

# nova



**October 1995**

AGM November 1st

Inside: Victorious Avon Club.

Flying in France.

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## The Committee

### Chairman

Pete Corcoran 9 Wallace Road, BATH, BA1 6QQ  
Tel 01225 335301 Email [pete@praxis.co.uk](mailto:pete@praxis.co.uk)

### Secretary & Treasurer

Paul Ellis Blindmans Cottage, Brickyard Lane, Wanstrow,  
SHEPTON MALLETT, BA4 4TH  
Tel 01749 850674

### Membership

Fiona Macaskill Churchill House, Vicarage Lane, Olveston, BRISTOL,  
BS12 3DP  
Tel 01454 613788

### Competitions

Tim Pentreath Garden Flat 10 Kensington Place, BATH, BA1 6AW  
Tel 01225 424953

### Sites and Club Coach

Chris Jones 20 Blenheim Gardens, Fairfield Park, BATH, BA1 6NL  
Tel 01225 319052 Email [chris@cj-hb.demon.co.uk](mailto:chris@cj-hb.demon.co.uk)

### Editor

Marcus King First Floor Flat, 21 St James Square, BATH, BA1 2TS  
Tel 01225 428356 Email [marcus@radair.win-uk.net](mailto:marcus@radair.win-uk.net)

### Novice Contacts

Dave Garbe Tel 01179 246504  
Paul Guilfoyle Tel 01179 551346

## Information

### Senior Coaches

Chris Jones 01225 319 052 Simon Buckley 01452 814114  
Jason Board 01934 510404

### Club Coaches

Mike Bowring(hg) 01179 444129 Dyan Ahado(hg) 01249 660611  
Nigel Fovargue(hg) 01793 643748 Nick Romanko(hg) 01179 248722  
Jon Buckingham(hg) 01179 698708 Marcus King(pg) 01225 428356  
Fiona Macaskill(pg) 01454 613788

### Sites

Mere Rifle Range 01747 860201 Lulsgate 01179 474441  
Crooks Peak  
Phone Mr Croft to check bottom landing BEFORE flying 01934 732730

### Weather

Avon, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Somerset 0891 500405  
Glamorgan 0891 500409  
Dyfed and Powys 0891 500414  
Airmet South 0891 500693

**Mid-Week Flying Phone 0800 515544**



NOVA



## Avon Hang Gliding and Paragliding Club Newsletter

September 1995

# Avon are AIRWAVE British Club Champions 1995



### Editors Bit

Well it's that time of month again and another issue of NOVA comes winging it's way to you, well as you are reading this I guess it's got to you safely. I have stuck to the A4 format as the only comments I got when I tried it out last time were favourable, but if you hate it like this drop me a line. This is your mag so give me any comments you have and preferably some ideas for new things you would like to see in it. As

usual I am desperately searching for articles for the next issue, several promised articles haven't turned up, so if you have promised me an article or think you may have something of interest to the rest of us get it down. I would prefer articles on 3.5" disks but beggars can't be fussy can they. Finally if anyone wants to use the mag to mail inserts we can do this, so far I have asked for half the cost of the postage to do this.

It has been a fairly interesting time for me flying wise. I spent two weeks out in France one competing in the British Open and the second week in Annecy. The weather was brilliant but I had some good high flights and a few smallish cross countries. Charlotte also got some good flying in taking her total flying time from 1 hour to 4.5 hours and had her longest flight of 1 hour 40 minutes and a height gain of 1500', and yes she did have a big grin on her face.

On return to fair blighty we found out that Avon had made the finals of the Airwave challenge. As a result I spent 2 wet and windy weekends in Hawes, more of which I hope next issue, with only one day's flying. Still on that day I did my first real XC since the accident last year, and although it was only 7.5km it did a lot of good for my confidence. So watch out you lot at the top of the XC league, I'll be back!!!

Anyway, safe flying and remember fly high, stay high, fly far. See you on the hill. ☺

*Marcus*

Towards the back of this issue you will find an up to date copy of the membership list which we thought might be useful.

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### Le Hot Gossip

Simon Kerr after buying his new UP Kendo has done some impressive flights recently, going XC nearly every time he has been flying, with his latest flight of 24km from Merthyr to a pub garden, where else, in Abergavenny he pushes Tim Pentreath out of 2nd place in the Avon PG League. Simon says it would take a bloody miracle to catch Mark Drake up.

Emma Sollom has actually been seen out flying, and flying what? A UP Vision of course.

Mark Drake who has already turned down was place in the Nationals for next year, due to his desire to keep flying at a club level and other commitments, looks set to get another one with his placing in the Nation PG XC League.

Fiona Macaskill was the only person to go XC at the BHPA All Out when she flapped off in zeros to make about 3km on the glide, so she gets 1st, 2nd, 3rd and any other prizes hanging around. Now she is off on her world lecture tour, starting with the local young farmers. We have been lucky enough to book her for the AGM in November, so do come along to hear about the PWC, Bassano and the Nationals, including the accuracy nationals which Fiona will be competing in between now and then.

I would put in a quick joke about Ray Bass and Hawes but maybe he has had enough piss taken. But there again...

Neil Atkinson and Jason Board are fighting it out at the top of the HG XC League, rumours abound that Jason may have done another flight which takes him into the lead.

Chris Jones is seriously considering giving up flying in favour of the motorbike he is rebuilding.

### Club Coach Course

The South Devon Club are running a club coach course on Nov 18th & 19th at  
Ivy Bridge  
Phone 01503 230449 for details



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## News From Your Committee

Yes the Committee have stirred from their collective slumber and even managed to make a few decisions over a pint or two in the local hostelry. And being your ever faithful scribe I thought the proceedings should be described for you, the member, and no talk of sweaty helmets please at the back there.

Wendy Windblows was our first point of discussion, there has been no real progress made on the possible siteing of a 'Wendy Windblows' in the Avon area. Nobody on the committee had been given much feedback and without it we felt we could not make a decision. But rather than let it drag on and on we thought it would be better to get something in action, hence you will find a form within this fine publication, asking for your choice of site and whether you will be willing up the £20 to join the system. We will use these forms to make our decision and therefore we need them returned by the November meeting at the latest. If there isn't a good response we will be unable to recommend a site to Rod Buck and we will probably lose the chance of getting a Wendy Windblows in this area.

We have had a request from Dave Garbe for two radios to help with the LAT days, of which there should be more coming up soon. We agreed to purchase a couple of minitalkers to see how it went. They should also be available for competition use. And on the competition front a plea was made for help with the petrol costs for the teams recent visits to Hawes, which several people made twice. It was agreed to pay half the petrol costs for the Paragliders and the Hang Gliders. The committee also decided that we would pay half the petrol cost for teams going to the semi finals and finals, as long as people were sensible about sharing lifts. We hope next years competition will be as successful as this years.

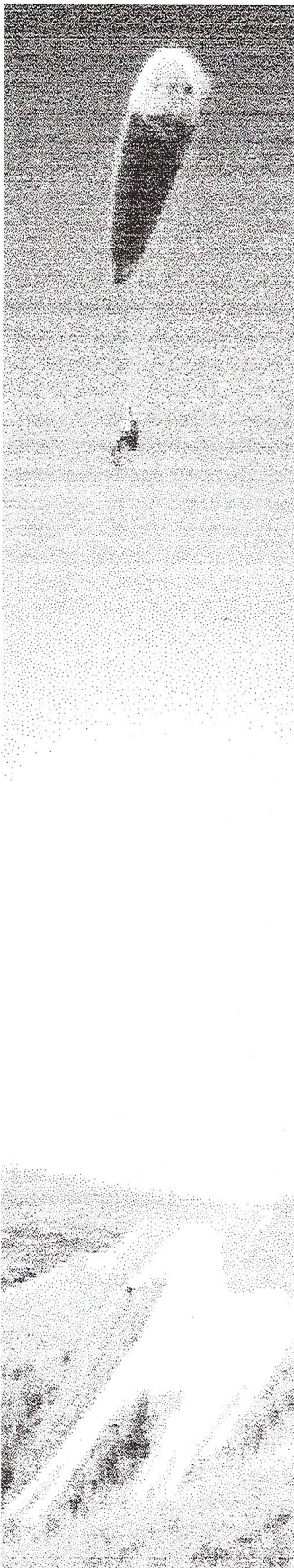
The committee also decided to look at the cost of upgrading the club computer as it is looking a long in the tooth now, and not really capable of running the software used to create this mag.

Finally, the topic of the AGM was raised, and the need to recruit new committee members. This is where we need your help if you have any ideas or want to be on the committee next year give us a call. **YOUR CLUB NEEDS YOU!!!**

## Last Year's Cup Holders

**We need the awards that were presented last year returned as soon as possible as they will be presented to this years winners at the AGM on November the 1st. Please give them to a committee member as soon as possible.**

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**Send Your Articles to:-**

**Marcus King  
First Floor Flat  
21 St James Square  
Bath BA1 2TS  
or Email to [marcus@radair.win-uk.net](mailto:marcus@radair.win-uk.net)**

## Site News

### **Foot launched powered flying**

Many will have seen the powered paragliders at the All-Out. It is only a few weeks away from being legalised. What is not generally known though is that the CAA have released legal control. It will not be controlled like microlighting. The BHPA will probably have complete control, but with no legality to back them up. It will be just like HG and PG.

What will this mean for the club? Are we going to allow powered flying on our sites? Are we going to accept powered members? I'd like to hear your thoughts.

Incidentally it's not only PPG that will become possible but powered hang-gliders as well, in fact anything that is foot launchable below a certain weight.

My personal opinion is that we do not want these noisy brethren on our sites. They should be used in a similar way to winches, but from fields far enough away from flying sites so that we don't all get tarred with the same "noisy" brush.

Chris



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## Frocester

Don't top land in the picnic area. This goes for paragliders and hang-gliders. We have already had one incident when a member of the public was collided with, we do not want another. We may lose the site

if an irresponsible pilot hurts a member of the public. If you stay out of the picnic area this possibility is drastically reduced. THAT means everybody!

Recently a number of paraglider pilots have landed there when they have been blown back in strong winds. Once in your career is probably excusable, anymore than that and you're being irresponsible. Don't fly if it is on the edge, go somewhere else where you've got room to land behind take-off.

Barry Seeley is the sites officer for Frocester. He's been flying there for donkey's years and has a keen interest in keeping the site open. Listen to what he says, but it is up to us all to preserve our sites. Those who are abusing rules for their own selfish reasons are jeopardising ALL our flying, not just their own. Give Barry your support, don't leave it up to him to control site usage, take an active part yourself.

## Westbury

I guess I'm going to have to say this until I'm blue in the face. If you don't think you can stay up don't fly. Certain members keep going down. STOP IT. You know who you are.

## September Meetings

The speaker at the September meeting was Howard Travers, who is the chairman of the Paragliding Competitions Committee on the BHPA. He used the meeting to gauge peoples' reactions to some new ideas he has for the British competition scene. The most important new idea is the creation of a British Paragliding Cup (and there is no reason the hang gliding league could not adopt a similar system). This BPC will be run along the same lines as the Paragliding (and starting next year hang gliding) World Cup, with 6 competitions each with various tasks. A pilot will get a score for every task he/she completes and the best five scores will go towards the final score. In this way you will not have to attend all the competitions to stand a reasonable chance of doing well. Howie is hoping that this competition will provide an alternative means of entry to the Nationals, the XC league no longer being necessarily the best way of picking competition flyers. The talk sparked off a lot of discussion between club members and the meeting was pretty lively.

## November Meeting AGM

Yes it's that time of year again when we have that fine tradition of an AGM, you know the one where hardly anyone turns up and those that do, having forgotten the AGM, end up being pressed into service on the committee. Well the AGM will be held as the November meeting. Because it is an AGM please don't stay away as the evening should be a fairly packed one. As well as the committee elections we will also be awarding the prizes for this year and Fiona Macaskill will be giving a talk on flying in the PWC, Bassano and the Nationals. And to tempt you further we will also be arranging for sandwiches etc. to be served. If you feel like becoming a committee member, and remember committee members get free membership, and even the odd drink bought for them, hint hint, you can come a long to the AGM and offer your services. Now Simon just because I said 'offer your services' there's no need to start sniggering and going on about sweaty helmets.

## Competition News



I think it's time to make sure all my windsurfing gear is in working order - the autumnal gales seem to have arrived with vengeance! Only 64 km has been flown in September so far (27/9/95), compared to 330 km in August!

### Airwave Challenge

Well finally the Airwave Challenge is over! I'm afraid I haven't the time or the information to do a full report here - I'll try for next months issue.

<i>Paragliding Final</i>		<i>Joint HG &amp; PG Final</i>		<i>Individual Paragliding</i>	
Position	Club	Position	Club	Name	Distance
1	High Sports	1	Avon	Mark Drake	53.7 km
2	Cumbria	2	Dales	Simon Kerr	24.0 km
3	Isle of Wight			Tim Pentreath	15.8 km
4	Avon			Marcus King	7.0 km
5	Dales			Dave McCarthy	4.0 km
6	Dunstable			<b>Total</b>	<b>104.5 km</b>

The only task of the competition was flown on August Bank Holiday Monday from a site called Grove Head near Whether Fell. In strong conditions an open XC task was set with Mark Drake coming 3<sup>rd</sup> overall with a absolutely stonking 53.7 km flight. However there was some initial uncertainty over the validity of his flight - according to the organisers two year old airmap he had landed inside Leeds Bradford Airport airspace, but upon checking the latest issue his landing was found to be well outside a much revised control zone/area (phew!).



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Simon Kerr helped our score considerably with his 24.0 km flight - and as for me, I was disappointed because I left the hill with Mark in the same thermal! I've since revised the golden rule "*If you're in lift stay with it*" to read "*If you're in lift stay with it, unless Mark Drake is in it with you and decides to zoom off before reaching cloudbase!*"

Well done Marcus and Dave too - the fact that the whole team left the hill (Dave only on his second XC) was quite an achievement.

Thankyou to everyone who has flown in any of the Airwave Challenge events during the year - I am certainly proud of our achievement, after all there were at least 12 teams that didn't even make the final.

### Go For It '95 - Avon PG XC League - 27/9/95

A lot of new flights have been added since the last newsletter (apologies to Marcus and Dave for leaving off your recent flights - can you let me have grid refs. sometime), but with only 64 km added in September I fear the season may be drawing to a close. The league finishes at the end of October so you've got four more weeks to go for it!

<i>All sites league</i>									
Rank:	Name:	Canopy:	1:	2:	3:	4:	5:	Total (5):	Total (all):
1	Mark Drake	Apco Extra	53.7	45.7*	33.0*	25.5*	24.3*	182.2	264.7
2	Simon Kerr	UP Kendo	28.6	24.0	23.8	11.8	10.6	98.7	103.6
3	Tim Pentreath	Nova Sphinx	30.6	18.7	15.8	10.9	9.1	85.0	124.9
4	Fiona Macaskill	Edel Energy	25.4	19.8*	15.7	10.7*	10.1	81.6	81.6
5	Tim Brunskill	Condor Tornado	34.0*	17.9	9.0*	7.2*	4.6	72.8	76.1
6	Chris Jones	Airwave Voodoo	12.2	10.1	5.7	4.8		32.8	32.8
7	Bertie Grotian	Trekking Espace	30.0					30.0	30.0
8	Angus Macaskill	Not known	20.4					20.4	20.4
9	Karl Ford	Firebird Barracuda	10.8					10.8	10.8
10	Dave McCarthy	Flight Design B3	10.6					10.6	10.6
11	Elly Milln	Fun 2 Fly Profile	4.8	3.0				7.8	7.8
<b>Total</b>								<b>632.9</b>	<b>763.4</b>

\* = mid-week flight

<i>Avon sites league</i>									
Rank:	Name:	Canopy:	1:	2:	3:	4:	5:	Total (5):	Total (all):
1	Mark Drake	Apco Extra	25.5	24.3	21.5	3.1		74.5	74.5
2	Fiona Macaskill	Edel Energy	25.4	19.8	10.7	10.1		66.0	66.0
3	Chris Jones	Airwave Voodoo	10.1	5.7	4.8			20.6	20.6
4	Tim Brunskill	Condor Tornado	9.0	7.2	3.3			19.6	19.6
5	Tim Pentreath	Nova Sphinx	6.5	6.1	6.0			18.6	18.6
<b>Total</b>								<b>199.2</b>	<b>199.2</b>

Please continue to notify me of details of your flights (Date, Canopy, Site, TO grid reef, LZ grid ref): home 01225 424953 / work 01225 447003 / fax 01225 443256.

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## British Paragliding Cup

During his talk at last month's meeting, Howard Travers proposed a new paragliding competition, based on the PWC format, as a means of getting competition qualified pilots (rather than XC qualified pilots) into the Nationals. Pilots can enter any of the existing competitions (eg. Airwave Manx TT, Scottish Open, Lakes Charity Classic etc...) and the scores from their four best tasks will be used to allocate points in the British Paragliding Cup. Sounds like an excellent idea to me - I expect more details will appear in Skywings in due course.

## And finally...

The top three pilots in the Airwave Challenge were awarded places in the Nationals for 1996. Mark Drake was offered a place but magnanimously declined it in favour of Dave Pilkington who came 4<sup>th</sup>. Mark wants to concentrate on promoting flying at the club level and felt that the time taken up with Nationals events would prevent him from doing this. Thankyou Mark for your commitment to Avon and for allowing yourself to be in next year's Airwave Challenge team! (Nationals pilots are excluded).

## From The NET...

Date: Wed, 13 Sep 1995 15:38:12 +0200 (GMT+0200)  
From: phrg@hippo.ru.ac.za (Mr Richard Grant)  
To: hang-gliding@lists.utah.edu  
Subject: (PG) **Upgrading to an intermediate.**  
Message-Id: <m0sss0z-0009IjC@hippo.ru.ac.za>  
Content-Type: text/plain; charset=US-ASCII  
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit  
Content-Length: 3633

There has been a lot of talk of accidents recently. Accident reports, accident statistics and even unremembered accidents.

Whatever the many and varied causes of accidents to members of the foot-launched community, I have taken what for me definitely feels like a move in the right direction. About a year ago I dispensed with my performance rated paraglider and upgraded to a new intermediate.

Since then my flying has never looked back and has never been better or more enjoyable. For someone like myself who cannot count on flying every day, a performance rated glider was something I just couldn't count on feeling "current" with. Even after a layoff of several weeks, it takes me only a few minutes to get back into the feel of the wing I fly now.

Some of the other advantages I see of flying an intermediate wing are as follows.

1. If I'm above my friends on their "hot ships" which is something that happens fairly often, I know it is my skill as a pilot which got me there.



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2. If I get left behind occasionally, I have an excuse (although it's not one I'll use when I think my glider is within earshot :-))
3. I think my chance of being dumped on takeoff (when many accidents happen) is now much reduced. I have watched a friend's hot ship flicking its wingtips in and out at launch, like it was licking its lips. No more of that for me thank you!
4. When I feel turbulent air on my face and the glider starts to dance around, my heart fills with joy at the promise of lift in the vicinity, rather than my bowels filling with dread as I nervously look up to see how much of the glider is about to stop flying.
5. I think my chances of a major collapse when flying are significantly reduced, and even if it does happen and the glider folds up and then re-inflates and dives with no input from me, it is unlikely to dive below my horizon so violently that I am projected into the sail and "giftwrapped".
6. For me, the only disadvantage of flying an intermediate that I can think of, is that I am losing out with practice at pumping out deflations.
7. An intermediate holds its resale value much better than a performance wing. There is always a market for second-hand gliders that can be bought by relative beginners. Far too often I have seen yesterday's ultra safe, ultra high pressure, ultra high speed and ultra stable performance wing become today's death machine which no-one wants and which is in dire need of a new set of its skinny little lines to remain "airworthy".

If anyone doubts the performance levels achieved by today's sports intermediates, they should read the two independent glider reviews in the latest Skywings. (I haven't flown either of them.) Top speeds of 45 km/h+ and remarkably, with one wing collapsed and held in, they take from 4 to 6 seconds to turn 90 degrees. When the riser is released they reinflate without input in a very few seconds etc. etc.

I wonder how many accidents are caused by people pushing ahead with their license grade and then feeling they have to buy the very latest and hottest glider on the market and that doing so will automatically make them a skygod.

When considering a new glider, don't pass up the new range of intermediates unless you are headed for serious competition. With an intermediate it's much easier to stay within the envelope.

The envelope or a body bag, and the choice is up to you.

--  
Richard Grant - Physics Department - Rhodes University  
Grahamstown, South Africa. Internet: phrg@hippo.ru.ac.za

So many hills, so little airtime.



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### Chris, Nick and Dave - quick tour 95

At the end of July and the beginning of August this year, myself Nick Romanko and Dave Tyrer spent four weeks flying and touring about the south of France. The flying wasn't exceptional there this year for us, but we did get to fly a number of sites that we'd never flown before. They were not all epic XC sites but each one had something to offer. The variety made for an interesting tour, and I think we all agreed that it was a welcome change to the usual X weeks at just one site. Here's a brief (very subjective!) guide to the places we flew, check out the French sites guide for the pukka details.

#### Puy de Dome - 1450m, 420m ttb

Martin Tillet is the only person I've heard say a good word about this place, but it is very scenic and incredibly well organised. It's an old volcano and hence is almost the perfect shape for launching into any wind direction you fancy. The trouble is, that few people I've spoken to about the place have every been "up" there. Dave is probably a member of a very exclusive group, because he has. The best thing is that in the summer only cars with pilots in are allowed to drive up. The rest of the grockles have to travel up by coach. Mind you, you do have to pay for the privilege, but when you get to the top you find there are parking bays reserved for pilots. Can't imagine that happening in this killjoy country can you!

Verdict - Probably better for PG than HG. Only bother if you are in the area. Take a broolly.

#### St Hilaire - 1000m, 770m ttb

Famous for it's festival that happens each September. Last years festival was a wash-out. A good place to go though if you want to see lots of films about flying and spend lots of money.





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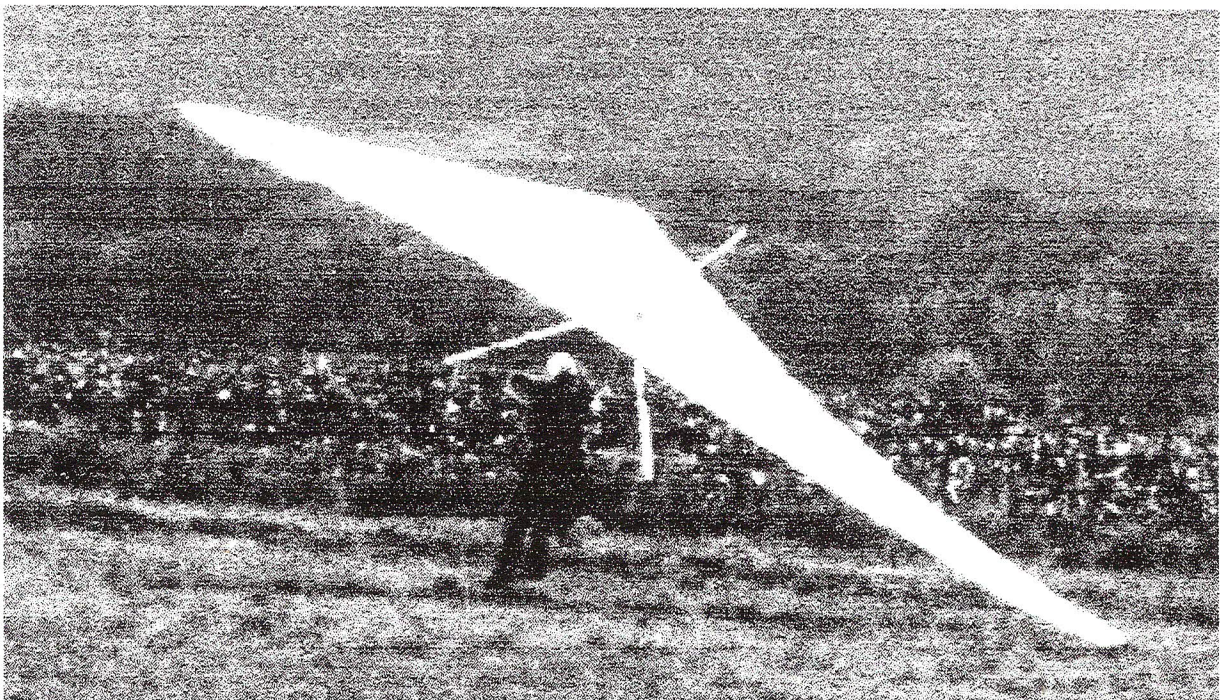
The bit where loonies dress up and throw themselves off the mountain disguised as fish, trains, chariots or whatever takes their fancy has to be worth seeing at least once.

Anyway we weren't there in September but in the height of the French holiday season. Evenso the place was virtually deserted except for a few locals and students learning to fly the hard way. It's not really known as a great XC site although big XCs have been done from there. It's on the east side of a long N-S valley just north of Grenoble, hence it works early and finishes early. The PG's have a great big carpet to fly from, very nice. HG's must make do with a grassy bank/shallow ramp if the wind has any south in it, and the *death ramps* if there is any north in it. When we where there is was NW ☹!

Dave loved the death ramps. In fact he loved one so much he got up early just so he could launch, even though it was far too early for thermals and a down flight was the only outcome - junkie.

Mind you, at first he hated it. Photos can't do justice to the death ramps. There are three but only two are used, and of those only one regularly. It is off this ramp that students are taught to fly. Aaargh, what courage.

*Imagine standing in a wooded clearing, just a little wider than a wing-span and looking out into a wide flat valley 2500' below. You are balanced on a five-foot square section of wooden decking that just ahead tilts down over a shear cliff at an angle of at least 70 degrees to the horizontal, and then continues for another seven feet or so before dropping off into nothingness. A streamer indicates that the gentle breeze is blowing across at 90° for most of the time, so you must wait for it to straighten. When it does you must be prepared to go. If you are lucky you will have wing men, but there is no room for a nose man, unless he has wings.*



Unknown Avon pilot prangs K4 at St Hilaire



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I don't think I'm embarrassing Dave to say that on his first attempt it took him a least 15 minutes to launch. Each time he moved to the edge he'd creep back and wipe the sweat from his palms. I was lucky, it was my day to drive the car down ☺. Nick had gone first and had stalled off, disappearing virtually in free fall, causing the local HG instructors to cringe. "He fly's very well", said one, as Nick thermalled up above launch, "but his take-off was one of the worst I've seen". Dave had the benefit of some extra coaching but he was still nervous, even after watching several sub-CPC standard pilots launch, oblivious to the joys of a nice rounded hill. When he did launch it was sweet with very little drive, just a quick swoop and away. Dave got such a buzz that he was back for more the next morning and is now a self-confessed ramp junkie. He just loves them and so do I. I can't recommend it enough. Weeeeeeee!

**Verdict** - A great place to spend a few days on your way north or south. Visiting the festival would be ace if the weather was kind (see the hi-five video for a taster of the festival). Good place if you fly HG or PG, just don't expect epic flying. If you want epic go south. There are lots of other sites to try in the area.

Oh yeah I nearly forgot, the ramp is steep as it was designed for dual instruction. Sometimes students don't run enough. With the death ramp you can't help but fly.

### **Prapoutel Les 7 Laux - 1980m, 1750 ttb**

If you stop off at St. Hilaire you must fly this place just across the valley. Access is by chair-lift once you have driven up to the Prapoutel ski resort. It was the first time we'd taken hang-gliders on a chair lift and we were more than a little worried. We needn't have been, the lift operators have got it sussed.

You get on board the double seated chair before it rounds the end of the overhead track, place your harness bag next to you in the second seat and close the security bar. After the chair has turned around and is pointing up the hill the attendant will hand you the glider, which you rest on top of your harness rather like a knight at a joust. At the top another attendant takes the glider from you. All this is done without stopping the lift. Easy-peasy. The ride up is very peaceful, as this is another place that in the summer is nearly deserted.

At the top there is a grassy bank and a fantastically huge wooden ramp to launch from. Flying from here is extra-scenic, even on the average days like when we were there. The landing is in the St Hilaire bottom landing 10km away, and was an easy glide. If you thermal up you'll be treated to some fantastic views and the possibility of some decent out and returns.

**Verdict** - A great adventure if you've never carried a glider on a chair-lift before. Great views and a beautiful setting. If you are close by, don't miss it.

### **Laragne, Chabre - 1300m+, 720m ttb ish!**

Not as good this year as in previous years. Never-the-less it is the place to go if you want easy XC flying on a HG. Lots of places to land, lots of sticky-up things to produce and trigger thermals and an extremely HG friendly attitude from the locals. Plus the main camp site in



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town has its own landing field which can be reached on all but the most naff of days. If you don't want to camp there are plenty of gites to rent. If you stay with Brian and Jane (see ad in Skywings) you can even get a guide/retrieve organised. Always a good bet but don't limit yourself to the one take-off, Chabre (unless conditions are epic!).

**Verdict** - Probably one of the best places to go HG in France for the average pilot looking for good flying. Lots of sites within easy driving distance and lots of "tasks" to do. This year we also tried Apres and the excellent Mont Colombis.

### **Aspres sur Buech - 1560m, 740 ttb**

Aspres is about 20km north of Laragne, top landable at a pinch and generally a more pleasant place to be during the really hot weather. The track up can give your vehicle a hard time if you're not careful, but it is worth it if the wind is westish. A good place to start for your first flight to the observatory on the 2700m Peak de Bure.

**Verdict** - A good companion site to the Chabre when there is west in the wind or you fancy a change.

### **Mont Colombis - 1700m, 1055m ttb**

Another good westerly site is Mont Columbus. It's driveable all the way to the top on tarmac roads. XC potential is limited for the less experienced pilot unless conditions are epic as the valley is narrow and full of vines. Nevertheless a ttb of over 3000' can't be sniffed at. On a reasonably good day it should be possible to fly SE to the 2500m Dormillouse or back to Laragne.

**Verdict** - More limited than Aspres but worth a look just for the ttb. Great views from take-off and there is shade!!!! Not really for PG, although it has been flown.

### **Plaine-Joux nr Chamonix - 1380m, 790m ttb**

The Chamonix is very popular with danglers but hangers haven't really raved about it much. I guess this is mainly due to the limited out-landings available in the narrow valleys. Plaine-Joux is the exception, it must have the biggest bottom landing field in France for HG (and strangely probably the smallest for PG!).

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Why would you want to go there? One word - scenery. Boy is it fantastic.



**Unknow Avon pilot on launch at Plaine-Joux**

Plaine-Joux is on a shelf just outside the west end of the Chamonix valley. Behind take-off there is a sheer cliff rising 4000' or more. Standing on launch you have a superb view of the snow covered white mountain, Mont Blanc just inside the Chamonix valley. Once you've thermalled up the cliffs behind take-off the view becomes simply breathtaking. All of us agreed that this was the flight of the holiday just to be able to take in the view of snow capped mountains stretching into Italy and Switzerland.

Verdict - What a view!

### **Annecy - 1217m, 767m ttb**

Annecy has long been a popular holiday destination for HG pilots. It is one of the main holiday centres for other kinds of holiday makers to, hence in summer it is a very crowded place. When we were there the weather was crap so I can't comment much on the flying, but Pierre Bouilloux has done some massive PG flights in the region, so it must be good occasionally! You have to like trees though as there are many of them. I saw at least one Brit HG pilot drag his wing through one on take-off before luckily making it out into clean air.

Verdict - A good place to take your kids as there's lots to do. Very pretty. Billions of PG's that tended to get in the way of the HG take-off. I spent some time with a couple of Austrian pilot pretending to be ack-ack gunners, shooting at any PG that hung around in front of launch (O.K. so we were bored and fed up with waiting!) A great place to get your photo taken by the zillions of grockles who crowd around the take-off ramp. (This ramp is crap, being very



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poorly sited.) If you're looking for a purely HG holiday go someplace else. If you do choose Annecy then try Semnoz 45 mins drive away, you'll not regret it.

### Semnoz - 1700 m, 1150 ttb

A group of Brummy HG pilots described it as being like the Long Mynd only 10 times higher, they were not far off. It has a large grassy take-off, and I guess top-landing area, although it is a 5 minute carry to reach it (shock horror!). The site is a long west facing tree covered ridge, with a cliff section forming about 30% of the drop. We only had a short flight there, but it was very pleasant and it shouldn't be too difficult to make it back to the Annecy lake and camp grounds.

PG and HG have separate take-offs (about a mile apart, which should please some!).

Verdict - Nice site.

Thats it, so hows about the rest of you telling us where you flew this summer?

**Chris**

As a follow up to Chris's article I found the following information on flying in France on the Net which may be of use to anyone heading out that way.

j.orloff@thphys.uni-heidelberg.de (Jean Orloff), November 1994:

FFVL 4, rue de Suisse F-06000 Nice Ph93886289 Fax93161562 143.9875  
Minitel: 3615 FFVL

The "Federation Francaise de Vol Libre" (FFVL) is a non-profit organisation taking care of free flight in France. With about 30,000 members, it is one of the biggest in the world. Its main visible activities are:

- 1) delivery of a "federal" licence for both paragliding and hang-gliding.
- 2) negotiating cheap insurance for its licensed pilots
- 3) organising national competitions
- 4) helping and coordinating club activities
- 5) subsidising clubs to maintain sites opened to \*any\* FFVL member
- 6) install wind-talkers broadcasting on the FFVL-reserved frequency (143.9875)
- 7) install info panels for local site regulations

Before flying to France, you probably want to contact the FFVL to get a list of clubs in the area you are interested in. They also distribute a wonderful guide of all FFVL sites (400FF). Next, you should check your third party insurance covers you abroad: as of 1994, this is the first legal requirement to fly in France, and the police could for instance check out after a flight (always have it with you). However, the other legal requirement is to have explicit authorisation from the owners of launch and LZ. For official FFVL sites (the vast majority), this has been negotiated for any FFVL member, so you probably want to become one (620FF with insurance, about half if you are already covered). People usually become FFVL members through a recognised club, which takes an extra fee around 100FF.

For meteorological informations, I usually rely on the following 2 phone services:

- 1) Bulletin Aerologie/Vol Libre: 36.68.10.14, followed by \*dd for departement number dd. This gives an incredible information flow, and

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will probably be hard to follow if you are not native french speaker (and even if you are!). If that case, you might prefer to read at your speed on a Minitel: 3615 METEO, select the departement, and look for VAV (Vol A Voile, ie sailplane) in the special activities menu. Watch out: contrary to the phone server, the VAV is not displayed in all departement. For instance 73 (Savoie) has it while 74 (Haute Savoie) not, but they are close enough that the 73 info is relevant.

2) Meteo Departementale: 36.68.02.dd for departement number dd is a good local forecast.

Coordinates conversions:

Certain french cards (like Didier Richard 1/50,000) use bloody frenchy units for their grids: tenth of grads (100 grads=90 degrees), counted wrt Paris... The conversion goes like this:

4.00gr E of Paris = 5deg 56'16" E of Greenwich  
4.28gr E of Paris = 6deg 11'23" E of Greenwich  
[=>0.28gr=15'7"=15.12'=0.252deg OK with 100 gr=90 deg]

```
==> | Greenwich=2.5975gr W from `Paris' |  
    | Paris= 2.3378deg E from Greenwich = 2deg 20'16" E |  
    |
```

Lattitudes are both measured from the equator -> \*10/9 to get the french ones  
At 1/50,000, 1cm = 0.5km == 0.005gr N (def. of the meter!) ~ 0.00717gr E  
around these lattitudes.



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## Wendy Windblows

We have decided to get your opinions on if a Wendy Windblows automatic weather station would be a good idea for the Avon area and if so where you think it should be placed. The equipment would be installed by Rod Buck and maintained by him, we the club would not have to pay anything. The system will be paid for by subscribing to the service initially £20. Rod Buck wants our opinion on where to site the device, and we thought it would be better to use the newsletter to gain your opinion. We need to know where you think it should go, we've given three suggestions but feel free to add your own suggestions, we also need to know if you will subscribe to the system by putting up the initial £20. Please respond as soon as possible, and at the latest by the November meeting, if we don't get enough response we will lose the opportunity for a Wendy Windblows in the area. You can post your completed Form to the magazine address or hand it to a committee member on the hill or at the meetings. Thanks for your time.

PS Full details of the Wendy Windblows system appeared in NOVA a couple of months ago, if you bother keeping them.

**Name**

**Address**

**Tick your chosen site:-**

**Tick 1 Box**

**1) Near Solar Wings Factory**

**2) Gliding Club at Nympsfield**

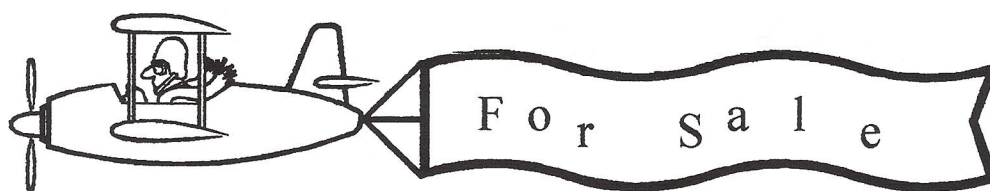
**3) Westbury**

**4) Other** \_\_\_\_\_

**Would you subscribe to the system?** **Yes / No**

**Any other comments?**

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## Gliders & Bits For Sale

**Edel Energy (Small)** Latest Competition Canopy 4 Months Old Offers circa £1600 (Cost £2600 New) Tel Fiona Macaskill on 01454 613744 (1)

**Bennet Back Up System Hang Gliding Reserve Parachute.** Immaculate Condition. £130.

**Maikiki Pith Ball Vario**, offers.

**Stirrup Hang Gliding Harness**, Airstream, free to a good home

**Ball Electronic Vario** £50

Phone Tony Williams on Bristol 9248230 (1)

**Xtralight 147**, Blue Leading Edge, Moyes Logo, Purple delta Grey undersurface, Only 15hrs, returning to Australia. £2500, call Ken Weekly 0181 675 4038. (1)

**LR2 Vario.** Audio/Visual with adjustable thresholds for up & down. Digital altimeter with QNE setting. £150. Ring Kay or Dave Draper on 01672 563850 (3)

**Kiss 154**, Very tidy glider, always stored indoors. Would suit progressing pilot who wants a lot of performance for very little money. Why pay £3000+ for latest hot ship when £700 will buy you all the performance you could wish for. For a test flight ring Geoff Rodgers on 01761 232096 (3)

**Magic 4 Full Race.** Sweet handling, lovely to land. Ex Steve Wills mile muncher. Rainbow underside. VGC £400 ono for a quick sale. Dave Garbe 0117 9246504 (3)

*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!*

Over and out!!!



# Diary of Events 95

November		
4	Avon AGM	AGM, Food and Fiona Macaskill
18-19	Club Coach Course, S Devon	Contact 01503 230449

*Many of these date are as yet unconfirmed, please check with the organisers and/or members of the committee. If you have any dates for this diary please let me have them as soon as possible.*

