

Apr97

Air

Heads



MINUTES OF THE AGM MARCH 1997

Phil opened the meeting at 20.30 with 20 members present. The minutes of the February meeting were read. There were no matters arising. The election of the new committee followed:

CHAIRMAN There were no volunteers so **Phil Fouracre** agreed to stand for another term. All were in favour.

SECRETARY **John Milner** was elected in his absence and to continue as club contact.

TREASURER Simon Bell wanted to stand down and **Andy Tew** volunteered and was elected.

SITES Nick Weaver resigned owing to work commitments. **Gerry McCann** volunteered.

EDITOR Phil & Maggie Wilson need a rest after many years editing an excellent newsletter. **John Fielder** said he would have a go.

SAFETY & TRAINING H.G.
Mark Hoer was re-elected in his absence.

SAFETY & TRAINING P.G.
Dave Thompson was not present, **Brian Smith** volunteered to do the job.

HG XC CLAIMS & COMPETITIONS
After many years, Jeff Hoer felt he needed to take a break from the job, but was more than willing to help anyone keen to fill this post. **Harriet Pottinger** volunteered and was duly elected.

PG XC & CLAIMS
Maggie Wilson was happy to continue.

MATTERS ARISING

The Chairman asked for ideas and comments regarding club rules and regulations. Copies were handed round for members to peruse.

INCIDENT REPORT

Phil read out a very descriptive report from Harriet about the dangers and risks involved when assisting as nose man when cliff launching H.G. pilots. One bruised ego, one fractured foot, two crutches.

The Chairman gave very warm thanks and appreciation to all past committee members and a large vote of thanks from the rest of the club. Open to discussion was the topic of pilots H.G. & P.G. making more effort this year to be more competitive and go for XC miles. Everyone agreed that this was what most would like to see. Please give any ideas to Harriet, phone anytime. Put more fun into our flying.

MEMBERS SUBSCRIPTION

The committee felt that it should stay at £18. Club funds now stand at £707. A suggestion was put forward to remove the need for a months notice for making any changes to club rules. A vote was taken on the night of the meeting. All were in favour of the proposal.

CLUB SITES

It was proposed to include **Smeatharpe** as a winch tow site but not an aero tow site. All were in favour.

John Fielder asked if it was possible to obtain the Kernow site guide. Phil to enquire.

It was reported there was a problem with **Crook Peak** regarding modellers. The National Trust want £120 from us & Avon HG & PG for a licence. More information to follow.

John Fielder promised to give a talk next month on his visit to Madeira. Simon Murphy then gave his parachute packing demonstration, very much appreciated by one and all.

Don't forget Harriet Pottinger will be waiting to hear any views/ideas on competition, rules, tasks, sites, leagues phone 01823 601202

Gerry McCann

Inside	
Renaissance	2
The Doc goes flying	3
Talking to the man	4
Bits & Pieces	5



There have been some optimistic signs for a few weeks. Several times pilots have sidled up to me and said that there seems to be a resurgence of interest in flying some distances in 1997. A better indication is that the take-off at East Hill has already been cleared, and there is obviously a strong desire to fly there again. If the Condors return to East Hill, they will undoubtedly return to the days of big XC's, simply because once a thermal lifts you clear of the ridge there is usually no incentive to return to it. You don't have to be brave to go XC from East Hill - merely to take off!

Bravery was probably evident this March, however, above the cliffs stretching from Charmouth to Seaton. Mark Hoer, Jeff Hoer, Five Philfeatures and Simon "Dinger" Bell (forgive me if there were others - I wasn't there!) were the intrepid gang who left the cosy milk run and set off where very few have gone before. No matter how good the day, I can assure you that you don't cross Lyme Regis without feeling some trepidation as to what might lie beyond it. For my money this was the most exciting flight on a Condors site for several years - one which might mark the renaissance of the hang gliding section. Look out for these guys through the rest of the year - they could produce some fireworks! If nothing else they have provided themselves with some wonderful memories.

Well, having exhausted the "Alternative Sites Guide" idea, the desperate Editor expressed a desire to have articles about flights from East Hill, so I will write one or two - until the active pilots take over with Tales of '97.

9.8.87

Judy was down for the weekend, so naturally the weather was perfect. We went to East Hill, and soon I was climbing out in a stonker with Pete Nethercot, Jeff Hoer and Malcolm Chave. Pete, who had often regaled me with stories of Sea Breeze fronts and sailplanes came over the radio to say that this was a perfect example, and promptly raced off along the clearly defined cloud which stretched off towards Dorchester. I followed him, and left Jeff for dead. (I think he was waiting for Judy). No matter how fast I flew and no matter how little I 360'd whenever I looked down I saw Malcolm circling his cumbersome Magic 2, and keeping up. Impossible!

Somewhere near Bridport the line of cloud curved dramatically inland, before returning to its former path a few miles downwind. Pete Charged across the resulting Blue Hole with hardly a moment's hesitation - and went down. All very well, but he had made such encouraging noises that I had followed him, and was soon struggling in and out of the valleys east of Bridport. At least there was no sign of Malcolm! (There was no sign of Jeff, either, but that was because he was firmly embedded in the cloud, cold, damp and disorientated, and quite confident that he was about to die. All this on a glider he had cadged off me!).

I struggled on past Dorchester, half hoping my path would take me past the Cerne Abbas Giant, until the hills came up to meet me at Piddletrenthide, south of my target and 38 miles from east Hill. Judy had also flown XC, and we eventually made contact by telephone. The best bet was for her to go back to collect the car, then pick me up. In between she picked up Martin Kellaway, so I spent four hours watching Piddletrenthide pass a Sunday afternoon and early evening. Blissfully relaxing, and almost as enjoyable as the flight! Later, J&M arrived, and we had Fish and Chips in Dorchester.

This might have been the perfect day, had not Jeff Hoer somehow extricated himself from the aforementioned dice with death, and gone on to fly something of the order of 55 miles. On my glider! Maybe not perfect, but jolly good memories.

Simon Murphy

THE DOC GOES FLYING



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A couple of names which don't appear on the current membership lists, but should do, are Chris Corston and Dr. Mike Glanvill, both of whom are Honorary Life Members. Chris has lost touch with the club, but Mike hasn't. A retired GP from Chard, he is still intent on returning to regular flying, and has been kitted up and ready to go for some time. Waiting for the weather, like the rest of us.

"Doctor, doctor, I keep thinking I'm a pair of curtains"
"Pull yourself together"

We went to Branscombe when everyone else went to Charmouth. I had the kids, but could fly because the incapacitated Harriet volunteered to come along and look after them. (She started rigging for me and promptly lost Tom. Branscombe is a cliff site. I carried on rigging, and he eventually turned up).

"Doctor, doctor, I think I'm a rubber band"
"Oh snap out of it!"

It was a bit windy, but given the fact that I had to drop Tom at a party at 2.00pm, it seemed the best bet was to lob Mike off first. Be alright, 'spec! Mike looked pretty worried as we manoeuvred him to the take off point. I tried to calm him down and prepare him for what he was about to experience (he hadn't flown for six months), but made the mistake of saying "When you are ready just let us know". As the words left my lips I realised Mike would take that as a signal to go, when it was only meant to be a calming comment.

"Doctor, doctor, everyone keeps ignoring me!"
"Next!"

Acting as nose man for Mike is always dangerous, because he tends to take two or three running steps before saying "Release". Or, in this case "I'm ready". I had seen it coming, and had just a little time to get the nose up a bit and check the wings were level before I had to get out of the way - or be trampled.

"Doctor, doctor, I keep seeing pink monsters with purple spots"
"Have you seen a psychiatrist?"
"No, just the pink monsters"

Well, the take-off was lacking in technique, but it was certainly effective. The Calypso is the ideal glider in such circumstances. Mike was away, and looking really good. I rushed back to my glider, and got into the air as quickly as I could.

"Doctor, doctor everyone thinks I'm a liar"
"I don't believe you"

I didn't see Mike's landing, 'cos I was entertaining the cliff-top walkers near Sidmouth. The air was turbulent near the ground, and Harriet said that Mike was moving his weight briskly here and there, countering the forces and keeping the wing almost level. This is the sign of a pilot in touch with his glider, and at one with the air. Welcome back Mike!

"Doctor, doctor, I think I'm a bridge"
"Now, now, what's come over you?"
"Two cars and a bus"

Mike has just had a birthday. I have been known to get his age wrong before (every time I have mentioned it) but I think he said Seventy-five. He is my hero.

Simon & Charles Murphy.

TALKING TO THE MAN



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My recent trip to the Induga exhibition was an eye-opener in many ways, but one conversation is worthy of repetition to a wider audience. As you might expect, most of my time was spent on the Firebird and Moyes stands.

Germany isn't so far away, and Matthew Whittall - Firebird's main man - is British. So one way or another we get to meet the Firebird crew two or three times each year. Moyes, however, is rather more remote (or is it Luppitt which is remote?). Either way, I don't get to meet up with the Moyes Boys and Girls very often, so Induga represented a chance to talk some business and drink some beers. Unfortunately neither Bill nor Steve made the trip this year, and although the in-depth discussions I had with Chris Salmon were valuable, you may not be too interested in the concerns of Moyes' World Marketing Manager!

Instead, I will tell you of a discussion I had with one of the pilots who was hanging around the stand, because it could be significant for all of us. The pilot was Tomas Suchanek, Current (and three-times-in-succession) World Hang Gliding Champion and he was just the person to answer a little question which has been bothering me for many years. How come, I needed to know, did he fly with Flytec instruments, which don't have Total Energy? Perhaps his Flytecs were not quite the same as others? Read the italics in a deep Transylvanian accent! The words aren't exactly those used by Tomas, but the sound will be:

"No, I don't have Total Energy on my Flytecs, because it isn't necessary. It is true that an ordinary vario isn't accurate, and to anyone used to TE it will obviously be telling lies, but TE causes inaccuracies too." {This was of particular interest to me because, on another stand that day, I had negotiated a distributorship for a range of stunning instruments. My only problem was that they didn't feature TE, and I don't like flying without it. Look out! Here comes the useful bit!}

"When I'm entering a thermal I fly by feel. It is easy to feel the initial acceleration, and this gives me a good impression of what the lift may be like. I don't look at the vario yet, I'm flying by feel and listening to the acoustic, and searching for the core of the thermal. After one or two 360's I will look at the vario to get an indication of how strong the thermal is - not looking at the needle, but at the averager. The needle gives an almost spontaneous reading for a particular bit of the thermal, but the averager gives the value for the first couple of 360's and that is a far more accurate indicator of the strength of the thermal"

My own method of entering thermals has been to fly by feel until banked up in whatever I have decided is the best direction, then to look at the needle to a) get a value for the lift available and b) try to centre in the best lift.

"No, When you look at the needle it will very probably be giving a false impression of the strength of the thermal. The averager gives you a much better idea, and instantaneous readings are not as important as those taken over a period of time. It is best to wait."

When I was pretty active and flying well, my method seemed to work well. In more recent years it has been less effective - which is most likely due to the fact that I don't get much airtime these days. Also, I suspect that no other vario has ever been as accurate as the Thunderbirds with which I was most successful.

Whatever the reasons, you just can't argue with Tomas. He delivers his opinions without a trace of immodesty, but plenty of conviction. It looks as though I have got to try to adapt my technique!

Simon Murphy.

BITS & PIECES



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MEMBERSHIP CARD

NAME	SIMON MURPHY
EXPIRES END	March 1998
IN CASE OF ACCIDENT PLEASE CONTACT	RILEY
PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE	£2,000,000
BHPA Member	

A Membership card has been suggested. How would the members react to a two sided card on the lines above? Any input would be welcome.

Has anyone a change to their address or telephone number? Do you have a mobile you can be contacted on or wish to fly during the week? Is everyone living close to our sites prepared to have keen pilots phone them regarding the weather?

Next Month Jeff Hoer will let us know our site records. This will give us all something to aim at. Charmouth HG records have already been rewritten this year.

Phil & Maggie have offered to continue the sites guide provided that we don't have major revision. Is our guide up to date? We all have information that would, if put together, make it current.

John Fielder

CONTACT NUMBERS

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Articles sent on computer disk are helpful and time saving, Word for Windows or text format if possible. If not jot it down and send it in please. The deadline for copy is the last Friday in the month, although articles arriving close to deadline may be delayed a month due to flying possibilities!!!!

