

Jul97 Air Heads



MINUTES OF THE JUNE MEETING 1997

Minutes of June meeting

The minutes of the May meeting were read and approved.

Treasurers Report

Andy reported that there were now 31 paid up members and the account was in credit by approximately £1200. Bill in the pipeline for East Hill.

Safety Report

Harriet had a fast landing at Pandy in windy thermic conditions, resulting in two broken uprights, a bent leading edge, bad bruising and a broken tooth. She concluded that the wind direction in the bottom landing field was not the same as on take off and that she must have landed cross wind. She has now been converted to full face helmets.

Rocket Ron also had a bad landing, probably due to not being current.

James managed to achieve a cravate in strong thermic conditions at Nantymoel and despite repeated efforts could not pump it out. To achieve stable flight, he pulled a big ear on the opposite side and landed safely.

Sites

Negotiations with the National Trust concerning Crook Peak continue. The horses in the field next to the landing field should be given a wide berth.

Phil has now completed negotiations with Charmouth Parish Council, who have agreed

to let us fly it all the year round **EXCEPT SPRING BANK HOLIDAY AND THE SCHOOL SUMMER HOLIDAYS IE 15 JULY TO 31 AUGUST.** However Charmouth Parish Council wishes to have a members register. So anyone wanting to fly, must have registered their vehicle with John Fielder. Everyone should have received a form by now. If not, give John a ring. I will get in touch with neighbouring clubs.

Karen Magee

The Trial scheduled for 21 May, resulted in a pre court settlement of £380.00 being paid to the club. The case remains on file. Hopefully this closes the matter.

Competitions

P.G.

Maggie suggested that PG trophies be awarded for the following comps during the year:

1. Best XC from a Condors Site
2. Best XC from a winch
3. Best novice (i.e. First Year)

After general agreement, she suggested a budget on trophies. Phil suggested £70 - £80 but Simon commented that this wouldn't buy much, and if we were going to have more trophies, that they should be of a reasonable standard. It being a justifiable use of Club funds. It was also suggested that the cheque from a recent court settlement be used, with an appropriate title for the trophy (suggestions to the editor).

H.G.

Harriet reported that in the Airwave challenge the Condors

HG team had come 3rd with Jeff making goal. She then went through the postponed dates for competitions:
Southern Club Comp 15th June
SW Towing Comp 21st June

Devon Air Ambulance

Angie brought along a load of shirts etc. being sold in aid of the Devon Air Ambulance. Phil reiterated our support for them and it is hoped that as many members as possible will order shirts or just make a direct contribution. **YOU MIGHT BE NEXT IN NEED OF THEIR SERVICES.**

New Members

Phil welcomed Paul Richards, Andrew Panther, Paul Hammill and Mark Aplin. Also someone called Martin wanting to register an X.C.

There being no further business Phil welcomed Rod Buck who despite his dreadful sense of humour gave us an excellent talk on Wendy Windblows and radio frequencies.

John Milner

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PLATE POSTCARD



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Treasurers Report

There are now 77 members - 51 paid up for 97/98 & 26 have not YET renewed membership.

Bank balance @ 24th June 1997 a very healthy - £ 1,461.11 + 380 = £ 1,841.11

Welcome to the following new members:

Richard Jones PG, David Austen HG, Paul Hook PG, Nigel Winchester PG, Robert Fielder PG, Peter Ranger PG.

Andy

Hang gliding for beginners - June

Crap! Paul Farley was ill most of the month, the weather was dreadful, the wind directions were always wrong and, the only times I flew, I flew like a prat. The Calypso is still in the hall. What's more, James (The Bastard) Orton went straight through his EPC & CPC in six days without any trouble. Congratulations to him from the rest of you. I'll just keep stabbing this wax doll I've made & pumping my new wheels. I look forward to taking over from Harriet as our leading glider wrecker one day.

John

HG COMPETITION NEWS



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AIRWAVE CHALLENGE 1ST ROUND

There were competitions on almost every easterly site available in and around Wales over the Whitsun Bank Holiday weekend. The Paragliding Nationals and the Hang Gliding League occupied the S.E. Wales and Shropshire sites, and the Airwave Challenge First Round Competition to which we had been invited was held on the Malverns.

DAY 1

(Wind ENE, 15/20mph, overcast.)

I was the first to arrive, having left home far earlier than necessary, but the car park soon filled up with pilots from Wales, Kent, Northampton, the Midlands, South Devon.... everywhere but Condor-land! Where were the lazy b.....s? As I berated the rest of our team for not arriving in time for the briefing, I was invited to guest as a South Devon pilot by the ever lustily hopeful Mark Nicol and Colin Jones, and so we set off to struggle up the back of the hill to takeoff. (It's a steep carry up, but worth it.)

As I was rigging, the Buzz Lightyears belatedly puffed their way over the brow, having got lost earlier, so I reverted to flying for the home team. Our mascot, however, had called in sick with a suspected case of "carryupitis".

The brief was to fly the length of the ridge over the lake to the south end and over the trig point at the north end, followed by an open XC via a turnpoint at Castle Meadows, Abergavenny. There was some confusion over this as it was presented as an XC to goal, with bonus points for flying further, but I think Mike Scholes (Joint Services) was the only one to do so, and

only by a mile or so. With the wind north of east the ridge run was not a simple task - it took me four attempts to jump the gap to the lake with enough height to get back again - and it was rough. Going up to the north end there were plenty of stretches in wind shadow with no lift and no bottom landing. As the whole ridge is a spine back, there is no top landing either. After an hour, and with the third good thermal that had found me after I'd completed the ridge run (I'd bottled out the first two times), I finally took a deep breath and turned my back on the hill to set off on my first REAL XC. (The one Angie mentioned in a previous Airheads was no more than a 2¾ mile downwind glide off the aerotow after one little thermal.)

The landmarks that were all so clear when standing on takeoff looking over the back were now lost in the haze of the inversion, so I found navigation a bit nerve wracking till I settled into it. I was flying with a La Mouette Topless, so reckoned that someone with a glider of that calibre should know what he was doing, and we leapfrogged each other from cloud to cloud, sometimes very close, sometimes losing sight of each other, for about 20 miles. By this time I was getting pretty tired: I'd made the mistake of going weight training the day before and my arms felt like they were about to drop off, I needed the loo, I'd lost count of the number of times I'd gone weightless and was feeling decidedly queasy. Quite frankly, I'd got thoroughly fed up with flying in circles! (I'll never make a big distance with THAT attitude!).

So I left the Topless in a comfortable one or two up under a cloud with plenty of life left in

it, and glided downwind into a very pleasant blue hole till I ran out of sky and had to land... which I managed without incident in the only flat field there was, which was surrounded by trees and full of obstacles (power lines, sheep, football goal posts, troughs, bales) and a man strimming nettles, who was able to show me on the map where I was. In fact, I had landed in the playing fields behind the village hall in Orcop, Herefordshire, and there was a map on their noticeboard with a sign saying "YOU ARE HERE" - what are the chances of that? - but I forgot to take a photograph of it. A phone call and a cup of tea were procured at the nearest farm and Craig arrived not long afterwards to pick me up.

Jeff had made Abergavenny after doing the ridge run twice because he'd gone north first, then got the idea that he had to do it south to north, so doubled back to start again (in fact it didn't matter which way you did it).

Brett and Martin Kellaway had both flown 18 miles or so, so we had scored well on the first day.

DAY 2

(Wind E, light, blue)

We all arrived in time for the briefing, and after much confusion and debate the task was set as a flight to goal at Hereford, with assurances from the meet director that the two parachute drop zones marked on the map over Hereford were inactive. I met the Topless pilot from the day before who said I shouldn't have been relying on him as he didn't have a clue, but it was too late to be telling me that now.

JEFF'S SPOT & NEW SITE



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Those Club Records again.

North Hill.

The lovely North Hill, easily the best coastal site we have.....

Best distance from here goes to Jason Board with a failed out and return, however, if you take the flight from Porlock to Ilfracombe and return it clocks about 40 miles. Simon M, Steve T, Adrian P, Steve Wills, are some of the pilots who have completed the out run to Ilfracombe some 26 miles to the West. Highest gain that I know of was about 4000 ft in wave flown by Vince on a M4 177. And Willy Knowles claims to have flown over the back to Chumleigh on a single surface Glider with no vario.

Raddon Top:

A small Southerly site that is rarely flown these days, probably Martin Howe and Brett have flown it the most lately, and I believe the Paragliders are invading, but in the past it was a favourite for Willy Knowles, Tam and Bob Haydon.. Willy's the winner here with a flight of 6 miles over the back, he even got a bottle of scotch from me, as I offered it as an incentive, but as it was Scotch expected to

win it myself!! Potential to do a lot better on the right day providing you get enough height to ride the sink.

Sandy Bay:

Good coastal site but quite a few people don't like it, probably due to the hairy landing field, but...fly it in the winter with a nice cold SE breeze and the sea thermals are really good. Best distance over the back goes to me with a flight way back in 1986 to Exeter...a 2000ft CB carried me a distance of just over 8 miles.

Best coast run is to Exmouth, the milk run on a SSE wind, on the right day you can fly back too. In the past we could take off from Exmouth and fly to Sandy Bay and back, but those were the days! or were they....This site had the record for the most crashes, to name but a few. Rob and Georgie,(Crashed duel on landing). Dennis Salt,(Crashed hard during Top Landing).

Smeatharpe:

British records broken from here way back in 1989.... The Best year the Condors have ever had.....I flew 62 miles to Salisbury taking the British Towing record and

Broken it again the following week with a five and a half hour flight to Southampton, this time 69.99 miles....Watch this space for the British dual distance record which will be attempted by someone soon...

Other records from this site go to Roger Slaney with an aerotow to 10000 ft. The club triangle flight has also been made here by Martin Kellaway many moons ago but was equalled by Billy Scott and a couple of others during a SW area towing comp.. New comp to be held here soon so who knows?. This site holds the most flight over 50 miles, with by the way East Hill coming a close second. Willy Knowles also claimed a 70 miler from Smeatharpe but it turned out to be a little dubious.

Telegraph Hill.

An Easterly site pioneered by Bob Haydon and flown very rarely....But...Tam Alford made the most of a Moderate Easterly in 1991 and flew to Ivybridge some 20 or so miles away....Flying during the Summer then was banned and eventually it became a little too overgrown to sensibly take off from, and so I believe it hasn't been flown much since..

More Next Month.....probably.

NEW SITE - HANGLEY CLEAVE

We have been given permission to fly a new site at Hangley Cleave, just south of Simonsbath. Map reference 748362 (OS Sheet 180).The owner is Mr Peter Stacke-Dunne and he would like to be contacted before anyone flies there, his phone number is 01643 831282. The site will take a NE'ly wind, it is inland and looks as if it might have good XC potential. It is also an SSSI because of the rare grassland plant community there. The owner has asked that we limit the number of gliders to not more than 8 on any one day, and has also asked that we do not fly on more than 12 days in a year. So that we can make best use of this site without overdoing it, I suggest that when you want to fly there you encourage some others to go along as well, and give me a ring so that I can keep track of how many times it has been flown. My number is 01458 252066.

Nick Weaver

The above was printed last year, but Nick does not know anyone who has flown it. Perhaps one of our Dulverton members could take a look! If we can get a few more details it could be included in an updated sites guide. Please check bottom landing with the owner if scratchy. (Ed)

BITS & PIECES



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FOR SALE

Trekking Odyssey XL. Ideal flying weight 110kg. 1 year's good usage although well cared for. Good performance and wonderfully reassuring in the rough £1500 ono. Tel 01297 489351

Airwave Black Magic + basic harness + bag. Medium size 70-90kg. Phone Brian or Lin for details. Tel 01278 431138.

Magic 4 155. Stored indoors. CofA. £300ono. Gerry McCann. Tel 01460 614684

It has been reported by one of the club paraglider pilots that last weekend elderly hang glider pilots were seen surreptitiously flying paragliders at Bossington. Unfortunately the old gentlemen were only able to get in a top to bottom. Last week our most recent paraglider CP's had a two hour flight with over half an hour around the bottom path and top landed. If you are having trouble flying, don't be shy, ask for help! The identity of one pilot was revealed when he returned to take-off to collect his pedal-powered zimmer. Angie and Maggie went to Coddan looking for a bit of rough (after putting on bedroom lights all over the SW). The wind did not arrive as forecast. If a light N wind is forecast, take the phone off the hook or get your call in first. Jamie Lee-Smith reports some good flights at Bossington. He's now up to 5 hours. Also a very bumpy flight at Bratton. Any pilots wanting someone to fly with on North Hill, give Jamie a ring.

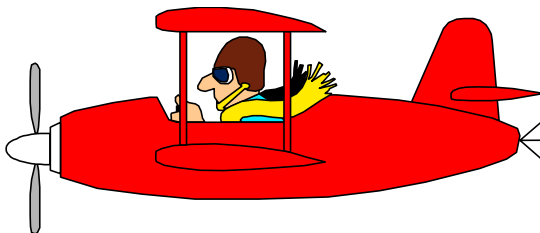
A new membership list will be out next month. Memberships are now OVERDUE. Pay to continue getting information from the club. Airheads this month is mainly in columns. This is at the request of some members. What do you think? If you like it, fine. If not, it's all going back to the old way as changing late text at the last minute is a total pain. How about some more copy from other members? We could have a letters section, details of your favourite sites, broken upright league?

The sites guide needs updating. Phil and Maggie are happy to continue with this if the revisions are not too major. If you have any amendments to the existing guide, they need to know about them. This means that some hang glider pilots need to read it to remind themselves what it says about the sites they are flying!

June has been a poor month, hardly any flying. Lots of mileage, many sites visited, a bit of gardening and only just over four hours in the air. July must be better.

CONTACT NUMBERS

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HG Safety & Training	Mark Hoer	Rose Cottage, Hemyock, Devon	01823 681188
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Articles sent on computer disk are helpful and time saving, Word for Window, Ami Pro, or text format if possible. If not jot it down and sent it in as soon as possible. **THE DEADLINE** for copy is the **LAST FRIDAY** in the month. **LATE ARTICLES** may be moved to the following month.

HG COMPETITION NEWS 2



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Anyway, his presence hadn't done me any harm, and he'd only gone about 4 miles further than me, which made me feel a bit better about jibbing out of the last thermal I'd left him in. We discovered that the ridge run of the day before hadn't counted for any score, no matter which direction or how many times you did it: it was merely masochism, and something for the lower airtime pilots to do if they didn't want to go XC, but as everyone had done it, it wouldn't have made any difference to give it a score anyway. A few people did get away from the ridge, and a few even made it to goal, but not very many. Phil and I both managed a few hundred feet ato before bottom landing and Brett did get high enough to go over the back, but didn't quite make the activating distance required of 6 miles. The others derigged and carried back down - this is NOT the attitude necessary to compete - we won't score if we don't even fly!

However, overall we did well, due partly to the rather strange scoring system and largely to Jeff's arrival in Abergavenny on the first day, as there was a 100 point bonus to be had for every pilot in (or within a 2nm radius of) goal.

We did not attend the Southern Club's comp on June 7/8 due to a bad forecast (in fact it was blown out in the end), and for various reasons we didn't have enough pilots available to go to the South East Wales comp on June 14/15.

XC's IN WALES

Phil said he would write about the rest of the week in Wales, but I will just mention that there were several more XC flights completed, mostly from Pandy to the campsite. Phil enjoyed it so much he did it twice in one day! Brett and I had a very satisfying flight each on the Bank Holiday Monday when all the others had gone to Hay Bluff. After watching every other hang glider go down from the Bloreng in virtually nil wind conditions, we off-loaded maps and glider bags and any other extraneous bits and pieces onto Martin, who had opted not to carry up his glider. We thought he'd made the right decision, as it was 4pm and the paragliders were still scratching. The Nationals pilots had mostly got away earlier in a couple of gaggles, and the wind had been steadily backing from North to NW, so we'd had to carry even further over to the NW takeoff.

It was a very pleasant and unexpected bonus, therefore, to climb immediately to 500ft ato and 500ft atpg (above the PGs), before flying out over the town to find lift to about 2½ grand ato.

After about half an hour playing around over the town I drifted off with my 3rd or 4th thermal towards Pontypool, but didn't get any more after that one decayed, so landed after 6¼ miles. Brett managed to get to cloudbase, about 1,000 ft higher than me, and landed in Castle Meadows after 2½ hours because he was getting tired.

Many thanks to Martin who was an excellent sherpa and retrieve.

June's weather has not been conducive to XC flying, so the league table remains virtually unchanged from last month (I've received a few minor revisions to distances, but the order remains the same.)

SAFETY (HG)

If you always take off and land perfectly then you may as well skip this bit, but it may be of interest and some use to lower airtime pilots.

I now know why I crashed at Pandy! A week after the event Jeff Rogers (Avon) was talking to Simon and, according to him, this is what happened (Jeff landed seconds after me): I did land into wind, but into sinking air. He correctly assumed that I thought I would convert speed to height if I flared at that time because of the speed with which I was covering the ground. I was dragging my toes in the grass and starting to bleed off speed by gently easing the bar out. However, he said I should have flared hard and let the sink take care of counteracting the height.

FINAL RESULT

Place	Club	Comp.pts	Airwave Challenge pts
1st	Joint Services	541	800
2nd	Northampton	280	700
3rd	The Buzz light years (D&S Aerotow Club)	169	600
4th	S.E. Wales	162	500
5th	Dover & Folkestone	157	400
6th	Mercian	90	300
7th	Long Mynd	68	200
8th	Malverns	25	100
9th	South Devon	24	

SAFETY & FAMILY WORRIES



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He said to me that it takes a lot of courage to flare hard when you're flying fast and low, especially the first time you do it, and he could understand why I hadn't done so.

So, I would put the main cause of the accident down to inexperience, as although I have landed in rough air with sinky bits (as has anyone who has landed at the carpark at Bossington), this was the first time I had landed in such solidly sinking air, and I did not recognise it for what it was. Next time I hope I'll know better, and I'll try to get that flare in before the ground jumps up to bite me. An expensive and painful lesson, but at least it happened at the end of the week, not at the beginning.

I've now started flying the SX2 (the smallest Moyes Super Xtralite - for the uninitiated). The 1st 2 times I flew it (at Bossington and at Smeatharpe on the winch) were fine, but I've just come home from Woolacombe where I had two appalling takeoffs and landings, which I was lucky to get away with without damage, although the flying in between was OK.

I know what I did wrong (basically not enough speed) and I intend to correct it next time out. On the ground the SX handles quite differently from the XT, requiring much more physical effort to pull on speed. For those of you who read my article in Free Flyer Issue 9 about upgrading your glider, I don't want any sarcastic or rude remarks about it! It's a big jump and it's taking some getting used to, so you probably won't find me flying my new glider anywhere other than on the coast or at Smeatharpe for a little while. (Messages of sympathy and flowers to the usual address!)

FAMILY WORRIES?

A short comment on stress management for families and friends of hang glider and paraglider pilots.

As an aside to the above, does anyone else get asked if their families worry about them partaking in such a "dangerous sport", or what they think of it? It is something quite a lot of people ask me: "What do your parents think of you hang gliding?" and "Don't you think it's a bit risky and/or irresponsible, especially with four children?" are typical questions. If none of us ever took risks we'd never get out of bed in the morning.

Well, my mother prays hard and as a hook, line and sinker born again Christian she has a direct line, so that helps calm her against the traumas with which the rest of us face her. My father recently broke his wrist and got petrol in his eyes from falling over whilst using a hedge trimmer (the mini chain saw type), and 12 years ago broke his pelvis, wrist and ankle jumping off a wall, which left him in traction for several weeks. He doesn't have the cleanest record where prangs in the car are concerned either. My brother almost lost his foot in a motorcycle accident a few years ago. My sister and her horse, who she was riding at the time, fell on the ice when she was 8 months pregnant, fortunately with no ill effect to either. She carried on riding till full term (but as a concession she stopped cantering or galloping after the fall). She also rides a motorbike and has done a little bit of motor racing.

I've ridden horses since I was 2, I did spring-board diving to junior national standard, which is

pretty dangerous (it hurts if you get it wrong), and I've ridden motorbikes on and off since I was 19. And I've had accidents and minor injuries doing all of them. But none of these sports or activities was perceived nearly as dare-devil or dangerous as hang gliding, although I would put them all pretty much on a par. Even insurance companies won't cover you for flying unless you take out a special and expensive policy, although they don't mind if you fall off your horse while galloping at speed out hunting and get trampled and kicked by the rest of the field. As for riding a bicycle on a main road - sheer madness!

So yes, my parents do worry (especially my mother), but they're used to us all taking risks, and my father in particular understands the need for adrenaline. They also admire us all for doing difficult and risky things and succeeding (well, most of the time, anyway). My children think I'm the coolest mum around, partly because I had a motorbike and I fly, and that makes me feel really chuffed, because I've never thought my mother was cool at all.

And if the worst should happen, by whatever means, at least I will have LIVED, and they'll all know it.

Harriet

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT



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Apologies for nothing last month, we were having a cracking (sorry Simon) time in Wales, don't tell me nobody noticed! I can't remember half of what I was going to write anyway, so here goes.

"Truth, justice and the CPS way ", perhaps that's a little sarcastic but I didn't like being bounced into a quick decision after all the hassle of the Karen Magee/Steve Wills saga.

For those of you who don't know, or probably don't care, the following is a quick resume of the story to date, as it now it finally appears to be over.

I became involved after being persuaded to become chairman, Karen Royce was sick and tired of all the hassle and aggravation she was getting, and pregnant at the time, which didn't help.

Prior to Karen Magee's theft of club funds, Steve Wills was accusing the towing syndicate of running the Condors, misappropriating club funds and all sorts of other strange misdemeanours, The concept of the Condors being involved in a power struggle and major financial scandal takes some believing, but then again people have some strange ideas!

It appears to have been this and Karen Magee's reluctance to provide any form of accounts that first alerted the committee. This was followed by letters from Angie, the then treasurer, requesting sight of the books with no response from Karen Magee. As bank statements showed £110 and £ 380 being withdrawn as cash as well as membership cheques not having been paid in a new treasurer was appointed and Karen Magee notified.

Theft denied, so we approached a solicitor then the Police.

Having spent hours taking a statement and sorting out all the evidence, they decided we had a case, and the CPS was contacted. Everything was left in their hands and all we could do was to wait. After further telephone calls and interviews I was told Magee had been arrested and was to be charged with the theft of £380 I was also told that Wills had been arrested, but heard no more. Her explanation of the theft takes some believing, but hinges on the syndicate sending a 'hit man' who attacked her and damaged 'personal possessions and decorations'!! Why do I always miss all the excitement??

Finally I ended up at the County Court accompanied, by Adrian Phillips, called as a witness for the prosecution. Simon and Harriet turned up for moral support and we watched the end of the previous case from the gallery. All ready with the evidence etc. I was taken to one side, literally minutes before we were due to enter court and told that Magee had a cheque made out to the club for the £380. She had actually come to court with the cheque. If that's not guilty I don't know what is! This is where I came in, hence the comment about being bounced into a decision. I was asked to decide whether we wanted prosecution at any cost, or to recover some of our money. I made a decision which upset Adrian, who felt he wanted to clear his name, but I felt we had proved our case and recovered some, although not all, of the stolen money, which would be of more benefit to the members of the club.

I can see Adrian's point of view, in that she was let off by paying the money. I hear a rumour that they are saying that they "got away with it" . I still feel it was better this way than to lower myself and the club to their level. Whatever the records show, she is and always will be a thief!!!!

Now I've got that off my chest back to more important matters, flying !! as I mentioned the towing syndicate earlier this gives me a tenuous link with my new found thrill of being at the wrong end of the Aero tow.

The CAA, having taken a month and £122 to produce a plastic wallet with my name in it, finally produced the goods. A call to Jeff to let him know and we're away. How he managed to persuade Mark, Vince and Brett to rig in the rain for the dubious pleasure of being scared witless by me in the tug is still a mystery. If anyone thinks being on the back is scary you just try the front!!!! Guess who the first victim was, and I thought I had a death wish! Sitting in the tug I obviously missed seeing Mark being dragged kicking and screaming into position.

With the best will in the world even I have to admit that the first few tows left a lot to be desired! Having trouble mastering the technicalities like fly straight or turn right or left as per instructions left Jeff tearing his hair out. It got better when the stress levels dropped to normal and I managed to remember what the hell I was doing. Put simply I found it slightly stressful when under full throttle, i.e. nothing left at all!!

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT 2



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The tug started sinking, the knee-jerk reaction was to dump that lump of drag attached and climb away properly, but no! Having joined this group of super heroes, (tug pilots to mere mortals) all I could do was clench and pray.

Things improved when we made a sacrifice to the weather gods, Brett cocked up his landing and decided to pack up, the sun promptly came out. Mark later decided I was getting to cocky and was going to try some off station work but broke the weak link, serves him right. The following day things got better with the weather, I think I've caught 'Vince's Disease', for those who don't know, its caused by super-gluing your backside to the seat of the trike! By the end of the day I was getting quite carried away with it all, I even got compliments about my towing, some quickly retracted.

Ask Harriet about her towing XC!! Back to earth with a bump! not literally! I gather the tug has had it's mods done, as the wing bolts were bent!! What about the ballistic chute?? I agree with Mark I don't want to be that much of a hero.

Having sampled the joys of Aero-towing it was pleasantly relaxing to go to Wales for the bank holiday week. I could title this 'Five go flying' or 'Condors go camping' but there were more than five and one of them had a caravan, 'cause he's getting on a bit now you know!!

I was late arriving so didn't go to the Malvern's comp on Saturday, but went straight to Pandy where I spent a relaxing (?) afternoon trying out my new mountain bike. Smurf turned up as I was heading back to the campsite and persuaded me to fly.

Pleasant evening flight, meal in the Pandy Arms and back to the campsite. It turned out that they'd all had a good day at the Malvern's with Jeff making goal and Harriet doing her first XC. Congratulations to all.

Next day we returned to Malvern's, (who said the carry up was like Charmouth?) Conditions were light and thermic, no great rush to leave. Brett got away but apathy ruled for the day, I sampled the joys of the bottom landing field, rather than carry down, this has a reputation but wasn't a problem, although it did catch a few people out.

The following day we went to Hay Bluff where a very pleasant days flying was had by all, except those who went to the Blorengel! The carry up at gospel pass is a bit of a pain, as it wasn't windy enough low down. Nice breeze and thermals 2000'+ QFE!! We all decided we should have gone over the back earlier, as it was Mark and me went down off the end of the ridge towards Talgarth. Jeff scuttled back on top, typical! I managed to persuade a friendly walker that the drive to the Bluff and down the valley was worth a visit, and could he drop me off on the way. As it took me so long to get back they had all gone back to the campsite, so, just to be a glutton for punishment I decided to climb up the Bluff and fly my canopy, had a thoroughly enjoyable hour cruising up and down the ridge. (It did actually occur to me that I shouldn't criticise anyone for not being current as I last flew the canopy at Annecy last July!!!)

We spent the rest of the week flying Pandy, almost to the point where it got boring! I mean, whoever heard of having a bank holiday week in Wales, flying and getting sunburnt every day. Don't be silly. Of us all Chris suffered most, having to listen to Mrs C's life history every day. I decided, in the spirit of being competitive, to leave if I got the chance. So when I was at base with Brett and Martin and they decided to leave, what could I do but follow.

The trouble was we left too early, and ended up in the campsite field, with Brett claiming it was a race to goal, as he bombed out and barely made it! I was circling over Abergavenny watching Martin follow him in, and chatting on the radio when the familiar tones of our editor chipped in to abuse me. He was at another site on the ground! He! He! These radios are great! Mark cruised in about half an hour later, circling lazily overhead intent on winding us up. Later it turned out that Angie had gone XC and enjoyed her flight, I'm not sure where she landed. (See Postcard - Ed.)

Having got a lift back to take off I drove back and found I'd forgotten my bag. As it still looked good I took my glider back up and flew thinking I might try again and wind them up. Not much happening so I spent half an hour hunting around the valley out in front thinking I was wasting my time. I drifted back to the ridge straight into a ratty rough thermal that took me almost to base. Then I thought what the hell lets go for it again. Martin had said we could have gone the other way to the campsite, so I did!

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT 3



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It was close. It all broke up on me a mile or so behind the ridge and I had to go around Sugarloaf as I was too low to clear it! If it hadn't been for the gradient I would have had to land. As it was I followed the slope all the way to the tree line, turned down the valley and broke out above the camp site, much relieved to see them all sitting there. Then landed as before, thanks Martin for a second lift up.

The rest of the week was Pandys each day, Angie got in plenty of flying. It's a shame there weren't more canopy pilots or come to that other members to enjoy the flying. Same old hard core! Nick was in a very negative mood but was eventually persuaded to fly and actually seemed to enjoy it. He appears to be happier with the glider now. Rocket Ron turned up to do his usual (terrify the pilots) routine, trying to bend uprights and succeeding! You really must fly more often Ron otherwise you'll put years on Jeff! Craig flew the Concept and thought it was great, despite all the negative feedback from Jeff Rogers. It certainly looks good in the air.

The days seemed to fly by! Consisting of a leisurely cycle into Aber' for shopping, then drive to Pandys to fly for as long as you wanted, then bar-b in the evening. I let myself down with a vengeance one evening getting totally rat-arsed I gather much to the delight of all! , the only consolation was that Brett was as bad. On the final Saturday we all flew Pandys, the wind was forecast to pick up and did. Most decided to do the run to Hay, but having watched Brett struggle decided to turn back early.

Harriet and I decided to have a second flight. It was breezy and pleasantly thermic with almost 3000'QFE height gain. The bottom landing caused Harriet a problem and she piled in hard, damaging her face and the glider. Simon turned up and flew the new CSX, it looks very impressive. Most of us decided to return home that evening, it seemed a shame as it had really been a very pleasant holiday, probably one of the best weeks in Wales, almost as good as France.

Finally back home to Charmouth, now open during the summer, rather than just the first and last four months of the year. I have had meetings and correspondence with the Foreshore Committee and the Council, who I am told were impressed and keen to support us. The site is to be closed for spring bank holiday and school summer holiday i.e. mid July to 30th August. This must be adhered to, likewise the following: Take off from cliffs as always but landing only on the grass, NOT the beach, if its not soarable do not fly. Please no excuses, everybody knows whether its soarable for them or not. No dual flying at all is to take place, whether for hire or reward or not.

Pilots must be BHPA members, membership numbers to John Fielder for inclusion on the list. First pilot on site to contact the beach superintendent (Peter Wingfield) as a matter of courtesy. It was nice to arrive on Sunday clutching the agreement and be able to fly, especially from the bottom take off, (don't mention the beach to Jeff!) From the hang gliders point of view the landing is going to be tight.

When I flew on the first day there were picnickers on the tables, a family with a windbreak on the approach and a new sign (very solid) part way across the landing area, plus assorted walkers.[Walkers who did not seem to worry about this large gentleman steaming in to land while I cowered in the safe place beside Jeff and Brett's gliders. Ed.]

If you cannot land in this sort of area DO NOT FLY. If you are approaching take extra care to look out for children and spectators generally. I'm sorry if this all seems a bit over the top but it will be busy and if you feel unhappy then just fly during the quieter periods of the year.

Well, that's all from me for the moment, I've probably forgotten something, or upset someone, but then what's new? (very true! - Ed.)

Phil

DIARY

1. **THE SOUTH WEST TOWING COMP.** will be the first available weekend suitable for towing.

2. We should have qualified for the **AIRWAVE SEMI-FINALS** (I'll know for certain in a few days I expect), which are planned for July 19/20, with the following weekend in reserve.

3. **WRINKLIES v. SMOOTHIES.** Let's try for the weekend of August 16/17.

Harriet

SEA BREEZE MY WAY



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Forecast was easterly 15mph down here and sea breezes up north. I just wondered if it was sea breezing in the north, would it down here? Andrew had already flown 35km in a sea breeze a year or two ago from near his house in West Bexington to Wool going east. It was my turn going west from Quarry

Hill, next to Chideock where I live. I put my glider on my back and jumped on my bike. There were plenty of cu clouds going west, although not deep, it was only 10.40 and they were beginning to gather themselves into streets. What's more, when I passed the village church. "Wow the cock is edging out to sea". I accelerate, just slow down for the speed camera, drive the 400yds, run up the hill realising it's still easterly.

Of course I do all the necessary preflight checks, (God I hate microlines!) and lurch into the air. The east side of Quarry has powerlines, houses and trees. "Christ it's a bit rough, but I'm outa here!" 6-8 up but it dies over the back. "Hey, look there's my house." Over Langdon hill (backside of Golden Cap) it booms 10-14up but the drift's gonna take me out to sea. I head north and over Hardown I drift with it again. Then, noticing it's blue ahead I go north again. Bad sink. There's a lower cloudbase forming ahead. I've heard and read about it but it still takes me a moment or two to recognise it. Convergence cloud! There curtains! There small wispy bits! I put the speed bar on. Sink like hell. Then it gets pretty nasty. I slow down. Sink. More speed. Up, lurch sideways and go up, not fast, but up. The lift is not as large an area as I expected or hoped but up I go.

There's another curtain to my east and I go to it still going up. I can see Coney's lovely clouds behind it. The convergence seems not to have set up in a line yet or I haven't been

able to visualise it. I keep going to the seaward side. Don't like it. I'm sinking and it's rough. No one had ever told me that or it hadn't got through the hairstyle. Anyway turn inland. "Here it is again, whahay!" Going along the convergence, which soon becomes an obvious line, the lift is not as smooth as I have been led to believe. Some of it is strong 8-12up. I circle in these. It's beautiful climbing beside cloud and I still recognise the groundscape. "Shit! I'm heading straight for Exeter ATZ and I haven't got my phone. (It doesn't work with ATZ anyway.) I turn into wind, still in the

convergence, wondering what to do. Either I head inland crosswind and risk going down as I'm only about 2600asl. Or I wait for the convergence to push inland, stay with it and the go down to Cornwall, (Haha!) after it has gone far enough to avoid the ATZ. Or I go east in the convergence and attempt an out and return. Or I go straight over the ATZ and piss everyone off. I've no camera, it won't score. Bollocks! Life's hard enough sometimes without consciously pissing everyone off and cloudbase won't allow me to go over it within the rules. I don't want to go down so I wait into wind. I've got time to think about needing a P. Simon's house isn't that far away. I wonder if I could No! just ignore it. You don't need to anyway. Oh well... I can't sit into wind anymore. I'm bored of scenery (well sort of).

As I pass over Honiton I'm just south of the road. I need to be north of the road or at least

directly above it to pass clear of the ATZ. There is now far less cloud about. I can't see where to go next. I notice some curtain cloud to the north. I have to go for it. I can't get there and after a low level struggle, land at

Whimple to get an immediate lift home to my bike, with a bailiff, of all people. I try the next day at 11.00am. It's windier and rougher. I go ballistically up (14+up) and over the back. Suddenly 75% of the wing goes just like that! Sort it out, go back for it, as I'm sinking rapidly. No warning. At least the same amount goes again and again. I not trying that again and head downwind to land near my house in seabreeze 1km away.

I've thought about it since. I'm sure that it was wind shear collapsing the canopy with the sea breeze rushing up the Chideock valley. It had not yet got to the east face of Quarry Hill, because it was shielded by Thorncombe Beacon and Eype Down. Much the same as the previous day where the sea breeze advanced quicker up the Exeter flats than over the hills east of Honiton. Still I'm going to get to Cornwall this summer. Andrew's going too. Who else wants to come?

Eddie



Not much to report because of the miserable weather. Fortunately new XC pilot Mark Aplin brightens the table somewhat with his first XC, a 20km out and return at Pandy.

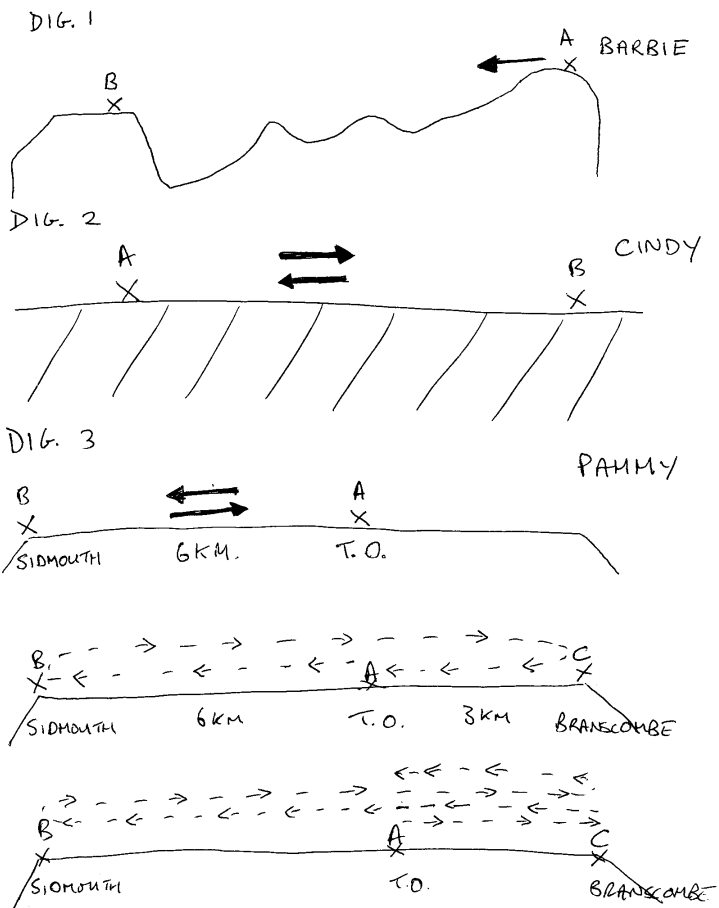
Pandy is a really great place for newish pilots to get the taste of staying in the air for a long time and going some where. For those who don't know it, when it's blowing a light Easterly it's the only place to be. A great majestic ridge in the Black Mountains, on a thermic day it is sort of Branscombe with bumps!! You can spend hours going up and down the ridge and if you are really careful you can just about eke a 20km out and return out of it and that is what Mark did at the end of May. In his note to me he raised the question of what distances count in XC leagues. I can remember being flummoxed by the same thing when I first came across the great addiction of XC flying. It is late and I've just finished the shift from hell at Minehead casualty and the red wine isn't helping but let me attempt to explain. For the definitive answer look in the national league rules published in Skywings, the only differences with our league is that we have a 5km min distance open XC and 10km min. Out and return. We require integrity not photos for turnpoints and we don't insist on witnesses (however I strongly suggest that you develop the habit of collecting these as you need them for the National league and you may forget on a very good flight if you are not in the habit). Out and return flights are complicated, to help the lesson children I've invented a few girlie flying friends and drawn you a few diagrams (of the flights not the girls).

In Dig. 1, pilot Barbie takes off at point A, goes over the back, drifts downwind and lands at point B. This is a straight forward open XC and counts as the direct crow flies distance between A and B even if she wiggled or did a dog leg on the way.

Dig. 2 shows Cindys flight. She is flying a ridge. Either a nice coastal run or a thermic ridge like Pandy. She takes off at A, flies to B and then flies back to A. If she is a condors member she tells Maggie who measures the distance and bingo she's girlie pilot of the week. If however she has dreams of showboating with the big girlies she should have taken a picture of herself, the wing, the startpoint from the air, the turnpoint B and back to A and all these photos must be in sector (subject of a future article).

They should be of recognisable ground features and on a databack camera (now you know what to ask Santa for at Christmas).

Now in Dig. 3 pilot Pammy who carries her own personal ballast bags wants to fly the maximum distance at Branscombe before landing on the beach to top up her tan. The coastal run at Branscombe provides us with a good example of the out and return rules. In her first flight Pammy turns right to Sidmouth flies all the way there and then back to take off to land. She has done a 12km out and return. On the second flight she does the same but then flies past take off goes to point C and then returns to A and lands. What Pammy doesn't realise is that this



PG XC LEAGUE



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DOES NOT count as an 18km out and return, it only counts the same miserable 12km. Why bloody well not you may cry, well I don't know don't shoot me I'm just the messenger. To get the full distance you have to fly one of the legs twice, in fact what you are claiming is the out and return between B and C and your take off point is irrelevant. In the case of Branscombe most of us fly left first to point C then all the way to Sidmouth point B passing take off on the way then return from Sidmouth passing take off again, back to point C then turn and head for landing at point A. 18km in the bag, and if you have photos to prove it a national league entry. In the past the league weren't so tight and Derek Posta and Rob Hayman had many an entry on trust but last year Phil made sure with proper turnpoint photos there and I suggest you do the same. When we were in the Alps recently we practised turnpoint photos and it's quite hard especially in thermic air. So the smooth coastal air at Branscombe is a good place to start. Try it and see, it's good fun. You might even get Pammy in the shot having a quick sunbathe after

her epic flight.

Now there are some other kinky things to bump up your XC score nationally but they are a bit out of reach of most of us. You can score double for out and returns where more than 50% is out of ridge lift, this is pretty hard. Even more difficult is a triangle on a PG which scores a triple distance a bit like a triple word score in scrabble but a lot more scary (and a damn sight more difficult). The longest British PG triangle is only 20 something kms and that was done in the lake district. Go on guys surprise me, give me a triangle, I will however need photos in sector to believe you! In fact to encourage pilots to try triangles this year the national league have modified the rules so that failed triangles count for something whereas in the past you got zilch, see national rules if you're interested (well I admit I can't remember what the flaming rule is now).

Now returning to Mark Aplin who started this whole orgy of frantic typing tonight when he wrote to me and asked if his flight counted as 31km. What he did was take off at A, go up the Pandy ridge for

4.42km to point B, then back down it passing his take off point, turned at C back up 10km to D turned round and flew back 10km to C. What he gets out of this if you look at the Branscombe rules is a 20km out and return between his turnpoints C and D, he cannot unfortunately add on the other bits. Still a fantastic flight, well done, the first of many we hope.

Talking of girlies, I went over the back at Bell on Tuesday with a girlfriend pilot of mine who I haven't flown with since my SIV course. It was a totally grey day but we got 1,500ft and 7.5km before we got decked. Her husband still flying at Bell dutifully landed when she called him on the mobile and he drove to retrieve us to take us back for another hours flying. We enjoyed giving just a little bit of stick on our return, there were at least 15 guys on the ridge trying to get away but needless to say only me and Jane managed it. Barbie, Cindy and Pammy would have been proud.

Keep flyin, keep tryin.

Maggie

Name	Distance (kms)	Distance (kms)	Distance (kms)	Distance (kms)	Distance (kms)	Total	Canopy
Eddie Colfox	68.6 Bell Hill	59 Ubley	18.8 King Tor	11 Bell Hill		157.4	Odyssey
Angie Weir	16.44 Pandy	10.50W S/tharpe				26.94	Rave
John Milner	11.50W S/tharpe	10.50W S/tharpe				22	Barracuda
Mark Aplin	20 OR Pandy					20	Axon
Maggie Wilson	7.5 Bell Hill					7.5	Genesis
					Total	233.84	

W = Winch, OR = Out & Return. All other distances open XC.

Postcard on the back of a paper plate from Abergavenny

The weather is brilliant, couldn't be better. The HG's have flown 5 days out of 5, with me a close 4 behind them. Our beloved leader Leader Phil got drunk on whiskey & my "bloody wonderful banana stuff" Home made wine to the rest of us. Last night he collapsed pitifully into his van - well half in and we shoved him the rest of the way in and shut the door. Don't worry he was lying on his side and we checked on him. Brett got drunker still on a mixture of the magic banana stuff and spent the latter part of the evening/early morning hughing in various positions - but ruined Martin's shoes this time! Jeff also staggered and slurred - nothing new there!! Jeff thought he'd left hid nose-cone at Hay-Bluff the day before and borrowed Nick's at Pandy, then later drove to Hay again but no trace of the nose cone. The following morning he went and had another made up, a lovely mismatch in colours - but hey! it's only a MOYES. Then it was spotted half way up the leading edge. He couldn't get it out. Then he had a brainwave after several suggestions, but we'd better not print it, ask Jeff.

The flying has been particularly good. Yesterday I flew 10.22 miles cross wind from Pandy past the Bloreng. I'm proud of the 0.22 my first one over 10 miles. Nick's opted to go on long walks and cycle, but I expect he'll fly tomorrow. Chris has become very friendly with Mrs Clayton at Pandy and grabs every opportunity for a chat and cup of tea. Craigs feeling better & has flown the last couple of days but is still quite weak. Mark and Tracy aren't roughing it with the rest of us but have opted for B&B. Now Marks trying to keep Tracy away from the shops. A couple of days ago she bought enough Edwardian furniture to fill a spare bedroom. Harriet had a good XC earlier in the week with the other & this was her furthest yet at 22 miles? I'm running out of room on this plate. John's been bullying us for copy. He's had nothing else to do poor chap. Everytime he arrives at a hill it becomes blown out or its too light or winds off. Your jinxed John - don't fly near us!!

love Angie