

Dec98

# Air

# Heads



## MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER MEETING 1998

The minutes of the October meeting were read and agreed.

Matters arising :

**The President.** The new President was introduced to the club and proceeded to go down on the Chairman, she then presented the Wonderclamp trophy to Andy Tew.

### First Aid Course

Phil Fouracre has arranged another First Aid Course. It was agreed for this to take place on Saturday 19 Dec at the Red Cross Centre in Bindon Rd, Taunton from 0900 to 1700. Anymore names to Phil.

**Treasurers Report :** Loadsa money, no new members otherwise NTR

**Safety Report :** NTR as very little flying had taken place.

**BHPA AGM** -election of officers. Sadly it is too late to put the President up for election to the Executive Council, however members are encouraged to vote or to return their proxy forms to Harriet.

**Sites: Ham Hill.** Clearance will start next weekend 7/8 November, assuming it isn't flyable.

**Trophies:** Still a number Trophies were requested to be returned please.

**Holidays:** Simon and Harriet are planning their annual pilgrimage to Lanzarote 7-14 Jan. Anyone interested get in touch.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 20.50hrs so that John Long and Pete Bayliss could give their brilliant talk about flying for the James Bond film "Moonraker".

**John Milner**

**The Blackbird** is definitely closing in the next fortnight, so I have found a temporary venue while we sort out where we want to go. **The Canal Inn** at Wrantage has just reopened after refurbishment, and they are keen to have us!

Easy to find, From Taunton J 25 head east A358 Ilminster just under 2 miles. Thornfalcon dual carriageway top of hill left A378 Langport appx 1 mile pub on left. Any problems let me know. On a serious note, I have looked at spread of members and Taunton is more central so I will look around the area.

Phil

## First Aid Course

**Saturday December 19th  
at the Red Cross Centre,  
Bindon Road, Taunton.  
9am to 5pm. Any more  
names to Phil.**

Adventure Sports are running a Club Coaches weekend at Redruth 20/21 March.

**Derek Sadler** has asked me to say that he is planning on going to Telford for the AGM on December 5th, and is interested in sharing transport. Anyone else??

Also, there are plans afoot for local PG pilots to go to Spain in February with Hotel California. It will be fairly cheap, he reckons, flying out of local airports. There are two parties planned, one experienced and one less experienced.

Call Derek for more info 01404 44773

This Airheads is a mess and half of the stuff has not appeared. My apologies to everyone. I have still to finish it, print it, drive to Bridgwater, copy it and get to the meeting by 8pm. It is now 17.30. It's going to be tight.

JF

Inside	
Chairmans Chat	2
CC / Letters	3
Letters	4&5
Comp News	6
Xmas with Smurph	7
Fly with Eddie	8
Bits & Pieces	9

# CHAIRMAN'S CHAT



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Another year almost over, hopefully not another \*\*\*\*! Month, something tells me it's going to be pretty useless. Talk about desperate! first Saturday after November meeting I'm at Charmouth, 8.15 am!! forecast was south west picking up to gale force. Great, theory being, get there early and get some flying in before it was blown out. Bloody typical, already about 30mph in the landing field. Adjourn to the café, joined later by John and Andy, they went off to help at Ham hill. Went back to the beach, just in case, no better, Harriet, Jeff, Mark, Simon B, Gerry, Vince and Roger S wandering about. Usual sad old crowd, back to the café again! Gerry and myself decide to go to help at Ham, everyone else goes home.

I've not really looked at Ham hill before, it actually looks OK, already better for being cleared. Its attractiveness increases due to its close proximity to home! John M has done a great job with the ranger, getting him on our side, he should be, we're helping clear his hill!! Seriously though it obviously helps to have a keen pilot close to a site to monitor and smooth out any problems.

Would you believe it, the forecast for the Sunday was crap! but looked OK early, for, you guessed it, Ham hill. Off I dutifully set, nobody else planning to fly due to the forecast. On the way the mobile goes, it's Harriet, obviously feeling lonely! nobody else playing, not interested in Ham. Lovely day when I got there, sun shining, wind smack on, reckon it's ok! Rush about getting ready so the wind promptly drops to nothing, aargh!! Leave the canopy spread out all ready, get the saw out and wreak vengeance on half a dozen trees, feel much better. Couple of calls from the other (older) sad git, what's happening, any good, " we're at Draycott" etc etc, why I ask myself? John M and Guy turn up, all keen, canopies out, stand around gossiping as usual.

Looking out across the valley, the smoke showing that the wind is definitely backing south westerly. Shall I, shan't I? What the hell, dive off to Charmouth, nobody else interested. Not totally convinced, as usual looking at trees, washing, smoke as I'm driving along. Some wind, no wind, God, please let it be on. (can I really still be this desperate after all these years? (YES)) What did you look at as you drove

Shall I, shan't I? What the hell, dive off to Charmouth, nobody else interested. Not totally convinced, as usual looking at trees, washing, smoke as I'm driving along. Some wind, no wind, God, please let it be on. (can I really still be this desperate after all these years? (YES) What did you look at as you drove through the lovely Dorset countryside? bonfires and other peoples washing, basket case! Guy rang as I was almost there, still not convinced. I set off for take off, some wind, getting better as I went across the bridge, yes! enough and dead on, run up the hill.

Not a solitary pilot in site, got it all to myself, yee!hahh!! Great these canopies, shake it out of the bag, lay it out, suit up, helmet, clip in, inflate, admire, turn round and float gently up and away!! Plenty of room to practise chucking it around and flying at low level close into the cliffs. I wanted to try Andy Pearses trick of reversing in to take off and landing, got within a couple of feet of touching down but chickened out! Be a shame to get wrong with nobody around and get dumped. Getting bored on my own by then so decided to see how low I could get without having to land. Spent half an hour doing this, and talking to the fossil collectors, climbing up the cliff, looks dangerous to me! then decided I'd had my fill, climbed to 500' headed out over the café and finished off doing a couple of nice steep 360's straight down onto the green, perfect, what a poseur. Just over an hour and a half, keep me going for the week.

Just thought I'd let everyone know what it had been like when I got home, who'd have thought our secretary would use such bad language in his email reply!! To cap it all John and Andy went from Draycott to Crooks peak flew for ten minutes then drove into a landrover on the way home, life's a bitch!

I've got to admit it, I am a convert, I still think it's because I'm getting old. It's just too easy. Having said that the handgliders flew most of Sunday while we couldn't get off the ground. Ah well can't win them all. I'm even three quarters convinced that we should sell our Mosquito and get a paramotor. It's difficult, I'm stuck in the middle, Jeff's dead keen to sell, and Gerry is as keen to keep it. Once I've seen Jeff and Mark fly theirs I think it will have to be, 'make your mind up' time. The weather looked great on Monday, so on the spur of the moment I decided to give the Mossie a flight. It really is a pain, or else my patience is wearing thin, when you compare the preparation time with a paramotor. I've got

I've seen Jeff and Mark fly theirs I think it will have to be, 'make your mind up' time. The weather looked great on Monday, so on the spur of the moment I decided to give the Mossie a flight. It really is a pain, or else my patience is wearing thin, when you compare the preparation time with a paramotor. I've got to admit it though, once you are ready to take off it's definitely fun. I certainly chose a great day, got airborne from the field next door!! and was over Taunton at 1600' quarter of an hour later. A surprising amount of gentle lift coming off the town, probably because the air temp had dropped spectacularly. In fact it was bloody freezing, who said it would be a good idea to fly it in the winter?

Had a bit of light entertainment as I was circling over a friends house and admiring the view. As I said, crystal clear sky, great vis, I had dropped down to about 850' when a bright reflection caught my eye, Ooops! One of those very large grey metal machines screaming towards me at slightly faster than the Mosquito flies!! Would you believe it, they gave me a wave and wagged their wings as they roared underneath me. Shades of a previous winching incident many moons ago sprang to mind. Remember to keep breathing, relax, unclench buttocks, and continue flight, no sweat!!!!!! Headed off up the motorway, towards North Petherton then cut across the moor towards home, as it was getting late. Flew low over the remains of the floods as the sun was getting low, eerie feeling.

The one thing that really puts me off this machine was coming next, I absolutely hate landing it!! Set up a low approach, to check out the windsock and decide on how best to approach it. Not a breath of wind, sock absolutely vertical, might even be moving slightly downwind, no, can't be! Trick of the imagination under stress, slowed the glider right down at about 100' God that ground's going past bloody fast (for those who don't know, it is almost impossibly to flare with the Mossie, and this on an Extralite!!) Can't face it yet, think I'll go round, have a think about, who me! a coward! never. Would you believe it, levelled out low over the field, full power to climb out and circuit again, when as I'm climbing the engine stops! aargh! If I ever get this down in one piece, I'm going to kick seven bells of \*\*\*\* out of it. High enough to clear perimeter hedge, but not to execute even the niftiest 180, or try a restart. No option but to put it down in the next field, a lovely soggy stubble one. Very pleased with the result, although I would not recommend trying to run across a waterlogged field at speed with a Mossie on your back.

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restart. No option but to put it down in the next field, a lovely soggy stubble one. Very pleased with the result, although I would not recommend trying to run across a waterlogged field at speed with a Mossie on your back.

This is definitely the sort of thing that really puts you off, the landing speed was horrific, especially with all that extra weight, and an iffy knee..The trouble is you forget the problems and always remember the best bits. The flight was great, so what do I do??

Another Charmouth day, (22nd) indecision rules, just a tad on the strong side, 30mph! Flyable but promising to rain, even smaller group of desperate pilots than usual standing around. Amazing how keen everyone is to talk someone else into flying, no takers, so head for home. Hope nobody flew Sunday.

Final weekend just finishing this off, another lousy forecast, might clear up tomorrow, although the sun is just coming out here now. Ring Jeff, already gone to Woolacombe, Try John M, Is Ham on? Closer! If I finish now and send it off it's bound to be a good day tomorrow, I wish.

DON'T FORGET THE FIRST AID, ALL WELCOME RIGHT UP TO THE DAY!!

**Phil**

## The purchase of the Blorange

Buying this prime flying site from the Coal Authority has proved to be a lengthy process, but the end is now in sight. On the 26th November, we finally exchanged contracts and completion should be in around three weeks. So all being well everything should be signed and sealed for Christmas. Once again our thanks to everyone who has made this possible.

**Paul Dancey**

## Microlight Club Xmas Dinner

9th January 1999

7.00 for 7.30 at the Honiton Motel (as last year) Ring Marilyn on 01404 891 747 or write~ Barrack Lodge, Dunkeswell. Cost anticipated to be £15.00 Money not later than 24/12/98

### MENU

1 mushroom soup  
2 florida cocktail  
3 fruit juice

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4 turkey etc  
5 roast beef etc  
6 veggie dish

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7 choc profiteroles  
8 fruit salad  
9 sherry trifle  
coffee & mints

## Paragliding Report

Condors pilots in the Sky Systems XC league have flown a total of 446.5km!

26th Eddie Colfox 176.9km  
69th Guy Anderson 105.9km  
103rd Mark Aplin 75.5km  
137th Andrew Pearse 44.3km  
177th Angie Weir 23.3km  
181 Nigel Winchester 20.6km

Condors pilot Mark Aplin competed in the 1998 British Paragliding Cup, finishing in 4th place.

Condors pilots competing in 1998 British Paragliding Championship (The Nationals)

Guy Anderson 21st 174 points (might be km but I don't think so!)  
Eddie Colfox 33rd 71.7 points

Will be joined in 1999 by Mark Aplin who qualified via the 1998 BPC.

1998 Condors Paragliding XC league - 8 club members have flown a total of 394km:

Eddie Colfox 155k - Mark Aplin 116k -  
Angie Weir 43k - Nigel Winchester 31k  
(Best Rookie 1998) - Andrew Pearse 19k -  
Paul Hook 13k - John Milner 10k - Riann 7k

**Mark Aplin**

**From Harriet**

Just seen **Jim Blackmore** outside his house and he told me that he doesn't live there any more! He and his wife moved to sheltered housing in Taunton last week and he was just over clearing up. We'll miss his cheery wave and smile on our way to and from school every day. His car has just been condemned as well, but he says there are good bicycle rides from his new home through Victoria Park and along the canal and they're building him a shed to keep his bike in. He does miss the airfield though. Anyone wanting to keep in touch with him, his new address and phone number are:

14b Victoria Gate  
Taunton  
TA1 3HZ  
Tel: 01823 251398

**From Simon Murphy**

Mark Aplin and I have been exchanging e-mails concerning a comment printed in the newsletter that "all Firebird wings are iffy". I was worried that it was not made clear that this came from somebody who was talking purely about Firebird Competition wings, and that somebody, somewhere would thus believe that Firebird was a make to be avoided.

From our exchange, I am impressed by the fact that Mark has got his priorities for next year absolutely right. So often a guy gets in the Nationals/BPC/League and thinks he needs the hottest glider. In paragliding that is absolutely wrong. I don't think there is any Condors pilot who should contemplate buying a DHV3 wing. It simply isn't what we need. Mark knows that.

Below is the text of my e-mail to Mark, which he seems to agree with entirely. There is no bad feeling between us over this, but since the comment was publicised in Airheads I feel I should reply publicly, too:

Hiya Mark, You would expect to get a reply to a comment about Firebird wings being "iffy", and here it is!

Firstly, I guess your advisor "who should know what he is talking about" was actually talking about Competition Wings (If he wasn't, he doesn't know what he is talking about). In which case, I would agree with him that Firebird competition wings have been "iffy". All out-and-out Comp paragliders have been "iffy", for as many years as I can remember.



was actually talking about Competition Wings (If he wasn't, he doesn't know what he is talking about). In which case, I would agree with him that Firebird competition wings have been "iffy".

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In the case of the Cult - which was our comp. wing for the last two years, it took a while for Firebird to appreciate that just because Robbie thought it was easy, that didn't mean it was easy for anyone else. As a result, we made a point of not offering the Cult for general sale last year, and only supplied two in the UK, both to pilots of quite exceptional abilities.

So, if you, or any other new comp. pilot, ring up for a demo on the Cult the answer is "No".

But the Cult was a success, in that it won a lot more PWC tasks last year than any other wing, in the hands of at least three different pilots. Rob won far more tasks than any other individual, and had he not flown straight past goal at the first round in OZ he would have won overall.

Moving away from the Firebird situation to that of the pilots - which was the real point of your article - what should new comp. pilots be looking at? Well, the Cult experience led Rob and Matthew to push for certified wings in Competition - the Formula One idea. There has been an excellent response to the suggestions, but whether any of the comp organisers will throw in their lot remains to be seen.

Whatever the rules, next year all Firebird pilots will be on Rockets, which are certified at DHV 2/3. This means they might end up at a disadvantage to those flying hotter, more dangerous wings. But they should be appreciably safer.

On to certification, which is something everyone should look at when buying a paraglider. The Cults (which might have got DHV3, had they ever been submitted for testing) actually passed all the criteria for Afnor "Performance"! The tester implored Firebird to enter it as "Competition", which was all we wanted. This highlights a problem with Afnor testing, which I have tried hard to get the BHPA to act upon, but they totally ignore all my letters! The Flame XL got Afnor Standard, which means, according to the BHPA, that we should be selling it to first-time low-airtime pilots. No way!

Standard, which means, according to the BHPA, that we should be selling it to first-time low-airtime pilots. No way!

Our advice, to all pilots, is "IGNORE AFNOR". DHV is another matter, giving a very good indication of what a canopy is like, particularly if you get the full breakdown of the tests, which manufacturers should be willing to provide. DHV 2 is really pretty safe, DHV 2-3 is considerably less so, and DHV 3 isn't at all. We would entirely agree with your advisor that new competition pilots should fly wings which they will enjoy. If that means a DHV 2 wing, that's great! Robbie came second in the '97 US Nationals on a DHV 2 Flame (Cult won). If you are really confident and capable, try a DHV 2/3 wing (like the Sigma 4 or Rocket) by all means, but if it doesn't instill confidence don't buy it - it would only hold you back.

So, that is our position. And if you would like to try a demo Rocket, the answer is "Yes, of course".

#### From Mark Aplin to Simon Murphy

I will have to have a word with the editor about publishing our "private" correspondence! My email to John was not particularly intended for publication! I have not seen said "article" yet but thank you for your measured and interesting response.

I am sure that my "secret advisor" was not referring to Firebird standard class/entry level wings.

I do agree with all you say - in particular the wish to enjoy flying your glider. Kath & I were in the Peaks a while back both enjoying flying in rough conditions - another pilot was there with a Sector - all his body language and what he said made it clear he did not enjoy flying it! Needless to say he spent the day stood on the hill! I'm sure there are pilots who would have enjoyed flying a Sector that day but he clearly was not one of them.

One thing I have been looking at is the actual DHV test results - I think these are quite informative particularly for pilots at my sort of level for whom they mean something (?). It is clear that, for example, the Vertex (certified 2/3) is nearer to 3 than the Sigma 4 (also 2/3) which gets 2/3 only for accelerated asymmetric. Indeed some of the 2/3 gliders I have reports for are rated 1 for things my Axon (DHV 2) is 1/2 or 2 for. All this said the Sigma 4 does seem to be generating very positive responses - I certainly enjoyed flying it!

gets 2/3 only for accelerated asymmetric. Indeed some of the 2/3 gliders I have reports for are rated 1 for things my Axon (DHV 2) is 1/2 or 2 for. All this said the Sigma 4 does seem to be generating very positive responses - I certainly enjoyed flying it!

When receiving advice I find it is best to give weight to peoples positive remarks rather than the negative. I certainly think the F1/certified gliders only route should be the way to go - I think it was a backwards step for the BPC to accept entries on comp/modified gliders (I will be telling them so on my end of year report).

Poor weather has prevented me moving any nearer a decision - plenty more test flying still to do! Also the SEWales Advance dealer didn't want to take my Axon in PX!

#### From Jamie Lee-Smith

Shock new tactics used by Airheads producers. Defamatory articles used to provoke members into sending contributions (and it works!)

Fancy giving the **Club HG Safety Rep** such a slating. [Did you nominate me because you expected me to be permanently writing about myself]. I'd sue you all if it wasn't mostly true. Well I had better put every body straight before the BHPA take away my licence. Lazy take-off? It's just how I make them look - honest. Broken upright? Not so. Just a small dent from a previous crash whilst perfecting the **appearance** of a lazy take off last year at Porlock. My flight was the first one from North Hill. Brilliant site - I was stoked (surfing term for euphoric). Setting up for landing was, as printed in last month's Airheads - crap! I managed to salvage a reasonable landing though. Thanks to Brett and John for staying around until I landed for moral support (turned out to be a double edged sword at the meeting though you P.T.Bs).

Apologies for missing the November meeting. No silly excuses, just forgot. (What a meeting you missed-ed). I don't feel too guilty because I still make more effort than quite a few. Do we really have 85+ members? Shouldn't we take into consideration the number of speed cameras en route to any potential new meeting place? Otherwise attendance could drop even more as the year progresses.

I agree with Simon in backing for pilot training in the clubs. (Implied by printing

## LETTERS



we really have 85+ members? Shouldn't we take into consideration the number of speed cameras en route to any potential new meeting place? Otherwise attendance could drop even more as the year progresses.

I agree with Simon in backing for pilot training in the clubs. (Implied by printing B. Kennedy's letter? Nov Airheads). I know at least four non fliers who would love to have a go but can't spare the time and money to travel miles for training that may not be possible due to weather etc. We must all know someone who would give Hang Gliding a go if it was made more accessible for them. If handled sensibly this could only benefit flying. Hang Gliding particularly with it's more involved early learning stages.

To sort out the potential pilots with the most aptitude, I'll teach take off technique at Porlock. Phil can do flying skills at Triscombe and going by the above criteria the list of potential landing instructors in the club is a long one. Any volunteers? We'll enroll all surviving students. See you on the hill.

#### From Simon Murphy

I thought these comments by **Derek Posta** concerning the John Long/Pete Bayliss slide show (attached to a cheque -always the best way of getting my attention) might be of interest:-

"Really good talk last night. Pity we had to rush off, but Nigel had to start work at 3.00am. Brian Smith really enjoyed it & said it brought back many pleasant memories. On the way back he told us how you got him his first microlight which he collected, assembled & flew from Smeatharpe. No lessons (no one to give them) no regulations (no one had written any) just a steep learning curve. Made me feel a right wimp worrying about minor line damage and shrinkage. Derek."

My recollection is that Brian ordered the trike from Graham Slater, and paid me a few bob to build it. It didn't seem like a big deal at the time, because I had mis-spent my youth building and racing karts and single-seater cars, so a little trike wasn't going to be a problem, was it?

When it was finished Brian arrived, and we took it up to Smeatharpe. While he rushed about getting permission to use the runway (probably from the wrong people, but it was at least a gesture) it began to dawn on me that perhaps this was a bit more serious than building karts and cars. Brian could die if I got it wrong!

He came back, and took off, flew about a bit, then landed and said it was my go. Being an Insurance Salesman, Brian managed to imply that this was some kind of reward for my labours, but it felt more like a final test I had to

was a bit more serious than building karts and cars. Brian could die if I got it wrong!

He came back, and took off, flew about a bit, then landed and said it was my go. Being an Insurance Salesman, Brian managed to imply that this was some kind of reward for my labours, but it felt more like a final test I had to pass before I would get paid.

As I recall, Brian had flown a trike before, but I certainly hadn't. The wind was quite strong, and not very smooth. It was slightly off the main runway, and I was concerned to keep the thing from turning over. Can't remember Brian's instructions, but they must have been adequate, because the take-off was fine, and in a matter of seconds I was reading 500 feet on the altimeter. It all seemed too easy. And too noisy, too vibratory, and too risky - precisely my current opinion of trikes, in fact.

Not wanting to be in the air any longer, I began to think of the landing. I clearly remember thinking that, whatever Brian had said, the best policy was to adopt a Richard Bach approach and land using plenty of power, so as to be sure of hitting the field rather than falling short with an engine failure (can't remember whether we had run it in, but it would have been rather a perfunctory exercise).

My father was now standing on the runway. A man who mis-spent his youth flying Spitfires, Lancasters, Mosquitos, Hurricanes, Stirlings and Mustangs with ATA watching his son fly something he had banged together in the garage. He didn't seem at all concerned.

In the event, the landing was really very good. The wind was so strong that I just parked up and waited for Brian to come and take charge of the machine to get it back to the cars. He made it look easy, but I felt it would have been fraught with danger.

Everything about that flight would now be illegal - a situation which I don't regard as progress.

After the talk John Long expressed a desire to fly a Hang glider again. He doesn't seem to want to fly dual, but is attracted to towing. He wants to fly something very slow and easy to take off and land. I've got a few of them in my shed. Who is to say it would be wrong to help him fly again? It is, after all, like riding a bike, and John was

is attracted to towing. He wants to fly something very slow and easy to take off and land. I've got a few of them in my shed. Who is to say it would be wrong to help him fly again? It is, after all, like riding a bike, and John was always extremely capable.

I can see that the towing syndicate cannot afford to get involved in that sort of thing, given the modern-day delight in wrapping everything in rules and regulations.

But what about Bossington? Given that the hill is exactly the same as it was when John was flying in the 1970s, the gliders are better and safer, John is far more experienced (albeit not exactly current) wouldn't this be a good place to take him?

I'll carry the glider.

#### From David Wootton

The North Norfolk HG and PG Club had a meeting over the weekend. One of things discussed was to invite another club to Sculthorpe next year for a weekend flying challenge. I thought the ideal club might be the Condors, being also a winch club. We could run an open distance comp. Camping on the airfield. Perhaps if successful, you could then invite us for a weekend with you. If you like the idea, give me a call to discuss. 01366 383817

#### From Tim Crundwell

Just for the records and airheads - safety officer tel. number (not that anyone's ever called it I'm pleased to say). My new address is  
Southernly  
Purn Way  
Bleadon  
Weston-s-mare  
BS23 0 QF

tel. 01934 813279

I am now only 10mins from Crook Peak - which is quite close to the longest flight I've ever had there.



# FLY SPAIN WITH EDDIE



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Just thought I might remind those people who are thinking of a holiday in Feb in the south of Spain that Flying Frenzy, Adrenaline and Steve Ham will be running one during most of March and some of April. There will be a great line up of qualified instructors, record holders and pilots from all parts of the country. Both the low air timers and more experienced pilots will receive plenty of assistance and in our last trip in Oct, people with 20 mins amassed 7hrs in 1 week. Transport will be provided although it will be cheaper to rent your own cars if you are a group, although bear in mind some one will have to do the driving.

The prices are to be confirmed although they are in the region of £400/wk This includes accommodation, transport and instruction, not food, beer and flights.

The area is excellent for both low and high airtimers. I refer you to the attachment last printed in "Sports in the Sky". I hope people are interested as it really was one hell of a trip in Oct with loads of EPs who were struggling to gain there CP in the UK, because of our fickle weather, and their work commitments, achieving their ratings and gaining that valuable thermalling experience with the hugely experienced hands and voices of Steve Ham, Goodall, Martin Edwards and myself guiding them upwards on radio. That saves a hell of a lot of time, imagine cp's with 7hrs airtime 6.5 of them thermalling! I wish it was that way when I learnt, as the already qualified CP's discovered as their thermalling skills improved, some even went XC. By the end of March last year people were recording climbs of 6m/s flying with vultures, there's the opportunity for fun, and learning for everyone here with our team.

The sites in the Algodonales region are ranging from 700m above the landing field to 300m. They have wonderful effect like "magic winds" valley convergences, sometimes the sea breeze even reaches this far in land. I believe that the sea breeze blows out the chiefly coastal sites fairly early on. This means that if it is too windy inland the coastal sites are still within a relatively easy car drive.

You are unlikely to ever find the combined experience of English speaking pg instructors on any Spanish hill, and most British ones, come to that.

Anyway thats enough of a plug, please ring/mail me for more details 01297 489351 Happy Landings and all that Hope to take you there

**EDDIE**

**SPAINAIR** - Paragliding away the Winter Blues with Flying Frenzy, Adrenaline and Steve Ham, in Andalucia ---Southern Spain.

A noise like a Didgeroo player being run-over by a Steam Roller disturbed my slumber. I peered out of the window in time to witness my wheelie-bin taking itself for a walk down the drive! Oh yeah I'm back home in blighty. Isn't it brilliant! When will I go flying again? Sinking back into the hibernation pit I resume fantasy Paragliding, after all only yesterday I was in Andalucia where someone went flying everyday. Everyone was happy, new club pilots arrived with 30 mins and left with 8hrs, only wish it was the same when I learnt.

There were Griffon vultures everywhere. We used to look through the binoculars to see if they were soaring the sites before we committed ourselves to a choice of site. There was one occasion

after all only yesterday I was in Andalucia where someone went flying everyday. Everyone was happy, new club pilots arrived with 30 mins and left with 8hrs, I only wish it was the same when I learnt. There were Griffon vultures everywhere. We used to look through the binoculars to see if they were soaring the sites before we committed ourselves to a choice of site. There was one occasion where I circumnavigated (in very light lift), the main mountain Sierra de Lijar, (La Muela) amongst a group of about 40-60 vultures it was impossible to tell, they just kept coming and going (they showed me the way). I was totally gobsmacked. More surreal moments, stretching to try and stroke a Griffon Vulture whilst cranked-up in a 6m/s thermal in Andalucia in-----March! Blimey, that was in March, only a month to go before Adrenaline's annual trip to southern Spain. Marvellous!

Andalucia is the southern most bit of Spain and therefore gets warm before most of mainland Europe. It's cheap to get to via charter flights to Malaga (about £100) and has thus become popular with discerning pilots craving thermal fun early and late in the season. The locals have also spotted the potential and hold the first leg of their Paragliding Nationals here at the end of March. Last year flights of 80-90km were required to win the tasks, with prize money sufficient to pay for the holiday. Why not have a bash!

For less experienced pilots the sites are generally kind with easy launch/landing areas and lots of options for landing out after cross-country flights.

Beyond the first mountain pass is Rhonda, famous for its spectacular bridge over a 600ft gorge which splits the town in two. There is clearly a great deal of historical interest here, with old world Moorish atmosphere, good restaurants and a particularly attractive Sherry Cellar. Some flying sites are near here too, but most pilots base themselves 20 mins further north in Algodonales, about 2hrs. drive from the airport. If you are not stopping at Rhonda, follow the bypass towards Seville and Algodonales looking out for the uneven sections of road repaired following the Winter floods of 95 & 96. In the distance the mountains subside to more accessible hills overlooking the plains around Seville, yet these lower peaks appear to be permanently capped with snow? In fact these are small villages painted white so often that they gleam brilliantly in the afternoon sun, dazzling unshaded eyes for miles around. Entering Algodonales you will be struck by the quaint narrow streets and tree lined square (do not eat the Oranges off the trees, they taste disgusting). There are an adequate number of bars and restaurants and even a couple of discos for the cradle snatchers. We generally stay in local hotels and self catering houses within walking distance of the square, but with the exchange rate being favourable it is so cheap to eat out that no one cooks unless its for fun.

**Steve Goodall** has been Paragliding since 1989, instructing since 1991 and competing in the National Championships since 93. He is partner in Adrenaline Sports, a Paragliding School based in the heart of the Peak District, and has been running Paragliding holidays in Spain since 92. **Steve Ham** is the UK record holder, British Team Manager and PWC Technical Director. He runs a Paragliding School in Spain and is hired by Adrenaline as a local expert, Instructor and translator.

In summary, Andalucia is cheap to get to and offers excellent flying



# BITS & PIECES



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Our chairman likes to relax at the weekend. If it looks flyable he phones more active types like Jeff or me and gets the up to date info. On Friday 13th an inconsiderate customer phoned him to whinge about her plumbing before 7am. After her call he quickly turned off the ringer and settled down again. Unfortunately he hit the redial button at the same time and my phone rang. 1471-3 and I was through. A very weary voice answered and denied phoning me. After much wriggling he had to admit it and asked if I had been flying at which point his boss did a very convincing Victor impression and the call was terminated. If you want some fun ...

Our Chairman also likes to buzz the hill while flying. On Sun 15th at Bossington the wind was strong. After a short time flying he swung into action as usual and was pinned. This put an end to his flying his canopy for the day. He will deny all this but there are those who know the truth.

You will see from Robin Brown's Advert that he is holding a parachute throw and repack at the Bristol Climbing Wall on Saturday 2nd January. £25 includes your repack. I am sure it will be cheaper if you do it yourself.

There has been considerable debate on the internet about a National Sites Guide. There is already one online run by Benet Allen. He has been pushing this for some time. We have discovered that in spite of our vote, earlier this year, not to have our sites online, they have appeared. Unfortunately this includes Branscombe and Charmouth. Harriet has had them removed. Other clubs have also discovered their sites on this guide. What do you all think? Are you for a National Guide? Do you want our sites to appear? Is this the right guide? Let me know, although I have no doubt there will be some debate at the meeting tonight.

I have had no contact from those of you who fly infrequently. Are you keen to get out? Jeff is hoping to run HG training for existing PG pilots. How many of you are interested? He will probably do this at Smeatharpe. Get your names on the list.

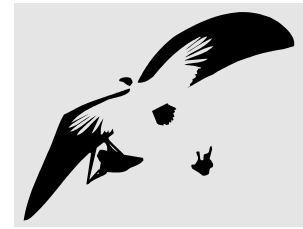
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Articles sent on computer disk are helpful and time saving, Word for Windows, Ami Pro, or text format if possible. If not jot it down and sent it in, on an e-mail if possible. **THE DEADLINE** for copy is the **LAST FRIDAY** in the month. **LATE ARTICLES** may be moved to the following month.

# COMP NEWS



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The 97/98 HG Winter XC League table consists of 1 flight each as follows:

1. Harriet Pottinger 13.24R SX2
2. Jeff Hoer 12.24R XTL147
2. Brett Wright 12.24R XTL137
4. Martyn Howe 9.94D Klassic

## ROUND UP - HANG GLIDING XC LEAGUES 97/98

The 97/98 season has been closed for a month and I've had no new entries, so the League Tables haven't changed since they last appeared in Airheads sometime back in the summer. There are no new entries to kick off the 98/99 Winter League yet, although I believe Jeff did the Beer Head/Ladram Bay out and return on his paraglider the other day, so no doubt he's currently leading the PG Winter XC League! Look out Eddie and Mark!!

You don't need me to tell you that this last year has not been exactly the most epic in living memory, and the XC League reflects that. However, the overall distances and the number of entries are up on the previous year, indicating a bit more competitive effort.

## AEROTOW

The best distances are from the aerotow. In early May, on a day of very mixed conditions starting with broken and bitty thermals and ending with strong sea breeze convergence, Mark Hoer and Craig Parker took around 20 thermals to go nearly 28 miles together, landing in the same field the far side of Yetminster (SW of Yeovil). The same afternoon Martin Kellaway landed near Beaminster (20 miles) and Brett went 15 miles in under half an hour with the bar to his knees nearly all the way under the convergence. I, on the other hand, took over 20 minutes to do less than three and a quarter miles off the winch, never getting over 1,000 feet ato, and returning to the airfield just in time to volunteer to drive a retrieve from hell for all the others. B\*\*\*\*\*ds!

There was another day on the aerotow when I was in the pouring rain in Scotland, when everyone attempted triangles. Good efforts were made, by all account, but no-one put in their distances except for Nick Adams, so those flights haven't been included in the final scores - shame.

## CONDORS SITES

Most of the Condors Sites League distances are coastal runs, with only Jeff going over the back from any of our inland sites - 7 and a bit miles from East Hill. Spurred by competition at the Brass Monkeys meet in March, three pilots went three and a bit miles inland from Bossington. Codden and East Hill have been attempted on a few occasions, but no joy.

## ALL UK SITES

The All UK Sites League includes flights in Wales, and this is where most of my distances come from. The best one was the first of the year in May - after half an hour being thrashed around low down I finally connected with a good'un and had a relatively easy flight to 19 and a half miles distance. The triangle I did was at Hay Bluff - I was trying for a bigger one but had to jib out and return to the ridge, with full trimmer and everything tucked in, arriving back lower than halfway down the slope. I never managed to penetrate as well on further attempts, but it was a rewarding flight and my first triangle. I even had all the photos in sector and everything!

## DUAL

Jeff and I had a brilliant time going XC from Merthyr with the dual glider - it was really good fun - but we need to double the distance to beat the current UK Dual HG distance record.

## TEAMS

The team competition was instigated by Mark Hoer to try to encourage more pilots to go XC from the aerotow, which I believe it did. His plans slightly backfired, however, as the Sharks (Jeff, Brett and myself all on Moyes gliders) totally trounced the Winglets (Mark, Craig and Martyn Howe on Airwave gliders with winglets). There was talk of a third team, the Old Gits, but with only one XC flight between them, we samed them the embarrassment of publicising the details. I hope we have more teams this year - groups of three with some common factor (eg same brand gliders, same age range, same marital status, whatever). All distances count from all UK sites and all launch methods, but for those who swing both ways, PG flights do not count! Sorry, but this is a push specifically for hang gliding.

## RESULTS

**The Condors Trophy** - Longest ever XC from a Condors site: Simon Murphy, 80+ miles from East Hill about 100 years ago!

**Brian Miller Trophy** - Longest coastal o/r in pairs: Simon Murphy & Harriet Pottinger

**Somerset Aerials Trophy** - Condors Sites XC League: 1st Harriet Pottinger, 2nd Brett Wright, 3rd Jeff Hoer

**Mary Glanvill Trophy** - Furthest inland flight from a coastal site: Martyn Howe

**Wonder-Clamp Trophy** - 1st XC over 5 miles: Andy Tew (PG from winch)

Bob Bridge Trophy - Longest XC of the year from all UK sites: Harriet Pottinger

Rosie Bowl - Longest XC of the year from the Condors winch: Angie Weir

SMFC Trophy - All UK Sites XC League: 1st Harriet Pottinger, 2nd Brett Wright, 3rd Jeff Hoer



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## **CHRISTMAS PRESENT IDEAS.**

**I TRY NOT TO BOMBARD THE CONDORS WITH ADVERTISING, WHICH MAY BE A MISTAKE FROM A BUSINESS POINT OF VIEW, BUT THAT'S THE WAY I AM. HOWEVER, WITH XMAS IMMINENT, PERHAPS I SHOULD MENTION A COUPLE OF THINGS WHICH MIGHT MAKE GOOD PREZZIES? HAVE A GOOD TIME!**

**Cross Country Magazine is now available from Firebird UK. It's the best free flight magazine by a (cross) country mile. £3.95 per issue, latest one out now! XC is printed every other month, and a six-pack subscription costs you £24.95.**

**Don't forget that we have full stocks of warm clothing, from gloves and bar mitts through neck tubes and hats to complete FlyMike flying suits. They're all high-tec stuff, so they aren't as cheap as C&A, but they are warmer, and better quality.**

**New Polar Fleece came in from Flying Dodo last week. Two people were in the office when they were unpacked. One of them bought the one I was going to keep for myself, the other ordered a colour/size I didn't have. Not a bad conversion rate! We have more orders in, but stock is likely to be a bit muddled with the AGM and Christmas coming up. These garments are typical Flying Dodo quality and style, but the prices are very reasonable - adults from £47.95. Kids sizes, too!**

**Have a good time at Christmas!**

**Simon. Firebird UK. 01404 891685**

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