

FINAL GLIDE

THE MAGAZINE OF THE OXFORD GLIDING CLUB

Issue 8: January 1993

Edited by Phil Hawkins

FLYING FEES RISE

The Committee Response

At the AGM the Joining Fee was abolished, and a reduced rate student membership was introduced. Subs were increased but the net loss of income to the Club of these measures is approximately £1800/year.

At the December meeting the Committee voted to increase the launch fee to £3 and soaring fees to 20p/min, in order to help cover a fairly expensive 1992 and proposed capital expenditure in 1993. The minutes from this meeting show that:

- a) One K13 has been re-covered and refurbished, and the other K13 is about to receive similar treatment.
- b) The winch has now been re-engined which completes a total rebuild costing in excess of £6000.
- c) The clubroom project is complete and work is about to start on the external barbecue project for Friday nights.
- d) The Club is acquiring an improved tow-out vehicle at a likely cost of about £3000.
- e) Both K13s and both K8s are being fitted with new audio varios and the Astir is to receive a new radio - total cost about £1500.
- f) The Committee is actively exploring the purchase of a glass two seater which will give advanced cross country training and act as a first step towards what, one day, may well be an all glass fleet.
- g) The Trustees and Committee feel that we need to increase the Site Trust Fund. Our tenure at Weston is no more secure than it ever was and we may one day have to try and buy Weston or an equivalent site.

There has been some debate about the increased launch and flying fees. Some of the debate has been useful but some less so. The following points are relevant:

a) £3 a launch and 20p/min are rates that are still below those used by any comparable club. However, the Committee has agreed that the "old" launch rate of £2 will remain for the time being for all dual training flights. This will however be reviewed on 1st July 1993 in the light of our finances at that time.

b) Subscriptions and flying fees are kept down to a minimum because the Club still manages to carry out the vast majority of work in-house. Aircraft, buildings, equipment, the site and general administration are dealt with by a handful of members.

c) The Friday night operation produces a major part of our income but again relies on a few very dedicated people.

d) If more people helped with the workload the effort could be spread more evenly and there would be a better understanding of what makes the Club work. It is probably true to say that Tuesday and Friday evenings hold the Club together, yet most members only turn up at weekends.

e) The Committee stand for re-election every year on the basis of their record over the previous twelve months.

NEWS NOTES

Slippery ships: most of the private syndicates at Weston have now contributed to joint ownership of a polishing machine. It is generally accepted that hard waxing on gelcoat surfaces at least once a year protects against water ingress, particularly to microscopic surface cracks. This prevents such minor imperfections from getting any worse, or prevents them forming in the first place.

Spring Lectures: watch the Club notice boards for news of lectures on various subjects which are now being planned. With the completion of the briefing room we now have an excellent venue for such events.

Airfield insurance: it has recently been pointed out that whilst our airfield operator's policy covers damage to property (e.g. cars) due to accidents involving Club equipment (e.g. the tractor), it does not cover damage due to member's cars bumping into each other whilst on the airfield. Your own car insurance may not cover you for accidents occurring on Crown property (e.g. Weston-on-the-Green airfield).

Official Observers: if you think your OO number ends in /88 it is no longer valid and you must re-apply. A number of OGC OOs were not notified of this fact by the BGA and only found out when it was nearly too late.

GLIDING AT EDGE HILL

Shenington GC at the Edge Hill Gliding Centre will be operating 7 days a week this coming season. It has been agreed that OGC and Shenington members will have the same reciprocal membership which already exists between OGC and Aquila. Winch launches at Edge Hill will be £5 and aerotows will also be available.

GET YOUR RT LICENCE AT OGC

RT licence courses will be run at OGC by Mick Orr, starting sometime in January. Courses will run for 2-3 evenings. Anyone interested should add their names to the list in the clubhouse, or see John Giddins. The price will be around £40 if we can get at least 10 people interested, which includes the cost of the licence.

NOTES FROM COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Gliding forecasts obtained from Dunstable during last soaring season had been generally well received, but often arrived too late in the morning to be of full use. They needed to be available by 9am at the latest. We have requested this by letter and will pursue it nearer the beginning of the 1993 season.

John Hanlon has achieved his full instructor rating, Alex Jenkins has an assistant rating, and Martin Cooper and Howard Stone have completed AEI courses. However, Mark Rowland and Nick Porat are no longer instructing. Cris Emson has been appointed deputy CFI.

We have provided the RAF with a new key authorisation list for 1993. Basically it consists of all instructors currently on the rota, committee members and a number of other active Club members. Please make a point of signing the new list when you next come to the Club.

At the December meeting the controversial decision to increase launch fee to £3 was taken, together with soaring fees to 20p/min. Later, it was decided to keep a £2 launch rate for all dual flights. See front page for more information.

The next regular Committee meeting will be held on 10th February, although other meetings are going on to consider possible additions to the Club fleet.

1993 Committee

John Hanlon (Chairman)
Chris Reynolds (Vice Chairman)
Tony Boyce (Secretary)
Neil Swinton (Treasurer)
Neil Turner
Norman Machin
Phil Hawkins

Club Officers

CFI	Steve Evans
Technical Officer	John Gibbons
Safety Officer	Graham Barrett
Workshop manager	Graham Barrett
Ground equipment	Neil Turner
Parachutes/Radios	John Hanlon
Instruments	Brian Payne
Instructor rota	Martin Oldfield
Promotions etc	Neil Turner
Inter Club League	Chris Reynolds
Publications	Phil Hawkins
Club News in S & G	Tony Boyce
Friday bookings	Peter Awcock

CLUB LADDER 1992

Last season only 18 OGC pilots entered flights for the Club Ladder, compared with 22 in 1991. However the total distance flown was up slightly at 15,802km. The winner for the second year running was Cris Emson, although Phil was somewhat closer behind him!

Cris Emson	5372
Phil Hawkins	4819
Tom Lamb	3831
John Gordon	3543
Graham Barrett	3409
John Giddins	3311
Martin Hastings	3215
Tony Boyce	2830
Andy Barnes	2340
Andy Butterfield	1666
<i>(and 8 other pilots)</i>	

The furthest distance flown was 501km jointly by Graham Barrett and Tony Boyce on 28 July. Not surprisingly they also logged the longest flight times at 8hr 56min each. Graham's flight was the highest scoring flight of the year at 2,101 points although his handicap speed was modest - 60.96kph.

There were seven other 300km flights made during the season, one each by Cris Emson, John Gordon and Phil Hawkins, and two each by Martin Hastings and John Giddins. John made the earliest and latest on 3 May and 5 September.

The fastest flight of the year was 88.02kph by Andy Barnes during the Inter Club League final at Lasham (101km out and return to Didcot). It wasn't a particularly high-speed year as there were only two other flights which broke the 80kph barrier.

The glider distance league table (in kilometres) was as follows:

Cirrus 278	4164
DG-202 515	3133
Mini-Nimbus 147	2887
K6e 577	1898
Libelle CLV	1011
Club Astir	1004
DG-100 251	363
LS-4 224	298
Cirrus EEN	289
Pilatus DRP	270
Club K6CR	202
Skylark 4 BNK	75

PS: Tony Boyce is already well in the lead in the 1993 Ladder thanks to his wave flights at Aboyne in October. A new ladder season starts each year on 1 October.

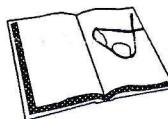
Letters



"NZ Gliding in North Island is not that brilliant because most towns and hence the clubs are near the coast with sea breeze fronts moving in most good soaring days. Also the centre of N. Island is not the place to land out in. Wellington club at Paraparaumu is on the coast but has a mountain ridge that one can do 300km along in a NW or west wind. So far every NW or west wind has brought cloud and rain but I am told it can be very good. South Island is a different ball game with clubs in the central part giving excellent soaring and the famous "North West Arch" for wave flying.

"I have kept my gliding going by flying various club aircraft (Std Libelle, Club Libelle, K6, Twin Astir) but it is not the same as having your own glider that you are used to and feel at home in."

Colin White



EDITORIAL

Well, it seems that the Club not only has budding aviators, but budding writers too. After two years of pestering you lot to produce articles for *Final Glide*, perhaps the message is getting through that writing about your flying can be fun, especially in winter when you can't do much flying. And you don't have to be a pundit to make a thoughtful or informative contribution.

As you can see by reading this issue, we have real literary stars lurking in our midst, so if you haven't yet thought about putting pen to paper, why not give it a try? I've already got some good stuff lined up for issue 9 which should be out around April/May, but it isn't full yet, so keep writing!



HOW I DUN IT

Tony Boyce has become only the second OGC member to win all three Diamond badges, with the two most difficult ones happening in the same season. Here is his account of the rigours and pleasures of high altitude soaring from Aboyne....

Scotland at the end of October is a place of short, cold, damp days punctuated by nights of hard frost. The mountains wear white caps; the bracken is brown. The people are already muffled and hotels offer bargain prices as the tourists have long since left.

Saturday 31st October was the last day of the 1992 visit to this Mecca of wave flying. After scraping the ice from the windows of the car, followed by a short drive from the hotel to the airfield, I was anxious to see the level of activity. Were the local experts getting their gliders rigged early in the expectation of a good soaring day? Or were they apathetic, tired of a succession of poor weeks throughout their customary wave season?

Some visiting pilots looked at the early morning weather and decided it was not worth staying so packed up and drove off home. However a small group were rigging gliders at the trailer park six hundred yards away at the far end of the frosty field. The drive down there was hard across the frozen ruts gouged into the grass by two soggy months of visitors' vehicles.

It takes time to get ready up here. Apart from the usual rigging hassles, you have to be careful about clothing. If you get a good climb the temperature could be well below freezing so you need layers of wool and particular attention to footwear. By the time the glider has been rigged and manhandled into the launch queue most people will have rather sweaty feet. A few hours at sub-zero temperatures will turn sweaty socks into blocks of ice which even the toughest pilot will have difficulty accepting. Sound advice is to keep one or more pairs of fresh dry socks ready to put on immediately before strapping into the cockpit. And a pair of moonboots are well worthwhile.

The previous day's flight should have given me a Diamond height. Both barographs had been unsealed and all the necessary signatures had been obtained. I decided to keep one trace undisturbed on the barograph and to fix the other so that I could use that instrument again today. And today I could enjoy my flight all the more because I would not be under pressure to achieve a badge flight. I had refilled the oxygen bottle and merely had to fit it after rigging.

It was reported that the rotor was over the field so I prepared for a rough aerotow. The

tow demanded concentration on keeping station but I had also to note the vario reading as I wanted to release as soon as I was definitely in lift. The normal 6-8 knots flicked up to ten but was gone quickly and I didn't risk trying to find it at 1500ft. Two hundred feet higher it went to ten again and I pulled off. Trimming out, I found myself in weak lift half a mile north of the airfield.

From the tracks of gliders several hundred feet above me, the orientation of this wave system was clear. It called for patience at this height. Very gradually I climbed to 8000ft before leaving this weak system to search for something better over Glen Tanner to the south.

I find it magical to cruise over the clouds, to look around and try to work out which parts of the pattern of clouds and gaps are giving lift. Cruising along the Glen in 2kt lift I approached a higher part of the cloud behind me and remembered my mentor's words about this marking the best lift. Sure enough, the vario went up so I turned into wind for a few moments until the lift began to fade and then started turning as if in a thermal. As I drifted back towards the cloud face I straightened up into wind once more and repeated this "knitting" process.

At 10,000ft I decided to explore somewhere else. I noticed the edge of some very high cloud to the west. It could almost have been an edge of cirrus and I doubted if it could be marking any lift at the height I was at, if I could reach it at all. Why not find out? I was enjoying myself today.

I increased speed to penetrate upwind and passed overhead Ballater but the edge looked a very long way off. At 9000ft I could see that the edge was not cirrus but had some slightly darker texture in it. At 8000ft the edge was much closer although very much higher than I was, and the vario had gone to zero.

I slowed down and looked around. To the south in the lee of Lochnagar was a classic lenticular with a pronounced curve on its leading edge. I flew towards it in the zero lift and positioned myself upwind of it. What a change! The vario leapt to 6kt up. Perhaps I would be using the oxygen today after all. At 10,000ft once again the lift was, if anything, increasing so I donned the mask and opened the valve to the "low flow" position.

As I climbed past the front of the lenticular the vario screamed continuously at eight knots for several minutes. This could be a good one!

At 17,000ft I made sure the oxygen valve was fully open and noted the pressure in the cylinder. The exhaust from the mask blew out to the right, and that side of the canopy rapidly frosted over. The front ventilator was fully open and the one on the clear vision panel just cracked open keeping the rest of the canopy relatively free from ice, but doing nothing for the comfort of the pilot! I hate not being able to see out, so spent some time scratching the ice off the canopy to my right. Every few minutes I checked the flying controls for freedom of movement. The flaps became quite stiff but the others remained free.

I passed 20,000ft on the altimeter and still had plenty of oxygen left. But I had a different problem - my bladder felt as if it was about to burst. I contemplated using the pee tube, but the thought of trying to get through four layers of clothing, and then the possibility of it freezing and backing up! (The temperature was later estimated to be -35°C). The lift had dropped to four knots as I reached an indicated 21,000ft and I decided I just had to go down.

Even with full airbrake and eighty knots on the clock it takes quite a while to get down from 20,000ft. I paused only briefly to allow the temperature of the airframe to increase before circling down over Loch Kinnord to 2,000ft for my circuit. I remembered the turbulent airflow a few hours before. The downwind leg was choppy and I decided to play very safe, turning finals at 500ft. The glider was thrown about as it entered the rotor that had been sitting over the field all day. Large control movements were needed all the way down. Twenty feet above the runway I was still fighting it. I touched down right in the centre of the 6-yard wide tarmac strip, half way along it, leaving me enough inertia to reach the end.

This flight gave me a greater gain of height than the previous day's flight so I got the declaration signed up and later the barograph calibrated. The low point was shown to be 1800ft and the high point 20,100ft, giving me a gain of 18,300ft which is 1900ft more than the minimum for a Diamond Height claim.

Tony Boyce.

CFI's TURN...



You will probably already have heard of the fatal accident at the Swindon club where the Chairman (a lady head teacher) was killed in a Cirrus following a winch launch. This accident highlights some important lessons. Firstly, the pilot was relatively unfamiliar with the aircraft (about 3 flights on type). Secondly, the pilot was of small stature and needed a large amount of cushions in order to reach the controls in the large Cirrus cockpit. It is believed that during the high acceleration of the first part of the winch launch, the cushions compressed limiting the pilot's ability to control the aircraft.

There is no substitute for a little thought! When getting into any aircraft, and particularly a new type, think! Am I comfortable? Is there enough/too much room? Will cushions compress? Will the seat back move under high acceleration? Where is the release and could I operate it under high acceleration? Also take your time, don't be rushed into the air. If you are waiting for a launch slot, make sure you are comfortable and secure well before you are the next in line.

Here is a story of what can happen. Last year I was flying a Discus at Booker. I noted when adjusting the seat back that the operating lever points forwards and is released quite easily so made sure that, when strapping myself in, the straps were well clear of the lever. After flying for an hour or so, I adjusted my position in the seat as the parachute was quite uncomfortable. In doing so, my elbow hit the seat back lever which promptly fully retracted the seat back. It was then I discovered that, with weight on the seat back, I could not move it forwards again and had to be content with operating the rudders with the tips of my toes! So, the moral is, think what might happen and don't fly a Discus!

On a different note, have you thought about hang-ups recently? No, I don't mean inhibitions, glider pilots don't have those. I mean being unable to release the cable on a winch launch. I can only think of one at Weston in the last 20 years but they can happen as was shown at a club recently. Firstly, a message to winch drivers. If you think a glider can't release (he is way over the top of the winch) YOU MUST OPERATE THE CUTTER. Don't wait until he is in a vertical dive and out of control, we can always mend the cable can't we? Once the cable is cut, the glider must be flown in gentle circles over the airfield at a safe approach speed until a landing towards the winch can be made. And most of all don't panic - these situations rarely end in disaster.

Steve Evans

Gliding at PERRANPORTH

During the summer I was fortunate enough to visit a club which we don't hear much about at Oxford - the Cornish Gliding Club at Perranporth. We took our summer holiday at the end of August, the first week of which was to be spent in Cornwall visiting friends.

Just before we set off for Cornwall, Fiona announced that she had rung the Cornish GC to see if I could fly there and that if I became bored with sitting on the beach she wouldn't mind if I disappeared off to the airfield. What a star!

Unfortunately the weather was awful for all but one day that week, and even then the family could only manage two hours on the windswept beach, so we all went off to Perranporth. On the way there it struck me how difficult it must be to manoeuvre a car and trailer combination down single track high hedged Cornish lanes, but I suppose the locals must get used to it.

The airfield itself looks a bit derelict from the road but a newish sign at the main entrance reassures you that you're heading in the right direction. When I arrived at the launch point a course was in progress. Two K7s and a Pawnee tug were operating. The club does have a winch but they weren't using it on this occasion.

I introduced myself to the people at the launch point who were very friendly. Some of them had come up to Perranporth from Culdrose as the Navy club had closed for the summer break. They explained that they would be flying a party of visitors later in the afternoon and asked if I could help get another aircraft out of the hangar (a small red stone barn-like building). Looking at the width of the hangar door it crossed my mind that the aircraft might need rigging. Inside I was surprised to see a fully rigged fleet of four bright orange aircraft and a psychedelic T21, cleverly packed on little wheeled trucks. We pulled out a K13 sideways through the opening, DId it and then towed it to the launch point.

It was soon my turn to fly and the instructor, Peter Endean, invited me into the K7 for a check flight. We prepared for an aerotow behind the Pawnee, then off we went launching into a westerly wind straight over the cliffs, heading out to sea. After a few moments the coastline dropped away. At about 750ft above airfield height Peter asked me what I would do if the rope broke. It had been obvious on becoming airborne that a field landing was out of the question. The fields around the airfield were small, hilly and surrounded by high stone walls, and of course the sea was ahead. I opted for a shortened circuit or a downwind landing on the runway. Peter agreed, saying there wasn't any other choice. I released at 2000ft and on turning to the left was immediately presented with a spectacular view of the rugged coastline.

The airfield seemed to be perched precariously on top of the cliffs which stretched for miles in both directions. The sea looked surprisingly shallow for 2000ft, all along waves were churning over the rocks to produce large patches of white water. I can't imagine anybody wanting to stray too far from the cliffs and the safety of the airfield. The weather wasn't soarable and all the time we had been sinking at a steady 2kt. It was soon time to think about a circuit. The downwind leg followed the cliffs in a north-easterly direction. Turning onto base leg seemed very strange. The angle with the airfield looked right, the altimeter looked right but the sea still appeared to be about 750ft below.

Turning finals I crossed the cliffs again and immediately everything felt normal. Without further ado I landed the K7 on the grass strip on one side of the runway. Having only been gliding for 14 months at the time, I can honestly say it had been my most exciting flight so far.

The family and I stayed for another couple of hours helping with the party of disabled visitors who had arrived for trial lessons. We eventually left promising to return if the weather improved. I was looking forward to a solo flight, but with rotten weather for the rest of the week this didn't happen. Still there is always next year!

The club members were accommodating and friendly, the price of day membership, a 2000ft aerotow and 16 minutes soaring (or sinking!) came to £19 and I would recommend a visit if you are in Cornwall.

Chris Buck

PORTMOAK MEMORIES...

There is no doubt that Portmoak and its surrounding area is a paradise for bird-watchers or golfers, regardless of weather conditions. However, it is only a paradise for glider pilots if the weather is right. Unfortunately, during our week there it wasn't.

Eight members took six gliders during the week 19-26 September. The route is easy - just long and boring. Get on the motorway at Weston-on-the-Green and leave it 395 miles later with 3 miles to go on ordinary roads before you reach the airfield on the shore of Loch Leven. The journey can be done in around 8hrs with a trailer, including brief stops. The toll on the impressive Forth Road Bridge is 40p with a trailer, 20p without.

The airfield is flat, with trees between it and the loch. The two isolated hills rise to around 800ft above the site, Bishop hill to the east and Benarty hill to the south across the corner of the loch. Launching is by winch (Supacat) or by aerotow (Pawnee) although the winch isn't used on Mondays and Tuesdays. In a reasonable wind Bishop hill is easily reached from a winch launch. Weekly membership is £20, aerotows £13.50 and winch launches £4.

The winds during our 6-day stay were mainly in the northeast to southeast quadrant, so there was very little hill-soaring and no wave activity. Much of England had torrential rains and disastrous flooding, but in Scotland the weather was quiet and autumnal most of the time.

Monday was the first good day, with cloud streets at around 3000ft base and lift moderate to good. Graham (Libelle) got stuck at Perth on the other side of a blue gap between streets, and took hours to get home. Andy (K6e) managed to land out on the top of a hill, within sight of Portmoak, in a ploughed field with a surface like a soufflé, and took hours and hours to be retrieved.

Tom and Richard spent hours and hours dismantling the PIK-20E engine, only to

prove a fault in Simon's jump leads. The remainder of the OGC team spent hours and hours whizzing up and down the streets locally and admiring the view.

The next day Richard and Phil went bird-spotting whilst the others tried out the exotic swimming pool at Perth, with its flumes and wild water rapids. Feet-first down the pitch black flume pipe for the first time is a terrifying experience, but the second time is not so bad. Andy spent a character-building afternoon digging out half a Kinross-shire ploughed field from the K6e wheel box.

Wednesday's conditions were also good, with strong lift and a variable cloudbase up to 4000ft in places. Tom, Richard, Graham and Andy each covered over 100km mainly to the north and east of the site. Highlight of the day was Richard reporting eight Buzzards sharing his thermal. The weather for the rest of the week was not so good but a repeat trip to the flume at Perth was organised, together with the inevitable shopping trips to Perth and Dundee.

Loch Leven is a major attraction for wildlife. In particular geese, duck and Curlew number in the thousands, and a good view is available from the RSPB hide at Vane Farm on the south shore of the loch. V formations and long straggling lines of honking geese (mainly pinkfoot and greylag) are often seen especially in early morning and at dusk. Several trips to the East Fife coast 30 miles away yielded a rich tally of marine birds including Fulmar, Razorbills, Bar-tail Godwit and the elegant Sandwich Tern. The species list maintained by Richard and Phil had reached 83 by the end of the week. The strangest sighting was a pair of flamingo amongst the thousands of geese on the loch shore. We also saw a red squirrel during a trip around the highlands.

Golf is another sport which features strongly in this area of Scotland. St Andrews, Gleneagles and Carnoustie are all within 1 hr drive of the airfield, and

other clubs abound, including two at Kinross and a small one at Kinnesswood only two miles from the airfield. All visiting golfer-pilots would be wise to take the appropriate kit.

We chose to hire self-catering chalet accommodation rather than camping. In view of the damp climate at this time of year this was a good decision. Loch Leven Chalets are situated at Balgedie about 3 miles from the airfield. Colour TV, fully-equipped kitchen, bath but no shower. With five sharing a chalet the cost was £32 each, the only extra being electricity at the end of the week. One bonus for self-caterers is the small supermarket in Kinross which stays open to 9pm seven days a week.

So - was it worth it? Comparisons with the Black Mountains club at Talgarth spring to mind. It is more than three times as far as Talgarth and it takes nearly three times as long to get there. For experienced pilots the hills are not as challenging as those at Talgarth and there are no long ridges. In non-thermic weather the hill beats would be short and could become crowded. The likelihood of wave conditions occurring may be no better than in South Wales, but if it does occur it is perhaps more likely to go higher.

On the other hand there is winch launching available which keeps costs down, together with easier circuits and landings for inexperienced pilots. The club is managed by Roy Dalling, ex-Mynd and before that Aquila. There is a lively club atmosphere which you don't get at Talgarth, a bunkhouse, bar, and full meals available every night at reasonable prices. The bar staff can be persuaded to give pilots a lift back to the chalets at the end of the evening. After one night with games like table-traversing, bar-climbing and poking your finger up the little Green Goblin's bum (ask Tom Lamb) one of the locals remarked "You lot should come here more often." Perhaps we will. I could get tempted.

EXTRACTS FROM ENSTONE EAGLES AUTUMN NEWSLETTER

Next year the club once again has the privilege of hosting the Open Class National Championship, which will run from the 10 - 18 July 1993.

Without the income from competitions we would have to raise all members annual subscriptions by a minimum of £100 per annum in order to make good the shortfall on our annual budget.

We are well aware that some members regard the competition as an unwelcome restriction on their own

ability to fly from the club over the nine day competition period. There is a marked reluctance on the part of some members to become involved in the running of the competition.

If you have not considered how you can become involved please do not hesitate to approach the Chairman or any other team member.

Extremely good launches have been obtained with winch number 2, the Jaguar engined one. Up to 2,000ft with two up in the Blanik at the end of

August, and all for £4. The cynics are suggesting that we should add on 50p for every 100ft above 1500ft!

The winching operation is clearly much more efficient than auto-tow and consistently produces greater heights. The work on the Rolls Royce engine for winch number 1 is proceeding well.

Lease negotiations are almost concluded on the Control Tower and Hangar together with large grassed areas of the airfield.

INTER CLUB LEAGUE FINAL

(29-31 August)

The Inter-Club League Final meeting was held at Lasham over the bank holiday weekend. This year we were competing against Nympsfield, Saltby, Keevil, Camphill, Anglia and Parham.

On Saturday the weather was very good but the wind was forecast to increase strongly from the south in the evening. The pundit task was 209km to Membury and Buckingham, whilst the intermediates were sent to Membury and Westcott.

Phil Hawkins (Mini-Nimbus) and Martin Hastings (Cirrus) found the thermals were much stronger than forecast, with cloudbase around 3000ft at first, steadily increasing throughout the day. The downwind leg after Membury went particularly quickly. One hour after starting Phil was passing Weston over half-way round the task.

Progress into wind on the third leg was much slower, and things went wrong for Phil near Basingstoke against the strengthening headwind. He came to earth in a grass field about 1 mile short of Lasham. He walked back to Lasham down muddy lanes to alert the retrieve crew, after watching Martin glide into Lasham overhead! Norman Machin landed at Kidmore End near Reading on the novice task.

On Saturday night Jack Miller and Phil stayed at Tom Lamb's house near Salisbury. Unfortunately there was a gigantic traffic jam on the way there because the Police were turning people away from some sort of rave party going on at Popham airfield. Searchlights on the clouds, thumping music, etc.

On Sunday morning the rain and wind were lashing at Lash'em. Some of the trailers had moved around a bit, including Norman Machin's which had moved sideways on its wheels. Obviously a non-flying day!

Monday was much more promising. Out and return tasks were set towards the north. Graham Barrett (Libelle) flew round Calvert but (as he admits) got lost after Reading on the way back. Endless discussions on the radio didn't help, and he eventually landed at Arborfield south of Reading. John Hanlon (Cirrus) had a turning point on the Oxford southern ring road, but got drifted downwind after that and landed at Lewknor.

Hero of the day was Andy Barnes who won the novice task to Didcot and back in the K6e at over 80kph, hotly pursued by Helen Cheetham (Saltby) in a DG-300.

Overall we were 5th out of 7 teams. The winners were Nympsfield, for the third year running. Phil Gascoigne's team from Bath & Wilts beat us by one place.

Letters



Phil Gascoigne writes:

"...we are now almost fully established at 'The Park' as far as flying goes, and look forward to some decent north-westerlies which will open up the local ridges for us. We will soon have a Pawnee to replace our Austers (for sale if you know anyone who wants them!)..."

EXTRACTS FROM "GLIDE ANGLE" (magazine of Bath, Wilts and North Dorset GC).

The amount of interest being shown in our new site is quite phenomenal, by non pilots as well as experienced glider pilots from around the district. By October eighteen new pilots had joined us since our move from Keevil.

Dick Yerburgh's tale in the October issue of *Sailplane & Gliding* tells the story very clearly of the hassle that occurred prior to us obtaining planning permission to fly from The Park.

The committee agreed to purchase a brand new grass topping machine, which was delivered within three days, enabling the first of a few autumnal cuts to be made.

The main income to the club depends on our launch performance from the winches. A 'Gold Seal' replacement engine means that we will have three engines allowing reconditioning to proceed with the other two.

A quick word about the drogue parachutes on the winch cables. Please ensure the drogue is folded tidily prior to launching. This will cause less wear and help to stop it from billowing just after glider liftoff.

The Bannerdown club, who previously flew at Hullavington, moved to Keevil in November. They will be using our old buildings plus the Star Avia hangar.

The editor of *Final Glide* is keen to exchange news items with newsletters from other clubs. If you have any contacts around the clubs, ask for spare copies of *Final Glide* and pass them on.

WARNING - MISHAPS IN CLUB AIRCRAFT CAN SERIOUSLY DAMAGE YOUR WEALTH!

(up to £275 in fact)

Insurance 'Excess' Group

Following comments made at the AGM, it has been suggested that Club solo pilots might like to get together to form a group. Each member would contribute £10 into a group fund. In the event of an accident involving damage to club aircraft the fund would be used to contribute towards the group members' liability.

A few rules:

- 1) The group will run for one year, starting on 1st February 1993. No new members will be accepted after that date (until 1994).
- 2) The membership fee is non-returnable, but if required it may be 'carried forward' into the next year.
- 3) Membership money from those members who leave the group, and bank interest received will be donated to the OGC Site Trust Fund.
- 4) In the event of a member causing damage to a club aircraft and becoming liable for the insurance excess:
 - a) The total amount in the fund will be available, regardless of how the damage was caused.
 - b) If insufficient funds are held to cover the excess amount required, the liable member must pay the difference.
 - c) After a single claim, the group will be disbanded and the money remaining will be returned to group members.
- 5) In the event of any dispute arising, the OGC Chairman will preside.
- 6) The fund will cover members who operate OGC club aircraft away from site, e.g. private hire.
- 7) Although I am quite prepared to administer the group on members' behalf, please note that the group has no legal or financial ties with OGC.

How to join:

- Either: put £10 into the flying tin, and ensure that this is noted on the log sheet.
- Or: post £10 in an envelope into the letterbox by the bar.
- Or: post £10 to my home address.

Remember:

The more people we can get in the group, the less you would pay if you damage a glider. PS: do you have any idea how much a K13 canopy costs?

Neil Swinton

HOW WE WAS DONE!

"Andy's landed out, he'll phone in." It sounded innocuous enough and Simon said something rash about looking forward to a retrieve. Eventually a message arrived saying "Colhill farm" and the dreaded words "soft field". So Donal was press ganged, and Tom and Phil said something about calling them on the radio if we needed more muscle. (I'm not sure who they had in mind to send, though).

We'd pinched Phil's OS map and found the farm - it seemed to be only about four miles away but on the top of a hill! Off we went, dragging Andy's shiny new trailer, turned off Portmoak airfield and headed north. Away in the distance was a hill. The hilltop appeared to consist of a vast ploughed field. And in the middle of this brown expanse was a tiny white K6-shaped speck. *Oh shit!*

Rapid discussions took place. We'd already concluded that Andy would owe us a pint each for the retrieve and the proposed charges now soared quicker than a buzzard over a stubble fire. By the time we found Andy at the farm gate, we were unanimous: "It's going to be three pints each for this one, Andy."

"Done!" said Andy instantly. *Hell, a Scotsman not arguing the price?* Something's wrong. An instant suspicion that it was us who had been done. He directed us through the farmyard and ever upwards along farm tracks. We couldn't even see the field, never mind the glider.

"I'm sure it's up here somewhere," Andy muttered amid general abuse. Eventually we ground to a standstill in a field where two combines were desperately scraping up wheat before it rained again.

"Have you seen my glider anywhere?" enquired Andy. We were directed up to the top of the wheatfield. There, on the wrong side of a 3-foot stone wall topped by barbed wire, and beyond 400 yards of beautifully ploughed soil, a K6 wingtip peeped over the hilltop.

An instant solution was proposed. "Let's burn it where it is!" Andy laughed nervously. We struggled across the field to the glider. The

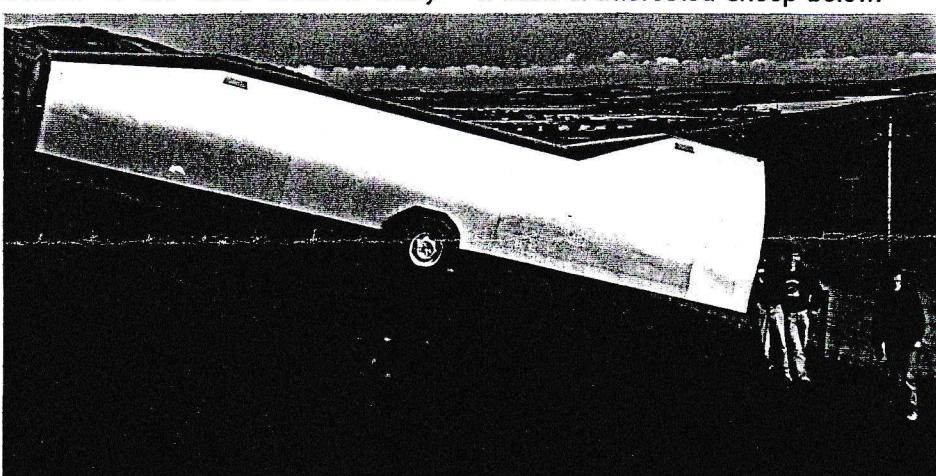
landing run would have been the envy of a Navy carrier pilot, and Andy hadn't had those nasty expensive arrester wires. Behind the tail of the K6 was a rut extending for 1½ fuselage lengths. Admittedly the field had been uphill but it was impressive.

Looking out from the hill, the Loch Leven basin full of lovely flat stubble fields was spread out below us. Portmoak airfield could be seen in the distance. The K6 altimeter read 450ft.

"Pity you couldn't have made it to the bottom of the hill, Andy," it was observed.

"Ah, yes. Well, I wasn't actually aiming at this field. I was going into a grass field across that little valley but it had wires across it. I didn't have too much height left when I got here." We didn't enquire further.

A gate was discovered at the bottom of the field. It led to a tiny



track notched into the side of a steep valley and seemed to offer a better chance than heaving the K6 across 400 yards of soft earth and over the wall. The field sloped steeply down to the gate, but it still took all four of us to move the glider. The wheel sank completely and the bottom of the fuselage scraped over small stones in the soil. We despatched Andy to the tail where the scraping was quieter and he could compose possible excuses to his syndicate partners in peace.

Soon we were *knackered* and Tom and Phil wisely chose not to answer the radio. Finally we decided to de-rig and carry the pieces the rest of the way to the gate.

I then walked back to the car, drove down the hill, back through the farmyard, and about three miles round to the other side of the hill to the foot of the track.

One or two minor problems cropped up at this point. There certainly wasn't room to turn a car and trailer on that track, and reversing the trailer for half a mile up it was not on. We very definitely didn't want to carry the component bits of a K6 half a mile down it.

"OK, we'll turn the trailer by hand when we get it up there." Now, the reason why Andy has a shiny new trailer is closely related to some nasty scratches on an M40 crash barrier. Filling in another insurance claim form, this time reading "*the glider plummetted to the bottom of a valley when it rolled sideways off a track*" obviously didn't appeal.

Tough, it was past opening time so the deed was done, with much chocking of wheels and Andy desperately trying to prop up the rear end of the trailer as it hung out over a flock of interested sheep below.

"Just stand there for a TP photo, Andy." Click! He wasn't impressed.

After that things got moderately boring. Carrying the wings down, we got it right the second time and didn't have to turn the wing round when we reached the trailer. The fuselage was wheeled in and off we went. Total elapsed time 2½hrs, distance 15km. Andy unchained his wallet and put in a bulk order for beer.

The next day he had washed the fuselage and was lamenting a couple of minuscule scratches on the bottom.

"Want to buy a nice skid off a Skylark, Andy?" He pronounced the cleanup complete but was then induced to remove the wheel. A large quantity of first class Scottish topsoil had to be levered out of the wheel well. No wonder that K6 had been so hard to move!

I don't believe the farmer ever got his soil back, either. *Dave Weekes*

BGA SOARING COURSE

Not many people know that the BGA run soaring courses throughout the summer based at a number of clubs around the country. Different courses are held for pilots of different standards. Andrew Butterfield and I took our K6e along to the Allcomers course held at the Cambridge club during the last week in August.

Gransden Lodge is a standard 'A' layout wartime airfield, although the runways have been broken up and replaced by 3 grass strips. The only disadvantage of the site is that it is very difficult to find from the air, in the middle of the virtually featureless Cambridge plain. During the week, a number of the local club members failed to find the airfield again after soaring flights. The club operates 7 days a week during the summer.

One of the most valuable features of the course was the chance to discuss in detail the previous day's task with other participants. This took the form of individual 'how I dun it' talks before the morning task briefing. It was interesting to discover how other pilots had struggled with the conditions and navigation at the same places we had.

It was also notable how the intensive flying was assisting the less experienced pilots. Two of the local Cambridge flyers came on the course with just Bronze, and went away with complete Silvers and 100km Diplomas!

Monday: blue sky with fluffy clouds and a 20kt wind. The task for the 'experts' was 100km via Cambridge and Rushden, us novices were set a 50km to Rushden and back, the upwind turnpoint. Andrew flew first but he found great difficulty in making progress in the headwind. After a couple of hours he landed and I had a go. I too struggled with the wind, and soon found myself at 700ft over a stubble field near Grafton Water. I was just starting on circuit when the farmer set fire to the next field along and I soon found myself at 7000ft in cloud!

From there it was easy to plough into wind (losing 3000ft), reach the turnpoint and return to base (losing only 1000ft).

Tuesday: Andrew flew today, with a 110km triangle to Rushden and Newport Pagnell. Since this was a 100km diploma attempt, it was to be declared, timed and photographed. The experts were set 300km and 500km triangles, unfortunately in a north/south direction. This was the day when Graham Barrett and Tony Boyce completed 500km flights, in the much better east/west direction. All the 300s were abandoned by the first turning point, with a number of aircraft landing out a long way from home.

Andrew got round the triangle in about 2½hrs, too slow for the 60kph speed required, so he set off again! This time

he raced round in 1hr 50min, which would have been fast enough had his second start been observed. Sorry Andy!

During all this I managed to get a go in the BGA Discus. After 60min of soaring I decided that I still didn't like the feel of plastic aeroplanes and landed.

Wednesday: The same 110km triangle as yesterday. Interestingly enough, my times were almost the same as Andrew's on the previous day, 2hr 30min the first time around, and 1hr 50min the second. Unfortunately I managed to run out of camera film on the second lap, so I couldn't claim my Diploma either. I did take some super shots of Bedford town centre instead though!

Thursday: The morning started overcast, and didn't clear until about noon. A 100km triangle to the east was set, Newmarket and Ely. Unfortunately the day seemed to end at around 2.00pm with most of the gliders on the second leg. The tone of the radio conversations changed very suddenly from elation and excitement to gloom and depression as people started to land out. With all the faith of a true syndicate partner I hooked the trailer to the car and waited. About an hour later the K6e arrived over the airfield, Andy having scratched back. At one point he had climbed at ½kt for 30min as an Astir beneath him slowly lost out and eventually landed.

Friday: the task was 230km via Peterborough and Banbury. I had never before flown that sort of distance, so I set off feeling certain of failure. After getting low and lost on the second leg I fortunately came upon the BGA Janus doing the same task - he had set off far later than me. Following a radio discussion of how similar Corby and Kettering look from the air (he was lost as well!) he found me a thermal, saw me centred and then belted off into the murk.

The conditions then rapidly improved, and I found myself flying very fast between thermals towards Banbury. Owing to a slight error in navigation (oops!) I then managed to miss both Banbury and the M40 and flew out over the Cotswolds. After what seemed like hours, and most likely was, I realised my error and turned back eastwards, and was very pleased to see Banbury eventually appear over the nose.

However, by this time I was tired and found myself struggling to stay airborne in spite of good lift. After getting lost near Silverstone and falling out of several good thermals I got low, chose a stubble field and flopped into it. The altimeter still read nearly 400ft after landing, so those Bronze 'C' checks with a covered up altimeter were worth doing after all!

Neil Swinton

AGM REPORT

The 1992 AGM was held in the recently refurbished briefing room above the clubroom. Brightly lit, freshly-painted and above all *warm*, the latter probably being a first in the entire history of OGC annual general meetings.

Chairman John Hanlon reported on a dull year, wetter than the previous season and with little or no achievement during the flying 3 weeks.

Treasurer Neil Swinton reported a Club operating profit of £1700, excluding the Site Trust Fund which also rose by £4,500 this year. He again stressed the importance of the Friday evening operation in keeping down potential subscription costs. 90% of trial lessons now happen on Friday nights, and this year in particular it was often difficult to get enough members to help out.

Neil then asked for questions, mentioning that 1993 will be his last year as Treasurer, and anyone asking awkward questions would be considered a prime candidate for the post of replacement Treasurer. *There were no questions!*

The meeting spent nearly an hour discussing and voting on motions designed to update the Club Constitution, which hasn't been reprinted since 1974. A new category of membership for students was agreed, and provisional membership for new joiners was extended from six to twelve months. At the same time the joining fee was reduced to zero. The full membership fee was raised from £110 to £120, although this year for the first time an arrangement exists for two subscription payments of £65 six months apart.

CFI Steve Evans then presented the awards as follows:

Malcolm Laurie Memorial Trophy for the best flight in a Club glider to John Gordon for a 320km flight at Aston Down in the Astir.

Club Ladder Trophy: Cris Emson.

Simpson Cup for the best flight by a member to Graham Barrett for his 500km in the Libelle.

The Flying Brick to Andy Barnes for landing on top of a hill within sight of Portmoak.

The CFI's own **Two-Up Trophy** for services to instructing went to Alex Jenkins, and the **Deep Breath Cup** went (as usual) to Martin Hastings.

Steve also made small presentations to the other new instructors and to Tony Boyce, only the second OGC pilot to win all three diamonds, and yet he hadn't won any Club award. Chairman John Hanlon also gave bottles to the ground equipment team including former member Gerry O'Sullivan. The AGM buffet was prepared this year by Christine Hanlon.