



FINAL GLIDE

Issue 16: Christmas 1996

Edited by Phil Hawkins

HARD WORK SOLVES WINCH PROBLEMS

Neil Turner

It was one of those hot summer days in August when Sue and I had made our way over to Dunstable to cheer Gordon Craig on in the comp.

With Gordon safely in the air we met up with Paul Rogers and retired to the caravan for coffee and lunch. We knew it was safe to relax because when you crew for Gordon you don't have to go on a retrieve as he always comes back - usually in the top three finishers.

At approximately 2pm my phone rang and I looked at Paul and said "Surely Gordon can't have landed out?" I answered and it was Cris Emson calling from Weston. "Hi Neil, its Cris, the winch has packed up. Where are you?"

After a few more phone calls to and fro it transpired that the problem could not be fixed over the phone. I could feel a visit to Weston coming on. Once Gordon had landed and de-rigged we made our way back to Weston. *I'll only take a quick look tonight* I thought.

When we arrived Graham had already started pulling the winch apart, so I donned my overalls and got stuck in. By 10pm we had made a temporary repair so that there was at least one cable that could be used for the flying three weeks. It was decided to leave the major repairs until the end of the flying season as the winch would be out of action for two to three weeks.

I turned up at the Club on a Tuesday morning and started work on the winch at

10.30am. My aim was to get the axle ready to be lifted out by the time the Tuesday night crew arrived. This I achieved. In the evening we were able to strip the axle down to find out what was stopping cable drum No.1 from disengaging. With the axle in pieces the offending parts were found.

By this time we had an audience. To everyone's amazement the offending bits were three or four blobs of weld 2-4mm in diameter. These had been in the axle since new (25 years ago) but had now decided to stop the half shaft from sliding in and out. Problem No.2 was to locate new bearings, seals and brake shoes (not an easy task!! as parts are no longer available from the manufacturers).

After many, many phone calls, I located someone to re-line the brake shoes (hopefully) and another source who could supply the bearings and seals. Once all the parts had been accumulated the long road to recovery began.

With the help of Dave Weekes, Paul Rogers and Terry Young one Saturday, we started cleaning and assembling all the bits. Dave and I struggled to get the axle back into the winch as none of the holes would line up. We then found that the axle was upside down!! Once this had been corrected (not too difficult) the bolts lined up (surprisingly) and it was in.

The new brake shoes and skinned brake drums were fitted, the axle was filled up with oil and now for the proof of the pudding - we started her up - and it worked (no surprise to us - honest). >>

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Clubhouse: 01869 343 265
Fax: 01869 343 403
Launch point: 0836 773210

Hard work solves winch problems - continued

Whilst all the work on the axle was going on, various other people were carrying out modifications to floor, seating and guards. So far the work had taken two weeks to complete including some week days as well as the weekends.

I turned up at the Gliding Club on a cold and miserable Monday morning to finish off. All I had to do was to load the cable onto the drums. With all the cable loaded onto drum number one I noticed oil pouring out of the drain holes in the hub. "Oh dear" I said to myself, or words to that effect.

I then wound off all the cable from the drum (by hand). This took me nearly an hour - I was not happy. Once I had got the cable drum and

brake drum off I could see that the brake shoes were coated in oil. The so called specialist hub oil seal had failed! With various solvents from the workshop I cleaned up the shoes and drum and fitted the old seal back in (fingers crossed) and reassembled. I looked at the clock and it was 5.30pm. Doesn't time fly when you are having fun! I eventually left the Club at 9pm still cursing the winch.

I turned up again the next day at 3pm and Paul Rogers had beaten me to it. We loaded the cable onto both drums, checked it all out - it was done. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dave Weekes, Paul Rogers (and his coffee) and all those who helped me with a difficult job which did not always go according to plan.

Neil Turner

Thame Scouts at WOG

During the weekend of July 13/14 Scouts from the Thame troop camped on the airfield. They were given the use of a K-13 with an instructor and also had an opportunity to learn how the airfield operates, take rides in the Land Rover and so on. Their badge tests included written questions on gliding and aviation in general. Even apart from the flying it was a hectic weekend with vast communal breakfasts cooked over the Club barbecue pit, an organised cross country ramble and evening camp fires. Here is a selection of the letters we received after this event.

Dear Oxford Gliding Club

Thank you for a lovely weekend. It was one of the most exciting I have had for a long time. It was really enjoyable even though I did not get all my flights. Our pilot was very helpful and a great teacher because when he did something he would talk us through it. I earned three badges during the weekend and I am looking forward to next year. (Andrew Boyd).

Thanks for the thrilling and exciting weekend and friendly atmosphere around the Club. I really enjoyed the gliding very much. And I would like to go gliding again some time in my life. At the moment I am trying to persuade my Mum and Dad to let me join the Gliding Club. (David Bennett).

Thank you very much for the weekend's flying. Thank you Dave [Nisbet] for being my instructor. I had lots of fun. (Alex Bailey).

Thank you for the fun weekend I had gliding. Thank you Mike [Martin?] Cooper for taking me up in EZE. I am hoping to join so hope to see you soon. (Matthew Schurch).

Thank you for our weekend at your HQ. It was fun up in the glider and could you thank the man who went up with me. It was a good experience in the glider. I had a lot of fun and would like to do it again. And I would like to see you soon. (Alex Thompson).

Thanks for an exciting weekend. I really enjoyed it. Could you please thank Chris Buck for looking after us and Dave [Nisbet] for taking us up in the glider. Even though I was nearly hit by a plane [!] I had a great time. (Ben Motteram).

Thank you very much for the enjoyable weekend we had at RAF Weston-on-the-Green. It was great fun and we all had a really good time. Thank you to all the instructors and organisers. (Suzie Reid).

We look forward to seeing the Scouts again next year!

CHRISTMAS FRUIT CAKE RECIPE

You'll need the following:

cup of water
cup of sugar
four large eggs
two cups of dried fruit
teaspoon of baking soda
teaspoon of salt
cup of brown sugar
lemon juice
nuts
bottle of whisky

Sample the whisky to check for quality. Take a large bowl.

Check the whisky again. To be sure it is of the highest quality, pour one level cupfull and drink. Repeat. Turn on the electric mixer, beat one cup of butter in a large fluffy bowl. Add one teaspoon of salt and beat again.

Make sure the whisky is still OK. Cry another tup. Turn off the mixer. Break two eggs, add to the bowl and chuck in the cup of dried fruit. Mix on the turner. If the fried druit gets stuck to the beaters pry it loose with a drawscrivver.

Sample the whisky to check for tonsisticity. Next, sift two cups of salt. Or something. Who cares? Check the whisky. Now sift the lemon juice and strain your nuts. Add one table. Spoon. Of sugar or someting. Whatever you can find.

Grease the oven. Turn the cake tin 350 degrees. Don't forget to beat off the turner. Throw the bowl out of the window, check the whisky again and go to bed.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

CFI's TURN...

Flying 3 Weeks

First of all I would like to thank everyone who helped with the flying 3 weeks this year. I think it was a success, with flying on just about every day. The Cross Country course also went very well, with several people taking the opportunity for "lead and follow" flights, and some dual cross countries in the Acro. I hope all those that participated learnt something. Even the water bombing from the T21 on the non-soarable day proved great fun.

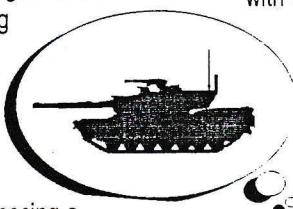
I appreciate that it is difficult to take time from work, just to help run the airfield for a day or two, so a special thanks to all those instructors that were able to do so. If there is sufficient demand, I hope to run a similar course next year. Perhaps a few more would like to attend next time!

Operating Procedures

You will all now have a copy of the OGC Operating Procedures (they were distributed with the minutes of the AGM recently). Please take the time to read them, as they should give all the information you need to understand the gliding operation at Weston-on-the-Green.

Duty Pilots

This is always a contentious issue, but it is important to the club to have a reliable person on the ground running the operation. I am not proposing a rota over the winter months, to give everyone a "breather".



Instead, volunteers on the day will be sought. This should not involve much work now that RAFSPA have stood down for the winter. Take note that the Duty Pilot is eligible for a free launch voucher for their half day stint - so make sure you claim it.

BGA AGM

You will notice that there is an advert for the BGA AGM and Conference in this issue. I have insider knowledge that this should be a good event, so I recommend everyone to attend. Note also the cheap room rates.

For AEI's and rated instructors, I would like to bring to your attention that one of the items on the programme is a talk by the BGA National Coach (whoever that is at the moment!). I hope that all OGC instructors will attend this lecture at the very least. It is only up the road, so there is little excuse.

BGA Aerobatics Badges

Finally, for those that are interested, and feel at a loose end over the long winter months, why not try to get the new BGA Aerobatics Badges? They range from simple manoeuvres (loops, chandelles etc.), to fully fledged inverted stomach churning stuff, that I personally can quite do without. However, the early badges can be done at Weston with a Full Cat instructor signing it off (the more advanced stuff involving inverted flying will require more experienced aerobatics instructors to check you out). If you are interested, ask me about it and I will pass on the necessary paperwork.

Cris Emson



There will be an EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

of the Oxford Gliding Club

To be held in the briefing room above the Clubhouse
on Saturday 1st February 1997 at 6:30pm

To discuss proposals for a Lottery Grant application with
the purpose of upgrading the Club fleet to glass.

Everyone urged to attend !

(Don't worry Tony we're not going to sell the T-21 !)



How I got....

ACRO-PHOBIA

by Paul Rogers

Having missed out totally during 1995 in securing a seat in the Acro for a cross country flight with the legendary P Hawkins esq, I had decided to go for it in 1996. Early in May I mentioned to Phil that I would like to have a cross country flight in the Acro. *Lets try for this Saturday* came the reply, *You get it all rigged and do the DI and I'll be there.*

On Saturday 5th May I made sure that I bagged the Acro and duly spent what seemed like the whole morning checking it over and finding parachutes and batteries. With still no sign of Phil, frustration got the better of me and I shot off to Phil's house only to find him engrossed in his building work.

Half an hour later we were both back at the airfield, and managed to get a launch at 2.30pm. Phil found some weak lift over the pond by the motorway and crept up to 2000ft. We glid off to Bicester but 10 minutes later we were back, at only 700ft. After a struggle lasting nearly 30 minutes we set off north from a respectable 3000ft. No GPS toys for these boys, straight to the motorway services and 8-10 knots to cloudbase breaking off at 4900ft. We headed west, over Heyford base, Enstone, Chipping Norton and just beyond Moreton-in-Marsh.

Not having to take many thermals on the way meant having a good look around at local landmarks, other airfields and landing places. At Moreton Phil thermalled up into cloud and we broke out into the clear at 5200ft, from here a steady 55kt glide back over Enstone towards Heyford until Weston became clear on our right hand side.

We reached Weston with enough height to fly around for another 15-20 minutes finally landing at 5pm. I am sure that this flight taught me some of the next steps in gliding. Being able to settle down and relax and pick Phil's brain with lots of questions, and not being rushed as you often are at the end of a 5 or 10 minute flight made this two and a half hour journey absolutely brilliant.

The following week I happened to be walking through the clubhouse where Graham Barrett, Phil and Claire

Thorne were having a chat. I was busy as usual either clearing up from Friday evening or building something. Overhearing the word "volunteer" was enough to make me stop and listen. It transpired that during the Inter Club League meeting to be held at Bicester in two weeks time there would also be a two seat competition. It was quickly decided that Phil, Graham and Gordon would be P1's and Paul, Lynn Jones and Claire would be P2's respectively. Phil and I were to fly on Saturday 25th May. At Bicester the day looked good and the Acro was rigged, DI'd, taped, washed, polished and canopy cleaned by 10.30am. The task set for us was Newport Pagnell Services, M40 Junction 6 at Chinnor then back to Bicester, total 110.9 kilometres. The weather men predicted thermals of 2-4kts, with an early cutoff, 15kt wind at 2000ft, but the really bad news was heavy showers around 15.00hrs.

With coats, hats, drinks, maps etc all stowed aboard [*and about 100 bars of chocolate - Ed*] we were towed across the airfield to the grid. Lots of gliders lined up wingtip to wingtip along the edge of the field in a barely organised fashion. We could both see to the northwest a very black looking horizon, and Phil whispered "Lets go now".

The Acro was quietly pushed in front and an attentive tuggy saw us waving and taxied over. Chutes on, controls, ballast, straps, instruments, flaps not fitted, trim, canopy, brakes, E for emergency, tow rope on and we were gone, leaving the rest of the field still settling, adjusting or just chatting.

From the 2000ft aerotow we were soon low over Marsh Gibbon, 1350ft low in fact, and Phil started to give free lessons about size, shape and colour of fields, what cows and sheep look like from above, and the possibility of going back for a relight. From up in the air the only advantage we had over those still on the ground was that we could see the heavy rain coming in, we both instinctively knew that if we didn't get some height and make a start within the next 15 to 20 minutes the rain would finish the day prematurely. Slowly, the vario crept

upwards, not a lot, just enough for Phil to work us up to 2800ft, enough to dive through the start line at 2500ft taking a photograph of the Bicester control tower on the way. We called a start time of 12.44pm, and we set off towards Finmere, then veered to the right keeping Buckingham on our left.

Over Little Horwood and Winslow, Phil cranked it up to 4000ft letting me glide off to Stony Stratford at 60kt and the vario was showing up all the way. Under dark cloud at Milton Keynes Phil took control again, called on the radio that we were entering cloud, and up we went, 6-8kt sometimes touching 9kt, it was very smooth all the way to 5500ft and we came out into bright sunlight with a perfect view across the whole of Milton Keynes.

On the far side we could see the M1 and just to the north the glint of many lorries parked was our first clue to the turning point which was the footbridge crossing between the two service areas. I missed the first photo, I blamed this on there not being a camera mount and having to hold the camera half over my shoulder, trying to get some wing tip and footbridge in the frame, 8 kt down, and a large portion of negative g all thrown into a 5 second period of time. But the second attempt was fine.

Off again straight over Milton Keynes shopping centre, over the A5, directly over the new prison where a long time was spent trying to gain some height. Two other gliders were with us here, and we watched them carefully to see if they were doing any better than ourselves, but there were no clues given at all. At Little Horwood we were low again, one glider safely on the airstrip below us, and another in a field about 1 mile to the north.

Then from nowhere 4kt on the vario and a climb to 3000ft, but in front of us nothing, so we headed off towards a darker shade of cloud to the right, hoping that something might develop but this turned out to be just wishful thinking. Ten minutes later I picked a compass heading to the south. Waddesdon and Westcott runway eventually came into view, so we knew Aylesbury was somewhere to our left

hardly visible. We glid down the west side of the town to the Bicester road and after an uncomfortable cloud climb to 4500ft carried on towards Haddenham, diving under the next cloud at speed and on to Thame where we could see what looked like a Discus so far below us that he must have already chosen a field.

From Thame the ridge running south provided a clue as to where to find the second turning point, a black stick standing out on the horizon marked the area, that black stick being the Telecom tower perched on the top of Stokenchuch hill on the M40. Our TP2 was the motorway junction directly below the deepest cut hillside in Europe.

In no time at all we had photographed this target and were on our way

again. Northwest, and over the new Oxfordshire golf course, looking quite yellow and dry after the previous weeks big competition, we were on the homeward leg. The wind was against us but fairly light.

At Oakley Phil said we were 8 miles from Bicester and we needed 2500ft to get back. As we were at 2800ft, things looked pretty good. He dolphined the Acro as far as Arncott and called 5 minutes on the radio, then it was stick forward for a bumpy 100ft final glide through the Bicester finish line, pull up, and a 270 degree turn to the right lined us up for our landing, and we finally rolled to a halt level with the Acro trailer.

What we hadn't realised was that at 1pm a huge rain storm had stopped all launches for up to 90 minutes, so the

decision to go early was good. The feeling of elation having finished the task was really good, but later back in the control room I was even more surprised to find that the provisional score sheet had us in first place for the Two seat competition. That result remained.

I'm sorry to say that the second day, Sunday, although OGC turned up and rigged, was scrubbed due to worsening weather and the only flight that Graham Barrett and Lynn Jones got was an aerotow back to Weston in appalling visibility. The third day it rained all day

[Phil's logbook entry includes the comment: "Paul has a good instinct for navigation"]

Feshiebridge 1996

The OGC Feshiebridge expedition this year lasted two weeks from 21 September onwards. As usual at wave sites, we were greeted upon arrival with comments such as "you should have been here yesterday" since Friday 20th had been excellent with about 5 Diamond badges being claimed. However, most of our first week was characterised by strong southerly winds. On two days the wind was so rough that no launches were made at all. On another day Richard Hall was the only one who flew in the PIK-2OE.

The 40-knot winds showed how dry the season has been, as dust storms were whipped up from the tracks across the airfield. Not the sort of thing you normally associate with Scotland. The dryness was also evident in the lack of fungi - Lynne Barrett only found about two or three penny buns all week and it was generally a disappointing time for the fungus hunters. The river Feshie was a mere trickle compared to last year. It was possible to walk up the river bed and scramble over the boulders all the way from the cottage at Invereshie to the airfield. The deep river pools were crystal clear and alive with baby trout.

Friday of the first week saw good flying conditions for a short time in the morning. The wind had changed slightly to south-westerly which allowed the wave to develop for a few hours before the next front arrived and it started to rain. Tom Lamb got 14,700ft in the Mini-Nimbus, only beaten by Graham Barrett who got about a thousand feet higher in the big Nimbus. Dave

Weekes scraped Gold Height in the Skylark, but was then caught out by massive sink in the Aviemore area and landed near the local fish farm.

Richard and Phil made one good bird watching expedition to the coast of the Moray Firth and Beauly Firth. Their most unexpected sighting was a Red Kite which must have been a re-introduced bird since the native population according to the textbooks is confined to Wales. They also saw Bar-Tailed Godwit on the mud flats at the Munlochy Bay nature reserve, together with large flocks of Wigeon, Oystercatchers, Curlew and Redshank. Richard saw and photographed a Golden Eagle while flying one day.

The golfing enthusiasts also made the most of the local facilities. As well as giving lessons to the rest of the OGC crew, Tom and Keith tried out the local courses at Newtonmore and Kingussie.

The second week saw more consistent gliding weather allowing flying every day, but the wave was never as good as the Friday of the first week. Good enough for Howard to reach Gold Height in the Nimbus, however. There is support growing for an expedition to Aboyne in 1997. In most wind directions Aboyne definitely has the edge regarding the likelihood of good wave. You can be grounded if the wind sets in easterly for a few days, but a 2-hour trailer run over the mountains gets you back to Feshie where easterlies are welcomed. There are likely to be OGC groups at both sites in September 1997.

OXFORD GLIDING CLUB AT THE OTMOOR SHOW

Reporter - Paul Rogers

For the second year running the Acro was displayed at the Otmoor show ground, only a short journey from Weston. This being such a local show, it must surely be an easy way of showing members of the public a real glider, and to impart to them our own enthusiasm for gliding on behalf of our club, and that of all glider pilots.

September 14th and 15th was a weekend of superb weather, sunny and warm, and from 10am until 6pm on both days the OGC display saw a steady flow of people, who all had enough questions to keep OGC members on their toes.

We followed last years format, and sold discount tickets entitling their bearers to a £3 reduction on the cost of a trial lesson, so please be aware they might be presented to you at the launch point. The tickets were numbered, and on Sunday evening went into a prize draw, the first ticket drawn for a Mini Course was held by Mr N George of Bicester, the second for two trial lessons Mr C Campion of Harwell, and third, a trial lesson for Mr J Scrawston of Wolvercote, Oxford.

This year, we sold £141 worth of tickets, £55 more than 1995, and this has been paid into OGC funds.

Those OGC members who generously donated their time for the benefit of the club were Chris Buck, Fiona Buck, Cris Emson, Phil Hawkins, Chris Lee, Steve McCurdy, Paul Rogers, Jane Stone, Barry Taylor and Claire Thorne. A big thank you to all of them.

As last year the show had a huge selection of other attractions to see, huge marquees filled with market stalls and crafts, a large arena with stunt shows and vintage cars, lorries and motorcycles. Steam engines and show jumping, in fact lots of things to make a very pleasant day out. We all had time to have a wander around.

Our main objective was to attract new members, and so far we have one, Mr Jeremy Bale from Marston in Oxford. Welcome to OGC Jeremy.

Apparently, some people visited Weston, coming directly from the show, and I would like to think that there will be more over the coming months, please make them welcome as you do with any visitors to our club.

AGM REPORT

Chairman Steve Evans commented upon the rather disappointing season with total cross-country distance being down by 50%. Our relationship with RAFSPA continues to be good and workable on a daily basis.

A new payment system with members flying accounts fully computerised had been successfully introduced by Treasurer Howard Stone. The winch had serious problems towards the end of the season but several members worked hard over several weeks to repair it. Friday evenings were successful this year, generating £6000 revenue.

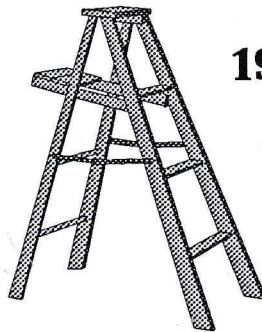
CFI Cris Emson ran a Bronze C preparation course during mid-season, and he also did well at competitions at Nympsfield and HB. Our best competition result was by Gordon Craig who won at Dunstable.

Treasurer Howard Stone noted that the Club income was virtually the same as last year. Operating profit was around £7000 but we are allowed to depreciate fixed assets to such an extent that this becomes a "loss" of £1700. The Site Trust Fund currently stands at £20,000. The Treasurer is also examining once more the pros and cons of registering the Club for VAT. A motion to increase annual subscriptions by £5 to £135 was carried unanimously.

Cris Emson described a proposed "cadet scheme" for 15-18 year olds. About 4 to 6 cadets per year would be taken on, at half subscription with a number of free launch tickets. The object is to promote our sport among young people and to raise the profile of the Club within the local community.

The **Ladder Trophy** was presented to Cris Emson. The **Dennis Farmer Trophy** for the first (and only) 5hr flight of the year was presented to Chris Lee. The **Malcolm Laurie trophy** (best flight in a Club glider) went to Martin Hastings for his Diamond Height in Astir DMH. The **Simpson Cup** (best flight from Weston) was presented to Howard Stone for a very fast 330km in the Pilatus. He also won the **Deep Breath Cup** for the highest climb from Weston. The **Two-Up Trophy** was won once again by John Gibbons. John Gordon accepted the **Flying Brick** for managing to fly around a Club League task with no film in the camera.

Cris Emson also presented several **Dick of the Year** trophies, most of which went to Martin Hastings for various regrettable indiscretions. But Graham Barrett and Rick Underhill did not escape either. [These trophies will not be described in detail - this is a family magazine after all - Ed.]



1995-96

CFI Cris Emson won the Ladder contest this year, after a close run battle with Howard Stone.

Cris achieved the longest flight of the season (529km on 4th May) whilst Howard achieved the fastest handicap speed with an impressive 103kph around a 330km task in the Pilatus on 6th May. Three other pilots made flights in excess of 300km namely Martin Hastings, Phil Hawkins and Caroline Oakes. Martin, Caroline and Howard flew the same 303km task around Leicester and Basingstoke on the same day - 4th August.

There were a number of flights scoring ladder points for height gain. Martin Hastings claimed Diamond Height for a gain of 16,700ft at Aboyne in November last year, and Rick Underhill also flew from Aboyne in October 1995. More recently, Dave Weekes just about scraped a worthwhile claim for Gold Height at Feshiebridge in September. According to the barograph calibration he just made it by 57 feet. The outcome of his claim is not known at the time of going to press but we wish him luck!

Only 14 pilots entered flights in the ladder compared to 18 last year, which is the lowest number for 5 years. The total cross country distance reflects this poor season - 8,650km against nearly 20,000km last year. The points table was as follows:

Cris Emson	7210
Howard Stone	7067
Martin Hastings	3854
Phil Hawkins	3473
Caroline Oakes	2941
Dave Weekes	2512
Brian Payne	2365
Rick Underhill	1730
Jack Miller	1669
Chris Buck	1079
Chris Putt	687
Dick Carter	265
John Hanlon	257
Ian Young	181

Can we please do better next year? We all have to put up with the same weather, but there are a number of pilots making worthwhile cross-country flights who don't bother to enter them into the ladder.



BGA Conference, AGM and Dinner

Hopcrofts Holt Hotel (Nr Kidlington, Oxfordshire)

Saturday 22nd February 1997

Starting at 11am and continuing through to 5:30pm, the 1997 annual BGA conference will be packed full of interesting talks, discussions, and events. The afternoon will be divided into a number of presentations, including our guest speaker, Mr Gerhart Weibal from the ASW factory in Germany.



JOINT AVIATION SERVICES Ltd

The conference is also to include a meeting given by the national coach and his deputy, to which all AEIs and instructors (or indeed anyone else) are encouraged to attend.



International Sailplane Services Ltd

It is planned that there will be something for everyone - whether you are new to gliding, or have been active for many years. Everyone is welcome.



AVIATION LIMITED

Come along and view the new World Class Glider (PW5) (subject to availability), which will be displayed by International Sailplane Services.

For more information, or to order your tickets, contact Claire Thorne on : (01280) 705741 / (0836) 512857.

To book hotel accommodation, contact Hopcrofts Holt Hotel directly on: (01869) 340259.



Shirenewton Sailplanes

Throughout the afternoon there will be the opportunity to visit many other exhibition stands, all of which are helping to support and sponsor this event.



If you get the chance, you can also relax and watch a few gliding videos, including the new "Champions of the Wave" and "Wind Born", courtesy of RD Aviation.



**Irvin
Aerospace**

Dinner £16 per person
Accommodation from £22.50 per person.

Following on from the conference, there will be the dinner, at only £16 per person. This will include entertainment in the form of a live band until the small hours of the morning, for those with enough stamina.

 **Nevynn international**

For those wishing to make a night of it, the hotel offers excellent accommodation, with reduced charges of £22.50 per person for bed and breakfast (based on 2 sharing, £30 single).

This is a local event, and promises to be a very interesting day. I recommend it to all club members.

Cris Emson (CFI)

Mike O'Neill

Ooh MY Bum Hurts

If you are reading this piece in *Final Glide* then you have only yourself to blame. For as the Editor has often hinted, if you don't take care to fill the magazine with your own good yarns, then those of us who write to compensate for lack of opportunity to fly.... will!

I don't have a vast drawer full of glider flights from which to draw when I want to reminisce about gliding, and at the time I made my Silver Badge 5 hour flight the only thing I wanted to remember was to try and forget it. But I never have, and the more I listen to how others got their 'Five Hours' the more I have come to realise what a singularly masochistic experience I opted for, such was my desperation to get Silvered. Apologies for the title; although rather prosaic it pretty much sums up my memory of the event.

John Gibbons always told his pupils not to get preoccupied or unduly concerned about achieving a Silver duration flight. The 50k distance flight, he said, was the essence of the Silver Badge trio and the duration would inevitably come along, if not during that flight then during some subsequent cross country flight when the pilot was fully absorbed in navigating and staying aloft and would barely notice that five long hours in the saddle had been reached and passed. But to set off with no other ambition than to stay aloft for five hours was unwise and likely to lead to fatigue and, in the event of failure, would only undermine confidence. Had I been younger, with more time, money and fewer commitments I would surely have heeded his advice. As it was, my wife told me in July 1992 that she was expecting our second child.

Earlier in the year John Giddins started working with Mike Cuming's newly formed Gliding Centre over at Hinton-in-the-Hedges and invited Oxford GC members to come out and fly with them during the week. I was keen to overcome my apprehensions about flying away from the familiar field at Weston and, as my employers busi-

ness naturally falls quiet in the months of high summer, was able to take him up on his offer. After a couple of visits where I was checked out in one of their K13 two seaters, I completed my Bronze flying test and got cleared for aerotow in a K8.

On Monday July 27 an anticyclone started to drift in over the UK from the west promising a period of good soaring weather as the barometer rose. I phoned John and asked if I could come out, but on arrival found that there was still a fresh NW wind blowing and launches were being made cross-wind by aerotow and were not recommended for low hours winch site pilots like me. I listened to the base radio whilst an over-zealous Libelle pilot trying for his 300k reported that he was landing out somewhere in Norfolk soon after rounding his first TP and starting back into wind. A long retrieve for someone, thought I, and settling for 40 minutes soaring practice in a K-13 with a newly qualified instructor who seemed keener to impress than to educate. I prayed for the anticyclone to move nearer to Hinton and give me fair flying weather tomorrow. And it did.

Tuesday 28 July was a pretty good day. But Hinton were winch launching and with very little wind, getting a decent launch was going to be a challenge. I reported to John Giddins on arrival to be told there were no single seaters available as course members got first pick. Sensing my desperation, John thought a bit then offered the use of their 'reserve' K7, a type I had never flown before, although I had heard John Gibbons views on them. The machine was serviceable but had no left rudder pedal footrest and only one ASI, which I would have to remove from the rear cockpit and fit into the front one before having my work inspected. Someone had fitted an over-long bolt in such a position that it dug deeply into my left shoulder. John advised that the rear DV panel also tended to slide open in flight and that it would be impossible to close it from

the front seat position if it did. The plane also lacked a radio. In 1992, USAF F-111s still operated out of Upper Heyford and Hinton airfield was sited within the UHMRA (Upper Heyford Mandatory Radio Area) which meant that any flying over about 2000ft AGL could only be undertaken after gaining permission from Upper Heyford ATC and on condition that the soaring pilot stayed on their frequency ready for any instructions. Clearly, without a radio this was not going to be possible. Hinton would also much prefer it if I stayed within gliding range of the airfield as they were not keen on dealing with the retrieve of an extra-curricular K7 (stuff the pilot) in the middle of a gliding course. No problem, said John the Optimist because I could fly North from Hinton until I crossed over the disused railway line running E/W, at which point I would be outside the UHMRA and free to soar to cloudbase. He also advised me that Banbury was a good source of thermals but that I would need to have 3000ft QNH to get back to Hinton should the sky turn to worms. Little things like spotting airfields in cloud shadow and pilot workload were skilfully kept off the agenda. John told me to ready the K7 and take it out to the launch point and wait for his instruction to launch, which I did. I dutifully waited by my glider, using the time to try and conjure up ways to make the accommodation more comfortable; it was marginal after 2 minutes on the ground and I didn't allow myself to wonder what it would be like after 5 hours. At 12.30 John had still not come back to me and I was worried about having enough day left so I grabbed him between instructional flights. 'My God, you still here?' said he 'You should have gone an hour ago. Lets get you into line quick'.

Despite the best efforts of Hinton's winch, my first launch gave me 900ft and I failed to contact lift. The K7s airbrakes were a revelation; like a K13 but better, much better. The landing pattern was across and behind the launch point and I was quickly back in

e. 800ft on the second launch and again, no lift contacted. The heat, the concentration and the hurried hauling back into line meant I was hot, bothered and inclined to give up but John wasn't having any. 'Launch after me' he said and I did. 800ft feet off the winch again and turning downwind, I saw that John in the K13 had found a stubble fire and was working it. I was at 600ft by the time I got to my very first stubble fire and I hung on in for dear life. My hard work was rewarded as I climbed to 1800ft and headed north out of the UHMRA, hoping to take 200ft climbs en route to stay high but legal. Daft, pre-silver idea, no chance and after sinking to 1500ft well short of the UHMRA boundary I returned to the stubble fire to relight. My second attempt went better and I pushed on out of the UHMRA. But extreme discomfort was already starting to affect my concentration and what was that roaring sound off to port. These bloody F-111s are everywhere, thought I and then realised that the rear DV panel had slid open. For the next 5 hours, I would have auditory hallucinations about F-111s trying to impale me on their nosecones. And then I started to get low. Bottom lip trembling, I headed back to Hinton whilst searching desperately for lift. I found a bit and summoned up all of my modest soaring ability to centre it and slowly win back the height I had lost. But this was the turning point of the flight, for I discovered two things. Firstly, the effort of trying to stay aloft had caused me to almost completely forget the considerable discomfort I was experiencing. Secondly, I realised what I needed to do to stay aloft for 5 hours. Forget centering well, forget pressing on, don't allow yourself to feel inferior as a soaring pilot. Get high, stay high, hang around in anything that is going up (or at least that isn't going down) and use the top of the climb to eat, drink, think, loosen straps and generally undertake circulation restoring exercises.

So I circled endlessly and aimlessly over Banbury. No matter how I tried, the K7 and I never seemed to settle well into thermals and bruising to my foot caused by using the left rudder bar meant that I circled right whenever possible. I was a beacon for cross country pilots, many of whom

were having a very good day; Graham Barrett and Tony Boyce did 500k's albeit that trouble down south resulted in flights of 8 hours duration. But anybody needing to top up at Banbury could rely on finding an Irishman in an old K7 marking the top of a decent thermal, his harness straps loosened, pulling his knees up under his chin to ease cramp and numbness of the nether regions. The visitors all joined well below me, turned inside me, shot up past me and disappeared. From time to time John Giddins and pupil would stooge past in the green and white K13 of the Gliding Centre, flying short O/R cross country between Hinton and Edgehill. Whenever I looked like getting a bit low, I looked for thermals in the direction of Hinton. At first I failed completely to identify the airfield, but once I had spotted it in a sunny patch of ground I made a note of one or two features that pointed the way to it and had no more problems.

Although I was worried about increasing high cloud and the declining strength of the thermals, providence kept me aloft. I still wondered if I could endure 5 hours of such discomfort; until I reminded myself that you couldn't just pull a glider over onto the hard shoulder. Finally, at around 17.00h I realised I had a good chance of making it. At 17.30h I knew I just had to come down slowly in order to reach 5 hours and my spirits started to soar. It was then that I spotted a large stubble fire to the west of Banbury. Needing a bit of excitement after my gruelling ordeal, I put the nose down and flew decisively towards the rising pall of smoke, arriving at 3500ft. I flew into the smoke on a curving line to test out its potency and was not disappointed. All at once warm air and a smell of burning straw filled the cockpit and I was subjected to turbulence like never before. The idea of flying with precision seemed preposterous and I wasn't sure my nerves would be up to it anyway. Nevertheless, when I exited the smoke and tapped the instrument panel, the altimeter confirmed that I had gained 500ft in around ten seconds. The same thing happened on my second journey through the smoke. On the third, I suddenly found myself enveloped in cloud as the thermal reached dewpoint. I had

gained 1500ft in three short passes through the smoke; and my circulation was now fully restored. I headed home at speed to land the K7 5hrs 46mins after launch and struggle, stiff legged from my cramped cockpit. F-111s roared in my head, my left shoulder bore the deep imprint of a bolt thread and I could hardly stand on my left foot, but me and the old dog of a plane had done it.

And that should have been that. But John Giddins came up, offered congratulations and asked if I had ever flown an L-Spatz. A minute later I was being back released from 600ft after a horrendous launch in another strange type (the L-Spatz has no trimmer and rather poor spoilers) and left to sort it out. Great days, crazy days. To John Giddins, and all those other instructors who seem to know better than you what you are capable of, my sincere thanks. Five days later, my bum still hurt!

Mike O'Neill

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Distributed free to members, ex-members and friends of the Oxford Gliding Club. Contributors to this issue were: Cris Emson, Steve Evans, Norman Hedge, Mike O'Neill, Paul Rogers, Barry Taylor, Claire Thorne and Neil Turner. The membership list came off Howard's computer so talk to him if it's out of date.

As the author of the accompanying piece has noted, stories of the "howidunit" type and other contributions are always wanted, otherwise the editor will dig out unpublished material of his own (he may do that anyway). If any member has news of other clubs visited recently, or samples of their magazines, please send it in.

Steve Evans

FOUR MILES UP

With the Libelle's canopy caked in ice, I shivered uncontrollably as I sucked oxygen at max flow and watched the altimeter pass 21,000 feet. I had reached Diamond height at last.

Disclaimer: it is not the intention of this article to make you green with envy (well maybe slightly) but to relay some of the joys and hazards of flying at Aboyne in good wave conditions.

Sheila and I had just spent a pleasant but fairly soggy week at Feshiebridge near Aviemore in the Scottish highlands with the Oxford Gliding Club. While it had had its exciting moments, the wave was not great and I hoped for better things at Aboyne near Aberdeen, where I had been many times before. I was not disappointed.

The first day dawned clear blue as Ric Underhill and I rigged at 0645 in light winds, we were 5th and 6th in the queue by the time the tugs arrived. Ric launched first in the LS6 with me following in the Libelle and in no time we were climbing in weak wave downwind of the local hot spot, a particularly good wave generating mountain called Morven (2862 ft) some three miles from the site.

Wave is a most unlikely phenomenon. By tacking back and forth like a boat in a stream gliders can climb an invisible wall of rising air to heights up to twenty times the height of the mountain generating this ripple in the ether. On this day the lift was not very strong, only 4 to 6 knots, and it topped out at 13,000 feet. But it was a foretaste of things to come. With 38 gliders flying at Aboyne, we found on most days that when we topped out in the wave, we had a flock of followers coming up from below and collision avoidance became a problem.

Day two, 30th September 1996, started much as day one but I felt something different in the air. It was hard to describe. Certainly the wind was a little stronger but it

was more the quality of the air. A sort of 'cleanliness' I have noticed on good wave days before. This time I launched first and after a little floundering around in strong sink finally connected with the Morven wave and started climbing slowly four miles from the airfield. It was at this point that I heard a later launching glider landing out near Tarnland having been caught by the same sink. There but for the grace of God.

The lift peaked at 10 knots at 10,000 feet but was down to only 1 knot at 13,000 feet and I feared a repeat of the previous day as I heard the radio chatter of a rising cloud of plastic below me. The visibility was truly superb. Out beyond Aberdeen the sea was a wonderful azure blue scattered with grape like cumulus. The sky had a laser like brightness. Were those really north sea oil rigs on the horizon?

Ric was just below me in the LS6 and we debated on what to do next. At that point I looked to the west towards Glenmuick, a ten mile long valley that leads to the mountain of Lochnagar (3768 ft), a most impressive massif, one of the highest in the area. Over Lochnagar appeared to be a large cloud with the downwind edge looking as though it had been cut with a knife. This had to be an exceptional lee wave downdraught so the lift must be over Loch Muick at the end of the valley.

I had been into Glenmuick before. It can be a scary place as it is completely unlandable (even for a reasonable crash) and it is not uncommon to lose over 10,000 feet in the sink getting out, so I proceeded somewhat carefully. With this sort of flying some degree of risk is inevitable, the key is to keep all your options open and plan for the worst you can think of. A good rule to use is to divide your height by three and assume you are at this height in normal thermal conditions. So 10,000 feet equates to about 3000 feet in thermals. Would you fly down a ten mile unlandable valley at 3000 feet? Now you see the problem. It is compounded by the fact that mostly the lift and sink is not marked and at lower levels the air is most turbulent.

This day was remarkable, however, as I found only modest sink all the way to the

end and one mile downwind of Lochnagar I was still at 8,000 feet. Here the lift began in earnest and I watched the most spectacular sight of Lochnagar slowly recede as I climbed. At this point I heard Ric returning to the airfield with barograph problems and I felt sad that he had missed this chance of a Diamond. Amazingly, twenty minutes later as I climbed through 15,000 feet, I heard Ric again saying he was in 10 knot wave approaching 10,000 feet having landed, turned on his barograph and relaunched! I quickly gave him the GPS vector and range and the comforting fact that the sink was not too bad on the way to Lochnagar.

It was about this time that icing became a problem. The Libelle canopy was collecting ice inside at such a rate that my feeble attempts at scraping it away were failing. My visibility was very limited and it was only the smoothness of the wave that made this blind flying possible. I had been on Oxygen since 12,000 feet and as I passed 21,000 feet, about 4 miles up, I switched to max flow. I open my DV vent a tiny crack and arctic air blasted in. Through the crack I could see a small white spec, the LS6, slide underneath me two miles below. Ric had reached my wave. Nobody else seemed to want to follow so we had it to ourselves.

At 21,500 feet I was shaking uncontrollably with the cold and could stand no more so with Diamond height in the bag, still climbing at 3 knots, I opened the airbrakes and started the long decent. The landing was easy. It was one of those days that makes gliding worthwhile. Ric reached nearly 23,000 feet getting his Diamond too. The majority of the other gliders stayed in the local Morven wave and did not exceed 13,000 feet. It was a 'who dares, wins' day.

My last day at Aboyne is of note as a cautionary tale. It was easily the best wave day I have ever flown on, though not the most pleasant. It was as before, an early start with, strangely, very little wind on the airfield. The aerotow was very rough all the way to the two local Lochs. I released at 3,000 feet and immediately started climbing at 3 knots to the usual 13,000 feet next to Morven. To the west over the Spey valley there were most impressive thunderclouds reaching to 30,000 feet or more. As often happens at Aboyne, though, the wave was

olding them at bay and by keeping a watchful eye on them it was possible to soar in the strong waves all over the Aboyne area.

As the sun rose higher the wave became stronger and higher with climbs to above 20,000 feet. I heard one ecstatic Astir pilot claiming Diamond height over the club-house. Another pilot reported 14 knots of wave lift at 2,000 feet over the Dinnet cross roads, only one mile from the airfield. Having been at 19,000 feet for several hours and got thoroughly cold I decided to land. On returning to the airfield I saw a frightening sight. It was clear that a massive and very strong wave had set up just upwind of the airfield and a large dark rotor cloud was boiling over the airfield itself. These clouds generate great turbulence and sudden changes of wind direction coupled with strong sink. Last year four gliders in a row had crashed in such conditions.

Aboyne is a tricky airfield to land at on the best of days as most of the airfield is unlandable with the exception of it's two parallel runways each 6 yards wide. Precision on the approach is essential to avoid an expensive and painful arrival. On this day I saw Ric start his circuit ahead of me and I noticed that it seemed 'tagged' with much flashing of wings. Having flown in similar conditions before, I elected to start my circuit at 2,000 feet and fly with full airbrake for most of the circuit to keep the aircraft as stable as possible. It soon became clear, however, that this was a difficult day and a normal circuit was not possible. The best I could do was to position the Libelle over the downwind end of one runway, in extreme turbulence and sink, at about 1,200 feet and try to keep the wings level in the decent. I think my heart rate must have hit 120 for that approach and just as things were at their worst I heard Ric on the radio "184, 486 come in 184". I fought the libelle to within 20 feet of the runway then heard "184, 486 COME IN 184" With a last mystic movement of all controls together I thumped down on the runway and slithered to a stop at the end.

I removed the canopy and took a deep breath. It seemed like a long time since I had last breathed. There was not a breath of wind on the airfield, as some kind helpers pushed me back to the clubhouse. There I met Ric standing next to 486. "What did you want on the radio" I said. "I wanted to tell you it was very difficult on the approach" he said. I just stood there with my mouth open.

Friday night flying

Firstly a big **thank you** to all of you who helped make 1996 an outstandingly successful year for Friday Evening flying. The weather was kind to us again and we lost only one evening. The introduction of a prepared barbecue was very popular. Returning groups commented that the already good quality improved even further as the season progressed - thanks to all slavers over salads, cakes and hot stoves. For my part I felt that these really pulled the evening together both for our guests and for ourselves producing a very enjoyable Club evening.

So to 1997...

From January onwards I shall be accepting bookings from groups wishing to fly in 1997. The season will start at the beginning of May. If you helped last year please come again this year - and if you didn't, we need you, please volunteer. I need sufficient names to produce a three week rota. Even if you are a very new member you can contribute, and introducing others to our sport is very rewarding. Instructors, winch drivers, cooks, tractor drivers, rover drivers, hookers-on, strappers-in, log keepers, washers-up, wing holders, food preparers, duty pilots, wise guys and smart gels please see me at the airfield, phone me at home, put your name on the list in the Clubroom, send me a blank cheque or volunteer by any other means BUT VOLUNTEER !

I guarantee that you will enjoy it.

Norman Hedge

FREE FLYING

WHAT?

**I DON'T BELIEVE IT
TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE**

HOW DO I GET SOME?

EASY

GET HERE EARLY!

For all flights ENDING before 11am flying time is now absolutely FREE - you pay only a reduced launch fee of £2.00 regardless of the length of the flight. For flights starting before but ending after 11am normal charges apply.

The first winch driver of the day, provided the first launch is before 11am, will receive one free launch.

NOTES FROM COMMITTEE MEETINGS

During the summer months an abnormally high demand for trial lesson flights and Mini Courses resulted in delays for some of the members. The committee recognises the obvious benefits to the club of trial lesson flights but are keen to ensure that members are not inconvenienced as a result. To ensure that members would not have to suffer delays before flying, the following measures have been introduced:

1. The Bookings Officer will not book more than two Mini Courses on any day and none between midday and 3pm.
2. Only one aircraft should be allocated for trial lessons and Mini Courses.
3. Whenever possible an AEI rated instructor should be used for trial lessons and Mini Courses.
4. Mini Course and trial lesson flights should not last more than 20 minutes.
5. Solo pilots should be encouraged to bring out a K8 when demand for K13s is high.
6. On particularly busy days trial lessons will not be given before 3pm.

Income from the sale of Trial Lessons has again contributed substantially to the club finances. The figure for the year to date exceeds £9000. However, this has been offset by a fall in income from members flying. The cost of Trial Lessons is to be reviewed in the Spring.

There has been much discussion at committee meetings on ways to encourage members to arrive at the airfield earlier in the morning. Examination of past log sheets shows that there is a trend towards progressively later starts, often resulting in delays during the mid-afternoon. To encourage members to arrive earlier, an attempt was made to reinstate the 10am rule. This would have meant that at 10am, a line would be drawn on the flying list, and the names above the line would be repeated below the line. However, the rule was unpopular, and analysis

of the log sheets showed that there have been only seven flights this year which were completed before 11am. As a result, the committee have agreed that soaring fees for flights terminating before 11am should be waived and that the launch fee for these flights be reduced to £2. As this arrangement would obviously make it difficult to find a volunteer for the first stint on the winch, it was agreed that the first winch driver of the day can claim a free launch, providing that the first launch takes place before 11am.

To encourage Duty Pilots to turn up, it was agreed that Duty Pilots (i.e. those who turn up) would be entitled to a free launch voucher. Duty Instructors must ensure that the log sheet has been correctly filled in before flying

commences, and sign the log sheet accordingly.

A second hand Land Rover has been purchased at a cost of £200. This will be steam cleaned and painted yellow. Spare parts are currently being removed from the old Land Rover in the hangar and the remains will be scrapped. Members are reminded that the brakes of both Land Rovers are poor. When towing a cable to a glider, the cable must be taken to one side so that the Land Rover is not driven directly towards the glider.

There has been an incident recently where a winch driver has attempted to wind in a cable which was still attached to the Land Rover. To avoid this occurring in the future it is imperative that the winch driver should not engage either drum until given instructions by the Duty Pilot, and that the Rover driver must never abandon the vehicle whilst a cable is still attached.

Douglas Hurd has notified the club that he will be standing down from politics at the next General Election, and has requested that a replacement President be found. Richard Branson has been contacted but has declined due to other commitments. Any suggestions for a successor to Mr Hurd will be greatly appreciated.

It has been a successful season as far as Friday evening flying is concerned. There were only three Fridays when flying did not take place, plus one where restricted flying took place due to RAF activities. Of the crew of 30 volunteers, five will not be available next year. We need additional volunteers!

Compiled
by
Barry
Taylor

The proposal for the hangar addition has been discussed at depth. Concern was expressed that a large proportion of the club's reserves were to be spent on something that would be lost should the club be required to vacate the site. The committee will be meeting with the Directors during December to discuss proposals for a lottery grant application for alternative schemes, such as the purchase of additional aircraft or ground equipment.

A visit to LATCC at West Drayton was arranged during the summer and was enjoyed by ten members. A transceiver tuned to 130.1MHz has been purchased and installed in the Launch Point Vehicle. A new alarm system for the clubhouse has been purchased and installed.

Club Officers for 1997

Chairman	Steve Evans	Workshop manager	Graham Barrett
Vice Chairman	John Gordon	Ground equipment	David Weekes
Secretary	Barry Taylor	Instructor rota	Cris Emson
Treasurer	Howard Stone	Duty pilot rota	Martin Cooper
CFI	Cris Emson	Membership sec.	Howard Stone
Committee	Peter Brooks	Publications	Phil Hawkins (<i>S&G, Final Glide, other book sales</i>)
	Norman Hedge	Bookings	Norman Hedge (<i>Friday nights, mini-courses etc</i>)
	Dave Weekes	S&G Club News	John Gordon (<i>and other publicity</i>)
Technical officer	Brian Payne		
Safety officer	Graham Barrett		
Parachutes	John Hanlon		
Radios	Brian Payne		
Instruments	Brian Payne		