



Scottish Airsports Club

Latest News

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Forthcoming Events

Late July - Trip to Laragne

Some lucky sods are off to Laragne for a hang gliding trip. Unfortunately I don't have enough credits with the wife to go myself. It's been suggested that I should just pop out "to get some milk, Dear" and leg it to France. I'm sure that would be a brilliant plan which would work flawlessly right up until the point I returned to find my front door key didn't seem to work anymore....

A New Era

At long last, the Scottish Aerotow Club has a new tug. We've got ourselves our very own Quantum 912 with less than 500 hours in very good condition and for less than £14,500. Too bad the wing's a girly shade of purple, but you can't have everything. Here are a couple of pictures of our new workhorse:



Since the photos were taken the towing kit has been added, so it's all ready to go to work. I haven't had a shot yet, but I'm told it flies beautifully and climbs like a bat out of hell, at least compared to our old XL. At the same time, it's set up to fly nice and slowly to make it easy for aerotowing.

The extra power of this tug now makes regular dual towing a real option for us. What's more, we're hoping to get approval shortly from the BHPA to start teaching hang gliding through dual aerotowing on a non-profit making basis.

This is a huge opportunity for us, since being able to teach beginners means we can give hang gliding a real boost in Scotland and significantly increase our membership. However we do need to remember that we have new skills to learn, and we really need to concentrate on putting safety first. Dual aerotowing, if not done properly, can be significantly more dangerous than solo towing. We also need to remember that for instruction the B.H.P.A. insurance cover is now only £25,000. However, if we all take things slowly, recognise that we have a lot of new skills to learn with the new tug and dual towing, and refuse to take any unnecessary risks, then there's no reason why we can't get the safety right back up to a very acceptable level.

To get to where we are now has taken a lot of effort from a lot of people. Alan Huntly spent a lot of time negotiating and arranging the interest free loan from the B.H.P.A. without which we could not have got the tug. Ross Paterson gave up a whole day of his time to help us fit the towing kit and get it ready for towing. Donald MacKenzie put a lot of time and effort into actually finding us a suitable tug and then arranging for it's purchase and delivery up here. Dick Long and other members of the B.H.P.A. have also given us a tremendous amount of help and support in our vision to turn the club into one of the premier aerotow clubs in the country (if not THE premier club). Also a number of members have very generously donated money towards the tug. Again we could not have purchased the tug without these donations. And finally everyone in the club has agreed to cough up an extra £10 per month in subs.

So thank you everyone for all your help! Now get yourself down here and get hauled up to 2000 feet or more in record time behind our new powerhouse of a tug!

Finally Donald asked me to include the following e-mail in the newsletter.

From Donald to Dick Long:
Dick

Our new tug has arrived!!

Many many thanks for your support and help.

We have spent 5 years getting our licences, learning new skills and setting up a new Airstrip, throughout that all that time we have been supported by the BHPA and dedicated members.

However it is true that some decisions will be seen as a catalyst. A tug that is fit for purpose will be one of those.

Any amateur organisation has its problems, however if you are supported by listening people who share your vision that Hang Gliding still has a huge potential then time and effort will work.

We owe many people a lot for their support, all love flying and can see the potential to increase membership and share knowledge.

Your support and help has been invaluable we hope that you will visit us, have a few beers and see the results of your work.

All the very best from all at Thornhill

Donald

Dick Long's reply:
Donald

I'm delighted that you are now up and running and that the prospects for the future look good. The BHPA is delighted to be able to be one of many groups and individuals to support you, and on a personal basis I'm very pleased to see a Scottish operation looking positively to the future. Hang gliding desperately needs a bolster, particularly so north of the border and I'm just delighted that I could help in a small way. I would love to come and see your operation some time this summer and I will give you a call.

Best wishes

Dick

More World Records

It's been a superb season for cross-country hang gliding at Thornhill. Previously I reported on Geoff's World Record flight from Thornhill to the south side of Perth for a distance of around 30 miles. Well Geoff, your record has been crushed! Earlier this month Andy managed to fly all the way from Thornhill to Knockhill to bring the record up to 32 miles or so. He even claims he had a couple of grand to spare but was too tired to fly any further. Andy managed to keep the record only until Jan Bennewitz landed later that same afternoon somewhere between Perth and Dundee for a 50-odd mile 3 hour flight. Well done Jan.

I may have got some of the above details slightly wrong, but don't worry. I'm sure I'll get full flight reports from both Andy and Jan for inclusion in the next newsletter. And I'm sure we'll have a pig making the next XC flight from Thornhill.

So come on guys - we've got a new tug so lets set some more new records!

New Hardware in the Hangar

Leon is one of our lucky microlight members with one of those flash new super-fast Quik things that can cruise at 100mph and make flying 1000 miles in a day a real possibility. However it's good to see someone like Leon appreciates that out-and-out performance isn't necessarily the be-all and end-all of it.

For that reason, Leon recently decided that the only thing better than owning a microlight is owning two microlights! Having re-mortgaged the house to buy his Quik, he clearly needed something a bit cheaper for microlight number two, which was where Ebay came in! Thanks to Ebay Leon is now the proud owner of a Hiway Super Scorpion (or something) which he got for less than 1/40th of the price of a new Quik (i.e. £500).

Rather understandably, Leon was keen that someone other than himself should test fly it, and Donald was happy to volunteer. Donald is well aware of the test pilot's motto: Never test fly anything to a height greater than you're prepared to fall from (not a rule Andy in his role as a test pilot ever seems to worry about). So Donald was seen to be having a great time flying Leon's new baby down the runway several times at a height of at least 5 feet without even wearing a helmet. Tut, tut! Judging by the grin on Donald's face, £500 can buy you almost as much fun as £20,000.

I look forward to hearing about and seeing more great flights from this wonderful aircraft! And yes, that is the complete trike! What superb all-round visibility!



Scottish Airsports Club, Easter Poldar Farm, Thornhill, Stirling, FK8 3QT
www.scottishairsports.com