



Scottish Airsports Club

Latest News

Issue 19, November 2004



Contents

Forthcoming Events
Page 1

Tug maintenance
Page 1

How they do it in Russia
Page 2

We have a new Chief!
Page 1

Airfield issues
Page 2

Website updates
Page 2

Forthcoming Events

Saturday 13th November - Parachute Repack

10am Broomhall Castle in Mentry. There maybe a small charge, but refreshments will be available. Make sure you find out if a small rodent has been eating your parachute before it's too late. Mine hasn't been opened up since the last time I took my wallet out at the bar, so I'll definitely be there!

February 5th - 12th 2005 - Annual Lanzarote Hanggliding trip

Need I say more? If it's half as good as the last trip it'll still be bloody good!

We have a new Chief!

Mark Dale came down to the club on Sunday 7th November to check out our operations. Thankfully we were blessed with a nice breeze and excellent conditions. There were lots of members present and everything went like clockwork with excellent teamwork from everyone. Mark Dale went away happy with what he'd seen, and awarded Allan Huntly his Senior Aerotow Coach rating. He therefore becomes our new Chief Aerotow Coach/Chief Executive Officer/Emperor/God etc., so congratulations from all of us to Al. Andy also got his Tug Pilot rating renewed after a day of non-stop towing.

The Boss is keen to point out that from now on we must be seen to operate by the rules at all times. This unfortunately means that we can only train pilots to aerotow once they have a Pilot rating. This really isn't too hard to get - you just need to get some hours under your belt and, most importantly, sit the Pilot written exam. Speak to Al for more information on how to go about getting your Pilot rating. This doesn't, or course, stop you from persuading Al or Martin to take you up for a dual flight on the tandem!

Tug maintenance

The XL has finally returned from it's complete engine overhaul and is now running smoothly and sweetly after all that much needed work. We plan to get the 912 powder coated soon to protect it from rust. We've put a large investment into the 912, so we don't want it to crumble away! This shouldn't take long, but while the 912 is out of action, we can continue to operate with the good old XL. The bad news is that with all our recent expenses, club funds are dangerously low. Please check with Scott, our treasurer, before spending any money on behalf of the club or you may find it coming out of your own pocket!

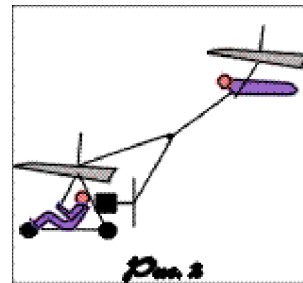
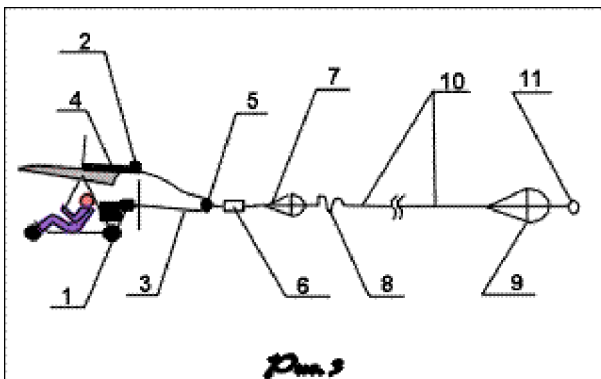
Airfield issues

The runways are very soggy at the moment, so please be careful. Sue may even be forced to close the airfield at times if it gets too bad. Leon had a rather scary landing in his Quik on Sunday when he went through a wet patch just after touchdown and nearly lost control of the trike. The huge splash/spray of water was very obvious to everyone watching, and Leon said the back end was slewing all over the place, but thankfully he managed to keep it upright.

It is a condition of the hangarage agreement that all aircraft are on trolleys. This is essential for Sue and George so that they can get aircraft in and out of the hangar easily. There are still three aircraft which aren't on trolleys (including our tug), but Allan Huntly has kindly offered to help make up trolleys for all of them.

How they do it in Russia

Sergey has told me of the very interesting aerotow technique they have developed at the Moscow Aviation Institute Hang Gliding club and have been using for the last 3 years. It's a bit like a cross between aerotowing and winching. There is a V-bridle at the tug end of the tow line attached to the prop-shaft and the tug's king post. This allows towing slow gliders because the glider can stay much higher than the tug (up to 80 degrees!) and glider's lift helps the tug to fly slow. Apparently this is more efficient due to less induced drag of the "biplane" (tug and glider combination), but mainly it helps the glider to fly at normal angle of attack without typical aerotowing difficulties. Flying on tow becomes more like on a winch.



- 1: Primary release
- 2: Secondary release
- 3: Cord, 6mm kevlar, 4 - 8 metres long
- 4: Tube 14 x 1mm
- 5: Small roller or ring
- 6: Spindle
- 7: Very small drag chute
- 8: Weak link
- 9: Drag chute
- 10: Tow line
- 11: Tow ring

If your Russian's pretty hot, check it out at either of the following two websites:

http://www.yutsa.ru/bibl/ignatov_syst.htm

<http://maiclub.narod.ru/delta2.htm>

If your Russian's not too hot and you want a laugh, try a machine translator on it - you may find like Sergey did that "weak link" comes out as "explosive"! (Adds a new dimension of fear to having your weak link go at low altitude!)

Any volunteers to try it out?

Website Updates

I've added some video footage from Sunday in the Downloads section of the website. Since the ground was soggy we were foot-launching as much as possible. Tim bravely decided to try his first ever foot-launch in front of a large spectator crowd and my video camera. What we didn't realise at the time was that Tim's V-bridle was set up for a very fast pitch trim - great for launching off the trolley behind a 912, but not nearly so good for footlaunching because the bridle was keeping the nose down making for a very fast take off.

A fresh Tim did manage to get off the ground on his first attempt, but during the transition from the uprights to the base-bar the glider started to turn and decided to head for the ground. Much to Tim's credit he didn't let this put him off and had another two attempts. However after the first go he was now more tired and unable to run as fast, making attempts 2 & 3 less successful than attempt one.

To discover whether the problem was with the set up or just with Tim being a plonker, we got Andy to have a go with the same V-bridle arrangement. Although Andy managed to pull it off, you'll see from the video just how fast he had to run! It was now obvious what the problem was, and Tim subsequently did a very successful launch off the trolley just to prove there's nothing wrong with his piloting skills. I would also have tried my first ever foot-launch, but Martin says my harness is not good for footlaunching since it's very difficult to adjust the angle of dangle under tow to a proper head down attitude. Plus even if I'd had a decent harness, I was wearing the wrong colour of knickers...

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