



Scottish Airsports Club

Latest News

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Forthcoming Events

Homegrown Festival, Fforest Ffields, Powys, Wales, 8-10 September 2006

"Let's make this event the best ever. Forget those Frenchies and their baguettes, salade vertes and hairy armpits. When it comes to weekend flying festivals, it's the Brits who know how to fly hard and play hard."

-Jocky Sanderson

Heed the advice of Uncle Jocky. Book your tickets now for the Homegrown Festival, based at the beautiful Fforest Fields campsite under Aberedw Hill, a big friendly flat-topped flying site. Come and enjoy the free talks and seminars on thermalling and XC flying by the UK's most Jedi-minded XC pilots take your flying to the next level. Homegrown is for the whole family, and we've got a childrens' entertainer and lots more:

- Magic Tent with real ale bar, live ska, dance and rock bands on Friday and Saturday nights.
- Test gliders and gear from Advance, Airwave, Apco, AXB, Brauniger, Avian, Digifly, Gin, Firebird, FreeX, Moyes, Nova, Ozone, Parajet, Skyline, Supair and several more. Browse for bargains in the Trade Marquee.
- A Paramotor Field, Balloon Field, Kite Field, and Acro displays!
- Repacks and repairs at The Loft's Tipi, and reserve practise deployment at the Green Dragons' Zip Wire.
- Food stalls including a veggie curry tent, Organic Burger bar, Lol's Eats, and Shepherd's Ice Cream
- Talks and Films Tent, with Martin Cray on raising and flying with birds of prey, plus Jerome Maupoint photography masterclass, Leo Dickenson's 'The Falcon that Flew with Man' and more.

Bring your friends and family - but book early as campsite numbers are strictly limited! Tickets cost just £20 including camping but please book early! Explore the site and buy online at www.homegrownfestival.com or call 01273 673000.

Cheers
Hugh Miller
Cross Country International

BHPA Club Coach Training Weekend 30th September - 1st October

Don't miss this wonderful opportunity! In the heart of beautiful flying country, in the lovely village of Chipping, the Penine Soaring Club are hosting a BHPA Club Coach Course. The course will be held in Chipping & District Memorial Hall in the centre of Chipping. Chipping can be found by taking Junction 31a off the M6, which is just north of Preston, and driving approximately 8 miles East.

Unfortunately, the number of delegates has to be restricted and therefore your early application is encouraged. Applications will be treated on a strictly first come basis. The course is open to PG/HG Pilots who are CP qualified with a minimum of 10 hours. Less experienced pilots are welcome to attend, although they will learn, they cannot however become coaches. The course would also be useful for existing club coaches who wish to update their skills.

To qualify as a club coach, you need to attend the full weekend and obtain a certificate from the BHPA organiser at the end of the course. There are no examinations; you just have to perform well on the course. In addition, your local senior club coach needs to approve your application to the BHPA.

The cost of the course is £35 per pilot (£25 goes to the BHPA and £10 for the lecture room facilities). All attendees will be responsible for their own food, accommodation, drinks etc. The course fee is non-refundable. The course will run on Saturday from 9.30am until 5.00pm and Sunday 9.30am to 4.30pm. All pilots will need to bring pen, pencil and paper.

This is a fantastic opportunity for many pilots to get together, meet new and old friends and hopefully improve our knowledge. Please request a registration form and send with a £35 cheque payable to "Pennine Soaring Club" to Dale Pickard, The Secretary, Pennine Soaring Club, Bank House, 4 Wharf Road, Sale Cheshire M33 2AF. If you have any queries you can e-mail Dale at: secretary@penninesoaringclub.org.uk

DALE PICKARD - (Secretary,PSC)

Ochils Paragliding Club Christmas Ceilidh 16th December

Billy the paragliding instructor is off to France, so the Ochils Paragliding Club now has no Landrover. We intend to purchase one ASAP so that easy access is maintained. We will have a hang glider friendly roof and welcome any hang glider pilot to use the transport we hope to buy.

To this end we need to raise funds and I have organised a ceilidh for the 16th of Dec 2006 from 7pm to 1am in the Devonvale Hall, Tillicoultry. There will be a quality buffet, live ceilidh band and a raffle. Tickets £20 (need prizes too, Free tandem flight?;-)

I would be delighted if you and your club members, friends and family could come along to support us. Tickets are printed and ready to sell. If interested, please send me your address and how many tickets you want and I'll get them sent to you.

Thank you for your support,

Andrew Ward (andy.gilly@virgin.net)

Verbier Summits

Turning 40 has its advantages. Normally I'm only allowed one flying holiday a year, but this year I got permission from the wife to go away for another week as a one-off for my 40th.

I'd had an impressive brochure from Verbier Summits for a couple of years and had never flown in the Alps before so here was my chance. It sounded great, with amazing scenery, a luxury chalet, breakfast and dinner, and a minibus to take you to take-off and pick you up from the landing field. I would have liked to take my own glider, but there was no way I was going to drive all that distance or struggle with a glider on two flights and a train, so the fact that they offered hang gliders to rent was also a big bonus. I just hoped I wouldn't find myself rigging some ancient death-trap!

The flight to Geneva was delayed by over 2 hours so I arrived at the Chalet in total darkness. The next morning I awoke to stunning views as we breakfasted outdoors at 5000 feet looking across to the high snow-capped peaks and the valley below. They have two lovely chalets right next to each other, but everyone dines together. If it's not flyable and you don't want to leave the chalet there's plenty to keep you amused with a TV video player, DVD player, a decent library of movies, a laptop with free broadband internet and even a Sony playstation! I was also lucky enough to get a room to myself at no extra charge. The chalets are conveniently located just a ten minute walk from the centre of Verbier and a 20 minute drive from the main take-off site.

There were three other hang glider pilots, plus two paraglider pilots staying when I arrived. At around 11am we loaded the minibus up with all the kit and headed up to take-off with Su and Mike, identical twin brothers who run the operation. It took me four days to work out how to tell them apart and avoid stupid conversations like:

"Was my take-off better than my last one?"

"Why, was there a problem with your last take-off"

"Oops, sorry - you must be Mike. Where's Stu?"



The chalet with outdoor dining area



The view from take-off. My rental glider is in the foreground.

The take off is a nice wide steep grass slope by the chair lift at 7000ft asl, and the minibus takes you all the way there - no carry up required. I opened my glider with a certain amount of trepidation to find an Ellipse Zenith which seemed to be in good condition. Ellipse are a French company who make gliders based on Aeros designs. You won't find the Zenith on their website (www.ellipse-delta.com), I guess because it's been discontinued, but it's a fairly standard looking intermediate with a kingpost, 3 luff lines each side, a VG, flexible tip wands, and loads of battens (11 top surface, 2 bottom surface each side).

The wind was light so a fast run was required with the thin warm air, but the steep slope meant it wasn't a problem. Because of an overcast sky there wasn't much lift, so I settled down to enjoy the 4000ft top-to-bottom. Unfortunately I soon found the glider had a noticeable right turn which made the handling a bit awkward.

The official landing field is a reasonable size, but the field next to it can also be used and the two can be treated as a single very large field. Coming in to land, the wind was very light and I managed to whack it in, much to the amusement of the paraglider pilots, although there were no bent uprights. Once we were all down, the minibus took us all back up to take-off for another try. My second flight was a similar story - the glider wanting to turn right and a crap landing. I told Stu about the right turn so the next day he gave me another Zenith to try. This glider was much better - it flew straight and I could land it too, although it still had a bit of adverse yaw which I'd noticed on the other glider. I guess that's just the way these gliders fly.

During the week, I got at least one flight each day. There was a static high pressure system over the area all week, so the air was fairly stable, with light winds. The best flight I got was 45 minutes - a bit frustrating especially when the paragliders managed some great flights of 2 hours plus at 12,000 feet. At that height you had a huge playground, all within an easy glide of the landing field. The problem for me and the other hanggliders was that there wasn't enough wind to ridge soar, so you had to catch a thermal quickly to get up. The thermals forming on the hillside below were small, making it difficult to turn a hangglider inside them especially so close to the mountainside. The slower paragliders could turn in a smaller circle and so found it easier to get up and away. Of course the week before I heard it had all been different, with less stable air, bigger thermals, and the hanggliders showing the paragliders how it's done with their much better glide.

All in all it was a good holiday. The flying was very different to Lanzarote ridge soaring, with much greater potential which I unfortunately didn't get to make the most of. Perhaps on my Rio, with its easy handling I might have been able to crank it round tighter and get up in the small thermals. However it is a beautiful place to fly, which I managed to do every day, and the chalets are excellent. Leah the chalet keeper made us lovely evening meals, Stu and Mike did their best to make sure everyone was having a good holiday, and the minibuses made at least two trips to take-off every day, usually three. I would thoroughly recommend Verbier Summits for an Alpine flying holiday. There were also three wives and two small kids staying with us - it's a great place for the whole family.

I've put some photos on the web at: http://www.allanphillips.co.uk/html/photos___videos.html, and you'll find the Verbier Summits web site at <http://www.verbier-summits.com>

Lookout Mountain by Dr. Bob

Here is a short story on my last trip, which was to Lookout Mountain Flight Park (LMFP) in Georgia, USA.

The Major was hoping to meet Geoff and myself at LMFP, but things did not go according to plan for Simon. Geoff picked me up at the airport in Alabama, which was on the way from Houston. After checking in we went up the hill and we both got 2 hrs on the first day. Geoff had kindly lent me a Wills Wing Fusion 150 which actually was a very nice glider (I have flown some real dogs on other trips).

There was a fair mixture of weather with heavy rain on some days. The next time that we flew was by aerotow and this turned out to be Geoff's day. I went first, climbed out on the ridge slowly before heading across the valley to some good-looking clouds which provided only zeros. I saw Geoff doing better on the ridge and went back for a top up (mistake!) and I never got up again. My flight lasted 40 mins. Meanwhile Geoff flew 18 miles out and return along the ridge. He got low coming back and was considering an outlanding before finding a ratty thermal to get up and then back to the LZ in 2 1/2 hrs.

More flying over the next few days, some of it top to bottom and a few weak link breaks for Geoff. These included one at very low level resulting in a bent upright, so one point in the CTD for Geoff. Near the end of our trip we were back on the Mountain in light conditions. Some of the locals did top-to-bottom flights and I staggered off the new Ramp and got lucky at 400ft. below take off. Geoff followed but was unlucky and went down. This turned out to be my day with slow climbs, eventually to cloud base.

The launch is 1400ft. above the LZ which is also the aerotow field. The training hills are a couple of miles away. LMFP is an excellent facility offering HG training for hill and aerotow pilots. There is currently no facility for Paras but this may change in the future. The accommodation was good apart from the dog shit. The other drawback was it is a dry county, (that's no alcohol, not no rain - Ed) but you can bring your own booze to the restaurants, which in some cases close at 2100hrs. Even the Jack Daniels distillery can't sell its bourbon on the premises.

My thanks to Geoff for doing the arrangements and lending me a decent glider.

Bob Dunthorn

You can find more information about Lookout Mountain at <http://www.hanglide.com>

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