



Scottish Airsports Club

Latest News

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Forthcoming Events

Scottish Aerotow Open, 8-10 September 2006

The Scottish Aerotow Open will be held on from Noon on Friday 8th September to the evening of Sunday 10th September 2006.

Tows will be available on the Friday afternoon, however the Friday will be an FLPHG event, with the aerotow competition starting on the Saturday. Costs will be £10 entry fee plus £2 per 1000 feet for tows.

There is a camp site very near the airfield in Thornhill, or for more information on local accommodation, please visit: <http://www.visitscotland.com/accommodation/?view=Accommodation>. Camping is not allowed on the airfield.

Please e-mail me at allan@allanphillips.co.uk if you're planning to visit so that we can get an idea of likely numbers.

Updates will be posted on the Scottish Airsports website (www.scottishairsports.co.uk) as final details are arranged.

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 Pennine 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)

Henry flies 200km

Date: 29th April 2006

Take off: Lord's Seat 12.33 hrs

Turnpoint: Bewdley

Landing: Sherston, West of Malmesbury. 17.50 hrs

Straight line distance: 199 km, 124 miles

Glider: MR 700, Harness: MR Tenax, Vario: Davron 808, GPS: Garmin 12

Mid-week: Weatherjack is giving a 4 in the north-west for the Saturday, high pressure and light northerlies forecast. The league was having the season's first meeting in South Wales. Tempting, but the 10 year old memory, from the same weekend, of sitting on the Bloreng listening to Chris Ashman flying 120 miles off Lord's seat was still too fresh. Derbyshire it had to be.

I spent a relaxing couple of hours the night before, quietly checking over my glider. I had brought it back from the winter in Lanzarote only 5 days earlier, and it needed checking for baggage handler damage and otherwise needed the Lanzarote dust washing off the bag and packing, as well as the usual tlc of siliconging the moving bits and checking the battens. Happy that all was well I had a good night's sleep and, crucially, a good fry up at my local greasy spoon in Manchester the following morning.

On top of Lord's Sam Hull-Bailey, temporarily grounded by injury, was offering his services as retrieve driver. On that basis he was very welcome to have my car keys, concussion or no concussion. He set his brother Ben, Duncan McDonald and me a route taking us down the west side of Birmingham.

The best time to have taken off would have been an hour earlier. Two para-puffers were winding over the back before Midday, whilst we waited on the hill, the wind from the right and the lift having switched off. When I did follow Ben into the sky it was to spend 10 minutes jostling with the jellyfish before winding over the back at 12.45.

As per usual my radio wasn't working properly, this time I could listen but not transmit. Getting sick of the yapping, mainly from the para-danglers, I unplugged as I left the hill, enabling myself to relax and concentrate for the rest of the flight. Save for one barrage balloon in the first thermal I flew completely by myself, save for the odd raptor, replaced by gulls in the Seven estuary area.

In order to clear Birmingham airspace we had chosen a direction that required a course of 200 from Lord's. This meant that we were having to cope with a cross wind from the prevailing wind at 340. The effect of this was lessened higher up ("right with height"). I also stayed as high as I could, having flown into the ground too many times as I've tried to leave the peaks.

The route east of Buxton and over Leek was straight forward. Things started to get interesting near the A50. The clouds were forming streets, but at right angles to the wind direction! Definitely wave influenced. Eventually I got a good climb east of Stoke and set off towards Stafford/M6. As I got there I had the firm impression that I should have been there 30 minutes earlier. What had been good cloud had spread out and now started to break up, shading the ground for a large

area. I spent the next 20 minutes working zeros at about 3000'. This was the lowest I got in the first 100 miles. The rest of the time I was working the lift in between 4000' and base at 5400', flying the clouds.

Eventually my patience paid off and I climbed out, now having to steer 220 to clear Birmingham having been blown off course. After I crossed the M54 I was then free to start heading south, fighting the temptation to head for South Wales, to drop in on the League.

We had set ourselves a goal at Bewdley. When I got there at 15.45 I was still at 5,000', the goal had just become a turn point. More importantly the magic, elusive ton was starting to look a possibility.

It was at this stage of the flight that the lift started to organise itself in lines that at least vaguely matched the direction that I was trying to fly in. In addition to the transverse wave bars, the first half of the flight was characterised by me zig-zagging my way across the sky, from one cloud to the next, avoiding a couple of large blue holes en route. Having reflected on this, and discussed matters with Gordon Rigg, since I think I now know why this was. It is the case in summer in Britain, in the middle of the day, it is virtually impossible to get cloud streeting in a northerly. This is because of the shading effect of the clouds killing off lift creation on the same path. This changes in the afternoon, when the sun, now more from the west, is able to get under the clouds and fuel the lift lines more continuously. If you want all day cloud streets you need to heading east or west, with the wind on that axis.

As I now tracked down the West side of the Malverns the air was bluing out slightly, but I found myself blundering into lift as I kept heading south. I don't know how strong the drift was (my ASI needed a service), but I would guess at 13/14mph from what my GPS was telling me. Most glides were now showing 47/48mph over the ground.

The base had now lifted to 6,000'. The lift tended to be strongest in the last 1500' with the cores to be found on the NNW (upwind) side of the clouds.

There was a certain amount of celebrating as I passed the 100 mile point, at 4 grand, now in sight of the Seven, south-west of Gloucester. Mission accomplished I went on a long glide, expecting to land on the north side of the river. Un-zipped to loosen my legs I hit a smooth lee-sider off a little ridge at about 2000'. I thought "I can't waste that" and climbed out to 4500', to then glide comfortably over the Seven. I joined a large flock of gulls in a fat thermal off the flats on the south side of the river which enabled me to glide over Nymphsfield gliding club on the north side of the Cotswolds, where I found my last climb.

There was now more west in the wind, compounded by now being quite low. With the sky dying I went on one last glide with a low turn into wind to put me in a dairy farmer's field just east of Sherston.

Having, mercifully, relieved the pressure on my bladder I phoned Sam to find that he had collected Ben at Stafford and Duncan at Kidderminster. They were now heading south, assuming that I must have kept going. Bless them! They arrived in the village as I walked in after breaking down my glider. After a good pub dinner we pointed the car north, arriving back at Mam's Nick at 1.00 am.

Whilst this was my longest flight in the UK, by a factor of 2+, its main benefit was as a dry run for the big one, should the opportunity ever arise. This was the route that Gordon took in 1989, and is an obvious one for breaking Nick Pain's 158 mile record from 1999. In order for me, or others, to have a crack at this, what do I reckon needs improving from this flight?

- a. Leave the hill earlier.
- b. A system to take a leak. A condom/tube type catheter would seem to be best for this.
- c. Food such as cereal bars stuffed in my sleeves.
- d. Have airspace on my GPS, so I can cut past Birmingham more tightly.
- e. Have Bath's coordinates in my GPS to take the gap between Lyneham and Bristol airspaces (had I continued much further I would have hit Lyneham).
- f. Warmer gloves/ bar mitts. The rest of me was fine in my new merino wool thermals and Woody Valley flying suit.

Otherwise a more northerly air stream; 010 would do nicely, thank you. Also June length daylight; generally the sunlight to power a few more thermals on top of the 12 climbs I made on this flight.

What do I think helped on this occasion?

- a. Flying in Lanzarote through the winter. I got sporadic, but good quality thermic flying there which meant I was reasonably current for our spring.
- b. Using a head support. For years now I have flown with a length of shock chord from my carabiner to a pulley and cord at the back of my helmet. This keeps your head in a position where you are naturally looking at and reading the clouds, rather than resting your chin on the base bar and looking at the ground. The rest of me may have hurt after the flight, but my neck didn't.
- c. I flew patiently, for a change. At no stage did I push too much or rush my decisions. As well as the relaxed night before I had done two good Yoga sessions during the previous week. Needless to say the suggestion that Yoga may have helped was greeted with a healthy contempt (derision indeed!) by my car mates on the trip back. Who knows?

Many thanks for Sam's hours on the road that day, and his Mum's hospitality at Cressbrook Hall that night. Also to the DSC hang glider pilots who have been happy to share their knowledge and skills since I joined in 1994.

Henry Blackshaw

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Skywings Snippets

I noticed the following in this month's edition of Skywings:

First of all, congratulations to one of our newest members, Steve Blackler on coming 2nd in the Joint Services hang gliding competition based at Crickhowell near Abergavenny from June 12th - 16th on his Moyes Litespeed. Steve was also first of the Services entrants and a member of the winning team, the Royal Navy. Nice one Steve.

I couldn't help notice the following in a report from the recent European Paragliding Championships, confirming my opinion of paragliding:

"FAI Category 1 events do not have as good a safety record as the British Campionships, but this event was relatively good with three pilots injured and five reserves thrown."

My god! With safety like that, who needs danger?

Finally, the following appears in the Safety Matters section.:

A French hang glider pilot died recently after a lower side wire failed in flight. An investigation revealed that the side wires on his glider were the original fitment, manufactured between 12 and 20 years ago. The opposite side wire revealed several damaged strands. ... BHPA advice is that side wires should be changed every 100 hours or every two years, or as recommended in the owners's manual for your glider. This maintenance failure has cost the lives of several BHPA members.

Of course no-one in our club would be daft enough to have original wires on an old glider and risk their life simply to save a few quid, would they?

Party at Cloudbase!

Saturday 12th August turned out to be a rather special day for the Scottish Aerotow Club. Andy McLaughlin, Tim Richley, Colin Harrison and myself were all rigged and ready to go towing by mid-day but the sky looked pretty uninspiring with almost complete cloud cover, so none of us had much expectation of staying up.

I got towed up first by Andy, and as soon as we started to climb out I could tell that there was life in the air. Andy waved me off at 3000 feet, and I immediately found myself in lift, climbing to 3500 feet and cloudbase. Then I found gentle lines

of lift under darker sections of the cloud so I could fly in a long straight line without losing height. After a while I lost the lift but found more over Kippen, before losing it again.

As I headed back towards the airfield I knew that Tim and Colin had both been towed up, and since I could only see Andy's glider on the ground I assumed they must still be in the air somewhere. As I passed over the airfield I could see that Willie had arrived and watched him tow Andy up in the air. I then went to look for Tim and Colin to see if they were in lift.

After a few minutes I spotted them both circling together west of the airfield, so I pulled the bar in and sped over at 35mph to meet them, arriving at just 1200 feet and below both of them. Just as I arrived, so did Andy, just off the tow and above all of us. We were all now in the same thermal together and it was very satisfying to see my advantage in the technological arms race (my rigid wing Atos) pay off as I quickly climbed above the others.

It's always easier to find the best lift if there are several of you, and when the lift got weak we just spread out and then centred in on whoever was going up the best. We flew together like this for a full 45 minutes for what has to be one of my most enjoyable flights ever. Eventually the other three landed, and even though I found myself in lift again at 1000 feet above the airfield I decided to get it down and land because I didn't want to miss the post flight chat! My final flight time was 1 hour and 38 minutes.

It's not often that the tug pilot gets to tow up three gliders, and then get towed up to join them all in the same thermal! Thanks to Andy for towing the three of us up into lift and to Willie for arriving in time to let Andy join the party.

Caption Competition

Thanks to Sue for sending in the photo below. Send your entries to me at allan@allanphillips.co.uk and the best caption as judged by me will win a year's free hangarage courtesy of Sue. And the use of George's Islander for a month, courtesy of George. And £40,000 a year for life courtesy of Gordon Ross. I don't think. Nope, sorry no prizes folks, it's the taking part that counts.



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