



# Scottish Airsports Club

## Latest News

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### Aberdeen Fly-In Final Reminder

Don't forget that the Aberdeen HG & PG Club is hosting a fly-in and party this coming weekend (31st May/1st June) to celebrate its 25th birthday. The Scottish Airsports club will be providing aerotowing from the gliding club at Aboyne. Unfortunately, Doodlebugs / Mosquitoes won't be welcome to use the gliding club but there may be an opportunity to fly these from a nearby field. More details about the weekend are on the club website (<http://www.ahpc.org.uk>) or get in touch with Geoff ([geoff\\_may@hotmail.com](mailto:geoff_may@hotmail.com)).

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### Thornhill Gala Day

I don't have too many details about this at present. What I do know is that there will be a fly past at the Thornhill Gala Day on 30th August. It is hoped that as many club members as possible will take part. See Donald for more details.

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### Aerotow.com - The Shocking Truth

Don't touch the mirror in the bathroom of apartment 3 when the light's on - it's live and you **will** get a shock! Thankfully someone else discovered this the hard way and warned me about it. Other than that, it's a great place for a week's hang gliding holiday as I found out when I went there at the beginning of May. For all the photos, visit:

<http://www.allanphillips.co.uk/aeroind.html>

For the facts behind the pictures, read on.

#### The weather

The weather at the start of the week was miserable. 3 degrees C, snow on the cars, and everyone going around with thick coats, woolly hats and gloves on. In complete contrast, the weather for the last four days was lovely - hot, sunny, light winds and T-shirt weather. All in all, not too bad I suppose. After all, we felt a bit robbed at getting only 4 flying days in, yet if you got 4 out of 7 flyable days in the UK, you'd count yourself lucky.

#### The emergency services

Only one person ended up in hospital. Ten of the HG pilots were learning to aerotow. One of these pilots, who was struggling a bit, nosed in after getting out of shape and releasing early. The crash looked undramatic, but he complained of back pain, so an ambulance was called. Thankfully he was back the next morning, still with a sore back and instructions to stay away from hang gliders for a few days, but thankfully no serious injury.

#### She's breaking up

Ron Richardson had a close escape. He had three uneventful flights on the Saturday before the week started. Then on Sunday morning, he was wheeling his glider down the runway on the trolley when a gust hit it from behind. There

was a loud “crack” sound and one of the leading edges snapped in two half way along. It turned out that it had been damaged in the trip over to Spain, and while it held together in flight on the Sunday, the negative load from the gust was enough to break it.

## **Happy landings**

We were blessed with 5 Atos gliders at Aerotow.com that anyone with an aerotow rating could try. I had 3 flights on one, and thought they were a delight to fly. David, a 747 pilot who flies fighter jets in his spare time as part of the airforce reserve, also had his first flight on one and liked it so much he decided to buy one. I don't think he flew his own glider again that week. During the week we were given a talk on the Atos by Mr Atos himself Felix Ruhle, and he mentioned how the tails were like adding suspension to a car, however it was not yet proven whether they actually increased safety or made the glider less likely to tumble. All the Atoses at the park had tails. We also got a talk on tucks and tumbles from Charlie from the DHV in Germany who showed us some dramatic footage of glider tumbles and tucks, some deliberate and some not.

Anyway, on the last Sunday the conditions were getting lively to say the least by mid afternoon. Darren on his Tsunami saw David on the Atos circling in one thermal and Ron on the Cheetah circling in another. He decided to join Ron and glided off in his direction. He then looked back towards David, only to see him descending under parachute! Being a bit of a cool customer, David talked through his entire descent on the radio, and ended up landing in some trees completely uninjured.

I didn't get a chance to talk to David myself, as by the time he got back to the flight park, I'd left to get the plane home. However, from what I've heard he was flying through strong lift which suddenly turned to strong sink and then the next thing he knew the glider was upside down, so he threw his chute. The glider only suffered damage on landing to one leading edge. It was suggested that the tumble was at least partly caused by David over controlling, but whatever the cause it didn't put him off, and he was flying another one the next day and still planning to buy one!

## **What about me?**

Before I went to Avila, my thermalling experience consisted of 900 feet gain on one thermal. Now I've had four good flights where I managed to gain height in thermals, including one flight of well over an hour. So I definitely came back happy!

## **The park itself**

I would definitely recommend Aerotow.com. They've got a fairly smooth operation running, and although it was slightly disorganised at times, it was their opening week and things improved as the week progressed. The altitude of the airfield (3100ft asl) didn't prove a problem for landing for those with a good technique, even in nil wind. Only one upright was broken all week, by one of the paraglider pilots learning to fly hang gliders. Do take wheels though, just in case! By the way the PG pilots all managed to go solo after only 3 days tuition. The accommodation on site is basic, but good value and you are right next to the hangers. Fall out of bed, carry your fully rigged glider out of the hanger a few steps on to the runway and away you go! It really is like that! I'll be back.

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