

# MIDLAND GLIDING CLUB NEWSLETTER

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*Jolly Rogering the DG - a Mynd pastime for summer*

*Roland Bailey*

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## Chairman's Ramblings

*Charles Carter*

Since the last newsletter the club has a new caterer namely Heidi Adams trading as Pie In The Sky. She serves excellent food and is keen to please even the most demanding of club members and she definitely needs your support. Catering is a very important and renowned aspect of the Mynd ethos and I know that Heidi will be upholding the high standards that we have come to expect.

I have said it before but it bears repeating that we owe Jan Outhwaite a sincere vote of thanks for stepping in at short notice at a tricky time and rescuing us from a catering desert which appeared during last season.

The committee has been working very hard this winter towards a strategy for the club's future. Gliding, both in the UK and worldwide, has been suffering from diminishing numbers of participants and this makes managing any club extremely difficult. The last thing that members want is a diminution of all the things which attract them to the sport and to their chosen club in particular but with falling revenue it is sometimes easy to grasp the law of diminishing returns as an easy option.

The committee of your club has taken a bolder approach to the problems and when the results of our strategy sessions are complete we will explain exactly what we are doing and why we are doing it. Suffice to know is that in the short term both fixed costs and revenue streams will need to rise as we attempt to grow our business.

We have excellent clubhouse facilities and a modern well maintained fleet but both fleet and premises can absorb almost as much money as we dare to throw at them. If you stand still you are going backwards at a great rate and so it is important to generate enough money to maintain and improve our assets.

It is the time of year when you get the chance to see if you can put a bit back into the club by offering your services on the committee. I know that it is fashionable to knock the committee and all its works but without the input of those willing to serve there would be no gliding club so if you think that you have something to offer please put your name forward. You might even enjoy it.

There have been periods of pretty foul weather since Christmas interspersed with some magnificent days. Last Saturday (3 March) was a glorious west wind day with steady ridge lift all day and some powerful thermals and cloud streets and in the evening gentle wave to 4500 feet QFE. If you were there you will know what I am writing about and if you were not then make sure that you do not miss the next one.

## Treasurer's Notes

*Keith Mansell*

Since Christmas the committee has met for several all-day sessions to review the full range of the club's activities and facilities, to consider new ones and to scrutinise the relevant costs and income streams. Among the innovations arising from the meetings are two new temporary membership categories:

- A **Winter Membership** aimed at glider pilots from flat sites who might enjoy some hill soaring during the five months November to March.
- A **Conversion Membership** aimed at paragliders, hang-gliders, microlighters etc who wish to convert to gliding.

We need to match better our fixed income to our fixed costs and to ensure that fees for specific services more than cover the variable costs of providing them. In 2007 we shall be involved in catch up and so some of the fees (effective from 1 April 2007) have risen by more than inflation. New fees are on page 8.

## **CFI's Bits**

*Neal Clements*

### **Undercarriage Down**

We recently had an incident with the Discus regarding the undercarriage. The glider was seen on the approach with the undercarriage up and a radio call was made from the ground alerting the pilot. The pilot lifted the nose and lowered the undercarriage, landing successfully. Let's just unpick the lessons to be learnt from this, apparently innocuous, incident.

Why would you approach with the undercarriage not down? There are two reasons for this;

- Not doing the essential pre-landing checks, which are water and undercarriage. Before an aeroplane can land it has to be configured to do so, this means the water has to be dumped and the undercarriage put down. The flaps and trim and speed are required to be correct at ALL phases of the flight and are adjusted constantly.
- The undercarriage was put back up after being lowered. This happens under stress and especially if the pre landing checks are not commonplace.

Why would you call a pilot to tell him the undercarriage is not down? You believe you are helping him and avoiding an accident. Landing with the undercarriage up will cause damage and also remarkably reduces the power of the wheel brake no matter how hard you pull the lever. However, landing on grass will probably only scratch the gel coat and or remove an undercarriage door and pilots at the Mynd do not rely on the wheel brake to avoid hitting things or people so this will not be an issue. (We always aim at things that don't exist, they are the hardest to hit.) So telling the pilot his undercarriage is not down is going to give him something to think about at a critical height, it will add to his stress level.

What would you do if, at a critical height you realised the undercarriage was not down? Your options are to do nothing or to try to lower it. The ramifications of the former are explained above. If you try to lower the undercarriage you will have to use a hand, in the case of the Discus you have to move a lever on the right hand side of the cockpit. You have the hand on the brakes, or the hand on the stick. If you release the brakes, what happens to them? It depends on the aircraft and the speed, if you leave the stick, what happens, it depends on the trim and the aircraft. Either way you are relinquishing control at a critical height. How about climbing to increase the height you have and reduce the risk? The only way you can do that is to raise the nose and reduce the speed. The reason you have the speed is because of the wind gradient which will not go away. So you reduce speed at the most critical part of the flight to lower the undercarriage by letting go of a critical control. The resulting stall into the ground from about 50 feet might well be slightly alleviated by having the undercarriage down.

Lessons to be learnt:

Pilots: do pre-landing checks, water and undercarriage, do them before you start the circuit no matter which part of the circuit you are joining, say them out loud, it helps you remember and you won't put the undercarriage up again. If, on the approach you discover that you have forgotten the undercarriage then leave it alone if you are below 150 feet, better to be laughed at than cried for.

Ground team: if you notice a problem with a glider on the approach think before you call, how will my call help the pilot? The undercarriage call in particular is the most tempting, please don't do it.

### **Howard's Way Overrun**

Howard's way is an excellent landing strip in good condition, its overrun to the west however is not as nice as it looks. Please take a moment to have a nice walk up to it and see if your glider would be undamaged, best to land and finish between the threshold markers.

### **Tail Skid Spoons**

Back on the subject of the airfield, has your glider got a tailskid that cuts the airfield up? Please help us all by getting a spoon or wider skid made. Every little helps!

[N\\_clements@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:N_clements@blueyonder.co.uk)

## **Motor Glider Training**

*Chris Ellis*

It has been the practice in the past to designate weekends in April for training in field selection and landing in the Falke. This year it has been decided that as we have Easter and club course weeks at the start of April, we will concentrate our training during that time.

It is our intention to have the Falke and instructors available during the club course period up to Good Friday, through Easter weekend and the following week.

If you are a cross country pilot this is an opportunity to brush up before the season starts in earnest. If you want a cross country endorsement this is the time to do it. If you are early solo it is a requirement that you are given instruction in how to land in the valley in case of emergency.

The Falke, being side by side, is also an excellent ab-initio teaching tool for effects of controls and circuit planning.

In spite of the very sharp rise in the cost of aviation fuel we have held the current rate of £60 per hour (charged by the minute from take off to landing) for the foreseeable future. Half an hour for £30 is very good value for money.

There is no need to book onto the course weeks to fly the Falke. We will operate as though it is a normal club day. First on the list, first flown. Briefing around 9.00am with a debrief at the end of the day. Any changes will be notified via the E-news.

The instructors with a rating to instruct on the Falke are Rod Hawley, Simon Adlard, Mick Davis and myself.

If you would like a session in the motor glider at any time please feel free to collar any of us. It was bought, and is operated by, the Falke 2000 Group for the benefit of the club as a whole.

## **Lunch with the BGA's Patron**

*Keith Mansell*

Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, has been Patron of the British Gliding Association since 1956. On 14 November 2006 to celebrate the Duke's fifty years as its Patron the BGA held a lunch in his honour at the RAF Club in Piccadilly.

Apart from the members of the BGA's Executive Committee invitees included all eight BGA Vice Presidents (including six former BGA Chairmen), eleven British present and former international champions and a dozen other glider pilots drawn from those nominated by BGA clubs making some forty in all.

On arrival the Duke posed for some group photographs and then chatted with us all assembled in the bar for a pre-lunch reception. After lunch BGA Chairman Patrick Naegeli made a short speech and presented the Duke with a large framed photograph of a Duo-Discus in flight. The Duke responded recalling Philip Wills' and Ann Welch's invitation to become BGA Patron. He amused us with an account of a glider landing at Balmoral recently whilst he was having tea.

The lunch was a most enjoyable occasion at which the Midland Club was well represented, if not overly so, by *Sailplane & Gliding* editor Helen Evans and BGA Executive Committee members Rose Johnson, Jon Hall, Diana King and me. With four MGC members on the BGA Executive Committee of twelve (if they are all present) we might be able to vote to make bungee launching compulsory throughout the land!

## **From the Flying Field**

*David d'Arcy*

Well my recollection of the winter season this year was that it's been crap! But we always say that don't we. Certainly pre-new year it wasn't wonderful, but since then I think the weather has allowed us some soaring every weekend. Heidi even cooked on the Saturday night during the snowed in weekend of February that required, I think, two search parties. The first by Helen to find Heidi who was walking up, and the second by Steve Gunn-Russell and Mike Witton to find Helen, and it's nearly golden shovel time too! So my log book is already looking healthy and my annual checks have been completed for another year as I notice a few other members have also been doing, as not every weekend can be a soaring weekend during the winter.

Welcome to new members, Matthew Cook, Laurent Couval, Adam Walker, Stuart Edinborough, Graham Reynolds and John Fraser; please make yourselves known to club members and ask questions of us all so that we can aid enjoyment of your new sport.

For a few months now Jon Hall has been sending weekly MGC eNews updates to all members with email addresses registered at the office. So if you would like to receive these useful updates then please let the office know your current email address.

As I have already mentioned there have been a number of good days this year, and that man Richard Bennett never seems to miss them by getting the first big climb of the year in FVP to 10,600 feet on 4<sup>th</sup> January. James Fisher followed quickly with 9,000 feet in KAW on the 12<sup>th</sup> and JS and Steve Gunn-Russell climbed to 9,500 feet as well as doing 101 km out/return into Wales in southerly wave on 15<sup>th</sup> February. Richard and Sarah Platt also won the CFI's quiz on 17<sup>th</sup> Feb, I forget what prizes they won, but I hear it was enjoyed by all.

A rather late addition, but a couple of Duos enjoyed another Scottish expedition to Aboyne during September and both reached heights of 18,000 feet and did a little cross-country as well. And talking of expeditions 494 and KAW have been in Jaca, Spain with JS, Dave and Simon and other lucky members to experience those epic wave flights in the mountains. Sarah Platt has a great pictorial set of their week, which can be view at herspace.com, <http://sarahplatt.spaces.live.com/>

Saturday March 3<sup>rd</sup> - what a day! I remember driving down Friday night for the weekend through patches of rain, which steadily turned to persistent rain and then ascended into cloud as I climbed up the hill, and had to ask myself 'Why?' But my heart was lifted slightly by the sight of a reasonably full (for a Friday night) car park that included Jonnyboy and IanMac. Maybe tomorrow won't be that bad after all. Sure enough wall-to-wall blue sky greeted us in the morning with about a 10-15 knots west wind - okay not perfect I thought but no reason not to rig. This takes a little longer now, having two LS4 seats, but is still easily achievable in less time than a 19 or Cirrus. Next it was a short push over and launching of my syndicate partners and help out at the launch point. In the meantime Jonny and Ian are already having fun and huge cloud streets set up, giving Clive Jones and then the boys a flight out to Newtown and back in strong thermals. And by the end of the day there was even a little wave for John Parry (FVP) and me (IV) to 4,500 feet above site. In the mean time Sarah Butler was going round again for what looked like a practice cable break in JGJ - basically from first launch (10:00) till the last (17:40) there was excellent soaring available. Afterwards there was a euphoric atmosphere around the club as members told their stories over late tea and cake. Sunday there were even stronger winds (from the SE) driving rain and low cloud giving a miserable day but not that I cared! Having had two flights, nearly four hours and some wave, with probably a bit of a tan thrown in also. Absolute magic.

## **Syndicate Partner Seeks Syndicate**

*Mark Wakem*

I'm looking for a share in a 15m glass glider to replace the Astir. Any suggestions gratefully received.

Mark Wakem: 01244 535301 (Home) or email [mjwakem@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:mjwakem@tiscali.co.uk)

## **The 2007 MGC Cross Country Coaching Program**

*Julian Fack*

For several years I have been aware that many very competent pilots at the club do not fly cross-country, yet some of them say they would really like to do so. I sold my Discus and replaced it with a Duo partly with the idea of helping selected members find out what they could achieve, given a little encouragement.

With the above thought in mind I was delighted when Mike Witton asked me to attend a meeting to discuss enhancing cross-country flying at the MGC. Simon Adlard, Mike and I worked out some ideas that we hope to bring to fruition during the 2007 soaring season.

The basic plot is as follows: a number of regular cross country pilots, "coaches", will take turns to set suitable tasks on weekend days, including preflight briefings on the task, the weather, NOTAMS, etc. The whole team, no more than six gliders, would then fly the task. The coach also flies the task, monitors the conditions, and arranges any retrieves required after returning to site. Finally, and most importantly, he will run a debriefing session, studying any logs available, and help to analyze the performance of individuals (and himself!) on the task.

That is the basic idea, so who would benefit? This is not an instructing operation, so the minimum qualification will be Silver distance completed plus competence in field landings. The pilots must be willing to participate as a team for the whole day, to attend the preflight and the debrief, and be willing to rig, derig and retrieve others. Anyone who seriously wants to commit to improving their performance this year should consider joining in.

It is intended to run these tasks every weekend day, given suitable conditions, from early May to mid September, excluding Task Week. A team of "coaches" has already been assembled, led by Simon Adlard. Mike Witton, Dominic Haughton, Nick Heriz-Smith, Sarah Platt, James Fisher and I have all agreed to help.

This is a brief outline of the plan. We intend to hold one or two meetings over Easter to discuss it in more detail. If you are interested please look out for information in the club's E-News, and on the boards at the club. If you would like to discuss the idea or express your interest before then, contact me on [j.fack@virgin.net](mailto:j.fack@virgin.net)

Summary:

- Main aim is to have fun and encourage cross country
- Minimum qualification is Silver Distance completed
- Tasks will be set every suitable weekend day, May to Sept.
- Full day's commitment required
- Detailed debrief after flight
- Not instruction
- Not lead and follow
- Discussion meetings to be held over Easter weekend.

## **New Style Weekend Course**

*Martin McCurdie*

Don't forget the new weekend courses. On these weekends William Brewis will take four pre-booked course members pre and post solo for a whole weekend instead of having the usual Number Two instructor taking the first few ab-initios on the list on a Saturday or Sunday.

Planned for 17-18<sup>th</sup> March and 28-29<sup>th</sup> April.

## **Open Days**

*Charles Carter*

On the weekend of the 21/22 April the Club is holding two Open/Recruitment days with the emphasis very much on recruitment.

I have been given the honour (lumbered while out of the room) of being in overall charge of the operation.

Yes, I can already hear the groans and am perfectly aware of the inconvenience which such events create but we need to sell ourselves to a wider audience and increase our membership.

Increased membership brings advantages to all of us. Obviously more members bring with them an increase in membership fees and increased flying activity and therefore revenue but they also give our caterers more business and make the catering operation more viable and without good catering our club would be a poorer place. If we are to maintain our standard of living as a club we will need to increase our membership so that we can justify all the toys and facilities which we currently enjoy.

So, instead of crossing out the weekend of 21/22 April as a gliding opportunity and before you promise your better half that you will look after the children or mow the lawn or take them to that long promised destination on that weekend let me explain to you why you should make every effort to help with the event.

In the weeks running up to the 21/22 we will be having a targeted advertising campaign in the local press and radio to get the message to as many as possible and we hope to attract a sizeable number of potential new members up to the club on those two days.

It is vital that when they arrive at the club they are managed in an orderly and safe way. We need stewards to man the main gate and to direct the punters from the car park to the office where we will have a team to show people around the club and to tell them about gliding in general.

Basic Trial Lessons will be offered with the priority going to those visitors who appear to show a keen interest and a financial sweetener to those who sign up to membership on the day. We need club members of all abilities and persuasions for a whole series of jobs and I can assure you that we can not have too many volunteers.

Club flying will take place on both days, weather permitting, but priority will be given to Trial Lessons.

Closer to the date I will be putting up a list in the clubhouse on which you can commit to help with either one or both days and at the start of each of the two days we will hold a comprehensive briefing to ensure a smooth running operation. I cannot stress too highly how much we need your help with this weekend so do not leave it to someone else to put in the effort, make sure you come along yourself.

## **Flying Start!**

*Chris Harris*

Bet you are all thinking about the superb breakfasts from the kitchen - WRONG - I am talking about the start time in the mornings at weekends. We do seem to waste a lot of time some weekends before we start flying. Now the days are starting to get longer and summer is around the corner, please can I ask Launch Directors in particular and club members in general to unpack the hangar at the earliest opportunity. Ordering your breakfast and then getting the hangar unpacked while your food is being cooked will mean that we can all get more flying. More flying means more income for the club so helping to keep membership costs down. Yes we all end up winners from a FLYING start! SO finally can I ask ALL the duty team to make a real effort to get flying started as soon as possible each day. Don't forget those half price charges for pre 10am launches - a double win - more flying at less cost!

## Club Fees as from 1 April 2007

*Keith Mansell*

<b>SUBSCRIPTIONS</b>	<b>Membership period</b>	<b>Fee</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Full Members:</b>			<u>12 Direct Debits of:</u>
Aged 21+ ) + Spouse	Annual	£365	£32
** Country ) at 50%	Annual	£200	£17.50
Overseas ) of the	Annual	£150	
Aged 18,19 or 20 ) relevant	Annual	£100	
Aged 16 or 17 ) fee	Annual	£75	
Non-flying )	Annual	£75	
<b>Fixed price to solo</b>	Annual	£1,050	
<b>Junior Flying:</b> Aged 14 or 15	Annual	£55	
<b>Social</b>	Annual	£75	
<b>Temporary Members:</b>			
<b>Winter</b> (1 November – 31 March)			
Aged 21+	5 Months	£125	) No discounts on courses)
** Country	5 Months	£70	
Aged 18,19 or 20	5 months	£35	
Aged 16 or 17	5 months	£25	
Aged 14 or 15	5 months	£20	
<b>Conversion</b> (including 40 w/e winch launches)	3 consecutive months	£350	
			<u>Member's friend</u>
<b>Trial Lesson – mile high</b>	3 months	£135	£65
– standard	3 months	£95	£45
<b>Daily Flying</b>	Per day flown	£6	
<b>Daily Social</b>	Per day	£1	
** For flying members of other BGA clubs & anyone resident 100 air miles from the Mynd			

<b>FLYING FEES</b>						
	<b>DG 505</b>	<b>K 21</b>	<b>K 13</b>	<b>Discus</b>	<b>K 23</b>	<b>K 8</b>
Hour	£27.60	£25.80	£24.60	£25.20	£24.00	£13.20
5 mins	£2.30	£2.15	£2.05	£2.10	£2.00	£1.10
Unlimited K 8						£130 p.a.
Winch/Bungee launch			£7.50	Block of 20		£130
(the above flying fees are reduced by 50% for those aged under 21)						
Aerotow			Tug minute	£3.00	Minimum £24.00	

<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>	<b>Dormitory</b>	<b>Private room</b>	<b>Half en suite</b>	<b>Full en suite</b>
Per person per night	£6.00	£6.00	£6.00	£6.00
Room surcharge	nil	£5.50	£11.00	£16.50
	<b>Year</b>	<b>Day</b>		
Caravan parking	£350	£8.00		
Trailer parking	£210	£2.00		
Hangarage		£10.00		