

# MIDLAND GLIDING CLUB NEWSLETTER

Number 130

November 2007

## CONTENTS

Chairman's Contribution .....	2
CFI's Bits .....	3
Winch Launching Safety Audit: Conclusion and Executive Summary.....	4
From the Flying Field .....	5
Competition Enterprise 2007 - Sutton Bank.....	6

<p>Please send <b>Newsletter</b> contributions to:</p> <p>John and Ann Parry Holly Cottage Wentnor Bishops Castle Shropshire SY9 5EE Telephone..01588 650379 Email.....<a href="mailto:John.Parry@Virgin.net">John.Parry@Virgin.net</a></p>	<p><b>Club</b> Details:</p> <p>The Midland Gliding Club The Long Mynd Church Stretton Shropshire SY6 6TA Office Telephone.....01588 650206 Office Fax.....01588 650532 Members Telephone..01588 650405 Email.....<a href="mailto:office@longmynd.com">office@longmynd.com</a></p>
<p>Club web site: <a href="http://www.longmynd.com">www.longmynd.com</a></p>	

## **Chairman's Contribution**

*Charles Carter*

Following on from last year's trial, winter flying will again take place on Thursday and Friday under the direction of John Stuart and on Saturday and Sunday with the usual suspects in charge. I recommend to those of you who wish to make progress that the winter can produce some excellent training opportunities and remember that you have to pay for John's expertise and instruction during the course season but it is available to you at no extra cost on Thursday and Friday for the next few months.

Apart from training there are ample opportunities for good soaring during the winter and while the flat landers are growing cobwebs we can be exploring the ridge and wave delights of our hill site and hopefully showing visitors why they should be joining us.

This year has produced extremes of soaring conditions. We started the season with unusually high temperatures and wonderful thermals but the overall memory of the summer is one of very wet and soggy conditions during June and July. Despite the monsoon weather during the middle section of the summer, many outstanding flights have been achieved from both the Mynd and nationally and it is good to be able to congratulate the first 750 from the Mynd. By an honorary chap as well, according to some accounts.

Apart from its usual duties, the committee has been burning the midnight oil to produce a strategic plan of its vision of the way forward for your club. We intend that before Christmas we will hold a briefing session to explain to all the members why and how the plan has been formulated and how it will affect us all as we go forward. I hope that as many as possible will attend because the nature of a strategy is that it will naturally evolve to take account of changing circumstances and new ideas and the thoughts and ideas of all interested parties. We have set out a vision of where the club ought to be in five years time but the plan needs to be a rolling five year plan and not a five year period in isolation. Please come along and get involved.

Mike Witton is leading a team in the replacement of the guttering between Roger's workshop and the MT shed. This has been a cause for concern for some time and the hope is that we can complete the work before the worst of the wet weather arrives. If you can spare some time to help, Mike and the rest of us would be most grateful.

The wet weather previously mentioned also affects our airfield and I would like to make a plea to all who use the airfield during wet weather to respect the surface. Grass is a living plant and with careful use we can ensure its survival.

Ripping around in a Land Rover or your car does little to help and every time you mark the surface by turning too short or by spinning the wheels you are doing damage. If a glider lands up the field then use the Land Rover but if it is close to the launch point a few pushers can easily do the job and you will keep warm to boot. Also, please use the roads for as much of any journey as you can even if it is slightly out of your direct route to do so and certainly on any glider retrieve to the other end both going to fetch and retrieving the glider. There will be days when the field is too wet for vehicles but hopefully they will be few and far between.

We have recently had quite an influx of new members and I welcome you all to the club. I know that I do not really need to say this but if the old lags see a new face looking a bit lost please give them a helping hand and to the new members I would say that we all wish you to make good progress and if you are unsure of what you should be doing just ask or get someone to point you in my direction.

Don't forget Christmas dinner at the club on 15 December, ring Heidy with your orders. Between then and now I have to endure two or three weeks in the West Indies so if you cannot get hold of me Jon Hall will field all concerns.

Safe flying.

## CFI's Bits

*Paul Stanley*

The course season has finished with a members week on which one member ended up flying for 15 hours and there was wave most days. As I write pilots are in wave over Wales and the DG 505 is returning from Hay on Wye.

The report ensuing from the winch launching safety audit carried out by Andy Holmes is complete. There is a copy in the office for your perusal. I can furnish electronic copies to anybody requiring one. The conclusion and executive summary appear below (page 4).

Whilst on the subject of safety, two operational matters have come to my attention which need to change, and one which needs reinforcing.

Firstly, the practice of aero-towing gliders from by the gate through the gap between the retrieve winch and the road when launching to the south needs to stop. It is potentially dangerous and gives little in the way of added benefit to either tug or glider. It also has an adverse effect on the rest of the operation. From now on gliders will be launched on aerotows to the south with the glider abeam the retrieve winch. The motor glider will also commence its ground run from this position. The only time this will be problematic in terms of performance is if there is a tailwind, in which case you know what to do.

Secondly, I have noted on two occasions recently that BIs have taken to landing to the west when everybody else has been landing to the south. Presumably this is being done in order to save a walk. This has never been either necessary or desirable, and the above change to aero-towing should render it less so. In any case this practice is extremely dangerous and will stop. The consequences of gliders encountering each other just above the ground on tracks that converge at right angles are unthinkable.

Finally, some months ago the previous CFI issued a ruling that those people accompanying trial lessons should remain at the clubhouse. On two occasions recently I have seen this ruling not being observed, and on one of these a toddler was running around the aero-tow launch point. Can I ask whoever was responsible to imagine the outcome of the ensuing enquiry should this child who was in our care have been struck by a rotating propeller? From now on **ALL** trial lesson hangers-on will remain in the clubhouse.

One activity allied to safety, and an area where you can all help, is in the cleaning of aeroplanes before they are packed. Denise will be co-ordinating your efforts and I fully expect to hear reports of what an enthusiastic bunch of scrubbers you are... Seriously, it needs doing, please do your bit with good heart.

The above items notwithstanding, I have been pleased to have a relatively uneventful introduction to my period as CFI and have been giving some thought to changes in the training regime. In particular the obstacles to post solo training and progress, and the ways in which these might be overcome. I will expand on the proposed programme in the next newsletter, suffice to say that next season there will be whole weekend courses each month and bookable check flights/training every weekend. Proposals for weekend courses are welcome from both instructors and students.

To conclude, I would like to take the opportunity to wish you all a happy festive season, hopefully interspersed with some flying. And in the unlikely event that the weather is unkind (ho hum) then you could usefully think about your flying goals for the coming season, as that is the way to move forward.

Happy flying.

## **Winch Launching Safety Audit: Conclusion and Executive Summary**

*Paul Stanley*

### Conclusion:

The answer to my question was that there are conditions when it is reasonable for the Number One to decide not to use the retrieve winch for safety reasons. As such, I recommend that using the retrieve winch on all runs should be the norm (as I believe is current practice at the Mynd) but that the Number One should have the discretion to choose to use it or not. Examples of such conditions are:

1. Conditions when ground runs are excessively long, such that the glider is travelling along the ground next to the retrieve cable for a relatively long period of time.
2. Conditions when launching on a long run, most likely to the south with a strong crosswind from the east, such that a cable break would cause the cable to drop on walkers/cyclists on the footpaths.
3. Conditions with a strong headwind using a long run, when there is a risk of the retrieve cable blowing back towards the launch point.
4. Conditions when launching to the south with the retrieve winch positioned too far east and not far enough back/north.
5. Conditions with a strong crosswind when, for airfield setup reasons, it is not possible to take off on the downwind side of the retrieve winch.
6. Conditions with very strong or gusty winds (e.g. Short West with over 30 knots + or a gusty 20 knots) when there is an increased chance of rapid wing drop.

These guidelines should form the basis for operational decisions regarding use of the retrieve winch from now on. I will be monitoring the situation and welcome any feedback re implementation of the above.

## From the Flying Field

*David d'Arcy*

A warm welcome to new members Molly and Sam Robinson, Zack Hutton, Filip Przybysz, Dave Roche, John Charleworth, Gerald Speich, Andrew McCann, Dave Nibbs, Graham and Stewart Hill, Ken Screen, Bryn Dando and Jon Whitehouse and Svetlana Charleworth, Martyn Ren, Francesca Aitken, Mick Davis, and Mihai and Ramona Popescu. What a tremendous bunch, I hope you will all get stuck in and soon be solo or re-solo. I look forward to meeting you all.

Congratulations to Luke Sanders who recently passed his BGA Bronze badge, also well done to Keith Ellis who has gone solo on a 750 to solo deal and some say with ten minutes to spare. Also well done to returning member Graham Hill who re-soloed after sixteen years on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2007. Not surprisingly Mark Wakem has been flying his new share in FWM.

Well there has been so much achieved by members from the flying field this summer, I feel I should drip feed you all over the coming winter months! But some achievements can't wait till then and a top of all these surely must be Rose Johnson, who represented GB/UK this summer in France, competing in the Women's world championships at Club Class. Being asked to fly for your club is one thing, but to fly for Britain must be overwhelming and an outstanding achievement. So how do you top that? Well Rose then went and completed the first 750 km flight from the Mynd on 31<sup>st</sup> July along with other mega flights by Simon Adlard 575 km, Iain Evans and Paul Shuttleworth 400 km, Rod Hawley 535 km and James Fisher 300 km for his Gold distance O/R. What a fantastic day for the Mynd, and a day earlier Andy Holmes also completed a 750 km flight but from Bicester where Sarah Platt flew 410 of a 500 km attempt.

Congratulations also go to Mark Sanders for his 300 km Gold distance to Newport Pagnell on 9<sup>th</sup> August. Paul Shuttleworth also completed his UK 500 km flight on 8<sup>th</sup> August, and Clive Jones who did a 300 km flight in 882, and the Mynd won Rockpolishers.

The Mynd also had a fantastic showing at the Club Class Nationals, with faceless Rose just pipping IanMac to 8<sup>th</sup>, then it was Iain Evans, Sarah, and Mike Witton. Mike nearly won the Lasham regionals – losing out by 8 points in the end. Apparently if he had not flown so fast on Day2, then the day would not have been de-valued and he would have ended up with more points than the competition winner! And on that note, congratulations to Jonny Roberts for winning the Bicester regionals in emphatic style with the club DG505. We had indifferent weather for this comp, unlike the Club Class that had a whole week of racing weather, but better than Lasham with just two days! Which meant James Fisher fared well with his P2 seat for the first part of the week, whereas Mike Rogers didn't do so well even if his diary wasn't double booked. Yet even more Mynd pilots were competing this summer with the Mynd Duos and Chris Alldis at Hus Bos (Midland) regionals, where Andy Holmes had a well-deserved 4<sup>th</sup> and 494 was achieving 100 kph! (Book instructors Crowson and Hawley to find out how they did it.) A couple of Mynd gliders also went up to Sutton Bank for Competition Enterprise where Mike Greenwood, Rod Hawley and John/Ann Parry had six or so competition days.

Amongst this wonderful summer a number of members made their annual pilgrimage to Ontur in Spain, visiting Paul Shuttleworth who was the resident instructor there this summer. Although, you'll be pleased to hear, the Spanish weather was a little below par we still had some fantastic flying with 12,000 foot thermals, the odd thunderstorm or two and some wave.

Task Week was good fun for the wood this year with Orch winning two days and the Rod K6 with Lenny and Mike Rogers competing for the first time. It was also a welcome return for the club K8 with Adam Walker also enjoying his first Task Week. This after both Lenny and Adam completed their Silver distance flights to Bidford earlier in the year. Unfortunately Adam lost out on the 1% height rule, but since thrashing the K8 round task week I'm sure it won't be long before a successful Silver distance claim is submitted.

## Competition Enterprise 2007 - Sutton Bank

*Mike Rogers*

For those of you who don't know, Competition Enterprise is held every year and is a competition which unlike the regionals and nationals of racing style tasks allows the maximum distance to be achieved from the day, with open start and finish times.

In attendance this year were Mike Greenwood, Rod Hawley and me with 494 and John and Ann Parry with FVP.

### **Friday 6<sup>th</sup> July**

We left the Mynd early afternoon leaving them bungeeing in a 40 knot westerly with a cloud base of about 500 feet. After six hours of driving we arrived at the bottom of the hill and spent a further hour and a half following various directions and disappearing signs to find the caravan route up to the gliding club. We arrived to find Rod had managed to assemble a huge tent on his own which was more or less correct, despite how he had described it. After a few beers in the bar we retired to bed at a reasonable hour in anticipation of our adventures the following day.

### **Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> July**

An early start ensured the aircraft were rigged ready for the day. The task set at morning briefing was a cat's cradle type with all the local clubs as turning points. The strong winds theme continued with 20 knot westerlies, cloud base was around 3000 feet with weak thermals giving a very challenging day. Mike and Rod in 494 after much low scraping managed to return to site after visiting Dishforth, Ruthford, Pocklington, but opting out of going to Carlton Moore, a total distance of 111 km. They spent about half an hour over the same farm thermalling away and then pushing into wind to exactly the same view. Upon returning to site, when I greeted them the whole tone of the flight was given by Mike's long sigh of relief and grins like Cheshire cats on both of their faces. Ann Parry in FVP familiarised herself with the site and handled the tricky conditions very well indeed. There was an obvious reason for setting the task around local clubs, the distinct lack of landable fields. Give it a few weeks more you would struggle to spot a non-landable field as they are mostly large and flat; however they are all currently with crop. This would not pose a great problem due to so many used and disused airfields. Even the RAF bases are happy to accommodate you so long as you talk to them on the radio. The same went for passing through class D airspace, many people did so and found the air traffic controllers to be very friendly and accommodating, including someone landing at Teeside airport. The day was concluded by a communal barbecue and some more beer in the bar.

### **Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> July**

Today's task required some tricky tactical decisions due to its string of pearls nature. There were a series of turn points set in a line to both the north and south of Sutton bank. Once turning the furthest point you dare go, you could only turn closer points from then on in both directions. The maximum distance achievable was 1000 km.

The wind had dropped to about 10 knots westerly with a varying cloud base of between 3000 to 4000 feet. The north looked reasonable, however the south looked awful. Consequently, most people set off north. Throughout the day several large showers passed through with accompanying thunder storms and hail the size of golf balls.

Mike and Rod in 494 headed north and were accompanied by Phil King for most of the flight up to Derwent Water, where they went their separate ways. The Duo boys headed back south to discover they had been cut off by a shower and so went north again. When they turned back again they proceeded to fly through the shower. The rain turned to hail which Mike commented that he thought was going to break through the canopy. They arrived back at Sutton Bank just before the thunder started again after covering a distance of 144 km.

Ann did some more local soaring in FVP, getting a feel for the area and the still somewhat bumpy conditions.

To finish off the day we headed to a local pub which, on the sign for the village practically said this is a local pub for local people but not quite in so many words. A rather good meal was devoured, followed

by what we all decided to be the Yorkshire equivalent of Glastonbury, given by the two token mud piles in the square. The two men playing a guitar and a violin were very impressive and then to complete the evening there was a choir, which actually turned out to be almost the entire audience.

### **Monday 9<sup>th</sup> July**

There is nothing like a day at the races! However, from a slightly different perspective. The task was a series of turning points at all the local racecourses.

The wind had slackened to only 5 to 10 knots with cloud base at about 2500 feet rising to about 4500 feet later in the day. There were reasonable to good thermal strengths varying between 3 to 5 knots, but with a lot of sink around.

The two Mikes were flying 494 today. We set off having turned Thirsk initially and had a good run down to Beverley. The sky around Beverley was really dark and about 10 minutes after our arrival, one of the other Duos photographed what appeared to be a tornado (not of the flying variety!), which some of you may have seen on Weather Jack.

After leaving Beverly we headed towards York and got rather low by Pocklington, which we clawed away from over the high ground. We then bagged the points for York and decided to head east from York to skirt around the back of some rather large showers; however the sink we encountered had other ideas. We plummeted very rapidly from cloud base to only just high enough to still be allowed over York, the trace showing this rather too well. We returned to the thermal we had taken before we left York and whilst I was trying to thermal us away, Mike took some amazing photographs of York Minster, with no zoom required on his camera. We then returned to Sutton Bank ahead of the showers with the intention of hanging around to go somewhere else, but unfortunately got shot down by a shower, landing back at Sutton Bank, a total distance of 165 km.

John flew FVP today and went around York and Thirsk before returning back to Sutton Bank at a good pace in the best part of the day, whilst Rod had his afternoon snooze.

Team Mynd had a barbecue in the evening and whilst eating watched Justin Wills return after almost 10 hours flying and covering an amazing distance of 615 km in his new Antares.

### **Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> July**

There were rumours about this being the best day of the week and so they set accordingly the option of two different 500 kms! The one being a 500 km in Yorkshire round a series of turning points and the other being Welshpool as a sector, meaning it was possible to turn at the Mynd. However, there was one slight drawback; the weather wasn't quite that good. You would have honestly thought twice about rigging; let alone going off cross country.

The Duo piloted by Rod and Mike failed to get away and so a relaxation day was in order. Rod and Mike both took the opportunity to have their afternoon snoozes. Paul Shuttleworth, who was in the area working, came to visit us and shared a good laugh about the task.

Ann was able to get away in the Pegasus during the afternoon and managed to reach Pocklington, which was one of the turn points, where she landed out to score some points to beat the Duo.

Very few people got away, although those daring few who did the deathly dive to the south found better conditions and managed to do some reasonable distances with Justin Wills once again winning the day with about 300 km. Incidentally, almost all the people who got away by doing the deathly dive over no landable fields were mostly turbos. An unfair advantage in this situation maybe?

Team Mynd went out for an Indian in Thirsk before returning to the club bar.

### **Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> July**

Once again today was a day where you would be in two minds about rigging. They set a series of fairly local turn points, practically all airfields, to take this into account.

Both the Duo and the Pegasus failed to get away and again, many others also failed to do so. So Ann and John prepared themselves to escape to a party down in Cheltenham whilst Rod and Mike went for their afternoon snooze. They were then awoken to be told it was booming and that there was a rush for the grid, which was more twisting the truth than telling a lie!

So they decided to take another launch as I had volunteered to collect them if they wanted to just glide somewhere to get some points and so that Mike could achieve one of his goals for the week, a P1 field landing in the Duo. So they set off and landed shortly afterwards in a fantastic grass field south of Sutton Bank. I hitched up the trailer and came to their aid eventually after following TomTom directions which took me down a single track farm drive. When I arrived there the gate was locked. After asking a farm labourer on site if he had a key, but to no avail, Rod proceeded to just lift the gate off its hinges. The farm labourer looked stunned and replied: "It's a good job the sheep rustlers aren't that clever!" The retrieve was straight forward after that, especially with directions from Rod.

We arrived back at Sutton Bank and then ate in, followed by a fairly late night session in the bar, due to the great possibility of Thursday being scrubbed.

### **Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> July**

The weather forecast was correct with low cloud and rain, so the day was scrubbed of any point scoring tasks. There was a photography competition set, such that there would be a prize for the best thing that was photographed that day from the air and from the ground. Many amusing and innovative entries were revealed in briefing the next morning from birds of prey in flight to photographs taken through the periscope located in the club house!

We enjoyed a rather good Italian evening, executed by the caterers in the evening and Ann and John returned from their party.

### **Friday 13<sup>th</sup> July**

Once again today was scrubbed due to bad weather. So John, Mike, Rod and I went to York air museum whilst Ann stayed and rested. Set in the style of a 1940s war RAF base there where many exhibits forming quite an interesting display, with a particular section devoted to Barnes Wallis and his numerous inventions. Rod and Mike had already had a rather good view of this from the air, after almost having to land on what turned out to be one of the largest aprons in the world. One of the interactive displays which Rod had a go on, revealed that he is not the man to be the gunner if a water pistol is taken up in the T21!

### **Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> July**

The wind had picked up significantly again today and so two tasks were set. The first being a low level ridge task of 100 km and the other being a 200 km wave task, both with speed points.

Rod was feeling a bit unwell so I took his place in the Duo with Mike. We took a winch launch onto their west facing ridge and after climbing up on the ridge we pushed out and encountered the wave. Mike worked really hard establishing us into it, including going through an incredibly small wave hole. Once we were past that stage we were fairly well settled and proceeded to put our oxygen masks on as we went through 10,000 feet QNH. We found the wave eventually topped out at about 15,300, so we set off relying on the Ipaq as we couldn't see from that height! As it was fairly late on we did the 100 km task and completed it at a speed of 150 kph, setting off at 15,000 feet and arriving back at the airfield at 400 feet!

That speed only positioned us 5<sup>th</sup>. The winner did the same at 200 kph, rolling his Duo over inverted and pulling through over the turn points.

Ann was suffering with a bad back, so didn't fly and set off home to visit the osteopath.

The evening party and prize giving was very successful, with a large buffet followed by a Ceilidh band with dancing. Enterprise was won by Justin Wills, with the Duo coming 15<sup>th</sup> and the Pegasus coming rather lower. A successful week was celebrated achieving a lot of flying out of some fairly average weather.

We all decided that we would definitely be interested in attending Enterprise again. Next year it is due to be held at North Hill.

Editors' Note:

We are told that the next *Sailplane and Gliding* will include a photograph of Mike in 494 taken by Mike Greenwood.