

MIDLAND GLIDING CLUB NEWSLETTER

Number 138

April 2009

CONTENTS

Rockpolishers 2009.....	1
T21 Share for Sale.....	1
Chairman's Column	2
Booking Two Seater Training at Weekends	2
From the Flying Field.....	5
CFI's Bits.....	6
Letter from an Ex-Member	7
An Astonishing Wave Day.....	9

Rockpolishers 2009

David d'Arcy

This year's events are:

- **Talgarth** 23rd-24th May
- **Nympsfield** 13th-14th June
- **Usk** 27th-28th June
- **Long Mynd** 18th-19th July

I would be grateful if you could consider your availability for say two events as you are allowed to fly a maximum of five days I believe. However, as you know our success rate with the weather is not great, which invariably means we usually lose one of the weekends if not more!

As usual we're desperately missing Novice pilots; that is someone who hasn't competed in a Regionals gliding competition, and not claimed a 300 km Gold distance flight.

T21 Share for Sale

Mike Witton

T21 share for sale. £100 or nearest offer. Email: mike.witton@hotmail.com

<p>Please send Newsletter contributions to:</p> <p>John and Ann Parry Holly Cottage Wentnor Bishops Castle Shropshire SY9 5EE Telephone..01588 650379 Email John.Parry@Virgin.net</p>	<p>Club 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.....office@longmynd.com</p>
<p>Club web site: www.longmynd.com</p>	

Chairman's Column

Jon Hall

More than 75% of the flying membership voted on the changes to the flying charges. Of those 80% were in favour, gaining the significant majority that we sought to implement the scheme. It was introduced on 1st April. Members are now required simply to pay a fixed fee for the year for unlimited use of the club fleet. Private owners and instructors get a discount because they put fewer demands on the fleet than others.

Thank-you to all those who contacted Dominic or me with your views. Your interest and comments helped to make the offer even better and convince others. It is encouraging to see that members are willing to engage with the issues we face and to take part in shaping policy. I particularly want to thank Dominic for a lot of hard work, clear thinking and for putting meat on the bones of the idea.

I believe it is the right decision, and, more importantly, that it is worth a try. The 2007-8 accounts show that we made an operating deficit of £25,000. We cannot continue to sustain losses of this magnitude. We really need to attract more members, keep them longer and encourage them to fly more. This scheme will benefit ab-initios, enabling them to calculate the cost of gaining a solo badge from the outset and removing barriers to doing a lot of flying when they need it most. Early solo pilots will be able to progress to cross-country pilots without being inhibited by cost. Developing competition and cross-country pilots can get as much coaching as they need. Private owners will be encouraged to make the most of the new training regime. More flying will generate more revenue from launches. Everyone stays current, in check and safe. Result.

The dinner dance and trophy presentation was, as usual, skilfully organised by Linda Taylor, for which I and those who attended are very grateful. It is a great comfort as chairman that there is someone quietly organising the dinner, so I can just enjoy it. It was slightly disappointing that more people, especially those receiving awards, were not there. Some say it is the venue, though the Longmynd Hotel has changed hands recently, and is in better shape with improved catering. The cost is hard to escape unless we hold the dinner at the club. I wish to move the event to the autumn, so the awards are more current, but I know you have views on this. Please let me know your ideas or comments.

This year has got off to a cracking start with what must be the earliest cross-country flights for some time. When Charles Carter was chairman he claimed in 2005 to have had a word with the guy upstairs to get the best possible weather for Competition Enterprise. I can't claim to be as well connected but I am praying that this will be a similar year. Enterprise is not that far away now. It is a great competition that enables everyone, no matter what their experience or aircraft, to fly to the maximum of their ability and to learn from some of the most accomplished pilots around. Entries are limited to 35 gliders and are filling up fast. I recommend you enter soon to avoid disappointment.

We now have a professional weather forecaster as a member. Simon Keeling runs weatherweb.net and is providing a daily forecast specially for us. It is available from his web site with a link from our club site weather page from 0845 daily. I hope you will use it, and especially feed-back to Simon what actually happened each day so that he can improve it.

Booking Two Seater Training at Weekends

Mark Sanders

From 2 May all weekend training in the two seaters will be pre-booked. This should not come as a surprise to you because it has been widely publicised over the last few months. This article, therefore, seeks not to justify the principle, but to describe the practice.

To find out what weekend training places are currently available, go to the MGC web site (www.longmynd.com) and click the "MGC Training Booking Page" link. For each weekend day you can see who the duty team is, what the glider availability is (for instance the DG may be off-site at a competition), what trial lessons are booked and what **course** and **session** places are available.

A **Course** place will give you half of an instructor's day. Courses may be one day or two day affairs. They will frequently be themed (e.g. "Pre-Solo" or "Pre-Bronze"), so you can expect to be flying with pilots of similar ability.

A **Session** place will give you one third of an instructor's day. These are tailored to your requirement, so you will be asked when you book what you hope to gain from your training; perhaps an annual check; stall or spin training or some other form of recurrent training.

Ground school will of course form an important part of both types of training.

To book - Having looked at the MGC Ops Sheet and determined which of the free places suits your needs, call or email Martin at the office who will take your booking. Shortly afterwards you will see your name in lights on the Net. That's all there is to it.

To cancel or change a booking - once again call or email Martin at the office.

Now for some of those Frequently Asked Questions...

What happens if I don't book and just turn up? You may find that you will have limited opportunities to fly. Things are changing and we would really appreciate it if you tried to change with them. Give it a try, eh?

What happens if I do book and don't turn up? If the weather is unflyable, then nothing, probably, but if the weather is good then you are robbing another member of some flying. Please call the office at your earliest opportunity and cancel the place.

What happens if there are no bookings? There will always be a Number One to run the field and conduct any session flying, but if there are no course places booked then the attendance of the relevant instructors is optional.

What about single seater flying? That remains unchanged at present. Turn up on the day and put your name on a list. Remember though that if you will need a check flight before flying solo, you must book one of the Session places.

What if all the places are booked? This will be a good problem to have because it will mean the system is working. Contact Martin in the office and ask to have your name put onto the reserve list for a particular day. If the reserve lists grow too large, we may need to review our plans by changing the make-up of the courses. With the change of charging regime, we are also alert to the possibility that pilots with plenty of time on their hands may overrun our flying capacity. Under these circumstances, we may need to consider some form of allocation (rationing).

How will the duty team know who has booked? I'm glad you asked that! The Flying List will be replaced by the "Flying Operations Sheet" and a sample copy has been reproduced here for your information.

What happens on the day? The same as usual; you help to unpack the hangar and ready the gliders for flight; fly when it's your turn; and help to pack everything away at the end of the day. You just don't need to put your name on the list (it's already there) and your flying (weather permitting) is

MIDLAND GLIDING CLUB
Flying Operations Sheet
SPRING / AUTUMN
 Day: **Saturday**
 Date: **18 Apr 2009**
 Issue: **1**



Today's Duty Team	
No 1	Paul Stanley
No 2	William Brewis
No 3	Mike Winton
Tug	Jon Roberts
L.D.	Dave Cole

Post Solo Course (Two day):	
(William Brewis)	
ID	Name
1 1234	Jeanette Griffin
2 3456	Caroline Roberts

Trial Lessons:		
(Mike Winton)		
Time	Name	Type
11.00	Mr Jones	Mile High
12.00	Mrs Jones	Standard
13.00	Young Master Jones	Standard
15.00	Little Miss Jones	Standard
16.00	Grandpa Jones	Mile High

Booked Session Flying:		
(Paul Stanley)		
ID	Name	Requirement
1 3053	Mark Sanders	Three Year Refresher
2 3425	Zakk Hutton	Bronze GFT
3 5324	Emily Bates	Recurrent training prior to third solo

Single Seat Flying						
Time on	ID	Name	K8	K23	Dis - cus	Other (state)
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						

assured.

From the Flying Field

Mark Sanders

We welcome new members Simon Keeling, Robert Shepherd and Leo Gair and junior members Alex Charnley and David Capper.

23 January (Friday) - A good solid 25 knots from the west made this a great ridge day for the select few, with a bit of wave about as well. Bob Swift, Paul Garnham, Steve Tilling, Steve Gunn Russell and Tom Seddon all had fun.

24 January - A little bit of weak ridge in the morning, with a thermic afternoon. Lots managed an hour or so in thermals, among them Allan Reynolds (ASW28), Alex Rowlands (Jantar), Tony Danbury (LS4), Mike Greenwood and Clive Crocker (Duo Discus), Luke Sanders (LS4). Denise Hughes certainly deserved a decent flight, but instead spent most of the weekend (the last few in fact) hard at it painting the Quiet Room - thanks Den, we appreciate your efforts!

25 January - A much better day than was forecast, which is probably why no-one was there to fly except for the trial lessons, who were treated to a bit of southerly wave for their trouble. The moral of the story; use the forecasts as a guide, but always make your own mind up on the weather - the Mynd makes its own weather sometimes. (Or dial our Wendy-Wind-Blows station for real time weather on 0900 900 7000, and key in 26 when the line answers - 50p per minute - or about 5 miles worth of petrol, if you are lucky!)

14 February - No flying for a fortnight because of the snowfall, but the meeting for the new schemes for flying fees and weekend training was well attended (over sixty members) and the proposals were well received. Heroic efforts with the snow-shovel by Mike, Jade, Neal, Jan and Den to name but a few saw Asterton reopened to normal traffic.

15 February - 15-20 knot westerlies all day; very few there to take advantage of it, but Charles Page, Nigel Lassiter, Charles Carter, Jonny Roberts and Fran all flew and all had fun.

8 March - 30-40 knots WNW and a visiting party from RAF Halton meant we had all the pieces of the jigsaw in place for some bungee launching - in between the snow showers, at least!

14 March - 25 knots on the ridge all day, and strong wave (6 - 8 knot climbs reported) available for those who could get into it. Dave d'Arcy and Tony Danbury both managed 11 km in 288; in 445 Jon Hall climbed to 13,000 feet and Paul Shuttleworth reached 15,000 feet and an out and return to Talgarth (126 km). Lots of others managed all points in between in a very busy day in the air. Simon Adlard's "Cross-Country Psychology" lecture was well attended and well received and has inspired many to extract that digit and endeavour to leave site a bit more this year - with Task Week, Competition Enterprise and a round of Rock Polishers all taking place at the Mynd over the coming months there will hopefully be plenty of opportunities, if the weather will play the game.

15 March - 5 knots west; thermals to 1500-2000 feet QFE and about seventy para-gliders on the ridge all day (a competition of some kind) made it an interesting kind of a day for the few that turned up and flew. The achievements of two deserve a mention; Zakk Hutton successfully made the transition to single seater flying with several launches in the K23 - congratulations to him; Jon Hall, clearly spurred on by Simon's talk the previous evening, flew to Nympsfield, although the top cover which followed him down made an aerotow retrieve the only option to get home.

22 March - The Dutch are in residence this week bringing with them, as always, seven glorious days of west winds, wave and of course bungeeing! (Over 100 bungee launches recorded in the week!) James Fisher reached 10,500 feet QNH and kicked off his cross-country season with 80 km round NET-ROD (Newtown-Rodney's Pillar) in the Ventus and Jonny and Fran took the DG for 150 km to HAY-SHS (Hay-Shrewsbury) before the darkness beat them.

29 March - Wow, the weather really played the game today, against a rather pessimistic prediction from RASP (which would explain in the final analysis why most pilots felt they had under-set their task). A really nice thermic day; David d'Arcy flew 288 km round Tim's triangle (100 km Shelton Water Tower - Mortimers Cross); Walter Baumann did the same in the club's Discus (493) and (I think) Mike

Greenwood and Neal Clements also took the same trip in the Duo (494). James Fisher flew his Ventus (391) for 222 km task to Worcester-Seighford-Oswestry and home; Dominic Haughton flew a 230 km triangle via Brecon and Tewksbury in the LS8 (Z19); Jon Hall (LS6 - 445) went Talgarth, Brecon, Montgomery, Llantilio for 264 km; Mark Sanders an out-and-return to Talgarth in 288 (128 km). You can see most of these exploits in detail (and record your own!) on the on-line ladder (www.bgaladder.co.uk).

4 April - Yet another day of west winds, so ridge, thermal and wave (to 7500 QFE) were all on offer. A strange dearth of takers for the two seaters considering how cheap it has become - perhaps no-one realises yet!

5 April - A forecast nice day was backed up by over 90 flights recorded on the BGA ladder, but sadly a bit of a hole over the Mynd prevented anyone from getting away from site. JS capped the day off just nicely by landing Lynette's K6E in a field. Not a problem except that her trailer is not yet roadworthy so Rod's K6 trailer had to be emptied out and used to get him back!

11 April - Yet another gloriously thermic weekend. Lots of people went cross-country, although the day got going very late; Paul Shuttleworth went round Snowdon; Dave Crowson and Clive Crocker in 494 also took an extended trip into Wales; Mike Witton went to Vyrnwy in the Libelle; James Fisher had a right old romp in the Ventus - 275 km to CONdover, - RODneys Pillar - BREcon - COSford and home; Dominic was pushed for time, but set the standard for Tim's this year with a 100 km/h handicapped average around SHW - LMW (Shelton - Mortimer's Cross in old money); Walter Baumann set off at 17:45 in the Discus and still managed 133 km around Telford SW (new TP at Ironbridge) Shelton and Shobdon. Congratulations to Helen Johnson on making her Silver height (with special thanks to Walter for deciphering her trace) and Charles Page who flew the K8 to Stroud to collect his Silver distance. (I'm sure he'd also like to thank Clive Crocker and Dave Cole for getting him back!)

12 April - Good lift, but very murky. Allan Reynolds got his hand in again with an 85 km trip via Welshpool, Shipton and Craven Arms; Jon Hall amazed everyone by making a 250 km flight despite the conditions to WPL-MYN-LLE-LLN (Lleweni Parc - Llanrwst) on the North Wales coast.

The mood in the club house was made sombre that afternoon though with news of the tragic death of Gordon MacGregor in a paragliding accident on Corndon Hill. Our thoughts and condolences go out to his family and friends.

CFI's Bits *Paul Stanley*

The summer soaring season arrived early with both wave and thermal cross-country flights occurring in March. As I write we have just experienced an Easter weekend with one potential 500 km day in it, trips into the Welsh mountains were enjoyed by a few and the views were stunning.

The start of the new flying year has seen the changes in the flying fees system of which Jon Hall writes, and also the new weekend training regime. Both the changes have been a long time in the development stage and will hopefully add an instant improvement to the experience of members - new, established and potential. Mark Sanders, who along with Neal Clements has been key to making this happen in a well structured manner, explains all elsewhere in this issue. I thank them both, and request that you pay Mark's guidance close attention.

These changes in training are focussed on increased effectiveness, and enjoyment, for all concerned. For this to work there needs to be a different approach adopted to learning to fly than has sometimes been the case. Whilst on that subject, one of the matters which has been drawn to my attention recently has been that of 'launch point banter' and lack of professionalism. A senior instructor noted that conversations at the launch point can lead to distraction of those under instruction (and their instructor) the upshot of which is, at best, impaired learning, and at worst a distraction which may lead to an accident. Please try and be more aware of your conduct in this regard, and if you find that you are

being distracted then politely ask the person/s concerned to 'go away'!

Another matter which has been drawn to my attention is that of the welcome we give to strangers. Whilst perhaps not within the immediate remit of the CFI, it is a matter close to my heart, so I will offer a personal perspective. When much younger I went to a gliding club with the intention to join. However I was met, not far from the gate, by an individual who evidently didn't like the cut of my jib, my motorbike, or the mini-skirted person on the back seat. (Yes it was that long ago.) So I didn't join, and eventually took up hang-gliding. Some years later, whilst on holiday in Shropshire and hang-gliding at the Long Mynd, I bumped into some MGC members in the Three Tuns. I was treated well, and invited to take a look at the club, which I duly did. And eventually I joined. But I remember finding entering the clubhouse for those first few times an intimidating experience. Not least because of the "Midland Gliding Club - strictly members only" notice which used to adorn the entrance. One of my first projects on becoming CFI was to have that notice removed. Why? Firstly, because all non-members are potential members and should be treated as such. Secondly, and also I think, more importantly, we are involved in a sport predicated on the assumed hospitality of others. Be they farmers, landowners, airfield operators, or just those who come to lend a helping hand and see if we are OK when we land out. For instance, we currently have a number of members gleaned from the hang glider and paraglider community. We could do with more, and they will always be welcome whilst I'm CFI. More than ever, the future of our club relies on new blood. If you want it to thrive, as I'm sure that you do, then please take care to be welcoming to strangers, as many are welcoming to us, in the pursuit of our sport.

Letter from an Ex-Member

David Toye

Dear Ann and John: I write as an ex-member of MGC to thank you for archiving another twelve months' copy of club newsletters to the website. I like to stay in touch with my old club online, so your recent update was the equivalent for me of delivery of twelve months' copy! You will not recall me or my name, I guess, though we did meet briefly a few years ago as referred to later on. Be warned - I feel a letter coming on!

What finally prompted me to write what is in effect likely to develop into an open letter to the club was the reference to Derek Platt's 80th birthday in Issue 131, when Ann left the question in mid-air - did anybody know when he joined? Well, I don't either, but I think I can recall a husband and wife flying couple by the name of Platt back in 1961. If this is Derek and his wife, then Derek flew either the Oly or the Skylark while his wife flew the Club Prefect. The Platts were good to me, a twenty year old rooky, being most concerned for instance that I should park my Greeves motorcycle in either Teddy Proll's workshop or in the MT Shed over weekends.

One course evening, Jack Minshall casually asked her whether she had ever looped the Prefect. She shook her head apprehensively, anticipating his response! After careful thought and briefing (though no check ride I recall), she winch launched to the south and we watched eagerly her progress north up the ridge. Would she, wouldn't she? The nose was lowered, speed on, and the little aeroplane lifted into a tidy loop from a modest entry height! Glasses were raised to her in the bar a little later. I think the Platts were both school teachers from the Birmingham area, and spent most of their summer holidays on the Mynd. I hope this is the same couple.

My log book bristles with memories from 1961. I had soloed in the Air Cadets at the age of 16 back in 1958, left grammar school in 1959 for my first job and saved hard for a motorcycle so that I could join the Mynd, which I did late in 1960. My first flight was with Jack Minshall in March 1961 in one of the Mynd's fully canopied T21s, and in May I was sent off solo in the Prefect by - yes, a young instructor by the name of Keith Mansell - ever heard of him? I also remember Christine's cheery welcome back at the clubhouse after a day's flying.

The first ever retrieve winch was built and commissioned in Teddy's workshop that year - a neat chassis

powered by a Morris Minor engine donated by member Pip Harris. Pip was well known in motorcycling circles for his national and indeed international success racing BMW sidecar outfits. That retrieve winch was successful and stood up to the demands of the Mynd (and the club!) pretty well. We had lots of excitement with that and generally, but I won't go on as I want to comment on more recent years. Job relocation caused me to say a sad farewell to the Mynd at the end of 1961, although I have always loved the place. I never returned to full-size gliding, until 2001 that is!

By 2001, I had retired back to Malvern and at the age of 60, felt the urge to return to the Mynd for a "40 year on" re-union course. I booked for an early course, foot and mouth struck, and my return was delayed until the summer. There was a brilliant feeling about that course, a freshness at flying again apparent in everybody. The course members were purposeful, friendly and well motivated, working hard for each other.

I drove up in my green Morgan Plus Eight and who should I meet in the car park but Keith Mansell. He "borrowed" a K21 that Sunday afternoon and as I flew him down the ridge, looking down on the club buildings, his familiar patter from the back seat, I could have been a time traveller, in a time warp, forty years disappearing as if it was yesterday. Lembit Opik was on that course, converting from power with JS, and as an MGB owner, was keen for a drive in the Morgan, so that took care of one evening. I flew with Chris Ellis all week and shall always be grateful for his efforts in getting me back up to speed.

That week also marked the start of Martin Moss' all too short involvement with the Mynd, a place that he loved. I have been a life-long aeromodeller and used to fly with Tony Danbury as members of Ivinghoe Soaring Association, so it was good to see at first hand his excellent work at that time with Shrewsbury School. And, last but not least, I met your goodselves!

I just could not believe my good fortune when suddenly things clicked, the weather held and I found myself flying down the ridge solo in JGJ on the Friday - a very special week in my life, you may have gathered!

I had enjoyed 2001 so much that I decided to do it all again the following year. This time the forecast was not good, gusting crosswind landings all week, kicking off more drift than I had seen in my life! I flew all week with JS "himself". I had an idea of things to come when on our first flight together, we missed out on lee wave that he was sure was there, and to his disgust we landed out to the east! I doubled up laughing on the trudge back up when he commented "never mind, we've got another in the hangar". That was to be a week of colourful stories as we struggled for lift under a cheerless sky, evening aeros clattering down for switchback runs up and down the ridge, energy diminishing to the point where I commented "we're not going to make it back on top" - we did of course - oh ye of little faith!

I had written off the thought of any early solos on that course, when miraculously, the weather settled on the Friday afternoon, fresh energy swept through the course and quite late in the afternoon I heard John gruffly asking me - "do you fancy a trip round on your own, David?" Did I! My first and last chance to solo in FWQ before her unfortunate loss the following year. The 2002 course was also a final opportunity for me to chat to dear Martin Moss; his tragic loss a year later left me badly shaken.

Nowadays I fly model sailplanes with Malvern Soaring Association from our slope sites in the north Malverns, and thermal from electric winches at Fish Meadow Upton, on the east bank of the Severn. I average about 80 sessions a year, roughly 100 hours, so can at least claim currency in my own hobby! Our club has a diminishing membership of about 70, an unimpressive age profile, too few junior members - is that a familiar story?

I close with two thoughts, one for me and one for yourselves. For my own part, I reflected later on the position of each of the full category instructors with whom I have been privileged to fly. They were presented with an aging non-member with no hours on the sheet. I would have understood if they had said to me on the respective course Fridays "you're doing OK David... just a few more launches and..." Neither of them did that. They gave me my chance, for which I am grateful, and for the trust they put in me to take care of your valuable aeroplanes. That speaks volumes to me of the integrity and professional standards of this club.

And my thought for you? Well, gliding clubs, all gliding clubs sometimes take a jaundiced view of some course members, so-called punters, here today gone tomorrow types necessary only for the needed revenue. That is entirely understandable. But try and remember at such dark times that there are a few of us out here who care, who really care about this great club.

I wish you all a successful and above all a safe year for your 75th anniversary celebrations, and shall be pleased if you will accept the enclosed small contribution towards Jon Hall's building fund.

An Astonishing Wave Day

David d'Arcy

It's a funny old game with next to nothing in the way of good winter flying conditions before Christmas and then good or fantastic flying most weekends since. On the 7th February we were treated to a great lecture by Phil and Diana King titled "The Icing on the Cake - The Ups and Downs of Wave Soaring." Having attended a few lectures on wave soaring and had the odd wave flight here and there I was surprised how much I didn't know and equally rejuvenated into trying a little harder to be a better wave pilot as it seems Phil and Diana have wave flights every other weekend from Shobdon so why can't I?

The synoptic for Saturday 14th March looked iffy mid-week but as the weekend approached it got better and then I got my Lasham weather email by Dave Masson telling me it was going to be a dry day with the fronts having gone through during the night but a bit windy. By the way I highly recommend you subscribe to the Lasham weather email as Dave Masson is just brilliant, okay so the forecast it not for our area but he gives plebs like me a good idea of what is going on without me having to do any of the hard work, which I wouldn't understand anyway. So it was off to the Mynd Friday night for some prospective ridge flying. Conditions Saturday morning were near the best one could hope for on a winter's day with a west wind of 30 knots and cloud base 1500 - 2000 feet above site. Wave conditions were clearly evident although there seemed quite a lot of lower level cloud about. After launching I went over to Bridges north of the club and tried to work this area of sky. Almost an hour had passed with me fishing about at the bottom of the wave hole but no climb through it! And then the weather looked to close in with the approach of some threatening clouds. Ahaarr! So I gave up and prepared to land if need be. Moments later the wave hole reappeared with brilliant blue sky above it and I was completely out of position! Thanks to a nice wave-assisted thermal, a little mucked up by a visiting wave-sniffing K21, I was back in with a chance and this time conversion through the hole and into the wave. Hurrah. At first it was a steady 4 knots and a gorgeous vista of the Shrewsbury plain although south it was still quite filled in. I was surprised how undefined the wave seemed upstairs, with no Mynd primary and little to no wave motion in the cloud sheet below me and no pointers above me. By about 5500 feet QNH the climb got a lot stronger with the mechanical vario hard over and the averager giving 7.3 knots. Damn, no camera and no barograph! What happened next completely threw me. I think my height was about 9,500 feet and I was starting to feel nervous and anxious. Okay, I told myself it's just a phase; it'll go away it has before, just remain calm, I mean I've been higher than this. But it didn't and I began to feel quite uncomfortable with a slight quickening of breath. At 11,500 feet with still 4 knots up I'd had enough and swanned off to Shrews to look at the pretty buildings, humming to myself and wondering where the **** was Shelton Water tower, losing height all the way. At about 9000 feet I turned round to go home feeling slightly better but still not wonderful, and decided to try the wave hole in front of the Stiperstones. By the time I got there I was about 7000 feet QNH and after pushing west a bit 'bang' the vario was hard over again, and the feeling of dread was back! Out came the airbrakes and I turned tail for home, after all there was a syndicate partner waiting to fly.

I recounted my story to a few people, but it was only Simon who told me that it was because I was suffering from hypoxia and not to worry about it; just open the airbrakes and come back down, which is of course what I should have done, all the same I still had quite a sleepless night about it all. One of the most impressive wave climbs I've ever had and I hated it! On reflection I think I was a little run down physically, although no cold or anything which may not have helped, and next time I want to be

better prepared and have the use of oxygen.