

Skywords

Monthly Newsletter of the Dales Hang Gliding and Paragliding Club

[Www/dhpc.org.uk](http://www/dhpc.org.uk)

March 2009



From the Editor, Dennis Wray

In this issue, we have some gripping adventures from Fred Winstanley while flying in Olu Deniz. Felt my heart rate go up just to read it! Also, we've got a very interesting report about Trevor's adventures with real gliders!!! Please keep your contributions coming in!

I had a great time flying in Tenerife in January, we flew almost every day. Most memorable flights were from the Izana ridge (7500ft) not far from the Mount Teide old crater - in the morning we flew miles to the beach on one coast, and then went back up and flew all the way to the beach on the opposite coast of the island!

Ogi has organised a fantastic trip to Ager, Spain in March, with several club members attending – hope to hear about it from them in a future Newsletter maybe!

Happy flying!

Please send your contributions directly to me - my email is d.wray@leeds.ac.uk

Club Night – Rod Buck

The club night on 5 Feb was well-attended for the excellent talk by Jocky Sanderson about SIV and XC. There were many useful tips for all of us, such as getting out of locked-in spirals which can occur with some modern gliders.

Future club nights continue on the first Thursday in the month at the Black Horse in Otley. Meetings are at 8pm, notices at 8:15 and event starts at 8:30.

For the next meeting on Thursday 5 March, the speaker will be Rod Buck, of Wendy Windblows fame.

This promises to be a very interesting evening, and we are fortunate to have Rod as a speaker given that he rarely gives talks/presentations nowadays.

Rod writes:

"I have been looking after Wendy for 20 years now, and there are quite a few funny stories to tell... so it won't be a dry, dusty technical lecture, I promise..."

Sounds good!

Club Coaches Course

At the time of writing, there are still places available for this course. This will run on 7/8 March from 0930 - 1700 (1630 finish on Sun) at the Black Horse, Otley, LS21 3AS.

The public car park opposite the pub charges £3.20 for 8 hours on Sat but is free on Sun. DHPC spies are out trying to identify alternatives.

Ideally you should be a minimum of CP + 10 hours. Less experienced pilots are also welcome - you will learn a lot but cannot qualify as a coach.

The cost is £39 per pilot for a first course, £29 for a retake. This includes a buffet lunch on both days plus tea and coffee throughout. Buffet lunch each day consists of sandwiches, pork pies, sausage rolls, dips, coleslaw, and quiche. Soft drinks will be available from the bar on payment. Bring a pen/pencil and paper!

To secure your place, please send a cheque made payable to 'DHPC' to:

DHPC, 20 Quernmore Drive, Kelbrook, Barnoldswick, BB18 6TX.

Please include the following information with your cheque: name, **email address (critical for updates)**, BHPA number, and date of previous course (if applicable). For enquiries, please contact Martin Baxter: mrbaxter@hotmail.co.uk

New Members

We welcome several new members who have joined the DHPC this month. They are Chris Potter, Peter Tilbury, Lance Greenhalgh, Ali Guthrie and Antony Crabbe. We hope to see you out on the hill soon! For those of you who've just got your CP, watch out for the club coaching events to be announced on the DHPC website, as these will be very useful for you.

Congratulations to Martin Baxter!

In a previous life, Martin was in the Regular Army but found that it got in the way of paragliding, so he left. However he remains an active member of the TA, mainly so that he can fly with them. He is shown here receiving his Army Paragliding Colours for representing the Army on 3 different occasions.



Pete Logan received this email from Mike Johnson, Derbyshire Soaring Club:

Important Changes for Westerly XC Flights from Derbyshire Sites

A new area of controlled airspace, which was introduced in August last year extends from the Humber to Worksop (almost 50k) and is a major obstacle for pilots wishing to go XC in Westerly (SSW-W) winds from Derbyshire sites.

Derbyshire Soaring Club (DSC) has managed to negotiate Letters of Agreement for two corridors within this airspace. To allow XC flights these corridors can be activated upon request by nominated members of the DSC. The agreement that DSC have with Robin Hood Airport Doncaster Sheffield (RHADS) stipulates that all pilots who use these corridors must be suitably briefed and must sign a register to acknowledge their attendance and understanding.

Accordingly, DSC is setting up briefing sessions so that pilots can become familiar with the new airspace and the corridor arrangements. It is very important that visiting pilots do not attempt to fly XC using these corridors without having first attended one of these briefing sessions. If there are any airspace infringements, these could potentially jeopardise the agreements DSC have worked very hard to obtain with RHADS and restrict the XC potential from local sites in future.

The provisional dates for the forthcoming briefing sessions are: 28th Feb, 7th March, and the 22nd March at Camphill, the airfield of Derbyshire and Lancashire Gliding Club.

Pat Dower, who lives in Holmfirth has kindly offered to run one session at his home on the 20th March for the benefit of Dales and Pennine members.

These are all provisional dates at the moment, please check the DSC website www.derbyshiresoaringclub.org.uk nearer the time for precise dates, times and directions.

Kate Rawlinson writes:



Airwave BCC competition

The 2009 BCC Competition series, is now the Airwave BCC with the final at Long Mynd! **So Don't be Shy, Come and FLY.**

The Airwave BCC is open to all members of the BHPA. Designed as a friendly club level competition, our focus is more on fun and team flying than out and out racing.

The competition has been designed to encourage paragliding and hang gliding pilots to improve their flying and cross country skills through a friendly yet competitive coaching environment, by competing in teams against other clubs.

The primary pillars underlying the competition are flying, fun and safety. The aim is to encourage teams to visit other areas of the UK and fly new and different types of sites to help improve the scope of their flying abilities. At the same time pilots will have the chance to learn from one another, exchanging views and ideas on the continual improvement of skills and the sport.

There are three variations of competition:-

1 Cross Country

These fall into 3 categories of open distance, out and return or defined goal.

2 Ridge Soaring

These fall into 3 categories of ridge run, out and return or touch and go.

3 Airmanship

These fall into 3 categories of spot landings, ground handling or theory/quiz.

The teams are made up as follows. Each team has up to six members, one captain/coach and five team members. The team can comprise club pilots, pilots and advanced pilots, and the competition is designed so that the more experienced can coach the less experienced members of the team. Website www.flybcc.co.uk

This competition really got me flying and built my confidence on the hill and in the air. It also gave me my first XC; it's a great way to get out flying. By the way, no pressure, but we **won** it last year!!!! This year I would like to get both teams in the final. I already have 16 eager pilots on my list; if you would like to take part,

even if it's only in one round, please send me the following details (or see me on a Club Night): name, pilot rating, hours flown, glider make and colour, email and mobile number. If you are interested, please send your details to me at katerawlinson@hotmail.co.uk

Here's more from Walter:



News from Ogi:

Ager trip

We are running a flying trip to Ager in the Spanish Pyrenees on the 22nd to 29th March for the Dales club. The trip is organised via www.wegofly.co.uk and because we are going as a club they have offered us a discount from their usual price of 450 euros, now at just 320 euros for transfers from the airport, accommodation and six days fly guiding. Ager is a traditional Spanish village used from the early days of free flight for its excellent flying sites. The main site at Ager has a massive take off, used for the paragliding world cup in 2007, with the main ridge being 42 km long with an excellent chance of picking up thermals and going X-C. Just a fly down to the massive landing field is about a 5 km flight!



The first week of 15th to 22nd March is booked up and we cannot add any more pilots to this

but there are two places on the second week of 22nd to 29th March. There are a number of other world class sites in the Ager region including Berga and Organya which if we are lucky we might also get to fly. I have arranged this trip for the dales club as an ideal chance to get some classic early season flying in before our epic summer starts in the UK.

To be honest, flying does not get better than this, waking up in a classic Spanish village, making your breakfast or walking down to the bar and coming round slowly with a café con leche, being driven in a people carrier to the take off that is big enough for 100 pilots (I just mentioned this in case you are a bit ropy after the long winter break), stepping off and gliding around some awesome Pyrenees scenery. If you end up at the main landing field you walk across the road and sit in the local bar waiting for your lift back up the mountain to do it all over again. If flying gets any better than that I have not seen it yet?

Hopefully these last places will fill quickly now so email the dales coaching organiser Ogi at sean@ogi.me.uk or send a text with your details to 07999606084 to reserve your place quickly. Cheers and see you on a hill soon.

News from the committee

Sites

Addleborough. John Ellerby, who held the shooting rights, sadly passed away last year. His son Jack has inherited the same rights and has agreed to our flying as long as we continue to ring beforehand during the months of Sept - Nov. An amendment will be published on the website.

Skywords

Deadline for receiving contributions to Skywords is now the 21st of each month.

Coaching

After the coaching course on 7/8 March, coaching sessions (one day per month) will start in April. Pilot training will take place on club nights (early start) beginning in May, leading to an exam in the Autumn. This may commence with an intro to new Dales pilots.

Safety

It is intended to organise a First Aid refresher for the April club night.

Competitions

16 pilots have expressed an interest in the ACC (formerly known as BCC). News about competitions will be publicised in Skywords.

Membership

As at Oct 2009, the club has 167 members, of which 132 PG, 15 HG, 15 biwingual and 5 unknown. The membership renewal date was 2 Feb 09, but the method of collecting payments is still under review.

Library

Three copies of the latest Pilot Handbook are to be purchased.

XC Club

This will be run as in previous years with an email being sent out to interested members on Friday nights outlining probable weekend activity.

Aerofix

MB took 9 items to Aerofix at a cost of about £60 in fuel. It was agreed that this represents a good service to members and encourages attendance at Club Nights, although a larger vehicle may be required if demand increases. Aerofix indicated that they might be willing to offer a discount next year. To be considered/advertised at Oct committee meeting.

Trevor Birkbeck writes:

Trev's new toy for 2009

Aircraft details

Three years ago, Flylight had a new wing on their stand at the British Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association show at Telford – the AL12, a small sailplane built in a conventional style with a tailplane but constructed in an unconventional manner, using the carbon fibre D-section leading edges from the Phantom rigid hang glider wing. Careful weight saving meant that the aircraft weighed less than 90 kg but gave a glide ratio of 27 to 1 and a minimum sink rate of 0.5 m/sec.



My friend Noel Whittall took a picture of me in the cockpit of this wing but little did I think that one day I would be the owner of one. Produced by Aerola, a company associated with Aeros in the Ukraine, the aircraft has been

designed by a top sailplane pilot who also happens to be the chief designer of Aerola. Both of these companies were a spin off from the Antonov aircraft group from Russia.

Two years later, they brought out the powered version of the glider, now called the Alatus-M. This uses the Corsair single cylinder 2 stroke engine producing 21 BHP, which folds down into the fuselage when not in use. Press a button and up it pops, taking 12 seconds in total then press another to start it and you're off! This is a self launching glider and it has a climb rate of between 300 and 500 ft/min.



The Alatus only has a 5.5 litre tank as it is principally a glider rather than a microlight, so the climb facility is designed to get you up to a thermal or any other form of active lift. It is designed to break down to parts small enough to enable it to be transported on and in a normal estate car. However, I think that is a dozy idea, so I have been renovating a conventional glider trailer to both transport my glider and to store it at my chosen gliding club, which is going to be York Gliding Centre at Rufforth.

My progress

The Alatus falls into a strange half-way house category, as the CAA class it as a microlight, therefore requiring a pilot to have a 3 axis microlight licence. Additionally, as it is sub 115kg, single seat and has a light wing loading, it comes within the Deregulated Category and does not need a permit to be obtained every year, saving £300 pa.

Earlier in the year, I have been training with instructor John Teesdale at the microlight side of Rufforth in an AX2000 – however, John doesn't let pupils use his wing for the solo hours necessary, suggesting that I carry these out in my Alatus.

I am not so keen on just jumping into a new glider to carry out such solo hours (though I did do gliding at Sutton Bank, but 22 years ago) so I have joined the gliding club side of Rufforth and am now furiously boning up on my long lost gliding skills. I am really enjoying this and last Wednesday I got into wave, worked about 4 bars and got to 6000ft.

As soon as I feel confident to do so, I will be off to Sywell Airfield at Northants to collect my glider and then commence my solo training with John Teesdale. Watch this newsletter for the next thrilling instalment of my prowess with the Alatus.

Fred Winstanley writes:

I was getting over confident!

I'd been in Olu Deniz for ten days, and the conditions were near perfect. A heat wave had hit Turkey and the thermals were booming. On the day in question a strong wind was blowing on the top of Babadag. A quick, clean reverse launch saw me up and away.

It was early afternoon; between the lagoon of Olu Deniz and the ghost village of Kaya stands a mountain, nicknamed "Cave Mountain," that has a good south facing slope that the sun was now beating down upon. "There must be good thermals dripping off the top of that," Or so I thought.



There is often a strong wind that develops over the Kaya valley

A smooth, easy glide saw me arrive over the peak with about twelve hundred feet to spare. There were no thermals to speak of, the wind was blowing too strong to allow them to develop properly, there was just enough lift to slow my descent rate but not strong enough to

provide any height gain. I decided to cut my losses and head off back towards the beach. However, the beach was on a heading directly into the wind, even with full speed bar on my GPS told me that I only had a ground speed of about two kilometres per hour, and I wasn't sure if that was forwards or backwards. At that rate I was going to end up landing on a rough looking slope with an even worse looking walk out. I appraised the alternatives, if I flew down wind I could land near Hisoranu and a quick Dolmus ride would soon have me down on the beach paying for another ride up Babadag. The leeward side of the hill was heavily wooded with only a small field as a bailout if things went wrong. Blissfully unaware of what was about to happen I turned and headed for Hisoranu.

I was a good half kilometre from the hill, scanning ahead planning where to lose height and picking the best field to land in, when the canopy gave a warning rustle. Then I hit the rotor! The right hand side of the canopy just collapsed instantly, almost without conscious effort I corrected the course and pumped out the deflation. No sooner had the wing re-inflated than the opposite side collapsed, I repeated the process but in reverse. Once again when the canopy was fully inflated it decided to do something drastic, it caught a draught and surged forwards and downwards. I was left sat looking at the trailing edge below me. I braked hard, the canopy just seemed to stop, the lines went slack, and I fell inwards towards it. Hands up! There was a loud "Whump!" the lines went tight and the canopy was flying again.

I loved my canopy, we've had some really good times together, it was solid, reassuring, dependable, a blue and white nylon comfort blanket, and a reliable friend. However, when friendships go array your dearest pal can become your bitterest enemy. We fought, we argued, we wrestled for supremacy, both of us wanted to be on top. She spun, she twisted, and she bucked and plunged. The horizon seemed to be riding on a roller coaster ride to which I was a none too casual observer; powerless. At times like these I find it amazing how calm the brain can be, mine was going through a process of cool elimination.

"Forget Hisoranu, you'll never make it."

"Reserve, forget that as well, do you know it will work properly in turbulence and strong wind? Besides, there are power lines and,

you're over a forest; you don't want to end up strung up in a tree for hours....perhaps later."

"Try and steer towards the field in the forest."

As I got lower the leeward downward slope of forest began to sap the strength out of the wind. The air got perceptibly smoother, only a little at first and then more and more. I found I was slowly regaining control and was making progress in the general direction of the field I wanted. Lower still I started my landing approach. Just above the trees there was no wind, just smooth air as I quartered above one edge of the field, and then touched down, an almost perfect landing. I felt remarkably relaxed; I gazed at the crumpled heap of fabric and smiled, an old friend? Hardly, more like a loved one who would stick by you through thick and thin, fight any adversity so that we could come through it together. I looked around the field at the wall of surrounding trees, "Now, which direction is that bloody road?"

The next day I was relating this tale to Murat, the owner of Sky Sport, and he told me, "In really hot weather there is often a strong wind that develops over the Kaya valley. If you stay in it, as long as you aren't being blown backwards, you will eventually drop out of it. You may only have a hundred feet or so above the peak but that is still plenty of height to make the beach easily." Local knowledge is a wonderful thing, pity I didn't ask for it before I set out!

Don't try this at home!

Following on from my experience in rotor I decided it may be a good idea if I actually threw my reserve so that I would know what to do in a real emergency.

I thought I had got it all covered. I had got a life vest and arranged a pick up boat, and even told the boat pilot the colour of my canopy. I took advice from a few of the local pilots who had done this before and they told me to concentrate on pulling the canopy in once the reserve was inflated. They also gave advice on how to install collapses and how to react, what could possibly go wrong?

A nice quick launch and I was away. It was a great flight. I was amazed at how much of the wing I could collapse and the canopy would still fly, and how easy the collapses were to pump out.

At about two thousand feet I decided that I should stop messing about and throw the reserve, I reached down grabbed the handle and threw it backwards. At first I thought it had failed to open and then came the reassuring tug, and the paraglider slowed down but continued to fly. Now, in many ways paragliders are just like their pilots and they love to fly and get a bit upset when someone tries to stop them. Mine did not want to collapse. Initially I tried to induce a front collapse; it would do that but as soon as I tried to gather in the lines they were torn from my grasp and the wing reinflated. I tried to stall it but again as I let go of one brake to pull in the risers the bloody thing reinflated. Finally I hit upon heaving on one riser and hauling down on that side "C" riser at the same time, which worked. At last I had the glider safely gathered in my arms and looked down to discover I was only ten feet from the water. No time to think, straight into the PFL position and SPLASH!

My work involves contact with water all the time, I hate the bloody stuff. In Olu Deniz a large percentage of pilots who ditch in the sea, who haven't organised a pick up boat down before help can get to them.

The delay in getting the canopy meant that my itinerary of procedures was thrown out of kilter. The Pilots' Handbook advises ditching your gloves before you hit the water, I now found out why. I had planned to stow them in my flying suit, I had also planned on releasing the harness buckles before I hit the water; I just hadn't had the time. In the sea my gloves felt like I was wearing plastic bags full of thick blancmange. I couldn't feel anything, grip anything, or do anything, the gloves flapped about hindering everything I tried to do.

Face down in the water I could hear the outboard motor of the pick up boat, but it seemed to be going away!

Despite the life vest I was wearing the polystyrene in my harness's back protector held me face down; my legs were now tangled in the lines of the paraglider and I couldn't kick properly. I could hear the pickup boat, but the engine noise was getting quieter, I tried to get the gloves off, but to no avail. I couldn't hold my breath much longer and was starting to panic. By using a side stroke motion I managed to get my head out of the water enough to grab a quick breath, before being very deliberately rolled face down again by my back protector, which seemed to have

developed a personality of murderous intent. I was tiring fast, but I could now hear the rescue boat racing towards me.



It pulled alongside, and with my little remaining strength I managed to grab one of the lines on the side of the boat and pull my head clear of the water. Like some masochist who enjoys inflicting pain the back protector kept up a steady downward pressure. I screamed at the boat handler, "Take my gloves off! Take my gloves off!" He gave me a blank look before comprehending what I wanted. As soon as both gloves were off, releasing the harness was no problem at all, three quick clicks and I was free of the harness and the back protector which reluctantly let me live. I quickly cleared my legs and hauled myself into the boat, completely shattered. All my gear was quickly recovered and we sped off towards the beach. On the way in I asked the boatman what had taken so long for him to arrive to pick me up. He obviously felt very pleased with himself as he smiled and replied, "Ah, you see, we went to pick up your reserve bag first as we didn't want to lose it!"

I sat in the bow and reflected on what I had learned. Should I have flown with no back protector? I have to answer no to that, if I had made a mess of the take off I could have seriously injured myself. Without doubt I should have removed my gloves once comfortably in the air (one tandem pilot told me later that he does this as a matter of course anyway.), or as a last resort just ditched them. I should have suspended my harness somewhere and practised and practised and practised releasing the harness buckles. I should have known how to collapse the canopy quickly and efficiently. I should have enrolled on one of Jocky Sanderson's SIV courses and I should not have been so foolhardy in the first place.

Don't miss more of Fred's gripping adventures in next month's Skywords!