

SkyWords – Feb 08

The Newsletter of the DHPC

Editor's Chat

No volunteers for the post of Newsletter Editor yet, so you will have to put up with me for another month. Perhaps I can bore you into volunteering?

After what can only be described as one of the wettest winters on record (or is it the fact that I have moved to Lancashire?) we are now in the grip of a record high pressure. Have you been caught out sitting on top of a hill waiting for a breeze to pick up or have you actually committed any aviation yet?

I went out to Stags Fell last Monday. After the winter lay off I had forgotten most of what was second nature at the end of last season. My glider had been serviced and I had repacked my reserve, but where were my gloves, flying suit and thermal underwear. Batteries, sandwiches, flask, water? My computer packed up recently and I had lost all my favourite weather links so I had to find them all again.

Obviously I was late setting off. I walked all the way around to the south-east face and wasn't surprised to find myself alone apart from a few walkers. It was on, but light. I decided to do some ground handling. Leaving my glider bag and bits and pieces (including my radio) on the grass I pulled the glider above my head. The air felt buoyant so I launched. It was easily soarable and I immediately regretted leaving some of my kit on the deck. Attempts to land next to it were thwarted by the steep slopes above and below my take-off: each time I made an approach I rocketed skywards. So I just kept an eye on it.

After about half an hour of soaring, wave conditions set in. Negligible penetration without my speed bar. I climbed about 2,000' in a straight line towards Hawes, getting further and further from my kit. It was cold. I managed to lose height over the car park and top landed in some dead air. I walked over to collect my glider bag and was relieved to have all my gear together once again.

Wendy reported that the wind had veered round to the south-west and confirmed my experience that it had picked up. I managed to find a small lump to get my glider out of the wind shadow and re-launched on the south-west face. Again I was rewarded with strong lift. Another pilot arrived on site and I could see him first trying to launch and then struggling to stay up. I wished that I had my radio turned on so that I could reassure him: perhaps he was trying to call me? After a while he slope landed and I landed by the car park.

So, lessons from the first flight of the season. Get your gear together the night before. Leave more time than usual. Don't get separated from your kit. Keep your radio on. Oh, and did I mention the Lynx helicopter, the Tucano that flew below me, the C130 Hercules and the RAF Tornados. Did I remember to NOTAM the site the night before? Er, not exactly.

Club Coaches

The BHPA has recently announced the introduction of a coach revalidation system. This requires all Club Coaches to have a declaration of support signed by the Club's Chief Coach (or Chairman) at membership renewal time. The FSC also recommends that coaches should re-attend the Coach Course at least every five years to ensure that nothing gets forgotten and that they are fully up-to-date with current thinking. (The course fee is reduced by £10 for re-attendees.)

At present the BHPA has some 700 licensed Coaches. It is quite certain that many of these are completely inactive – perhaps having consciously decided to take step back in our more litigious society. There is therefore also a box on the membership form for coaches to tick if they no longer wish to hold a Coach Licence.

All this may well change our list of club coaches, which will be reviewed and updated on the website and in future newsletters soon.

Competitions

Congratulations to Hamish who has obviously been out flying already. The result of a few cheeky ridge runs is that he is top of the National XC league. Now the trick is to stay there Hamish...
<http://www.pgcomps.org.uk/?page=/news/index.php> and click XC League, table.

Trophy Winners

Baildon Sod. Pete Logan has graciously conceded that Kev McCloughlin flew as far as he did so they will share the prize.

Dinner Dance

It's this Saturday but if you are not one of the 65 already booked in, it is too late now. We will be hosing 6 farmers and their guests.

Pilot Exam

There are 18 pilots booked in for the revision day with Northern Paragliding this Saturday. The Pilot's exam is being arranged for 11 Mar 08 at the Arts Depot in Gargrave. To take the exam you need to be a CP and have all your pilot tasks signed off. If you want to take the exam either give you your name and BHPA membership number to Kate during the revision day or email her: katerawlinson@hotmail.co.uk. On exam day you will need to bring along £10 cash, a pen and a calculator.

Library

New DVD's including Play Gravity, Flying with Eagles, Manilla Sky etc, and we now have two copies of the fab book Thermal Flying, see Kate on club nights, and please remember to bring overdue DVD's etc back to the next club meeting.

Membership

Just in case you hadn't noticed **renewals are due NOW**. Of the 180 renewals sent out so far about 80 have renewed so far. If you haven't had a reminder get in touch with Neil: neil_plant@hotmail.com.

Club Nights

The next club night is on Thu 6 Mar in the Riverside Hotel in Ilkley. The theme is **Holiday Review** and various members will be telling us about their favourite holiday destinations. If you haven't booked your break in the sunshine yet and need some ideas then come along. We aim to start around 8pm.

For Sale

Airwave Sport 3 – size large 95 -120 kg, colour blue, white and orange. Good condition with no damage or repairs. Little flown last year due to illness, reason for sale – just bought a new wing - £800 or best offer. For more info or to make an offer- 01535642304 or Sean@ogi.me.uk.

If you have anything you want to buy, sell, announce or question then I am more than happy to include it in the newsletter. Send it to me at mrbaxter@hotmail.co.uk

Martin Baxter