

SKYWORDS

June 2021

Chairman's Chat

Following 'Awesome' April we've had a mostly 'Monsoon' May. It's entirely my fault: the change in the weather came pretty much as my enforced absence from flying came to an end. Sod's Law!

Elsewhere in this edition you can read about how the team successfully erected the club's new weather station. The club ticks over smoothly from year to year without too many events of note, but having our own remote weather station is a significant milestone in the club's history. (The old and bold will point out that we did once have our own weather station. It was called Hamish and we sold it to Rod Buck so that he could replace it with a Wendy Windblows station.) We are indebted to Simon Tomlinson and Trev Birbeck for their initiative, and to the 'Famous Four' for their contribution on erection day.

We all owe Stef Sykes a beer. Since nobody else stepped forward, he volunteered to fill the vacant post of Social Secretary. Obviously, we bit his arm off, and he has been formally co-opted onto the committee. Judging by his note of introduction, also in the edition, he is ideally suited to the role. As always, the plan is for club nights to start again in September. If we are still allowed in the pub by then, Stef will probably need a taxi home!

Perhaps by the time you read this the reserve repack will have been and gone (29th May). We normally run it in February when we can almost guarantee that it won't be flyable, but that just wasn't possible this year due to the pandemic. Even though a number of pilots made separate arrangements we decided to run the event later in the season, even if the club has to subsidise it. Sorry, but I've got my fingers crossed for rain and strong winds that day! Thanks, as always, to David May for organising it.

The farmer at Hawkswick (not Windbank) has decided that he doesn't want us landing in his field anymore and has locked the gates. There is an alternative landing field by the bridge, but it can be unforgiving. Please read Shaun Pickard's update, and check the site guide carefully if you intend to fly there.

Fly safely,
Martin Baxter
Chairman

On the record

I think a fundamental part of keeping safe in our sport is an awareness of our own fallibility: no matter who we are, no matter how much experience we have, **given the opportunity we can and will make mistakes**. Developing this awareness so that it becomes a conscious part of our decision process will give us the best chance to reduce these opportunities to an acceptable minimum. Of course, what that acceptable minimum might be is a matter of personal choice but at the very least, it should be a choice.

What are these 'opportunities'? Allowing oneself to be distracted during the pre-flight check is an opportunity. Poor ground handling skills is an opportunity. Flying a wing class that is beyond our skill level is an opportunity. And so on. The fact is all of us are on the learning curve somewhere so it's inevitable that we generate these opportunities, where we give ourselves room to make mistakes. Thankfully most of these opportunities pass us by unnoticed, without any negative effect. For example, just because we are distracted during a pre-flight check does not necessarily mean we miss something - most of the time there is nothing to miss. But the point is we may miss something and that something may well become significant later - a knot in a line for instance.

I think the best way to learn this awareness, (other than from first-hand experience which can be prohibitively painful) is through discussion. Not just discussion of incidents and accidents, but also of all those experiences that we all have had, when we reflect and think 'Hmmm - that was a mistake, I got away with it this time but ...'. And the closer to home the discussion - something that happened on a site we know for example or a pilot we fly with - the more real it becomes and the better we learn from it.

A good example of this type of discussion is what I have noticed around the article Jake wrote in last month's magazine. If you haven't read it then please take a look. The discussion was good natured and fun, with plenty of banter but the real benefit to me at least, is it has made me reflect my own flying and how easy it is to become complacent. Unfortunately it's human nature to become complacent and it takes effort to push back, to maintain the awareness we need to keep safe, the awareness that just because we have done something a thousand times before without issue, it doesn't mean we won't get it wrong the next time.

For that reason, I'd like to try to get the discussion going but this will depend on us all. I think everyone in this sport has had similar experiences, especially those who have been flying for a while. It would be great if you could send me a description of what happened with your thoughts on why and what you learned from it. It doesn't have to be long or pretty - I'll edit it and send to Carl for the magazine. I'm happy to keep it anonymous if you like.

To get the ball rolling, here's one from me...

I was reminded of it when I read of the sad event in Bergamo recently where a hang-glider pilot died because he forgot to clip himself in before launch. Such a tragedy. If you had asked me in the first few years of my flying career if I would ever forget to clip myself in I would have answered NO, absolutely not. And I honestly believed it. And yet, I have done it twice. And both times I got away with it ***because of nothing more than luck***. I had time, space and the conditions to abort the launch before my feet left the ground. But the opportunity was created, the mistake was made and ... I got lucky. I really don't want to roll that dice a third time.

How could this happen? Simple - I was distracted during setup and when I got back to it, instead of starting from the beginning again I carried on from where I thought I was and missed the important step of clipping in. Really!!! It's a humbling experience to realise I could miss something so fundamental and yet I did, I can't pretend otherwise. Apart from the obvious learning from this experience - to start the setup again from the start if I am interrupted - it has made me realise that there really isn't a mistake I am not capable of ... given the right opportunity.

Fly Safe
David May
DHPC Safety Officer
safety@dhpc.org.uk



*Image
from
petensara
on 14th
May at
Kilnsey,
(read
more on
the forum)*

19th May... about timing...

Pete logan - Dodd Fell, me and the usual's. Knew we needed to be off early to beat the rain. Even got to cloudbase before 10:30! (admittedly quite low at 3000-3500ft)

One thermal wonder for me and then camping under the glider in the rain. Jake and Chris made Kettlewell, Pete D to Pately and Rich to past York.

This was my existence for two showers waiting to continue flying. Unfortunately it wasn't to be though. I'm not complaining though, had a pie and podcasts to keep me company.



On the other hand.....

Richard Meek - As forecast, this flight was all about the showers. They were chasing us along from the outset. A big cell grew to the south of our track, exactly as RASP forecast, and the ones behind were steadily marching eastward.

On the western outskirts of York things were looking ok, at least partially. The route to goal at Brough was marked by a super looking cloud street. Although the Cumulonimbus about 15km south did look a bit daunting...! Enjoyable flight, awesome retrieve...



Site Update – Hawkswick

The landing field to the North West of Hawkswick is now not to be used, the farmer says that the gates are now locked and he doesn't want us to use it. The landing field by the bridge in the centre of Hawkswick is however still OK, the farmer is happy for us to continue to use it.



However, please heed the safety advice when using the bridge landing field

“ This field has been known to suffer from turbulence in strong westerlies so treat it with caution”.

I'll also be seeking to identify and negotiate the use of an alternative field to use as a second landing field. Remember current status and details are always available on the website

Shaun Pickard
Sites Officer South

Stef Sykes

New Social Sec

Hello and thanks for welcoming me so warmly to this fine club. Your committee has over-ridden their statutory risk-aversion and agreed to allow me on as Social Secretary; I shall endeavour to live up to this great title over the coming year.

Infinite thanks to the marvellous Rosie (who I've yet to meet), who delivered a masterful set of on-line events over this last winter of Covid restrictions.

I am rather a newbie to the Dales having moved up from Sussex late last summer. I have just over two years in the harness and have flown the grand number of 29.5 hours with my skills and knowledge of both the sport and it's inhabitants reflecting these 'light-breeze' numbers.

That said, my knowledge of hospitality and events is not a weak gust however, having run a beachfront cafe/bar/venue for 10 years, starting a film club and festival and sitting on the trust of an Arts Centre in Worthing.

Still, the bar is set high and your righteous expectations are clear, so please don't let me fail too quickly.

I would be delighted to hear of your ideas for speakers, films, points of discussion, drinking games, physical trials and untold stories of (safely executed and fully planned) derring-do. I believe the winter season commences in September, so there's plenty of time to nudge me on the hill and speak wheezes into my shell-like.

Thanks and may the lift be with you.



Stef

Wether Fell Weather Station

The new DHPC **Holfuy** Weather Station was successfully installed on Yorburch (site of the old Wendy Windblows station) on 7th May 2021. The site is 1690ft AMSL.

Trev Birkbeck, Pete Logan, Stef Sykes & I spent the day installing the new station, removing the old Wendy mast & clearing the site.

Holfuy Specification.

Holfuy (Extra) base unit.

Larger battery pack & solar panel.

GSM modem with data storage.

2G/3G/GPRS Vodafone contract connectivity – There is a very good mobile signal here.

Temperature sensor.

Pressure sensor.

Humidity sensor (used for cloud base estimation)

Rain Gauge.

Davis wind speed & direction heads + spare direction & speed vanes.

12 months warranty.

Support Steelwork.

6.4m galvanized steel mast.

2 levels of galvanized steel strapping to mount the mast to the existing brick building.

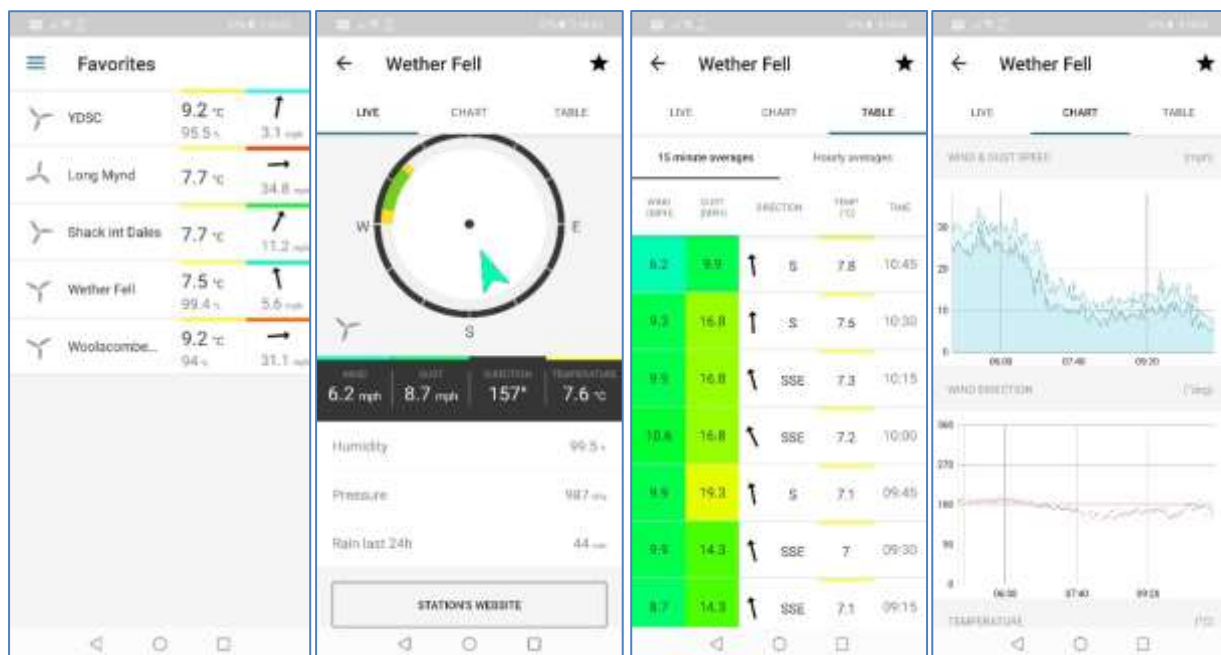
Stainless steel support wires to stabilise the mast.

Lightning protection fitted.

Holfuy App.

This can be downloaded for both Android & I Phone.

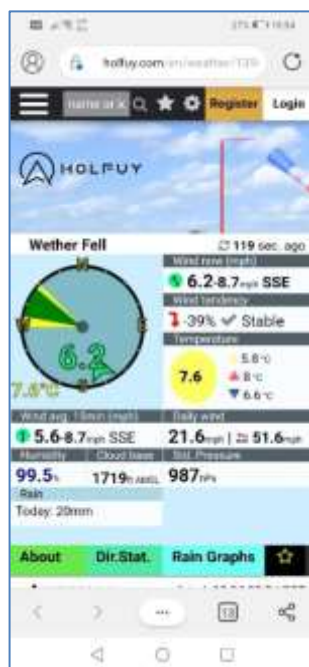
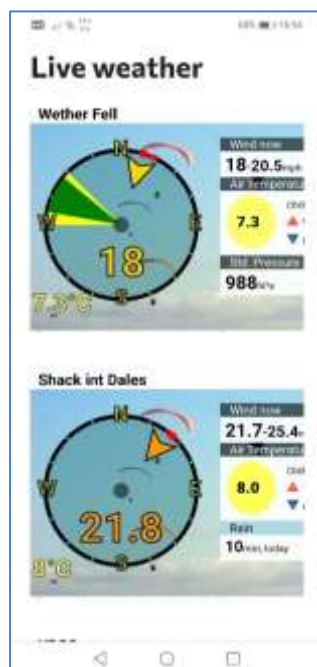


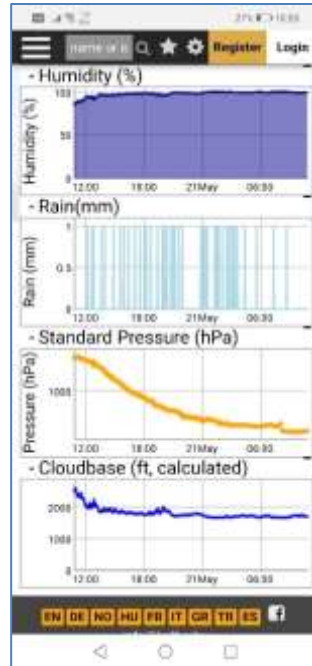
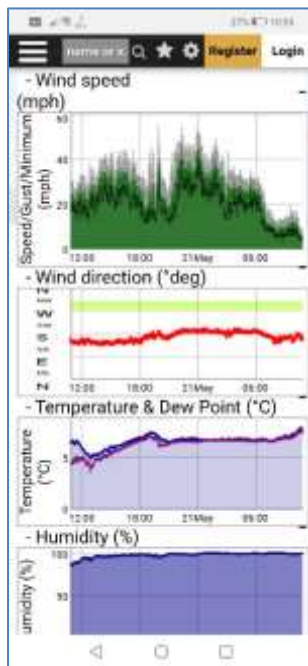


Holfuy Website.

www.holfuy.com/en/weather/1390

There is now also a widget on the **DHPC website weather page**, along with a few other local ones, showing the current status, clicking on the widget will take you to the above link





Other Details:-

We have permission from the (private) land owner to install the station in the same location as the old Wendy unit.

Trev & I will keep an eye on the station & carry out any maintenance as required. Pete Logan has set up some monitoring software to ensure that data updates are being transmitted as required.

We have also put a link through from the station to **Windy.com** to give live weather updates which might be useful.

Simon & Trev.

Club's harness hanger?

Does anyone know the location of the club's harness hanger, shown in the attached photo? It was used it for a school presentation in 2012, and then Steve Mann vaguely remembers handing it to another member sometime after that. We don't need it; we just want to know where it is. If you have it or know of its whereabouts, then please let me know: chairman@dhpc.org.uk
Martin

