

# SKYWORDS

October 2019

## Chairman's Chat

Do you keep a log book? Some pilots are of the opinion that log books are just for novices, and not worth bothering with once you get beyond CP. I'm nearing the end of my third.

I was probably influenced by the military. We were issued with rather fancy hard backed log books (RAF Form 414). Every qualification, rating and annual medical was recorded on the first few pages. At the end of the book was room for 'periodic' summaries, either annual or at the end of a course or tour; and simulator practices. The main part of the book was used to record every flight, surprisingly similar to the BHPA Log Book (Date, Aircraft, Duty/Exercise and hours flown to the nearest 0.1). In the military the hours were split into categories: day, night, instrument, and Night Vision Goggles (NVG). We had to use blue or black ink, and Typex was very frowned upon. At the end of every calendar month we had to make an entry in red ink summarising activity. This was presented to the Squadron Commander for his signature of approval. The periodic summaries contained an assessment of ability and a short report. Each aircraft had a separate log to record hours flown (for servicing) and faults. Very formal.

As I was leaving the world of military aviation (blimey - about 20 years ago!) the Army was just starting to introduce a system of electronic recording. I remember having my own 3½" floppy disk!

I still have a log book from my days of free fall parachuting, and from a basic PADI (sub aqua) course that I did.

All very nostalgic, and I suppose that's one of the reasons why I still maintain a paragliding log book. I have a shocking memory and I find it useful to be able to remind myself of flights I've had, sites (and destinations) I've visited, and people that I have flown with. It's also useful when you're asked how many hours you've flown in the last year, and to judge your own currency (in the military we had set minima). Also useful for keeping you honest when you come to sell your wing.

Widespread use of GPS and t'interweb now make it very easy to record just about any activity (including sleep!) using an appropriate App. Flight times are automatically recorded and added up. Watching tracklogs and videos over and over again gets a bit boring, but a couple of nice photos and a few words can be enough to re-live the memory. Some pilots record their flying in v/blogs. Whatever method you choose, I'd recommend that you maintain a log.

When we joined forces with the local gliding clubs to fight the Leeds Bradford ACP we were asked for some statistics. OK, so we only have about 170 members (not many), but most of

us own our own aircraft (quite impressive – unlike the gliding clubs which tend to share in syndicates) and some have more than one. (As Pete Logan says, the correct number of wings to own is  $n+1$ , where  $n$  is the number that you currently own!). They also asked me about how many 'movements' we conduct annually. A 'movement' is defined as a take off and a landing. Whilst weather conditions limit the number of days we get out (not many), imagine how many 'movements' we complete when slope or top landing (lots). The military call it a 'force multiplier'. I now try to record how many take-offs I do each day.

If you have looked at the online [Pilot Development Structure](#) you will see that it offers a tentative step towards a suggested currency for some activities. Hopefully this will be developed into something more useful in the future. Tandem pilots already have a currency requirement. Students have a syllabus to complete (especially hard if they change instructors). Coaches need evidence to support their licence. A log book is invaluable in all this and, whilst some will worry that Big Brother is monitoring their activity, there are potential benefits to be gained from sharing data.

When it comes to accidents, it's very difficult to judge a good year from a bad one. More accidents might just mean better flying weather. The comparison is only valid if you compare it with the number of flying hours completed. (The military quote accident rates per 10,000 flying hours.) This might seem like statistical trivia but when it comes to analysing procedures, training methods and equipment it can be a powerful tool. Statistical facts can unlock pots of money, and prove useful in fighting unjust legislation.

It might even be useful have data on site usage. On average how many days per year is Nont Sarahs flown? How many pilots fly there? How long do they fly for? Are they PSC or DHPC members? Should we continue to pay site fees? Should it be marked on air charts?

Fly safely,

**Martin Baxter**  
**Chairman**

Still no volunteer for the post of Trophies Officer.

If nobody steps forward, either before or during the AGM, then we simply won't be able to present any trophies this year.

It's one of the easier jobs on the committee and a good opportunity to give something back to the club.

You don't need any special skills or previous experience.

If you want to know more without making any commitment whatsoever then please give me a shout:  
[chairman@dhpc.org.uk](mailto:chairman@dhpc.org.uk).



## September Club Night, Photograph with Harry Bloxham

Our first club night of the year welcomed pilot Harry Bloxham. For those of you who are unfamiliar with the name, he is currently British Paragliding Champion and his photos don the front of XC magazine on a regular basis.

Harry, a PHD student from Bristol, talked us through his short (only 6 years started in 2016) but very full flying career. Like many of us, Harry's adventures started in mountaineering and skiing. Focus soon turned to paragliding when he caught the bug.

Harry is part of the new wave of young racing pilots coming up through the BPRA (British Paragliding Racing Academy). Harry told us of the first day he met Rus Ogden, when he asked for a site briefing on his first post CP flight.

After learning to fly, becoming a better pilot through entering competitions and time spent in the alps, speed riding caught Harry's attention as someone who likes adrenaline. He talked about flying closer and closer to the terrain, and looking for trickier lines to get the buzz. A near miss combined with the risk: reward to get the buzz meant Harry took the wise decision to stop speed flying.

Harry completed a SIV in Turkey with Rus Ogden on a Mentor. He had plans to progress through the wing categories, but that year he upgraded to an Ice peak 6, and the year after onto an Enzo 2. He is now flying the Enzo 3. A big jump from the Mentor! Alongside SIV Harry dabbled in Acro showing us photos of manoeuvres over Chamonix.

The evening then turned towards competition flying and taking photos. Paragliding takes us to some amazing places in the world. We were wowed with photos from Brazil (Deans usual winter trip destination), Turkey, The Alps and the UK. Each photo came with a story about the competition or flight along with some top tips on how the photos were composed and shot.

### Harry's Top Tips

1. The rule of thirds. Line features up imaginary lines splitting the picture horizontally and vertically into thirds.
2. Take lots of photos, some of them are bound to be good.
3. Take photos from new perspectives. Looking down on pilots (that does require you to be above them!)
4. You don't need a big SLR to take great photos.
5. Stay safe when taking photos.
6. Play about with pictures post production. Using something like Adobe Light Room for post processing.

It was a very enjoyable evening with a great turn out of pilots. Hopefully those who came have taken away some inspiration to get their cameras out and take some pictures (especially given the January Film and Photo competition). Harry finished the evening with taking about the future, more competitions and racing plus flying sailplanes and light aircrafts.

**Rosie Lyle**





Image courtesy of Harry Bloxham



## SIV Annecy/Doussard Sept 2019 with Flyeo

"You should do an SIV course!" was the advice from every coach I've spoken to and a pre-requisite to the XC Beginner course I'd booked in Annecy one week later. What follows is the account of a low airtime (20 hours/2 years) Club Pilot, yours truly, embarking on his first SIV course.

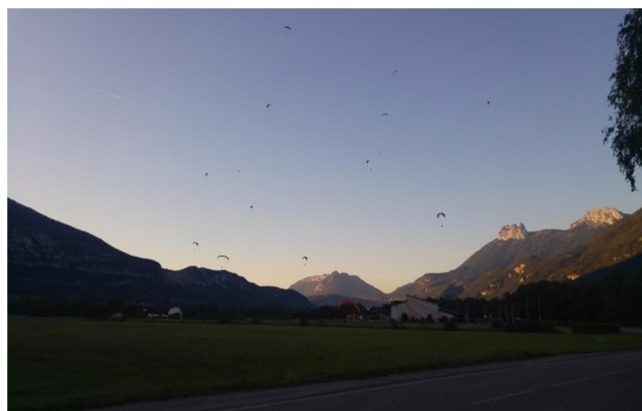
The journey to Doussard on the southern shore of Lake Annecy was a smooth and timely one and could have seen me bag a two hour flight in the evening sunshine, if it were not for the fact that I was tired, I didn't know where or when the shuttle bus was picking pilots up from and I needed to get the keys to my rental studio sooner rather than later. I was in Doussard for four days, a two-day SIV course followed by two days of free flying to explore the area and make the most of my time here, and I'm so glad I did, for it was the best flying I've done in my two years' experience, beating my week long CP Mentor course in Algodonales last year, hands down.

I took a nice 11am flight from Manchester to Geneva, with the intention of picking up the bus (T72) to Annecy and then another onto Doussard (51). The bus stop is directly opposite the exit doors of the airport, and as luck would have it, a more direct coach (Flixbus) was already waiting to depart for Annecy. It seemed like everybody was somehow related to Parapente in Annecy/Doussard, giving me the feeling I was joining a big family. The Flixbus coach driver in Geneva airport, after dispensing with the usual Brexit jokes, asked if I was going to the Coupe Icare and explained that he shuttles the pilots up the hill all day, but today he was just taking one pilot, me, to Annecy.

The Annecy to Doussard bus (51) saw me being given more advice from another French pilot/instructor taking the same bus. Shame I couldn't understand what he said.....something like my lon 4 won't go into a SAT. Note to self - brush up on your French and what exactly is a SAT? (Thinking, hopefully, I won't be attempting one on this course)

Coasting along the lakeside road towards Doussard, I marvelled at the blue skies and beautiful scenery, something that was lost on the school children filling the rest of the bus who see this every day; the girl next to me falling into a deep sleep. My enthusiasm turned to trepidation as I saw the height of some pretty gnarly rock formations, with names like 'the fin' and 'the teeth' (Dent du Cruet) on the south east side of the lake, covered in hundreds of paragliders playing in booming thermals. "Oh God, I'm doing a SIV here tomorrow....(rumble)...I hope my apartment's got plenty of loo roll!".

I jumped off the bus in what appeared to be the centre of Doussard and rang the apartment owner. Turns out he works in the Paratroc paragliding shop just 150yds from the apartment and bus stop...nice one. A quick food shop at the local Carrefour, a 5 min recce to find the Flyeo shop/classroom and I'm all set for an 8am (!) start in the morning. I just need to tear myself away from watching the gliders coming in to land as late as 7:30pm, making the most of the 30 minutes after sunset.



After confirming the French plumbing was working the next morning, I set off to the Flyeo shop and joined the other course members in a large room where gliders or more importantly, your reserve, could be inspected. Your reserve has to have been checked and repacked by a qualified club member or service centre within the six months prior to your SIV course. Flyeo can check and repack your reserve, but the repacking process takes 48 hours as it's best to let the reserve hang for 24 hours prior to repacking. All this would have meant arriving in France 2 or 3 days early, so I opted to have my reserve repacked by Aerofix during a spell of bad weather before leaving the UK. Fabien 'Fab', the course leader, pulled out my reserve handle undoing the zips in the process and asked me to repack it. When I told him I didn't know how exactly, he laughed and said "now's your chance to learn!" and walked off to check the other reserves. I like his style...try for yourself and make the inevitable mistakes and then he'll come along in 5 minutes to correct you.

It concentrates the mind to know you may have to use this reserve handle in the coming hours! Reserves checked and introductions over, we sat in one of the many classroom/briefing rooms to go through the day's itinerary. Flyeo tailor the exercises to match each pilot's individual experience levels, so myself and one other pilot started at the beginning with rapid decent techniques, while the more experienced pilots in the group did wingovers, tail slides and all manner of manoeuvres I could only dream of. Before setting off, everyone is equipped with a floatation jacket that doesn't get in the way of your harness, a waterproof bag for any valuables and a radio earpiece, if you haven't got one fitted to your helmet already.



A 15 minute mini-bus ride up the hill takes you to the glider friendly launch site of Montmin, part of the Col de la Forclaz area. The launch area surface is made from an artificial turf like material as short and as smooth as a bowling green, with a large preparation area at the back of the launch area and enough space on launch to get 4 gliders side by side, two deep. Perfect! At busy times, someone is on hand to act as a

Regulator to ensure nobody jumps ahead of the queue and tempers are kept in check. I was in no rush, simply soaked up the atmosphere and the vista across the lake and waited my turn. Eric, from Flyeo, was on hand to help people launch and his advice was good, forget about the SIV, concentrate on the launch for now, then once you head over the lake, relax and prepare for your instructions from Fab. There was no wind on launch, so most people opted for a forward launch, which I managed to nail first time to my relief as I hadn't done one for over two years since my EP/CP. All my ground handling was paying off.



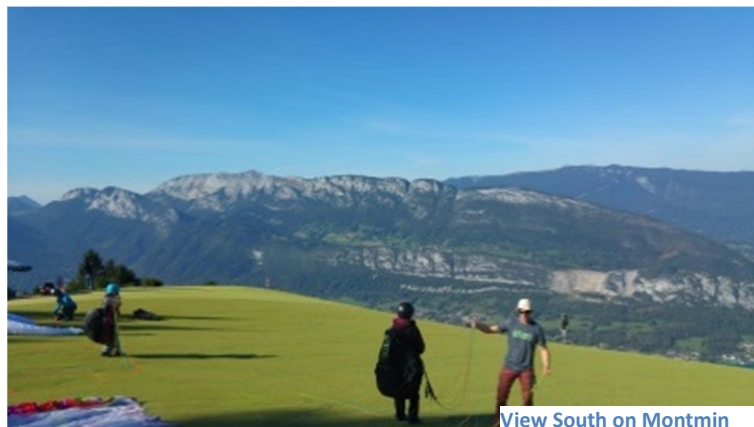
Launch Preparation Area

The first instructions were quite benign, exploring brake range, which involved progressively and repeatedly putting the brakes on and off until you pitch back and forth, like a kid on a playground swing, to alarming angles before braking any dive forward and avoiding overdoing it. Brake travel now recalibrated in my brain, I'm

ready for my first manoeuvres, Spiral Dive with smooth recovery.....hopefully. Turning into a Spiral Dive was surprisingly easy, but not knowing how to control the speed of dive caught me by surprise.

Full speed spiral dive, 150Km/h, pulling 4G, the wind noise deafening me...."what was that last instruction on the radio?" "hands up?", ok, damn it's locked in or so I thought. "Don't worry it'll come out in a moment", I told myself. That moment seemed to last a long time, but the glider came out of the spiral and into the next phase, the auto recovery/compensation phase, which I duly cocked up....left brake, right brake, where the hell's my glider going? Just catch the final dive....and relax. Phew! Just as you feel you've got off the rollercoaster, Fab comes on the radio with a slight chuckle, a chuckle that says "ok, you didn't do anything right there", he gives words of encouragement and instructions on how to compensate for the roll when exiting the dive. "Ok, let's go again!". What!? Already?

The next two attempts were better and before I knew it I was instructed to land. The landing field is a nice strip of grass next to the beach, which everyone should be able to land in, but it is surrounded by a lake on one side, a camp site on the other and a few trees to the side. Care must be taken in the afternoon in



View South on Montmin

particular, as the valley wind regularly blows down the lake from North to South, as I found out on my last (3rd) flight mid-afternoon when taking a constant aspect approach into the landing field. I turned a little bit late into wind and came to a complete halt, mid-air, above some huts in the camp site. I only just scraped over the top of the huts, then the perimeter fence and landed 5 metres into the field.

Before my 2nd or 3rd flight, I heard Fab calmly saying Reserve, Reserve, Reserve, so someone from our group ended up in the drink, but by the time I'd taken off, I'd forgotten all about swimming options.



After puking up before my third and final flight (I suffer from travel sickness, especially sitting in the back of a mini-bus going up a winding road and the roller-coaster SIV flights), I set off with Eric telling Fab to take it easy on me, which was comforting to hear.

The most eventful moment of my 3rd flight was when I came very close to spinning my glider mid-session. This happened when I didn't have the requisite weight shift before braking to turn the glider, the glider wanted to fly straight ahead and I persisted with the brake on one side. Just as it started to go, Fab shouted hands-up and all turned out well. It's at times like this that it's very important to react immediately to his instructions, for any delay would result in the situation worsening.

So, what was day one like on reflection? Well, I improved a lot. I was beginning to understand the series of actions required to enter and exit the spiral dive. Next, I need to control the speed within the dive, accelerate and decelerate the dive whilst observing around and below my glider. Keep my head back, look at the glider, and sit back in the harness. We headed back to the classroom for a 1 hour debrief looking at everyone's video footage and discovered who had gone for a swim. It was Jon Chambers, a former GBR X-Alps competitor 2011/2013, who was doing wingovers and ended up diving into his wing, something Fab had never seen done on a wingover before.

Jon Chambers :- <https://www.redbull.com/gb-en/interview-jon-chambers-paragliding-red-bull-x-alps>

Day two was less gut wrenching and far more enjoyable, with tasks including 50% asymmetric collapse (ac) steering away from the collapsed side, full frontal collapse, 50% ac with weight shift into the collapsed side into a spiral dive, control, exit and re-inflate the glider followed by a full wing spiral dive concentrating on staying in the spiral while slowing the dive down, accelerating again, repeat then exit. Four flights in total on day two, no sickness, just lots of fun and satisfaction of being in control and improving on every flight.

The challenge now is to practise in the UK. Oh and how did our day 1 swimmer get on with day 2? Just more extreme SIV manoeuvres, this time in a tandem with his 12yr old daughter....as you do. She might be one to watch out for in future comps. In the debrief, I was crowned best launcher proving all my ground handling and calm nature on take-off were paying off.

I stayed on in Doussard for an extra two days and flew a couple of XC flights on the biggest ridges I've flown on to date, reaching cloud base on day two (2575m/8448ft) and crossing the lake both days on the 'mini tour'. I wish I could have stayed on longer into the evening to catch the sunset flight, but the bus to Geneva Airport was beckoning. There's always next time!



## The Essentials

Prior to your SIV:

1. Ensure your glider has been serviced within the last 12 months.
2. Ensure your reserve has been repacked/checked within the last 6 months.
3. Ensure you have specific paragliding travel insurance.
4. Ensure your BHPA membership is current.
5. Take a USB key. Videos of your flight are available for 15 euro if you bring your own USB key or 20 euro on a key they provide.

Transport Info:

Regular flights from Manchester to Geneva with Easyjet. Tip: don't book your hold luggage (glider) until 24 hours before the flight, because if you need to cancel the flight, you won't get your luggage costs refunded (23Kg is approx £26 each way). Book your luggage online before the flight to avoid sky-high costs at the airport.



Bus to Annecy:

Up-to-date PDF timetables can be downloaded from <https://www.auvergnerhonealpes.fr/264-haute-savoie.htm>. Just search for Annecy and click on bus lines 51 or T72.

The faster Flixbus can be booked online via <https://global.flixbus.com/bus/annecy>.

Current Timetable Direct PDF links - La Region

[https://www.auvergnerhonealpes.fr/uploads/TransportInterurbain/b5/37\\_088\\_FH-T72-automne-19-web.pdf](https://www.auvergnerhonealpes.fr/uploads/TransportInterurbain/b5/37_088_FH-T72-automne-19-web.pdf)

[https://www.auvergnerhonealpes.fr/uploads/TransportInterurbain/29/8\\_542\\_FH-51-52-Sept19-Juill20web.pdf](https://www.auvergnerhonealpes.fr/uploads/TransportInterurbain/29/8_542_FH-51-52-Sept19-Juill20web.pdf)

Navette Bus to Launch

There are 3 shuttle buses called Navettes that take pilots from the car park of the official Landing Area at Doussard, up to Montmin launch. They run constantly, arriving every 20-30mins. A numbered queuing system is in place around the perimeter of the parking area, to help maintain some sense of order. Food and drink is available at the café/bar at the landing area, next to the Navette pickup area.



Graham McAnanys

## NOTICES

### Annual General Meeting

**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2019, The Horse and Farrier, Otley. LS21 1BQ 7.30 for 8pm**

All members of the Dales Hang Gliding and Paragliding Club are invited to the AGM. If any member wishes to submit a formal proposal please ensure that it reaches the Secretary ([contacts@dhpc.org.uk](mailto:contacts@dhpc.org.uk)) by 1 November 2019.

All proposals will be published in the November edition of Skywords which will be published later than is usual in order to include any proposals from members. There is no opportunity to raise new issues for voting on the night at the AGM.

As well as setting membership subscriptions and contributions to the Flying Fund for the coming year, all committee posts are up for re-election, as per the Constitution. Members are free to stand for any post - none of the incumbents will be offended if you wish to have a go at their role. We will certainly need a new volunteer for the Trophies Officer role. Committee membership simply requires a little spare time and a willingness to put something back into the club. If you want to have a non-committal conversation about a role, then please contact the Chairman, Martin Baxter, at [chairman@dhpc.org.uk](mailto:chairman@dhpc.org.uk).

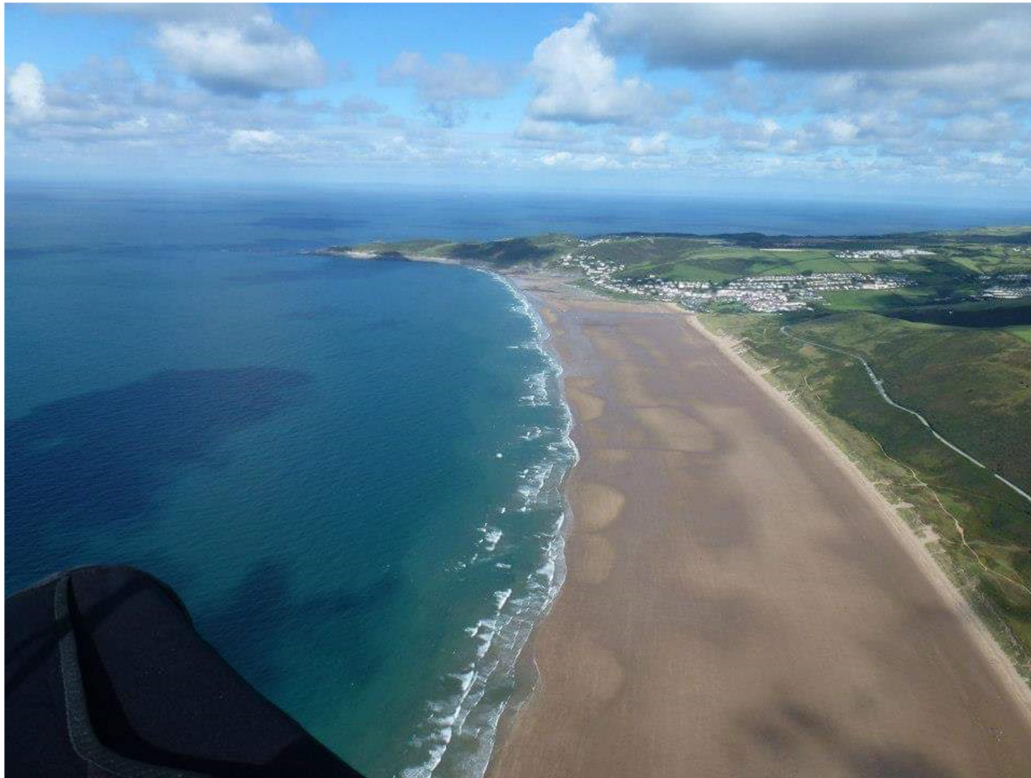
We look forward to seeing you at the AGM.

**DHPC Committee**

#### **Editor's Note:**

**Many thanks to all the contributors this month; keep them coming however long / short**

## Picture Corner



Pictures by **Simon Tomlinson** (while flying Woolacombe)

“The NDHPC club is very friendly & welcoming and it's a great place to fly”

**Editor:** I’m taken by how similar to mine in last months (South Wales)