



NEWSLETTER

April 2011

Well it's been a strange weather month with lots of sunny days, thanks to High pressure, but consequently E / NE winds have dominated. It has also brought regular inversion layers restricting XC opportunities although sky gods have managed a few. It seems to have been potluck turning up at your chosen site, sometimes having a good day, but often finding unforecasted calm or gales. Currently the Met Office is forecasting this to continue into mid-May!

March Meeting minutes

Apologies:
Andy Holt
Mike Gadd

Repack Sunday 27th March

Chairman reports that this was a great success and an estimated 30 reserves were repacked. Thanks to Andy Farrow and Robin Mills for the help and Andy Guy for arranging a discount on the cost of the hall.

Withnoe Barton/ Freathy

The fee for this site has gone up to £250 from £150 this year and is by far the clubs most expensive site. Members are reminded that this is a sensitive site and to not upset the owner. Members are required to pay the £3 parking fee when requested, there is no exemption for club members.

Batten Cliffs

This site is an alternative to Struddick but only in lighter winds. Also the farmer should be contacted before flying, contact details will be on the site guide.

Met Training DVD

There are 2 meteorology DVDs in the club library and therefore the DVD discussed last month won't be purchased.

The "50k or Bust" book will be added to the library soon.

Members List

As discussed last month an email was sent to all members about the proposed members list. So far there have been no objections. A list will be made up once the 1 month period for objections has passed.

Facebook

The club Facebook page is proving to be quite a success with 26 members now on it. It is an easier place for members to share pictures and videos than the yahoo group. There is a link on the club website to the Facebook page.

Frostbite comp/Brass Monkey comp

The Frostbite comp was quite a success as reported in the newsletter.

The Brass Monkey is still to be organised, Colin having been busy with work recently. This may eventually end up being an Easter comp during the 2 bank holiday weekends that are coming up.

Trophies

It is requested that all trophy holders return their trophies so that they can be presented for the 2010 results.

Other Matters

The Chairman thanks Mark Ansell for a particularly good newsletter this month.

Mark Nicol notes that the Condors have some good presentations at their meetings but they do pay for their speakers and as a consequence membership fees are £25 there.

There is a new email address for NOTAMs, which will be updated on the club website [see below].

Next month

There will be a presentation of member's favourite weather websites. A computer and Internet will be available for any member to share their favoured sites.

Any members with ideas for future meetings can air them on the Yahoo group or mention them at the next meeting.

Future – a review of the sites guide, probably cover 1 or 2 sites per month.

Other News

Changes to NOTAM email address

Most of you are aware of the need to NOTAM flying activities especially on a Thursday at Freathy. Usually this is done by phone Tel: 0800-515544 or Fax: 0800-3892225.

I did not realise until recently that you could also do it by email, however, that email address has now changed. It is now E-mail: cas-gmbaslfosfbc@wittering.raf.mod.uk and include the following details :-

2.2.1 CANP fax and telephone messages should provide details of the intended activity in the following format:

- a. Type of activity;
- b. location(s): Preferably as a 2-letter, 6-figure grid reference taken from an OS 1:50,000 map, although latitude and longitude will be accepted. The name of a nearby village or town is also required;
- c. area of operation(s): (See paragraph 2.4.1);
- d. date and time of intended operation(s): Start/finish in local time;
- e. maximum operating height(s) agl;
- f. number and type(s) of aircraft;
- g. contact fax and/or telephone number(s);
- h. operating company and fax/telephone number(s) (if applicable).

Example:

CANP NOTIFICATION

A - Hang Gliding / Paragliding

B - Freathy SX 401 518

C - 2 NM RADIUS

D - 12 SEPTEMBER - 1000 to 1800

E - 1000 FEET AGL

F - 12 Hang Gliders

G - Contact fax and telephone number for the site

H - South Devon Hang Gliding & Paragliding Club

Ashley will post the full document on our club web site in the very near future.

Repack / Air Ambulance

At the Feb meeting, it was decided that as the annual repack is free, a collection would be held for the Devon Air Ambulance Trust. The collection did not take place on the day, but at the March meeting instead. £50.90 was raised and will be forwarded to them

Thanks to all who contributed.

TURKEY trip in May

Julie & Mark, Mick & Lyn Boarer, Andy & Trish Holt, Jim & Anjie Saunders, Steve & Carol,(Coley). Are all off to Olu Deniz around the 2nd May for 2 weeks.

There are offers of 7 days B&B incl flights for as little as £150 at this time. A lift up the mountain is around £6 at current exchange rates. Food is cheap. Drinks reasonable.

Skywings says that a round of the Acro world cup will be on while they are there. Should be interesting!!

If any-one wants to join the party and want any more info, give Mark Stapleton a call.

Other Flying News

Saturday 2nd April Mark and Jenny went to Whitsand:

We launched right in the corner near Polhawn into a 14 -18 mph wind with the help of Allen and made our way along Whitsand Bay. Very smooth very buoyant air.

Going past the higher cliffs by the camping park we got to 420ato and by the time we got to the corner before jumping over the ranges we were still at 300 ato. Decided to try and cross the ranges and did very well to start with. As we flew onto the lower cliffs we gradually lost height until we were down to about 200 ft ato and then we were able to maintain this height. I was sure we would get to Portwrinkle and back.

However when were about two thirds of the way across the air became quite turbulent. It didn't feel nice at all so I carried on for a few more seconds and then turned back towards the bigger cliffs. The air still felt quite uncomfortable and there was no lift. We got back onto the bigger cliffs on the corner where the road bends but no lift so I elected to land on the beach below Tregantle.

Setting up my approach I could see no signs of wind. No kites, no flags and there was a kid carrying a day tent above his head and the tent was not moving? I decided to land heading towards the sea and we did a nil wind landing. The wing settled behind us as we ran it off and we then stripped off our flying suits etc -it was like a summers day on the beach.

After we had landed I looked along the coast and there were still hang gliders skying out and 10 minutes later hangies passed over us on their way back from Looe. A few minutes later as we were packing up the wing the wind picked up and blew around 8 mph off the sea.

Same day on the moors CB reported

Strange weather on Widgery too. Walked up with ant moore in almost nil wind 1pm. Waited for thermal cycles to come thro before launching or we would have gone down. wind varied between WNW and SW over the next hour of flying, and 5-18mph. I ripped my wing on a sharp rock, then had to watch Ant immediately climb to cloudbase. He landed at Hittesleigh, north of Whiddon Down. Chris Blanchard

Saturday 9th April Mark S was at Beesands:

Arrived Beesands at 5pm, to find Mark, Jenny and Les at the pub and Peter Reeve just landing.

Julie took off at 5.30 and quickly rose to 165ft above T/O. Shortly after joining her in the air, the farmer started tilling the feild behind take off. The massive dust cloud rising was soon filled with about 200 or so gulls.

Not sure if a coincidence, but the air then in front became very rough.

Having enjoyed half an hour in the air, we both decided to head for the beach.

Still, can't think of a better way to spend a Saturday evening....

Tuesday 12th April Nick Bubb flew the north coast

My plan was a full days flying on Woolacombe today but looking through the window to the sea this morning I could see the tell tale white caps. The forecast for Woolacombe was looking like a late afternoon session so I decided to head down the coast to lighter winds at Perranporth and return to Woolacombe mid to late afternoon. I had a great 1 hour 30mins flight at Perranporth. Conditions where light to moderate winds with gentle thermals. Great fun.

I arrived back at Woolacombe around 4pm to find winds still strong but PG's where soaring the dunes at the base of the Hill and HG's soaring high above the main ridge. After a quick fresh up the winds had eased and I made away to the lower take off and launched into what would be a 2 hour flight. The last hour was very smooth and I maintained over 800ft ato with ease just floating about.



Mike Gadd was also at Woolacombe:

On getting to the top, I found the wind a tad off to the W, and blowing 10-14. Every time I tried to raise the wing, I got lofted still in reverse, overcorrected and dumped on my arse embarrassingly. On the third attempt I got dragged and I decided enough was enough and sat on the glider feeling deflated in more ways than one!

Whilst contemplating taking up another activity and selling all my gear, I got chatting to a fellow hangie who I think felt sorry for me, and so offered me a flight on his HG (Wills Wing – Eagle). Although I haven't flown a HG since 1996 I did have about 250 hours at that point and plenty of competition experience under my belt, so I decided that if it feels right on TO, then I'll launch. Well, when I got to TO with my wing man (a very relaxed owner of the said Wills Wing), it not only felt right, it felt as though I had never stopped – it was perfection. So I launched with a very committed TO into a 14-18 in perfect conditions. Flying the HG was gorgeous, it did everything I wanted it to, was stable and easy to turn, and I also had chance to put in some deep stalls, tight 360's and figure 8's. I was able to explore and fly a long way out from the ridge and return with speed and confidence. Landing was fast of course, so I ground-effected further down the field than expected, but landed perfectly right on front of the still chilled out owner of the wing.

What a turn around, from feeling like I shouldn't be on the hill at all with my level incompetence - to doing what I do best!

Also on the 12th Martin Foley was further east at Batcombe:

It was windy but calmed down later. I went about 4 pm after I got home from fishing, and 4 pilots had got away earlier. It was gone 5pm when 2 condors and myself got away and 2 of us landed at Lulworth cove at just before 6.30 having had to lose loads of height in the sea breeze convergence still working over Lulworth, could of carried on into the ranges as they had finished firing, but did not fancy the long walk out at that time of the

day. Landed at my friends house, another fisherman from Lulworth, greeted with a sandwich and cans of ale; a good end for the first flight of the year. Martin

Sunday 17th Editor was at Maker

Didn't get out of bed until 10am, so wasn't at T/O until 12:30, but only Bondy and Neil Northmore there to start. Many others later.

Very confusing wind conditions persisted all day:

1. On T/O it was a light 8 - 10 mph SE. Hard to build a 'wall', but half way through launch the wing surged up and flew fine. If others hadn't been flying one might have thought it marginal. In fact it was then slow / low progress over the fence into lift;
2. Out to sea the yachts were all coming in using a moderately strong S breeze;
3. Out in the lift band it was E - ENE giving slow progress up to the Fort, but easy lift giving 200' - 350' ATO.
4. Up at the north end, if you could make it, was 450'ATO, except on the last run where, going out to sea following gulls, I kept going up to 700'ATO! Dougie was along with the Tandem and suggested it was 'wave', which might account for severe sink as I went further out.

Packed up at 5pm after 2 1/2 hours flying and getting tired. As the last car pulled out Colin B arrived, and he later reported a further 90 mins smooth flying..



Same day Bob was at Beesands

Got to Beesands 1100 ish I guess. A bit top endish for pg, (and NE again) but I wanted to try some stronger wind ground handling with the new wing.

Had a nice 45 mins, 270 feet ato at best. Wind picked up a bit, and a couple of times I was on half bar, hands got cold too so I headed for the l/z. Got there with 200 feet ato. (500 ft asl?) Pete flew his (or actually his dad's old hangie?) for much the same time. Pete landed just after me, so we had a pint at the Cricket Inn and then Pete wanted a bit of strong wind g/h so we wandered up again (me without glider) and Pete flew his floppy. A bit too strong for his wing, even on full bar, so he top landed behind pretty soon after and we called it a day.

Wednesday 20th April Robin Mog went XC into Dartmoor:

Martin and I went to Beardown. First mistake - as the day before he'd flown at Belstone and had a nice little X/C to Northlew about 14k and after landing later we could see cumms forming over the North of the moor - so Belstone would probably have been better. Anyway we scratched around for about an hour finding little bits of lift but nothing substantial - lots of slope landing and kiting back up to T/O - quite tiring. The wind was switching between E and SE. Then about twoish I found a reasonable thermal which got me to 1500' @ T/O but was taking me NW into the middle of the moor. When I lost it I headed for the conifer plantation the other side of the Cowsic as a possible trigger and to minimise my walk-out.

Then I noticed Martin coming up in good lift so I headed back to his thermal - second mistake - I couldn't connect with it and was now lower and further into the moor. He got a few hundred higher and carried on almost making the western edge of the moor. Because I was lower I aimed for Great Mis Tor and landed 1K north of it by a bend in the Walkham, which I soared for about 10 min hoping for a low save. I decided to walk back to the car as it was only 5K - third mistake - I'd forgotten that on the moor this was more like 5 miles with all the twisting and turning etc to avoid bogs and find river crossings. I should have made for the road - only 3k.

Anyway it took me over 2 and a half hours and I haven't been so shattered since walking the Perambulation (around the moor - about 55 miles) in 24 hours, but I was 25 years younger then and not carrying a P/G!

The fourth and biggest mistake I made that day was forgetting to leave my car key with the car. Martin rang when I was halfway back to say he'd hitch-hiked back to the entrance to the Beardown farm track but couldn't get my car as there was no key with it. If there had been he could have retrieved it, driven up the road by the plantation on the west side of the Cowsic and saved me an hours tramping!

So, was the 20min or so of good flying worth all that effort? Well probably if I learn from my mistakes. It could have been worse though - the moor was really dry and some of the hummocked ground I walked over would have been bog and uncrossable in its normal conditions - same with the rivers, they were low and unusually easy to cross.

Easter weekend some varied flying in N/NE conditions

No detailed e-mail reports, but Dougie's blog shows flying was had by several pilots on the north side of the moors.

For Sale

I am selling my **Firebird Matrix Medium (still available)**, DHV 1/2 as I want to trade up to a DHV 2.

I bought the glider new from Simon Murphy in July 2004. It's blue and white, still quite crispy, probably less than 60 hours, no tears or damage of any kind. I think its in very good condition. Of course it's old technology now and not as good as the later Firebird Grid and Spider. It would be a good, safe, first wing for someone new to paragliding.

I would like around £450. Anyone interested? Mark Nicol 01752 896597 / 07773331964

Below is the list of paragliding equipment that I have been asked to sell.

The equipment belonged to a paraglider pilot who has recently died of a heart attack -definitely NOT paragliding. His mother phoned me last week asking if the club would want the equipment and said that she didn't want any money for it. I explained that as a club we didn't own equipment but that I could sell it and give the proceeds to the Devon Air Ambulance. She thought that this was a good idea.

Nova Ra wing size medium. DHV 2, the take off weight range is 90 -112 kg. The wing is in fantastic condition. Virtually unmarked. -£500

Charlie stirrup Harness - old, a little scruffy £75

Small reserve -would suit an all up weight of 85 kg -£150

Open face helmet, medium size, as new £ 20

Quick pack bag £20

please give me a ring if you are interested

Mark Nicol - 01752 896597

Next Meeting is on Thursday 28th April at the **Royal Oak, South Brent**, at 8:00pm.

Directions (roughly) are to go into the town centre from the roundabout before (westbound) or after (eastbound) the London Inn. The Pub is in station road (near the station car park) to the right, when you get to the middle.

Mark Ansell, Newsletter Editor,

SOUTH DEVON HANG GLIDING AND PARAGLIDING CLUB

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