



# NEWSLETTER

## JUNE 2010

Summer has well and truly arrived along with powerful thermals. I've been too busy to get out myself, except to the Barbeque, but see some concerning reports of accidents and near misses. Perhaps it would be nice to have a cold front come through again.

### **May Meeting minutes**

16 members came to the May meeting.  
Apologies from Brian Clavin.

### **Freathy / Withnoe Barton Site**

Further to the unfortunate use of old mattresses to cover the 'spike' in the fence we received a letter of formal complaint from the site owner Mr Alan Wilcocks-Gynn.

Not only was he upset about 2 mattresses appearing in his field, but he consequently decided it was time to review the site licence and increased it from £150 to £250 / year. He has also raised the parking fees to £3 and expects all flyers to pay.

Given that he can make £250 in parking charges in a couple of days, clearly if we upset him enough he wouldn't miss the licence fee if he banned us. It was agreed that we would have to go along with this. Most pilots who had visited the site also agreed that the fencepost was of minimal risk being low down below take-off. The 'new' fence had cost £7,000 and replaced the old one, so was not a new hazard to flyers (the metal post was used instead of a wooden post due to the rock outcrop).

Mark S has sent an apology letter along with a copy of the BHPA Insurance in an endeavor to placate him and requested leniency on the licence fee. Mr. Wilcocks-Gynn also expects the site to be called Withnoe Barton after the farm, not Freathy (the local hamlet).

We are reminded to treat all sites with respect as the Site Officers work hard to maintain good relations with the land-owners, but it can all be lost through some thoughtless act.

### **Devon Adventures**

Robert Greenwood's school has now moved to Chagford and is active on many of our sites. Robert is a paid up member of our club, but we have received a letter from the Condors Club expressing concerns at his activities. A discussion was held with no concerns coming from those who have met him out on the hill. The general opinion was that we should not show undue concern at this letter and judge Robert's activities ourselves. It was considered that having an active school in our area could only be beneficial and that Robert had shown great enthusiasm and energy with the school, getting students out on a regular basis.

[Robert subsequently came to the BBQ with his Demo wings and has offered to speak at a future club night.].

### Club Radios

Alan H has made further checks on the radios with corrosion on circuit boards, but says they are still unreliable. There is no plan to replace them as members appear happy to loan out their own if requested.

### Membership numbers

It was noted that a number of well known pilots have still not paid up for this year, but that the policy not to 'name and shame' in this Newsletter will be followed. Some may receive personal calls.

### 2010 Olu Deniz trip

Mark, Julie, Simon and Andy (plus partners) went last month. They gave a slide show showing great improvements to the road up Babadag and that the local authorities were working hard to further improve facilities, including Astroturf on the Take-Off.

Ali Atarod was recommended for organising X/Cs from Babadag.

The weather was very hot when they were there, but they had a great time.

Another trip is planned for the 9<sup>th</sup> October, costing around £600 for 2 weeks all inclusive.

### Video show

Bob showed his latest exploits and Colin B in a biplane.

## **Other News**

### Cox Tor Jam on 5<sup>th</sup> June

A dozen or so people turned up for the annual bash at Cox Tor. Robert Greenwood brought along his demonstration range of Advance Epsilon 6s and Sigma 7s plus Success harnesses. Mark C appeared for the first time in a while to try some out. The wind was very light, so only top to bottoms and brief soaring was possible. Paul C arrived late and demonstrated night flying to the kids.

Unfortunately the weather was not as warm as expected, but mainly dry. For those who stayed overnight, thoughts of an early flight were dashed when the cloudbase dropped below T/O.

Thanks go to Mat for arranging the BBQ, plus flying and other entertainment

### **Flying News**

#### Friday 4<sup>th</sup> June Bob reported on Labrador Bay:

Having witnessed 3 or 4 people have 'incidents' there, Labrador Bay claimed another victim yesterday, **ME**.

Got there at 4 ish (low water) with Chris Bellamy, Peter Reed, Jim McD, and Jon Thorne. Chris felt sure it was on, I expressed caution and had my doubts as it can be very misleading there. Was blowing nicely up the hill, but flags on the crab pots looked off to the North. Nobody was in too much of a hurry to try it. After a long while, Chris did take off, but went straight down and had to clamber around the rocks to the Ness beach.

Peter tried a few times to launch, but the wind had gone light. An hour or so later, it picked up to 12 -14 and appeared to have come around to the SE (according to the crab pot flags) so me, Jim and Jon shifted to the launch by the car park. (We'd been in the left hand field) Jon took off, did a couple beats, was going down and managed to slope land. I felt sure that had he gone straight out he'd have gone up. The tops of the trees

showed there was plenty of wind about. Anyhow, I launched, went straight out, did ok for a bit until I got towards the cliff at the bottom (point of no return) and sunk like stone. No possibility of slope landing and it had been a bit bumpy (rotor?) so I didn't feel it wise to turn towards the hill and attempt a fly on the wall slope land. Continued and went left hoping for some lift along the small cliffs that might take me around to the big cliff and then Ness Beach, but nothing. Did a small 's' over the sea to lose height and land on a bit of beach, but lost more height than I wanted and was left with an option of flying towards a large isolated rock on the beach, or between it and the small surf, landing with my feet in six inches of water, I chose the latter, but unfortunately a few cells of the wing dropped into the sea. Trouble is a few cells fill with water and even the smallest of surf will drag more of the wing further in. Couldn't pull it out so jumped out of my harness on the beach and walked into the 18 inches of water to retrieve my wing. Forgot the vario on my leg, which made a strange squark when it got wet. (Bugger that's another two hundred quid, I thought.) After considerable time and effort managed to drag glider complete with sand and seaweed up the beach. What a blooming mess. NOT RECOMMENDED.

**If you have managed to wade through this far, the point of all this though** is once again to warn people that Labrador Bay can be a tricky site. Even though I tried to treat it with a great deal of caution, it still bit me on the arse. Wind direction on the hill can be deceptive.

#### Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> June Paul reported on Maker:

Was a nice little day at Maker, wind picked up around 1.30pm and although a bit cloudy at first, it soon cleared leaving blue sky and buoyant air. Mike C and myself enjoyed a jolly hour or so before being joined by Sam, visitor Nick, Kernow Bill and Dougie.

Upon first taking off, it was quite misty and we could hear several naval helicopters passing nearby. I called FOST (Flag Officer Sea Training) based in Devonport Dockyard to notify them of our flying at Maker. They said they would notify all their pilots flying, to avoid the area. They were appreciative of the call and asked if we could notify them in future just before we are about to fly and then again when the last person has finished flying. I should have asked whether they would like to be notified of us flying at Freathy as well since Mike said a jet plane flew past the cliffs at low level the day before, probably wouldn't hurt to.

Their number to save onto your phones is 01752 557550

[Editor's Note – Members have been warned before that Thursdays are 'War-Games' days. Hence low flying fast jets all around the Sound and Whitsand Bay. Recommend to keep away].

#### Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> June Geoff reported

Saw quite a few paragliders and 3 Hangies at corn ridge, Keith, Andy and myself braved the climb up, I had dithered a bit about going to Codden but not knowing if the bottom landing was in crop or not decided on Dartmoor! It was tricky flying with small broken thermals and maybe some wave effect. I had one flight and top landed, then another that I managed to get about 2500' asl, when the thermal broke up I decided to head upwind, nice bouyant glide out to the services, then nothing! Landed a bit further up the road, a whole 3km from take off! When I had got back to the hill with my glider, intending to go for a pint with Keith and Andy, I got a call from Brett Wright, he had gone to Codden and flown down to Halberton near Totnes, Bugger! 73km apparently. 100miles later (in the car!) I was at Codden dropping a happy Brett at his car.

Ps the official bl at Codden now has maize tilled in it, give it 3 weeks and it will be bout 4' high!

#### Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> June Robin Mog reported on King Tor

The wind dropped a bit after 1pm and Malcolm and I did fly though it wasn't very good - the wind kept switching from NE to E and back and at times was too strong to penetrate. I got to 500'@T/O in one thermal then left it as I seemed to be going back faster than going up - very rough air encountered getting forward again. Malcolm got to 700' but had to land on the plateau and walk back to T/O. He suggested the inversion might have been just above the hill - well that's our excuse anyway!

#### And again the next day

Martin and I flew at King Tor and both of us managed short X/Cs down to near Hexworthy before it all clagged in. I had a slow climb off the hill and left with only 1500'@T/O and eventually reached cloudbase (2900'@T/O) at Dartmeet. Then I fuffed about trying to take pictures and couldn't decide whether I'd make it over Red Lake, lost the lift and chickened out of trying - still had a longish walk out to Hexworthy though. It might have been better if we'd got there earlier (didn't take off until about 1.30pm) but somebody (I won't mention names) switched their burglar alarm on when they left home in Weymouth, forgetting their son was still in bed!

Rob M.

#### Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> June Colin B reported

There was a large contingent at Corn Ridge and a few optimists at Sourton, the wind although northerly most of the time had just a little West in it and was forecast to go more Westerly later.

I took off about 11:30 and had a few enjoyable climbs, to around 125ft, ever conscious of the crew at Sourton aiming to get higher than us to prove their forecast was more right than ours. Dougie appeared to be going for it from Sourton he was much higher than me, but as suddenly as he had appeared high above the Ridge almost facing north he disappeared again.

At around 12:30 a thermal signaled to me that this was the one to go with, it did this by causing several minor collapses, always a good sign. In no time I was at 125ft again, climbing at between 200 and 500 fpm. A few minutes later I was falling out of the sky just past the viaduct, bugger, not a nice spot to lose everything, my altimeter showed 125ft mmmm. While looking for the best landing field downwind I caught a late save back to 125ft?. Note to self, replace alti batteries. There were no clouds to mark any lift, when the odd fast forming ball of fluff had drawn me towards it on the hill the effort was met with disappointment. When I tried to get my camera out this new thermal reminded me that it was one of the Dartmoors rough edged variety, sometimes placing me in enormous sink, but, each time I aimed out over the road to be met with the reward of a nice new, but, usually scrappy thermal. I past to the West of the firing range then immediately above Innes's house aiming towards North Brentor in a real saw tooth fashion, every time I wanted to fly closer to the A386 though I seemed to meet a thermal! Brilliant, I'm not usually this lucky! Now I'm faced with a dilemma, I'm over Mary Tavy and just upwind to my right the Brentor gliding club looked so inviting. It would have been a hoot I know several of the guys there, but it was never worth burning off 125ft? for that particular buzz. Now I was in some reliable if scrappy lift again and went for Cox Tor Circling at zeros for a while. I arrived with 125ft? On the NW edge of Cox, it was my day coz right on cue another scrappy broken thermal took me high above Cox possibly 1000ft and dumped me fast just south of the car park, where a crowd was gathering to see me land. At around 250ft I stopped going down and found another initially weak late save, marked by a seagull, this turned out to be the most disturbing thermal of the day, increasingly powerful and smooth to maybe 125 - 1500ft when a very large sudden collapse had me momentarily giving the wing and spin more attention than the pub/retrieve options. At possibly 1000ft above Walkhampton all lift and collapse calamity had given way to a gentle decent, I may well have made Yelverton but options if the glide failed looked poor and publess so I opted for the field immediately outside the Burrator Inn at Dousland. The moment I landed Paul Cioffi, who was out entertaining his family popped his head over the fence to say Hi. Then in the pub I bumped into my old buildings inspector who, a few sheets to the wind, let me in on a few secrets to help with my latest build, what a day, brilliant! I later learned that Alan Kay also got away and made it out to Plasterdown, while those who went to Codden, Robin and Co had a disappointing short flop over the back, I also heard that an unfortunate German pilot got away by air ambulance to Derriford with a serious ankle injury. I don't normally bother going for it, convinced that everyone else is still flying having a great time on the hill while I'm struggling for a retrieve, but, I admit I enjoyed this particular experience.

**Next Meeting** is on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> June 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.

Again we have no speaker so will have the opportunity to show any photos or videos of recent flying, so please bring along any contributions. Failing that we could play a DVD from the library.

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