



NEWSLETTER

May 2010

Well the weather has been mixed this month, and although has been shining recently, the mailbag suggests not as good as might have been hoped. The notable exception was a personal record XC by sky god Dougie.

April Meeting minutes

19 members came to the April meeting (or actually found the pub).
Apologies from Brian Clavin.

Royal Oak Venue

This was the first meeting in the Royal Oak, South Brent. It was noticed that the London Inn has been boarded up and the car park is fenced off, so it was a good call to make a move.

The Royal Oak provided a plush meeting room upstairs to a higher standard than we had in the London Inn. Members agreed this was a good option and that we should hold at least the next 2 meetings at the venue.

I spoke to the landlord and he explained the room was only used for functions / meals at weekends, so weekdays are not a problem (there had previously been talk of moving the day of the meeting, so this is still an option).

Annual Repack

It was reported that 20 – 25 people attended the event at Devonport School on Saturday 27th March, and again thanks went to Andy and Robin Mills for their expert tuition.

Evening Speaker

Richard Whitmarsh unfortunately cancelled at short notice due to work commitments. It is not clear if he will offer on another occasion.

Contact List

12 members are now posted on the website as Contacts.

Struddick – gates left open

It was disappointingly reported that gates had been left open both into the lower field and the road the previous Monday after pilots had been flying. It is not clear how this may have happened, but members are asked to close all gates if in doubt. It was suggested the farmer left them open, but he may have assumed a pilot was leaving and would close them.

Rogue pilots have also been seen at Struddick, but they should not have the gate code, and would have come through the walker's gate.

Accident at Belstone

It was reported that on Saturday 10th April Charles Grose crashed at Belstone whilst flying with other members and required the air ambulance. He was later released from hospital, but had sustained injuries including a broken collarbone, cracked rib and damage to the knee. Essentially, a full frontal collapse 60-80ft at with not enough height to recover the wing properly. He has captured the accident on camera that he had attached to his boot.

Charles is a BHPA member from London, but not affiliated to our club, so not very familiar with the site. He is an experienced pilot flying a DHV2 wing. Video suggested he may have been applying too much brake. Dougie (flying above) had reported that he had a large collapse at about 100ft, which then turned into a cascade followed by a spin, unfortunately as the wing recovered it was flying downwind and pendulumed Charles into the hill, luckily in a grassy spot.

Discussions were had over best recovery from collapses and avoiding unnecessary brake.

Video Library

Mark donated the DVD "Adrenaline & Turbulence". It was quickly taken out.

Club Radios

These have been checked by a marine specialist who suggested they are not waterproof and are starting to suffer corrosion on the circuit boards. Investigations will be made into cleaning them up.

Pilot Lectures

Jeff Hoer (Condors) will again be running Pilot lectures for those needing to pass the theory test. They will be on a wet weekend in Sidmouth with a nominal charge to cover food etc. You can sit the exam the same day.

Mark N will circulate details on Yahoo Group when this is likely.

Cox Tor Jam

In the notable absence of Mark C, Mat has offered to arrange the annual bash at Cox Tor on the last weekend in May [this weekend] or thereafter if the weather is bad. This will involve camping out with beer and BBQ, plus flying and other entertainment. Robert Greenwood has offered to bring his demonstration range of Advance Epsilon 6s and Sigma 7s plus Success harnesses.

Mat will make the call by e-mail, a few days before, if the event is going ahead.

Future Events

Robert Greenwood of Devon Adventures was invited to give a talk at the May meeting [He has just reported that he can't attend due to a funeral obligation, but has an open invite for another month].

Other News

Membership numbers

We are now up to 61 paid up members – keep it coming in, we must be a few outstanding after the 80 last year.

Flying News

Friday 30th April Tony reported:

Had an early flight this morning trying to keep low in the compression area of Talland bay. Lots of wind lines and white horses on the ocean. Spent most of the time on Full bar and a good portion of the flight with Big Ears. Although the wind was strong it was smooth. Ballooning up after launching I pushed out to get low below the cliffs. The day was mostly overcast. Picking a landing spot was a bit of fun, as I had to make sure the canopy hit the deck quickly between the trees. So I thought it was about time to test the foam protection in my harness.

Friday 7th May, Bob reported:

Nice little challenging flight at Strete this afternoon. Wind 8/9 mph and 45 degs off to the hill north. Having got my gear on the hill, I figured I might as well fly, even if just a top to bottom. (It's been a long time!). I could see the tops of the trees moving quite well so figured it would be flyable ok if I could get up higher, as is usually the case at Strete.

Took off with the intention of going hard left into the bowl, but rotor/ turbulence from the trees turned me a bit right so my first pass I was actually below the tree down at bottom of the bowl. Worked every bit of lift and scraped up a bit and second pass I was just higher than the bottom cliff tree. Working every little bit of lift, gently gently, slow and easy I eventually got into the bowl and was eventually able to get 100 - 200 feet ato. Very satisfying working hard at figuring which bits might be working with the wind that far off. Couldn't quite get to the green house on the point, but great fun for 3/4 of an hour, till I got cold and a bit bored. Nice to get off the ground.

Thursday 13th May, Bob reported:

Floppies and Stiffies enjoyed an hour or so at Freathy, wind 13mph at 1400 inc to 18 - 19 mph. 300 feet ato. Flags flying so couldn't do a run. Then a couple of us spent half an hour at Struddick, also quite breezy, and the wind was well off to the west, which meant only a small play area.

Myself, Dougie and Julie, Sam Allum, Martin Reed, Michael Reed, Colin Jones and James Bull (Kernow?) were the mid-week slackers.

Thursday 13th May, Gordon reported

I sat and watched a PG with a red wing take off and go XC yesterday. He/she took off from a site south of the A38 between Buckfast and Ashburton. Does anyone know who it was? I have to say that I admired their tenacity in staying with what looked like pretty hairy turbulence at relatively low altitude, (as it appeared from my vantage point on the old A38). At times the canopy was surging and retarding very quickly and the lift was the squeaky bum sort! There were also the usual asymmetrics but all appeared to be handled with aplomb. Well done to whoever you are. [Later suggested this was Robin Mills].

Saturday 15th May, Dougie reported (on his Blog) a personal best of 49km from Sourton to Blackawton.

Robin Mog added : Both Dougie and Chris Blanchard (from North Devon) landed at Kingsbridge - I don't know who got to Dartmouth - it could have one of the other Northerners. Anyway well done to them both - cloudbase wasn't much more than two grand @T/O (when I was flying a bit later) so you were risking a long walk, going across the middle of the moor! I chickened out of this and did a shorter flight to Dousland, cross winding several times to stay closer to the road

Saturday 15th May, Bob and Jim F reported from Wessex:

Well done Dougie. Bell Hill was ok, light to start with strong cycles coming through. Wind gradually picked up. Cloud base was pretty low. One small gaggle 3 or 4 pilots went over the back early. At about 1300 sky was 7/8 cloud I caught a climb to nearly 1400 ato. I figured it was last chance for the day so went with it. didn't pick up another decent climb and only did few k but it was fun! I walked into a village and after a pint Jim kindly retrieved. We stayed at hill till quite late and wind got very top end with lots of lift. Jim got 800 ato out front. I met Kirsty Cameron, she got to the coast as did a couple of Avon pilots from Batcombe. We all had a good day out.

Monday 17th May, Paul reported

Reasonable day of it yesterday. Tom, Tony from Looe, Robin & Robin, myself and Tim were all at Sourton although wind was off to the west more. We could see Innes and Craig Morgan at Widgery doing really well and we were left wondering if we were at the wrong place. Persistence paid off and around 12.30 it switched on and we all enjoyed some good climbs to base at around 2200 ato. Innes and Craig flew across from Widgery to join us and headed off on an XC with Robin Mog.

After 1.30 the wind dropped and it was harder to stay up. Although Tom did well to stay up boating bout high out front, the rest of us it was a case of up and down with the weaker thermals till about 3ish when the wind switched right round to the west. Speaking to Colin Blagdon, not so good at Cox Tor as wind was too light there although they managed a few climbs in the thermals that came through.

Speaking to Robin Mog, he only managed a little xc to near the A30 where Craig got all the way back to his home in Sidmouth, Innes got to near Exeter and had a collapse in his new wing, unable to recover it he had to pull his reserve taking a hard landing.

Robin Mog added : He had a hard landing on a steep slope (luckily) and was feeling a bit sore but it didn't seem to inhibit his intake of beer in the Fox and Hounds late afternoon.

Tony added: After arriving at Sourton we had a few short scratches and exploratory hops but could not get away. Then came a bit of a sinking feeling that we may have chosen the wrong site as we saw a few gliders skying out over Widgery. Eventually a gaggle left from Sourton and I was still on the hill fiddling with my GPS. A nice cloud came over launch and I decided it was not to be missed so off I went with a quick scratch out the front and a steady climb and drift over the back. As I gained height the Sourton gaggle was heading back to the hill but I kept in my climb and was eventually joined with two hot ships above me an R10 and Innes. I did not dare leave my cloud as they took off on glide over the Okehampton ranges. My old Z-One climbs well but going on glide with those guys could have been embarrassing. Flew over what looked like the army trying to hide with about twenty camo bivvys set up, they blended in well but the square shapes gave them away. Not knowing Dartmoor too well I headed over towards Okehampton, the nearest town in sight. Landed near a road stuck my thumb out and got a quick lift into town to the Tourist info shop in the back of a 4WD. Here I obtained a more detailed map and then set off back to Sourton where I was duly Rescued by two Robins who went out of there way to come and pick me up. So thanks chaps appreciated it a lot.

Saturday 22nd May, Bob reported:

Mick Boarer, Jon Thorne and Mark Stapleton had a good bit of flying in the afternoon, though just the NE corner. It was pretty much over by the time I got there at 1500 or so we had a couple of pints or so and slept in the van by the beach.

There seemed to be quite a nice easterly breeze when I got up to inspect the beach at 0400 . Then at 0600 very little wind. At 0800 I measured 10 -13 mph NE on the beach, and 13- 14mph on take off , but I figured it was probably stronger aloft. I took off, went up very quickly and had to big ear and bar to get to out front of the hill, but even there it was still way too strong to soar. No fun gale hanging. Gave it up and landed on the beach after more ears and bar!

Mick Boarer arrived maybe 1130 ish and it looked as though the wind had eased a bit, He wandered up and was doing ok on the NE corner so I wandered up and had about 20 mins before the wind died further and the lift died. Andy Holt and Martin Johns turned up a while later and top to bottomed.

Same old weird Beesands, but nice sunny weekend all the same. And 20 mins was better than nothing!

Next Meeting is on Thursday 27th May 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.

Due to Robert not being able to speak on Thursday, we will again 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.

Mark Ansell, Newsletter Editor,
SOUTH DEVON HANG GLIDING AND PARAGLIDING CLUB
E-mail: 44homepark@supanet.com