



NEWSLETTER

September 2011

What a strange year weather-wise. A hopeful spring turned into a blown-out summer and September has given little relief. Only now as I write is there a glimmer of hope with several days flying possible for the average pilot. Of course some have picked their moments well and caught the illusive lift, but others are bemoaning weeks of being ground-based. Such is the sport we choose.

August Meeting minutes

New Members: Keith Alldon

Chairman

Alan Hughes was asked by the committee to stand in as Chairman until the AGM in January, when the normal procedure for electing a new Chairman will proceed.

Mark Stapleton Memorial Trophy

There was proposal to create a trophy in memory of Mark. There was some discussion over what to award the trophy for, which settled on the best contribution towards the club. It was felt that this was more in keeping with Mark's contribution to the club than an XC award etc. The selection process will probably involve proposals being invited from members followed by a vote at the AGM. This will be confirmed in due course.

Membership

Dougal Martin has now chased up most of the unpaid members. There are still a few outstanding who are not BHPA members(which is a requirement for club membership) or are no longer flying.

Next month

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

September Meeting Agenda

8:00 Meeting Start

1. Rules for club XC league
2. Interest in setting up winch group?
3. Safety in flight - moving up to higher performance wings - stalls / collapses - recent incidents
4. Flight reports
5. Mark Leavesley Ground Handling course

9:15 - 9:30 Break

6. Speedflying - talk by Gordie Oliver

10:30 Meeting Close

Other News

New rain website

Hugo Makin kindly forwarded a new website giving more detail than the Met site, although with some delay time, which I have certainly found useful (OK, more because I've had the roof off for 3 weeks, but also for flying) : <http://www.raintoday.co.uk/>

[UK] Flying News

Monday 29th Aug Mat went to Sourton:

Dougie was very keen this morning, meeting Tom and Ivor at Sourton very early, Bex picked me up shortly after and we got there 1030 ish, the sky looked very grey and pants. There was a nice sky to the west into Cornwall that we all hoped would come our way so we walked up. Dougie and I launched first into a grey sky and it was actually quite nice and lifty. Half an hour later or so and it had flicked north so we were on the deck for a while, more pilots were arriving all the time, with 14 there at one point.

At about 1 o'clock the sky started improving and thermals were starting to come through, the wind was back on, oh yeah, and Dougie had been banging around at base for ages! I think it was around 3 when the thermals started to become big enough for the rest of us to start working, and all of sudden we were all flying up at a serious rate of knots, Dougie was the first away and I was climbing with 3 guys from N Devon shortly after. At base I shot off crosswind towards Widgery, my aim was to fly back to Tavi. Lift was easy to find and I topped up after losing 500ft or so, on again towards Peter Tavi, I could see birds circling over a bit of woodland a long way down, hit the big sink, then hit the big lift :-). As I was climbing I could see Dougie in the distance, about 5 km or so away to the east and thought of heading after him, but Cox was close now and it was getting late in the day, we had been flying for ages and I was tired and cold.

The Ice cream van in Cox car park was the target, I could see it from miles away, like a beacon of happiness, however, Cox was in sun and by God what a whopper I stumbled upon, base in no time at all, a smooth 900/ 1000 ft min lovely nice and big, so back on bar towards Tavi, I boated around over Tavi for a while, and set up for landing once again on my runway on the golf course! Just after I landed, My wife pulled up and the kids ran over for cuddles, they had been watching me come in on there way back from Plymouth, Perfick! More distance would have been easily possible, I was flying into wind a lot of the time, but I was very happy with making my own goal, I really just couldn't be bothered with a long retrieve. A good day after all, more like that please!

Robin added:

Dougie made 47 km to Torquay Ring road after 4 and a half hours flying, but the North Devon boys probably took the laurels yesterday (as they often do). Ant got to Start Point - 60k and the first time that's been done since Pete Bridson in April 1995 - and Malcolm was a few ks behind him. Pete's flight was early in the year before sea breezes kick in. This time of year it must have been harder though the cloud cover earlier in the day and the unseasonable low air temperatures must have helped to minimise these.

I never got higher than 750' which was disappointing especially as the wind seems to increase and get gustier at Sourton as the day goes on - a cross-country flight would have been much more enjoyable flying! However it was good to see some low-airtime and less regular Sourton-flyers taking off and top-landing without incident in the challenging conditions.

Same day Bob, Jim McD and Editor went to Batcombe:

The day passed with a consistent blast, mixed with some lulls and gusts. During the brief lulls some local [good] pilots launched and were soon going over the back (whether they wanted to or not). They later returned from Bere Regis (25 km), Wareham (33km), and also Swanage (48km before the land runs out).

Our Martin Foley struggled with launches and didn't get away. Simon Murpy arrived with a floater HG, saying it seemed too strong for even that, but was last seen at cloudbase drifting off towards Swanage.

Many local pilots decided they'd seen enough and went home, but finally around 4:30 it eased to a leisurely 14 - 16mph (in the compression of t/o) and the die-hards starting taking off. Bob and Jim got off before me, but I had a relatively comfortable launch. However shortly after I saw Bob land. He later said it was too rough and he'd had enough. Pah, what does he know..... Jim then proceeded to demonstrate how to recover from a full frontal followed by a small asymmetric using the full stall technique at 300...200....100 feet above the field (I watched from the air). We managed to stop him going into shock by filling him with 2 pints of Otter Ale at the pub later.

Not to be outdone I came in to land in the middle of the field 'clear of lift and rotor' and demonstrated a good PLF when having an asymmetric at 15ft above the ground and piling in. Bob decided not to have another flight and we headed home.

Sunday 4th Sep Geoff went to Chinkwell

When we arrived Robin Mills was flying about half of his paraglider! It was smack on and the sky looked pretty good. Pete decided there was no time to be wasted and was off first, we flew about in quite lively air for around 40mins, however it felt like all the action was off the east a bit. After the sun had finally been in the valley for about 10-15mins we both sunk well! What comes after sink? A nice big thermal which we both got into and went over the back with, we stuck pretty close together until it fizzled out a bit at around 1850'asl (so Pete tells me, I hadn't set my vario at t/o) I went on a short glide hit some really strong lift on 3/4 vb and then the sink after it, by the time I'd let the vb off and sorted myself out I'd sunk out well. I headed over the Lustliegh valley (of doom!) And onto the high ground where there are nice landings. I couldn't find much and landed in a nice field. Pete was doing rather better than that out in the valley, he then flew over and landed in the same field as me. Congratulations to Pete on his first xc, in tricky conditions when many wouldn't have tried! Thanks to Robin for fetching us, we hadn't gone a long way but it was a long way back.

Same day Alan H went to Freathy:

When I arrived MarkN and MickB were in the air on their PGs, and I'd passed Bill Northcott driving away after he'd landed and gone off to do what he should have been doing...! So it looked like being a cracking day. Not to be, of course! Mark landed as I arrived, making a nice job of coming in on C's on his "new" (Dougie's "old") glider in the strong wind. I checked the windspeed which was 18mph gusting 22-24mph on my trusty ancient mechanical venti. So I started rigging the ATOS, then thought twice about it as the glider was getting buffeted around. Back out with the venti, and yep, it was now averaging 24mph gusting 28-30. And forecast to continue to pick up. Rats! The glider went back in the bag, and we consoled ourselves in the pub. Disappointed hangies apart from myself were Ashley, MikeC, Paul Cioffi, and Mark Nicol attempting the double. Well done to the early birds at Freathy who managed to get off on the PGs.

Thursday 15th Sep Mark N went to Maker:

Arrived Maker midday and to our surprise it was flyable. Flew for 90 minutes tandem with Jenny - not a helicopter in sight (Americas Cup racing). Max 250 ato in a bit of gentle sea thermal.

Landed to have a cup of tea and stretch my legs and then flew my new red wing (Dougie's old Artik) until 5.30 pm. Alan Hughes turned up and flew his paraglider - his first flight since Laragne. It was still flyable when we landed and packed up.

Whilst the helicopters were filming the America's cup racing we were careful to stay the Kingsand end of the ridge.

Friday 16th Alan went back to Freathy:

I headed out to Freathy today with the Atos in the hopes of snatching a quick flight as the wind started to veer W and pick up. Lo and behold, what did I find on arrival but a red PG half way down the cliff and headed for the beach. MarkN and Bill Northcott had arrived early and got in an hour or so flying PG before I arrived and the wind dropped!

Once the two intrepid pilots had climbed back from the beach Mark and I set about rigging the HGs as Bill fished the seaweed and other beach detritus out of his wing. By the time we had rigged the wind had clearly picked up a lot. Bill managed to launch his PG, albeit with a struggle, followed by Mark on his Lightspeed. I carried on trying to remember how to rig my new "quick rig" Atos, and eventually got it right, taking to the air about 30mins after Mark. By now it was a struggle for me to get off too, with the Atos feeling very like a PG launch: weight forward, inch forward on tip-toe against the wind... yes, it was now pretty strong.

No sign of Mark by now, so I assumed he'd headed off towards Looe. I made one beat towards Polhawn, and climbed easily to 800ft ATO before pointing W to find out where Mark had got to. In the cove before Batten Cliffs I topped up with height as best I could to attempt to jump forward - now below 500ft ATO. Pushing forward was a real struggle, and I eventually wimped out when it was clear I would scrape round only about 100ft below the top. Flying back through the sink in the lee of Batten I got back to the Portwrinkle stretch below ridge height, and was very pleased when the vario started beeping again. Heading back to Freathy gave me a groundspeed of 42mph flying at min sink (24mph airspeed) compared to a ground speed of 15mph going the other way at Max glide (35mph).

So, on out to Rame Head, to be joined eventually by Mark who had got as far as the monkey sanctuary - but couldn't get enough height to carry on across the bowl. At Rame it was easy to park the Atos into wind and hang there with 1-2mph ground speed: again just like flying the PG!

Heading back to Freathy it was clear that the wind had continued to veer, and the flags were now blowing almost along the ridge. Time to land after a very pleasant flight.

Thursday 22nd Sep Chris Bellamy was at Polhawn:

Landed at Polhawn with Tom Dodge after an hour and a half. Picked up to 18mph or so, bit gusty.

Same day Pete Dixon went to Bolberry (unofficial site)

Having been out yesterday and spent 2 hours getting to Whitsand, thought I would check out Bolberry Down near Kingsbridge. Have had a look before but the wind was too strong. Both Robin M's have told me about this place before and apparently it used to be flown a lot but not these days. There is limited bottom landing and nearing low tide offers only one bail out cove to the left of take off.

Managed to gain 400ft ato and cruised along to the headlands to the north and south. Great to fly a different site with its plunging cliff lines. Best bit was the landing field. Having previously spoken to the landlord in the pub I was given the impression that no fuss would be kicked up if I used the field in front of it. It turns out that this was a satellite Spitfire station during the war used to protect Plymouth. Just about big enough for me. Cracking day and definitely beats driving to Whitsands on marginal days. Not as long a beat perhaps but apparently the Salcombe estuary has been jumped in the past?



Friday 23rd Sep Julie got back in the air at Struddicks:

What a day!! It's happened - I'm back in the air thanks to my Guardians Mark N and Bob.

Wind was gusting 14 to 17 MPH around 11:45 when I arrived (bit strong for me, having not flown since July) and then increased to over 20 MPH allowing hangies to fly. Bob, Mark + Jen, Chris Bellamy, Andy Holt, Martin Read, Dougie, Mark Ansell, Paul Cioffi all happy to fly in stronger winds but Les C and I waited until it dropped a bit and then took to the air.



Bob, Bill Northcott and a Kernow member all made it to Freathy and landed whilst Dougie made it there and back in the air on his hotship!!

Andy and Chris Bellamy - now official tandem pilots - well done both



Great day - with great company - I was emotional when I landed, but very happy to be in the air again
Feel Mark would have been proud of me today, Juliexx

Saturday 24th Sep Keith went to Beer Head

Thanks to Mark Phillips for introducing me to Beer Head on Saturday. It looked like quite a few had been up but I'd had to work so only arrived when they were packing up. Would have loved to go for Sidmouth but only had time for a 45 min belt up the coast. Great to blow the cobwebs away though.

Sunday 25th Sep Bill Arkle went to Struddicks with the HG:

Flew at Struddicks for an hour on Sunday with a few other HG pilots. I had a poor, heavy landing as I was rusty - having not flown since May. I landed 1/2 in prone & my harness cut into my groin & left me in agony. I needed help to put the Xtralite back on the roof of my Xantia! Today I still find it very difficult to climb out of bed & my genital area has turned purple with bruising. I may have to go to the doctor if I don't improve soon! Bill

Tuesday 27th Editor went to Vault Bay

Arrived 1:20 at NE car park in warm sunshine, but saw that the SW end (T/O) was shrouded in orographic. Found Kernow Bill and Steve Mac huddled in the damp looking at 15 - 18mph SE blast. They had been flying earlier, but it was claggy. By the time I had unloaded and walked back from the SW car park it had eased off to 10-12 mph so we all launched and quickly made cloudbase (40' ato!). I was instructed to circulate anti clockwise as we couldn't see each other most of the time. After 10 mins I landed with Bill and Steve as it didn't feel completely comfortable. We deduced that the prevailing was probably E (Polruan was down, but channel buoy gave just north of east) and the air was just funneling up the face. We decided to wait and have more coffee, and promptly cloudbase dropped towards the beach. Was thick fog all the way back to St. Blazey, where it broke to warm sunshine. At least I can tick the box as having flown it.

Jim was flying at Maker as well, but Strete was also fog bound and light.

Well after arriving at Maker around 11 am with Malcolm to find it clagged in, it soon cleared and the wind came on nice to give good flying conditions. Nice afternoon's flying with Malcolm, Tom, Ivor, And dougal.,

For Sale (still to my knowledge)

Advance Harness. I have an Advance Success 2+. I paid £750.00 for this and have flown it around ten times (this harness is as brand spanking new). It is a large, if you are six foot or over and around 12 stone, then this would be fine. I have come to the conclusion it is too large for me. I bought it from The Sick and The Wrong in Keswick end of last season, didn't get to try it as it was raining all week. Obviously to try to sell it back to a shop now I would be given a silly offer. I have the receipt & booklet. I am looking for £600.00 please no offers. Have gone back to my old harness for now, shall buy a medium once this is sold <http://www.advance.ch/SUCCESS.602.0.html?&L=1> Contact Jim Saunders 07743 259020

Mike Gadd's paraglider equipment.

-Firebird Mowenpik Reversible (Large) - As new, one hour of air time, very comfortable, carbon-fibre seat plate, magnetic speed bar clips, reverses into fully adjustable and very comfortable high quality rucksack (£650 new) VERY LIGHT - New Reduced price £420 (was £475)

<http://www.turfhouse.com/acatalog/harnesses.html>

http://cms.flyfirebird.com/paraglide/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=69&Itemid=84&lang=en

-Charley Second Chance 118 – New and in the harness for one hour - £320 (£460 NEW)

<http://www.turfhouse.com/acatalog/paraglidingreserves1.html>

Below is the list of paragliding equipment that Mark N has been asked to sell.

The equipment belonged to a paraglider pilot who has recently died of a heart attack - definitely NOT paragliding. I will sell it and give the proceeds to the Devon Air Ambulance.

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

Open face helmet, medium size, as new £ 20

please give me a ring if you are interested. **Mark Nicol - 01752 896597**

Gin Sprint Evo Size: Medium (90 -110kg) Colour: Kimchi (that's red with a white leading edge)
Serial: BA05-K5400133P

I bought it new, it now has just under 5 hours on it. The new price is £2,800; I'm looking for £2,300. All the usual accessories (brand new, not used, not even been outside): Back pack, Stuff sack, Speed bar, Stickers, Repair tape, USB manual. Plus Gin concertina bag (new, only used with this wing).
Blue Ramsey 07861 221900

Firebird Grid DHV 1/2. 200 hours. 80 -105 kgs flying weight. Concertina packed and carefully looked after, even to the extent of airing it when I've flown on damp grey days on the coast. 3 x very small patches over match-head sized holes. Stuff sack too!

Still crispy and mylars good and flat. Inspect Torbay. Pics can be seen here

<http://homepage.virgin.net/bobmoore.sfy/grid.html>

£425 - Inspection welcome. And even maybe a test flight, if we get a half decent day!

Bob Moore 01803 851402 / 0794 11819106

Late News

Bracken harvesting

Some stalwart peasants have been out clearing bracken at Beesands (no goats).



Next Meeting is on Thursday 29th September 7:30pm at the **Royal Oak, South Brent**.

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.

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