

# NOVA

April & May  
1999



**Meeting 6<sup>th</sup> April  
Flying in South Africa  
Meeting June 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Flying in Jordan**

## The Committee

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## Information

**For Club Coaches Information See The New Updated List Near The Back Of This Magazine.**

### Sites

Lulsgate 01275 474441

### Weather

Wendy Windblows Call Rod Buck to Subscribe 0114 253 0372  
 Avon, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Somerset 0891 500405  
 Glamorgan 0891 500409  
 Dyfed and Powys 0891 500414  
 Airmet South 0891 500693

Send XC Flights to Tim Pentreath (PG)  
 Neil Atkinson (HG)

## Avon HG & PG Club Diary

Date	Event	Venue	Contact
01-03/05/99	Paramania	Builth Wells	
06/05/99	Club Meeting	The Compass Inn	
01-09/05/99	Club Week in Snowdonia	Cottage in Snowdonia	Simon Kerr
03/06/99	Club Meeting	The Compass Inn	
01/07/99	Club Meeting	The Compass Inn	
03-04/07/99	All Out / Festival of Flight	Wroughton	Skywings
05/08/99	Club Meeting	The Compass Inn	
24/07-08/08/99	Club Trip To The Alps	Chamonix/Annecy	Marcus King Simon Kerr
02/09/99	Club Meeting	The Compass Inn	
04-05/09/99	The Mere Bash	Mere	Simon Kerr
07/10/99	Club Meeting – AGM!!!	The Compass Inn	
04/11/99	Club Meeting	The Compass Inn	
02/12/99	Club Meeting – Xmas Meal and Presentations	The Compass Inn	

**Mid-Week Flying Phone 0800 515544**

# NOVA

The Avon  
Hangliding & Paragliding  
Club Newsletter

April & May  
1999

NOVA is the newsletter of the Avon Hangliding and Paragliding Club. The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Editor, or Committee of the Club.

All contributions should be sent to the Editor of NOVA. NOVA can also be found online at [www.skytribe.force9.co.uk](http://www.skytribe.force9.co.uk)



AVON



## Hang Gliding and Paragliding Club

### Editors Bit



Welcome to the latest issue of NOVA. First off a big thankyou to everyone who has sent in articles. I have held back on some for next time, especially as some needed typing up. However, I don't seem to be getting many from the HG side of the club, consequently this is becoming more and more a paragliding publication. Hopefully some of you will send me in some articles soon.

We have just run the XC Virgins weekend, unfortunately the first weekend was blown out but there was still a good turnout fro Fiona Macaskill's talk, thanks for that Fiona. The next weekend we had another good turnout and surprise some flyable weather. Typically the weekend after was mega XC weather, well that Saturday, and half the world seemed to go over the back. Well that's it I'm going to keep this short to leave room for a quick message below. A big thanks to everyone who has contributed to this issue! See you all on a hill.

Marcus

**Get High, Stay High, Fly Far**

### STOLEN

**Geoff Rogers had his Voodoo 2 Paragldier Stolen from the Crooks Peak Car Park. The glider is Purple and Green and is complete with a sky systems SAS harness with bright yellow X Straps. Also in the bag is a bright green french made vario. Please contact Geoff if you are offered this glider.**

Send your articles to  
Marcus King

159 The High Street, Batheaston, Bath. BA1 7DW  
or

Email: [marcus@skytibe.force9.co.uk](mailto:marcus@skytibe.force9.co.uk)

Fax is also possible by arrangement, phone me on 01225 852912

## On Your Own

Dear Nova

Well, it had to happen sometime. After what seemed like years of training and endless top to bottoms, I was standing at Westbury contemplating my first 'solo' flight. No cosy school environment, no nurturing instructors to ask advice from, and only one set of clean underwear to protect e from the queasy feelings growing in my nether regions.

As a low airtime (5 hrs) CP Paraglider, the prospect of launching myself off an unknown site, with nobody to follow, or watch for inspiration was nerve-racking to say the least. It didn't help that although the conditions were perfect (8-10,NNW), there was not a single other person around, aside from dogs and their 'responsible owners' leaving poo pyramids everywhere. It was only a quarter to ten so I decided to stand on the edge and study the Avon sites guide until moral support arrived n any shape or form. With my eyes closed, and feeling the breeze and all it's subtle changes, I could have been back on Rudder's West or Alton Barnes. The only thing missing was the dulcet tones of CFI Rick Ware gently coaching a first day EP, blissfully ignorant of the anatomical difference between his elbow and something else.

"Left! LEFT! THE OTHER LEFT!"

"Hello, how are you?" said a voice beside me (just stopped myself - see first paragraph re clean underwear!) The voice was a German Hanglider pilot called Jan, who explained he was living and working in Bath on his way round the world flying - no not flying round the world, just flying at different sites - you know what I mean. Anyway back to the plot.

I now had the moral support I needed, even if it was only a witness for the enquiry (confident or what!) I harnessed myself up checked my leg straps, which were verging on the tourniquet tight, and launched my glider above me with minimal effort (minimal effort = straight up, stopped dead, no dragging, collapses or embarrassment. Usually only achieved on your own with nobody watching!)

Two steps forward and a tad of brake and 'Hey Presto', the 'Magic Hand' lifted me steadily skyward as I turned west along the main ridge. By

the end of the first beat I had passed my personal best of 200' above launch (or is that above lunch? my stomach seemed to be OK for now). Turning back and passing over the White Horse I did several beats and all of a sudden looked down... and realised 'MUMMY!' Jan later told me he estimated my height to be 800'+. A quick trolley check revealed that the strange sulphur smell was coming not from my natural airbag, but from Westbury's most prominent windsock, the cement works chimney (Nice!)

I relaxed as much as I could (HA!) and looked around the world as I've never seen it before. Awesome. For all you skygods reading this, think back to your first high flight, and remember how you felt.

After about 20 minutes I started concentrating on how to get down, and began planing my landing (wish I had a copy of Touching Cloudbase with me now!). A couple of gentle 360s and an S turn found me 400' above the back of the landing area ready for an approach (plan 'A' seemed to be working). I puled big ears - on the A5 the split 'A' risers make this untraumatic. My rate of descent increased comfortably and at about 20' I released them and used the brakes for finals. Touchdown turn, full flare, stumble stumble (should have grabbed the rear risers!) and.... stop. Now my legs were a bit wobbly!!!

I left my glider in a bundle beside my motorbike and rejoined Jan. Within the next 10 minutes the wind increased to about 15 knots and Jan launched. Several other stiffies turned up, the wind increased and soon the sky was full of them (gits!). Ho hum, I packed up the wing, and stopped off at my wife's work on the way home to tell her (boast!). As she is a 2hr CP, she longs to do her first high flight to heaven and back (I could brag, but no, she wants to use a paraglider!).

As a small footnote, we are both members of Avon and Thames Valley, and in common with some of our 'new CP' friends have been on the Low Airtime List for the last year. But have we had a phone call asking if we'd like to go to a new site with a skygod? Have we ever received any encouragement outside

the school environment? We all have to start somewhere.

So next time you look at Teletext, and it looks good for tomorrow, get out the list and 'make somebody's day' We might be working, we might only have half a day, but we want to fly and your time and help would be repaid over and over again in friendship and respect. (Since writing this, that friendship has been extended to us. Cheers Steve Keith, the pints on me).

All the best

Sandy Osborough

PS How many CFI's does it take to change a lightbulb?

One to change the light bulb, and 3 others to criticise every turn!

### **Rich Harding Replies**

Thanks for the note, Sandy,

As the former Low Airtime Contact and current Sites Officer, I'll reply.

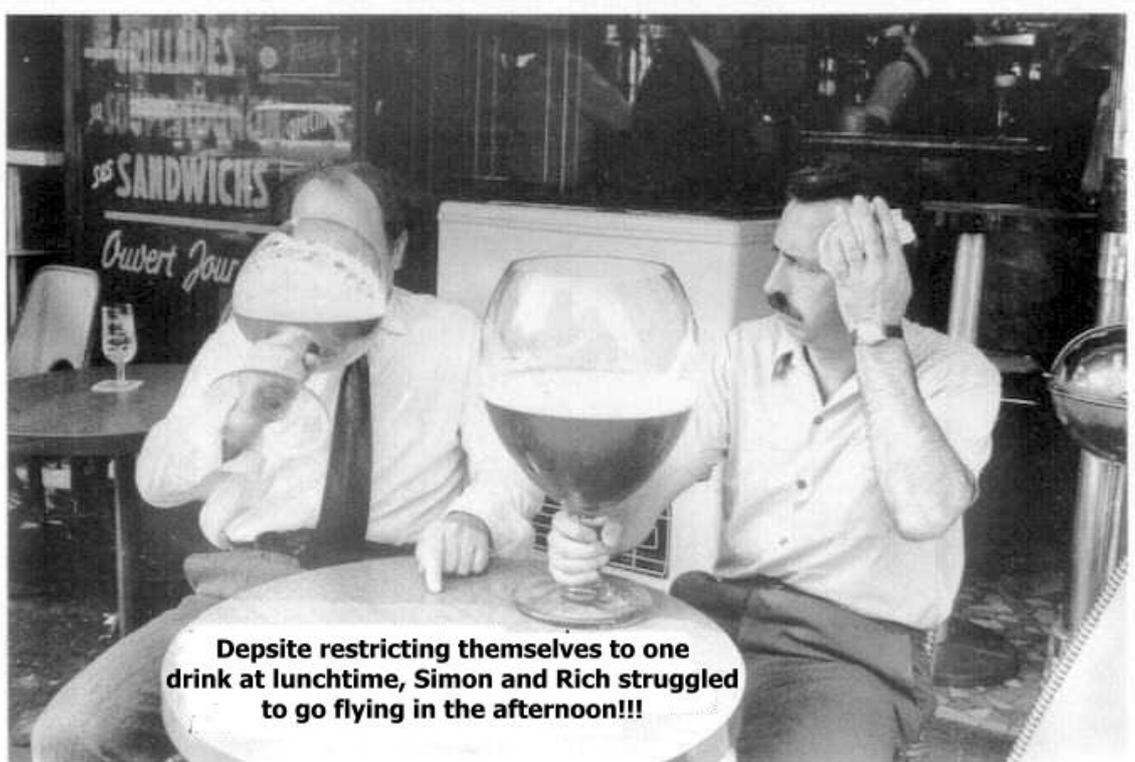
As you'll appreciate there is a considerable throughput of pilots entering and then leaving the sport, some of whom no doubt leave because they don't receive enough support, and this is of continuing concern. The Avon Committee has thought about this and developed a consistent viewpoint on Low Airtime contacts over the last couple of years which is as follows:

It has been found that experienced pilots spending Friday nights and Saturday mornings making calls TO Low Airtimers (and others) about flying is a highly wasteful method of encouragement; it is too hit and miss and results in a very large number of wasted calls and an equally substantial amount of wasted time. However, all Committee Members (and others) are always willing, indeed eager to receive calls FROM other pilots. This is then self-selecting and, because many of the Committee fly together and keep in touch regularly by various means (this answer coming to you via my and Marcus' e-mail, for example), even if the person you call is not flying they almost certainly will know who is and where. Many formerly Low Airtime pilots will attest to the fact that this system works very well if you give it a try. I realise that this isn't quite the answer that you want but, having tried the alternative as Low Airtime Contact, I can certainly attest to a far higher success rate using this one.

We'd love to hear from you the next day you want to go out. I can certainly speak for my fellow Committee Members when I say there is little that gives more pleasure than helping others progress. As far as I'm concerned, you're welcome to ring me on weekday evenings too - I simply won't be able to join you on the hill for a month or so!

Cheers,

Rich Harding.



**Despite restricting themselves to one drink at lunchtime, Simon and Rich struggled to go flying in the afternoon!!!**

## NEWS etc...

### Mere Bash, Sept 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>

This years MERE BASH is being sponsored by White Horse Marquees, and it will all be happening in the Rifle Range at Mere on the first weekend in September. Plans are well under way and it promises to be a bigger and better event than last year, definitely a date not to be missed, so turn the pages of that calender, open up that diary, boot up that computer, and make a date!!!

The arrangements this year will be much the same as last year with camping in the bottom landing field, but with added improvements to the event itself. New this year, lots of cheap goodies, yes we are twisting a few arms and hope to have some traders on site with loads of desirable bits of kit to play with and haggle for. Also we are actively seeking a better winch site which will be suitable for all wind directions, and of course lest I forget FOOD, yes this year there will be a BBQ and it will happen on time, (trust me!!!) Last years caterers didn't even have the guts to ask us to pay for the food we ate, which is lucky for them coz I don't think they would have liked Colins answer. Of course it goes without saying that there will be lots of good beer at £1.00 a pint and naturally cheap vino for those with a more refined palette. There will be competitions galore with great prizes, and plenty of bad weather entertainment should the worst happen. Once again there will be live music on the Saturday night, so bring your dancing shoes. There will be many more attractions which I will pass on to the editor as and when they are in place. This year we will be selling tickets in advance, price to be announced ASAP, as this is not a profit making venture I can promise you it will be as cheap as I can justify. So watch this space for news of further attractions and ticket sales, all coming soon. In the mean time don't forget to put it in your diary.

Simon.

## SITE NEWS

### Sites News North

Haresfield

This 'site' is somewhat unusual as it is not a registered avon site. We have no agreement with the national trust who own the take off area and we have no agreement with the farmer who owns the valley below!

Recently the farmer who owns the valley below has been less than enthusiastic about us bottom landing, having previously said that we can go down there...He has got cattle on the bank imediatley below take off and wants us to keep out of the very bottom field because of the grass crop. The good news is that due to clearance work around the take off area side slope landing is feasible for competant pg pilots, otherwise please use the common land accross to the left to top land. The farmer understands that emergencies occur and if you go down thre is not alot we can do but if possible please keep from any bottom landing until further notice.

**Glastonbury** will again need to be avoided, details will appear on the website or ask a club coach.

## Other News

### Member-get-Member Scheme

In an attempt both to encourage visitors to our sites to become Associate members, and to encourage Avon pilots to speak to pilots they don't recognise, the Committee has decided to introduce a "Member-get-Member" scheme. Included with this edition of Nova are two membership application forms. First write your name on the bottom of each form. Then when you meet a visiting pilot who you convince to become a member, give him your form, and when they return it to me, I will know who the referring pilot was. For your troubles you will get £2 knocked off next year's membership fee for each new member you introduce! Can't be bad!

Contact me if you run out of forms, but preferably try to photocopy them yourself.

PS. This scheme doesn't apply to schools I'm afraid - sorry Robin and Dave!

Tim Pentreath

### **The Pulitzer Prize comes to Nova**

The Committee has decided to introduce a prize for the best article published in Nova during the year. This will be presented at the Christmas Dinner (2nd December). Details are still to be decided on how the prize should be judged, but one idea would be to get all club members to vote for their first, second and third choices as in PR. So go on, put pen to paper (don't forget to include photos, Marcus can scan them in) and just think of the fame and fortune to follow!

### **Avon Club Coach caps**

In yet another bold and imaginative decision by the Committee, we have decided to purchase some baseball caps embossed with "Avon Coach" to help newcomers identify experienced pilots on the hill. Due to the cost we haven't got enough go around all potential wearers at the moment, but let me know if you think you are suitably qualified - the Committee will then decide who gets one from the first batch. If the initiative is successful we will get some more made.

Tim Pentreath

### **Summer Trip 1999**

Yes we are already planning for the 1999 Summer Trip, we thought this year at least we would give you a bit more warning so those of you who have to book your holiday a long time in advance get the chance to go. A group of Avon Pilots will be heading out to the French Alps for the last week in July and the first week in August. We will probably be in the Chamonix/Annecy area, all pilots welcome. If you are interested in coming along and want more details contact Marcus King or Simon Kerr.

**NB This is not a commercial trip**

### **News from NZ**

Avon club member Elly Milln has been getting some flying in out in New Zealand - she entered a friendly comp organised by the Blenheim club (top of the NOVA April & May 1999

South Island). She tried to enter it into our Easter comp, but seeing as it's 12,000 miles too far away we've had to disallow it!

Elly writes: "A small entry for the Avon Easter XC Comp:

Date: Easter Monday

T/O Site: Rarangi (where the hell's that?)

Grid Ref: 174 degrees east , 41 degrees and 40 minutes south (approx)

Distance: 7.5 km (approx)

Witnesses: A bunch of cowboys from Marlborough who call themselves pilots."

Elly can be contacted via email - eleanor\_milln@nzgse.ac.nz

Elly will be writing an article for Nova in the near future.

### **Wendy Windblows**

Rod Buck informs me that there is strong possibility of another Wendy station in the area in the near future - this time at the Mendip Gliding Club. This will be ideal for Ubley, Draycott and Crook Peak, and may also be useful for people flying Frocester too. Contact Rod on 0114 253 0372 or rodbuck@telespeed.demon.co.uk or visit <http://www.wendywindblows.com> for details.

### **Email usage**

As 45% of club members now have email, I am increasingly using this medium to inform club members of club meetings, weekend events (eg. xc virgins w/e), site news and membership renewals! Sending out a conventional mailshot (as per the most recent mini-Nova) costs £26 per 100 sent, and takes a couple of hours to put together. Email is virtually free and only takes a fraction of the time. If you are wondering whether to get "wired" then maybe this will convince you!

Tim Pentreath (tim@pentreath.primex.co.uk)

## **PG XC League Sponsorship**

There are prizes at stake in this year's PG XC League - in return for advertising in Nova, Nick Mallabar from System X has offered vouchers worth £100 (the vouchers can be redeemed against System X, Swing, Icaro and Scarpa goods at any local dealer, ParAvion, Innes Powell, Dave Bullard, Simon Murphy etc), and Rob Arnold of ParaExcellence has offered a flying suit (worth £120) and a couple of T-shirts. I'm still hoping to attract some more prizes from other dealers.

I haven't decided exactly how the prizes should be allocated yet, but there will be prizes for newcomers to the league as well as the die-hard xc hounds!

Tim Pentreath

(<http://homepages.primex.co.uk/~timpent/avonpgxc>)

## **Paragliding at Bournemouth**

Following a recent accident at the Wessex Club's most sensitive site, in which an uninsured, non BHPA, non club member crashed into a lamp post whilst flying a tandem (fortunately his passenger was not injured - only himself), it is vitally important to stress that any Avon pilot wanting to fly Wessex sites gets in touch with a Wessex committee member first. This rule obviously also applies when visiting any club's sites.

Regarding this incident, Bournemouth Council will be meeting soon to decide whether to ban paragliding completely at this site... Adrian Bishop (Wessex Sites Officer - [adrian.abishop@virgin.net](mailto:adrian.abishop@virgin.net)), wrote: "It is with regret that the Wessex Club has decided to name the pilot who flew at Bournemouth without contacting us or the Council and has now put ALL flying at Bournemouth in jeopardy. His name is Mark Foster from Southampton."

## **Swedish Open PG Championship (received via europg)**

Open invitation - Lapland Sweden

The Swedish paragliding association will hold open Swedish paragliding championship in North Sweden July 4-11 1999

NOVA April & May 1999

It is a pleasure to invite accredited pilots from your country to partake in the competition.

SM 1999 will be held in Kittelfjll in the Swedish Lapland mountains. It will be a mountain competition with a standard of high class. The starting points lay in the 4-500 meters level and the competition will transpire in a mixed mountain flatland environment with mountain tops at 1500 Mt. Kittelfjll is to the east of a elongated and protected mountain ridge and has good weather patterns. Kittelfjll is situated near the arctic circle and has a fantastic arctic nature with raindeers, bears and mouses.

The flying environment in North Sweden is very good! It is light all the day round during the competition and the sun will rise at 02:13 and set at 23:51. Pilots from our club have during the last 3 years flown a total of 1509km, 2121km, 736km for a total of 5100km in the local area. Best of all no restrictions, no TMAs no CTRs just open airspace for hundreds of kilometers radius! It is possible in good conditions to fly up to 300 km! Cloud base is often between 1500 - 2500 msl.

Our club "Skrmflygarna Vsterbotten/ngermanland" (OK let's just say VAPK) is responsible for conducting the competition. The distance from Hatfjelldal in Norway approximately 100km road trip. From Vasa in Finland about 100km with a ferry and 340 with a car (3.5 hours drive). Denmark is about 1500km away. Commercial airliners fly into Vilhelmina or Gunnarn from Stockholm. Train and Bus options exist also.

1st prize is guaranteed 10,000 SEK about \$1200 US other exceptional prizes are on the line as well.

Registration fee is 1,000 SEK per pilot (\$120 US). Registration fee is to be sent to Swedish Postgiro 677 555-5 or non Swedish nationals can send a letter of intent or email followed by cashiers check in less than 3 weeks.

You can pay when even pay when you arrive in Kittelfjll!

Contact us and we will help your with what your want!

Send to: SFK V/, Mark Presson, Krrsjgrden, S-89054 Trehrningsj, Sweden

Or mailto: mark@starofhope.org

Please see our web page for details [www.outdoor.se/skarmflyg](http://www.outdoor.se/skarmflyg).

Accommodations are available in the hotel at the resort or in adjoining cabins; house trailer hookup are available also. Even the local village had accommodations and information can be found at Kittelfjlls web site [www.kittelfjll.se](http://www.kittelfjll.se)

Registration is on the 3rd July between 1800 and 2100 at the Hotel, aside from the preliminaries to the Miss Nude World we will have the hotel pretty much to ourselves.

You will need your license and a camera.

Lift to start is included in registration, onlookers and others, family etc.. must walk up or pay 50 Swedish crowns per lift (\$6 US).

Tandem pilots will be on site to do tandem flights, this will be clubs controlled and no non registered tandem flights will be permitted access; we hope

you understand the ideology that the competition will not go back.

We hope you will tell all the pilots in your club and or country about this open competition and know that all are truly welcome.

Many warm wishes and welcome to the open Swedish Championship 1999!

Mark Presson with the Board of Dir.

### And finally...

Congratulations to Avon Club members Chris and Nia Harland on the birth of their second child - a bouncing 9lb baby boy - I'm sure we'll see them all out on a hill soon!

### Membership News

Thankyou to all of you who have renewed your membership on time this year. However, as you can see from the following table, there are still 67 full members who have not yet renewed their membership. If **you** haven't renewed yet, please do so as soon as possible to avoid me having to send out loads of reminders.

Renewal stats as at 14<sup>th</sup> April  
(nb. this table doesn't include members who've joined in 1999)

Status2	Status	Renewed	Not Renewed	Total	% Renewed
Associate	A	26	16	42	62%
<b>Associate Total</b>		<b>26</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>62%</b>
Full	Family	7	1	8	88%
	Committee	9	3	12	75%
	Full	129	62	191	68%
	Life	0	1	1	0%
<b>Full Total</b>		<b>145</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>68%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>171</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>67%</b>

We currently have 226 full members of whom 57% are PG only, 31% HG only and 12% fly both. We also have 52 associate members whose main clubs are predominantly Thames Valley, Wessex and SE Wales.

In terms of full members, the club experienced a 9% increase in members during 1998. This consisted of 58 new members (72% PG, 23% HG, 3% both), with 38 people lapsing (HG lapsed at a slightly higher rate than PG).



## Paragliding XC League

Sponsored by System X, MAC UK (ParaExcellence) and Sky Systems

Hello again!

As I write this on Tuesday evening (13/4/99), only two flights have been entered for the Easter Cup - Tom's 6.1km flight from Haresfield, and Rich's 5.3km from Crook Peak, so it looks like Tom could be on for the Easter Cup this year. Although described by himself as a "rather meagre" flight, if conditions were anything like I experienced at Mere then it was quite an achievement to get high enough to even consider going xc! My max height gain was about 200' during the hour I flew in the Rifle Range Bowl and Cowards Bowl. It's probably a little premature to offer congratulations to Tom as flights don't have to be entered for up to one month, but I think there's a good chance he's won it. I know the chaps who went down to SE Wales didn't have much luck with the weather.

I was hoping to have had some flying down on the Isle of Wight on Easter Saturday, Sunday and Monday, but the weather was completely crap down there - virtually fogbound the entire three days! So I think it's fair to say that 1999 has not got off to a good start - by the end of March last year we had had 178km flown in 18 flights, this year it was 36km in 3 flights! (1997 was worse with 24km in 2 flights, but 1996 and 1995 were better with 69km and 60km respectively)

Although I've actually flown on four occasions this year, I really only consider that I've had one decent flying day this year - on January 9th at Westbury (see photos below). OK, so it wasn't thermic but it was just a beautiful winter's day with some lovely smooth flying.

Well, the Avon XC "virgins" and low air-timers weekend in SE Wales (10th/11th April) came and went, with yet another unflyable weekend. However eight or ten people turned up on the Saturday and were treated to a talk on XC flying by Fiona Macaskill, and a walk round the Blorenge, so it wasn't an entirely wasted day. It was beautiful walking weather and I gather a small group had a

good walk in the Black Mountains later on. And so to a repeat of last week's prayer... If anyone is listening up there, please let us have some decent weather for a change. Thanks in advance!

[Tim Pentreath](#) - 13/4/99

Just a quick reminder of the rules:

1. Flights must be entered within 30 days of making the flight
2. A flight can only be entered if you are a full Avon member at the time of making the flight
3. Airspace restrictions must be observed during your flight - study an airmap before the flight and use one during the flight
4. Flights can be made from any UK site
5. Flights must be over 3 km
6. Witnesses are not required

So there you go - get out there and give it a go! I look forward to receiving details of your flights - Date, Canopy, Site, TO grid ref, Turnpoints, LZ grid ref.

Contact me : Tim Pentreath  
at :168 Bradford Road, Combe Down, BATH, BA2 5BZ  
home : 01225 832922 (phone/fax)  
work : phone - 01225 447003, fax - 01225 318997  
(please mark it for my attention!)  
tim@pentreath.primex.co.uk

<http://homepages.primex.co.uk/~timpent/avonpgxc>



## 1999 PG XC League (most recent flight - 24/4/99)

Rank	Name	1	2	Grand Total	Average	Total (all)	Average (all)	Glider
1	Jim Mallinson	48.3	32.7	81.0	40.5	81.0	40.5	Edel Response
2	Simon Kerr	27.1		27.1	27.1	27.1	27.1	Gradient Saphir
3	Jean Christophe Schrotter	15.3		15.3	15.3	15.3	15.3	Advance Sigma 4
4	Tim Brunskill	15.3		15.3	15.3	15.3	15.3	Advance Omega 4
5	Tim Pentreath	12.7		12.7	12.7	12.7	12.7	Advance Omega 4
6	Charlotte Hedges	9.2		9.2	9.2	9.2	9.2	Flight Design A4
7	Fiona Macaskill	7.6		7.6	7.6	7.6	7.6	Edel Energy
8	Marcus King	7.4		7.4	7.4	7.4	7.4	MAC Eden
9	Robert Bilson	6.7		6.7	6.7	6.7	6.7	Firebird Genesis
10	Tom Mayne	6.1		6.1	6.1	6.1	6.1	Nova Vertex
11	Alex Coltman	5.5		5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	Nova X-Ray
12	Richard Harding	5.3		5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	Firebird Flame
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>166.5</b>	<b>32.7</b>	<b>199.2</b>	<b>15.3</b>	<b>199.2</b>	<b>15.3</b>	

## 1999 HG XC Table

Class 1 Hang Gliding League

Pilot	Flight 1	Flight 2	Flight 3	Flight 4	Flight 5	Flight 6	Total
Bertie Grotram	31.66	3R					31.66
							0.00
							0.00
							0.00
							0.00
							0.00
							0.00
							0.00
							0.00

Jim and Chris are on Extacy Sky God League (or Class 2 for the boring)

Pilot	Flight 1	Flight 2	Total
			0.00
			0.00

Spring has Sprung and the XC's are starting. Last week Bertie flew a triangle from Westbury on the Thursday and several (non Avon) people went XC from Coombe Gibbet on the Friday. Personally I was in the air for almost 3 hours on Friday and flew a lot further than any of them, unfortunately the pilot insisted on landing at Heathrow so I can't enter it for the XC league.

See you at Easter

## CALLING ALL PILOTS – Simon Kerr

Well it's that time of year again, and if Airwave have got their act together then they will hopefully be announcing this years challenge soon.

Ever since I have been involved with the Airwave Challenge, both as a newcomer, and more recently an organiser of The Clubs Paragliding Teams. The Avon Club has been a top performer, getting both Hang gliding and Paragliding Teams into the finals on a regular basis, and winning the Club Cup two years on the trot. That was until last year, when our Paragliding Team got knocked out in the semi finals. Yours truly was in Scotland at the time chasing BPC

points, so my thanks to Tim Pentreath for stepping in and taking a Team over to Wales for the weekend. From what I have heard it was a very difficult one to win, with very tricky light wind conditions and most of the points going to either the very good or the very lucky! Still I know we did our best. I would like to thank everyone who took part last year, both HG and PG Pilots alike without your enthusiasm there would be no Airwave Challenge.

This year the honour of The Club is at stake, and regaining that top spot is high on my agenda. To do this we need YOU, yes that's right! All you Pilots out there whether you're a gung ho top X/C Pilot or a keen beginner ( it matters not ). Flying in the

Challenge above all is Fun, not to mention a great learning experience, no matter how experienced you are. So fill out the form in this edition of NOVA and send it off without delay. It would be useful to have some idea of numbers before registering with Airwave, as it will affect how many Teams we will enter. Some idea of your availability, and or flexibility is also useful. Although every effort is made to organise heats in advance, due to the fickle

nature of the British weather this is not always possible, and sometimes they are thrown together at the last moment. So if you really need more warning then tell us, so that when the opportunity arises you will not be overlooked. So get those forms in the post. To Neil Atkinson if you're a Hang Glider Pilot or me if you're a Paraglider Pilot. There are lots of Clubs out there just waiting to be thrashed, so lets not disappoint them!!!



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## A TALE OF TWO FRACTURES...or

### Tony & Brent's exploits in South Africa

Day 1, 14/2/99

Arrive at Heathrow at 17:30 for a 21:00 departure. As we are on standby tickets we have to wait until 20:45 to find out that we're on the plane. Stress or what!

Day 2

Arrive Johannesburg on time, get transfer to Cape Town, arrive at 13:40. We get picked at 14:30 and get whisked off to Porterville. This is a small town about 100 miles NE from Cape Town, totally unaffected by tourism. Rob Manzoni (our guide for the duration) has a large house there which is geared for free fliers, i.e. comfortable, clean but not too fussy, together with DHV3 bunks and a swimming pool for cooling off after hectic sweaty retrieves. Enjoy a tasty 3-course meal (for £5) and sleep like a log.

Day 3

Up early and after a good breakfast we set off for Dasklip Pass at 09:30. This is a pass which cuts through the Porterville ridge, with 20k south and 50k north of uninterrupted ridge. The take off is at 700m, the bottom landing 300m and the highest peaks along the ridge 900m. The flying choices are many, you can head along the ridge, out over the flatlands or if you head north you can cross over to the next valley and continue north for as long as the winds stay light or your bottle gives in! This is the route that Nick Roberts (sky god from Swansea) took to break the site record (139k) the previous week. The lift here is all thermic, the ridge just being the trigger. There is practically zero dynamic lift.

The take off is an area about 30m square, covered with netting. We get briefed on where the reliable lift is and I take off before I get too scared! I don't find any lift where I expect it and find myself heading to the bottom, aptly named Turkey Patch, but at about 70m above it I get a low save that takes me to 920m at a steady 3m/s. Not bad for my 1<sup>st</sup> thermal since October. I fall out of it and float down. By the time I pack up the sky has seriously

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over developed and we can see a big storm heading our way, so we can it for the day..

I apologise for the use of metric units- when in Rome..... and they sound less scary.

Day 4

Up early again and off to Dasklip Pass. The weather looks good, no cloud apart from some small cu popping up here and there. Take off early as it seems to be getting windy but end up in Turkey patch with Brent and a couple of others. Nick comes to join us but thinks better of it, finds an outrageous low save, specks out and flies 138k the b\*\*\*\*\*! We get a lift back to take off and I go again, this time picking up lift just after launch, and find myself 500m directly a.t.o. I Press on down the ridge and try to cross over to the next valley where I can see a cloud building. Unfortunately I sink out and end up landing. All of a sudden 20 local kids appear and I enlist their help in packing the glider away. Unfortunately they don't speak English and I can't make them understand that their presence is not conducive to me hitching so I head on up the road, away from this nice shady spot and walk 500m to hitch under another tree but as soon as I stop half of them run after me! Eventually I get a lift and 3 lifts later I'm back at the house. A good day, a new pb of 19.3k and a pb height gain as well.

Day 5

Up early again and off to Dasklip Pass. I know, yawn yawn here we go again but anyway we are joined by fellow Avon aviator Karl Ford. Small world ennit. Hang around till 13:00 and get a good take off. Somehow the GPS has moved in the flight deck and switched my vario off. Now I'm flying in strong thermic conditions and I need my vario and both hands on the brakes. I climb out away from the ridge and manage to flick it back on. Head along ridge and hook into a stonker which takes me to 2100m averaging at times 5m/s. Once I top out I cross over to the next valley and press on, not sinking out this time. The valley runs north south and you have to be careful that you don't get pinned

by an increasing westerly as you will be blown into some serious wild country that could take you days to walk out from. As I progressed North I could tell that a westerly had kicked in so I opted to steer away from the danger and had a well hectic landing in the lee of a small hillock. A 3 mile hike followed this in 39degrees and little shade. Eventually I got a phone signal and chilled out under a tree waiting for my retrieve. Another pb day, 38.4k.

#### Day 6

Yes you've guessed it, off to Dasklip pass again to make it 5 days on the trot. Get a good take off but end up heading to landing field but pick up a low save. I fly along the ridge for about 10k, not connecting with anything big enough to cross over into next valley and after being warned that the wind has switched directions (confirming my thoughts) I try to head back to take off but sink out.

#### Day 7

It's competition weekend here at Porterville, a friendly duel between 2 local clubs so we feel the need to enter a 3<sup>rd</sup> team. Today's task is a race to goal about 52k north of take off. However the conditions are very strong and most pilots (including yours truly) sit it out, only one guy made goal and Karl got 3<sup>rd</sup> place for about 30k.

#### Day 8

Competition day 2. Today the weather was almost perfect. A very light breeze smack on the hill. A task was set which was a race to goal via a turnpoint. The goal was the field behind the house we were staying in and the turnpoint was at the southerly end of the main ridge, 25k from take off. Total distance 41k. Brent takes off as soon as the start gate opens but he's a bit previous and goes down. The rest of us wait about ½ hour and I take off at 12:15. Head along the ridge and pick up plenty of thermals both on the ridge and out over the flats, indicated by cumulus clouds building everywhere. The TP is about 1 ½K further than the end of the ridge so a bit of height is needed but this is not a problem as I make it easily. The plan is to retrace my flight back towards take off until I am closest to goal and then head out at 90 degrees to the ridge.

As I return to the ridge I get a good climb but at about 1000m I get hit by a 70% deflation. No problem I thought, counter the turn and pump it out as we do, like, I've read the book and seen the video. However things were not that simple, firstly even after applying heaps of brake to maintain course (any more would have stalled the flying wing) I found myself going round and down in alarmingly steep small circles. Secondly even though I was pumping the deflated side somewhat urgently it did not want to come out. Eventually though I was blessed with the reassuring thwack of a reinflation, just prior to engaging panic mode. This little episode spooked me a bit, not the deflation but the fact that I'm sure I dealt with it as I'd been taught yet it took forever to come out.

I carried on gingerly along the ridge for a couple of Ks and when I saw someone climbing over the flats I decided to make a beeline for goal rather than sticking to the ridge. Unfortunately I landed 5K short. On the retrieve I was told by a pilot who was close to me when I had the collapse that I went round 4 times before it came out. I've heard since that the best way to deal with these big asymmetries is to pump both brakes.... Any comments???

On my return to the house I heard the awful news that Brent had piled in and had hurt his back. We spent the afternoon anxiously watching the helicopter rescue and I have to say that the next few hours were pretty scary. I managed to speak to Brent later that evening, he'd been examined and x-rayed and would suffer no permanent damage. Time for a beer or 5.

#### Day 9

We decide to move on from Porterville to Hermanus, via Cape Town to see Brent. We all have a peep show at his x-rays and are relieved to see that he will indeed be ok but will be somewhat incapacitated for a while. I feel that it's only right that I should endeavor to fly twice as much from now on to make up for him, so it's onto Hermanus. This is a small seaside resort on the Indian ocean, with a line of cliffs about 1.5K long, 1.5K inland, It looks a good place to fly but unfortunately the wind is too strong. We stay in the resort hopeful for a flight tomorrow. End up having an indoor BBQ at a local pilot's house.

#### Day 10

Get to take off for 10:00 and it's very light. Two guys launch and as one of them maintains I have a go and scratch around at ridge height until I find the one and only thermal which gives me a 300m climb. This encourages all the locals to have a go but this is one of those rare days when I manage to stay well above them all.. The lift eventually switches right off so we all land and head inland to Franschoek, an inland site with huge mountains all around. It's blown out so we go for food and return to take off and wait for it to calm down. Take off is on a saddle so there is a severe venturi effect and being blown back here is very bad news. Eventually get off at 18:30 and climb up to the tops of the cliff faces and spend the next 50 minutes floating around in very smooth restitution lift. Head off for bottom landing but as I'm 300m above it I elect to go out over the town and land on the rugby pitch, well that was the plan anyway. What actually happened was that I made the pitch easily and did a few lazy turns to lose height and.... missed it! Severe case of not allowing for wind shear/gradient meant that I landed on the cinder running track that goes around the pitch, and promptly trip over an irrigation pipe and give my right leg a nasty graze. I guess I won't bother entering the spot landing contest. Head back to Cape Town to see Brent and get some pizza.

#### Day 11

Blown out.

#### Day 12

Table mountain. I never really believed that I'd get to fly here but it looks as if the wind gods are being kind. We drive to the landing field, (a small cricket pitch next to the beach) and then up to the cable car station. For some reason pilots get a discount so the cost was £3:20. According to my vario the max climb was 4.4m/s. We got off the cable car, checked out the views and headed over to the NW side of the mountain, collecting a few spectators on the way. The take off consists of a small slope of about 8m followed by the cliff edge, a shear drop of about 300m. It looked at first to be a very committed and technical take off but I felt that as you had time to get airborne (or abort!) before going over the edge it wasn't too bad. After a clean reverse launch a brisk run and I was off, buzzing all the way. We soared the top for about 30 mins. ,  
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gaining only 50m, before heading out to land. The landing site was not visible, we had to fly between Lion's Head and Table Mountain before we could see it, taking care to avoid the cable cars. I made it with loads of height and for the first time in my life flew out over the sea, before coming in to land.

Normally top to bottom flights don't do much for me but this was something very special, a totally amazing experience marred only by the fact that Brent was not enjoying it with me. I guess we'll just have to come back!

#### Day 13

No fly day. Relax in morning and spend PM looking around Cape Town. Go to nightclub in the evening and leave feeling as if I've smoked a pack of 20. Ugh!

#### Day 14

Up early with a view to fly Hermanus again. We call in to see Brent on the way, just to let him know that we're off flying -as you do. We stop at a site called Sir Lowry's Pass on the way. This is a take off right next to a rest area by the side of a trunk road, complete with many spectators. Rob, our guide takes off and loses a lot of height but seems to maintain much lower down. No other pilots seem to want to go in these light conditions so I have a go. I maintain easily and head off down the ridge picking up little thermals all the way. After a while a couple of our group have bottom landed and I get the hint over the radio that they are waiting for me to land so they can carry on to our intended destination, so I duly oblige.

At Hermanus it's still very light but flyable. I had a couple of nice 35 minute flights scratching around in the weak lift with views out over the Indian ocean, followed by a top to bottom, managing to actually land on a rugby pitch this time. Back to the land of big air (Porterville) via Cape Town & Brent.

#### Day 15

Off to Dasklip Pass again and I'm feeling troubled by what happened last time we were here. The only cure is to take off early, risk going down, to gain some confidence. Even though it's early I take off into a stonker that carries me up to 300m ATO without turning! I felt like a right prat for not, but all I wanted was a safe solid flight. Of course, looking back, I should have gone with it. I reckon it

would have taken me all the way! I get a lift back to T.O. and go again, managing this time a respectable 34.5k. I landed absolutely busting for a pee, only to be greeted by some kids offering me a glass of iced water. Stiff upper lip and all that, I politely drink it, and get out of there ASAP to relieve my bulging bladder.

Day 16

Off to Dasklip pass again.... This time only for one extended top to bottom as it was too rough to enjoy flying.

Day 17

Blown out so we went on a tour of the area.

Day 18

We set off for Dasklip Pass again but as we arrive we find out that a pick up truck has just gone off the edge so we get involved in the rescue. One guy is seriously hurt, broken legs and probably ribs as well, severe gash in his right thigh and hardly any blood pressure due to shock. (Good job we had a doctor with us and a comprehensive 1<sup>st</sup> aid kit) I thought we were going to watch him die but after the paramedics arrived we stretchered him off the mountain and the medics stabilised him, before a helicopter took him to Cape Town. No one felt like flying after that so we packed up our gear and moved on to Cape Town.

Day 18 (Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> march)

Spent most of the day paradriving and found ourselves at Lion's Head (next to Table Mountain) at 17:30 with a light wind, slightly off the hill. A tandem got off ok so I rigged up and prepared to reverse launch. The take off area is small, quite steep with plenty of rocks hidden in the undergrowth. I ran backwards to inflate the glider and as I turned around, tripped, span round and my left leg impacted on the edge of one of said rocks. Ouch.

I knew that I'd broken my leg, confirmed by a doctor who was present. The mountain rescue center was just around the corner and within ½ hour I was enjoying? A shot of intravenous morphine.

Today it was my turn to be in the stretcher.. Oh the irony of it all.. And within the hour I was looking at the x-rays in the hospital, clearly depicting a clean spiral fracture of both tibia and fibula.

Overall I have to say that I had a fabulous holiday. This must be one of the places to fly during our winter. I've learnt a lot about flying, and my own (lack of) abilities, met some really friendly people and flown in some outrageous scenery. I'm going to miss out flying in our spring thermals but should be back in action for the summer.

Looking back at my accident I can't believe how stupid I was. It was too light for a reverse launch, I knew that, but as I have little experience in forward launching, I took a risk and am now paying the penalty. Another incident I'm reflecting on is my asymmetric that didn't want to come out. I've had loads of tucks in the UK (haven't we all), all of which have either popped out by themselves or just needed a prod with the brake to re-inflate. This one was in a different league, maybe my 1<sup>st</sup> real one, and I have to say that I'm still troubled by it. I don't feel that a full on S.I.V. course is necessary but I feel we should all be able to deal easily with situations like this, especially when flying big sites abroad.

I'd recommend our guide, Rob Manzoni, to anyone, he was a real diamond, willing to coach at any level and drive all over the country retrieving. Porterville itself has tremendous potential; Nick Roberts flew over 1,300K, 63 hours, in 4 weeks. The exchange rate (10 rand to £1) made life cheap out there, I would imagine that for a 3 week holiday that would stay with you for the rest of your life you would see change from £1,500.

Oh, and one last bit of advice, wherever you fly abroad get insured. My £40 policy got me out of a total bill of £3,500, not to mention the fact that all the arrangements re repatriation were dealt with for me.

Enjoy the spring flying, I hope to see you (from above!) in June, Tony.

Next Issue - Brent's version of events...

## AN EASTER BREAK IN BLENHEIM, NEW ZEALAND

New friends, fantastic views and an award!

Hi everyone! I've been in New Zealand for three months but the teaching course has been keeping me so busy that I've had very little time for flying. However, with a few days off allowed over Easter, I decided to drive north from Christchurch to Blenheim to join the local Marlborough Club for their annual Easter fly-in. Blenheim boasts the most sunshine hours of anywhere in this country and since the area is riddled with vineyards, I suppose there must be some truth in this assertion. Anyway, we certainly had sunshine - lots of it! It's a beautiful area (well everywhere in New Zealand is beautiful) situated on the north coast of the South Island near the Marlborough Sounds.

I couldn't make it for Friday as college assignments kept me glued to the desk, but early on Saturday morning (5.00 am) I drove to Blenheim - 4 hours away. The dawn heralded a glorious sunny day and I was secretly pleased to learn that Friday had been blown out, but that today, (Saturday) looked very promising. I didn't know anyone when I arrived at the briefing, but no matter, paragliding folk are nice people and I soon felt very welcome.

We drove to an inland site, past the NZ spy station (two very large white spherical objects, surrounded by a high fence in the middle of nothing) to a hill called Benhopai (about (2000' asl). A track only accessible by four wheel drive led to the top where the view stretched out over the wide river valley towards Blenheim and the sea. I was still feeling a touch nervous after my 'excitement' in Morzine last August and had done very little thermal flying since then but although the conditions were a bit rock and roll (12 up thermals), everything stayed in shape. After flying for over an hour, all the paragliders were forced to land in the bottom field with the sudden approach of the sea breeze. Immediately there were seven hanggliders in the air!

Later that afternoon I was taken to look at a site on the coast called Rarangi.

"That's the take-off". I was told.

"What! You don't take off from there do you?"

We were standing on the edge of the coast road looking over the bank down to the sea. It was steep and bushy and very tight. We left for a beer.

Day 2 - Sunday - another lovely sunny day! Met up at Picton - a picturesque seaside town and port for the InterIslander Ferry. The take off site above Picton is about 1500' asl and affords a wonderful view of the Sounds - the view from 3000' is even better. We were set a task - 25 km to a goal - the first trick was to get to at least 4000' and be able to see the whole of Blenheim before setting off across the valley in front to the next ridge of hills. Once the day warmed, although thermals were only 10 ups today, the entry and exits were a bit of a handful. Anyway, I was doing very nicely - two pilots had scraped across to the other side - and I was climbing up in a thermal. But before I had time to say "wow, this is wonderful" the glider had collapsed big time, the risers had twisted and nothing was flying anymore. Deja vue?

I looked down, I was behind take off and below was a steep sided valley, crammed full with trees and bush and there was no way out. 'Not the place to throw the reserve' I thought calmly. 'Better had sort this one'.

Well, after a wee while and a bit of a fight, all was looking heaps better except my heart rate was a touch higher than normal so I flew out over the town and landed in the rugby field. Conditions remained flyable for the rest of the day, so being unable to resist it, I had a couple more (less bumpy) flights into the late afternoon.

That evening, the annual awards were dished out over a few beers. Among them there was the 'Bugger' award for the pilot who crash landed his glider into the bushes on take off. The 'Dickhead' award for the pilot who landed out and phoned to say he was 'in a valley' (not much use to the retrieve driver, but he was found before nightfall), and I won the 'Near Miss' award for nearly having to throw the bag.

Day 3 - Monday - a light easterly and a bit of cloud on the hills - perfect for ....guess where? Rarangi! Take off was assisted by at least four people holding up the leading edge of the glider on the road while the pilot scrambled down the bank to get a foothold for launch. Anyway, the system worked and everyone got away without too many close encounters with the trees. Another beautiful view,

looking out to sea and down the coastline - empty beach stretching for miles.

After a bit of lovely smooth ridge soaring, I followed four other pilots over the back and along the thickly forested ridge (lots of trees in NZ) to land about 7.5 km away. One pilot landed, mistakenly, in a bush filled gully. By the time we found him, he was drenched in sweat and covered in scratches. Anyway, back to take off for a final cruise over the sea before landing by the beach for a communal brew up and chill out.

And so ended a perfect weekend.

My impressions of flying in NZ so far are that it's a beautiful country to fly in, the sites are uncrowded, it's challenging, there is potential for distance (despite the risk of landing out in the boonies) and in fact, good XC's are being flown. There are only about 450 pilots in the country, some of whom are self-taught but they have the right attitude, fly for fun, fly safely, fly respectfully.

I wish you all safe and happy flying this summer!

Elly Milln

PS Tim B. - When you come out to NZ in October -  
DON'T FORGET TO BRING THE TANDEM!!





## Issue Five

### Introduction

**Happy 99!** (NOT Happy99.Exe - New year; same sarcasm!):

As promised - Libel Case Study - one Euro PG contributor's cautionary tale!

Boot Test Feature - Will Marcus' Saloman's survive a downwind landing?

South Africa - Hospital Tour with special Fracto-Cam footage!

**Well**, an interesting time to be an Avon Member abroad, certainly. I'm not sure how long it took some of us to believe the second e-mail about Our Tone - oh, sorry, that should be Stan! - and it was rather ironic to receive a message on the mobile about it from Westbury Wendy - I mean, Ollie! - at exactly the same time the club was hearing Captain Fantastic thank everyone for their calls to Ollie & Jill, at the meeting entitled 'Dealing with a Major Accident' .....

**Seriously** - best wishes to the both of you and it was particularly good to see Brent at the April meeting.

**This year I have been mostly flying Avon Sites.** And pretty good they are too! (Sorry - wrong hat - where was I?) Ah, yes - are we going to use up all the great flying days too early again this year? Apparently not, but it's not been too awful, with a few acceptable weekends. Having February off did turn out to be pretty pointless - one week particularly springs to mind, when it was only just blown out on the Tuesday and Wednesday, immediately followed by dead calm on the Thursday and Friday. Bring on the South Wales invasions ..... oh - we just have!

### November 2nd - Hay Bluff

**Forecast North-Westerly**, looks like another Hay day! Left Aber with MacSplittie and The Piper in

hot pursuit, or as hot as it gets in a Split-Screen versus a GS550 (!), hung around for a few minutes and then walked up (only most of the way, obviously - I'm an Avon pilot!). Had an interesting flight, with the wind strength greatly affected by the ominous clouds occasionally passing through.

Eventually the twosome arrive, as I'm big ears'ing down under a very dark grey mass of moisture an hour later - MacSplittie had forgotten to put Capt F's XC undergarments in his toolbox and was at a loss without a fanbelt!

**An hour later** and it's calmed down again, and one-by-one we launch into lifting air. Twenty minutes in

and it feels eerily similar to earlier and, remembering having to wingover down last time, I make my way out beyond the road to land. Being dragged on landing I realise that the other two may not be so fortunate and turn my eyes back to the ridge: MacSplittie turns and runs - his GPS recording over 60km/h

crosswind as he disappears to land almost a km over the top; The Piper gives more concern - flying not so much with Big Ears as with Tiny Nose! - travelling backwards up the face and just clearing the top!

**We packed up after that** .....

## January 9th/10th - Westbury / Ubley

**Saturday**, January 9th, 1999 - notable for the reformation of some of England's finest, The Jam. Yes, today was the day Paul 'Piper' Weller, Bruce 'MacSplittie' Foxtan and Rick 'Webmistress' Buckler decided it was too strong and went

potholing. (You'll get the reference in a minute, honest!) It was also the day when almost everyone else went to Westbury and got the year off to a fine start!

**Plenty of fun flying**, mainly on the NNE face for PGs, lifting all the way out to the road on a consistent basis - Ginger Spice had so

much fun, in fact, that he flew until dusk! Several pilots were also taking photos - thanks to Mike Andrews for this one - which led to a few 'Oh - you've got your hands off the brakes too!' incidents (!), as well as the local rag and another, freelance photographer - we ended up with a good spread and some great flying for January. Pity my photos were crap 'cos I have an APS camera ..... :-)

**P.S.** I resisted the temptation to use the photo where I'm above everyone, including the lone HG! The HGs were mostly using the main ridge.

**Sunday**, January 10th. No Going Underground today, (cue light bulbs flashing on in brains - it was actually

## March 13th/14th - Draycott Sleights

**Actually** I might as well just call it 'March - Draycott Sleights' as I wasn't the only one to do all

of my flying there for the month. Saturday 13th was the first, fun day with MacSplittie, Capt. F., The Webmistress and a fair multitude of others congregating on our 'emergency westerly' for a spot of aerial enjoyment. A lightish and largely uneventful morning -

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The Piper himself who came up with that one) that's for sure and it's off to Pandy where ..... The Wanderer and Condor Man, amongst others, are standing in cloud, which is well below the hill! Hmm - retreat to The Skirrid for some lunch - no, let's go

totally mad and drive back to Ubley!

**On arrival** we find the usual congregation of HG pilots flying paragliders (!) but there's no-one up 'cos it's very light. The frustrating weekend continues for our speleological friends as Firefly, on his first ever

Ubley flights, watches from just above the trees, with the brakes heavily in use, as one by one they sink out to the mudbath that is masquerading as a landing field. (In MacSplittie's case this was fairly unsurprising given that he was throwing his distinctive wingovers on launch!)

**Meanwhile**, back in Wales, a hang glider goes for a solo flight when the extremely lucky, not-clipped-in pilot drops out on launch.....



excepting an unknown pilot on a Freex Spear body-checking the cliff while taking off with cravats on

both tips(!) - then blew up to a fair strength, with only the Cap'n and the Mystery Pilot flying for a couple of hours around lunchtime.

**Later on** we all decided to do the simple trick - walk down the hill fifty yards! - and were back in the air. Shocking reports of six

pilots flying at once can be confirmed as accurate!  
**Sunday** saw very light winds, starting with the customary southerly evacuation of air from the Levels and then swinging round to the West. Very little thermic activity left the thronged masses, including Ceri, Donna's friend and Donna, Steve's friend, enjoying the MacSplittie Cabaret. This mainly consisted of a series of attempts to emulate our very own Dangerous Brothers with some amusing stunts including:

- Crashing through a tree on the cliff edge whilst launching and

- Testing the ankle support qualities of Saloman boots with a 'let's fly straight at the hill' landing.

**Fortunately**, The Webmistress was absent on Mother's Day duties and didn't have to watch!

**Saturday 20th** saw a similar crew, augmented by a parent-free Piper, returning to the Sleights for the typically quick half hour between no wind and blown out. One day someone is going to go a long way from this site - one day, honest!

### In The Next Issue

Virgins with no knickers - we hope!  
 Laurel & Hardy - back in the saddle?  
 And much, much more!!!

### Parting Thought

(From the files of Norwich Union)

"I was going at about 70 or 80 mph when my girlfriend on the pillion reached over and grabbed my testicles, so I lost control."

Puts another slant on my 'It's like having a pillion that doesn't fidget', doesn't it?!

Photos by Rich Harding & Mike Andrews.  
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## Flying Diary - March 1999

### **Saturday 6th - Westbury**

Wind - WNW Bath CNN gave 13 mph

When we got there it was fairly windy, and it was mainly hanggliders in attendance. Neil Atkinson, Ron Smith and loads of visitors including the likes of Dave Draper were having fun. John 'Fitz' Fitzpatrick was the first paraglider pilot in the air and seemed to have a pleasant enough flight until he got too close to the compression and was hoovered backwards. A little later myself, Tim Brunkill and Jean-Christophe Schrotter took to the air for some great flying with nice climbs to about 1000'. The cold forced us to land as Alex Coltman and Simon Dutton took to the air. The new Avon Dual team of Tim B and Charlie Hedges then took off to enjoy an hours soaring in an increasing wind, which pinned everyone else to the ground except Tim Pentreath. Eventually the approaching front got to us and we retreated to the local in Bratton.

Marcus King

### **Saturday 13th - Draycott Sleights**

A Westerly wind so we decided to head over to Draycott. It seemed to blowy for Wales, which was confirmed the following day. Pilots were Rich Harding, Charlie Hedges, Tim brunskill, Geoff Rogers, Kevin Winters and two new members Pete and Tim (?). The flying was variable but we managed quite a lot over the whole day and headed home as the sun got low.

Marcus King

### **Sunday 14th - Draycott Sleights**

Again we headed back to Draycott, maybe we should have gone to Merthyr. Many of the same faces plus Donna Pinker, Christine Carter and Ceri 'Nationals Pilot' Brown. The wind was more fickle and we didn't get that much flying in but lots of attempts at staying up. But some of us managed to top land, fly into trees and execute perfect downwind landings???

Marcus King

### **Friday 19th - Westbury**

I believe Tim Brunskill did a 15 km XC but he has yet to give me any details, come on Tim...

Marcus King

### **Saturday 20th - Draycott Sleights**

Charlie Hedges, Rich Harding, Simon Kerr and myself headed over to Draycott. When we got there

there was little wind and it wasn't really flyable. We then had a spell of about half an hour or so where it was flyable before the wind built up too much, this was demonstrated by Charlie who wa hoovered backwards. All in all a bit frustrating. I believe other pilots were on Roundway Hill.

Marcus King

I managed an hour at Frocester in cloudy and quite gusty weak frontal weather. Robin Brown went down a couple of times with his tandem, otherwise only a couple of Hangies, one went straight down the other scrated for 30 mins. At last got used to flying over trees!

Mike Andrews

### **Friday 26th - Westbury**

Brillant day for hangies at Westbury 10-20+ mph, so strong for me but with re-tuned speed-bar on the Astral I penetrated quite easily and had an excellent half hour before deciding it was getting too strong so top landed. 3.7 m/s thermals - only wish I could have gone over the back - As I left 2 HGs were enjoying it all. 4 hours so far this year is quite encouraging.

Mike Andrews

### **Saturday 27th - Mere Rifle Range**

As a HG Saturday 27 March was a total washout, unless of course you count the bright red face I got for falling asleep lying around on Mere watching the odd PG scratch around and bottom/side land.

Neil Atkinson

### **Sunday 28th - Draycott**

Sunday 28 March looked better for HG. However it was 20 mph at 10 O'clock (BST) with a freshening forecast after a bit of dithering Draycot looked the only worth while option. The sailplanes were already scooting around when I arrived and Nick R self launched from the far take off whilst I participated in the compulsory start of day jaw-jaw.

Geoff R was the next animal off from the near take off, but was sufficiently close to the ridge below to convince Kevin and myself to try a different take off! By the time I was ready having carried to the far take off Kevin was in the air as well. It took 10 minutes before the air calmed down enough for me

to be able to hold the glider still enough to take-off, but once moving it was much problem. Paul Ellis thought otherwise and immediately started to de-rig. The only other person to commit aviation was Jim 'Oh my membership must be in the pile at home waiting for me to do something' McMackin on the Lean Mean Exxtacy machine. Although it was interesting that this only seemed on a par with the kingposted gliders, seems that strong conditions don't suit the Exxtacy.

Lift was good, but couldn't be taken behind the ridge for fear of being pegged. Jim shot off in the direction of Wells but thought better of it at the next gorge beyond the quarry and came back to the Quarry where he spent 10 minutes gaining height before rejoining the main ridge. Cloudbase was around 2,500' with my best at 2,200' ATO, mainly achieved by only following the first thermal back to the ridge and then using the rest of the cloud suck

to regain distance into wind, rather than attempting to fight forward into the sink having followed the lift back too far.

The landing was interesting as the wind was ~30 mph by the time people had enough of the flying. Geoff landed on the front without problem, but experienced turbulence whilst still high. Everyone else opted for the 'dead' field on the track up. This meant pulling on to hold position in 30 mph, then flaring hard as you dropped below the hill in front (~30' above the deck) and the still air of the field. Hmmm... Amazing what you'll accept as flyable when you're desperate for a flight.

Neil Atkinson

Last Updated 04/04/99

## Flying Diary - April 1999

### Friday 2nd - ???

A few Avon pilots flew in SEW but failed to get away before the rain stopped play... However a fun time was had by all.

I believe some flying happened on this side of the Bristol Channel, more details when I get them.

Marcus King

### Sat 10th / Sun 11th SE Wales

We found Simon in the Britt on Friday night, having a hard time in the bar. No flying but a good turnout for the XC Virgins Weekend. Fiona M gave a talk on XC flying 'aided' by Simon Kerr. We then for a walk up the Blorenge without our gliders 'just to show people what the SEW club have bought'. Most people departed but a few of us stayed on for a walk in the Beacons and Barbie in the forest.

Marcus King

### Sat 17th - The Blorenge

Up at 7 after clubbing till 2, Tim P Charlie and myself travelled over in the splittie to meet up with Simon and Richard who had braved the Britt in Crickhowell for the rerun of the XC Virgins weekend, well kinda. Another good turnout it's good to see so many new faces in the club. It was a tad

cloudy when we headed up the Blorenge but flyable on the NE face a few of us had a good float around whilst Simon gave a site briefing to the others. I then hailed and some went home, nearly including Tim P. It soon cleared up and switched to the NW face where we enjoyed a whole afternoons flying before running from a cloud to the Castle Meadows LZ. Charlie took the height record for the day with 1000' ato on her trusty A4. No XCs but it was good to get a serious amount of flying done. Three of us returned home via Fiona Mac's where we enjoyed a lovely meal and then promptly fell asleep during Colin Lark's slides :-). Simon and Rich apparently went back to enjoy more of the Crickhowell night life in the Britt.

I believe some flying went on at Westbury as well, but nothing has winged it's way to me, so I can't put any details up.

### Sun 18th - Merthyr

Yep the XC virgins were back again, well those that could get out of bed. More flying, well scratching and then the sky got bit vicious and we all beat a hasty retreat, well it would have been if Rich hadn't been so optimistic that it would improve. He got his dues when forced to go for a rather long uphill walk...

Pete Corcoran said that a similarly small amount of flying went on at Westbury.

### Mon 19th - ???

Rumours abound that Jim (Phd in Yogic Flying) Mallinson did 49kms from an unofficial TVHG site, all at 200' above ground level. I hope your membership was up to date or that nice Mr Badger will be outing you Jim :-). I don't suppose it's worth me applying for membership now, they'll probably turn it down on the grounds that I am unsuitable.

Well the rumours have been confirmed, here's what Jim wrote

Hello

Here are the details of a wonderful flight I had yesterday:

Date: 19/04/99

TO: Martinsell SU179367

LZ: Duntisborne Leer SO 970072

Duration: 2:20

Glider: Edel Response M

Distance: 48.3 km according to the Sky Systems calculator

After an hour or so faffing around in light and bitty thermals things picked up and Adrian Thomas climbed magestically away. I found myself in a pretty gnarly bit of lift that tracked down the ridge before lifting off as an 8-up when it hit the trees. As I climbed to 'base (c. 5,000') I realised that my map was no use to me at all because I'd folded it for an ENE breeze but it had swung around to SE. I radioed to Sam Moffett on the ground who told me I'd have to head NE to avoid Lyneham airspace. Soon after that I lost radio contact. I played catch-up with Adrian (who was unfortunately on a different frequency), hopping from cloud to cloud and enjoying the views of the Marlborough Downs,

Avebury and Silbury Hill until I lost him at 'base while drifting ever closer to Lyneham. I pulled in the ears and got on the bar to get out of the cloud and avoid the airspace thinking that Adrian was just ploughing straight into it. (He later told me that he simply glided over the top of it-it only goes up to 3500'). I decided then that I would have to get my map sorted and that involved opening the whole thing up, somehow spotting the word Swindon on it and crumpling it back into the case looking like one of those Alpine 3D jobs! I headed NE and got low over the M4 SE of Swindon before getting a climb back to 'base and clear airspace ahead. I'd somehow caught up with Adrian (distance-wise not height-wise) and we headed off in the direction of Cirencester, following a very useful railway line. Meanwhile lots of high cloud had arrived and things looked a little desperate but somehow it kept working for another hour or so. Gliding under a cloud just NW of Swindon I got a few little blips but nothing that I felt was worth turning in, especially since the lakes at Cerney were within range and I remembered something from the Avon site guide about them being thermal triggers. Adrian had worked the lift under the cloud and was now a couple of k behind me and about 2,500' higher! As I went over the lakes I didn't get anything until I was over the last part and preparing to land. A few tiny blips somehow organised themselves into a 1-up which took me from about 200' agl to 2000. By now there was no sunshine anywhere, the blob fizzled out and I set off on a death glide but found a zero to take me over Oakley Wood to a field of linseed just beyond. I think that, possibly, for a minute or two, I may have had the longest UK flight of the year until Adrian flew over to land a few k further on. A very kindly farmer took me to find Adrian at a (sadly closed) pub where we waited for Tim Guildford to come and get us.

Anyway, sorry to tantalise you with these ramblings- I expect you're cursing us layabout students already!

Jim Mallinson

Well done Jim

Last Updated 21/04/99



**In the next issue...**

**Romanian Travels  
Brent's South African Adventure  
Simon Goes XC**

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The South East Wales Club's Bloreng Party has now been put back until the August Bank Holiday Weekend. I am still looking for people who wish to dress up in unusual clothing and launch themselves off a hill. Fancy Dress can be solo or tandem, HG or PG.

Lots of new gliders to try this year, Nova X Ray and Edel Promise are out there doing it.

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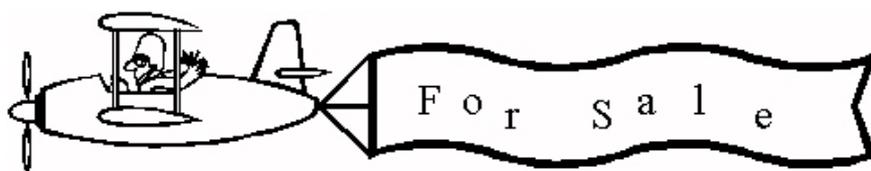
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