

# Cabletalk

January 2010

Welcome to the first Cabletalk of the new decade and a very happy new year to all our members and friends.

Club history was made on Sunday, 20th December when we flew our T21 with the help of the ATC. I had just poured myself a glass of wine at home when the phone rang; "hello it's Steve (Codd), do you fancy flying the T21". 20 minutes later I was sitting in the cockpit with snow all around and launching into a crystal clear but very chilly sky. Steve and I did 10 launches using our winch on the short runway and reaching 1000 feet. The view was

terrific.

The ATC were unable to fly their Grobs because of the depth of the snow, the wheel boxes would fill with snow and cause problems landing, but the T21 has a large exposed wheel and a nose skid, and can cope well with snow. Since they were not flying Steve had persuaded them to help launch and enjoy the T21. Their reaction was very positive and friendly and a unique and enjoyable experience for everyone.

This was the first time that I can remember where the club or I had flown at Kenley on a Sunday. *Richard*



## From our Chairman

A Happy New Year to you all

This is the traditional time to emulate the Roman god Janus and look back at 2009 and forward to 2010 !

As I said at the Annual Dinner last month, 2009 was a year of highs and lows ! The highs started in April with the arrival of our new winch with excellent publicity in S & G. In June, the "modification" of our twin-cabin Clubhouse by the removal of most of the dividing walls made it a much more useable space, with - so I was informed - a lifetime guarantee against falling damp provided by Mick Ely !

The lows mainly related to one man - Peter Wann. As a result of his illness in the Spring, the Committee resolved to have "deputies" in place to insure against the unplanned absence of key Club members. Although David Johnson has been missing from the office due to illness since midsummer, written procedures are in place and Brian Smith has been an invaluable stand-in while he searches for a new day job. Our instructor team has been strengthened by the "promotion" of Ingram Gavan and Steve Skinner to Assistant Instructor status and Mick Ely getting his BI ticket. These achieve-

ments have given Steve Codd more scope for coaching new members and those progressing to solo status and beyond. More members are now proficient winch drivers which paid off when Phil Chapman was away for a while. Sadly, Peter's sudden death in August meant that he had not had the time to introduce another member into the black arts of his bookkeeping. This gap is being addressed.

What will 2010 bring ? There are a few givens - mainly expenditure ! Our usual bills for rent, rates, pay and tax and insurance will be enlarged in June by the arrival of the first repayment instalment of the loan we took out from the Philip Wills Trust to help us pay for the re-engineered Skylaunch winch. So what do we need to do ? It's very simple - all members to work towards an incident-free year, look after our visitors so they have a great experience when they come to Kenley - oh and get out you prayer wheels, mats, worry beads etc and pray for great gliding weather through the year. Over to you !!

And in the words of our BGA Chairman, "Have fun, stay safe !

*Adrian Hewlett*

## Surrey Hills Gliding Club Team

Club Chairman—Adrian Hewlett

Secretary—Marc Corrance

Treasurer—Ed Brown

Membership Secretary—Russell King

Safety Officer—Michael Pointon

Club Instructor—Steve Codd

Chief Flying Instructor—Richard Fitch

Equipment—Steve Skinner

Cabletalk Editor — Richard Fitch

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Comments on this newsletter and any contributions and photographs are welcomed and should be sent to the "Cabletalk Editor" at the club.

## Competition Enterprise

by Marc Corrance

I was first introduced to Competition Enterprise by our former CFI Peter Poole with his tales of incredible and unusual cross country flights sometimes in conditions where cross country competition might not have even taken place. The concept of the competition has always been to make the most of the day's flying and conditions, and as such the tasks are quite different from normal competitions. They are usually quite open with a number of different turnpoints that give you the choice of direction and distance you want to go. This enables everyone to have a go at a task no matter what they are flying. This year at the

Long Mynd there was everything from a K6 to a top of the range Antares flown by Justin Wills. I was joined on the trip by Ben Watkins who was invaluable as crew and had to come and pick me up three times dur-

ing the week. It would have been very difficult to take part without him. Peter Poole was also taking part with his wife Diane crewing for him. One of the tasks was one called 'Visiting the Llans'; with this task we were given a list of all the turnpoints starting with LL in Wales and a list of all the BGA clubs and were told to visit as many of them as we could with bonus points for getting back the Mynd at the end of the day. There are no bonus points for time taken, and the points are based purely on distance. Some of us only managed to get round 3 or 4 turnpoints, but there was always someone who got 10 or more and covered ridiculous distances. In particular, Justin Wills always managed to fly twice as far as most people but quite often ended up landing out on the other side of the country having followed the best of the weather to get as far as possible. One day he landed in Cambridge after having flown over 800kms in the process. Fortunately for Justin he has a very sympathetic retrieve crew in the form of his wife who is happy to go and pick him up from wherever he happened



to land. Another difference with this competition was that you decide your own start time and take a launch whenever you felt ready to go. This avoided everyone taking off at the same time and having large gaggles of gliders thermalling together.

One of my most memorable flights this year was not a long one at just over 100kms, but the last 40kms back to the Mynd was done jumping from ridge to ridge below 1000ft for most of the time. There's nothing quite like the feeling you get when you manage to scrape home after most of the other contestants have landed out.

For me, the competition was not about competitive flying, but more about getting the opportunity to fly in new places under different conditions, and the Long Mynd is certainly a most fantastic and beautiful place to fly if a little bit intimidating at times. The

club lies on top of a hill up a very narrow, steep and winding road that is quite scary to drive up with a trailer. The view from the club house towards Wales is stunning and their ridge works well with any westerly wind. We made good use of the ridge on at least three days in the week. It is also one of the last places in the country where you can bungee your glider off the ridge straight into ridge lift, although we didn't manage to do it in the week it is something I really want to go back and try one day.

For any of you who have thought about entering a completion, or who are looking to further their cross country flying I would definitely recommend Enterprise, and I will finish this with a quote from Justin Wills about the philosophy of Enterprise "is designed for those who fly for the sheer joy and adventure of it all and who wish to challenge themselves to their own limits in a friendly competitive environment, whilst flying their hearts out.

"Enterprise 2010- Lasham 3-10<sup>th</sup> July  
[www.comp-enterprise.com](http://www.comp-enterprise.com)



## Concorde Lessons for Glider Pilots?

On a recent short break, I listened to talks by a retired Concorde pilot, his last one being about the Paris crash. Among the points he made (which I understand were dismissed by the French equivalent of the AAIB)-were the following. I started to link these to issues we face in gliding

**Fit to Fly** The Second pilot's medical certificate was out-of-date on the day of the fateful flight.

**Weight** The chartered flight was quite seriously late to depart. The load schedule had been passed to the crew. But when another pallet of luggage was discovered, it was loaded onto the aircraft without notifying the crew. The aircraft was accordingly overweight.

**Peer Pressure** The kind chaps in ATC, knowing of the delay, offered the crew a downwind takeoff, after all, the tailwind was only about 5-10 knots. Accepted by the crew-anxious to get airborne-who in an aircraft already overweight, forgot that the taxi to the reciprocal takeoff heading would have used about 4 tonnes of fuel! Even more overweight!

**Maintenance** The port undercarriage assembly, after overhaul had been reassembled without a vital spacer, later found on an engineering workbench! The result was that the bearings supporting the main wheels were allowed to slip to one side, resulting in steering akin to the super-market trolley I usually pick!

**Fuel leak** The rogue part, left on the runway after an earlier take-off, did not puncture the fuel tank. When the impact happened, a hydraulic pressure wave in a full tank caused the tank to rupture from the inside.

**Fire, etc** At this point, several things came together! The overweight aircraft, with fuel leaking and veering to port as a result of the defective u/c, at some point destroyed one or more runway-side lights. The debris was ingested into one of the engines, this debris or the rogue part severed electric cables, causing the ignition of the leaking fuel! The Concorde's track narrowly missed an aircraft waiting to cross the main runway - which had on board the President of France!

**Aviate!** The heat sensors indicated that the "good" port engine was on fire. The operating manual prescribes that no action should be taken until the aircraft reached a prescribed minimum height. For BA, this is 600 ft. But the crew shut down a perfectly serviceable engine, leaving the two starboard engines to cope with a seriously overweight aircraft - with only one possible outcome.

**Food for thought.** We're not Concorde pilots, but does any of this ring bells for us? # Are you legal, current and fit to fly?

## Have you ever checked that there are any weights in the glider that shouldn't be there?

Adrian Hewlett

## Congratulations

In the last year we have had several first solos. Tom Arscott and Brian Smith in December 2008, Ray King, Brian Yates, Adrian Roberts, Tom Merrell and Justin Fielder in 2009. Tom Arscott went on to get his Cross Country endorsement and silver height.

Chris North and Larry Lawes both achieved their first 50km flights and Dave Kirby-Smith also achieved his Cross Country endorsement. Bob Slumen was seen to spin the K8 over Kenley.

## Club Awards 2009

The 2009 club awards were presented at the annual Christmas Dinner held at the Woodcote Park Golf Club. There are four awards, the Cross Country, Club, ab initio and Alex Wright.

This year we had several contenders for the Cross Country award.

Marc Corrance participated in Competition Enterprise and came 11th (see p 3).

Steve Codd took part in two competitions, the Gransden Regionals where he came 12th in one of our Grobs, and the Bicester Regionals where he came 8th in his Nimbus 2c. Steve is now 188th in the BGA national ladder.

Russell King also took part in the Gransden Regionals and scored over 2000 points to come 18th. He also flew from Kenley around the Biggin Hill ATZ and had an outstanding flight to Lasham and back.



The Cross Country award was presented to Russell.

The Club Award is presented to someone that has been a great help to the club over the last year. This was awarded to Mick Ely for all his help with

instructing. Mick persevered with getting his Basic Instructors rating despite being frustrated with the lack of progress he was able to make at both Husbands Bosworth and Parham.



The ab-initio award was presented to Brian Yates for his determination in achieving his first solo.

Alex Wright started the Surrey Hills Gliding Club at Kenley. We have an award in his name for someone who, by their efforts, helps the club run smoothly. The award was presented to Dorcas Pointon for her exceptional talents at organising the admin side of our club. She is the friendly voice that most of our customers and members experience when they contact the club.



## My Introduction to Gliding

by Mike Randles

My first experience of gliding was very different from Kenley in the 90's. As an ATC corporal of 406 squadron in NW London in 1947, I was lucky enough to be nominated for a gliding course of several Saturdays at 124 Gliding School at Stanmore.



I flew two types of gliders, both single seaters. The first was a Dagling, a skeletal device with no canopy, instruments or any sort of protection from the elements. The second glider was more conventional, a Kirby Cadet, not unlike a Swallow.

After some classroom instruction into the theory of flight and the structure and controls of a glider, the next step was to sit on the Dagling and prepare for my first "hands on" experience of gliding. Ground slides they were called, very descriptive as the glider was pulled across the airfield by a cable from a modified barrage balloon winch. The speed was just sufficient to maintain wings level but keeping the skid on the ground. My ATC Gliding Log shows 7 ground slides. Air

slides came next which meant that the winch driver, who had the glider in sight all the time, increased the towing speed just sufficient to get the skid off the ground. I WAS FLYING. After 6 air slides I progressed to the Kirby Cadet and had three low hops.

Low hops were followed by high hops, probably of a few yards. At the highest point of the flight, which again was carefully regulated by the winching speed, the cable was released.

In many respects, the gliding background is similar to how it is now. We all helped launching and retrieving, holding wings level and generally enjoying our time on the airfield whilst awaiting our next flight.

This was just after the war when resources were scarce and a gliding course was highly prized, even though



the skills acquired then do not compare with current expectations.



## Gransden Regionals

by Chris North

Last August a number of club members joined Steve Codd for the Gransden Lodge Regionals where Steve had entered the club Grob (KFG), and where Russell King had entered his Vega. This gave an invaluable taste of cross country flight for members flying as P2 in a competition.

The weather for the nine days of the competition was winder than ideal for cross country tasks but only three days were actually scrubbed because of the weather.

On Saturday, the first day of the competition, David Kirby-Smith flew with Steve and was considered sufficiently competent in his navigation to be signed off for his Cross Country Endorsement. Tom Arscott then flew on the Sunday with Steve and was also signed off for the navigation exercise for his Cross Country Endorsement; proving that some people are able to navigate better in the air than they are on the road. Tom was also given the experience of a long aerotow back from where Steve had had to make a "field landing" at Saltby (Buckminster GC). On the same day, while Steve was landing out at airfields, Russell landed out in a field nearly at the furthest point from Gransden Lodge on the task. The day was difficult and many other competitors landed out in this area.

Monday was scrubbed because of the weather. On Tuesday Russell sadly ran out of steam on the last leg of his task and landed in a field within sight of the airfield. The farmer was rather insistent that Russell should make a payment for landing in his field, but this was successfully turned into a competition fine. Steve, with Tom, managed to get round the task and Steve was, therefore, able to retrieve me from Rattlesden. I had been persuaded to do my 50km cross country for my silver distance and successfully flew Russell and Trevor's K6 from Gransden to Rattlesden. I was congratulated at the following morning's briefing but was fined for having to be retrieved whilst supposedly

being official crew for my retriever!

Wednesday was also scrubbed. On Thursday I flew P2 with Steve on an interesting task which culminated in a final approach to Gransden into a strong head wind. Russell also successfully managed to get back in the strong head wind.

Meanwhile at Gransden both Tom and David had successfully done their field landings (for their Cross Country Endorsements) in the Motor Falke with one of the Cambridge GC instructors.



Friday was scrubbed and an expedition was made to the Shuttleworth Collection at Old Warden. Brian flew with Steve on Saturday and landed in an extremely popular field where another Grob flying in the Junior Na-

tionals also landed together with a cross country pilot flying from the London GC. This use of a field must be some sort of record. Russell got stuck around Husbands Bosworth area and threw in the towel there and took an aerotow back. While all this was going on Tom managed to gain his silver height in the K6. On Sunday both Steve, flying with Emma Sharp, and Russell landed out in neighbouring fields on their way back from Cambridge. The retrieves didn't work quite as smoothly (in terms of road map reading and generally getting lost) as they ought and everyone missed the final speeches and prize giving.

The high points of the week were Russell's first competition, excellent experience flying cross country with Steve, all those badge flights and the wonderful catering arrangements provided by David at his tent. The low points included many cries of "it's not working" from both Steve and Russell referring to loggers and GPS's just as gliders were about to launch. This inevitably meant me having to sprint to the back of the grid on a number of occasions to find alternative bits of technology. If there is a next year (and Steve has already entered a Grob) I will have a full set of spares which I will carry around on the grid to avoid having to run backwards and forwards at the behest of pilots with faulty equipment.

January 2010



Ingram wrapped up for the cold



Phil a long way from his winch



Russell, Tom and Dave imitating penguins



The T21 puts a smile on everyone's face. Above Paul Haywood and left Tom again.

(Pictures by Steve Codd)