

Cabletalk

June 2012

A warm welcome to the summer edition of our club magazine. I always look forward to this time of the year when the heat of the sun produces good reliable thermals that make ambling around the skies such a pleasure. This year is a year of contrasts, after a dry winter we had a very warm March, a cold April and a very wet June. My average flight time this year for 141 launches is only 9 minutes, this includes one flight of 2.1 hours (and several launch failure practices). The weather can only get better surely, probably during the Olympics.



Club News

Lots of achievements recently. In March Adrian Roberts enjoyed his first flight in the club Vega and Tim Horbury achieved his first 1 hour flight again in the Vega. Andrew Woolley used the more sedate K8 to also achieve a 1 hour flight. Bruce Grain passed his Bronze exam and enjoyed 2 hour flight. Jason Barton went solo on the 12 June, well done Jason.

Many thanks for all the help you gave on our Charity Day. It was a great success although the weather was awful. The rain arrived late morning and we almost gave up flying for the day but it cleared during the afternoon and, by the evening, we had flown everybody. Several people commented on what a friendly club we have and how helpful we all were. It seems that everyone that flew enjoyed the experience and the rain didn't dampen their day.

Three members of our club have just taken part in the Eastern Regionals at Tibenham airfield in Norfolk. Despite very disappointing weather, (there was no flying on 5 of the 9 days), Steve Codd achieved 3rd place and Chris North came 17th. Larry Laws took part in his first competition and would have been better placed if his logger had worked but he came 22nd. Mark Kidd achieved his silver distance during his week at Tibenham. David Kirby - Smith and Tom Arscott also enjoyed the bracing Norfolk weather for the week.

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

You can contact any member of the team through the club at:

The Surrey Hills Gliding Club
Kenley Aerodrome
Victor Beamish Avenue
Caterham
Surrey
CR3 5FX

Telephone Number -
020 8763 0091

Website -
www.southlondongliding.co.uk
Email -
surreyhillsgc@gmail.com

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

From our Chairman

In the House of Commons, the new Speaker is traditionally dragged to the Speaker's chair, protesting his unworthiness for the office! After six years as your Chairman - preceded by four as Hon. Treasurer, I'm beginning to think that there must be a lot of you out there who likewise feel that a change would be a good idea. However, as no volunteers - or pressed men or ladies - were forthcoming, I reluctantly agreed to carry on and to do my best for the Club.

However, I have to confess that my piece on page 4 of the April 2012 edition of this organ have proved to be wildly optimistic. I pleaded for all of you to come and fly your socks off during the restricted period of the Olympics. However, subsequent publications from the CAA and the BGA have made it abundantly clear that we have to control our flying to ensure beyond peradventure that the CAS(T) is adhered to to the letter. On page 4, Richard has set out the details of the restrictions and what we as a Club must do to fulfil the conditions imposed. It is regrettable that we have decided to exclude solo flying, but the risks are far too great. I guess that most of us have exceeded 1,934 ft amsl - indeed I would be surprised if there are any of us who would exit a thermal at 1,700 ft to ensure the flight was legal. And which glider has an altimeter calibrated in tens of feet?? Furthermore, all aircraft will need a radio to keep a listening watch.



So this decision has two consequences - firstly if you want to continue solo flying, you will need to fly elsewhere and secondly, we shall still need members on the field to help run the operations. For myself, I need to complete the flying and other tests to the satisfaction of Richard or Steve to complete my Bronze Badge so shall aim to do this during the Olympics period. I expect that I am not alone in this - and when did you last fly with an instructor to check on the bad habits you may have developed when flying solo? We all go through our pre-launch checks, and decide our actions in the event of a launch failure, but when did you last have one for real? So lots of good reasons to be around even if you can't fly solo.

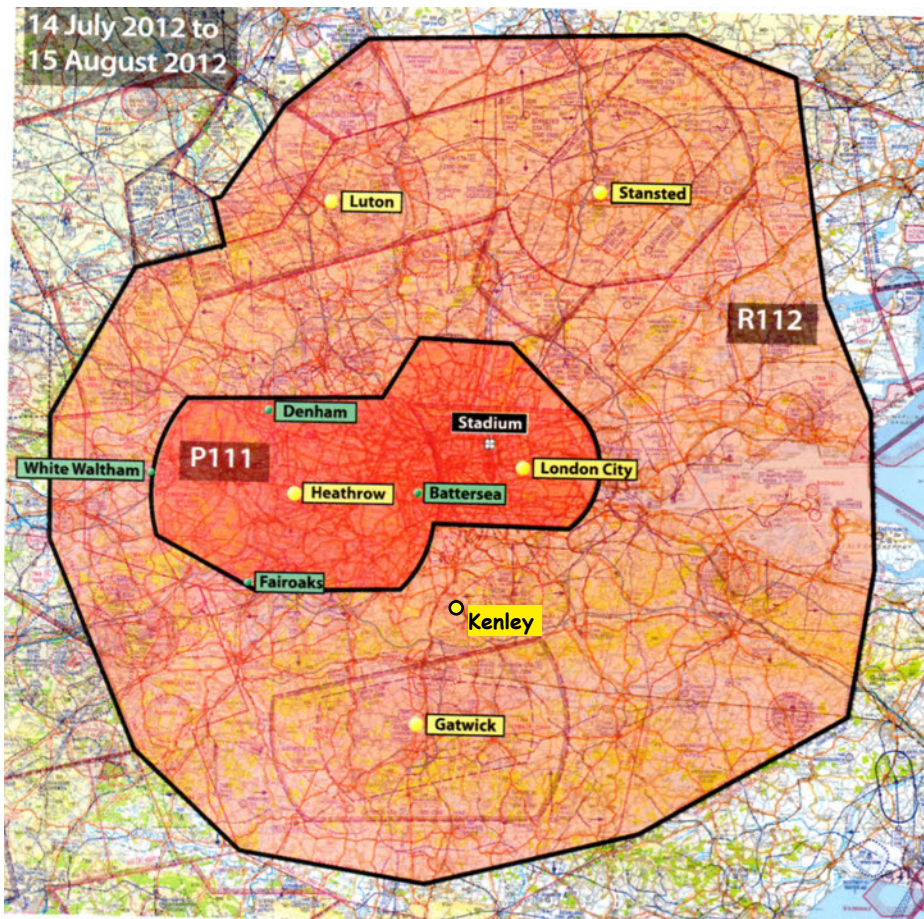
Charity Day went well, so thank you all for your help on the day, and likewise thanks to those who attended the AGM on 11 May. All the usual suspects were there - but nobody was on fire to join the Committee. So I'm back to where I started! I guess that the reason is either apathy - or that all of you are content with the way the Club is moving forward. As I know none of you are apathetical, then it must be the other option! But it has to be said that without the team of instructors and especially Steve Codd, there would be little or no forward movement! Thanks to you all.

Have fun - stay safe!

Adrian Hewlett

Olympic Air Space 2012

The UK Government has announced that airspace restrictions will be in place around all the Olympic Games venues; this will be in force from 14 July to 15 August. A much smaller restricted area will be in force between the 16 August to 12 September for the Paralympic games but Kenley will be outside that restriction. These restrictions have been designed to try to meet the needs of all general and recreational aviation. They are now set in stone and must be complied with. No exceptions. It's very serious stuff. If a glider pilot ends up somewhere he or she should not, the long term implications for gliding will be very damaging.



Kenley is well inside the restricted area but it has been agreed that we can operate if we comply with the regulations. We will have to phone Atlas Control 1 hour before the first flight to activate our site. The gliders must carry a transponder and will be given a code to squawk, (a transmitted code from the transponder), so that Air Traffic Control can trace us in the air. Will have to notify Atlas Control when flying has ceased for the day. We will have to stay within a 3 mile radius of the airfield.

A transponder would cost around £2000 to purchase and would not be required after the games; so we have arranged to hire two balloon transponders for the duration of the restriction. These will come with their own batteries as normal glider batteries would only last for a short while.

Your committee has agreed to hire two of these at £750 each for use in the Grobs. The decision was taken not to include club single seaters because of the cost (which could not be recovered) and the risk of a solo pilot infringing the controlled airspace; this would have very serious consequences for the duty instructor and the club. Solo pilots without Bronze C certificate and Cross-Country endorsement would not be allowed to fly solo in the restricted area anyway.

The opportunity does exist for solo pilots to take our single seat gliders to another gliding site outside the restricted area. The Vega has been away three times this year to other gliding clubs. This would be a good time to visit other gliding sites and see how they operate.

Steve's Page

It's summer, so I'm told. Having just come back from the first comp of the season at which we only managed four flying days out of nine, I wonder when the good weather is going to arrive. We have had some really good days at Kenley and need to make the most of them. Starting flying earlier would be one way, 10.00 instead of the more usual 10.30 to 11.00 would be a good start. We have a busy few weeks coming up that will help offset some of the costs we are going to incur over the Olympic period. As both Adrian and Richard have explained, we will only be flying the two seaters over this period. We can still train both pre solo and post solo members. Have you done your Bronze exam or do you want to improve the way you find and centre in thermals. When did you just look out of the window and see all the scenery pass below. We fly many air experience punters and most of them come back saying how fantastic the view is; when did you last look at it yourself without the worry of finding the next thermal and getting back into the circuit etc. Fly for the fun, not all dual flights need to be instruction.

Both the single seaters will be put on or in trailers so can be taken by members, subject to some conditions, to other sites away from the Olympic area. Tibenham is one option, an ideal site to get your silver certificate or make use of their motor glider to complete cross and field landings.

I'll be away flying in the Club Class Nationals over one week in July and would like to thank Richard for standing in and running the airfield for that week and hope that you will support him.

We have a difficult summer to get over, lets not let some running and jumping spoil our sport. Fly safely and enjoy any good weather that comes our way.

Steve.



High winds this spring blew the launch over.

Old and new



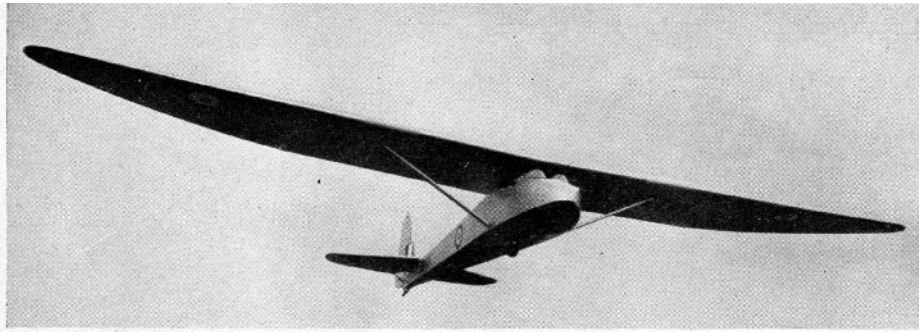
This picture of a T31 taken at Kenley in the 1950s shows many of the RAF buildings before they were cleared for the Home Office use of the Officers Mess as a radio research station. See the 2 pill boxes, the goal and rugby posts on the airfield.



Opps, I made two mistakes with this superb picture in the last issue. I should have said it was taken by Andrew Woolley and it shows the K13 being launched in the snow.

The Good Old Days

by Richard Fitch

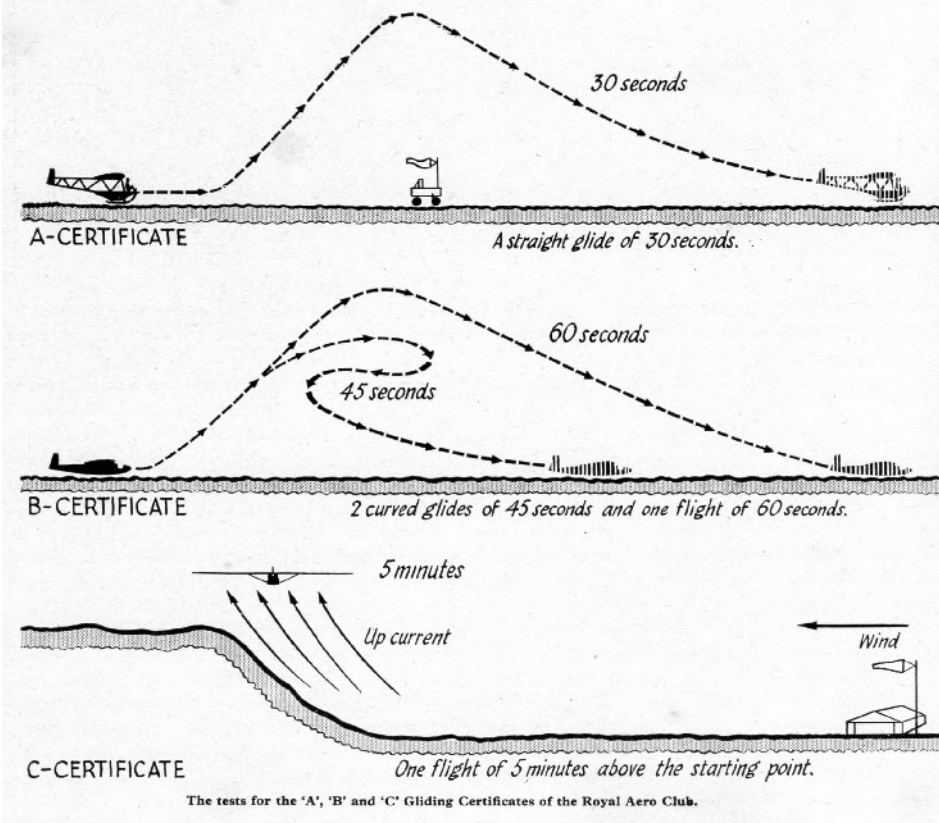


Training up to the soaring stage has been made possible by introduction of the new Slingsby Sedbergh two-seat dual-control glider.

I was browsing through my Eagle Book of Aircraft (revised edition 1955), looking for suitable material for my recent talk on the history of Kenley airfield, when I came across this page on the ABC gliding certificates.

Before the introduction of the Slingsby T21 most training had been solo, on single-seat primary gliders, but the T21, together with its cousin, the tandem two-seat T31, meant that virtually all initial training was being carried out in two-seaters by the early 1950s. With a glide angle of about 1 in 20 a 5 minute flight was quite an achievement. (Our Grobs have a glide angle of 1 in 33).

Things have changed, the A-Certificate (now called



the 'A' Badge) is one solo circuit followed by a satisfactory landing. The 'B' Badge is now a soaring flight of at least 5 minutes also followed by a satisfactory landing.

The C-Certificate has been replaced by the Bronze Badge which requires a minimum of 50 solo flights, two soaring flights of 30 minutes duration (60 minutes if launched by aerotow), and a minimum of 3 flights with a full rated instructor who will appraise your general flying. You will also have to pass the the Bronze Paper on general aviation and air law as they relate to gliding.

The Bronze Badge together with the Cross-Country Endorsement are required to get a British Glider Pilots licence. The requirements have been harmonised with EASA so that in 2015 our licence should be acceptable throughout Europe. For full details See 'Laws and Rules' on the BGA website.

An Eventful Spanish Holiday

By Peter Bolton

It was eleven years ago, in 1998. The Club was making its second expedition to Jaca, in Spain, and I was quite keen to go – as so were several others. Simon Smith and I decided to take a K8. Keith Hampson and I had been working on a trailer for the aircraft (JFT) for several weeks, cutting down to size an old wooden trailer which had once housed Peter Poole's Dart. The idea was that Simon and I would tow it with my Peugeot 205 (automatic) – not the most powerful car, but the glider and trailer would be fairly light.

The first problem, when we started on our journey, was that the M25 was blocked, so we had to travel along the A25 to ensure that we caught our ferry from Dover. We caught it with minutes to spare. In France, the first part of the journey was uneventful and we managed to keep in touch with others in the party (Peter Poole with his glider, Keith and Judy Hampson, and Alan Seear) by mobile phone. Mick and Pauline Hughes and Peter Farr had decided to go by Brittany Ferries to Bilbao towing a HusBos Discus and join us later.

The first problem was that Keith's Cavalier broke down near Poitiers and had to be left for significant repairs. Alan, who was towing a Junior from Husbands Bosworth, picked them up. After an overnight halfway stop, Simon and I ploughed on down the motorway network, through the long straight roads of the Landes area of Southern France and over the border into Spain. We had decided to take the motorway route from the coast up towards Pamplona and were making good time when Simon, who was in the passenger seat, said that he thought that there was something wrong with the trailer. We pulled on to the hard shoulder (the motorway was mercifully empty) to find that the left hand wheel of the trailer was missing; it was running on the brake drum. We walked back to look for it with no success. We even considered that it may have overtaken us – but we still could not find it. Luckily we had a spare (though it had a nasty crack across the middle which had been welded), but we had lost the wheel nuts too. So we decided to remove two of the



wheel nuts from the good wheel and use them to hold on the spare. And with both wheels held on by only two nuts, we completed our journey – very carefully.

My breakdown service came up trumps and the following morning a Spanish mechanic arrived at the airfield to try to sort out our problems, the first of which was to try to find another wheel. After a search, he found one which fitted the studs - just, but the hole in the middle was too small. He took it away and ground it out to size, but then he found that the securing nuts and bolts were not metric, but

Imperial sizes, which are like hens teeth if you try to find them in France. He eventually found four nuts which fitted, even if they were not proper wheel nuts. So we were roadworthy again, just.

The gliding in Spain was excellent, with people flying 10000 feet or more in wave and with flights of four or five hours. A visiting French club from Arcachon, near Bordeaux, whose members treated us with suspicion at first, turned out to be very hospitable and arranged an excellent social evening for the two clubs together. I attempted to express our thanks in French, and had the embarrassment of having a French Canadian translate my inadequate French into French which the others could understand. I said that the gliding was excellent, but later in the week the wind got up and it was decided that it was too much for the K8 which was pulled out of the aerotow queue. That was obviously the right decision, because when Keith Hampson was flying a Junior at about 15000 feet, he found that at that height, although he had 70 knots on the ASI, his GPS was telling him that, over the ground, he was either stationary or going backwards!

An Eventful Spanish Holiday

By Peter Bolton

The journey home came around all too soon. We decided that Simon, Alan and I would drive our two cars, each towing trailers, between us; in other words, two of us would drive while the third one rested – then we would change. It all went well until we got to Dreux in Northern France. I was driving the Peugeot and Simon was resting with Alan who was some distance behind. I was following a juggernaut which was travelling very slowly, and I decided to pull out to overtake it. The road was clear, but remember that I was sitting on the right side of the Peugeot, so it took me a second or two to move out far enough to the left to be sure that it was safe to overtake. At this point, the juggernaut stopped dead at some traffic lights which I could not see. I braked hard, but the trailer pushed me into the back of the lorry and there was an ominous sound of breaking glass and running water and the smell of anti-freeze. The Peugeot had died. The back of the lorry was unmarked.

My breakdown people came to the rescue again and in no time there was a rescue truck on the scene, which radioed for a second truck – one for the car and one for the trailer. Fortunately, Alan and Simon were not too far behind and were able to pick up me and my personal luggage. Everything else, including the glider, were left with the breakdown man, whose name, incidentally was Jack. I asked him why he did not spell his name 'Jacques' like other Frenchmen. He told me that he had been born in 1945 and there had

been a lot of Canadian soldiers around. No answer to that.



I'd like to think that that was the end of this tale of woe. But in the Pas de Calais we hit fog which made us late for the ferry, which was so full that there was no room for the car and trailer. So we went for a bite to eat, and when we were almost back at the port, Simon realised that he had left his coat behind and, in going back for it, we were late for the next ferry. Alan was so

exasperated that he banged his fist on the windscreen, which cracked in various directions! We caught the subsequent ferry and you might say that after that it was all plain sailing. But it wasn't the sort of trip which you could forget very easily!

Post script. The Peugeot was a write-off. The glider and trailer were eventually returned by my breakdown company. On investigation afterwards, I found that the operating cams in the trailer's brake drums were worn, and while they appeared to operate satisfactorily under test, when real pressure was applied, such as under heavy braking, they went over centre and the brakes became ineffective – hence the prang. And the difficulty of finding a matching wheel was subsequently explained. Some months later, I managed to find an identical wheel in a scrap yard on a rusting Austin A30 – which explains how old the rig really was.

The lessons to be learned from this trip obviously include making sure not only that your wheel nuts are tight before setting out on a long journey, but also ensuring that your trailer brakes really work, and not simply under static test conditions. And do make sure you have good breakdown insurance. It can save an awful lot of bother!