

## Winch Masters Report 2015

This past year our aim was to keep the overall winch sections spend to a minimum considering the Clubs financial position and to have the winch system available for every flying day, I believe we fulfilled on both counts.

One small spend but a major improvement was the purchase of new PBR radios which has resulted in an excellent ground communications system.

We have experienced a number of problems with the English winch this year namely "heavy ends" in the gas which was solved by turning the vaporiser upside down thus eliminating the oil accumulating in the filter system. We have also had erratic running at low revs which was found to be a diaphragm problem in the gas mixer. We also had a rev limiter fail which gave starting problems and did take time to solve. Apart from the above we have been very happy with the performance of the winch.

In April a new set of Dyneema cables were put on the winch and unfortunately due to an early incident a large percentage of one was damaged. To date we have had further handling problems and Brad has used all our spare cable to try and keep the cables serviceable. We would normally like to see at least two years life out of a set but I do not believe this is going to be possible!

The work on the German winch is still progressing but we can see the light at the end of the tunnel. Worthy of note is the fact that we are incorporating all the modifications made to the English winch over the past years which does take time.

To be proactive we have purchased two old Tost winches from Wattisham to enable us to put a complete spare differential and scroll gear units on stock.

This year we have had more members step up and help with the winch operation, so I must thank:-

- Dave Wallis for making the trim panels for the German cab interior.
- Leon Green, Brian Smith, Ken Ward and Colin Woolf for their work maintaining the strops and weak links.
- Alan Bilby for helping with the Jeep mechanics.
- Alistair Smith who has worked on the Land Rover amongst other things.
- Chris Price who is always willing to go and get spares for us!

I must thank Jerry for his fantastic continued support, Brad for his continuous husbandry of the cables and Doug for keeping the winch rota going.

Finally on behalf of the membership I must thank all of our Volunteer winch drivers without whom none of us would be able to fly!

Martin Lawson

03-02-2015

