

### **SITE OFFICER REPORT April 2016**

During the last year we have completed fitting out the members workshop which is now being used. The first week is free of charge except 13amp power which is by way of a slot meter thereafter there is a charge of 25 pounds per week.

Members are put on trust to pay any additional charge but checks will be made.

Planning approval is in progress for the extension of the M T shed which we hope to fund this year. When completed the the grass cutting machinery will be moved from the existing building which will then be demolished as it is unsafe.

Various maintenance works have been carried out through out the year to keep the buildings in good order.

Pot holes have been filled in track at the East end and a new hard standing has been provided for the winch again at the East. This to prevent cables falling across the car park which has caused damage to one car and resulted in a claim against our club insurance.

Recently we have had to curtail some flying due to the pipeline works associated with the Gas Plant Unfortunately we could do little to mitigate this incursion due to grass runway being out of action. We have been fortunate in being able to use the concrete track in the Winter time but this track does not form part of our lease so we have no explicit right to use it for aircraft landings only for access purposes. However as part of the land swap for giving up all our leased land to South side of this concrete track we are going to gain a 12m strip down the South side of the track for a length equivalent to the area given up. This will then give us the right to land on this track at least at the East end.

As compensation for the disturbance caused by the pipeline works our landlord has agreed to grass the 12m strip and also make good the potholes in this track.

We have also decorated the club house during the down time and many thanks to all the members concerned however the response for help in this matter was poor considering the number of members we now have, Hopefully we will also be replacing the furniture for something much much better!

I am also considering a large mural on the corner West wall of the club room depicting the three aircraft flown from field during WW2 which will compliment the collection of photographs.

Alan Bilby Site Officer

### **Publicity Officers Report For The Year 2015.**

Following last years AGM it was decided to hold an open day to increase the clubs awareness to a wider audience and to improve our relationship with our close neighbours. The theme was to be the 1940's and period vehicles and costumed personnel acting as dads army enhanced the visitor's experience. We also donated certain profits to the Essex Air Ambulance and the helicopter landed for the visitors to see and talk to the crew. I was surprised at the numbers who arrived early to book flights and by late morning we had sold almost 100 vouchers, unfortunately the arrival of rain curtailed sales and as the rain had set in by early afternoon many did not fly, almost all however elected to retain the vouchers and fly another day.

Publicity for the event was spring-boarded from Ken Taylor's 90th. birthday flight which was reported both in the local papers and local BBC radio. We also used posters (our thanks to Dennis for his expertise ), face-book, local papers and internet what's on pages to advertise.

The relationships built up with the local media has resulted in the coverage of our soloing juniors triumphs and inter-club league results.

This year we intend to hold an open weekend, this may prevent us losing out to any inclement weather issues. The theme is WINGS AND WHEELS with the Saturday being super-car's and the Sunday being vintage. Already we have offers from a vintage motorcycle group and vintage commercial vehicle enthusiasts. If all members can dust off the Lamborghini's , Porches , Ferrari's and Masserati's in the garage then Saturday will be sorted.

Like last year we will need help with the guest experience. Those wonderful club members who gave their time last year found the experience very rewarding, however many hands will lighten the load and the committee will appreciate more volunteers this year. Please help the club enhance the public's perception of us by helping out on June 18th. & 19th. And to this end we have enclosed a form with these reports for you to indicate your help and in what area.

We have had a successful year publicity wise and with your help 2016 will be the same.

Paul Robinson.

### **Technical Officers Report 2016**

## Gliders

### Single Seat

Last year a major portion of this section concerned the low utilisation on the Club Single seaters, and how they were not covering their running costs, let alone contributing to the overall funding of the club.

I pleased to say that 2015 was a very different season for the single seater fleet utilisation was way up on 2014.

Whether this was due to the changes in the usage policy and charging or whether it was simply the cyclic nature of the progression through Pre-Solo Training, to Cross Country pilot remains to be seen. Many of last years members who contributed to the increased hours on the Single seaters have now moved on to private ownership but there is a new group of members ready to take their place – only time will tell.

During the Autumn both of the Astirs received a general refurbishment correcting many of the bumps and scrapes which they have accumulated over the years. While this is not going to have a drastic effect on their performance it will preserve the aircraft for many years to come.

KEE is still unfavoured amongst some members citing its handling as not as good as HKM. To address this we have taken the option to add a full length turbulator tape to the underside of the wing. It is hoped this will improve the aileron response.

I'm concious that many of our younger pilots are close too or below the placarded minimum weight limit in the Single Seater fleet.

HKM and HSX both have ballast weight options, but the mounting and provision of weights for KEE is still on the to do list.

I will endeavour to complete the provision of a ballast weight option for KEE by the end of May

In light of recent developments related to the lifespan of the K13s upgrades/expansion of the Single Seater Fleet has now taken a back burner see below.

### Two Seater Fleet.

As I wrote for the AGM this time last year DVB was out of service following a new AD (Airworthiness Directive) from Schleicher. The AD is mostly aimed at checking for failure of the "kauit" glue used in various but not all parts of the wooden structure and included a mandatory fin removal.

During this inspection significant degradation of the Fin Stern Post was discovered, and this is to be attributed to water ingress over the years.

The repair to the fin took some 4 months to complete due in part to the unavailability of aircraft certified pine.

I site this example of what we might expect over the coming years as the K13s age, remember both DOA and DVB are now approaching the 40th birthday (First flights in 1977).

Having DVB out of service for an extended period last spring whilst the fin was re-built caused some frustration to the membership and for this to become a common rather than exceptional occurrence is not desirable in the operation of the club.

With two K13s as our primary training aircraft the ESGC is also very exposed should the worst case scenario occur and EASA/BGA issue a general grounding. Personally I believe this is very unlikely but the possibility does exist should a K13 somewhere in the world suffer a catastrophic glue failure in flight resulting in the loss of the aircraft.

With these thoughts in mind the committee has been re-evaluating it decisions from the 5-year planning meeting held in October 2015 and has decided to expedited the replacement of the K13s as our primary training aircraft in a shorter 2-3 year time frame.

The exact plan is still being worked but current thoughts would replacement/supplement just one of the K13s, in the near future.

Associated with this we will need to change in the pre-solo training model as it will no longer be possible to guarantee to have two identical aircraft for all pre-solo training.

Not surprisingly a large number of clubs worldwide are seeing the writing on the wall for the K13 and this is reflected in their value. Recently we have seen K13' for sale in the £8-11k range. This figure is interesting as it is pretty much the income each K13s generates per year.

The big question is what to replace the K13s with. The K13 ticks all of the boxes for a training glider and finding a replacement is difficult. There are dozens of parameters to consider span, cockpit loading limits, control harmony, g limits and aerobatic manoeuvres etc.

If we just consider spin characteristics,

The K21 won't spin (and tail weighting although a Schleicher approved modification has just been ruled out by the BGA). The Grob 103 spins like a top, so well in fact that doing so for training purposes from launch height is not desirable/permitted.

When we weigh up all of the requirements we are left with a very short list

The current contenders:-

DG 500

DG505 orion

DG1000

Perkoz

This list is rather all embracing as each glider has a bunch of option span, undercarriage etc so we must be careful we are comparing apples with apples..

Since the club started to look at the secondhand market on a regular basis back in October 2015 no DG505s have been offered for sale on the major glider sales websites, and most of the DG 1000s have been turbos at over £100k which is probably outside our price range.

The Perkoz (successor to the Puchacz) is a possible contender and we should have the demonstrator at Wormingford in late April/May.

To summarise its too early to be certain of the implementation but there will be changes to the two seat glider fleet in the near future and the K13 will cease to be the only pre-solo training glider.

#### Instruments

During the course of this year we have purchased a second Oudie and we now have front and back cockpit mounts in the Grob 103 allowing it to be used for advanced X-Country training.

This time last year I was writing that I wanted to embark on an comprehensive replacement program for many of the Electronic Instruments as many of these were in excess of 20 years old making service and spares very difficult if not unobtainable.

Unfortunately these plans have been delayed by funding issues. It was hoped that we could fund a portion of the instrument upgrade from a grant, but the rules, categories and availability of grant money seems to be more difficult then ever.

The instrument grant has had to be separated from the capital grant for MT shed and Club House refurbishment as "equipment" was no longer covered under the Sport England rules.

The new equipment grant has a £10k limit per application and as a consequence we have re-directed this towards the replacement of the Airband Radios with 8.33Khz transceivers. This was before the rumours that there may be some help from the BGA to fund the compulsory replacement of the 720 channel transceivers we all use today.

#### Damage to Gliders

Unfortunately during the course of the year we have had a couple of minor incidents resulting in damage to the Club fleet, the good news is none of this was major.

Grouping the significant events together:-

#### Flying Related

i) Damage to the underside of the SF27 nose

ii) Damage to the underside of the K21 following landing on the track.

We narrowly missed

iii) Damaging one of the K13s when it ran off of the wide part of the runway into standing crop (Exactly what ripped the tail off of the K6 DRD 3 years ago).

The flying related incidents are unfortunate but that's what we are here to do and there is a finite probability of damage so we must just live with these. What is unacceptable is the damage which occurred whilst ground handling

### Ground Handling

- i) K13 canopy damaged by reaching through DV panel to operate release
- ii) Damage to K21 nose when a buggy was driven into it.
- iii) Damage to K21 rudder when fitting Tow Out Gear
- iv) Damage to SF27 rudder when fitting Tow Out Gear

### Trailers

Work has continued on the Trailer refurbishment during 2015/16 but we still have a way to go. The converted Pegasus trailer is now in service for the Astirs and seems to work well with far less chance of damaging the glider during loading and unloading.

Work has commenced to refurbish the wooden back and front of the SF27 trailer (the remainder is aluminium), this should be completed in the next couple of months.

New wing tip dollies have been fabricated for the Grob 103 and we are in the process of adapting the rails within the trailer to work with these.

I've no progress to report on rectifying the corrosion damage to the frame at the front of the K21 trailer. It is mostly cosmetic and not unduly affecting the strength of the structure.

### Log System

During the course of 2015 we have not made any major changes to the log system, just a few bug fixes. There is a more major update planned for latter this year mostly to cover changes to the membership classes.

As part of this update we will reduce the capabilities of the "Log Sheet" program "Edit member" dialog as we continue to see log keepers trying to force the log sheet to correct flight charges by editing the membership class ---- PLEASE DO NOT DO THIS!

If the charging is wrong leave it and mark the paper log sheet to that effect at the end of the day it will be corrected before these charges appear on your statement.

As we have not completed the membership classes update some members will appear to be in the wrong membership class after the 1st April. This will ensure the day to day flying charging is correct and as soon as possible you will be migrated to the correct membership class.

One big event for 2015 was the connection of the Flying Log Database through to the Web Server. In doing this a major consideration was the security of your personal data since the Web Server is in effect open to the world.

The implementation of the link required changes to the ESGC intranet structure and an additional computer to act as an application server (a sort of hardware firewall). I must thank Norbert for his considerable expertise in implementing this connection.

Work has commenced to replace the paper "record cards" with an electronic record system. The electronic system will store the record data on the same server as the log system data and will be accessible using one or more tablets in the launch vehicle.

We cannot run this system in an off line mode (like the log system where we synch at the end of the day) we need real time access to the database via a network, and this brings the need to put WiFi or some other radio data link across the airfield.

Part 1 of this has been completed with a WiFi Extension over the East end of the airfield.

### Website

With the Log System Database connected through to the Web Server my thanks to thank John Wells for his expertise and the speedy implementation of the "Flight View" pages on the Website, allows you the membership to browse your flying from anywhere. This new page should also speed up completing the aircraft log books as it offers the capability to view all flights for a particular glider.

Where we have not been so successful is the implementation of online rotors/calendars. Dennis believed he had found an appropriate plugin for the website but after several months discovered it had some severe limitations. He was forced to abandon the his work to date and look for a different plugin, as a consequence we are still working on:-

- Online Instructors and Winch drivers rotors, with real time edit.
- Online Trial Lesson allocations, also with real time edit.
- Trial Lesson Calendar possibly with public booking capability from Trial Lesson purchase
- Social Events Calendar

To view flight information on the web only required read access to the Log System Database. In the longer term we are still planning to implement read/write access allowing all members to administer their own profiles.

### Technical Officers Gripes

Unfortunately these sound very familiar to past years:-

#### > Ground Handling

Ground Handling including trailer load/unload damage continues to add a significant sum to our annual maintenance bill.

Its a little difficult to separate the cost of this damage when we have combined invoices e.g. the refurbishment of the Astirs but I believe some £1800 + £800 for the K13 Canopy is attributable to minor bumps and knocks which have occurred on the ground during manoeuvring or hanger packing.

As a club we have made little progress towards reforming the ground training but now that we have two new Safety Officers they are in the progress of updating the "Ground Procedures Manual". Once this activity is complete we will expect all club members to become familiar with the new requirements/procedures.

#### > Trailer fittings dumped in hanger

If you re-rig a club glider after a land out or competition, please ensure all of the trailer fittings are returned to the appropriate trailer.

#### > Canopies

Last year I wrote "I continue to see actions which could lead to major canopy damage almost daily e.g. arms in coats reaching through DV panels, lifting on the DV panel cut-out."

As you all know this year the inevitable occurred and we cracked a K13 canopy by reaching through the DV panel, to operate the release.

Please think before you reach in:-

i) K13s these have levers to operate the canopy catch on the outside. It should NEVER be necessary to reach in through the DV panel.

ii) K21 Why do we reach through the DV panel to lock the far side catch when the glider is just to be stored in the Hanger? I could take this further and ask why do we lock the canopies of any of the Glass gliders when they are in the Hanger? – there is no wind risk!

Canopy cleaning is still only performed when a canopy is very dirty, or I specifically ask someone to do it it should be a standard part of the DI. The cleaning materials and cloths to care for canopies are in the cupboard in the hanger and there are instructions on the cupboard door.

### **Essex & Suffolk Gliding Club Annual General Meeting 2 April 2016 CFI Report**

When compiling these reports it is very difficult not to sound like an old stuck gramophone record, the same topics and recurring themes appear annually.

The past year

EASA is here to stay and an "out" referendum vote will probably not make any difference! The BGA web site gives lots of advice about the new licences with a target date in 2018 (although there are rumours about 2019). The BGA are still working with the CAA and other organisations to make the EASA/ATO burdens less onerous, so publications or statements are few because the details may still change.

Our lack of new solo pilots the previous year was unusual and some viewed the three-year trend of eight to three to zero as very worrying. Last year we had twelve (well, eleven and one re-solo). So congratulations to: Staffan Alhner, Gary Morris, Kristoffer Ahlner, Toby Brown, Jamie Carruthers, Seb Brown, Andy Greenhalgh, Robert Walker, Pablo Martinez, Mark Wilshaw, Steve Jones and Alan Bateman and thank you all for giving us a difficult target to aim for next year.

The number of instructors in the team has remained fairly stable although Dick decided to head for the hills. I'm sure his frequent attendance and help has been appreciated by many. I hope that we may have two more instructors soon and two or three more IFP's (Introductory Flight Pilots) or BI's too.

Well done! And thank you to Bob for all his efforts and battles with bureaucracy to obtain our permission to use the motor-glider.

Looking forward

Before the season really gets going I would like to re-remind all solo pilots about the proximity of the new Southend Class D airspace; please look at your maps (or the notice board) again to ensure that you understand where it starts.

The BGA have had several safety campaigns recently and their analysis suggests that their messages are "getting through". One recent piece of advice is that the wing-tip holder should stop the launch if they feel any significant up- or down-force, this is to prevent a wing-tip touching the ground soon after they let go. The most worrying numbers are for the most common accidents which are not reducing, these are usually due to inattention or distraction, so: Do not interrupt or distract someone during a D.I. or during their pre-flight checks! If you are interrupted then postpone the interrupt or re-start your checks afterwards.

Last year I asked for more members to assist with airfield operations. Some help out regularly, but the request is still valid so I will quote that plea:

'Please do the day-to-day tasks around the airfield without waiting to be asked. Instructors are trained to teach people to fly, and that is their primary role (in my opinion) but instructors are expected to set up in the morning and organise the airfield, prompt pilots to fly to "keep the list going", prompt for cables to be retrieved, find a replacement winch driver when necessary, and so on until the hangar packing, logging computer close down and site security. The instructors' days can be very tiring and it is sometime not possible to "keep all of the plates spinning" which results in delays and missed opportunities for someone to fly. If everyone could be a bit more proactive, fetching gliders that have landed, getting the cables ready to "hook on", making sure that the next pilot is prepared to fly etc. then we will get more launches done'

Motor-glider planning permission gives us a huge opportunity to expand our training possibilities. The Flying Orders have been updated to reflect some aspects of its use, but we need to learn by experience too, so let's all try to make the best use of it that we can without annoying any neighbours.

I know that the technical officer will be referring to our ageing K13's. My view is that there is almost nothing better than a K13 in the role that it fills, but we cannot assume that we will remain unaffected by the glue problems that others have experienced, even though inspections to date suggest that ours are "good" ones. I am looking forward to a demonstrator Perkoz visiting Wormingford so that we can all evaluate its potential as an option for a replacement.

In the next year I hope that we will be able to introduce an electronic version of the progress sheets, this will allow us to get a system in place, tried and tested, prior to the arrival of the EASA requirements.

Safety

The informal incident report forms are still not being completed. Please use them to record your concerns or potential problems that you are aware of, as well as actual incidents that do not need to be reported to the BGA. The forms are available in the clubhouse or the web site (<http://esgc.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/ESGC-Informal-Incident-Report.pdf>).

The "ABCD" checks are being adopted by other clubs now (although with a few variations) so please try to make them part of every launch.

Thanks to the instructors.

All of our instructors put in a great deal of effort throughout the year and have contributed a lot of their time and money to achieve and maintain the required standards (just ask those who are training). I rely on the team to keep us flying and on Dennis and Eddie to make sure I don't let standards slip. Thank you.

## **AGM 2016 Safety Officer's report**

First of all thanks to Eddie for handing over a safety system in such good nick, I hope the high standard can be maintained!

### **Incidents**

We have had a few incidents this past year, thankfully none of them serious in terms of injury. The worrying incidents are the ones that cost the club serious money, which is not difficult with the price of parts and labour and the standards that have to be worked to. We must remain aware of everything around us whenever we are on the airfield and around the aircraft.

Some of these incidents are caused by distraction and over familiarity leading to complacency. Vigilance must be maintained at all times, especially when the gliders are involved.

To this end the ground handling manual is being updated, and when it is released it will be emailed to all members to read and take in at their leisure. The emphasis will be on observation and caution.

As and when anything untoward happens one of the informal minor incident forms must be completed. This is not to point the finger or victimise anyone in any way, it is primarily to look at what is happening in the short term and to look at trends in the longer term. These forms are a vital tool for maintaining safety within the club and a guide to illustrate whether our safety systems are working. The forms can be found on the club website and in the clubhouse. Information on these forms is not submitted to the BGA, they are purely an internal safety tool.

### **Doing it right**

There are several documents around the club that stipulate how things must be done, from flying to winching to ground handling. These documents are there for a reason and must be obeyed to maintain general safety. If everyone followed these documents to the letter we would probably have very few incidents or problems. There are also signs and placards in various places that must be followed.

Some things seem to need constant reinforcement, a typical one being buggy driving when retrieving gliders. It is essential that buggy drivers keep looking back to the glider as well as where they are going. Keep the tow cable as near in line with the centre line of the glider as possible and drive at a sensible pace that the wing holder can keep pace with easily, making glider handlers run is asking for trouble.

### **Safety system changes**

I have no plans to change much, Eddie did a brilliant job with the way things are done. There may be a bit of minor rescheduling purely to suit me.

### **Parachutes**

The period between the spring repack and the late summer autumn repack will be nearer 7 months than 6, purely to "reset the clock" and get the timetable back to normal. There is the possibility of an extra visit from Tim in April if there are enough takers to make a visit worthwhile for him. See the notice in the clubhouse.

### **Going forward**

Obviously we all want a peaceful trouble free existence, me included, so I hope the coming year will not hold a lot of excitement as far as this job is concerned. We need to be on our toes and keep our eyes open. I am open to suggestion from anyone at any time. Again please do not be afraid to use these minor incident forms, they are vital and only take a couple of minutes to fill in!

## **WINCH MASTER REPORT 2016**

As always the main objective for the winch team was to have the winch system available for every flying day and once again in 2015 we have managed to achieve this.

The English winch has proved to be very reliable except for a period mid season where a very strange set of symptoms and rough running without loss of power made diagnosis difficult without a partial strip down of the engine. The defect was found to be a failed inlet manifold gasket and once replaced the problem was resolved.

The German winch is now complete but as a number of the systems are very new we will still be continuing a proving regime in the early part of the season. Driver conversion from the English to the German winch should be very easy as the main controls are both the same however the

seating arrangement in the English winch still makes it the best training machine for new winch drivers.

The very unreliable Jeep which was taking considerable maintenance to keep it going has been retired in favour of a newer diesel 4 wheel drive automatic KIA unit.

The tow out gear and PBR radio have been transferred to the vehicle and it will be ready for the start of the new season.

I must thank Jerry and Brad for their continued support and expertise without which it would have been very difficult to continue at times. Also we have been very pleased to see a lot more of the newer members stepping up and willing to put the time in to make the operation as efficient as it is.

Finally on behalf of the membership I must thank all our volunteer winch drivers for their continued efforts as without them we would not fly.

Martin Lawson