

WINCH MASTER REPORT

As always the main objective for the winch team was to have the winch system available for every flying day and once again in 2017 the goal was achieved.

As the winches have proved to be so reliable this year it has enabled the team to concentrate on routine preventative maintenance and enhancing the systems we have. Brad was very lucky to find another gliding club selling its gang mower for a very good price. We now have a superb piece of kit with its own storage shed.

The major advantage of the new mower is the reduced time to cut the field, the quality of the cut and that we do not get the large clumps of grass scattered around the runways.

However the smaller unit is not redundant as it is used for rougher ground, the field perimeters and the glider parking areas.

The Club now has an extra 150m of runway at the west end, complete with access to hard standings North and South. This extra length has enabled some excellent launches up to 3000 feet this winter vastly improving the air time for everyone. The extra landing area has been seeded but will need a lot of work before it can be used to land on. We hope by the later part of the 2018 season the work will be complete.

We must thank the volunteers who have helped not only cut the grass but to look after sections of the kit that keep the membership in the air.

In particular Colin Woolf has done Stirling work with the cable drogue chutes and shock ropes, making summer and winter units; he has also helped significantly with the grass cutting.

Leon Green assisted by Brian Smith has again this year kept the weak link supply up to scratch, again one of the operations that “just happens” in the background.

We have been very happy to see a number of the newer members (they know who they are) asking how they can help and the efforts have been much appreciated.

As always I must thank Jerry and Brad for their continued support and expertise that enables the winch operation to be so efficient.

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

Martin Lawson

JUNIOR OFFICERS REPORT

The Gliding club currently has 23 Junior members of which 10 are on the Junior Fixed Price Scheme and of the remaining 13, six are family of adult members. Eight of the ten Junior members on the Fixed Price scheme are now Solo pilots. With last

year seeing First Solo's from Tyler McGregor on his 14th Birthday in October and from George Lee in November.

In other achievements, Xav became only the fourth 14 year old in the UK to achieve Bronze. Toby Brown now has Bronze with a XC endorsement and is already working towards completing his silver. Kristoff Ahlner and Bradley Soanes competed in the UK Junior Nationals at Nympsfield. Bradley also achieved his Diamond Height and Basic Instructor Rating.

The junior sub-committee has been of great help to me in highlighting and progressing not just the needs of our junior members, but also the needs and requirements of the gliding club in relation to its junior members. This includes the requirements set out by the BGA in terms of juniors and our junior gliding club status.

As a result of requests from the junior membership we have run a series of Bronze Lectures. These have also been attended by some adult members and my thanks go out to all the instructors who gave their time and effort putting these together. Chris Brown has organised some ESGC branded clothing which also bears the BGA's Junior Gliding Logo. This is helping to promote junior gliding off the airfield and looks great when our juniors visit other clubs. Loess is organising an RT Training day to be held at Wormingford in November, this will be run by Chula Rupasinha and details will be sent to all members. For this season I have devised a 79km task set within 5nm of Wormingford for those solo pilots who are still waiting for their 16th birthday to obtain a XC endorsement.

Over the past year, we have worked to ensure we have appropriate documentation covering the requirements of the club and BGA. This includes a document advising parents on the supervision requirements for Junior Members, and an updated Junior Training Progress Card which makes clear the age restrictions and training requirements for Ground Handling activities. In preparation for this year's intake of new junior members, we have put together a Junior Membership Pack, including these and some other essential documents and items. There is now a 'Juniors' tab on the ESGC website. The above documents have been added to the junior page making them easily accessible to all members for reference. One of the sub-committees aims for this year is to develop a proposal for the juniors section of the website to make it more engaging.

The BGA's Young People In Gliding – Child Protection 'Blue Card' guide is available from the holder next to the junior notice board in the club house. All members should be familiar with these. Please take one if you haven't already. The BGA have updated their Child Protection Policy and Procedures document. Instructors should make themselves familiar with the revised definition of regulated activity on page 18. The document is available from the BGA members website at <https://members.gliding.co.uk/child-protection/>

Inter Club League

Last Year Essex & Suffolk won the Eastern Region Inter club League and competed at Cambridge Gliding Club in the Final. It was a 2 day final, the Sunday being tricky with a short soaring window plagued by pre frontal cirrus and a strong wind. Richard

Hayhoe put in an excellent performance in difficult conditions and won the novice class that day. But alas we were no match for the world class team fielded by Hus Bos and had to settle for joint second with Upavon.

This year's ICL begins again at Tibenham on 26th May. Pilots and Crew, please put your name on the list by the serving hatch as usual. Wormingford will host it's ICL weekend 11th & 12th August.

George Green

SITE OFFICERS REPORT

During the last year we have seen the completion of the Bio-Gas plant which although is now capable of producing gas has yet to be connected to the main gas main across the Airfield.

As part of the compensation for the disruption and loss of 150m of runway at the East end the farmer has extended the Western end of the runway by a similar amount. This will enable the use of longer cables on the winch and greater launch height in favourable wind conditions which should see 2000-2500 feet.

Works carried out to club facilities include new doors to the kitchen and shower block with renewal of the shower block roof and erection of shed for the grass cutting equipment which in the main was carried out by Martin and Jerry-well done!

We also now have a bunk house for use by the members who wish to stay over at weekends or at any other time. The cost is very reasonable at 5 pounds for full members and half price for juniors and booking can be made on the planner in the main club house. The cost will be put against the members flying account which can only be authorised by the Site Officer.

Like most other things we rely on the members to assist in maintaining the airfield infrastructure including grass cutting so please contact me or Brad who arranges training on the tractor and grass cutting machinery.

During the coming year on going repairs will be carried out to the club house including the replacement of the flooring to the Male toilet area and replacement of the fire exit doors leading onto the hanger frontage.

Alan Bilby

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

1. Membership Numbers

Membership data for the last five years is as follows:

	Mar 2014	Mar 2015	Mar 2016	Mar 2017	Mar 2018
Full	99	95	102	95	100
Junior	15	13	20	27	24
Social	5	8	6	10	8
FPTS	No data	11	2	11	6
Single Seat	No data	2	5	4	0
Total	119	129	135	147	140

It can be seen that there has been a small reduction this year but overall there has been good growth over the five year period.

2. Membership Renewals

2018/19 renewals will be issued shortly and payment should be made by 1st April. If you haven't received a renewal invitation can you please contact the Membership Secretary. Payments should be made to the club account in the normal way but please return the signed membership renewal form to the Membership Secretary.

A grace period until 30th April will be allowed for receipt and processing of payments. Note that all payments take several days to process, payments by cheque or cash may take longer. If your payment has not been processed by 30th April your membership will be deleted from the log system at the launch point and you will not be allowed to fly.

Membership renewals is a massive task – please assist us by paying promptly.

3. Trailers and Gliders

All trailers should now have a club label. Note that these are now undated and do not need to be renewed each year. Please contact the Membership Secretary if your trailer does not have one.

Also note that the Membership Secretary should be given details of any new gliders brought on site so that they can be included in the club database.

4. 2017/18 Membership Rates

The committee has proposed that membership rates should remain unaltered this year. The full members' rate for 2018/19 will therefore be £380, the same as 2017/18. This has to be agreed at the AGM.

5. Commercial Flying Rates

Members should note that the cost of ESGC vouchers will be increased shortly as follows:

Gliding Experience £69

Trial Lesson £99

Couples Experience £99

Family Experience £169

Day Course £199

It is intended that this will be a 2-stage process and we will, in due course, be offering a discount for mid-week voucher flying in order to reduce the pressure on weekend flying.

Steve Jones

CFI REPORT

Finding something different to say is a challenge! The same topics remain relevant.

The past year

The number of first-solo flights has reduced again this year to five (plus two re-solos) from seven last year and eleven the previous year. Although these differences are small numbers relative to the overall membership it is still a slightly worrying trend. My guess is that the reduction in solo age brought an influx of junior pilots a few years ago, which in turn created a bubble in the number of new solo pilots. We are now seeing a return to a “steady state”.

I must repeat what I said last year and thank all of our inter-club league pilots for their efforts and for getting us to the final yet again.

Accidents

We have had an unfortunate number of minor accidents this year; luckily, without serious injury, but any accident is costly in terms of repair and having an aircraft out of service.

Our technical team are very good at getting our facilities back in working order, but it would be much better for everyone if they could concentrate on maintenance rather than repairs! The BGA spend a great deal of effort in trying to make gliding safer (<https://members.gliding.co.uk/bga-safety-management/>) so please review the documentation that they provide, some of which is in booklet form which are displayed in the clubhouse, along with our incident report forms. Have you looked at them (or the BGA web site) recently? 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>).

This year, I was surprised to learn that a solo pilot was unaware of these forms. They have been available for years and are located with the safety leaflets in the document holder attached to the wall, but a sheet of plain A4 could be used to make a report too!

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.

Similarly, remember NOT to interrupt someone who is performing a “Daily Inspection”. If they miss something because you were chatting to them then it may fail whilst you are flying that glider.

Single-seat gliders

It has been pointed out that the “Flying Orders” are a bit over-restrictive with regard to flying the Astirs, particularly now that we have younger pilots who cannot get a “cross-country endorsement”. The “Flying Orders” will be revised to allow for this, but will still require a progression, so the “wood” gliders will be flown until the pilot has gained sufficient skill and experience to be re-checked to fly the “fiberglass” Astirs. This is what we have already been doing for some time.

Thanks to the instructors.

I can only say again, what I said last year. This club could not operate without the great deal of effort that is put in by the instructor team. I know that winch drivers, launch-point ground crew and many others are required to mesh together too to achieve a “good day” of flying; but I must thank all instructors for their dedication and enthusiasm which continues to push us all along and improve our standards.

Jonathan Abbess

SAFETY OFFICER REPORT

We have had another year with relatively few accident, and none resulting in any serious injury or worse.

This does not mean we should relax because “it’ll be alright on the night”. Complacency is a recipe for disaster, we must all remain vigilant and aware of everything that is happening around us.

The incident forms are still not being used every time they should be. These forms are vital for spotting errors, bad practice and unsuitable procedures that need to be identified and corrected. It is better that we have a few bits of trivia to read than not have something important to the members and visitors alike. If there are no forms available in the clubhouse please ask a committee member for one please.

It is important that we all remember what we have been taught by our brilliant team of instructors. This has unfortunately been underlined about 15 months ago when a very experienced pilot did not remember. After a low launch failure in difficult conditions in Devon he did not land ahead when he could have and decided to turn for a tight circuit. The condition beat him and he died in the crash short of the airfield. RIP Baleka.

To repeat from last year do not allow anyone to distract you when rigging or DI’ing a glider. Similarly do not be tempted to distract anyone doing the task, even just to pass the time of day.

The glider fleet is currently being fitted out with new energy absorbing safety cushions. These are vital for your protection so please do not remove them (unless there is a loose unused cushion in a 2 seater when flying solo). Your bum should not be on the seat without a safety cushion!

Have a safe, enjoyable and fulfilling year.

Trevor Smith

TREASURERS REPORT

We have another strong financial results in 2017 as the enclosed ESGC annual accounts and report. This year's profit reported at c.£38,000. Our balance sheet remained strong and accumulated additional c£30,000 cash during the year. The net asset reported at c£295,000, a positive finance performance indicator that the club is building assets and has adequate capital for future investments.

The positive cash flows and strong balance sheet enable us to fund the fleet improvement without relying on loans from external financial institutions. The club is looking to secure a foreign (EUR) bond to cover 80% of the purchase price via Lloyd's Banking group in order to hedge the risks before the new glider is handed over to us later this year.

2017 profit was inflated by c£15,000 due to release of grants. In 2016, profit was inflated by £11,000 due to Ian Agutter Bequest and donations as previously reported. These profit items are one-off events and unlikely to reoccur in 2018.

On our profit and loss account, the glider fleets and winch & ground equipment combined have increased to £31,911 from £19,316 in 2016 (refer page 8 and 9 on the annual reports and accounts). The general site maintenance are spent on site facilities, new winch hardstand and airfield improvement planning. Additional c£4,400 spend on new Dyneema and glider rings and links. We had 3 canopy repair/check in the year. Additional £3,600 of glider repair which we didn't claim for insurance and maintenance of two tractors in 2017. On a positive note, we've retained our insurance no claims bonus during the year which reduce the expenses by c£6,000.

As per the membership secretary's report, the 2018/19 commercial flight new rates will be implemented on 1 April 2018. The 2018/19 membership fees, glider hire charges and member's facility fees remain the same as 2017/18. We'll be reviewing future membership fees and charges in due course during 2018 and propose necessary adjustments in 2019/20.

It might be worthwhile to point on a few other areas on the annual accounts and reports. The kitchen sales have increased by £1,531 in 2017. Dave (Wilde) has taken the responsibilities of Kitchen Sales in Jan 2018. On the expenses side, we've seen marginal decrease in flying income (member's and commercial flights combined) in 2017, however, the fuel charges have gone up by £1,000. This is mainly due to increased ground activities and fuel theft.

With the 2018/19 new commercial flight rates and charges, the forecast of 2018 commercial flights is expected to increase marginally in compare to 2017. Approximately 30% of club's flying income are from commercial flights. We've seen reductions in group flights compare to prior years. In 2017, we had £1,306

group fly income (v c£3,000 in 2016 and c£7,500 in 2015). The financial results outlook remain strong. We are looking to continue to invest in the glider fleet and equipment.

Joy Chen

PUBLICITY OFFICERS REPORT

The open weekend proved to be a runaway success, the weather was kind to us, the vehicles proved to be spectacular and very popular with the visitors. All those who bought tickets to fly were flown. Our thanks to all those who helped Alan and I with the organisation, and during the day. The tea and cake stall again returned a sizeable profit and special thanks to Cath Haynes for her organisation. This year will follow a similar pattern and the date's will be 16/17th. Of June. As with last year please come and help, a form for you to indicate what help you can give is included with your report.

The local media have been willing to publish just about everything I send them, all fourteenth birthday solo's have been reported as have our inter club league results.

Our Club news in Sailplane and Gliding has been published in every issue, however I can only submit the news reported to me or that I am aware of. If any club member has news that you feel will be of interest please tell a committee member.

During 2016 we were approached by a film production company who were making programs for Sky Arts titled, Tate Britain Great British Walks. Two aircraft were used, the Grob and the Falke carrying a total of 7 cameras with another on the ground, so several hours worth of film was produced, the program was shown on the 9th of May. The segment in the glider with an enthusiastic Gus Casely-Hayford was quite long as these things go and came over very well. That segment is on the briefing room computer if any one wishes to see it.

Some dates for you.

Flying week 20-28th.

May. Task week 11-19th. August.

Open weekend 16/17th. June

Inter Club League.

NGC Tibbenham May 26/27th.

ESGC August 11/12th.

TECHNICAL OFFICERS REPORT

Gliders

Single Seat Gliders

The following table summarises utilisation of the club single seater's over the period 1//1/17 → 31/12/17.

	2016			2017		
Glider	Days Flown	Launches	Hours	Days Flown	Launches	Hours
KEE	45	154	60	32	95	51
HKM	44	193	69	45	151	45
HSX (SF27)	47	200	68	50	162	49
DRD	28	102	29	38	132	41

As can be seen the 2017 single seat utilisation is down on 2016 which itself was down compared to 2015.

In addition there were only 5 days when all four of the single seaters flew. This suggests some laziness on the part of the membership – it is easier to fly a glider already at the launch point rather than prepare a further single seater and tow it to the launch point.

Please remember the ESGC usage policy for single seaters:-

- I) There is no time limit on single seater flights, unless all 4 single seaters are in the air.
- ii) If all 4 are flying then feel free to get on the radio after 2 hours and ask the pilot to return.

The single seat usage numbers are very low for club aircraft, a syndicate glider is quite likely to do 50-60 hours a year with only one or two pilots. It must be recognised that at this level of usage the single seater fleet is barely covering its Annual Insurance and ARC Inspection cost. Maintenance, Spares and the cost of damage repairs are all being subsidised by our 2 Seater/Trial Lesson income.

Last year we attributed the down turn in Single Seater usage to effect of bringing the K6 back onto the fleet and that a large number of the members who flew the club single seaters in 2015 had moved into private ownership. Single seater usage is always cyclic so we should wait until next year to see if the new solos from 2017 increase the single seater utilisation in 2018. However if the downward trend continues in 2018 giving us 3 years with a reduction in usage, I would be considering returning to a single seater fleet of three aircraft.

Two Seater Fleet.

The following table summarises utilisation of the club two seater gliders over the period 1//1/17 → 31/12/17.

	2016			2017		
Glider	Days Flown	Launches	Hours	Days Flown	Launches	Hours
DOA	116	1125	170	141	1261	214
DVB	131	1209	208	127	1123	199

GBN	134	1199	250	153	1275	272
KMT	83	526	131	119	762	175

Its nice to see the Grob 103 hours increase, these are now within 12% of the K13s. Considering little training is performed in this aircraft this is a welcome move.

Although DOA and DVBS hours/launches are almost identical to 2017 both have been out of service for an extended period this year, as we elected to do some extended repairs/maintenance during the Autumn/Winter.

DVB suffered a fatigue failure of the airbrake/aileron pivot bracket at the wing root.

During DOAs ARC inspection cracks were detected in the keel tube and a section of the tube has been replaced. At the same time the opportunity was taken to perform repairs to the trailing edge of the second wing.

Expanding the Two Seater Fleet.

As noted above we continue to see instances of metal corrosion/fatigue failures in the K13s adding to our justification to reduce our dependency on these ageing gliders.

Following last years AGM a sub committee was formed to evaluate the possible 2 seat gliders which we might consider.

The deliberations of the sub-committee are contained within their own minutes but I feel it appropriate to bring the summary of the deliberations and recommendations into the AGM minutes for future record.

The sub-committee rapidly rejected the suggestion of a second K21 citing it as too easy to fly and hence not a good training aircraft. This left just two possible contenders a DG 1001 Club Neo and a Perkoz.

The following is extracted directly form the minutes of the final sub committee meeting held 20/11/17.

Recommendation

The remit of the Sub-Committee is to advise on a new Primary Training Glider, as such the flying characteristics, ground handling and cockpit access are crucial on a day to day basis. With two contenders in the frame the sub-committee felt that concerns over the Perkoz design/build quality and SZDs stability must carry less weight in the decision on which glider to recommend.

- *The flying characteristics of the selected aircraft must be the number one consideration: here the Perkoz wins.*

- *Primary training implies many launches and many different pilots per day. Ground handling and cockpit access become significant considerations again the Perkoz wins.*

Voting

The members of the sub-committee voted on the question:-

Which is the best glider for ESGC to purchase, DG or Perkoz :-

Those present at the meeting were unanimous to withdraw the previous recommendation and to endorse the Perkoz.

In a subsequent phone call with Dennis, he would also have voted to endorse the Perkoz.

In the period since November the Main Committee has been working to finalise the contract with SZD.

Most of this work is now complete with just the odd detail to resolve e.g upward adjusting lap straps. It is expected that our Perkoz will be serial number 25 from the production with a quoted delivery date towards the end of 2018 or the beginning of 2019.

Instruments

New Trig 8.33KHz transceivers have now been fitted to all ESGC gliders except the K6 and SF27. The update to these aircraft should occur before we reach the hight of the soaring season.

The K21s electric vario a Cambridge S-Nav has developed a fault and we will take this opportunity to replace it in the next couple of weeks. The replacement Vario will be an Lx Nav S100.

The S100 has a lot of features in addition to a basic vario and I would encourage members (and especially the instructors) to take a look at the manual. its some 100+ pages so not the best thing to try and read while sitting in the glider waiting to launch.

<https://gliding.lxnav.com/wp-content/uploads/manuals/LXS8xS10xManualEnglishVer0606.pdf>

As a minimum you should learn how to turn it on, set the QNH (first flight of the day), reset the screen to basic vario, adjust the volume and turn it off (last flight of the day).

I will organise a training session in the club room over the next couple of week before the unit is finally bolted into the K21.

Like the Trig radios it is my intention to make this the vario of choice across the club fleet with more aircraft being retrofitted over the next couple of years. Needless to say it will be the type of vario fitted to the Perkoz.

Latter in the year after everyone has had a chance to fly with this vario I will be conducting a survey to ask amongst other questions if we need to fit mechanical Varios to the Perkoz.

Personally I believe the days of the mechanical vario are numbered, they are less sensitive than electronic instruments, they do not have audios, they become sticky with time, very few have an averager (none of the club mechanical varios include an averager), in club use Mechanical Vario's often exhibit a zero error which is caused by rough handling – the odd heavier than desired landing.

As part of the upgrade the ageing Cambridge GPS-Nav unit and displays will also be retired. The S100 includes moving map waypoint and task screens which are vastly superior to the two line LCD of the GPS-Nav unit.

The S100 is also airspace aware and this should help prevent our minor airspace infringements by this aircraft.

Damage to Gliders

Overall 2017 was a very good year with only one notable incident causing damage to a club glider. The SF27 suffered a PIO during take off and before the pilot pulled off of the launch the fibreglass nose cone below the cockpit was damaged by repeatedly contact with the ground. The SF27 manufacturer Scheibe is no-longer in business and no alternative Maintenance Organisation exists so we must fabricate a new nose cone before this glider can be returned to service. Unfortunately this is not a small task and we have missed the opportunity to do this during the winter, meaning it will not be serviceable for the start of the soaring season in April.

Although significant damage in 2017 has been low there have been a growing number of instances of minor damage. These are mostly caused by careless handling or trying to move a glider without sufficient persons present. More on this latter in my Technical Officers Gripes ---

Trailers

We have successfully found a replacement for the Astir trailer damaged on the A12 in back in May 2016. Although this trailer previously carried a Std Astir some work is required to make it suitable for our two different Astirs.

This work is mostly complete but needs a couple of solid days to make the trailer ready to go for 2018 --- any volunteers with GRP and welding skills would be appreciated.

Log System

Unfortunately Rob Nunn's personal/business situation has reduced the time he has to work on the log system, meaning very little has changed during 2017. During the course of the year a couple of other members have offered assistance to help with modifying the existing C# code written using

Microsoft's Visual Studio IDE, unfortunately neither of these has come to fruition. Going forward we might consider re-writing the "Logsheet Program" and the associated administration tool the "Control Panel" using a different language, where we have more expertise in the club

Until the Logsheet Program is working in real time to the SQL Database (No end of day synchronise required) we cannot make any further progress on the electronic record cards system.

Website

We believe we have now found a calendar/booking plugin for Wordpress (the tool the website is written in), The plugin is from a company called WooCommerce and is simply called "Booking". Work has now commenced to write a fully integrated browse, purchase, reserve day/slot and print TL vouchers all on the Website.

This is a major undertaking which will need careful testing before it is rolled out on the public website but once in place should significantly reduce the administration and errors which consistently plague the Trial Lesson booking process.

Technical Officers Gripes

Sorry its a long list of gripes this year.

I make no apology for copying much of the following text directly from my 2017 report. There has been no improvement in these areas indeed we see an escalation of unnecessary/mindless damage:-

1. Checking Tyre pressures is part of DI

Yes I know it can be awkward and time consuming to find a valve extension and fit a pressure gauge, but if a tyre looks flat then please make the effort to check and inflate if necessary.

In 2016 we wrecked 2 tail wheel rims and wrote off 6 inner tubes all because aircraft were flown with under inflated tyre(s).

Apart from the inconvenience of an aircraft out of service with the valve ripped from the inner tube, the pneumatic tyre acts as a major elastic component absorbing energy from a heavy landing. If we fly with under inflated tyres then we put the whole airframe at risk of significant damage

2. Canopies

Every year since I became Technical officer; Canopies have featured as a gripe in my AGM report. 2017/2018 is no different except this year we see a major increase in the number of incidents

i) We have cracked a K13 canopy along most of its length adjacent to the frame on the hinge side. This occurred when an attempt was made to close the canopy while the instructors shoulder strap was laying in the hinge gap.

Fortunately this crack is in an optically unimportant area and it was possible to repair the perspex

ii) We broke a piece out of the SF27 Canopy, by careless reaching through the DV panel. Again it was possible to repair the perspex with little distortion to the optical properties, but we were lucky the crack did not propagate over the top of the bubble.

Why do some members reach through the DV panel to lock the right hand side catches on the K21 canopies when it is in the Hanger?

iii) We have broken the Front Canopy of the Grob 103 **TWICE** by leaving it outside the hanger unlocked in windy conditions, allowing it to blow open. As the canopy blows open in an uncontrolled manner it first sheers the gas strut mounting and then opens further than normal bending the hinges.

Just to add salt to the wound the Grob 103 did not fly between the first repair and the second instance of blowing open.

iv) In March I returned from my vacation to find both K21 canopies covered with muddy smears on the inside. The canopies had clearly misted up and then been wiped with a dirty rag or gloves, resulting in a number of significant scratches on the inside.

If there is no clean stockinette cloth in the glider there should be a stock in the launch vehicle, if this has been exhausted there is stock in the hanger cupboard and a reserve stock in the workshop ---- there is no excuse to use dirty cloths or the back of muddy gloves a couple of minutes delay to your launch while you obtain a clean cloth saves hours of work polishing out the scratches.

Checking the canopy is clean is part of the DI! If the canopy is not clean the glider is not ready to fly for the day. Clean canopies are also much less susceptible to misting up!

When we get the gliders out in the morning there are normally lots of members milling about, if you see a dirty canopy please take the initiative to clean it. The canopy cleaning materials are all in the cupboard in the hanger with instructions on the door. If you feel you need to be shown how to clean a canopy then please ask.

3. 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.

During 2017 the SF27 was retrieved in the K13 trailer because the correct fittings for its trailer could not be found. The K13 trailer is not set up to accept the SF27 securely, it was simply wedged in with foam cushions. By good fortune the glider returned to the airfield undamaged, but this serves to demonstrate why it is important that trailer fittings are returned to the correct trailer after use.

4. Tow-Out gear dumped in hanger

All of the club Tow-Out gear has storage hooks/fixings on the hanger wall, please return it to these after use. Don't just dump it on the Hanger floor, or leave it fitted to the glider. Please pay special attention to keep the yellow/black box by the door clear clear so as not to impede the Grob 103 as it rotates into the Hanger.

5. Hanger Rash

This year we have suffered more minor damage to gliders during packing and unpacking the hanger than in my previous years as technical officer.

a) Damage to the “D” box of the motor glider where it appears someone stepped or keeled on it.

b) Damage to fabric by pushing on unsupported areas of fuselage and wings. - Never push on unsupported fabric or trailing edges for that matter.

c) Numerous scrapes on the top surface of wings and canopies where another wing has passed overhead, and the opposite wing tip holder has not held their tip low enough.

If you find yourself on a wing tip and cannot see what is going on on the other side then the safest thing to do is to allow your tip to rub on the hanger floor – it has a rubbing block to protect it.

d) A hole in the wing-tip of an Astir created when a fuselage dolly was rolled over it.

e) Damage to the skirt frame behind the main wheel of K13 – caused by not holding the tail up as the glider is put on or off of the trolley

f) Damage to the SF27 rudder probably caused by dropping the back of the glider onto miss-aligned tow out gear (may have happened out on airfield)

In an attempt to reduce some of the Hanger Rash we introduced two new policies in 2017

- Only move a glider in or out of the Hanger with a person on each of the 4 points I.e

Nose, Wing Tips and Rudder

- Do not leave club gliders outside the Hanger on a windy day if they are not going to be flown.

Never leave the Motor Glider outside the hanger if it is not going to be flown.

Please try to remember these new policies and adapt what you have accepted as normal practice in the past. If you see a member (including the instructors) not conforming please politely remind them .

Thanks

To close I would like to send my thanks to all those club members who have helped with the various projects/jobs over the last year. The Technical Office has a pretty wide ranging scope and without your help it would not be possible to achieve what we have, without incurring significant additional costs.