



FLYWIGHT



NEWSLETTER OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT HANG GLIDING & PARAGLIDING CLUB (www.flywight.co.uk)

SPRING 2008

The 2008 Club Committee

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IT'S YOUR CLUB - SUPPORT IT!!

We're only a small Club and we need all our members to do their bit to support and help out with activities, to encourage new pilots and to support local farmers whose land we use. And, of course, an active Club is also more fun - which is why we all fly!! Over the past year or so the number of active pilots seems to be dropping off, so to try and get some interest in the Club going again the new Committee have devised a cunning plan :

- we're organising Club Social Evenings on the first Friday of every month - these will be at The Countryman pub just outside Brighstone from 8pm onwards. The Club Committee will be there and we'll be organising a number of events and talks at these evenings as well as just being an opportunity to talk para-bollocks over a beer or three. So put these dates in your diary - even if you can't make it every time try and make it some of the time.
- the new look Club newsletter will be coming out every 3 months and will in future be posted to members rather than just emailed
- each Committee member is also taking responsibility for maintaining personal links with a group of members - so expect a few phone calls to remind you about events and encourage you to get out on the hill
- we're also hoping to organise an Easter flying weekend on the mainland (probably in Wales)
- and we're also thinking about circulating member names & addresses so that you can share lifts (if you don't want your details circulated, let us know!)

CLUB SOCIAL EVENINGS - 1st FRIDAY OF EVERY MONTH, 8PM AT THE COUNTRYMAN PUB, BRIGHSTONE
(first one will be on March 7th)

TIME TO COUGH UP, PLEASE!!

Yup - it's that time of year again - Club subscriptions are due! But the good news is that, unlike British Gas, our fees are staying at the same rates. We're a small Club but still have to pay the various farmers and landowners for the right to fly and land at their sites so please let us have your subscriptions.

Membership fees for 2008 are as follows : Full member : £30

Full Member (under 21 / over 60) : £15

Associate Member (for mainland residents) : £15

Temporary Member (valid for 1 month) : £10

So make my day and send cash or cheques (payable to IWHGPC) to : John Bentley, 28 Denmark Road, Cowes, Isle of Wight, PO31 7SZ. If any of your personal details (address, email, etc) have changed please let me know - membership forms can be down loaded from the Club website (www.flywight.co.uk)

RE-PACK / KIT INSPECTION

Not flown since last year? Well, it's time to check out your kit ready for those spring thermals. The Club is holding a re-pack / kit inspection evening:

Saturday 8th March
Brook Village Hall
(4pm - 8pm)

We'll have a porosity meter available for those of you with older wings or those that are just plain curious to know how their wing measures up.

If you're aiming to re-pack your reserve do remember to bring the manual along.

British Paragliding Cup

Do you want to go flying, develop your abilities a little, fly in different areas, learn something new about paragliding and then have the opportunity to sit and talk about it with your friends and peers? If the answer to these is yes, then why not give the BP Cup a try this year. Although you need to be Pilot rated it's an ideal event if you're new to competition flying - there's a relaxed atmosphere and experienced pilots are on hand to give advice and help. The dates for 2008 are as follows :

Snowdonia 3rd - 5th May
S E Wales 23rd - 26th May
Long Mynd 21st - 24th June
Borders 12th - 13th July
Yorkshire Dales 1st - 3rd August

Dave Fentum from the Club will be attending a few rounds - so if you're interested in car sharing give him a call. (07990 582875). Further details on www.bpcup.co.uk.

Links with Skysurfers Club

The Club currently has a reciprocal arrangement with Skysurfers, who fly in Hampshire, for their members to fly our sites and vice versa. Skysurfers are keen to develop their links with the Island - we're investigating the possibility of a fly-in event later in the year. It would be good to get some new pilots over here and help develop the Club atmosphere. To make it easier we would like to set up a network of local pilots who are willing and able to offer an occasional pick-up service from the ferry ports. If you're able to help please contact John Bentley (07970 009642).

It's good to dream...



2007 Cup Winners

At the Club AGM the following cups were awarded :

Best XC - Dave Fentum
Best Flight - Adrian "Fluffy" Daish
Neptune Trophy - Geoff Underwood
Best Newcomer Award - David Evans
Most Improved Pilot - Jim Cooper

Congratulations to one and all!

Meteorology for Pilots - weather training CD

Fed up wading through complex text books? Well, have a look at this new powerpoint self-learning training package now available to Club members at a discount. Developed by Brian Essex a qualified flying and meteorology instructor and examiner with 10,000 hours flying experience, the CD aims to give a practical understanding of the principles of meteorology. The CD contains 10 lessons and over 560 animated slides covering atmosphere, cloud formation, weather fronts, wind theory, jet streams, turbulence, wind shear, thunderstorms, etc. Normally retailing for £15 the CD is available to Club members for £12 plus £1 p&p. To order simply email iowstratus@gmail.com (annotating your email "Met...Simply for pilots" and including your address). For more information visit www.weatherbuff.webs.com.

If you have any suggestions for articles for future editions of FlyWight or, better still, can be coerced into writing something, please contact John Bentley (07970 009642) or email johnbentley765@btinternet.com

FLYING IN MOROCCO - Emma Brading and Steve Goodier head off on the hippy trail with Passion Paragliding

The advert said :

"No electricity, no running water...no bars, no discos, dusty roads, and sometimes the simplest of accommodation." Steve looked dubious, but unfortunately for him this was my holiday - and there was something very enticing about wild mountains, paragliding, colourful bazaars, donkeys and some autumn sun. This was going to be Out of Africa meets Oludeniz.

The flights were ludicrously cheap - Easy Jet at it's most environmentally incorrect. £110 had two of us return to Marrakech. We were greeted at the airport by our host and guide - Toby Colombe. Our group consisted of a father and son from Hong Kong, three other solo pilots and us. Although the blurb quite clearly states that pilots should be competent club pilots, capable of making their own calls, it soon became apparent that Toby's considerable coaching and instructing experience would be needed for some of the guests. This did compromise our itinerary a few times as the average experience had Steve looking like a sky god.

We travelled by comfy and up together 4x4 vehicles from Marrakech, heading directly into the High Atlas mountains. Amir's place, or the old fort at Aguer gour was our main base for this trip and probably the most famous site in Morocco. The mountains rear up from the coastal plains and the site takes a Westerly or North Westerly. Wide, comfortable thermals make this a great site to gain some initial confidence and restitution lift in the late afternoons allow you to fly for hours over the plains, until the moon lights the landing beside the fort. It's busy by Island standards. The French have been coming to Morocco for the past decade, but we're probably talking about 30 pilots staying locally at any one time, utilising a huge site as big as St Andre.

Toby works hard and drives far to find the best flying, but this is as much an extravagant cultural experience visiting remote parts of Morocco inhabited by the mythical Berber tribes. The scenery is breath-taking, enchanting and very exotic. Flying in the setting sun with the magical Atlas mountains and Saharan desert as backdrops. The colours were breath taking as we flew through the African skies, the scenery changing through incredible shades of crimson and scarlet, shades of saffron yellow, lilac and purple. No electricity means, the brightest star-filled night skies. We also visited Tisn'Test, a hair raising mountain pass on the southern side of the High Atlas mountains to fly high above the Sous valley and distant Saharan desert. A surprising shift in wind had us heading 6 hours down to the coast. We laughed because the first site we visited could have been the south west coast of the island - only a little more sandy. The second site was the truly spectacular "Eagles Nest" overlooking the Atlantic Ocean some 250metres below. You can check them out on the website.

Now - about that basic accommodation - it's basic. The poverty is tangible. We slept on mattresses on clean floors - no pillow, bottom sheet - nothing. The toilets are western, if given over to that squatting French theme. 30 of us shared 3 showers. But in it's defence, it works. If you can't wait till Mr World Champion Acro Pants has finished in the shower, you can always use the Hammon - the local version of a Turkish Bath, which most hostels seemed to have.

No account of this holiday would be complete without a word about the delicious Moroccan cuisine. Toby cannot be faulted in the vast quantities of aromatic and spicy tagines, the succulent fruit and of course the ubiquitous mint tea. On the other hand, food poisoning is a real risk out here and was the one of the few things that compromised this adventure for us. If you're only away for 7 days, being poorly for 3 of them isn't funny.

Would we go again - yes. Would we need a guide? Probably not second time round, but with only a short amount of time available, Passionparagliding was cheap and great way of being introduced to the paragliding opportunities of this vibrant country. Go see for yourselves - but be prepared for the involuntary weightloss programme!!

Fancy going yourself? Have a look at www.passionparagliding.com

THE FIRST SIGNS OF SPRING.....

Filled with enthusiasm from the Club AGM a number of pilots have been making the most of the sunny February weather - some good flying has been had at Chillerton, Limerstone and Alum Bay. We were even treated to the sight of Geoff undertaking his first walk-ups of the year - well, as newly-retired Club chairman he's got nothing better to do!!

Trip to the Pyrenees - May 11-18th

A number of Club members are going out to the Pyrenees (again!) in May. The area has some great flying sites all in the jovial company of Udo & Jen from Clear Skies Paragliding who provide the guiding and accommodation. We'll be flying from Southampton to Perpignan with Flybe. If you're interested in coming along (and have CP plus 20hrs.) contact Mike Rouse (tel. 07910 798695). For more details about the area see the Clear Skies website (www.fly1166.com)

2008 Sites Guide & Helmet Stickers

We're currently updating the Sites Guide - the 2008 version is being printed soon and will be sent out to all members as soon as you've paid your subscriptions!! We're also re-introducing the use of helmet stickers - Red for Full and Associate members and Yellow for Temporary members. When you get your sticker please do use it and if you see someone without a sticker have a friendly word!! There is a tear-out Club Membership form in the Sites Guide - if you meet a visiting non-member pilot on the hill please ask them to pay for temporary membership (£10 valid for 1 month) using this form. Send the money to John Bentley who will also give you a replacement Site Guide.

My fave video clips of the moment...

Trying to avoid doing some work, weather too crap to fly or just at a loose end? Check out these YouTube clips - the jump from the crane is especially cool...

Paraglider rollover jump from a Crane at La Defense

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3cOySBL7-dM>

Supermax 1 - The Swiss paragliding cult clip

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xJ_6-ZvcHVw&feature=related

Parasail stunt goes horribly wrong!

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_qGh0dw5wA

The day after Luccombe - part 2 of Fluffy's epic weekend!!

The last newsletter contained an article about Fluffy's epic Luccombe flight last autumn which led to him winning the Best Flight of the year trophy. This is part 2 - the following day on Saturday 6th October 2007.

Wind started a bit strong but still bang on East as I rode up to take off at 11am and met Graham Brading and Gordie. Graham was so eager he nearly got his glider out with the wind bleeding about 15 - 16 mph but Gordon and I persuaded him it might be a bit difficult to get off. An hour later and it looked more promising. I told the others about yesterday and Graham said, 'Ok, you first! Show us the way.' Keith turned up, Graham's friend Pete and Keith took Graham's car, a gas guzla pickup down the sea front, I laid out and then started texting a few others. Sorry if I didn't text you, but Graham was getting eager and impatient! By the time I was ready to go there were four girls sitting on take off and another 3 or 4 people on the road watching, Graham said, 'No pressure.' Oh, of course not!

My first launch was during a lull - down came my wing onto a prickly bush! Got the others to lift it off, reinflated and relaunched. Up fast on a gust this time, a huge handful of brake, to stop it overflying, then hands up and run like hell! Off I went, Graham next, then Gordie. Then Chris turned up, took off and went off to Lake and back, Dave Fentum turned up, just before he and Keith (with Graham's friend Pete on tandem) took off. I thought I would make some room and flew over to the cliff next to Shanklin lift, but no lift next to the lift, so I turned out and landed on the beach next to the roundabout. By the time I packed up everyone else was down apart from Dave - he had it all to himself. The rest of us piled into Graham's pickup and got a lift back up. All the others went home, I stopped to talk to a friend who was passing, Dave landed and went home, Keith took off again solo and a friend, or recently signed-off student from Winchester, with a red ribbon on his harness, tried to take off with minimum airspeed, and plenty of min sink on his brakes. He came straight back down again before reaching the barbed wire fence, into a 6' bush. I went down to help him extricate the glider, Keith top-landed and joined us, but it took us about an hour to get it out. We gave it a check over, and they both took off again, this time successfully. All in all a very eventful two consecutive days flying - and a five year dream come true!