



# Instructor and Coach **NEWSLETTER**

**W**elcome to the autumn edition of the Instructor and Coach News Letter. The weather outside is the worst it's been for a while so I think it's safe to say autumn is well and truly here (I'm sure I've said that before!). There was some interesting feedback to the spring edition and in particular to Bruce Goldsmith's 'Mitsos Launch' article (more of that inside). Thanks to everybody who contributed.

For the benefit of newly registered coaches, this edition will contain articles from previous editions. This will be the norm from this issue onwards so for the observant coaches out there, 'it's not a cock up'.

Please keep your letters and feedback coming in, even if it's just to say how fantastic the newsletter is.

All responses/contributions/suggestions/articles/letters to: (in order of preference)

email: [dave-thompson@bhpa.co.uk](mailto:dave-thompson@bhpa.co.uk) (please send attached files as 'MS Word' or 'text')

fax: 01792 280941

snail mail: Dave Thompson, 13a Sketty Avenue, Swansea, SA2 0TE.

## FSC TRAINING CONFERENCE

The FSC Training Conference was held on 15th September earlier this year and was well attended. What follows is a brief outline of the topics discussed as a more full description will be published in Skywings.

Phil Bibby, the new assistant tech, gave a talk on marketing. One of the interesting points that came out was that schools did not see getting students as a problem, some in fact were turning people away. The weather and lack of instructors was more of a problem.

Marc Asquith presented a paper on insurance explaining how the cost of our policy was going to rise due to our recent claims history. The majority of CFIs and school proprietors present accepted that costs would have to increase to cover the cost of the insurance.

Graham Phipps hosted a forum on hang glider student training. The aim was to look at ways of making the system easier for students to get through. Ideas centred around letting senior coaches take more responsibility by getting more involved with the schools.

Dr Ian Stewart presented a summary of where we are with the Emergency Parachute Systems and Packers Course. There have been two 'fast track' courses and one full course so far. Questions from the floor showed there was still a great deal of confusion with regard to emergency chutes and systems. Poor information from manufacturers was outlined as a

problem.

There was also discussion on 'weak link' testing, communication systems within the BHPA and Paramotoring. The new rule allowing schools to take EP + students abroad was explained. Some thought the new rule still too restrictive.

## AIRSPACE PANEL

### Is Your Chart Up To Date ????

These are the current editions of the following charts:

#### ICAO 1:500 000 Chart Series

Southern England & Wales	Edition 24
Northern England & Northern Ireland	Edition 21
Scotland, Orkney & The Shetlands	Edition 19

#### Topographical Air Charts of the U.K. 1:250 000

Central England & Wales	Edition 2	West & South Wales	Edition 1
Northern Scotland - East	Edition 1	England - East	Edition 1
Northern Scotland - West	Edition 1	The Borders	Edition 1
England - South	Edition 2		

If you are using an edition older than those indicated above, then it's time to put your hand in your pocket to buy the current edition. All charts are £12.50 and are available from;

Westward Digital Ltd, 37 Windsor Street, Cheltenham, Glos, GL52 2DG, Tel: 01242 235151

OR from any other accredited chart agent or flying school.

### A Lucky Escape:

By now you will all have read about the South Devon Club's close encounter with the Red Arrows. The sport is very lucky not to have suffered a much greater "fall-out" from this event.

Please can we all remember to use the two free phone numbers that are always listed in Skywings. That way we all reduce the possibility of a similar occurrence.

It is always worth being aware of local flying events and displays in your own area, they are normally publicised in the media. It is quite likely that they could have an effect on your weekends flying.

We are ALL using the same AIRSPACE, we need to be aware of what else may be happening in our own areas. Just because you may only be 50 ft above the hill does not absolve you of your responsibility to obtain any useful pre-flight information that is very easily available.

FREE PHONE 0500 354802 for info on Royal Flights, Air Displays and Temporary Restricted Areas etc.

FREE PHONE 0800 515544 to notify your site as active to the Military Low Flying cell.

## PILOT TRAINING PANEL

### Learning to Juggle.

I agree with the often quoted "rule of thumb" that a very good measure of how well anyone understands something is whether they can explain it to someone else. Although in the case of physical skills "explaining" is probably not quite the right term.

One of the most physical skills I can think of is juggling. It's all about doing lots of things at the same time, complete with very good hand and eye co-ordination, and it's very hard (at least for me).

Until I was 25 I knew with certainty that I couldn't juggle. I had tried a bit, but I just didn't have the required skills. I also knew that if I really wanted to learn, I would need to find some expert to teach me. Someone who could demonstrate and guide me, to show me how to do it.

Then one day I saw a book, and bought it as a joke for a good friend. The book is called "Juggling for the Complete Klutz". It is a thin paperback and came complete with three square beanbags attached. My friend and I had often discussed learning and philosophy, and the joke was the idea that anything as physical as juggling could possibly be learnt out of a book.

I opened the book before I gave it to him, and I was so captivated that I went straight back to the shop and bought myself another copy. And I had learnt to juggle competently with three balls by the following evening.

The key to the book's success (and the point of this article) is that for any physical skill (like juggling is when you are just starting) what people need is not just a description of "how to do it right". They even more importantly need advice on what to do when it goes wrong... and how to recognise what is going wrong... because it goes wrong most of the time at the start of the learning process.

The authors of the book knew this well,

and their very first instruction is to take your three 'jugs' (well what else do you call things you juggle with?) in one hand, feel their weight, throw them up in the air, and then let them all drop on to the floor. The reason given being that since this was going to happen a lot, you might as well get used to it now!

They give a short and clear introduction to how juggling should work, starting with one jug and one hand, then one jug and two hands, then two jugs and two hands, finally three jugs and two hands. But the bulk of the book is about what to do when it goes wrong. They identified several common problems, and gave remedial techniques for each, and in each case had a second, or even third, approach to overcome a problem. Three quarters of the book is about what to do when it goes wrong, only a quarter on how it should go right.

I learnt more about what can be achieved from good documentation from this book than from anything I had seen or heard during the preceding 20 years of formal education.

Learning to fly has a lot in common with learning to juggle. And most people spend more time getting things wrong than right at the start (and even longer for some of us). Practising things that are going wrong only tends to make the fault worse.

The same of course applies to the skill of teaching. Practising a poor technique is likely only to make that technique more fixed.

What is needed are some practical tips that will help people to concentrate on getting something right.

Cheers,  
Angus Pinkerton.

**Incident Report Forms - For your protection.**

Most of you probably think that Incident Report Forms (IRF) are for telling the BHPA accident panel about potential hazards that other pilots should be told about. Some of you understand that they are used to produce statistical data. However, very few of you seem to appreciate that they also form a fundamental link in the insurance protection which the Association provides for you. This article is not intended to tell you how filling in an IRF may save another pilot's neck someday but is supposed to show how filling out an IRF will protect your pocket from the ravages of marauding claimants.

When you fill in an IRF and slip it into the post box, you have initiated a complex sequence of events. Obviously, the form is copied and sent to those who are responsible for monitoring accidents from a safety point of view and clearly they go to those who maintain the statistical database. What may not be clear is what happens from an insurance point of view. Once an IRF is received, it is considered from a liability angle and placed in one of three categories: no risk of claim, low risk of claim and high risk of claim. In order to correctly categorise the incident we need to know as much as possible about the incident. There are several reasons why this is important. It is a condition of the insurance that we report the 'high risk of claim' incidents to the loss adjusters very quickly. In order to process the claim properly we need to have accurate information about witnesses, the weather and what exactly happened and this we collect immediately for 'high risk' incidents. Such information becomes harder to gather as time passes. Our relationship with the underwriters is based upon a sharing of information and a lack of unpleasant surprises. An incident which occurred some time ago which unexpectedly becomes a substantial claim constitutes a nasty surprise and damages our relationship with the underwriters, potentially leading to higher premiums.

Once categorised, 'high risk' incidents are then fully investigated and a report is submitted to the loss adjusters who then decide, having sought our opinion, whether to settle or contest the claim. Thus, when a claim subsequently

arrives, the insurance department have already established a view on the claim and how to respond to it, ensuring quick, efficient, and most importantly cost-effective response. Similarly, 'low risk' and 'no risk' incidents are monitored to ensure that nothing unexpectedly emerges which will lead to a change in their categorisation.

In the event that a claim does turn sour, that is, the claimant pursues the claim which we regard as invalid, all the documentation will have to be exchanged between the parties and one of the main documents will be the IRF which was completed in the first instance. It is the document which represents the freshest memory of the events and it is intended to be the fullest record of all the information. Thus, the IRF is the one piece of paper which can turn a claim from one which is easily settled to one which is fully litigated, from one which is settled at a reasonable cost to one which hits the insurers hard, and most worryingly can, if not properly completed, invalidate your insurance.

So how should you complete an IRF? This may appear an excessively simple question, however, given the number of atrociously completed IRFs we get, it clearly needs spelling out.

Firstly, the box entitled 'Name'. Two of the commonest errors in this box are:

- 1) Failing to complete it because you have signed the form at the end and you think we can read your signature!
- 2) Putting in your own name when the incident happened to someone else.

Next comes 'Address', and again we regularly get the name of a town and nothing else or it is left blank. If you do not know please write 'not known'. The next boxes are: M/F, Age, Weight, Rating, Experience and School, again if you do not know the answer to any of these, then please estimate and mark it as such.

Now the form moves onto the incident details. All the boxes in this section should be filled in. Many reporters fail to complete the 'time of arrival on site', 'Best wind direction' and 'wind direction on the day' boxes. Airfield operators often feel that this is irrelevant information, but if the answer to 'best wind direction'

is all, then put that. The next section asks about injuries. If no injuries occurred, then the form should say so. A blank section gives no information, particularly when looked at in a courtroom 3 years after the accident occurred. The equipment section is again usually only filled in sparsely, the C of A boxes rarely being completed. Now, we all know that an aircraft has to be in one of these categories, C. of A., registered, Grandfathered, or uncertified so why is it that so often these boxes are left blank? If it is a school accident then you must be using a C. of A. glider so you should say so to prevent there being any confusion years later in a courtroom. Similarly, the usage of the aircraft is important and so the flying hours, estimated if necessary, should be included.

And so we turn the page to the large empty boxes. Each should be completed as fully as possible, with a sketch, no matter how rough, if appropriate. Sometimes the boxes can generate duplications, particularly the 'What lead up to the incident' and the 'What was the student briefed to do?' boxes. Nevertheless, you should try to fill in the boxes as fully and clearly as possible. At the end of this section is the space for your signature and the date. Both these should be completed with your name next to your signature if, like mine, the signature is an unreadable scribble.

Finally we turn to the back page, here finally is your chance, if you are reporting an incident which occurred to someone else to put in your name and address. Please don't assume that we can access your address from the BHPA computer, sometimes that is not possible and similarly, with the witnesses, please try to give their addresses and phone numbers.

Now you have completed the form you can post it can't you? Whoa up boys, not yet! If this is an incident which, in any way, involved coaching or training, or could otherwise give rise to a claim, you should now sit down and write down your fullest account of what happened, who was where and what they may have seen or done and attach that to the IRF. For school or tow based operations there is a supplementary sheet to submit which should be again filled out fully and comprehensively and similarly attached to the IRF.

It never ceases to amaze me just how illiterate our coaches and instructors are and so if your handwriting is poor, it may be worth getting someone to fill in the form with you. Certainly, your attached narrative should be type written if at all possible and then signed and dated at the bottom. It is possible to type onto the form using an old-fashioned typewriter. When all this is complete you should fold up and post your IRF and ask any witnesses to the incident to do the same.

In conclusion, it is not my intention or desire to reduce the incentive to submit IRFs, but those IRFs that we receive from schools and coaches are often pathetic attempts. The IRF is essential to your insurance cover and no doubt one day, the insurers will be faced with a doubtful situation and a crappy IRF and simply point out that the member has not complied with the terms of their cover. If it happens to you, the consequences will simply be your own fault.

#### TEN GOLDEN RULES FOR FILLING IN AN IRF

- 1) Write a word in every text box.
- 2) Tick appropriate tick boxes.
- 3) Write neatly in block capitals or type.
- 4) Put the correct name in the name box.
- 5) Always write the fullest account you can.
- 6) If it is a training situation, write an additional separate account and attach it to the IRF.
- 7) If it is a school or tow incident complete the supplementary form.
- 8) Sign the form and date it.
- 9) Report every bump, dink and deviation from normality.
- 10) Tell the truth! If there has been a breach of procedure or rules, include it with an explanation. We all get it wrong sometimes and the joy won't fall in if you explain what happened.

### The Mitsos Launch...or Not, as the case may be!

By Dave Sollom

I read with interest and a little incredulity Bruce Goldsmith's 'Mitsos Reverse Launch' article in the I and C News, issue 4. There are a few points that I feel must be aired...

Firstly, I would like to say that I taught Mark Mitsos the A and C launch method - and I have subsequently rejected it as being a poor technique. There are a number of reasons for this, not least that many gliders now (including most from Airwave) have only three risers! This makes his instruction number 8 (check your hold of the C riser) impossible.

There are a number of reasons why I rejected this technique.

1. The amount of steering provided by moving the C risers side to side is limited - plenty for a coastal launch, but insufficient for an elegant departure from St Andre. This is especially true if things don't go exactly to plan and you wish to abort.

2. Having both A risers in one hand can often lead to problems with asymmetric pull (i.e. if the As are being held by the right hand then the pull tends to be slightly weighted towards the right hand side of the glider).

3. Having both C risers and one brake in the other hand means that the brake will be pulled when the risers are moved sideways. No big problem on one side, but it does tend to pull the brake line across the D riser on the other.

4. Teaching an ab initio to pull both A and C riser does tend to confuse; often a lot of effort gets put into pulling both together. This leads to some interesting, but seldom successful, results when both are released.

Bruce does say in his article that the HGFA are to adopt the Mitsos launch as the only method to be taught in schools. I do hope that this is not the case - although there is nothing badly wrong with it, it is not necessarily the best, particularly in gusty conditions. (I suspect this is a political move, rather than one based on safety, unless the other Australian schools really are still in the dark ages.)

### On the Mitsos/Sollom launch.

First of all thanks to the people who responded to the article, in particular Noel Humphries and Mark Shaw for their in depth replies. The overriding feeling from all the responses was that there was nothing special about the Mitsos launch. On the whole the benefits were more than outweighed by problems of various sorts.

I think the moral is 'stick to a method that works for you'. That method should ideally be based around one of the cross brake techniques to ensure maximum control and should work (perhaps with slight variations) in all situations.

*The following letter was written by Rob Arnold, CFI of Para-Excellence in North Wales. It is an interesting subject and worthy of debate. Comments please to the editor.*

### Harnesses & Safety

The recent rise in the popularity of so-called "race" paragliding harnesses seems to me to be an area of potential safety risk. Whilst these harnesses may well be suitable for top competition pilots seeking that edge in performance, they are in my opinion not suitable for the recreational pilot. They have little or no provision for back protection and this combined with the fact that the pilot is virtually lying down and also that it is much more difficult to get ones feet down, must increase the potential for back injury in the case of impact.

In the event of canopy collapses/spins the potential for line/riser twists would seem to me to be increased. A number of pilots I have come across with these harnesses have modified (shortened) their risers, because of the difficulty of reaching lines for Big Ears caused by the lower hang point that these harnesses have. I also assume that flying with one these harnesses takes gliders out of certification, since the harness configuration forms part of the test certificate.

In the last couple of months I have been approached by a number of pilots intending to purchase one of these harnesses, all were flying standard rated gliders and all had less than a years experience. I won't speculate on their rea-

soning for wanting one of these harnesses. In all cases I refused to sell them one (after pointing out my reasons) and all but one promptly bought their new harness from someone who doesn't hold these views. One promptly turned

up on site with his new harness which he had "modified so I can sit more upright" stating that he had "bought it because it was the only comfortable harness he could find"!

## ACCIDENT? PREVENTION? AND? MEDICAL? PANEL

### MID-AIR COLLISIONS - ...BUT I DIDN'T SEE HIM!

First the facts:

- In the last ten years there have been 17 HG fatalities, of which 6 have been the direct result of mid-air collisions.
- In the past four years we have had 7 fatal HG accidents. 4 of these deaths were as a result of mid-air collisions.
- In the last two years we have only had 2 fatal HG accidents, both as a result of mid-air collisions.

Do you see a pattern here and what can we do about it?

One of the worrying features is that the majority of the mid-air collisions actually happen when the air is fairly empty, not as one might expect when the air is busy. Why should this be and again, what can we do about it?

To begin with it is refreshing to see that the number of fatal accidents in hang gliding is declining, though this may be related to the amount of hang gliding activity currently undertaken. Improvements in equipment will also have played a part in reducing the figures, as will improvements in training techniques. The worrying aspect is the fact that the percentage of fatalities due to mid-air collisions has risen dramatically. It would appear that the only area improvements have not been made is in the mind of the pilot! Mid-air collisions are caused by BOTH pilots failing to keep adequate look out, and failing to take the appropriate avoiding action.

On a flyable August bank holiday Monday at Devil's Dyke it is unpleasant, though not entirely surprising to hear of the occasional mid-air collision. Though inexcusable, sheer volume of traffic makes the chances of a mid-air more probable. Why then, are the majority of HG

mid-air collisions occurring when there is little or no congestion?

Perhaps there is a relationship between the ability to keep a proper lookout and the degree of congestion. For example, are people more observant when they perceive a higher risk due to congestion and therefore less likely to have a mid-air? Is it the case that when the perceived risk is low then the pilot relaxes or even switches off altogether?

Whatever the reason there are a number of things you can do to make sure you do not become one of the statistics:

- Keep a vigilant lookout at all times, irrespective of the number of others. You may think you are the only person in the air but how can you know if you don't keep an adequate lookout? You CAN NOT afford to relax.
- Always know where everyone else is in the air. This can only be done with proper lookout.
- Always look before you turn. It may sound obvious but not everyone does it!
- Fly courteously. Never pin anyone else in with nowhere to go.
- Stay current. If you are properly 'tuned in' to your glider you can then devote more of your brain to other aspects, such as lookout. If you are a bit rusty then choose a safe environment to get some practice in.
- Fly in a constant fashion, ie follow accepted circuits and beats etc. Avoid erratic and unpredicted manoeuvres.

(the points mentioned above apply equally to paragliders and any other form of aircraft)

There are some very good reasons for avoiding mid-air collisions: Firstly statistics show that if you have one, the probability is it will be fatal. Secondly, it is against the law to endanger any aircraft. Failing to keep proper lookout is not only endangering your craft and life, but also those of the other party.

The cause of the accident was attributed to PILOT ERROR.

How often do we read this statement relating to aviation accidents?

Recent incidents that have come to the attention of the Accident Prevention Panel clearly show that the vast majority of accidents occurring in our sport are due to PILOT ERROR. (I have not included accidents to students in this study as they are few, and anyway, the responsibility for their accidents lies with their instructor.

So, how can I make such a bold and sweeping statement?

Well, usually it is the pilot himself who has admitted to the error, but not always. In some cases we have read that "It was not my fault". However, simple analysis of the causes of accidents clearly shows them to be through the fault of the pilot. Let us look at a small sample list that has emerged recently.

Reason (stated by the pilot submitting the report)

- Misjudgement of height (CP)
- Misjudgement of height (P)
- Misjudgement of height and sink rate (CP/TI)
- Misjudgement of speed (AP)
- Carelessness/overconfidence (AP)
- Poor approach line to landing field (CP)
- Misjudgement of meteorological conditions (CP)
- Decided to land on back instead of PLF (AP)

This is but a brief look at what is happening out there.

Let us look at some of them a little deeper by asking a few questions.

- When Club Pilots, Pilots and Advanced Pilots make errors of judgement of height, whose fault is it? **THE PILOT'S.**

- When a Club Pilot landing in strong winds decides to fly over trees as part of a landing approach, who made the error? **THE PILOT.**

- When an Advanced Pilot flies over an area known by locals as "a place not to be", gets trashed 15 feet above the ground, is still in the supine position, and decides to land on his back, despite having water bottles in his harness, who made all four errors? **THE PILOT.**

(Although this one wrote that it was not his fault, just bad luck!!) He failed to obtain advice from locals about flying conditions in the area, and ignored well-documented advice gleaned from years of experience.

- When a Pilot unclips his harness whilst in the air in order to slip out of it on landing, and as a consequence, injures himself, whose fault is it? **THE PILOT'S.**

Also, if we look at a couple of other frequent types of accident, we can ask similar questions.

- When a mid-air collision occurs, whose fault is it? **BOTH PILOTS.**

They have BOTH failed to keep and adequate look out, or they have both failed to take the necessary action (required by Air Law) to avoid a collision.

- When a Pilot gets blown back into an area of rotor, whose fault is it? **THE PILOT'S.** He took off in unsafe meteorological conditions, or failed to detect change in those conditions.

The list really is endless. So what, if anything, can we do about it?

Firstly, we have to establish why these experienced Pilots are making such errors. Surely, we can expect them to have acquired the skills needed to avoid these incidents. After all, how can anyone get to Pilot or Advanced Pilot rating without being able to judge height or speed, or be able to determine the best approach to make it to a landing field, or know the collision rules, or have a good understanding of meteorological conditions?

So, if a pilot has learned these skills, why is he not applying them? Has he forgotten them? Possibly, but I doubt it.

Surely he isn't deliberately failing to use these skills. Or is he??? Maybe here we are getting somewhere near the truth.

Perhaps he isn't bothered about using the skills he has learned because he thinks they don't matter, or that he knows better, or that "accidents only happen to other people". Or is he trying to prove that he is a better pilot than another, or does he just like showing off?

Let me offer here a timely reminder;

**ALL FORMS OF AVIATION WILL BITE FOOLS**

I remember, a couple of years ago, after landing in Chamonix, I found a few friends were enjoying a beer to round off a good days flying, when we were joined by a couple of other pilots.

Then, first we heard and then we saw a paraglider pilot descending at an incredible speed in a radical spiral dive down to the landing field just next to us. He completed his last rotation almost at ground level, and landed. A manoeuvre that almost had me running to the "scene of the accident".

One of the pilots who had joined us commented on how "good" the manoeuvre had been. My response was that it was not clever and that anyone can do a spiral dive like that. He said that I was talking rubbish and that the

pilot in question was a top local French Pilot.

I repeated that it was not difficult to do what he had done, in fact one of the pilots in my group at the table had done a similar dive when he was still a Student Pilot.

"Mind you", I added, "he had done it at 2000 feet over a lake with a safety boat present".

"ONLY A FOOL WOULD DO IT ALMOST TO GROUND LEVEL".

So, perhaps we are getting somewhere near the truth. But, why the "misjudged height" type of accident I can only attribute this to lack of care or concentration, or, as one pilot who submitted an accident report stated " the primary cause was carelessness and overconfidence". He got it right, i.e. ATTITUDE.

So, perhaps when we are out on the hill and we see someone showing off, or being careless or foolhardy, we should go up to him and tell him what a FOOL he is instead of applauding him.

Who knows, we might just prevent him from injuring or killing himself, or at least from becoming "Just another STATISTIC".

**Remember: The war against accidents must be fought in people's minds.**

**Training incident reports**

98/062. 17/05/98

Site: Metcalfe's Field

Conditions: 0 - 5mph, variable.

Glider: Off Chute Mirage 29

Pilot: Novice (PG).

Injury: Scratches on legs and arms

Student steered off course on take-off, then ran into a bush and fell over.

98/066. 20/05/98

Site: Tremayne

Conditions: 5 - 10mph, variable.

Glider: FreeX Flair.

Pilot: EP (PG) rated.

Injury: Sprain.

After several attempts to correct minor deflations, student aborted take-off as canopy overflew, fell over and ankle twisted underneath.

98/078. 16/05/98

Site: Bedlinog.

Conditions: 5 - 10mph, steady.

Glider: Hiway Stubby.

Pilot: Novice (HG).

Injury: None.

Instructors noticed that the base bar/upright connecting pin had worked loose; the spring retaining ring was missing. Suspicion that with use the spring clip becomes weakened and dislodges easily.

98/089. 01/06/98

Site: Varteg.

Conditions: 5 - 10mph, steady.

Glider: Airwave Reggae.

Pilot: Novice (PG).

Injury: Sprained ankle.

Student held brake on from take-off and down the hill, so failed to get airborne. Tripped and fell.

98/097. 28/06/98

Site: North Luffenham.

Conditions: 10 - 15mph, variable.

Glider: Harley 9/288.

Pilot: EP (PG) rated.

Injury: Torn leg muscle

Tow pilot, landing in high wind, collapsed canopy but then released brake lines and canopy re-inflated, catching him off balance.

98/098. 29/06/98

Site: Ribury.

Conditions: 5 - 10mph, variable.

Glider: Advance Sigma 1-E.

Pilot: Novice (PG).

Injury: Bruised lower back.

Student, on 3rd flight, gained more height than anticipated; overbraked and stalled one wing in.

98/099. 01/07/98

Site: Larne.

Conditions: 5 - 10mph, steady.

Glider: Airwave Black Magic.

Pilot: EP (PG) rated.

Injury: Broken arm.

Student misjudged approach and landed to one side of the LZ in rougher ground; good flare but student fell over.

98/104. 06/07/98

Site: Thunderguy.

Conditions: 10 - 15mph, steady.

Glider: UP Stellar

Pilot: EP (PG) rated.

Injury: Major bruising.

Student, attempting top landing, was too close to the hill; landed prematurely and awkward.

**EXAMINATION AND INSPECTION PANEL**

**Evaluating Your Course.**

In a bid to improve standards the FSC strongly recommend that schools adopt a system for course evaluation. This is most easily achieved by producing a simple questionnaire for students to fill out on the completion of their course, an example of which follows.

Course evaluation questionnaires have proved useful on both the TI and Coach courses run by the BHPA producing some thoughtful ideas not always obvious to the course provider. They also give course providers an idea of what the customer really wants and not just what the school thinks they should have!

ABC Parahang Gliding School end of course questionnaire.

To monitor and improve the service we provide, it is important that we receive feedback from our customers. To this end we have produced this simple questionnaire and we would be grateful if you could complete it and return it to us on completion of your course. PLEASE BE HONEST!

If you have any other comments which may help us improve our service in the future, please tick the "SEE OVER" box and use the reverse of the form for details.

Type of course recently completed:.....

My instructors were: (names).....

	POOR	AVERAGE	GOOD	EXCELLENT	SEE OVER
	1	2	3	4	
At the Centre:					
Introduction.....	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Course organisation.....	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
End of course de-brief.....	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Lecture (Met).....	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Lecture (Air Law).....	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Lecture (Flight Theory).....	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

On the hill:

On hill organisation.....	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Instructors.....	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Instruction in group.....	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Personal instruction.....	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Equipment.....	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Pre-Course:

Publicity material.....	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Confirmation details.....	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Would you recommend ABC Parahang Gliding School to your friends?

If not, why?

Any other comments:

THANKS FOR YOUR TIME.

This is an example and may be chopped and changed to suit your particular school, we would be interested to hear of any good ideas picked up with a view to spreading the good word.

**Recurring Weaknesses in Instructor Candidates.**

Feedback from examiners indicate two common faults, prevalent to all disciplines. The first is a lack of confirmation in factual lessons, to ensure that what has been taught has actually been learnt. In a skills lesson, good candidates always confirm what has been taught by making the student repeat the skill till it has been performed correctly for a number of times in succession, it is considered that three or four times is the mini-

mum. However often, candidates who are otherwise very good frequently fail to confirm that the students have taken in the facts just taught.

It is insufficient just to ask "any questions" at the end of a session.

Pointed questions must be put, "What is this?", "Show me that", "Explain which...", "How would you.....", "Which has the right of way" . . . .etc.

The second common weakness we would like to be eliminated is in regard to demonstrations. It is expected that the initial demonstration should set the standard which the student is expected

**JOB VACANCIES**

Any Senior Instructors looking for a week or two in the sun??

A letter has been received through FAI/CIVL from Iran Airports Commission wanting someone to train HG and PG instructors in Iran...

The contact details are:

Farzad Fesharaki, International Secretary  
Iran Air Sports Committee  
P O Box 14155 - 5735  
Tehran  
Iran

Ref 13012 - 4 - 31-72 (letter sent to Olivier Burghelle, President of CIVL)

## INSTRUCTOR AND COACH TRAINING PANEL

Course	Date	Venue
Trainee Instructor	2/4 December	Holme Pierrepont
Coach Course	12/13 December	Wetton Village Hall
Coach Course	23/24 January 1999	South East
Coach Course	6/7 February	Cumbria
Trainee Instructor	16/18 February	Bisham Abbey
Coach Course	20/21 March	Cornwall
Coach Course	10/11 April	Joint Services
Trainee Instructor	14/16 April	Telford

Coach courses that are marked 'vacant' require a host. If you feel able to host a Coach Course in your area then contact Tony Mitchell at the BHPA office for more information.

Senior Instructor Courses are arranged as required - if you are interested please contact Tony Mitchell and get your name on the list. We need at least 6 to make a viable course. Incidentally, the same is true for the Emergency Parachute Packer and Systems Licence.

Although the Technical Manual does not contain specific time periods, we would not expect potential Senior Instructors to apply for examination unless they have spent at least 2 years as an instructor.

The Training Conference held in September was well attended, with some 30 schools represented. The presentations were reasonably well received - even if the Insurance session raised the temperature a little - and the open forums certainly aired a few chestnuts. It is too early yet to say what the outcome of the wider insurance debate will be, but Marc Asquith and the Proprietors/CFI's exchanged views and the discussion provided Marc with some possible options. We are trying to put together some notes on the Training Conference and what transpired; these will appear in Skywings shortly.

We keep drawing your attention to the need for all instructors, but particularly Senior and Chief Flying Instructors, to constantly assess the risk to students. Please read the past I & C Newslet-

ters and get into the habit of asking yourself throughout the day/week/year - Is there a danger here that we can do something and, in the latter case, who can do the assessment? The summarised table opposite should prove useful, but if you are still unsure then call either Tom or Mark for assistance. If you are an appointed Assessor then you will remember that the office have pro-forma which you should be using - a telephone call saying which one you need is all that's needed.

The Examiners Seminar earlier this year decided that there should be a time limit on outstanding examinations - in the past several candidates have 'disappeared' and the exam has been left in limbo. The policy now is that, if an examination is not completed within 3 months of the initial contact between Examiner and candidate then it will be cancelled and the candidate will have to start from scratch (fee and all). Of course, if it is the Examiner's 'fault' then the candidate will not be penalised.

Senior Instructor examinations.

The SI is not discipline specific - in other words, if you get your SI in one discipline then (once you have completed SI in one discipline then (once you have completed the necessary pre-requirements in another discipline, including the 2 year rule) just remind the Office to automatically be awarded the Extension.

## Sharing Sites

On our hills and airfields today it is common to see both school and club operating along side each other. In fact this can be an extremely beneficial arrangement as well as in most cases a necessity. Students are able to see what they are aiming at, they are able to establish early, and therefore lasting, links with the club, instructors are able to use club fliers as examples and a whole host of other positive reasons.

There is also a negative side to this coin however if the situation is not closely monitored and controlled by the school CFI and club officials.

People learn by listening, observing and then copying. If there are pilots displaying techniques that are not appropriate to your students, how can you guarantee that the students will not copy them? Such techniques need not necessarily be reckless, it may just be that they are not suitable for beginners. It is important that the environment in which students learn is controlled in such a way that such problems can not arise. Make sure your students know why certain techniques are not appropriate at their level, or prevent them from witnessing them in the first place. Point out bad airmanship, but also explain WHY it was bad. By always explaining the 'whys' as well as the 'dos and don'ts' you will be well on the way to producing 'thinking' pilots.

From the club side of the fence, what happens if someone asks you, the local coach, a question? What you say may determine whether the person lives or dies. For example, if somebody asks a question on 'B line stalls' (or fly on the wall landings) it would be very easy for the coach to give a detailed description of the manoeuvre, its uses and how to carry it out. But what if that person was on day two of an EP course and you hadn't bothered to find out? It does happen!

So when someone does seek your advice you've got to GET IT RIGHT! Fortunately it's not so difficult if you remember what you learnt on the coaching course. Remember SITE, where; S = student. Find out all about them.

I = instructor/myself. Are you able to help them?

T = tools. Do you have the necessary tools for

the job?

E = environment. Is the environment suitable?

To help you find all this out use A LOT, ask, listen, observe and think. SITE A LOT.

It may well be that if the person asking the questions is a student then your best course of action is to refer them to their instructor.

## TI Training.

Please note the importance which we place on the practical training which TIs receive - briefly this is in progressive stages :

- a) to observe the way the SI trains the students in each of the Exercises
- b) to assist the SI in teaching the Exercises
- c) to train and supervise his/her own student(s).

We don't want to be forced to designate how long each stage will last as this really rests in the hands of the CFI - but we offer the following guidelines :

During stage a) the TI could be used :

- \* as a demonstrator (providing he/she is very, very good);
- \* to help on wing tethers or wing tips;
- \* to talk to students to help boost their confidence;
- \* to note student problems and tell the SI.

No 'stage a' TI should be used where he/she is apart from the SI (such as in the landing field to 'bat' students in).

Stage b) TI's might be used to assist a SI :

- \* to pre-check students who are in the harness waiting for the SI's briefing;
- \* to practice briefing students with the SI to correct/check if necessary;
- \* to be in the landing field and guide students in.

At the end of stage b) he/she must be signed off as being competent to brief students. This is done for each of the Exercises of the Training Programmes required up to CP, including, where relevant, any additional Exercise indicated on the TI Log Card. Once signed off he needs

only be under close SI supervision (visible and within unassisted voice range) whilst training his/her own student(s).

Stage c) TT's still need supervising and their skills improved, and regular checks should be made by SIs that standards are being maintained. During this period they should be con-

tinually prepared for their Instructor Examination (see the item in the Exam/ Inspection Panel section.

And finally, please don't let the TT's own flying suffer - give him/her every opportunity to stay current.

NOTE - don't forget that TT's must act as a Duty Instructor for 3 separate days during their training.

### **OBTAINING A LICENCE in ALL disciplines.**

A few notes to explain how any BHPA Licence can be obtained - and who can do what during the process.

#### Assessments

What needs an Assessment	Who can train*	Who assesses	Fee
Operator Licence	SI or I or STC	SI or STC	)
Tow Conversion	SI or STC	SI or STC	) £10
Dual Pilot Licence	DP	DP+Ins or DP+STC	) to
Coach	Self	Chief Club Coach/Officials	) register.
Tow Coach (inc Aero)	STC	STC	)
Extension to existing Licence	SI	SI	)

process: Personal approach by candidate to assessor. The correct assessment pro-forma should be used by the assessor, and returned to the office. Office records and issues the licence – not normally copied to the Chief Examiner.

Assessors must be licensed in the appropriate discipline, appointed by the CFI or CTC and have it entered in their Log Book.

Extensions are available only within the original discipline (eg 1st Exam for PG (Tow) Round canopy - Wing canopy is an Extension)

\* = Initial training must be done by a Senior XX where shown, but subsequent supervision may be at discretion of CFI/CTC.

#### Examinations

What needs an Examination	Who can train	Who examines	Fee
STC	STC	Examiner	) £50 or
AEI	SI	Examiner	) £25 for
Instructor	SI	Examiner	) repeat or
SI	SI	Examiner	) additional includes £10 reg'n fee

Process: Formal application to office; allocations and notification arranged by office. Examiner returns pro-forma direct to Chief Examiner who authorises licence issue to office, and writes report to CFI.

Examiners are appointed by the Chief Examiner and duly listed.

**The Technical Manual is the authoritative source and should be referred to for precise details.**

**Please note that the fees mentioned are likely to increase in the near future.**

## STUDENT PILOT INDICATORS . . . . . and more!

This idea of attaching ribbons to the kingpost or harness to indicate an inexperienced or student pilot is good, but I don't think it goes far enough. Surely there are other types of pilots besides students. There should be ways to indicate them as well. I propose the following:

Indicator	Pilot Description	Comments
Pink Ribbon	Student pilot	Pink to suggest innocence.
Blue Ribbon	Pilot of average skills and ambition	May blend into the sky, but this shouldn't be a problem if these are the most common pilots.
Orange Ribbon	Just got Pilot rating	Warning! Pilot may be too impressed by new rating
White Ribbon	Mellow high-time pilot	Pilot has been around, knows the sky will always be there tomorrow and isn't going to fight about right of way
Silver flag	Old pilot	Highly skilled, but may have vision problems.
Gold flag	Jackpot	Pilot has dedicated retrieve driver. Follow this pilot and be very nice.
Red Ribbon	Pilot only turns left	International marine colour for left. Indicates pilot can only turn left in thermals.
Green Ribbon	Pilot only turns right	International marine colour for right. Indicates pilot can only turn right in thermals.
Yellow Ribbon	Quarantine	Pilot has a contagious disease.
Black Ribbon	Emotionally distraught pilot	Pilot has just lost their job and/or suffered an unhappy love affair. Beware!
Pre-1945 Japanese flag	Death-or-glory XC pilot	Obvious.
Skull and crossbones	Pilot is incompetent	Obvious
Red Cross	Pilot has difficulty with landings	Obvious.
Centrefold from 'adult' magazine	High libido	Better give this pilot extra room. May be preoccupied with other matters.
Centrefold from Skywings	All Right!	MUCH better!
This article	Nethead	Follow them! They probably have a GPS, cellular phone and modem to arrange retrieves.

In the previous article I talked about problem students and about what we as instructors are trying to achieve. (-Happy customers in case you missed it). To be able to do this we need to know what they want and why they are here. Understanding this is obviously fundamental to meeting their expectations. So why are students at a flying school? . The obvious answer is "to learn to fly" (for most of them anyway). You could (and many do) teach them pretty well just knowing that. However if you dig a little deeper and ask "why do you want to learn to fly" you will find that there are a wide range of factors that influence this desire to fly, and understanding more about them can help you be a more effective instructor.

I have a few ideas from my own experience, probably you have some of your own, but I would like to examine a couple of examples of motivation and consider how best we can meet their needs.

1/ Fun! Apparently pretty simple this one, some students see a hang-glider or a paraglider and think "that looks like fun" - that is they expect it will make them happy and cheerful because of the sensation of flight they expect to experience.

But why? - Partially it is pure pleasure, - it feels good. But also humans seem to thrive on experiencing controlled fear, they are often attracted to something which seems dangerous and the "fun" is in surviving it. (look at rollercoasters!) fun in both guises motivates all of us to some extent and the "adrenaline" sports depend entirely upon this urge. - Where would bungee jumping be without the fear, just some nutter bouncing around on a string (you may think so anyway of course).

Our optimum response to those seeking a thrill is to supply it in a controlled way, that is we reassure them, progress steadily etc but still allow them to progress fast enough so that they experience the rush.

An example of using this: I often have a very controlled, safety orientated and almost bor-

ing introduction on the first day up until the first couple of flat ground runs have been achieved. I may then choose a suitable victim client and give them an unexpected helping hand so that they actually take off by a few feet without warning. This usually triggers the adrenaline Ok and we can add to the fun by shouting at them "hey, who told you to take off" It gets a laugh every time and livens up the rather serious "pre-flight check" atmosphere. Naturally pretty soon they all want to fly... Is this good instruction? I think so because they are having fun. It is this blend of responsible professionalism and fun that makes the happiest customers...

2/ Ego. As we all know hang-gliding and paragliding are sports for those with plenty of confidence and healthy egos. We are just a little superior to the ground hogs who spend their Sundays washing the car and trailing round Tesco's. . Instructors are extreme examples of this of course (except you dear reader obviously!) It seems likely that many of our clients also see flying as a bit removed from the norm and see themselves as suited to that kind of hobby. In short they are all closet egomaniacs too! This is fabulous news for the instructor because they are so easy to understand. Just tell them they are doing better than average and many students could never have done it as well as they just did.

This is what they want to hear! Here are some extracts from my typical end of day de-brief.

(Crap day): "Well we had challenging conditions and I am forced to admit that I have had students who would have had problems today, but I am really pleased that you made such good progress despite the conditions. I prefer groups like this one who have to cope with tough stuff, people who learn in perfect weather all the time are in danger of getting qualified thinking it's all a bed of roses and it is a shock- or even dangerous when they come across (thermals/ changing winds) later in their careers. - I have confidence that you guys are going to end your courses really well equipped for the challenges ahead.

Well done, an impressive performance."

(Good day) " What can I say? My classes usually take another day or more to reach this level, we have had good conditions but despite that I have felt confident to progress faster than usual because you are all picking it up so well. I think you all deserve a pat on the back, an impressive performance"

(Weak student performance) You have had a few problems today, but I have to say that these are pretty normal, and your flights are getting more and more fluent. I am really pleased with the progress you are making and in my experience those who pick up alpine launching as well as you have will have no trouble getting your reverse launching sorted out given a little more practice. I feel we are really getting there!

(Strong student performance) You must have realised that you have a real aptitude for this, there is work to be done of course and we must not get too far ahead of ourselves but that was a very impressive performance. Well done.

Of course your de-brief needs to be accurate and the students should not get their ego's over inflated, but you can see the general drift. Stroking a person's ego is the most useful way of reassuring them and of course overcoming fear in under confident students.

Group bonding: Groups are a rich vein of motives and agenda's! - some members may be establishing dominance, or displaying leadership, some are looking to make friends and others may be made scapegoats for holding the group back for example. You have the power to strengthen bonds, and build up those that need support. The key to dealing with groups is to find time to speak to each person individually. Usually it is easy to pick someone appropriate to say "Oh God not you again!" - a little piss-taking is Ok if done right and can make the group experience much more fun, as long as you retain the authority to control it.

Other less common motives to identify and address include Father and Son teams who have come out Paragliding for a bit of bonding. Boyfriend/Girlfriend teams whose principal concern is how they appear to each other. We have even had a customer who came hang-gliding to try and overcome his vertigo!! These considerations are useful to have at the back of your mind in dealing with these clients.

Instructors sometimes sympathise with one type of customer and it is important to keep sufficiently objective to ensure you are fair to everyone and give those you find difficult or less pleasant just as much attention.

Being aware of the customer's motivation and applying some basic social skills to the instructor/ student relationship you can transform their experience of the sport, and very likely increase the number of clients who stay with you and buy gear. Even more important it is a feedback thing. If they like you, the whole business of instructing becomes much more enjoyable. I have noted that instructors or schools without enthusiasm, or who do not try hard to make sure their clients are having fun, (no matter how experienced they are), - lose their customers.

Final Thought- Why do some people like to walk close to the edge and why do we seek out adrenaline at all? At first glance it does not seem a good survival trait. In fact it is not for the individual of course, but as a species that "pushing the boundaries" of what we can do has proved a pretty successful strategy.

The first pilots were taking huge risks, the first cavemen to hunt a mammoth were even crazier. Yet it is people like us who push the barriers and challenge ourselves by doing the stuff we do, who are at the cutting edge of human achievement. - Who would have thought it was even possible for an unpowered foot launched aircraft to have travelled 300 miles?

Maybe challenging physical limits is out of date and we are just throwbacks.... Personally I prefer to think that we are pioneers exploring another frontier... but then I may possibly be just a little egocentric myself...