



Days to Booker Regionals 73

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# The Booker Newsletter

The 12<sup>th</sup> Easter Egg Cup is coming! See page 4

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| <p><i>From the CFI</i><br/> <i>Members' Achievements</i><br/> <i>Dates for your Diary</i><br/> <i>RAF Benson Air Users Awareness Day</i><br/> <i>Booker Aerobatics 'Easter Egg Cup'</i><br/> <i>Regionals Update</i><br/> <i>Talgarth and Shobdon</i><br/> <i>Evening flying</i></p> | <p>There's plenty going on now the season has started, kicked off by the spring expedition to Talgarth and Shobdon - in this edition we have praise for expeditions from a cadet who took part. There is also news of the imminent Aeros Comp, an update on prep for our Regionals, and a reminder about what fun it is to fly in the evening. Also included is a report back from the recent meeting at RAF Benson with plenty of advice about flying nearby. Stay safe!</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Jane</i></p> |
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## From the CFI

The season is now firmly with us and we've got our first expedition of the year under our belt.

Unfortunately in the case of Talgarth the weather didn't play ball although the couple of flying days that we did get were fantastic.

As for Shobdon, we were certainly blessed by the weather gods! We had five excellent days of good quality cross country weather. Phil and Diana King went above and beyond the call of duty to make sure we had an excellent stay. The airfield has new and improved facilities, which include a new rigging area for gliders, clear of mud and tractors. I'm pleased to report that the 2016 expedition will most certainly feature Shobdon once again!



Back at our own airfield there's rather a lot going on. The motor glider will soon be back in action and we're now taking bookings for those who wish to brush up on their navigation and field landing skills for the coming season.

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Our new instructor, Matt and our new tug pilots Tom and Lucas have now started with us and I hope that you will all say hello when you see them. Bob and Doug have been busy training them over the last couple of weeks so many thanks to them for that.

The lease sub-committee has been busy lately and there have been several positive steps towards securing a long term lease for the gliding club. We all owe a huge thank you to John Otty, Glyn Read, Adrian Hegner, Graham Morfey and Richard Martyn for their tireless work towards securing Booker Gliding Club a long term future. There's still a lot of work to do but rest assured, everything is moving in the right direction.

Our Regional competition is filling up nicely but we still require a few extra entries, if you're tempted but still undecided come and have a chat. For those who don't yet own a glider, please remember that the club kit is available and we would love to see someone flying it.

I must sign off now as I've some keen Bronze students who want to go flying and the sun is out!

Richard

## 2015 season tuggies



Please welcome our 2015 tuggies, Tom and Lucas, who will soon be taking you to the nearest thermal.

## Dates for your Diary

18<sup>th</sup> April (19<sup>th</sup> fall back) – the Booker Aerobatics 'Easter Egg Cup' competition

13<sup>th</sup> June – Longest Day event

20<sup>th</sup> June – Regionals trial weekend and club clean up

27<sup>th</sup> June – Regionals!

## Air users' awareness day - RAF Benson

For what now seems to be an annual event, last month the Commanding Officer at RAF Benson hosted an Awareness day for local flying organisations - pilots from Chiltern Park, White Waltham, Booker GC and flight crew and ATC from Benson. Pilots had been invited to fly in but the weather really didn't cooperate. After a welcome from the Station Commander, there were presentations from various groups who operate in and around Benson.

First a Squadron Leader of one of the two Puma squadrons based at Benson gave a quick update on the newly updated Pumas and their enhanced capabilities but more interestingly the type of flying they do and issues they have with other airspace users and people on the ground. Put simply they fly low, medium or high level profiles for flight training (both VMC and IMC), underslung loads and flight testing. They were very open in recognising that a lot

of this is in class G airspace, and as much as operational requirements allow, they try to organise their sorties to minimise the risk of conflict with other airspace users, for example, low level flying in good weather when they think there may be a lot of GA activity. This is not always possible, for example, air tests needing to follow a defined flight profile which could include timed climbs/descents following a fixed ground feature such as the railway line from Didcot to Goring. Another significant point is that they have procedural holds for inbound traffic directly above the MATZ only published on the military equivalent of the AIP and therefore not generally known to civilian traffic. Lastly they noted their ILS which routes in from Oakley over Chalgrove and may have a mix of fixed wing jets and helicopters on a descending profile into Benson.



The chief pilot of the University Air Squadron then gave a summary of the flying from Benson that they will be doing this summer - they will have UAS flying in Grob Tutors most weekdays, and the Air Cadet Motor Gliders from the middle of the summer at the weekends. He did comment that they have changed training areas following the incident a few years back and that he would stop flying if significant numbers of gliders were seen locally.

A chap from NATS gave a quick presentation on air proxies and ways to mitigate and steps being taken to reduce high risk ones to low risk. He mentioned ATC traffic services, transponders, Flarm and their benefits, incompatibility and limitations, and that work is ongoing to try to improve the situation for all.

The most interesting presentation and the one that generated most questions and debate came from Richard who spoke about the types of gliding done in and around the area, not just from Booker but also the other clubs. This came as quite an eye opener for the power pilots as they had little perception of traffic volumes or the amount of cross country flying done. The White Waltham pilots were sufficiently interested to request a similar presentation there. There was mention of Flarm and also recognition of the limitations/practicality of transponders in gliders.



As well as a splendid lunch in the officers' mess, the key point to come from the day was that RAF Benson is a busy place and whilst they are not giving an open invitation to land there, they would like to know where we are. **If flying during the week in or around the MATZ and especially if you are getting close to or likely to enter the ATZ, call them on Benson Zone 129.900. At weekends this isn't manned, so call Benson Tower on 127.150. Their ATC are helpful and if you prefix your call sign with "Glider G-xxxx" are less likely to bombard you**

with requests to change heading/climb to altitude. If you do have to land there, you may get a cup of tea if you have spoken to them, otherwise you may end up in the guard room - they really don't want any stealth arrivals. Remember they have instrument holds and approaches that start overhead the MATZ in the class G airspace so a good lookout is required (as always) as the other pilots may be heads down focusing on instruments. Also remember that the ILS approaches may commence several miles out and the pilots flying them may have their attention on instruments. A useful rule of thumb for a 3 degree ILS is that it rises 300 feet for each mile out.

Overall a useful day of sharing information about what we all do flying and how we can share the airspace in the safest manner.

Doug Hilton

## The 12<sup>th</sup> Booker **Aerobatics** Competition



The Easter Egg Cup, which like the Longest Day event is only tenuously connected with the calendar, offers members the opportunity to practise flying aerobatic sequences to competition rules and be scored by qualified judges. But don't let that put you off, it's great fun and not at all scary. There will be two classes, Standard and Tricky, you can enter as many times as you have £5 notes in your pocket, and there will be safety pilots for those not cleared to fly aerobatics solo. There is a magnificent trophy for the winner and prizes for runners up. And as a bonus, if you are safe to fly the Standard sequence solo, it qualifies you for a BGA 'Standard' Aerobatics badge which gives you the Aerobatic rating on your EASA licence.

## Booker Regionals 2015 – update

Preparations for the Booker Regionals (27<sup>th</sup> June to 5<sup>th</sup> July) are going well. The website is now virtually complete – just awaiting some download materials



such as local rules which will be available shortly, and links to Soaring Spot for task and results. Many thanks to Bob Smith for doing the heavy lifting on this vital aspect of the comp. John H and Rob Turner are in the process of refurbishing the water ballast taps and pipework with new meters which allow pilots to see exactly how much water they are loading. Many thanks to them and also to the many others who have picked up tasks to be done before the competition starts.

- We will be holding a 'Trial and clean-up' weekend on 20<sup>th</sup> June. Weather permitting we will be flying an HDT task or two and trialling the scoring/results system. There will also be many things to be done in the way of clearing up and setting out the briefing area with a P/A system in the parachute packing loft in the BAS hangar. Rob T has kindly agreed to take on the prep of the airfield – which will be a matter of setting out an area in the trailer park for visitors, and mowing the key areas around the bus, the trailer park and the water ballast tank. That's a big task and anyone who can help with the mowing will be welcomed (especially if they have a mower they can bring). We will also be setting up control and the scoring area in the clubhouse.
- There will be a meeting of the Regionals Organising Group on **25<sup>th</sup> April at 10am** in the clubhouse. Anyone who would like to join the group and lend a hand will be very welcome!

William

## My First Expedition - Talgarth

Well, after a pleasant 3 hour drive we arrived at Black Mountains Gliding Club and wow, what a place! The ridge, which sits about a mile from the airfield, shoots up skyward. Its presence only amplifies the sheer beauty of the area. It really is picture perfect. I just couldn't wait to see it from the air. There was one thing stopping us, the weather. So the rest of the day was spent doing numerous things such as looking around model shops and viewing land out fields, of which there weren't many! Then it was topped off with an enjoyable evening out at the Riverside Café.



Day two also resulted in un-flyable conditions. However all was not lost as a few of us went on an interesting visit to a coal mine even though the wind was nearly strong enough to blow us off our feet! There was another great meal in the evening which Jim kindly cooked for everyone.

On Monday, we finally had the chance to go flying. Retrieving gliders with the club's quad bikes kept me occupied for the first part of the morning, and then it was my turn to have a go! The best way to describe BMGC for those who have not been there is as a miniature airfield, which made taking off a bit more interesting than at Booker! After we got off the ground we immediately pointed towards

the towering ridge that filled the sky in front of us. We released from the tug and bam straight into lift! This is when the fun really began. Richard talked me through all the tricks and tips that are associated with ridge soaring. I probably learnt more in that single flight than I have done in any other before, simply because it was so different to what I am used to. That this is one of the reasons I enjoyed it so much. Then I remembered "oh yeah we've got to land on that miniature airfield as well!" It took a bit more concentration than usual but it was really satisfying when we touched down in the knowledge that I had got it right. The day was finished off with another great meal, this time cooked by Graham Morfey.



Tuesday resulted in some tough racing in the BGC go-carting championships. There was a ten minute qualifying session followed by a non-stop 30 minute race. 3<sup>rd</sup> was John Herman, 2<sup>nd</sup> Richard Crockett and in first, me! Not as if I'm boasting or anything... Next on the agenda was the local Conservative club for a few games of snooker. Then another fantastic meal was had at the Indian restaurant in Hay-on-Wye during the evening.

Wednesday morning resulted in some more fantastic

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flying for a few other people who didn't get a chance to fly on Monday. Still, shooting up and down the airfield on the quads was fun enough for me!



On Thursday morning the wind was light enough to get the models out for a play. Then after lunch at the Honey Pot Cafe, I and John Herman went to an idyllic trout lake for a spot of fly fishing. It was something that I had not tried before so I was looking forward to giving it a go. It took a bit of practice but after getting tangled up about 50 times I finally got the hang of it! John managed to catch two and then just before sunset I managed to get one in the net too which was a really great end to the week. The day ended with a meal out at the Dragon's Inn which was once again, another great meal.

Friday morning I arrived back home from a week that I will never forget. If you have never been on one of the club's expeditions it is now something that I would highly recommend. Even though I only flew once it was still a fantastic week away with people that I really enjoyed spending time with. I hope that everyone who is going to the next expedition to Germany enjoys themselves as much as I did on this one.

See you in the skies

*George Hunter (cadet)*

## Shobdon



The second part of the Spring expedition was at Shobdon (Herefordshire Gliding Club), where there was no mud, no wind and plenty of sunshine and thermals. No report back but here's a pic of the happy crew de-rigging.

## Evening Groups are back!

The Evening Groups have started up again. For those who are not aware, these are small bands of instructors and members who usually have the whole fleet and the run of the airfield to themselves and are willing to share this immense privilege with you and your friends for:

- Keeping current
- Progressing through the fleet
- Honing skills

- Getting into aerobatics
  - Trial lessons
  - Practising your instructor's patter
- ... or just flying for fun



The Evening Groups are on Tuesdays (run by Graham Saw), Wednesdays (run by Chris Rowland) and Fridays (run by Symeon Economou) and start from around 17.00. Everyone is welcome, although it is always appreciated if you let the office know if you are going to turn up.

Finally, why not take advantage of the reduced rate for evening trial lessons and get your friends, family or work colleagues to sample what you've been prattling on about through those long winter evenings? If you can get a group together ask Shelagh or Chris in the office about group rates.

Symeon

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## Club Communications

We use Yahoo email groups, which we encourage all members to subscribe to, in order to provide a quick way to communicate with the membership. Details are below.

**Booker GC Forum** – Open to all members to participate. The Forum provides the opportunity to share ideas about the Club. Send an email to: [bookergc-forum-subscribe@yahogroups.com](mailto:bookergc-forum-subscribe@yahogroups.com) and *include your membership number when applying.*

**Booker GC Expeditions** – Open to all members to participate. Send an email to: [bookergc-Expeditions-subscribe@yahogroups.com](mailto:bookergc-Expeditions-subscribe@yahogroups.com) and *include your membership number when applying.*

**Booker GC X-C** – Targeted towards those pilots who fly cross-country or who aspire to develop their cross-country skills. Send an email to: [bookergc\\_xc-subscribe@yahogroups.com](mailto:bookergc_xc-subscribe@yahogroups.com) and *include your membership number when applying.*

**Booker GC Instructors** – This is for Booker instructors only to easily email each other. Mainly used for swapping duty days. Send an email to: [BookerGC\\_Instructors-subscribe@yahogroups.com](mailto:BookerGC_Instructors-subscribe@yahogroups.com) and *include your membership number when applying.*

The **Booker GC website** at [www.bookergliding.co.uk](http://www.bookergliding.co.uk) has a Members Page. This contains the latest Club news snippets and links to previous newsletters, meeting minutes and several useful and informative Club documents. The Members page is accessible to everybody (not just members) but certain documents, such as committee minutes need a user ID and password. To obtain these, go to the members' page and click on the 'email Administrator' link. Don't forget to *include your membership number.*

**For the latest news about what's happening check out**  
<http://bookergc.blogspot.com/> and [www.facebook.com/bookerglidingclub](http://www.facebook.com/bookerglidingclub)

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\*\*\* All view expressed within the newsletter are those of the contributor and do not necessarily represent the view of the Club or committee \*\*\*

Contributions to the newsletter are welcome. If you'd like to submit an article for a future edition please send it to William Parker by email at ([williamparker275@gmail.com](mailto:williamparker275@gmail.com)). Please note new email address

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