



The Booker Newsletter

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Saturday 7th January was a day to remember! Aboyne-style wave over Booker with climbs that peaked at 4kts and, were it not for the TMA, would probably have taken us up to six or seven thousand feet. What's more it lasted several hours. Meanwhile, this month is one of reminders about Tug Operations –especially with the airfield in a soggy state –about Bob S's FOG lectures, and setting goals for 2012. Yours truly has taken a brief look at the background to gliding at Thame. And Ben Crook fondly remembers his time at Booker. Plus, as ever, a timely reminder about currency from Mike.

Happy New Year.

William

From the Chairman

As you read this I will still be in the US or making my way home. So I've only heard about the recent 'best wave day at Booker for 20 years' (yes you read that right *wave at Booker*) on the blog. I hope it's a good omen for an exceptional year ahead. This time last year the shadow of the stadium lay over the club. For the first time for 3 years we can look ahead without that particular problem ahead of us. Of course we have our challenges. Notably the forthcoming rent review and the Olympics. But few other clubs are free from challenges like these and with our talented teams of members working on them we're confident that yet again Booker will win through. The prospect of migrating to Thame in July is proving to be an incentive for people to think how we can turn the Olympic problem into an opportunity. We'll need volunteers and ideas to make our Thame outing a success for every aspect of our activities from XC flying and training to trial lesson flying and socializing. Let's make the most of it! We'll have a get together in the next few weeks to talk about plans for Thame.



We began 2011 with an ambition to keep safety at the top of our priority list. And indeed we enjoyed a very safe flying year at and around the club. We have to thank Mike and Doug and all our instructors for their tireless attention to this priority. However we did have some very noisy arrivals on the XC field landing front, and I would like to encourage all our XC pilots to refresh their understanding of the potential pitfalls in field selection and landings. Another important priority that I'd like to highlight is the need for maintaining constant lookout

and being aware of airspace boundaries. This is particularly important because the new EASA environment is currently emerging and it is very important that none of our pilots give the anti-gliding people anything they can hold against us.

On a lighter note we have had some really great group efforts in 2011 with many barbecues, a great team effort to clean up the airfield and the party for local residents that did so much to create a good relationship with our neighbours. I hope we'll be able to do all these things, and more, again in the coming year.

Once again our expeditions have created new friendships between members and inspired many of our pilots to move on to higher goals. If you are one of those members who are hesitating about coming on our expeditions to Talgarth, Serres or Aboyne I urge you to take the plunge. Like everything else the more you put into your gliding, the more you'll get out of it. But of course we can't all do all of the things we would like to achieve. And that's why January should be our goal setting month. If you're not sure quite what you might be able to achieve have a word with Mike or Doug or any of the pundits. In fact Mike has some great advice on this on the very next page.

At Booker we are so fortunate to have so many people, too numerous to mention them all by name, who make such an effort to make our club what it is. We're in good financial shape given the times, it's a very harmonious club (considering the strong opinions that gliders pilots hold about most things), and above all it has that special Booker spirit which distinguishes us from our rival clubs and for which we are so well known, not just here in the UK but around the gliding world. Thanks to everybody who creates and fosters that spirit and a very happy new year to you all.

See you at the launchpoint

Geoff

From the CFI

Firstly, Happy New Year to you all! I hope the festive period was kind and you've amassed a considerable number of brownie points with your respective others in the poor weather we've had over Christmas and New Year period.

With the winter solstice behind us it means the spring is coming! So, now is the time to start thinking about the season ahead. This can be done by (forgive the management speak) goal setting. For some, this may be to complete that elusive badge or just to go solo, but if you sit down and consider what you want from your gliding you're more likely to achieve it than by bumbling your way through the year. An example will be a Bronze pilot who wishes to start flying cross country and perhaps do their 300km. They really need to be thinking about it now and spending some time getting to know the equipment they will use, making an effort to learn how to decipher the weather, get NOTAMS and learn about what tasks would be appropriate. Also, and more importantly, they should be current and get all the field landing checks out of the way early. This can all be done very easily this time of year and we've even got a comprehensive lecture series on Saturdays that will teach you many of these key skills. So good luck and do not be afraid of asking for help and sharing your ambitions as there is a wealth of experience amongst the members. I am also very happy to sit down with anyone to talk about their aspirations for the year and how we can help them achieve these.



The lists for our trip to the Alps (Serres 9th June – 23rd June) and the Black Mountains (Talgarth 24th March – 8th April) are up on the notice board and if you are interested please

let us know. Both these trips were very successful last year and we hope to make them even better this year!

As I mentioned above there are a number of lectures being carried out Saturday mornings starting with the Bronze lectures and the exam, followed by the fundamentals of gliding lectures and finally culminating with the X/C performance lectures. It really is worth the effort to get out of bed on a Saturday morning to attend.

Now for my annual whinge about currency.....I appreciate that the weather has not been particularly conducive to flying recently, however, it is important to keep yourself current during this period. It's amazing how quickly your flying goes from being a little rusty to positively seized! There are plenty of ways we can make it interesting as well, if you fancy taking an instructor to learn a new skill. The motorglider is also fully serviceable for all those who would benefit from field landing training (or just brush up on their skills), I was certainly glad to be current with this in a certain escapade recently.

All the best for 2012,

Mike

Fundamentals Of Gliding (FOG)

Bob Smith's series of winter lectures are now taking place. There is something for everyone in these lectures –important tuition on some of key matters you need for XC flying and useful reminders to everyone else. You can see the full schedule of lectures on the website at:

<http://www.bookergliding.co.uk/members/BGC3459.html>

From the Tug Team – January 2012

The more observant of you will recognise that this isn't the first time this article has appeared in the Newsletter but as the new season has started it is just as relevant now as when it was first published. It has been changed slightly, but only to reflect the time of year, the state of the airfield and the low arc of the sun at this time of year.

Again thanks to the tuggies who have made themselves available on the rota over the winter during the week and those tuggies who have covered the weekend slots.

The engineers in BAS have continued to keep the tugs serviceable and highly available in spite of our efforts to the contrary, often coming in at the weekend or their days off and working into the evening to make tugs available for the following soaring day after we have broken them – this level of support is unique across UK gliding clubs and something Booker members should be grateful for and especially proud of.

Start of the season reminders

The 2012 season has finally arrived and we have been able to fly for the first time this year. It's also time for a few reminders (nothing new here, just the usual mantra) to ensure we have an efficient and safe tugging operation.

The following is a bit of a list and in no particular order but please stick with it – after all it's not a lot to ask when you have the privilege of being one of Bookers tug pilots. If you are unclear on any of the points then please ask either Andrew Betteley, Bob Davey, Doug Hilton or Mike Collett. Over the coming months you may find one of us 'jumping' in with you – this is to ensure consistency of operation and to make sure we are getting the best out of our tugs.

- The airfield is particularly 'slippy' this time of year and it takes very little rain to make the surface very soft - it is extremely easy to skid in the tugs when taxiing and strong winds can cause the tugs to 'drift' sideways (the Robin is particularly prone to this). Ensure you always taxi at a rate appropriate to the conditions and people/equipment around you. Avoid tight turns which can churn the airfield up as well as putting unnecessary loads on the aircraft undercarriages.
- Keep the tugs clean. They are nicer to fly and more importantly use less fuel when they are clean. This includes the propeller and especially the canopies. This is particularly relevant with the colder weather and low sun making visibility into sun difficult.
- The field is very rough in places at present – be particularly vigilant on DI's to check the condition of the undercarriage bolts and the leaf springs on the tail wheels of the Cub and Pawnee (don't forget to undertake the rest of the DI thoroughly).
- Don't taxi or run the engines on the Robin or Pawnee with the doors open. It puts significant strain on them and results in avoidable damage to the Perspex.
- Parking at the launch point – on 24 make sure they are sufficiently out of the way of the take off run, parking half way between the bus and water bowser by the line of yellow markers should give any ground looping glider plenty of space to avoid an incident. On runways 06 and 35 please park in the area adjacent to the wind sock (if there is a large grid on 35 it may be necessary to park further along the hedge adjacent to the Lane End Road).
- Familiarise yourself with the Noise Abatement Zones, local airspace and airfield procedures. We have built a good reputation with the local residents and are not seen as the 'bad boys' – let's not lose that reputation. Plan your towing pattern to optimise getting the glider into good lift whilst not compromising any of the above.
- Taxiing – no more than brisk walking pace and when moving in and around the launch area getting no closer than a gliders wing span from any person, object, glider– ideally more. The launch rate will be most efficient by members on the ground retrieving the rope/hooking on, not by trying to position the rope as close to the glider as possible.
- Minimise the use of brakes when landing and taxiing and avoid making unnecessarily tight turns with the tugs as this puts greater strain on the undercarriage, brakes, airframe and all add to the operating costs.

- If you find yourself having to Go-Around, then smoothly apply the power. Don't slam the throttle forwards, as it is no good for the valves and there is also the chance of a rich cut. Climb straight ahead back to circuit height, join the circuit and land. Only retract the flaps one stage at a time, once a positive rate of climb has been established.
- Ensure the 'blue' serviceability folder in each tug is completed each day before flight and if for any reason a tug is found to be unserviceable, complete a red snag card and leave it in the pigeon hole in the office and let one of the duty staff know.
- Finally, please observe and stick to the tug priority list displayed in the club house.

Current procedures for tug descent techniques

Full details of our current Tug Pilot Notes are published on the Booker Gliding Club web site and can be found at the following web address

http://www.bookergliding.co.uk/members/Documents/tug_pilots_notes.pdf

As a reminder, here are the descent techniques for all 3 tugs. We can't stress enough how important it is that the tugs are descended properly. Please plan your descents efficiently so that the engine temperatures are managed correctly, but also so that when you arrive at circuit height, that you are actually somewhere close to the airfield. Motoring back from Henley at 1000 feet costs both time and extra fuel.

Super Cub

When you are sure the glider is off tow, increase speed to 100 mph while reducing power to keep rpm constant throughout the acceleration phase and then reduce power to 2350 rpm – just above the avoid band – DO NOT reduce rpm and then increase speed.

When the CHT has reduced by 25 degrees, reduce the rpm smoothly to 2150 – just below the avoid band – and maintain 100mph. When the CHT has reduced by a further 25 degrees, reduce the rpm to 2000.

Maintain this until towards the end of the downwind leg and then gradually reduce rpm and speed and then lower flaps for approach as required.



Robin

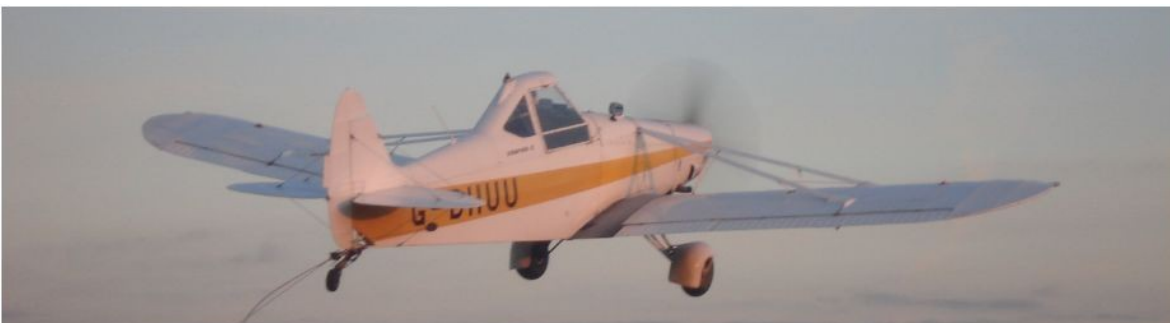
The Robin runs at a higher rpm at towing speeds than the other tugs. At 75kts, the rpm is just under 2700 rpm, any increase in speed above this will require a power reduction to avoid over speeding the engine. When the glider comes off tow, increase speed to 95 kts whilst reducing power to hold the rpm constant through the acceleration phase taking care not to allow the engine to over speed. When at 95 kts, reduce rpm to 2500 which will result in a slight descent.

After the CHT has stabilised (after about 30/40 seconds), increase the speed to 100-110kts adjusting the throttle to maintain 2500 rpm. Reducing to 2400 rpm after a further 60 seconds will give a good rate of descent. Maintain this until reducing speed for approach, initially not below 2000rpm until below 100kts. The flight manual states that it is OK to use full carb heat for the whole descent if required. Note that 100kts at 2500 rpm should give a rate of descent of about 800 to 1000fpm.



Pawnee

When the glider comes off tow, increase speed to 110 mph while gradually reducing power to 2400 rpm. Speed can be increased to 115- 120 mph with a corresponding increase in rpm if a higher rate of descent is required after the initial CHT has stabilised. Maintain this until reducing speed for the approach, initially not below 2000rpm until below 100mph. Please note that Lycoming specifically states that the engine should not be run at a low manifold pressure and a high airspeed - i.e. the propeller driving the engine rather than the other way round.



As always, fly safely and enjoy the season.

The tug team: Andrew Betteley, Doug Hilton, Bob Davey, Mike Collett

Talking about Thame

With our Thame Olympic relocation in mind I looked out an old book of mine about gliders and the pilots who flew them in World War II. Originally the Glider Pilot Regiment was formed at Ringway (Manchester) and was made up of former civilian glider pilots who brought their own gliders along! One of the first proper operational training bases was at Thame, where pilots learned to fly Hamilcar and Horsa gliders loaded with troops, jeeps and light artillery pieces. At the end of the war a group of Glider Pilot Regiment veterans set up the Upward Bound Trust to enable under privileged kids to get a taste of adventure and flying. They based themselves at Thame and they still fulfill this mission to this day. Quite how any of the WWII Glider Pilots survived the conflict is a mystery. Their incredibly heroic story is one long catalogue of flying seriously overloaded gliders, sometimes on dual tows, for opposed night landings on terrain that had only been sketchily reconnoitered. The resulting crashes into forests, vineyards, buildings and each other were truly horrifying –and then there was the gunfire.



Grid before briefing –1940's style

However they seemed to keep a cheery attitude to the whole thing. One pilot gave his account of a launch failure in training. He was flying a Hamilcar – a massive glider that could carry a light tank. In order to get the hell away from the landing area quickly, they developed a technique whereby the tank crew climbed aboard the tank and started it up *while in flight*. (Fortunately, this was discovered not to shake the aircraft to bits but it did threaten both tank and glider crews with carbon monoxide poisoning if the flight lasted a moment too long.) On this particular launch failure flight the tug waved-off the Hamilcar, with a tank on board, and the lumbering monster careered through a hedge and crashed into a building. The pilots, unhurt, sitting atop the glider in their tandem cockpit, were amazed to see the tank hurtle out of the front of the glider, through the building and out the other side, where it came to a halt 80 feet beyond, covered in rubble. Even more amazed, they watched the tank drive off! They were a very special breed of pilots and Thame definitely has a special place in the annals of gliding.

William Parker

It is all about virtuous circles

Will I get out, what I put in? We are hearing this a lot at the moment aren't we? At times in 2011 it seemed everything was a variant of that question: in or out of Europe, the banking crisis, our recession. Looking to 2012, and at our annual dinner, I was struck by Geoff's suggestion that we get out, what we put in to our club.

I joined Booker in 2009. My brother had moved to Loosley Row and I was weary of the sea-breeze fronts which had restricted my soaring from the Kent gliding club. Driving from central London it didn't matter much whether I went north or south, the traffic would be ugly. What I wanted out of my membership was a chance to fly cross country. With a part Silver and a couple of 100km dawdles behind me I was itching to fly further and faster. But how to break in to a new club when you don't live locally and can't be there every weekend? I signed up for the Booker Regionals. That year we had soggy murky days and sunny blue days, with a day or two of cracking cumulus in between. I flew progressively further each day of that competition and, by the end, had flown more cross country in one week than I had in the preceding five years. This was more like it.

Yes bits of the kit broke. The tow out gear needed welding, the cockpit electrics smoked, and the wing got dinked on the inside of the rubbish leaky trailer. And yes it was exhausting coping with the highs and lows of the flying: getting away, low, high and back, only to discover you'd earned as many penalty points as your 580 competition number –*thanks again for that joy Boris!* But boy was it fun flying with your mates out of Booker. I was back for our 2010 Regionals, and then in Jim's excellent 2011 Booker Rules Comp. There are obvious reasons why you learn so much in a competitive week. You repeat your practise, measure your success, and crucially learn from those around you (particularly those who have done it before). But that is only part of the story. The less obvious reason is the encouragement you derive from being part of a group enterprise, particularly where the group is encouraging; as we are at Booker.

So, if like me then, you are thinking of next season's soaring and wondering how to get the most out of it, I recommend you consider a task or competition week at the club. But don't sign up and let the event creep up on you. Get your equipment ready, get yourself ready. You need to be current, with as much cross country practice as you can get, and crucially you need to set yourself some sensible and defined goals for next season. Don't let the winter weather fool you, there's plenty of prep to be done now so you are ready in February for next season.

To conclude, will I get more out of my soaring than I put in? Absolutely, that wind and thermal energy lifts more than wood and carbon fibre, it lifts our spirits and horizons. But like the surfer waiting for a good wave; make sure you've done the paddling to be in the right place before next season starts.



*Great times at Booker
Ben Crook*

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@yahoogroups.com and *include your membership number when applying.*

Booker GC Expeditions – Open to all members to participate. Send an email to: bookergc-Expeditions-subscribe@yahoogroups.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@yahoogroups.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@yahoogroups.com and *include your membership number when applying.*

The **Booker GC website** at 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 i/d 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/>.

*** 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 (william.parker5@btinternet.com).

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