

The Booker letter

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With the Editor away in sunnier climes there will be no cartoons in this slim edition. However, we do have a comprehensive report of the new Booker Rules comp and a cautionary tale from one of the competitors, useful info about flight analysis and an unmissable opportunity for some open air fun, plus news and updates about events in and around the club. Normal service will be resumed next month.

Keep an eye on the blog for news of the imminent Serres expedition.

Jane

From the Chairman



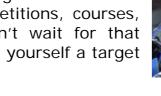
With the season well advanced, many of us are off on trips, including the one to Serres in the French Alps which this year will be a full club expedition led by Mike Collett and Doug Hilton. As well as several private aircraft, the Duo and a K21 will be going, to enable members with little or no mountain experience to learn new skills. This is consistent with our policy of 'stretching the envelope' by offering exciting opportunities for members.

Another example of this policy was the new Booker Rules competition, devised and directed by Jim White, which offered

opportunities for less experienced cross country pilots to sample competition flying. The rules put together by Jim and the 'consultative committee' resulted in a much simpler (and cheaper) format than a rated comp, and a more flexible

approach to task setting. We hope to apply the lessons learned to fine tune the scoring and run a similar comp next year.

It is up to every member to take advantage of what is on offer at the club, be it expeditions, competitions, courses, task weeks or individual instruction. Don't wait for that perfect day, on any flyable day you can set yourself a target to improve some aspect of your flying.



See you at the launchpoint.

Geoff Tabbner

From the CFI

May's been a bit of a disappointment after a fantastic April, although there have been some good days and evening flying to be had for those of you who were lucky. A theme for this year so far has been a number of very windy but very soarable days. These sorts of days require a little bit of practice and experience to be flown safely and successfully. I recommend that anyone that hasn't flown cross country on a very windy day should make use of our Duo or Falke to broaden your horizons and give you



some knowledge about the situations you may end up in, and hopefully how to get yourself out safely. It is imperative that you ensure you select an appropriate approach speed for the day and judge your angle to landing appropriately as a minimum. If in doubt, ask the duty instructor who will be very happy to talk you through the day's conditions.

Congratulations to Brian O'Sullivan who has recently re-soloed, Stuart Whitehouse who's gone solo, and Martin Blanchard who has finally completed his Silver by getting his Silver height.

Look out for articles on the Serres expedition in the coming months as we're off shortly for the club's trip to the Alps.

Also don't forget to make use of the evening groups that we are lucky enough to have running through the summer months. These run on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday and are a great way to get the most out of gliding or to just let off steam after a day at work.

Happy landings.

Mike

Rodney Stroud



We regret to announce the death of Rodney Stroud on 9 May 2011 after an illness. Rodney was always interested in flying and obtained his PPL in the 1970s at Booker. In 2001 he decided to try something different and returned to Booker to have a go at gliding, eventually buying a Discus and flying midweek. He had to give up in 2007 when he found himself no longer able to rig. Our condolences go to his family.

Achievements

Brian O'Sullivan re-soloed on 24 May with the Tuesday Evening Group.

Jon Sugden flew a Pegasus for the first time on 21 May.

Stuart Whitehouse went solo on 2 June.

Martin Blanchard has completed his Silver badge with his recent height claim.

Events

Contact the office to book

Get your Silver course – Monday 25 July to Friday 29 July

Task Week - Saturday 13 August to Sunday 21 August

Get your Bronze course - Monday 26 September to Friday 30 September

Aboyne Wave Expedition - Sunday 2 October to Saturday 22 October

At a loss for something to do in the evening?

Look no further than Booker. Come along to one of the evening groups and get in some practice in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. If you're just starting, going for Bronze, want to brush up some skills or merely enjoy the sunset from a different angle, this is the time for you. The group leaders are:

- Tuesday Graham Saw (aerobatics a speciality)
- Wednesday Chris Rowland
- Friday Symeon Economou

Office update – club email address

Until now the office email address has been office@bookergliding.co.uk, please use this for all emails to the club. You may wish to update your list of recognised contacts so that club emails are not marked as spam. You may still get the occasional email from the nildram address and your monthly statements will continue to come from max2@bookergc.nildram.co.uk.

On our new website we display the address <u>info@bookergliding.co.uk</u>. This is for the general public to use as a first line of enquiry. It initially sends an automated response giving additional information about the club.

That Stadium

The local council elections in May resulted in changes in the upper echelons of Wycombe District Council. The leadership passed to ClIr Alex Collingwood who chaired the scrutiny committee which challenged the process of decision making on the stadium project. His new cabinet includes several councilors who have made clear anti-stadium commitments. This does not mean the project is off, the new administration has yet to declare its position. GASP, the coalition of action groups opposing the project, is still very active, including visits to local groups to dispel some of the myths about the project, but is waiting for the council to make its position clear. Keep up to date with www.gasp-no.org and www.nostadiumatbooker.org.uk.

Booker Rules

A new approach to competitions

At the end of April 2011 Booker Gliding Club ran its inaugural Booker Rules Competition. This competition format was developed to enable the club to run a formal competition in 2011 without the rigour required for a rated competition run to BGA Competition Rules. The truth is we couldn't find anyone who wanted to run a rated competition, so were faced with the prospect of not having a club competition at all this season.

At a meeting of 30 or so interested pilots held in January, a small team was challenged to come up with a simple format for a competition which could be run early in the 2011 season that met certain objectives:

- That it would be safe and accessible to new competition and XC pilots yet remain challenging for our pundits
- That it would be simple to run, score, and fly
- That it involved a variety of task types similar to those used in rated competition
- That it would provide race coaching opportunities for members.

Starting from the 32 page Rules for BGA Rated Competition and after much discussion and argument our format was agreed and rules written for the inaugural competition. These ran to just three pages and a date was set.

The 10 key points of the Booker Rules format

1) The competition would be open to all entrants with a Silver C or Bronze C with the CFI's permission. No FAI licence would be required. Whilst the conduct of the competition would be the responsibility of the Director, the conduct of the flight would be the sole responsibility of the pilot in command, and the safety of the competitors would remain with the club CFI and his instructing staff who would decide whether the conditions were suitable for low experience pilots.

- 2) Pilots and teams could fly two types or configuration of glider during the competition. This would allow pilots to match their glider to the day or, more importantly, to fly with a coach in our Duo Discus on one day and still be scored.
- 3) We wanted to enable coaching and cooperative flying so there would be no prohibition on the use of the radio, team flying, and Flarm. We believe that Flarm is an aid to safety and should be embraced by the competition. No restriction on its use makes great sense to us.
- 4) Gridding would be less formal, allowing inexperienced pilots to get away early and pundits to fly when they liked. In the event that no one wanted to take a launch when first offered the start line would be opened immediately.
- 5) Controls would be essentially the same as for BGA Rated Competition except that there would be no penalty zones. Start height would be the lower of airspace or cloudbase.
- 6) Evidence in the form of an IGC file would be accepted from any GPS logger.
- 7) No cloud flying would be allowed at any time.
- 8) We have a no tolerance attitude to airspace busts. Entry into controlled airspace or designated penalty zones would be treated as a landout even if before the start.
- 9) Competitors would enter their own performance into the scoring program with points awarded both for handicap distance flown (with completion bonus) and handicap speed.
- 10) The Director and his team would arbitrate all disputes and hand down any penalty they think fit for infringement of the rules, inaccurate scoring, cheating, or unsafe flying behaviour.

The Booker Rules task types

The Director would set one of three task types depending upon the weather and at his sole discretion:

- 1) The Racing Alternative Task. In this task type the Director would set a base task suitable for the lowest handicap glider and the lowest experience pilot. Two alternative tasks which use a similar shape and in similar directions would also be set which would provide more challenge to faster gliders or pilots. Each pilot wishing to fly one of the larger tasks would be required to declare which before launching and would be scored against that task.
- 2) The Area Assigned Task. In this task type pilots would be required to turn any points within each designated area that they wished within defined minimum and maximum time limits. No declaration would be required and their goal would be to maximise their distance flown and their speed during the scoring flight by using the conditions to best advantage.
- 3) The Pilot Selected Task. This task type gives the pilot the most flexibility to fly a task of his choosing within parameters dictated by the base task set by the Director. There would be a maximum handicapped scoring distance of 2x the base task. As a declaration is required for any task other than the base task, this task type would test both the flying skill of the pilot and also his ability to judge where and how far to fly in the conditions, before launching.

During the competition we flew on 5 days and set two RATs, two AATs, and one PST. In feedback from the competitors the RAT and AAT were preferred as the PST was considered more difficult for the pilot!

Story of the 2011 competition

We had 22 pilots / teams enter paying £20 entry fee each. This gave us £440 to spend on prizes, the web site, thank you gifts for the club staff, and still make a small profit. Each day our professional weather man Nils did a met forecast and director Jim presented the NOTAMs and tasks. Doug was on hand to dish out warnings and admonitions as required!



Denis receiving his prize

Day 1 and Day 2 let us down with the weather and were scrubbed. Day 3, however, provided much improved yet uncertain conditions. An AAT was set going North where we had negotiated an airspace dispensation with DAP / NATS to allow us to fly over Princes Risborough at up to 4500ft. Most pilots flew the minimum distance and some much further. Two or three fell foul of the 'no tolerance' rule, were denied any points, and learned a valuable lesson! We had our first scoring day won by our house pundit Denis Campbell in his Ventus 2CT.

Day 4, although windy, provided much better conditions with epic thermals and a high cloudbase.

It also went blue to our South later but provided a good

opportunity to set a PST task. Many pilots overset especially going too far South late in the day. One canny pilot went as far North as he dared and won the day by choosing to declare a task in the better conditions.

Day 5 was another windy but good soaring day where we set a RAT. The base task took the pilots onto the Cotswolds then around Calvert and Chievley for 186K. The long alternatives gave pilots the choice of MAR or WES for the third

turn. Glen Alison, the day winner, and most others figured that the approaching front would make MAR difficult and DEV impossible so chose the base task. Those that tried to go longer both landed out! Day 6 was a scrub.

Day 7 looked like another very difficult and windy day. The Director umm'd and err'd for a while before setting a short AAT based around SIL. Some completed, many landed out but still a worthwhile and scoring day. Yes, all days score! The day was won by Geoff Tabbner who landed out, but did so quickly and at the right time scoring good speed points. Day 8 was a scrub.

And so to our last day which started overcast and disappointing. The cold front went through at lunchtime and left us with the possibility of a short



Director Jim checks the weather

task into wind to the South. A RAT was set round BAS and NES with GBE and AVE as alternatives. It proved too difficult and everyone either abandoned the task or landed out. Alan Johnstone won the day by flying the furthest.

The overall competition was won by Denis Campbell (Pundit) with Geoff Tabbner (Chairman) second and Jim Pengelly (Novice) a deserving third.

Reflections on the competition



Waiting for the launch

Given the weather we did a lot of flying, learned a great deal, ate a lot of fabulous BBQs, and drank a fair amount of beer. Feedback from the competitors was all positive and everyone claims to have enjoyed the competition. The club also got a 100 launches it would otherwise not have done and there was a tangible clubbiness about the place. Whilst pilots flew and achieved tasks in conditions they would otherwise have rejected we did, unfortunately, sustain some damage in field landing accidents.

Feedback also showed that whilst we briefed well, we were a bit too relaxed about the grid. There was also a view that we could have explained the scoring system better to the mathematically challenged. We decided early on that it was OK to get the format wrong in the first year. It was largely fine

but we shall need to consider whether the completion bonus was big enough and whether to further handicap turbos if we go again.

What the competition did show was that it is possible to run an interesting and challenging competition that is accessible for low experience pilots. It successfully introduced them to competition flying and provided a great opportunity for them to learn new skills and gain confidence in their XC flying. It was also done cheaply and simply with the least possible burden upon the organisers and staff.

Jim White

Travels with my Discus

A cautionary tale

Oh S*%t, was the last comment I made as my stalled Discus plummeted towards the ground from a height that was less than required to do me any damage, but more than required to destroy the undercarriage, and as the undercarriage was shoved upwards into the fuselage, most of the space frame, and the control linkages that are mounted to it.



Ready to go

This is the tale of how I came to encourage the underwriters to lift their premiums. I hope that by telling it, some lessons can be learned by all of us and that over time a reduced rate of accidents similar to mine will bring insurance premiums down again.

Monday 2 May was deemed to be the first flyable day of the Booker Rules task week. This was to be only my third foray into the world of cross country gliding, and the first that involved a grid launch and the potential of flying alongside some really experienced pilots. My other two flights had been a very early flight to Bicester and back, in wonderful conditions, followed by a much more recent flight to Enstone via Bicester, and returning Bicester- Didcot-Booker. I had tried to go to Enstone once before at the end of 2010, but landed out safely at Thame.

In preparation for the task week, I spent an hour tuning my field landing skills in the club motor glider, with a patient Steve Williams, and many hours at the club waiting for conditions to improve so that I could get a couple of soaring flights in. I also installed a Redbox flarm, and iPaq running XCsoar.



Trace of the flight shows the strength of the wind, and the difficulty I was having staying up wind.

The wind was strong on the Monday. Really strong, and gusty, and there was some suggestion that the day would be scrubbed. I decided from a personal point of view to follow the advice of our duty instructor and safety officer, along with some other pilots, that we the inexperienced pilots, shouldn't fly, and the grid left without us. But the day was sunny, and Cu were forming into streets, and an hour or so later, with the wind at Booker significantly moderating, I decided to take a launch, and see what it was like in the air. (Mistake 1: I should have reviewed the current wind around the task, rather than just at Booker.)

Coming off tow and straight into a 5 knot thermal which took me within a few feet of the local airspace, followed by a dash across to the 4500ft airspace and another strong climb, left me feeling pretty good about the potential for poking around the shortest route that would complete the days AAT. So off I

charged. Phew, it was pretty hard work staying on the windward edge of the course, but I found that by maintaining a relatively high airspeed in cruise, I could regain the ground lost in the thermals. (Mistake 2: I should have realised how strong the wind was on the ground, based on the difficulty I was having staying at the windward side of the course.) The wind at flying height was probably in excess of 30 knots. I should have high-tailed it back to Booker even then, but I thought that the wind might moderate more which would make getting back over the Chilterns easier later on. Getting low at

Thame I started setting up for a field landing at Haddenham strip. But as luck would have it I got a strong climb from about 1500 feet, right up to cloud-base at 4500 feet. So off I went into wind again.

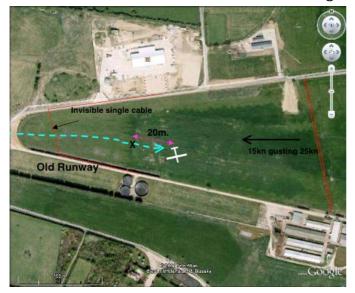
Try as I might, after a while, I could only find little bubbles here and there, and started getting low again at Winslow, which happened to be the first turn point I had selected. My intention from there was to fly back to Thame and then back to

Booker. (didn't all those instructions say something like go around a windward turnpoint low, and regain the height on your way down wind......) But I got low, and selected a great field that is part of the disused Little Harwood airfield. I was just setting up to do an upwind leg so that I could complete a circuit, when boom I hit a saviour thermal. Wouldn't it be great if I got away, and got around the task...! Turning as steeply as I could in the tiny core, I was half in and half out of the thermal. (Just as Mike Collett the CFI predicted, for a low thermal in



The accident site on the disused Little Horwood airfield near Winslow. I wasted the opportunity to fly a circuit by trying to thermal away.

strong wind) and couldn't make any gains, but drifted down wind, and wasted the opportunity to do a proper circuit. (Mistake 3: I should have realised the strength and gustiness of the wind (20kn gusting 25kn), and immediately made my way upwind for a proper circuit.) Half way through my attempts to get away, I decided to lower the U/C so that in the stress of my second field landing I wouldn't forget later on. I tried a couple more circles, before actually realising that I had wasted the circuit. Back to the field, I had seen the electricity poles running down both sides of the field (south side obscured by pine trees) and the wires strung across the far end of the field and noted that the field was flat with short grass with no stock, and it was long in the



Note the location of the power line across the threshold

direction I wanted to land. I decided to land at the near end of the field, so that if I overshot I wouldn't be anywhere near the powerlines.

Descending to the North and downwind of the field, I flew a normal base leg. I think I unconsciously selected an approach speed of about 60knots. (Mistake 4: in the strong gusty wind conditions, an approach speed of 65 or 70kts would have been more appropriate.)

Sometime after completing my final turn, I noticed a single wire strung across the threshold of the field. My

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glide slope was above it, but just to make sure, to ensure good clearance, I raised the nose and may have put the airbrakes away, but can't remember, before returning to a normal approach with airbrakes deployed. But I never regained the speed (Mistake 5: I should have checked the airspeed, or at least got the attitude right.), and then it went quiet.ASI 40kt!....what the hell......too low to recover, remember choosing to hold the attitude as far as possible and pancake on to the ground. I ran out of ideas and airspeed and height at about the same time. (Mistake 6: I should have put the airbrakes away. It might have helped.) BANG. Body check, yep all there. Toes wiggling, so that's good.....

I immediately rang my crew, Marnie my wife, to say I was safe but that the glider had sustained damage, and went in search of the landholder.

- Damage to me. Slightly bruised back and badly bruised self esteem.
- Damage to the glider: U/C, spaceframe, control linkages written off. Fuselage, canopy, wings and tailplane all OK.
- Estimated cost of repair: £17,500. Ouch.

Mistakes

- I should have reviewed the current wind around the task area, rather than iust at Booker.
- I should have interpreted the ground wind speed from the high windspeed at flying height, and returned to Booker.
- I should have realised the strength and gustiness of the wind while trying to get away from near my selected landing field, and immediately made my way upwind for a proper circuit. I would have had more opportunities to see that single wire, and also to think about and stabilise my approach speed.
- In the strong gusty wind conditions, an approach speed of 65 or 70kts rather than 60kts would have been more appropriate and would have helped to maintain control in a strong windshear.
- After clearing the wire, I should have re-checked the airspeed, or at least got the attitude right.
- I should have put the airbrakes away to improve the wings lift as soon as I sensed that I was slow.

Other contributing factors:

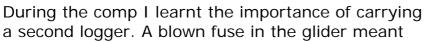
- I had low experience, (70+ hrs and not many on type) and only a single previous out-landing which was in relatively benign conditions.
- It is possible that the ending of a gust (possibly associated with the thermal I had been trying to get away in) caused the fairly dramatic drop in airspeed. However this may not have affected me had I the right airspeed in the first place. There could also have been a severe wind shear close to the ground
- 'Got to have a go'-itis, got the better of me. I really wanted to mix it with the more experienced pilots, and get around my first task.

Needless to say, I didn't score enough points even to get the wooden spoon trophy, and so relegated myself to co-piloting the BBQ for the week.

Ladder Corner

The season is well under way and the Booker Competition in early May put us in a position where until the local weather locked us in on 14 May we were top of the weekend ladder. Olli Llewellyn was also at the top of the Junior ladder.

Don't forget to put your flights on the ladder, this helps the gliding movement as a whole to stake our place in the skies.



the EW D was on backup battery which gave out, and I couldn't download the flight data, fortunately my backup logger, an EW B, still worked.



A few thoughts on Flight Analysis

If you download a task from the ladder into SeeYou you can do some analysis on it and consider the strong and weak points in your performance. I have my EW D logger set on a 3 second interval and the EW B is on a 12 second interval. This makes for interesting circling profiles. If you do a 20 second circle with 3 second interval you will get 6 or 7 fixes but on a 12 second interval only 1 or 2. So a 3 second interval will give you a good idea of the shape of your circling whereas on a 12 second interval it just looks like you are jiggling around.

Checking for Airspace Infringements can be done on the route page or the graph page and 'Control + I' on the keyboard (thanks Ben for this) will give you a list of them, hopefully all pre-approved.

The graph page gives you a vertical profile of your flight. You can easily see how well you have been climbing by how steep your line is and whether you left at the right time, or lingered too long in a failing thermal.

Have a look at **the statistic page**. There is lots of useful info on this page. **Thermalling v Gliding %:** I am informed that if you spend much more than a third of your time climbing you are probably not being as efficient as you could be!

How much of your time do you spend turning left as opposed to right. Are you more successful one way or another? Does it vary from day to day? I have heard people say that for example 'today was a left hand day'.

What is your average length of glide and the average L/D at which you did them? See how long your glides are on a particular day compared to one of the pundits. If they are gliding for 15 kms and you are only gliding for 7 or 8kms then perhaps you are stopping to turn too often.

Go the phase tab: By clicking on this you can uncover more details of the flight. Then by clicking on the column headings at the top of the page you can sort the data.

AVario: Is your average climb rate really as good as you thought it was?

Dis Done will give you the length of your glides and sorting by **Avg IAS** will give you the speed at which you did them. Was your final glide really as fast as you thought it was?

D/H is interesting. It is the L/D for the glide in the relevant phase. A –ve figure means you were climbing in that glide phase and any +ve figure above the glide ratio for your glider shows you chose good air.

There is a lot of info in Seeyou that can be useful in improving our flying. I'm sure that some of you have discovered ways of analysing your flights that will be helpful to us all, so please feel free to share them in print, lecture or on the XC forum. The book 'Beyond Gliding Distance' by Flavio Formosa published by Thin Air, and available in the office, has a chapter on flight analysis and I think many useful points helping us to untie the strings that bind us to home.

Don't forget to put our club tasks in your PDA so if the task you have declared proves to be the wrong one you can revert to one of the club tasks and treat it as a declared one.

BOB-BIC-DID-BOO 100k FAI triangle (The Milk Run)

BOB-MEM-BOO 100k o/r

SOS-FMA-AVE-BOO 200k FAI triangle

(FMA is Four Marks station on the Watercress line, south of Basingstoke)

BOB-ANE-BUC-BOO 200k triangle

BOB-FRO-EVE-BOO 300k FAI triangle

BOB-BUL-COB-BOO 300k triangle

Meanwhile continue to share your flights with your fellow club members and don't forget to make comments on the ladder about your experience. These are read and really well received by the rest of us.

<u>Jeremy Gilbey</u> jeremygilbey@mail.com





Chris Collett and Jim Van Aalst

Rigged in the hangar ready for you to fly!

'Goofy' is a privately-owned 1947 Slingsby T21, previously kept derigged in its trailer. With the kind permission of the Committee, she will now be kept *fully rigged* in the main Booker hangar during the summer months (apart from 2 weeks in August when she will be at a Vintage rally in Austria) ready for use whenever wanted by the syndicate members.

In order to cover the cost of keeping her in the Hangar over the summer, we are currently offering a number of Insurance ('Hangar!') shares for £150 each. Members joining the syndicate will also need to be members of the VGC (£27.50 plus £5 joining fee).



This is a wonderful opportunity to experience the fun of open cockpit vintage gliding!

For more information contact: Jeremy Gilbey (jeremygilbey@mail.com

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 bookergc-Expeditions-subscribe and

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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