

GLIDEPATH



The Journal of Wessex Soaring Association. March 2019
BMFA Club No 2759

From the Editor

Probably the most important item in this edition of Glidepath is that on the new 'drone' exclusion zones around airfields, which as Martin mentions below affects our use of Win Green and Death Valley. Elsewhere there are reports from Mike Seale on problems with the springs on FrSky transmitters and from Mark Deverell on recent flying activities and changes relating to large model regulations. Also, in I think a first for Glidepath, Mark has composed a poem in which he ponders some of the hardships endured by modellers for our sport.

From the Chair

Winter Warmer

The Winter Warmer went off well, and 17 chaps had a lovely meal and chat at the Grove Arms in Ludwell, I am sure we all send thanks to Nina our host. The only drawback was that it was rather cosy with so many of us. Thanks also go to Ian Duff who helped organise this popular event, I am sure we will be doing it again next year.



Drone Law

I am sure most, if not all, of you know that the law regarding flying model aircraft/drones near airfields is changing. This has moved forward faster than the BMFA expected, and will become law soon. The **only WSA slope affected is Death Valley however the public site at Win Green will also just come into the 5km restriction for Compton Abbas airport.** The new regulations state that permission must be obtained from the airport before flying, so I am hoping to contact the local clubs so we can get a united approach as to how this can be arranged. I will also contact the BMFA to see what they advise. **The regulations come into effect on 13th March so until arrangements with the airfield are agreed, after that date there should be no flying at Death Valley or Win Green.** To do so would mean that your BMFA insurance was not valid, as you would be flying in a restricted zone without permission.

E Soaring Pre-season meeting

The E Soaring meeting also went well with 10 chaps coming out to meet at The Horton Inn. After a debate on the suggested changes to the usual rules we agreed to leave things as they are, but we would make welcome anyone from Geoff's 100" comp if they wanted to join in. It was also felt that the

club need not make a height limiter available for guest use, as fiddling with electronics on the field is generally a bad idea.

Impromptu Slope fly in

A good call from Ian Wettstein saw a few of us enjoying really nice conditions at OXO/Swallowcliffe. I tested the replacement canopy I made from polystyrene for my Jantar (thanks for the donation Mike). It seemed to work well and is around the same weight as the original. I have now painted it and split it so I can get at the innards. Some of you may know that the original canopy met an unplanned end when the fuselage fell off my workbench and landed upside down on the canopy which smashed into it a gazillion pieces ! The replacement looks pretty good as long as you do not get too close !



Google Group

Doug has been working to change the settings on the Group so when you hit "reply" it automatically sends to everyone in the group. Before this change you had to make sure you hit "reply all" otherwise it would only go back to the original sender.

40 Years

As I mentioned in last month's "From The Chair" this year marks 40 years of the WSA and we are planning to hold a couple of events to commemorate this.

Slope Tour

This event is mainly aimed at newcomers but if there is enough interest I will run it anyway. So if anyone would like a tour of our most used slope sites please contact me at martinburr9@gmail.com.

Slopeside by Pete Carpenter

What we believe to be the situation on each slope is as described below, however it is not always possible to contact every landowner each month and we have no wish to pester them. For Sallowcliffe and OXO please take extra care when parking, and do not drive down past the brow of the track in wet conditions or you may get stuck. If in doubt, walk onto the field and track first to check! Please use your own common sense and apply the countryside rules. Therefore if things look different at a site, particularly if it involves crops or livestock, please do not enter and contact me on pete.carpenter@yahoo.co.uk or 01722 328728.

- 1) Winklebury:- Available.
- 2) Norrington Down:- Available
- 3) Donkey Valley:- Available.
- 4) Swallowcliffe :- Slope available. It is believed that this slope is going to be put back to cereal, in which case we must obviously not drive onto the crop.
- 5) Quarry: Available. Access to the slope must be via the Stony Down / Berwick St John route only. Launching and landing from the slope face is OK, but the slope is perfectly flyable from the Berwick St John field. You may encounter some paraglider as they also have permission from the farmer to fly there. In this case it is best to have a friendly chat with them and see if you can agree separate airspaces for models and paragliders.
- 6) Oxo: Available and at the last check, sheep-free
- 7) Horses/Barbara's Field:- Available.
- 8) Daltons 1&2 :- Available
- 9) Crockerton :-Available subject to rules in slope guide.
- 10) Death Valley. **No flying after 13th March until arrangements are agreed with Compton Abbas airport (the same applies for Win Green)**
- 11) Berwick St John, Stony Down :- Available. Code on gate padlock is 5823 . Please do not over fly the parked cars on your landing approach at Stony Down
- 12) East Bowl:- Available. it is available but there is now a gate with a keycode, which is 7850. The shepherd is Mr.Fletcher (red Toyota pick-up) and he has asked that anyone parking on the track put a little note on the dashboard of their car, letting him know that they are a WSA member.

There are also a number of public slope sites, particularly in the Purbecks that anybody can fly from. A list of these is maintained on [Christchurch Club's website](#) so please have a look there for details.

Flat Field Update

If you are the first to arrive at Chalbury go to the green box in the farm yard.

1. The field number is shown on the small plate on the box front . LEAVE THAT WHERE IT IS.
2. Remove the large red plate from inside the box and place it on the box front. It indicates the WSA are on site.
3. Also take the required equipment out of the box and to the flying field, i.e peg board, bungees etc.
3. If it is an event where you are expecting a large number of people take the corresponding field number out of the box and place it on the fence hook at the road entrance to the drive. There is no need to put the number on the hook if you are flying there alone or with just a few other people
- 4 The last to leave the site, ensure everything is replaced in the box, including the red plate and number on hook if used, but LEAVING THE FIELD NUMBER INDICATOR ON THE BOX FRONT.

Be aware of the field condition, e.g. after rain. Do NOT leave wheel spin marks. If in doubt, park off the lane outside the field. Leave space for farm traffic.

Be aware of footpaths across the fields, Do not launch if walkers are on the paths. Do not launch if horse riders are nearby.

No low flying over power lines. **No flying over farm buildings and the cottage, AT ANY HEIGHT, or immediately upwind of the farm complex.**

Fly SAFELY at all times. Especially launching and landing. Do not launch over cars and do not approach a landing over other flyers, fly a proper circuit.

Report any problems to the flat field rep, Doug Bowmann.

FrSky Taranis Gimbal Springs by Mike Seale

I took the opportunity to take a trip to Win Green on Saturday 2 February. This was the day after we had a good snowfall and the conditions were just about perfect with a smooth 20mph NNW and clear blue skies. I had had a few flights and was about 10 minutes into a flight with my Phase 5 when it suddenly lost control and rolled into the hillside. I had no idea why until I looked at the transmitter and noticed that the aileron stick was not centring. Back home I took the back off my transmitter and, as expected, found that the spring had broken. So, even though I still had full control of the model, it was

impossible to centre the ailerons properly. I do not know whether I would have been able to fly it had I known this but do not intend experimenting to find out.

I obviously need to get some new springs to fix the problem, but where from? A little Googling identified that many others have experienced a spring failure on their Taranis transmitters. This is worrying and means that a non-FrSky replacement would be needed. I am guessing that the springs from other manufacturers' radios do not break very often, since they seem very hard to source. FrSky springs, on the other hand, are very easy to find.

In the short term I have removed some springs from a 19-year old Multiplex transmitter and will fly with these springs for a while before checking their condition. I expect that they will last forever! I will also see if I can order some Futaba springs as a replacement to get the Multiplex transmitter serviceable again.

Why did the original springs break? Attached are a few images that might highlight the problem. It would appear that one end of the spring is deforming instead of the coil doing all the work. I think this is work-hardening the wire until it fails. I am fairly sure that there is a quality control issue with FrSky springs, which is perhaps unsurprising considering the quality of some other Chinese metallurgy!

I do not want to be an unnecessary scare-monger, but considering this is not an isolated occurrence I do wonder if other Taranis users might want to check their springs. This will require that the springs are removed because you will not be able to inspect both ends of the spring in situ. Whether this is a concern for you might depend on your flying preference. Slope soaring and aerobatics require a lot of full deflection flying and clearly put a lot of pressure on the springs. E-soaring will only stretch the springs to their limits occasionally and reduce the chance of a failure.

Image A – Broken spring. The break is where the loop that fixes to the gimbal and presumably is stretching and relaxing leading to work-hardening.



Image B – Unstressed end. The loop is still round and shows no sign of stress.



Image C – Stressed end. The loop is slightly oval and must have stretched into this shape.



To Infinity and Beyond by Mark Deverell

After three years of fast growing cataracts I now have two new eyes and found myself up at White Sheet with a goodly proportion of flyers from the Scale Soaring Forum and a SW wind blowing around 12 knots onto the bowl, wooppeeeee! My 3.5m Epsilon was put to good use. This was rather marred by a parascender flying up and down the ridge on the bowl between us and our gliders. I gave in and landed but this went on for a while and he was joined by another doing the same. I know they are supposed to take off and fly away but they did not and so obviously wanted to make a point and restrict our flying. I left early and looked back at the ridge from the main road and they were still doing it. Incidentally if anyone is thinking of getting new lens fitted in their eyes I had two long distance ones so I could see my gliders, brilliant!

Having felt my elation rather crushed, the forecast lifted it again with a 12-14knots SSW wind on Ringstead the next day, and sun was forecast as well. I launched for an early am flight on the slope. I was the only person there, the slight crispness to the day coupled with the sun's warmth felt through my insulated suit giving a degree of wellbeing to me. I had launched a Wowings Skua, the first chance to get it wound up to speed since I had it. A clear bright sky with plenty of lift for this 'higher wind model' provoked a need for speed and recklessness that I enjoyed to the full! The only thing that stopped me was the need to pick the grandchildren up from school, oh well.

The Large Model Association (LMA) has just circulated the latest amendments to the Air Navigation Act and there are a few details in there that captured my attention:

1. Registration of UAV pilots (that's us) or operators. How and when will be determined by an agency called 'Skywise' from November 2019.
2. Competency testing, that should prove interesting for slopers!
3. A ten figure registration number to be displayed on our gliders; this will not do much for scale models. I am not sure what the police are expected to be able to see on a small fast moving glider or even a drone that is misbehaving at height, no doubt they will come equipped with suitable binoculars
4. Police now have the powers to search and seize data contained from within our gliders (sorry UAVs) but only with a warrant. They are welcome to my Rx; just shows how much the CAA know about our sport.
5. The maximum weight for our gliders has been raised to 20kg.

I might think twice about flying a 20kg glider at less than 400feet. Jessops the camera firm have got in on the act as well with the CAA and are offering advice on their products to the drone world, I am sure they will appreciate it.

There are more than a few pages of legalese to get your mind around including extending restricted areas around airports and including more definitions which also restrict over 2kg kites; now does that include the control lines and their handles? I digress, but will leave the reading to you. P.S. It will be suitable to read last thing at night and put sheep counting out of business.

Finally I have decided to to have a attempt at writing some poetry, I hope you like it .

Bbrrrrrr, its bloomin -4 in my shed
I sit cutting and gluing the balsa
I should be cuddled up in my bed
Long hours getting cold and stiff
Two rings and I get watered and fed
The kids think we had a tiff
But all I'm doing is building in my shed!

Tarrant Hinton Event 24th Feb by Geoff Collins

The weather for was perfect, but alas only five pilots made it. So with insufficient numbers for a competition we had a practice day instead. It was ideal conditions to test fly planes.

Darren Bumpass flew his 3.6m Pulsar with an increased prop size of 17x13 that gave it a more positive climb. Ian Duff flew his light weight Maxima again very smooth air, and having not flown for couple of months it was perfect conditions for honing those skills that elude me ! Nigel Bennett came along with a new 2.3m R/E model with a very thin wing section that flew well, a very light weight model I should think. Doug Bowman bought out his Avia and settled in some good long flights; no fuss he just flew with what looks like a very nice plane indeed. I have a new Bitsa which I have flown a couple of times and am very pleased so far. I changed the elevator part of the stabiliser to a larger chord and added a steel wing bolt to retain the stab which sent the CoG right up the shoot. Therefore I slowly added weight to the nose and by the end of the session may have found the correct balance. I fly mode 1 so I can have rudder and elevator on my left stick and managed to climb away a couple of times with only a couple of inputs from the right stick ailerons . The nose weight was still shy but I was running out of space to fit it inside the nose so will try and find some UNF aluminium bolts or will have to drill out the steel centre to save weight at the back end.

All in all it was a nice flying day with no damage. I look forward to the comp at the end of March, which is the last one of the winter series. I will then hold a very basic comp at Tarrant Hinton for any plane up to 100in span with a height limiter , as many controls as you wish and no minimum weight. Just resurrect those old 100 inch span models and enjoy a very low spec/ tech comp with one on one scoring no spot landing. Bring a chair to enjoy the day , and I look forward to seeing as many of you as can make it.

Calendar

2/3 March

Sun 24 Mar

6/7 April

Slope Fly-in

Tarrant Hinton E-soaring

Slope Fly-in

Contacts

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