

GLIDEPATH



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

From the Editor

I have now managed to get Glidepath back on schedule and hopefully will manage to keep it like that. As well as competition reports this edition contains the second half of Richard Docketty's epic on Eddie the Eagle, which does look most impressive when flying. There is also an article from Mark Deverell about a Ghost Squadron meeting where due to the wind a number of models were seen flying almost stationary. Though to a Gentle Lady pilot this does not seem strange as in anything more than about 10mph of wind the Lady will often be seen flying backward, and definitely not for turning! Finally Nigel Bennett describes his recent cataract operations which is a condition I expect affects many flyers of a certain age. I do though like the fact that he choose the replacement lenses so he would have the best possible vision at long ranges, clearly a man who has his priorities right.

From the Chair

Hi all, well, I finally managed to get a competition in at Chalbury, more on that in a different report. It has been a rather poor period for settled weather, so let us hope things calm down a bit, and we can all get some good flying in soon.

40 Years of the WSA BBQ

I had very little interest in this event, so I can only assume that you have heard about my cooking! We would like to do something to mark this event and the committee is meeting in early July to discuss options. If you have any suggestions please let me know at martinburr9@gmail.com

Chris Williams Scale Days

Chris organises scale events at Whitesheet hill. The hill has excellent slopes in various directions, but not all are covered. Chris is also a member of the WSA so we suggested that, if it was needed, he could try using our slopes for the event to save it being cancelled. WSA would of course be welcome to join in, but bear in mind it is a scale event. If this situation arises I will email round to let you chaps know what to expect!

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. **Not Available until 1st August**
- 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.
4. 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
5. 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.

Eddie the Fledgling Eagle (Part 2) by Richard Docketty

Alex Bush from the CDMFC persuaded me to bring Eddie along to a members meet as part of their build and show competition, and then reminded me one of the requirements of the competition was to have the model (successfully) flown before it would be allowed to take part in the final judging later in the year. Gulp!

By far the best slope I could think of for Eddie's maiden flight was Wether Down, or Mercury as local flyers call it, named after a long since defunct Royal Navy shore establishment in the Meon Valley. It is a private slope used by the MVSA and shared with the Sky Surfers Club, a hang glider and parasailing club. With a long east facing slope and a huge flat landing area behind it was perfect for

testing new gliders of all shapes and sizes, All I had to do was wait for the east wind to blow on a day I was available to go flying. So somewhat impatiently I waited, and waited, and waited....until several days of easterlies were forecast. Those east winds are like London buses, you do not see one for absolutely ages and then a number come along one after the other. Nearly a whole week of easterlies was forecast; surely I must be able to fly on at least one of those days.

As luck would have it, there was one day I was available to fly, Monday 13th May; thank goodness it was not a Friday. The excitement of finally getting Eddie airborne was rapidly replaced with pre-flight nerves! Had I set the CoG right/or was the CoG on the plan even right? Was it trimmed right? Would the drag ailerons need different handling to avoid tip stalling? Would the wind even be strong enough, as the advice was Eddie needed a 12mph+ wind to fly well? Even down to silly things like can I trust the new battery I bought for Eddie not to fail? All these things were buzzing around my head leaving me feeling like an old mother hen.

One nice thing though, Monday the 13th was the same day my wife had already booked a day's holiday and she agreed to join me on the slope as the official recorder of whatever was going to happen, good or bad. This was on the understanding that once the maiden flight was complete I would take her to a nearby National Trust House, Hinton Ampner, for afternoon tea. How could I refuse such an offer; I love afternoon teas.

The Maiden Flight – 13th May 2019

True to the forecast, the east wind was still there under a beautiful blue sky and when we arrived at the slope there were already a number of members enjoying the conditions with a range of different models vying for airspace. 'At least that proves there's lift out there' I told myself in an effort to slow my heart rate down a bit.

A number of good friends from the club had arrived to offer both moral and practical support to Eddie, who must have been getting a bit nervous about his first flight too! Something I did not tell anyone, especially not Eddie, was there was a large dustbin bag secreted in my rucksack in case the flight did not go so well. This was based on the old adage, 'if you do not take it you will need it.....'

First things first, the pre-flight checks. Are the wing bolts securely fastened? Is the battery still fully charged ? Are the control surfaces centred and respond to the TX commands. Are they moving in the right direction and to the right amount ,etc etc? Time for a test glide.....

1st test glide – the slope has a gentle curve which gets steeper so it is good for glide tests if you start further back from the flight line. Checks complete Eddie was given a firm launch and he immediately ballooned upwards, only being saved from a stall by a very quick application of full down elevator and easing off just a bit to achieve a glide. A lot more down elevator was needed so a combination of manual and program adjustment was made and the trims reset to zero.

2nd test glide – much much better this time with Eddie gliding about 50ft before gently landing back on the slope. Time to test Eddie in the big blue? The consensus was yes, if only the wind was a bit stronger. By now it was late morning and the wind was only about 8-10mph , I was hoping for at least 12mph, but it was increasingly thermic so I took the decision it was a go for Eddie's maiden flight. What is it as they say, 'fortune benefits the brave', or was it 'fools rush in.....' , either way it was time to put Eddie through his paces.

Maiden Flight – Pilot Notes: Jim, who had helped me cut the wings out all that time ago, offered to launch Eddie while I kept both hands firmly on the sticks. My wife, Yvonne, stood further down the slope ready to record the flight no matter how it went.

A final check of the controls and I gave Jim the nod it was OK to launch in his own time. A jog forward and with a gentle measured throw and Eddie was airborne, well sort of doggedly hugging the contour of the slope while canting from side to side. First decision time, land him or let him get out into the lift? Much to the consternation of Jim, who admitted later he would have landed, I chose the latter and

Eddie moved out into the valley but still below the launch point. Oh dear, had I made the right decision, is he going to land out at the bottom of the slope and will I need that dustbin bag after all? A little trimming of the elevator and Eddie began to climb and was soon soaring above us doing wide figure of eight circuits looking just like an eagle should. The lift was not the best and a bit patchy so the flight was a mixture soaring high above us then at eye level or below, so after what seemed like a long time , though Yvonne tells me it was just under 3 minutes, I decided Eddie had done enough to earn his wings and I returned him to the launch point for a slope side landing. Eddie was obviously quite pleased with himself too as he did a little pirouette on landing.

I could not have hoped for a better test flight, well apart from wanting a bit more wind. We had a beautiful setting, wonderful weather, good friends as witness and my lovely wife who produced a smashing video of it all <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7eLrEtQDnJ8>

Next Stage – Some Plumage

Now Eddie had successfully fledged he had earned the right to look like the true Eagle he is and not the 'bald' eagle he was for the maiden flight. So with paint at the ready I waited till the weather had warmed up and dried up a bit so Eddie could get his wish of a full set of feathers before his next outing.



I am told the local rooks and crows on Wether Down do not like birds of prey much and the Red Kites have been following (chasing?) normal gliders so the next flight could be interesting. Watch this space.

E Soaring Round 3 by Martin Burr

Well we made it at last ! Round 3 took place despite a fairly unfavourable forecast. The Met and XC Weather both suggested that it would be rather windy with possible showers. In the end the wind was very light and variable, with no rain . A low turnout of chaps due to operations and a wedding, made it very easy for me to organise and thanks to Doug's help we made an early start.

2.3m Class

Ian Wettstein showed us all how to do it, campaigning a new plane he got from Nigel and in his hands it was unbeatable in the conditions. He is unused to the rather odd rudder elevator handling but it did not seem to bother him too much, a well-deserved win !

Pos	Name	Score	Rnd 1	Rnd 2	Rnd 3	Rnd 4
1	Wettstein, Ian	3,852.3	852.3	1000	1000	1000
2	Burr, Martin	3,597.9	1000	1000	744.9	853
3	Collins, Geoff	3,324.9	657.9	745.9	921.1	1000
4	Bowman, Doug	3,079.8	542.2	940.4	1000	597.2
5	Bush, Alex	2,657.6	1000	686.5	971.1	0

4m Class

The afternoon comp saw Terry join in with the flying, in the morning he was helping with timing, so 6 pilots assaulted the air. The conditions were much the same as the morning, generally light lift with no significant thermals or sink, except for "Ian's corner" Ian found a small patch of reliable lift a long way upwind which he could reach because his plane has an excellent motor setup which gives his plane a good turn of speed. He capitalised on this every time and made to most of it to take his second win of the day. I nearly had him on one round, but I made a mess of my landing and handed it to him. Very well flown Ian. It was a very nice day with no significant problems and even a mid-air on launch did not cause any major trouble.

Pos	Name	Score	Rnd 1	Rnd 2	Rnd 3	Rnd 4
1	Wettstein, Ian	4000	1000	1000	1000	1000
2	Burr, Martin	3,745.7	1000	745.7	1000	1000
3	Antell, Terry	3,132.3	595.2	1000	695.1	842
4	Bowman, Doug	3,000.7	818.4	782.7	672.1	727.5
5	Collins, Geoff	2,671.5	611.7	678.6	855.1	526.1
6	Bush, Alex	2,439.2	591.4	622.9	594.9	630

Ok so on to the next round in July when hopefully a few more chaps may be able to come along.

Slowly Does It by Mark Deverell

I am just back from hiding in the caravan in a field near Cheddar, by any other name it was the Ghost Squadron annual meet and fly in. At 812 feet high on a large plateau above the Bristol Channel we got only two completely clear days of flying out of a weeks stay; not a lot of glider flying took place and there was minimal towing. Wind and rain versus man's efforts to fly.

Pilots seemed to spend their time managing a new type of competition, 'The Slowest Fly of the Week!' Many old models were brought out, all built up with two channel control, masses of dihedral and both diesel and electric power though neither seemed to have the upper hand. Joining in the fun when the heavens did not interfere, I used my Tundra foamie which I had not flown for 2-3 years and got down to the serious business of flying at less than walking speed against the wind. I found that

with less than half flaps deployed, any more and throttle was needed to counteract the braking affect, coupled with something like a quarter throttle applied and balancing the ailerons against the buffeting wind I was at times, stationary but never with the sense of control that the old timers could manage.

The usual thrills and spills of flying were taking place, an upmarket jet went in after the owner flew too slow and did not have time to rebuild the speed he had lost; the jet engine takes time to spool up to efficient power levels. His ability to control the elevator and the model took a time to complete an outside loop ending, as always at ground level. A £99 HK speedy model was more spectacular, its owner directing ever lower passes down the grass landing zone culminating in high speed climbs and loops and no guesses where the last loop ended! As per Top Gun, no permission was given! The pilot who I would say has one of the safest pair of hands in the business but lost his mantle in a resounding whuuumpphh! He blamed outside interference from a friend talking to him. The usual tail overs, cartwheels, getting stuck at the side of the landing zone etc were happening with frequency until someone suggested the grass had grown since we had been there and so the mower was started to reshape the green stuff. More than a few pilots puffed their chests out in a show of righteousness, see, models crashing was not their fault! I will admit to one tailover on landing, windshear, of course!

I Can See Clearly Now by Nigel Bennett

Some of you may have noticed over the last 2 or 3 years that I have crashed or lost, four 2.3m gliders in competitions at Chalbury and Tarrant Hinton. In each case I had lost sight of my model at height. As we are an ageing bunch of flyers, cataracts are a common problem, and I thought my experiences might be of interest to others.

I was aware that I had cataracts in both eyes and this year I decided to do something about it. I visited an eye surgeon in Bournemouth who said my eye sight with glasses was very good and he was worried that an operation could make it worse. Whilst my sight was good in a darkened room and viewing the lit up letters board, with a bright sky I knew I suffered from glare and reduced contrast. It did not help driving either, especially at night.

I was recommended an eye surgeon, a Mr Tadros, who operates at the private BMI Winterbourne hospital in Dorchester. An extremely thorough hour long consultation with him convinced me to go ahead. Not cheap at £2k an eye, but with a waiting list of 41 weeks for an NHS op, I decided to go for it. Right eye first then the left some weeks after. Mr Tadros uses anaesthetic eye drops whereas in Bournemouth apparently they inject into the eye. I can not say the experience was pleasant but neither was it particularly painful. And it lasted only about fifteen minutes. Staring into an extremely bright light while the rest of your face is covered, a 2mm slit is made in the eyeball and the existing lens is broken up with ultrasound, and the fragments sucked out. Then somehow the new lens is inserted through the tiny slit, presumably rolled up. He also corrected astigmatism by making cuts which change the shape of the whole eyeball. Mind boggling!

My immediate impression was how bright everything was with the new lens. Not well focussed but I had been advised that would take from 2 to 6 days to settle down. Day 2 there was some hazy fog, but immediately on day 3 I had perfect vision, pin sharp, bright with much more colour everywhere. Brilliant! A few weeks wait till the op on my other eye. I will need reading glasses because although varifocal lenses are possible, it does slightly compromise one range or the other, and I wanted perfect long distance sight.

Because I was aware I would not be flying, or even driving for a few weeks, I decided I needed another model to build! I sold my 3.5m Infinity, which while it is undoubtedly a good performing model, I was never completely happy with some aspects of it. I then bought a new Explorer BF from Ace Models; BF stands for big flaps and they are enormous, almost twice the chord of the normal Xplorer 2 flaps. They were flown by the first and second place finishers in the European F5j championships in 2018, both senior and junior which was convincing.

Relatively cheap compared to most moulded F5j gliders at £1260 from Ace Models, it arrived with virtually nothing but the moulded and painted surfaces, joiners and carbon push/pull rods, all of which are of first class quality. It leaves a lot of work to do, especially the IDS wing servos drives, which suited me because I had a lot of time to spend on it. I will write more on this ground breaking F5j design anon.

Calendar (WSA events in bold)

Sun 30 June	Rosebowl Event
6/7 July	Slope Fly-in
Sun 7 July	Fall back date for WSA 40th Anniversary BBQ
Sun 14 July	E-soaring round 4
Sun 28 July	E-soaring event at Tarrant Hinton
3/4 Aug	Slope Fly-in
Sun 11 Aug	Limbo event
Sun 18 Aug	E-soaring round 5
0/1 Sept	Slope Fly-in
Sun 22 Sept	Multi-task event
Sun 29 Sept	E-soaring event at Tarrant Hinton
Sun 27 Oct	E-soaring event at Tarrant Hinton

Contacts

The committee members for 2019 are;

Chairman- Martin Burr, 01202 773144, martinburr9@gmail.com

Secretary - Bill Ebdon, 01258 861612, bill.ebz@gmail.com

Treasurer and Member Secretary- Alan Butterworth, 07905 765634, ajbutterworth16@gmail.com

Glidepath Editor – Roger Crickmore, 01929 550680, roger.crickmore@btinternet.com

Flat Field Representative – Doug Bowman, 01202 416664, dougbowman@hotmail.co.uk

Slope Representative – Pete Carpenter, 01722 328728, pete.carpenter12@gmail.com

Deputy Slope Representative- Ian Wettstein, 01202 524620 ianwets@gmail.com

Flat Field Competition Director – Martin Burr, 01202 773144, martinburr9@gmail.com

Member without Portfolio - Geoff Collins, 01202 601732, gliderguidergeoff@hotmail.com