

# GLIDEPATH



The Journal of Wessex Soaring Association. August 2021  
BMFA Club No 2759

## **From the Editor**

The weather in July has been rather variable with everything from floods, heat waves and storms; perhaps with climate change this is another 'new normal' we will have to get used to. The first e-soaring competition took place on a day when the temperatures were soaring close to 30 C, and despite the high pressure conditions, the strong sunshine induced much thermal activity so the models were soon soaring sunward as well. I did have visions of some models suffering the same fate of Icarus, but fortunately modern adhesives are rather more heat tolerant than wax and so all was well.

## **From the Chair**

Hi all, looks like we have had the opportunity to do a bit more flying this month, I hope some of you have made it out. We have had a few new members this month, welcome to you all. If you have any questions or I can help in any way please just email me at martinburr9@gmail.com

## **E Soaring**

The weather finally played ball for the E Soaring event. A full report is elsewhere in Glidepath.

## **Picnic Site**

The latest update on this site is that CDMFC (Christchurch and District MFC) are proposing to take on the licence from the M.O.D. The ministry will only deal with one club and wish to ensure that anyone flying on their land is insured via the BMFA.

The annual licence fee is £180, which CDMFC will pay. Anyone flying at this site must become a member of CDMFC (£15) and be a member of the BMFA. CDMFC usually charge a joining fee, but this will be waived.

If you wish to join CDMFC or if you have any questions, please email Alan Butterworth or myself.

## **Slope site access**

The track up to Horses remains very good, however it seems there may be another caravan parked at the top, so you will need to park accordingly. Also Pete has advised us that we will need to park, then walk to OXO/Swallowcliffe.

Well, that is about it from me for this month. Happy landings, Martin.

## **Slopeside** by Pete Carpenter

As far as I am aware there is no change regarding the Oxo/Swallowcliffe situation. There is also still no change with Stoney Down so for the time being we can continue there as we have done. **Please note that Death Valley is no longer available for use this year.** The situation regarding the other slopes is shown below. 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.carpenter12@gmail.com](mailto:pete.carpenter12@gmail.com) or 01722 328728.

- 1) Winklebury (W to NE wind) - Available.
- 2) Norrington Down (S to SW wind) - Available.
- 3) Donkey Valley (SE wind) - Available.
- 4) Swallowcliffe (NW to NNE wind) - **Not Available.**
- 5) Quarry (W to WNW wind) - 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 paragliders 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 (WNW to NW wind) - **Not Available.**
- 7) Horses/Barbara's Field (WNW to NW wind):- Available.
- 8) Daltons 1&2 (NW to NNW wind) - Available.
- 9) Crockerton (NW to NNW wind) - Available subject to rules in slope guide.
- 10) Death Valley (SW wind) - **Not Available.**
- 11) Berwick St John (SW wind), Stony Down (ESE to SE wind) - 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 (NEE to E wind) - Available. There is 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.

### **E Soaring Round 1, July 18th by Martin Burr**

Well we finally made it, on pretty much the hottest day of the year. The conditions turned out to be really thermic, despite the lack of clouds some strong up-currents were found during the day. There was very little breeze (though some would have been welcome for cooling purposes) and so approaches to the landing spots were made from a variety of directions

In view of the forecast temperatures for the afternoon, we decided that for the 2.3m class the target time would be 8min instead of the normal 10min and only run 3 of the usual 4 rounds. Things got underway pretty well and considering we had not run a comp together for quite a while, the rounds progressed reasonably smoothly. I managed to scrape a win using my home built Andreas, which was pleasing while Roger, whose Electric Lady was at home in the calm conditions, came second.

Pos	Name	Score	Rnd 1	Rnd 2	Rnd 3
1	Burr, Martin	3000	1000	1000	1000
2	Crickmore, Roger	2675.4	675.4	1000	1000
3	Bowman, Doug	2196	1000	809.7	386.3
4	Collins, Geoff	2062.1	802.6	382.4	877.1
5	Wettstien, Ian	1699.2	903.6	577.1	218.5
6	Bush, Alex	688.9	264.3	245.8	178.8

By cutting short the morning event we got the afternoon comp running pretty promptly, however, it was getting pretty hot by then. We were initially undecided how many rounds to have, but after a few of them people were getting pretty tired so we called it a day at three as well. Terry Antell achieved a well-deserved win flying his new plane, hopefully he has ironed out all the teething troubles now.

Pos	Name	Score	Rnd 1	Rnd 2	Rnd 3
1	Antell, Terry	2943.9	1000	943.9	1000
2	Burr, Martin	2731.8	731.8	1000	1000
3	Bowman, Doug	2509.7	783.7	1000	726
4	Bumpass, Darren	2415.8	1000	909	506.8
5	Wettstien, Ian	1645.7	971.2	674.5	0
6	Bush, Alex	1496.7	593.7	531.6	371.4

Ok so on to the next event, hopefully the weather will again play ball. Thanks to all that helped and competed on the day.

## **What a Load of Bull** by Frank Bayes

One day at the end of July I thought I would go slope soaring for the first time for some weeks. With a good 15-20mph breeze forecast from the southwest I thought Death Valley (a WSA site) or Bulbarrow would be ideal for a couple of hours before the rain came in.

I arrived at Death Valley with a terrific strong south westerly breeze, perfect for a challenge, bright sunshine and no other cars were there. I climbed over the stile after cutting back the sharp brambles; obviously no one had been there for a time. Perfect conditions I thought but then I spied a large black bull exactly on the flight line and landing area.

Sometimes there are cattle in the valley but they have never been a problem on the slope. This chap was all on his own and he looked up and snorted at me. I saw the white of his eye from 200 yards. I am OK with some animals, but on my own with El Torro, who looked like the grandson of the bull that finished off El Cordobes, I decided to retreat to the car and head for Bulbarrow which as the name would not suggest, was hopefully bereft of bulls.

As I crested the hill in the car to overlook Bulbarrow, I was treated to the sight of a large RAF transport plane, BELOW my eye level, skimming over the old fort. This plane then disappeared into a terrific rainstorm to the north.



The southwest sky looked promising for an hour at least with sunshine blue sky and scudding clouds. I got a model ready but as I opened the gate a giant rain drop hit my nose. I looked up and a narrow grey twister of rain was coming down in my direction. I got in the car as it then bucketed down for about half an hour.

The road was awash so I had my lunch. There was some more rain on the way, but way behind it a beautiful vista of blue sky. I decided to head back to Death Valley as the bull obviously would have gone back to its shed to hide from the rain.

I arrived in bright sunshine, no rain, white clouds blue sky and a very strong breeze. Two magnificent red kites were soaring and seemingly dancing with each other only about 30ft up from the slope. I looked over the stile, no bull to be seen! I got my boots on as everything was very wet, prepared the model, radio gear batteries and my camera.

I stepped over the stile and took a few steps towards the slope, hearing a noise behind me I looked round and saw the bull, a few feet from me which had been lying in wait under the hedge a few feet from the stile. With great presence of mind in the face of great danger, (David Attenborough has nothing on me) I took a quick snap of the creature. I then decided again that I was a namby pamby at heart and retreated to the safety of the car.

On a positive note I had a most enjoyable drive in the beautiful Dorset countryside, explored some tiny side roads on the way home, saw some beautiful houses and had a nice day. I never knew model flying (without actually flying) could be such fun.



### **Towing the Line for a Change** by Bill Ebdon

Whilst chatting to Chris Williams at Daltons recently over my unease at flying with a herd of cows behind me, I mentioned to him that I had finished building his 1/5 scale Slingsby Petrel last October but had not yet had the opportunity to maiden it. He very kindly offered to let me know next time he went flying so I could join him; an opportunity to get assistance and advice from the designer was clearly not to be missed.

A couple of days later I got an email from Chris offering the chance for an aerotow at the County Model Flying Club site. It was a blistering hot Monday with a clear blue sky and very little wind. When I got to the field there were some small cumulus clouds forming and a friendly bunch of fliers assembled, so things looked promising.

The Petrel was assembled and range checked and Chris looked it over and gave it a hand launch into the long grass to get some idea of trim and CG. He quizzed me on its light weight, perhaps wondering which crucial structural bits I might have left out. I was then given a thorough and very clear briefing by Barry my tug pilot who seemed to speak as one who has seen all the mistakes before. With my finger poised on the tow-release (chicken) switch, tow line "all out" and pulse racing I said OK and we were off.



Barry kept the climb-out nice and gentle with the Petrel maintaining a good position without any overtaking and towline snatch. I released at a height which I felt was the realistic limit of my eyesight being able to judge the trim required. It is a real credit to the design of the model that all I needed to do was put in one click of up elevator to achieve a good stately glide.

Trevor Hewson (who also flies a Petrel) was at my shoulder to provide moral support/back-up help and he walked me back to the flight box. He suggested testing the spoilers whilst at a good height which was fine and the stall was very gentle with a smooth recovery. It gradually dawned on me that, despite having been up for five minutes or so, the Petrel was not getting any bigger and there seemed to be lift all over the place.

Now, unlike many of you thermal flyers, the prospect of a glider getting too high is a bit alarming to me with visions of loss of orientation, VNE-exceeding dives and broken spars. Anyway I need not have worried as I left the lift without trying and made a decent landing with my first use of spoilers; right over the other side of the field admittedly, but a soft touchdown.

I was really delighted and had another couple of tows (one from Geoff Crew and another from Barry) which were equally enjoyable, so an excellent morning's flying. So thanks to Chris, Barry, Geoff and Trevor the maiden was achieved safely in a really enjoyable manner and with no cows to worry about. I am really glad I installed a tow release in the Petrel despite being an exclusively slope flyer, and I must say the appeal of aerotowing is growing on me after this experience.



## **Calendar**

Sun 15th Aug E soaring round 2

Sun 19th Sept E soaring round 3

Sun 17th Oct Multitask

(Each following Sunday will be the fallback date for the e-soaring events)

## **Contacts**

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