

GLIDEPATH



The Journal of Wessex Soaring Association. June 2023

From the Editor

Well summer is finally here and with it has come some good soaring weather (for the flat field fraternity at least). This edition of Glidepath contains a report from Martin on the first e-soaring event of the year and an article from Barry Smith describing his associations over many years with a glider called the Grunau.

From the Chair

YOUR CLUB REALLY NEEDS YOU !!

Our excellent treasurer Alan is moving away so we will need a new chap in this role. It is not a huge task, but an important one. If you feel you can help, PLEASE CONTACT ME. Martinburr9@gmail.com

Alan will help with the transition.

The Slope Tour

This went ahead on Sunday 7th May. I met up with Jerry Stone, Roger Villiers and Jeff Smith at Win Green at 10am, then toured round the most used slopes and ending up at Horses for some fun flying. We had a great time with some good lift to end with. The track was poor, but passable with care.

Slopeside by Pete Carpenter

I have recently made a couple of changes to the slope conditions, everything is below and the those that have changed are shown in bold. 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 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) - Available but have to park on main track until further notice.
- 5) Quarry (W to WNW wind) - Available. **Access to the original quarry slope is from the main westerly slope by hopping over the fence and walking to the 'quarry corner'. 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 airspace for models and paragliders.**
- 6) Oxo (WNW to NW wind) - Available. Parking off the main track is permitted again, but take care with soft ground.
- 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) - Available until August
- 11) Stony Down (ESE to SE wind) - Available. Please do not overfly the parked cars on your landing approach at Stony Down, try

and land from the right hand side. Code on gate padlock is 5823.

11) Berwick St John (SW wind) - Available. Code on gate padlock is 5823 .

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.

NB At Berwick and Quarry there is a new(ish) fence line that splits the main field and restricts the landing area to approximately 50m wide, as opposed to the whole field. Parking may also be different to before, subject to sheep being in a new fenced area. If in doubt, park before the main field and walk to the slope.

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

1. The field number to be used is determined by the farmer to suit his activities and is liable to change periodically.
2. The current chosen field is shown by the number on the hook located on the front of the club (green) cupboard in the yard opposite the Farm House. **Leave this where it is.** NB, after a period of strong winds the number may be blown off its hook and might then be found nearby on the ground.
3. The location of the fields is shown on the numbered map to be found in the club cupboard.
4. If you are the first to arrive, take out the red sign from inside the cupboard which reads (WSA ON SITE) and slip this into the grooved slot on the front of the club cupboard.
5. On competition days take out the required equipment; tapes, cones etc. and take to the flying field.
6. After the flying is finished return any used equipment to the club cupboard and remove the "WSA ON SITE" red notice and put back in the cupboard.

Ensure that the field number remains where it is, hooked to the front of the club cupboard.

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.

It's a Grunau by Barry Smith

The summer of 1951 saw two personal developments for me, I soloed a glider at the Southdown Gliding Club and sat my 'O' levels. Both resulted in modest success but there was no doubt about which gave me the greater satisfaction. Then it got even better as in July after ten flights in a Kirby Cadet, I was promoted to the Tutor. Originally called the 'Taper wing Cadet' the Tutor had the same fuselage as its predecessor but an additional five feet of span. Bliss, one could hope to stay up in the lift provided by the Seven Sisters cliffs instead of returning inexorably to earth. Extolling the virtues of this high performance glider one day to one of the senior members, some of whom were reputed to be as old as thirty, I was brought up short. 'Ah', said this ancient veteran of the skies 'you should have flown the Grunau'.

Propped against the back wall of the hangar were the component parts of a Grunau Baby 2b which someone had cartwheeled on landing the previous summer. It was still there when my departure for

military service brought my membership of the club to an end a couple of years later, as there was no-one with the requisite skills to carry out a repair. Absence undoubtedly made hearts fonder and such were the lyrical recollections of the delightful handling of the Grunau Baby, that those of us who had never flown it suffered pangs of jealousy. Sixteen is an impressionable age and I came to regard it as a holy grail, infinitely desirable but forever beyond reach.

Many years and some hundreds of hours gliding later an opportunity came my way. The Army club at Upavon was rationalising its fleet and had a Grunau Baby for sale at a modest price, so I hastened to buy it. It was slightly unusual in that it had at some point acquired a rudder from a Slingsby Kite 1, which fitted perfectly and the glider's provenance was shrouded in mystery. It appeared to have been 'liberated' from Germany at the end of the war and had been given a British military serial number; presumably it had been one of the spoils of war the winning side felt they were entitled to. This impression was reinforced when I took it to a 'Babytreffen' (gathering of Grunau Babies) in Germany in 1983. A local member patted the glider's nose and said 'Welcome home', glaring at me all the while rather pointedly I thought.

But was the Grunau the delight I had been assured it was all those years ago? Have you ever noticed that long postponed pleasures never quite live up to their billing? So it was with the Grunau. For a start it was difficult to get my 6ft 4ins frame into its cockpit and once there one's legs got in the way of the stick. Of course people were undoubtedly smaller in days of yore. The all round vision left much to be desired, particularly when the collar type cockpit cover was fitted. Judging from photographs the person who seems to have fitted the Grunau best was Hanna Reitsch. Petite, feminine and an expert aviatrix, her only fault was that she was a dedicated Nazi with a disquieting taste for being dominated by powerful men. But I digress!

The Grunau's handling was nothing to write home about. Compared to say the Meise Olympia, the aileron/rudder co-ordination lacked fluency. Naturally with a slow speed/high lift wing section (Gottingen 535 as I remember it) it went up well in weak lift but its performance between thermals was poor. Hill soaring was fine, except that on a crowded ridge when a Grunau at 35 knots had much the same effect as an elderly gentleman in an Austin A35 proceeding up the M1 at 38 miles an hour; everything else was going so much faster! I flew, and largely enjoyed, about thirty hours in the Grunau before selling it to a man who was going to put an engine in it. Philistine!



Faults notwithstanding, the Grunau Baby is an iconic glider. Over 4000 were built in many countries and that wonderful wing, designed by Edmund Schneider in 1930, was copied by other manufacturers including Slingsby who scaled it up for the T21b in which most British glider pilots of my generation learnt to fly. On retiring from gliding a couple of years ago I found the very realistic Grunau Baby model produced by Pichler so I ordered one. I am a complete beginner at model flying and frankly may have left it a bit late to start. Fortunately Pete Carpenter has very kindly taken the 'almost' out of 'almost ready to fly', and recently flew its maiden flight at Horses. It looked superb in the air, and Pete has promised to give some dual instruction. My only contribution to the proceedings was to get my car stuck in mud on my way home which meant that Pete, ever resourceful, had to tow me out. I hope to do better in the future!

E-Soaring Event 21st May by Martin Burr

The weather held pretty well for us, and 7 happy chaps came along to Chalbury for some thermal chasing fun. The conditions were ok, but a bit breezy which meant trying to stay in lift risked the model being quickly blown downwind. The morning's 2.3m comp featured a new plane from Roger, the "Shreddie Lady", with a new style of battery compartment cover, this did him very well as you can see in the results. We were trying the new 100m launch height, I did not see any problem with it, except possibly some shorter flights. We were only aiming for 8mins with the small planes though in some slots the lift was so good it was a struggle to get the models down quick enough to prevent over flying the target time.

The afternoon saw the arrival of the big planes, thankfully most of the 2.3m planes elected to continue on as there were only 3 chaps flying the larger models. Again, whilst the low launch height looked a bit meagre, several good flights were made. The big planes do look rather low when the motor cuts.

As usual a few people had to drop out part way though a competition due to plane damage often caused by trying to hit the spots in the rather turbulent conditions near the grounds. Fortunately I think the damage done was always relatively minor and so should be quite simple to repair.

The results of the 2.3 class event were



Small 1 2023 - Overall Results

Position	Name	Score	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
1	Burr, Martin	3000	1000	1000	1000
2	Crickmore, Roger	2823.8	823.8	1000	1000
3	Couldridge, John	2618.9	755.2	921.1	942.6
4	Wettstien, Ian	2242.7	691.1	701	850.6
5	Bowman, Doug	2231.1	626.2	708.3	896.6
6	Bennett, Nigel	1000	1000	0	0

while those for the 4m class were

BIG 1 2023 - Overall Results

Position	Name	Score	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4
1	Burr, Martin	4000	1000	1000	1000	1000
2	Bennett, Nigel	3793.9	829.5	1000	964.4	1000
3	Duff, Ian	3313	1000	814.7	1000	498.3
4	Couldridge, John	3246	932.3	975.8	748.7	589.2
5	Bowman, Doug	2591.8	0	916.5	711.1	964.2
6	Crickmore, Roger	1448.8	819.4	629.4	0	0

DATE CHANGES, PLEASE NOTE

Due to holiday bookings, I need to move a couple of our E Soaring dates. **The next event will be on 25th JUNE.** The one after will be on **30th JULY**

Calendar

Sun 25th June E-soaring event Chalbury
1/2 July Slope Fly In
Sun 30th July E-soaring event Chalbury
5/6 Aug Slope Fly In
Sun 14th Aug, Limbo event, Chalbury
Sun 20th Aug E-soaring event Chalbury
2/3 Sep Slope Fly In
Sun 17th Sept E-soaring event Chalbury
0/1 Oct Slope Fly In
Tue 5th Dec, AGM

Contacts

The committee members for 2023 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

Slope Deputy– Mike Sims, 01722 326550, mike.sims1@sky.com

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

Member without Portfolio - Nigel Bennett 01258 861863, nigelcbennett@googlemail.com