CFI message – July 13

23/07/13ml

Safety First

There are a few incidents of worthy note, now that we are flying.

All clear above and behind / Runway conflict

Another recent example to mull over. The Tug and K13 combination were given all out launching NW with K13 'Kilo 13' on approach to land SW. The observant tug pilot ignored the signal and stopped the launch. This was on a day where we had the launch point radio broadcasting to the launch point to try and help increase awareness.

This might sound as if I am being picky; 'nothing happened'. Yet for me the last link's in the incident prevention were breaking.

- No one at the launch point had picked up the downwind call by Kilo13 – is that because the glider radio is u/s or the launch point radio could not be heard?
- The glider had been missed on the all clear above and behind – was that due to the trees along the Eastern boundary or poor look out?
- P1 of the launching glider had not realised the possible conflict and therefore would not know to stop the launch
- The observant tug pilot stops the launch and breaks the chain of events.
- After that it would have been down to P1 in the landing glider to avoid any conflict.

So we have to be observant and aware at all times when at the launch point. We are un-usual in that the majority of our launches and landings are in different directions.

The trial ideas of having radio broadcasting to the launch point or a Launch Marshall with handheld radio (wearing a day-glo bib so we know someone is at least doing something) are exactly for this purpose. To increase the awareness at the launch point, but not replace the basics of all clear above and behind.

But both rely on serviceable radios, pilots using them and then being heard.

The committee are working on the radio problems in the club gliders, but did P1 even know the radio was u/s?

One quick radio check at the beginning of the day would confirm if it is on, set up properly or even works!

If it doesn't work at least you know and can be prepared for the fact that others might not know you are in the circuit if you have not been seen.

If you are in the circuit and a launch appears to be getting ready to go never ever assume you have been seen or heard. Always have a plan B – in this case Kilo 13 could have dropped short onto the SW run, but only if the P1 had the plan ready and the approach set up. That's what I'd have done.

Launch Failures

We had two launch failures on successive days the other Friday/Saturday where the tug engine 'coughed' just at the wrong moment.

In both cases the gliders were airborne.

Tug pilots Keith and Brocky did a great job at stopping the tug before the boundary fence (launching NW) and both glider pilot P1's (Tony Crowden/K13 and Dave Hope/Junior) managed to get the gliders back down on the ground and stopped with in the airfield boundary. All four pilots are to be commended on their airmanship, but Dave in particular as he only went solo 2 months ago and had to ground loop the Junior, only just missing the tail of the tug.

No one was harmed and no gliders were damaged. The tug issue has been identified and resolution is being put in place, but it is a wakeup call for us all.

Be on your guard – launch failure can happen at any time.

If the examples above had been a few seconds later the gliders would have been committed to going down the valley. As a reminder on what to do and what this looks like have a watch of the briefing video.
http://www.blackmountainsgliding.co.uk/vid_launchfailure2.php

Overrunning the launch rope and snatch launch
Last weekend launching NW with the ground being firm the Junior overran the rope slightly on the completion of up-slack. The tug held on the brakes whilst full power was confirmed and then off they went. The subsequent snatch as the rope went tight caught out the wing tip holder as the Junior lurched off. The wingtip immediately touched the ground and after some wild gyrations from the inexperienced P1, got airborne. This could have easily been a lot worse, especially with a different glider/pilot combination.

- So be alert – as P1 if there is an over run, release and start again.
    - If the wing tip touches despite corrective action – release.
- As the wingtip holder, if you see slack in the rope, before all out then be ready to keep up. If that is not possible then stop the launch.
- Signallers – get the timing right. At the moment the ground is hard and gliders that have no skid will roll forward easily.
- Tug pilots – I recognise judging up slack can be difficult and you rely on the signaller. But I'd ask you to be even more aware if the ground is hard, the glider has no skid and the P1/launch point combination are inexperienced.

Nuff said.

Other Incidents over the last 3 months

1. We had GAZPA nearly get blown back on a very windy day into the fence/gate whilst being re-fuelled by the loan tug pilot after the flying had been stopped. He managed to steer the tug away just in time otherwise we would have had a damaged tug on our hands.
    a. Chocks are now available at the fuel pump and always please help the tug pilot with re-fuelling.
2. Weak link broke very low down in strong Easterly wave/rota. P1 well handled and landed back on SE. Rope whipped back and hit canopy (some minor damage). No harm done but alarming for very experienced pilots. Highlights what can happen on a strong Talgarth day.
    a. Be ready for the unexpected. Also be realistic with your own abilities on the day – in this case what would you have done or reacted?
3. Europa on approach to land; had to go around as glider was moved across landing area. No one had seen aircraft on approach. Ok in this case as the P1 was vigilant and went round again, not ok if it had been a glider. We then had a similar occurrence 6 weeks later, but this time with G-AZPA.
    a. Before you move a glider on the airfield you have to make sure it is clear to do so – obvious and yet it still happens!
    b. P1 of the landed glider has overall responsibility until the glider is safely clear of the airfield and parked up
4. Pilot being rushed by helpers at launch point whilst getting ready including putting on his parachute. When P1 had landed several hours later, he found he had not done up his parachute chest strap. Not a huge thing but goes to show what can happen if distracted.
    a. Pilots must not be hurried when preparing for flight; likewise if pilots need more time they should pull off the flight line
5. Club K6 dropped a wing on launch; the tip stayed there and eventually picked up. By then the glider had wandered way off centre line. P1 debriefed.
    a. As with the Junior example at the beginning of the article if the wing tip drops and touches the ground, despite corrective action, then release.

    b. Wing runners' please give the pilot as good a chance as possible by running for as long as possible. If you can't, ask someone else that can.
6. K13 got airborne with both ASI's not working; pitot tube found disconnected and missed on DI, although to be fair that is more of a gotcha.
    a. Where ever possible check the operation of the ASI's and have a good look under and around the instrument panel for any loose tubing; as per the DI briefing video.
7. Two gliders landing SE in the circuit at the same time but opposite sides. One (me) made a radio call, the other (K21, with experienced P1) thought they had also made a call but I heard nothing. K21 did not hear my call (i know my radio was ok). We met on base leg head on at roughly the same height. No problems as i had long since spotted the K21and had a plan, but the K21 had not spotted me. Some lower level manoeuvring by me fixed the problem but if it had been less experienced pilots what might have happened?
    a. Club fleet radios are an on-going problem which the committee are working.
    b. Always have a good look in and out of the circuit as you progress; not just the landing area
    c. Always have a plan B up your sleeve ready to use if your plan changes

Stop Press – another runway conflict

This happened today (17th Jul) with a K13 landing SW whilst training having completed a standard right hand circuit and a Mini Nimbus landing East (not sure which circuit the Nimbus flew).

The conditions were light wind and variable, briefed preferred landing SW. The P1 had to take control and steer the K13 towards the fuel store to prevent any possibility of hitting the Nimbus. Both saw each other late; anything nasty happing was avoided thanks to the quick reactions of the K13 P1 (Jamie).

The K13 made a radio call as did the Mini Nimbus (long finals). Neither heard each other probably because of the u/s K13 radio.

So yet again we have got away with another near miss on the airfield. If the P1's were of less experience how would they have reacted? <u>What would you have done?</u>

- Guys we have to be so careful – really make sure you know who is in the circuit; even more so on days when we can land in any direction.
- Look in and out of the circuit – too many of you focus on just the landing area.
- Where ever possible <u>and it is safe to do so</u>, use the preferred circuit and landing direction as briefed in the morning. That at least means we keep any conflicts to the minimum.
- Tug pilots also take note.

Pilot Fatigue

Thankfully we have had some half decent weather so i thought i'd remind you on fatigue. Fatigue can creep up on you. We call it accumulative fatigue in the airline world. But it can apply equally to you. Long working days, minimal night's sleep can leave you tired at the end of the week. Then we go off flying to relax and enjoy ourselves! Think about yourself. Ask yourself the following before you fly:

- How busy a week have I had leading up to my flying at the weekend?
- Did I get consistently good night‟s sleep during the week?
- Have I just driven a long way to get to the club?
- How rested do I feel before I fly?
- How demanding do I expect the flying to be? (i.e. easy lob onto the hill or being banged around in Easterly wave).
- These can all be factors that contribute to your fatigue and alertness.

So think about the following as guidance:

General Flying

If you don't feel fresh and alert, keep the flying less demanding. Perhaps consider a shorter flight.
If you are inexperienced or lack currency be even more aware to your own alertness.
If the conditions are more demanding – think again.
Ultimately be honest with yourself – should you fly?

Tug Pilots

- Max 15 - 20 launches before taking a break – even then that is pushing it. You know yourself

Instructors

- Over 6 soaring instruction flights in a day is pushing it. Take a break after at least 3 or 4 but again you know yourself

To those of you who think i am talking tosh, i can associate pilot fatigue to several incidents in my incident log. This is just guidance. But be honest with yourself.

Annual Flight Review 2014

The Annual Flight Reviews have already started.
Mike Entwistle tracks who has done what and when. It is pleasing to see that quite a few of you have done a review. However there are also still plenty of you that still need to do one! Don't delay and get one done.

Lookout

Having flown with many club pilots and visitors over the years the quality of the P2 lookout can vary considerably.
Stating the obvious but you must maintain a very good lookout.

- maintain regular scan of the full field of view, both above and below the horizon as well as on it, pausing from time to time.
- Most of you look before you turn, far less look before they level the wings rolling out
- Most of you look into the circuit far less look out

Be warned. If you are flying with an instructor be it pre-solo, currency, AFR, site check etc and the lookout was inadequate then you may well not be able to fly solo until your lookout is up to standard.

- As a basic rule of thumb. If an object does not seem to move across your field of view, it is on a collision course
- **Constant bearing = constant danger**
    - Aircraft / glider heading straight towards you

Stall/Spin training

- Feedback on national accidents shows the stall/spin related accident rate increasing. Most will result in serious injury or death.
- Most of these accidents are due to the pilot getting distracted (late field selection, low pull up off competition finish, low final turn onto approach etc) and missing or not recognising the symptoms of the approaching stall or spin
- Please take every opportunity you can to practice and give yourself exposure to this very important but rarely practiced area of your flying..
- I also encourage you to practice in your own glider if cleared to do solo (check with the duty instructor first if you have not spun your glider solo before).

- You may know that the vast majority of single seaters will stall/spin far more readily than our K13's or K21. You must fully understand and appreciate the symptoms, prevention and recovery of the glider you fly solo so that you can take appropriate action when it is needed through the 'fog of distraction'

If you think I am waffling on, think again. Spinning is the primary killer within our sport. Two experienced pilots have been killed in the French Alps over the last couple of weeks.. Reasons un-known but I suspect it would be distraction/work load and then not recognising the symptoms before it was too late. Very sad.

Airspace / Navigation

- Do make sure you understand the symbols on a chart, what they mean and what to do
- Do make sure you can accurately navigate using both chart and GPS
- Do check the NOTAMS
- Do make sure you understand the difference between QFE/QNH/1013
- Do not go cross country or anywhere near the airway when in wave unless you understand the above for sure

Nationally there are way too many airspace infringements which just adds weight to the regulation argument – please see attached document from the BGA.

Training and Development.

Post solo to Bronze development card

A while back I introduced the idea of having a second development card for solo to Bronze/XC endorsement. It would also include more BMGC specific training. I held off at the time until I knew more about EASA.

I have to apologise – i had intended to publish the card and details by now but just have not had the time – blame buying into an ASW20 and selling my Cirrus as the excuse.

I'll get onto it asap to give you a fighting chance before the end of the summer season.

Other training

The Aerobatics course is running at the moment; thanks to Don Gosden. He has also attracted good weather.

Thermal soaring course; several of you have already had at least one of your coaching flights which is good to see.

General news.

EASA

Please read the attached email – it gives you the detail including medical and costs as you can now start to transition across. Please take the time to read it.

Do join in and help

The only way the club can run and ultimately survive on the current charge structure is if we all join in, be it from sweeping out the club house, cleaning the club fleet, helping at the launch point right through to being on the committee.

There are members out there that do just turn up, fly and then go home. Unfortunately BMGC just cannot run that way. Do your bit!

Help the tug pilot and Duty Instructor

Yes it is the responsibility of the tug pilot to make sure the rope is collected and the tug is washed; it doesn't mean he has to do it after spending all day launching everyone else. Do help (as above).

The other week the rope was found on the airfield which will bugger up the mower if it got caught up…which would be another bill.

Likewise don't just stick the kit away mucky and or wait for the Duty Instructor to instigate a clean. Take the initiative and just get on with it!

Badge Claim forms
Message from the BGA – please use the correct forms for any claims, if not they may be rejected. You can find the correct forms on the BGA website

Daily Inspections – who can do them?
I believe there may be a little confusion out there on who can do a Daily Inspection.
For clarification – any club pilot so long as the following apply:

1. Watch the DI briefing video available on our website
    a. http://www.blackmountainsgliding.co.uk/vid_di_1.php
2. Be observed by an Instructor doing a DI and get signed off by him/her (form completed).
3. Have a minimum of 50 solo flights or 20 flights and 10 hours solo (the flying requirement for a Bronze).

Do not do an un-supervised Daily Inspection unless you have completed all three parts.

- The DI also must include cleaning the canopy – too many of you don't!
- Don't take the glider to the launch point until a Daily Inspection has been completed.
- Still have a good look round the glider before you fly it for the first time that day.
    - You may have noticed that I do; I like to know all is ok before I get in it!

John Horley – retired as a tug pilot.
After 45 years of tugging John has decided to hang up his boots.
So i'd like to take this opportunity in thanking John for all of his launches over the years.

You will be glad to hear that's it – Safe flying, when the weather allows.

Cheers
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