

September 2012 – Part 1

Dear all

There has been a lot going on since my last message three months ago. I could lump it all together but I suspect you will get bored before you get to the end! So there will be two parts; this is part one. The second will be in the next couple of weeks.

There is a bit to read between the two messages, but please do take the time to give them a go.

Safety First

Daily Inspection (DI) training and sign off

As a reminder you need to get signed off to do Daily Inspections **by the end of this month** as per my last message in May.

Please try and get this done asap.

After this date you will not be qualified to DI any glider, including your own.

This training and sign off will be applicable to all BMGC solo pilots who have a minimum 50 solo flights or 20 flights and 10 hours solo (the flying requirement for a Bronze).

The exceptions are the Instructors and the nominated DI sign off team (listed below).

There are two stages to the process.

Firstly, view the two (Pt1 and Pt2) training videos that are now available on our website http://www.talgarthgc.co.uk/vid_di_1.php

Once you have viewed both video's, grab an instructor (or nominated DI sign off team member) at the next convenient opportunity and do a DI on a K13, as it has the most to look for and is consistent with the training video's.

Once this has been completed, fill out and sign the form. The instructor also needs to counter sign the form.

Place the completed form in the CFI in-tray in the office

Eventual goal is to have a list of all 'approved' glider daily inspection pilots. Only those on the list will be able to do daily inspections once up and running.

Annual Flight Review (AFR)

A gentle reminder, please get your AFR done!

Please ensure you do your AFR in time. I don't want pilots flying solo/P1 after their due date.

The AFR consist of one soaring flight minimum.

- Launch fee only – make sure log sheet is annotated otherwise you will have to pay soaring

The AFR is applicable to all solo pilots (excluding Instructors) for full and country members.

Any Bronze C test, currency check, Friends/Family check, coach check etc all count as an AFR so long as the minimum syllabus requirements are met and the form has been completed.

BMGC recent incidents

The following are excerpts from the CFI incident/accident log.

As you may know I record any incident or near incident however minor it may seem at the time.

It is really important to keep the feedback coming. It is dealt with in a confidential manner and is a really important tool in accident prevention.

The main purpose is to try and head off anything that might become a regular occurrence and /or may be useful feedback to you in the hope that you will not make the same mistakes or misjudgement.

In each case the last lines of defence in accident prevention are starting to unravel. Once the defences have been breached the incident can rapidly turn into something nastier.

Here is a selection from the last 3 months.

Distraction when doing your pre-flight checks

Canopy closed and locked?

We had a visiting ASW20 get airborne with an un-locked canopy.

The pilot, a very experienced Full Cat instructor, re-opened his canopy to ask a colleague to get the quad to collect the landing K21. Unfortunately he then failed to lock it again. He then launched into the strong SW conditions.

He soon discovered his error as the canopy decided to get a life of its own as he got airborne (launching west) and started to vibrate/rattle. So he tried to lock it with his free left hand. As he looked inside the cockpit for the canopy latch he inadvertently allowed the glider to pitch up, not helped by perhaps having the glider slightly out of trim? This caused him to lose sight of the tug and so he released (below 500'). The subsequent, low level circuit in the strong, turbulent conditions to land SW with a rattling canopy was a tad exciting to say the least!

Having elected not to land SE he had a low final turn for the SW run where he also decided not to select any flap because of the turbulence, something he had not done much before which added to the work load.

To round things off on landing the left wing touched down in the longer grass at the side of the runway ground looping the glider (no damage).

Experience and keeping a cool head saved the day after the initial mistake – could you have handled the situation?

Junior – airbrakes open on launch

This incident has taken place very recently so details are sketchy. However it does appear that the Junior got airborne with the airbrakes unlocked. The P1 took a while to figure out that his airbrakes were open whilst on tow, which was eventually resolved by radio calls from the tug pilot. Luckily the combination had a positive rate of climb so the tug pilot elected to keep going and resolve things over the radio (not the 'tug wagging the rudder' signal).

This could have been a lot different as airbrakes open on the launch can have a big impact on the rate of climb which could result in you being dumped by the tug pilot.

If you don't realise the brakes are open and you have been dumped low down, where would you go? Life could get very difficult very quickly.

An observant tug pilot who thought the problem through prevented things from getting worse – would you have recognised the brakes were open?

So this is another example of poor checks and/or distraction during the pre-take off checks.

DON'T LET IT HAPPEN TO YOU!

Lessons to learn

A good proportion of incidents can be traced back to the pilot getting distracted.

Despite the ASW 20 pilot being a very experienced and respected Full Cat he managed to allow distraction interfere with the last part of his preparation for launch.

The distraction was sufficient to miss locking the canopy which then provided unwanted entertainment for the P1.

If it had been you, what would you have done and how well would you have handled it?

So think about the following:

- Obvious, but don't allow yourself to be distracted, if you are start the checks again.
- Avoid distracting the P1 unless absolutely necessary – which would mean something related to the launch
- Check, check, check again – for instance i will check my canopy and brakes again once i have accepted the rope
- Leave the airfield to those outside of the cockpit – don't allow yourself to be distracted. You don't have to accept the rope for your launch until you are ready or if you have you can stop the launch at any time by releasing.
- If the canopy is unlocked and you are now on tow – be really careful about the distraction created in trying to lock it.
- If your brakes are open – you will get buffet (noise/vibration), the rate of climb will be a lot less than normal and the glider will handle differently; these are big clues but can be hidden if you are sitting low in the tow on the tug slip stream for instance.
- Trim the glider for the aerotow or if not sure, biased for more nose pitch down. Any distraction and the glider is more likely to pitch nose down below the tug rather than nose up, which is very dangerous for the tug.

Control members of the public

We recently had a member of the public decide to stroll out from the picnic area to meet their family member who had just landed following a trial lesson.

At the same time an Open Cirrus was fairly late on finals landing west. A suitable bellow from an observant club member managed to recover the situation in time and got them to run back.

An observant club member saved the day.

When we greet trial lessons and members of the public we must make it very clear where they can and cannot go. If a hanger-on wants to go airside to take photos of the event then that is fine but they must be escorted.

If they cannot be escorted then they cannot go 'airside'

To most the airfield is a strange, exciting and interesting place. They will not understand where or what they can do so it is important that all trial lesson visitors are briefed and escorted as required.

P1 of the Open Cirrus is a very experienced and respected pilot who did not get distracted by the incursion. I have seen others not do so well.

So with an incident like this we could end up with a broken glider or worse case a member of the public being hurt – we have to be observant and keep the members of the public under control.

Stopping a launch

If you are at the launch point or anywhere near it and need to stop the launch because of an issue you think would endanger the launch (i.e. a landing glider that will get in the way) you must call a stop.

This is not one! Or a general shout or waving of arms – the only way is one arm held up vertically and shout at the top of your voice '**STOP**'.

Remember on 'all out' the tug pilot might now be looking ahead and/or one last quick check of the engine instruments so he might not see the stop, but if it is loud enough and the right signal given the P1 of the glider and anyone at the launch point must react immediately.

Launch point repeat the message so that P1 of the glider hears it

As P1 of the glider you release instantly – don't hesitate.

If you are on the wing tip – put it on ground.

BGA Safety news

See attached leaflet re tug upsets; recall our incident earlier in the season (my May message)

Message from BGA chief exec

Dear CFI

A tug upset is of course an incident or accident usually caused by a tug being forced into a dangerous situation by a very poorly flown glider on tow.

Did you know that BGA clubs are currently experiencing a tug upset incident rate that is 6 times higher than we were experiencing ten years ago? This represents an accident waiting to happen.

General Info.

Winter Lecture – six years of BMGC incidents

I'll be running a winter lecture (probably December) reviewing the key incidences over the last six years. Why six, that's the time since i have been CFI and have kept the incident log. Details to follow but the evening will run similar to the one i run three years ago with examples, photos, etc but this time i have some logger traces and possibly even video recreations using the simulator.

So watch for details nearer the time.

GAZPA – marginal launches

In case you did not know GAZPA is down on about 20HP over the original engine we had before its exchange last year. There is nothing wrong with the engine/prop. It is just that the new engine does not develop the same power as the old.

As we all know we have had the new engine in place for over a year now.

Due to the reduction in power, you may have already seen that on some marginal days launching has stopped because the conditions are getting too marginal and therefore the tug pilot may decide enough is enough and stop launching sooner than we may have done so in the past.

If this is the case the decision will have been taken in conjunction with the Duty Instructor.

Under no circumstances must there be any pressure applied on the tug pilot to take the launch, his word is final. **Safety first.**

Currency reminder

Let's face it; the weather has been rubbish this season. Mix in the cost of living at the moment and I suspect most of us think twice before heading off to the club and using up valuable 'brownie points'.

Unfortunately that also means we are not flying as much, so you need to be careful about your currency. So the following is our standard guidance:

The following is **minimum guidance only and not a target**.

Full club members

- Up to Bronze C – maximum of 4 weeks without flying
- Bronze to Silver – maximum of 6 weeks without flying
- Silver and beyond – maximum of 8 weeks without flying or 3 landings in 90 days

The DI will also ask the question at the daily briefing and expect an honest answer. If you need support then take a flight with an instructor first.

If you do so then consider using it as an opportunity to do your Annual Flight Review saving you doing it again later in the year.

Remember ask yourself the question: Am I current enough to fly in today's conditions in the type of glider I am about to fly? Any doubt don't fly solo or take a flight with an instructor first.

Keeping the log.

Another reminder – again.

There is a general poor standard of log keeping at times (e.g. no name entered/no Surname/lack of paperwork filled in).

For instance we have had a glider that landed out at the club who took a launch back to Usk. No name, no details. Net result is me and Liz trying to track him down to get the £40 for the launch. Of course we could just not bother, in which case, you the club members will pay.

On the same day there were two flights in the T21 where the P2 names were not logged.

The list goes on.....

As well as being a legal requirement, it makes Liz's job in the office very difficult, wastes her time and perhaps loses the club revenue. As club members you will of course be the first to raise concerns if you are being charged incorrectly or the fee's increase. So please make every effort to keep the log correct and legible.

Quad DI's.

Again, not a new one. One of the new quads was found to be very low on oil. Oil needs to be checked each day along with the fuel and general condition.

The quads have to be checked each day before use. Don't just leave it for 'someone else'.

Cheers

Martin

CFI

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