



NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2009

Just back from a flying holiday in the French Alps, so this will be a brief newsletter.

August Meeting

16 members attended including Martin Foley (normally resident in Weymouth) who's staying in 'the caravan' this week.

Apologies from Bob, Gordon and Brian Clavin.

Strete update

The licensee has cashed our cheque, so we have decided that flying there has been accepted, despite not being able to get the higher insurance cover. After some debate it was agreed to leave matters as they are and not ask further questions.

John Chick's Air Ambulance Raffle

John is running a raffle at every meeting to raise funds for the local air ambulances. 2 Prizes will be up for grabs each month.

John was picked up by a Yellow helicopter after his accident and had to look up whose it was (Devon and Cornwall are both usually red). It turned out to be on loan to Cornwall so he sent a donation and 'beer money' to the crew.

Future Events

After some discussion it was concluded:

September agenda:

Bob - Ager trip

Mark, Alan. Mark Nicol- Blouenge bash;

Mark Nicol- Flying in the Lakes

October – GPS / Nokia Phone talk;

November – Curry night.

Flying Feedback at Meetings

Jim F had flown Beer Head mid-August in low cloud with Bob.

Monday 24/8 Mark N had flown tandem at Polhawn in 16 – 17mph and had a scary backwards flight.

Mark C reported some problems with his Chilli, which seemed to be difficult to ground handle and test stalled (2' up) at shorter brake height. Following recent discussions he decided to stretch the lines and says it is now "just like the good old wing".

John C said that early reports of extreme shrinkage were incorrect, as the wing had been checked against the wrong specification (line plan). However The Loft is still checking and has not yet returned it.

Other News

Paid up Membership has now reached 84.

Summer BBQ

Mark Canvin finally called the Cox Tor event on the 5th/6th Sep. We await a report at the club night.

Polhawn Take off and Ponies

Polhawn's take off field now has Dartmoor Ponies in, put there by either the National Trust or the Mount Edgcombe Estate - not quite sure of that but either way - important Land owners.

It would be better if people used the far takeoff and landing in front of the mobile home and nearest to Rame head, as the ponies are rarely in this area.

Flying News

Sat. Aug 29th Robin reported:

Arrived about oneish to find quite a bit of cloud and a lightish westerly. Alan, Dougie and Matt were just about staying up. I had a little flight but couldn't find anything and landed at the bottom. About twoish, with the sky clearing to the south, the sun started coming through and Mat and Dougie were getting quite high eventually vanishing over the back. The wind was also picking up. I moonwalked the Aspen up to launch and found it quite difficult to control which suggested strong thermals coming through. In the air, the thermals were coming through but difficult to stay in - one turn and you were almost over the back - and then, in the strengthening wind, you had to use the speed bar to get back forward. Something I don't like doing in thermic air. I chickened out of going with first two of these and then the third seemed a steady five up so I went with it (by then it would have been easier to land behind or beside the Tor then at the front). Luckily the thermal was a good'un and I managed to stay in it to cloud-base at about 2500' @ T/O. The clouds around were quite tall, so I moved to the sunny side and found I could gain another few hundred feet thermalling up the side of the cloud - presumably the sun burns off the cloud on that side but the cloud-suck is still there to lift you!

After that, I followed the road (for ease of retrieve) and with a few little top-ups managed to stay over two grand @ T/O till I got to Poundsgate at the edge of the moor. Here the clouds had thinned out and the lift as well (the waterfall effect coming off the moor?) and I aimed for the large quarry just north of Ashburton and a bonfire next to it. These didn't work so crossing the A38 at the Newton Abbot turn-off I was getting quite low and looking at some pretty uninviting landing options - little hillocks, tight fields, power lines - you name 'em. Luckily I picked up some weak lift that took me another 5 or 6 km over the china clay works to land a mile north of Newton Abbot. This is only the second time I've flown Cox Tor in the 19 years I've been flying S. Devon sites, usually I go to Widgery in a westerly as it's higher and steeper, but Cox does have the advantage of being easier to climb and slope-land and if you get away you follow the road rather than having to cross the middle of the moor so I'll probably fly it more often in the future.

I also got lucky with the retrieve - only three hitches to Poundsgate where Martin has a caravan and had driven my car back to (thanks for that, Martin).

Sunday 6th Sep Alan H reported:

Another of those nice buoyant days at Struddick today. Winds were slightly off to the W, and OK for HG but just too much for PG. I got there mid-afternoon - Martin Reed & a rigid were in the air, and Phippsy was there with some students, and about to strap a young lass into his dual glider. Everyone seemed to be getting good height. ATOS off, and soon crossing the river at Looe. Didn't push on too far - I was burning height for distance and not finding any more lift. Back the other way, and Batten cliffs were an easy run. Orographic was forming at c. 900ft AMSL, and it was easy to climb the front of it in gentle lift. I got to c. 1200ft AMSL. Lovely stuff! I didn't push on to Freathy coz there was a NOTAM earlier in the day for the Plymouth Navy Days, and even though it had expired I decided not to push on. So, bimbled around a bit, crossed the river at Looe again, and headed back for a nice landing... excellent day!

Sunday 13th Sep Lawrence reported:

Finally managed to fly King Tor today. Arrived about 2.30pm with no wind but fantastic views, a few thermal gusts. Was about to go home by 3.30pm but noticed that a constant breeze had come in of about 6mph so geared up and decided to try flying my wing on the slope. Managed to fly it and control it in the thermal gusts that came through so tried a short hop thinking I was going to land and was flying high instead.

I found lots of thermals, off to the left going up the face of King Tor and caught a few going over the back twice and tried to top land a couple of times found it too much lift before I was back out the front of the hill. Settled in to hill soaring for a while, but surprised at my groundspeed and was unable to slope land as I was too fast whichever way I was going, so not sure what was happening there. I also found lots of thermic gusts coming through while soaring the hill wind in your face and a bit bumpy in the air.

Decided eventually I had had enough so started to fly out into the valley and just caught thermal after thermal they averages 4.5ms but also felt quiet strong, I think they were all coming from the ploughed field in the valley, again also lots of wind in my face, but that may have been the thermals throwing me around a bit. Started flying up in one to about 180meters at before I decided I was not yet up for my first cross country as it was all a bit active for me, not sure where I would be going. Took a while getting out of the thermal, but eventually found my way out and big eared my way down only to be picked up by another with me going up at 2ms with big big ears.

Got out of that one and made it into the landing field at the bottom and was picked up by my lovely retrieve driver.

From my limited experience of thermal flying, I was surprised by how punchy the thermals were and how many of them were in the valley. Perhaps I took off too early in the afternoon and I should of waited till later, as it was a bit out of my comfort zone, but made the decision to bottom land rather than hang in there and try and top land. An interesting adventure and a surprising active 40 minutes flying.

Tuesday 22nd Sep Bob wrote:

Sorry for the workers, but Freathy was pretty magic for a while between 1200 and 1400. Already top end by the time I got there so I launched at Polhawn. Ranges active so couldn't go far, but sweet just boating about 300 - 400 feet ATO. Me, Tim, Dougie, Ash on stiffie and a couple of others whose names I'm not sure of.

For Sale

Brian Hayes, occasional South Devon flyer, is selling an Airware Rap harness. Size medium (75 - 95 kgs?) range. He's 11 stone and says he slips about in it a bit. Has back protector, but no foam. Only wants £30 for it.

He's near Teignmouth. Phone him if interested. 01626775587 or 07762575986.

Next Meeting is on Thursday 24th September at the London Inn, South Brent, 8:00pm.

Bob - Ager trip

Mark, Alan. Mark Nicol- Blorange bash;

Mark Nicol- Flying in the Lakes

Mark Ansell, Newsletter Editor,

SOUTH DEVON HANG GLIDING AND PARAGLIDING CLUB

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