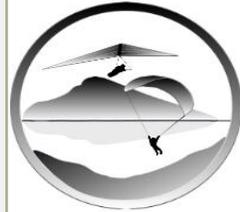


Cumbria Soaring Club

'Spoilt For Choice'

The Newsletter for Members of the C.S.C.



Well it's here at last, the much awaited Spring thermal issue of the **Nation's favourite read**. Unlike Spring which having made a tantalising appearance several weeks ago retreated to Unst for the foreseeable future. (Ed note: – me neither) The content of this issue reflects the general lack of activity although there have been gallant exceptions. Thus in this issue we give you a heads-up on the Wainwright Competition. Now in its second year and with the International Olympic Committee showing keen interest in the event (if sufficient slush money can be raised) we already have a clear leader (and it's not Mike Cav – well not at this very minute) Check it out in the sports supplement! Also in this issue:

- **Thinking of buying a new glider? Don't make your move until you've studied the advice in 'The Pick of the Forum'. It's not about performance it's all to do with colour!**
- **Got an old Meccano set in the attic, thinking of taking it to 'cash in the attic'? Well, not until you've read what Tony Thompson has been getting up to in his newly acquired spare time.**
- **It hasn't all been flying gloom. The last Saturday in March produced a great North Easterly. No prizes for guessing where everyone headed – Clive Allan recorded the day and took some pics too – spiffing!**
- **Anxiously waiting for the results of the Wainwright Quiz? Nope, me neither. But if you are that person who entered, the results are announced in the Competition Supplement. And the winner is irritating music ... pause .. yawn .. reach for the remote.**
- **Solemn voice – seriously, for a moment, this is the most dangerous time of the year for pilots. Our Safety Officer shares his thoughts as many of us get our kit out for the first time since last Autumn.**
- **As a real treat, twice award winning writer Andy Paulson reveals more than we want to know about Yorkshire, and elephants...**
- **... and much much more!!!**

Safety – Because you're Worth it!

Mike Cavanagh, The Club Safety Officer provides timely advice

For those of you that have been lucky enough to keep flying over winter the coming season may seem less daunting, but whether current or not spring time is always a time for caution, patience and good preparation.

It is also a time for great joy as we hopefully get to play again, but we must remember that, in the cold air, thermals tend to have sharp edges and the general mixing of the air can lead to unexpected turbulence. And we are usually a bit rusty after a winter lay off. And we often have new exciting kit to play with.

I think the main thing to remember is not to rush. Take your time. The hill is going nowhere. The wind will be back (and the sun).

Ensure you can take your time to get to the flying site and walk up the hill with plenty of time. There is nothing worse than getting there late and seeing people already flying, or worse still, starting to struggle to stay up.

If you have not flown for several months do not have big goals. Maybe just a bit of ground handling, followed by short flight to check everything out. It always help if you have a buddy to go along with, to help remind each other about what to do and not to do! Signing up for one of the coaching days is a good way of ensuring everything is remembered, but still treat the day as if you were on your own, making sure you are taking responsibility for yourself.

Ideally go to a hill you know well so you can judge the conditions better and feel more comfortable with the take-off and landing areas. Be prepared for a short flight checking out your skills and your equipment, especially if new toys are involved. Maybe plan an early morning flight or an evening when conditions are usually smoother.

Before getting to the hill it is worth getting your wing out if it has been stationary for the winter. Check a mouse has not been using it to make nesting material! That everything looks good and maillons all tight. Recently I found after a bit of a ground handling session, followed by a balled-up glider walk with risers jangling, that ALL my maillons had come undone – one fully. I was amazed, but have heard similar stories, so always check those maillons. If they seem a bit loose, even when tight as possible then a bit of lock-tite etc. should be used. But even so, it is always good practice to check all your attachments look good just before you fly.

Try and ensure your take-off area is as perfect as possible. Over winter I have been trying to bag Wainwrights and that has reminded me a lot of the importance of choosing a good take off point and laying out your glider well. I've been caught out trying to launch on icy snow and finding that even a slight wind ends with you scuttling back, desperately trying to control wing and feet. Luckily the ground was smooth so no unfortunate consequences, but it reminded me how important a good take off area is. Don't just check where you might get pulled back to, but also what you are running over in front. Cold air is not always buoyant so you may end up running further down the slope than expected, or even touching down after your initial take off. Try and ensure your take off thinks about these factors. The happier you are with your take off area the less stressful your first launch of the season will be.

Patience is a good virtue for any flying. Once you have reached the take off, take your time checking the wind, the conditions. If you are lucky wait until a more experienced pilot goes off to show all is good. If they make it look hard work, don't be disheartened. Try and work out why they made it look so difficult –perhaps it was their first flight of the season. Unless your conclusion is that the conditions are just not very good then use their take off as pointers to improve yours. A good confident launch is always better than being timid.

Hopefully you are now happily in the air. I hope you looked out before you took off and not just had someone swearing at you as they have taken avoiding action. Easily done when you are so focused on getting everything right. Once in the air hopefully all your pre-flight checks mean there are no problems. But if for some reason something is wrong, don't panic. Depending on the problem either get yourself back on the slope if it is safe to do so or fly straight down.

All is good, things are comfortable, so enjoy your flight. Ensure you fly away from the take off area to allow others space to take off. Take your time to remind yourself what it all feels like. Don't worry if you are sinking out. Just enjoy the ride down and look forward to practicing your landing. Hopefully where you expected. If somewhere unexpected, be prepared for anything. Get your feet/legs out of the harness quickly. Scrutinise the ground for obstacles as much as possible. Be prepared to PLF, or run, if the ground suddenly comes up too suddenly – and it might as you may not have a good feel for your wing yet and sunk too much on the final turn and the air being cold may not keep you up as hoped.

Safe on the ground. Smile! Then have a quick think if there was anything that you need to improve and go back up for another go.

Over winter we have had a few incidents and pilots are recuperating and luckily for us they are willing to share their thoughts to try and help others learn anything from their misfortune...

One involved a landing on a slope in a bid to get back up a hill more easily. Nothing to fault with that attitude, but unfortunately he got caught out at the last minute catching a foot just before touching down. Plain unlucky if you ask me, I'm sure he was being as careful as possible in such a situation. It was not his first flight of the season. He himself thinks that he was possibly caught out by sinking too much on his last turn, maybe due to a drop in wind and that all makes sense – he was just unlucky that one rock happened to be just at that spot and he is now wishing he had gone for a lower, perhaps more predictable landing.

Another involved slipping, possibly due to ice, as turning to take off after a reverse launch. Unfortunately below take off it was rocky and gravity and momentum took its toll. The slip was unlucky, and easily done (ice or no ice) whilst trying to turn after a reverse launch in light winds. In light winds you have to be moving downhill whilst you are turning and it is easy to get caught out like that with a trip or a slip. More wind would have helped, and perhaps a forward launch may have made footwork easier. On light wind days it is always a tempting to take off as high as possible, but this should not over-

ride the desire to find the nicest, grassiest take off possible. The pilot had some pain killers that he really needed, but not convenient and this is a good point... there is no good carrying safety, emergency equipment if they are not easy to get at. I like to ensure my mobile is in my top pocket of my outside jacket, and the radio is not tucked away somewhere. The same thought should be given to any first aid kit too.

Thanks to them both for sharing, and helping us to understand a little bit more about what we do, and hopefully we will see them both in the air soon and the real spring weather will arrive and find us all safely up, enjoying the air.

From the Forum

*A service provided by **SFC** for those pilots who have a life but perhaps not a computer or prefer to spend their precious time on more useful endeavours.*



The *'Pick of the Forum'* this time is **Choosing a new Glider – the joys and pitfalls** – all you need to know from the pilots who know and several that don't. The thread was started by Ali Westle who having lost so much weight found he was too light to fly his substantial glider – take it away Ali

Ali Westle – 20 Dec

In the absence of anything of interest on the Forum of late, I thought I'd ask people's opinions on when a pilot should move from an EN B wing to a C.

Is it on number of hours flown in the last 12 months? Or maybe if you 'feel upto it'? Or even just fancy something faster?

I hope to start a useful discussion, in part 'cos I'm changing wings soon (Hurry up Steve!). I am staying in the B category, so don't worry about me doing something stupid (for a change!!!), and partly 'cos I really am interested to see what the gurus think regarding one's ability to handle (and use to its fullest) a sportier wing.

I have also heard several 'pros' stating that they think there is no need to fly anything other than a B (One even said that there was no need to fly more than an A in the lakes!!)

Chris Field (Ed) 20 Dec

Ah, I detect a thread that could form the basis of a useful article for the **Nation's favourite read!**

For me the key factor is why you need the higher performance. Will it enable you to achieve something your current glider is preventing? The clearest case is pilots who are entering the world of competition. Obviously, to be competitive you need to fly a competitive glider, you wouldn't enter the RAC rally with a mondeo. However, there is no point in upgrading if you can't handle the glider and in particular if you are freaked waiting for the next collapse. It's well summed up by Mr Gin (can never remember his name) who says it is better to fly a low performance glider 100% than a higher performance glider at 60%. When I lived in Oz, it was interesting that a disproportionate number of the coastal pilots flew top end gliders and then got freaked when they ventured to Manilla (although of course they came up with all sorts of other excuses for failure)

Also I think it is important to investigate the proposed new glider fully. Too many pilots simply treat a higher rating as a performance upgrade (and a badge of success). We need to look at the test results across the board and ensure that the promised performance improvement in the various areas is worth the loss of stability. Lake district flying calls for different characteristics than flatland flying and certainly coastal flying. My only venture from a DHV 1/2 to a 2 was from an Epsilon 4 to a Sigma something. Looking at the test results the move from a top end 1/2 to a low end 2 offered significant performance (glide and speed on bar) with hardly any stability issues and this proved to be correct. Now of course, my DHV1/2 Swift out performs the sigma. Other pilots choosing different DHV2s around the same time were less comfortable which is perhaps why I still have my sigma and some of them don't.

I am also reluctant to buy a new glider until some user experience has accumulated. There are many examples of brilliant looking, great sounding, positively tested gliders being enthusiastically received by the flying community only to turn out to be complete dogs.

Anyway, that's my twopennyworth. I look forward to reading what the experts say.

PS. Sorry for using DHV rather than EN ... well not really.

And back to Ali ... 21 Dec

Great Chris, thanks for your response.

The reasons that I would want to move up to a 'C' would be;

I want to fly higher, faster and further the more I fly.

Reading the hype surrounding higher grades of wing leads one to believe that this is the way to achieve my personal goals and targets. You read all of this marketing speak and get drawn into it, then I read Richard Carter's account of his 253.4Km flight on his old B and then realise that, maybe, your quote from Mr. Gin (Better to fly a lesser wing at 100% than a higher wing at 60%) is the only thing anyone needs to focus on.

I'm concerned about the lack of info in the marketing about one's ability and skill set needed to fly a better performance wing. For example, when I read Niviuk Artic 3's EN report, I notice that it gets mostly 'A', with a few 'B' and just 2 'C' grades. The C's are for course change with 75% collapses. It makes me think (quite incorrectly I believe) that I could fly it in a similar way to my Hook 2 and have massive gains in performance.

I suppose, what I am asking is how does one really know when they actually have the abilities to go up a grade.

I think it is the phrase "Active Piloting", and the ability to do it well, but how does the pilot (or observer - peers etc.) know that you are a good active pilot? I could be encroaching on Rick's interest in pilot development after CP here!

If I were to go into a shop where I don't know the owner - and had never flown with him/her - would they sell me a 'C' on verbal info that I would give them about my ability?

We have all said "why has he/she bought that wing? They'll hurt themselves on that! It's far too hot for them", but what are we basing our opinion on?

Andy Paulson joins in ... 21 Dec

Interesting thread Ali.

I'll chuck my hat in. Apologies for harking back to my Pilotage in Annecy (tell me to shut up anytime), but it truly was having the scales lifted from my eyes. The Instructors were so knowledgeable and so willing to share their knowledge and experience, outside of the parameters of the Course.

Three bits of advice that stuck with me.

1. "learn to fly your current glider at 100% of its capability before you move on up the ladder". We've all heard it but thing is, from my limited experience, until you do "pilotage" you've no idea where the 100% point of your glider truly is, and I still don't!! (might even be flattering myself to say that I found 50%).

They were amazed at the number of pilots (mostly Brits) who rocked up at their door with a glider that may align with the pilot's perceived capabilities, but was actually way beyond their true capability (as becomes apparent as the course unfolds).

2. "take what you read in glider tests with a pinch of salt". The guys may have had a degree of cynicism, but they're flying a whole range of gliders all day every day and they know the characteristics first-hand, so I bow my head to their wisdom. Their view was that the expert test pilot could (by a bit of weight shift here or there) quite easily make a glider behave in a certain way and pass or fail certain criteria, to get it to fall into one EN category or another, depending. Also they reminded that the certification tests are done in still-air. So a certified "high-end B", in real-air might actually be a "low-end C" (or whatever). Not intentionally being provocative here and I mean no disrespect to Glider Manufacturers. Indeed our Instructor's comments might have been a load of B-S, but it seems plausible to me and who am I to argue against that wealth of experience.

So if you were to looking to upgrade, focussing upon a glider's sportectivityfulltitude (as George Bush might say) and not so much on its safety stats, if a problem arose in real air conditions, the way the glider reacts might come as a bit of a surprise and be totally different to what it said on paper, and of course that piece of paper isn't going to be much use in A&E!

3. "when you do get a new glider, get on a Pilotage course" (well they would say that wouldn't they). "Find out its true capabilities and limitations". But it does make sense.

And then Rick Livingstone ...21 Dec

In the absence of genuine wisdom.....here's my take:

Performance differentials between ENB & ENC look fairly small.

If you glide for 5kms at 9:1 you'll drop 555metres, at 10:1 you'll drop 500metres. During such a long glide a good 'lift sniffer' pilot will easily make up 55metres over a pilot with poor lift exploitation. Between most ENBs and ENCs there is now usually only about 0.5 of one point of glide....

There is also little speed difference on trim or flat out; but when you're past half bar, when the ENC may glide significantly better.

Safety differentials between ENB & ENC.

I think there seems little doubt that a slope side assymetric collapse, when scratching, is going to be more dangerous on a C than a B. The C will tend to whack you into the hill more and be harder to 'catch'. I seem to scratch quite a lot so until I know I can cope with a B collapsing like this, it seems tempting fate to fly a C.

Conclusions:

1. Unless you are flying your ENB frequently on more than half bar, and coping OK with the wing, then there isn't a significant performance advantage to flying a ENC.
2. If you work on getting to be a good pilot it will more than outweigh the ENB/C

performance differential.

3. When you can fly an ENB flat out with impunity and otherwise cope with all the collapses it can throw at you, maybe it's time to think about an ENC!

Anyway, this is my excuse for sticking with a B for the foreseeable future!
Rick.

And representing the XC hounds it's Ed Cleasby ... 21 Dec

(And getting very personal (ed) that is ed the editor not ed the Ed...) From flying wingtip to wingtip with you Ali you've probably got the answers to most of your questions. When do you move up? Dunno it's personal. I sense you know what you want to do but need others to confirm it for you.

What you won't do is fly higher, faster, further not to any meaningful extent. After 30 years of moving up in search of the holy grail I've discovered that's a myth mostly. I only fly what i fly cos i feel safer, wouldn't catch me on a EN A that has no feeling, limited flight envelope and sorts itself out in trouble I prefer to do that as I wish to be a pilot not a passenger. . Now an Artik 3 could be tempted myself ; def the best EN C on the market (although the German girl helped persuade me - she could have done more). From what I saw of your flying you seem to have excellent ground control skills (you could teach me some), well developed active piloting skills, you fly a lot and stay current, a sensible approach (except when coming up short into bushes - and an EN D won't prevent that). To me you seem a very much ready for an EN C (but pick the one carefully they vary a bit across the range - ignore the test ratings to a large extent - they beguile somewhat) - I think if you get another EN B you'll plateau - not in terms of xc skills and achievements, just piloting skills. It's right about the 100% thing, but every move up begins with 70% and the extra 30% is the fun part of learning to max your and the wings potential. Otherwise it would be a bit pointless.

It's natural and good to be cautious - and also honest with yourself. Some I would not feel comfortable about suggesting any move up - take that Mark (?) bloke for example (forget his last name - sent me an Anne Summers catalogue for Christmas, must thank him if I ever see him on the hill) anyhow, yeh - he'd still keep going down whatever he flew. You ? I think you and an EN C are a pairing made in heaven.

As I opened with - will try and find one of the elusive breed for assurance you seek - under 80kg? Pull the other one - be honest with those scales.

And back to Ali ... 21 Dec

I've ordered the new Hook 3. Still a B but higher AR than my last one and a 3 liner. I hope that gives me enough growing room, not weight wise! My scales are extremely

accurate as they measure my wife at 25kg!!

I'd love to move up to a C, truth be known, but I'm not convinced that I'm ready.

My future plans for flying are to get into big distance bagging, and I'd love to do some comps too, but I'm apprehensive about lesser passive safety. I also still have shed loads to learn. I might look again in 12 months.

And at last ... Chris Scammell! 21 Dec

In favour of higher class wings

Very few pilots fly their current wing 100% before moving up a class. Don't beat yourself up on that one.

Higher aspect wings offer more than higher performance. Factor in 'feel'. Souped up Vauxhall Corsa's go faster than Jag e-types but which gives greatest driving pleasure? Unless you have access to regular SIV then you can't train adequately to pilot any wing when it turns to shit. Safety created by a one off SIV is an illusion.

A step up a class is not a one way trip. You can suck and see. You'll know if you've made a mistake as you'll feel held back by fear (or you'll crash and burn)

Risk homeostasis. A hotter wing will see you take fewer risks in where you position it relative to known/expected turbulence.

You will be challenging yourself as a pilot which is key to surviving 'the killing zone'

In favour of staying in the B class

Is your hook/next holding you back? I doubt that it is yet.

Will you enjoy your flying more on a higher class wing? Smooth days yes. Rough days no. Good XC days are rough days by and large as thermals create turbulence.

You will probably feel greater satisfaction at performing well on a lower class wing.

Beating higher class wings is satisfying and if it doesn't work out then you can always blame the glider!

You avoid the risk of being labelled 'all the gear and no idea'

If it's any consolation I have a constant inner dialogue about risk vs performance vs satisfaction. It is not easy to choose the right equipment as we fly in a huge variety of conditions, not to mention psychological states. The trouble is that if you have several wings to cover different conditions then you are never fully dialled in to one wing, which is also important. Ultimately there is no right or wrong, there is only feels good and feels bad. Only you can answer that one. Good luck and Merry Christmas.

And yet more ... 22 Dec

I reckon you are ready to move up a class when you are no longer suffering major collapses on active days when others report collapses. This means you are actively piloting well and are ready to progress to a wing that requires more finesse.

Also. Don't just consider how gliders recover from collapses but how easily a glider collapses in the first place. Some gliders have great recovery characteristics but need them as they collapse readily. Others hardly collapse at all but when they do, you'd better be on top of the situation before it gets out of hand.

Then the manufacturer pitches in - Mike Cavanagh 22 Dec

Always a tricky topic and one that could have long and complicated answers, especially if you are willing to really think about it.

One of the main things I would like to add to the pot is to stop being so fixated on EN classes. That is a potentially dangerous way to buy a wing, and perhaps inhibiting to you as a pilot. I especially find irritating the classic, 'well it only has one or two c's so I'll be OK on it as really I'm more comfortable as an EN B pilot'. No one is an EN B pilot, or an EN D pilot and if a good manufacturer is not classifying you as such (although I admit it is very hard to escape the EN language). We are all pilots with different experiences and a different feel. Some associations (particularly the DHV) are very keen to put everyone in boxes and expect wings to do the same. It is not possible, but it is their fault why we find ourselves so troubled by the EN classes.

Because the stakes are high if we get it wrong our sport is a bit of a mind game. Therefore we are all fair game to anyone who is prepared to throw us a crutch, something to help remove a responsibility or thought process. A lot of pilots use the EN as a crutch, or perhaps as an un-needed restraint.

Instead pilots should be looking at their experience. Perhaps with the aid of others, such as an instructor, or a fellow pilot they feel can offer sensible advice.

If you are flying a Hook and... Feeling very comfortable. Not minding the rough stuff, perhaps even relishing it as you know it is telling you something. Flying with others on similar wings and at least climbing as well. Noticing you suffered on a glide, whilst someone on a slightly better wing stayed higher. Finding you don't get any collapses whilst others were having them. Then you are probably probably well up for flying a more demanding wing. (If you feel the need).

If you decide to step up, then you need to decide what wing will give you the performance gain that you can cope with. By performance I mean in speed, glide and feeling. Always good if you can try a wing before you buy - the Lakes is particularly fortunate in this respect as demos are often available. But, whatever you do, do not base any of your major thoughts on the EN results. Read what the manufacturer says (hopefully they are not stuck in EN speak), speaks to others that fly the wing and look at reviews you can trust. And don't forget to look at the design! Higher aspect. Big arc. 2-liner! In ozone we have a saying that you cannot cheat aspect. Maybe aspect is just added because they cannot get the required performance in safer ways (structure). More aspect usually requires better pilot skills on the ground and in the air.

If you choose to step up, then hopefully your flying remains enjoyable and after some time you reach the same position again and you go through the process again. Or, perhaps you are not enjoying it and then you have to think why? And try and remedy. Maybe means you go back to the type of wing you were flying, or you have to look at a similar wing that behaves, or is designed, differently. Full respect to pilots that do step up and down the mis-leading EN categories - they are often the good pilots.

One thing to remember in the back ground of all this. The change may not mean you fly any further (if that is your goal), or stay up any better! If you are comfortable on this new wing then it just means you are capable of flying such a wing. The rest (further, longer flights) comes down to your experience and skill of making flying decisions. If you are not quite capable of flying the wing you have chosen then that can mean you spending too much thought on flying the wing than on the flight. Leading back to the old adage that it is better to fly a wing at 100% etc.

Nowadays there is always a temptation to rush things. Paragliders and speed are never the best of mixes in more ways than one. Take your time on your progression. The hills are not going anywhere. I doubt anyone got into paragliding with the dream of flying 100km. We do it for enjoyment and the buzz it gives in so many different ways.

And back to Ali who's really happy and thin ... 22 Dec

This is brilliant guys, thank you for taking the time to put your thoughts into words for me.

I didn't really ask the question for me (at this particular moment in time), more for many pilots that may be asking themselves the very same question - I cannot be alone in wondering what the signs are to move up.

Mike - I actually did get into paragliding with the aim of flying 100km, really.

It's an interesting point that a couple of you raise that "if you're not getting collapses when others are". I don't necessarily get any when others do, but the nature of my mind would tell me that my wing is just more resilient than the others and not that I am handling my wing better. I sometimes think (despite the external image) that I am too self-critical and refuse to accept my strengths and just focus on the negatives (the quack tells my there were issues in my childhood

On a couple of flights with Ed, we flew side by side in some strong air and the only difference that I noticed (feel free to correct me Ed) was my sink rate was much greater than his.

I appreciate that experience plays the biggest part in wing choice, but can one put a time on it? I have 100 hours in all types of conditions, but my 100 hours would be much more relevant than someone's 100 hours of coastal flying, and much less relevant than a pilot with 100 hours of purely alpine flying.

I certainly like the feel of my wing and am very happy to do another season on it, but there will be a point when I want more - I hope I live that long!

Forgetting the EN class and test reports, surely the manufacturers write glowing reports on their

new wings? If I went on Niviuk's report on the Artic 3, I would have bought one when it came out. The reviews also talk about great passive safety and performance like nothing else in the sport class, with technology from the serial class.. Sounds like a dream!

Chris Scammell again ...22 Dec

I am happy to confess to upgrading and then wishing I hadn't a couple of times. It's not because the wings weren't great. I was loving them 99% of the time (Advance 08 and M4light). The performance was astonishing and very seductive. I just couldn't relax and enjoy the flying the way I can on a lower class wing. And if I'm not relaxed I can't fly creatively and get in the zone. I wish I was man enough to fly the real high performance wings but I am willing to accept that I'm not and happy to do what I can on the gliders that I'm relaxed on. Unless you are comfortable on a wing you are not going to be able to relax enough to absorb all the extraneous info necessary to perform well.

What we really need (Mike), are gliders that reef between being a death-blade and a mattress, to suit conditions. An aspect than can shape-shift between 5 and 7 should do it. (I want royalties on that one!)

Then Mark Lennon 23 Dec

Excellent topic Ali.all good info if you're thinking of moving up to an en c wing! having moved up to an artic 2 from a hook 2 here's my take on it. don't read all the manufacturers hype and believe it! Just fly the wing on a good thermic day in strong conditions and you'll get your answer? Something I didn't do and had to learn the hard way. although now I love my wing and it delivers all I need there was a time I wasn't sure partly because of reading the en debate.so I guess it's about personal goals and what you want to achieve. I personally think you'd fly an artic 3 really well mate, so the choice is yours to make

Steve Giles brings us down to earth – it's all about the bottom line! 23 Dec

Only move up when you are ready to pay more for your wing initially and can smile when it's worthless in 12 months.....for VFM, En B wins every time, 90% of the performance for 50% of the cost over the life of the glider.

If you are happy with that, then you can start pondering if you are up to/need to fly and EN C.

And back to maker Mike ...23 Dec

Putting my manufacturer's head on I would say that it is not in a manufacturer's interest to unduly 'hype' a wing. If a wing is not as described then a manufacturer should know that pilots and dealers will soon set you straight, and years of building a good reputation would be tarnished. From an ozone point of view we do not want pilots to buy the wrong wing. If you do buy the wrong wing we all know what happens, you tend to sit on the hill and perhaps leave the sport. Hopefully everyone gets the right wing, but if not, then the sooner you can bite the bullet, and get yourself sorted with the right wing the better for

your flying.

Ali, entering the sport to fly 100km is an alien thought to me. It is such an arbitrary figure, it might as well be 100 miles, just to keep it a bit more British. Getting into the sport to fly across the lakes, back to your house etc. I can understand better. I always remember the first time I could look back and see the mountains of the Lake District from a far, knowing I had started there. Escaping the lakes is a good goal if distance is your thing. Then you have to work on escaping the Pennines. And then a bit flatter and think about the Vale of York. But if you are fixated on 100km then get yourself off to somewhere like South Africa - 3 thermals and you will have it in the bag. For me 10km in the lakes is worth 100km in most other places. And just a thought, does your goal mean that you stop flying if you cannot fly 100km. You may find that you progress faster if you concentrate on quality, rather quantity, and the quantity will come as an added bonus. Saying that I wish you every luck with your goal, it is certainly feasible for any pilot who can take off successfully. Actually, an aside, it is important to understand that luck plays a very important part in our sport. Pilots that don't realise or accept that will always find it a frustrating sport.

What conditions to demo a wing in. Never easy. There is a good chance you won't like any new wing if you choose a great stomping flying day and go with it at prime time. You need to know a wing to get the most out of it, except if it really suits your flying style and fits you like a glove from the off. Some will, some won't. Best not to be lazy. If you are picking it up in the afternoon and it is still flyable then go for a nice soar around in calm air, or a flop off the hill. Just the way it takes off should tell you a lot. Even on the stomping day, get up there early and off for a quiet fly down or scratch around, sink out, walk up, do it again. Then, if you are still happy, get off in the rough stuff, or go and get your old wing. Basically, put as much time aside to get used to the wing and your demo will tell you all you need to know. If it fits you like a glove from the off, then go ahead, buy. If not, then take the time to think why, try again or get yourself a different wing to compare and contrast.

Active flying is just good piloting. You fly the wing rather than the wing flies you. As a rule of thumb the higher the performance of a wing the more active piloting that is needed. It is those little adjustments that keep it in about one place above your head. Feeling the pitches and reacting. It becomes an instinctive reaction. Most pilots will not be really thinking about it and just be doing it not knowing it even has such a name. The faster wings often need faster instincts .

Chris Scammell dabbles in the occult or psychology or something ...

Purchasing the latest wing scratches an itch on many levels, most of them psychological I reckon. If you believe that your latest purchase has got the edge over everything else then it may fill you with the necessary confidence to try that improbable glide or persevere with a low save when you really should be setting up for landing.

The flip side is that much like other consumer purchases, the product that you desire loses

much of its value the moment that it is in your possession. This is a syndrome that is well documented in vehicle purchasing. Much of the pleasure of the purchase is in the anticipation of future gratification. Once the new model is in your ownership, the desire is transferred to the latest product in development that is being hyped rather than the purchase already made providing the gratification that you anticipated it would when dreaming about it. My observation is that this syndrome is increasingly prevalent in paragliding over the last five years (I am as guilty as anyone). This might be because there have been step changes in performance over this period but could also be attributed to forums and the fact that punters are now very aware of products in development, whereas in the past we generally didn't know about new wings til we saw them on the hill.

So the question is; will purchasing that new model enable me to achieve things I wouldn't have achieved on my old wing? The answer is possibly yes, but maybe not for the reasons that you expected. It could be more to do with how it alters your mind set and confidence when aboard the new must-have glider rather than because of huge leaps in measurable performance. That said, these new wings do seem to cross valleys with ease, I'm sure it never used to be like that. Or maybe I just wasn't taking the right line.

There was a couple of week's gap for Christmas when everyone presumably feasted heartily. Forum watchers waited with bated breath to hear whether Ali's Christmas had been so successful he could return to his original glider. But no!

Ali who has a problem with the test regime. 15 Jan.

I learned something very interesting on my coach course at the weekend.... and it wasn't coach related!

I assumed that if a wing got an A in a particular category in the EN and LTF tests, it was particularly safe. It really means that that particular routine (take take-offs for example) has simply Passed. There are no B, C or D's for some tests.

I assumed (quite incorrectly) that a glider that has 2 C', for example, with the rest as a's in the report, that it would fly very similar to a wing with all A's until the situation that arose giving it a C.

I, obviously, knew that a C wing would fly very differently from an A, but the tests gave very little away regarding performance.

I bet I'm not alone in making these assumptions!

You can buy the 43 page BSI document for £26 if you want to know what the tests really mean!

And the last word to the man who ought to know .. Mike Cav .. 16 Jan

Don't get hung up on EN ratings. They never will, and can never have given, the answers that most pilots seem to think they should. They are a small part of the puzzle and if not understood can give you the totally wrong information. Everyone has put too much importance in them, from pilots to manufacturers. They are good to show a certain level of conformity and basic safety, that

is deemed necessary by good thinking people, but they're not doing what most people perceive or want them to do.

The purpose of the EN (or LTF) tests are to prescribe a set of wing configurations in order to then measure the result. They do not measure how easily a wing collapses or the level of the piloting needed to fly that wing. They merely measure the result of putting a wing into a certain shape/configuration.

Not only are these tests misunderstood, they are, if anything, more problematic for our sport than is fully appreciated, as they can mean that a designer is designing a wing structure in order to make it possible to make the prescribed collapse, so the result can be measured, rather than focus on a structure that is designed not to collapse. The debate on the pros and cons of this is another can of worms, but one that pilots may find themselves thinking more carefully about in the future as the EN tests are changing in 2013.

In the absence of pilot experience to make their own informed judgements on a wing, then I will keep stressing that most good manufacturers should honestly explain their wings and if they don't then they should rightly be flagged up on this. Good dealers, who know the products they sell and take the time to know their customers are another key part of the equation. Listening to fellow pilots who have the wing in question is another good pointer. Take them for a pint!

You may always have some doubts before you buy a wing. There will always be that unknown bit about how you and the wing really suit each other. The important part to act upon is that if those doubts are not overcome then for sure you have bought the wrong wing. It is important for your enjoyment and possibly your safety that you get a wing which makes you feel happy, confident and comfortable (but don't get cocky! - this sport will always punish the blasé!). Then you can concentrate on the flying bit!

So, just what glider is Ali flying? I don't know but it's red which is interesting. This rang a bell and a quick search in the dusty SFC archives revealed some advice provided by Thermalus back in 2006. Whilst aimed mainly at Librans the general content still holds good.

Libra – September 24-October 23. You enjoy some success on the national lottery and decide to spend some of your winnings on a new paraglider. The key decision with which your stars can help is the all-important colour. Yellow gliders have the best sink rate but attract insects. As Mars features in your firmament you might consider a red glider to curry favour but this could result in Venus giving you a kicking. Blue is UV efficient but boring, green is so uncool and orange is a fruit. Black is the most visible from below but hopeless from above. White can be easily lost if you leave it in snow. Thermaluss suggests you stick with your old grey glider and as you are only going to win £10 you might buy a nice pair of socks instead, not red ones though. Lucky numbers – 2,14,23,24,27 and 39 with bonus ball 11.

Winter Speed-flying in the Alps – 2013 (Or Standing on the Shoulders of Elephants).



(Andrew Paulson conquers his demons and has a night out in Barnsley)

After successfully overcoming my internal battles with demons last spring, I'd decided to push on and investigate the black art of speedflying (YouTube has got a lot to answer for) although in truth, Stevie G had already whetted my appetite with tales of post-flight grins the size of the Cheshire Cat's. So I arranged a try-out day with Gordie just before Christmas and after my first ever speed flight straight off the top of Fleetwith Pike, true enough I couldn't stop smiling! Result. My Ozone Firefly duly arrived in the New Year and I stole another good day with Gordie, Malc and Rob at the end of January to get used to my new wing.

With a snowsports trip to the Alps booked for late February with my non-flying (but ultra-competitive) mates, I just couldn't miss out on an opportunity to show-off! I converted to snowboard more than 15 years ago and haven't been on skis since. However, again, good old Stevie G had made me aware of the peculiarities of flying with a large ironing board fastened sideways across your feet, so in my novice speed-fly status I thought I'd better err on the side of safety and get myself sorted out with two pieces of planking instead. A cheap pair of boots and my wife's old skis (bindings suitably butchered to suit the larger boot size) and I was kitted out. I was hoping for a day on Raise to re-acquaint myself with skis and to practice some ski take-offs, but it didn't happen.

Nonetheless, I was all ready to go. The Firefly coupled to a Gin Speedride harness weighed-in at around 7kg and at the size of a medium rucksack I was able to take it on the plane as hand-luggage. Plus, great opportunity for posing at the check-in queue methinks, with the "Speedride" motif resplendent on the rucksack. However, flying from Doncaster-Sheffield, in the People's Republic of South Yorkshire (land of my birth and home for 37 years), to be honest I'm not certain how many people could read "Speedride", let alone know what it was. But it is always a joy going back, especially when I go for a night out in Barnsley with my old mates, and I never tire of the "anti-humour" embedded in South Yorkshire mining communities.

The airport was built to try and offset the catastrophic unemployment brought about by the Tory's decimation of the mining industry in the 1980s (but I'm not bitter and I bear no resentment) and for anyone who has flown from Liverpool-John Lennon, you might be in for a bit of a surreal experience if you ever travel via Donc-Sheff. With the

exception of a statue of Robin Hood in the place where old John-boy stands at Liverpool, it's exactly the same building. Its former life was as RAF Finningley, base of the Cold War Vulcan Bomber Squadrons and not surprisingly (if anyone is remotely interested) home to the longest runway in Europe, which makes for quite a strange experience on return landing. The pilot of a piddling little Airbus 320 or B737 with all those miles tarmac in front of him (or her) doesn't need to apply any brakes, simply shuts off the throttles and free-wheels to a halt.

Anyway, back to the tale. No problems at check-in, but at the security desk it was a different story. Speedwing goes thro' X-Ray scanner. Imagine Brian Glover in Kes. "Wot's tha gorrin' theer cock?". I try to explain, wishing in my mind "please don't make me un-pack it, please don't make me un-pack it". "Oh arr" he replies "Weer tha gooin? Turin?" I nod. "Ad keeup it cloise if arr wor thee. A' uised ter wuk on t' chain 'aulage at Rossington Main (colliery) wit blooaks as maintains thy plane. Tha might needud yond parashooit aif way theer. Av' a nice flight".

Snow trip was to La Thuile in the Aosta Valley Italy, a resort that links with La Rosiere in France via the high San Bernardino Pass, the reputed route which Hannibal and his Elephants took on his way to attack Rome in 218 B.C.

I just hope he had better weather than me. It was either white-out or blowing a gale all week and the Glider never came out of the fekkin' bag.

*(This has to be the finest anti-climax in the history of **SFC** still the Nation's favourite read)*

Sports Supplement

The Wainwright Quiz

(Mal Grout adjudicates)

The Wainwrights 'quiz' published in the last edition of SFC received one suggestion which although fitting much of the description was unfortunately in the wrong location. The walk up through woodland then heather and bracken onto the ridge was from NY234292 forestry pull-in on the A591. The ridge was Ullock Pike. Snow clad big sister then easily becomes Skiddaw, and the ribbon of glass (due to the lack of any wind in the valleys) Bassenthwaite Lake. The two Wainwrights we flew over were Longside Edge and Ullock Pike, the third which could have been included (but then may have lacked height to achieve a soaring flight) was Carl Side.

So no CSC mug won last edition! *(Is that a pun? Ed)*

Wainwright Competition 2013

Having hardly recovered from the nail biting climax to last year's competition this year has got off to an astonishing start. Despite the appalling weather one pilot has displayed extraordinary intrepidity and clocked 45 tops between 12th Jan and 16th March, and

there are some pretty impressive bags amongst them. Mike Cav is hot on his wake with 39. Can't wait for the XC season to kick in! Results as at 2 April are:

Simon Blake – 45
 Mike Cavanagh – 39
 Rick Livingstone – 10
 Tim Oliver – 1
 Tony Eadington – 1

CSC XC League

Massive excitement at Yanwath Towers when the latest league showed a new champion of champion (pro tem) as Ali Westle leads the pack. Is it worth a trip to Ladbrokes?? Nah, give it a few days.

Pilot	Club	Glider	Total	Flight 1	Flight 2	Flight 3	Flight 4	Flight 5	Flight 6
1 Ali Westle	Cumbria	Niviuk Hook 3	73.8	→14.1	→13.0	→13.0	→12.1	→11.2	→10.4
2 Gary Stenhouse	Northumbria	Niviuk Icepeak 6	62.9	→32.1	▲30.8				
3 Rick Livingstone	Cumbria	Ozone Rush 3	43.5	→15.2	→9.4	→7.6	→5.7	→5.6	
4 Anthony Eadington	Cumbria	Skywalk Cayenne 3	42.5	→16.1	▲15.5	→10.9			
5 John Hamlett	Cumbria	Ozone Rush2	19.8	→19.8					
6 James Harrison	Cumbria	Nova Ion2	14.8	→7.6	→7.2				
7 Tim Oliver	Cumbria	Gradient Golden 3	12.1	→12.1					
8 Mark Gravestock	Cumbria	Nova Mentor	6.9	→6.9					

Oops – I shouldn't have done that!

Sponsored by Meccano



The safer toy for boys of all ages.

(Tony Thompson relates how he bumped into Whiteside and then tells of the many things one can do with this timeless toy.)

Friday 15th Feb

I was flying with Dave Ashcroft, took off on Swinside and flew around to Grassmoor. Nice flying just below orographic cloud. The wind dropped and we both headed back towards Swinside. I wasn't flying as close to the cloud as Dave, so I couldn't quite make it back. I did a nil wind slope landing on lower slopes of Whiteside. Swung into a rock and broke left leg. I Radioed Dave and he flew back. (Much less graceful landing than me) Mark and Phil drove around to where we were, and got their vehicle to within 200m. I checked myself over, definitely no other injuries, although I did get a small nose bleed.



Would you want these guys to carry you down the hill?



.... or these?

I thought better of a carry down and we called 999, Police and MRT. I enjoyed the afternoon sun while Mark and Phil 'stuffed' my glider into its bag and carried it down to his car. Then we got a call back from MRT - Martin was coming to save me, "Oh dear I

won't be able to keep this one quiet". There was time for a quick photo opportunity with Phil and Mark, a phone call home, (fortunately it was my daughter,) then all hell broke loose; sirens coming up the valley, helicopter "Oh dear, what have I done?".

Martin was running up the slope, then I realised why! He had a camera on his head. They started taking all details etc, Martin said that unless I moderated my language they wouldn't be able to use the footage on TV. (I don't think they will find enough footage without bleeps to use! Phew saved some more embarrassment.) I unzipped my flying suit and slipped out of the top. Out came a needle to go into my arm, then it all goes a bit hazy. (I'm not good with needles) A few good whiffs of Entonox and some morphine before my boot was removed. I do remember 'encouraging' MRT to cut my laces as they tried to remove my boot. (Not much fun that bit. It was pointed out that my leg was a funny shape (I did see it actually and had to agree). It was put in a splint and I was put on the stretcher and carried down to my transport, the North west Air Ambulance.

I was transferred to the Air ambulance. I have to admit to being rather quiet at this stage, I hadn't forgotten the day when I was flying at about 2,500ft above Derwentwater and it flew right below me and didn't see me. (A definite brown trouser moment that I could see coming from a long way off). Now wasn't really the time to ask if he was the Pilot. On takeoff the pilot did a 180 deg turn just above ground level, 'for the cameras'. I had my suspicions that this could be the same pilot! We flew over Loweswater and round Burnbank, to keep below cloud level, then directly to Whitehaven Hospital. The guy sat next to me was pointing things out, but I knew exactly where we were. I heard later that Dave had phoned his wife at this stage. Dave: Hi, are you at work? Clare: Yes. Dave: Look out of your window, is there a Helicopter coming? Clare: Yes. Dave: Just approaching the landing pad? Clare Yes! Dave: Don't worry it's not me, it's just Tony, He's OK. Once into A&E I do remember someone from MRT collecting straps and something I had been lying on. They were about to cut off my flying suit when I explained about the zips. Saved that one! That was it for a while, when I came round I had no trousers on and a plaster on my leg. (The dislocated joint had been relocated under sedation) I was moved up to Overwater Trauma ward.

Tuesday 19th Feb

Full plaster cut open to reveal some large blisters (About 4 inches long) around my ankle, and some large patches of red skin about to blister. Bandaged up to keep in place till specialist saw me on Wed. Nil by mouth on Wed, CT scan.



Wednesday 20th Feb

Operation to keep bones apart. It was a long day; Nil By Mouth from midnight and operation started at 4:20, I don't know how long it took but I missed my dinner. The very nice nurses on Overwater brought me several rounds of toast and loads of tea and Biscuits all eve. Ex Fix was rather strange two bars screwed into my shin and a bar through my heel!



Wednesday 27th Feb

Possibility of operation if blisters had healed enough to take stitches, Nil My mouth. No Operation, sent home for week. A week at home, no plastic mattress, no noisy old people moaning all night, no senile patients removing plasters off broken arms, no old guy tipping up his "water bottle", no bins rattling all night, no beds changed at 7am before coffee at 9:15, no nice nurse to wash my back, no adjustable bed to make it more comfortable at night! I just had a daily visit from the District Nurses, to clean my poles (No I have not been on drugs again, it is where the metal bars went through the skin) and to give me my daily clexane injection.

Wednesday Mar 6th

Operation Day, went in at about 3am Via ambulance, this was because I was in pain and the Paracetamol, Codeine and Ibuprofen cocktail were not enough. Morphine in the ambulance did the trick.

X-ray in A & E, then slept it off with help of Morphine

Admitted to Patterdale, (Can't go direct from A&E to Skiddaw) then transferred to Skiddaw Ward, went for Operation at 10:40. Ex Fix removed, various plates inserted. Apparently there were at least 10 bits of bone! OOPs.

4:30 on Kirkstone 2 (With Split plaster) 10.30pm I was in pain and had not been prescribed many drugs, doctor was on the way! About 12:30 when I got some decent "Prescription "drugs. I didn't have to wait that long sat on Whiteside, or at home waiting for the ambulance. Anyway I could go flying whenever I wanted now, it just needed two nurses to cross check my Name DOB and serial No. (I knew it off by heart by the time I left.) I can recommend the Oxynorm ☺

Friday Mar 8th

I was given IV Paracetamol and an IV 'drugs on demand' button. I had to get doped up before they took off the plaster. After 3 to 4 presses with only 5 minutes between I was away with the fairies, definitely flying again. I was quickly brought back to earth! Plaster changed, new back slab! (Rather painful, removal of plaster and bandages) Not the best time for me but I did keep the 'drugs on demand' button for another day. I slept well that night.



Bad ankle

Monday Mar 11th

Plaster changed, new full multi coloured plaster (Red at the bottom of the stack, blue at the top). Most memorable bit was a minor collision with trolley and toes on way into plaster room. (I can't say anything about the gender of the driver, I'll be reliant on them for the next few weeks). Allowed home at about 5pm. I have a carrier bag full of Syringes (To stop blood clots) and a great assortment of pain killers, some I can drink



with others I don't need to.

New windsock

Tuesday Mar 19th

Plaster Changed (Dark blue)

Tuesday Mar 26th.

Plaster Changed (Bright Yellow)

Lessons learned.

Don't be afraid to call out the Mountain Rescue, it may prevent any further injury. If you ask for police and MRT, if you mention 'paragliding accident' you will almost certainly get a helicopter unless you specify 'No HeliMed required!'

Don't assume medics will look for zips on a flying suit.
If you feel uncomfortable in a plaster (Pressure swelling etc) get it taken off. At the time I remember describing my foot as "It felt as if it was cooking"
Don't slope land where there are big rocks, even if the slope is nice and green.

The Royal Air Force provide a robust response to the NOTAM request for the 2012 LCC



... and on that note the entire editorial team wish all members a great safe season. See you on the hill where you can tell us all about the exploits you don't write in about! I'm off to the pub!

Chris (Editor in Chief)