

Issue 8/Spring 2018

Introduction

We hope instructors enjoy receiving this newsletter. If you have anything that you would like to add next issue, or any comments please drop us a line – mike@gliding.co.uk

Spring Flying and Infrequent flyers

Spring flying after a winter break and Infrequent flyers feature regularly in our accident statistics every year, where a lack of currency and recency may have been an underlying cause.

This spring has been fairly slow to get going, with the weather playing a large part in reducing the amount of flying available to some pilots and instructors.

This lack of currency and recency can easily increase the workload and reduce capacity to handle things if they start to go wrong. The shock factor and resulting increase in stress levels can prevent the individual from processing the situation quickly enough.



We need to recognise that some pilots may be rusty and need to get back into the swing of things before they can venture off cross country or even fly on a challenging gusty day. Also remember the importance of post rig checks. As supervisors we need to offer help/advice, the BGA currency barometer would be a good place to start.

New Accidents

As I'm sure you know, there are relatively few new accidents in gliding – many accidents have happened before, be it stalling / spinning, hard landing, or taking off with the canopy unlocked etc. At a recent OSTIV conference, our Swedish representative presented a new accident, which related to an electric self-launched sailplane. Apparently, the batteries in this self-launcher were very cold, and failed to deliver enough power for the sailplane to climb. It staggered off the ground and eventually stalled and hit the ground. Just a reminder I guess that new technologies sometimes introduce new gotchas. The lesson? Whenever a new technology is introduced into our environment, it's a good idea to read the manuals thoroughly while thinking of those 'gotchas'.

Landing in tree-tops

Another piece of advice from the conference was about how to 'land' in treetops. Apparently, it is never a good idea to be at flying speed at treetop height. If you catch one wing first (which I guess is inevitable), it will cartwheel the glider and there is a good chance you will crash nose first. The advice was to slow to a gentle stall just above the tops, so that the glider descends, flat, into the treetops. Worth tucking away, I thought!

Three year revalidation seminars

Please remember that EASA FI(S) refresher seminars are run regularly around the country. We try to run the majority of them in winter when the weather is more conducive to spending a weekend in a classroom. You can do this seminar ANYTIME IN THE 3 YEAR VALIDITY of your instructor certificate. You could do a seminar, revalidate, and then do another one in the next month which would be valid for your next 3-year revalidation.

Instructor Course help

There are many instructor course modules around the country throughout the year. As an instructor, you are always welcome to attend, and if you are a fully rated instructor, to help with the flying. It is of course free for you to attend, and you will often get to experience different types and different sites as well as refresh your instructing knowledge. Have a look at the BGA courses page and e-mail mike@gliding.co.uk if you want to get involved.

Why bother becoming a Full Cat now?

Under EASA I'll be able to do everything anyway...won't I?

There seems to be a common misconception that once we move to EASA licencing and instructing, because there will be no 'Full Cat' or 'Assistant Cat', that an instructor will be able to become a CFI, perhaps run the airfield or similar without any extra training. However, as there are some skills that need to be learnt before you can do those things, no matter your 'licence'. When we transition to a full EASA system, we will have a training program for each of these things, so that if an instructor is persuaded to become a CFI for instance, we will teach you about elements of supervision, setting up the airfield, rules and regs etc. Sound similar to the Full Fating syllabus?

Air Cadet instructors to BGA instructors

While it is of course possible for experienced Air Cadet instructors who are members of BGA clubs to convert to a BGA rating by attending a BGA instructor course, there are other ways to achieve this. Laws and rules details this provision. Contact your BGA club CFI to arrange this with a local Regional Examiner. The Regional Examiner may contact the BGA training standards manager for advice in this situation. Please also remember that the Silver badge is no longer a requirement for Basic Instructors.

CBSIFTCBE

We have heard pilots on many occasions delaying the 'canopy' to the end of their pre-flight checks because the cockpit gets hot in the summer and steams up in the winter. While, to a certain extent, private pilots can do cockpit checks in any order they like (although we wish they wouldn't!) it is essential that we teach the checks in the correct order to our pupils. Why? Because if we don't, something will be missed with predictable results. The Eventualities check sometimes delays things, but please be aware that actually performing the detailed thought process of this check once the canopy is shut is not the right time. The final eventualities should consist of (something like) 'If I can't land ahead, I'll turn Left, and fly at not less than 60 knots' or whatever works for your situation. Considering the eventualities in detail is best done before you get in the glider. You can then see the windssock, the terrain around the airfield and will not be rushed.



It's also useful to encourage your pupils to ask the instructor about check items in the back cockpit that they can't see – so Straps, Instruments and Canopy locking. Why? Because when they are solo in a 2 seater, that action might just prompt them to check that the back canopy really is locked and the straps are done up!

Epilogue

We really hope that you have a good summer flying and instructing, whatever your gliding cravings!

Please do let us know if there is anything you would like to add to these newsletters, or anything you wish to comment on.

Mike Fox, BGA Training
Standards Manager

Colin Sword, Chairman, BGA
Instructor Sub Committee

May 2018
mike@gliding.co.uk

