

Booker Gliding Club

Newsletter

June
2025



Member achievements – page 2



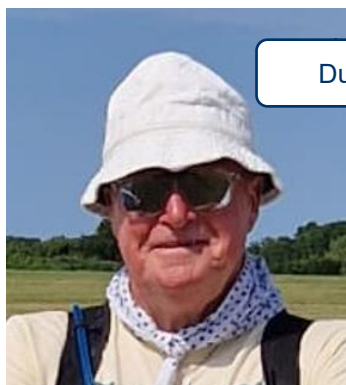
BI privilege added to SPL – page 5

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Member achievements

June has been a busy month for our members. We have two additions to our Instructor team - **Duncan Reed** and **Phil Cumming** have renewed their **Basic Instructor rating** after a lay-off of some years.



Dunc



Phil



Stuart

Stuart Whitehouse has moved on from BI and has gained his **Assistant Instructor** rating.



Phil

Phil Bellamy has passed his **General Skills Test** for Bronze.

Dean Miller has completed his **Bronze cross-country endorsement** with a flight in the Duo with Steve Williams.

Greg Watkins has converted to the **Pegase**.

And finally **Tony Greener** started flying with us in 2021 when the club was based at Chiltern Park. He had a trial lesson as a delayed 80th birthday present from his wife Audrey – presumably he has enough socks. Tony stuck with the club as it toured various airfields before restarting at Booker in late 2022. He is a veteran of several expeditions, racking up hours at Aboyne, Lleweni Park and Aston Down. And now he has - at the age of 85, which must be some sort of record – gone **solo**, and since then cemented it by doing a few more.



Congratulations to all!

Midsummer party

The longest day was forecast to be in the low 30s, which would have been too hot for the tug, so plans to roll out some vintage gliders were shelved. In the event it turned out to be slightly cooler, so flying continued into the afternoon. Graham Saw's beautiful red Petrel was kept busy by various members, alongside training in the K21s.

The evening warmth provided ideal conditions for the magnificent barbeque organised by **Bob Smith** and cooked up by **Duncan Reed**.

Many thanks for their hard work.



Bob checking the fruit salad

There will be another barbeque in August, date to be decided – keep an eye out for announcements.



Dunc feeling the heat

The Cub is back!

Well, almost. The Piper Super Cub has been restored to more than its original glory by Graham Saw, with assistance from Robin Willgoss, and is now back in the hangar. The next step is to run the re-built engine. It now belongs to a syndicate of members and when finished, with all the paperwork in order, it will be available to the club for towing.



Summer is here, come and fly!

The summer heat is producing some great soaring conditions for local soaring and cross-country, and the farmers are starting to cut some fields too. **Paul Brice** has some more tasks lined up for us, the next **Task Weekend** will be **5th – 6th August**, and then a whole week from **2nd to 10th August**. There will be tasks for all levels, including opportunities for Duo Discus cross-countries for those with less experience.

Meanwhile, you can follow the progress of **Ashley Birkbeck, John Otty, Steve Williams** and **Tim Scott** at Lasham Regionals **12th – 20th July** on [Soaring Spot](#).

If you have friends or family who would like to come and find out what you get up to, you can buy a trial lesson for them at the special rate of £99 (not available online, you will need to buy it from the office).

Essential skills for club members

Ever wondered how to park a glider, change a weak link, pack the hangar? Being part of a gliding club also means acquiring some essential skills. This [page](#) on our website helps to de-mystify what experienced members take for granted. The information is also available in the **Useful Information** folder on the bus – a little light reading between launches? And if you can't find what you are looking for, don't be afraid to ask.

New members may also find the first 4 documents [here](#) helpful, in particular the [jargon-buster](#).

From the BGA



Sailplane Pilot Licence – latest news

As previously reported, the UK Sailplane Flight Crew Licensing (SFCL) rules are applicable after 30th September. Pilots who can convert their BGA qualifications to an SPL should do so without delay.

A small number of helpful changes to SFCL are expected to be confirmed in law later this summer. One of those changes is the *inclusion of a Basic Instructor (Sailplanes) privilege*.

The BGA [SPL conversion application forms](#) have been updated to include BI conversion. Applications for an SPL with BI(S) privileges or to add BI(S) privileges to an existing SPL are now being accepted by the BGA, so that BGA BIs can apply in good time ahead of the 30th September deadline. *Please note that an SPL with a BI(S) rating cannot be issued by the CAA until the law has changed as described above.*

Note for all applicants - take time to read the guidance notes and application form carefully before completing and include all required evidence. Please see the latest [BGA guidance](#).

Parachute drop zones - reminder

Skydiving takes place into Drop Zones (DZs), radius 1.5 or 2nm up to FL150, as marked on a chart and listed in the UK AIP. Skydivers usually *drop directly upwind* of the DZ and routinely descend through cloud.

Drop-planes operate outside as well as inside a DZ to position themselves for the drop. They often manoeuvre sharply with steep descents. The major sites at Langar, Peterborough Sibson, and Hinton-in-the Hedges are very busy. The Weston on the Green military DZ is located within a Danger Area (D129). Temporary DZ sites (notified by NOTAM) can be particularly difficult to identify.

A pilot may see other flying activity within a DZ. This will be subject to local safety protocols – *do not assume that any aircraft can fly within an active DZ.*

A pilot will not see a free-falling parachutist in time to avoid a collision. If in doubt, stay out.

More [BGA guidance](#).

Dates for your diary – summer flying

2025 programme

31st July – 1st August **No gliding** – airfield in use for a British Airways Families Day

The full programme of events additional to our normal flying operation can now be found on the [events diary](#) on the website.

For day-to-day ops, check the [duty rota](#).

Over the summer we are operating 7 days a week. Adam supervises Tuesday – Friday, weekends are covered by the member instructor rota, and Mondays are for licensed pilots only – although instruction will be available if an instructor offers to cover the day



Club Communications

We use WhatsApp groups, as below:

Booker Gliding Club – general club information and notifications including details of online daily briefings

Booker Instructors – information and swap requests for instructors

Booker Expeditions – set up in the run up to each expedition.

If you wish to be included in any of these groups, contact the CFI.

Booker XC – for tasks, cross country discussion and feedback – contact Jane Moore or ask for a link on the main Whatsapp group

Booker Chat - for general chitchat – contact Jane Moore

Condor Flyers – for those wanting to join in Condor group sessions – contact Bob Smith or Henry Ross or ask for a link on the main Whatsapp group.

The **Booker GC website** at www.bookergliding.co.uk has a Members Page. This contains the latest Club news snippets and links to previous newsletters, meeting minutes and several useful and informative Club documents. The Members' page is accessible to everybody (not just members) but certain documents, such as committee minutes, need a user ID and password. To obtain these, go to the members' page and click on the 'email Administrator' link. Don't forget to *include your name and membership number*.

For the latest news about what's happening check out

<https://www.facebook.com/bookerglidingclub>

The Booker blog is no longer maintained but has a wealth of pics and stories from previous years

<http://bookergc.blogspot.com/>

*** All views expressed within the newsletter are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Club or committee ***

Contributions to the newsletter are welcome. If you would like to submit an article for a future edition, please send it to Jane Moore at jxmoore@gmail.com

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