

Booker Gliding Club

Newsletter

March
2025



Easter Task weekend – page 5



Women go gliding – page 6

CONTENTS

page 2	Member achievements
page 3	Spring expedition - Denbigh
page 5	Easter – Task weekend
page 6	National Women's 'Go Gliding' weekend
page 6	SPL update – rolling recency
page 7	From the BGA – refresher self-briefing, competitions, airproxes
page 8	Dates for your diary – <i>summer flying schedule</i> - 2025 programme now on the website

Member achievements

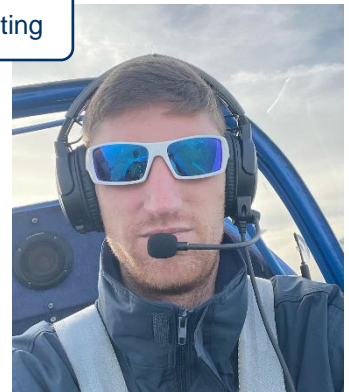
Aspiring cross-country pilots have made good use of the poor weather at the start of the year by focusing on progress towards their Sailplane Pilot Licence.

Bronze theory test

Thanks to a number of instructors giving up their time to deliver briefings on various topics, and **Bob Smith** for co-ordinating it all and signing the forms, the following have all passed their Bronze theory test:

- **Phil Bellamy**
- **Deiniol Heywood**
- **Greg Watkins**
- **Dean Blair**
- **David Harborne**

Dean Blair navigating



Bronze field landing and navigation training

Dean Blair has also completed his field landing and navigation training.

Tug pilot rating

We now have two new tug pilots, Luke Bishop and Dean Blair, thanks to **Christine Bell**, Tug Manager at Bidford Gliding Club, who came over to Booker on several occasions to train them – with the help of a number of members who acted as guinea pigs on the other end of the rope.



Dean, Christine and Luke

Spring expedition - Denbigh

The Club's annual expedition to Lleweni Parc, home to Denbigh Gliding, was remarkable for having no daytime rain for the entire two weeks, so flying was possible every day, and days off could be enjoyed in sunshine. The trip started with T-shirt temperatures and an easterly wind which produced wave not far from the airfield. Poor visibility spoilt the view but it was fun working out what was going on. After a couple of check flights with Doug Hilton, Simon Jones flew his Discus and had his first solo flight at Denbigh, and also his first solo wave flight. The next day the wind went round to the north and the temperature dropped about 10 degrees, but the sky cleared with the passage of a cold front and there was some excellent thermal soaring. After a few days of thermals, the wind turned to the southeast, which produced wave but involved a longish tow south to contact it. The hills were also burning so the viz was impaired by smoke.

Many thanks to **Doug Hilton** (long time Booker member now flying at Parham) for leading the expedition. For the first week he flew 315 with Booker members, and then for the second week the licensed pilots with single seaters stayed on and Doug flew with Parham members, who were very grateful for the opportunity offered to fly a Duo and experience wave for the first time.



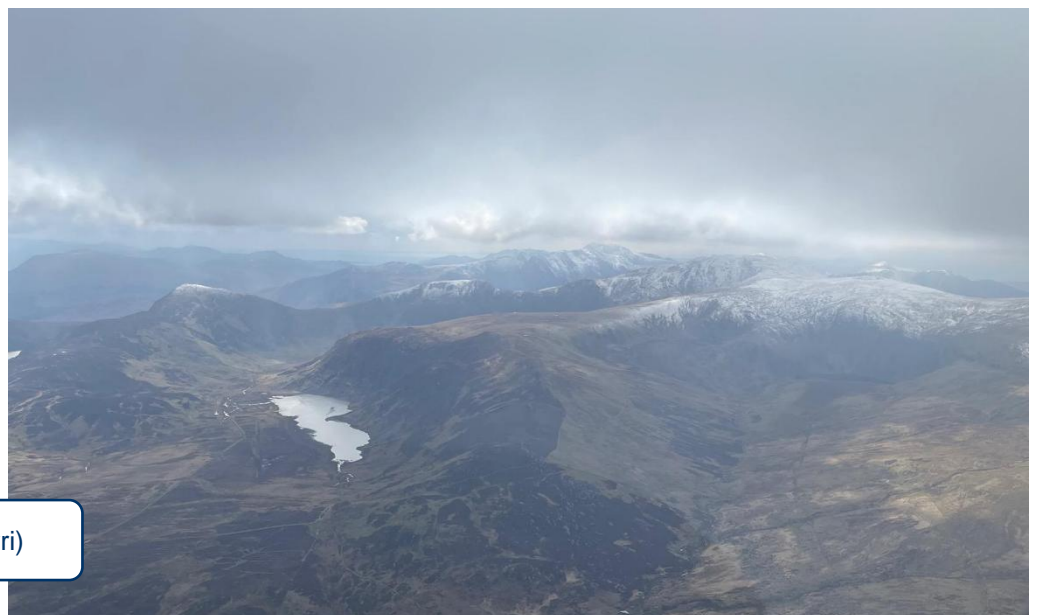
A fine view of the airfield



The River Conwy



Ruthin and the ridge



Snowdonia (Eryri)



Sky on fire – John Herman heading off, leaving Ventus V66 tucked up for the night

The Club's next trip will be to Aston Down, 15th – 18th May, while the airfield is closed for the Private Flyer event. If you would like to come and have not already joined the Whatsapp group, drop the office an email and we will send you the link to join.

Easter - Task weekend

Easter is fast approaching and with it the first of our Task Weekends, organised by [Paul Brice](#). As preparation, Paul is running a series of briefings for participants and others. The first, on 8th March, covered early cross-country soaring and task setting, and the second, on 22nd March, was on [badge and diploma flights](#) and [setting personal goals](#). Coming up, **at 0930 in the clubhouse**, is:

29th March – use of soaring software

Paul says: *All are welcome at all levels - we'd love the more experienced pilots to share their views in the discussion; and hope that people not yet ready for cross country solo will have their appetites whetted!*



National Women's 'Go Gliding' weekend – 26th/ 27th April

Anyone can learn to glide, there is nothing stopping women taking up and excelling at the sport, and yet they form a very small proportion of pilots in general and glider pilots in particular. We are therefore taking part in the BGA's National Women's Go Gliding Weekend on 26th/27th April, with the objective of signing up new members. The BGA ran this in 2024 and the clubs that took part reported significant successes.

The plan is to encourage women to come along and have a trial lesson, a sim session or just hang out and see what it's all about. This will be alongside normal club operations, members can fly as usual.

Take a look at <https://bookergliding.co.uk/women-gliding> to see what the plan is and let me know how you can help, maybe by driving the sim (training provided) or helping out on the ground with hospitality.

Jane Moore

WOMEN'S GO GLIDING WEEKEND
26/27TH APRIL

Wycombe Air Park
SL7 3DP

Booker Gliding Club

- Socialise with fellow flying enthusiasts
- take a trial flight in a glider
- try our glider simulator
- visit our clubhouse and airfield, see our gliders and tugs

CLICK LINK ABOVE

BRITISH GLIDING ASSOCIATION

SPL update – rolling recency basics

From **1 October 2025**, all solo glider pilots, other than those still under training, will need a Sailplane Pilot Licence (SPL). The BGA and CAA websites now contain comprehensive information about how to apply for and maintain an SPL.

To maintain and exercise the privileges of your SPL (that is, to fly as a licensed pilot) you will need to ensure, each time you fly, that you meet the **rolling recency** requirements. Simplified, for most glider pilots, the requirements are that within the past 24 months you must have completed:

- *five hours of flight time,*
- *15 launches*
- *two flights with an instructor, who must sign your logbook.*

If you are an instructor, self-launch pilot or carry passengers there are additional recency requirements.

Here are a couple of scenarios worth considering:

1. **SPL Changeover day and thereafter.** If you wish to fly on or after 1 October 2025 you will need to be compliant with rolling recency, so you will need to have the required hours and launches in your logbook and also two flights with an instructor completed within the past 24 months and signed off.
2. **Winter.** If you are likely to drop out of rolling recency as winter approaches, ensure that any issues are resolved before the poor weather delays you further.

This BGA Webpage has further details, including what to do if your recency lapses, and links to the CAA site.

<https://members.gliding.co.uk/pilot-licence-privilege-recency-and-revalidation-guidance/>

If your SPL lapses after September 2025 you can still fly, but only under the supervision of a Flight Instructor (Sailplanes).

From the BGA



Safe Start 2025

The BGA has put together a refresher self-briefing for glider pilots to help everyone enjoy a safe start to their 2025 flying season.

[The Safe Start 2025 self-briefing presentation can be viewed here.](#)



Competitions

Competition flying is an important part of gliding. Organised on-site competitions range from a one-day event through to nine-day or two-week championships involving multiple tasks and classes of gliders. You can read more [here](#).

Many pilots compete in online competitions, for example the [BGA Ladder](#) or [We Glide](#) or the [OLC](#), where pilots upload logger traces of their cross-country flights to compare performances. It can be very instructive to see the decisions other pilots made flying the same task.

Airproxes

These two recent airprox reports are worth reading.

The importance of good pre-flight planning including airspace and NOTAMs near the route can help to avoid getting caught out when things don't quite go according to plan. [This report](#) of an Airprox between a Beechcraft Bonanza and a launching ASK 21 glider in Wattisham's ATZ is worth reading.

And [this report](#) identifies why it is important for all aircraft to make their presence known when flying in or adjacent to busy airspace.

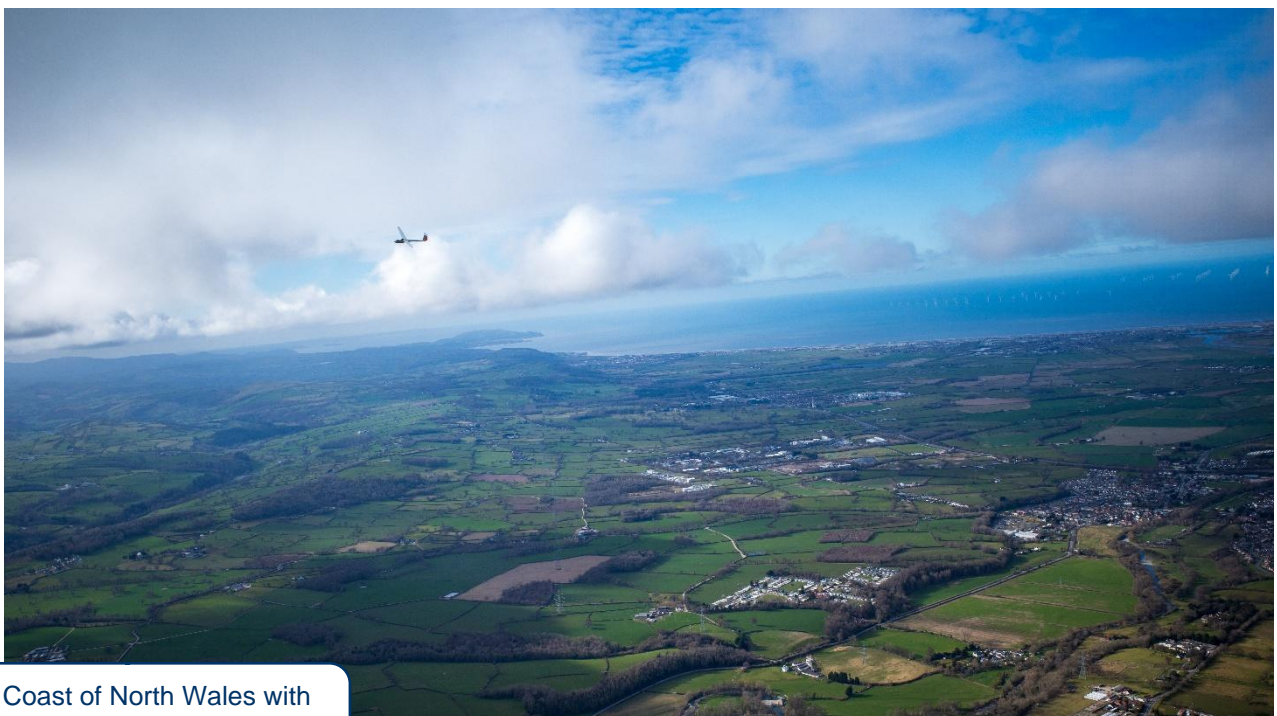
Dates for your diary – summer flying

2025 programme

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](#).

From 1st April 2025 we will be operating 7 days a week. Adam will be supervising Tuesday – Friday, weekends will be covered by the member instructor rota, and Mondays will be licensed pilots only – although instruction will be available if an instructor offers to cover the day.



Coast of North Wales with
Nils in his LS4 in the
distance

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

Published by Booker Gliding Club
WYCOMBE AIR PARK, MARLOW, BUCKS SL7 3DP
Office Tel: 01494 442501

Booker Gliding Club Ltd registered in England, number 1492733
Registered office: Wycombe Air Park, Booker, Marlow, Bucks, SL7 3DP
VAT number: 350 4182 83
© Booker Gliding Club 2025