

Booker Gliding Club
Newsletter

November
2021

Don't miss
the daily
briefing
0830hrs

Aboyne – what a trip!



Condor multi-player is back

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Latest news

Chiltern Park

The airfield closed at the end of September because the lease terminated our last day was Sunday 19th September 2021.

Abingdon

We have moved to Abingdon Airfield, home to Dalton Barracks since it was handed from the RAF to the Army. The ATC used to fly Grobs there, and it is sometimes used for practice by the RAF. The airfield very large – 300 acres. The main runway is 2km long. We are looking at using the eastern part of the cross runway, which is 650m from the east end to the intersection, and have erected a temporary hangar for the tugs and K13. Airspace – overhead is FL85, and we may even get wave from the Cotswolds. Access – convenient for the A34. There is a fence all the way round for security.

We will not have exclusive use as Dalton rent it out to make money, it is used for track days, Formula E testing, fireworks, filming, but we are used to operating in a mixed environment.

When the RAF left in 1992 it became a training area, so there are no current documents to allow aviation - aircraft from Brize landing there use a different set of rules. We have therefore in effect had to re-commission the airfield and produce all the documentation to establish a civilian operation - a much bigger job than we expected. We are currently working on the final steps and hope to be flying there soon.

Wycombe Air Park

We have always maintained that we are going back to Booker, to the north side and new facilities. This will be possible when the current legal dispute between Buckinghamshire Council and the leaseholder has been resolved.

Staff

We are grateful to the staff for their continuing efforts – Richard, the engineers John and Paul Sawney, and Shelagh Clowry in the office.

Shelagh will be retiring on 22nd December, after 16 years. We very much appreciate all her hard work over the years and her sticking with us through the tough times.

Please make **Jenni Hursey** welcome as she takes over from Shelagh.

We also bid farewell to **Sam Coole**, who was course instructor at Chiltern Park, and then offered experience in winch launching at his home club, Surrey Hills (Kenley) while we were without an airfield.

Members' achievements



The grin says it all

Simon Jones made good use of his first visit to Aboyne. Along with several excellent wave flights he achieved his first Aboyne solo in the K21 and promptly converted to the ASW19 and did four more.

Hakan Gokalp also re-soloed after a long break.

Meanwhile, down south, those that took advantage of the hospitality of Surrey Hills GC (Kenley) had some fun on the winch. **David Hamilton** re-soloed, as did **James Roland** (48 years after his first, also at Kenley), and **Graham Saw** did his first winch launch in a K8.

In the power world, **Willy Hackett** converted to the amazing Lysander.



The members have turned their hands to construction. The **temporary hangar** the club bought for Abingdon, to keep the tugs safe from the winter weather, arrived in two large blue boxes, with a sheet of instructions which lost a little in the translation. Just getting all the bits out of the boxes required some effort.



A team led by **Robert Turner** and **Graham Saw** managed to make sense of it all and get the frame up.



And then, a mass turn-out of members came along to drag the cover over the frame and complete the structure.



It was a **fantastic piece of teamwork** by members which gives us an excellent facility at the launchpoint.

Aboyne

The club's annual expedition to Aboyne (Deeside Gliding Club) was blessed with good weather and a large number of members made it up to Scotland to experience the best of wave soaring. As well as those with years of experience, a number of first timers, including pre-solo pilots, came along to continue their training in a new environment. Here David Harborne shares his experience of his first visit to Aboyne.

My first visit to Deeside Gliding Club at Aboyne as a pilot under training was something I was really looking forward to. I had listened to Richard's Aboyne briefing twice so knew roughly what to expect but the actuality exceeded my expectations.

I arrived on Saturday afternoon, just as the club aircraft had been rigged, and was immediately involved with helping at the launch point as we got both of Booker's two-seaters airborne. A great way to get to grips with how things were going to work for the coming week.

On Sunday I was fourth launch of the day, flying with Dave Byass as my instructor, taking the Eurofox aerotow to 2,700ft. With Dave's guidance I flew to just over 12,000ft using the lift in the wave which at times was 6 knots up, with plenty of time to take in the stunning views of the Highlands, including Lochnagar, Ballater and Balmoral. We went on oxygen at 10,000ft which was surprisingly fuss-free and easy, something that had concerned me before the flight as I had never had to use the system before. This flight introduced me to the practicalities of flying in wave and I found it exhilarating.

On Monday I helped on the launch point for a couple of hours before taking the afternoon off to do other things, missing out on a terrific flying afternoon.

Tuesday the weather was iffy to start with, taking until lunchtime to become flyable. I was lucky enough to get some circuit practice in and even managed a half-decent final landing.

Richard was my instructor on Wednesday and once again we managed to get into wave and although it was less defined than on Sunday, we still got some great flying time in, jumping from wave bar to wave bar, flying around the Crathie area, managing to get to around 6,500ft.



Thursday was my last day and after a couple of hours helping on the launch point my turn to fly again came. We knew the weather was going to break down in the afternoon and the wind was up on the previous few days so we took a tow to 2,700ft, got into weak lift which turned into wave, giving 2 knots up as we flew up and down the edges of the clouds. When the lift died out Dave would take control for a little while and hunt around until we found enough to keep us going and then hand back control to me. We topped out at just over 7,500ft before the cloud started closing in. Air brake descent to 5000ft then hovered around until the traffic cleared then descended to join the circuit and land.

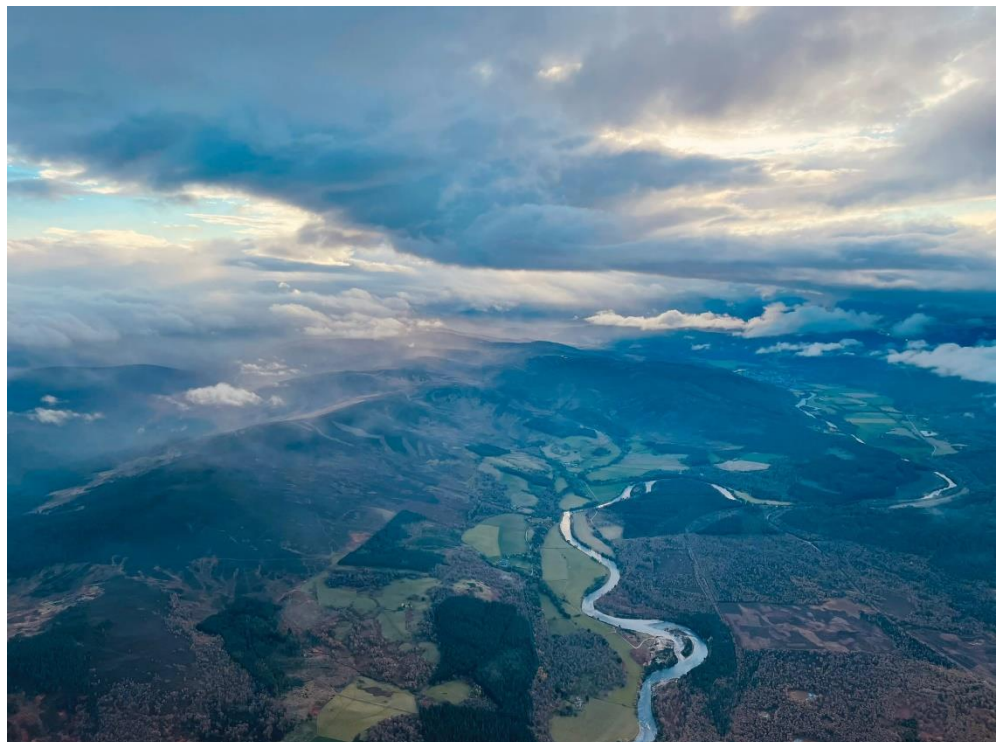


I cannot recommend a visit to Aboyne more highly. As a pre-solo student pilot I have gained valuable experience, flying with extremely experienced and skilful instructors to guide me.

I'd read about wave and watched the G Dale and BGA Wave Soaring YouTube videos, as recommended but until you've experienced it you have no idea what a terrific way to go flying it is. Wave flying is so amazingly smooth and, in my view, beats chasing thermals hands down.

What a glorious way to take in Scotland's fabulous landscape.

David Harborne





Kenley winching

After Chiltern Park closed, we were grateful to Surrey Hills GC (Kenley) for their hospitality in welcoming members who fancied winch launching. Sam Coole, our summer instructor, was on hand to smooth the way, and several members had their first experience, or renewed their acquaintance with winching. David Hamilton and James Roland re-soloed, and Graham Saw, who seems to have flown most things already, had his first winch launch in a K8.



Sam at his home club



The view is a bit different from Scotland, or Bucks!

Simulator upgrade

Back in 2013 a talented group of members – Graham Saw, Robin Willgoss and Pete Wyld – constructed a simulator which, unlike gliding simulators built by other clubs, incorporates force feedback so that the controls feel realistic. It is housed in a trailer which was funded by a grant from Sport England. Scroll forward a few years and PC hardware, Windows, and the software – Condor – have moved on, so James Giles is getting the original members, together along with some enthusiastic helpers, to take a look at what would be needed to upgrade and keep our simulator running. The first step was to give the trailer a good scrub, a task undertaken by cadets Leo and Dan. Once a trial and technical evaluation is complete, hopefully with the aid of some external funding, we hope we will be able to complete the work quickly. The aim is to take the simulator out to schools and community groups in order to stimulate interest in gliding, and with luck recruit new members. We also intend to take it to Abingdon for the benefit of the servicemen and women stationed in Dalton Barracks. In the meantime, the simulator is available for training if anyone would like to give it a go. Let us know on the club WhatsApp group if you are interested.

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Leo and Dan

Condor glider simulator – multi-player sessions

As most members will be aware, Condor is a low-cost gliding flight simulator that will run on your home computer. The latest version, Condor 2, has great graphics, flight and environmental modelling. The best way to get an idea of what it can do is to look at the manufacturer's [web site](#). Last year, during lockdown, we flew a couple of times a week. During the flight you can see the other participants flying around you and real time scores can be viewed as you go around the task. Your strategy during the flight will closely match what you would do if you were flying it for real. We have virtually flown from many sites around the world.



There will be a zoom briefing on Wednesday 1st December at 8pm (link sent out on Whatsapp). This is for anyone interested in understanding how to join in with other Booker club members flying Condor gliding simulation over the coming winter. Time permitting, the session will give an opportunity to join in with a short demo flight. We will probably run our first proper multiplayer cross country on Sunday 5th December 8pm and then once a week, though content and timing may change in accordance with participants' preference.

Our first look this year will have heavy penalties for anyone careless enough to touch Abingdon Airspace!



Dates for your diary

2022

- 5th - 20th March: Spring expedition to Lleweni Parc (Denbigh)
- 14th - 29th May: Summer expedition – destination tba
- 23rd - 31st July: Booker Regionals
- 8th - 23rd October: Autumn expedition to Aboyne



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 – NEW GROUP

Join here: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/HukdaXAnb83JIVpd2FZ9nw>

Booker Banter - for general chitchat – contact Jeremy Gilbey

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

<http://bookergc.blogspot.com/> and <https://www.facebook.com/bookerglidingclub>

*** 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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