



Instructor and Coach **NEWSLETTER**

Welcome to the autumn 2001 edition of the Instructor and Coach News Letter. The Spring Edition began with a 'doom and gloom' note on the foot and mouth crisis, and indeed the 2001 season has been a disaster. Some have fared better than others due to location or the ability to diversify etc. but on the whole it's been crap. Well done to the lucky ones who made it abroad – hopefully you all made it back in one piece.

On a positive note it looks as though we may have situation normal for next season – touching wood and crossing fingers and all that!

Thanks to those who provided 'positive' feedback to the last edition.

Please keep your letters and feedback coming in; you can make a difference.

All responses/contributions/suggestions/articles/letters to:
(in order of preference)

Email: dave-thompson@bhpa.co.uk (please send attached files as 'MS Word' or 'text')
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Snail mail: Typed, no hand written please. Dave Thompson, 26 Beechwood Rd., Uplands, Swansea, SA2 0JD.

TECHNICAL MANUAL AMENDMENTS

The introduction of the new Student Record Booklets has resulted in a considerable number of amendments having to be made to the Technical Manual. The hang gliding and paragliding EP and CP Training Programmes appearing in Section 3 Chapter 1 of the Manual have now been superseded by the information contained in the new booklets. An amendment will shortly be issued that addresses this change. The knock on effect of these changes means that virtually every section of the Manual will need some updating. Some of these changes can be

issued immediately, however as work on some of the disciplines is still in progress the plan is to introduce other amendments in stages, therefore avoiding any unnecessary corrections in future. During this period the Manual will contain outdated information. If you are uncertain about the accuracy of a particular point then please contact one of the Technical staff for advice. Parascending Instructor Licences.

INSTRUCTOR AND COACH TRAINING PANEL

Parascending Instructor Licences.

In the new Parascending Student Training Records, the furthest a student can get on a round canopy is Elementary Pilot. At the FSC meeting 22nd September 2001 it was agreed that instructors would first have to gain their 'wing' licence (by external examination), and then obtain their 'round' licence as an extension. The Technical Manual will be amended as soon as possible to make this clear.

Instructor/Student supervision.

Instructors must be mindful of the ability range of their students when organising the days' training. It is considerably easier to work with a group who are of a similar ability i.e. at a similar stage of their EP or CP training.

The more different the range of ability, the more difficult the job becomes to a point where it is almost impossible to run a safe operation.

The only safe way for an individual instructor to work with a mixed group, such as some 'day 1' students and some who are well into the CP course, is to stand one group down completely while the other is attended to.

This is obviously not good practice as it represents poor value for the student, not to mention lots of hiking up and down hills for the instructor!

Proper organisation is essential to prevent unmanageable groups of students. This is best achieved by having good systems (organised paperwork) in place, and by having the right amount of suitably qualified staff.

Put yourself in the student's' shoes and consider what you would think reasonable to expect in similar circumstances.

NVQs for Instructors in the BHPA

This is an update on the work towards setting up an NVQ system to give "added value" to the qualification of BHPA Instructor. This should prove to be an encouragement to TIs as well as providing another "string to the bow" for

Instructors and Senior Instructors.

The way I see this working is that all HG and PG Instructors achieve the Training and Development (T&D) NVQ. While achieving the whole NVQ you also achieve D32 & D33 assessor status which allows you to assess other NVQs within your areas of expertise.

Being a D32/D33 (NVQ assessor) has benefits in its own right for the Instructor. It would give you another employable skill that could be used by the local colleges in that you will be able to assess NVQs and thus supplement your income. Being a D32/D33 Assessor also counts towards the T&D NVQ.

Senior Instructors should be able to achieve a level 4 NVQ and Instructors should be able to gain a level 3. It is possible that TIs could also achieve a level 3 but more likely a level 2. I would like to see people start the level 3 as TIs and finish it as an Instructor.

Perhaps a little background information on NVQs would be useful at this stage.

What is an NVQ?

- An NVQ is a competence-based qualification
- An NVQ is best assessed in the workplace
- An NVQ is an award that reflects your standard of competence in specific areas

A recognised body, such as OCR or C&G, issues an NVQ to an individual as a statement of competence. It incorporates specified standards – the ability to perform a range of work related activities and skills, plus knowledge and understanding which underpins such performance in employment.

The T&D NVQ is applicable to all trainers irrespective of what they teach. The competencies are not specific to HG or PG. The level of the NVQ indicates the level of autonomy/authority exercised by the candidate. Level 3 is for candidates who are fully skilled with supervisory responsibilities. Level 4 is for candidates who are highly skilled and have

control responsibilities.

- A candidate for an NVQ award:
- Takes responsibility for the overall process
- Plans assessment with Assessor
- Undertakes training to fill gaps
- Assembles portfolio of evidence
- Presents the portfolio for checking by the Assessor (D32/D33) on a regular basis

Our first batch of D32/D33s should include CFIs because in order to hold Internal Verifier (D34) qualification you must already hold Assessor (D32/D33) qualification. Again these candidates should be self-selecting so that they don't "fall by the wayside" before they gain the qualification.

Most of the cost is at the start of the system. It is normal for NVQ candidates to pay for their own NVQ but most employers subsidise this in some way. In our case it would be up to the individual school to decide if any financial support could be given.

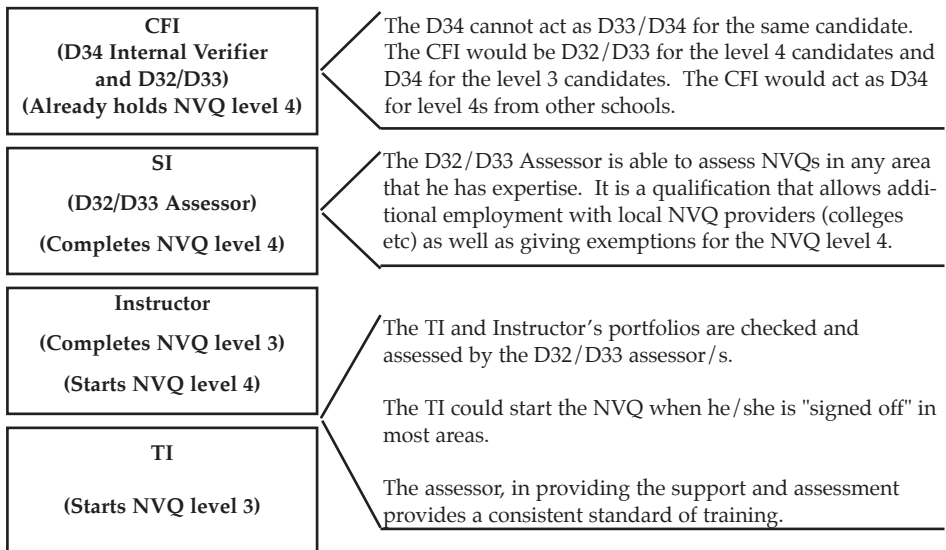
There could well be other methods of funding to reduce the costs further such as the Government's Individual Learning Accounts (ILA). I would like to see this NVQ system supported until it becomes self-sustaining.

Once fully established substantial support for the TI and Instructor candidates would be available from the schools in the form of an "on site" assessor to help assemble their portfolio of evidence. This level of support is not normally available.

There is an economy of scale that operates with the D32/D33 training. If we could provide five candidates at a time instead of just one then the cost falls from approx. £900 per candidate to approx. £600 per candidate. Ten candidates on the course would cost approx. £300 per candidate.

What I need now is a group of volunteers to get qualified as Assessors. I can then get the course underway. It would consist of two days of theory (in one or two chunks), followed by the practical work of assessing NVQs under supervision. In this way they follow the path I outlined for all candidates for NVQ awards.

I already have some volunteers but I would like more to keep the costs down. If you are interested please contact me either via the BHPA office or at colin.morley@openlink.org or colin.morley@ouvip.com.



PILOT TRAINING PANEL

New Student Training Record Books

The new PG Hill and HG Hill/Tow Student Training Record Books are now available from BHPA head office, the PG Tow and Parascending books to follow soon. The FSC would like to give a big 'Thanks' to all the schools that provided feedback to the first PG Hill book.

The new books must be used as they are and must not be split up, or altered in any way. While the books are considerably more user friendly than the first edition of the PG Hill book, there will undoubtedly be some minor errors. Your feedback would be appreciated in order to make them perfect (ish).

N.B.

There are still some schools that think it is acceptable to leave the student record books at base and fill them in at the end of the day. This is NOT the case! The record books must be taken on the hill/tow field, and filled in (with the appropriate signatures) as the exercises/stages are completed.

Schools who fail to comply with this may find themselves without insurance should an incident occur, not to mention having to explain themselves to the FSC.

N.B. 2

Recent incidents (resulting in potential insurance claims) have prompted the insurance company to insist that the new training books must be used as soon as they are available. **All existing students MUST be moved onto the new books.** (This does not apply to PG Hill students currently on the edition 1 books)

Student Training Abroad

It is evident that several schools and instructors have either not understood the rules for taking students abroad, or are happy to work without the BHPA's blessing (and insurance cover).

LIST OF SCHOOLS WITH PERMISSION TO TRAIN BEGINNERS ABROAD:

Adrenaline
Axis
Lakeland Leisure

Northern Paragliding

(These schools are reminded that we require numbers and dates of all future trips to the same sites.)

If you have been actively involved in the training of pre-CP students abroad, outside the auspices of those four schools, then pray that no claims are made against you.

If your school is planning to take students abroad, dig out your school's copy of the 'STUDENT TRAINING ABROAD' paper, read it very carefully, discuss any points that you don't understand with Technical Officer Dave Thompson, submit a complete application within the stipulated time period, and await permission. When you have written permission in your hand, go off and have a good safe time.

If your school has lost its copy of the 'STUDENT TRAINING ABROAD' paper, it can be obtained from the BHPA Office, Reference A126 Revision 03/01.

The Spanish Armada.

The BHPA have recently been contacted by FEADA (a regional division of the Spanish Aero Club) to enquire about the rules and regulations involved for Spanish schools who now wish to organise trips to Britain, to train their students on our soft green hills. Hopefully British schools and clubs will welcome them onto their sites.

Training Ab-Initios in Southern Spain.

For those of you thinking of training beginners in the sunny south of Spain, a word of warning. Having fulfilled all the BHPA criteria for training beginners abroad, a certain BHPA school found that training in Spain was not so simple. Extremes of heat during the day meant that training could only safely be carried out early in the morning (before 9am) and late in the evening. Due to the heat the students became tired very quickly and dehydration was a major problem. The ground was also very hard meaning that even simple stumbles often resulted in quite nasty cuts. The school were lucky to get 4

hours training in a day, half that of a good UK day (and yes, I know that's a bit of a contradiction!).

The school concerned has decided not to train complete beginners in Spain any more because of these problems, having found it to be commercially un-viable.

Pilot Pack: the future.

As part of ongoing efforts to streamline and simplify administration procedures the 'Pilot Pack' system has been revised.

The new Student Training Record booklets (Copyright 2001, small logo at bottom right of the cover, due to be delivered to HG and PG hill schools in the Autumn) will contain a cut-out/pull-out CP registration form. When this is returned with the £10 registration fee to the BHPA office it will be processed and the new Club Pilot will be sent a Pilot Pack with their new membership card.

The new Pilot Pack will contain a Red Ribbon, the Pilot Task book, a new Membership Card and the BMFA/BHPA Code. The pack will no longer contain a logbook: schools have indicated that they preferred the earlier system where they stocked and sold BHPA logbooks at the optimum moment, so this is being re-introduced.

The change over to the new system will be simple. Remaining students training with the old Task books should continue with the old system: the school sells them a Pilot Pack, and they use their Pink CP application forms to register their rating. Students training with the new Student Training Records should not be sold a pack: they finish their CP training and send in the white registration form from the Training Programme.

Schools should run down their stocks of Pilot Packs. When the new Student Training Records are distributed schools will be able to return unused, complete, clean Pilot Packs for a refund.

AIRWORTHINESS PANEL

Certification Requirements For Gliders Used For Instructional Purposes

You know what's coming; don't you... yep, after 25 years of development and hard work, we are getting near a position where we have a useable certification standard for all the gliders we fly. Hang gliders were certified years ago (appaling early track record) and paragliders a few years ago (appaling early track record, as well). Parascenders (quite a good track record) have had to wait until the others, but there is a system in place now and soon all the wings we fly will have some sort of "Certificate of Airworthiness".

Quite clearly it would be draconian in the extreme to insist that everyone's wing must have certification (there will always be a few nutters and test pilots out there), but wherever possible everyone's wing should. Especially in schools, where the client is paying good money and is totally in the hands of the instructor.

Scenario one

Telephone...

"Ah, Mrs Jones? – this is the CFI of little Johnny's paragliding school – I'm afraid little Johnny's in bits all over the airfield"

"Oh!" long pause (about three weeks)

"my (no win, no fee) lawyer wants to know if the glider he was flying has a certificate of airworthiness"

"Nope"

"Oh!" short pause (whilst (win and fee) lawyer asks the CAA about airworthiness etc.)

"why not?"

"Umm"

"You're toast; m'boy"

So, now there is a scheme in place for all branches of our sport, it seems only right that all branches only use certified gliders during training.

As always, there is a slight problem: Although we have a certification process for parasailing canopies in place, there aren't that many certified canopies yet. Most of the gear out there is registered in the 'grandfather' category, having been built many years before certification was thought of.

So this is what we're going to do. There will be a dispensation to allow teaching parasailing on g/f registered canopies until such time as there are certified models available. But, be forewarned; there will come a time when there are certified gliders available, and then the old g/f stuff will no longer be able to be used for teaching. Plan and budget accordingly!

Just in case you think "that's okay, no manufacturer will bother getting certification for years..."

Scenario two

Telephone...

"Ah, Mrs Jones? – this is the CFI of little Johnny's paragliding school – I'm afraid little Johnny's in bits all over the airfield"

"Oh!" long pause (about three weeks)
 "my (no win, no fee) lawyer wants to know if the glider he was flying has a certificate of airworthiness"

"Nope"

"Oh!" short pause (whilst (win and fee)

lawyer asks the CAA about airworthiness etc.) "why not?"

"the manufacturer hasn't certified it yet"

"They're toast; m'boy"

Engineer Or Certify

We really don't want to have to certify every last little piece of flying equipment (we'll leave that to the Germans), so we'd like to try and encourage pilots, coaches and instructors to look at the engineering qualities of the bits and pieces they are using and decide whether something is safe or not.

Aerodynamic and structural qualities of gliders and harnesses might be a little more technical than most pilots can cope with (so these bits definitely have airworthiness certification), but there are some basic bits of gear which are no less critical where there isn't, (and hopefully will never need to be), any certification. Look at it, think about it and ask yourself whether it's going to do the job.

Of course, this applies equally to certified stuff. Just because some geezer strapped a similar model to the back of a big truck when it was new (and the truck broke before it did) doesn't necessarily mean that the old knackered model you have is going to do the job.

The Technical Manual clearly states that:

1.2.3.1 Responsibilities of the CFI.

- d) Ensure that equipment is maintained to a safe standard and consult with the FSC when considering the use of non-standard equipment within the school.

TOW PANEL

Weak links

A weak link is a simple device intended to prevent excessive tow tensions ever being applied. There are countless ways that excessive tow tensions can be generated. These are easily visualised with fixed-line vehicle towing, but even with constant-tension winches, malfunctions, mistakes and mishaps can lead to excessive

loads.

Excessive tow tensions, when towing modern paragliders, result in the pilot being significantly in front of the canopy. If a line break or release (deliberate or accidental) was to occur in this situation there is a significant danger of the canopy surging forward and tucking, or of the pilot penduluming backward, or of some other

fairly horrible uncontrolled dangerous event occurring - all of which would be even more hazardous if it happened near the ground. Excessive tow tension when towing hang gliders can lead to dangerously steep climb angles which would result in very severe problems if a line break or release was to occur. A weak link prevents excessive tensions ever being applied.

The other possibility that excessive tow tension brings is structural failure of the glider. Neither hang gliders nor paragliders are indestructible, and even normal towing puts significant extra stress on them.

The 100kg (125kg max) weak link used for all hang glider and most high-performance paragliding towing also protects the pilot in the event of falling over during the take-off. (In one case where an Aerotow club had doubled the size of the weak link, a pilot was injured and his glider written-off when he fell over during the take-off run and was then dragged at high speed for a considerable distance.)

Modern paragliders should be towed with low tensions - and a weak link must be fitted to ensure that even if something goes wrong, tension never becomes excessive.

Dennis Pagen, in his book *Towing Aloft* recommends a weak link of 75% or less of the total weight of the pilot and glider for modern paragliders. If pilots are finding that a weak link operating is causing them too much excitement then they should insist on a weaker weak link: a weak link parting should be an easily dealt with inconvenience. (There has never been a reported incident arising from a weak link parting: all the worries seem to come from those who tow without them perhaps they have experienced line failures at high tensions and still don't understand that the correct weak link will prevent that level of trauma.)

A weak link is just like the fuse in a domestic plug, and like the circuit breakers in the mains supply board in the house. By having the fuse blow at 5 amps your wife is spared burning or electrocution when her hair dryer starts to try to draw more amps. Of course you might have

been a silly boy and put a 13 amp fuse in there because the 5 amp kept blowing; the hairdryer is now beyond repair and your wife is downstairs running her hand under the tap, and there's a nasty burn mark on the carpet - but at least you didn't burn the house down. Moral: too high a weak link value adds danger!

And by having the fuse in the plug you do not burn out the ring main somewhere behind the plaster, or under the floorboards. In the same way, having the weak link near to the pilot ensures that, if excessive tension was to occur, the line doesn't break leaving the pilot trailing hundreds of feet of line.

Nobody would be daft enough to remove all the fuses and solid-wire all the electrical goods in their homes to ensure that they are never inconvenienced by a fuse blowing!

Of course there are those pilots who don't believe that a 'gentle' tow is worth having. This is perhaps because they have become addicted to the adrenaline buzz of a high-power tow, with everything at full stretch. But all we are talking about here is a tow that takes two minutes to 1,500ft (with lots of risk) or a tow that takes three minutes to 1,500ft (with minimal risk).

Would you rather hold the faulty hair dryer knowing that it had a 5 amp fuse in it, or with a 30amp fuse in it? (And anyone who doesn't treat winches, winch operators, weather etc. combined as a situation at least as potentially hazardous as a faulty hair dryer isn't reading the risk warning properly!)

At its meeting on September 22nd the FSC approved a revised weak-link schedule which is reproduced below. The values are based on the Tost weak link system which lends itself to having a very quick no-tools method of changing links. Koch make an identical system. Note that the BHPA Technical Manual requires that a weak link be incorporated in all tow lines.

Besides having the correct weak links fitted, it is important that the winch is operated correctly. Tow tensions should be minimised during the

first 80 - 100 feet of the launch, so that there is gentle climb out: that way if any problems occur it is easy for the pilot to recover to normal gliding flight. Only once this safe altitude has been gained should the full climb be commenced.

BHPA maximum weak link values

Parascending

Square wings

Canopy maximum recommended payload 70kg+ 300daN (kg)

Canopy maximum recommended payload 94kg+ 400daN (kg)

Canopy maximum recommended payload 117kg+ 500daN (kg)

Rounds 500daN (kg)

Paragliding and hang gliding

Tow launching heavier payloads requires slightly higher tow forces. The Tow Panel recognises this fact and has now introduced the facility to allow pilots towing at higher payloads (typically tandem pilots) to use a slightly bigger weak link.

Paragliders

Up to 150kg total weight in flight

125daN (kg)

More than 150 kg total weight in flight

150daN (kg)

Hang glider winch tow

Up to 150kg glider clip-in weight

125daN (kg)

More than 150kg glider clip-in weight

150daN (kg)

Hang glider aerotow (glider end)

Up to 75kg glider clip-in weight

80daN (kg)

75 - 150kg glider clip-in weight

100daN (kg)

More than 150kg glider clip-in weight

125daN (kg)

Hang glider aerotow (tug end)

Up to 150kg glider clip-in weight

125daN (kg)

More than 150kg glider clip-in weight

150daN (kg)

Notes:

1. All weak link values stated are maximums.
2. All weak link values stated are for professionally purpose-built calibrated weak links such as Tost and Koch. These values must be reduced by 20% if using any other type of weak link.
3. 1daN (1 deca Newton) is approximately 1kg force.

Converting to towing.

It would appear that even the Foot & Mouth cloud has a silver lining. Many hill pilots have completed Tow Conversions this summer and are now enjoying the benefits of being able to fly when they otherwise might not.

Even better is the fact that I have been approached by several recent converts that want to set up their own tow clubs but are a little unsure of how to go about it. They have been pleasantly surprised at how "easy" this can be and how close they actually were to being qualified with their current "Self Launch" ratings. By virtue of the fact that you have been sent a copy of the Instructor & Coach Newsletter, do you realise that you are already well on the way to being qualified to set up and run a tow launch club?

So what do you need to do?

- First, register your Club name with the BHPA office and pay the one off registration Fee (Currently £50). If your group are part of a current hill club then this has already been done.
- Find a suitable field, complete a site sovereignty form and apply for the Tow Permit. Help is at hand from the BHPA office or directly from me for these procedures - which are fairly simple.
- Buy the necessary equipment!
- Train up the necessary personnel to run a tow club. This is not as difficult as it might seem. If the tow club only wish to fly pilots who are Club Pilot (tow) or Club Pilot (hill -

with a tow endorsement) and above, then the personnel required are a **tow coach and a tow unit operator**.

It may be worthy of note that there is nothing to say that the Tow coach and operator can't be the same person

Becoming a Tow Coach

A potential Tow Coach must first:

- a) Hold Pilot rating with an appropriate Tow Endorsement. If a Tow Coach licence in another discipline is already held, then CP with the appropriate Tow Endorsement is acceptable
- b) be aged 18 years minimum
- c) Have logged 50 + tow launched flights
- d) Hold a Club Coach or Senior Coach Licence
- e) Possess a current 1st Aid Certificate (minimum First Response)
- f) Possess, and be familiar with the relevant Sections and Chapters of the T.M. (eg Responsibilities, Regulations and Operating Procedures)
- g) Be recommended by the Club.
- h) Pass an assessment conducted by a Senior Tow Coach or suitable qualified Instructor

NOTE:

A Tow Coach is Licensed to conduct operations involving only the launching of Club Pilot and above.

If you are a regular tow pilot, you might find

that "H" is the only thing that you need to complete. See – It's easy to become a tow coach!

The next step is to become an operator. It seems a bit of a complicated exercise but it's not. Visit any Tow Club or school and they will be only too happy to help you with an operator` qualification.

The Operator Scheme

The term 'Operator' means any BHPA member who is licensed to operate a tow unit.

Operator Training

A potential Operator must first:

- a) Be an annual member of the BHPA
- b) Be aged 18 years or over

Before being allowed to operate any form of tow unit a potential Operator must follow a recognised course of training appropriate to the tow unit type.

Under training the Potential Operator must:

- a) Be familiar with the relevant section of the current edition of the BHPA Technical Manual
- b) Be trained in and practice the relevant theory and practical skills.
- b) Maintain a log of all training completed (see Table below)

	Discipline	Number of days (min)	Number of tows (min)
1.	Parascending Vehicle tow driver	4	45
2.	Winch operator	2	30
3.	Aerotow		10

I hope this has given you an insight into how simple it is to start towing. With the right site you can fly in any wind direction and even in nil wind too. No walking up hills either. Interested? Go on, you know it makes sense!!!

Russ Hicks FSC Tow Panel Head j.hicks3@ntlworld.com

ACCIDENT PANEL

Accidents - It's All In The Mind

I hope all of you read the brief note in August Skywings where I said, "The war against accidents must be fought in people's minds".

To expand on the subject, I believe we as instructors and coaches have to bear a lot of the responsibility for the "pilot attitude" that has been shown to be the root cause of the vast majority of accidents.

It is our responsibility to teach students to become safe, competent pilots, and within that definition lies "Attitude".

In fact we are required to satisfy ourselves that the student has: -

"The right attitude to flying" before signing off the assessment at both EP level and CP (Novice) level.

"Attitude" can also be described as behavioural pattern or, to use a modern figure of speech, mindset.

If we study behavioural patterns we have to accept that a major influence is the individual's background; the examples he was set as a youngster, his choice of peers, or the freedom he was permitted during his formative years. Most of us are unable to alter this as it is deep rooted in the past, and it would probably take a psychiatrist to make changes.

What we need to consider throughout a student's training period is the mental attitude being displayed by the individual. If we can

identify certain negative behavioural patterns at this stage we may be able to effect a change, and thus turn out a safer, more sensible pilot.

Some examples of behaviour, all of which can adversely affect a pilot's flying career, that are fairly easy to spot are: -

- Attempting to hide fear
- Over-confidence
- Impulsiveness
- Showing-off
- Taking unnecessary risks

If we can identify these in our students early enough, and point out the problems that this behaviour can lead to, we should be able to stop the accidents that are waiting round the corner for them.

BUT FIRST OF ALL, WE MUST LOOK AT OURSELVES, BECAUSE USUALLY WE ARE THE STUDENT'S ROLE MODEL.

CAN WE SEE ANY OF THE ABOVE IN OUR OWN BEHAVIOUR?

BECAUSE IF WE CAN THIS IS WHERE WE NEED TO START.

John Lovell (Accident Panel)

IT'S YOUR LETTERS, IT'S YOUR LETTERS!

Green Dragons Instructor Courses. By Andy Shaw

During the past few months, I have been looking into running Residential Instructors Courses and I confirm the general outline as follows:-

Next year, I am organising fairly intense Residential Paragliding and Hang Gliding Instructor Courses, for a duration of 3 months.

It's true to say, we all have a system in place developing instructors, but the difference with this type of course will be to provide a fairly intense 3 month course, which will allow us to train instructors without the commercial pres-

sure & allowing thorough briefings and debriefings etc....

They may not have qualified as an instructor by the end of 3 months, but should be well on their way.

The course will be geared towards Hill Launch instructors, but we will be looking very closely at the old and modern teaching techniques and advantages of towing and powered flight. We will be looking at all elements of becoming an Instructor, including the business side and survival, along with what's required to run a flying workshop and other services that customers

require.

My intention is to base the Residential Instructors Course here at Green Dragons in Surrey/South London, with some time spent travelling around the UK during these 3 months, with at least one week abroad. I have, and am in the process of speaking to many key people in our sport/business, who are all showing signs of full support!!!!!!.....

If this is successful, I hope to have produced 12 potential NEW instructors each year for the next few years. I also think if it is successful, we could see more of these types of courses being run throughout the UK, maybe world! Therefore, multiplying our instructors within both clubs and schools.

COSTS, There will be a cost involved in taking part and when the Trainee instructor's are signed off for teaching at each exercise, there will be wages paid, with realistic wages involved for training staff.

IF YOU ARE COMMITTED YOU WILL GET AN EXCELLENT RETURN IN WAGES AND EXCELLENT VALUE FOR MONEY ON THIS INSTRUCTOR'S COURSE.

Would anyone like to join in, be it participating or offering your experience to teach these potential instructors?

This could really be a breakthrough, we all need to develop more instructors to develop our sport/business. For further information in participating or offering your experience to teach these potential instructors, or any points of view, please contact me.

Regards

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Coaching in the Clubs

I have been reading through Issue 10 (April 2001) of the Newsletter once again. I came across Jim Ashley's letter. Jim raises some very interesting points about coaching, most of which we can probably all recognise in our own clubs. I have no solutions, but I thought it might be worth sharing a few experiences from initiatives we have tried in the Sky Surfing Club. I also have a few suggestions of my own.

Let me try and identify the key points Jim has raised.

The need for good airmanship. No argument there. The schools cannot be held to blame too much on this, either. I'm sure they do their best to drill in the theory of flying-with-others, but the practicalities only surface when the Club Pilot (CP) - or should that be Club Pilot (Novice) - is flying with others as a qualified club member. Until that point, very little 'sharing' of the air has been required. So, local club pilots (especially Coaches) have an important part to play.

Large number of inactive coaches. The motives for obtaining a Coach Rating are sometimes dubious. I recall many candidates on some of the early coaching courses regarding the training as an opportunity to get some decent flying, (the courses were often held near attractive flying sites).

On one course I helped to organise in August 1992, the afternoon of the second day was lost to the desire to get out and fly. This served no practical purpose as far as the course was concerned; the round-trip of 150 miles to the nearest suitable site seemed to me to be an awful waste of valuable time.

Thankfully, attitudes have changed to some extent and candidates are in no doubt that the Coaching Course is 2 days of classroom-based training. However, I wonder how many attendees still expect the course to somehow improve their own flying skills? How many 'badge collectors' make up the audience?

(Perhaps there IS an opportunity here for the BHPA Technical Staff to also run improver

courses for pilots wishing to advance their own skills. This is popular within other aviation circles. Such courses will be beyond the resources of most Schools, not least because they will not be commercially viable. What are our National Coaches for?)

Under these circumstances, it is little wonder so many Coaches are inactive; they never intended taking an active part in the first place.

Organised Coaching weekends. I will cause something of an outcry here; my personal opinion is that such weekends are largely unproductive. Sure, organised sessions - especially to different sites - are very popular, especially amongst low-airtime pilots or infrequent fliers. But does any serious coaching take place?

When conditions, organisation and everything else does come together, (rarely) then everyone has a good time. Perhaps these events should be renamed 'Club Outings'. They provide an element of focus which some pilots need to get out and also provide an excuse for a social get-together, but are skills being developed?

I contend that the best place for coaching takes place in a known environment where new things can be introduced safely and without distraction.

Identifying Active Coaches. I imagine most clubs maintain a list of qualified coaches as part of their membership database. The local newsletter may even identify names and contact information.

Within the Sky Surfing Club we have gone a step further by producing a simple tri-fold, A4-leaflet which specifically details each Coach. A passport-size photograph is accompanied by name, discipline, contact telephone number, etc. The leaflet also includes some introductory text.

Inactive Coaches do not appear on the leaflet, which is revised every couple of years.

The mug-shot is the key to identification out on the hill or at club gatherings. Also, by agreeing to appear in the leaflet, each Coach is openly inviting novice pilots to get in touch.

(The next step would be for each novice to be formally 'adopted' by the nearest Coach on joining the Club. However, this would place a significant burden on the membership administration and moves the responsibility for decision-making from the pilot to the Coach. We are all volunteers, remember!)

The Sky Surfers 'New Member' pack includes:

- covering letter
- Committee List
- Coaching Leaflet
- Handbook/Sites Guide

Throughout, novices are encouraged to make contact!

Coaching Panel. Back in the dark ages, when the present Pilot Rating and Coaching Schemes were devised, the intent was for the Senior Coach(es) to adopt the role of coaching coordinator(s) for the club, leading a local development panel. Does this happen? Nah!

A fine idea, but nothing has come of it. Nowadays there also appears to be no role for the Senior Coach - we have 'dumbed down' to what is practical to implement. Maybe its time to look again at having an organised panel of coaches in each club, actively involved in developing local coaching programmes.

Enough already!

No doubt this letter will prove far too long (and too late) for the next issue of the Newsletter - but I hope some of the comments prove useful.

Regards

Brian Parkins
Senior Coach (8801)
PR/Sites Officer, Sky Surfing Club

Daily Telegraph Adventure Travel and Sports Show - Olympia London Jan 11/12/13th 2002

As you know the BHPA have been attending the show now for 5 years - For those schools who have come along it has generally been very successful to promote the BHPA, the sports and

themselves - aided by having the Virtual hang glider.

During last years show - the organiser, Martin Anslow, myself and some of the schools had discussions re ourselves attending the show and how the schools were moving more to making the BHPA stand commercial. As Martin Anslow said, he was and is, more than happy for the BHPA to bring the VHG, but he is running a commercial show and cannot continue the BHPA stand turning into a full commercial enterprise for no charge. He proposed some ideas at the time, which a number of schools agreed would be a suitable arrangement.

He has spoken to me today and proposes the following for this years show.

1. He will still give free stand space to the BHPA for the VHG – BHPA promote sport in general.
2. He has four 2m x 2m shell stands available opposite the VHG to allocate to BHPA members. More could be available.
3. He will do these stands at 1/2 price for BHPA school members
4. You can then operate your stand as you wish and sell as much gear, courses etc. as you want.
5. The BHPA stand will promote the sport, give people flights on VHG and direct people to your stands if they are interested in discussing taking a course.

The downside of schools not taking up these stands, is that this year the BHPA can have the VHG placed for free, but no schools will be able to directly market themselves on the stand. The stand will be to promote the sport and the Association and people will be directed to the full list of schools in the country. I believe, though Martin, hasn't said it, that if I can't find schools to

come on board with this proposal, that it will be the last year that we will be offered the free stand space.

Hopefully enough schools will show an interest, however, I propose one extra stipulation. As in the past the schools, being on the stand, have assisted running the virtual HG. However, I see that with schools having their own stand that I will be on my own to run the VHG, as trying to get BHPA member volunteers is near on impossible. I therefore propose that any school taking a stand will volunteer 2 man hours of their staff each day to help with the VHG. That includes you Michel ;-)

I hope you will continue to support the show, as I think those schools who have attended have benefited and can continue to benefit even having to pay for some stand space.

I look forward to your comments and hopefully a commitment from you to support the show.

Regards – David Wootton

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