

# All Out

January 2010

## Welland Gliding Club Newsletter

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### Note from Editor

Happy New Year everyone, sorry for the delay in getting out Decembers Newsletter what with Xmas and everyone busy over the festive period it has now turned into Januarys Newsletter, nothing to report on the Flying side of things, on that note I thought that this would be a short newsletter but it has turned out rather large with thanks to David Evans, Mike Taylor, Dick Short, Mike McNally, Sprocket & Winch Witch, lets hope the weather and field conditions soon improve and we can all get back to flying, socializing and insulting each other, and now a few words from our illustrious leader.....

Happy new year to you all, I am looking forward to the warmer weather (I hate the cold), remember that the Acro is at Wittering and we should make use of the facility offered to us, we may not get the opportunity to use the hanger next year if no one ever goes. Even with WGC adding its fee you still get good value for money getting over 2000' on each launch. Spin checks slipped through the net last year, they WON'T this year, the dead line will be the end of May, no ifs or buts, they must be completed satisfactory or "No solo flying" you have been warned.

All the best

Sprocket

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### Treasurer's Notes

Happy New Year to all!

I have recently sent out on the flying account, statements for December 09. This will be the last one in this format as Mike Taylor has created a new simplified system and January's statement therefore, will be in this new format. I do hope it meets with everyone's approval. A paper copy will continue to be available in the Club House for members not on the group.

You may recall that at the Committee Meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> August 09, it was agreed that members' flying accounts should not have a debit balance greater than £50. In addition it was agreed that any 90 day members should pay on the day so that they did not accrue a debit balance at all. This has worked out very well and with only a couple of exceptions, most accounts have been operating within the limit. I am very grateful to all those who have co-operated as we now have much healthier situation with the club's overall finances.

We could still improve on this though were we to increase the numbers paying by Standing Orders: Our income is not spread evenly through the year unlike the bulk of our outgoings. We also have further commitments at the present time beyond the normal outgoings of approximately £5,000 e.g. HUF's wings, Club House Roof and Winch

Engine...and recently we have purchased another tractor. While we should get a bit of money back by selling the now spare tractor, the sums involved are pretty significant. At the moment we have approx 9 members paying by Standing Orders and it does include me! I do have a supply of forms with me most of the time.....and would be able to let people know what their spend was over a full year so that this could be averaged out into the appropriate monthly payments.

It would be excellent if we could get an increase in numbers. If you have any queries at all regarding your account, or for that matter, the finances of the Club, please let me know. I think this communication would be better done off the group, so please email me direct at ([seakayak59@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:seakayak59@yahoo.co.uk)) or ring me on 07767052886.

Thanks,  
Mike McNally

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### **A taste of Alpine soaring by David Evans**

We had intended to overnight in Munich. But on arriving at the motel we - a young undergraduate friend and I - were not welcome. It seemed that they had been expecting us the night before. So, the gravity of our booking error having been made clear to us, and the management's magnanimity in waiving the charge for the unused accommodation being duly acknowledged, we pressed on to Zell-am-See. We had managed to get some sleep during the crossing from Harwich and trailing our light, wood and fabric, 15 metre glider - an Olympia '463' we'd christened 'Phoebe' - along those splendid roads had been stress- and trouble-free. The final leg of the journey into Austria was a bit more taxing but we arrived in the airfield's car park in good order at 6 a.m. Our total journey time from Cambridge was 36 hours.

Neither the Fliegerheim nor the Segelflugschule showed signs of life that Sunday morning in May. So we dozed in the car until 8 a.m. Thereafter things happened fast. While we were smartening up and refuelling our tired bodies, the much admired and respected bi-lingual Cambridge friend who had enticed us there was busy dealing with the formalities on our behalf. Such was the regard in which he was evidently held that, without so much as a briefing from anyone else - let alone a check flight - I found myself airborne close behind a Super Cub at 10 a.m. Very close behind, it seemed at first, to one unused to the short aerotow ropes used in the mountains. But the need for unusually precise formating woke me up nicely and when we went through some serious turbulence I understood why it's best for the combination to transit it as nearly simultaneously as possible.



Our friend and sole mentor had allayed any concerns that one's tug would actually hit the mountain sides at which it flew and had insisted that one held on until well above the inversion. That done, the next 4 hours were pure joy. The size and strength of the thermals were way beyond anything I had previously experienced and the landscape, with its snow-covered peaks, beyond description without resort to poetry. We were forbidden to fly in cloud but altitudes of 12-14,000 ft were readily achievable in clear air. The grandeur of such topography as seen from those altitudes can never be captured on film, of course, but I hoped my trusty Agfa Silette would help to regenerate the scene in memory some day. So I snapped away as I flew along the major valleys, trying to fit strange names on my map to peaks, rivers and villages below. No wonder, I thought, there'd been no call for a heavy briefing before my despatch. Just "Go and have a look at the local area" had been all that was necessary. No need to add "Keep within gliding range of the field" on a day like that.



Thus initiated - and captivated - we were "given the griff" in increasing detail during subsequent non-flyable days, which averaged about 2 in every 3 thereabouts in May. So clear were the expositions of the meteorological aspects, the behavior of airflow across ridges and in valleys, and the cardinal rules for self-preservation, that we felt sure only a P.O. Prune could possibly get into serious trouble. Our F.O. Kite insisted that we mark our maps with minimum altitudes for crossing passes and we drove to the very few landable fields within 50 Km of our site to inspect them on foot. That was an education. So many of the fields which looked OK from the air proved to be strewn with obstructions - particularly poles for drying crops - which might easily write off outlanding gliders (and did).

There was, I suppose, a risk that such a benign introduction to this idyllic new dimension of engineless flight might breed overconfidence. It certainly heightened the appetite for more of what the wonderful new playground might have to offer. The locals waxed lyrical about the lift to be had close to sheer faces - within a wingspan they had us believe, when sure of the relative flow - and there were stirring tales of long voyages at high speeds, also of great altitudes to be had almost above site when the Southerly winds blew. But there were caveats too - about long glides over snow and about mountain storms which might appear suddenly and seem to chase one along valleys. It's always a good idea to take notice of what the locals have to say and it seemed especially wise to heed the warnings of the older pundits - though one of them gave us cause for reflection

when rescued from the top of a 90 ft pine around which his glider was wrapped, courtesy of its pushrod rudder controls. He was lucky to have been spotted in that unpopulated valley. A power linesman, having his lunch, had watched fascinated as he beat back and forth overhead and then suddenly stopped. Visited in hospital, he made light of his broken bones and seemed unworried about the loss of his glider - evidently not the first he had written off - but seemed to think it somehow unfair that it had stopped flying in that valley when his altimeter still showed hundreds of metres (above Zell....).

We became aware of more serious prangs in the area too, as we cautiously increased our experience. It was quickly evident that complete confidence in one's mount is essential if one is to venture a bit closer to the peaks or further from the site. Fortunately, I was completely at home in 'Phoebe', in whom I had recently been wafted to 22,000 ft over Scotland. Her powerful ailerons were particularly appreciated in the sometimes chaotic airflow which seemed to be "grabbing the controls", as Captain Jeppesen put it when reminiscing about the affinity of the airman and his element which is, perhaps, most keenly felt by pilots of primitive wood-and-fabric aircraft.

And so I enjoyed some 20 hours of visual delight as I toured the area, spiced with that visceral pleasure known, perhaps peculiarly, to the soaring pilot while beating back and forth alongside massive mountain faces and circling above them. Only once did I make the mistake - against which I had been warned - of thinking, as I turned at the end of a beat, that I was far enough away from the face to make a tight circle. It's the classic mistake which has claimed the lives of hang-glider pilots particularly. As one comes head-on to the face with one's airspeed of, maybe, 50 knots - a bit more than the circling norm to avoid being stalled by the increasingly vertical airflow ahead - plus the hitherto friendly wind on the face which is, at that moment, right on the tail, it becomes rivetingly clear that time is not on one's side. I don't know how close I actually got to that face. Almost vertically banked, as I pulled as hard as she'd take, I couldn't see. But I didn't need a second lesson.



Particular delights of that first Alpine sortie included an excursion over the Steinernes Meer to fly over the Königsee and Berchtesgaden. Overhead the Eagle's Nest, I couldn't help thinking of Adolph and Eva gambolling there, albeit some 30 years before. Were

their ghosts still there? The thought was accompanied by an almost irresistible childish urge to drop something on their terrace. I wished my faithful '463' had a flour-bomb bay. But it hadn't, so my banana skin would have to do.

Another memorable flight involved climbing up the back of the Kitzsteinhorn - a circa 10,000 ft peak to the South of the site - and then contouring the ski slope at an indicated 70 knots with the airbrakes out. Some of the skiers may have been surprised to be overtaken thus - even a little put out, maybe. As I topped out in a joyous loop, once past the slope's edge, I fancied I saw one or two waving sticks. But we had no 'phone calls at the Flugschule - or, at least, none were passed on to me.

The other salutary lesson I took home from that first venture was confirmation of the theoretically self-evident absence of thermal lift over large snowfields. I was West of the Grössglockner at about 12,000 ft and thinking of rounding it to the South when, after an already long glide in lifeless air, common sense prevailed. An economical 180° was followed by a tidy return to Zell - in contrast to the pale-faced arrival of a fellow venturer who had pressed on round the mountain and only just made it back via the depths of the Kaprun valley.



I wasn't able to get time off for a return to Zell until 1973. On that second occasion I was privileged to be allowed the use of our mentor's Libelle - a rather dainty 15 metre sailplane which he had positioned there for the Alpine soaring season and which I had flown once in the UK (ignominiously landing out after losing the unfamiliar airfield in haze!). She was a handy little bird - very easy to rig - but a bit cozy for a tall pilot and, as I already knew but came to know better later on, her aileron-power was seriously deficient. She had a best-glide angle well in excess of 30:1, albeit at only 50 knots, and I was encouraged to use it to extend my acquaintance with places and turning points further afield. I soon got used to crossing ridges without excessive clearance when confident of lift on their upwind side. And crossing passes with the specified minimum altitudes, confirming that they were indeed adequate to get back if there was no lift on the far side, was another confidence builder. Thus prepared, I was keen to use the opportunity to complete a 500 Km flight for my third Diamond. The thermal strength was such that it shouldn't take more than 7 hours, even in a Libelle, and the days were long in May.

The problem, as ever, was the unobliging weather. It needed to be good for some distance beyond Innsbruck and the daily forecasts - which were very detailed and remarkably

accurate - too often had storms that far west. I did set off in what turned out to be vain hopes on three occasions. Two resulted in uneventful returns after observing the golden rule but the third was a bit different. I had crossed to Gerlos with too much confidence and not enough height to get back to the known lift. Very soon I found myself hugging the Northern face of the mountainside in depressingly still air. I was all too obviously a few hundred feet below the sharply defined sunlit, and lift-generating, area. And not far below me was a part-frozen reservoir. I reckoned I could ditch or skate towards what looked like a bit of habitation if necessary but the prospect was distinctly unattractive. And then I noticed a glider soaring well above the crest and not too far away laterally. Reasoning that the airmass in which he was climbing must have been entrained from somewhere in the valley below, I headed his way. It worked. As I came in below him, a most welcome reduction in sink rate slowly became a gentle climb until I, too, was back in the sun and climbing Alpine-style.

Relieved to be back at base, with 2,000 ft in hand, some effort to restore confidence seemed in order before landing. So I snuggled up against the Hönigkogel - the "afternoon hill", as it was known to the locals, on the South face of which the sun bore strongly after mid-day. A climb to the TV mast a few thousand feet above looked attractive but my rate of climb was painfully slow. So, thinking the next gully to the West must be more directly insolated and generating better lift, I made to cross the dividing spur at 55 kts. Everything suddenly went quiet. The airspeed disappeared. Pine trees filled my view ahead. I was stalled. As I soon found out, the air was going down and not up in the gully towards which I was heading and into which I effectively fell. In consequence, I had acquired a tidy tailwind as I crested the spur. With airspeed regained, and in control once more, I crept back whence I came and accepted a quiet ascent before, spirits restored, an exceptionally careful (and noticed) circuit and landing.

One further chastening experience sufficed to remind me of my responsibilities as a breadwinner with progeny in full-time education. I was at 10,000 ft over the Kaprun valley, hoping to contact the enticing wave system overhead. I expected a bit of trouble from the rotor at the interface, having experienced it over Scotland. But I was totally unprepared for the Alpine version which, without warning, almost inverted me one way and then the other. The ineffectiveness of the Libelle's ailerons should not, in retrospect, have been too surprising. But nothing seemed to work and the violence to the airframe was such that I looked again and again at the wings expecting imminent break-up. Ridiculously, I prepared to bail out! But as I went for the buckles I realized that, having no radio, no-one would know where I was if I landed on some snowy ledge, icy lake or pine. Staying with the glider seemed a much better idea. and once her nose could be persuaded to stay down, so it proved.

Thus ended my second and final Alpine gliding sortie. Only six flights, adding a further 20 hours to my logbook. But they had taught me quite a lot - about the essentially unpredictable nature of the airflow in such terrain, about myself, and about other things too.

DWE

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## Wind Farm Planning Application

I attended the open day at the Francis Griffin Memorial Hall in Sudborough on Friday 27th November. West Coast Energy (WCE) was there in force with 5 representatives. When I attended, mid afternoon, there were only a couple of locals present. One of these was having a fairly heated discussion with all 5 from WCE about the merits of other alternative energy sources including nuclear. The weight of numbers made it look like wind power was winning!

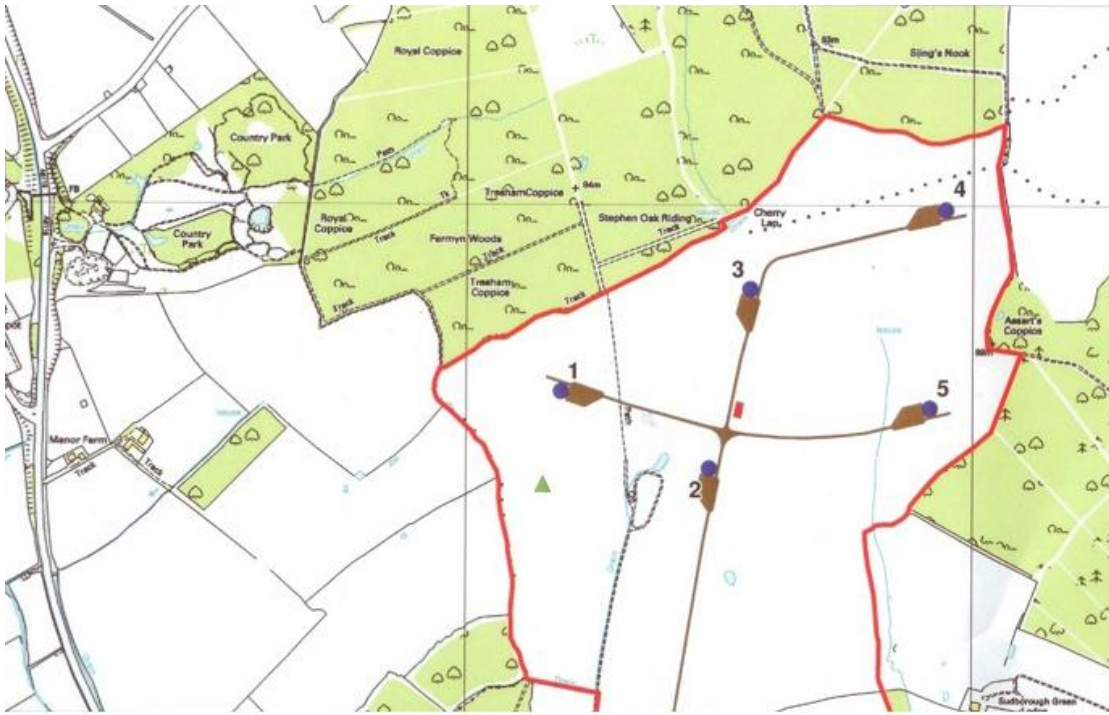
There wasn't a lot new on display, although there were a few handouts to explain the history and theory of wind power.

What was on display were maps showing the "proposed location" of the 5 turbines. You will see from the maps included below that the proposal sites the turbines a little nearer to our field than was first hoped.

I met up with our contact from WCE Jonathon Cawley, as agreed at previous committee meetings I kept our discussions on a positive level whilst expressing some surprise that the turbines were closer to our field than we would have liked. They had a PC based aerial simulator that allowed them to reproduce our typical landing profiles (see below) with the simulated turbines in place. To be honest it was quite easy to avoid the turbines but I did make concerned noises as we flew by.



Site Overview Map



Proposed Turbine Positions

Mark Rushton has collated logger info from several flights and produced an average landing profile for both East and West approaches with a downwind leg to the South, they are reproduced below. You will see that they are clear of the turbine blades, but not by a lot. There is no doubt that the turbines will have at least a physiological impact on our gliding in that area but hopefully not a significant actual impact, although aerotows to the south will not be possible.



Typical Downwind circuit "funnel" with heights when landing to the East



Typical Downwind circuit “funnel” with heights when landing to the West

I’m afraid that all we can do now is wait for the planning application to be submitted and monitor its progress. Jonathon Cawley estimates that it will take at least 12 months for it to get through planning, with the anticipation of it going to appeal. Assuming it gets approval it will then be at least 2 years more before we are likely to see the turbines appear. It is certainly not a done deal as there is very strong opposition from several sides.

The committee has decided that our stance is one of passive support, unless of course the actual plans submitted really do represent a significant hazard to gliding from our field, in which case this stance will be reviewed.

With regard to renewal of our lease, we have regained a good working relationship with the Duke and estate manager, John Elliot and a recent correspondence to them has produced written assurances that they intend to renew our lease and will open formal discussions in March 2010, 12 months before our lease runs out.

Mike Taylor (Sec.)

## **A lesson in Composite Repairs**

Ok guys and girls, you’ve just pranged your lovely composite flying machine and your thinking “bugger, this is gonna cost me”, well you would be right, but you can save some money by doing many repairs yourself. I would not suggest that you attempt to build yourself a new wing but small-localized repairs are a definite yes provided they are inspected and authorized.

Please remember when working with composites and resins to be in a well ventilated area, and if cutting and fettling always remember to wear mask, goggles, gloves and cover up well especially arms and neck, G.R.P, Carbon Fibre and the resins involved are as itchy and annoying as a itchy annoying thing, seriously these fibres and resins can have serious side effects if not respected and simple safety rules followed, and especially

important note to the males is, if using composites and resins always wash your hands **before** going to the toilet as contact with certain parts of the body can cause serious swelling, while the swelling may look good the pain involved won't, oh and if it should happen don't forget to take a photo for bragging rights down the boozier and you will be forever known as Donkey Boy or Horse.

Ok some important points to remember:

Never use Epoxy Resin with Chopped Strand Mat (CSM) Glass Fibre, because CSM has a binding agent within it to keep all strands together until resin is applied, but Epoxy Resins do not dissolve this binding agent, only Polyester & Vinylester do.

Never use Polyester Resins for structural parts on any aircraft they are just not strong enough, they are fine to use on dashboards, facia etc, anything as long as it is not stressed in any way. At the very least you should use Vinylester Resins. By far the very best for lightness and strength is Epoxy.

Please do not use the Fibre Glass repair kits that are available from Motor Accessory stores, these are fine for providing a backing prior to filling on a vehicle, but should not be used in any way to repair or make anything for an aircraft, the hardener/catalyst in these kits is in a paste form and for correct mixing a liquid catalyst should be used, and they do not represent value for money, far better and cheaper to use products from a Fibre Glass suppliers. The local one that I use for all Polyester GRP related things is Trylon in Higham Ferrers near Rushden, very helpful and good on price.

## **Lesson 1 – Gelcoat Repairs**

Ok so your composite machine has suffered some hangar rash and has chipped the Gelcoat, first thing to do is to find the git who damaged it and hurt & humiliate them, the second thing is to remove all loose pieces of the Gelcoat so we can see what we are dealing with, then around the chip we need to use a rubbing compound and make sure we bring the Gelcoat back to its original colour, much like faded paintwork on a car, but do not use T-Cut as this has petroleum distillates in it, use a compound such as Farecla which is water based and is available easily from most motor factors, after this if you wish you can lightly chamfer the edge of the chip with a dry 320 grit paper, next clean the chip with Acetone or Isopropyl Alcohol ensuring all dust, grease and debris have been removed. At this stage I normally mask around the area just slightly larger than the chip using a vinyl tape, not masking tape, you don't have to do this but it can save a lot of clean up time after.

Ok we're now ready for the new Gelcoat, Gelcoat is normally a very pale pinkish translucent colour which will need a pigment adding to it for the correct colour you require which, with a glider will normally be white. So weight out in grams however much Gelcoat you think you require, and then add 6-12% pigment by weight and mix well, once mixed add 2% by weight of catalyst and again mix well. Apply the Gelcoat to the affected area by a clean soft paintbrush or small spatula making sure it stands proud of the panel, then cover with a Vinyl tape and then leave it until the next day, do not direct heat onto it, just ambient heat will be enough to help send it off, do not keep going back to it and touching it to see if it is dry, just bloody leave it alone.

The next day – By now the Gelcoat should have cured, starting with a 180 grit using a block and soapy water rub down the new Gelcoat carefully, gradually increasing the grit number i.e. 320, 600, 800, and 1200. Once the new Gelcoat is flush with the panel

surface then remove tape and polish with Farecla compound. You should have a perfectly smooth finish with hopefully a colour match that is very close; it is virtually impossible to get a perfect match when carrying out a repair due to different manufacturers and batches of pigment. Apply several coats of a good quality wax polish to seal the repair.

Perhaps some bright spark can come up with an idea for something we need at the club that can be made from composites, and then we can turn the whole thing into a demonstration/lesson.

If you have any problems or just need some advice on matters relating to composites, see me at the club or give me a call 07815 305323.

Ian  
(Mario's twin brother)

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### **Member Profile**

Dick Short

Born I Sussex in 1936, married Jean in 1957, have two sons, Five grandchildren and one great grandson, moved to Middleton in 1969.

Now retired (2001) I worked as a mechanical development engineer, design engineer and maintenance manager for various companies, eventually qualifying as a Chartered Mechanical Engineer and Member of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers.

Early sporting interests were rugby and motor-racing, both sports cars and single seaters.



First interest in gliding was during National Service in the R.A.F. but was unable to participate until 1980, when I joined the Welland at Witham-on-the-Hill, after three years as a rugby referee. I went solo on the last day of flying there. In 1981 we moved to Middleton and I became Secretary for three years. I was an air Experience Instructor (now called B.I.) from 1985 to 1993. I also became a B.G.A. Inspector in 1985, upgraded to Senior Inspector in 1999 and qualified as a B.G.A. Chief Engineer and A.R.C. Signatory in 2009.

I completed my Silver in November 1985 with a 57 km flight in 56 minutes. I bought my SHK in 1986, obtained Gold Height at Aboyne in my first wave flight in 1995. After several attempts (photos out of sector) I completed the Gold Badge in 2002. So far I have flown 12,000 km cross country and for 825 hours. I have flown 45 different gliders from 28 sites, including France and New Zealand.

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As promised in the last newsletter, an interview with Mike McNally on his world record attempt at multiple landings from one approach.....

**Ed. Mike thanks so much for agreeing to this interview**

Mike. You are more than welcome, anything for Gransden errrr I mean Welland.

**Ed. So what made you think that this record was achievable?**

Mike. Well I don't want to appear big headed but multiple landings from one approach is something that just comes natural to me.

Ed. I see, so you definitely felt you were qualified?

Mike. Absolutely, my former instructors were always telling me about this and that I was consistent at doing this, so to me it seemed a natural progression.

Ed. So what did you do to prepare yourself and your equipment?

Mike. Well the only thing I did to prepare myself was make sure people were watching as I was flying, and as for the equipment, well I knew the Junior was a tough old bird a bit like our Winch Witch, so the only thing I did was inflate the Junior's Tyre to 120 psi, I knew this would give me enough bounce and protection.

Ed. Didn't you do any mental preparation?

Mike. No, there was no need, I knew from my years of Martial Arts training that I was mentally ready.

Ed. Weren't you worried about breaking the Junior?

Mike. Not at all, I knew Dick could repair almost anything that broke, and as club financial secretary I knew I could offset all the costs to the other member's accounts.

Ed. So how come you didn't get the record?

Mike. Well that's simple, Welland doesn't have a big enough landing area, it's the clubs fault not mine.

Ed. What about the other members who are able to fly the Junior, did you think it was fair to deprive them of flying that day.

Mike. No no no, it's my glider, nobody else's.

Ed. So I hate to ask this question but why were you grounded?

Mike. I wasn't really, it was a mutually agreed thing between me and the duty instructor, we just agreed to it so that the other members didn't feel there was any favouritism.

Ed. So do you think you will attempt the record again?

Mike. Yes of course, you can see me practicing most weekends, I try to practice on every approach, but I can't but help landing perfectly sometimes.

Ed. That's good news, it's always good to hear people pushing themselves, it just leaves me to say a big thank you to Mike for taking the time to give us some insight into his skill & mindset, and I'll leave you with one last comment from Mike.

Mike. Stay away from the Junior, it's mine.

**Please Note:** This interview is a work of fiction and in no way bears any resemblance to Mike McNally, I had to make it up because he wouldn't let me through the door.

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## Winch Witch Questions

Dear Winch Witch,  
Horses, what's the point?

Yours truly,  
Confused of Cranford.

Dear Confused  
I'd have thought that anyone familiar with Welland's winch would have known the answer to that one: the more horses the better!

Kind regards  
WW

**Dear Winch Witch,**

**I am currently the owner of a Ka6e. During the last flying season I seemed to land out quite often, but that's not the problem. The problem is my ground crew are so damn slow at retrieving me. What can I do to speed them up? I've tried abuse and sulking but nothing seems to work. Personally, I think the old girl is past her sell by date. I mean, most women age like a fine wine; mine ages like milk. What do you think?**

**Many thanks in advance,**

**L.O. Larry**

Dear Mr. Larry

I think you should buy a motor glider – but then I don't suppose you'll have enough money left after the divorce settlement, will you?

Regards

WW

**Dear Winch Witch,**

**Hope you are well. Sorry this is not a flying related question, but this is a question that keeps going around and around my mind. I think I'm going to go mad if I don't get an answer from someone, so the question is, if I fell down the up escalator when it was moving would I keep falling?**

**Dizzy of Brigstock**

Dear Dizzy

Well, I suppose your question makes a refreshing change from the usual sexist drivel I have to deal with. I wouldn't worry about going mad, though, as I think you've already achieved that particular goal. I always think you should try out theories yourself so you have first hand evidence. I hear there's a very pretty escalator in the psychiatric unit in Kettering – why not have a go at falling down that one?

WW

**Dear Winch Which,**

**Could you please let me know where you stand on that age old question, Flexible Composite Surface Deturbulator versus Computer-optimized laminar flow with micro-hole blowing turbulators. I really can't decide which is best.**

**I appreciate your input,**

**Prof**

Dear Prof

To be perfectly honest, I've always preferred the Thermogleidensmoothensurf myself. Why not try asking Southern Sailplanes for some next time you're in?

WW

