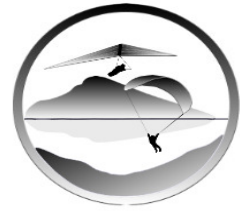


Cumbria Soaring Club

'Spoilt For Choice'

The Newsletter for Members of the C.S.C.



It's Spring! Thermals are a'comin; the clocks are about to leap forward, and life is looking good. Let's celebrate!!!



Where? – The Brewery at Staveley.

When? – Friday 8th April, From 7pm.

What? – Everything except thermals.

How much? – 12 quid – (in advance, we want to know who's coming)

Small print? - It's at the end of this issue

Spring Thermal Special March - April 2011

Welcome to the **Spring** Issue of **Spoilt for Choice** (the Nation's favourite read) We'll ignore for the moment the fact that at this very moment the snow is settling on my neighbour's roof with more forecast for the weekend – It's official, thermals have been reported on Blease, Coniston Old Man and Carrock, crocuses are popping up all over and the daffs are about to burst – it makes you want to write a sonnet!!

*A pilot whose wife was a tease
Was told no more flying at Blease
If you're wanting cuddles
And regular con juggles
You take me and the kids to St Bees.*

...well alright, a limerick but Wordsworth had to start somewhere.

More seriously (note the change of colour) it is spring and bear in mind that the thermals can be nasty wee bastards or seriously big and bouncy. Make allowances until you are back into the swing of things.

In this Issue

- Boots – who needs them? Johnny spills the beans.
- Are you one of those pilots who feel the need to talk to people when you're flying? Rick Livingstone puts you in touch – ten four!
- The latest edition of the Ben and Dangerous Show! Scariest than ever! Not wishing to spoil the ending but it involves trees, rocks, language barriers, human relationships and of course bandages – but then you guessed that.
- Do you have an air bag harness? Then whizz it six times round your head before launch! Not sure if this is before or after you get into it .. anyway the nice people at the DHV offer some life saving tips.
- Did you attend Chris Scammell's XC presentation – see his follow-up tips, might just be useful, you never know.

AIR BAG HARNESES

The DHV organization has been focussing on air bag harnesses. Unsurprisingly they have been found to wanting in several areas (protection mostly which is a pity) and some harnesses are clearly defective. Every pilot makes his own decisions over safety V comfort and convenience. However, pilots using or contemplating airbags should check out the report. It does provide some useful tips for those of us using airbag harnesses which are repeated below. Sit down on my harness – moi?

Practical test results conclusions

None of the tested harnesses offered anything like the back protection required in the LTF standards during the start run and take-off phase. It is to be noted that good back protection while close to the ground during launching is particularly important – accidents frequently occur here due to collapses, knots in lines or pilot errors in applying too much brake and resultant crashes with back injuries.

Note: a few points which help make airbag filling better:

- ✓ Shaking out the airbag or pre-filling it (whirl it through the air – although the filling usually doesn't hold for too long) before putting it on makes for faster filling during the start run.
 - ✓ Consciously pre-fill the airbag by facing into the wind at the start (stronger winds help more).
 - ✓ Plates or elements built into the airbag to help it keep its form should be handled carefully. Bends or deformations in these elements can prolong or prevent a complete filling of the airbag. Always pack the harness to prevent unnecessary bending or deformation of such elements. Check in the harness handbook to see that everything is correctly assembled when unpacked.
 - ✓ Once you have put on your harness, do not sit on the airbag – doing so can deform the above mentioned plates or stiffeners, and also completely empties the airbag.
 - ✓ Mechanical stress and ultraviolet radiation are significant factors on the lifespan of the airbag, especially when frequently used as a rucksack. Frequent packing / unpacking, damage during transport and general wear and tear can degrade the airbag. For maximum lifespan, these harnesses should only be used as rucksacks when necessary (e.g. Walk&Fly tours). For general lift-flying it is better to pack equipment in a separate rucksack.
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Johnny's top tips

Boots



I was asked to write a piece on paragliding boots for this newsletter; about how effective they are at reducing injury and whether they offer good value for money. It seemed pretty straightforward and also I suspected that the answer would be yes, they did help and were essential kit. Well, after hours of research and reading I have come up with some surprises.

Let's start with we think we know; paraglider boots work because they offer good grip, protection to your

foot from abrasion, no hooks for line to catch on, provide impact resistance and, give support to your ankle to help prevent sprains and of course, comfort.

The grip that boots offer is very important and good hi grip soles such as Vibram are definitely a big benefit. I think we're all happy with this idea and most of us prioritize this when looking for flying footwear.

Protection from abrasion is also a good idea, especially in a rocky environment. If you do knock up against something you want protection from bruising and abrasion. You'll have to consider where you're likely to be flying and the nature of the ground.

I can see that hooks on boots are just one more thing to snag lines however, there are so many other things that will also snag lines such as vario mounts, flight decks, reserve handles, radios, wrist watches... and the list goes on. Definitely, given the choice, I would prefer boots without hooks however I don't think they make a boot unsuitable, it is just something that you need to be aware of and is easily dealt with by covering with a little tape.

Impact resistance is a little more difficult to get accurate information on, however, there have been a few studies and the most notable was by the American military. Their conclusion was after extensive testing that footwear that had been corrected for pronation or supination by including shaped inner soles actually resulted in a higher incidence of injury. It further went on to say that the benefit of impact absorption materials was questionable; when they are first used there may be some benefit but in a short space of time they become useless. More recently, these findings have been verified in two articles appearing in The British Journal of Sports Medicine, the first in 2008 and the second in June of this year.

I suppose that the biggest surprise for me was concerned with ankle support. Many of us (including myself) believed that high and fairly firm boots offered the best level of support but the evidence of two major studies shows that actually the incidence of ankle injury is lower with low-top boots (and for those with weak or damaged ankles, the addition of lace up ankle supports). This is explained because the ankle is designed to articulate (move in lots of different directions). High, rigid and heavy boots are

probably the worst possible choice as they will simply raise the height if the injury site and the additional weight /rigidity of the boots alter our foot strike pattern, which alters balance and the position of areas of stress. In fairness, these studies haven't been done on paragliding boots but I have looked for ones where we might experience similar stress there were several good studies published in The American Journal of Sports Medicine that were conducted on American football players. I contacted one of major manufacturers, The North Face, and their European head of footwear said that most of the manufacturer of premium hiking boots have now reduced the rigidity on the ankle that traditional hiking boots used to have which makes them more comfortable to wear and more comfortable to manoeuvre. Study further goes on to show that comfort is extremely important and that for running shoes at least, if you try several pairs on (and have a short run in them if possible), the most comfortable ones are likely to be those that least result in injury.

I did come across additional information on preventing ankle injuries and there are several suggestions. There are a number of exercises (including balancing exercises) that will allow you to strengthen your ankles and anyone who has suffered from an ankle injury in the past should take these seriously. Stretching, particularly calf muscles before exercise is very helpful. Finally, weight is an important factor; if you can reduce your body weight and the weight of your equipment you will greatly reduce the risk/severity of injury.

So, to finish this off, my personal view is that spending £215 on a pair of boots that weigh nearly a kilo each is unnecessary and there are many alternatives at less than half this price (and weight) that are better. Apart from rings instead of hooks, paragliding boots seem to offer little extra except a hefty price tag. If you do fly in boots, a lower cut pair that allow movement are generally better and go for a pair that are comfortable.

Major Sources:

<http://www.thestretchinghandbook.com/archives/ankle-injuries-pt2.php>

<http://ajs.sagepub.com/content/16/3/228.short>

<http://mrw.interscience.wiley.com/cochrane/clsysrev/articles/CD000018/abstract.html>

<http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/07/21/phys-ed-do-certain-types-of-sneakers-prevent-injuries/>

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18424485>

(The Fashion and Footwear Sub-editor is grateful for this interesting and useful article. Unfortunately he can't remember where it came from. So if you are Johnny or know Johnny can you get in touch so due recognition can be given.)

Ben and Dave Go to Slovenia - Be afraid... very afraid

*(This is an account of the events that took place in Slovenia and N Italy in July 2010. To complicate the story, Ben's narrative has been added in **blue italic**. D Dave.)*

Where?? Slovenia! I knew it was in Europe - I had at least heard of it. 2010 had been Ben's choice of where to go vol bivouacking. "Mountains - you'll love it" he said, if I recall.

Why Slovenia? Just gurgel useful phrases and you'll find it's not to be missed! For example:

I haven't done anything wrong.

Ničesar nisem zagrešil

It was a misunderstanding.

Gre za nesporazum.

Where are you taking me?

Kam me peljete?

Am I under arrest?

Sem aretiran?

And -

This Lady will pay for everything

Ta gospa bo plačala vse

...and mountains! Who could resist?

On the 4th of July, equipped with a set of trail maps of the Julian Alps and the NE of Italy, we arrived in Tolmin by train from Venice Airport late in the evening to a heavy



Two boy scouts

downpour. No hesitation- we booked into a hotel - bivouacking could officially start tomorrow! We sat outside sheltered from the rain under the canopy and inaugurated the holiday with a few beers (I'm almost 'tee total' so a big step for me). Ben produced a packet of tobacco and proceeded to roll up. He confessed to having started smoking over Xmas and wanting to pack it in. Recognizing his cry for help I immediately confiscated the packet of Golden Virginia, but we compromised with one fix a day for the two weeks.

The next morning I persuaded Ben that we should get into the spirit of the holiday and walk up to the local take-off rather than pay for a taxi; a climb no bigger than one of our fells. Not a problem until we missed a junction in the path. We scrambled up a gully **like two**

boy scouts. The temperature rose, our rucksacks grew heavier and the ground steeper. An hour and a half later and we were on all fours clawing into the soil to find rock for purchase or tree roots to cling to. This was ridiculous, and bloody dangerous. Eventually we climbed onto a decent path, our clothes for the fortnight muddy and sopping wet with sweat. Wrecked.

There are a lot of trees in Slovenia, a bugbear if flying, but today we had been below the foliage for a while and with no landmarks we felt a little lost. (*By Ed; regular aficionados of the Ben and DD Odyssey will be familiar with this litotes, 'we felt a little lost'*) We eventually got frustrated following the path as it didn't go up! True to form, we scrambled straight up some more, false horizons taunting us. Eventually we cleared the trees at the top of the hill only yards away from an alpine hut and in time for lunch.

By the time we'd reached the top of the ridge – and the path leading to take-off we were spent. 100% humidity, big bags and ice climbing techniques applied to mud gullies – only the fear had kept me going. I'd almost failed to appreciate the beauty of these beech forests!

With a palate for curiosity like no one I've ever known, Ben chose to drink a local specialty of curdled and separated milk - it tasted like salted bile compared to my fizzy mineral water. My choice of drink, however, was giving my platypus bag a case of wind - I was initially concerned about the bag splitting. After chilling out a while, vans began to drive past delivering schools and free flyers. We followed them to the launch. Although it was sunny everybody was floating down to the landing field on the other side of town. Later an eagle thermalled past towards cloudbase which inspired us to unpack and try to get away today. We had a route in mind but, after an hour and a half scratching about trying to get up from various ground features, we both met in the hot landing field. After successfully digging a very small tick out of some local's armpit (*I had no part in this activity!*) we caught a taxi back up to the alpine hut for a cooler night's sleep and a head start in the morning. That night, as the fire flies displayed their presence, we played our annual card game to the distant noise of the rock festival in town and sampled a little of the local schnapps. The trip had started.

Awaking in the early hours, the hard core metal festival had degenerated into repetitions of BlackBetty and, for Christ's sake, The Final Countdown. I almost preferred the death rock grunge played earlier! (Ed; I have no idea what he's talking about)

With thunderstorms scheduled the next day, we walked into the mountains gradually gaining altitude. *A classic case of Dave taking the lead! A high level path going deep into the mountains and from what we could see of the valleys below, no bottom landings for days! My advice was to hold-fast at the hut (and drink more schnapps) but he wasn't to be deterred...*

By midday we came across another alpine hut. I washed my laundry in the bathroom sink before lunch was placed on the terrace. Walkers came and went as I ate my small portion

of apple strudel envious of Ben's two substantial bratwursts (Note to myself - take more effort in translating the menu). *Dave was still struggling to master Hello and Thanks in Slovenian – which he'd only just mastered when we arrived in Italy!*

Enjoying the scenic path, sun, and cool altitude we marched off by grazing cattle towards the Krn mountain range. On a narrow footpath a few strides ahead of Ben I exploded two feet into the air with a scream as an enormous adder lunged at my boot. *Quite a feat with a 26kg+ rucksack!* It was well pissed-off and shot after Ben as I struggled with my camera and shot of adrenalin. If dangerous critters weren't enough, our time walking in the mountains were frequently along dodgy exposed paths cut into the cliff face. The odd low ceiling bumped into the top of the rucksack briefly knocking you off balance. The Slovenian mountains bore the scars of 2 world wars. Natural caves and rock strata had been built upon or mined out further, to a great extent in some areas. In between these fortifications, well made paths joined and split off again. Occasionally pieces of rusting iron and cannon shells could be found lying to one side of the path. *Crossing the sort of bleached limestone scree that made you feel you were the first person to ever visit, we found a fox-hole, complete with dozens of shell casings and tins which I imagine held sardines or Italian pemmican.*

As forecast, the clouds darkened over the mountain. Fortunately we were within site of a group of huts *(the only shelter of the day)* before the first drops of rain fell. We quickened our pace as the heavens opened. It turned into a spectacular storm raging for 2 hours. A thunder and lightning show as we sat inside the doorway wrapped up from the cold, playing cards and sipping coffee. The tin roof hammered from the heavy rain and then hail. As suddenly as it had arrived the sky cleared and we left our temporary home and returned to the trail. *This had always been my concern over the last 7 years – that our luck would break and we would be caught out in this kind of weather. The light weight equipment we carry would be sorely tested in this weather. However – I'm travelling with DD!*

By 5pm, tired and seeking a shelter for the night, we reluctantly lost 1000 ft to check out a mountain hut. It was locked! We set up the tent close to the side of the hut in case of any gusts through the night. I should explain that my tent is a simple tarp with no door at either end; inside is entirely of fine mesh with the exception of a water proof floor. Weighing in at just 1.2 kgs and accommodating 2 with plenty of storage under the eaves it does the job, but is very drafty and not storm proof. Dressed in all we had, we ate our dehydrated meals, texted home and turned in as it went dark. *Surprisingly the metal fest mayhem drifted up to us from the distant valley...*

The next morning the neighboring beck had almost run itself dry - we foraged for water in the rock bed. Another beautiful day, but pleasantly cool under intermittent cloud cover, we climbed further up the trail to a pass. As indicated on the map, there were numerous caves and sink holes formed in the limestone. But more common were a network of stone roads cut and leveled during the wars. Our first signs of snow, and a party of youths

walked by with day sacks. We sat, marveled at the view, and chewed on Ben's beef jerky. We were hoping to fly today, but had some way to go before we were on the windward side of Krn and possible launch sites. The previous day's rain had increased the humidity and consequently low clouds formed on the windward side. The tops and leeward side were clear and sunny but if we managed to take off we still had reservations that we might land on the high rocky plateau and not get away. We carried on past more caves and trenches dug into the ridge. *It was astonishing the amount of trench-work up here. From one of the bloodiest battles in the 1st World War apparently. In my mind all day was the question 'How did they possibly manage the logistics?' No food or water for days, vertiginous paths exposed to enemy fire...*



Sunset on Krn

I was really looking forward to the next alpine hut perched near the summit of Krn. Food and drink, and if we didn't fly away today - a bed for the night? It was closed for renovation! Below the veranda, facing into a light breeze, was a steep grassy slope that ran uninterrupted right down into the high meadows. One minor technical hitch though, we couldn't see through the cloud. There was a momentary break in the cloud that revealed the meadows and small hamlets in the valley bottom. I persuaded Ben to unpack and prepare to fly. We sat in our harnesses for an hour or more but never saw what lay below us again, just the occasional sound of the cow bells delivered to us on the breeze. In contrast, the view of the Dolomites and cloud silhouetted by the setting sun was a wonderful site to see. We were at 7000ft, it would be a cold night. *Cold is an*

understatement. The tarp flapping roused me at one point – and by the light of the head torch I watched as the clouds rushed through the tent – soaking the mosquito netting which in turn rained droplets over us.

The next morning started with a procession of Slovenians on their way to summit Krn. The cloud still obstructed taking off to the south. We packed and moved out. Traversing around the summit, we followed the long descending ridge further north with the intention of finding a suitable take off to the east (which remained sunny), or losing enough height to soar the west side below cloudbase. With very few ascents, uninterrupted views to the east and plenty of sunshine, it was an enjoyable day - although the weight of the sacks was a constant burden. The trail crossed wide bowls of snow, through fortifications and across large beds of flowers. After one more spur, we had finally left the plateau behind and taking off to the east was now a possibility.

Descending down a well built path we started to pass flocks of sheep, the terrain had changed to thick tufts of grass, an indication of a moderated altitude. We came across an easterly take-off but by then the wind was prominent from the west! Another hour's exercise on the thighs and we were finally below the clouds on grassy sloping bowls facing into a light westerly breeze. It was approx. 4pm and without discussion we quickly unpacked and rigged to launch. As normal Ben was ready before me and resting in his harness. I thought I'd better hold his wing's leading edge and ensure he got off before me. He hadn't slept that well over the last two cold nights and he looked too comfortable slumbering in his harness. Due to the steep slope his Addict 2 had pancaked over itself and he didn't seem too bothered. *The grassy bowl DD mentions was steeper than 1 in 1 – and had tussocky grass waist high covering it. You had a choice when laying out: to drape your canopy across the narrow footpath and slide around in the jungle losing your kit; or take the flat path yourself and risk being wrapped in your canopy sliding-down the hill. I couldn't have launched without help – how Dave managed later I can't imagine.*

He got away and I hurried into my harness and drank what water I had left. *The first part of the flight was rather hard - long ridge with the cloud on the top. Our route went north right along to the end before it dived into a deep completely treed valley with a tree covered hill in it. As this was in the lee of another huge ridge – and DD hadn't taken off yet – I returned below take-off and along the ridge looking for lift and then tried to push forwards to skirt around the mountain to the windward side. It didn't work!*

Unexpectedly another paraglider had flown over from a neighbouring hill, and a mile away I watched as Ben joined him in a low save above a hanging valley. Because the grass was so deep I had to wait for a breeze to be sure my lines weren't knotted and then go. I did what I do best and scratched the short height up to cloudbase and waited until they had finished thermalling back up. *After a struggle – I joined him, and we flew through the col and headed for Bovec, our goal for the day. A golden eagle took offence – for a while I thought he was going to hit me, but he pulled up in the nick of time. Midway to the huge treed hill I spotted that the right hand valley had some small fields you could*

land in. So I went that way – to Dave's bemusement. Unique it was – two chums gliding past a huge hill one on each side. My side worked... but of course Dave's worked better. Had it been the other way around – I can guarantee they'd have been picking me out of the trees!

It was still sunny east of the ridge and with Bovec within our sights we instinctively worked the thermals, began to relax and enjoyed being carried around for a change. After a short excursion onto the ridge for Kranjska Gora (our next goal) we turned back for a long glide down to Bovec, flying in close proximity for a photo shoot and chat. We spotted the two camp sites on the map and chose the closest to town to save our weary legs. We landed literally across the road from the camp site, bunched up our gliders and waddled across the tarmac to drop everything in the nearest clearing and then went to the bar next door.

The 'photo shoot' was in a different climatic zone to the previous 4 days. Wonderful. Worthwhile – all of it. We picked out our campsite from the air, landed next to it and didn't have to pack-up. Grilled steaks restored vitality, and the low altitude made the night's temperature delicious...

A couple of beers later and I was a bit drunk, probably because I had been dehydrated. I returned to my gear and struggled to pack my glider small enough to squeeze into the bottom of the rucksack and then staggered about putting up the tent.

The next morning, showered and clean shaven, we packed, had breakfast in town and walked down the road for the 11 o'clock bubble lift up to 6000 ft. Very civilized.



Relaxing in the top cable car station we kept an eye on the performance of numerous chuffs and a couple of vultures as we bided our time 'para-waiting'. The take off was a few minutes walk down the ski slope, a green carpet no bigger than a tandem PG. Locally the sky was completely blue, but clouds were developing in the distance. Eventually impatience won over and in a nil wind we took off and slowly made our way east along the massif working patches of lift. Having lost more height than expected we crossed a valley onto the beginning of a ridge - our planned route north to Kranjska Gora. We found our own thermals and converged level with first summit. As the ridge gained height we failed to climb any higher and chose to continue on the east face. As we lost height on a long glide along the face, a prevalent wind became apparent from behind. This prevented any decent thermals from forming.

When push came to shove – and I had to pick a side of the ridge I chose the open valley rather than the one closed to our route. Immediate valley winds were obvious. I chose a safe long landing field rather than the risky and committing move onto a spur – I would have gone up – but would I have got high enough to find another landing? Dave was still high and radioed his intent to fly back to Bovec – effortlessly it seemed. I kicked the ground and muttered 'Bet he's getting tired of hanging about with some-one as hopeless as me...'. A perfect stream and rapid to swim in cheered me up.

I worked dynamically on an outcrop as Ben sank into the valley wind and eventually landed.

I watched in case he had found a low save, and then crossed into the middle of the valley to head back for Bovec. I was soon hampered by the same wind and made little progress. The valley was an oasis of green, mostly trees with a river running through. Descending, the wind had increased, and I'd set up for a large field while still having plenty of height. Almost invisible and lost in the landscape a fine steel cable rose in front of me, surprisingly close and yet I still hadn't seen it! It ran discretely up to an old mine - a spider's web just waiting for an accident. I always make a point of searching for power lines when coming in to land, but was taken by surprise to find a cable 500 ft in the air. I cursed under my breath. Also disappointed with having landed so early, I packed up and walked to the road. Having only just scrambled up the bank, the next car pulled over to give me a lift. I was given a front seat as the passenger got in the back with my bag. They had just finished harvesting something in flower, evident from the small petals covering their overalls and in their hair. The conversation soon ended when it was clear that 'Bovec' was the only familiar word between us. Apart from music of some Arabic origin playing constantly from the driver's phone, we traveled back in silence. The driver pulled over in a lay-by and gestured towards a fountain on the road side. I returned the gesture to them, but they didn't want a drink!?? Er...No thanks! I had visions of them driving off with my bag. After they went out of their way to drop me off at the same campsite cafe I felt a bit guilty for thinking such a thing. I ordered my tea & cake and pondered how Ben was getting on.

On return – and without prompting, Dave congratulated me on my choice! He'd only got about 5km further back to town and had been hoping I would do what I had! Yippee... That night we carefully looked at the map and re-assessed our strategy and options should we drop into that valley again...



That evening we ate at a restaurant in town while being entertained by traditional dancing in period costumes.

The next day began like Ground Hog Day: We chilled out in town and

took the bubble up to the 'departure lounge' at 1pm. Unique today were huge cumulus towers crowning distant mountains like Marge Simpson's hairdo. There was some concern that our planned route travelled straight through some of these imposing monsters. We took-off and repeated the mediocre flight along the south facing range before making a committed glide onto the start of the same ridge as yesterday, arriving low. This time we mixed in the same thermals until we leveled out just above the ridge. How two PG's managed to get in each other's way so much I'll never know. It was a bit punchy and we ducked and dived in our own different style (clockwise vs anti-clockwise of course) avoiding each other when necessary, but only just! While working the same thermal as Ben, and while trying to get some nice photos of his red Addict 2 against the limestone landscape, my vario decided to turn off!!! The batteries had run out. I stalked Ben closely for while until I found my miniature Bräuniger vario and then wait for it to chirp into life. Yesterday we had cocked it up after this point and debated it that evening. Curiously, when writing this, Ben wrote '*Having decided to be more aggressive*', and I had thought we should be more patient! Maybe Ben flew more aggressively and I flew more patiently, but it worked well and we navigated around the summit. *Up the spur, past the point of no return – flying slowly, gaining height at all times. At one point I was several hundred feet up one side of the cloud and Dave parallel on the other.* Actually I flew through it! *The cloud lifted off the summit as we approached!* At this height there was no wind and once clear of any black bottomed clouds we boated about taking in the view, surrounded by the biggest mountains in Slovenia. *Dave 'scratched' the sharp ridge for pure entertainment calling out to some climbers and then we flew through a small gap in the limestone. From here the view was unbelievable. Just awesome in all directions. And smooth and lift. Time for another photo shoot. We were part of a massive scenery that is still vivid in my mind today, but will blur over time. Dave kept chiding me for flying too fast or too high - trying to get the perfect composition. Coming up though was the biggie of the day. A proud monster on the last range that separates north from south.*

We couldn't guess what the valley winds were like through the pass the beast guarded. I played the game of vertical chess to ensure Dave went in first. He played the game of cloud flying committing me to do the start of the transition first. Bastard!

By now we had reached the east end of the ridge, and with one last top up to cloudbase we made a glide for the south face of Prisank, one of the big boys. Ben connected first and shot off to the summit. I took the next lift. Approaching 10,000 ft I tried the radio but there was no reply. By the time I emerged onto the north side I couldn't make out his canopy anywhere. I waved to some mountaineers who had just climbed onto the summit, quite an achievement belittling my comparatively lazy day.

Straight at the rock face – straight-up and over – flying 20 feet above the climbers on the summit and I was off. Dave can never keep up with me when I am on the charge – and I headed down into the huge valley having lost site of the man. Considering how high I was – level with the cliffs of the huge spurs – I thought about the valley winds really early. Low down I could see a swarm of hang-gliders obviously pinned under an inversion made it simple. Or so I thought! From space – and 10km away – I now know it can be quite hard to see exactly what features hangies are using. By the time I had figured it out I was committed... 'Come on – I only need a hundred feet' to get over to the correct side of the spur I was next to.... Needless to relate – that never happened – but I just made the nearest field and survived a fast landing. And was elated. It was one of the best days flying I had ever had.

With Ben not responding on the radio, I flew from one sunlit face to another, popping out above the ridge each time. The main valley was within a glide but I wanted more, despite getting cold which was making my bladder complain. Austria lay over the next range, and in an attempt to reach the border, I flew across the main valley and onto these low tree covered hills. I soon abandoned the idea due to the strong valley wind and landed near the campsite we had seen on the map. I desperately wanted to pee but there was a woman nearby digging up vegetables. Having gathered my glider to walk to somewhere more sheltered from the wind, it occurred to me that she couldn't see me amongst the canopy! Stood in my harness and, surrounded by fluttering cloth, I managed to empty my bladder without a mess. Or so I thought. I had inadvertently filled up one of my cells, which only became apparent when I recommenced walking! Despite this and the campsite being closed, it had been a good day. After getting a hitch from two English lads enjoying a long summer recce through Europe, I rendezvoused with Ben in Kranjska Gora and we booked into a youth hostel. Unbeknown to me, he had restocked in cigarettes.

A walk into town, and ambushed by Dave and a Jabba the Hut landlord later we sat beer in hand and smiling. The culture had changed from eastern European to Germanic and British blue rinse – 'see Austria on the Cheap'. And there was a take-off with ski-lift.

The next morning I bought some batteries for my gps/vario and joined Ben for breakfast in the centre of this rather quaint village. We were packed and ready for a big day, but

were in no rush as there was a rickety old chair lift a short walk away. At midday, with our bags sent ahead of us, we had a slow ascent through the trees to a mediocre 2000 ft launch overlooking the town. In a break in the trees sat a wooden HG ramp. *Great for hang gliders. Yesterday, Saturday, the valley had been busy with hang gliders. The only pilot there today was Darja, a paraglider who ran a guest house in the town. 'If you don't get anywhere today come to my hotel – only 10 Euros for the night!' Dave was silent as he prepared. The launch site required us to hold up the leading edge for the new companion who then soared about in front of launch for an age before heading down to home.*

While he flew to-and-fro in front of the hill we emptied our bags and systematically packed our harnesses. I laid out first in the limited space between a bench and the ramp. As if by magic, a couple of Ben's friends from Cumbria arrive in time to hold my leading edge aloft. Wrongly, I waited for a significant breeze and end up getting 'whooped'. With help I untangled myself and had an entertaining second launch bouncing off the side of the ramp and into the air. Darja had flown down, and now I to-and-fro'd in slightly better lift. I took some blurred photos of Ben's text book launch and waved goodbye to Rich and Andrea.

But we were stuck below the inversion too. For ages – trying this ridge then that. A huge storm cloud was racing across from Austria, although alto stratus, the local mountains were responding with 100% cloud cover to the North, South and West. A foray down wind and Dave caught some lift but I only got the dregs and returned to the spur. 5 mins later I decided to bail... a decision that was timely as after a windy backwards landing it all went off. Even in the lee of a building I couldn't get my glider packed. Dave I last saw being sucked into a towering cu over yesterday's final spur...

Five hours later I still hadn't heard. More beer please.. The phone rang – Not Dave but bad news from home [ex met new girlfriend]. What a worrying day. At last Dave walked into the square and introduced himself to the Nepali I had befriended with a grin as big as a watermelon slice...

Despite Ben eventually going down, the weather had scuppered our planned route before it had begun. Not having a plan, I flew in the opposite direction - east starting at the same sunny limestone faces I



enjoyed yesterday. To cut a long story short I hurdled ridge after ridge tormented by tree filled valleys with nil landing options. And then the landscape suddenly changed to a plateau, tree covered of course. Getting cold I continued SE from one cumulus to the next. Thermalling with some swifts to cloudbase I weight shifted and peed over the port side. There was a lake to my right, Bohinjsko Jezero, a bit of a milestone for me. I pushed on aware that I was pushing my luck. Conscious of getting back to avoid a tedious walk / hitch (something you don't usually worry about vol-bivouacking) I took my final picture of the Bohinjsko Jezero valley and turned back. Straight away I struggled to maintain height, getting low over some cabins on the plateau. Desperate to get some ground clearance I flew over a hanging valley - need I mention the trees! On scraps of lift I struggled up the rim of the valley and onto the first ridge. My return journey was now in shadow and in jeopardy. On survival mode I stuck to the recently sunny side vertical face on a long glide out of there. The end of this valley had some farms and pastures, and a moderate valley wind from the east. Like flying back home in the Lakes, I hopped from bump to bump down wind, a little higher each time. The sky was looking grim but I was now in the main valley and getting closer to Kranjska. Then, unexpectedly the wind ceased and I faced a head wind that grew stronger until I was forced to land outside the same village as yesterday. I hurriedly packed expecting a shower, but it didn't happen. One minute thumbing for a lift and who should stop but Darja and his wife Janez on their way back from Bled to the east. They offered accommodation for both of us at their hotel Gostilna Pri Martinu at a generous rate. In fact, they we're both very helpful and generous throughout. I found Ben with Rich and Andrea at a Bar in town. Ben had been concerned about my fate, and the content of the ashtray gave him away. He was busted.

The evening was wonderful. The PG pilot on launch – who had been in the first car Dave stuck his thumb out for, was irrepressibly generous. Free food, lodging and beer and breakfast in the loveliest accommodation. People can be rather wonderful.

The next morning, to get above the inversion we hitched to the top of the Vrsic Pass and chose a trail up Mojstrovka to look for a suitable take-off. The landscape was very steep and rocky, and for a while we struggled to find anywhere suitable to launch from. We scrambled across the shattered scenery checking out all the snow patches for launch sites.

It was approaching midday, and at this high altitude the wind was picking up and we were beginning to wonder if we would get away at all! Traversing round a second spine we found a smooth limestone slab potted with grass and south facing into wind. Once in the air we relaxed and set off on our preferred route - due west to the Italian border. We thermalled up to cloudbase which sliced through the high peaks that passed by and after a long glide and a non-eventful thermal we limped across the border into Italy. We were relatively low, but with the wind direction evident on a blue lake below, we both crossed to the same crag and took thermals up the face of this new mountain range. With a slight head wind we leap-frogged one bowl after the next topping up on the windward side of

each spur, it looked like we were on a roll and I radio'd Ben: *"It'll be a piece of cake from here" shouted Dave as the huge ridge we were on invited us forwards. Warning him about tempting fate I had to agree. The ridge curved more into wind, the clouds looked good...*

As if the Gods took a dim view of my overconfidence the next spur failed to work. Before losing further height we started on the second glide without topping up. I led, on and off the speed-bar, determined to get around the next corner and back into wind. I wasn't as low as the 'tree line' yet and even considered landing around the corner if I could just make it. The valley immediately below was a small ski resort at the top of a high level pass, and offered minimal landing options between trees and hotels, and probable stronger winds. As we lost height, the wind did increase. Any delay passing through the lee side resulted in sinking further into the choppy air, compounding the situation. It was a race between the glider and the spur which moved further out of reach as we lost height. After a lot of pumping on the brakes and interrupted use of the speed bar I eventually made it round the spur and moved in close to scratch back up. During this time I had been paying all my attention to glider and ground, glider and ground. Only once the air became smooth and the vario cease it's negative tone did I crane my neck to see behind me, left and right and above - No sign of Ben. Gaining some height I turned away from the ground and got on the radio. There was no reply. I flew back to see around the corner and tried again. The delay in response was sickening.

Three spurs later I was fighting hard. Collapse and surge, will we make it over this – yes just. Landing options limited to diving down wind all the way back to the lake (or more probably the river bed that fed it). We attacked the next spur. With all the courage I could muster yet even on bar (in very turbulent air) I couldn't make it. Fuckfuckfuck. My only chances were to put down in the back of the hanging valley – below the scree and above the trees. I had lost awareness of everything but survival. There was another option – a steep field lower down – surrounded by trees and next to a mountain hut.

Trusting intuition I went for the original option. Talking to the collapsing canopy I tried to pick the least boulder and tree scattered part of the hill knowing I would have to be lucky to walk away. In the end, well I missed the trees. But hit a boulder. This time I willed my legs to take the initial impact. A sudden tailwind fired me into the top of it and I bounced up hill.

Coming to rest I knew I was broken again... Not my back?!... Not again... Struggling out of my claustrophobic harness I knew I was hurt – but not as badly as before. Dave who had made it over the spur called on the radio and we hatched a rescue plan. I ate my industrial strength painkillers in industrial quantities – only now becoming aware of the other bits that were hurting.

And then he replied - 'Hurt but walking'. I looked down, and far below I could see him out of his harness and stood near his canopy - a red flash across the green hillside. He was still assessing his back, but suspected a broken arm. Fortunately, only a few hundred

yards below Ben, there was a few cabins and a vehicle. I advised him to leave his gear as it was and walk down to grab a lift off the mountain.

It was the end of the trip – save for a painful descent through the trees to the hut for me – and a long walk for Dave who did my packing. A sight for the hut owner and his young son was a self bandaged Brit – it took me a while to win them round – but they drove us



down to the mountain rescue – and thus began my comparative study of international hospitals...

Flying around one more spur the ground fell away to a huge grassy plateau with farm buildings and alpine huts. It was a cooking pot with thermals boiling off all the time. I had to spiral down numerous times before eventually close enough to the hill to glide down and land near a lane. I packed and began to walk back along the lane with my thumb out. *Dave being Dave of course – as well as getting over the spur had chanced upon the only top-landing of the trip! Complete with Italian milkmaids!*

Two attractive Italian girls stopped and then drove off. Was it my age, nationality, mono-linguist, or smell, or all the above, I wasn't sure. An 'older' man than me took pity and drove me down to the pass and small ski resort. Buying some cold drinks and dumping my gear, I walked up a trail through the forest and rendezvoused with a sore and fragile Ben. His lift and family were keen to get away so I went to find and pack Ben's gear. Wrapping his glider I hid an assortment of flowers for him to find one day in the future when he's fit again. Ben winced most of the journey down the rocky track. The resident mountain rescue team practiced their first aid on Ben's arm and then drove us down the steep sided valley to the nearest hospital an hour away. The doctor looked at the x-rays and pointed at anomalies in his skeleton with a quizzical expression. I helped clarify the old from the new!

The next day I confiscated Ben's Slovenian cigarettes and we traveled into Venice for a few days rest sightseeing amongst the smelly canals. The beer was expensive and waiters rude.

One final note... if you are carrying a big rucksack from the water-taxi to the airport when unable to tie your own boot laces – don't be proud when your friend offers... it saves the agony of swan diving onto the pavement!

The Chris Scammell Triangle Tour Hits Keswick

The designated room at the Skiddaw Hotel was packed for Chris's presentation on XC flying in the lakes ... and was it worth it! Chris has been flying hang gliders and paragliders over the Lakes for a quarter of a century, usually alone and launching from the more esoteric fells and hidden valleys. Thus his repertoire has developed an enigmatic quality. This was the time to blow the myths, share the secrets and get us all flying closed triangles over the best flying- mountain terrain in Britain; nay the world! The **SFC** Events Reporter had hoped to provide a tear-off supplement for CSC pilots to tuck into their harnesses as an aide memoire for their intrepid forays over the central fells but there was just too much to take in and his pencil broke noting that a flight to Hull is a



reasonable objective from Clough. It was clear from the post-talk noise that we have been inspired.

Waterstones travel section has sold out of street maps of Hull and having been informed that the XC season officially started last week dozens of pilots congregated on various fells equipped with high altitude clothing, pee-tubes and extra rations for the extended flights. All that was lacking were the thermals and a quarter of a century of experience. Still, my brand new pee-tube will be handy for decanting my homebrew. Chris certainly managed to dispel some of the myths and challenged some of the received wisdom associated with Lake District XCs however a note of caution is needed. Chris has helpfully provided a short list of 'cautions' to bear in mind while you accrue your 25 years of experience.

Bear in Mind

Remember; as the **wind speed** doubles the energy present in the air quadruples. Therefore a 10mph wind will produce 4 times the turbulence of a 5mph wind.

When flying an **unknown area** for the first time, pick a light wind day to get acquainted with the lay of the land and local airflow.

Never fly mountains that are in cloud, or are likely to develop cloud

below summit level, unless very experienced.

Be prepared for the approach of the **sea breeze**. Anticipate where it will produce turbulence upon its arrival.

Approach **lee side slopes** with great caution. Be prepared to make a sharp exit at the first signs of nasty air (rapid change in ground speed is a potential sign of rotor). Remember that the lee side air will be flowing downhill even if not rotoring.

Don't fly near cloud unless you are practiced at navigating out of it on instruments.

Don't scratch in close in bouncy conditions. Have you got enough height/ground clearance to survive a 60% deflation?

Weight shift away from the hill when flying in close. If you should lose the inner wing it won't swing you into the hill.

Have your legs dangling when scratching in close in case you cock up and end up touching down.

Keep speed on when scratching to give you turn authority and glider energy should you need to make a quick turn away from the hill when hitting sink.

Don't fly in the mountains on windy days. Go to more 'traditional' CSC sites with less in front of them.

The ability to **spot land high on difficult terrain is an essential skill.** Ensure you have it before you need it.

Radios for Dummies

or

What foot launched glider pilots need to know about radios.

(By Rick Livingstone)

CSC NOTE:

This article is based on the author's opinions and experience, mainly with Marine band VHF.

It presupposes that users have complied with the various legal requirements.

Its appearance in S.F.C. does not constitute CSC endorsement or approval.

1. Introduction & Purpose

Unlike most things concerned with flight, where a little knowledge is often dangerous, with radios a little knowledge can, in fact, be very beneficial.

I've noticed a need for a little radio knowledge among PG/HGers..... Like: What type of radio should I get? How do I use it? Am I allowed to use it, will I get into trouble? What frequencies should I use? etc etc.

So this article is an attempt to pass on some *practical information that will make the use of radios on the hill more useful and avoid the key pitfalls* which a lack of training can cause. It is not a replacement for your radio's user manual! It is what they don't tell you in the manual!

Based on what I know about Marine band VHF procedures, this article is a significantly shortened version. Marine band procedures seem to be simpler & more understandable to the layman, less abbreviated and more jargon free than the transmissions I've heard coming from aeroplanes & airports.

Am I suitably qualified to write this? Well I do hold a 'UK restricted certificate of competence in radio telephony – VHF only', 1989 vintage, so it's probably out of date. Therefore I'm probably not officially qualified and my set is not (yet?) licensed for 2011..... but I do have several decades of practical experience in the amateur use of Marine band VHF sets.

Whether or not you are qualified; if you see anything in this article that you think is missing or wrong and consider it is important, please let me know and I promise to correct it. Also note I've not personally tested everything in this article!

2. Types of radio & range

You may hear a radio being called a 'transceiver', this is the formal name for a 'walkie-talkie' or a 'hand-held' as the set will both transmit and receive signals.

Range, on all VHF radio types, is more or less 'line of sight' – if you can't see them then your signal probably won't get through.

There are only two types of radio which you should legally consider using for flying:

First and simplest are the **Private Mobile Radio ‘PMR 446’ sets**. If you want more detail see: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PMR446>. These are OK to use throughout the EU with no license requirements whatsoever. Usually sold in pairs as ‘walkie-talkies’ you can buy these in Argos etc etc. They are pretty good, and cheap, but are low power - only having a range of up to about 10km. Better models have hundreds of channels & sub channels, see the frequencies section below.

Second are the **Airband sets** sometimes incorrectly called 2 metre radios. If you want more detail see: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Airband>. These are ‘proper’ (professional use) radios. These cost more and are only available through more specialised retailers, radio or flying gear shops. You are supposed to get a set licence and, if you want to transmit on other than PG/HG channels you are supposed to have an operator’s certificate. These sets are much more powerful than PMRs. i.e. ***When you’re at 5000ft probably most of the country can hear you if they tune to your channel !*** The number of channels you are supposed to use is also pretty restricted – see frequencies below. All this ‘supposed to have’ means that if you mis-use your set you are likely to end up in bother; whereas it’s ‘no problemo’ if you learn and use some basic operator sense and stick to the agreed channels. ***If you are negligent and transmit your para-crack on say Manchester Airport’s Air Traffic Control Channels, you can imagine the result ! Nuff said I hope !***

3. Frequencies

Private Mobile Radio PMR 446 sets

These only work on the 446 Mhz frequency. This whole frequency is reserved for amateur use and you’ll only interfere with other amateurs if you do mis-use it. Hence you may have ‘idiot’ problems. However it’s usually easy to find some free space as there are 8 main channels and 38 sub-channels within each of those.

Note that our local flying school, **AIR-VENTURES**, ***uses channel 7, sub-channel 4***. So if you need to get Gordie when he’s training on the hill or during the LCC, and you’ve got a PMR, try 7.4 - otherwise use another channel to avoid interfering with him (what a shocking thought!).

Airband sets

There is an official ‘unofficial’ dispensation to allow us to use the PG/HG channels below, I understand, without needing an operator certificate; but your set is still supposed to be licensed.

I think radios can be adjusted/re-chipped to cover different frequencies. ***You need to be careful when you're buying***, I suggest you look for a range covering say ***120 to 145 Mhz*** but I'm not exactly clued up on this!

My own radio (an Alinco DJ195), which I bought secondhand on e-bay, only goes down to 130.100 Mhz but goes all the way up to 174 Mhz. This was pure luck for me as I'd really no idea what I was buying and it turns out it covers all the marine vhf channels (156 to 174 Mhz) as well as most of the flying channels I'm going to need!

Here's the lowdown on the channels I've found and which I believe you are restricted to (unless you are contacting Aeroplanes or Air Traffic Control – in which case you need more training than this article delivers!):

FREQUENCY	<i>USE</i>
121.500	UK Aviation Emergency Channel
125.725	Glider Channel Scottish?
126.600	Glider Channel North?
128.600	Glider Channel South?
129.900	Glider Channel ALL
	Volmet ?
129.975	Glider Channel ?
130.100	Official Glider Channel Training & misc
130.125	Official Glider Channel Training & Misc
130.400	Official Glider Channel Cloud flying
135.275	Official Glider Channel National
143.700	Unofficial PG/HG Channel Cumbria Soaring Club
143.725	Unofficial PG/HG Channel
143.750	Unofficial PG/HG Channel
143.775	Unofficial PG/HG Channel

143.800	Unofficial PG/HG Channel
143.825	Unofficial PG/HG Channel
143.850	Unofficial PG/HG Channel
143.875	Unofficial PG/HG Channel
143.900	Unofficial PG/HG Channel
143.925	Unofficial PG/HG Channel
143.950	
	Unofficial PG/HG Channel Dales HG&PG Club

143.9875	FRANCE Rescue Channel
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4. Setting up your radio

Private Mobile Radio PMR 446 sets

These vary a lot, just follow the instructions. Some of the Airband tips below could be applicable. i.e. I have mine normally locked to the 'Air Ventures' channel 7.4

Airband sets

I'm assuming that most sets will have similar features to my Alinco.

- ***Put the above frequencies into the memory and re-name the channel*** if you know it's specific use. i.e. Change it so the display says 'CSC' rather than '143.700' – this makes it easy to know you've got the channel you want and avoids 'knob twiddling' (!) on the hill and trying to remember how the bloody thing works when the manual's 50 miles away!
- If you're normally using the radio to fly CSC sites then ***lock the radio to the CSC frequency***. That way it'll be ready to use as soon as you switch it on and there's no chance it will re-set when the knobs get twiddled as you're putting your harness on!
- I suggest you don't try to learn the manual (if you're anything like me) mine's a nightmare of radio ham gobbledegook. Once set up, all you might normally need is: on/off, lock/unlock, memory re-call/channel change, volume adjustment, and battery charging.

5. Common Transmitting Pitfalls to be avoided

- When anyone is transmitting they have taken over that channel – no-one else can use it; until the transmit button is released, that channel is effectively jammed.

So, if you put your radio in a flying suit pocket where, unknown to you, maybe a harness strap is pressing the transmit button in flight; you will have bugged the whole radio system on that channel for everyone else for miles and miles around, probably until you land or your battery goes flat!!

So, if it all goes totally quiet on your radio, just make sure you're not the culprit!

- Before you start transmitting, first listen for a while to see if the channel is in use. *Common courtesy for other pilots and you might be muscling your way onto the airwaves at the expense of something important.*
- Remember the radio is not like a phone - on the phone you can both 'transmit' and 'receive' simultaneously, - on the radio only one party can speak, while the other listens, then vice-versa – BUT NOT BOTH TOGETHER !

6. Normal Operating Procedures

You don't need all the 'zed victor tango one' lingo but some of the standard radio

procedures make very good sense and are worth using. Here's the minimum I'd suggest:

PROCEDURE	WHY IT'S A GOOD IDEA
Say ' OVER ' when you've finished speaking - it is the invitation to reply.	Avoids confusion. Let's the other party know it's their turn to speak. Stops you both trying to both speak at once – which does not work.
Say ' OUT ' to terminate the conversation. (Do not say 'OVER and OUT'; it's meaningless Hollywood twaddle.)	Avoids confusion. Whoever you've been speaking to, and anyone waiting to use the channel, knows that your conversation has ended.
When initially calling, identify yourself and try to name the specific party you're calling i.e. saying ' Rick calling Gordie, Rick calling Gordie, over. ' is quite good enough. The repetition is wise and normal procedure.	If you call several potential sets – i.e. by saying maybe ' Rick calling gliders on Burnbank, over. ' and several reply; it'll just jam the system. If you don't know who it is try something like ' Rick calling blue glider laid out on Burnbank, over. '
To see if your set is working OK say i.e. ' Fred to Frank, radio check please, over '	Quick, efficient way to see if it's working.
Keep transmissions times <i>short and concise</i> and <i>speak slowly and deliberately</i> .	Others may be waiting to use the channel so keep it short and understandable to avoid repeats.

7. Emergency Operating Procedures

If you are requested, on your radio, to vacate the airspace – PLEASE do so immediately, either land or fly several kilometres out of the incident area; whichever is quickest. Otherwise you may be hampering an air rescue - as happened on Clough in 2010.....

MAYDAY is the international call sign for use during distress when life is in imminent danger. In these circumstances put **MAYDAY** at the start of all transmissions. Using this lets people know immediately that the transmission is literally deadly serious.

Keep off the radio channel in use; unless you are part of, or assisting, in the emergency, until the situation is resolved.

If you are reporting say a casualty position it is vitally important that you understand the convention for describing position: ***This is always the distance and direction FROM A KNOWN GEOGRAPHICAL POINT.***

i.e. '1.5 kilometres south west from Burnbank summit near Loweswater.'

If you are able, and wish to, you can use a bearing. i.e. due south would be 180 degrees true. Done correctly this is more accurate than compass points but requires a sighting compass and some navigational skills.

If you hear a **MAYDAY** call and can render assistance you have a legal requirement to reply. If you seem to be the only person who's heard but you're miles away you must still attempt to reply and then ***relay the message to the rescue services*** by radio, mobile phone or any other means.

8. Accessories

Paraglider & Hang Glider pilots often install a microphone and a speaker in their helmets, plugged into their radios. The radio is then controlled by a PTT (press to transmit) button strapped to a finger. Great in the air, as you don't need to let go of anything to use the radio, they are available from S&W !

9. Summary

You should now be able to get the right radio to cover the frequencies you ought to be using, be able to set it up to be easy to use and, more or less, know the correct way to use it.....

There are loads of other rules and procedures some of which, as a good operator, you may wish to learn & use. I have only included here what I think is the bare minimum.

I've looked but failed to find a good Airband training book but here's a link to the Marineband self-train book I used to prepare this article – just in case you want to progress further:

[http://www.rya.org.uk/shop/pages/product.aspx?pid=G22\(RYADefaultCatalog\)&mode=t&type=BK\(RYADefaultCatalog\)](http://www.rya.org.uk/shop/pages/product.aspx?pid=G22(RYADefaultCatalog)&mode=t&type=BK(RYADefaultCatalog))

Oh – and profanities are illegal!

And one last thing – in some countries just possession of an Airband radio without state approval is a criminal offence for which you can be immediately jailed! ***Be careful where you take yours, especially if going outside the EU.***

I hope this has helped.

See, and hear you, on the hill.

‘OUT’

Rick Livingstone (islandbagger@hotmail.com).

'Hidden Valley Paragliding (Chris Scammell) is back up and running after a lay off of several years. Chris is running several 4-day Mountain Master classes this Spring, at a cost of just £99 with a further 10% discount for CSC members. In addition he is available for personal guiding/coaching at your convenience. See website for details. Chris is one of the country's leading mountain pilots. He made a name for himself in 2001 with an inspirational solo, unsupported para-bivouac traverse of the Alps, from Nice to Salzburg. Since then he has been expanding the local paragliding envelope, culminating in last year's epic 60km triangle around the Lake District. Visit www.mountainparagliding.co.uk for more information and booking.'

"Pre-Season Appetiser"

(The Small print)

Cumbria Soaring Club invites you to a "Pre Season Appetiser" to be held at the Hawkshead Brewery, Staveley near Kendal on Friday 8 April from 7pm until midnight.

It promises to be a great night out with your mates with great food, real ale and a pre-season talk by Richard Westgate. Richard is a paragliding multi world record holder and current UK XC Champion. He also did four flights over 100km in the UK in six weeks in June/July 2008. Richard's talk will cover flying 100km in the UK, looking at how to be at the right place at the right time, what to concentrate on, and analysing flights from the last few years with photos

The buffet will start at 1930 and you can choose from

Honey roast ham

Chicken curry and rice

Thai vegetable curry

Goats cheese and beetroot tarts

There will be a selection of two salads and potato and vegetable accompaniments To follow

Cheddar and Stilton with celery and biscuits

Hot apple beignets with cinnamon sugar and apricot sauce

We will be presenting the CSC awards for 2010 after the meal. Richard's talk will follow and the bar will be open until midnight so you can plan the forthcoming season's flying! Friends and partners are also very welcome.

The cost is 12 pounds per person payable before 4 April. Sorry, you can't turn up at the door as the venue needs the numbers in advance. Places are limited so please book early to avoid disappointment.

Location details: <http://www.hawksheadbrewery.co.uk/>

Accommodation: The Brewery has a large car park for camper vans!

Camping and Caravan sites <http://www.ukcampsite.co.uk/sites/townlisting.asp?town=Kendal>

Booking and Payment:

Please confirm your booking by sending an email to jon@ambleside84.fsnet.co.uk or a letter to Jon Bennett, CSC Treasurer, 1 Fisherbeck Park, Ambleside, Cumbria LA22 0AJ. Club members can pay by internet bank transfer. For details of the account, please log into the members only section of the website and go to

http://www.cumbriasoaringclub.co.uk/documents/CSC_Standing_Order_Form.pdf.

In the bank payment reference field, you will need to put your membership number followed by your initials and surname.

Non club members will need to send a cheque payable to Cumbria Soaring Club to the above address. If you want an acknowledgment, please send a SAE. Again the price is 12 pounds per person payable by 4 April.

PS The purpose of the night is to prove beyond doubt that the committee can organise a p*** up in a brewery!

And that wraps it up for another issue of Spoilt **for Choice** (the Nation's favourite read!) – and remember, if you don't write up your own exploits I'll make them up.

Don't forget the AGM on 8 April 2011 just before the 'do' at the Staveley. The formal notification can be found at:

http://www.cumbriasoaringclub.co.uk/documents/AGM_Notification_2011_doc.pdf

It's your last chance to sack the Editor. Join me in voting him out!