

BGA accident/incident summaries

AIRCRAFT Ref	Type	Damage	Date, time	PILOT Injury	P1 hours
132	K-13	destroyed	12/08/22, 11:45	serious/serious	not reported
Low level aerotow launch failure. Witnesses at the launchpoint saw the glider disconnect from the rope at about 40ft agl at a point where the airfield starts to slope downhill towards a valley. The glider was seen to start a turn before disappearing below the sightline from the launchpoint. A non-flying witness saw the glider in a left turn before levelling the wings, flying under some powerlines and then impacting the ground nose first. The witness called the emergency services and radioed a message to another glider. Both pilots were taken to hospital suffering from back pain. The P1 can remember diving under the powerline but neither pilot has any further memory.					
135	Discus	substantial	05/08/22, 13:05	none	162
Field landing accident. The pilot picked a field at a suitable height but failed to notice the upslope at the downwind end of the field until rounding out. The glider ran out of energy while rounding out and landed heavily, breaking the undercarriage supporting H-frame.					
136	DG-101	minor	20/08/22, 15:45	none	75
Undercarriage collapsed during landing on a runway. The underside and undercarriage doors were damaged, along with the belly hook deflector plates. The report suggests that the excessively loose undercarriage handle could have been rotated out of the locked position during the ground run; a nut on the actuating rod was found to be loose and subsequently tightened.					
137	K-13	minor	19/08/22, 13:55	none	9
Low-level winch launch failure. The cable parted just as the glider took off at the point where the weak link quick release ring is attached to a quick release hook. The glider landed heavily, the rubber mount for the skid was forced into the fuselage and bent an internal steel tube. The report suggests that the weak link ring may not have been fully inserted into the quick release hook.					
139	DG-1000	minor	27/08/22, 15:30	none	2700
Wingtip hit the wingtip of a parked glider during the landing ground run. The pilot was aware of an aerotow combination waiting to take off so taxied off to the side of the airfield after landing but misjudged the distance to a parked glider. The DG-1000 had some minor scuffing to the wingtip and split the trailing edge of the wingtip of the parked glider.					
141	Grob 102	minor	26/08/22, -	none	949
Damaged canopy. The glider passed through a rut during the winch launch ground run and the pilot's head hit the canopy. The launchpoint controller aborted the launch. The pilot reports that the straps were tight and that his head was not touching the canopy prior to the launch.					
142	Ventus 2	substantial	12/06/22, 14:15	none	3497
Field landing groundloop. Getting low in the vicinity of the airfield the pilot elected to start the turbo. Having selected a suitable field he extended the turbo but it initially failed to start. At the second attempt the engine did start but then subsequently cut out. Too low to return to the original field, the pilot picked another field. After touching down a wingtip caught in crop, groundlooping the glider and breaking the tail boom.					
143	Discus	minor	30/08/22, 16:10	none	133
Wheel-up landing. The pilot lowered the undercarriage as part of his pre-landing checks while preparing to join the circuit. Finding some lift he climbed away, retracted the undercarriage and continued soaring. When he subsequently returned he omitted the pre-landing checks and landed on the grass airfield with the wheel up, causing minor scratching to the underside of the fuselage.					
145	Discus	substantial	01/09/22, 13:00	none	101
Flight with airbrakes open. The pilot had some trouble locking the canopy closed before the flight and was thinking of getting out of the launch queue before some club members helped him close the canopy. The airbrakes were seen to bounce open during the winch launch ground run before coming fully open when rotating to the full climb. After releasing from the cable the pilot initially headed downwind to look for lift but, losing height rapidly, soon turned back towards the airfield intending to make a straight in approach to a cross runway. Recognising that the glide back to the airfield was marginal the pilot made no attempt to open the airbrakes and therefore was still unaware that the brakes were already fully open. A witness at the launchpoint describes the glider stalling and dropping a wing as it rounded out. The wingtip impacted first, groundlooping the rest of the glider as it touched down. The wing and fuselage were both severely damaged, the tailplane, rudder and canopy were also broken. The witness had been calling the pilot over the radio to inform him that the airbrakes were open but the pilot had not tuned the radio to the club frequency before taking off.					
146	K-21	substantial	26/08/22, 12:25	none	103
Bounced landing. The glider was seen to be low in the circuit but instead of turning in early at an adequate height the pilot made a low turn on to final approach. The roundout was inadequate and the glider landed on the nosewheel, bouncing several times before coming to a stop. The structure around the nose wheel was damaged and had some internal delamination.					

BGA accident/incident summaries *continued*

AIRCRAFT Ref	Type	Damage	Date, time	PILOT Injury	P1 hours
148	Discus	minor	31/08/22, 13:30	none	1468
Wheel-up landing. The pilot reports being distracted by a nearby glider when joining the circuit and omitting his pre-landing checks. He also reports that the navigation device was issuing repeated airspace warnings that he had tuned out, potentially missing an undercarriage warning.					
150	EuroFOX	minor	23/08/22, 12:15	none	not reported
Rudder pedal broke as the tug took off. The pilot was able to remain in control and continued the tow using the right pedal on the P2 side. Inspection after landing revealed a large fatigue crack in the tube supporting the rudder pedal.					
153	K-13	substantial	11/09/22, 16:10	none	163
Loss of control on final approach. The glider was seen to make a normal approach until, at about roundout height, the glider slowed, dropped a wing and turned left, flying off the airfield before landing in an adjacent field. The ground run took the glider over a ditch, damaging the nose and distorting the fuselage. The pilot reports being hit by a strong gust of wind from the right, lifting the wing and turning the glider.					
154	DG-200	substantial	10/08/22, 15:20	none	99
Hard landing after rejected aerotow launch. This was the pilot's third aerotow on type and, after seeking advice from experienced instructors, he intended to start the take-off with the flaps set at full negative, changing to positive during the ground run. During the first attempt to change the flaps the glider took off and pitched to a nose high attitude so the pilot quickly switched back to negative flap to regain control. On the second attempt the glider again pitched nose high and climbed behind the now airborne tug. The glider pilot pulled the release and lowered the nose before opening the airbrakes. The combination of low airspeed and airbrakes out ended in a heavy landing collapsing the undercarriage, the frame supporting the wheel broke during the impact. The manual for the type recommends starting with neutral flap before moving to the first positive setting during the ground run.					
156	K-21	minor	18/09/22, 12:30	none/none	1230
Rear canopy opened in flight. The P1 had taken control from the very early ab initio student during the circuit and was on final approach and opening the airbrakes when the canopy came open. Due to CofG issues the P2 was sitting in the rear seat so the P1 was unable to close the canopy which was now acting as a large airbrake. Realising that they may not be able to reach the airfield the P1 landed in an undershoot field. The welded joint between the gas strut support tube and the canopy support frame had failed. There was evidence of a previous weld repair and corrosion on the joint surfaces indicating an incomplete weld.					
157	K-21	substantial	10/09/22, 15:40	none	not reported
Wingtip hit parked car during landing. The glider was low on approach and rounded out over a taxiway leading from the perimeter track to the runway in use. While holding off, a wingtip hit the rear of a parked car, the glider groundlooped and came to rest on the runway threshold piano key markings. The impact creased the wing near the inboard end of the aileron and removed the wingtip. The car was also damaged. Daily operations had originally been set up using a different runway. As the thresholds for the original runway and the accident runway are adjacent, members' cars were parked on the grass to the side of the narrower taxiway leading to the accident runway. The report points out that failure to move the parked cars after switching runways was a contributory factor.					
158	T-61	minor	18/09/22, 13:05	minor/minor	10,000
Canopy detached in flight. Canopy security had been checked before taking off as well as during the HASSELL check immediately prior to conducting a stall exercise. It had been noticed that the canopy was a poor fit with a noticeable gap on the starboard side. The canopy detached while stalled with full left rudder. Both pilots had minor cuts and bruises to the face but the P1 was able to land safely on the airfield.					
159	ASW 20	substantial	16/09/22, 14:05	minor	298
Heavy landing following low-level winch launch failure. At about 10-20ft agl the cable detached from the glider. The pilot responded by moving the stick forward to maintain speed but there was insufficient energy to round out and the glider landed heavily in a flat attitude. The pilot suffered a compression fracture of a vertebra and the glider had cracks in the underside of the fuselage. No fault could be found in either the winch hook or the cable rings after the accident. The pilot cannot recall monitoring the airspeed during the rotation so cannot be sure that a safe speed for the attitude had been reached. The report points out that the windsock was varying immediately prior to the launch in the gusting wind and a lull in the wind may have contributed to the loss of energy during the launch failure.					
161	ASW 24	substantial	20/09/22, 14:45	none	546
Wheel-up landing on hard runway. Unable to soar, the pilot returned to the airfield from downwind. Instead of flying to a high key area and starting a normal circuit the pilot chose to fly a straight in approach from about 1,000ft agl and in doing so omitted his usual pre-landing checks. The structure of the underside of the club glider was worn down to the inner layers of fibreglass. The CFI suggests installing undercarriage warning devices in club gliders, as well as greater emphasis in training pre-landing checks.					

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AIRCRAFT Ref	Type	Damage	Date, time	PILOT Injury	P1 hours
Incidents					
133	Grob Astir	none	10/07/22, 12:20	none	4
Wheel-up landing. Finding only sink after a winch launch the pilot became distracted at having to fly a slightly non-standard circuit and omitted the pre-landing checks. The club safety officer suggested that it would be better to leave the wheel down after launch until finding some lift.					
134	K-13	minor	13/08/22, 09:30	-	-
A wingtip hit the side of a container while the glider was being removed from the hangar. The minor dent to the glass fibre tip was fixed the same day.					
138	DG-505	minor	26/08/22, 17:15	-	-
A wingtip hit the side of a building while the glider was being towed back to the hangar, causing minor damage.					
140	K-21	none	31/08/22, 14:00	-	-
Low-level near tug upset. The tow pilot reports the tug nose pitching down at about 60ft agl at which point the pilot pulled the release and was able to recover control and fly a circuit. The glider P2 had been attempting aerotow take-offs in previous lessons and after a careful briefing the P1 allowed the student to attempt another take-off. The ground run was well handled but soon after taking off the P2 started to overcontrol in pitch, resulting in the glider rising sharply. By the time the P1 took control the tug had already released. The glider P1 was unsure of whether they would be able to land ahead in the available room so turned the glider and landed safely in an adjacent field.					
144	K-13	none	10/08/22, 16:00	none/none	1623
Training flight flown with the rudder lock still in place.					
147	Shark	none	05/09/22, 16:00	none	2690
Undercarriage retracted during landing ground run. The report describes the over centre locking mechanism as becoming "very weak"; adjustments were made to the linkage that improved the operation.					
149	EuroFOX	none	28/08/22, 15:30	none	2120
Engine began to run roughly at 1,300ft agl during a tow. After the glider pulled off, the pilot was able to glide back to a safe landing. Later inspection revealed a likely worsening detonation issue in one cylinder potentially leading to piston failure. The club replaced the engine with a spare.					
151	Cirrus	minor	29/08/22, 14:15	none	392
Trailing edge of aileron damaged after hitting metal post. The pilot was towing his glider behind his car, keeping a close eye on gliders on final to land to his right when the starboard aileron hit a post protecting the club's fixed LPG tank. The CFI points out that it would have been better to stop moving when an aircraft is on approach.					
152	Mini Nimbus	none	11/09/22, -	none	487
The pilot noticed that the trim system was not working during an aerotow. The glider remained controllable and the pilot was able to land safely. An inspection revealed that one of the trim springs beneath the seat pan had detached from the trim mechanism.					
155	K-6	none	27/07/22, 14:30	none	26
Winch launch near cartwheel. The starboard wing went to ground early in the ground run. The glider yawed to the right before taking off into a nose high, port wing high attitude. The pilot reports considerable difficulty releasing, possibly due to the side loads on the winch hook, but fortunately the winch driver closed the throttle on seeing the glider rearing up. The pilot was able to level the wings and lower the nose but the glider landed heavily before groundlooping. The wing holder reports not feeling any downward force on the wingtip before it left his hand; the wind was light and variable with the occasional tailwind component.					
160	ASH 26	minor	16/09/22, 18:15	-	-
Ground towing incident. The pilot was towing the glider behind his car back to the hangar. While turning right on to the taxiway the starboard wing of the glider caught in an overgrown gorse bush. The car was travelling at sufficient speed that the glider broke free from the towbar, allowing the port wing to strike the back of the car, damaging the aileron. The overgrown gorse bush, tiredness after a five-hour flight and the fact that the starboard wingtip was not in view in the mirror while turning were all cited as factors. The club have asked the airfield operator to trim back the gorse bush.					

During BGA Club Safety Officer seminars it was proposed that, to further encourage reporting, it would be a good idea to remove site names from summaries. This has been reflected in the summaries on these pages. Edward Lockhart continues to provide a little extra detail, where available, in these listings. We would also like to publish (anonymously) your stories of particular flights that have taught you a valuable flying lesson. Please send details to editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk or by post to the address on p3.