

BGA accident/incident summaries

AIRCRAFT		Damage	Date, time	PILOT	
Ref	Type			Injury	P1 hours
93	DG-300	minor	05/06/24, 12:35	none	41
Wingtip picked up cable during winch launch. The launchpoint configuration was different from usual to allow the cable retrieve vehicle to avoid soft ground. The glider was attached to the first cable with the remaining three cables under or near the left wing. During the launch the left wing went down and picked up the outermost (Dyneema) cable. The pilot was unaware of this and continue the launch to 500ft ato, the usual height to drop on to the local ridge. A call was made to the winch driver to cut the cable but this only happened after the glider released. There was some superficial damage to the gel coat on the wing and fin. The launch marshal was advised by an instructor not to stop the launch after it had started as that might present an equal danger. The club intend to clarify whether or not to stop a launch with their launch marshals. The report also suggests more thorough assessment of potential threats of any abnormal launchpoint configuration.					
94	Grob 109	minor	29/07/24, 11:20	none/none	1,616
Propeller strike. After landing with a considerable crosswind component the glider started to yaw off the runway. The pilot attempted to correct this using differential braking but the TMG left the runway onto rough ground before hitting a rut at a fast walking pace. The tail lifted and the propeller broke when it hit the ground. The pilot reports that his foot was not high enough on the pedal to reach the toe brake.					
96	SZD Puchacz	minor	28/07/24, 13:20	none/none	4,907
Slow speed collision with parked glider. After a simulated aerotow failure, the P2 touched down successfully on the reciprocal direction of the take-off runway. The P1 took control, intending to extend the ground run to avoid delaying other launches. The ground run extended further than the P1 expected and the wing of the Puchacz struck the wing of a parked glider at slow speed. The other glider was undamaged but the Puchacz wing had a few inches of leading edge damage.					
97	LAK 17	minor	03/08/24, not reported	none	3,698
Wheel-up landing. During the pre-landing checks the pilot discovered that the wheel could not be lowered, despite several attempts. The pilot landed on a tiled surface adjacent to the runway causing minor damage to the underside paint. With the fuselage in the workshop the pilot was able to lower the undercarriage only with the help of a syndicate partner pulling hard on the wheel. Further investigation revealed an apparent fouling between the fuselage structure and undercarriage arm.					
98	Silent 2	substantial	04/08/24, 17:00	none	2,700
Competition field landing groundloop. It was only while rounding out that the pilot realised that the grass was taller than expected. The fuselage was cracked about 1m behind the wing root during the groundloop.					
100	Grob Astir	substantial	09/08/24, 15:35	none	5
Heavy landing damaged undercarriage. The pilot reports adjusting the trim at about 300ft ato on an aerotow when some turbulence was encountered and the rope released from the glider. The pilot was able to land downwind on the runway but with extra energy, resulting in a bounce. The pilot closed the airbrakes and adjusted the attitude before re-opening the airbrakes. The hard landing damaged the undercarriage frame and gear doors.					
101	Grob Astir	substantial	07/08/24, not reported	none	4
Undershot landing hit hedge. The pilot had successfully flown a check flight earlier in the day which ended in a simulated winch launch failure. The wind picked up throughout the day, reaching 20kts at the time of the accident. After clipping the boundary hedge the glider yawed through 180° before coming to rest. The tailplane fixtures were damaged during the landing. The CFI's report highlights the importance of talking through TEM before a solo flight by such a low-airtime pilot.					
104	Dimona	minor	04/08/24, 15:15	none	403
Canopy came open during take-off ground run. The pilot had positioned the TMG ready for an aerotow launch before shutting down. As the glider prepared, the tug pilot did the pre-flight checks up to and not including closing and locking the canopy before engine start. An instructor approached the pilot to discuss another student after which the glider was ready to launch. The tug pilot reports closing the canopy before starting the engine and lining up. As the tug accelerated after "all out" the canopy came open, damaging a bracket in the open/close mechanism. The pilot reports probably not fully securing the canopy, citing tiredness, familiarity and the distraction of the other instructor as possible factors.					
108	Grob Twin Astir	minor	17/08/24, 11:10	none/none	752
Front canopy came open during BI flight. The P1 had released at 2,000ft ato and climbed to 3,000ft before demonstrating the effects of controls to the P2. While entering a turn, the front canopy opened so the P1 took control and asked the P2 to close the canopy. The P2 was unable to lock the canopy as the hinges had been pulled out of the fuselage. The P1 subsequently landed safely. The report is unsure whether the canopy was not properly locked before take-off or whether the P2 inadvertently unlatched it. It recommends reminding passengers to take extra care to avoid the canopy release in flight, as well as confirming that the canopy is locked before taking off.					

BGA accident/incident summaries *continued*

AIRCRAFT		Damage	Date, time	PILOT Injury	P1 hours
Ref	Type				
109	Ventus 3	substantial	09/08/24, 19:10	minor	3,603
Landing accident. While turning onto final approach at about 600ft aal at the recommended approach speed (yellow triangle) in a gentle bank a wing started to drop. The pilot reports probably applying some opposite aileron at which point the glider entered a spin. The pilot recovered at about 130ft agl but was now committed to landing off the airfield into the field immediately in front. The field was short and despite rolling up a 6ft bank the glider went through a barbed wire fence before stopping 30m after the fence. The pilot had some aches and bruises to the back which faded after a few days. Both wings and spars were broken in two at the airbrake box with further damage to the wingtips. The canopy was broken, the undercarriage frame bent and the fuselage was damaged under the nose and above the wing root. The pilot reports setting the flaps to the landing setting before turning final and that in this setting the nose is relatively high and there is little airflow nose, possibly masking symptoms of an approaching stall. The pilot discussed the event with an experienced instructor and 18m Class pilot, who recommended that the pilot leave the flaps at +2 in the circuit, saving the landing setting until wings level on final approach.					
112	DG-300	substantial	23/08/24, 15:55	none	93
Competition field landing accident. The pilot had two fields in mind but, on closer inspection, had to reject both because of stock and wires. The pilot was able to select a pasture field but after touching down realised that the glider would not stop in time. The pilot groundlooped the glider, breaking the tail boom about 1m in front of the fin. Analysis of the flight trace suggests that the approach may have been flown too fast and that the glider touched down halfway into the field.					
113	Grob 109	destroyed	27/08/24, 16:45	minor/serious	not reported
Undershot landing. After a short local flight the TMG undershot the approach, hitting a tree and ending up on an A road. The starboard wing broke off, the tail boom broke and the undercarriage legs broke. The P1 had some internal bruising, the P2's lower back injuries may have required corrective surgery. Currently being investigated by the AAIB.					
114	Grob Astir	minor	28/08/24, 13:35	none	not reported
Broken undercarriage. The pilot retracted the wheel after the launch but the mechanism did not feel as usual. He then lowered the wheel, again noting that it felt unusual, before asking the launchpoint if the undercarriage was down. They replied that it appeared to be. After a successful landing it was seen that a part of the undercarriage frame had broken.					
Incidents					
92	—	—	24/07/24, 17:45	minor	—
Friction burn and cuts. The launchpoint was moved but the cables were retrieved to the old position. The retrieve vehicle was used to tow one cable to the new launchpoint but the vehicle set off at speed, knocking over a helper. The Dyneema cable scraped along the helper's hand, causing the friction burns and cuts. Club advice is to pull cables across to the new launchpoint by hand, not the retrieve vehicle.					
95	—	—	08/06/24, —	—/—	—
Potential near miss between light aircraft taking off and car. The glider trailer park was on the edge of an old runway some distance from the gliding clubhouse; the aircraft was taking off from a narrow hard surface that converged with the old runway after about 550m, roughly where the trailer park ended. The taildragger light aircraft performed an all round look before lining up on the hard surface and starting the take-off run. It was only after raising the tail that the pilot saw the car ahead. The pilot had just enough airspeed to take-off before accelerating and climbing away. The car driver reports approaching the trailer park from the other end of the airfield and, after rounding the first of the trailers, saw the aircraft taking off so turned back towards the trailer park without actually encroaching on the hard surface used by the aircraft taking off.					
99	Grob Astir	none	31/07/24, 15:40	none	390
Wheel-up landing on grass with no damage to the glider. The pilot was unable to soar after a winch launch, joined late downwind and was focused on landing long but omitted any "wheel down and locked" check.					
102	SZD Junior	none	26/07/24, 14:00	none	750+
Incorrect elevator control rod connection. During the pre-flight ABCDE checks, the pilot noticed that the elevator connection seemed not to be seated correctly in the guide sleeve; a quick physical check immediately disconnected the elevator. The report suggests that the connection may have been insecure for nearly a month, through seven DIs and several pre-flight checks. The CFI has made pilots aware of the issue and advised a suitable way to perform a physical check of the connection without disrupting a previously secure connection.					

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BGA accident/incident summaries *continued*

AIRCRAFT		Damage	Date, time	PILOT	
Ref	Type			Injury	P1 hours
103	K-21	none	28/07/24, 16:00	none/none	—
Delayed spin recovery. Both P1 and P2 were instructors, the purpose of the flight was for the P2 to become familiar with the K-21's spin characteristics and recovery actions. The first spin was from a wings-level stall, the P2 held the spin for almost two turns and the recovery was immediate. The second spin from a similar entry was held for three turns for the P2 to patter the spin before recovery was attempted. After two and a half further turns the P1 took control, confirming that the P2 was using the correct recovery technique. The P1 then re-applied in spin rudder with the ailerons neutral and the stick fully aft before again applying spin recovery control. The glider then recovered from the spin without delay. The total height loss was 1,900ft. The pilots weighed themselves with parachutes after the flight, the front seat P1 was 2kg heavier than estimated, the P2 exactly as estimated pre-flight and within the limits for the amount of tail ballast used. The P1 recommended that the glider control deflections should be checked and the glider re-weighted before being used for spin training again.					
105	K-13	none	11/08/24, 16:20	none/none	797
Near miss between glider and landing PA25 tug. The glider P1 reports rounding out at the end of a BI flight before noticing the tug passing less than 20m away from the cockpit on the starboard side. The tug pilot reports making a downwind call, being told that the tug should stand down and not seeing the glider at all. The tug had flown a curved approach from a right hand circuit, the raised port wing and long nose likely obscuring any view of the glider. The glider P1 reports that the glider battery was flat meaning that neither the radio nor the FLARM were working. The CFI has instructed that an inoperative radio or FLARM should ground the glider until the battery has been replaced, as well as reminding both tug and glider pilots that an all round lookout is important in the circuit.					
106	Pegase	substantial	31/07/24, 16:30	minor	not reported
Glider towed into car. The club retrieve tractor towed the glider to its parking area, the pilot reached in to the cockpit not to release the glider but to turn off a navigation device. After a few seconds the tractor moved off without the driver checking that the glider had been released. The pilot was knocked over and bruised, the glider was towed until it hit a car wheel, causing structural damage to the wing. The CFI's report emphasises the importance of retrieve drivers coiling and stowing tow ropes before moving off, thus ensuring that the glider has been released.					
107	K-21	minor	12/08/24, 19:55	none/none	1,707
Ground handling damage. The K-21 was stationary in the launch queue when a Grob 102 was being towed into the launch queue after landing and was perpendicular to the queue. The retrieve buggy lurched forward slightly and the Grob wingtip hit the K-21 rudder, denting the skin and the rudder end stop. The DCFI reminded the buggy driver to not tow gliders close to other gliders, suggesting instead to stop short and manually pull gliders into line.					
110	Arcus	none	17/08/24, 18:00	none/none	8,017
Turbo engine failure during flight. The rpm gradually reduced from the normal 6,000rpm to 4,000rpm after the engine had been running for about nine minutes. The glider stopped climbing and started descending but the pilot was able find some lift and return to the airfield after stopping the engine. Investigation revealed that a piston ring had disintegrated, damaging the piston, barrel and cylinder head. The engine had run for 22 hours total in 187 cycles since new in 2010.					
111	K-21	none	26/07/24, —	—/—	—
Near collision with club member walking across landing area. The member reports looking out before starting to cross the landing area but then failing to continue looking while crossing. It was only after hearing the K-21 touching down after an air experience flight that the member noticed the glider and dropped to the ground before the wing passed over him. A witness reported that the glider may have been as close as 10ft to the member by the time he was on the ground.					
115	Silent 2	none	11/08/24, 13:05	none	37
Aerotow ground run wingdrop. The pilot tried to correct with full rudder and aileron but the glider continued to diverge to the right of the tug. The pilot attempted to release but although pulling hard the glider initially remained attached before eventually releasing. After the incident the hook was tested with a sideload but did not release easily. The report notes the low wingtip clearance and tendency for the wing to drop in the aerotow propwash. It also recommends that the release knob be changed to a T-handle to provide extra grip. The pilot reports using the flap 0 setting to avoid having to adjust the setting before taking off but that other users prefer to use flap -1 or -2 at the start of the ground run, adjusting the flap setting during the ground run.					
116	ASW 19	none	29/08/24, 11:40	none	380
Wheel-up landing. The pilot winch launched into ridge lift but the lift proved to be not enough to sustain height. After a few beats and down to 350ft the pilot elected to make a quick landing but omitted to lower the wheel.					

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.