

BGA accident/incident summaries

AIRCRAFT		Damage	Date, time	PILOT	
Ref	Type			Injury	P1 hours
27	Junior	minor	28/01/23, 14:15	none	3
Wingtip hit runway light. After some check flights, the pilot was cleared to fly the Junior, a glider he had flown before, and was briefed to land on the grass to the right of the runway in use. The wind was calm and the pilot was distracted by another glider in the landing area, leading to him being high at the low key area which he attempted to correct using the airbrakes. Despite using full airbrake on final approach and full wheel brake after touching down the glider landed long, overrunning a cross runway. Although he was able to avoid the cross runway approach lights a wingtip struck a runway light, breaking it and scuffing the wing leading edge. The CFI points out that the pilot's desire to land where briefed for operational reasons overrode the pilot's instincts to choose a safer landing area.					
33	Perkoz	minor	05/02/23, 11:00	none/none	512
Overshot landing. The windsock indicated that the surface wind had changed direction so the instructor and handling P2 agreed to fly a circuit and landing to R09, having taken off from R27. The P2 reports being slightly too high at the start of the circuit but planned to extend the downwind leg. The CFI reports that the IGC file showed the glider drifting towards the airfield during the downwind leg, then turning on to the diagonal leg prematurely. Despite full airbrake the glider was too high so the P1 took control and landed in a nearby field. The only damage was cosmetic cracks to an aileron drive fairing when the P1 groundlooped the glider to avoid a fence.					
35	K-21	minor	25/02/23, –	none/none	770
Heavy landing. The briefed approach speed was around 60 knots for the P2's third and last flight into the 15-20 knot wind. At about 50ft agl the speed had reduced below 55 knots so the P1 prompted the P2 to regain speed. The P2 lowered the nose and regained speed but there was now little height or time to roundout fully. The glider landed heavily, damaging the wheel fairing. The CFI points out that at that height the P1 should have taken control.					
36	PW6	substantial	26/02/23, 12:35	none/none	~4760
Hit tree branch on approach. On approach at the end of an introductory flight the P1 was concentrating on avoiding a K-13 already in the landing area and failed to notice that he was getting low. The glider hit the top of a tree, damaging the port wing leading edge, breaking a DV panel as well as splitting and cracking the leading edge of the port tailplane.					
40	Grob 102	substantial	25/02/23, 16:00	none	755
Unlatched canopy. Mindful of the fresh wind the P1 closed the canopy before starting the pre-flight checks. Once the checks were finished the cable was attached and the glider launched. The canopy came open at about 500ft, shattering the canopy and damaging the gel coat on the leading edge of the wing but the pilot was able to land safely. The pilot points out that they obviously failed to lock the canopy, the CFI mentions that there is no point running through the pre-flight checks without carrying out the associated actions.					
43	Grob 109	substantial	12/03/23, 14:00	none/none	20,000+
Prop strike. The flight was to be a refresher for the P2, having not flown a TMG for six months until the previous day. The pre-flight briefing covered take-off abort criteria but not the actions to take if the take-off was aborted. At about 20 knots during the take-off ground run the P1 called for an emergency stop. The P2 assumed that it was a genuine emergency and applied the toe brakes as well as closing the throttle. Despite the stick being held fully aft, at slow speed the tail lifted and the propeller hit the ground, removing about a third from each blade. The CFI points out that carrying out the exercise without first briefing the actions to be taken and discussing TEM aspects of the exercise was inappropriate.					
Incidents					
20	K-21	none	04/12/22, 13:00	–	2
Cable failed to release at top of winch launch. The pilot reports the airspeed increasing and being surprised at reaching the top of the launch about 300ft lower than his previous launches. The nose started to point down, the pilot believes that he pulled the release but maybe not hard enough. The winch driver reports that the climb angle at the top of the launch seemed a little shallow and then cutting the cable as the glider started to turn. The pilot was unaware that the cable was still attached until informed over the radio, at which point he released the cable and landed safely. The glider was taken out of service to have the release system inspected. The report does not reach any conclusion but a fast, shallow climb, difficulty releasing and failure to back release are all symptoms of being winch launched on the aerotow hook.					
21	K-13	none	29/12/22, 09:30	–	–
During the DI it was noticed that there was some excess play in the wings. An inspector tightened the main pin bolts and then had to pump up the flat tyre and tighten the bolts holding both instrument panels. The glider had been rigged after its annual and released to service only eight days previously.					
22	K-13	minor	29/12/22, 09:00	–	–
Hangar damage. A helper lifted a wingtip allowing the trailing edge of the other wing to hit an obstruction, damaging two ribs. The helper said that he had heard an instruction which he interpreted to mean to raise the wing. The safety officer points out the need for clear and unambiguous instructions as well as briefing helpers before the glider is moved.					

BGA accident/incident summaries *continued*

AIRCRAFT					PILOT
Ref	Type	Damage	Date, time	Injury	P1 hours
23	—	—	29/12/22, 12:00	—	—
A winch strop was used to launch two gliders before it was noticed that there was no weak link attached. One end had the usual ring to attach to a glider, the other a ring with a flat that would normally be attached to the missing weak link assembly.					
24	Puchacz	none	17/12/22, 12:00	none	103
Front seat control column misrigged. For the first flight after the annual the front seat P1 did not have to touch the controls and did not notice anything unusual. After the second flight a different front seat pilot reported that the position of the stick did not feel right. An investigation found that the stick had been removed during the annual and subsequently re-attached 180° out.					
25	—	—	18/01/23, 12:55	—	—
Wingtip holder slipped and fell during an aerotow launch. The ground was still hard after an overnight frost and the helper broke a collarbone after landing on his shoulder.					
26	K-21	none	22/01/23, 15:00	—	—
During the pre-flight checks a control restriction was noticed. After removing the seat pan, a 150mm x 10mm x 10mm piece of wood was discovered next to the control run under the seat. The glider was taken out of service to be inspected for any other foreign objects.					
28	SF 25c	not reported	23/01/23, —	—	—
During the DI some oil was added but could not be seen on the dipstick. Advice was sought and an inspector noted that the propeller was easier to turn over than usual and that the usual oil gurgle had not happened after a couple of minutes. The oil was checked again and found to be over full, the CHT probe was also noticed to have detached and was hanging loose. Consultation with a Rotax service agent suggested that the engine had been overheated, melting the probe housing and damaging the cylinder heads, leading to low compression. It was then discovered that there was no coolant in the engine. A pilot who had flown the TMG the previous day had noted that the CHT gauge was reading oddly and made a note in the aircraft log sheet but took no further action. He later stated that he used the oil temperature as a proxy for the cylinder head temperature; the report points out that although the engine is air cooled the cylinder heads are water cooled and the absence of cylinder head cooling would not be reflected in the oil temperature. All four cylinder heads were found to be damaged and needed replacement. The club intend to change their aircraft fault reporting system, improve TMG DI procedures and train pilots in the Rotax cooling system.					
29	EuroFOX	minor	31/01/23, 14:45	none	>4,200
Wingtip hit parked car. After refuelling, the pilot started the engine with both feet on the brake bars above the rudder pedals. The tug started to move forward and swing to the left, despite the pilot firmly pressing both brake actuating bars. The pilot was able to cut the engine but the tug's momentum continued the swing until the wingtip struck a car parked on the perimeter track adjacent to the refuelling area. The paint on the wingtip was only scuffed but the car's rear quarter window was cracked. The pilot's right foot had been resting an airframe tube next to the rudder pedal as well as the brake bar, obstructing any brake application.					
30	K-21	—	21/01/23, —	—	—
During the DI the rear seat headrest was found behind the wing spars, resting on the control rods.					
31	PA 25	minor	28/01/23, 14:30	none	1485
Fractured tail wheel leaf spring. While taxiing back to the launchpoint the pilot felt a thump from behind and the tug started yawing. After switching off the engine the fractured spring was discovered, fortunately the aerotow release protected the fin and rudder from damage. A fatigue fracture was found through the two lower springs under the clamp that holds them to the other two upper leaf springs and wouldn't be visible during a DI.					
32	Grob 109	none	12/02/23, 09:00	none/none	850
Fuel starvation on approach. The P1 had dipped the fuel tank before the flight and assessed that there was enough fuel for 90 minutes, enough for the planned one hour sortie. There was no fuel available to top up the tank. The old aluminium dipstick was hard to read, especially in the early morning light, and the black paint had come off. In one area the paint had left a smudge which the pilot had misinterpreted as the current fuel level. The club have replaced the dipstick with a more user-friendly version.					
34	K-13	none	08/02/23, 13:45	none/none	829
Bird strike with buzzard on final approach. The glider was undamaged but some blood spatter was found on the leading edge of the port wing.					
37	n/a	n/a	26/02/23, 15:30	serious	—
The launchpoint minibus was being driven back to the hangar, in first gear, when it skidded sideways on the grass, pinning a club member between the bus and a shipping container. The member was taken to hospital by ambulance with possible fractures to an arm, shoulder and upper spine.					

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BGA accident/incident summaries *continued*

AIRCRAFT		Damage	Date, time	PILOT Injury	P1 hours
Ref	Type				
38	LS8	minor	18/02/23, 15:30	—	481
Tow-out gear incident. The driver maintained a steady slow speed while towing down a slope and slowed further when he saw the wingtip with the dolly attached bounce up, possibly due to a rut or rabbit hole. He then noticed the tailplane passing down the left side of his car until the trailing edge of the left wing hit the back of the car. The trailing edge was damaged, as was the rear of the car. The tow bar was of the type that hooks over the extended tail dolly wheel axle, with the glider's tail wheel resting in a channel fixed to the top of the tow bar. The driver reports that the tow bar to tail dolly connection was very loose and believes that the bar had disconnected from the dolly, allowing the glider to continue downhill.					
39	DG-500	none	28/01/23, 13:10	none/none	258
Wheel-up landing on wet grass. The P1 was distracted by a radio call while on the downwind leg and forgot to put the wheel down.					
41	Grob Acro	none	02/03/23, —	—	—
After rigging the glider following its annual inspection the owners discovered a rag wrapped around the airbrake drive rod inside the starboard airbrake box. The club intend to verify that the maintenance organisation will adopt procedures to prevent this happening again.					
42	Astir	none	not reported	—	none 820
Wheel-up landing. During a practice winch launch failure at altitude the undercarriage lever came out of its detent. The pilot latched the lever again but believes that they may have mistakenly lowered the wheel and then subsequently raised it as part of the pre-landing checks. The club intend to remind pilots to visually check the lever position against the placards during pre-landing checks.					
44	Janus	none	08/03/23, —	none/none	—
Elevator control obstruction. After practising stall recoveries it was noticed that up elevator control movement was limited. The glider was able to land safely and measurement of elevator travel revealed that up elevator movement was only a quarter of the normal range. Borescope inspection found a 3cm x 2cm x 2cm lump of cured resin resting below the elevator bellcrank at the base of the fin, restricting elevator movement. The lump was removed with the aid of a strong vacuum cleaner and adapted attachments. The report speculates that the lump was originally part of a support that fell off before being fully cured, then adhering to the fuselage during the build process before eventually becoming dislodged.					

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.



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