

BGA accident/incident summaries

AIRCRAFT		Damage	Date, time	PILOT	
Ref	Type			Injury	P1 hours
27	SF25C	minor	15/02/26, 12:25	none/none	760
Rough running engine. The TMG had just come out of maintenance to renew the ARC and a routine replacement of engine hoses. The engine had been run twice on the ground and the aircraft was then prepared for a post-maintenance check flight. At 500ft ato and still overhead the airfield the engine began to run roughly, the pilot chose to reduce power and immediately turned into an abbreviated circuit. Before touching down the engine began emitting oil smoke. An inspection revealed that a cylinder piston ring had failed, allowing oil to detonate in the cylinder, raising the temperature and melting the spark plug electrode, as well as emitting burnt oil smoke from the exhaust. The club do not believe that the failure was related to any of the recent maintenance activity.					
30	Discus	minor	14/02/26, 12:50	minor/—	128
Heavy landing. The pilot turned on to final approach, picked a reference point and then opened the airbrakes. The pilot then assessed that he was undershooting so held the airbrakes almost closed for most of the rest of the approach. His last recollection of the approach speed was just above the selected minimum and when nearing the airfield the pilot increased the airbrakes before rounding out. The glider landed just short of the perimeter track and bounced slightly. The pilot reports that the tail wheel may have struck the edge of the perimeter track. An inspection revealed gelcoat damage in front of the tail wheel and that further investigation is necessary. The pilot reports that his energy management in both height and speed, exacerbated by increasing the airbrakes before rounding out, led to the heavy landing. The landing left the pilot with some back pain. The CFI reports seeing the glider making a low approach but a crest in the airfield obscured his view of the round out and landing. It was only after speaking to the pilot some 30 minutes later that he was aware of the landing. The glider had already been de-rigged in preparation for its annual so the CFI went to look at the impact point, finding indications of a touchdown before the peri-track and subsequent bounce with the tail dragging through the track edge. He suggests that this was a classic undershooting approach with the pilot sacrificing airspeed to maintain the correct approach picture.					
34	K-21	minor	21/02/26, 10:50	none/none	1,405
Undershot landing. The low airtime P2 was receiving a check flight and flew most of the flight to an acceptable standard. The P2 turned on to final approach a little far back in the moderate to fresh wind but also slightly high. Initially the P2 waited to open the airbrakes; after opening them realised that an undershoot was developing so closed the airbrakes again. The P1 praised the P2's judgement. At about 50ft agl the airspeed started to decay so the P1 verbally prompted the P2 who then lowered the nose but also opened the airbrakes fully. Despite taking control and shutting the airbrakes the P1 was unable to prevent the glider landing on the perimeter track with the tail wheel striking the outer lip of the track. The tail wheel was split and the tail wheel bolt sheared. The P1 reports being over-confident in the P2's abilities leading to a late take-over of control.					
36	K-21	minor	26/03/26, 13:40	none/none	1,043
Nose first landing. The approach was flown at a higher than usual airspeed for the 7G10kt wind. Witnesses report that the glider bounced after the initial touchdown and the P2 then opened full airbrake and lowered the nose. The subsequent impact left a two-metre long by 85mm deep trench with mud filling the nose hook and surrounding the nose wheel. An inspection revealed damage to the plywood where the rudder pedals were mounted, some disbonding around the bulkhead and cracks where a seat pan was bonded to the aircraft shell. There was also discolouration in the epoxy flock on the underside of the wing spars where they bond to the wing shell.					
38	SF25C	minor	31/03/26, 10:00	none/—	435
Prop strike. The pilot was conducting power checks prior to flight. After advancing the throttle to about 80% power the TMG started to move. The pilot let go of the control column to reach for the spoiler handle to increase braking performance but the tail lifted allowing the propeller to hit the ground and removing about 50mm from each tip. The pilot's report acknowledges that reducing power should have been the first response to the TMG moving.					
41	Duo Discus	substantial	07/04/26, 14:45	none/none	2,242
Landing accident abroad. After landing normally, towards the end of the landing run, the pilot started to turn off the main runway towards a taxiway on the left. A gust from the right lifted the right wing and there was insufficient speed for full aileron to control it. The glider departed the runway to the left and struck a concrete kerb surrounding a hidden drain in the undergrowth, destroying the main wheel and undercarriage mechanism.					

Incidents

24	Grob Astir	none	01/01/26, 13:45	none/—	1,842
Wheel-up landing. After releasing at about 2,000ft ato the pilot deliberately left the wheel down while searching for lift. At about 1,000ft ato the pilot positioned to join the circuit to land, as briefed, near the hangar. The pilot carried out pre-landing checks on the base leg, mistakenly raising the undercarriage. While concentrating on looking out and planning the approach and landing the pilot omitted to visually check the undercarriage lever position so missed that the wheel had been raised. The glider was not damaged by the wheel-up landing on the grass landing area.					

BGA accident/incident summaries *continued*

AIRCRAFT Ref	Type	Damage	Date, time	PILOT Injury	P1 hours
25	Puchacz	none	10/01/26, 12:45	none/–	2,000
Landing in field adjacent to the gliding club. The grass airfield is about 115m wide with the launchpoint set up on the north side and landed gliders being retrieved on the south side. On this day, gliders were being retrieved in some places about half a wingspan in from the southern edge to avoid soft ground. Club SOPs are for landing gliders to land to the north of any gliders being retrieved or, if that's not possible, to land long. The flight trace shows the glider lining up the final approach and then landing in a long, narrow field immediately south of the airfield. The trace shows that at no time was the approach lined up with the airfield. The CFI's report notes that this has happened before, especially when the field surface is the same colour as the airfield. Fortunately, although the field surface is scattered with large flint stones, the glider was undamaged. The pilot reports being distracted by a glider being retrieved seemingly towards the centre of the field while avoiding the soft ground so choosing to land in the field. The CFI points out that there was plenty of room to land long.					
26	EuroFOX	minor	14/12/25, 14:30	–/–	–
Propeller blade struck by glider being ground towed. The tug was parked on the grass inside the perimeter track facing the club hangar; a car was parked outside the perimeter track near the club hangar. The crew towing the glider intended to tow it between the parked car and tug, the P1 had instructed the student to hold the wingtip as close to the car as possible. As the glider reached the tug the aircraft was seen to move slightly. The glider wingtip had struck the carbon fibre propeller blade causing delamination at the tip. The P1's report notes that the collision could have been avoided by waiting until either the car or tug had been moved.					
28	–	–	14/02/26, –	–/–	–
A life-expired parachute, marked "not for flight" and used only in the simulator, had mistakenly been placed in the launchpoint vehicle and was subsequently worn in flight. The club has now removed the chest strap to render it unusable and have asked the members for information as to how the parachute was placed in the launchpoint caravan.					
29	Discus	minor	07/03/26, 10:00	–/–	–
Hangar unpacking damage. An experienced member was being helped to extract the glider by two relatively inexperienced helpers. The tail dolly had been placed on the glider and one of the helpers was assigned to hold the left wingtip, the other to watch the right wingtip to assure clearance but not hold the tip while the more experienced member pushed from behind the wing. As the glider started to move the helper on the right wing began to hold the wingtip, the experienced member stopped pushing to remind the helper not to hold the wing. In the meantime, the helper on the left wing continued to pull the wingtip forward, yawing the glider and allowing the tailplane of the adjacent glider to strike the Discus rudder leaving a 75mm long gash. The club estimates the repair cost to be in the region of £6,000.					
31	Grob Astir	none	11/03/26, –	none/–	343
Wheel-up landing. The pilot winch launched to 1,200ft ato but was unable to find solid lift so eventually joined the circuit at the low key area. At the same time a K-13 joined higher up at the high key area. The pilot made the appropriate radio calls planning to land short and allow the K-13 to overfly and land long. Distracted by the other glider and aiming to land short the pilot omitted any pre-landing checks. The wheel-up landing on grass did not damage the glider other than leaving grass stains on the underside. The pilot cites the abbreviated circuit and distractions in the circuit for forgetting the pre-landing checks.					
32	DG-505	none	04/03/26, 12:30	none/none	261
Tug upset. At 2,200ft ato the tug started a descent on tow at the request of the glider P1. After a short descent the glider P1 radioed that the exercise was complete and the tug could resume climbing. The tug pilot began to open the throttle, the tug started climbing but soon afterwards the tug pilot felt the tug being jerked backwards. The pilot then saw the glider under tow off to the left and higher than the tug. The tug was again pulled back and rolled sharply on to its back, pointing at the ground. The tug pilot cut the rope and was able to recover to normal flight and land back on the airfield. The glider P1 reports that while resuming the climb the glider's airspeed increased and they caught up with the tug leading to a bow in the tow rope. Unable to control the bow, the tug upset happened when the rope came tight again. The club has given refresher training to all instructors and pilots in correct descent on tow techniques, including maintaining airbrakes open until the tug has resumed climbing.					
33	EuroFOX	none	15/02/26, 14:00	–/–	–
Aerotow rope broke after all out signal. The rope snapped at the rings at the glider end although the glider had barely moved. The tug pilot had inspected the rope at the start of the day and judged it serviceable. The club CFI inspected the rope shortly after the incident and reports that the internal fibres had worn far more than the exterior, thus hiding the damage. The CFI puts this down to a period of wet weather during which the club operated off the hard runway but the tug dropped the rope onto the rain-soaked grass next to the runway before landing. It's believed that the wet surface soaked into the rope, bringing in particles of mud which eroded the inner fibres. The CFI intends to replace all ropes annually going forward rather than relying on a visual check of condition.					

Continued on p58

BGA accident/incident summaries *continued*

AIRCRAFT		Damage	Date, time	PILOT Injury	P1 hours
Ref	Type				
35	—	minor	22/03/26, 12:40	—/—	—
Winch windscreen damaged. While pulling in the descending cable after a launch the cable started to drift back over the winch. When it became clear the cable might fail behind the winch, the winch was taken out of gear and the drum brake applied. However, the parachute and strop continued to fall behind the cab, whiplashed over the top of the cab and the shackle on the parachute smashed a small hole in the laminated rear windscreen. Although small shards of laminated glass entered the cab neither occupant was hurt. The report suggests that the wind had veered at height giving a slight tailwind component.					
37	K-21b	none	0/03/26, 16:05	none/none	—
Loose battery obstructed controls. The glider had recently been released to club flying following annual maintenance and a check flight. On this instructional flight a simulated winch launch failure was initiated, the P2 flew a successful recovery with minor negative G during which a loud 'clunk' was heard. After a normal landing it was discovered that the airbrakes could not be closed so the glider was towed to the maintenance hangar. The K-21b has self connecting controls so there is no fuselage hatch to help with internal inspection. After removing various cockpit pans and using a mirror and light to no avail the obstruction was eventually found using a camera, a battery obstructing an airbrake pushrod behind the wing spar box. The battery was marked as for workshop use only and was used when the fuselage was on the dolly with the wings removed. A subsequent full inspection found no further foreign objects. The report concludes that the battery had been left on the spar box and later fell on to the shelf behind the spars where it would have been unlikely to have been seen during a normal DI. The engineer's report mentions that the battery should have been removed as soon as it was unplugged, that a thorough foreign object search should be made before rigging the wings and that the battery should be added to the shadow board, as with other tools.					
39	K-21	none	04/04/26, 9:35	none/—	292
Loose ballast weight. The glider was flown once before being handed over to the next pilot. The next pilot discovered that an unseen 640-gram weight was attached to the forward part of the seat pan, not by the usual attachment bolt but instead caught on the edges of the hole surrounding the fixture thread. The weight had been obscured from casual view by the seat cushion. The report advises physical verification of the weight attachment area rather than relying on a visual check.					
40	Perkoz	none	21/03/26, —	none/none	2,000
On final approach during a trial lesson, one side of the P1's seatback became loose and slipped back. The P1 was able to retain control and landed safely. The P1 had adjusted the seatback prior to the flight but reports that the securing mechanism was stiff and hard to use; the report also notes time pressure for the P1 to prepare for flight. The CFI's report points out that the securing pins, particularly the second pin, can be hard to locate and may require the relevant side of the seatback to be wiggled slightly to ensure that the locking pin is correctly positioned in the socket rather than jammed against the side of the cockpit. It also notes that identifying whether the seatback had been secured may not have part of the pilot's type conversion. The club has colour marked the correct position for the seat secured indicator and has briefed its members on how to check that the seatback is properly secured.					

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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