

BGA accident/incident summaries

AIRCRAFT		Damage	Date, time	PILOT	
Ref	Type			Injury	P1 hours
44	K-21M	minor	24/04/24, 16:35	none	500+
Propeller brake stop damaged. After a check flight, which included two full propeller retract and extend cycles, the pilot flew a solo self-launch flight. Practising the retract and extend cycle again, on the second retraction the pilot cut the engine and allowed the propeller to slow while flying at less than 50kts. After pulling the propeller stop lever the pilot heard two distinct 'clunks'. The pilot could see in the mirror that the propeller was slightly offset from vertical and the propeller down indicator light remained unlit after retraction. The pilot decided to land with the propeller partially extended and later noted that the rubber propeller stop was missing and there were black rubber marks on the propeller tips.					
49	Jonker JS1	substantial	29/05/24, 14:40	minor	4,000
Competition field landing accident. On final approach at about 200ft agl the pilot started the jet sustainer. It started normally and ran up to flight idle but when the pilot selected full power there was no response. By now the glider was well down the selected landing field so, faced with trees at the end of the field, the pilot started a turn to the left. The glider entered a spin at about 50ft agl and hit the ground. After shutting down the engine the pilot walked away with only a slightly sprained ankle. The cockpit area was damaged, the fuselage broken aft of the wings, the tailplane broke into several pieces and the starboard wing was damaged.					
50	K-21	minor	27/05/24, not reported	none	5
PIO on landing. The watching duty instructor reports a well flown circuit ending in a half airbrake final approach. He saw the airbrakes close over the perimeter track before being reopened. The roundout was slightly late and the glider landed heavily on the main wheel. The glider bounced and, rather than select and hold the landing attitude, the pilot over-controlled in pitch. The next landing was on the nose and main wheels, leading to another bounce and subsequent bounced touchdowns. The nose wheel impact disbonded the front seat frame.					
53	unknown	unknown	25/05/24, 15:50	fatal	—
Mid-air between two gliders on short final. AAIB investigation.					
54	DG-303	minor	24/04/24, 13:55	none	112
Field landing in a ploughed field. The glider decelerated rapidly as the main wheel sunk into the soft surface up to the axle. The glider tipped forward, scratching the underside of the nose and the gel coat on a wingtip was also slightly chipped.					
56	Cirrus	minor	02/06/24, 12:15	none	22
Wheel-up landing. After a winch launch the pilot and another glider attempted to soar in weak thermals. The other pilot started the circuit, followed by the accident pilot a few minutes later. Concentrating on maintaining separation while flying a circuit to the single hard runway landing area, the pilot omitted to perform the pre-landing checks. The landing damaged the winch hook guards and scratched the gel coat under the nose.					
58	SZD Junior	minor	15/05/24, 13:35	none	369
Heavy landing following a low-level aerotow abort. The pilot reports pulling back on the stick to take off but climbing too high, too fast. He then pushed the stick forward but, seeing the slack in the rope, he pulled the release. Uncertain of being able to land ahead the pilot opened the airbrakes. The glider descended rapidly and landed hard. The impact disbonded the tailplane mounting bush and further damage was reported. The CFI notes that the pilot often adopted a nose down attitude during the ground run, needing a rearward stick movement to take off. The pilot was also light and even with full ballast was only a few Kg above the minimum. The rearward CofG may have led to greater pitch sensitivity. The club have changed the ballast arrangement for the pilot, bring the CofG further forward.					
60	Mini Nimbus	destroyed	05/06/24, 11:10	fatal	128
AAIB investigation.					
63	Lak 17	minor	08/06/24, 18:20	none	1,133
Groundloop on landing. While rounding out, the pilot noticed that the ground in front of the intended touchdown area sloped slightly. After touching down the glider yawed uncontrollably to the left. A section of the fin skin separated from the spar. The CFI reports that a section of the grass landing area for that runway has a left to right downward slope and that pilots are advised to land short or overfly that section.					
65	Vega	substantial	19/06/24,	minor	140
Field landing in crop. After local soaring for a while the pilot assessed that he was out of range of the airfield so started selecting potential landing fields. By 1,500ft agl the pilot had picked several 'least worst' fields, all of which contained crop. After flying a circuit he noticed while turning on to final approach that the field contained wires so switched to the neighbouring field. The pilot realised that the crop was high and despite landing wings level the glider groundlooped. The pilot strained his back, the glider tail wheel was damaged and the main pin securing the wings bent. The CFI reports that the glider may have been within safe gliding range of the airfield and has suggested more cross-country training.					

BGA accident/incident summaries *continued*

AIRCRAFT		Damage	Date, time	PILOT Injury	P1 hours
Ref	Type				
66	Nimbus 2	substantial	22/06/24, 18:00	minor	~300
Field landing accident. The flight started out with good lift but after a while, pushing into a 15kt head wind, climbs became harder to find. The pilot noticed a potentially landable field some 2,200ft below but continued to fly towards a more soarable looking area a short distance away. Still unable to contact good lift the pilot turned back to the potential landing field. From 900ft agl the pilot realised that the first part of the field was unlandable due to a significant slope. On turning on to final approach the pilot then noticed some wires across the field, one pole concealed behind a tree and another in the border fence line. The pilot assessed that the glider would not be able to clear the border trees and descend below the wires but would also not be able to overfly the wires and land due to the length of the field. The pilot closed the airbrakes and flew another turn, at the end of which he realised that he was likely to catch a wing in either the trees or the ground. He levelled the wings and continued to land, intending to catch a wing on a bordering fence post to avoid overrunning into the far hedge line. The pilot exacerbated an existing back injury in the impact. The glider's tail boom broke and the wing was damaged.					
68	Grob 109	substantial	12/06/24, 15:45	none/none	1,424
Heavy landing and prop strike. The P2 was a retired commercial pilot and ex FI(A) looking to learn to fly TMGs. The P1 flew the take-off and at a safe height the P2 was invited to take control. Unsurprisingly, the P2 had little trouble flying the TMG so, at the end of the flight, the P1 was happy to talk the P2 through the circuit. The P2 remained in control on final approach although the P1 operated the airbrakes from the left seat. The P1 tried to rescue the roundout by reducing the airbrake but could not prevent a hard landing damaging a propeller tip. The P1 acknowledges that being influenced by the P2's previous experience into allowing them to fly the landing was not wise.					

Incidents

45	K-21	none	21/05/24, 12:30	none/none	3310
Trial lesson field landing. The first two trial flights were completed successfully but after releasing from the tow on the third flight the cloud cover increased and cloudbase descended. The P1 felt that cloudbase was too low to return to the airfield so landed in a known safe field in the valley. The report points out that the club do a lot of trial flights but that self-imposed pressure to get them done needs to be avoided.					
46	EuroFOX	none	27/04/24, 10:55	none/none	432
Door came open during aerotow. At about 600ft ato the glider pilots noticed the tug descending so pulled the release before landing back on the airfield. After the tug landed the pilot reported that the door came open and that he was concerned that it may detach and damage the tailplane. The pilot was adamant that the door was closed and locked before the flight. The report points out that the EuroFOX can fly at up to 65kts with the door open.					
47	K-13	none	25/05/24, 13:00	none	<1
Crop field landing. After a check flight and a successful solo flight, the pilot took another winch launch. The pilot aborted the launch at about 400ft ato due to high airspeed, then turned downwind before deciding that the glider was too low to turn back into wind. The pilot opened the airbrakes and landed downwind in a crop field. The CFI was driving the winch and felt that the pilot could have landed ahead safely and has advised further winch launch failure training.					
48	PA 25	none	25/05/24, 12:15	none	290
Aerotow combination near miss with landed glider. While backtracking after landing the tug pilot noticed a glider landing and coming to a stop in a dip hidden from the launchpoint. By the time that the tug pilot had backtracked, entered the previous flight details into the tow log, waited for a winch launch and then lined up for the next aerotow, both the tug pilot and launchpoint controller had forgotten the glider in the dip and started the next aerotow. Soon after the tug became airborne it flew over the dip and saw the landed glider again. The combination flew over the glider at a height reported at between 10-25ft. The report mentions the club policy of either moving unseen landed gliders from under the aerotow path straight away or for the pilot to climb out of the dip and make themselves visible to the launchpoint. The pilot under tow reports that the landed glider would have been visible from the winch but that the club now used separate frequencies for winch and aerotow launches.					
51	EuroFOX	none	28/05/24, 11:10	none/none	46
Tug engine misfire. At about 50ft ato while passing over the airfield perimeter a puff of smoke was seen coming from the exhaust and the climb rate greatly reduced. Further puffs of smoke were seen and the tug pilot was asked to confirm that both magnetos were switched on and that the choke for the Rotax engine was off, which he did. The tug pilot flew a close in circuit and at about 150ft ato and at the downwind end of the airfield the pilot waved off the glider. Both aircraft landed safely on the airfield. Initial testing confirmed normal power output to start with followed by a progressive reduction in rpm. Later tests were unable to reproduce this but the fuel filter and some fuel lines were replaced and the engine subsequently ran normally.					

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BGA accident/incident summaries *continued*

AIRCRAFT				PILOT	
Ref	Type	Damage	Date, time	Injury	P1 hours
52	K-21	none	09/05/24, 17:15	none	<1
Heavy landing following low-level launch failure. The winch driver reports that on applying full power the engine started to accelerate but then began to misfire. The glider pilot felt the loss of power during the initial climb so pulled the release but, being so close to the ground, was reluctant to lower the nose leading to hard landing. The glider was declared serviceable after an inspection. The winch driver noted that the winch fuel tank was nearly empty but that he was able to slowly retrieve the cable. The tank had been half full at the start of the day and it was thought that this would be enough for the day. It was noted that although nearly empty the fuel gauge still read 10%. The club has decided that the winches should be fully fuelled before starting flying.					
55	K-6	none	25/05/24, 9:30	none	5,155
Airbrake came open during launch. The brakes functioned as normal during the pre-flight checks but the right airbrake came open during the aerotow ground run. The pilot carried on with the tow until releasing at a safe height and deploying both airbrakes before landing safely. The right airbrake was found to be unconnected and the report notes incomplete positive control checks before flight.					
57	EuroFOX	minor	02/06/24, 10:05	none	460
Tug taxied into car. The pilot was aware of the club tow vehicle in front of the tug while doing the DI. After completing the DI the pilot sat in the tug and spent several minutes doing the paperwork and then the pre-start checks. By then the pilot could see several gliders being towed out and that the area adjacent to the hangar was clear of gliders. The pilot thus assumed that the car had been moved so started the engine and moved off, hitting the car after a few seconds. The propeller and the underside of the cowling was damaged. The pilot notes the significant blind spot while looking ahead in the tailwheel tug and accepts that the blind spot should have been positively checked to be clear before moving.					
59	Grob Astir	none	25/05/24, 12:40	none	13
Wheel-up landing. After a relatively low aerotow the pilot followed another glider into the circuit. Distracted by the other glider's downwind radio call the pilot forgot to do any pre-landing checks. Thereafter the pilot concentrated on flying the circuit and maintaining separation before landing on grass with the wheel up. The glider was undamaged.					
61	PA 18	none	29/05/24, 18:30	none	--
The tug experienced a significant loss of power during the take-off ground run. The take-off was abandoned, the glider released and both aircraft were able to stop safely on the airfield. Investigation revealed that a strip of foam from the air intake filter had detached and partially blocked the carburettor venturi.					
62	DG-1000	none	05/07/24, 14:00	none/none	2,674
Undercarriage collapsed on landing. The club intends to have the glider inspected as this is not the first time this has happened to the glider.					
64	SF 25C	minor	04/06/24, --		
Hangar packing damage. The report suggests that the members involved may have been tired at the end of an intensive week-long course.					
67	Ventus	none	16/06/24, 13:05	none	846
Wheel-up landing. The pilot reports not retracting the undercarriage after releasing from the aerotow and then moving the lever during his pre-landing checks. The DCFI debriefed the pilot on the importance of not being distracted, identifying the correct lever and ensuring visually that it is in the correct position.					

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.

BGA PUBLICATIONS

A number of BGA publications, and gliding vouchers, can now be ordered at <https://britishgliding.myshopify.com/>

