

BGA accident/incident summaries

AIRCRAFT Ref	Type	Damage	Date, time	PILOT Injury	P1 hours
102	Duo Discus	substantial	25/06/22, 16:00	minor/none	926
Competition field landing accident. After launching in the fresh to strong breeze and an unstable airmass, the pilots elected not to do their usual engine check, partly because of the rough conditions but also because of the crowded sky. While flying on task the lift deteriorated and the pilots agreed to start the engine. The front seat P1 took control, selected a field and attempted to start the engine at about 1,000ft agl, when the engine didn't start he began a circuit into the chosen field. After turning final the picture initially looked OK but the additional drag of the extended pylon while flying into the strong breeze led to the glider sinking fast. The P1 remembers the glider brushing through the tops of the trees before crashing to the ground. The P2 was able to get out, the P1 remained in the glider until extracted by the emergency services and taken to hospital, fortunately with nothing worse than cuts and bruising. The glider fuselage broke in two places, the tailplane and canopy were also damaged. The P1 reports having never done a landing with the pylon extended due to fears that the pylon might be damaged during landing. Although the pilots declared a mayday on 121.5, this was subsequently cancelled by the emergency services due to them finding other gliders landing safely nearby.					
103	Grob 109	substantial	25/06/22, 12:10	none/none	1098
Heavy landing. As the pilot rounded out, the TMG dropped suddenly and hit the ground hard, tail wheel first. The pilot closed the airbrakes and went around, subsequently landing safely and taxiing off the runway. An inspection found that the tail wheel supporting wishbone had cracked and the internal wheel box had separated from the fuselage.					
104	K-6	substantial	28/06/22, 13:25	none	6
Landing groundloop. The glider was hit by a strong gust during the ground run, groundlooping the glider which then rolled into the perimeter fence. The tail and leading edge of one wing were damaged.					
106	Pegase	substantial	07/06/22, 15:50	minor	293
Lever confusion. The pilot was unable to find lift after a winch launch so returned to the airfield. Too low to return to the runway in use he set up an approach to an alternative runway in the light and variable wind. After pulling what he thought was the airbrake lever the pilot noticed that he was not losing height but put this down to flying into strong lift. Approaching the intersection with the runway in use the pilot turned and flew down that runway, ultimately turning again to fly down a third runway. It was only after completing a lap of the airfield and turning on to the original runway that the pilot realised that he had been holding the wrong lever. He locked the wheel down and opened the airbrakes but the glider overshot the runway, landing in crop in an adjacent field. One wing caught in the crop, turning the glider and leaving a crease in the wing ending in delamination at the trailing edge.					
107	Astir	minor	02/07/22, 16:00	none	not reported
Cracked canopy during a landing on bumpy ground.					
108	Pegase	substantial	21/06/22, 16:15	minor	315
Lever confusion. The pilot intended to make a hangar landing but on final approach moved the undercarriage lever instead of the airbrake lever. Realising that he was too high the pilot flew an orbit and set up another approach, sideslipping the glider as low as he dared before straightening up. Fearing that he would collide with a row of trailers the pilot forced the glider on to the ground, leading to a heavy, bounced wheel-up landing. The pilot had some bruising around his ribs and credits the energy absorbing cushion for preventing spine damage. The underside of the fuselage, rudder pedal attachment and canopy fixtures were all damaged.					
109	K-6	substantial	08/07/22, 11:30	none	17
Aerotow launch failure. The tow rope dropped away from the glider soon after taking off, just as the combination approached the airfield boundary. Too low to turn back, the glider pilot had no choice but to land straight ahead into a crop field. The high wings were just high enough to clear the crop but the low tailplane and mounting area was damaged when the starboard half of the tailplane was torn off. The rope connection had been checked after attachment and the pilot reports having made no deliberate action to release the towrope.					
110	ASW 24	minor	26/06/22, 11:30	none	647
Wheel-up field landing. The pilot reports concentrating on maintaining a safe airspeed in the strong and gusty wind; the GPS trace shows that the landing field was upwind of the last thermal turn so the pilot flew into wind before turning on to base leg, missing out the downwind and diagonal legs. Although the field was a cut hay field there was some damage to the underside of the fuselage.					
112	K-21	substantial	12/07/22, 16:20	none/none	not reported
Late roundout. While teaching the approach and landing the P1 had taken control on the previous flight. On this flight the P1 had made a few minor verbal prompts, the last of which was at the roundout stage. When the P2 failed to respond to this latter prompt the P1 took over and rounded out but in doing so the tail wheel hit the ground, damaging the wheel and gelcoat around the axle fixtures. This was the P1's 16th and last instructional flight of the day and the report suggests that the heat and fatigue of a long day may have led to the late takeover of control.					

BGA accident/incident summaries *continued*

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114	K-21	substantial	08/07/22, 16:00	none/minor	809
Landing undershoot. The BI P1 took control and started a circuit, turning onto final approach into the 20kt+ wind at about 850ft agl. At about 500ft the P1 opened one third airbrake and, noticing the glider undershooting, tried to shut the brakes again. He reports that he could not move the handle either forwards or backwards, he moved it inboard in case the front seat handle lug had locked into one of the holes used by hand operated rudder control pilots to no effect. The pilot lowered the nose to pick up speed intending to hop over the road and land in the field adjacent to the airfield. While descending into the field a wing caught on a fence post, yawing the glider before it landed heavily, breaking the fuselage in half in addition to wing damage from the impact. The P2 remained in the glider until extracted by a helimed team having suffered spinal bruising. The glider was equipped with energy absorbing cushions. The airbrakes were checked after the accident and found to be operating normally.					
115	ASW 19	substantial	22/06/22, 14:30	none	390
Wheel-up landing on to a hard runway caused serious damage to the underside of the glider. The pilot had winch launched to 1,000ft but had been unable to find solid lift before returning to the circuit, omitting to lower the undercarriage. The club intend to emphasise the importance of routine pre-landing checks.					
116	K-6	none	27/06/22, 14:00	minor	not reported
Battery came loose in strong turbulence during the aerotow, hitting and bruising the pilot on the back of the head. The battery had only been held down by bungee cords on the parcel shelf behind the pilot.					
117	DG-300	destroyed	17/07/22, 18:00	minor	360
Field landing crash. The glider flew into an unseen electricity wire on approach before crashing into the field. The fuselage boom broke, the cockpit area skin cracked open and the wings and tailplane were also damaged.					
118	DG-303	destroyed	06/07/22, 19:15	fatal	4,000
AAIB investigation.					
119	Mosquito	substantial	23/07/22, 16:25	minor	550
Competition finish undershoot. The pilot realised that the final glide was marginal but thought that the margin was sufficient and rejected a possible landing field and carried on. After rounding the control point the pilot still had 6km to go into a 20 knot headwind; after flying through some sink the glider started to undershoot but the pilot carried on until landing in a crop field and running into a hedge. The canopy and tail boom were broken, the pilot had some cuts and bruises. The CFI's report points out that the pilot was not current, had a long drive the previous day and not much sleep the previous night before flying a five-hour task on the first day of the competition.					
120	K-13	minor	23/07/22, 15:15	none/none	285
Landing conflict. The club operate from a single runway surrounded by crop fields. The K-13 was returning to the airfield after a short soaring trial lesson flight. On the diagonal leg the P1 spotted a K-6 slightly higher and turning on to final approach. Because of its height the P1 assessed that the K-6 would be landing long so committed to landing short. In the event the K-6 landed short leaving the K-13 P1 no option but to land in the bean crop in the undershoot. The glider brushed through the top of the crop before touching down on the runway threshold and groundlooping, damaging a wing trailing edge. Although the K-13 was FLARM-equipped the K-6 was not and the pilot had not been able to see the K-13 slightly below and behind. The club intend to mandate radio calls when joining the circuit.					
121	HpH Shark	substantial	27/07/22, 13:40	none	1247
Field landing. The pilot picked the field and flew a normal circuit but on final approach realised that the surface was recently ploughed leaving furrows and large clods of earth. While landing along the furrows first one wingtip caught on a clod and then the other, groundlooping the glider. A wingtip wheel was detached, an aileron damaged and there were multiple scratches to both wingtips and the fuselage.					
123	Ventus	minor	14/06/22, 17:15	none	229
Wheel-up landing. After returning from a cross-country flight the pilot flew a racing finish before pulling up into an abbreviated circuit to land on a runway perpendicular to the finish track. The pilot lowered the undercarriage but after touching down the wheel retracted. The underside of the fuselage was slightly scratched and there was some dis-bonding of structural components under the seat. The report suggests that the pilot did not fully lock the undercarriage down while pulling up and flying the brief circuit.					
127	Skylark 3	substantial	04/08/22, 13:10	none	8
Winch launch failure. At the start of the launch the glider was jerked forward and simultaneously yawed and then rolled to starboard. The pilot tried to correct using rudder and aileron and also tried to release. The glider turned to the right, the cable coming off after about 90° before the wingtip hit the ground, pulling off the outer section of the starboard wing.					

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BGA accident/incident summaries *continued*

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128	Vega	substantial	04/08/22, 12:30	none	1963
Wheel retracted during take-off ground run. The pilot reports that the lever may not have been in the fully locked position. The underside of the fuselage was damaged and the bottom of the rudder was abraded as the tail wheel also retracted.					
129	Junior	minor	05/08/22, 16:40	none	20
Canopy smashed. The pilot was practising sideslips at altitude when during a slip to the left the canopy came unlatched and opened. The canopy and restraining strap both broke but the plot was able to close the frame and relatch what remained before making a safe landing.					
Incidents					
105	LS7	minor	21/06/22, 12:00	-	-
Undercarriage collapsed. The glider was being towed when the wheel retracted. The undercarriage lever was still in the down position and a later inspection found that the joint between the rear undercarriage leg and the drive arm had failed.					
111	Chipmunk	substantial	11/07/22, 12:50	none	127
Tug wing hit trailer. While taxiing back to the hangar the pilot was focused on avoiding a parked glider to his left and failed to notice the trailer on the right. The starboard wingtip hit the rear of the trailer, damaging the leading edge. The club intends to mark out a sterile taxiing area in front of the tug hangar.					
113	K-21	none	11/07/22, 11:30	-	367
While teaching aerotow the P1 moved the glider out to one side and then handed control and asked the P2 to resolve the situation. A bow developed and the P2 responded by opening the airbrakes. The rope snapped after the bow tightened and part of the tow rope snaked back and caught around an airbrake. The airbrakes could still be closed and the glider landed without further incident.					
122	SF 25	-	06/07/22, am	minor	-
The TMG was being pulled out of the hangar by members pulling on the front edge of the cockpit. One of the members foot was run over by the undercarriage, dragging her to the ground. The member was left with a fractured and sprained ankle, as well as bruises. The club intends to move the TMG by pushing from behind in future.					
124	ASW 19	none	10/08/22, 13:15	none	-
ASI failure. The pilot did not notice that the ASI was not working until rotating into the winch launch full climb. He was able to continue the launch, pulling off early before flying a circuit and landing safely. It was discovered that the tube from the pitot had been pinched closed under a ballast weight.					
125	Nimbus 4	minor	05/08/22, 12:00	-	-
The falling winch cable drifted further downwind than expected and, while being retrieved, the strop hit the wingtip of the glider, damaging the wingtip and aileron.					
126	Ventus	none	13/07/22, 13:30	-	360
The glider airbrakes came open during take-off. The tug pilot could feel the drag but the glider was not visible in the mirror. The duty instructor radioed that the airbrakes were open, the glider pilot closed the brakes and the tow continued.					
130	K-6	none	04/08/22, 14:30	none	44
Low flight. The K-6 pilot was preparing to join the circuit when he saw a K-13 slightly below and also about to join downwind. He radioed the K-13 to go first and flew an orbit before following the K-13 round the circuit. The K-13 flew a slightly longer downwind than the K-6 pilot was expecting and, as the K-13 flew an approach to the south side of the airfield, the K-6 pilot turned final to land on the north side. He realised that he would have to overfly the launchpoint so initially kept the airbrakes shut before briefly opening them and then shutting them again. The report describes the glider overflying the launchpoint at an uncomfortably low height.					
131	K-8	none	13/08/22, 18:30	none	2
Landing groundloop. The inexperienced pilot was attempting a hangar landing in a light crosswind but landed too long. The pilot tried to turn the glider to avoid a hedge and ended up groundlooping.					

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.