

BGA accident/incident summaries

AIRCRAFT		Damage	Date, time	PILOT Injury	P1 hours
Ref	Type				
162	Duo Discus	substantial	19/09/22, 12:55	none/none	353
Field landing overshoot. The pilots picked a field with plenty of time to plan the circuit. After turning on to final approach both pilots realised that they were overshooting so the front seat P1, the handling pilot, added some sideslip, losing enough height to cross the field boundary at 40ft agl, albeit with a GPS recorded ground speed of 70kt. The glider touched down well into the 300m-long field and was unable to stop before hitting a fence at the far end of the field. The fuselage broke just aft of the wings, the canopy shattered and there was further damage to the wings, nose and rudder. After the landing, the P1 realised that they had landed with a tailwind component. Both pilots were aware that the 12-18kt wind was slightly west of north, but the P1 had assessed the field as being orientated E-W and both pilots were expecting a crosswind from the right when landing towards the west. In reality the field was orientated NE-SW so the approach to the SW was flown with a tailwind component. The P2 described the downwind leg as being flown close to the field with a continuous turn from downwind on to final with no diagonal or base leg to aid in assessing the wind.					
164	ASW 20	destroyed	24/09/22, 10:55	fatal	-
AAIB investigation.					
165	Discus	minor	16/09/22, -	none	290
Wheel retracted several seconds after touching down during a field landing. The surface of the stubble field was dry and hard, with occasional large clods of earth, as well as ruts and stones. The undercarriage door hinges were bent and there were some scratches in the gel coat. With the fuselage suspended, the pilot later tested the undercarriage and reports that very little force is needed to move the lever sideways out of the locked down detent, at which point the wheel partially retracts and can be easily pushed into the wheel bay.					
166	LS4	destroyed	27/07/22, 14:15	minor	50
Attempted field landing. The relatively inexperienced cross-country pilot was reluctant to commit to a field landing so was late to choose a field. As a result the circuit was poorly planned, too high and too close, requiring a 360° turn at the end of the base leg. As he straightened out on to final approach the pilot noticed a line of wires about 30 yards before his selected field. After pulling up to clear the wires the glider stalled and crashed on to the ground short of the chosen field. The pilot walked away with minor scratches and bruises. The glider fuselage, canopy and wings were all severely damaged.					
167	DG-1000	minor	17/09/22, 15:10	none/minor	3,500+
Undercarriage retracted during landing ground run. The P2 had only flown K-21s before, so the P1 made a point of stressing the need for pre-landing checks in a more complex glider and is certain that the undercarriage was down and properly locked before the glider joined the circuit. The landing ground run was quite bumpy and, as the wheel retracted, the P2 hit her head on the canopy and suffered a sore neck. The glider had minor damage to the underside and a bent door hinge. A rubber buffer in the undercarriage mechanism was later found to have been over tightened, decreasing the locking force holding the wheel down.					
168	Discus	minor	24/09/22, 13:50	none	20
Wheel-up landing. The pilot moved the gear lever during the pre-landing checks but the glider landed wheel up on a hard runway, damaging the underside and the winch hook. The pilot believes that the wheel was not retracted after take-off and was therefore retracted during the pre-landing checks.					
172	Skylark 4	substantial	13/08/22, 18:25	none	141
Skid damaged in field landing. The pilot reports grounding the nose skid to aid braking after touching down and then trying to turn the glider with the rudder to avoid a pair of electricity poles. The glider was in a furrow and the nose skid hit the peak of the furrow, delaminating the skid as well as damaging the rear and possibly also front skid mount. The CFI's analysis of the flight trace suggests late field selection leading to a cramped circuit with final approach flown at a relatively high speed, presumably in an attempt to lose height rapidly. The CFI also suggests that the eventual field was in fact an overshoot field.					
2023					
2	Grob 103	substantial	15/10/22, 13:15	serious	78
Hard landing. After hearing a loud noise at 200ft agl during a winch launch the pilot assumed that the weak link had broken and initiated a negative G push to the recovery attitude. The pilot reports then becoming incapacitated and, although conscious, unable to properly control the glider. The glider was seen to oscillate in pitch with the airbrakes still retracted before landing heavily and then bouncing to two further landings. Despite an energy absorbing cushion, the pilot suffered two crushed vertebrae and spent some time in hospital. The tail broke off, the top of the fuselage was split along a seam, the nose section was damaged and the front canopy shattered, amongst other damage.					
4	K-21	substantial	15/10/22, 10:10	none	27
Rear canopy opened during winch launch, shattering the canopy. The solo pilot rejected the launch and landed ahead safely. The pilot reports inadvertently forgetting to lock the rear canopy closed after securing the rear seat straps.					

BGA accident/incident summaries *continued*

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6	K-13	substantial	12/10/22, 15:20	none	1
Wingtip hit fence post. The very early-solo pilot saw another glider and a tow vehicle in the landing area so decided to land short and towards the edge of the landing area to leave plenty of room. During the landing the wingtip hit a fence post, leaving a 20cm long hole in the leading edge.					
7	Duo Discus	minor	19/10/22, 16:55	none/none	c1,500
Wheel-up landing. After descending from a wave flight the undercarriage lever was moved as part of the pre-landing checks. The P1 spoke the checks out loud and the P2 agreed that the lever moved. The ensuing wheel-up landing on a hard runway ground away some of the underside. The P1 believes that the wheel had been left down after take-off and that most of the P1's attention was focused on coping with the severe turbulence experienced throughout the descent and circuit.					
8	Junior	substantial	22/10/22, pm	none	154
PIO on approach ending in a hard landing. The CFI's report suggests that the pilot was not using much airbrake. An inspection found damage to the underside near the nose skid.					
9	K-21	substantial	02/11/22, 12:05	none	98
Glider landed in field near the club. The pilot released from the aerotow at what he thought was 2,000ft but was only 1,000ft agl. The pilot drifted downwind, failing to recognise how low he was, before landing in a field near the usual low key area, severely damaging a wing after it impacted a barbed wire fence and fence post. Witnesses describe seeing the glider start a downwind leg at about 300-400ft agl before disappearing behind a tree line in a nose-high attitude. The CFI reports that the elderly pilot had not flown the K-21 for nine months and had flown multiple recency checks that year due to gaps in his flying.					
10	ASW 20	substantial	22/10/22, 15:35	none	750
PIO during landing. The landing damaged the nose internally and externally, as well as the instrument panel and the canopy locking mechanism.					
11	Silent 2	substantial	09/10/22, 13:35	-	-
The self-launch glider was taxiing towards take-off when a wingtip wheel caught in a gap between concrete slabs. The wingtip wheel was ripped off and the wingtip and aileron were damaged.					
19	K-21	substantial	17/12/22, 10:05	none/none	931
Crash after rejected aerotow launch. After taking off the glider started to drift downwind of the tug and then started to catch up with the tug. The P1 elected to crack open the airbrakes but felt that the glider was still too high behind the tug. The CFI estimates that the glider was at about 75-100ft ato when the glider released and turned to land back on the airfield. A wingtip caught the ground while the glider was still turning and the glider cartwheeled into the ground. The fuselage snapped, the tailplane was ripped from the fin, there was some damage to the nose, and the front canopy broke.					
Incidents					
163	DG-303	none	22/09/22	14:30	none 500
Undercarriage collapsed during landing. The report suggests that the lever had not been placed in the locked down position before landing.					
169	PA 25	none	19/08/22, 13:30	none	700
A representative of a business bordering the airfield visited the club to point out that a landing tug had allowed the trailing rope to clip their property the previous day. The tow rings had struck a traffic cone, sending it flying and narrowly missing a bystander. The tow pilot was unaware of the event and the tug master has emailed all tug pilots to remind them of minimum heights and recommended ground tracks for landing.					
170	K-13	none	24/09/22, 14:40	none	54
Wingtip hit tree on approach. The pilot saw that another glider was blocking the normal landing area but in choosing somewhere else to land allowed the glider to get too low on approach.					
171	LS4	none	27/08/22, 16:00	none	750
Wingtip hit tree on approach. The pilot extended his circuit to leave room for a K-21 inside and slightly lower. After turning final the K-21 landed long to leave room for the LS4 so the LS4 pilot opened the airbrakes to land short. A wingtip brushed through the top of a tree at the airfield boundary. The pilot's report mentions being distracted by the K-21 but also that a navigation tablet obscured his view to the right of the instrument panel.					

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BGA accident/incident summaries *continued*

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2023					
1	Puchacz	none	10/10/22, -	none/none	1232
Glider flew into winch cable. After an instructor demonstration it was the student's turn to fly a low launch failure land ahead exercise. The winch driver cut the power early in the full climb as arranged and, after a brief pause, the P2 lowered the nose to the recovery attitude. At this point the P1 noticed the inflated parachute above and in front of the port wing and the glider landed with the cable drooped over the wing. As the club use a UHMWPE cable there was no damage to the wing. The CFI notes that the lightweight drogue 'chute and the 15kt wind would have contributed to the cable kiting and the club intends to stop using that 'chute. The CFI also points out that instructor-initiated winch launch failures tend to provide greater separation due to the tension of the cable at the moment of release.					
3	K-21	none	16/10/22, 16:05	none/none	--
Tug pilot released tow rope. The P1 was the handling pilot coaching the P2 through instructor training. At about 500ft agl behind the SF25C tug the P1 allowed the glider to move laterally off line until when in line with the wingtip the P2 took control to regain position but then saw the tug jettison the rope. The tug pilot reports the tail of the TMG being pulled to the side, some roll induced and the nose dropping so the pilot guillotined the rope. The glider P2 instinctively pulled the glider release, dropping the rope on to farmland. Both aircraft landed safely on the airfield.					
5	DG-505	minor	14/10/22, 15:00	-	-
Broken canopy. A helper was pulling the glider forward holding the between canopy arch with the rear canopy open. At some point the helper slipped and their elbow punched a hole in the still closed front canopy.					
12	K-21	none	23/11/22, 12:50	-	-
The glider's downwind drift during the winch launch remained uncorrected and the winch driver allowed the launch to continue. When the weak link failed at 1,800ft agl the strop continued to drift as it fell and it eventually landed just outside the perimeter track, very close to a parked BMW and Tesla.					
13	PA 18	none	12/11/22, 11:30	none	1,000+
Trim failed during aerotow. Despite the trim being stuck in the climb position, the pilot was able to land safely. A pulley attached to a spring in the empennage detached, leaving no tension in the trim system.					
14	LS8	none	27/11/22, 11:35	none	240
The glider pilot retracted the undercarriage at about 2,000ft agl while still on aerotow. While doing so the glider initially climbed above the tug, the tug pilot was preparing to release the rope when the glider pilot overcorrected, leaving a bow in the rope which broke the weak link as the bow came out.					
15	Grob 102	none	06/12/22, 14:45	none	10
Glider launched on a winch launch attached to the aerotow hook rather than the winch hook. The winch driver terminated the launch at 500ft.					
16	Citabria	none	03/12/22, 12:30	none/none	1252
Tug undercarriage struck the top of a boundary fence during take-off while towing a K-21. Before take-off the wind was light and about 40° off the runway heading; after landing the wind was a light tailwind. The acceleration during the take-off run was enough that both the tug and glider pilot felt that the take-off could still be completed safely. The tug was the club's secondary tug, only used when their primary tug was unavailable and was fitted with a 150hp engine and a cruise optimised propeller. The club intends to restrict two-seat glider tows behind this tug to days when there is a headwind component of 10kt or more.					
17	SF 25C	unknown	3/11/22, 15:00	-	-
After a flight the pilot reported that the cylinder head temperature gauge displayed at full deflection whenever the master switch was turned on, returning to zero when the switch was turned off. The club is investigating possible engine damage.					
18	K-21	none	17/12/22, 11:30	none/none	-
Soon after releasing from the winch cable, smoke started to come from the rear instrument panel and there was a smell of burning plastic. The P1 took control and landed as soon as possible. After landing all the fuses were intact and all instruments were working, the glider was sent for more detailed inspection.					

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.