

BGA accident/incident summaries

AIRCRAFT		Damage	Date, time	PILOT	
Ref	Type			Injury	P1 hours
145	K-13	none	19/08/23, 13:30	none/minor	153
Heavy landing. The P1 aimed to land beyond a concrete track crossing the grass landing area. Despite approaching at 65 knots and using only half airbrake the glider's airspeed started to reduce in the gusting crosswind as it descended into the wind gradient. The glider landed heavily just before the concrete track and the nosewheel hit a dip on the edge of the track. The trial flight P2 complained of back pain but after assessment by paramedics was able to drive home, reporting some bruising to his lower back. An inspection of the glider revealed no damage caused by the landing but found two areas in need of repair.					
2024					
2	T-21	minor	07/10/23, 15:55	none/none	864
Mid-air with quadcopter drone. At about 100ft agl on final approach the pilots spotted the drone a couple of seconds before impact. The drone struck the the wing about 1m outboard of the cockpit, narrowly missing the P2's head and leaving cosmetic damage to the underside of the wing. The drone was recovered from the airfield and the owners later made their way to the launchpoint to retrieve it.					
3	LS4	minor	12/10/23, 12:20	none	190
Wheel-up landing. The visiting pilot released from the tow at 3,500ft agl and started to search for lift, forgetting to retract the undercarriage. Eventually, back down to 1,500ft agl the pilot made the required radio call and performed the pre-landing checks, unfortunately retracting the wheel in the process. Distracted by planning the circuit at an unfamiliar airfield, as well as having to make unfamiliar radio calls during the circuit, the pilot did not hear the undercarriage up warnings being radioed to him. The wheel-up landing on the hard runway abraded the underside of the fuselage.					
4	Arcus	minor	11/10/23, 13:10	none/none	1,720
Wheel-up landing. The wind had been 10kts when the glider launched but was reported at 15G30kts when the glider returned to the airfield after a four-hour flight. The report suggests that the approach was flown at an excessive speed, touching down, wheel-up, in a nose-down attitude in the second half of the runway. The glider bounced for about 35 metres before climbing to 10-15ft agl at which point the wheel was lowered. By the time the glider touched down again there was insufficient room ahead to stop. The glider ran off the end of the runway, through the grass parking area, through the electric fence at the airfield boundary and eventually groundlooped and stopped 150 metres into the neighbouring cattle field. The glider had gel coat damage and the electric fence was also damaged. The pilots had not performed any pre-landing checks. The report suggests that the long flight in cold temperatures and turbulent conditions may have distracted both pilots. It also points out that had there been gliders parked in the parking area or cattle in the field the damage could have been much worse.					
6	K-21	minor	14/10/23, 17:35	minor/minor	1,845
Landing in undershoot field. The glider returned to the airfield just as a shower was approaching. After joining the circuit, the glider experienced strong sink so moved the downwind leg closer to the airfield and turned on to base leg early. During the turn it became apparent that, due to the strengthening wind, the glider would not reach the airfield so the P1 took control and landed in an undershoot field. The glider landed heavily into the soft field and came to an abrupt stop. Both pilots had some back pain and the P1 some bruising from the straps. The glider had a fractured and delaminated internal cross member behind the nose wheel.					
7	Cirrus	none	18/10/23, 10:40	none	332
Wheel-up landing on grass airfield. During the de-brief the pilot stated that he had forgotten to carry out the pre-landing checks.					
8	Slingsby Swallow	substantial	07/11/23, 13:30	serious	not reported
Ridge soaring crash. A witness reports seeing the glider fly into an area of strong sink and turbulence. At about 50-80ft agl the glider entered a spin and crashed on to the hill having turned through nearly 180°. The glider landed on the tip of a strip of dense heather surrounded by grass tussocks. The pilot complained of back pain and remained in the glider until medical help arrived. He had suffered two broken vertebrae.					
10	Cirrus	minor	10/11/23, 14:55	none	128
Wheel-up landing. The pilot reports being distracted by radio calls to other aircraft while in the circuit and forgetting the pre-landing checks. Although the glider landed on a hard runway, the metal plates either side of the inset winch hook took the brunt of the landing with only minor surface scratching to the gel coat. The CFI points out that pre-landing checks are not downwind checks and should be performed before joining the circuit. The CFI also pointed out that the "check gear" warning on the navigation device (Oudie) is masked by repeated airspace warnings. As all club pilots are aware of the airspace and a local agreement is in place he suggests that that particular airspace warning should be permanently muted. It is also possible to remove the airspace from the airspace file.					

BGA accident/incident summaries *continued*

AIRCRAFT		Damage	Date, time	PILOT Injury	P1 hours
Ref	Type				
12	DG-1001	minor	26/11/23, 11:00	none	3,000
Undercarriage failure. While at 2,000ft agl, and with the engine running, the pilot tested the electric undercarriage extension and retraction mechanism. On the third retraction the pilot heard straining noises from the actuator so selected the undercarriage down. The green down and locked light remained off and the red gear unsafe indication remained lit. The tug pilot took an in-flight look and reported that the gear was down and seemed to be in the locked down position. The glider pilot suspected that the wheel might retract on touchdown so set up an approach to a grass runway. As expected, the undercarriage retracted during the ground run and as the glider slid across the grass it clipped the edge of a hard surface intersection. There was some damage to the undercarriage doors and the underside gel coat. After putting the fuselage on the belly dolly, the undercarriage still would not fully retract, even with manual assistance.					
Incidents					
142	ASG 29	minor	29/09/23, 13:00	—	—
ASG 29 AS33					
Tow-out incident. The pilot of one of the gliders started to tow the glider from the parking area to the launchpoint. The starboard winglet caught on the port wing of the adjacent glider, yawing it through about 45° until its starboard wing struck the port wing of the neighbouring glider. The second glider was not on a tail dolly so some force was required to move it. All three gliders had minor damage to a wingtip.					
143	Grob Astir	none	03/09/23, 13:25	none	21
Wrong lever. The pilot adjusted the trim on the diagonal leg but after lining up on final approach mistakenly pulled on the trim lever instead of the airbrake. While concentrating on maintaining approach speed the pilot noticed that the glider was not losing height but remained unaware of the error. After flying a low 360° turn the pilot realised that there was still insufficient room to land ahead so turned left towards the adjacent valley and flew a low circuit before landing in a ploughed field. It was only after lining up on the field that the pilot noticed the mistake and opened the airbrakes.					
2024					
1	SF 25c	none	01/10/23, 12:30	none/none	904
Engine failure. The RPM reduced until the engine stopped with the propeller almost fully feathered. The propeller control was set to the start position and several attempts to start the engine were made before deciding to abandon re-starting and land in a field.					
5	Mini Nimbus	none	14/10/23, 16:25	minor	—
While helping hangar packing, the club member walked into a glider trailing edge. The member suffered a large gash in the forehead that required medical attention.					
9	Grob 102	none	09/11/23, 12:40	none	120
Canopy opened during winch launch. The pilot reports making an upward push on the canopy during the pre-flight checks with the canopy remaining closed. Soon after reaching the full climb attitude the canopy came partially open. The pilot was able to catch the canopy and hold it closed before releasing, opening the airbrakes and landing straight ahead.					
11	K-8	none	22/11/23, —	none	69
Airbrakes came open during winch launch. The pilot encountered cloud at 450ft agl so pulled the release and lowered the nose to the recovery attitude. As the wind was light, once the glider was at a safe airspeed the pilot chose to fly a modified circuit before landing. The pilot noticed the high sink rate so made a rapid turn back towards the runway, only noticing that the airbrakes were out when lined up on approach. As part of the CFI's de-brief the pilot sat in the glider to demonstrate the event. It was noted that the pilot held the release while also covering the airbrake to prevent it opening. In the heat of the moment while closing his hand around the release he also closed around the airbrake lever, pulling both at the same time.					

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.