

BGA accident/incident summaries

AIRCRAFT		Damage	Date, time	PILOT	
Ref	Type			Injury	P1 hours
48	Chipmunk	substantial	02/04/23, 14:25	none	1,060
Tug veered off landing area after touchdown. The runway in use was R09, the surface wind light northeasterly. The pilot reports that after a normal landing the tug veered sharply to the left. Full right rudder failed to correct the swing so the pilot added a burst of power to the Lycoming engine to add to the rudder's effectiveness. The aircraft took off again before the power was cut but was still heading for the side of the airfield. The tug impacted a boundary hedgeline a few feet off the ground. The pilot was able to exit unaided but the tug propeller and spinner were destroyed, the engine damaged, the forward fuselage substantially deformed and the leading edges of both wings severely damaged.					
49	SZD Junior	substantial	07/04/23, 14:40	none	64
Field landing accident. While on a Silver distance attempt the soaring conditions started to deteriorate. The pilot pushed on, hoping for conditions to improve but found himself at 1,600ft agl over an area with few, if any, landable fields. The pilot's selected field was described in the CFI's report as the best available but undulating, with a significant cross slope and long grass. Halfway through the downwind leg the pilot assessed that landing into the light wind would mean landing downhill so reversed direction, intending to land downwind but uphill. The CFI reports that the pilot flew a cramped circuit, was still 300-400ft agl over the field threshold and landing downwind and downhill. The trace shows that the pilot accelerated to lose height, rounding out at 60+ knots before a wingtip caught in the long grass, yawing the glider round such that it landed backwards. The right wing and fuselage received substantial damage. The pilot acknowledges that turning towards a more landable area while higher would have been a safer option. The CFI notes that the pilot had not been able to practise field landings this year due to instructor availability and weather.					
52	ASW 24	substantial	16/10/22, 15:45	none	2761
Hard landing. The pilot noticed two gliders in the normal landing area so chose to land long and to one side. While extending the glide the pilot let the airspeed reduce and had insufficient energy to hold off fully on the rough upsloping landing area. The pilot inspected the glider and found no damage so the glider was put away for the winter. Damage to the metal undercarriage structure and associated glass fibre was only noticed during the ARC inspection in April.					
55	LAK 19	minor	18/04/23, 16:25	none	480
Wheel-up landing left abrasions underneath the cockpit and tail boom.					
56	DG-300	substantial	12/03/23, –	–	–
Damage resulting from a groundloop previously reported in accident 85/2022. During the annual inspection, further damage at the base of the fin and distortion to the undercarriage was discovered. The report credits the BGA's pilot/owner maintenance seminars for an enhanced inspection. The glider had flown 32 launches for 28 hours after the previous damage repair.					
57	SZD Junior	substantial	25/04/23, 12:15	none	44
Heavy landing(s). After giving way to another glider in the circuit, the pilot turned on to final approach at a slightly low height. After overflying two parked gliders the pilot opened the airbrakes before noticing that the airspeed was low and the glider was undershooting. The pilot closed the airbrakes and lowered the nose but then had to round out with little or no airbrake. The glider entered a PIO with the nose hitting the ground at least twice during the oscillations. The skin around the nose skid, aerotow hook and cockpit floor was cracked and delaminated. The wheel mount shows signs of being twisted.					
59	LS4	minor	29/04/23, 15:20	none	200
Wheel-up landing on grass detached an undercarriage door. Getting low on final glide the pilot had picked a field and was preparing to start the circuit. The glider had just come out of the workshop after its annual during which the undercarriage mechanism had been serviced. The pilot was surprised at how much less force was now required to lower the wheel. The pilot was able to gain 200ft in lift after which two gliders passed just overhead continuing on to the airfield so the pilot raised the wheel and resumed their final glide. After crossing the finish line the pilot lowered the wheel but the required force was so low that they were unsure whether they had just raised or lowered the wheel. The pilot operated the lever again before subsequently landing with the wheel up. No undercarriage position placards were fitted.					
63	Grob 102	substantial	17/05/23, 12:15	minor	4
Landing overshoot. This was the low airtime pilot's fourth flight in the Grob. The glider was low in the circuit so the pilot decided to turn in early. Witnesses and the GPS trace suggest delayed application of the airbrakes and an unstable, occasionally fast, approach in the light crosswind. The glider touched down towards the far end of the airfield and ran into the boundary fence at speed. A strand of barbed wire shattered the canopy, the pilot's head had been jerked forward and the wire was now resting on the back of his head, pinning the pilot immobile in the cockpit. The winch driver had to cut the wire to release the pilot. The pilot suffered lacerations requiring a visit to hospital. As well as the broken canopy the right wing of the glider solo was damaged by impact with a fence post. A club rule requires unqualified pilots to receive a daily briefing from an instructor before flying solo, something the pilot inadvertently failed to do on the day.					

BGA accident/incident summaries *continued*

AIRCRAFT Ref	Type	Damage	Date, time	PILOT Injury	P1 hours
64	SZD 55	destroyed	04/05/23, 16:25	none	54
Winch launch crash. The duty instructor noticed that the wind had veered but the pilot stated that he was happy with the amount of crosswind. During the ground run the left (downwind) wing went down but the pilot was able to correct without the tip touching the ground. Just as the glider rotated into the full climb the left wing again went down to a 45° bank angle, at which point the pilot pulled the release. The glider fell to the ground, the left wing impacting first followed by the nose before the rest of the fuselage landed the right way up. The pilot was uninjured. The front section of the glider was damaged, canopy shattered, the tail boom snapped and the left wing was also damaged.					
66	Zugvogel	minor	23/05/23, 14:45	none	117
Aerotow PIO. The glider was fitted with a winch hook only, the pilot's flying weight was just 5kg above the placarded minimum and some turbulence was expected from the boundary trees in the crosswind. The pilot reports that at about 100ft agl he was lifted out the seat, his head hit the canopy and, seeing the tow rope snaking away, realised that he had accidentally pulled the release. The pilot was able to land safely ahead on the airfield. The DCFI reports seeing the glider oscillating in pitch behind the tug with some significant bending of the wings. The glider had some paint damage to the underside and cracks in the wing fabric.					
67	Chipmunk	minor	27/05/23, 11:30	none	extensive
Tug hit airfield sign. Taxiing back to the parking area after landing, the pilot was watching for obstructions either side of the nose but failed to see a runway marker sign directly in front and taxied into it. The sign and its support pole were metal and damaged the propeller, as well as leaving an eight-inch dent in the underside and damaging a flap. The report points out that the club are guests of the airfield operator and have limited influence on the placement of airfield signs.					
69	LS8	substantial	29/05/23, 16:40	none	2641
Landing accident. Returning to the airfield after a competition flight the pilot set up a long, straight in approach, completed his pre-landing checks but chose to leave the wheel up until closer to the airfield. Mindful of other finishing gliders, as well as club traffic, the pilot was working hard to keep a good lookout and believes this might have distracted him from lowering the wheel. Competition rules requested that pilots land long so the pilot was flying at low level at 60 knots when the call "wheel" came over the radio. The pilot swapped hands on the stick, felt for the undercarriage lever and briefly looked down. When he looked up again the glider was close to the ground in a slight nose down attitude. Despite pulling back on the stick the glider hit the ground and bounced back about 10ft into the air. The right wing went down and hit the ground, followed by the nose of the glider which then yawed through 270°. The nose of the glider was damaged, the tail boom snapped and the right wing extensively damaged.					
Incidents					
45	PA 18	none	18/03/23, 13:20	none	—
	DG-505	none		none	750
Rope guillotine partial failure. The ground was soft and wet, the wind calm and conditions suggested a high probability of carburettor icing. After a few slow accelerations and less than full power climbs in a PA 25 experienced by two tug pilots it was decided to switch to the Super Cub. When the first tow with the Cub experienced even slower acceleration the pilot pulled the guillotine, which operated but only partially cut the rope. The glider P1 had also been on the verge of releasing but held off after the glider took off and the combination accelerated into a climb. The tug pilot informed the glider P1 over the radio that the rope had been cut and could fail at any moment; the glider released at 400ft agl and both aircraft landed safely on the airfield. On the ground afterwards, with the rope under tension and the pilot using both hands to pull the guillotine it still failed to fully sever the rope.					
46	Grob Astir	none	05/03/23, 12:50	none/minor	235
Broken shoulder. A visiting pilot ran the wingtip during an aerotow launch. He slipped and fell at the end, breaking his shoulder in two places.					
47	K-13	none	19/03/23, 13:30	none/none	183
Field landing at the end of a BI flight. It was the second of two flights for the P2; at the end of the first flight the glider had been low in the circuit so the P1 turned in early and landed on an alternative runway. During the second flight, the P2 was practising turning the glider when the P1 realised that they were too far from the airfield for their height. The P1 attempted a straight in approach to the reciprocal runway but, realising that the approach was marginal, he landed the glider in a field near the airfield. The P1 reports that although the surface wind was a light northwesterly, the upper wind appeared to have a southerly component. Although flying at what the P1 thought was the upwind side the glider was actually drifting away from the airfield.					

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BGA accident/incident summaries *continued*

AIRCRAFT Ref	Type	Damage	Date, time	PILOT Injury	P1 hours
50	ASW 20	minor	08/04/23, 12:00	–	95
Rigging mishap. As the second wing was inserted into the fuselage the first wing was pushed out a bit. The pilot and the helper pushed on opposite wings until both were seated. When the pilot started to connect the controls he discovered that the flap pushrod for the starboard wing was jammed under the flap and aileron mixer mechanism. As the aileron clamp had still been attached while rigging, the corner of the starboard aileron had cracked when being deflected.					
51	Grob 102	none	10/04/23, 13:00	none	300
Wheel-up landing on to grass landing area. After the weak link broke at 900ft agl during the winch launch the pilot retracted the wheel and attempted to soar. Finding no lift they entered the circuit but omitted pre-landing checks. The pilot reports being current in the K-8 but had not flown the Grob for 44 months.					
53	SF 25	none	07/04/23, 09:00	none/none	317
Landing in a field. Carb heat was applied to the Limbach engine for 30 seconds before take-off with no sign of carburettor icing. Soon after taking off, the engine briefly ran roughly so the P1 applied carb heat again. After a few more seconds the engine again ran roughly. The P1 realised that they were too low to return to the airfield so made a safe landing in a field.					
54	Discus	none	05/04/23, am	–	–
During the DI it was noticed that the safety pin that secures the handle of the main wing pin to the fuselage was through the hole in the handle but not through the fuselage bracket. The report suggests that as part of the annual inspection the glider was rigged to check control movement range without the safety pin being properly inserted. The glider was then placed in the hangar and the unsecured safety pin was not noticed during the next seven DIs.					
58	K-21	none	01/05/23, 16:00	none/none	469
Shortly after taking off on aerotow the P1 noticed that the left front side of the canopy had distorted and there was a visible gap between the canopy frame and the glider, despite the closing mechanism appearing to be fully closed. The P1 opened the DV panel to hold the canopy shut. The tug returned towards the airfield where the P1 asked the ab initio P2 to pull the release and later to open the airbrakes before the glider landed safely.					
60	–	none	01/05/23, 12:20	–	–
After landing, the tug pilot taxied the tug to the launchpoint, shut down the engine and prepared to exit to move the tow rope off the runway. The pilot noticed a power aircraft taxiing behind the tug so stayed in the cockpit ready to release the tow rope if it snagged. In the event, the tailwheel of the other aircraft caught on the rope and pulled it out of the tow release without the tug pilot feeling anything amiss. Fortunately the rope fell off the other aircraft before it took off. The incident was promulgated to other users of this mixed use airfield and another power pilot reported multiple incidences of tow ropes being left at full length and being hard to see in the grass. The club is reviewing its procedures.					
61	DG-300	substantial	15/04/23, 14:35	–	228
Towing incident. As the car went over a pothole the pilot heard a bang and braked. The glider ran into the back of the car, damaging the rudder. Three rivets attaching the tail dolly hinge had sheared, the fourth rivet had been pulled out of the dolly.					
62	Perkoz	substantial	14/05/23,	–	–
While pushing the glider backwards into the hangar the tailwheel bounced over the ramp over the lower hangar door runners and, despite being held down, the top of the rudder struck the low upper door lintel. The rudder was damaged and a hinge jammed.					
65	LS7	substantial	21/05/23, 14:30	–	–
While being towed behind a car a wing hit a stationary tractor, damaging the aileron and wing trailing edge.					
68	Duo Discus	minor	28/05/23, 17:15	–	–
Glider hit hangar door while hangar packing, damaging the leading edge gel coat of the tailplane. A contributory factor was the presence of a large power aircraft inappropriately parked and partially obstructing the hangar entrance at the mixed use airfield.					

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.