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and the editor writes....

FIRST OUTING AT NEW TOW FIELD.

There I was, wandering around aimlessly at work during the week, absent mindedly gazing skyward and considering the possibilities of the post-cold front conditions spread before me.

"I could do with a winch at the moment." I whinged at a mate, standing within earshot.

"Don't you mean a wench?" He asked.

"No," came the witty ripost, "I'd get more mileage out of a winch!"

I only mention this because, as fate would have it, at that moment, key members of the winching syndicate were doing just that (winching not wenching) at a new site at Tehidy, just outside Camborne.

The winch was at Paul's, being modified to accept a motorbike rack, and once completed it was decided to try the site's potential. Despite starting quite late in the day, Graham, Bill and Pete went over the back with Graham getting the best distance; just short of St. Austell.

Subject to the farmer's consent, Graham hopes to get the site registered with the CAA and, as it's not in any restricted area, will mean it can be used mid-week.

KERNOW VICTORY AT SMEATHARPE .

The weekend of the 21st-22nd September saw the SW Towing Competition take place at Smeatharpe, and the good news is we won both the team and individual places.

Congratulations to Phippsy for taking first place, and the understated and unassuming way in which he accepted the mantle of champion!

So, until next month, safe flyingRob..

BRIAN'S BAZELEY'S BOLDEN BARTER BARBEQUE BASH.

OK, OK it's Golden Garter, but alliteration is everything when it comes to a snappy headline!

Come along on Saturday evening to the KHGA Barbeque, kindly hosted by Brian and Chris at Frontier City. The last get together of the season - so don't miss it.

7.30pm
SATURDAY 28th. SEPTEMBER
GOLDEN GARTER
FRONTIER CITY
St. COLUMB MAJOR.

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TOWING TOWING TOWING TOWING TOWING TOWING TOWING

Over the last few years the towing side of our club has gone from strength to strength until we've reached a stage where a day's towing has come to be regarded as a chance for a good days flying. This situation has arisen largely through the hard work, both at the site and behind the scenes, of a few dedicated individuals.

With the syndicate now well established, and with consistently good turnouts on towing days, it is felt that work loads while at the tow field should be spread more evenly.

So, to get to the point; look around and see what jobs need to be done, don't wait to be asked to help out on general duties - VOLUNTEER.

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THE 4th AND FINAL LEAGUE

Situated about 80 miles north of Marseille, the busy market town of Laragne is over-shadowed by the 2,500 ft spine backed ridge which was to be our main gateway to cloudbase over the next 10 days. Stretching approximately 5 miles to the west it provided several launch points to both North and South, thus enabling the 100+ competitors to all get airborne in a very short space of time. The mornings generally brought a very light Northerly breeze which was nearly always reversed by about midday by the strong thermals rolling up the Southerly slope.

After a couple of practise days the competition got under way on Sunday with almost perfect conditions, just a hint of cu-nims later in the day, the only likely hic-cup. A task of about 90 miles around 2 turn points and back to base was called with a speed section between the turn points. Launching about 1.30 pm I made my way along the ridge to the 1st turn point before setting off into the mountains on the speed section. The first 20 miles proved uneventful but then the difficult bit, a large area of flatlands with little or no thermal activity, a solitary cumulus about half way across beckoned to me, I couldn't resist it. Unfortunately, the closer I got the smaller it became, a glance behind with the thought of turning back quickly made the plains look very inviting as the sky over the mountains I had recently left was looking very dark and forbidding. A radio call for Angela to set the wheels of recovery in motion and it's the long glide down to land for about 25 miles. Graham fared a little better, managing to get across the flatlands before being faced with a cu-nim, he made the right decision and landed. Apparently several pilots didn't and were fortunate to be able to fly the following day. The honours went to Robbie Whittle who just failed to make goal by a couple of miles.

Monday brought a similar task but in the opposite direction and it wasn't long before I was in trouble. About 10 miles out I was flying towards a large South facing cliff that was sure to give good lift when almost too late I noticed about 10 gliders landed at the base of it, it obviously wasn't working, quickly changing course I just made it to another smaller cliff before meeting the ground. Thirty minutes and some very hard work later I was back at reasonable height once more and could relax. Graham's radio crackled into life to tell me he was down just short of the 2nd turn point, relaying this message to Angela, she set off after him with me in hot pursuit. About an hour's flight later I approached turn point 2 to be greeted with blue skys and an abundance of gliders on the deck. As time was now against me I had little choice but to get the photo and glide as far as possible. The end result being some 36 miles with Graham not far behind.

Tuesday gave us blue skys and a different area again, similar task though. Caz driving today and off to a good start with the car breaking down on the way up the hill. After running repairs by Pips we were almost at the top before we became entangled with a Frenchman's truck, unfortunately, the recently resprayed side of Graham's Citroen came of worst. This eventful morning obviously helped Graham relax as no sooner had he taken off than he was plummeting to the bottom landing field.

All went well on my flight until time got the better of me some 4½ hours and 52 miles later. Landing with a few other pilots was helpful as my radio had gone dead in flight. Borrowing Gordon Riggs I managed to contact Caz who is close by and also to talk to Graham who had got back to take off and launched one minute before the window had closed. He had done very

well to almost catch up with the rest of the field and was only a few miles short of us on his final glide. Giving his proposed landing position next to a main road it was agreed Caz would fetch me first and then find him later. This would appear to be a straightforward task until one realises that Grahams landing plans changed at the same time as his radio batteries went flat. Some 6 hours later we came across him on a mountain top, in someones house surrounded by dirty plates and empty wine bottles. Caz was so pleased to see her husband safe and well that the greeting he received was truly moving.

Wednesday proved to be a little stable with nothing occurring until well after 3 o'clock. It was then a mad dash in the very light thermals to try and beat the clock. A handful of pilots made the first turn point for 35 miles or so with the rest strewn along the valley en route. I managed 27 miles with Graham again not far behind.

Sadly we lost Thursday and Friday to the weather but Saturday dawned looking promising. As this was the last day something different was on the cards, a shorter course but a race all the way around with an air start. At 1 o'clock the day-glow cross would go out which had to be photographed before setting off. With things very close at the top nobody wanted to be first off the hill, so it was left to some nonk to lead the way. Looking down from a couple of hundred feet as the other 99 competitors all tried to take off second was certainly a spectacular sight, I managed to reach the 1st turn point in the lead but then the hot shots were passing me by with apparent ease. The second turn point claimed most of the field including Graham, myself and league leader Mark Chick. This enabled Bruce Goldsmith who made it back to base with a good time to clinch the league and be crowned British Champion 1991.

Unfortunately, Graham failed to make the cut by the narrowist of margins and was relegated. Missing the first 1½ leagues and failing to grasp the intricate details of setting a data-back camera* obviously didn't help him.

* He lost all his speed points for not having the time printed on his films.

As for me, I just managed to hang on in there to fight again next year, hopefully to improve on this year's position with the help of the experience gained, there's certainly a lot to learn.

Final Placings:

1	Bruce Goldsmith	4439
2	Mark Chick	4112
3	Robin Hamilton	4090
4	Robin Rhodes	4035
5	John Pendry	4017
28	Peter Coad	2448
37	Graham Phipps	1746

KERNOW GO TO WALES

by John Sekula

What follows is a personal account of a recent foray to the Welsh Valleys and Black Mountains.

I had all but given up on the possibility of getting up to Wales this summer due to the changeable nature of the weather. However, at the August meeting weatherwise it looked quite promising and plans were laid for the weekend. The away team consisted of myself, Rob Ings, Graham May and Roger Clewlow with Bill Scott and Mark Seymour meeting us up there.

Friday 16th August

As luck would have it on route we encountered Graham Phipps and family returning from the league in France. Graham was invited to join us but despite being given every encouragement from the lads he felt he had to decline.

Once in Wales the wind direction was assessed as westerly so it was off to Merthyr Common. As we neared the site 2 or 3 gliders could be seen in the air, it was looking good. A 'road', a track riddled with pot holes and piles of rubbish deposited here and there (reminiscent of Spain), goes to the top - no carry up!

We reached the top at about one, the wind was slightly north of west and felt brisk to say the least. I was assured that this was due to compression caused by the 800' hill and the wind was actually quite light. This seemed to be confirmed by gliders topping out about 100' above the ridge. The sky was grey all over and there seemed to be little in the way of thermal activity, things didn't look so good after all. Just then Tim Jones arrived, such timing, and we rigged regardless of the unimpressive conditions. After rigging, the waiting, eventually Tim could wait no longer, and having done what he had to do decided to give it a go. Assisted by 3 encouraging and essential helpers Tim became airborne and confirmed there was little to be had in the way of height. Roger, keen to establish whether or not his six had suffered any real damage after ground looping while rigging followed soon after. Fortunately, despite his efforts, the glider appeared to fly perfectly and in no time he was up with Tim. Rob and Graham, who had assessed the conditions, were in no rush to take off (cool dudes) so I decided to follow their example and wimp out. Tim came in to land and demonstrated his skill/luck by putting his Kiss down just behind Rob's glider, much to Rob's surprise. We all sat around waiting for things to improve while Roger remained the only one in the air.

It was about three-ish and patches of sunlight were starting to appear so I decided to fly sooner rather than later and get it over with. Three able wiremen assisted as I edged towards the take off, the 'compression' felt strong. I shouted RELEASE, they did and I lunged forwards except I didn't move, the compression WAS strong and the wiremen were quickly back in place. Undaunted the glider was steadied and a second, this time, successful attempt made. Once away and clear of the hill, as predicted, penetration was no problem and I soon joined Roger. After about 10 mins I noticed Roger making good height sure enough thermals were coming through. In no time I was averaging 1000' at occasionally making 1600'. In the relatively light wind it was easy to drift with each thermal and then fly back to the front of the ridge and out over the valley in search of the next. Roger and I had the sky to ourselves, I couldn't understand why no one else was flying, always worrying (apparently the wind had picked up a little). Eventually the gliders lying on the ground moved into position and took off.

For those who have not been to Merthyr the hill is a spine backed ridge which overlooks Merthyr Tydfil in the upwind direction and has a deep valley, the first obstacle in any flights over the back, downwind. On the ground I had had visions of being sunk out in it and encountering rotor and all sorts of nasties but from 1600' above it looked no problem. The real problem was what lay 3 or 4 miles down wind because with the wind slightly off to the North the track lay across densely populated valleys.

I had spent the best part of an hour working thermals back and forth over the ridge when I noticed what I thought was bad weather approaching (in fact it only looked bad because I was so close to cloud-base). With this in mind, and the thought of landing back on top after having such good height, I opted to go with the next thermal and take my chance on finding more lift on route. The dreaded valley passed below almost un-noticed after which the land flattened out. It was just as well because there was no lift to be had despite a zig-zag search, not a beep. After a steady downwind glide I landed on Deri mountain (local name) some 4 miles from take off. What could have been a tortuous retrieve was helped by two locals, practicing their golf near where I landed, who gave me a lift back to the TOP of merthyr common, grateful thanks to them.

With no one else having gone over the back that afternoon it was agreed to de-rig and set forth for the camp site at Llangorse and the Red Lion (I'll spare you the grisly details)!

Saturday 17th August

The sky was looking really good, the wind was from the Northwest and strongish so it was to be Hay Bluff via Hay-on-Wye (Note there are no cash machines for Midland/Nat West or TSB). At the top of the hill the wind-speed registered 40MPH, a little too strong. Bill Scott and Mark Seymour turned up in the latter part of the afternoon having had an earlier flight at Merthyr. Despite waiting and hoping it did not ease and no *real* flying was done. In some respects that was just as well as the exertions of the previous day (more precisely night) were still evident. The evening was again spent at the Red Lion, need I say more!

Sunday 18th August

The wind was from the Northwest, light with clouds starting to form as we had breakfast. Hay Bluff was going to be the place to be.

Hay Bluff is an impressive sight and must be seen to be appreciated, a look at an OS map only gives a vague idea of its size. Unlike Merthyr it involves quite a carry-up, the best part of half-a-mile.

Eventually we were all, the team now numbered 7, on the top, rigged and watching paragliders scooting back and forth along the ridge. By now it was about one with little in the way of thermal activity. One by one gliders took to the air staying up on weak thermals and occasionally going down! However, it was not long before stronger thermals started to come through providing good height for those who caught them. Again the sight of 20 or 30 hang gliders and paragliders converging on one thermal has to be seen to be believed. This was not a place for the faint hearted, and I thought what the hell was I doing there?

It was on Hay Bluff that the animal comes out in the day to day club pilot. Once all preflight checks have been carried out its each for him/her self. The general approach to thermal flying in light winds is to be clipped in and ready to go as soon as a thermal has been detected, the paragliders did a good job of finding thermals. Determined to look the part if nothing else I clipped in and leaned forward on the nosewires to assess what was happening up and down the hill. Led by the likes of Bill, Tim and Mark soon everyone had gone, except for me.

There comes a time when the posing has to stop and that time had come. I moved to the edge and watched the sky for signs of up. Eventually gliders were climbing away from the hill so I decided to go for it. Take off, no problem (apart from having to wait for a gap in the traffic), I went up, then I started to go down, rats. For what seemed like an age, but was probably only three or four minutes, I flew back and forth along the ridge, below the top and close in to avoid going down, not a pleasant experience. Every now and then scraps of lift picked me up above the top but just as I thought about landing sink put me down again. Luck must have been on my side because having decided to fly straight out from the hill I encountered a weak thermal. As I turned the lift strengthened and eventually became an 8 up which took me to nearly 2000' ato. It was a tremendous feeling to see gliders below rushing to join MY thermal. With loads of height to play with and other gliders as indicators it was relatively easy to jump between thermals. The light wind made it possible to go right out in front of the hill then drift back with a thermal well over the Black Mountains before repeating the process and at best I made 2400' ato.

The idea of doing a triangle around the mountains or flying back to the Severn Bridge had been suggested but no specific task had been set. I set my own goal of flying cross wind to Llangorse lake a distance of about 9 miles. Using thermals I gradually edged towards the lake, in stronger winds a ridge run would account for more than 50% of the flight. The lack of other gliders made it more difficult to find the next thermal while maintaining good height. I did manage to play with a few thermals or perhaps I should say they played with me. Eventually I found myself seriously considering where to land as the altimeter unwound and that's where I made a mistake. I picked out a perfect field which I judged I could glide to and have good height to set up a landing, usually I just arrive. It was then, at about 500' agl, that the vario gave a few weak beeps. Dilemma, should I turn and risk not making the field if I lost it or ignore it and carry on. I ignored it and landed 1 mile short of goal. It is obvious on reflection that I shouldn't have banked everything on one field and given myself some options so that I could have turned and probably gone on to make goal. Anyway a lesson learned. I had been in the air just over an hour, covered 8 miles over the ground, probably 16 in the air, and added considerably to my experience. My thanks to Bill's mum for co-ordinating the retrieve and Roger for picking me up.

That afternoon Rob and Mark reached Pandy. Apparently conditions weren't classic and although many had good flights there were no epic distances flown.

The weekend was over and as we headed back to Cornwall a vivid red sunset silhouetted the Welsh hills across the Severn estuary. It had been my first visit as a flyer but I am sure it will not be the last.

The tale of how the 1991 Airwave Challenge Semi's didn't quite go the way we'd planned.

NOT FOR THE WANT OF TRYING.

by Rob Ings.

Saturday 31st. August and Sunday 1st. September:

With time on our hands and a favourable forecast, Daisy and myself decided that some serious training was in order before battle commenced on Saturday, and so on Friday morning, with the Met. Office finally deciding on moderate Easterly winds, we made our way to the Malvern Hills for what we hoped would be some mega-miles.

Flying we certainly got, but we were both somewhat perplexed and bemused, nay astonished at the abuse our bodies if not our kites received. Our flights were very enjoyable but the turbulence experienced was, for me, reminiscent of Ager at half speed.

Nevertheless, good heights were reached, views marvelled at, photographs taken and even successful landings made - but no miles flown. But still, after one and a half hours of aerial gymnastics we were definitely 'warmed up' for the competition to come. That evening we made our weary but contented way the 35 miles to The Long Mynd for some well earned libation; ready for the next day's briefing.

Saturday 31st. August:

After the regulation greasy fry up we arrived at the top of the Mynd and within 10 minutes or so the whole of 'Team Kernow on Tour' put in an appearance, and remarkably all were bright eyed and ready to go.

As Bill explained, 'We arrived last night half an hour before the pubs' closed - so we only managed 3 pints!'

Unfortunately, Daisy would have done well to have heeded the sage's worldly advice. On Friday evening he was well placed (leaning on the door of the pub as it opened at 7.00pm) to take full advantage of the delights of it's Kronenbourg 1664 and, throwing caution to the winds, tried to drink the pub dry. I for my part joined him in his cups with a small Amontillado. Anyway, I digress.....

It was hot, it was hazy, it was sunny, it was Easterly, so it was off to Corndon Hill which although noted as a Northerly site, appears to have a better Easterly face, and to everyone's relief, you can drive right to take off. A moderate breeze was blowing more or less straight in which meant we could use the two rigging and take off areas, thus easing any overcrowding.

To everyone's dismay the task for the day was a crosswind effort of some 28 kms with a minimum 5 kms to score. Now ordinarily this would not have caused too many problems, but in the relatively breezy conditions the drift was approximately 90 degrees from the desired course to goal, and coupled with the rather sporadic thermals, it meant that a crosswind dash, for course adjustment and more lift, more often than not ended in tears!

However, it's the same for everyone so we just had to get on with it. Team tactics were to get at least three Kernow pilots over the back for a quick score and a swift retrieve, while the others kept an eye on things on the hill in case conditions improved, in which case they could also go.

Pete, despite being our official retrieve driver, was first to rig (old habits die hard) and he generously offered to 'wind dummy' for us. Before launching he asked one of the 'locals' for the best place to top land and, after his flight got rotated in at the very spot suggested, fortunately with no injuries sustained. (Some locals are more local than others it would seem)

As it turned out, we were so eager to get going that five out of the first seven pilots into the air were from Kernow! And after about half an hour we'd all gone XC, leaving only Colin at the front to 'cover' - then he also succumbed and 'went for it'.

Our retrieve service - Pete driving, John riding shotgun - worked like a dream, although Daisy somehow slipped through the net, and we were back on the hill within 90 minutes. Unfortunately, those 90 minutes proved to be the best of the day! The window closed at 6.00pm, and despite a couple more flights by the lads, we didn't improve on our score.

So, at the end of the day no one had a clue as to the scores because no one had got around to working them out! Still, we went down to the pub that evening thinking we might be second.

A very enjoyable evening was spent wining, dining and trying to pick up an empty Fruit and Fibre cereal box in our teeth. (A very good game, dreamed up by the South Devon's, which didn't involve blood being spilt).

Sunday 1st. September:

The day dawned shrouded in a thick blanket of mist, but glimpses of the sun promised better things to come. The night had passed uneventfully despite the proximity of one Peter Coad to our tent.

He later confided to us that he'd noticed, during his late night reconnaissance of the campsite, that the South Devon team were sleeping with the door to their Combi wide open. It was only Pete's unwillingness, being completely naked at the time, to make the most of the situation that prevented him from dispatching a 'really useful' tethered goat onto the slumbering victims!

Everyone gathered on The Mynd at 10.00am for the day's briefing and as expected the site for the day was Corndon. Due to the misty conditions the sense of urgency to get flying was lacking as we drove leisurely to the top and surveyed take off; although the prospects did look encouraging.

When the organisers announced the first day's results, we were second - to last!

The previous day's XC measurements had been taken from a different start point from that anticipated, and so we only had two pilots scoring instead of four, which made a great deal of difference. The next few hours Kernow spent bemoaning our lot, wingeing at our lot, accepting our lot, and then saying, 'Bollocks to the lot!' We felt better after that!

The mist slowly burned off and the wind finally settled down to a very light Easterly and so an open XC task was called; no minimum distance to score. On occasions pilots would launch and meet with varying degrees of success but none got high enough to risk an XC.

As the afternoon wore on it became clear that the only flying to be done was of the top to bottom variety while sliding off the side of the hill in the hope of getting a distance. For Team Kernow there was no hope of making up sufficient ground to get us into the Airwave Challenge Final, so by 4.00pm we decided to pack up and make an early start for home.

Only the first two teams progressed into the finals, and they were South Devon and the Southern clubs; congratulations to both.

So to sum up, we all enjoyed an excellent weekend 'abroad' and despite not progressing into the Finals, it was not for the want of trying.

Kernow XC League Positions as at 17/09/91

Po	Name	Distance in Miles					Total	Glider
1	Bill Scott	25.10R	22.20	18.10	8.17	6.66R	80.23	Rumour
2	Pete Coad	37.62	17.65	11.72	8.65	4.52R	80.16	Kiss
3	Graham Phipps	24.52	19.30	5.33	2.55		51.70	Kiss
4	Roger Clewlow	18.07	9.40	4.00R	3.69	2.22	37.38	Magic Six
5	Paul Dunstan	14.31	11.60	3.71	3.17		32.79	Kiss
6	Colin Mc Kenzie	22.20	8.29				30.49	Magic 4
7	Roger Green	11.83	9.81	5.33			26.97	Ace Rx
8	Richard Whitmarsh	15.17	4.57	3.87	3.08		26.69	Ace Rx
9	Barry Green	17.54	2.67				20.21	Kiss
10	Mark Seymour	14.09	5.54				19.63	Kiss
11	Roger Full	14.83	2.32	2.02			19.17	Rumour
12	Monty Pugh	9.63	4.95	3.86			18.44	Kiss
13	Rob Ings	4.52R	4.02	3.56	3.56		15.66	Ace Rx
14	Graham May	15.06					15.06	Kiss
15	Billy Cowell	7.21	3.56	2.62			13.39	Ace Rx
16	John Sekula	5.16	3.27	3.25			11.68	Magic 1
17	Tim Jones	5.54	4.51				10.05	Kiss
18	Graham Woodcock	4.74	3.03				7.77	Typhoon S4
19	Alan Phipps	3.61	3.13				6.74	Calypso
20	Martyn Cartmell	5.54					5.54	Magic Six

D = Double Distance, R = Out & Return, T = Triangle Total 529.75

The latest additions to the XC League were made from the new towing field, near the Ops Room at Portreath. Although quite close to the coast the site proved to be very thermic. The field faces South West and thus effectively inland.

KHGA XC MAP

DEVON

FROM 20th June
TO 17th September

