

BGA accident/incident summaries

AIRCRAFT

Ref	Type	Damage	Date, time	PILOT Injury	P1 hours
115	ASG 29	minor	14/07/18, 18:00	none	996
Competition field landing. The pilot raised the engine at 1,000ft above his chosen field but it failed to erect completely and, despite several attempts, the pilot could not start the engine. Concerned about the length of the landing area (a rugby pitch), the pilot flew the approach with full airbrake and as slow as possible. The glider landed heavily and the gear collapsed.					
116	K-6	substantial	14/07/18, 12:00	none	7
Tail damaged during an otherwise normal landing. As the glider touched down, the pilot heard a bang and, after getting out, saw that the tail skid had been ripped back by about 10cm, damaging the base of the rudder post and bottom of the rudder. The pilot suspects that the hard ground following a period of dry weather may have contributed to the damage.					
119	Arcus	minor	20/07/18, 16:00	none/none	2,953
Undercarriage control rod weld failed during retraction. The pilot at first felt the usual resistance when moving the lever and then nothing. A subsequent cycling indicated that something had broken. The wheel-up landing onto grass caused minor damage to the gelcoat.					
120	Grob 102	substantial	21/07/18, 14:20	none	17
Student pilot crashed in field after getting lost. The pilot had asked to convert to a single-seat glider, but was not current at aerotowing. As it was club policy for first flights in single-seat gliders to be done using aerotow, the pilot first had a successful aerotow check flight before being briefed and sent solo in the Grob, releasing from the aerotow in the same position as before, a couple of miles from the airfield. Although the pilot had started gliding at this club, almost all of his training and solo flying had been done at a coastal airfield. He had only rejoined this club the previous year, although he had very few flights. After releasing, the pilot was immediately lost and flew away from the airfield, eventually planning a circuit into a field. The approach was downwind, one wing caught in crop and the glider landed in the crop travelling backwards. The fuselage snapped behind the wing and the canopy broke. During the debrief, the pilot was unable to produce the training record from his previous club and the new training record he had been given on rejoining this club had no entries. Subsequent conversations with instructors from his previous club indicated a history of incidents and the pilot's own assessment of his abilities was not matched by his previous instructors. The glider was fitted with a navigation device, but the report does not mention whether it was turned on for the flight.					
122	DG-300	substantial	14/07/18, 14:30	none	621
Field landing into crop field. The pilot rejected his originally chosen field and flew straight towards his alternative. Arriving from downwind of the field with insufficient height to fly a complete circuit it wasn't until very short final that the pilot realised that what he thought was a cleared hay field was, in fact, a barley field. The glider stopped quickly and the starboard wing root showed signs of being overstressed during the landing. The report points out that the tramlines clearly indicated standing crop.					
123	K-21	minor	28/07/18, 14:50	none	2
Ballooned landing. After two check flights the pilot was cleared to fly his fifth solo flight, but while he was airborne the wind picked up and veered. The pilot modified his approach direction, but had difficulty maintaining a stable approach speed and direction in the now gusting wind. After the balloon, the glider landed heavily with some sideways movement, damaging the structure around the nosewheel.					
126	Discus	substantial	31/07/18, 16:30	none	137
Field landing damage. Large, hard, dried clods of earth in the otherwise suitable field ripped off an undercarriage door. After the prolonged dry weather, some of the clods were hard enough to stand on without collapsing. A subsequent inspection revealed that the forward fuselage had also been punctured.					
127	Mosquito	substantial	04/08/18, 12:30	minor	1,993
Glider struck by tow rope in flight. About a minute after being waved off in the designated competition release area, the glider pilot saw a tug pass overhead from behind, about 15ft above the glider. Shortly after, the rope wrapped around the fuselage and the tow rings struck the lower rear corner of the right side of the canopy, leaving an A5-size hole. Both aircraft landed safely. The tug was not equipped with a FLARM.					
128	Grob 109	minor	04/08/18, 15:30	none	270
Heavy landing. The pilot made a steep approach with lots of airbrake, but then ran out of airspeed during the roundout. A crack in the fibreglass structure around the undercarriage support bracket was discovered after landing; one wingtip was about 18" lower than the other.					
129	Supermunk	minor	05/08/18, 12:15	none	3,000
At about 300ft ato the tug pilot felt a slight thud on the airframe and could see in the mirror some white fragments passing the glider. The glider released and both aircraft landed safely on the airfield. The glider was undamaged, but the propeller spinner was missing from the tug.					
130	ASW 19	substantial	07/08/18, 13:55	none	30
Field landing undercarriage collapse. The wind was light and the pilot misjudged the wind direction, setting up a downwind landing. The circuit was cramped and the glider landed deep into the field with high ground speed. The wheel struck a mound of hard soil, collapsing the undercarriage and the fuselage was also cracked as it slid along the ground.					

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AIRCRAFT				PILOT	
Ref	Type	Damage	Date, time	Injury	P1 hours
131	SF 25	minor	21/07/18, -	none/none	15,000
<p>Prop strike on take-off. The NPPL SLMG student had a habit of not raising the tailwheel during the take-off ground run and taking off in a nose-high attitude. The instructor re-demonstrated the correct attitude during the take-off for the first flight, a navigation exercise landing at a power airfield with a grass runway. The student was the handling pilot for the second flight and the instructor reminded the student about the appropriate attitude before take-off. On this take-off the student lowered the nose to what the instructor thought was lower than ideal, but he let the student continue the take-off. The TMG passed over a dip in the runway and the propeller struck the ground, damaging both tips. The take-off was aborted. The instructor reports that an early take over would have been preferable to accepting the student's over correction and that, given the student's history and the known undulating state of the runway, perhaps he should have flown the take-off himself.</p>					
132	DG-300	minor	03/08/18, 16:30	none	84
<p>Wheel-up landing on to Tarmac runway. The pilot got low while flying cross-country and made a straight-in approach to a power airfield, forgetting to lower the wheel. The underside of the fuselage had abrasion damage and the CofG hook was also damaged.</p>					
133	K-13	destroyed	08/08/18, 12:45	none/minor	9,648
<p>Trial flight crashed on hill in cloud. After releasing from the aerotow, the pilot soared the nearby ridge with cloudbase several hundred feet above the top of the ridge. A large rain shower was seen approaching, but the pilot was used to dodging rain showers in his thousands of flights from this airfield and wanted to give the P2 value for money. He also rejected the option of flying down the valley as the inevitable land out would disrupt club operations. The pilot headed into wind with the intention of flying through the shower, but the cloudbase came down with the rain and the pilot lost sight of the ground and situational awareness. He had a brief glimpse of the ground just before the glider arrived and groundlooped in grass tussocks on top of the ridge they had been soaring. The P2 had a couple of minor cuts, the P1 was uninjured, both were able to walk down the hill and were picked up by car. The fuselage was bent beyond economic repair.</p>					
134	HpH Shark	substantial	15/08/18, 14:35	none	1,058
<p>Field landing damage to underside of wingtip. The pilot had tried to use the FES to return to the club or a nearby power airfield, but twice received battery voltage warnings and elected to land in a field. His straight-in approach ended in landing with 0 flap rather than +2 and, when a wing dropped, the wingtip caught and the glider groundlooped.</p>					
136	DG-505	minor	16/08/18, 14:00	none/none	80
<p>Wheel-up landing on to grass runway. On previous flights with the student the instructor had not raised the undercarriage as the flights were short. When the P2 asked how to raise the undercarriage the instructor demonstrated its use, lowering the wheel for the landing. On the next flight, the instructor believes that he raised the undercarriage automatically, but then glossed over it during his pre-landing checks and downwind radio call, thinking that he had left the wheel down as in the earlier flights. The student heard the undercarriage warning but, concentrating on the landing, didn't mention it to the instructor, who hadn't heard the warning buzzer. The gelcoat on underside of the fuselage was damaged.</p>					
137	K-13	minor	16/08/18, -	none/none	3,000+
<p>Glider flew into winch cable. The instructor requested a winch gradual power failure at about 500ft ato. He reports a sudden power failure at 300ft ato following which the student lowered the nose to the recovery attitude. The student also reports seeing the airspeed reduce and pushing into the launch failure recovery attitude. The instructor took control when he saw the cable and parachute in front of the glider, but could not stop the cable going over the port wing. He rolled the glider into a steep bank angle, the cable slid off the wing and the glider landed ahead with only minor marks on the paint. Witnesses report that the glider seemed to maintain the winch launch attitude even after the power had reduced, almost to the point of stalling, before the nose dropped into a very steep nose-down attitude. The FLARM trace shows that the top of the pushover was at 425ft ato.</p>					
140	EuroFOX	minor	25/08/18, 16:30	none	278
<p>Tug on approach overflowed a K-21, allowing the rope and rings to hit the glider. The tug had to dodge some rain on the way up to 4,000ft and then skirt the rain again on the way down. Both the grass and concrete runway were occupied, but it wasn't until after he overflowed the K-21 and felt a tug that the pilot realised that he had forgotten to retract the towrope. The K-21 wing was damaged.</p>					
141	Grob 103	substantial	25/08/18 -	none/none	72
<p>Trial flight heavy landing. The pilot reports that the glider was being flown at near the top of the allowable cockpit weight range so he elected to fly the approach at 65 knots. After encountering some turbulence at 50ft agl in the lee of some trees, he reports that the glider did not respond to his attempt to round out, landing heavily and bouncing. The CFI's report suggests a combination of fast approach, lots of airbrake and perhaps some curlover led to a high descent rate needing an earlier than usual roundout. There was substantial damage to the fuselage around the mainwheel.</p>					
142	Grob Astir	minor	29/08/18, 14:35	none	8
<p>Landing groundloop. The wing dropped during the landing in a light 90° crosswind and the glider finished the ground run going backwards, having lost the tail skid and damaging the rudder and tailplane fixtures. One witness reports seeing the glider touchdown on the mainwheel in a nose-down attitude after a fast approach. Using the wheelbrake on touchdown with the tail in the air in a crosswind would only encourage a tailwheel glider to swap ends.</p>					

BGA accident/incident summaries *continued*

AIRCRAFT				PILOT	
Ref	Type	Damage	Date, time	Injury	P1 hours
143	Arcus M	minor	23/08/18, -	none/none	3,950
<p>Uncommanded engine retraction. The engine spindle drive circuit breaker popped during the initial climb, after reaching shutdown height the engine was stopped and the breaker was reset to retract the engine. Some time later the engine was erected normally, but the starter motor did not turn over the engine. The emergency switch was selected and the engine started manually, bypassing the automatic start sequence, but just as it reached full power the pylon retracted with the engine still running. One door was separated from the fuselage, the other stopped the engine. The pilots landed safely in their pre-selected field.</p>					
145	K-6	minor	22/07/18, -	none	380
<p>Damage to rear fuselage and tail skid. The glider yawed slightly during a winch launch take-off and the skid hit a rock sticking out from the grass runway.</p>					
Incidents					
117	Ventus	substantial	15/07/18, 16:00	-	-
<p>Ground towing accident. The towbar in use was the type that hooks over the extended axle of the dolly tailwheel, holding the glider tailwheel in a section of U-channel fastened to the top of the towbar. One of the bolts securing the U-channel to the towbar failed as the car turned, the channel swivelled round the other bolt and, as the weight of the tailwheel was no longer supported by the towbar, the tail dolly rotated around the fuselage until the towbar detached from the dolly. The glider continued into the rear of the car, damaging the elevator and a car window.</p>					
118	Glasflugel 304	substantial	17/07/18, -	-	-
<p>Ground towing accident. While towing towards the launchpoint the driver saw a pair of gliders on approach. He turned sharply to clear the landing area, but the glider came off the tow gear and rotated until the trailing edge struck the car. One flap was crushed where it struck and damaged a light cluster.</p>					
121	K-21	substantial	22/07/18, -	-	-
<p>Crack noticed in the gelcoat near the aerotow hook. On closer examination some surface rippling was found. Removing the front seat pan revealed some inner skin delamination, as well as separation from the half frame at the front of the seat. The repair facility agreed that the damage is consistent with one or more nosewheel strikes and the report speculates whether such damage could have been exacerbated by the hard ground following dry weather.</p>					
124	K-13	none	18/07/18, 14:45	-	608
<p>The airbrakes came open at about 400ft during the winch launch having not been properly locked closed.</p>					
125	Sport Vega	none	31/07/18, 12:10	none	-
<p>Canopy came open during the recovery from a winch launch failure, despite being securely locked before take-off. The pilot's Camelbak was later found on the airfield, it had been stowed behind the pilot's head. The report suggests that the negative G caused by the pushover to recover from the launch failure may have lifted the Camelbak into the canopy locking lever behind the pilot's head, unlatching the canopy.</p>					
135	T-61	minor	16/08/18, pm	-	-
<p>Canopy cracked while being removed during maintenance. The maintenance engineer was working alone and, while raising the canopy to detach the front locking pins, his foot slipped off the steps, the canopy slipped through his hand and struck the fuselage, cracking the canopy.</p>					
138	Grob 103	none	18/08/18, 15:30	none/none	2,100+
<p>Winch cable hang up. The rear seat cable and sheath had just been replaced, the release worked during ground tests so the glider was taken for a test flight. The pilots decided to release under load, but neither the rear release, nor the front release, nor both releases together were able to release the cable. As the glider flew over the winch, the nose started to be pulled down, but the cable then released before the winch driver could operate the guillotine.</p>					
139	K-21	minor	21/08/18, 18:30	-	-
<p>The glider was attached to the retrieve vehicle by rope, with the standard wingtip holder and member alongside the cockpit preparing to tow the glider. The retrieve driver's foot slipped off the clutch and the glider was tugged forward a couple of feet. The member standing beside the cockpit was knocked off balance when hit by the wing and he fell on to and broke the rear canopy.</p>					
144	Skylark 4	minor	07/07/18, 11:00	-	50
<p>Solid wood tow-out bar snapped under tow. Part of an outer wing section was damaged by contact with the tow car.</p>					

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.