

Will Rumsby- Gliding Scholarship

This summer I was given the once in a lifetime opportunity of a week's gliding from the Honourable Company of Air Pilots, at Portsmouth Naval Gliding Centre.

Since a young age, I have always dreamed of becoming a pilot, as the thrill and freedom of flying always excites me. From my own research, I found out about this scholarship a few years ago, however I had to wait until I was old enough to apply!

The interview at Cobham House was tough, but a lot less stressful than I anticipated and I felt a great sense of pride when I received an email from Angie a week later informing me that I had been successful. This definitely motivated me through my GCSE exams, and was always in the back of my mind.

Friday 11th August

On the Friday evening, I nervously made the journey down to PNGC, where I met my fellow course members for the first time. Within minutes it was clear that I would be spending the week with five like-minded individuals, all equally as excited as each other. We were briefed about the week ahead and then it was time to say goodbye to our families.

Saturday and Sunday 12th and 13th August

On Saturday morning, we got up nice and early to move the aircraft out of the hangars. Then at long last the moment we had all been waiting for arrived. Stepping into the glider I felt quite apprehensive, however the second we lifted off the ground the 'flying bug' returned and I remembered exactly why I applied for this scholarship in the first place. The first few flights were spent covering the effects of controls, as a glider acts very differently from a powered aircraft. Over the weekend we experienced the best weather, and I was lucky enough to fly 8 times, adding a further hour and a half of flight time to my logbook.

Monday to Thursday 14th- 17th August



The next few days were spent revising everything we had learned so far, as well as learning new skills such as landing the aircraft. On Monday morning, we were all given the amazing opportunity to experience a DH60 Gypsy Moth flight, as well as numerous flights in the Grob Motor Glider with Lee, a Flybe captain. As the week progressed, so did we. By this this stage of the course we were starting to learn the more advanced techniques of flying such as stalling and practice cable breaks from the winch launch.

Under the careful guidance of my instructor, I could feel that my confidence growing every flight, as well as understanding the importance of learning from your mistakes. Thursday was a special day for two members of the course who managed to go solo.



Friday 18th August

As the week drew to a close, it was time to put the aircraft back in the hangar one last time before our parents arrived for the PNGC awards ceremony. Former Concorde pilot Peter Benn and PNGC chairman Captain David Durstein (RN) spoke about the immense career opportunities available for us. All in all, I managed to fly an incredible 28 times, which is crazy considering that I had only flown 3 times previously.

I would like to extend a sincere thank you to both the Honourable Company of Air Pilots and my sponsor Virgin Atlantic, for giving me this opportunity which otherwise would not have been possible. Secondly, I would like to thank all of the instructors and members at Portsmouth Naval Gliding Centre for all of their hospitality and invaluable advice throughout the week. A special mention to my instructor Chris Terry, who gave his time so generously to teach me how to fly.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow course members who made the week so much more enjoyable. My experiences this summer will truly be treasured for the rest of my flying career, and I hope to one day return the favour to future aspiring aviators.

