

Gliding report - Edward Smith

I was fortunate enough to be selected to be on the gliding scholarship sponsored by the Honourable Company of Air Pilots at Derbyshire and Lancashire Gliding Club from the 15th until the 20th of August 2021.



I arrived on the Sunday afternoon before the course. After the warm welcome from one of our instructors, we were shown around the clubhouse and taken to the hangar to see the aircraft we would be flying for the week to come. Back at the clubhouse we were given our flight logbooks and told what to expect in the week to come. We were told straight away that the main focus was flying and we would have the smallest amount of time in the classroom that was possible, which was amazing because it meant we had a lot of hands on learning in the air.

At the start of the first day we were taught how to drive the tractors which we needed to do to pick up the gliders from where they landed and bring them back to the launch location. We also learnt about the checks that we had to do to the gliders both at the start of the day, and also before each flight, along with how to get the gliders out of the hangar. This day was unique due to the wind direction meaning we had a west take off and landing which is a lot shorter than the runway facing south which we used for the rest of the week. The rest of the day was like all of the other flying days that we had. We were busy all day, even when we were not getting our glider ready for flight or flying, we were on the tractor picking up another glider or logging flights on the computer.

I was fortunate enough to get an 87 minute flight on the first day due to the wind allowing for good ridge lift. On this flight I learnt about adverse



yaw, how to turn with rudder, trimming to adjust for speed and more.



We had two days in which the weather was not good enough to allow us to fly which was unfortunate, however we spent the day on the indoor simulator in the club house. Although this wasn't as good as the real thing, it allowed us to get some good practise on what we had already tried in the air, and also try some things we would be doing later in the week such as landing.

The simulator also gave us the opportunity to do things we wouldn't be able to do in the air such as spins, spiral dives and cross country flying.

We could fly on the last two days, however there were not any thermals or any ridge lift so we couldn't fly for as long as on the first day. This however had the benefit of allowing us a lot of short flights, which meant we could practise a lot of launches and landings. I got to do the top of a launch and I had the opportunity to land on my own. This was a very difficult but rewarding



experience. There is a lot to think about, look at and do but your instructor is helpful on giving you guidance, so it was very fun when you could do it all successfully.

I am extremely grateful to the Honourable Company of Air Pilots for awarding me this scholarship as it has introduced me to gliding which is something I would never have done. Giving me this unique experience has taught me a lot and inspired me into a career in aerospace. I would definitely recommend this scholarship for anybody who is considering it.