

Aodan Chislett-Trim

Gliding Scholarship Journal

Day 1 - Tuesday

The first day of my gliding scholarship at the London Gliding Club started off nice and early with an 08:30 meet. I was then introduced to my instructor Istvan Toth who would help me learn to glide for the week. Istvan told me a little about himself he is Hungarian and has had lots of gliding experience in the past including in the Scottish Highlands and at Dunstable every summer from now on before returning home to Hungary. We were then given a lengthy briefing about the airport do's and don'ts and more importantly how to fly a glider correctly. I was first to fly and through shadowing Istvan's controls in the front seat after a few mins into my first flight I was beginning to understand the basics. On my first flight Istvan was confident I was able enough to land the glider. It was a near perfect landing for my first time I was very happy with myself! I then returned later after a great lunch served by Trevor in the cafe for another flight which was unfortunately cut very short due to communications from nearby Luton airport to ground our glider. Istvan took control from here and took me to over 110 knots in the glider also showing me some aerobatic stunts on the way! As we landed



we could see a lightning strike in the distance so was very sensible to land our glider. The first day was rounded off with a debrief of what was to come tomorrow and what activities we did during the day. The highlight of my day was a wing wave to an EasyJet A320 in the Luton flight path only about 200 m above us. Back again nice and early for another full day of gliding, can't wait!

Day 2 - Wednesday

The winch was today's mission. After being shown how to take off using the winch by Istvan on my first flight of the day, I later had 5 other flights during the day where I was able to practice my take offs. At first the acceleration and how steep the climb was really took me by surprise but after a few take-offs I was getting more used to it. Unfortunately, the weather conditions were not in my favour and the longest out of the 6 flights was around 11 minutes. However, this meant I was able to practice my circuits, landing and take-offs in the glider, I was becoming more and more confident with every flight. The highlight of my day was soaring over Whipsnade Zoo seeing a heard of Zebras galloping around in a straight line. Hopefully tomorrow's weather conditions mean I can get up in the air for longer.



Day 3 - Thursday

I was wrong at 09:00 in the morning there was thick fog surrounding the airfield. I thought I wasn't going to fly today. However the fog lifted quickly just before 11:00 and so after breakfast I made it to the briefing room once again where we watched some video clips of the previous day looking out for common mistakes and things which went well. I started flying in the afternoon and had 3 flights back to back from the winch where I got the hang of the take offs and how to maintain the speed and keeping in mind a sensible take off gradient. Then, we did short circuits around the airfield as lift was limited so I was able to land myself and complete the circuit without the help of Istvan. After a short break we returned to the winch before the evening session started for 2 more flights where I was fully in control of the aircraft. I was able to take off, complete the right hand circuit and land the glider all on my own without Istvan saying a word. I was told if I was given longer I would be on my way to completing my first solo! Hopefully tomorrow will bring some longer flights for my last day of the scholarship.



Day 4 - Friday

My last day of gliding started once again with an early start. The first flight of the day was a short circuit meaning once again I could practice my take-offs using the winch and landings unaided. My second flight was much longer as we managed to find some lift which kept us up for much longer and we reached 2600 ft unfortunately, we missed some wave lift from the clouds which could have meant we were up there for even longer. However, this flight was one of my longest yet and I enjoyed every minute of it! This excitement carried on with the following two flights where I performed two near perfect landings in some very difficult weather conditions. The control vehicle had a red flag warning which meant the conditions were very bad. It was even more noticeable in the air as every gust of wind was amplified on the controls, still it made for a very interesting and entertaining flights as I had to battle with the controls to keep the glider pointed where I wanted it to go. After lunch and a certificate presentation lead by two members of the Honourable Company of Air Pilots it was time for the flight I had been most looking forward to all week, the aerobatics! Istvan told me that we would be using aerotow for this flight so we were able to climb to 3000 ft which meant we had lots of space for upper air activities like loops and spirals. Istvan handed the controls to me once we had got off the ground a little and briefed me how to fly behind the tug plane. Istvan was expecting me to keep control of the glider for at least 20 seconds but I was able to control the glider in harsh conditions all the way to 3000 ft. He was so impressed with my flying he uploaded the clip to his YouTube Channel where you can watch the clip here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=enlef6yA1d8>



The week was brought to a close with 3 loops, 2 spiral dives and finally 3 controlled stalls which all put a huge smile on my face. It was such a fantastic week where I learnt so much about gliding. It is definitely something I would love to do more of in the future! Thank you very much the Honourable Company of Air Pilots, The London Gliding Club and Istvan Toth for making this experience so memorable and for giving me such a brilliant experience which has really fuelled my passion for aviation.

