

Ciaran Cain Gliding Scholarship



Back in 2019 I took my first flight in a glider, however, I wasn't quite old or tall enough to begin gliding. I waited until summer 2022 to join my local gliding club up in Andreas on the Isle of Man. I managed to get an hour or two of gliding in that summer before the weather and maintenance stopped flying. My next flight was February 2023.

From the beginning I always wanted to do a residential course across in the UK, but funding would've proved difficult with all the extra travel costs associated with living on an island. I began to research scholarships that were out there when I came across the Honourable Company of Air Pilots and their scholarships. I applied and managed to get an interview which led to me being successful in gaining a scholarship!

I was based at the Midland Gliding Club for a week at the start of the summer holidays. I ended up being the last to arrive to the club on the Sunday evening, but I was met with a very warm welcome by a few club members along with everyone on the course for the week.

Throughout our time there we all got stuck in with learning how to launch gliders safely at the club as they have a winch and retrieve system, which is a little different to other clubs. There was a strong breeze all week and on the first 2 days it was a westerly which meant the ridge was working. I managed a 37-minute flight on the Monday with Andy in the K21 before swapping to the K13 and getting a 56-minute flight with Dave to practice stalling on the Tuesday. In the end we managed a full 5 days of flying which was amazing.

After a day of flying, we'd have a chance to sit with our instructors and debrief what we had each learned through the day. Dave and Andy were both extremely knowledgeable and had many stories to tell us about their careers and were great to answer any questions we had to do with gliding or even their careers.



Once we had everything packed up and had sorted out our logbooks, we sat down to amazing meals cooked by Helen, and we were certainly never going to go hungry! Some nights after our meal we had a chance to mess around in the gliding simulator and perform aerobatics or play some card games like bluff which was very enjoyable and a great way to make friend with everyone else on the course.

All in all, it was a great week and I'm extremely grateful to the Honourable Company for giving me this unique opportunity to do something I really enjoy and as well

a huge thanks to our instructors Andy and Dave along with everyone else at MGC for making this an extremely enjoyable week and one to never forget!

And to top it all off, once I returned home to the Isle of Man, I managed to go up to Andreas that weekend and complete my first ever solo flight in a glider.

