

## Jacob Nelson Gliding Scholarship

Gliding is a fantastic sport and discipline of aviation and I thank The Honourable Company Of Air Pilots for giving me the opportunity. The course commenced at AAC Middle Wallops Officer Mess which for me was a fantastic insight into military life. After meeting everyone we were briefed by Dave Howell and Ed Hillman whom worked tirelessly throughout the week to make the course run as efficiently as possible.

The first two days were spent on the airfield at AAC Middle Wallop where in our syndicates we started to learn and see for ourselves how important the community of the gliding club is for safe and fun flying. We were shown all the elements of the gliding club, from building the gliders that had been transported in trailers to attaching the cables from the winch to the aircraft. Then of course the bit we had all been waiting for – our first flight in a glider. My first launch was from the winch and the only thing I can remember was how fast everything was going past the canopy. It was incredible and slightly overwhelming.



As the week progressed, we all started to understand what we had to do and where we had to be and solid progress was made in the gliders. I had a hard time coordinating my turns, aileron and rudder and then small adjustments as the turn was held, however the more flights I got the easier it became. One of the benefits of being in small syndicates with two instructors was you always had a second opinion. If one instructor's method wasn't clicking you had the opportunity to have a flight with the other and often the problem was solved. The log books we were provided with planned out clearly the steps to get to your first solo which brilliantly some of our course did achieve. Some highlights that come to mind were experiencing G force for the first time when performing stall recovery procedures, my first take-off and landing with no input from the instructor and getting a short flight in the Chipmunk the club use for aerotows.

Evenings were spent in the Mess which was a great environment to relax. We had a variety of guest speakers from commercial and military flying backgrounds whom inspired us all with their personal stories to the cockpit. The course finished with a short morning of flying and a formal presentation at the Mess which we were able to meet our Sponsor and share our stories of the brilliant week of gliding.



It would be fair to say we were all gutted to be leaving. As a course we bonded really well and got into a good routine for the duration of the week. I would encourage anyone to apply for a scholarship with Air Pilots, it was a fantastic week. I've learnt so much and made a group of new likeminded friends. Portsmouth Naval Gliding Club who ran the course were very accommodating and the generosity and hard work of all the instructors didn't go unnoticed. I can't wait to get back gliding and get my first solo!