



SAFETY ADVISORY

Hang Glider Sail

During a service check on a glider the trailing edge of the sail was found to have torn along the batten pocket stitch line. The glider was an Aerial Arts Clubman. Whilst the glider is at least ten years old, the sail was generally in good condition. The reporter felt that the stitching method employed during construction had caused a weakness.

This tear could have led to a catastrophic failure of the sail in flight – the trailing edge being a highly stressed vital part of a hang glider's structure.

- Owners of all hang gliders should check the trailing edge as part of their Daily Inspection routine.
- Owners of Aerial Arts Clubman gliders should check this are very carefully. If there is any damage at all the glider should not be flown.

Solar Wings Keels

Solar Wings have sent out a Service Bulletin which draws attention to an area which can get damaged during fully flared landings. On all Solar Wings gliders the rear of the sail is attached to the keel by a self-tapping screw. Pilots should check for signs of cracking or distortion around this point, and re-inspect after any high load has been applied to the rear of the keel.

Solar Wings have also suggested drilling two 6mm holes, close together (8mm between them) across the bottom of the tube, 25mm behind the rear cable sleeve. These should ensure that, if overloaded, the keel will fail there first.

Sup-air Air-foam "Mousse" back protectors

It has been found that the male (hook) velcro patches on the rear of one of these has abraded its way through the harness container fabric and had started to damage the fabric of the emergency parachute.

Velcro has been used by various manufacturers to supply a retaining anchor to prevent the airbag or back plate moving around in the harness, and in this case to allow the airbag to be rolled up for easy transport. However, velcro can be a very abrasive material and similar damage has been noted in the past when velcro closures on harnesses have contacted parachutes or other delicate materials.

It is strongly recommended that all pilots check their harnesses, backpads and parachute systems to ensure that there is no velcro/fabric contact. Owners of Sup-air air/foam bags are advised to contact the UK importers (Northern Paragliders 01931 715120) who can advise on a suitable course of action or will supply a free female patch to blank the offending area.

Discovery 195

It has been reported that on some Discovery 195s the two bolts that connect the upper and lower side wires to the cross-tube may have only half to one-and-a-half threads showing above the top of the Nyloc nut. Owners are recommended to carefully inspect these fittings. If insufficient thread is showing, replacement nuts and bolts are available, free of charge, from Offpiste Aviation at 52 Long St., Dursley, Glos., GL11 4JB tel/fax: 01453 546991.