



Instructor and Coach Newsletter

Dear instructors and Coaches,

Welcome to the latest edition of the BHPA Instructor and Coach newsletter.

In this issue:

- 1/ Managing expectations.
- 2/ Notice of Paragliding (hill) syllabus changes.
- 3/ The 2020 Trainers conference.
- 4/ Instructor & Coaching course diary.

Articles & suggestions for I & C news can be mailed to: ian-currer@bhpa.co.uk

1/Managing expectations.

In 2019 reports have been received of some new pilots who have appeared fresh from school on club sites; but appear to have been ill-prepared to fly safely in a club environment.

There are a few reasons for this; sometimes there are significant delays before the new CP gets to a club, and their skills have deteriorated, sometimes the sites and even the kit is quite different from what was familiar in the school.

But unfortunately, there have also been occasional cases where subsequent checks indicate that the school had awarded the student a CP when they had simply not had adequate time or practice to consolidate their skills sufficiently within the school.

There is particular pressure on schools training students on holiday to try and get them signed off as CP's, as the unpalatable alternative is for the student to go to another school; or have to return on another occasion to complete their training. The students themselves are often pushing to complete, for the same reasons.

This applies to both Paragliding (Hill) and Paragliding (Power) training.

These pressures cannot be allowed to influence the schools' responsibility to ensure the student is safe to fly without instructor supervision when they leave. If they still need any instructor input on the last couple of flights, they are not ready.

The BHPA has produced the document below regarding Paragliding (Hill) that is designed to give students a realistic view of what each rating consists of and the route to achieving it. A further similar document addressing the paragliding (Power) syllabus is planned.

This is in two parts, a description of what is involved and a "quick glance" table.

The BHPA will publish this, and it also be would be useful for all schools to make this available to every student, either as a handout, or on the school website, in order to help manage the expectations of the students, and to refer to if students ask about what is involved and how long it will take.

Guidance on the Pilot Rating Scheme for prospective Paragliding Hill trainees.

Level	What is it?	What do you have to do to reach this level?
Advanced Pilot rating	The rating where the Pilot is deemed very experienced, and has the knowledge and skills to cope with a wide range of challenges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete >10km, >20km and > 30km cross country flights • Complete a >10km cross-country flight to a declared goal • Complete a >20km out and return cross-country flight • Have logged at least 100hrs airtime. • Have successfully completed a BHPA safety training (SIV) course. • Pass the “Advanced pilot” exam paper.
Pilot rating	The rating where the pilot is deemed ‘fully qualified’; and has the knowledge and skill to fly and navigate safely in a variety of conditions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform consistent launches in winds of less than 5mph. • Competent top landings at different sites • Have flown a variety of locations including inland flying sites • A minimum of 25hrs & 50 flights logged • 5 x accurate landings (<10m) • 3 x flights using thermal lift where the height gain exceeds 1,000ft. • Display an understanding of instability situations. • Pass the “Pilot” exam paper.
Club Pilot (CP) rating	The minimum standard to fly unsupervised in the club environment (away from the school), making your own decisions in order to conduct your flight safely.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform consistent forward and reverse launches. • Safely handle the glider safely in a variety of flying conditions, with other aircraft in the air. • Consistently good landing approaches, with good landings in a defined area. • A minimum of five* successful ridge soaring flights. (Or 2hrs airtime for Alpine students). • Demonstrate instability manoeuvres and a knowledge of emergency situations. • Usually 6 to 8 days’ training on the hill. Often more. • Pass two written exams. • Satisfy the Senior Instructor that you are flying at CP level.
Elementary Pilot award	The first stage of training to become a paraglider pilot. It does not give the pilot permission to fly without instructor supervision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be able to assess conditions and the suitability of your equipment; and prepare it for flight. • A minimum of twelve* successful flights (excluding low hops) that achieve the objectives set out in your Student Training Record Book. • Usually four to five days’ training on the hill. • Pass a written exam. • Satisfy the Instructor that you are flying at EP level.

*** REALITY CHECK:** these numbers are **minimums**. Many students do twice this number of flights in order to complete the exercise to their Instructor’s satisfaction. Don’t fall into the trap of expecting to achieve your rating by doing the minimum – in reality this never happens!

The BHPA Pilot training syllabus

The BHPA Elementary pilot's course.

What is involved?

The syllabus is progressive; and starts with an introduction to the equipment and the basic skills of site and weather assessment. Safety is critical, and some time is spent ensuring each student is able to conduct a good daily inspection of all the equipment and environment. Your instructor will demonstrate how to prepare for flight and the pre-launch checks, before showing you how to launch and control the paraglider.

After a period of ground training, the next step is several small low level "hops" maintaining good airspeed, practising the landing flare, and collapsing and moving the paraglider. Once this is mastered, you will be progressively introduced to higher and longer flights.

The EP exercises must be done in order and there are specified minimum numbers of successful flights that must be completed before the next exercise can be attempted. This means that a "perfect" student (*i.e.* one who does every exercise to a good standard on every flight) would require twelve flights to complete the EP flight requirements, not including ground training and first hops. In reality this generally means around 20 flights.

By the end of the EP course the student should be able to check their kit, prepare for flight, make a simple flight plan, carry out the planned flight and consistently make good landings. There is also a short multiple-choice exam paper that covers the basics of the principles of flight, simple weather, and the rules of the air.

How long will it take?

Variables such as the wind and weather, the size and shape of the flying site, the students' fitness level and aptitude for learning can all have a bearing on the rate of progress. Many students manage to reach EP level in four good days of flying. If conditions do not co-operate or there are significant gaps between your training days, getting to EP level may require several more training days.

Bear in mind that the instructor will be progressing the students at the rate they feel is suitable for each individual. If there are large gaps between the days a student can train, the instructor may take a student back a few steps and "refresh" exercises that they may have already completed.

The BHPA Club Pilot (Novice) course and rating.

What is involved?

The CP exercises cover using lift - this could be dynamic soaring on a ridge; or using convection (thermal lift). This requires good glider handling skills and observation. Students will need some spare mental capacity beyond flying aircraft to deal with the fact they may be sharing the air with others. It will take several flights to achieve competence in this area.

Lots of focus by students is on soaring flights or altitude, but it is very important that launching skills in both light and moderate winds are mastered, as the take-off is one of the most potentially hazardous elements of a flight. Longer flights mean conditions may change in flight, so a number of exercises such as rapid descent techniques,

exploring the speed range and using an accelerator system are introduced and the student should be comfortable using them.

Most UK based pilots will need to be able to top-land at their club sites, so this skill must be covered as well, this exercise is in two parts, the theory means that students are familiar with different approaches, hazards etc, and will involve “walking through” the options. This is then followed up with practical top landing skills.

Some mountain-based schools are unable to offer the students an opportunity to complete the five good top landings that they require to become fully qualified. In these cases, the school can compensate with additional soaring and theory training, and the top landing practical can be done with coaching or instructor assistance on a more suitable site. All students must have the skill set to be competent to attempt this.

The Club pilot rating also involves some further theory knowledge which is tested by two multiple choice exam papers. The subjects are Principles of flight, Meteorology, Airlaw and Airmanship/Human factors. These are usually delivered by the instructors as a series of theory sessions, often backed up with notes or resources for self-study.

How long will it take?

Like the EP, the CP rating represents a standard of flying skills and knowledge - it is **not** a number of flights or a number of days. The conditions for soaring flight can be elusive, so it can take many flights and waiting for the right day to reach a level of competence and confidence with all the exercises required. For a competent and reasonably current student that holds the EP award, a rough guide is that at least six days of instruction in good flyable weather is needed, but it is more likely that 7 or 8 days will be required.

A common question (particularly from those considering a CP course on holiday) is “can it be done in one week?”

It is like asking how many driving lessons someone needs to pass their test. It is not impossible for a capable student who is fairly current from gaining their EP and is lucky enough to get good consistent weather; however, it would be unrealistic to assume that every EP student will achieve a CP rating in only a week of tuition. It is very common for the syllabus to take anything from 8 to 10 or more days to complete.

The instructor and student must have reached the point where they are both confident that the student can go away and fly safely without any instructor supervision. If the student requires instructor input on their last couple of flights, then they are not ready.

Where next?

Once CP qualified the new pilot will be the “pilot in command” and be entirely responsible for the safe conduct of their flight. This can be quite daunting, so all new pilots are urged to make contact with their local club and using the coaching system to continue learning. They should fly with the red ribbon to alert other pilots that they still quite inexperienced. Coaches are volunteers and as they are not professional instructors, they can only offer advice. This is particularly important for the first 10 hours or so. Once beyond 10hrs and comfortable with top landings; (the “foundation” level), the Club Pilot can remove their red ribbon.

It is important to remember that the Club Pilot is a novice rating and you are right at the beginning of what will hopefully be a long and safe flying paragliding journey - all flyers are urged to progress through the BHPA’s rating system (to “Pilot” rating and beyond), and to keep a log of all their flights.

2/ Notice of Paragliding (Hill) syllabus changes.

The next edition of the Student Training Record Books will include some changes. These proposals will be submitted to the FSC for ratification early in 2020, so any comment or input should be received well before the Trainer's conference in March 2020.

The Elementary level will remain unchanged; but the Club pilot syllabus will offer two choices for some exercises. One option is to complete the existing exercises which are aimed at students training in a dynamic hill soaring environment, and the second option is to choose the alternative version of the exercise, which is aimed at students training in an Alpine environment (*i.e.* On mountain sites with light winds and convection lift).

The fundamental changes/ Additions under consideration for Alpine students are:

21. Theory: The student should gain an understanding of Thermal activity, Anabatic and Katabatic flows, Valley winds.

22. 180 degree turns: This will be expanded to require turns of at least 360 degrees maintaining a constant low angle of bank. Both directions.

23. Planned approaches: Planned approaches using the constant aspect method should be used. Controlled landings within 20m of a designated target at least 4 times.

24. Soaring: This can be achieved using convection lift; at least 6 flights of at least 20minutes duration (or equivalent) must be completed. At least 2 of which must be on a separate site or a separate day.

Top landing theory and reverse launching remain in the syllabus for all students.

Top landing practical and side slope landings will remain optional.

The purpose of these changes is to reflect the skills required by the increased number of students training in an Alpine environment. It also brings us into closer correlation with the International pilot proficiency scheme levels.

3/ The 2020 Trainers conference.

This is now confirmed for Friday March 6th & Saturday 7th 2020 at Lilleshall National Sports Centre in Shropshire.

The conference will include presentations from the technical staff and members of the FSC on developments over the last couple of years. It will provide a chance for instructors and coaches to have their say, and to influence the association's direction. All things to do with safety, training, and coaching will be covered, including changes to the training syllabus, post CP training, accident and incident reports. There will be the chance to discuss particular projects and interests in smaller groups.

The BHPA 2020 AGM will be held at the same venue on the Saturday afternoon, and will include awards, election to the executive committee, etc. It would be good to see some instructors and coaches attending that as well. Further details and a conference agenda will be published in the new year. But do put this date in your dairies now!

4/ BHPA Course diary

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Club Coach courses:	Oct 19th-20th	Derbyshire Soaring Club
	Dec 6th & 7th	Available
	2020 Jan 18th & 19th	Devon & Somerset Condors
	March 14th & 15th	Available

Emergency parachute repack course Nov 16th & 17th 2019 Perth Scotland

2020

Trainers conference: March 6th & 7th Lilleshall Shropshire

Instructor/ senior coach course: (Prov) April 20th-22nd Lilleshall Shropshire