



*I & C Newsletter Issue 29 January 2024*

## **Instructor and Coach Newsletter**

Dear Instructors, Coaches and Dual Pilots

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

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### **Welcome**

Welcome to Edition 29 of the Instructor and Coach newsletter. Dual pilots are included in its distribution. It has been sent to the email addresses we hold on file for our Coaches, Instructors and Dual Licence holders.

The BHPA membership stands at over 7,000 members which reflects the great work done by schools at bringing in new members, and by Clubs in supporting their flyers – which encourages them to retain their membership.

Articles & suggestions for I & C news can be emailed to: [office@bhpa.co.uk](mailto:office@bhpa.co.uk) **BHPA Technical Department.**

# 1. Report on the 2023 Trainers Conference

This was held online on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> November.

It was hosted from the BHPA head office by Angus Pinkerton (Chairman Flying & Safety Committee), assisted by Ian Curren and Mark Shaw, Senior Technical Officers. Also in attendance was Marc Asquith, BHPA Exec member and Admin & Insurance Officer.

Mark Shaw outlined some housekeeping and procedures for the meeting. The technical aspect of the online format worked effectively with no problems.

Some delegates did not stay for the whole conference and some joined later but overall attendance was in the region of 35 delegates online, some logins were shared by more than one person. Apologies were received from a further three schools who were operating overseas and were unable to join, or were actively training and unable to attend.

Angus opened the meeting, welcoming the delegates and outlining the agenda.

**Revised Student Training Syllabus.** Ian Curren presented the 8<sup>th</sup> Edition of the PG (Hill) Student Training Record Book (STRB), due to be published for the 2024 season. He noted the changes from the current version and the reasons for those changes. The changes, (several had been suggested by CFI's) were broadly welcomed, though a lively debate concerning the wording of the "accurate approaches" exercise produced some useful insights, and in view of this the syllabus has been reviewed by the FSC.

A Chief Coach asked if Club Coaches could be effectively teaching dynamic soaring to CP holders who had qualified in Alpine conditions. The answer is yes, provided they feel capable of doing so. (This situation remains the same as it has been for the last few years). Though with the significant increase in airtime now required students following the "mountain" route, the standard can only improve.

One Senior Development Instructor noted that they felt that there should be only one version of CP that required all students, even those practiced at the "Mountain" skills listed in the record book (multiple 360's constant aspect approaches and using thermal lift), should also have completed some dynamic soaring close to the terrain.

Ian responded that it was hoped that by listing all the useful skill sets in the STRB, schools would indeed (where possible) try and promote the goal of mastering all the exercises. However, it was noted that not every school had the facilities to offer this.

One delegate noted that their club would not allow CP's trained in a Mountain environment to join until they had a Dynamic Soaring conversion. The technical staff will discuss this with the club.

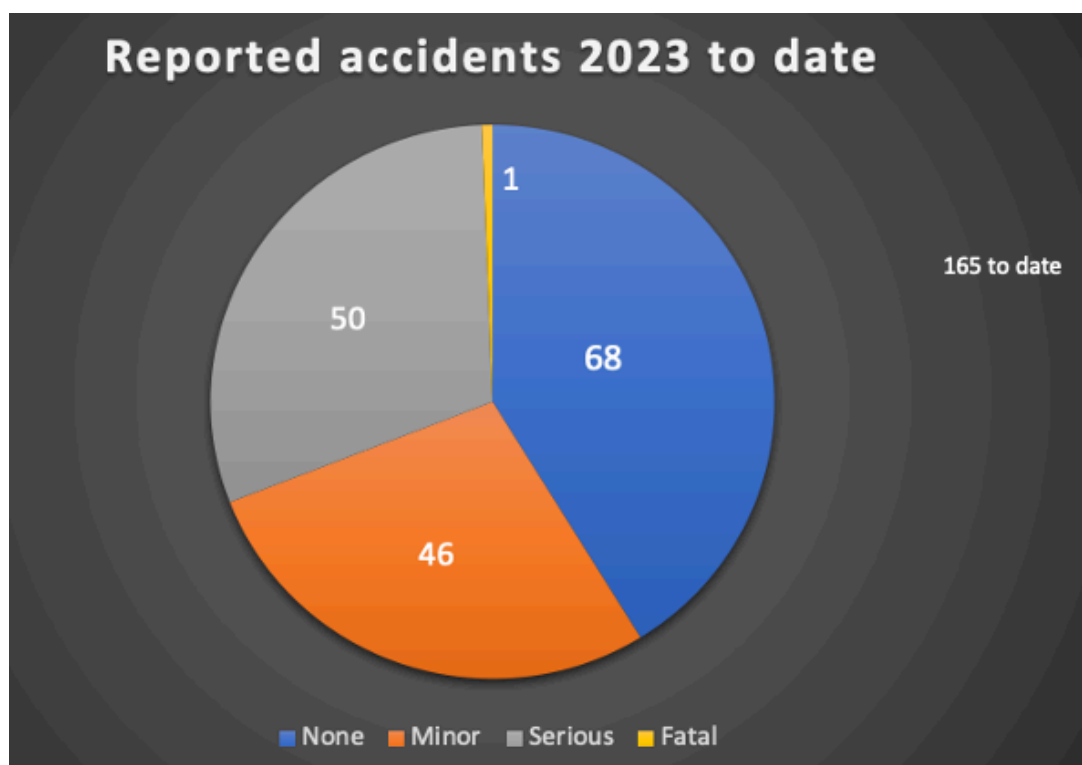
**Exams & Inspections.** Mark Shaw gave a report on examinations and school inspections. To summarise, the technical staff are doing quite a few exams, standards have varied and there have been a few unsuccessful exams. School inspections have shown a steady improvement in standard over the last few years, though Mark highlighted a few paperwork issues (missing student signatures, operations manuals not updated etc.) that are still occasionally an issue.

**SIV for instructors?** For the last few years, the BHPA has required dual licence candidates to have attended an SIV (Advanced Glider Control) course.

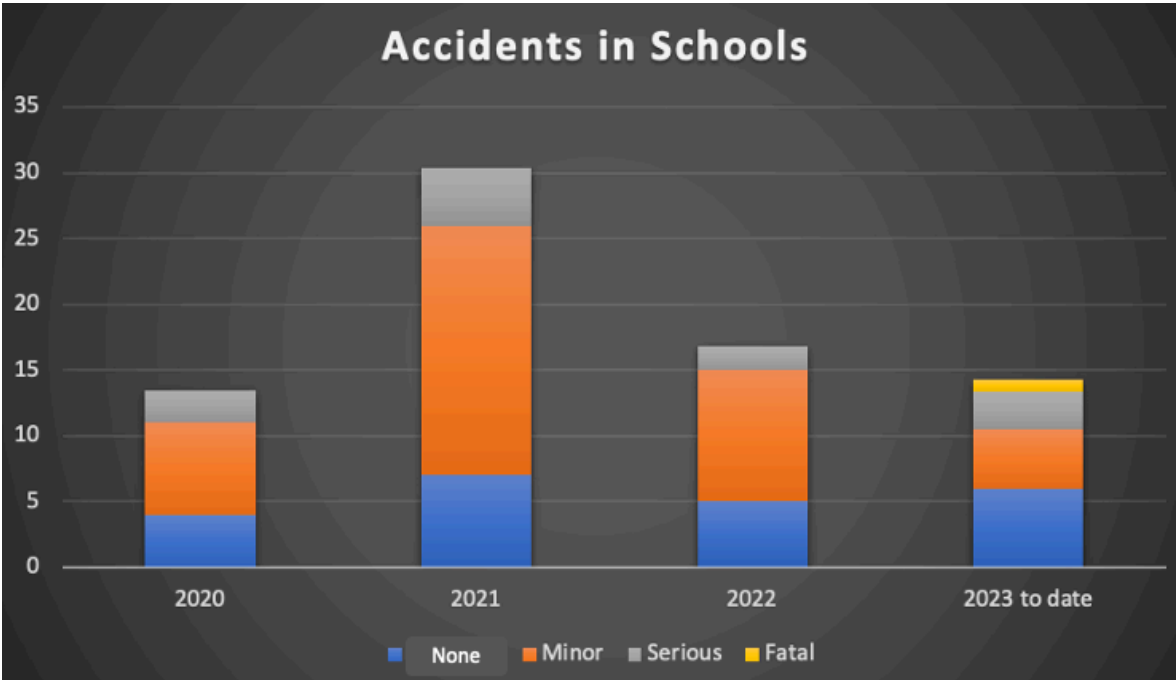
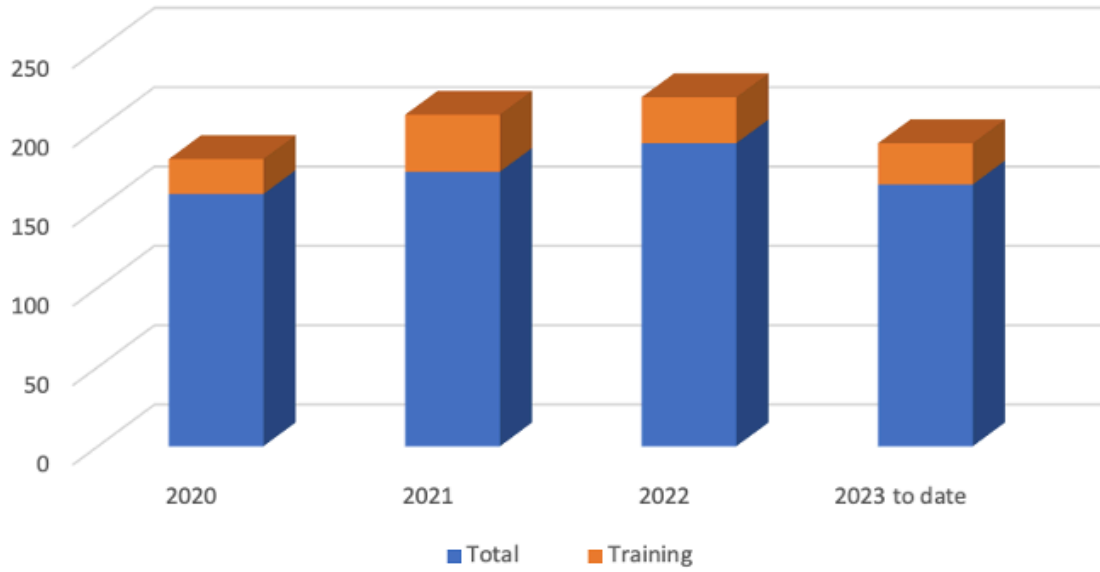
Instructors are required to discuss and explain various instability situations with their students, including stalls, spin recognition, dealing with an asymmetric collapse etc. Yet it is possible that they themselves have never been trained in managing these situations.

For these reasons the conference unanimously agreed this should be addressed, and FSC have now determined that having attended a suitable course should be a pre-requisite to applying for an Instructor Licence. (Note: this is for new applicants, not a requirement for existing Instructors, although they are also encouraged to attend a suitable course).

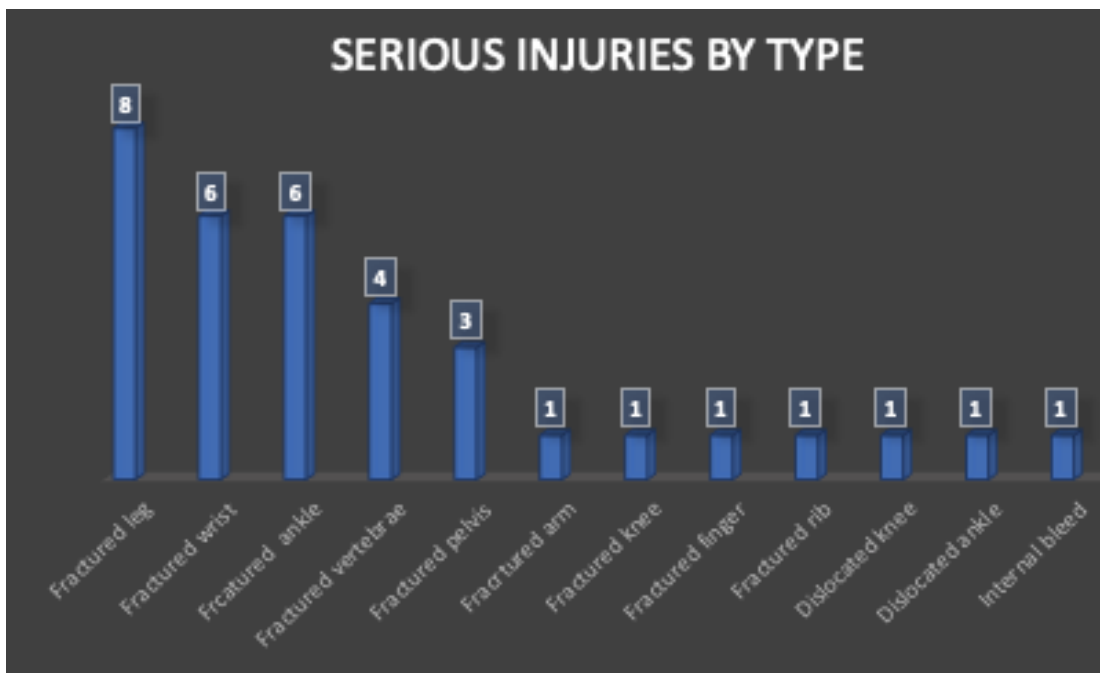
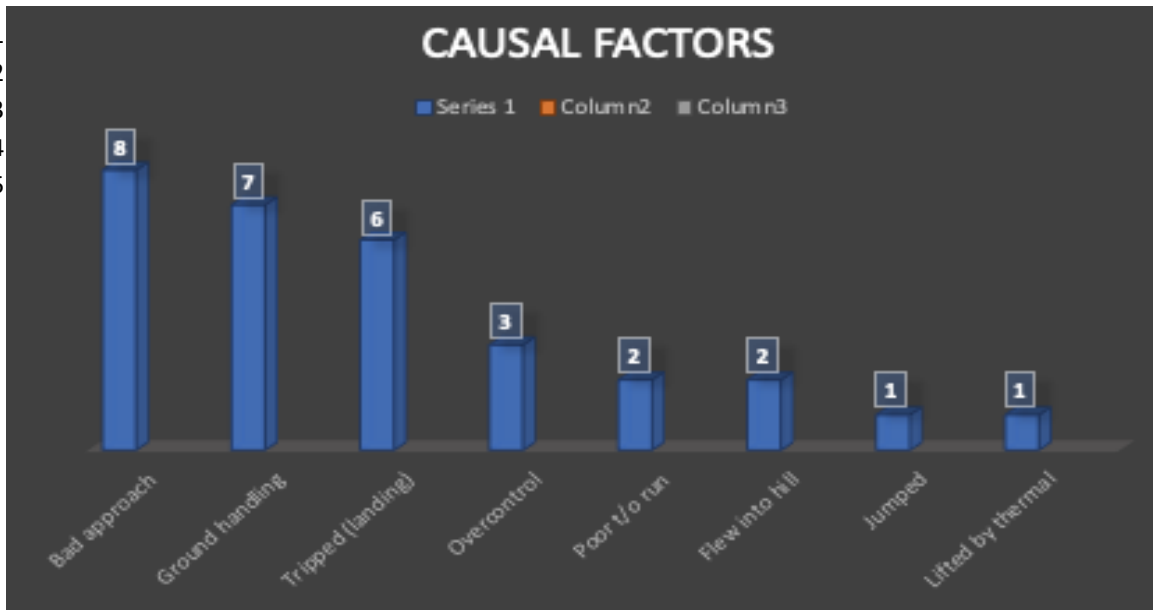
**Accident Statistics.** Mark Shaw presented a report and analysis of UK accidents reported in the last 4 years. He then focussed on accidents in schools, the causes and the injuries that had been sustained. The charts are shown below. Mark noted that on the whole training remained a well-controlled and relatively safe part of the sport. Though very sadly the first training fatality in many years had occurred in 2023.



### BHPA Accident Statistics



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2  
3  
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5



Mark then summarised the main areas of risk and there was a discussion about how best to mitigate these risks. Cross-wind landings or obstacles in the landing area is a significant hazard, as is ground-handling in strong conditions. Consolidation training before progressing is a key tool in managing these risks.

**Pilot Exams.** Ian Curren gave a presentation about the online “Pilot” exams. Most delegates considered this a good step forward and some who had already been involved in the trials shared their views and feedback with the conference. It was suggested that the exams be reviewed by someone for whom English is not their first language to try and improve clarity.

The BHPA Pilot Handbook does not cover some of the knowledge areas required to prepare for the “Human Factors and Airmanship” paper of the Pilot exam. A separate BHPA document that addresses this area is available on the BHPA website. Details are in section 4 of this newsletter.

The idea of a “mock” CP exam to test areas of knowledge before taking the actual exam was also suggested and generally approved. This had been added to the technical staff “To Do” list.

In future an online format for Club Pilot and Environment exams may be provided as an option by the BHPA.

**Instructor Training.** The issues of slow progression and the short BHPA Instructor courses were discussed. Many TI’s drop out before qualifying, which is not good for the sport (or for the ageing Senior Instructor cohort). The Technical Manual requirement for TI’s to work at more than one school has also been increasingly difficult for trainees to achieve.

Ian Curren outlined a plan to improve training and shorten times for TI’s by offering an extended BHPA course including practical skills training. Whilst the idea was welcomed, the conference noted that the additional cost (£800-£900 for a 7 or 8 day course, as opposed to the current £360 for a 3 day course), and the “block” of time commitment required could be a hurdle to some new TI’s.

The more comprehensive course model has already been used by the BHPA on two occasions with a good success rate, and is the normal method of progress in other associations.

Some schools have TI’s working for an extended period without making much progress towards qualification. The BHPA considers that a TI is not a level or qualification itself, it means a person who is actively working towards being an Instructor. An extended course has been shown to assist TI’s to progress.

It is possible that this will contribute to raising the cost of training an Instructor, but it would also raise the standard and the capacity of a school.

The technical team are working on a compromise option which will see the Instructor course extended to 5 or perhaps 6 days.

**Other points that were raised.** It was suggested by one CFI that if a TI was still not put forward for examination as an Instructor 3 years after attending their first Instructor course, they should attend another one.

This conference was for qualified Instructors and it was suggested that Senior Coaches should be invited to future conferences. (Or should they have their own event?)

The conference ended at approximately 13.00. A good deal of ground was covered and a good interactive conversation on several important topics was achieved.

These events help the FSC shape policy and are a good opportunity to share views and opinions. Clearly the online format does not give Instructors the chance for personal interaction, or one to one chats with the staff, or with each other.

On the positive side, it is inexpensive and makes the conference much more accessible to Instructors, even if overseas.

Your feedback on whether this is the best model for future conferences is welcomed.

## **2. Dual Flying: A change to the regulations**

The process for a Pilot to amass the required experience as a Dual Pilot before they apply for an examination is to fly with another Dual Pilot. In that way, at least one of the people on board has a dual licence and the flight is properly insured. The person holding the dual licence is always the pilot in command; and is therefore responsible for the safe conduct of the flight.

There are some issues with this arrangement, particularly in paragliding, where (unlike general aviation or even hang gliding) the pilot in command cannot easily re-take control to deal with any situation that may arise. This means the pilot under training could have an issue, during launch for example, but the pilot in command is effectively powerless to intervene.

A further issue is that a newly minted dual pilot could be wholly responsible for training another potential dual pilot, even though they have had no Instructor training or hold any instructional licence. Both these situations pose an additional risk to both parties, and potentially to our Insurance Policy, should a claim arise.

An additional consideration is that when being examined for a dual licence there is still a significant proportion of candidates who do not reach the standard required, particularly on their first attempt. Very often a thorough de-brief from the examiner, and some further practice, solves the issue and they are subsequently successful. In short, they are capable but require further training.

This is not ideal; it is costly and time consuming for both candidates and examiners. It is apparent that dual pilots who have never been trained by a qualified Instructor have a lower success rate than those that have completed a professionally arranged training programme, and who have been recommended for examination by their trainer.

The good news is that there are now more than 60 Pilots who are both dual rated and who also hold either Instructor (including AEI) or Senior Instructor licences.

The FSC has therefore determined that in future all dual pilot training must be conducted by a dual pilot who holds a suitable Instructor or Senior Instructor licence in the appropriate discipline and environment.

Clearly a Dual Pilot can fly with anyone as a passenger including another pilot, but they cannot now train that pilot as dual candidate by relinquishing control of the aircraft to them during the take-off or landing phases of any flight, unless they hold the appropriate BHPA Instructor licence. For Hill or Tow based paragliding, this means only an Instructor can occupy the front seat, unless the rear seat is occupied by a qualified dual Pilot.

The FSC have tried to envisage the possible scenarios where a dual rated Instructor is not available. E.g. in some tow operations, or in a very remote location. In cases where there is a genuine difficulty in arranging

training with a qualified person, the candidate is advised to contact a member of the BHPA technical team, and if a solution cannot be found, an individual exemption may be possible to arrange.

This change to the regulations will be published in the next amendment of the BHPA Technical Manual.

### 3. BHPA Events & Course Diary

<b>Club Coach Course</b>	<b>Jersey HG &amp; PG Club</b>	<b>Feb 10<sup>th</sup> &amp; 11<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Senior Instructor Course</b>	<b>BHPA Head Office Leicester</b>	<b>Feb 14<sup>th</sup> &amp; 15<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>BHPA AGM</b>	<b>Loughborough</b>	<b>Feb 24<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Club Coach Course</b>	<b>Peak Soaring Club</b>	<b>Mar 16<sup>th</sup> &amp; 17<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Instructor Course</b>	<b>BHPA Head Office Leicester</b>	<b>Apr 24<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Club Coach Course</b>	<b>Green Dragons</b>	<b>May 18<sup>th</sup> &amp; 19<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>G-BAR 3 (Aerotow meet)</b>	<b>Deenethorpe</b>	<b>May 24<sup>th</sup>- June 2<sup>nd</sup></b>
<b>Buttermere Bash</b>	<b>Lake district</b>	<b>May 31<sup>st</sup>- 1<sup>st</sup> June</b>
<b>Parafest</b>	<b>Caerwys, N Wales</b>	<b>Jun 13<sup>th</sup>- 16<sup>th</sup></b>

Full details and contact information for all events and competitions can be found at

[https://www.bhpa.co.uk/sport/events/index.php?category=competitions\\_and\\_events](https://www.bhpa.co.uk/sport/events/index.php?category=competitions_and_events)

### 4. New Pilot Resource

Human factors and Airmanship are crucial factors in the safe conduct of flights and in the decision-making processes of pilots. The Pilot exam now contains a paper specifically focussed on checking each candidate's knowledge of this subject.

In order to ensure that members have access to suitable resources to learn about this subject, and to assist candidates to prepare for this exam, the BHPA have produced a resource document that all Pilots may find useful. This can be found in the "Documents" section of the BHPA website at <https://documents.bhpa.co.uk>.

**It is strongly recommended that this is read by all pilots.**

Safe Flying