

Mentoring at gliding regionals model/terms of engagement

This pilot is being rolled out by the BGA as a development opportunity for less experienced competition pilots. Use of the model at any regionals is entirely at the discretion of the competition director. Involvement is entirely optional for both mentors and mentee, and all parties should remember that engagement is voluntary and, if the relationship is not working at any point, the mentoring process can be dissolved without acrimony on both sides. In particular, most people fly gliding competitions for fun and the process should be enjoyable, as well as constructive.

What is mentoring?

“Mentoring is a supportive learning relationship between a caring individual who shares knowledge, experience and wisdom with another individual who is ready and willing to benefit from this exchange, to enrich their professional journey.” - Suzanne Faure

“Mentoring involves primarily listening with empathy, sharing experience (usually mutually), professional friendship, developing insight through reflection, being a sounding board, encouraging.” - David Clutterbuck

What is a mentor?

A mentor is... “an accomplished and experienced performer who takes a special, personal interest in helping to guide and develop a junior or more inexperienced person.” - Stephen Gibb

“A mentor should have the qualities of experience, perspective and distance, challenging the mentee and using candour to force re-examination and reprioritisation without being a crutch.” - Christopher Conwa

Mentoring is about help and support for the mentee and is a two-way relationship. Coaching can be part of mentoring; it is not an essential ingredient, but we hope will be an integral part of this scheme.

Who is it for?

All pilots entered in a regionals level competition, with any level of experience (other than National team members), will be offered the opportunity to participate in the scheme at a regionals comp where the scheme is operating.

In the event of there being insufficient mentors coming forward, priority will be given to less experienced pilots.

In the unlikely (but v happy) event of having lots of volunteer mentors it may be feasible to either have a floating mentor or more than one mentor per group.

How the scheme will work

The comp director will facilitate/organise setting up the mentor groups, but **then have no further involvement in the process** other than collecting feedback forms at the end of the week. We suggest comp directors include the information about the scheme in their pre-comp bumpf and ask before the comp if competitors wish to participate, either as a mentor or a mentee.

Mentors: Experienced pilots, such as previous members of any of the British teams (i.e. seniors, juniors and women's) and experienced nationals level pilots, will be asked if they are willing to mentor for the duration of the competition

(Please volunteer if you would like to do it to prevent the comp director having to use blackmail or violent coercion to get enough mentors.)

Mentor groups: Each mentor will have between 2-4 mentees.

A minimum of two is wise as one-to-one can be a bit intimidating in the early stages of a mentor-mentee relationships. A small group makes focused discussion easier and allows time and space for all parties to contribute – ideally the sessions will be discussion groups rather than teacher/ learner lectures.

As far as possible, the mentees will be grouped into similar levels of experience.

Again enables focus on issues of common interest to the group and logistically it is easier to get four people together at the same time.

Activity: Each mentor is expected to offer a minimum of **two** pre-task briefings (expected to last approx 20 mins and ideally on the first couple of task days) and **three** post-flight debriefings (expected to last no more than 30 mins, ideally with a beer in the bar.) You shouldn't expect anymore than this as it is the mentor's holiday as well, but if all parties agree to more, then feel free.

A crib sheet is attached which may be of use as prompt for discussion. Use is at the discretion of the group. If you amend/adapt it please include the amendments in your feedback at the end of the comp. Also let us know if you develop a different format for your discussions which proved useful.

The mentor should also be available for questions and other support at other times, but it may be wise to make the last 30 mins of time prior to possible first launch as sacrosanct where the mentor shouldn't be disturbed for obvious reasons.

Commitment to the group

Mentoring relationships take time to develop therefore we ask that you make the same commitment to the minimum number of pre-flight briefings and debriefs as your mentor, before (and if) you decide it isn't for you.

Feedback

At the end of the comp, don't forget to thank your mentor. He/she has given up their time and if the process did not work for you it may well be the process or you rather than the mentor – mentoring is not for everyone.

There will be a feedback form for participating mentees /mentors (see next page) so that the BGA can see whether the process was valuable for at least some individuals and whether variations/improvements on the system were made in practice.

For more details, contact: Rose Johnson – drrosejohnson60@gmail.com

Feedback form BGA competition pilot mentoring scheme.

Name:

Which regionals did you fly?

	Very useful		OK	Not v helpful		
Overall did you find the scheme helpful?	5	4	3	2	1	
Overall did you find the scheme enjoyable?	5	4	3	2	1	
Did you find the small group format appropriate?	5	4	3	2	1	
Did you find the pre-flight briefings useful?	5	4	3	2	1	
Did you find the post flight de-briefings useful?	5	4	3	2	1	
If you used the crib sheet for your debriefs, was it helpful?	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Tell us anything that was particularly valuable:						
Tell us what would improve it:						
Please provide an email address and/or phone number if you are happy to be contacted to discuss:						
How many days were tasks set? How many days did you fly?			How many pre-flight meeting did you have? How many debrief meetings did you have?			

De-briefing crib sheet

Remember to re-enforce the good as well as discuss the less good. Therefore, it is often good to start by asking mentees what went well in the day. Don't try to cover too much in each session – focus on two or three areas that the mentees would like to discuss from that day's flight.

Preparation

Equipment preparation – pre-comp and at comp, glider, trailer, crew, instruments, loggers, etc

Personal prep – managing emotions and stress

Task planning

Understanding airspace

Water or not to water

Starting

Start times/strategy

Which end of start line?

Before the start

Thermalling

Did you get out climbed?

What the climbs were like on the day

Look out and safety issues

Speeds to fly

Routing – plan and actual

Did your plan take geography and airspace into account?

Did your actual match your plan? If not, why, and could you have foreseen this when planning?

Decision making on task

What were good decisions and why?

What turned out to be a poor decision – was it avoidable?

Coping in flight with a poor decision

Final glides

Under or overcooked

Safety

Landing out

Inevitable or avoidable – why?

Field landing issues

The retrieve

Assigned area tasks

May want a separate session just on AATs if v inexperienced pilots

Psychological aspects

Managing the psychology of doing badly

Managing the psychology of doing well

Don't forget to finish on a positive e.g. try finishing with "tell me one thing you've learnt/reinforced today" – learning is always good, even if everything else wasn't!