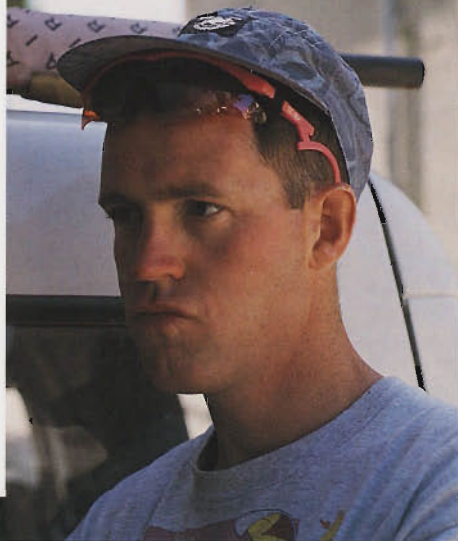


Another Nationals, another record!



Steve Ham - new UK record holder



A busy start at the Long Mynd

19th May saw Day Two of the 1995 Nationals and an Open XC task set from the Long Mynd. By the end of the day Steve Ham had taken the British distance record to 175km and Bruce Goldsmith had flown 154km, both on the new Airwave's new Alto Extreme wing. This is their story, recorded by Bill Morris.

Steve Ham: I took off at 12:10 after the window opened at noon. Conditions were quite light on take-off initially but we finally got up. Richard Carter and Bruce Goldsmith were with me. Then we went straight back. It's always quite difficult behind the Mynd. They say there's usually a big blue hole, and we did have a lot of difficulty getting up at the next thermal. Bruce nearly went down - he came in below me and went on a suicide glide; I saw his

shadow and thought that he had landed. Poor Bruce... tee hee!

Bruce Goldsmith: I had a very low save but I was quite pleased because I felt I was getting it right a lot. I felt there should be a cloud here, there should be a thermal there, and it was working every time. It was a 5km glide to what I thought was a thermal source. It was only a hill about 50ft high with gently sloping fields going up with a house at the top, but I could see that the clouds were starting at that point. When I got there with 200ft agl there was a 5-up thermal and I was really pleased. It was so nice to predict that that was exactly where it was going to work from and to arrive so low and get back up.

SH: I was in a thermal with Dave Sollom and Dean Crosby and we bumbled on together until we got near the Stourport/Kidderminster

area. There we had to do something; the wind seemed quite west and was taking us towards Birmingham so we had to do some serious tracking south. I led off and Dean followed me, and we got seriously low on this glide. At the next thermal Dean got in just feet below me but bombed out; Dave hung in for a few turns but went down pretty soon after. That's when I saw Jocky Sanderson, he was a little way ahead of me towards Droitwich.

We bumbled around there and basically it was much easier from then on. We went over Stratford and I got a bit stuck there; I had a small scale airmap on me and I was trying to work out where I should go, but I had it badly folded and it was whipping round my ears at times. So I went south a bit, then I changed my mind and flew north. In that period of time Jocky got away from me. It was actually quite good then for a while, fairly lofty with good glides. I had Silverstone on the horizon



Base at 5,000ft

and it looked like after there the sky was dead and that would be the end of the day.

I was pretty keen to land but I managed to have a pee in the air. I got to Silverstone pretty low but just after there, although the sky looked pretty dead, there was light stuff and I got up off some rape fields and got to the north end of Milton Keynes with reasonable height to cross it. On the other side it triggered and I got one of the strongest thermals of the day but as it was looking a bit iffy on airspace I didn't go to the top of that one and glided off.

BG: I thought I was behind other people but it turned out I was quite a long way ahead. At the end of the day it all overdeveloped. The sky started looking really weak; it just got worse and worse and I landed about half past five. Unfortunately it then regenerated again so I shouldn't really have landed until Steve landed at seven o'clock. There were even clouds at eight.

SH: The sky seemed to activate again after five o'clock when things got better south of Milton Keynes. I went for one last cloud that looked OK, following the M1 down. I reached lift but ignored it because I thought there would be stronger lift. That was probably a mistake, but it may not have been as I would have gone into airspace. I went on a final glide because I thought I could get to Dunstable, but it was actually a site called Sharpshoe Campus. I didn't reach it although I had a pretty good glide because there was quite a bit of wind around. I turned into wind and landed. That was it - pretty boring really.