

PNGC Sutton Bank Expedition Report



Simon's wave flight topped out at 14800ft ASL

This was the first expedition to Sutton Bank by PNGC as last year's Expedition had to be cancelled due to COVID 19 with only 5 days before we were due to set off!

This year's expedition went ahead with: Simon Gutman, Enrico Steffinlongo, Chris Hensman, Jamie Steel, Nobby Noble, Nigel Clark and Nigel's syndicate partner, Richard, from Lasham. Unfortunately, at the last minute, Ailsa Campbell became ill and was not able to participate in the expedition.

On Saturday 9th October, LPV was packed in her box with her associated equipment by the duty team (Thank you to Neil Shaw and his team). As no one on the expedition was equipped to tow her, Nobby who had been at Sutton Bank flying the week before, travelled down to Hampshire on the Saturday to collect her.

07:30hrs Sunday morning, LPV along with Enrico were picked up by Nobby (Never known Enrico to be up and about this early before!) and 300 miles later arrived at Sutton Bank. Fuel was a worry with all the shortages around the country. However, enough was found for the trip. LPV arrived at Sutton Bank at 13:30hrs and was met by Simon, Nigel, Richard. The aircraft was rigged and site checks began. Chris arrived later that day.

The first evening meal was cooked by Nobby (Corn beef hash with cheesy potato and baked beans) and was apparently was Simon's favourite meal when he was a child. Oh, almost forgot this was all washed down with beer while a full Sutton Bank brief was conducted including wave flying and ridge soaring in the briefing room.

Monday was a great day with all PNGC members having a good flight thermalling around Sutton Bank. Simon managed to get into wave and climbed up just under 1000 ft before the wave collapsed. At the end of the day LPV was put into the hanger at Sutton Bank for the night. That evening more beer and wine was consumed with Nobby cooking Spaghetti Bolognese (Enrico said it was a reasonable attempt for a non-Italian cook!).



The first flight at Sutton Bank for LPV.



Tucked up in a warm hanger for the night

Tuesday was a wash out with rain and wind so a day out to Elvington air museum was decided upon. Two cars set off with all members for a day of looking around the museum. Tickets bought and toilets visited by Nobby (a number of times - old man's curse!). Then back to the Greyhound pub for evening meal (Turkish restaurant) before returning back to the club for a night cap.



High Wave flying suits



Royal Navy Fairey Gannet



Royal Navy Buccaneer



WW2 DC 9 Boys conducting jump practise



Boys will be boys!!!!!!

Wednesday was a ridge day and began by getting all the aircraft out of the hanger and the morning brief being given by army officer, Ian MacFarlane. Ian is a member of the Sutton Banks instructor's team. Throughout the week, Nigel and Nobby also helped the local instructors instruct Sutton Bank members as well as our own members.

All members spent the day running the ridge dogging the other entire glider fleet on the ridge. The ridge can get very busy on these days so you need to keep your eyes open as the Flarm is never quiet.

Jamie had arrived on Tuesday night and his glider was rigged and ready for flying and a check flight conducted, Nobby arranged some free A/T for Jamie, Nigel, and Enrico (Sutton Bank had a new tug and they wanted volunteers to be towed to see if it worked!!!!!!).



Chris Hensman on the ridge



Jamie having one of his 3 free A/T

Thursday morning arrived with great anticipation as all the local pilots said it was going to be a great wave and ridge day at Sutton Bank, **and it was!!!!**

Simon and Nobby made the second flight of the day using the Sutton Bank winch. This is not like a normal winch launch at Middle Wallop as, if you rotate or pole bend, the cable will break and you cannot land ahead. Instead you go over the cliff edge and have to land out in the valley. At approx 400ft the power is cut and you dive for the ridge hoping it works! This flight lasted only 9 minutes as the wave down side was hitting the ridge so they were unable to gain lift and had to shoot back to land.

Simon and Nobby then took an A/T towards the wave. At 1500ft the tug started entering cloud so LPV was waved off, diving through the cloud away from the Sutton Bank, a proportionately landing site picked (Bagby Airport) LPV came into clear sunlight and 4 to 6 knots of wave at 1000ft. The rest is history - First flight on O2 for Simon, also his highest flight (Nobby had brought 2 portable O2 kits just in case). Simon and Nobby topped out at 14900ft ASL.

Once back at Sutton Bank, Enrico jumped in the front seat and again A/T into cloud to dive through again this time to 8 to 10 knots up in wave. It did not take too long to reach 12400ft ASL on O2. Jamie was called up on the radio and then followed up doing the same routine to climb in the wave (he topped out around 13400ft ASL). At that point it was decided to return to Sutton Bank to take Chris up for a wave flight.

On approach to Sutton bank the wind had increased to over 30 knots gusting 35 knots so approach speed was 85+ knots to get through the curl over. On arrival the local members were putting all the gliders away as it was too windy for the tug. Only then did Chris tell us it was his birthday!!! Jamie arrived back some 45 minutes latter to Sutton bank. Nigel spent most of the day on the ridge and did not get to the wave, as did not many members of Sutton Bank. However, Steve Thomson (Instructor) got away and landed at Millfield. Jasper Mjels in his DG 400 achieved 19800ft ASL and is on top of the ladder.

Read more about the day on S/B web site link. [Thursday 14th October 2021 | Yorkshire Gliding Club \(ygc.co.uk\)](https://ygc.co.uk/Thursday%2014th%20October%202021)



Simon on O2



The Wave



LPV from Jamie's glider



Enrico very happy!

Friday started quiet. Simon had his fill of flying the day before so Enrico and Chris wanted to fly in the DG1000. Nobby had not flown a DG1000 for 7 years so Paul Whitehead (Sutton Bank CFI) took them both up for long soaring flight while Nigel and Nobby instructed Sutton Bank members, with Simon & Jamie helped on the ground.

LPV had been cleaned and put away the night before due to the strong winds and a hanger not being available. That evening we all went to Thirsk for an Italian meal (Booked by Enrico).

It was decided due to poor weather and that N7 needed to get into Sultan that we would end the expedition on Saturday; however Chris would be staying till Sunday.



Saturday morning, after the brief, we all had breakfast in the cafe where Liz cooked us bacon butties. Bills paid, goodbyes given, and off to Middle Wallop to arrive back in time to rig LPV and put N7 in the box for its annual. Well that was the plan! Like all good plans it had to be adopted due to Jamie blowing his turbo at Oxford and Nobby having to go back to Oxford to collect his glider after dropping LPV off.

Total time flying for the trip with LPV / 811 Jamie's Glider, W5 Nigel's glider was just short of 24 hours.

Our thanks to the team at Sutton Bank for a great safe expedition and being such great hosts. Hopefully we will be back again soon.

Nobby Noble (Expedition Leader)