

Winch launching in a crosswind at The Park

Background

During a crosswind launch there is always a risk that a wing will drop. This is particularly likely in strong and/or gusty crosswinds on the **south side** of airfield due to the sloping ground. The upslope wind can unbalance the glider and lift the into-wind wing, causing the downwind (uphill) one to meet the sloping ground.

This could potentially result in a very dangerous ground loop or cartwheel.

To prevent this, while minimising the possibility of dropping the into wind wing, the wing runner should hold the wing more parallel to the slope but appropriate to the conditions.

The load on the wing tip should be a positive (downward) load which can be comfortably held by one finger. In strong crosswinds this results in the wing being held roughly parallel to the ground. In lighter winds or lesser crosswind components the wing will be raised from the parallel.

Holding the into wind wing on the south side will make it easier for the wing runner to keep the wing correctly balanced.

Technique on South side

Wing runner:

- When flying from the south side of the field in a crosswind the wing runner must hold the into-wind wing. Starting by holding the wing parallel to the ground, the wing runner should, if necessary, progressively raise the wing tip until the positive load could be held on one finger. The wing should then be held as normal and run in this position.

Pilot:

- The pilot should concentrate on maintaining the initial wing angle relative to the slope throughout the ground run.
- Use the rudder as normal to reduce the yaw.
- Pilots should resist the strong natural instinct to level the wings with the horizon as soon as the glider starts to move – this sets up exactly the potentially dangerous situation that we are trying to avoid. The wing position at launch will be roughly the angle needed to lay off for drift. Any adjustments should be made when fully established in the climb.

Technique on North side

- When flying from the north side of the field in a crosswind the down wind wing is held.

Wing runners: In either case, if there is more than a finger load on the wingtip – **STOP THE LAUNCH.**

Pilots: If you cannot stop the wing going down – **RELEASE THE CABLE.**