I thought you brought the tent pegs?

It's funny on a camping trip, but not at 2000ft, says **Chloe Eriksen**

A FEW years ago, my husband took our daughter on a camping trip to Wales.

It was only a two-night stay, but the first night they ended up having to sleep in the car because "someone" managed to forget the tent pegs.

"I thought you brought the tent pegs?" has now become shorthand in our household for when we have not clearly articulated who is responsible for what.

Luckily for them, it didn't ruin the trip and added to the sense of adventure. However, this is not true for all situations, and when flying, ambiguous or unclear division of responsibilities can have disastrous consequences.

Recent accidents

Hopefully you caught the latest edition of the BMAA *Safety Newsletter* in July (if not, they're all available on the BMAA website under Flight Safety). For those who have read it, you may have noticed the striking similarities in the accounts of G-CDCF and G-TBJP.

These common themes did not go unnoticed by some of our expert instructors, along with the fact that the Pegasus Quik is an excitingly capable aircraft and can be tricky to master when steering on the ground.

See, it's easy when someone brings the tent pegs

Tent pegs? Pilots don't need them (photo: Michael Pereckas)

I'm sure this isn't the way it's supposed to go up

Both accidents occurred during instructional flights on the Quik, and although unconfirmed in the case of G-CDCF, each event involved simultaneous control inputs from both the student and instructor.

We cannot be totally sure, but it may have not been clear who was in control at the time, or the instructor may not have been able to exercise full control authority.

> "Handing over control is fundamental

I have control

Flying is full of procedures, but the handover of control is possibly one of the most fundamental ones.

It's one of the first lessons I was taught as a student pilot, and a major black mark against you if not clearly articulated during instructional training.

The instructor typically leads the handover of control with a clear statement to either tell the student to relinquish control or take up the controls.

Effective communication normally relies on both visual and verbal cues to convey messages, but visual cues may not be easily interpreted in a cockpit, and are almost non-existent in a tandem seating arrangement.

Set procedures and briefing before flight help to alleviate any confusion, and the handing over of control needs to be extremely clear.

There should never be a time where no one has their hands on the controls of an aircraft, and conversely you should never need to fight for control.

Instructional flights

In some aircraft, not all controls are duplicated, and this can lead to confusion in the air over who is responsible for what and when, especially when someone is learning to fly.

These sorts of elements require careful briefing on the ground before flight, to iron out any uncertainties.

Keeping your arms and legs clear of the controls to allow full freedom of movement by the handling pilot is also vital, and can be very tricky when operating in a small aircraft.

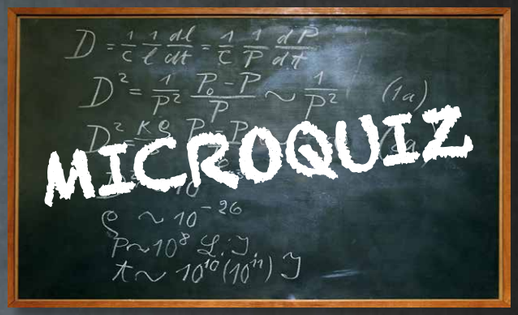
The follow-through of controls which is common in instructional flights should also be clearly explained prior to flight, as it can be difficult for a new student to understand the light touch required without impeding the instructor's movements.

Clear communication

There should be no doubt as to who is in control at any one time in an aircraft and these reports have highlighted to us all the importance of these procedures.

As ever, preparation is key, and time spent on the ground going over these elements is essential. Verbal communication must be clear, concise and unambiguous, and these procedures can help us all achieve that.

For more information and guidance, see the BMAA *Instructor & Examiner Guide.* □



1 **What causes induced drag?**
- a The shape of the aircraft fuselage.
- b The varying direction of airflow above and below the wing, resulting in a vortex.
- c Low pressure below the wing.

2 **The upper surface of an aerofoil typically produces:**
- a one-third of the total lift
- b two-thirds of the total lift
- c 41% of the total lift

3 **What process results in the formation of orographic cloud?**
- a Cold and moist air mixes with warm and moist air.
- b Prolonged radiation during nights clear of clouds.
- c Warm and moist air is moved across a hill or a mountain range.

4 **If a pilot suffers an engine fire in flight, they should**
- a turn off the fuel tap and leave the engine running until it stops.
- b immediately turn off the ignitions to stop the engine.
- c reduce power and turn downwind.

5 **Which type of cloud is associated with prolonged rain?**
- a Nimbostratus
- b Cirrostratus
- c Cumulonimbus

***MF*'s quizmaster Lawrence Bell is the developer of QuizAero, the online groundschool for microlight student pilots, quizaero.co.uk.**

Answers overleaf

GASCo, the General Aviation Safety Council, is a charity whose members are aviation organisations. Its aim is to make aviation safer through education. It presents the CAA safety evenings, runs seminars and provides safety information through its magazine and website, gasco.org.uk.

CHIRP, the Confidential Human Incident Reporting Programme, reviews and analyses reports from pilots, then publishes them so others can learn. Get the app at chirp.co.uk.