



## **Preparation - physical and mental**

Although paragliding is a “sitting sport” and hang-gliding a “prone sport”, both require some degree of fitness. Walking up a hill with a large rucksack or glider is hard work. A good level of cardiovascular fitness will help. If you are planning on doing a fair bit of walking with your paraglider, then lightweight folding walking poles will make a HUGE difference (X-Alps Red Bull Pilots use them for a reason - they convert a “biped” into a “quadriped”, spreading the load).

Core body strength is important in controlling “roll” - strong abs, back and oblique muscles help a lot, especially if you have a hammock style harness. Shoulder and upper arm strength and mobility are vital - triceps dips are good and a full program can be found here - <https://tinyurl.com/pgshoulders>

What about the mental side? You need to have given thought to which site you are going to (when did you last read the relevant Site Guide?), what time to get there and what you are planning for your flight. Time spent the night before looking at the weather forecast and possible routes, noting relevant Airspace restrictions, will be well spent. It goes without saying that you will need to be giving your flying 100% of your concentration. More of this in a future edition.

Finally protecting yourself from the sun is vital. A lot of us have “Celtic” skin, which over time, will get sun-damaged. Without adequate protection this can lead to skin cancers. Use a good sunscreen and remember to pay particular care to your nose, ears and lips. If waiting in the sun before take off, wear a hat or even better, shelter in the shade. I have even seen pilots use mini folding umbrellas for this. This will stop you getting “sun-stroke”.