GLIDING AUSTRALIA

Issue 4 January - February 2012 www.soaring.org.au

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ANOTHER WORLD

STATE COMP RESULTS - SPEED WEEK - BEVERLEY SS
TASK TIPS - VINTAGE GLIDING - GFA NEWS - JUNIORS IN POLAND

GLIDING AUSTRALIA

No. 4 January - February 2012

COVER PHOTOGRAPH: STEMME VH-GHC FLYING FROM COBAR TO LAKE KEEPIT BY GERALDINE CLARK

Sean Young
Editor
sean@soaring.org.au
Adriene Hurst
Deputy Editor
adriene@soaring.org.au
Maurice LIttle
GFA Magazine Committee
magazine@sec.gfa.org.au

EDITORIAL SUBMISSIONS
We invite editorial contributions. Please email magazine@sec.gfa.org.au Other large files and photographs and can be uploaded at www.soaring.org.au/ga

DISPLAY ADVERTISING & MAGAZINE ENQUIRIES
sean@soaring.org.au

GLIDING AUSTRALIA
www.soaring.org.au
Tel 02 9332 2822
PO Box 246 Edgecliff
NSW 2027

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Changes of mailing address etc.
Tel 03 9303 7805
Fax 03 9303 7960
membership@sec.gfa.org.au
L 1 /34 Somerton Rd
Somerton VIC 3062

West Sunset
Design & Publishing Services
info@westsunsetbooks.com

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Official publication of the Gliding Federation of Australia (GFA).
The GFA ia a member of the Féderation Aéronautique International (FAI) through the Australian Sport Aviation Confederation (ASAC)

WHAT PRICE THE FREEDOM TO SOAR?

BY PETER CAREY

We've all been there I'm sure - the dinner party where you disclose your hobby and passion for gliding. In my case, this disclosure is generally met with horror or disbelief, closely followed by the first question, 'Isn't it dangerous?' and inevitably, should the conversation continue, with the next question, 'Isn't it expensive?'

Strangely enough, the reality is that these two concepts are connected. It's our Gliding Federation of Australian (GFA) membership fees that ensure that we are able to pursue our passion for taking to the skies with a sense of security and ease.

If you don't see the connection, I'd like you to imagine for a moment your life without the GFA.

Alone, you would be required to comply with all of the strict Government regulations governing every aspect of the sport. There are airspace restrictions, radio procedures, maintenance requirements, pilots' qualifications, registrations, reports and other procedures that CASA requires every pilot to comply with. Instead of soaring, we'd spend most of our time on the ground debating the CASA standards by which we must abide.

It would be your job to read, digest, interpret and record Government rules and regulations. And before you volunteer for the job, you should know that there are currently over 600 Airworthiness Directives (AD), 110 glider type data sheets, and a data base for over 1000 gliders tracking their age, maintenance and ownership. It's a slow, laborious, sometimes frustrating and often painstaking task that the GFA staff and volunteers undertake on your behalf.

Further, the GFA must serve its master, namely CASA. There are directives, rules, regulations, amendments, procedures, registrations, information, delegation, education, observing, reporting, supervising and recording that the GFA is obliged to do simply to be allowed to fly, and do it as safely as possible.

Managing the safety of the gliding operations, training and airworthiness of the fleet is a daunting task and every aspect of it must conform to CASA's rules and regulations Unfortunately this aspect of the GFA's activities is not negotiable.

The GFA acts as a firewall between the pilots and the authorities. We see it as our role to do all of the hard work, the boring jobs and the stuff nobody else wants to do to ensure members can spend the maximum amount of time doing what they love most - gliding.

In fact, the Federation's mission statement directs the organisation:

"To drive the development and promotion of the sport of gliding and foster excellence in safe accessible and enjoyable soaring."

No one person can achieve this goal alone. It must be done collectively and through the dedicated service of a national organisation like the GFA. However the stark reality is that delivering all of these services costs money.

It's true that compared to the local football club, GFA membership seems expensive. It's equally true to say that a glider costs much more than a football, and correspondingly the stakes are so much higher in terms of safety, accountability and regulations.

SO WHERE DOES YOUR MONEY GO?

Here is a snapshot:

- 38% of your subscription is paid out for insurance covers providing liability cover for you.
- 28% covers administration fees.
- 16% goes towards the cost of the magazine.
- 8% supports our international competitors, and
- 9% is paid into the Government's coffers as GST.

The GFA has a group of dedicated paid employees who carry out a range of essential duties required of them by both the Members and by the Government.

These tasks include;

- Responding to a number of daily phone calls.
- Selling gliding packages.
- Registering new gliders and handling the administration associated with change of ownership.
- Placing advertisements on the internet, and
- Managing the banking functions for the Federation.

The office staff at Somerton is dedicated to providing you with the freedom to fly.

The tasks they perform are far too complex and time consuming to be facilitated by the few employees on the Association's payroll. They can only be fulfilled with the help of many volunteers – a situation that will hopefully give you pause for thought the next time you call the office instead of checking the website for an urgent response.

GFA Treasurer Peter Carey at the Gliding Seminar and AGM in September.

The GFA does have some money accumulated in the GFA's bank account, which represents about $400.00 per member.

These funds were accrued over many years as a result of good financial management and some targeted levies. They provide the organisation a certain degree of freedom and a buffer between the good and lean years. We are blessed with a certain degree of security in the event that the Government decides to discontinue subsidising the compulsory administrative activities. Should this occur the organisation would be in a position to continue to operate until an alternative solution is found.

Overall, it's incredible to consider what we are able to achieve on such a relatively small contribution by our members

Without the Federation, nameless officials would hound you every time you went airborne. You would be spending your time answering phone calls, brushing up on the latest CASA regulations and increasing the amount you pay in life insurance.

If the best things in life are free, then freedom with gliding comes from the feeling of soaring through the air. And the GFA fees are simply the price we have to pay to feel free.

SELF LAUNCHING GLIDERS – PROS AND CONS

SHINZO TAKIZAWA – RTO OPS NORTHERN NSW

FROM THE OPERATIONS PANEL

This article by Shinzo mentions the use of wheel brakes during take-off and recommends the use of a headset. These two issues were probable causal factors in a fatal accident involving the launch of a motor glider late last year. In this accident the airbrakes deployed during take-off, the pilot did not recognise this was the reason for his degraded climb performance, presumably because he was under a high workload at the time, and attempts to warn the pilot by radio were unsuccessful because the pilot was not wearing a headset.

Lest anyone doubt the dangers of taking off in a motor glider with unlocked airbrakes, we direct your attention to an article by Derek Piggott on the DG website at www.dg-flugzeugbau.de/piggott-haken-e.html. We also recommend pilots flying motor gliders under power to use a headset or similar device to ensure the radio can be heard and they can communicate as required.

Shinzo Takizawa prepares to fly his Duo Discus at the NSW State Championships at Temora.

MY EXPERIENCES

Twenty years ago I flew a DG400. Before the actual flight I had a check flight in a Janus M, including an outlanding/re-start engine exercise over a different airport along a planned cross-country route.

I remember the decisions which had to be made on downwind trying to start the engine at abeam point. The engine started but with not enough power, so 200 to 300 feet were lost. When full power eventually came, the aircraft climbed enabling us to return to the home airfield.

At the time I felt this was a stressful experience, even though it was a planned exercise over an airfield. I imagined a real outlanding would be so much more stressful and likely to result in a mishap.

During a world championship in Sweden where I flew my own Nimbus 4DM I pushed the radio-talk switch instead of the engine start switch. Fortunately, I had enough altitude when I realised my mistake so I could start the engine. This is an example of what could happen during stress.

Another time, during a German gliding competition, I tried to start the Nimbus 4DM's engine over a city in an attempt to get enough height to make a finish in wet conditions. The engine opened, I pushed the starter but there was no response. I tried to retract the engine, still no response, meaning the glider was in a full airbrake open condition over the city. I did not have enough glide angle to fly away from the city into an open space with a suitable outlanding area. Fortunately, I found an airport in the city where I could land.

During a National team training week at Lake Keepit on a day of heavy rain, no one except Bruce Taylor and I wanted to go on a second run to Manilla. Bruce was high over the ridge. I went to Manilla and returned to the ridge working only zero. On top of the ridge and cruising towards Lake Keepit, the ridge was getting higher and higher so there was no choice but to find a good outlanding field. On downwind to a stubble paddock I started the engine, but there was not enough power due to a wet engine and I landed.

How many times have I started the engine during my flights over the past 10 years? Probably six times. On two out of the six occasions the engine failed to start, which shows us we should not rely on an engine to get us out of trouble.

IN GENERAL

In case of an outlanding, decision-making in a pure glider is quite simple. In a motor glider it can be very complicated because in our mind we think we can easily start the engine and avoid a paddock landing! Often it is a late decision and when the aircraft is getting low. The manual says, start engine at a reasonable height on downwind on to a landable strip.

TAKING OFF

The DG400's wheel brake is connected to the airbrake. Most of Alexander Schleicher's gliders are the same. Schempp Hirth's wheel brake is also connected to the airbrake, but the hand lever brake is not connected to the airbrake. ILEC, which is an engine control computer, has an airbrake lock sensor. If the airbrake is not locked and you try to start the engine an alarm sounds. (If a glider does not have a hand lever brake you must apply full air brake to activate the wheel brake). I believe it is a good idea to have a warning sensor installed in your glider.

HEADSET

We always use a headset to protect our ears from engine noise. A motor glider's engine noise does interfere with the quality of radio reception and transmission. It is hoped someone will develop an engine noise reduction system.

I am currently flying a Nimbus 4DM very happily, as after self-launching I always say to myself, "I do not have an engine," so my flights are getting better. One of my German friends, a world champion and owner of a Nimbus 4M, carries five litres of petrol for take off, so he has no fuel left for re-starting the engine. On one day at a world championship event in Poland, all aircraft had a technical outlanding, starting the engine in flight, and returned home. My friend got home without an engine, and won the day.

PROS AND CONS

PROS

Does not require a tug for launching

Can move to better lift beyond gliding range

Prevents outlanding and returns to the airfield

CONS

Requires a lot of engine maintenance

The engine is heavy

Complicates decision-making in case of an outlanding

SPORT & RECREATIONAL FLYING SCENE

In this edition I would like to take the opportunity to provide members with an indicative snapshot of recent GFA involvement and interaction with the wider sport and recreational aviation sector and the aviation industry as a whole to assist in providing an understanding of the environment in which we operate.

REGIONAL AVIATION SAFETY FORUM - OCTOBER 2011

The Regional Aviation Safety Forums are held twice each year and are chaired by John McCormick, the Director of Aviation Safety and focus on aviation safety issues not associated with capital city related activity. Obviously we have a significant interest as much of our activity is conducted in regional areas.

Examples of those represented at these forums are Regional Airlines, Flying Doctor Service, Aerial Agricultural Association, Recreational Aircraft Australia, helicopter operators, HGFA, Australian Parachute Federation, Australian Federation of Air Pilots, seaplane operators, Australian Airports Association, Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association and the Australian Licensed Aircraft Engineers Association.

Some of the issues covered at this meeting were operational issues at a number of regional locations where conflicts of varying types are an issue, CASA regulatory reform program, mandatory transponder fitments, airspace reviews and aeronautical studies.

One item which impacts directly on our members was a concern raised that the standard of radiotelephony practice in general aviation - that is, anything other than airlines - is often less than satisfactory and this has the potential to impact on safety. There was general agreement that a problem exists and while CASA indicated that they believe the current rule set to be satisfactory it was agreed that an education campaign would assist.

I don't believe GFA pilots are any better or worse collectively than any other group but there is no doubt that there is always room for improvement. I would encourage all members to have a think about their own standards and if you think you may be a little rusty, review our training material or seek advice from an instructor.

SAFESKIES CONFERENCE - OCTOBER 2011

This conference is held every two years and is regarded as one of the pre-eminent aviation safety conferences in Australasia and globally and is a highly informative event.

This year the Sir Reginald Ansett Memorial Lecture which opens the conference was delivered by Australian Astronaut, Dr Andy Thomas. Andy's presentation was both highly informative and entertaining. Having flown on four shuttle missions and spent a considerable time in the space station Andy was well qualified to discuss the space program from an up close and personal perspective.

From a gliding point of view it is worth noting that on each mission once the shuttle re-entered the earth's atmosphere he was along for the ride in the world's heaviest glider on the world's longest and fastest final glide.

The next two days of the conference comprised a range of speakers from government, the industry and the military both locally and internationally on topics as diverse as The Safety Challenges of Growth – an ICAO Perspective, Australian Accident and Incidents – Some Worrying Trends, The Next Generation of Air Traffic Management Systems, The Challenges of Remotely Piloted Aircraft, Air Carriage of Dangerous Goods, Basic Aviation Risk Standards and Aging Aircraft.

GFA is a sponsor of the conference and I think we get good value in having our logo alongside significant players in the industry. Having an opportunity to meet and talk with people from the wider aviation industry is valuable and while many of the topics discussed have their origins at the big end of town, they all have lessons and are food for thought for those in the less rarefied air. One overriding impression, however is that while many in the industry express an interest in gliding, they may know very little about what we do and how we do it. We obviously have more work to do in publicity.

SPORT AND RECREATIONAL AVIATION STANDARDS SUB COMMITTEE - NOVEMBER 2011

This is a sub-committee of CASA's Standards Consultative Committee and is co-chaired by Andrew Ward from CASA and Bob Hall, NSW alternate GFA Board member, representing the industry.

The meeting opened with an outline by Jonathan Aleck, Associate Director of Aviation Safety of the anticipated future arrangements for self administration of recreational aviation under CASR Part 149. This will see GFA and other similar self administering organisations move to an approved organisation model rather than the existing arrangements where we operate under a series of exemptions and delegations.

This change has been on the books for some years and with an updated discussion paper due out about mid 2012 hopefully the proposal will now move ahead.

A wide range of other issues were covered. Some of those impacting on gliding were an update on a project to allow flight by PPLs without a Class 2 medical, which will be of significant interest to many tug pilots. There was also an update on changes to Part 61 covering pilot licensing which includes provision for a licence for glider pilots which will be recognised internationally and details of a proposal to cover the international licence issue pending Part 61.

The meeting was well attended by both industry and CASA and I think it is fair to say that the relationship between the two is very positive.

AUSTRALIAN SPORT AVIATION CONFEDERATION AGM - NOVEMBER 2011

The ASAC was formed in 1989 as a national confederation of sport and recreational aviation organisations. In 1990 it joined the Federation Aeronautique Internationale (FAI), and is Australia's representative on that body. FAI is the world body which governs air sports and regulates aviation records. In addition to its FAI related roles, ASAC is essentially a lobbying body and seeks to protect and promote its members' interests at state and federal political and governmental levels, especially regarding airspace and regulatory matters.

GFA is represented on the Board of ASAC and I recently attended the AGM in Sydney, which in addition to the standard annual governance issue of electing its office bearers also discussed the impact of drug and alcohol regulation on sport aviation and sporting events, ATSB reporting, promotion of ASAC to members, CASA Deed funding to member organisations, internal FAI structural issues, responses to CASA discussion papers on both transponder fitment and altimeter testing and parallel path issues for member organisations.

IN CONCLUSION

The take home message from all of this is that we are part of a significant, diverse and increasingly complex industry and are sharing the skies with more and more aircraft, many of which have capabilities and performances only dreamt of a few years ago. Many of the operational and safety issues we face are shared by many others and we should take the opportunity to learn from and support each other.

Safe soaring.

PHIL MCCANN PRESIDENT

FAI GLIDING BADGE REPORT TO 30 NOVEMBER 2011

A.BADGE

STANFORD NEVILLE WILLIAM	11709	SOUTHERN CROSS GC
PEPPER KATE	11712	S.A. SCOUTS GC
THOMPSON SARAH JANE	11715	DARLING DOWNS SC

B. BADGE

RAMSAY JUSTIN	11677	GEELONG GC
COOPER IAN	11701	NARROMINE GC

A & B BADGE

MILLINGTON IVAN JOHN	11711	SOUTHERN CROSS GC
BECKERS NADIA LOUISE	11713	NARROGIN GC
HARRIS KAREN	11714	NARROGIN GC

A.B.C BADGE

EALES MICHAEL JOHN	11708	BEVERLEY SC
REES DAVID CONWAY	11710	GYMPIE GC
HOCHWIMMER BERNHARD RUPERT BRANDON	11716	G.C.V.
MICHAEL ANDREW WERDA PETER	11717	SOUTHERN CROSS GC
	11718	DARLING DOWNS SC

SILVER C BADGE

HOCHWIMMER BERNHARD RUPERT BRANDON	4762	G.C.V.
MICHAEL ANDREW WERDA PETER	4763	SOUTHERN CROSS GC
	4764	DARLING DOWNS SC

DIAMOND DISTANCE

DALTON ADRIAN MARK	KINGAROY SC

DIAMOND C

KUSIAK ZIGGY	7244	HORSHAM GC

INTERNATIONAL COACHES IN AUSTRALIA

Coaching activity in Australia has grown rapidly over the last decade and along with all the excellent coaching events we have had the opportunity to stage a series of coaching events with G Dale, an international professional coach. Similar events been done in the past with Brian Spreckley and Martin Wells from England and Georgio Galetto from Italy all with no charge for their time!

Photograph by Tim Rowledge

Because we are geographically isolated we need to take opportunities to expose ourselves to fresh ideas as cross country pilots. So when G Dale became available for a coaching stint in Australia, the National Coaching Panel arranged a busy three week schedule of coaching in Kingaroy, Lake Keepit and Gawler in October and November. Each day there were lectures followed by G conducting two flights per day then discussion about the flights or further lectures into the night. The pilots were kept busy but still wanted more!

G works full time coaching and competing between the UK and Omarama in New Zealand. He has 6,500 hours gliding and is a successful international club class pilot. His experience as a coach shows through not only in his technical understanding of the sport but also in his enthusiasm and ability to clearly explain cross country flying to pilots at all levels of experience. The coaching done at each of these venues was attended by early cross country pilots, competition pilots and coaches.

G put a new perspective to a range of topics including thermal structure, thermal centring, the performance/ arousal curve, risk management, thermal selection, goal setting, cloud structure and many more. The new slant on some of these topics generated some intense discussions.

A feedback survey following G's visit had very positive responses such as "I found that it was most beneficial and a real eye opener to what can be achieved by directed coaching. I think those of us who attended really have a better understanding of where we are at, what we have to work on, and how we should go about developing our cross-country flying skills." We are keen to have him back in Australia for another visit to the states that missed out last time and perhaps include other coaching events or competitions. The timing of this has yet to be arranged to fit in with his other coaching and competition commitments. At least one club is looking at bringing him back to do a month of one on one coaching. This could be extended to include time at other clubs if there is interest.

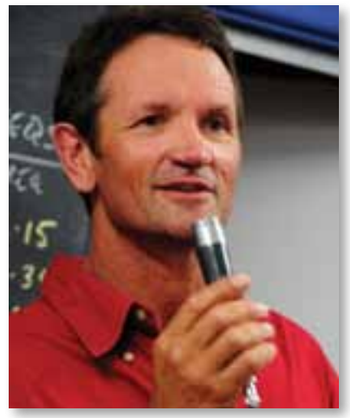
NEW SOUTH WALES STATE SOARING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Pilots on the grid contemplate a magnificent sky.

Temora Gliding Club held the NSW State Championships the week of 26 November - 3 December. A total of 33 pilots entered the competition, which catered for Standard, 15m, 18m, Open and Club classes. Classes were combined for tasking based on entry numbers received for Open -18m and Standard - 15m.

The competition was fortunate to only lose two days to bad weather, and scores were recorded on five days.

Mac Ichikawa won the Standard and 15m classes



Bruce Taylor was the winner of the 18m and Open Classes.

Dave Meredith (left) was runner up and Richard Frawley was the winner of Club Class.

NSW STATE GLIDING CHAMPIONSHIPS 2011

CLUB

1. 4850	FQN	RICHARD FRAWLEY	TEMORA	MOS-QUITO
2 .4598	GZT	DAVE MEREDITH	GEELONG	STD. JANTAR 2
3. 4208	MXP	NICK SINGER	LKSC	PIK 20 E
4. 3572	DGI	DEREK RUDDOCK	SCGC	DG 1000/20M
5. 3421	GLL	VIC HATFIELD	LKSC	G 103 TWIN III SL

STANDARD

1. 4806	IJA	MAC ICHIKAWA	NARROMINE	LS 8
2. 4690	ZBI	MILES GORE-BROWN	KINGAROY	LS 8
3. 4597	GCE	TOM GILBERT	TEMORA	SZD 55
4. 4390	LSL	SCOTT LENNON	TEMORA	LS8
5. 3778	GXZ	GARY STEVENSON	GRAMPIANS	DISCUS 2

15M

1. 4656	IJA	MAC ICHIKAWA	NARROMINE	LS 8
2. 4605	IIC	PETER TROTTER	KINGAROY	ASW20
3. 4540	ZBI	MILES GORE-BROWN	KINGAROY	LS8
4. 4451	GCE	TOM GILBERT	TEMORA	SZD 55
5. 4246	LSL	SCOTT LENNON	TEMORA	LS8

18-METER

1. 4950	YZT	BRUCE TAYLOR	LKSC	JS1
2. 4744	XTK	TOM CLAFFEY	NARROMINE	ASG 29/18M
3. 4024	GLQ	BRIAN DURIEU	LKSC	LS 10/18M
4. 3483	ZDS	DAVE SHORTER	LKSC	JS1
5. 2990	GYL	JAY ANDERSON	LKSC	JS1

OPEN

1. 4808	YZT	BRUCE TAYLOR	LKSC	JS1
2. 4712	YVW	GERRIT KURSTJENS	DDSC	NIMBUS 4T

Two classes were combined. Open class consisted of Open and 18m gliders. 15M class consisted of 15m and Std gliders. See www.soaringspot.com/nsw2012/results/ for the full day by day results and task information.

FROM THE CHAIR SPORTS COMMITTEE

We're on the road again, rolling north after the NSW State Championships. It's great to see such a vibrant competition scene. We counted eight NSW Clubs represented here at Temora this year: Lake Keepit, Southern Cross, Narromine, Soar Narromine, Byron Bay, Canberra, Southern Tablelands and Temora. I guess that is a challenge out to the other 16 NSW clubs to send along a representative! I was pleased to see several two seaters competing, mentoring new members for both the cross country experience as well as exposing them to the challenge and joy of competition gliding. We had a diverse group with two women competing, Lisa Trotter and Pam Kurstjens, the president of the Junior Gliding Club, Adam Webb and an international pilot from Japan, Mac Ichikawa. It was also lovely to have Nathan Johnson drop in on his way to Joey Glide 2011, and a few others flying 'hors concours' on the weekend.

Something I really enjoy is when a competitor achieves personal bests during the competition. This year Dave Meredith had his first ever day win at a State Championships. This is a significant milestone for a competitor. Dave ended up in a close second place to Richard Frawley in Club Class. Richard has been working hard to increase his competencies and succeeding! He has been diligently practicing the skills needed to do well as well as attending coaching events, such as Speedweek and recently attended the G Dale coaching sessions at Lake Keepit. He was mentioning to me one evening, after a particularly long day in the cockpit, how G's pearls of wisdom had saved him from a certain outland. On one of their coaching flights, G had been showing Richard how important it was to line up a row of possible thermal sources/trigger points and pick a track over all of them, and Richard remembered this when low during the competition. The end of day 'bar talk' is a great way to share these experiences, and makes it interesting for those who are not competing.

The 'bar talk' is also a good way to share mistakes and for everyone to be able to learn from them. There has been a lot of effort put into developing a culture where we can talk openly about incidents, accidents and 'stuff ups'. It's so important to have a positive environment, because we are all human, all make mistakes and can all learn to do things better. I've noticed of late that when some members have become quite upset about something, their first response is to yell abusively at the 'perpetrator'. This is not acceptable. It's not acceptable to yell at another member for several reasons. Firstly, because if someone is yelling at you, it is human nature to become defensive, and if you are defensive, you stop listening. Yelling at someone will not help them learn, will not help them approach the situation from another perspective, perhaps yours, and it will not encourage others around you to speak honestly and openly about things that need speaking about. Secondly, our Member Protection Policy (MPP) is quite clear about what is required of members. If you haven't had a chance to read it, have a look on the GFA website, under Documents, Administration http://2009.gfa.org.au/Docs/Policies/MP_Policy.pdf . Our Code of Conduct, for example, includes, "Treat all persons with respect and courtesy and have proper regard for their dignity, rights and obligations." It is up to all of us to ensure our culture facilitates a positive response to indiscretions, mistakes, incidents and accidents. I am committed to this and encourage you to lead by example. Let's start by not yelling at each other. Of course it should go without saying that under no circumstances should any member resort to physical abuse. If you have an experience that you feel comes under our MPP, please contact a Member Protection Information Officer in your area.

Our GFA website is another critical cog in the wheel of sharing information. The Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS) reporting system is up and running, and is an important part of managing and learning from mistakes.

"To have an effective Safety Management System, we need to be able to learn from our mistakes. To do so we need to report our mistakes, determine the cause(s) and implement remedial actions. This requires an honest and open culture where admitting mistakes is not considered a weakness, punitive action being a thing of the past and misdemeanours being addressed in a just manner. If we achieve that we are well on the way to being an effective learning organisation with good prospects for a much improved accident record." David Pietsch

TASMAN TROPHY REPRESENTATIVE

Bryan Hayhow: 2011/2012 Australian Tasman Trophy Representative to New Zealand

It is with great pleasure that I announce our Tasman Trophy Representative Bryan Hayhow will be travelling to New Zealand this January to compete at Matamata in the North Island. We all wish Bryan a great competition and the 'absence of bad luck'. I look forward to hearing about it when he returns. Next year is Australia's turn to host the Tasman Trophy, and we will be on the look out for an Aussie representative, so if you think you may be interested, please contact our ITC Chair, Mike Maddocks mike@maddogcomposites.com.au .

ONE WEEK NATIONALS

You may have seen some emails circulating about the possibility/discussion of trialling a shorter Nationals format. All sports, the world over, are moving towards reducing the time commitment required to compete at all levels. Miles Gore-Brown has written an excellent proposal paper and I will endeavour to circulate this to all competition pilots, and the matter will go on the agenda for the upcoming Nationals Pilots Meetings. If you won't be going to the Nationals this year and have an opinion, please contact your Pilot Representatives to make your thoughts known. Club and Sports Class reps are Allan Barnes and Tim Wilson. Multiclass reps are Peter Trotter and Mike Durrant. Junior rep is Andrew Maddocks. You can also contact NCC Chair Ross McLean.

I look forward to meeting you somewhere on an airfield this season or next! Go well.

ANITA TAYLOR
CHIR SPORTS COMMITTEE

SOARING THE WESTERN WHEAT BELT

WORDS: TOM HOLT
PHOTOS: BSS ARCHIVES

The Beverley Soaring Society takes its name from the rural town of Beverley, Western Australia. Our cross county and training based club is located in flat, open country where good gliding conditions can occur all year.

ABOVE: Beverly airfield lies on the edge of the great wheat growing regions of Western Australia. Here the topography is relatively flat for up to one thousand kilometres to the east, north and south of the club.

Our club commenced in 1973 when a small group of enthusiasts from the University of WA Gliding Club decided that they would form their own gliding club at Beverly. Dave Woodward, Alan Gartland and Bill Whitehand were instrumental as foundation members and since that date we have grown from a fledgling gliding group to over 100 members, both flying and social. Our club fleet now comprises four twins, a DG 1000S VH-DGZ, Puchacz VH-XQD, ASK21 VH-BSS and a Twin Astar VH -KYK.

We also have three club singles, a Standard Cirrus (VH-GVE), Astar CS VH-DA and a PW5 VH-ZBA. To launch these gliders we employ two Pawnee tugs, VH-CSN and VH-BMF. Earlier in the club's history, we tried winch launching but found it was unsuitable due the tree lined runway and the prevailing cross winds. All launching is now carried out by aerotow or by self-launching. The club has two glider hangers for club gliders, a tug hanger, workshop, clubroom - dormitory and various other small support buildings. The shire also allows us to have up to 50 caravan sites nestled amongst the trees that surround the main runway and club house. Many members take advantage of the weekly long weekend of flying to not only enjoy the good flying conditions but also to share the company of other enthusiasts over a communally prepared meal with a beer or glass or two of red.

FLEET

There are also 35 privately owned gliders in our fleet ranging from 15 metre standard class through to self-launching 18 meter flapped and ballasted class. These privately owned gliders are housed along the two main strips in single tee hangers or in multiple hangers constructed by the owners. Although the majority of the fleet is of a reasonable age, in the order of 20-plus years, recently there has been a steady flow into the club of newer gliders in the high performance classes 18m flapped and water ballasted such as the LS8-18, of which we now have four, ASG 29 series, ASH 26e and Ventus 2cm self lauchers. This process seems to be accelerating as the older gliders increase in hours and their competitiveness begins to decline against the newer, sleeker high-performance German gliders.

We operate from the Beverly Airfield, located almost centrally between our two sister gliding clubs of Narrogin and GCWA. A healthy rivalry between the clubs exists and competition between the three is encouraged and fostered. Monthly 'around the clubs' cross country competitions during summer are held, in which each club commences the competition from their own airfield. Points for competing and times are tallied, leading to the winning club being announced at the end of the season.

Beverly Soaring Society is a cross county and training based club. Our club is located at the junction of the two strips that form the Beverley airport. Here the heat of the inland and the prevailing hot easterlies of summer are balanced by the strong South Westerlies that also occur in the peak gliding period from October through to March. BSS operates year round, with summer being the peak gliding and cross country season, although good gliding conditions can occur all year. Gliding is carried out at BSS on a volunteer basis by the members attending on Friday, Saturday and Sunday roster although flying activities are carried out over most of the gazetted public holidays and during declared events such as state championships and cross country week flying as well.

The Beverley airport was initially established and used during the Second World War as training and inland airport for the Royal Australian Air Force. Shortly after the end of the war, the RAAF stopped using the airfield as a base and it has reverted to solely civil use, primarily as the home airport of BSS. The airport now has two runways, the dominant runway 16 – 34 and 08 – 26, a much shorter, secondary runway. During the war period, these two strips were bitumised, but the bitumen surface had degraded over time and was removed in the late seventies. Now the two strips are predominantly gravel although 16 – 34 has two bitumen take-off areas at either end to accommodate our two launch tugs.

CROSS COUNTRY

BSS's endeavour is to train glider pilots to the point where they are capable of undertaking cross country flying. Cross country flying is not our sole focus, but it is given a high priority in our flying roster. We endeavour to maintain a balanced fleet for easy solo training with a more advanced fleet to introduce the newly fledged pilots to the joys of cross country sorties. The Beverly airfield lies on the edge of the great wheat growing regions of Western Australia.

Here the topography is relatively flat for up to 1,000 kilometres to the east, north and south of the club facilities. We are flat landers and there is plenty of sand, but we also have clear blue skies stretching from horizon to horizon. This has its advantages, as the peak flying season offers hot, still days with strong thermals that commence early in the day and die slowly and late. Summer days are typically clear and blue with many days in excess of 10,000 feet and thermal strength exceeding 6 knots for large portions of the day.

The flat lands coupled with broad acreage of stubbled or grazed pastures gives confidence to the novice and experienced alike. East of the airfield we have a flight ceiling of 12,500 feet that soon gives way to class E air space allowing the big gliders to stretch their wings to their full extent. Pilots that happen to land out in paddocks are comforted in that the open flat nature of the surrounding pastoral properties provides safe landing areas and easy air retries.

Navigation in the area is easy, even for the inexperienced, as all the grain silos are painted brilliant white, standing in stark contrast to the brown, dry summer pastures or the glorious gold and greens of the winter crops. These silos are used for turning points and usually mark the location of a close town and associated landing field. We utilise the DGS1000S and the Twin Astir for cross country training gliders on good cross country

☛ continued over page

DATA SHEET

- 135 kilometres due east, from Perth.
- Friday, Saturday, Sunday and public holidays
- Good flying conditions all year - OLC leader

www.beverley-soaring.org.au
Tel 08 9646 0320
Beverley Soaring Society
PO Box 136
Beverley WA 6304
S32 07.548 E116 56.881

TOP The BSS Puchacz is one of the club's four twins.
MIDDLE: Beverley has 35 privately owned gliders on the airfield.

BOTTOM: Members enjoy the club atmosphere after a day's flying.

Beverly airfield was originally an RAAF base. The two strips are now mainly gravel.

days, allowing the novice to team with experienced cross country pilots. This enables pilots who are unwilling or unable to participate on a solo basis in cross country to experience the joys of venturing over the fence.

BSS also offers air experience flights to the public. We usually have at least three flights per day of this nature. The day's roster provides a suitably qualified pilot to give pre-arranged bookings a flight or to accommodate the person who turns up on the day and wants to experience a flight. Reciprocal club memberships are also welcome and suitably qualified visiting pilots, once duly certified and acquainted with the airfield and flying conditions, are welcome to fly using our fleet and facilities.

RELIABLE WEATHER

The weather conditions for Beverley are usually kind throughout the year. It is rare for a weekend to be totally lost to flying due to rain. Weather fronts in the west tend to pass quickly and the post frontal weather in summer or winter makes for good flying conditions. Our field is rarely closed due to hot or strong winds although a very strong westerly will generally kill the thermals and limit the day's flying.

BSS tries to take full advantage of these benign soaring conditions and members venturing over the fence are encouraged to enter their flights on the OLC website at www.onlinecontest.org. We have often been rewarded by leading or ranking among the top five clubs of the world for the past three years.

WAVE-RIDGE CAMP

Flying in the club is not limited to flat land flying. During winter the strong winds that blow north from the Antarctic and strike the Stirling Ranges south of Perth create perfect conditions for ridge and wave flying. Our club, Narrogin and GCWA annually prepare expeditions to the southwest to take advantage of these conditions. Several height records for gliding have been set in this area of Western Australia in the past and it is not unusual for our members to attain 23,000 feet during these wave camps. Our record is five diamond heights in a single day.

Unfortunately, flying ridges and waves has its dangers and this year one of our club members Alfred Rosche, was tragically killed in a gliding mishap at the Stirling wave camp. We will always remember his beaming smile and infectious enthusiasm for gliding that was ever present when he was around. The tragedy has had a profound effect on club members but has not altered their resolve to continue flying and enjoying the thrill and beauty of our sport. We are inspired by the memory of Alf and by continuing to fly both at our club and at future wave camps we will keep his memory alive and honour his spirit by doing the things that so obviously thrilled and inspired him during his gliding time.

SUMMER CAMP

Many of our club members take advantage of the strong soaring conditions that occur further east of Beverley during the summer. The more adventurous pilots interested in testing their endurance and possibly bagging the elusive 1,000km flight, travel east with a tug to the town of Southern Cross for two weeks in late November. Here flights of 500 plus km are common and this year multiple flights of 800 km plus were achieved with speeds in excess of 120 km averaged. This was one of the best years at Southern Cross for the group and several of us consistently topped the daily ratings of OLC for many consecutive days. This has led to our club logging claims for six Australian speed and endurance records.

Beverley Township is a small rural town that services the district extending north to York and south to Brookton. It has two hotels, a caravan park and several well-appointed B&Bs that service the tourist and local alike. The tourist town of York is only 20 minutes away by a well maintained two lane country road. York is more of a historical farming centre and caters to the weekend hobby farmer, local craft and artist fraternity. Well-run, pleasant accommodation is available ranging from top quality hotel-motels to large B&B style accommodation.

These two centres were primarily the central collection points for grain and wool where the Western Australian Narrow gauge railway still runs to Perth taking the harvest to the main ports of WA. Travel within the district is easy with well-maintained country roads. The Gliding Club of WA at Cunderdin is about one hour north and Narrogin Gliding club is also an one hour away by road, shorter and better if you use the time to glide.

The Beverly-York region is also home to other aviation activities such as hang gliding, parachuting, RA-AUS aviation and ballooning. The area is rich with agricultural history and each season has its own charms although winter and spring are the best periods for the tourists generally. Gliding enthusiasts will get the best out of their trip by coming in late spring and summer although one should be prepared for the heat.

Beverley Soaring Society is a friendly gliding club that encourages its members to enjoy all forms of gliding, whether it is just social soaring, wave or cross country. We encourage a sense of friendship, rivalry and camaraderie. If you are in our flat part of the world, take the time to seek us out. We are always pleased to greet any fellow soaring enthusiast and to enjoy together the wonders of being one with the elements. **GA**

UNPREDICTED BUT EXPLAINABLE

This is the first in a series of practical tips for planning and flying tasks. In this first article Richard Frawley, winner of the Club Class at the recent NSW State Champoinships, examines the forecast weather and how well it matched the actual weather he found in the air.

BY RICHARD FRAWLEY

We all know that weather forecasts are at times a bit of a guess. Especially when there are mixed air masses around a task area or when things are under the influence of a trough or two.

THE FORECAST

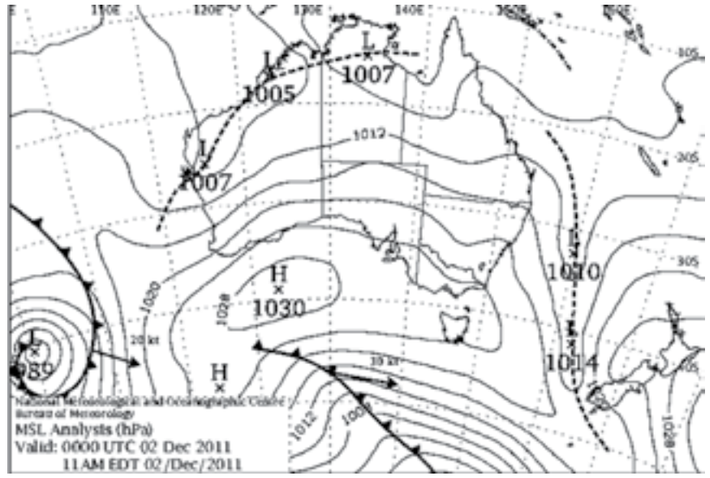
The forecast on this particular day was for Cu's to 6,000ft with possible extensive overdevelopment after 3pm, low level winds from the south at up to 20Knots and light and variable above 5,000ft.

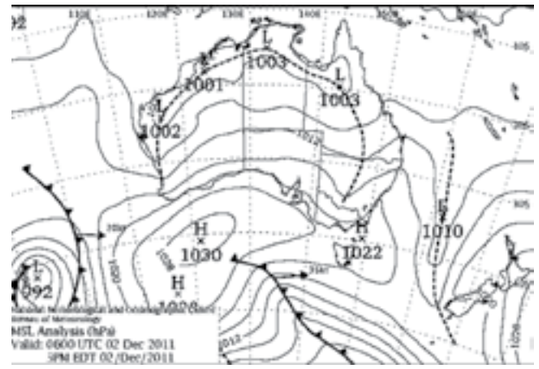
You can see from the MSL Analysis that a South/SE flow would have been expected and a slight trough over the region would generate additional instability in the moist airflow.

At launch time, however, the runway was seeing a light 5knot breeze from the West, Cu's were around 6500ft base and indeed showing strong signs of overdevelopment around the start area, but less so on track to the west where a 4/8th sky could be observed.

Getting to cloud base in preparation for start, my Oudie running SeeYou showed a southerly flow, consistent with the elongation and alignment of the Cu's (4 – 6 knot lift) and as per the forecast, tending to head towards overdevelopment. A combination of cooler southerly air and the predicted overdevelopment soon lead to collapse of lift around the start points and lot of pilots who did not leave early on started to struggle with the conditions. Careful searching for sunny patches did bring some relief with a 3 – 4knot climbs to 7,000ft allowing a start.

On track and heading off into a sunlit channel, extended sink quickly become the order of the day. Zagging did not help and a solid 45 degree fast exit stage left was required to get to where the air was buoyant with the reward of a good climb culminating around a 6knot average. An energy line to the west appeared to be in place with darker and more pronounced street like Cu's now visible ahead. Some stitching, selective weaving and stopping for an occasional 8 – 10knot pick me up, saw the first 100km leg disappear at a managed speed of over 100kph, a nice recovery from a soft start and into a 10+knot headwind at altitude.





The 11am and 5pm weather charts for 2 December, the final day of the NSW State

USING INFORMATION

So what about that forecast wind on track? Not light and variable but a steady 10/12 knots from 283°. The more extensive overdevelopment at the start area was probably the result of convergence between a southerly flow and a westerly flow. The westerly flow was clearly generating strong sink and lift line and the strong lift a result of the trough.

Without doubt I wasted about 1500ft wondering what was going on and searching for lift after I left the start point, especially when a quick scan of the Cambridge wind would have alerted me to a change in wind direction and the fact I was likely to be in a sink street. The murk and overdevelopment around the start area made it very hard to see down track from altitude, so it was easy to assume that the same conditions found at start, and as per forecast to some degree, would be the same down track.

Looking at the charts above you can see the differences between the 11am chart and the 5pm chart. There was a deepening of the trough as well as the formation of a high cell east of Tasmania. This of course was not predicted by earlier analysis but was consistent with what was experienced on task!

When an unexpected situation arises on task there is generally a cause. As such, it's a wise move to put all the available information at our disposal to good use. Questioning and validating assumptions is a very good idea when faced with uncertain weather conditions or when things don't appear as expected.

The weather pattern we see is similar to last year, where Australia is girt by low pressure systems, not just by seas. **GA**

VICTORIAN STATE SOARING CHAMPIONSHIPS

WORDS: BRIAN TROTTER

The Grampians Soaring Club hosted the Victorian Soaring Association 2011-12 Championships during the week 3 - 10 December. The competition was originally scheduled for March 2011 but poor weather conditions at the time led to this event being abandoned. The switch in the timing to December proved to be a winner for the participants, with strong soaring conditions prevailing over the first four days of competition with six days out of seven flown. Conditions allowed a 217k task to be set for the practice day on Saturday 3 December. Unfortunately, for safety reasons, strong winds prevented a launch on the Sunday.

ABOVE: The view of Ararat Airport and the surrounding countryside.

The next three days permitted tasks of 213.8km, 386.3km and 503.7km to be flown, with only two outlandings over the three days. On Day 4 an Assigned Area Task of 232km was flown. High average speeds were achieved over the first four days, when the leaders typically reached 132kph. Day 5 allowed a 2 hour run task enabling this competition to hold all three types of task.

The final Day 6 was marginal, with a forecast for wind, thunderstorms, rain showers, low cloud base and weak climbs. An AAT provided a challenge for those leaving late as rain crept into the task area. However, those with patience were rewarded with 265km distances and modest speeds of around 90 kph.

The change of date saw a big increase in participant numbers with 24 gliders entered, including the new Duo Discuss from Geelong, the Twin Astir from Beaufort and the host club's Janus. Three tug planes were used over the duration of the comps. Many thanks to Jim Barton for making his Callair tug plane available and the Geelong Gliding Club for their Pawnee, both of which supported the Grampians Soaring Club Callair tug.

Of particular interest this year, three members of the Australian national team used this competition as an opportunity to sharpen their flying skills in preparation for the next world championships to be held in Argentina in 2013. The members of the team flying at Ararat were Craig Collings, Allan Barnes and Mike Durrant. The members took the opportunity to conduct some team bonding personal development sessions.

It was a pleasure to have two women participate in the competition. Marta Najfeld from Poland, the runner up in the Polish National titles in 2006, currently holds 21 Polish national gliding records and is the current world record holder for speed flown around a 100km triangle at 163kph. Marta is now residing in Australia and currently flying with the Horsham Flying Club. Eighteen year old Ailsa McMillan, a member of the Geelong Gliding Club who has just completed her VCE, has completed her first competition.

Andy Smith from the UK, who flies with Windrushes Gliding Club at Bicester near Oxford, is making his first visit to Ararat and says, "It's great to fly around the beautiful Grampians mountain range."

The good soaring conditions made it possible for Gordon Trollip from Beaufort Gliding to achieve his first 300km task on Tuesday 6 December and then followed it up with his first 500km flight on the Wednesday. Alf McMillan of Geelong was another pilot to achieve his first 300km.

Thanks go to all those who made this competition possible and to the VSA who graciously refunded the competition entry fee to all competition winners. **GA**

BELOW: Left to Right, Andy Smith, Makoto Ichikawa, Alf McMillan.

VIC STATE GLIDING CHAMPIONSHIPS 2011

SPORTS

1. 855	GMF	CRAIG COLLINGS	MT. BEAUTY	LS 1F
2. 827	HDR	GARY STEVENSON	GRAMPIANS	STD. JANTAR 3
3. 812	IKM	NOEL VAGG	BEAUFORT	TWIN ASTIR
4. 631	GES	BERNIE SIZER	SOUTHERN RIVERINA	ASW 15
5. 597	HDJ	MARTA NAJFELD	HORSHAM	PEGASE

STANDARD

1. 880	FQF	MIKE DURRANT	GEELONG	LS8 T
2. 867	PNL	ALLAN BARNES	DDSC	LS 8
3. 864	IJA	MAKOTO ICHIKAWA	ACTION	LS8
4. 838	VPB	PETER BUSKENS	BEAUFORT	LS8
5. 754	OKZ	TIM WILSON	GCV	LS8

15M

1. 862	ITB	ANDY SMITH	MT BEAUTY	VENTUS BT
2. 729	GAX	GEOFF VINCENT	GRAMPIANS	PIK 20 B
3.648	GRG	JOHN SWITALA	GCV V	VENTUS BT
4.318	UIW	ALEX KRETI	BEAUFORT	MINI NIMBUS

18/ OPEN

1.922	VTT	TONY TABART	CORRANGAMITE	VENTUC 2CM
2. 757	ZDW	DAVID WILSON	VMFG	ASG29
3. 714	GHE	ALISA MCMILLAN	GEELONG	DUO DISCUS
4. 529	GHE	ALF MCMILLAN	GEELONG	DUO DISCUS
5. 423	EVV	MAURICE LITTLE	GRAMPIAN	JANUS C

See www.gliding.asn.au/index.php/competition/competition1/55-2012-state-comps-results-and-tasks for the full day by day results and task information.

LEFT: Ailsa McMillan, 18m/Open Class

BELOW: Bernie Sizer, Sports Class

NARROMINE CUP

Last year Narromine Cup Week was fortunate to be nearly the only gliding event with a straight run of flyable weather. Torrential rain and floods occurred just before and straight after the week. This year we were not so lucky. The first Saturday was a good flying day, followed by a week of wind and rain. Paul Mander achieved the longest flight of the single flying day, flying 667km.

Several pilots continued on to the competitions in Temora and Ararat. Narromine Cup will take place again in November 2012.

Morgan Sandercock shows off the remarkable Sparrowhawk ultralight glider in the briefing room.

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☐ The C of A requires renewal. $44* payment is enclosed and the existing C of A document is returned.

☐ Initial registration package is required. $416* payment is enclosed.

*Fees include GST

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Registration marks VH- .....

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Address .....

.....

State ..... Postcode .....

Forward to: **The Gliding Federation of Australia**
Level 1/34 Somerton Road,
SOMERTON VIC 3062
Email: Assistant@sec.gfa.org.au
Fax: 03 9303 7960

MORNING GLORY 2011

WORDS AND PICTURES: ROB HANBURY

The map shows the route Stemme S10 GTS followed this year to visit the Morning Glory from Perth and back. This triangle is about 10,000km, the same as flying from Madrid to Moscow to Bagdad and back to Madrid. Or from LA to Montreal to Florida and back to LA! With cross-countries, morning glory flights and more, we logged about 17,000km on the seven week trip.

ABOVE: Approaching a strong Morning Glory over the mudflats. The bottom is almost always at 500ft, the strong lift is at the toe going up the face. The glory stretches out to sea. This is the smooth type glory.

BELOW: Stemme GTS flew 17,000km in 170 hours flying time, using 100hrs of motor time in seven weeks.

Touring motorgliders are a great way to visit excellent soaring conditions and other gliding clubs, and tour Australia. It is comfortable compared to driving, quick and quite cheap for a seven week holiday. We often do over 1000km direct in a day and avoid driving detours. There are risks to manage and we did our SMS, or safety management plan, according to GFA guidelines. It helped us to pre-think but we were still caught by things we had not thought about.

In 2008 we went via the northern route, shown on the map by red airplanes, and in 2006 across the middle and back. So these motorgliders and this group of friends have really been around Australia a few times.

In 2011, Stemme GTS, with Achim Sehm, a Stemme Owner from South Africa, and myself, Rob Hanbury from Perth started on a great trip to cross Australia and visit the mystique of the Morning Glory clouds on a typically wet, blustery day, 18 September. We went with two Ximangos, ZAN and GFU, and a Dimona, VRG, from Perth. GTS and ZAN went direct via Ayers Rock, the Olgas, Alice Springs while VRG went around the south and up the middle via Birdsville. Then later, GFU followed across the middle. The different routes depended on range of fuel, finding suitable airfields with fuel, fitting in with the weather and pilots' holidays.

We only did a short leg on Sunday, 100km, and were then stopped by weather. Next day made up for it. A strong 100kph tailwind had us cover 1600km via Kalgoorlie and onto Ayers Rock on Monday. We averaged 200kph on the 1100km leg.

On our way we did a tour in the motorgliders around Ayers Rock and then on to Alice Springs, a short hop of 2 hours but there were many fires in the area and we had to climb to 9000ft to get over one smoke plume, hard in an S10. Then Alice was deep in the smoke, a scary experience for us VFR glider pilots. Luckily, Air Traffic control was there and willing to help guide us in under a Special VFR with insufficient visibility, flying just by ground visual but on GPS nav. The trouble with smoke is that it billows and sometimes the visibility reduced to below the forecast, but we were now stuck in it.

It is best to fly in company with other gliders and remain in radio contact to support each other. But due to timing and different range capabilities we often went alone and then filed a SARWATCH with Airservices. It's essential to manage risks when crossing this huge deserted, dry continent.

Most times we flew two in a glider, although this limits baggage to a few essentials. So the Stemme crew invited a couple of international friends, Achim to fly up with me and do the first two weeks at Burketown, then Peter Hill swapped at Mt Isa and did the second two weeks before returning by airline. I continued alone so I could take my camping gear, backpacking by air!

The Morning Glory is a set of waves that sometimes occurs in the early morning in September or October over the Gulf of Carpentaria. Sometimes 1000km long, they can be seen on satellite photos and come in many interesting patterns that are wonderful for sailplanes to surf. We run along them for hours in good smooth lift, sometimes doing VNE and climbing, just like surfing ocean waves. They are elusive and we takeoff at dawn each day to hunt them - a perfect touring motorglider outing. It can work for self-launchers, but not as often because we often motor for an hour to find them. This year the Morning Glories were less spectacular, since they were generally less frequent, less strong and hidden in the murk of the smoke. Better luck next time.

TOP: Even over a rough looking Morning Glory at dawn, the lift is still smooth.

MIDDLE: Sometimes the glories have odd patterns such as this one. We often look down the glory and see waves within the wave, as numbers of wave systems may intersect and interfere with each other.

LEFT Stemme was surrounded by bushfire smoke at Undara.

We met with about 10 gliders from all around Australia and met many interesting pilots who have made the pilgrimage. A Motorfalke came from Hobart, almost as far as us! Geoff Pratt, the guru, has been 16 times in a row and sure knows it - he did over 900km on one day, partly on the Morning Glory and partly on thermals. The Stemme with her high performance did 250km out at 240kph on a good day.

One needs to go for at least two weeks as the the clouds often go through a cycle, not occurring for five or more days and then coming four in a row. On off days or in the afternoons, we went on trips to interesting places such as Adel's Grove, Sweers Island Resort, or soaring. The best time is 20 September to early October although they occasionally occur at other times. We found a good one on 14 October and then departed off the glory to Mt Isa for Peter to get the airline back home.

The Stemme got its share of care and attention with oohs and aahs from impressed glider pilots. Fortunately, I can take my hobbies - gliding and maintenance - with me on holiday. On a 100 engine hour trip through the outback, you need to be able to do oil changes and make sure the glider is in good condition.

She now has 2350 hours on the airframe and 900 hours on the Limbach motor - still in excellent condition. Over all, the time has averaged 0.16L/100km - now that is green!

I continued on my own from Burketown with my camping gear in a backpack in the co-pilot's seat. The route continued around towards Cairns, Airlie Beach, Kingaroy, Boonha, Lake Keepit, Bathurst and Temora, while I stayed at the gliding clubs or with friends and soared with other glider pilots. It was great to meet so many and see the eastern clubs.

At Undara, the Stemme was surrounded by a bush fire but the Undara Lodge firefighters protected her all night. Thanks, guys. I slept well. It was great to visit the Lava tubes before departing in a cloud of ash from the burnt runway.

Then I went back home via the central deserts, the Flinders Ranges, Lake Eyre, Coober Pedy, a 630km glide to historic Forrest airport, through the wind and storms and back to Perth. I flew 17,000km in 170 hours' flying time, using 100 hours of motor time.

I am lucky to have a great touring motorglider and be able to do such wonderful adventures. Now, where to next? Maybe I will meet you along the way! GA

BELOW: GTS and ZAN fly over the Olgas with Ayres Rock in the background.

AUSSIE JUNIORS IN POLAND

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHS: BERYL HARTLEY, MARTIN RULE & TOM HOWARD.

Director Piotr Haberland of the Poznan Aeroclub and seven times world glider aerobatic champion Jerzy Makula extended an exciting opportunity to me to invite four Australian junior glider pilots to visit Poland to attend an autumn camp with student glider pilots from the Poznan district.

ABOVE: The Aussie juniors, (L-R) Peter Werda, Sophie Thomas, Martin Rule and Tom Howard, gather at Poznan Aeroclub.

The camp was to be held at the historic gliding site of Bezmiechowa, the birthplace of gliding flight in Poland. This beautiful site in the mountains of south east Poland is now an attraction to gliding visitors from throughout Poland.

The Australian Joeys requested young pilots in Australia to apply and created a selection process for choosing the four participants. Initally, two boys and two girls were chosen, however, due to the demands of final exams one of the girls was unable to attend, allowing the next pilot in line to take her place. The final four were Sophie Thomas, Tom Howard, Peter Werda and Martin Rule. The four juniors and myself were sponsored by the Poznan Aeroclub.

We arrived in Warsaw after a short stopover in Bangkok and were met at the airport by Wes Mysak, the agent for Polish gliders in Australia, and Jan Makula, one of the Polish junior team members. I was delighted to find gliding friends after the long trip. We were introduced to our guardian angel of the trip Tomasz Kaczmarczyk who was to be our driver, instructor, interpreter, tourist guide and friend during our stay. The club had supplied a new 8-seater VW vehicle for our transport. We were welcomed by the Makula family and stayed two nights in Warsaw at a new, Venetian palace-style hotel. We toured the local museums and palaces and then set off for a 400km drive to the mountains.

The spring and autumn camp run by the Poznan aeroclub members undertakes training for students participating in the aviation course at school level. Bezmiechowa is famous as a mountain ridge site and we were hoping for good strong seasonal winds. The gliding site and the school in the village are named after the local gliding hero Goda who achieved the second Diamond badge in the world and was the first winner of the Lilienthal Medal. The site is owned and operated by the Polish University.

During our stay we were invited to attend the local primary school where the children sang a song about the flight of Goda, presented us with a spread of local foods and lined up to get autographs from our juniors and Jerzy Makula.

The new building has been built in the style of the old 1930s structure and sits on the top of a long grass strip which is 600ft above the landing point at the bottom. Modern student style accommodation includes an excellent restaurant and bar and all the facilities required for large groups of gliding pilots. The launching is by gravity, gently pushing gliders on the ramp, winching up the mountain, bungee just for fun, and aerotow. In company with 45 other juniors, numerous instructors, visiting world competition pilots, a group of senior soaring pilots from Poznan, local pilots and crew, the Aussie juniors joined in the fun. The fleet of aircraft includes a number of Bocian, Puchatek, PW6 and the new Perkaz which was delivered from the factory for our juniors to fly. Jerzy Makula came to fly with our juniors for a lesson in glider aerobatics. With Tomasz as instructor, the juniors flew in all the two seaters with all the methods of launching from Bezmiechowa and from the site at Wienamein on the other side of the valley.

The weather was cold. Although two days were sunny enough in the afternoon for the locals to strip down to T-shirts, the Aussies were rugged up in thermal underwear, woollen socks and hats with warm gloves. The ridge lift was weak but the days were all fine and we were able to fly each day. The Aussies went exploring with Tomasz and the local gliding guide Monika Bobula and travelled though the mountains bordered by the Ukraine, Belarus and Slovakia. One day was spent with the group visiting a large lake and hydro dam. The autumn colours were spectacular. The area has a very small population and is a wonderful place to go mountain trekking.

After seven days in the mountains we headed for Krakow to visit the Polish Aviation Museum, the old city of Krakow and the huge salt mines, which contain an underground cathedral. We then travelled on to the home site of our Poznan hosts. Up until this time the juniors had been part of the gliding community, however, the Poznan club is more than gliders. Many of the talented young pilots who have passed through the school system have gone on to become aerobatic champions and our juniors were about to discover this thrill. The club arranged for the trainer of the aerobatic team, an ex F16 pilot, squadron leader and commander of the local NATO base, to take each of the juniors for a lesson in aerobatics in the Extra two-seater. They quickly suited up and for the next few hours a constant airshow of every maneouver possible filled the sky with the roar of the aircraft and the trails of the smoke markers.

Just as we thought it could not get any better we climbed into a helicopter and C-172 to fly over the city through the NATO and main international airport airspace to a private house for afternoon tea, set on a large lake with a 1000’ grass strip and hangar in the back yard. Our host was very gracious and, after taking Sophie for a drive in his super sports car, we arranged to meet him the next day when he would be the interpreter during our meeting with the Mayor of Poznan.

Our trip was rapidly coming to an end. The next day we attended the meeting with the Mayor in the beautiful town hall in company with the Sport Minister, Director of Schools, Directors of the Aeroclub, young pilots from Poznan and from Australia. I was very pleased to present the Mayor with gifts from the Mayor of Narromine and to express our appreciation for the generosity extended to us by the members of the local club. After a tour of the city we headed for Warsaw for the final night, attempting to pack all the gifts from our new friends and meet the luggage weight requirements for the trip home. Jan Makula came along for a sad farewell to Tomasz.

SUMMING UP OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

The juniors had a chance to fly gliders, powered aircraft and helicopters. They used winch, gravity, bungee and aerotow launches. They flew with world champions and from a number of interesting sites, and met gliding friends I am sure they will keep.They experienced another culture and saw beautiful old historic cities and interesting museums, including the huge Polish Aviation Museum. They were a credit to themselves, their parents and the gliding community of Australia. The Polish pilots were amazed at how well they related to each other though they had never met before. As Tomasz said to me, “They are like brothers and sister.”

TOP Peter Werda joins Tomasz Kaczmarczyr in the cockpit.

LEFT: Pilots line up their gliders for a gravity launch.

For myself, I met old gliding friends, made new ones, was treated as a celebrity, and enjoyed the tours and the history of Poland. I particularly enjoyed the friends who came to visit with me during the week at Bezmichowa, from the senior gliding group of the Poznan aeroclub and from the women in gliding. I renewed old friendships and made some wonderful new ones. I am definitely going back.

The four juniors are deeply grateful to Piotr Haberland, the Makula family and all the members of the Poznan aeroclub who arranged our trip and were so generous with their time, aircraft, accommodation and friendships. I would like to thank Barbara Grzeskowiak-Bocian, Witold Milewski and Pawel Frackowiak for their company during our stay.

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LEFT: Martin Rule takes a flight with Jerzy Makula in the new Perkoz.

MARTIN'S ADVENTURE

WORDS: MARTIN RULE

TOP: Martin and friends bungee launch the Salamandra.

RIGHT: Martin Rule waits for his turn to be TWANGED off the mountain.

I was lucky enough to be one of four selected out of all the juniors in Australia to visit Poland as guests of the Poznan Aeroclub. We departed Australia on 17 October on what was sure was to be an adventure. We had come from locations across Australia and all met for the first time in Sydney. It was great to be going with people we didn't know and we quickly became good friends. We also made contacts with pilots from different parts of Australia and around the world.

When we first arrived in Poland we were greeted by Wes Mysak, Tomik our driver/instructor/tour guide, and the Makula family. It was pretty cool to be going to the home of a seven-time World Glider Aerobatic Champion and seeing all his trophies and memorabilia. Jerzy is a fantastic guy and by the end of the trip we knew he was a very special pilot.

After a few days of sight-seeing we set off for Bezmiechowa, a small gliding club in the south east of Poland. The club was very well set up with a hotel and restaurant on site where we ate and slept. It has a massive hangar full of 16 sailplanes ranging from the Salamandra to the new aerobatic trainer made by SZD, the Perkoz.

BELOW: The Aussie juniors pose with Tomasz Kaczmarczyr, the team's 'angel' in Poland.

The first day was overcast, foggy and visibility was poor. We spent the day rigging gliders and familiarising ourselves with the club. After coming from Mildura in NSW where the days are hot and the ground is flat, the mountainous Polish terrain took a while to get used to.

They use very different launch methods and it was strange sitting at the bottom of the hill with the winch on the top, waiting to be launched up the hill instead of over flat ground. The first launch was an unusual experience for me. I've never wished harder not to have a cable break.

Another launch method we used was the gravity launch where the glider rests on top of the mountain and two people simply push you down the hill until you reach flying speed. Once airborne the idea is to turn straight into ridge lift. Sadly, the week we were there the wind wasn't strong enough and with temperatures at around 10°C, thermals were unlikely. So it was mostly up and down flights with Poland's beautiful autumn scenery below us. I've never seen a more amazing sight, looking out at the wing tip with multi coloured trees above the level of the glider.

Another very different launch method was the bungee launch. Eight people run with a massive rubber band attached to the glider which is attached to a tree by the tail at the top of the mountain. When the people pulling gain the right amount of tension, the rope on the tail is released and TWANG! The glider accelerates forward and is usually airborne after about 5 metres. This was an amazing sight and we were lucky enough to experience a bungee launch although it is physically rather demanding.

The only problem with all these fancy launch methods is that they start from the top of the mountain while the gliders land at the bottom of the mountain. So someone has the painful task of holding a wing while being towed for 20 min up a 30° hill.

After the two days of cloud and poor visibility, the sky finally cleared and the sun came out. However, there was still no wind, so the flights were short. We had a briefing every morning in English, and classes every now and then teaching us the theory of wave cloud, rotor effects, ridge soaring and so on.

During the week we were treated like royalty and driven all over by Tomik to visit various tourist sites. The last day in the mountains was spent at another small gliding club called Weinvin. Each of us took an aero tow to 3,000ft AGL behind a huge Yak 19 with Jerzy Makula in the new Perkoz, a variant of the Puchacz. We all had the ride of our lives doing some awesome aerobatics. I pulled 5g in a glider before and it was very cool.

Before long our week in the mountains had come to an end and we sadly derigged the gliders and said goodbye to everyone. We departed for Poznan, where we were to meet the Mayor, and had a little surprise. My eyes lit up when I saw my dream aircraft, an Extra 300L, the Red Bull air race plane. We were all lucky enough to get a flight in this 315hp beast. Not only did we go for a ride, the pilot let us fly. He asked me to do a loop so like a typical glider pilot I pointed the nose at the ground and pulled back hard and high speed stalled the Extra. I heard a voice reminding me, "We have an engine be gentle." The Extra was lighter than a Libelle to fly and with a role rate of over 360degrees per second it was by far the best flight of my life. We did snap rolls, inverted flat spins, tail slides EVERYTHING that has been invented. Pulling +8g and -5g was something that I think I wouldn't do again unless I had a g-suit. It was the best day of my life!

I'd like to thank everyone that made this trip possible, Poznan Aero Club, The GFA, Beryl Hartley, Anita Taylor, and Andrew Maddocks for helping me apply. Thanks to everyone. It was an amazing experience perhaps has made me a better glider pilot and someone who will never forget how magical the sport of gliding is! **GA**

TOP: Spectacular view from the gravity launch point

TOM HOWARD

I believe that all of the Juniors attending this trip would agree that even though the weather was not all that conducive to ridge soaring, we all had some of the best times of our lives. This was predominantly due to the hospitality of all the people we stayed with, as well as how many extra and unexpected activities they had prepared for us. Personally I made some great friends and I hope to stay in contact with as many of them as possible with the view of heading back to Poland in the Future. On behalf of the Juniors who attended this camp, I would like to thank the Poznan Aeroclub and the Polish people who were so hospitable to us. Many thanks also to our 'team captain' Beryl Hartley for helping us with so much, Anita Taylor, the GFA and everyone else who made this trip possible.

Left: Sophie Thomas in the Extra 3001

SPEED WEEK 2011

WORDS: MIKE TIMBRELL
PHOTOGRAPHS: JUDY RENNER

The prospect was too attractive to miss. Ingo Renner, Paul Mander, Harry Medlicott and other hot pilots in the one place and offering to share their knowledge was an attractive drawcard to those pilots intent on improvement.

ABOVE: Ingo Renner talking at the morning presentation

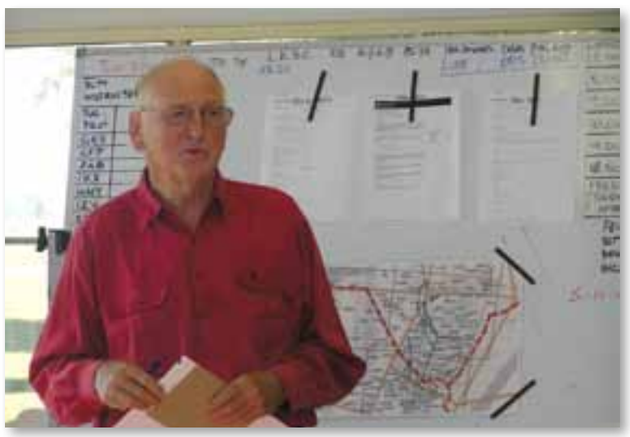
The twenty-eight places were quickly filled and a waiting list established well before this year's training regatta started.

Speed Week is an early season hit out designed to hone the skills of existing competition pilots and to introduce others to the atmosphere and specific challenges of flying competitively and in company. As one of the sparrows flying with the eagles, there is so much more to be learned in a single Speed Week than could ever be gained soaring around the home strip in a year or longer. It's not only a great way to accelerate in the early season, it's also great fun - total immersion in gliding.

Since last year's event two participants, Richard Frawley and Dave Shorter, have won state titles in NSW and Queensland respectively as well as finishing with high end results in the Nationals. Both pilots can attribute at least part of their success to participation in last year's Speed Week.

BELOW: Paul Mander talks about block speeds.

Many experienced pilots saw the week not so much as a broad learning experience, but rather as a catalyst to re-focus or redirect their flying in a way which would improve overall performance in the competitive environment of a friendly regatta. The less experienced among us soaked up new information at the feet of the experts and learned so much about the preparation and experience of competition flying.



AT THE DESK

Our mornings were spent listening to some fantastic presentations followed by questions and input from the forum.

Richard Frawley's Rhythm not Blues presented a convincing view of how pre-task strategy can provide an effective framework for on-task decision making. Consideration of weather and its effect on terrain on track, modified by further assessment prior to starting, sets a firm foundation for developing effective tactics en route. Having looked at over 500 comp traces, Richard has identified a cruise and climb rhythm among winning pilots which is demonstrably less apparent among the slower finishers. He also shared the concept of Now, Next and Then, which is an idea developed after lengthy discussions with a number of other X-C pilots. It's a simple mnemonic phrase used as a reminder to maintain a regular regime of forward planning on task.

Anita Taylor gave us the best presentation on Sports Psychology for Glider Pilots that I have ever heard. Her unique situation as a professional sports psychologist, combined with an extensive practical knowledge and experience with the international competitive gliding scene, has enabled Anita to acquire a deep understanding of the mental and emotional challenges faced by many soaring and competition pilots. We were fortunate indeed to hear her thoughts and techniques designed to address our special needs. How stress factors can affect judgement, practice through visualisation, recognising our individual responses in different situations, relaxation techniques and most of all, knowing oneself, were all covered in constructive detail. Unless we are completely candid, if not brutally honest about our personal attributes, our potential for improvement will be limited.

Dave Shorter took us through an effective method of planning AATs to optimise performance. Deciding the distance of each leg, where and when to turn, the cost of finishing earlier versus later and many other factors were presented in an easily understood presentation.

Ingo Renner, in his quiet unassuming manner, shared the keys to his success against the background of his early development as a soaring pilot in Germany and eventually here. Arriving in Brisbane as a fresh migrant, Ingo not only found the DDSC but managed to charm his new boss into driving him 150kms out to the airstrip! Many questions were asked in an effort to discover the secret to Ingo's magic. Although we learned much from this master, it became abundantly clear that he had a passion for gliding, singularity of purpose and a strict discipline of directed practice, and plenty of it - 34,000+ hours.

Paul Mander shared his thoughts about flying MacReady or Block Speeds. He opined that both tools can be used effectively when other factors are taken into account. Too frequent use of elevator certainly injects drag, and blind adherence to any speed theory in a soft area or within a lower or more difficult height band is asking for trouble. Knowing when to change gears may limit the supply of outlanding stories but will certainly get both you and your mates into the bar a lot earlier.

Ian Downes and Dave Shorted in the LKSC office.

MIDDLE : Bryan Hayhow and Paul Mander.

RIGHT: Ian McCallum, Ray Humphry and Phil Eldridge looking for the first cu to pop.

IN THE COCKPIT

Keepit turned on some great early season weather during our week. At noon each day there were up to 31 gliders on the grid ready for launching by three Pawnees. All tasks were AAT and most days we had one of two alternatives to be selected before the gate opened. Blue days were common and often convection finished early, catching out a few of the unwary. The country around Lake Keepit varies between narrow ranges of rocky hills, the rich cropping land of the Liverpool Plains bounded on the Western side by the Pilliga Scrub and the wooded craggy heights of the Mt Kaputar National Park. The area is a glider pilot's delight and boasts a good selection of ag strips, ploughed paddocks and regional airports if needed.

Tasks were designed with broad assigned areas to satisfy both accomplished competition pilots and hot ships and the less experienced who could still get around with a gentle kiss on each circle. Bob Dircks couldn't conceal his delight the first time he got around the task in his Libelle and was warmly congratulated by one and all. Such is the spirit of the week. Each pilot's accomplishment is individual to their own experience but also prompted by an assigned task in the atmosphere of a competitive environment. Local soaring just won't do it for you.

We used the marvellously simple Wallington Scoring System. Competitors were handicapped by aircraft and prior experience. Then one point was given for each person you beat. The beauty of this system is you don't need every single trace before the day's results can be published. In the spirit of the Tour de France, the day's winners were given a green shirt and the current leader the yellow jersey. The day's 8th place was awarded a black shirt for no other reason than it seemed like a good idea. We were all delighted to see Ingo receive his black shirt on the last day.

The overall winner of the Yellow Jersey was Kevin Leo of the Southern Highlands Club. Allan Buttenshaw received a prize for Best Handicapped Speed and was presented with a subscription to GI donated by Australian Schemp-Hirth agent Brian Hayhow.

APRÈS GLIDE

Cold beverages were followed by some outstanding meals prepared by the willing team of ladies ably led by Sandy Mander. Daily sandwiches and fruit were also supplied by the same group each morning so we really wanted for nothing.

The sessions after dinner each night consisted of a David Frost style interview session with Ingo Renner, Paul Mander and Tony Tabart regaling us with stories of past characters, flights, Nationals, Pre-World and World Championships. Ingo told us his full story including the dark years in Germany until 1952 when gliding was banned. We heard about one day in the Worlds when the FAI triangular task had a cu-nim in its centre which competitors used to gain height - legally - before nipping out to each turn point and returning for another boost!

UNTIL NEXT YEAR

The farewell party was once again hosted by Jan and Bob Dircks in their beautifully restored schoolhouse home close to the club. We feasted on a selection of Jan's spectacular homemade cheeses, hot dishes to die for and a sideboard groaning with fine wines, the latter made possible by Steve Hedley's enthusiastic collection of fines on one and all over the week.

The hospitality shown by Lake Keepit Soaring Club to the group of visiting pilots was warm, willing and helpful in all respects.

Speed Week is quickly establishing itself as a valuable experience for all who aspire to competitive soaring. Congratulations to Paul Mander for his establishment, organisation and execution of a great training tool in support of Australian gliding.

GA

FEBRUARY 2012

PHOTOGRAPH: PIOTR SZYMANSKI, JERZY MAKULA AND SOPHIE THOMAS PERKOZ, BEZMIECHOWA POLAND

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
30 VSA HORCHAM COACHING WEEK 28 JAN – 3 FEB 2012 HORSHAM, VICTORIA 50TH NATIONAL MULTICLASS GLIDING CHAMPIONSHIPS 30 JAN – 10 FEB 2012 NARROMINE	**31**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4** HORSHAM WEEK 2012 4 – 11 FEB 2012	**5**
6	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**
13	**14**	**15**	**16**	**17**	**18**	**19** LAKE KEEPIT REGATTA 19-26 FEBRUARY
20	**21**	**22**	**23**	**24**	**25**	**26**

GLIDING AUSTRALIA

MARCH 2012

PHOTOGRAPH: JUDITH ANDERRSON
BRUCE TAYLOR, JS1, TEMORA

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
27 .	**28**	**29**	**1**	**2**	**3** V	**4** SPORT FOR WOMEN DAY VARIOUS PLACE
5	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10** GRAMPIANS SOARING CLUB AND BENDIGO GLIDING CLUB FLYIN ARARAT AIRFIELD	**11**
12	**13**	**14**	**15**	**16**	**17**	**18**
19 10 FEBEBRUARY	**20**	**21**	**22**	**23**	**24**	**25** 4TH ANNUAL MINDEN-TAHOE WAVE CAMP 25-31 MARCH MINDEN-TAHOE AIRPORT, MINDEN, NV, USA
26	**27**	**28**	**29**	**30**	**1**	**2**

JOURNEY TO THE INLAND SEA

WORDS: JOHN CLARK
PHOTOGRAPHS: GERALDINE CLARK, JOHN CLARK OR OTHER SAFARIAN

The idea for this Safari germinated in late 2010 when Ian Barraclough and Al Giles were discussing another event to equal the 1995 epic Heart of Australia Tour. After months of preparation, researching and gathering courage, the crew set off from 16 to 21 October 2011 for an unforgettable flight.

ABOVE: Water has gathered in usually dry Lake Eyre, although in places the depth may only be a few mm.

147 km to run to goal, 1500ft below final glide and climbing through 11,000ft in 9+ knots… the task was in the bag! What started out as a grizzly 150 km leg to Hawker in South Australia to avoid bad weather in conditions which probably meant motoring all the way, had turned into an absolute screamer of a day, typical of the 2011 Lake Keepit Soaring Club's Lake Eyre Safari.

BIG ADVENTURE

Ian Barraclough: I was looking for the big adventure of the 1995 'Heart of Australia Tour' where a dozen gliders circumnavigated the Simpson Desert - and I found it. After months of planning, rising anticipation and a wobbly start, the excitement built and a great adventure unfolded. Ten knots to 11,000ft day after day is heady stuff and kept me going through the weaker conditions nearer home.

The idea for this Safari had germinated in late 2010 when Ian Barraclough and Al Giles were discussing another event to equal the 1995 epic Heart of Australia Tour. Since no tug was going to be available, the Safari was proposed as a self-launching glider event and since Ian Barraclough has a share in an ASH 25, Sierra India, the legs were designed with that in mind. "It will not be for the faint hearted, of course. There will be some flying over unlandable territory."

I signed on immediately because this was the type of flying I had got out of hang gliders into sailplanes to do but for several months afterwards, I was too terrified by Ian's ambitious plan to concentrate on the actual details. Of the nine proposed legs, five were over 400km including one of over 500km. Initially, a lot people were interested in the Safari but only four gliders actually started. This is not a bad thing because trying to find accommodation in the bush at very short notice for a big gang of people could be a nightmare.

LEFT: The safarists are ready for adventure at Warriealpa Station.

BE PREPARED

Apart from having your glider in tip-top condition, it's difficult to prepare for an event such as this. I already had a small remote area flying kit in a lightweight backpack and a set of tie-downs. The LX 8000 in my glider has no real limit on waypoints so I have about 2,500 of them installed, including almost all of the Safari waypoints.

It turns out that Google Earth is not a good way for the faint-hearted to prepare for something like the Lake Eyre Safari. The territory looks even more unlandable than Ian Barraclough had suggested and some of the emergency airstrips were all but invisible!

Most of my extra preparations involved making sure I had huge quantities of water. I bought a 6 litre water bladder and squeezed my old 4 litre one in behind the oxy cylinder with another 1 litre bottle for emergency emergencies. I resurrected an old Filofax and printed out all the legs, contact details and frequencies, airstrip and waypoint details on waterproof NeverTear paper, which all folded down neatly into something you could carry in a glider cockpit.

When we left LKSC, Paul Mander's Speed Week was just about to kick off. While us straight-liners stowed fuel cans, emergency tents and sleeping bags in a box trailer, the fish-bowlers all sat down with notepads and sharp ball-points in important looking briefings. While they gridded, we pushed our gliders up and down the strip wondering whether to wait or jump the queue and go early.

GREETINGS FROM NYNGAN

The first two days were blue, soft and short. On the radio, we could hear the people from LKSC moaning about the day turning to worms as we plodded on into the blue and the 20 knot headwind, normal for a Safari. The first leg to Nyngan goes via Coonabarrabran and the Warrumbungles which can generate a big lee rotor in a strong wind. You either go north via the dreaded, unlandable Pillager Scub or cop a pasting in the rotor. The second ASH 25 outlanded and damaged its landing gear while the rest of us in the air or on the ground diverted to either Coonabarrabran or Coonamble, or both.

Al Giles: Greetings from Nyngan, capital of Bogan Shire! Yes, yes, I know we should have been here yesterday. Paul and I were on final glide in the Stemme for here when we got the call that Ian and Geoff in the ASH25 and John in the DG808 had headed north to Coonabarrabran or Coonamble to dodge the sink in the lee of Bungles, so we turned around and landed with them. Unfortunately by then Lynne, Paul's wife, had reached Nyngan and checked into a motel. Her phone was Vodaphone, so she was uncontactable. Paul rang the Nyngan cops, who went around to tell her but she'd already decamped to the airport to wait for us, so they had to nose around to find her.

Today was equally stable with adverse winds and cruddy broken up thermals, which the Stemme doesn't like all that much, but Paul likes turning right and I like turning left so we split the flying equally. Lynne filled up the 4WD with diesel and got petrol in the jerries for the Stemme but forgot to pay for the petrol, so the cops turned up yet again and put the cuffs on Lynne - then one of the cops said, 'Ahhh...I've left my cuff keys in Quirindi.' Fortunately all NSW cop handcuffs have the same key.

Fraser Vickers, P2 of the broken ASH, decided he had to see Lake Eyre so he got up early and drove to meet us in Coonamble, just as Lynne Thompson was being arrested. I can't imagine that you'd get the city police to cuff someone just for a joke photograph. We made the front page of the Coonamble Times the next day.

ELECTRONIC FLIGHT

At the start of the third day at Nyngan, we were already one day behind schedule and the goal was the opal mining town of White Cliffs 400 km away, where most people live underground and there are barely a few dozen buildings scattered between the craters left over from mining. If the day was

☛ continued over page

ABOVE: Looking back to cloud streets between Broken Hill and Jamestown, conditions weren't sucky enough for pure dolphin flying. But with a 10,000ft cloud base, they were predictable enough to give a fast, easy ride.

BELOW: 10 knot clouds lead the way ahead.

bad, we'd stop at Cobar but this was only 133 km away and not going to get us anywhere, and nobody wanted to land at the only other alternative, Wilcannia.

As we launched, faint wisps of CU dotted the sky and soon we were making good progress under a 5,500ft cloudbase. Towards Cobar, the terrain turns from farming land to something else - and something you don't want to look at too long.

On these long legs over desert country to a point destination you could easily miss, you can let your mind run away with thinking the coordinates in the GPS are incorrect and you're flying the wrong way. Before the Safari, on the recommendation of several other pilots, I had bought a copy of OzRunways, an iPad and iPhone 'electronic flight bag app'. It was a simple matter to get out my iPhone and see my position on the WAC chart. A single tap on the screen brings up a dialog which shows bearing and distance to the nearest waypoint which can be compared with your glide computer. A tap on a waypoint entry in the list and OzRunways brings up the ERSA entry for the airport. Very nice!

The cloudbase went up fairly abruptly to 8,000ft beyond Cobar and we finished the 420km leg in high spirits at close to 100kph. White Cliffs is one of those towns where nobody uses their real name and everyone is called 'John'. We shared a beer with a few of them while waiting for the ground crew.

CLIMBING INCENTIVE

The next leg was to Jamestown in South Australia some 520km away or, if the weather didn't cooperate, to Broken Hill at 200 km. The forecast was for the day to end early near Jamestown and the following day looked worse so the plan was to push on.

We got an early start into some very bumpy blue air with no great signs of thermals. There were giant areas of lift and bigger areas of sink but not a lot to turn in. I was taking a picture of White Cliffs soon after take-off - norrmally the glider will keep itself out of trouble while I organise the camera - when it was upset by a bump and dropped a wing into a spin. Never has a camera been stowed so fast! After that, the others were oddly reluctant to cooperate in any air-to-air photography.

After Cobar, the landscape had increasingly taken on the appearance of something more Martian than lunar. There's no better incentive for finding a climb than looking down at something like that below! Since there were few if any outlanding places directly between White Cliffs and Broken Hill, the choice was to either track via Wilcannia and hope you didn't have to land there or, if the conditions were good, straight-line it to Broken Hill. Paul Thompson and Al Giles in the Stemme were navigating in the traditional way with a road map and chose to make a leg in towards the main road to Broken Hill, which also gave them a better looking OLC score. But the day did look good enough to go direct, as long as you didn't look down.

RED DESERT

Around 100km out, the thermals organised themselves and small CU started to appear at 9,000ft, which meant that we could get a move on. There was a big blue hole around Broken Hill and for a while, the faint-hearted thought that the day might be over early. But it got better and better. Soon, big cloud streets were going our way with 7 to 8 knot climbs to 9,000ft, and we had Jamestown well in the bag and landed after about 520km just as it began to rain. Paul and Al ominously radioed in to check what Jamestown strip looked like in case they were about to land in Peterborough!

ABOVE: The DG-808 has an amazing climb rate.

Al Giles: White Cliffs to Jamestown was another great run, although we had to deviate south a long way around Broken Hill to avoid its airspace. I was really loving flying the Stemme and as we approached the Goyder line, the red desert started to green up and the first folds of the Flinders rose up out of the flat horizon. We had a skinny final glide into Jamestown. There were heavy clouds above but a little lift in the rain as well. We didn't have a waypoint for Jamestown either but we had a map and I was sure I could see our destination, which was correct as it turned out.

The following morning we woke to an almost complete cloud cover. The forecast and blipmaps showed more rain on the way and the whole area socked in for several days. However, the area north, which was where we intended to go, was clear and showed good thermals, so we decided to motor towards Hawker, 185 km away, and wait for something better to turn up. Motoring long distances in a self-launching glider is as much fun as a sore tooth, so we were a bit subdued when we set off north. Little did we know that we'd be on oxygen in a few hours.

SPREADING OUT

On the LKSC Safaris, you mostly fly alone. You may head out on task immediately after take-off and not see anyone until you land. This day was no exception. Ian Barraclough and Geoff Sim left first in the ASH. Their climb is fairly flat and like the DG, the ASH works best when motoring and gliding in sore-tooth mode. The big men, Paul Thompson and Al Giles in the Stemme, also have a fairly flat climb but at a much higher speed, say 80 knots as opposed to 55-60 knots. The DG-808 has a much better rate of climb but at only 49 knots. So within 10 minutes after take-off, the gliders were well spread out along the track.

There were bubbles of thermals and though the numbers on Hawker got better when turning, there was also a 20 knot headwind… it was going to be a slow day. As we headed north, the cloud deck thinned out a little. After my third motor run, as I switched from static to total energy, the vario just would not settle down… normally when you switch over, it swings to 10 knots up for a while… but this time it didn't come off the stops and it took a moment before I realised that the darker area I had been heading for was really sucking! Geoff Sim and Ian Barraclough were also recording 6 to 9 knot climbs and all of us were soon within glide of Hawker. So the taskmaster decided to push on…

Ian Barraclough: Escaping from Jamestown was an unlikely and spectacular day. Totally overcast, a trough imminent that would ground us for days with only the hope that the Blip map said there were good conditions way to the north. A long climb out with the engine and then finding unexpected lift while still under total overcast led to a day that got better and better. We made it to Hawker, our initial objective and then pushed on to Leigh Creek, our second objective.

Finally bursting out from the overcast yielded to climbs of 11 knots to 11,000ft. Every cloud worked, with certainty that if you were feeling low at 8,000ft, any cloud would get you back to 10,000ft or more. From the gloom of Jamestown, we arrived 450kms later at our Safari goal, Lake Eyre.

BELOW: The safari took the gliders over conditions north of Leigh Creek that could only be described as Martian, where 12,000ft felt like the right height to fly!

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REACHING THE GOAL

The cloud deck ceased quite abruptly after Leigh Creek but Ian Barraclough reported that the CU beyond were working reliably - and how! They gave totally predictable 7-10 knot climbs, right where expected. Geoff Sim said it was as easy as

ABOVE:
147 km and
1500ft to go.

flying a power plane, but faster.

More than 140km out and at 12,000ft we had final glide on Marree. The faint-hearted tend not to believe final glide calculations, especially not when 140 km away, but soon the problem was getting down! The ASH 25 burned off height by heading out over Lake Eyre for a look while the back marker - me - tried to burn it off in a rough-as-guts 110-120 knot dive for the strip. Landing was a bit exciting because they use a local CTAF frequency that was not preset on my radio and there was a slab of emus on the strip… but what a cracker of a day!

BELOW: Soggy conditions prevailed between Nyngan and White Cliffs. It was surprising how much water was on the ground to the east of Broken Hill. But wherever we found rivers and lakes, we also found about two knots less lift.

These Safaris are unlike round-the-can racing, or whatever it's called in gliding. The great flying days stand out clear and sharp in your mind, even years later. What also stands out is the comradeship of the other people on the Safari, the pilots and the friends on the ground, which is built over these shared experiences and a beer and dinner at the end of each day.

Geoff Sim: I thought the Safari would be a bit of a challenge… As it turned out it was a tremendous experience with the best company. The legs that stand out for me were when it came good after our struggle from Keepit on the Cobar to White Cliffs leg… it boomed over unlandable country and we spent the night underground in a place I had never been to …Then launching into the gloom at Jamestown to end a spectacular days gliding to Marree. To sum up - excellent company, lots of fun and fantastic flying with all the challenge of doing your best to stay safe.

TOP WELCOME

Al Giles: Marree pub was our home for the next day or two and, being slightly different from the usual run of tourists, we got a top welcome. You know how we refuse to buy water in Oz? Well, when the alternative is bore water, it suddenly becomes a grim commitment, but I got my mineral supplement - and didn't piss more than once in 48 hours. Fraser, Lynne and Geraldine were taken in the Stemme and ASH out over the lake, catching some great photos, which made it for them. While we'd been having fun the whole time, they were focused on making it to the lake.

In the evening we took a picnic in the 4WDs, 60km up the track and walked out from the lake's edge to where things got sticky and sloppy underfoot and popped champagne to Lake Eyre. Geoff Sim caught a taste for bubbly from Geraldine which he refined daily over the rest of the trip.The sunset reflected in the lake was superb and after dark, John and Paul decided to test the ESP and traction controls of the 4WDs. Both vehicles tried to roll a couple of times but we got back to Marree pronto. At that rate, we could have done the Birdsville track in a few hours, Coopers Creek crossing included.

Planning the return from Marree was interesting because there was no phone coverage and not much internet. What internet there was up there was secretly absorbed by Paul Thompson to post his scores on the OLC to get an (unfair) advantage over me!

We set off towards a Warriealpa station, 185 km away, expecting another great run but were surprised to find the thermals very hard work. It took a long time to get to cloudbase and turn on the oxy. Then it all went to a sort of worms when the clouds overdeveloped. Ian B reported 'zero lift, zero sink' for the rest of the task. Being at 11,000ft and on final glide is fine except that the ground was high on the Flinders ranges and sloped down towards the Warriealpa strip at glide angle. So the last 30 minutes of the flight were all at 2500ft AGL - a bit nail biting.

SHEEP STATION STOPOVER

Warriealpa is a working sheep station set in the eastern edge of the Flinders range about 60km north of Wilpena Pound. Fortunately Paul T had been a sheep strangler in a previous life and was able to explain the workings of the shearing shed and help the following day with roundups and crutching. In most respects, this was the highlight of the trip. We were sleeping in the old shearers' quarters and eating in their kitchen and dining room. Geraldine almost wore her camera out, it was so photogenic.

Ian Barraclough: The Safari Team of widely different personalities and interests increasingly melded into a happy frictionless group. The planned overnight stop at Wirrealpa Station that

LEFT: The gliders climb away over the Strezlecki Desert between Wirriealpa and Broken Hill.

BELOW: The host of small rivers that feed into the Darling at times form small lakes like this one between Broken Hill and Cobar. They were areas to avoid since the going was always slower over the wet areas. A lot of water stood between Nyngan and Broken Hill.

BOTTOM:The Stemme lands at Wirrealpa before the rain.

turned into a four night stay was a very relaxing and rewarding break. There was no anxiousness to get away, and the highlights kept coming each day.

We had a day out at Wilpena Pound, which is quite something from the air but a bit underwhelming when it's 30º and you have to walk miles for not much of a view. The following day was windy, rainy and blown out so we stayed where we were, possibly for two days - I can't remember exactly!

Al Giles: We lounged around all day, enjoyed a beer and a walk, helped out on the property - bit of fun. A visiting Cessna reported a mob of 200 wild goats, so the crutching, mustering and other sheep work was instantly dropped in favour of yarding the goats - good money when sent to the abattoir.

Wednesday dawned clear and sunny so we loaded up the 4WDs, sent the girls off the long way round via Wilpena and Hawker and Peterborough to then turn north to Broken Hill, and we took the straight run over the desert. Not a lot out there - couple of properties and that was it.

DESERT DIAGONAL

Our diagonal across the Strzelecki desert to Broken Hill to make up the lost day meant Lynne and Geraldine doing an epic 7 hour drive along the other two sides of the triangle while we soared effortlessly at 12,000ft over the trackless waste below - or so we had hoped.

In fact, the day was very tough. We had about 260 km to run which should have been quite easy except it was cold, stable and blue with high cirrus blocking out much of the ground. The thermals were weak bubbles, often difficult to centre and topping out at 5,000ft early in the day. So we got to see a lot more desert that we'd planned. I would have said that we got more than our just deserts, but I will leave that sort of comment to Al Giles.

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ABOVE: Over the Strezlecki Desert between Wirrealpa and Broken Hill, Lake Frome is visible in the background.

Al Giles: The lift wasn't strong or high and was a bit broken, The day died as we got into BH, so we had no arguments about where we would spend the night. Good restaurant in BH, the Astra, champagne and good red with a good sirloin and a great quandong pie with creme anglaise. It's a tough life, this Safari.

Gliding into Broken Hill is difficult because it's a busy airport. Getting enough height for a safe final glide was slow and long, and then a Kingair from the RFDS called a straight-in from 15 NM and bumped me out of my approach, forcing an engine run to hold above the town.

The leg from Broken Hill to Cobar was another 400km run. Again the day started blue, broken and slow. There were tantalising CUs way off in the distance - 160km away as it turned out - which looked like vapourising before we arrived. But they didn't and at least gave you something to look at because you sure as hell didn't want to look down! It was a difficult day at 87kph, made harder by our big night out in Broken Hill.

END OF THE LINE

Cobar was really the end of the line. The taskmaster had proposed an easy 460km run to Lake Keepit for the last day with a Plan B of landing at either Coonabarrabran or Coonable or both. The DG flew out of lift with only 30km to go and the Stemme only a little sooner. The ASH had a technical relight over Cobar but with its long legs, managed the rest of the leg OK.

What an event! What a couple of weeks! As I sat in my glider after touch-down at Keepit, I thought, "If someone asks, I will turn around tomorrow and do it all again." Each day, the Safari had taken us further and faster than we would have flown if we were flying round the cans and we'd flown on days which we otherwise would have given away. We'd flown thousands of km over ground where the previously faint-hearted would have fainted and we'd returned to tell the tale.

Al Giles: The bleak desert scenery was superb, even the times we had neither a waypoint nor a WAC to cover the area we were flying in! It was a joy to observe Wilpena and the Chace and Druid Ranges from 11,000ft. No chance of ridge soaring them, as we couldn't get down there. Lakes Torrens and Frome are almost as speccy as Eyre, and crossing the Strzelecki Desert reminded me that civilisation is confined to quite a small part of Oz. Wirrealpa was good too, where we got to check out and help out on a working sheep station.

Best of all was the good company, even of the iDevice people. All those in our little caravanserai were fun to be with, and having audaciously bluffed my way into the Stemme cockpit in the first place, it was a pleasant surprise to discover how well I got on with Paul and Lynne. I admired Fraser's tenacity. Having signed up for a glider safari, he then drove about 4000km to get a glimpse of Lake Eyre. And everyone else looked like they were enjoying it as much as me. I even learned a little about iDevices. Just a little.

SAFARI EDUCATION

iPads and iPhones were used extensively on the Safari by those who had them, running software for task planning, weather reports and general information with programs such as OzRunways.

This Safari was an event designed around the ASH 25. On almost all the days, the ASH got ahead in the last hour to land 10 minutes or more ahead of the rest. It was only let down by the difficulty of ground handling such a big glider with a non-steering tail wheel.

The Stemme was impressive, more so than I would have thought before the Safari. It carried two full sized men and had little difficulty keeping up with the ASH on a strong day. It excelled when it came to taxiing to the GA tie-down area while the rest of us nailed our gliders down far out in the field or when ferrying people out to have a look at Lake Eyre. Its weak point was only on the light days when it was out-climbed by the DG808.

The DG-808 was designed for events like this. It could convincingly out-climb the other gliders, both under motor and when thermalling. The DG was close or ahead of the ASH on most days, right up to the final glide. With a steerable tailwheel and large wing-tip wheels, it could be taxied fairly well unless the taxi-way cones or lights got in the way. Its weak points were lack of cockpit space for the paraphernalia required on trips such as this and while flying by yourself and making your own decisions was great, the workload of flying and navigating in a single seater can be tiring. GA

STATISTICS - APPROXIMATE ONLY

9 DAYS FLOWN.
3000 KM.
39 HOURS AIRTIME.
ENGINE TIME APPROX 1:15. LESS THAN LESS THAN 25 LITRES FUEL IN DG OR ASH

Test your knowledge of flying rules and regulations for glider pilots, instructors and operators with this challenging quiz. Complete answers with references are provided to help you pick up information you may have been missing.

MUTUAL FLYING

I don't have an Independent Operator authorisation but my friend does. Can I fly with him without a Level 2 Instructor supervising?
No. our mutual flying must be authorised by and carried out under the direct supervision of the Duty Instructor [MOSP, Part 2, 16.2.2].

My friend and I are both Independent Operators. Can we fly together without being supervised by a Level 2 Instructor?
Yes, but only within the limitations of your authorisation. A Level 1 Independent Operator's authorisation only allows the holder to exercise the privilege where there is no Level 2 Instructor on duty [Ops Directive 03/06]. In addition, only one of you can act as command pilot so this will need to be determined before the flight.

You mention the pilot in command must be determined before flight. Can't we share the command pilot duties?
No. Civil Aviation Regulations (CAR 224) require that for each flight the operator shall designate one pilot to act as pilot in command.

I am an experienced pilot but I have a medical condition that prevents me from flying in command. Can I fly mutual?
Yes, providing your condition is such that it does not present an unacceptable risk. You will need to discuss this with your CFI.

As a pilot with a medical condition, am I limited to flying mutual only with an Instructor?
No, you can fly mutual even if the other pilot is not a qualified GFA Instructor but the second pilot must be qualified for mutual flying with "Pilot in Command" responsibility.

If I am flying mutual with a medical condition that prevents me from flying in command, can I take control?
Yes, but the glider must at all times be operated within the limitations of the 'pilot in command' qualifications and authorisations.

PASSENGER FLYING

I want to take my friend for a flight. What authorisation do I need?
You need a Logbook endorsement from your CFI for the carriage of private passengers [MOSP, Part 2, 16.2.4]. The minimum requirement is the 'C' Certificate.

If I take my friend for a flight, can I charge him for the cost of the flight?
Cost-sharing is legal on passenger flights in accordance with Civil Aviation Regulations but the pilot in command must pay at least half the full cost of the flight.

When flying with a private passenger, can I let them have a go on the controls?
No. Handover of control to a passenger is not permitted. If your passenger wants to have a go at the controls he/she would need to undertake an air experience flight with an Instructor.

Can I let a private passenger have a go on the controls if I am an Instructor?
No. Handover of control to a person who is not a member of the GFA is not allowed.

What is the difference between the Level 1 and Level 2 Private Passenger authority?
The Level 1 private passenger-carrying authority allows carriage of private passengers, subject to direct authorisation by the duty instructor on each passenger-carrying flight or group of flights. The Level 2 private passenger-carrying authority enables experienced pilots who do not hold any other passenger-carrying ratings (such as AEI or Charter) to carry private passengers without having to seek direct authorisation for each flight from the Duty Instructor. If a pilot holds Level 2 Independent Operator authority in addition to a Level 2 passenger-carrying authority, private passenger-flying may take place independently.

Do I need a private passenger authority if I am an Instructor?
No. A person holding a valid GFA Instructor authorisation does not need a separate authority to fly private passengers.

I am an Air Experience Instructor. Can I allow the person undertaking the AEF to take off or land?
No. You must carry out all launches, circuits, approaches and landings. In addition, you may only hand over control to the person undertaking the AEF after giving an appropriate briefing or demonstration and subject to you being above 800ft AGL.

What is the difference between Air Experience flights and Charter flights?
An Air Experience flight is defined as carriage of a person who is a member of the GFA for the purpose of experiencing the sport of gliding. Charter flying involves carrying out 'hire and reward' passenger operations for persons who are not members of the GFA. A club or operator must hold an Air Operator Certificate issued by CASA to conduct charter flights and pilots must be appropriately endorsed.

I have an Instructor rating and my club has an Air Operator Certificate. Can I fly Charter Flights?
No. Instructors must hold a separate logbook endorsement by their CFI authorising charter flying [MOSP, Part 2, 16.3.2].

My club has an Air Operator Certificate and I have a Charter Pilot endorsement. When flying with a charter passenger, can I let them have a go on the controls?
No. Charter passengers must not manipulate or interfere with the glider's controls [CAO 95.4.1 Section 6.4].

COACHING

I have heard my club has a Sporting Coach. What is the coach's role?
The sporting coach provides pilots with cross-country soaring training together with training in advanced racing techniques for those pilots aspiring to championship flying.

Isn't coaching the role of an Instructor?
Not necessarily. While instructors can teach any part of the syllabus, coaches are usually chosen because they have proven skills in performance flying and the ability to pass that knowledge on.

What kind of coaching is available to me?
Coaches are available to assist pilots through the various stages of competency, such as working towards the Glider Pilot Certificate, achieving Badges, cross-country flying, and competitive flying. Coaching may be conducted in a 2-seater or as single seat lead and follow. GA

BLANIK RECOVERY PROGRAM

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY
DAFYDD LLEWELLYN

Eight originally modified Australian Llewellyn Blaniks are airworthy again after being granted an exemption against the EASA AD by CASA, subject to their being made fully compliant with the original Llewellyn STC. The first newly-modified Blanik will be VH-XQO. Its wing are in the jigs at the moment.

HISTORY

In 1978, the Czech authorities proudly let it be known that the calculated safe life of the L-13 was 3000 hours. This caused absolute consternation in Australia, because we did not ignore fatigue issues with light aeroplanes or gliders. We had at that time one L-13 with 7750 hours, one with 5500 hours, and a number between 3000 and 4000 hours. As a result, the Czechs then performed a series of endurance tests of portions of an L-13 airframe, which allowed them to extend the life to 4000 hours. This did nothing worthwhile to ease the situation in Australia, but it did identify the critical locations.

The importer Bill Riley of Riley Aeronautics asked me to design a life extension modification. Since there was clearly little difference in labour content between modifying the aircraft for a life of 8,000 hours and modifying it for 12,000 hours, we chose to do the latter. The rest of the world took no notice. At that time, most people gave fatigue issues for light aeroplanes, let alone gliders, little consideration. Such matters were thought to be significant only for airliners, which a rather illogical point of view because almost all aircraft materials except wood are subject to fatigue - a progressive loss in strength due to repeated loading cycles. While tensile loads affect metals and compression affects composites, even wooden gliders have metal fittings in critical locations. The 'safe life' of a Blanik was based on a 99.9% probability of avoiding failure - or, in more understandable terms, the chance of a fatigue failure will have risen to 1 in 1000 per flying hour at the point at which the aircraft is retired from service.

A sharp awakening occurred in 2010 when the European Aviation Safety Authority issued an Airworthiness Directive that grounded all L-13 aircraft as a consequence of the fatigue failure of the wing of an Austrian-registered Blanik at a nominal life of 2230 hours. Because Australia, like other countries, automatically accepts ADs from the airworthiness authority that is responsible for the Type Certificate, this applied to Australian-registered Blaniks also. However, after representation from myself, CASA issued an exemption against the EASA AD for the eight Blaniks that had been originally modified, subject to their having the complete modification installed. Some had only been partially modified.

The simple answer to the current Blanik problem is that the designer did not put sufficient material in certain critical places to give an adequate life for any usage other than the original one, that is, as a fairly short-life military trainer. Two critical parameters regarding the fatigue life of an aircraft wing are (i) The per-G stress level in the tension load path of the main spar, and (ii) The loading spectrum to which the aircraft is subjected. Aerobatics consume the fatigue life at something like ten times the rate of normal flying.

The original design had approximately 6000 psi per G tensile stress in the lower wing spar cap and assumed that aerobatic usage would not exceed 2% of total flight time, figured on the basis that the whole of any flight on which aerobatic manoeuvres occur is counted as aerobatic flight time. This means, in effect, that the Blanik may be used for spin training but, apart from that, one should use an L-13AC or a glider explicitly designed for aerobatics if you want to let off steam. To extend the fatigue life to 12,000 hours, on the same assumption, it is necessary to add material to the lower wing spar cap at the critical point, such that the 1-G stress level is reduced to less than half its original value. Obviously, that means adding more material than was there in the first place. Also, it is not sufficient to consider only the wing. It is just as lethal if the tailplane fails or the fin falls off, so all the critical areas identified in the Czech report have to be addressed.

This is not a small job, and it needs to be done under controlled conditions by a qualified aircraft maintenance shop, with accurate jigging to get the new wing root fittings in exactly the right place. Further, no two Blaniks have their rivet holes in precisely the same positions. It is not, therefore, a case of purchasing a mod kit and installing it in the back of the typical gliding club hangar.

WHAT THE MODIFICATION INVOLVES

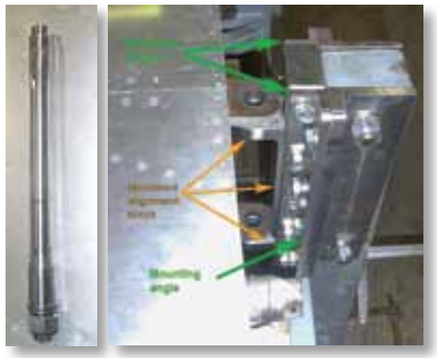
Because the wing root pin is a very precise fit – the tolerance is only 0.0006 inches - extraordinary measures have been necessary to ensure that the replacement wing root fitting is located in precisely the correct location; each wing must be locked to its jig, and so must the wing root fitting, in such a way that the old fitting can be removed without losing the precise location of the hole for the main wing pin. No clearance can be permitted. This is achieved by ingenious expanding pins, devised by Ian Bent (the owner of CAMIT Pty Ltd, which holds the licence – and the necessary CASA Production Certificate – to manufacture the critical components for the life extension modification).

Ian Bent installing the expanding pin into the starboard wing of VH-XQO, in the CAMIT factory, whilst the starboard jig was being perfected, behind one of CAMIT's huge numerically-controlled machining centres. George Markey, head of ARMCOM, the holder of the licence to implement the modification, and the owner of the jigs, is looking on.

The jig supports the wing from the wing root to the inboard end of the aileron, so that the precise location of the root fittings can be maintained. When the wing is opened for internal work, the jig also prevents any alteration of its built-in twist. The design and construction of these jigs has involved a lot of effort and cost. They are, for example, designed not to depend on being bolted down to a concrete slab. The wing goes into the jig in a precisely controlled location, and is clamped so that it cannot move out of alignment.

When the root fittings have been secured to the jig, the aileron hinge is also secured to the jig and the wing root clamps are installed and tightened. The wing is now ready to be opened.

The next step is to dye-check the inboard end of the spar cap extruded angle for cracking. VH-XQO was entirely free from any cracking.



ABOVE LEFT: The expanding pin (one for each wing)RIGHT: The root fitting alignment block, which is secured to the root fittings by the expanding pin.

The old root fitting secured to the jig by the expanding pin.

The starboard wing of VH-XQO, with the root fitting and the internal reinforcing strap (which runs from the root to rib#4) removed. Note the excellent condition of the interior of the wing.

The modification provides more than twice the amount of material that was originally built into the spar at the critical location and for that reason, in fact, some transverse cracking is permissible in the original angle. The life extension to 12,000 hours assumes that the original angle has reached the end of its safe life.

Originally, it was hoped to use eddy-current inspection of the holes, but this was based on the expectation - which seemed likely in 1979 - that such inspection methods could detect a crack only 0.005 inches deep, emanating from a fastener hole bore. However, in the light of current knowledge, the threshold detectable crack depth is more like 0.040 inches or 1 mm and thus, too great to be removed by oversizing the holes. So it was necessary to amend the basis from that of the original modification - which fortunately assumed that the angle was ineffective, and supplied sufficient reinforcement to cater for that situation - and replace the requirement for eddy current testing with a dye-penetrant check. This required a re-appraisal of the Supplemental Type certificate, and this has delayed the project by many months. However, so far, no Australian Blanik wing has shown cracking in the spar angle. This will no doubt depend upon how much aerobatic usage an aircraft has been exposed to although it does not present a problem for this modification process.

Any life-extension process for the Blanik wing that relies on eddy-current testing is fraught with danger. It assumes that the spar will only fail through the rivet holes. However, in the original fatigue testing in Czechoslovakia, the initial failure occurred in the inner strap, and it did NOT go through the rivet holes.

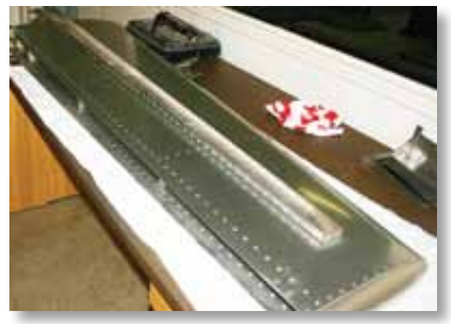
The Llewellyn modification replaces the original internal strap, which is approx. 4.5 mm thick where this crack occurred, tapering to about 1 mm at either end, with three 0.080 inch duralumin straps which extend past rib #4 inside the wing, plus two 0.063 inch steel straps, also internal, which further reinforce the critical zone around the outboard end of the steel root fitting. It also adds a large duralumin strap externally, which extends to approximately 15% the length of the dive brake, past the inboard end of the dive brake. It then adds a second, relatively short, external strap at the critical root attachment zone.

There are also local reinforcements at the tie-down bolt area and on some versions, also at the skin joint at the centre aileron hinge.

The steel root fitting is replaced with a new component made from a superior grade of steel, as is the lower wing carry-through member in the fuselage.

ABOVE: The side of the fuselage of VH-XQO removed to allow access for replacement of the lower wing carry-through member. Before the carry-through member can be removed, a jig must be attached to locate the new carry-through member with similar accuracy to that of the wing root fittings (obviously, they must fit one another or it will be impossible to rig the glider). The replacement carry-through member is of heavier section as well as being made of a superior material.

BELOW: What about the tailplane? It is futile to reinforce the wings, and their fuselage carry-through, unless the tailplane is also capable of the extended life. So the tailplane is also reinforced. To do this, the entire tailplane spar is first removed from the tailplane.



New steel root-fittings are installed, replacing the original aluminium fittings.

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DAFYDD LLEWELLYN

Dafydd graduated from Sydney University in 1964 with a Bachelor of Aeronautical Engineering. He has a wealth of experience covering the certification of small aircraft such as the Seabird Seeker, Jabiru, Skyfox and Airtruk agricultural aircraft. He is the designer of the fatigue life extension modification for the L13 Blanik sailplane. Dafydd also has extensive experience with the design and certification of modifications to large aircraft such as the Fokker F 27 for atmospheric research by the CSIRO. He holds a CASA test pilot authorisation for small single engine aircraft and is a member of the Flight Test Society of Australia. He has a long association with gliding including 250 hours as an instructor in Blanik aircraft.

Dafydd is Engineering Director of Southdown Engineering Pty Ltd, a company based in Queensland.

What does all this weigh? The empty weight of the aircraft is increased by approximately 10kg, by the total reinforcement program.

However, this does not translate directly into 10kg reduction in allowable pilot weight, because the ballasting arrangements are changed. Most Blaniks carry some fixed ballast attached to their nose bulkhead, and they are normally operated without ballast. Ballast is added only when a light pilot in the front seat needs more weight. By changing this arrangement to one where there is no fixed ballast, but some ballast is normally carried in ballast boxes installed for the purpose, close to the front bulkhead, unless the front pilot is sufficiently heavy that it is not required. Thus, when the pilot weight is an issue, all the ballast can normally be removed.

This, plus the provision of a battery box on the front bulkhead, accessible by opening the nose fitted with quick-release fasteners to facilitate this, has the effect of approximately halving the weight penalty of the modification.

Experience to date shows that most Blaniks have not been weighed for a very long time, and the aircraft weight assumed by their operators is liable to be incorrect. Part of the modification package is a complete re-weighing, to ensure the allowable pilot weights after the modification are accurate. Anyone concerned about the allowable total pilot weight should ensure that his concerns are based on accurate current aircraft weight information. Most aircraft can expect to lose about 5kg of total pilot weight. This is not normally a problem.

WHAT IS THE EFFECT ON PERFORMANCE?

Perhaps surprisingly, experience has shown the effect of the modification on performance to be unmeasurable. The first aircraft modified, in 1980, was flown with one modified wing and one unmodified wing, on the theory that any performance effect would show up as a turning tendency. None was detectable. Further, when GFA conducted a survey of the modified Blaniks in 2010, it emerged that one of them had been flying with one modified and one unmodified wing for many years. For all practical purposes, the effect on performance is too small to be detectable. ***GA***

ASK 21 TRAILER CONSTRUCTION

BY JOHN HUDSON

Following the Waikerie Gliding Club's purchase of an ASK 21, the decision was made to construct a trailer for the glider from scratch.

After discussions with the Balaklava Gliding Club and Peter Goodale, the club provided a copy of the drawing members had used to build their trailers. the building crew at Waikerie made some minor changes to the drawing, mainly to incorporate a sloped front on the trailer to improve its aerodynamics.

The Club Secretary, John Ridge, offered the use of his nearly new workshop at his home near Forreston in the Adelaide Hills to build the trailer.

Keeping it square.

Nigel Baker, RTO/A SA, offered to do the welding. A materials list was prepared and Peter Robinson arranged for the steel required for the construction to be purchased and delivered to John's Forreston workshop. Other required items including axles, wheels and lighting were also purchased.

One of the more unusual decisions about the trailer construction was to fix the external cladding, white Colorbond steel sheet, using 3M VHB tape, very high-strength bonding tape.

A small nucleus of club members attended to most of the construction activity, carrying out most of the work on Fridays, and several others made a contribution. Where would clubs be without volunteers? With construction preparations ready, the task commenced on 20 May 2009 when John Ridge cut the first steel.

The first steel is cut.

The trailer began to take shape. Particular care was taken to ensure the construction was very accurately square throughout, using the external cladding sheets as the template.

The trailer frame starts to take shape.

The under-carriage, made up of two axles and spring sets to support the four wheels, was constructed as a separate unit to allow adjustment of the undercarriage position for trailer weight and balance purposes.

Throughout the construction project, Nigel acquainted those involved with advice about the need for and methods of sharpening drill bits, making sure the tape measure was sharp and a range of other sharp aspects.

The wheels for the trailer were obtained from the club's airfield car, a Holden stationwagon, from which the wheels were removed before the vehicle was disposed of.

As the project neared the time for the fixing of the external skin, the crew had to transport the incomplete trailer to Waikerie to allow a fitting of the glider. Because of the Colorbond steel sheet being used for the skin and the plan to use 3M VHB tape to secure it, it was necessary to complete all of the welding first.

With the welding complete, Matthew Cox of Armstrong Packaging at Port Adelaide visited to show us the finer points of using the VHB tape, highlighting the need for absolute cleanliness and thorough preparation. Following Matt's visit, we prepared the rear door and attached the skin with relative ease.

Attaching the skin to the trailer was straightforward, although time consuming due to the need to individually fit each sheet before meticulously cleaning every surface and applying the VHB tape before fixing the sheet. All the advice and pointers provided by 3M and Matt from Armstrong Packaging were extremely valuable in ensuring our project went well and without any major impediment.

On Saturday 5 June 2010, the trailer was towed to Waikerie, where arrangements were made for an inspection of the trailer to complete the paper work for formal registration.

The ASK 21 trailer project was an interesting and enjoyable project for the club's members to undertake. The project took a little over one year, from cutting the first steel on 20 May 2009 to applying the final sheet of Colorbond sheet on 28 May 2010.

The benefits of using the VHB tape include the fact that the trailer is now waterproof, dustproof and is considerably stronger than any screwed or riveted skin attachment, because the skin is fully attached across the entire steel structure. Due to this full attachment, the VHB tape also eliminates any oil canning of the skin.

The Club members who regularly attended the construction sessions ensured the project was able to make a considerable saving for the Club. ***GA***

Nigel Baker and David Conway, building the undercarriage.

Installing the under-carriage.

Installing the plywood floor.

Fitting the AS K21 to the trailer.

BELOW: The completed trailer at Waikerie.

MELBOURNE CUP VINTAGE RALLY

29TH OCTOBER TO 1ST NOVEMBER, 2011 BACCHUS MARSH

WORDS AND PICTURES: DAVID GOLDSMITH
PICTURES: BOB HICKMAN

We were hoping for some good luck with the weather after the soggy start to last year's event. At least, last year the weather improved as the rally progressed, and unlike some sites we did get some good flying in.

ABOVE: Back-door entry to the unique Zephyrus

This year followed the same pattern, a bit wet and a bit windy so we were not able to fly on Saturday and Sunday. Fortunately, Monday and Tuesday were much better!

Visitors from South Australia, John Ingram and John Pollnitz, arrived on Friday, to be greeted by a power blackout that even prevented topping up the Super Cub for it's flight to the VSA cross-country coaching course at Raywood. A fuel stop at Bendigo was necessary! The power came back well after dark when some lines were repaired. Not an auspicious start,especially as the wind started to blow some rain in on Saturday morning. The rain stopped, but the wind didn't, and a relaxing day ensued. John Pollnitz revealed that he had repaired the Museum's T31b in 1961 after it was badly damaged in an accident in Western Australia. It was further damaged when being transported in an RAAF DC3 to Adelaide, some wing ribs being sacrificed during loading and unloading! John's major repair, including design adaption brought on by a shortage of plans, has stood the two-seater in good stead over the following fifty years! John presented to the museum the original receipt he received when buying the T31b wreckage for 120 pounds!

Saturday evening's barbeque by our Chef John Mackley, assisted by Jill, Kaye, Jennifer and Jenne, produced a magnificent three course dinner enjoyed by all.

On Sunday the Australian Gliding Museum's Open Day was held in the Bruce Brockhoff Annexe. The weather was perfect – but only inside the Annexe - and soon a large crowd had gathered. Over sixty members and friends of the Museum took their seats for the eleven am start, and the enthusiasm and support for the Museum was evident. The unique line-up of diverse gliders, exhibition of winches and appropriate memorabilia looked great, much preparation having gone into the event. John Parncutt recorded proceedings on video and set up the PA system.

BELOW: Australian Gliding Museum AGM 2011 Photo by Bob Hickman

At the Annual General Meeting all committee members were re-elected, and an informal discussion and information session gave added insight to the museum's future plans. In particular members were requested to remember the museum when items become surplus, donations are possible, or a will is considered.

Following the Museum AGM we all moved to the new hangar next door for it's opening ceremony. This hangar, at Locksley, was donated by Diane Davey and Phil Prapulenis . It had been disassembled and brought to Bacchus Marsh by members, and was re-erected by a contractor. A concrete floor was installed, and it is to be used primarily as a workshop and paintshop.

The GFA kindly assisted by sharing with the Museum the cost of re-erection. It was named the "Dave Darbyshire Glider Restoration Workshop" in the presence of Russell Darbyshire and other family members. Dave was a foundation Committee member and supporter, and he was very active in Museum activities until his death some years ago. During an active business life, Dave started Aviaquip Pty Ltd., and Russell and family continue the support and assistance begun by Dave. A letter from Mavis, in appreciation of the museum's recognition of Dave's support, was read out by Russell. A plaque thanking Diane and Phil for donating the hangar was also unveiled

Next on the agenda was the Sausage Sizzle and Burger lunch, enjoyed by almost eighty hungry people. Last minute arrangements were made to get in more supplies. Sincere thanks to Ian "Moose" Cowie, Alma Cowie, Ann Birch and all the volunteers for a great job!

When the list was opened for flights in the Museum's T31b, volunteers were hard to find – perhaps due to the visibility deteriorating to about 500 metres in rain at that exact time!

Dinner was had at the wonderful "Back to Bacchus" restaurant Sunday evening, an excellent menu and social occasion enjoyed by 18 glider pilots and friends.

The Vintage Rally began in earnest next morning, Monday, with a light south westerly breeze and six vintage gliders ready to fly. Geelong Club's K13 GPZ had seven flights, including one of 34 minutes by Rosie Howse and Dave Goldsmith. The Vintage Gliders Australia K4, IKK, had four flights including one of 45 minutes by Brian Amey and Alan Patching. Greg O'Sullivan had 28 minutes in his all-metal HP-14V. David Howse had 3 flights in Boomerang "Yellow Bird" GQO, the longest being 33 minutes. The longest single-seater flight award was presented to Bob Hickman, for 40 minutes in Boomerang GQY, one of four GQY flights. The longest two seater flight was awarded to Diane Davey and Jenne Goldsmith for 46 minutes in K13 GPY. GPY did 3 flights on the day.

Sunday night's casserole was produced by the local members, followed up with a birthday cake and ice-cream to celebrate John Pollnitz's birthday the previous day – he nearly got away with keeping it a secret but all enjoyed the occasion!

Tuesday the soaring continued and a few light afternoon showers caused slight interruption. Nine vintage gliders took to the sky, some using the Geelong winch, and getting launches reaching about 2,000 ft AGL.

The Slingsby T31b VH-GDB, belonging to the Museum, made five flights before being tucked away as rainshowers approached.

ABOVE John Pollnitz and Ross Birch in the Geelong Club K13

Greg O'sullivan had a flight in his HP-14

K13 GPY had two solo flights by Jenne Goldsmith.

K13 GPZ made two training flights with Peter Hoffman and instructor Wayne Mackley.

ES-65 Platypus VH-GFA, also made two flights, with Leigh and Sue Snell.

Boomerang GQY had flights by Bob Hickman and Neil Hardiman.

Standard Austria VH-GUN had it's first flight in eleven years, and Ian Patching proved it really is a Top Gun with the award for the longest flight, 55 minutes. Well done!

The Beaufort Gliding Club's unique Zephyrus showed there is plenty of life in the old girl as Chris Thorpe and Jim Henkel got the longest flight award in a two-seater, with 31 minutes.

The rally lost the first two days of flying due to the weather, perhaps confirming the long held belief that you should plan be there on the Monday! There was lots of enthusiasm and interest, and all agreed that it was all well worthwhile and much enjoyed. Thanks to all those who attended and to the many who assisted with running the event. GA

BELOW LEFT: John Ingram with VGA's K4

BELOW RIGHT: Diane Davey and Dave Goldsmith reluctantly come back to Earth.

GETTING HIGH IN NEW ZEALAND

WORDS AND PICTURES: BERNARD ECKEY

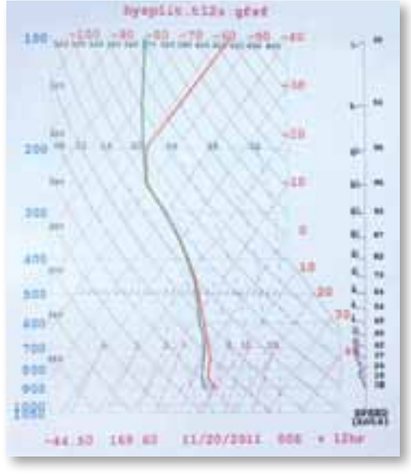
Even a loud bang on our chalet door could not wake me up at 7:15 the morning after the wind-up dinner at the South Island gliding championship in Omarama, New Zealand. Fortunately my travel companion Brian Rau opened the door for Theo Newfield. “Bernard get up! The wave is on and I have already organised a tug for you,” he said excitedly.

TOP: Looking at Mt Cook from 6000ft above 'cumulo granitus'.

BELOW: The Mackenzie Basin is surrounded by high mountains and has its own microclimate. The forecast was for rain, but it turned into a great wave soaring day.

I’m not known for being quick off the mark in the morning and in hindsight I was dubious whether that last glass of Merlot the night before was a good idea. In any case I thought that the weather forecast was for rain and was half convinced that Theo was having us on. However, there was a seriousness in his voice which made me open the bedroom curtains just enough to have a look at the sky. What I saw got me out of bed very quickly.

I put on long underwear and two pairs of thick woollen socks and rushed off to the hangar. With a lot of help from the tuggy and several other friends, we had Theo’s ASH 25 E on the grid in no time.



APPROACHING RAIN

However, by the time I finally shut the canopy ready for launch the sky was closing in rapidly. Even worse, there was rain in the distance. “I will keep a listening watch on the radio for you, Bernard, but whatever you do play it safe,” said my friend Brian.

Just minutes later I was slope-soaring the aptly named Mt Horrible but the turbulence was severe enough to ensure that the airspeed never dropped below 80 kt. This resulted in very slow progress but also prevented me climbing much above 5000ft. In the absence of any other options, I reluctantly pointed the ASH 25 into wind believing that I was far too low to contact the wave.

Rain was clearly approaching from the southwest resulting in rapidly deteriorating visibility. A few moments later Omarama base called and advised of light rain and thick water droplets started rolling down my canopy. My meagre altitude was rapidly decreasing and I cruised towards some rotor clouds hanging over the middle of the Mackenzie valley. Just as I was contemplating turning for home the air became very rough. Even the big ASH 25 was thrown around by severe turbulence and a mixture of strong gusts of lift with patches of even heavier sink. I was clearly battling the rotor and needed no reminder to pull my harness tight. I told myself that every rotor has wave above it and continued to milk the rough lift for every possible foot of altitude.

CONTACTING THE WAVE

All the air vents were fully open but that didn’t prevent the canopy from slowly fogging up on the inside, while the approaching rain led to a deterioration of visibility outside. Decision time had arrived and the prudent thing to do was to head for home. But I had managed to gain enough height to push just a little further upwind when suddenly the air turned so smooth that I could have been forgiven for thinking I was flying in a church. I was obviously in wave and in the right spot at the right time. The audio vario began to chirp quite nicely and sounded happier with every second that passed. Soon the averager was reading a steady 6 kts.

It was now safe to head further north and fly into an area of better visibility. The rain was quickly left behind and with it my earlier thoughts of terminating the flight.

I soon approached the 13,500ft airspace limit and in order to stay out of trouble I either needed a clearance or had abandon the climb. Speeding up to 120 kts while flying away from the wave arrested the climb and eventually took me into unrestricted airspace. But I had lost valuable altitude and had to find another climb.

Lenticular clouds downwind of the Ben Ohau ranges clearly marked the path into another waveband and when I contacted the lennies the altimeter was soon showing 15,000ft. My oxygen flow appeared to be nice and steady, but it was now time to put the pulse oxymeter on. For high altitude flying these gadgets are essential. They simply clip onto a fingertip and provide feedback on pulse rate and blood oxygen saturation levels. My oxymeter produced the most interesting readings. I had a blood oxygen saturation of 90% which was reassuring but my earlier battle with the rotor and the current excitement was evidenced by a pulse rate of 126 beats per minute. It was obviously time for me to relax and I headed towards a promising lenticular cloud just downwind of Mt. Cook. I prudently keep one eye on the oxymeter for the rest of the flight.

Mt Cook, New Zealand’s highest mountain was partly engulfed by clouds, but with an altimeter reading of well over 18,000ft I had a clearance of almost 6,000ft to the rocks and cumulus granitus below. Unfortunately, the climb rate dropped to just 2 kts and even in the textbook wave cloud over Mt Cook I could only temporarily improve upon it. Clearly, some patience was needed to get to diamond height but when Omarama base requested a position report I was able to report climbing through 22,000ft in two knots of lift.

DIAMOND HEIGHT

But why risk falling a few feet short when there are still two knots of lift around? Only a little patience was needed. At 23,000ft the Tasman Glacier appeared briefly through a gap in the clouds below but I figured that 24,000ft would be a nice round number. Just as the GPS showed a distance of 120km to Omarama airfield I reached my target altitude and It was time to head for home and get warm again. But why waste 24,000ft and miss the chance to learn a little more about New Zealand’s wave? If only it was a bit warmer it would be a perfect opportunity to experiment with lift patterns on the way home. To expedite my descent and to get away from the cold I deliberately moved the ASH 25 into the wrong part of the sky. I quickly contacted sink and the result was dramatic! The altimeter started to unwind at a rate that would normally increase a glider pilot’s blood pressure to alarming levels. However, relocating the lift turned out to be just as straightforward.

After just 2.5 hours flying time the ASH 25 touched down on terra firma. An official observer was called to remove the datalogger but the next morning I was told that the logger had not produced a secure file. This is the second time this has happened to me and using two different dataloggers. Never mind, it looks like I have the perfect excuse for another trip to Omarama next year to do it again.

Looking at the temp trace pictured on the opposite page, the weatherman could have been forgiven for declaring the day good only for sightseeing or fishing, but sometimes it pays to have friends with local knowledge who are prepared to hurry you out of bed.

My sincere thanks must therefore go to Theo Newfield not only for letting me fly his beautiful ASH 25 for a whole week, but also for his first class advice and his overwhelming generosity. I also owe a big thank you to my friend Brian Rau.

The following day turned out to be only good for ducks with well over 30mm of rain falling in the Omarama area. However, the weatherman predicted excellent wave flying conditions for the day after and so we topped up our oxygen bottles. The forecast proved very accurate. The rest of the week provided wave flying opportunities unlike any I had ever experienced before. GA

TOP: Bernard and Brian Rau at the launch point Omarama.
BELOW: The view of the Tasman Valley with Mt Cook towering above it.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Please send letters eith the heading 'Letter to the Editor'
to *GLIDING* AUSTRALIA
Email: editor@soaring.org.au
The deadline is the 10th of the month prior to publication.

Welcome to Gliding Australia's first Letters to the Editor section. Because we had not received letters in time for publication in previous issues, this section has been omitted until now. However, we welcome comments and feedback on all gliding related subjects. We would particularly like to hear from readers about what you would like to see in your magazine, whether you intend your letter for publication or not. Please feel free to call, email or write to me at any time.
SEAN YOUNG

As a casual glider pilot of limited experience but mature age, I am enjoying the new format Gliding Australia. Who said there would not be enough content after the breakaway from the HGFA. Congratulations.

A couple of observations which may assist:

1. Excellent idea to include a quiz (as per CASA's Flight Safety mag). So many aspects of gliding can be covered and the result would cause the magazine to 'hang around' rather than be thrown out post read.

2. More instructional type articles on flight theory, navigation, and meteorology. I thought the recent article on women instructors and instructing women in a male dominated sport was most interesting.

3. Encouraging pilot stories on 'near misses' and incidents which would remind and educate others in safety on the ground and in the air. A recent article on getting lost on a cross country was a wonderful example.

Well done TIM BRODIE (RRGC)

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SHEEP, GOATS, AND WATER BALLAST

John Clark, with his usual sharp wit, described a recent Lake Keepit Regatta in the April 2011 "Soaring australia" (p. 30-32) in an article "Separating The Sheep From The Goats".

In it he summarised a talk I gave on the effect of water ballast on performance. Unfortunately, he left out the punch line (perhaps I muffed it somehow). This gave the impression that I do not recommend carrying water ballast, when in fact I do. The advantage is simply not what people think it is.

My talk was a brief version of an article I wrote in the distant past: "The Use of Water Ballast", Australian Gliding, September 1982, p.16-22. I am sure that my argument was correct then, and is still correct. Wing loadings are all heavier now, so someone should update the calculations and graphs leading to the conclusions of my article.

John Clark has since earned my gratitude by kindly re-publishing my ancient article where it can be read by a new generation of glider pilots: the Lake Keepit Soaring Club online magazine "Keep Soaring" for May-June 2011 (see pages 33 to 37):
http://www.keepitsoaring.com/LKSC/Downloads/Keep_Soaring/May_June_2011.pdf

To quote John Clark's article (with the points numbered):

"Garry Speight gives a challenging talk on why increasing your wing loading with water ballast

(1) will give you a lower rate of climb

(2) will give you more trouble in narrow thermals and

(3) won't make your speed on the glides any faster.

As usual with Garry's talks, it provoked some amusing arguments and more than a little scratching of heads."

These three points were supposed to lead to the up-beat conclusion:

(4) will stop you from getting too low.

The argument is this:

The advantage of a high wing loading is not directly related to all points on the polar (including best glide) moving to the right. It is related to the fact that a loaded glider sinks less at all the high speeds used for cruising, although it sinks more at all the slow speeds used for climbing.

When thermalling with ballast, the rate of climb is reduced for two separate reasons: the glider sinks more at each speed, and the minimum circling speed is higher, forcing a bigger circle which may be outside the thermal core. The best reason to dump ballast is finding that the glider cannot fly within the core.

The best speed for cruising depends directly on the rate of climb. Pilots carrying ballast will fly at much the same speed as those not carrying ballast. If they experienced the same rate of climb, their better polar would justify a higher speed, but they don't; they experience a much lower rate of climb.

Given that ballasted and unballasted gliders should cruise at much the same speed, it is clear that the heavier glider's lower sink rate in cruise is its only advantage. It is a very great advantage: the flat glide angle brings strong thermals within range, avoids scratching at low altitude, and makes outlanding less likely. GARRY SPEIGHT

I am surprised that there have been no 'Letters to the Editor' in either of the published copies of GA. In days gone bye, a good deal of sometimes heated correspondence took place which made the magazine an excellent, democratic forum for discussion over all relevant topics to the gliding movement.

Latterly, the opposite condition has been noticeably present, in that an unofficial censor, or unofficial censorship, has been in force. Will this situation continue, or can the movement as a whole expect a return to a more open and hence democratic forum for general debate? Yours sincerely. ERIK SHERWIN

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www.gfa.org.au

Please send classified advertisements with payment to: The Gliding Federation of Australia - Classifieds
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Somerton VIC 3062.
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Once payment has been received, your ad will be placed on the GFA website for a period of 1 month and published in the next edition of Gliding Australia. For the current advertising charges, please go to www. gfa.org.au and click Classifieds.

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GLIDING EVENTS

31st Club and Sports class Nationals
Monday, 02 -13 January 2012
GFA National Sports and club competition with 20 meters 2 seater class will be conducted at the State Gliding Centre Benalla. Come along for some safe, fair and fun competition at one of the best equipped gliding sites in the country. Full details and entry form at www.deltone.id.au/Benalla2012 or contact the comps director Tim Shirley at tshirley@internode.on.net

Vintage Gliders Australia
Annual Rally 7 - 15 January 2012
It's on again – all welcome!
Contact Ian Patching 03 94383510

VSA Coaching Week
28 Jan – 3 Feb 2012
Horsham, Victoria
www.gliding.asn.au

50thNational MultiClass
Gliding Championships
30 Jan – 10 Feb 2012
Narromine
www.narromineglidingclub.com.au/Narromine50/MultiClass2012.html

Horsham Week 2012 4 - 11 Feb 2012'
The new north south runway is complete and the competition room has been completely renovated so that the games can begin. Entry forms and local rules are all available on the club website www.horshamweek.org.au so please get your completed forms in to the Contest Director by mail to 13 Montrose Crt, Greenvale 3059 or by email cd@horshamweek.org.au

Entry remains at $100 and the competition is held in a friendly and relaxed manner.

Lake Keepit Regatta 19-26
February 2012
Lake Keepit Soaring Club Organiser:
Tim Carr tim.carr@optusnet.com.au

THE TRUE STORY OF A.G.

BY MARTIN SIMONS

In the first issue of **GLIDING** AUSTRALIA there was a brief but inadequate account of how the magazine Australian Gliding was started, managed and edited.

For years the main driving force responsible for the magazine was R J (Bob) Muller. Bob was a journalist and founder member of the GFA. Recognising the urgent need for a monthly Australian journal for glider pilots, he took the necessary steps to get it started. He was wholly responsible for the first issue, which appeared in typewritten, cyclostyled form in December 1951, carrying the incorrect publication date of 1950. The second issue appeared in January/February 1952. The lead story was an account of a record breaking flight by Keith Collyer who, in the last few words of his article, indicated that he was the editor.

For the rest of 1952, the magazine was edited by Bob Muller, assisted by Allan Ash. Allan spent this first year learning the business. Bob soon became secretary of the GFA and Allan became sole editor in 1953. The magazine by now had progressed to a well printed publication.

No one was paid for the work they did on A.G. Costs, especially printing and distribution, were met entirely from subscriptions and revenue from advertising. It was not compulsory for GFA members to subscribe. The first crisis had already developed by 1953 when only about 200 people were subscribing. Although gliding clubs were growing, the number of readers declined. Advertisers consequently lost interest. Total cessation of publication began to seem probable.

Necessary economies required a change to cheaper printing methods. The situation was saved by a passionate plea from the President of GFA, Bill Iggulden, calling for more subscribers and for more publishable material to be contributed. The circulation figure rose to about 400 and continued to grow slowly. Even so, there were some occasions, a month here, another there, when the magazine missed publication altogether. Raising the price did not help.

The work was far too much for one person, especially without financial reward. Allan struggled on as editor during this difficult period. In 1959, four of the monthly issues never appeared and in 1960 no magazines appeared for six months out of the twelve. Allan was finding it impossible to continue. Out of necessity he began to write for another magazine that paid its authors. In 1961 A.G. did not appear at all for seven months and it seemed to have ceased for good.

BELOW: Allan Ash (left) and Martin Simons c. 1975 when Allan was visiting South Australia. Photo by Jean Simons.

Under Bob Muller's chairmanship a small committee was formed to re-start the magazine. A new editor, Peter Killmier, agreed to take on the job, still without pay. A meeting was held every month to look back at the latest issue and prepare the next one. Advertising and distribution were taken over by committee members. Circulation grew and after a year topped 1500. Advertisers became interested again. During the next few years the figures continued to improve and the A.G. began at last to do better than paying its way, contributing a small profit each year to the general GFA funds.

Bob Muller and Val c.1980

The problems were far from over. Peter Killmier had a neighbour who was a skilled typist. She worked from copy, often handwritten, using a carbon ribbon onto white paper. Peter then used scissors and paste to lay out the magazine on standard sheets provided by the printer. Each page had to be ready for litho plates to be made by the usual photographic method. Advertisers were required to provide 'camera ready' copy. Peter and his neighbour were in effect combining the jobs of editor, sub editor, typesetter, proof reader, layout artist and production manager, always trying to meet the deadline for next month. The time and energy required increased. Contributions from gliding people were still hard to find.

Peter remained editor for about ten years while working full time at his demanding profession, and even doing a little flying in what little spare time he had left. More deadlines were missed. By mid 1969 it was clear the situation could not continue.

Late in 1967 in England, I was making plans to move to Adelaide. I had some editorial experience with an academic journal in London and was a member of the British Gliding Association Magazine Committee, which produced the bimonthly Sailplane and Gliding. Knowing I would be soon be arriving in Adelaide I began subscribing to A.G. and got in touch by airmail with the editor.

In mid 1968, with my family, I stepped off the train in Adelaide to be welcomed by two people. The first to shake my hand and meet Jean and the children was Peter Killmier. My future boss, Professor Neale, in whose department I would soon be working, came up as a somewhat astonished and disconcerted second.

I joined the A.G. Committee and worked with Peter through 1969, becoming editor the following year. My first task was to catch up on a serious backlog of missed months. My daughters Patricia, Margaret and I worked for several weeks cutting and pasting like mad and taking the results to the printer for photographing every few days. For a desperate couple of months A.G. became a weekly until we caught up. After this we were never again late with an issue. This did wonders at least for the advertising revenue.

Circulation improved steadily. It became financially possible to have the typesetting done professionally by the printers and they undertook the layout design and paste-up as well. A.G. began to look like a serious magazine.

Finding enough interesting material to fill the pages remained difficult. Glider pilots rarely think of writing anything unless an editor pesters them face to face. As an active pilot I took part in competitions and sometimes took a small tape recorder into the cockpit, recording my impressions of the day's flying. Sometimes faced with blank pages, I wrote under pseudonyms such as R Suppards and Nitram Snomis, characters who always got things upside down or the wrong way round.

Membership of the A.G. Committee changed a great deal over the years but Bob Muller remained Chairman throughout. Many other people served for a while and then departed. Bob wisely kept a tight rein on the financial situation. He resisted attempts to introduce expensive colour printing and to increase the page size. A.G. under his leadership continued to make a profit and contributed to GFA funds. The Committee members never interfered with the editorial content, except sometimes to offer a contribution.

I continued with a couple of breaks when I was studying overseas. Gary Sunderland and Noel Burnett took my place for these intervals.

In 1981 I resigned. There were two main reasons.

First, the GFA had become a legally incorporated body. This required every gliding club member by law to receive, every year, the financial accounts, Chairman's and Treasurers's reports and so on. The distribution costs for the reports would be quite high. There would have to be a special printing, envelopes would be needed, addressed and stamped.

Someone had the bright idea of distributing the Reports as an annual supplement to Australian Gliding. Our machinery was already set up. All that seemed necessary was to include a few extra pages in the journal. The regular distribution system would do the rest.

This seemed attractive at first but we had always been proud of our success in attracting readers. Those who did subscribe did so because they wanted to see the magazine. Now A.G. became compulsory. Every GFA member would have to subscribe, the amount being added to their club subscriptions. Circulation would double overnight to something like 6,000, but many of the new recipients would not have chosen to pay.

I did not want to be part of this compulsory system.

Secondly, after ten years, I felt it was time for some lively youngster with new ideas, to take over. I assumed that whoever it was would be an active pilot and would be paid a fair salary.

So who became editor after my departure? Allan Ash.

Full circle!

The Magazine Management group wish to thank Martin for the above detail and refer readers back to the premise of the original article (edition 1) which stated it was an incomplete very broad overview of the magazine history in which many of the various committees and editors were omitted for brevity. **GA**

THAT SPECIAL FLIGHT

A PERSONAL JOURNEY

BY: SHARON DOWLING

When my brother was diagnosed with a terminal illness a few years ago I dragged out my bucket list. It's surprisingly short, and right at the top was my teenage dream of gliding. It was one of those things I'd had to give up when I moved out of home, and between career, family and financial commitments I'd never managed to go back. Twenty years on, the dream was bruised and battered but still there.

At 16 I won a gliding scholarship through the Air Training Corps. My first glider flight was amazing, of course. The next one – and my first attempt at a landing – not so good. Like the other cadets, I went on to finish my 10 rostered flights, stalling and spinning and thermalling my way happily around Bathurst. The only problem was landing. Every time I joined the circuit I felt sick, and while all the rest of my landings were fine, I always climbed out of the glider shaking.

After another glide camp I decided to switch to powered aircraft, and found it a breeze after the training I'd already had in gliders. Though not as much fun, it was clearly the right direction for someone keen on a career in aviation. But again, landings were a challenge. I spent 10 hours over Cessnock airfield making my parents dizzy, doing nothing but circuits and trying to get used to the idea of voluntarily approaching the ground. My instructor was surely a saint!

With time and practice, all went well until I failed my flight medical, and all my dreams were dust. A severe heart murmur meant that I would never be able to work as aircrew. Shattered, I gave up flying completely.

Twenty years on, bucket list in hand, I made a few calls, and a few days later found myself out on a grass airstrip at Towrang, being shown around the Southern Tablelands Gliding Club (STGC). The chaps all made me feel very welcome, and I had a fantastic time chatting to a bunch of wonderful people who were just as keen to talk about their passion as I was.

When it came to actually flying though, everything was different. The winch launch was terrifying, and as I'd started in the autumn flights were very short. Things that had been easy as a teenager - as natural as breathing - were suddenly impossible to master. It seemed the more I flew the more mistakes I made and the more stressed I became. I was feeling nauseous the whole drive out to the airfield, and having panic attacks after almost every flight. After a few months I was finding excuses not to go.

☛ continued over page

Sharon Dowling gets ready for her first solo in one of Southern Tabelands' Blaniks.

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I'd all but decided that, bucket list or not, it was time to give up. But then I flew with Wilko. He took me up for the hangar flight - the last flight of the day. I was stressed, tired and anxious, and really feeling like my supposed dream was nothing more than an exercise in frustration.

Then we were in the air, nose pointed at glowing clouds as the winch flung us into a photographer's dream. A spectacular sunset sky, shining over a landscape initially aglow but gradually dimming below us as the sun settled over the ridge. The air was completely still and smooth as silk. The sense of peace and wonder was soul deep. Needless to say, I stuck with it.

Six months later I had my first real breakthrough. Climbing too steeply on the winch, I was at 300ft when I had my first cable break. Before I'd consciously figured out what happened I had the nose down, the release pulled twice and the brakes half out, and was set up for my best ever landing. Without the time to stress about it, it was perfect. If that was the worst that could happen, why on earth was I stressed? The next few flights were noticeably better than those before.

Eight months later I was still a student. I'd been away from the airfield a lot spending time with my brother, and was back to wondering if I should be there at all as every flight seemed more excruciating than the one before. The instructors all had immense patience with me, and were endlessly supportive. Once again, Wilko was the one who kept me going. He took me for a long thermalling flight, twice the length and much higher than any I'd had before. From 5000ft over Towrang we had an extraordinary view over the Bungonia Gorge - one of the more beautiful landmarks in our area - and could even see the Pacific shimmering in the distance. Far above the ground, I could relax and remember what it was about flying that I loved. I kept on.

Then on a November weekend I met up with Wilko again. We had a short flight initially, and I struggled once again to relax, fly smoothly, and let it all come back to me – again. But the cu's were popping, and soon enough we were up again, and thermalling hard. Over 4000ft I started to relax and settle in – it's amazing how a few thousand extra feet under your wings makes everything so much easier. I'm not afraid of heights – just terrified of the ground!

'I'd all but decided that, bucket list or not, it was time to give up. But then I flew with Wilko.'

But something special was brewing around us. We had launched late in the day, yet the lift was growing. Reaching 8000ft and pushing into the westerly wind it became clear that an easterly change was producing thick cloud some distance away towards the coast.

We watched the sea breeze front approach the Bungonia Gorge, which was well to our East. As I continued to climb, John pointed out the different meteorological conditions in the area, such as which clouds showed thermals forming, stable, or dissipating, how little we were tracking and what that meant about the wind at this altitude. And all the time, we watched the front creep closer and the altimeter creep higher.

Finally we made a dash for it, 15km straight from Towrang to Bungonia Quarry, where we stopped just short of the front to top up in a thermal before reaching the front itself over the gorge. Laid out before us was a wall of frontal cloud rising from about 4500ft up to 9000ft. Above and forward of this was a long continuous cloud street at 10,000ft plus. Then it was an hour of amazing frontal soaring, riding along the updraft before the leading edge of the front, cruising over the ridge, and feeling the sudden downdraft over the back, only to dash through a gap or around the end of the cloud ridge and back into the lift. 'Morning Glory'.....eat your heart out!

The only camera we had was my mobile phone, which was in my back pocket, and as I could not get to it without undoing my harness it stayed there.

Seeing the front up close, moving, rolling, growing and changing was amazing. Flying over it was fantastic. Peering out the vent with nothing between my eyes and the clouds, seemingly touchably close, was mind blowing. This was the dream of flying I fell in love with so many years ago. No thought of the aircraft as something to be controlled, no fear of the ground, just an awareness of the air around me and a pair of wings with which to soar it.

Like a surfer riding a wave, we were carried back over the airfield and westward towards the setting sun. When the radio crackled with an announcement that the hanger doors where soon to be shut, the hint was reluctantly accepted and the journey down from 8000ft, filled with all manner of flying exercises, ended not much before 7pm after almost 2 hours in the air.

The next day, still grinning, I headed out to Towrang again and flew my first solo flight in a glider. Twenty one months - and 20 years - coming, but still nothing to compare to my last magical flight with Wilko and to think, all in one of the few Blaniks able to fly.

There's more to learning to fly than angles, attitude and coordination. Sometimes it's about specific experiences that shape the way you think – both good and bad - and the people you share them with. So hold onto that 'bucket list".....you never know when it might come in handy!

GA

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Wes Myszak
mobile: 0408 155 215
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