

Gliding Australian SKY SAILOR

In this Issue:



An
Outstanding
Day

Fly
Tasmania



New Horizons

Surviving the Bight

A Cloud Somewhere

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Photographs should be printed on glossy paper either in black and white or colour. Captions and the name of the photographer are needed. Please do not print on the back of photos.

Drawings, maps, cartoons, diagrams, etc. should be in black ink on white or transparent paper. Lettering may be pencilled lightly but clearly on the drawing, for typesetting.

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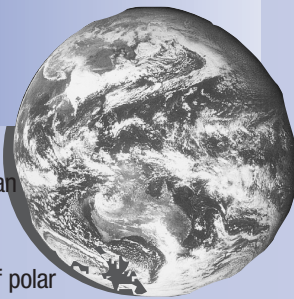
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In the Circuit



Local News

How long is a piece of string?

The Bendigo Gliding Club members have enjoyed excellent soaring conditions during the recent spell of hot weather. With cloud base in excess of ten thousand feet, the club's Chief Flying Instructor, Keith Evans was encouraged to try for Gold C height. This is an internationally recognised award for a gain of height of 3,000 metres (9,842 feet), in a glider. A sealed barograph was carried in the aircraft to verify the height gain. After a winch launch Keith descended to a low point of 1,200 feet. He then climbed steadily in a thermal, but had difficulty in exceeding 11,000 feet. When the barograph trace was printed after the flight, it showed a gain of approximately 77 feet greater than requirement. However the Sporting Code applying to gliding certificates specifies that the barograph be checked in a testing laboratory within a month of the flight. When this was done, a temperature correction was applied, reducing the height gain to only 11 feet above the requirement. Keith is convinced that it was his lucky day and is now keen to complete other flights for the Gold C. These are a five hour duration flight and a distance flight of 300 kilometres.

W.A. State competitions

Full details of the W.A. State comps are not yet to hand, however we have extracted the results from the Beverley S.C. house magazine, compiled by Graham Watts.

25 pilots contested five classes and the winners were:

Standard Class:	James Cooper (Cunderdin)
Handicap Class:	Greg Beecroft (Beverley)
Sports Class:	Dick Sasse (Morowa)
Racing Class:	John Dennis (Beverley)
Teams Trophy:	John Dennis, Greg Beecroft, John Welsh (Beverley)

New GEOSAR technology can speed up search and rescue

GPIRB technology (Global Positioning Indicating Radio Beacon) is about to be released Australia wide. It is a combination of conventional EPIRB and GPS technology that can provide rescuers with a latitude and longitude fix, accurate to approx 100 metres, as well as drift speed and tracking of the locator beacon. (GPIRB technology allowed Italian yachtsman Giovanni Soldini to accurately pinpoint the location of recently capsized around-the-world yachswoman, Isabelle Autissier.

EPIRB – Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons – the standard emergency/

distress device, can be tracked by the COSPAS-SARSAT satellite system of polar orbiting satellites. Rescue operations/organisations can hone in on an EPIRB distress signal using direction finding equipment. Depending on the level of sophistication of the EPIRB unit, search areas can vary from between 1km² to 5km². Delays can be experienced if the orbiting satellite is not overhead at the time of activation. Top of the range EPIRB's carry identification codes to confirm distress situations.

GPIRB units use EPIRB technology to transmit a distress signal but also use the GEOSAR system of four geostationary satellites that give constant coverage from 70° north to 70° south latitudes and give instant call recognition almost anywhere in the world.

GPIRB units also carry an onboard GPS engine that locates itself when activated and loads its current position into the emergency transmission for broadcast to satellites. The GPS engine can reduce the search area to 100m and track the unit's drift (or movement) by re-stating its location every 20 minutes. GPIRBS also carry unique identifier codes to assist rescue operations.

Applications for GPIRB: Boating/fishing/yachting/4WD or off-road vehicles/outback travellers/light planes/gliders. Available from leading Marine and Aviation outlets.

Flying the Olympia

The famed "Yellow Witch" Olympia glider formerly owned by WGC turned 50 years old on the 28th of December 1998.

I went solo in 1967 and my first solo glider was to be the Olympia. However the glider was sold to Keith Nolan just prior to this so I missed out.

Keith had always offered me a flight, but we never seemed to be in the right place at the right time.

When the ad appeared in AG inviting pilots to fly her on the 50th birthday, and being on holidays in Melbourne at the time, I took the opportunity to travel to Locksley field (near Mangalore, VIC) and claim my seat.

Arriving late in the afternoon, Keith immediately bundled me into the Olympia. A winch launch to 1600' and 20 minutes soaring finally capped off a wait of over 31 years to fly her.

Later over a few beers I was able to relate some of the many stories from her history at Waikerie.

Bill Mudge

High-visibility markings

Views expressed on this matter ranged from strong support for brighter and/or more contrasting colours on all gliders to the view that it doesn't make any difference, as it is primarily the glint from canopies and the glossy finish that draws a pilot's attention to the presence of another glider. Interestingly, a pilot who was until recently a scientist in this particular area told one of the seminars that Australian research shows white to be the most visible colour in flight, with black a close second. In relation to the second colour mentioned, the Royal Air Force in UK has repainted its entire training fleet of Tucano and Hawk aircraft black, the reason given being to improve in-flight visibility of the aircraft in all conditions.

While this is all very interesting, the fact is that gliders of fibre-reinforced plastic (FRP) construction must be white in order to keep their surface temperatures within the 54°C maximum permitted by the airworthiness requirements. Whether we may add different colours to this basic white finish in the future remains to be seen, as does any decision regarding the best colour for gliders of non-FRP construction.

What Have They Been Doing?

Fritz has again flown to Temora! His plan was to overfly Temora to Cootamundra and then back to break his previous record but only managed Temora. On the next day Fritz was to fly back but on reaching Renmark only had a very shaky final glide home so elected to land there. On that day no solo ships flew at Waikerie. Mark Jacobs has placed his name for the pilot with the longest flight and less than 50 hours experience, claiming a flight of 272km. Terry Moore has knocked Craig Vinall off from 503km with a 509km flight for the under 500 hour pilot trophy. Terry also has a ticket against the sailplane award for a 509km flight in 7 hour 20 minutes. On the 6th of January Ron Brock, Maurie Bradney and Mark 1 during a great flight blasted down to Wanbi and back at 12,000ft at warp 5 under a frontal line. On the 5th of January Fritz flew a 300km triangle for an Austrian record in 2 hour 8 minutes and 20 seconds at an achieved average speed of 140.6km/h (now that's a wing bender!) Nobu Harigae flew 440 kilometres in DL on his day off. Darkies back in the sky solo after jousting with the GP's for so long and flew a leisurely 250km flight in DL. (543 days between solos but who was counting). Now that Higuchi & Anders have left followed closely soon by Fritz the cross-country

kilometres will plummet. Maurie Bradney achieved 7th place in the sports class nationals in EB. We've seen BV in the sky more than usual this month. We had a visit from our old partner in crime Warwick Shepherd, who while looping during an aerobatic ride noticed that height was being gained at the top of every loop. At the end of 10 consecutive loops he finished

500 feet higher than starting. Is that called vertical thermalling?! Mark 1 flew 350km after work in 3 hours and 10 minutes under an exceptional sky.

CFI Care
Cross Country Flying and You

Another Record by Anders

On the 6th of January, Anders set another Swedish record. The one was a 500km out and return using Bannerton silo as the turnpoint. He averaged 141,36km/h for the 500k's.

Overseas News

Announcing the new Russia motorglider

Russia Sailplanes is pleased to announce that AviaStroitel's new AC-4m self-launching sailplane is ready for delivery. The first production run of the new ship will be fixed gear models with a retractable Solo 210 motor supplying a 335fpm climb out and a take-off roll of 1,500ft to clear a 50ft obstacle. The motor is the single cylinder cousin of the Solos used by Schempp-Hirth and Glaser Dirks, from the Ventus 2cm to the DG-800b.

The planes are offered with a variety of options including 33:1 performance kit, single-piece canopy and the latest generation Russia trailer. Assemble by yourself at any airfield and soar when you want. Priced at less than US\$30,000, several have been sold in advance.

New motorglider from Germany announced

Technoflug, a German motorglider manufacturer, has recently completed the certification flight testing for its latest product, the Carat. A Sauer 1.8 litre Volkswagen engine powers the single-seat, low-wing plane. Cruising speed at sea level is 133mph at 2.8gph. Constant power-on-range is 610 miles with no reserve.

Even with no thermal or ridge lift, the Carat's range can be significantly increased by occasionally shutting the engine down and flying a sawtooth profile flight path. The Carat is utilising the wings and the horizontal tail of the Discus, a wellknown Standard Class glider.

With its 15 metre (49 foot) wingspan, the Carat has a glide ratio of 35:1. Minimum sink

engine out is 120fpm. The retractable main gear is fully covered by fairings and the propeller folds automatically forward to reduce drag, if the engine is stopped. The Carat is fully trailerable and can be assembled by one person in less than 10 minutes. All controls connect automatically for safety and convenience, when the wings and the horizontal stabiliser are mounted. There are no tools required and no loose parts involved.

The Carat's seat and rudder pedals are adjustable to different pilot sizes. Take off and landing run is 450ft. and the best rate of climb is 750fpm. The Carat's speed breaks allow descents of 60°, without exceeding the airplane's VNE of 150mph. The Carat will be certified for simple positive aerobatic manoeuvres.

The first production Carat will be on display at the AERO '99 in Friedrichshafen in spring 1999. A detailed pilot report from an independent test pilot is available in English upon request, with good quality detail and air-to-air pictures at no charge.

Soaring Calendar

Bordertown/Keith GC Regatta

6-7 March 1999

Enquiries: Mark Trnousky (08) 8752 1338.

Riverland Masters Games

13-14 March 1999

Renmark Gliding Club. Pilots aged 35 years and over are eligible. Classes dependent on entries received. Contact Margo Kranich, PO Box 129, Lyrup SA 5343, for info and entry form. Ph/Fax: 08 8583 8325.

Adelaide S.C. Easter Regatta

2-5 April 1999

Enquiries: Andrew Wright (08) 8303 4648.

1999 Queensland Easter Comps

2-10 April 1999

Central QLD GC, Thangool. Good Friday practice day. Trophies for 1st Easter comps, sports class and QLD two seater champions. Enquiries: Sue Schluter (07) 4928 3231 a/h, (07) 4930 4499 b/h, or www.rocknet.net.au/~schluter

FOR SALE

(Reluctantly due to work commitments)

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(All aircraft extremely well presented)

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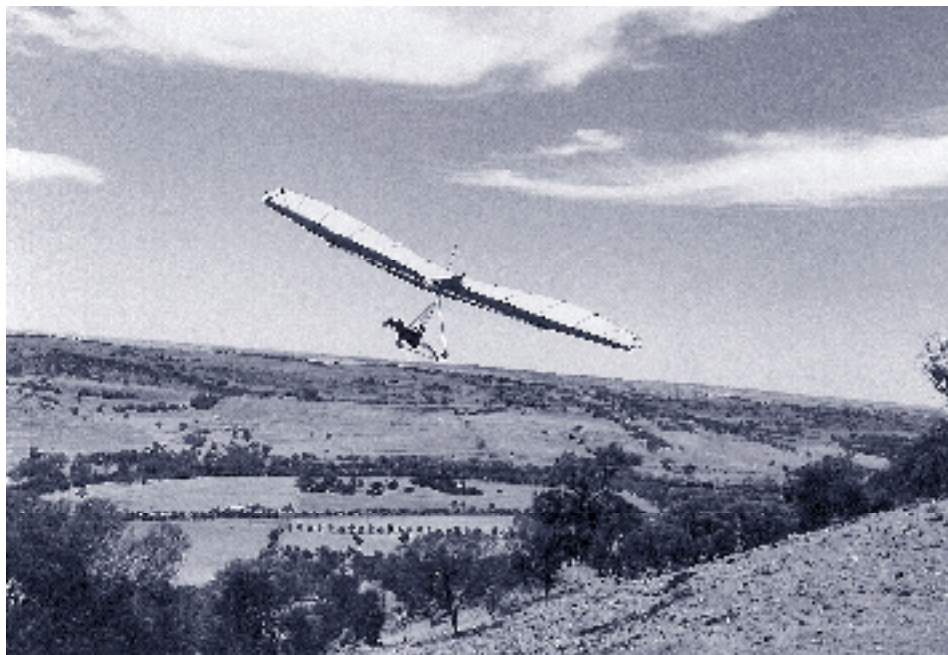
P.O.A. Phone 041 2305799

New

MICHAEL THORN

This story starts when I was just a kid. For me many holidays in the 1960s were spent in a little cabin in the Karri forest on the southern slopes of the Porongurup Range in the south-west of WA. My brothers and I grew up loving this ancient range of hills with its huge rock outcrops and majestic Karri trees. I learnt the exhilaration of hours of climbing through un-tracked primitive forest to then scamper up the granite peaks and stand on the summit, exultant, looking south to Albany and the coast, or north to the mystical Stirling Ranges. The little cabin in the forest is still there under the huge backdrop of the Twin Peaks – two 500ft high granite domes. It is now very seldom used since my father retired to a small farm and vineyard on the north side of the range.

Horizons



During my early days in hang gliding in the mid 70s I was inspired by the first pilots to fly from the north side of the Porongurup Range. Bim Lillig, Mark Fascius and Russ Sharples took off from Wattle Hill – an old potato farm paddock below Collier Peak – and flew back towards Albany. For 18 years I dreamt of soaring the air above the steep granite slopes and forest of the Porongurups. In 1995 my chance came when, with the help of Oliver and Muriel (two German backpackers) we climbed the 1,000ft slope to the launch area. Under a brilliant sky full of fluffy cu's I launched my XT. After being thrown around by turbulence off the Karri trees, I scraped out into thermal lift and, without a vario, did my best to stay up. About 30 minutes later I was landing out front and dreaming what could have been with more thermal experience and a vario. I was hungry for more!

The Porongurup is a National Park so I became very friendly with the local ranger who eventually agreed to let me fly Nancy's Peak on the south side. I thrilled to the idea of soaring the gentle sea breeze and cruising for hours above the 1,000ft peaks. With my wife, Vicki, our three kids and my XT, we bumped along a steep firebreak in the ranger's 4WD ute to the saddle of Morgans View and Devils Slide. From there the climb was up a steep narrow walking track a further 800ft to the summit. I found a perfect take off on a 30 degree rock face plunging 1,000ft to the Karris way below, with flat paddocks right in front.

1990, Mike Thorn is the first pilot to launch off Noondeering Hill near Toodyay in WA.

The conditions were far from ideal, with the wind 0-5 knots from the back. After two hours of assessing conditions I set up the glider. My son was stationed on a rock with a ribbon. I waited till it was limp and then ran like buggery! The ground vanished and there I was in the silky smooth dense air. I had a memorable fifteen minute sled ride and became the first pilot to launch off the south side.

By late 1998, I had a whole lot more flying experience in my Blade Race (what a great glider!) including a fair bit of towing. I was enjoying the resurgence of hill flying in WA with my great flying mate Rick Williams and lots of old and new friends since the formation of our WA Hill Flyers Club. At our Christmas function I got talking with Kim Burge about the wonders of this amazing place. Kim owns a trike and agreed to fly me along the south side of the ranges.

On Boxing Day we met at my Dad's place and checked out the possible take off paddocks. We found three ideal paddocks for towing. Later that afternoon we had a fabulous flight in his trike from Millbrook near Albany, to the Porongurup. Kim allowed me to fly from the back seat, and as we felt the silky lift off the peaks we reduced revs to a minimum and tried to imagine the lift available to a hang glider. It was certainly there in ample quantities! After cruising to cloudbase we chucked some steep 360s, where on pulling out I screamed

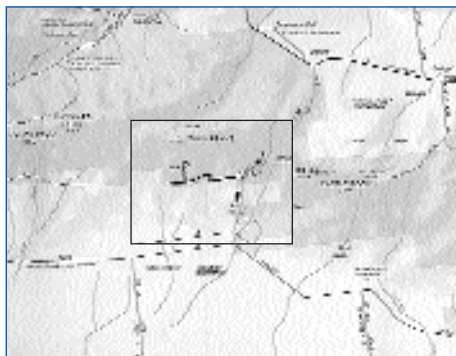
German backpackers Oliver and Muriel at take-off on Wattle Hill, north side of the Porongurup, in 1994. The view is towards the Stirling Ranges where wave lift has taken glider pilots to over 25,000 feet!

with delight at the feeling of my intestines moving to my bum. The G forces are a lot more intense in a microlight! The next day I headed out to Shelly's Beach for a bit of coastal silk and met one of the handful of pilots in WA who have been flying longer than me – Simon Shuttleworth. I knew Simon was keen on being in on this Porongurup adventure.

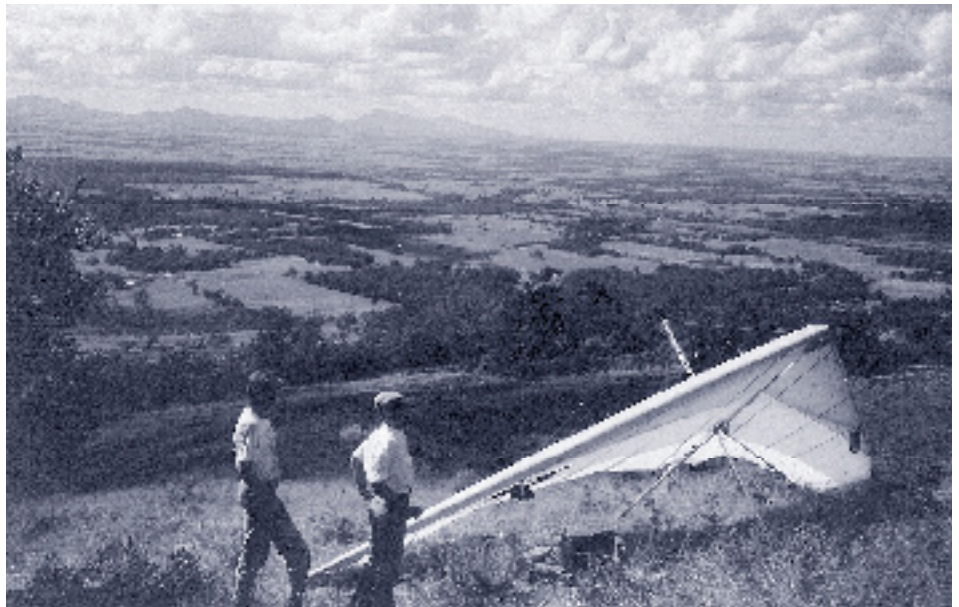
On New Years day 1999, it all came together. At 4:30pm I met Simon at the paddock directly in front of Collier Peak. At approximately 5:30pm we were ready to go. With a light southerly drifting up the paddock it was GO GO GO! Seconds later there I was – the dream becoming a reality. I released at 1,500ft above launch in front of Nancy's Peak, after flying through a bit of wispy white stuff. Unbelievably smooth lift gently took me to summit height of 2,150ft ASL where I played in the air with three wedge-tailed eagles, checking out the extent of the lift band. What a scene – Devils Slide and King Arthur's Castle to the north-east, the Stirling Ranges 30km to the north, and Albany and the South Coast out in front. This place is as close as I'll ever get to heaven on earth, I thought.

After a 'coming down' phase, with adrenaline levels down from 'off scale' to 'high', I decided to head for the Twin Peaks, 3km further along the range. I arrived at 1,600ft above launch and gently felt out the lift in front of the 500ft sheer cliffs of these massive granite domes. Down below I could see our little cabin where the dream started all those years ago.

It was getting late and very cold, so I pressed on across Millinup Pass and around the front Collier Peak to the Castle Rock – a sheer 500ft pinnacle of rock. The lift was light and consistent as I did slow 360s in front of this awesome landscape. The landing



Detail of Porongurup National Park showing the way to Karri launch.
All photos: Michael Thorn



Checking the wind on the south side of the Porongurup Range at Manyat Peak, 1993. View is towards Wall's summit, also known as King Arthur's Castle.

paddock was right out front and I arrived with 1,000ft, so to finish off I flew upwind and slowly 360'd my way to the landing zone. A perfect landing in the setting sun finished off my greatest yet adventure in flying. Simon was beaming as much as I was, and the farmer thought it was sensational – a good start to what I plan on being a long relationship!

The Porongurup is a 12km long razor back ridge which is soarable on the south side with winds from SW to SE, and from NNW to NE on the north side. My search for a paddock on the north side paid off, finding a friendly farmer with big flat paddocks 5km from the range.

The next day Simon flew out from Millbrook. At 10:30am, under a very promising cu-filled sky, I was towed to 800ft before ending up with the rope following a weak link break. I quickly ditched the rope (Oops! – lost it too) and started hunting. I soon found good lift and two wedgies soon joined the lift party under me. For the next hour I boated around with up to five friendly

wedge-tailed eagles, all seeing who could outdo each other – me included! Base was at 3,500ft above launch and I experienced some of the juiciest easy thermals I'd ever been in. The only downer for the day was losing the rope and not sharing the air with other pilots – sorry fellas!

The Porongurup is truly a new horizon for flying in WA, and I am looking forward to sharing the air with more pilots in the years to come! To me hang gliding is the ultimate three dimensional adventure and I'm bloody grateful I was born at this incredible time when flying can be this good!



LOOKOUT!

JOHN BUCHANAN

I was only 15 at the time. The green pellet in the capillary tube of the old Cosim variometer was nearly stuck to the top. But it teetered. So I kept wracking around on every little extra surge and opening violently when I thought I had to reposition. Hassling the old red and white short-wing Kookaburra for all she was worth. Intent on making that green pellet go through the top of the tube when, "Lookout! – Did you see that Sabre jet fighter," yelled my instructor.

I was instantly awake, scanning madly around the completely new world outside my cockpit – excited to see a fighter that I'd never seen before and immediately scared I might hit it. "He's gone now," said Vin, my instructor. As my fear subsided I realised there never was a fighter and I wouldn't have seen it anyway as my focus had been entirely on that green pellet!

A similar message was rammed home a few years later, during Macchi jet training. If the instructor in the back seat didn't see your head continually scanning the skies you were in trouble. Even on tactical exercises, with a lot of 30 second, very low level, map reading and instrument monitoring work, your head was not allowed to linger on the panel for more than a few seconds. It took a lot of practice but rapid scanning techniques

were soon developed and they eventually became second nature.

Prior to going solo in gliders many of us were taught at least the importance of looking out. Since going solo we have advanced to cross-countries, Silver C's, competitions, and learning more about the new instruments in our panels. How many of us however, can remember advancing our lookout techniques to keep abreast of the other skills we have been developing?

As a result of the increasing number of mid-air's we are seeing in top competitions around the world, I gave a talk on "Lookout", at our Nationals this year. Judging by the response I received from some very renowned international and national pilots, I feel it is an area we need to re-address more openly. Hopefully, the repeat of my talk below will prompt further discussion and articles.

Vision Impairment

We all remember the aircrew medical where the doctor wriggles his fingers to test the range of our peripheral vision.

Height can reduce peripheral vision by as much as 10% per 1,000ft!

Stress, from heat, concentration, dehydration, noise, glare, the competition, strange beds and food, alcohol, sleep, tiredness, the ergonomic positions in which we sit and the fact that we have to sit in that position for so long, all reduce our peripheral vision.

Unfortunately the effect of stress are cumulative. As a result your vision gets progressively narrower. This narrowing of a pilot's vision is an increasing tunnel vision effect which means that it is very important to move your head and look directly at each point in the sky for aircraft. You will simply not see those aircraft unless you look almost directly at them!

To maintain a good lookout therefore, it is helpful to imagine some points in your spatial reference that you must actually ensure you look at. One way is to imagine 8 corners of a box, plus 2 additional areas, one above and one below the box. The front 4 corners of the box are those more commonly looked at. They are in front of the aircraft, up about 40 to 50 degrees and out to the left say, for the first point. Then across to the right at the same elevation for the next, down on the right to 30 to 40 degrees below the horizon for the next and then across to the left, lower side – below

the first point. Many glider pilots would naturally see these areas without much conscious effort. The other 4 corners of the box can be imagined as firstly, rearwards under the left wing say, then above and behind that wing, then above and behind the right wing and finally, below and behind the right wing. The additional 2 areas to be mindful of when searching for other gliders are above your head and well to the rear. Then forwards under the nose. Naturally one loses at all the points in between and around these points but a continual awareness of these 10 points, and the need to actually turn your head and look directly at them is essential for safe flying.

Scanning

Scanning is the technique we should use to ensure that we look at all of the 10 spatial references above, plus all the points in between as well as a selection of instrument panel readings. It is an organised, or disciplined process of continually moving ones' head with the deliberate intention of absorbing information through looking. That is looking and seeing in an organised and efficient way. For example, a scanning technique for the first 4 corners of the box may be to start at the lower, front left, up, then across, down to the bottom right corner then the instrument panel. The process doesn't stop there. Only look at one or two instruments in that scan and then continue back to the lower left etc, repeating the scan. The instruments you look at will vary depending on the required focus at the time. Do not attempt to look at all instruments in a particular scan to obtain the information you seek. Your scan rate should be high enough that you will soon see the other instruments on subsequent scans.

Consider for a moment what your own lookout behaviour has been? Do you have a formal process? Have you identified particular or more important areas in which to look? How much time do you spend looking at the instruments? Do you consciously move your head as far as possible? At what rate do you scan and is it continuous?

I find it convenient to further consider a priority one scan and a priority two scan. A priority one scan consists of the rear 4 spatial references, plus the one back behind your head and then the basic flight instruments. A priority two scan starts with an awareness of what's under the nose, then the

front 4 points and the navigation, or vario-meter instruments. Of course one is also looking conscientiously at all the points in between the reference points.

My scan rates might vary from about 5 seconds for a priority one scan to about 10 seconds maximum. A proper priority two scan will still take at least 5 seconds and extend to about 20 seconds the further rearwards your search is during a particular scan. Try to develop your own scan techniques and rates in flight and see what is comfortable for you. The priority two scan, including stretching it sideways up to about 80 degrees, is the most common scan and is best done about 4 to 8 times as often as the priority one scan during straight flight.

I so name the priority one scan because of its' major importance whenever manoeuvring and its' tendency to get overlooked because it requires more effort. Priority one scanning is therefore undertaken as often as priority two scanning around airfields, start points, approaching turnpoints and thermalling – particularly if other aircraft could possibly be nearby.

One of the most difficult things to do is to remember to keep using the scanning techniques and rates. It is easy to get distracted and fixated on other aircraft in the vicinity, or special weather situations for example, and let the mind wander. The best way to overcome this is to set yourself cues to always remind yourself to scan. For example, pulling up into lift; or achieving the five and one km marks from a turnpoint; or hearing the arrival 'ping' at a turnpoint; or hearing a radio transmission; or fiddling with an instrument (for no more than 3 seconds at a time); should be used as cues to remind you to get your head out and do a priority one scan. Often events such as the above do just the opposite and entice pilots to look straight ahead – particularly at the instrument panel awaiting some further development.

Instruments and Equipment

The audio variometer helped reduce the amount of time necessary to look at vario-meters. Many of the computer and GPS systems in use can encourage head in the cockpit 'fiddling' though. Some of the displays and the large number of pages in some computers require a complete, second nature familiarity to be able to use them in 1 or 2 second steps as part of a scan. The GPS also creates invisible tracks in the sky, along which we all fly with much less track error than before and therefore with increased traffic density and collision risk.

It is important to establish safe techniques for the use of these new instruments. As an

example, I use the GPS the same way I used to use the old compass system. I look at the GPS to establish where my track is taking me and select a ground feature in the distance and thereafter fly towards it, updating it progressively and giving only casual reference to the GPS instrument. This is an important technique when approaching turnpoints or start points. 5km or so from the turn or start point use the GPS to note a feature in the direction of track to your turnpoint, but beyond the point, and fly towards it. This enables you to continue your Lookout scanning, using the distance proximity cues for priority one scans.

Your safety should be further enhanced by techniques such as remembering to look at your map about 10km from the turnpoint and guess the angle through which you have to turn through at the start or turnpoint for the next leg. As you approach the turnpoint look to where you think that angle will take you and select a feature along the new track. So when you receive the point 'arrival' signal you automatically conduct a priority one lookout before and you turn.

Clearly refinements of this technique are possible. For example, 10km out from a turnpoint you are cued to do a priority one scan during which you identify a likely feature on the next leg. Refine the next leg feature with a priority one scan at 5km. Then on the 1km audio signal cue (or having picked up on the approximate distance via a scan) you know you have 20 to 30 seconds to go to the turnpoint. Hence time for a priority one scan followed by a priority two scan will see you at 0.5km from the turn. At this point you have 10 to 15 seconds at normal cruise speeds to the turn. Hence, you can do a quick priority one scan and immediately turn knowing, without reference to the GPS you will have at least 3 data points in the 0.5km radius, when the logger logs at 4 second intervals! You should have also rolled out within 20 degrees of your next leg track. Conduct another priority one scan and include the GPS track. And so on we go!

Another example of thinking ahead is to pre-program the most likely start point you will use (from your allocation of multiple start points) and have the next screen setup for your second most likely start point. I do this on the ground BEFORE TAKE-OFF so I don't fiddle with the GPS in the air before start.

Future Improvements

Rule changes which effect safety such as POST tasks or increased number of start points and fewer pilots allocated those points for example all help to improve safety by reducing traffic density.

However, we should also consider the use of other aids such as wing stripes as used in the WGC in France. My experience was that these bright orange stripes did help to pick up other gliders much easier. Suitable low powered, strobe lights on the fin for example have also been suggested to me.

I believe we should put a lot more pressure onto our instrument manufacturers to provide much better displays and simpler operation of the instruments. A GPS track deviation display should not need numbers to read. A horizontal line with a target displayed above and a vertical line below representing the glider heading for eg, would show magnitude and sense of track error at a glance. An improvement may be a plan view of the glider heading at an angle to the track required.

Similarly, big numbered screens with the minimum of information should be used on our computers. Normal flying is done on a 'prime page' whilst a single push on the left button gives the pilot the next 'page' he might wish to glance at. A third page! could be accessed with another push on the left button whilst a push on the right button takes you back to the screen you should be mostly using. Let this be the absolute maximum!

Summary

In Australia and overseas there have been increasing numbers of mid-air collisions. This has been particularly so at competitions and is resulting in rule changes such as limiting contestant numbers; multiple start points; different type of tasks – particularly for blue days; like POST, to reduce gaggles; single frequencies for better communications and encouraging better pilot behaviour; pilot safety committees; etc all aimed at improving safety. Certainly we have to improve the rules and procedures under which we fly or there will be more mid-air collisions with possible adverse effect on our competition gliding through litigation.

However, it is also possible that we need to focus on pilot behaviour, including their Lookout techniques and put further effort into instrument layouts and glider markings.

The above is meant to stimulate more ideas and discussion on safety and in particular LOOKOUT. Please think about it before you next fly!





Letters to the Editor

► The new joint edition is fantastic, it is just what it needed. I have been looking at buying a Carbon Dragon now for a while and the GFA story has got me motivated enough that I hope to purchase one very soon.

Flying hang gliders now for over 21 years, microlights for 16 years and paragliders going on 7 years, I've felt the need to expand (cross dressing as they call it) into other forms of flying, just getting a little bored with it all lately. Recently on a dud day at Manilla I went to Lake Keepit to get a few more lessons under my belt and was fortunate enough to accomplish some good thermal soaring for about 1½ hours and was amazed of actually moving forward in a 20kt breeze. The guys at Lake Keepit are great instructors with a really laid back attitude. They all seemed enthusiastic about the amalgamation and I hope the HGFA members see the benefits as a whole also.

I would encourage all members from both sides to enjoy all the forms of flight available in our new federation, as in the end your skills and outlook on flying will benefit greatly. After all we are all pilots soaring.

Regards, Lee Scott

► Hello everybody,
After reading the Australian Gliding/Skysailor magazine I was a little bit disappointed. There were more than enough articles about gliding, hang gliding and one article about paragliding but NOTHING about microlights. Even in the past, most of the articles were about hang gliding rather than microlights. Will this be the future of representing the microlights in a combined association?

Best regards, Claus Kraemer

Claus,
One of the advantages that will come from broadening our discipline range is the exposure this creates to how other people meet the challenges and problems associated with sport flying. It doesn't matter what wing you fly, the aerodynamic principles remain reasonably consistent; the environment and conditions in which we fly present us with similar problems requiring coping strategies.

Things like navigation, and airmanship remain consistent across all disciplines. I am sure that there will be articles specific to your sport focus. Be patient, this is the first issue and we must allow time for the new arrangement to find its feet. As a contribution based magazine, all we can do is encourage microlight pilots to contribute more so that the editor has a good range of material across all disciplines to choose from each month.

Ian Jarman (Executive Director)

► Well done for getting a combined issue published. But as a paraglider pilot, I was disappointed that there were no paragliding articles at all. The GPS piece had 'Paragliding' at the top of the page, but it was a general topic – nothing specific about paragliding. This feeds one of my fears about the merger with GFA, that the organisational profile of paragliding will reduce even further. I doubt that you would have published a first combined issue with no articles about hang gliding. Hopefully future issues will redress the balance; there is already considerable catching up to do. Score in pages: Gliding: 14 (pp 5, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 20, 24, 25, 28, 29, 33), Hang gliding: 12 (pp 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 22, 23, 26, 27, 31), General: 4 (pp 18, 19, 30, 32), Paragliding: 0

Stephen Young

Stephen,
I can appreciate your concern about the lack of paragliding articles, but I'm afraid this is a reflection of the number of contributions made by paraglider pilots to the magazine. To date I have received only one article from John McKenry, which I have included in the April issue. Perhaps you would like to send me a piece on paragliding and I can assure you it will be published. The same applies for microlighting; there really is a dearth of contributions.

Another suggestion is for yourself, or other members of the paragliding community, to forward me details of interesting articles you have come across from another source (perhaps a foreign publication which you subscribe to) and I will seek permission to reproduce the article in our magazine.

Ed.

► We have a proposal for a reformatting of the new 'all-in-one' gliding magazine: Can you please group all the hang gliding articles together into a convenient tear out section. We are finding it frustrating sorting through all the stuff unrelated to hang gliding.

Thanks, John & Tony Knight

John and Tony,
The idea of a joint publication is to incorporate all material into a format that is presented as a whole. A fragmented magazine, with articles confined to predetermined 'categories of interest', would make a mockery of our belief that the separate disciplines of sport aviation share many features in common, and that pilots generally stand to gain by recognising the possibilities opened up through a cross-disciplinary exchange. As for the frustration of sorting through all the irrelevant stuff: I would have thought the anticipation aroused by a good chase makes the thrill of discovery all the more pleasurable.

Ed.

► I am writing to let you know that I went to the Airshow Downunder 1999 last week at Avalon in Victoria. This is the biggest event of its kind in the southern hemisphere, held every two years and attracting hundreds of thousands of visitors. Obviously the first stand I went looking for was the HGFA's. With a chance to capture even a tiny percentage of this vast potential market, the HGFA would have to be there. It was.

When I found the stand, I was amazed to see one hang glider, one fairly ancient paraglider and no sign of a trike. There was also no information or representation whatsoever from any of the major local clubs or flying schools of any discipline, and whilst I was there, no sign of the videos which the HGFA has ploughed tens of thousands of dollars into. On checking, it appeared that none of the major clubs or schools had been previously contacted by those running the stand, either to provide promotional literature or supply staff to help man the stand. In fact the HGFA head office, when contacted, was not quite sure where the HGFA's quota of exhibitor tickets had gone.

If the HGFA was a healthy, thriving organisation with no need to worry about members or income, this poor showing would be a shame and a missed opportunity. In the light of recent increases in fees, dire warnings from the board about belt-tightening and exhortations to boost membership at all levels, the airshow stand was nothing less than an inexcusable disaster.

This was the best opportunity we have had in two years to boost our profile, our contact list and our actual membership. To put it bluntly this opportunity was totally squandered, and the lack of representation by local clubs and schools is an absolute disaster in public relations terms. In contrast

the AUF had a vibrant and thriving stand with information from all national affiliated clubs, all schools, a wide range of both static and mobile displays inside and outside their tent, and a continuous and engaging video of the attractions of ultralight flying.

I believe if the HGFA is serious about its stated aims of expanding the sport – not just providing yet more glossy magazines and videos to attract the yuppie set on a temporary basis – it should make good use of the one positive attribute it has already – its existing long term members. If the local and national associations prefer to ignore those members and those that supply new members – the schools – the eventual outcome is blindingly obvious. We will simply run out of members, then money. Then the association will cease to exist. I would hope that this letter is taken in the spirit in which it is sent, one of great disappointment, and not be consigned to the 'another whinger' bin. I would also appreciate you publishing this letter in full without editing it.

Jeremy Torr

► I would like to reply to Ian Jarman's reply to my last 'letter to the editor', both printed in L/D for February. Specifically, to his concluding paragraph, where he said: 'Graham, I think it is time for us old buggers to stop trying to lock the sport into a time warp... it is perhaps appropriate to now let the newer members provide the energy and direction for the sport and organisation and leave us to find our own particular niche in this very rapidly changing world'. Ian, well it seems that we've both taken your advice. You, you old bugger, have taken up the new direction and seem to be pursuing it with more energy than any newer members that I have met. In fact, most newer members that I know would rather go flying than try to change things. Maybe that's why there were so few responses to the personal accident insurance proposal. And as for me, I've given up hang gliding, and have taken up paragliding and paramotoring. Happy flying.

Graham Sutherland

Graham,
You are correct, I still have great energy and enthusiasm for our sports and organisation. I have always taken this role as the Executive Director and my previous volunteer roles in the HGFA very seriously. If, I as an employee whose job description requires me to advance the projects and policies contained within our strategic plan and annual budget

(as approved by the Board) were not seen to be doing this I would be failing to serve the organisation in accordance with my contract. I would be just as enthusiastic about most of these things even if I were not employed to develop them. However, I do think I would spend a lot more time flying as I wouldn't be required to fight the good fight for the sport every day. Your letters have raised important issues and deserve fair and reasonable response. It is always better to discuss such issue in a free and frank manner and I would encourage more members to write to the magazine especially if they have questions or concerns about the proposed amalgamation so that those questions and concerns can be answered and resolved. Graham from one old bugger to another enjoy your flying as this is what it is all about at the end of the day.

Regards, Ian Jarman

► Congrats on the editor job Justin... Hope you can squeeze in more cartoons than there has been in the past. Y'know it's been a long dry spell for me as I used to get some material in every issue, which kept my edge sharp with practice. Email me with requests for stuff to go with articles as this often adds greatly to the content.

If you're a long time member like me, and can remember the old grass roots style the mag had, it was fun, informal and had character. Now that the mag looks so slick, but it's lost some of the soul, I'd like to suggest we liven it up with some wild, radical attitude, graphics and free spirit. After all, the sport has come of age, but hopefully not middle age. Sharing the platform with the gliding fraternity doesn't mean we have to look so formal and staid. That doesn't mean we'd look like the younger skateboard riding brat brother, but we should project/ preserve the free spirit and excitement inherent in hang gliding. I still feel the rush though I'm going on 39. The gliding members are fully welcome, as are the trikes and paragliders, to share the exhilaration and fascination of free flight. I'm looking forward to the articles about XC, weather and meteorological stuff that they are so good at covering. What a rich, diverse and broad spectrum of topics we can all read about.

More power to ya...

Jules Makk

PS: Adam Hunt... where are you? Your loony cartoons are in high demand.



Dear Jules,
please do send some new cartoons and I will happily use them! Your contributions from a few years ago have mostly been used up in past issues or have appeared in older Skysailors already. It would be great to have some new material available and the odd article illustrated with cartoons, but as yet no one has taken on the job. I receive very few cartoons in the mail (faxed copies aren't good enough for reproduction), and all good (and not grossly offensive) ones do get printed.

Suzy Gneist (Production Editor)



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Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir/Ms/Madam,

It has come to my notice that comments are being made regarding editorial control over the contents of "Australian Gliding". These comments are unfounded and indeed completely untrue. This letter to you confirms that editorial control is in the hands of the Editor with the knowledge that you will use your skill and experience in the world of journalism to protect the GFA from any actions which may cause legal actions to be taken against the Federation.

Tony English, President G.F.A.

I have served on the Committee of AG for over 20 years and never in this time has there been any pressure put on over editorial content. I am certain that all previous Editors of AG will concur with me.

Bob Thomas,

**Convenor AG Committee and Sub-Editor
(temp)**

Dear Sir,

How many of you have noticed that the so called service industries are giving less and less service? Most of us will have suffered from the general lack of interest shown by shop assistants, bank officers, office workers and the like.

Well there is one amongst our own who always unreservedly gives to the customer.

Recently I needed to get an insurance document signed as our club Pawnee was to provide glider launching at the Avalon air show. This required me to fax a copy of the form to the insurance agent for him to send it on to the insurer, then to sign and return to the agent who then faxed a copy to both me and the airshow organisers. As is so often the case even this simple job required several long distance phone calls to clarify some aspects of the requirements. When all done a cheery call from the agent to ensure my satisfaction and no charge for his time and effort.

I was reminded of some previous times when we have needed assistance with insurance matters, like the time we stood our Super Cub on its nose and needed to bulk strip the engine, or the time someone else's glider ran into our parked ASDK13 and damaged the wingtip, or the time we needed to clarify who was covered by the insurer in respect to tug flying. All of these matters and more were handled speedily and professionally. I am still amazed when I recall the claims manager phoning me on completion of some expensive repairs to ensure our

satisfaction and to pass on seasons greetings, as it was that time of year, to me and the club.

I would recommend to any club, syndicate or pilot who is looking at their insurance requirements to talk to the company to which I direct my praise – Chamberlain Knights and in particular Kevin Chamberlain, who at all times has treated me and my club as though we were his only customer.

Finally I would say that most of us are quick to complain but slow to praise so with this letter I would like to publicly say thank you to Kevin and his staff for the way in which they treated me in our dealings over the years.

Kevin McGowan

Dear Sir/Madam,

It was with the usual anticipatory pleasure that I received my January/February edition of Australian Gliding.

That is, until I read the articles on page 4. To say that I was stunned would be the understatement of the century. I heartily concur with the tenor of Noel's article. Placed in his position I would have taken similar action, but without his admirable restraint. (Noel was ever nature's gentleman.) Personally, I would have been far more forthright. My sympathies are also extended to Beverley, who put so much into the production of our magazine. They will be extremely difficult to replace and I for one lament the actions taken which pushed them to this position. Incidentally, a straw poll taken at our club cements this view, as I have yet to find anyone who endorses the proposed joint publication.

I also empathise with Jack Iggulden in his feelings in relation to the proposed merger, which he so economically describes as "This improbable marriage". I applaud the representatives of Victoria and South Australia for their stance in this matter.

I am concerned with what appears to be the precipitous haste to accomplish this change. Particularly as there is to be a postal vote as regards amalgamation prior to June 1999. The cynical among us could be influenced toward the view, that the Executive sees the amalgamation as a fait accompli and are proceeding on that assumption. Once again a personally conducted straw poll, (local I'll admit) does not guarantee this, but to the contrary. Time will tell. Again, the cynical could take the view that the executive are taking the 'softly, softly, catchee monkey' approach and

depending on the apathy of the individual to accustom him/her to the change, over the next couple of issues.

From my viewpoint, whilst basically similar, the two disciplines are chalk and cheese in their structure, club set-ups, and culture. GFA persons tend to operate from fixed sites, on a club basis, with clubhouses and infrastructure, whilst the majority of our hang gliding cousins are more the itinerant type with a looser structure. (No disparagement intended).

Finally, contrary to the sentiments expressed in bulleted paragraph No 7 in the lead article I should have been much happier (and also, no doubt Noel and Beverley) if this combined magazine were delayed until the rank and file, who ARE the GFA have voiced their opinion in June 1999.

Henry Levy, Hunter Valley Gliding Club

Dear Sir,

I would like to thank Rudi Salter for his support of my objections to winch guillotines.

I did, however, omit some other statistics, which are very important. Alice Springs started winching in late 1960, up from autotow. We built that first winch in one weeks working bee and if Dean Hill of Balaklava had seen it then he would have had a fit. However we changed to aerotow in 1966 (it was much better in comparison then). But in 1981 we were forced to return to winching because of the high cost of aerotowing. I haven't as yet been able to locate all past club records but using what I can since 1981 and adding a fair average, I estimate we have made around 23,000 launches. This is not many compared to much bigger clubs, some of which use two winches together. However what is very important is that in both periods (between 1960-66 and 1981-present) we have never needed to use any cutting device let alone a guillotine to cut the wire.

We have NEVER had an aircraft hookup. Remember Australia has been using winches since the late '40's and I have never seen a guillotine on any winch. It would be quite reasonable to say Australia would be into the 1,000,000's of launches. I have never heard of a guillotine being used to cut the wire to terminate a launch in an emergency. It could be that instead of fitting guillotines to winches some clubs should modernise their winches.

Fitting all sorts of weird looking guillotines and devices could cover-up other dangers, and make way for trigger-happy

drivers. I believe that pilots are well protected with the TOST release and other methods to get rid of the wire. But a lot more emphasis should be put on driver protection and not guillotines.

Just to show how far some people will go with safety upon safety devices I read in the last AG about the electric winch in Germany. Here we have a guillotine, which is rarely used, but when it is used it cuts all four wires simultaneously so now they have three times more knots than they want. What a fantastic piece of engineering that is. I am of the opinion that if the clubs such as the above need to cut the wires in an emergency then they should look very deeply into their method of operation I will stand by my first article that our winches do not need guillotines. I would like to put a motion to the operations committee to change the OD 2/98 to make it a recommendation only, not mandatory.

Tom Bird, Alice Springs

Amalgamation

Dear Sir,

I feel that the GFA Council and the Executive are doing their fellow GFA members a great disservice in amalgamating Australian Gliding and Skysailor into one magazine, indeed I am quite angry about it.

As part of my GFA fees I subscribe to Australian Gliding and this is what I expect to get, not some mish mash of articles of which half will be of no interest to me in any way.

We the GFA members should have been allowed to vote first, before the event, not after!

I don't know who first started this amalgamation business, but I would be very surprised if there is anyone game enough to stand up and say "Yes it was my idea".

I am beginning to liken this whole amalgamation to Hans Christian Anderson's story "The Kings New Clothes". Let us beware that we, the GFA, don't go flying naked; I leave that to HGFA members who I know have practiced that art.

When, if ever, I get to vote on amalgamation I know it will be a resounding NO! So I quote from Noel Matthews farewell note in the January/February 1999 Australian Gliding USE YOUR VOTE. I don't know, but perhaps this is the time to consider a breakaway organisation for real glider pilots who prefer to fly real gliders!

Ron Baker, Scarborough QLD

Guillotine for Winch

Dear Sir,

I agree with Tom Bird and Ray Ash re the fitting of compulsory cable cutters to club winches.

Why have we not seen in the recent copies of the AG details of accidents or incidents involving hookups in which the use of a cable cutter would have negated whatever problem arose? Surely details of specific incidents would make this directive easier to accept.

The winches I saw in Britain that are fitted with cable cutters are barrage balloon winches from WWII. British clubs mostly use plaited cable that behaves differently to spring steel wire. I have photos of purpose built modern winches, no cutters. The winch at Newark uses spring steel wire, weak links and no cable cutter. There seems to be a double wammy in having weak links and a requirement for guillotines.

Who designs the guillotine? A standard design would be cheaper. Who pays? Do you then need a standard winch? Who is liable, the designer of the guillotine? Will the guillotine be tested to cut the wire if a knot is passing through the jaws at the time of activation?

If we fit engineer designed, purpose built guillotines, who instigates and pays for their testing, the club fitting them or the Gliding Federation who require them? How far will the testing be taken? If a guillotine is used and does not work or perhaps makes the problem worse, who then carries the can?

Is the GFA moving liability to individuals (of winch clubs)? If a tug has an engine failure who is liable? Vehicles used for auto tow launches do not appear to have guillotines, but the glider is still attached to a cable.

Is there any proof that freeing the wire is any safer than the pilot flying back towards the winch and landing? Does the freeing of the wire set up other dangers, (dragging the wire over roads, power lines, spooking stock, damaging buildings, vehicles, etc.)? Do we then have to, not only teach cable break recovery, but also teach people to fly around safely with a thousand feet of wire dangling from the glider?

Winches have been fitted Plexiglas to prevent the possibility of broken wire shards hitting the winch driver. The downside of this is reduced visibility in certain conditions (light reflections, a damp or dusty day). I know people will say you fit washers and wipers, but the more things you have to maintain

that are only used

on rare occasions the more potential for failure if they are ever needed. What is the downside of chopping wires?

I am sorry but I do not see this a safety issue, only a political issue. Is this an admission that the disclaimer if it is not good enough?

Let us spend money on helping small clubs (the mostly winch clubs) survive not pushing them under even faster than they are going. I am of the same opinion as Ray Ash. The motives are a bit sus. Is someone who does not fly winch and consequently does not appreciate the science (a little like the people who expect aircraft to take off with a half throttle setting to keep the noise down) pressuring the GFA to get rid of winching?

We have not stopped people from doing things because of the blind spot in their vision caused by the optical nerve ending. We teach them to work around it. Cars have a blind spot behind the roof pillars. We do not leave the hoods off, we do not make the pillars transparent, we stress that it is a danger area and live with it.

Ian Kelly, Wagga Wagga, NSW

Dear Sir,

I was disappointed at the correspondence in the Jan/Feb '99 issue, not least because I am now forced to make this long reply.

To start with my original letter (AG Nov/Dec) was concerned with the GFA response to the Part 149 proposal. I specifically did not want to get involved at all in the amalgamation issue, which I regard, still, as a minor matter in comparison.

I am very well aware of the enormous amount of time and effort that people like Henk Meertens and Bob Hall put into the administration of the GFA. We are all very grateful that the GFA and HGFA fought and won the battle for our access to airspace. However, the main event is now upon us. This is the "once in every 50 years" event, where we have the opportunity to shape the future for gliding and sport aviation in general. Get it right and we will be able to run our affairs in peace. Get it wrong and we may all drown in a sea of bureaucracy.

There are two models, or precedents, of which we should all be aware. In the British system they have nearly complete exemption from their Regulations, apart from airspace, and gliding people run their affairs, sporting, operations and

Letters to the Editor continued

airworthiness. In the USA the SSA is the FAI representative for the sport, but the government agencies license gliders, glider pilots, training schools and everything else.

For the last 50 years in Australia we have lived under a hybrid system. Our operations have largely been exempted from the regulations and the GFA generally runs its own show. The airworthiness area has been more of a mixed bag, with delegations, rather than exemptions, in many areas, so that our glider airworthiness system has often been forced to change

for no good reason, other than some regulation has been altered in Canberra.

The proposal now before us is to consent to be licensed under Part 149, or to reject the proposition outright. Some years ago I alerted Henk that this might be coming and my advice then, was to negotiate to keep our existing freedoms, at least, and preferably try for complete exemption as the preferred option.

The second proposition on the Part 149 response sheet which Henk provided was really the same as an affirmative answer, with a bit of sugar coating. Being a little bit certificated is rather like being a little bit pregnant. Once committed to the process then the sweetness can be gradually removed in the future.

We all need to consider the options. Do we want to run gliding for the next 50 years? The last 50 years were pretty good fun, but what of the next generation? Do they have the bottle? I am sure Henk would respond appropriately if there was a clear message coming from the broad membership. Not just a few individuals, or a lot of minor grumbles, but a mass commitment to a course of action.

Turning to the response from Bob Hall, about being "informed" otherwise in the debate, Bob should be aware that I do receive and read AGM and council minutes, executive minutes and the appropriate NPRM's. I certainly read anything from Henk Meertens and Bob Hall very carefully. We know that negotiations with CASA are going on, but where are we going?

Our leadership also needs to be informed. At the Benalla World Comps Anne Welch, from the FAI, gave us a presentation on the world-wide soaring movement and problems with various government agencies. A lot of what she had to say is now coming to pass in this country.

Incidentally, I am very well aware that the GFA leaders are in close touch with the top level at CASA. If Bob had checked with Henk he would know that this was so. This is only right and proper. The big questions need to be discussed at the highest level. My point in mentioning this approach was that our Part 149 written response seemed, to me, to be a mistake, and a direct contact might be the only way out of the current situation.

All the comments about the GFA "bureaucracy" confirm my argument. The airworthiness side of GFA administration has gradually got worse with time. Just ask John Ashford! He was always being held up by some delegation or other not forthcoming from Canberra. Perfectly airworthy aircraft are not able to fly awaiting some piece of paper, or some regulatory requirement. The safety task always comes first and is done well, but the bureaucratic burden grows larger with time. Delegations are generally a waste of time and effort on our scarce resources and we could do a better job without them.

These problems are gradually extending into the operations area. A classic example at the moment involves the 535kg limit for gliders. Current high performance sailplanes exceed this limit and we need to aerotow launch them at contests. The technical people in GFA and CASA all agree this can be done safely. Even without doing the sums, common sense will indicate that a (say) 600kg modern sailplane will have less drag than (say) two (dual-tow) 300kg two seaters. In the old days of the CAA, this would have been sorted out in a few weeks, or less. Unfortunately, the airworthiness requirements are now superseded by a proposed operations branch policy to make the tug pilot solely responsible. Catch 22. These new CASA regulations are in "someone's" in-tray, where they have been for several years. Don't ask how many more years will pass before these new rules see the light of day.

Turning to Mike Cleaver's letter, I accept the back-handed compliment as to my engineering prowess, but wonder what "expertise" he has, that I don't?

I started instructing back in 1959, which makes 40 years instructing on gliders, 20 years an active contest pilot, two international championships as a self-funded crew, plus tug pilot, Editor of AG for two years, plus

various club, state and GFA appointments.

I was fortunate to join the old Department of Civil Aviation when it was still the best department, and a World leader in civil aviation under the late, great, Sir Donald Anderson. After the Department of Transport fiasco and the move to Canberra, the reconstituted CAA never really recovered and got lost in a sea of paperwork. In particular the orders dealing with sport aviation were a terrible mess, and I circulated a paper to that effect within the Authority back in the 1980's.

For 20 years, at least, I have advocated the de-regulation of sport aviation to anyone who will listen. Not just for the benefit of airports, but also the Authority, which became too diverse, and lost its focus on air transport safety.

The CASA was formed to return priorities to air transport and commercial manufacture. I am astonished to see that they have made so little progress in the last five years that we still have people advocating the regulation of sport aviation.

As for the "conspiracy theory" mentioned by Mike, where did this come from? Certainly not my letter (Nov-Dec 1998 AG). Perhaps Mike was just dreaming again?

Mike had a lot to say about the role of the Government (and CASA) and the Law, as applied to gliding. Personally, I would accept Jack Iggulden's interpretation first. If the Law was that simple, then why would we have need of a Constitution, a Senate or a High Court?

Come to think of it, do we really know that the Government, or the public, wants to regulate sport aviation, other than us keeping out of Civil transport airspace? I think not. The last I heard, the CASA intended to get out of sport aviation altogether and de-regulate general aviation to a great extent.

Let me spell it out to Mike. We are not an "industry", we are a sport. We can, and should, make our own safety rules without interference. What possible need is there for us to be "...supplying the Government body with the relevant information"? As taxpayers we cannot afford to pay for someone to receive this "information". As GFA members we cannot afford to pay for someone else to provide it!

Gary Sunderland, February 1999



Harry Medlicott's 1,200km Record Flight

Gliders carry our dreams of what we would like to achieve. Flying across Bass Strait is one that many pilots have independently considered. At Lake Keepit, a few of us have thought flying to either Waikerie or Gawler, near Adelaide, a possibility. However, it is extremely unusual to have good soaring over such a long distance and the right conditions would only occur a few times each year. On January 4 the forecasts for NSW and SA were for hot conditions with NE breezes predominating. Isolated storms were expected but these appeared to be indicative of good conditions rather than general rain or overdevelopment. The dew point and forecast temperatures indicated that cloud base would be about 10,000ft in western NSW and SA. A goal flight was declared using Stonefield airfield, a gliding field between Waikerie and Gawler, as a remote finish. If achieved this distance would exceed Ingo Renner's record flight from Tocumwal to Jondaryan in 1982.

The reality on launching at 09:44 was a lot different as a stiff 12 knot wind from 190° was immediately apparent. It was breaking up the early thermals, and I found myself working lift at 1,000ft agl and sometimes less. It took 3 hours to reach Gilgandra a distance of 200km, but by now the wind was starting to swing to the south east, reducing the head wind component, also the more favourable terrain allowed for pushing on without the need to constantly have an outlanding field lined up.

Tottenham, 135km further on, was reached at 13:58, still not fast enough but conditions to the south and ahead looked better and a calculation of the time available allowing for the extra daylight in SA, showed that the flight was possible. The decision was made to press on rather than return to Lake Keepit. Conditions began to improve with cloudbase rising to 10,000ft. The choice now had to be made between diverting to the south to track near Hillston and have the comfort of the empty but landable Hay plains or the direct route which went over unknown and probably unlandable terrain. With well spaced clouds, 8 knot climbs to over 10,000ft and the strongest part of the day to come the decision was made to keep on track. What followed was 400km of unlandable scrub for which I was totally unprepared – no ELT, no co-ordinates for airfields and only 6 litres of water. Homesteads were insignificant and about 50km apart but most appeared to have a small airstrip. The consolation was that at any time one could slow down and glide 100km to more favourable country. In the rush to launch, the oxygen had not been turned on and having lost half of my lung capacity in a car accident it was important to avoid hypoxia. One a couple of occasions I deliberately flew down to 8,000ft to replenish oxygen levels.

Flying under good conditions at high altitude enabled an average speed of over 150km/h to be maintained for 2 hours which took the flight past the worst of the unlandable country.

Approaching the Darling River about 25km north of Wentworth at 17:15 SA, time a diversion was made to the south to avoid storms which had developed on the trough line. From now on it was a case of slowing down and maintaining height of 10,000ft or more which would allow a final glide of 150km to Stonefield even if convection ceased. The overdevelopment rapidly spread south and west. Down to 4,300ft near Waikerie a climb was found adjacent to a storm which gave a climb to 9,000ft allowing plenty of height to safely fly through the storms and rain which lay on track. Not much height was lost and after photographing Stonefield it was an easy decision to fly onto Gawler which lay in the sunshine. Wendy contacted Rob Moore from Adelaide who graciously came to Gawler airfield to document the landing and look after me for the night. My thanks are to him and the other South Australian pilots who showed me great hospitality.

Most readers will remember Roger Woods who devoted his life to gliding, particularly administration, and who was primarily responsible for Gawler winning the World Club Class competition. Shortly before he died he gave Wendy his Care-bear and asked us to take him on the flights which he would no longer be able to make. "Woodsie", as we call him, already sports a 750km badge earned on a couple of 900km flights earlier on and now has his 1,000km badge.

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NSW Sporting Injuries Scheme

Club executives will shortly receive a form asking for contact details of their club. This information will be entered on the new HGFA database in order to confirm the club's affiliation with the HGFA. It will also help to confirm a club's affiliation with the NSWHGPA where that is relevant for the purposes of the NSW Sporting Injuries Scheme (which some groups or individuals have not yet agreed to take part in).

For you or your next-of-kin to be eligible for any compensation for personal injury under the NSW Sporting Injuries Scheme you must first of all be a member of the HGFA and then be registered as a member of one of the clubs affiliated to the NSWHGPA (listed below).

The scheme will not recognise a claim from anyone who has not registered as a member of one of these clubs, and thereby does not comply with its operational programs and procedures. The cost is negligible. Registering as a member and participating in the club's activities, its administration and its programs, helps guarantee the independence and integrity of our clubs in the conduct of their operations.

The HGFA database form requests the names, HGFA numbers, postal and email addresses, and daytime phone numbers of club executives, along with the time and place of club meetings. The information is required by the end of February.

The NSWHGPA affiliated clubs are as follows: Southern, Stanwell Park, Central, Northern Beaches, Newcastle, Byron Bay and Manilla. It should be noted that members of the combined Sydney, Blue Mountains and Central Western clubs are registered members of the Central Club. Other clubs may do likewise.

P.S.: No apologies for harping on the insurance rules.

National Instructor Conference

The National Instructor Conference will be held near Ararat (Vic) on May 4, 5, and 6. The first day will be devoted to a workshop on future instructing policy issues, including trainee membership, instructing and facility standards, improving the instructor education system and dealing with breaches of the instructors' code of ethics and behaviour.

Instructors will receive further details by direct mail. All members are welcome to attend the policy workshop sessions.

Paraglider Instructors Wanted in Canada

Rocky Mountain Paragliding are looking for paragliding instructors for the May-October 1999 season. Applicants must hold an instructor's rating and a current first aid certificate. Wages are negotiable, and successful applicants will be required to sign a contract. The position is for working in Vernon, British Columbia (Canada). Please email resumes to: glennderouin@hotmail.com or phone

Glenn Derouin on (604) 448 9828 for more information. The company's website is located at: www.paraglidecanada.com.

New Power Cells

A new power cell for batteries has been released, called Grandcell. Grandcell is a rechargeable alkaline (zinc/manganese dioxide) battery which the manufacturer



claims will last up to 25 times longer than regular alkaline batteries. Other advantages claimed include high temperature stability, provision of the full voltage required (unlike Ni-Cad), no 'memory' effect and a more environmentally friendly design. The introductory price for a set of 8 Grandcell batteries and a wall recharger starts at \$29. For more details contact Ultralight Flying Machines in Melbourne: 03 9431 2131.

FAI Delta Silver Badges Achieved

Stephen Bayley and Craig Semple, both of Tasmania, competed the FAI Delta Silver badge requirements over the summer. The cross-country flights and the height gains were achieved on a week long cross-country course under the direction of national team member, Rohan Holtkamp. In fact, they both easily exceeded the 50km flight requirements, with several flights around the 80-90km mark. The 5 hour soaring flights were then completed ridge soaring Winton Hill near Brighton in Tasmania.

It is perhaps a touch ironic that after one of the best soaring seasons on record, the

1999 Water Landing Night

A Practical Safety Seminar presented by the Blue Mountains Hang Gliding Club

The purpose of the Safety Seminar is to explore in a very practical way the inherent dangers of landing in water. By jumping into a large swimming pool in a fully rigged glider and harness, you will have the opportunity to experience first-hand what is required to survive the situation.

Supplied on the night will be a glider, a harness and army scuba divers. You must bring a towel and flight clothes for the exercise. (To increase realism pilots are invited to bring and use their own harness, just remember to remove parachutes, radios and various first.)

The night will be held at the Holsworthy Barracks, Heathcote Rd, Holsworthy (Sydney) on Friday 26th March at 7:00pm.

Ring Richard Lockhart on 0418 130 354 by Tuesday 22nd to register your name and confirm details.

first silver badges awarded for some time were claimed by Tasmanians.

Congratulations to both Stephen and Craig.

1999 Australian Nationals – Wyalkatchem WA

Day 1: After much confusion about the tow direction, the day was cancelled due to numerous thunderstorms in the area. There was lightning near the turnpoint, and pilots in the air at the TP reported a gust front approaching. More thunderstorms were active near goal, so with no chance of a safe task, the day was cancelled.

Day 2: The day dawned under the influence of a low pressure and trough system. There were severe thunderstorms in the area at 6:00am, and more storms were building as the day went on. Lightning strikes were seen around the paddock mid morning, and once again the day was cancelled.

Day 3: Strong winds saw the day cancelled yet again. Later in the afternoon the winds died down and some pilots opted to free-fly.

Day 4: Still more strong wind. The window was opened at 3:30pm in fairly marginal conditions, but shortly after the wind picked up and the day was cancelled. The wind continued to strengthen and the area was shrouded in raised dust.

Day 5 – Task 1: Wyalkatchem – Cunderdin – Narrogin (181.3km): Finally conditions abated enough to call a task. The winds were quite mild from the NE, and a 181km task to the south was called. About halfway down the task the pilots encountered a SE wind and no-one made the goal.

Day 6 – Task 2: Wyalkatchem – Southern Cross (179.8km): The day was a bit windy, but quite flyable. Straight line task to Southern Cross saw some smiles at the end of the day.

Day 7 – Task 3: Wyalkatchem – Trayning – Beacon (111.7km): This day had high overcast cloud, but with the promise of good weather. As it turned out, while conditions were somewhat light and scratchy, there was some good flying to be had.

Day 8: Yet again, the day was blown out. With only one day left, the comp still required one more round to avoid being invalid.

Day 9 – Task 4: Wyalkatchem – Moora (152.7km): The winds were lighter and the temp trace suggested that it was going to be a booming day. Unfortunately, the temperature only got to a remarkably low 33°C, resulting in thermals being low and slow.

Results

1	Barnes, Allan	GB	Icaro Laminar)	3,326
2	Bondarchuk, Oleg	UKR	Aeros Stealth	3,235
3	Heaney, Grant	AUS	Moyes CSX 5	3,190
4	Coomber, Kraig	AUS	Moyes CSX 4	3,166
5	Holtkamp, Rohan	AUS	Moyes CSX 5	3,123
6	Richardson, Ron	GB	Avian Cheetah	3,044
7	Paton, Len	AUS	La Mouette	2,716
8	Elkins, Steve	GB	Avian Cheetah	2,690
9	Moyes, Steve	AUS	Moyes CSX 5	2,606
10	Loten, Conrad	NZ	Moyes CSX 5	2,551

STOP PRESS: Bureau of Meteorology in Forecast Scandal

It was claimed today that the Bureau of Meteorology issued a 24hr weather forecast on Saturday, 27 February which subsequently proved to be correct. The forecast for the Central Tablelands region of NSW predicted strong W-SW winds, easing in the afternoon. At 10am on Sunday 28 February, an eyewitness in the country town of Blackheath observed that the wind was indeed from the WSW and recorded wind speeds of up to 30kt using a hand held windspeed measuring device. Subsequent recordings clearly established a decrease in the velocity, to an average of 10-15kt at 12 noon.

A spokesman for the bureau strongly denied the allegation, claiming that, 'Weather forecasting is an inexact science, in which there is a statistical probability that a forecast and the actual conditions may

coincide. However, we can't be held responsible when such an unlikely conjunction actually occurs.' He also called into question the validity of the report by noting that the eyewitness was observed to assemble a flimsy craft made of aluminium tubes and dacron, to which he attached himself. In attempting to manoeuvre the craft near a cliff edge, it was caught by a wind gust, lifting both the craft and the eyewitness many hundreds of feet into the air. What followed was a horror ride lasting more than an hour, with the craft at times observed to be at least a thousand feet above the cliff. Miraculously, the gusts abated and the craft and its hapless passenger were wafted into a nearby valley where they came to earth without apparent injury. 'After an experience like that, I would think that the eyewitness is in shock and unlikely to have a clear recollection of the facts,' the spokesman claimed. The eyewitness appeared remarkably cool after his experience, claiming to have 'enjoyed the ride, even though it was a bit rough at times.' He insists his actions were based on the recommendations in the bureau's forecast. The bureau spokesman expressed grave concern that such an attitude set a dangerous precedent: 'We can't have people going around, making plans on the basis of our forecasts can we?' *P.S.: This is just a bit of fun, no criticism of the bureau is intended.*

Airtime Products Export Overseas

Airtime Products, the manufacturers of the Explorer Powered Hang Glider Harness, have committed to full production of clear fuel tanks (option of twin tanks) and carbon fibre props in their expanding exports to France, South American, New Zealand and Malaysia.

Airtime Products are also dealers for the Adventure Paramotor Range, the Elle Paragliders and Radne 120 UL motors. For further information please contact Airtime Products, ph: 07 49466305; fax: 07 49480974; email: bauerengineering@bigpond.com.au

New Aeros Dealership


An Aeros supplier is now dealing wings, spears and accessories on shore here in Australia. Products include the top performance Topless KPL2 and the Racer harness available with internal or side mounted parachute. For more information and testflights, ring Tim Osborn on 018 051686.

Canungra Hang Gliding Club

At a recent meeting of the club it was suggested that the return of a monthly Skysailor gave us an opportunity to provide the wider community with some up to date information on the club's activities. Obviously I wasn't paying attention because I came away from the meeting with the unenviable task of having to put together a regular account on who is doing what, when and with whom and without offending anyone. I guess I won't have the job long!

For those of you not familiar with the Canungra Hang Gliding Club, it is based in the Gold Coast hinterland, but its 180 or so members travel from as far afield as the Sunshine Coast, Brisbane and Byron Bay to enjoy the excellent flying conditions that prevail throughout the year.

For many people the crowning achievement of the club was its organisation of the Hang Gliding World Championships last year. For others, however, it is the friendly supportive environment that the club provides for its members, irrespective of their level of experience or the type of wing they fly. Regardless of your opinion, it is fairly clear that this is a club made up of an enthusiastic bunch of pilots whose 'raison d'être' is to fly high, fly far and to have a bloody great time while they are at it.

Having secured a 30 year lease on the Tamborine Mountain launch towards the end of last year, the current committee have been working towards developing the 1.8 hectare park designated as a landing in the subdivision which used to be the bomb-out. Although the park itself is secure,  concerns remain with regard to the landing approach. Until this issue is resolved pilots are asked to continue to use the public open space in the Settlers Park Estate, and all visiting pilots should be absolutely clear where this landing area is located (preferably by checking it out in person) before launching.

Over on Beechmont the really fantastic news is that Jon and Judy Durand and Phil Pritchard are now the very proud owners of the launch, having recently purchased it from Stan Roy. Everyone is very happy that the launch is in the control of such capable and amiable club members. Their intentions to improve the site are already evident with some superb landscaping having been undertaken which has really cleaned up the air and the top landing potential of this awesome site. Unfortunately, the construction of the new Beechmont school adjacent to the cricket pitch has inevitably raised the potential for conflict between the local



community and pilots who use this area for landing. Wayne Lee has done a superb job in building up a rapport with the school principal and other community groups in an effort to enable the club's pilots to continue to use this as a landing area. If we are to retain the use of this area for landing it is absolutely vital that the following rules are strictly adhered to by all pilots:

1. Absolutely no flying over the school or its grounds at an altitude of less than 200ft (agl) during school hours. Note that this does not exclude the use of the cricket pitch during school hours, but you must NOT fly over the school or its grounds.

2. Absolutely NO landing in the park when it is in use by the school or any other sporting or community groups. Consequently, you must be high enough to ascertain that the landing area is clear **before** diving over the back to land.

Because a single violation of either of these rules is very likely to result in the permanent loss of access to this useful landing area, **severe** penalties will be dealt out to anyone failing to comply with them. You have been warned.

On the flying front, Jon Durand's 210km flight from Beechmont to Inglewood is the longest XC I have heard about on a hang glider, but Graham Mansfield was probably just as pleased when he pulled off the 50km to Boonah for a new personal best. Akiko Matsushita showed that learning to hang glide hasn't interfered with her ability to fly her paraglider, with an excellent 70km XC from Beechmont to Aratula. John Botting's 75km to Urbenville, Andrew Horchner's 62km to Maroon and my own 50km declared goal are the only other noteworthy paraglider flights (except for JJ Bastion's 136km flight – but that was in Manilla and so doesn't count!).

Congratulations to Jon Durand Jnr who won B grade at both the Bogong Cup and the Forbes Flatlands, and to all the club's pilots who did so well at all the hang gliding and paragliding competitions to date. Also a round of applause to Bernard 'Speedy' Gonsalves for taking out first place in the recently completed Hang Gliding XC League (proudly sponsored by Drew's Pool Cleaning Services) with 538 points, ahead of Gordon Bieske (480 points) and Jon Durand Snr (452 points). The Paragliding XC League is still in progress with John Botting leading, and Andrew Horchner and myself striving for second place just ahead of Fran Ning who is flying like a 'woman possessed' this season. More news, views and videotape next month. See ya!

Mark Plenderleith

Victorian Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association

Amongst the sites currently being assessed for new works are the Corryong and Mt Mittamatite launches. Ramps on Mt Mittamatite have been removed as they were felt to be unsafe. Four sites on Mt Mittamatite were assessed, and the recommendation is to build a new ramp on the site of the previously SE facing ramp. The new ramp will face east, and should be suitable for both hang gliders and paragliders. The Corryong launch is also likely to be steepened at some point in the future, and at this time the ramp edges will also be rounded more to stop errant paraglider pilots discovering how steep the sides currently are.

A new automatic weather station will be deployed on Mt Buffalo in March. The intention is to have this report on UHF 21, the same as the weather station on Mystic launch in Bright. The intention is to delay the Mt Buffalo transmission such that the two launches report in sequence.

Following an incident in the coastal run from Bells Beach to Apollo Bay – where a novice HG pilot flew into cloud, landed in a 30m gum tree some 5km later, and was somewhat lucky to eventually reach the ground mostly in one piece – Dynasoarers Club has made the following safety recommendation. It strongly recommends HG pilots carry a radio on channel 16 as well as a reserve when flying this part of the coast. Before any pilot new to the area attempts such a flight, they should contact an experienced local pilot. It should also be noted Bells Beach is an advanced launch.

The VHPGA meets on the 3rd Monday of every month (except January) at 7:30pm at

URGENT NOTICE Attention all Pilots

There's a nice hill east of Mt Cambewarra (near Nowra on the NSW south coast) known as Mt Coolangatta. It looks like an excellent training hill or even nice for a quiet Sunday afternoon flight in a summer NE coastal breeze. Some visiting pilots and local paraglider pilots have been flying here lately:

THIS MUST STOP IMMEDIATELY.

Pilots flying here are violating the Navy's jurisdiction and flying in military controlled airspace. Mt Coolangatta is in a direct flight path from the aerodrome. The Navy has informed us that further flying here will jeopardise the future of Mt Cambewarra launch.

SSO – Illawarra Hang Gliding Club

the Sport Aircraft Association of Australia, 265 Queens Road, Melbourne. All welcome.

Michael Bruce

Mid North Coast Hang Gliding Club

An enthusiastic group of NSW mid north coast pilots got together for the weekend of the 20/21 February. Some good flying resulted from Middle Brother and North Brother mountains. Matt Worth outshone the more experienced pilots present, consistently showing off the undersurface of his new Shark.

The Club plans another fly-in over the Easter weekend, camping at the High Adventure Airpark at Johns River. All are welcome.

FAI News

New FAI Records

Paragliders

Speed Over an Out and Return Course of 100km: 18.46km/h

Pilot: Burkhard Martens (Germany)

Glider: Free-X Flair

Site: Gnadenwald, Tirol (Austria)

Date: 2/6/98

Hang gliders

Straight Distance: 353.18km

Pilot: Tiki Mashy

Glider: Wills Wing Ramair 146

Site: Hobbs Industrial Airpark, NM (USA)

Date: 19/6/98

Note: On the same flight Tiki secured the record for straight distance to a declared goal (306.72km).

FAI Claims Pending

Hang gliders

Out and Return Distance: 414km

Pilot: Joel Rebbechi (Australia)

Glider: Moyes CSX 4

Site: Eucla (Australia)

Date: 6/2/99

Speed Over an Out and Return Course of 200km: Speed?

Pilot: Oleg Bondarchuk

Glider: Stealth

Site: Eucla (Australia)

Date: 6/2/99



Jellyfish on the Tablelands

JOHN MCKENRY

Having survived the Cooktown trip the micro-meteorology and fluky winds at the Rex were driving me mad. There had been a great day earlier in the month, with Gerry Gerus getting to South Mossman on his performance paraglider. Joe Reyes, fresh from snatching defeat from the jaws of victory at the Gillies, flew past Mossman, while the lesser mortals amongst us made it to Oak Beach and Yule Point. That's three paragliders doing a cross country and only one hangie. Two of us even hitched back and had a second flight (ahhh... the joys of paragliding).

Sadly, the next four visits were basically fruitless. However, it was worth the effort just for the gem of a statement from one of the resident southern pilots (who has since gone home): 'You can't saturate my brain with too much quantum physics.' Without Nev and his ice-box of beer it was time to go home. One of our visits had resulted in some gardening. Russel, when asked: 'Why are you mowing the lawn?' by some tourists, replied: 'It's all part of my community service order.' The tourists didn't hang around for too long.

I was so frustrated with my last visit that I resolved I would do a top to bottom, just to say I had flown. The wind was so weak I did an alpine/forward launch. I shouldn't have been too shocked to find myself in the pandanus bush 10ft below launch a few seconds later. I should have known better. Well, at least none of the club members had seen me: then I looked up to see Trevor peering over the edge. Ah well, most of you hangies think we're crazy so it should be no surprise when we actually are.

Russel had been talking about flying up in Tolga, behind Ian's place. I had visions of a small hill and was very happy, once down Bones Knob Road, to find a decent looking mountain. The forecast of 2kt easterlies at Low Isles was optimistic; there wasn't even a breath of wind up there. Having said hello to the local landowner, I was pleased to find the trek up with paragliders to be only twenty minutes. Although fairly steep, the blackboys are abundant enough to be good for hauling yourself up the slope. It was nice to be bush again. The launch required a little gardening, but after the Rex this was nothing.

We made the fatal error of sitting down for half an hour watching cycles coming through. This was in part due to me remembering a

statement from a pilot at the Gillies comp that the tablelands were not worth crossing until after 1pm, when they have warmed up sufficiently. We were also trying to work out the cloud drift, which appeared to be westerly.

After the toss of a coin to decide launch order I got off on my second attempt: straight into a stomping thermal. Launch was about 3,000ft and within ten minutes I was up at 5,000ft. As I drifted over the mountain I became increasingly concerned by the thick rainforest and remote valley over the back. Not having a radio, I decided to head back to the front of the mountain. The sink was as radical as the lift and in hindsight I'm pleased I didn't go any further back; if I had got sink back there it would have been a hell walk out. By now I was below launch watching Russel's final check. Suddenly he started gesticulating wildly, as a fairly territorial wedgie swooped towards me. Fortunately it realised my glider was fairly decrepit already and left it alone.

While there was a lot of lift, it was in small, strong bubbles which, although you felt you had cored, tended to peter out as you circled. Poor Russel seemed to be having no fun. Then I saw the wind indicators we had put up: the wind was blowing down the hill! It is not nice being in leeward rotors and, having experienced them once before, I decided to get away from the hill. To my amazement the further away I got the smoother the lift was.

Eventually I got into a thermal with a sou'westerly drift, which took me to the northern tip of Atherton. I could see loads of small pieces of straw drifting around with me. I was at 6,000ft but still unable to get to cloudbase no matter how hard I tried. Atherton, however, looked a picture with all the Jacaranda trees in full bloom.

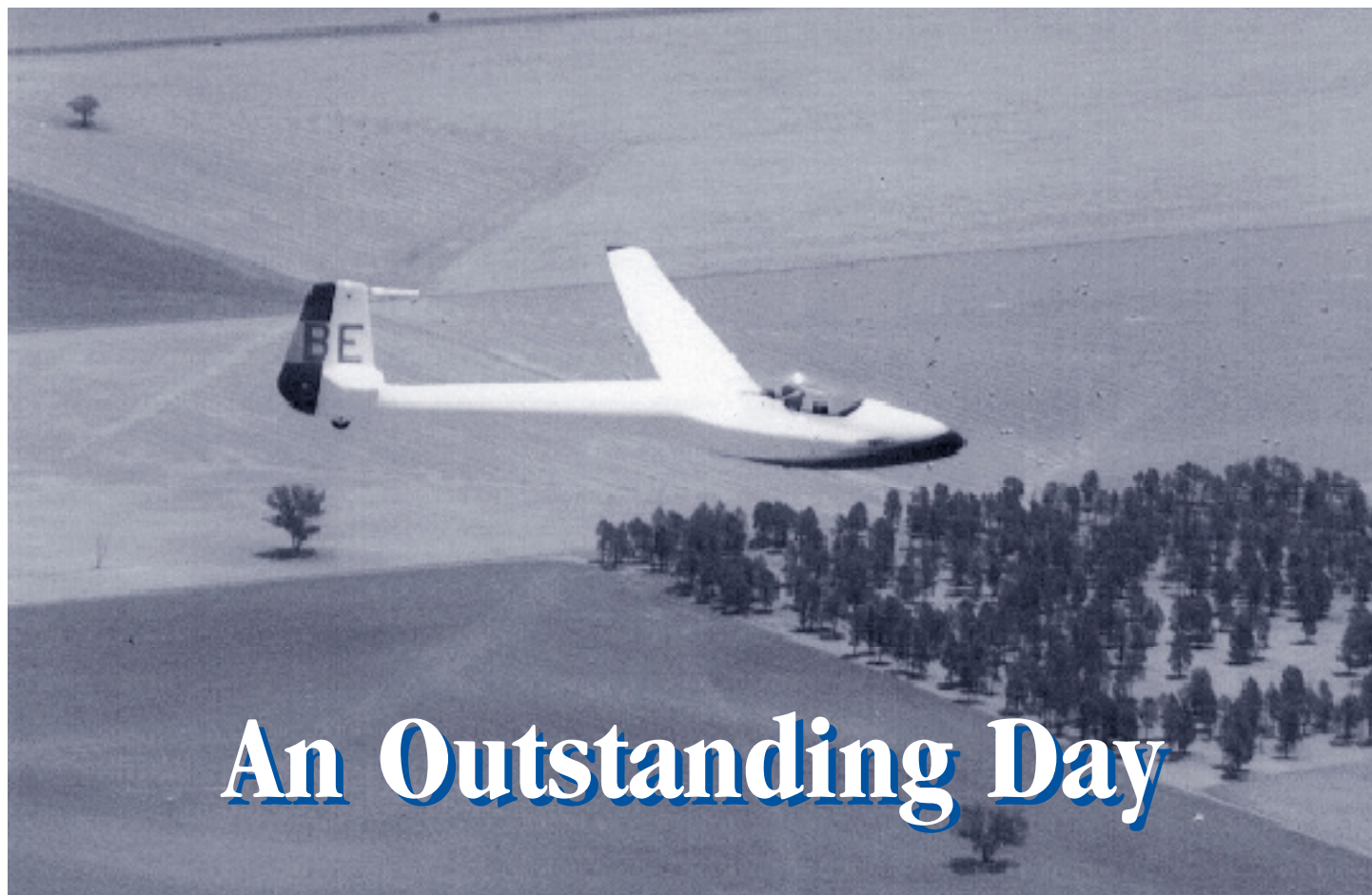
Sadly, as I headed south along the range behind Atherton, I was finding sink everywhere with only an occasional small bubble of lift. This all happened just as I was getting confident of a legendary XC. At 4,000ft the vario went into dead duck sounding mode and I began to look for my landing options. Everywhere seemed to have cables, and the only open areas on the western side of the road appeared to be a cemetery and a dump. I opted for the latter with its big open areas. As I came in I got the lift I had been searching for, but it was really punchy. I tried in vain to get one of those amazing saves from a few feet off the ground, before finally setting up my landing.

It was so lumpy that in the end I was really pleased I picked the dump; mind you, I hadn't bargained for all the bulldust. Half an hour later I was back at Bones Knob and grinning like a Cheshire cat, thanks to a friendly local gardener at the dump giving me a lift. Sadly, Russel had only managed a short flight lasting all of five minutes. I'm sure the jellyfish will be back up there again before too long, and next time we may make a legendary flight!

(One important lesson to pass onto my fellow pilots is not to land in the dump unless you want your glider to look as crappy as mine now looks!)



Photo: Godfrey Wenness



An Outstanding Day

COL VASSAROTTI

“Where’ve you been the last few days – the soaring’s been phenomenal!”. Somehow these words did not fill me with joy.

For years I’ve been trying to fly a 750km task in Standard Libelle “BRAVO ECHO”. It’s been great fun and I’ve enjoyed many a long flight in the process. The magic and challenging 750, though, has always eluded me.

In any glider, a 750 needs very favourable soaring conditions. Libelles, of course, are not just any glider; but, like other standard class sailplanes of the late 1960’s they are a little short of performance at the top end of the speed range. So, it’s fair to say 750 success in a Libelle requires particularly good soaring weather. These exceptional days do come along. The trick is to be there when they do. Then it’s down to the pilot and glider being prepared, with the task declared to an official observer and the launch organised. Take off should be at the first sign of thermal activity. It all sounds easy. The problem is that those perfect soaring days have a habit of occurring when you are not at the airfield.

My perfect 750 day would feature light winds and reliable lift kicking off at about 11:00 and going through to 2,000ft. Realistically, thermal strength and depth would be low for the first hour, but compensated by rapidly improving conditions by 12:30 or thereabouts. Such a dream day would deliver 5-6kt thermals to 10,000ft (or better) from 14:00 onwards. Clouds and cloud streeting would also be immensely helpful. This idyllic state would naturally prevail over the entire 750km flight route with no adverse weather changes such as thunderstorms, wind shifts or high cloud cover. As the pundits would say “in your dreams Col...”

18 Australian Gliding • Skysailor

Canberra Gliding Club’s Christmas camp for 1998/99 at Tempora was great fun as always. The soaring was good, although short of outstanding. Over 6 days I managed 1,200km of cross-country in BE.

Only one day looked a rough chance for 750. Unfortunately, despite an encouraging start at about 11:00 conditions were very slow to improve. Lift strength was 3-4kt at best and there were no clouds. North of Parkes the thermals deteriorated and I could not climb any higher than 3,000ft above the ground. As I had done on so many previous attempts I cut my losses and flew back to Temora; yet another nice long flight for the log book and very enjoyable, but not the elusive 750.

Predictably, as I prepared to drive home to Canberra on Sunday, 3 January the sky looked magnificent. High, flat-based, well shaped cumulus clouds stretched horizon to horizon painted in sharp relief against the crisp blue of a fresh airmass: perfect soaring conditions. Temora airport was buzzing with excited glider pilots gleefully topping up their aircraft with water ballast and preparing for big flights. Morose thoughts of lost opportunities reduced my enjoyment of the drive back to Canberra. I could hardly bring myself to look at the sky over the next few days.

And there were big flights. Les Kinsley achieved Silver C, then Diamond Goal; Sue Hanley, Norm Sutton and Lou Szabolics flew their 500km Diamond Distance tasks. Rod Stone and his brother Ray flew a creditable 428km in the Puchacz only to be outdone by John Thomson and Stewart May who promptly covered 493km, also in the Puchacz. Rod was not too upset, though, because he succeeded in flying the coveted 750 in his Discus, 76. “*It was such a good day, Col*”, he told me enthusiastically (I didn’t really want to know), “*it was easy*”.

The news of all this achievement by Canberra pilots and others greeted me when I returned three long days later. With son Daniel’s

help I rigged BE on Wednesday evening. Was it possible, I wondered, the good weather might continue for just one more day?

Thursday, 7 January dawned with a clear sky, light northerly wind and rapidly mounting temperatures. Dan and I prepared the Libelle. John Thomson agreed to be my official observer. In the absence of any weather information I opted for a cross/downwind first leg and declared Urana, 150km to the south west as my first turnpoint. Second turn was Goonumbla 3,409km north, then Grong Grong 230km south as the third, with a 70km final leg back to Temora.

Dave Pietsch beat me to the launch point. He had declared 1,000km in his elegant ASW20 "Zulu Zulu". He took off at 10:50 and disappeared rapidly northwards and downwards. The surface air was motionless with absolutely no sign of early morning thermals. The sky was dusty blue and cloudless.

John Caldwell had just launched Dave behind the Pawnee. I questioned him intently. Had they encountered any lift on tow I wanted to know? John grinned. "*Some bubbles*", he said enigmatically. I waited another 15 minutes. There was still no movement in the surface air. I decided to launch anyway and took off at 11:15.

After release I was relieved to find 1-1½kt lift going to 3,000ft and from one potential outlanding paddock to the next. Over the years I have accumulated a lot of practice at this nail-biting brand of flying. At times the time difference between the top of the climb respite and the adrenaline rush of circuit and outlanding can be about 3 short minutes. This day the going was fairly easy and I was reasonably relaxed until Dave radioed that he thought he might outland at Barmedman. This did not sound good. There was better news 15 minutes later when he reported he was climbing again and back on track.

By the time I reached Ganmain the lift was improving rapidly to about 4kt and going to 5,000ft. Even better, cumulus were beginning to form, conveniently marking the thermals. Conditions improved even more south of the Murrumbidgee with 5kt average climbs to a 7,000ft cloudbase. I photographed the turn point at Urana at 13:30. At this stage I was slightly behind schedule but very encouraged by the even stronger lift and signs of cloud streeting ahead on track.

The only worrying aspect was the high overcast which placed Urana and the entire countryside south in shadow. There were still cumulus underneath but they were smaller and less well defined. I hoped fervently this ghastliness would not follow me north.

Urana to Forbes was very good. South of the Murrumbidgee was sensational with 8 knot average climbs to 12,000ft cloudbase. I had switched on the oxygen before take-off (more in hope than any real expectation of needing it). This paid off handsomely as I found it possible to make 20-30km glides between 10 and 12,000ft with a clear head and clear conscience. By the time I reached Lake Cowal, cumulus were more scattered with bases about 9,000ft; but conditions were still excellent.

My confidence level was pretty high because I had made up lost time and was ahead of schedule. BE glides well at 75-80kt with its maximum (albeit minuscule) 50kg of water ballast; but I had been pushing at 90kt, sacrificing glide performance to take advantage of the good climb rates. At 70kt the Libelle's natural sink rate is about 2.4kt. At 90kt airspeed this almost doubles to 4.7kt down.

The greater distance between the clouds and their lower bases meant that flying at this speed reduced my working height band from a luxurious 7-12,000ft to a less comfortable 5-8,000ft (4-7,000ft AGL). This worked nicely until I approached the Lachlan River. About 15km west of Forbes a couple of clouds didn't produce lift. I pushed on and lo and behold found myself at April 1999

1500ft above a group of stubble paddocks 2km west of the Gunning Range.

So much for only taking 8kt thermals – now I was scratching in zero sink waiting for a thermal to kick off. After 10 minutes of this frustrating and sweaty activity I contacted a respectable 4kt and clambered back to 6,000ft. Keen to make up lost time I said good-bye to my 4kt and pushed on to the next cloud. Within 3 minutes I was down to 4,000ft; but, most importantly, nicely centred in an 8kt thermal.

Abeam Parkes I nervously watched the altimeter unwind yet again to 4,000ft. Only last week I had reached almost this identical point from Temora and encountered very poor lift. On that occasion I was grateful just to stay airborne and struggle back south to better conditions.

Luckily history did not repeat itself. I hit a booming thermal which I managed to centre from the very first turn. The Cambridge variometer pegged at 10kt, the instrument's maximum. Out of curiosity I timed the rate of climb by stop watch: a genuine 12kt thermal to 9,000ft. At about 6,000ft I was joined by a two-seater – a K13 or a Bergfalke, I think. It climbed well but the pilots must have been impressed at the rate BE rocketed upwards. Reaching cloudbase I left the thermal to the two-seater about 2,000ft below and zeroed in on Goonumbla, first silo north of Parkes. At 16:20 I took the turnpoint photograph.

Next leg was to Grong Grong. The sky looked great. The 309km second leg had been completed at 109km/h. I relished the prospect of the higher cloudbase and cloud streeting which I had enjoyed earlier between the Murrumbidgee and the Lachlan. And it was good. At least it was good until I was within sight of Ariaiah Park. The GPS told me I had 85km to run to reach Grong Grong. Temora was a further 70km. It was 17:30. It all seemed easily achievable. I could almost taste the cold beer at Temora, maybe less than 2 hours away.

Ominously, the sky was not looking so good. That high cloud I had seen near Urana was now much further north. The ground from Mt Beckham to the southern horizon was in shadow. The only cumulus were thin, scrappy and altogether unimpressive. I was looking at a clearly decaying sky. "Stay high, stay high" I told myself.

At the last of the good cumulus I wound up to cloudbase at 9,000ft about 15km north of Ariaiah Park and started a cautious 70kt glide into the gathering gloom. 7,000ft on the clock and still 60km to Grong Grong. "Not good" I thought. Over to the south west there was an isolated well-shaped cumulus. It was mid-way between my present position and Narrandera. Diverting to it meant going at least 15km west of track. On the plus side, it held the prospect of a good climb to 9,000ft. To glide directly to Grong Grong from my present position meant arriving there with zero height unless I found lift along the way. Other had been none since I started my glide north of Ariaiah Park.

I heard Ziggy Kominek at The Rock in the Jantar CQT. He was a 7,000ft and said it was heavily overcast and dark and thought he was unlikely to make it back to Temora. Dark, I'll say it was dark! I looked over towards The Rock, such a prominent landmark that it can usually be seen from the air for well over 100km. It was invisible. Following Ziggy's example I called Canberra base at Temora and admitted I was not too confident I would make it back. Stewart May offered helpful advice to Daniel at this point. Taking account of Dan's inexperience at glider retrieves (or even towing the trailer), Stewart gestured vaguely towards the south west and said "*Grong Grong is that way*".

While all this was going on I made my decision to divert towards the solitary cumulus and arrived there at 5,000ft, still no closer to Grong Grong. The rate of sink increased as the Libelle slid

An Outstanding Day

quietly into its shadow. I held my breath. Joy abounding! BE surged upwards in a 7kt thermal which I rode to 9,000ft. Now I had enough height to reach Grong Grong with sufficient to spare for at least the first 10km of the 70 being Grong Grong and Temora.

The turnpoint was very difficult to see. The entire area was in shadow from the overcast although there were patches of filtered sunlight which dappled the ground in places. Looking at the ground I was intrigued and encouraged to see long plumes of dust blowing horizontally from the south and streaming upwards. Optimistically, I thought I might get some assistance from a tail wind on the home run to Temora.

Down to 3,000ft above ground after turning Grong Grong I dumped the water ballast while working a miserable half knot of lift. The climb rate improved to 2kt. "Good", I thought "if I can just get another 3,000ft I can make final glide." Perversely, the late evening thermal quit after just 1,000ft. The air was very still. Temora remained out of reach.

Suddenly it happened! BE bucked, pitched and rolled in turbulence just like the rotor we are all so familiar with at Bunyan. The vario screamed up to 7kt and instantaneously sagged to 10kt down. It felt like flying inside a gigantic tumble dryer. The southerly airflow seemed to have formed a convergence zone with the upper north westerly stream. Wave and rotor flying techniques worked nicely. Elongated turns, pushing into the best lift and very tight turns in the strongest lift zone meant I climbed at 7 glorious knots for about 2,000ft. Then it all stopped. But now I had 7,000ft – more than enough for a comfortable and very satisfying glide to Temora. I landed at 20:05.

Now, that's what I call an outstanding day.

Epilogue

Ziggy made it home too for his 750. Bruce Campbell (Cirrus) and Garry Stevenson (Libelle) also flew 750. They showed better judgement than Ziggy and I by tasking in the sector west and north of Temora – away from the southerly overcast (the satellite weather picture for 3pm 7 January tells the story eloquently). Dave called off his 1,000km attempt after initial slow progress. He still managed more than 700km. Sue Hanley completed 500km in her Astir IKI.

It rained the next day.



Finding our Founding Fathers and Mother

ALAN PATCHING

I have obtained copies of minutes of the meeting of 37 glider pilots, 36 male and one female, who decided that the time had come to form the Federation and the DCA version of what happened next day. Somewhere in a drawer or box exists the GFA version. Needless to say we all know the outcome which resulted in the production of our MOSP and Instructors Handbook.

Even though it is quite a long time since the GFA came into existence there are still many who remember vividly the two historic meetings.

All the pilots still alive have been located and will be contacted soon to invite them to a reunion which will be held somewhere in the Melbourne area, most likely in June.

If you are in a Club near any of them you may care to invite them along to see what current gliding is like, believe me it is quite different!

Gone are the days of 30 second flights followed by weeks in the workshop. At the recent Vintage Glider Rally held at Locksley in Victoria logbooks were shown confirming these flight times.

The following is a list of the 14 known survivors in alphabetical order and the place

where they are currently living:

Eddie Byrne, Chadstone VIC; Brian Creer, Morayfield QLD; Dave Darbyshire, Mentone VIC; Howard D'Alton, Airrie Beach QLD; Alan DeLaine, Winkie SA; Neil Hart, Gatton QLD; Jack Iggulden, Bellingen NSW; Grace (Roberts) Iggulden, Arrawarra Headland NSW; Doug Lyon, Kyneton VIC; Gordon Macdonald, Langwarren VIC; Geoff Richardson, Mount Waverley VIC; Kevin Sedgman, Cairns QLD; Len Travers, Trangella Beach NSW; Merv Waghorn, Terrigal NSW; and Les Williams, Oakleigh VIC.

If you know of anyone else or would like further information please give me a call on (03) 9817 5362.

By the time you are reading this the Avalon Airshow will have been held with a display showing how glider pilot training has progressed in the past 50 years in Australia. There were four gliders available starting with a Rhon Ranger Primary, an ES52 Mark IV Kookaburra, an IS28B2 and a Ximango.

Meanwhile I trust that you have devised a day to show your local community how we enjoy our gliding.



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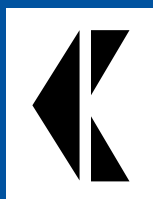
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THE WEDGE-TAILED

PETER MEREDITH

Reprinted by courtesy of the author and
Dick Smith, Australian Geographic 1994

**We met in the sky one
perfect summer day.
I was flying a hang
glider 2,000ft over
northern Victoria
when I became aware
of a plaintive mewing
cry. In the next instant
I glimpsed a dark
shape out of the corner
of my eye.**

It was a wedge-tailed eagle, big, black and very close. So close that the finger-like tips of its upswept wing seemed almost to be touching the dacron tip of mine.

I had never been so near to one before. I could not say truthfully that it struck me as particularly beautiful at that moment. Its gaunt face was too vulture-like, its black plumage too tatty-looking. Yet this very untidiness seemed to bespeak a casualness about its mastery of the air and its regal position at the top of the bird hierarchy. It was the combination of this with its historic reputation for ruthlessness as a hunter that made the sight truly awesome at such close quarters.

But I was more than awed; I was worried: Its lowered legs, extended talons and the ferocious gleam in the piercing eye told me it wasn't pleased to meet me. By my presence I had probably broken a rule in the eagle's rule book and brought disorder to its ordered world.

A moment later it began to attack. First it cruised out ahead, gaining height and glancing back with quick movements of its head. Then it peeled round to the left, hung momentarily some 10m above and behind me before swooping with half-closed wings, most likely aiming for what it perceived to be the neck or head of my glider. For an instant the shadow of its 2m span darkened my world. Then it shot past me, almost tumbling over the leading edge of my left wing, all the time uttering its querulous cry.

Time and again it did this and I wondered how long it would be before these warm-up attacks turned into the real thing. Fortunately, when the real thing came, it resulted in no damage, though the effect on my nerves was dramatic enough. The bird came in for its final swoop and, as the shadow fell, I felt the glider shudder violently and heard a resonant thud.

It was over. The eagle climbed until it was a ragged speck, and then vanished. As there had been no tearing sound, I assumed the bird had hit my upper rigging wires, not my dacron. But just in case, I craned round to check my aircraft.

I had flown among wedge-tailed eagles previously and have done so since. None have behaved quite as aggressively towards



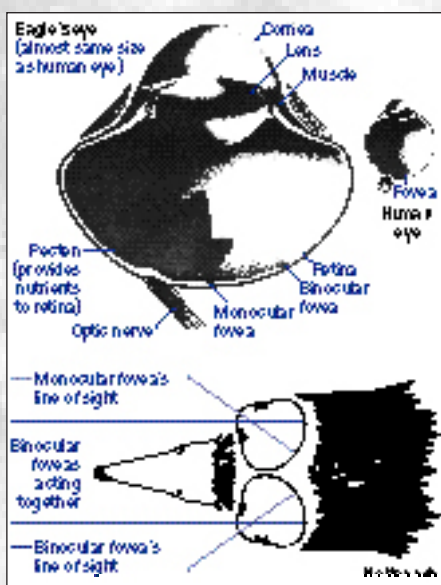
me as this one. It was this encounter, more than any other, that rekindled a childhood fascination with eagles. I resolved there and then to find out as much as I could about Australia's biggest bird of prey.

For me nothing matches those occasions when an eagle has drifted inquisitively up to my hang glider thousands of feet above the ground. There, with the Earth spread out below like a distant dream, man and bird are united for a few magical moments by the ability to fly. It is an indescribably moving experience. And long after the bird has gone I am left with a deep feeling of gratitude that I was granted this privilege. We should never let the potential for such experiences slip from our grasp.

EAGLE



INSIDE THAT PIERCING EYE



Eagles have always been credited with miraculous vision. Sharp sighted people are said to be eagle-eyed. Some people claim an eagle can spot a sitting rabbit 3km away. Is this a myth or truth? Just how good is the eagle's eyesight?

Like the human eye, the wedge-tailed eagle's eye has a lens that focuses light from external objects onto the retina, the eyeball's light-sensitive lining. The retina is packed with two kinds of cell – rods and cones. These turn light into electrical signals that are relayed to the brain via the optic nerve.

Rods work best in dim light and respond to shades of grey. Cones enable the eye to distinguish colour and see sharp images in bright light. The human eye has about 120 million rods and some 6 million cones.

Our eye has a small area of extra-acute vision, a tiny pit packed with cones, in the

retina. This is called the fovea. When we look straight at an object, its image is focused onto the fovea, allowing maximum definition. This explains why we can't see objects as clearly out of the sides of our eyes as when we look straight at them.

Eagles have more cones than we do – possibly as many as 8 million more in each eye. Like us, they also have foveas, but theirs are three times more densely packed with cones than ours, giving an image three times sharper. There's a catch, however, one that photographers are familiar with. Photographic film that produces the sharpest images works well only in bright light. In exactly the same way, the eagle's eye works best on sunny days, but as soon as the light fades its vision deteriorates dramatically, far more so than in humans. It's quite likely that its eyesight suffers even on dull, overcast days.

Another remarkable difference between the wedge-tail's eye and ours is that the eagle's eye has two foveas, one pointing to the side, the other pointing forward. The sideways pointing fovea gives the sharpest image and is probably used when the eagle is hunting and needs to discern distant prey in a jumble of vegetation. As it searches the landscape, its eyes move independently of each other and its head tilts this way and that, ensuring that the foveas sweep large areas.

Having spotted its prey, the eagle dives to attack. Two eyes are better than one when it comes to judging speed and distance and some scientists believe at this point the eagle looks straight at its target with both eyes, bringing into play the forward-pointing foveas. This allows for precise judgment when rapidly closing with its prey.

Another feature that helps the eagle at this moment is super-fast 'accommodation'. Accommodation is the ability of the lens to change shape in order to focus on objects at different distances. Humans cannot change focus faster than about once per second; eagles can do it ten times a second, enabling them to keep objects in focus during fast flight.

So from how far can an eagle spot a stationary rabbit? Probably from about 1.5km – assuming there's plenty of sunshine. This compares with less than 500m for the human eye.

It's not miraculous – but it's still amazing.



HGFA Microlight Survey

CRAIG WORTH

Recently all HGFA registered microlight owners were sent a questionnaire regarding the operating temperatures of Rotax engines. The survey was carried out following some overheating problems being found with Rotax 582 engines, particularly when fitted to Airborne Edge microlights. Of the 340 HGFA microlight owners sent the questionnaire, 93 responded.

The questions follow, along with a summary of responses.

1. What kind of microlight do you own?

Airborne	58	(Edge - 31; Edge E - 18; Edge X - 9)
Pegasus	29	(XL - 4; Q - 7; Quantum - 13; Quasar - 5)
Other	6	(Mainair, Medway, Skylink, etc.)

2. How many hours has your Rotax engine run to date? What size is it?

Hours varied from 1 hour, to several with over 600.

Average hours were 225 per aircraft. Rotax 582 engines totalled 69.

3. Do you have a Cylinder Head Temperature Gauge fitted to your aircraft?

Yes	53	No	40
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39 Rotax 582 engines were fitted with CHT gauges (Edges - 34 and Pegasus - 5)

4. What operating temperature does the CHT gauge normally indicate?

All Edge/582 owners except four reported temperatures within the range recommended by Rotax (110 to 130EC). The 4 exceptions reported temperatures of up to 150EC under certain circumstances (as listed in the following question).

Edge owners reported an average CH top temperature of 104EC.

The Pegasus 582 owners with CHT gauges fitted reported temperatures within the recommended range with an average CH top temperature of 80EC.

5. Under what circumstances do you find this temperature increases, and to what level?

Cylinder head temperatures were reported to rise to 150EC by several respondents. Overheating occurred: when applying full revs for an extended period on the ground or when taxiing; during extended climbs at high power settings; when flying with a large passenger in the rear seat; and when aerotowing on very hot and/or humid days.

6. Do you have a Water Temperature Gauge fitted to your aircraft?

Yes	36	No	57
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All 36 WT gauges were fitted to Rotax 582 engines (Edges - 25 and Pegasus - 11)

7. What operating temperature does the Water Temperature Gauge normally indicate?

In 12 of the 25 Edge/582 aircraft fitted with WT gauges, owners reported temperatures in excess of the recommended limit of 80EC.

Edge/582 owners reported an average maximum water temperature of 75EC.

One of the 11 Pegasus/582 owners with WT gauges reported temperatures in excess of the recommended limit of 80EC.

Pegasus/582 reported an average maximum water temperature of 66EC.

8. Under what circumstances do you find this temperature increases, and to what level?

The reported circumstances for overheating occurring were similar to those shown in question 5. Several respondents reported water temperature reaching 85EC, one reported 88EC, another 90EC.

9. Have you had any overheating problems with the Rotax engine fitted to your aircraft?

Yes	7	No	86
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(Despite this, 33 respondents indicated temperatures at or above recommended operating temperatures.)

10. If so, please briefly describe the problems:

Two respondents reported that they had reduced overheating problems by changing carburettor settings or changing coolant.

Further comments included:

- I have flown numerous model trikes without problems.
- A CHT gauge is not effective on a water cooled engine.
- Edge radiators are just big enough to do the job.
- Fuel mixture must not be too lean.
- I had a problem with the radiator cracking – noticed before flight.
- I have fitted a larger radiator to keep within limits when aerotowing; a tacho and water temperature gauge need to be fitted from new to enable revs and operating temperature to be properly monitored.
- I have owned 6 Edges used for training; all tended to overheat.
- I have replaced two crankshafts due to overheating of rear shaft bearings. Other ultralight aircraft I have flown have not run as hot as the Edge – radiator placement is the problem.
- I have a normal radiator with no thermostat fitted, fly only in the cool of early morning on the coast and have had no troubles.
- No problems ever, but it is maintained.
- Occasionally the temperature used to rise to 120C – I fitted a 'T' piece in the top hose and I don't have any problems anymore.
- The Australian Rotax agent recommends using distilled water in the radiator.
- Operating in tropics – I have had header tank fitted to cooling system which works well, particularly if idling while waiting to take off.
- Overheats with carby needle on top ring.
- Previous overheating problems have been rectified by raising the radiator into a clean airflow.
- Radiator regularly flushed to keep coolant clean.
- Rings seized in ring grooves will increase temperature.
- Suggest all Rotax have EGT gauges fitted.
- Engine monitoring gauges need to be fitted to all aircraft (tacho and cylinder head temperatures for aircooled engines, and tachometer and water temperature gauges for water cooled).

Conclusions:

The last comment appears to be spot on; it is critical to monitor the operating temperature of your engine to maximise its longevity. It appears that for every report of overheating

HGFA Events Calendar

Australia

1999 Flatter than the Flatlands

Easter 1999

Birchip, VIC. Webpage: www.users.bigpond.com/warwick.duncan/ Contact: Warwick Duncan email: warwick.duncan@bigpond.com

Mangalore 1999

2-5 April 1999

Mangalore, VIC. Annual convention: 2-5 April. Public Airshow: Sunday 4 April. Contact: John Liddell, SAAA, ph: 03 94824716, fax: 03 94823936.

Yea Adventure Fly-in

1-2 May 1999

Sat: Fly into Yea! Sun: Fly to a place normally off limits to trikes (You need to be at the airfield on Sat to participate on this trip). Contact: 03 57972972 or 03 57972159 for more info.

Bright Autumn Festival Fly-in

7-8 May 1999

Bright Alpine Fly-in 27-28 May 1999

Porepunkah, VIC. Both events are held at the Porepunkah airfield (36° 43.2 min S, 46° 53.3min E), 4 Nm ENE of Mt Buffalo. Enjoy our friendly fly-ins & experience the colours & calm autumn air. Contact: Greg or Rosemary Withers (Bright Microlight Centre), ph: 03 57501555, Don Walpole, ph: 03 57535250 or Coach House, ph: 1800 813992.

1999 Canungra Classic

23-30 October

Canungra, QLD. Entry fee \$100 plus \$35 site fee. Registration and 'Calcutta' on 22 Oct, 7pm. Paragliders & floaters welcome. GPS mandatory (Garmin or Aircotec). Camera back-ups can be used every day except last day. Prizes awarded for grades A, B,

C, Ladies and Paragliding. Int rating required. Closing date for entry: 31 Aug. Late entry fee: \$30. For more info visit the website: <http://tinny.eis.net.au/~tim/classic99/index.html> Contact: Phil Pritchard ph 0418 761193, Glen McCleod 0755 435716, email: tim@eis.net.au. Send entry to: Canungra Classic, PO Box 116, Canungra QLD 4275.

Overseas

Torrey Pines Gliderport Air Races

21-25 April 1999

Torrey Pines, CA, USA. This event features ridge racing in a XC format over the Torrey Pines Ocean cliffs. Each race is approx. 13 miles (20km). 2 classes: open & int., awards are presented each day & a grand champion is chosen for each class at the end of the event. Entry fee: US\$250. Contact: David Jebb +619 4529858, email: aircal@ix.netcom.com

PWC Slovenia

8-13 June 1999

Kobarid, Slovenia. Registration deadline: 8 April 1999. Contact: mandy@pwca.org

British Nationals

2-9 July 1999

Monte Cucco, Italy. 40 places for guest pilots from other nations. Min pilot experience: International SAFEPRO 4 standard or participation in own nation's Nationals. All pilots must have personal liability insurance which will cover HG accidents. The entry cost will be £80 sterling (or equivalent in Italian lire), which includes a T-shirt, primary films and retrieve coordination service (not retrieve vehicles). For further details visit: www.theleague.force9.co.uk Contact: HGMmeethead@aol.com

there are many reports of pilots having no problems, though the ability of some operators to assess the engine's operating temperature is questionable. The survey does show that many pilots are not aware of the recommended operating temperatures of their specific engines, as some pilots reported no problems though their reported temperature levels were above recommended levels. You cannot assess the operating temperatures without appropriate gauges. I am advised that it is possible for cylinder head temperature gauges to indicate temperatures within limits while the water temperature is above the maximum recommended. Another factor that can affect cylinder head temperature readings is the heat range of the spark plug.

Some owners reported operating temperatures below recommended levels – this can also be damaging to the engine. Rotax recommend that the 582 runs at 65EC plus or minus 15EC. The practice of operating without a thermostat fitted can lead to the engine running too cool, which can lead to 'cold seizing' the engine. Other than thermostats, the survey indicates that some engines are not fitted with head venting or overflow bottles as recommended by Rotax. Operators should also ensure that they use the minimum ratio of inhibitor to water, to gain the maximum cooling from their radiators.

Water temperature gauges must be calibrated accurately; gauges designed for automobile engines usually show a 'normal' temperature at a higher level than recommended by Rotax, as cars with anti-pollution equipment are running at around 90EC.

The survey does show that microlights – the Edge fitted with the Rotax 582 in particular – can overheat under certain circumstances. It is imperative that pilots be aware of this and monitor temperature gauges to ensure that allowances are made to counter overheating by not taxiing or revving the engine for extended periods on the ground, or by not maintaining full power for extended periods during climb. When operating in humid conditions, or aerotowing, or when flying in the hotter time of the day this is all the more critical. Airborne are currently in the process of gaining the necessary approvals for an optional radiator which will soon be available for pilots regularly operating under such conditions.



Real Men Fly Rigid

I never saw a girl on a rigid wing,
Never saw a wimp on one of these things.
Flaccid wing fliers just don't understand,
To fly a rigid wing takes a real man.

Why, one asks, would anyone do it?
The answers are simple, I'll explain them to ya.

One is their size: can't transport but one;
Another their weight, a good part of a ton.
You can set one up in only a day,
A completely full tool box is all it takes.

Find six people and beg them please
Move it to launch while I pray for a breeze.
Please God I have a favour to ask:
Would forty knots be too great a task?

It's so easy to launch I don't understand
Why crowds always gather to give me a hand.
Over half my launches have been a success,
Why they stand and watch I just can't guess.

When the breeze comes up I start my bolter,
'Call 911!' I yell over my shoulder.

But then in the air where the cumulus tower
I dive and climb for hour on hour,
I loop and I roll and can't stop my smile
While the ground passes by, mile after mile.
This rigid design is a beautiful thing,
A man must be crazy to fly a flexible wing.

But it's ten below zero and I break out in a sweat,
Almost forgot, I've got to land this thing yet!
And so on my radio I transmit to the wind:
'Call 911, I'm comin' on in!'

I never saw a girl on a rigid wing
Never saw a wimp on one of these things
Flaccid fliers just don't understand
To fly rigid wings takes a real man!

S. Lantz



Towing Tales

Reprinted from *free flight*

ROBERT HELLIER, Venlose Zweefvliegclub, The Netherlands

The "tow" is a necessary and exciting component of soaring flight, requiring skill, concentration and coordination by pilots and ground crew. In ab initio training, the soaring student spends considerable time learning how to handle various types of tow. As fully fledged pilots, this training will continue to include other types of tow and more demanding conditions.

While a good deal of this training takes place formally (instructor to student), some of the knowledge is transferred informally (pilot to pilot) through impromptu descriptions of real life occurrences. The most extreme of these are towing tales of hair-raising, near death experiences. Classics in this domain include the winch tow in a gusty crosswind with a glider full of water ballast, and the vicious, gut wrenching aerotow through rotor for a record flight. These tales have a wealth of information for other pilots but, let's face it, their real intent is to highlight the author's consummate skills and cool head in the face of adversity.

As an expatriot Canadian who now lives and soars in the Netherlands, I also wish to relate a recent life threatening and manhood-defining towing tale that occurred during my first weeks at a Dutch gliding club (the Venlose Zweefvliegclub, located in the south-east of the Netherlands on the border of Germany). This event, which actually occurred during a checkride with one of the club's instructors, has made me realise that there is one type of tow that has been largely overlooked by the soaring fraternity.

I hope that this article will do its part to remedy this oversight, and after listening to my story I am sure you will agree; for along with winch and aerotows, and besides car tows, bungee and JATO launches, we must not forget the dreaded glider trailer tow.

It all started innocently enough during discussions about cross-country flying with 'Wilde' Bill Stockings, a recent acquaintance and the only other buitenlander (Dutch for foreigner) in my newly-adopted club. Specifically, we discussed an important club rule that a pilot wishing to declare a cross-country flight must also ensure there is a dedicated and approved ground crew for possible retrieval. In the usual give and

take of a gliding club we knew that we had to offer ourselves as crew to other pilots if we were to have them volunteer for our cross-country flights. Unfortunately, another club rule stipulated that ground crews must go through a club training regimen on glider retrieval. So we decided that, at the earliest opportunity, we would arrange to submit ourselves to the program.

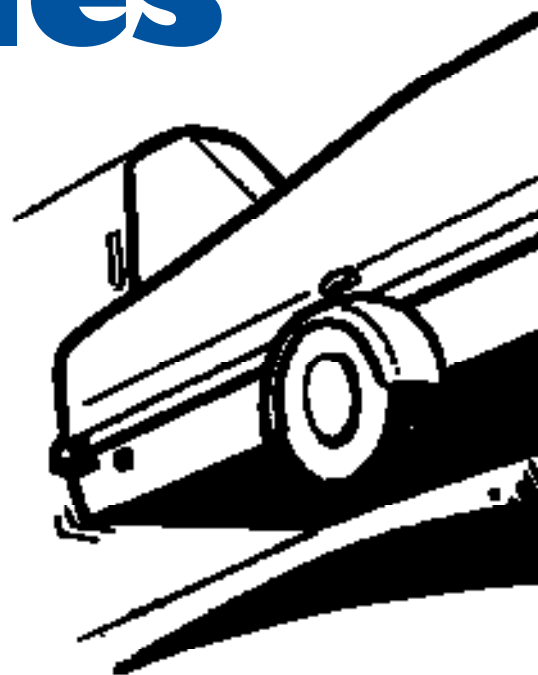
The very next Saturday Bill and I were at the airfield and chafing under sub-optimal soaring conditions. So, deciding to make the best use of our time, we arranged a few hours with the club instructor approved for glider trailer tow training.

Bill volunteered to go first, pulling out with a huge, shiny and white, fully loaded Nimbus trailer with his ancient, dark, mottled Fiat. Noting the disparity between car and trailer, I distinctly remember my impression that, from the air, this procession would probably look very much like a little black ant trying to manhandle a large, fat maggot. I only mention this as an indicator of my state of mind about something that I was not particularly looking forward to but was otherwise compelled to complete. And certainly, my emotional state was not relieved by the ashen expression on Bill's face when he returned some 90 minutes later.

Unfortunately there was no time for him to warn me as the instructor – who was in a hurry to get home to dinner – drew me towards the Nimbus trailer to prepare for my checkride. What follows is an unabridged, real-time transcript of my thoughts, words and actions in order to convey the full impact of events to the reader.

Gingerly approaching the white behemoth, I began my internal patter... "OK, let's be really professional about this. First I'll hook up the trailer and then go through all the checks I can think of. Line up the car, lower the hitch onto the ball, secure the safety chain, raise the third wheel and plug in the electrical socket... Oh my God!, the indicators and brake lights aren't functioning! Quick, grab the electrical contact spray, douse the receptacle and pray it works."

Several "start-up cycles" of unplugging, spraying and replugging eventually evokes a weak signal from the running and rear nav lights of the trailer.



Another blast and some percussive maintenance finally brings the signal to full strength and I sigh with relief... "Whew, that was a close one. Now let's get into the car, finish our preflight checks and warmup. Let's see, license, car, and trailer papers, seat belt..."

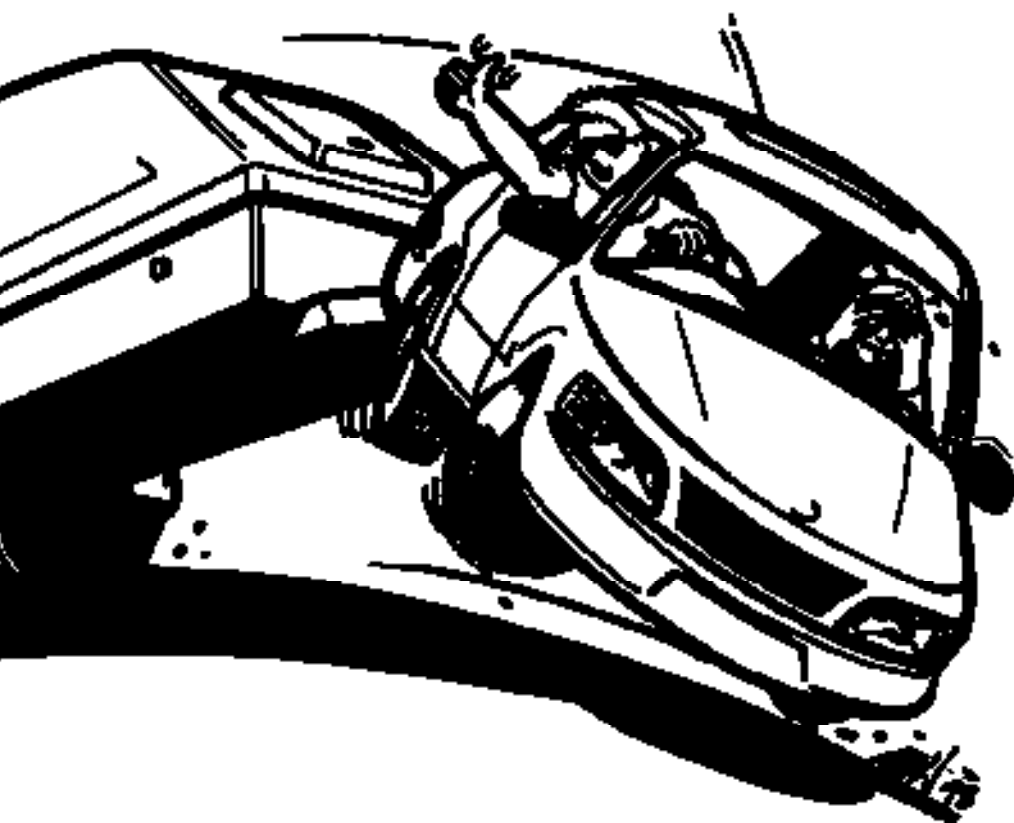
...Uh, excuse me, Mr. Instructor, but could you please use your seat belt too? It is, after all, mandatory in your country to wear one. Oh, and by the way, I and my family would much appreciate you refraining from smoking cigars in this automobile. Thank you."

With the instructor firmly in place I continue my checks... "OK, check gear, clutch in and... ignition... so far, so good. Now, ease the car into first and feel any difference in this fully loaded configuration..."

Feeling the immensity of the load through my controls, I check my mirror and ask myself, "Is that a trailer or a beached white whale?" Over the next few minutes, as we head away from the airfield through shaded woods and fields, everything proceeds smoothly. But then the instructor initiates his instruction, ...in Dutch!

"My God man, spreek je geen Engels!? NEE! God ver domme, how do I get into these situations!?" OK, OK, relax, everything will be fine. Just concentrate on the instructor's words as they come through the cigar fog. If all else fails, follow his body language and hand gestures.

As I attempt to deal with this latest complication our entourage comes upon an intersection. Summoning up my best Dutch I ask... "Links or rechts?"



"Links," the instructor replies, but points to the right.

"Aarhh, he's dyslexic! We're gonna die and there's nothing I can do about it!"

After this initial panic, I spare a thought for the instructor's previous generations of students that had made it to this point, knowing that most had succeeded in equally trying situations. This helps me to calm down. I then consciously employ some Crew Resource Management (XCRM) technique... *"OK, we can resolve this situation with a couple of experiments before we hit the really big stuff. First I'll assume that his 'PIF' meter (Pointed Index Finger) is reliable but that his audio is signalling incorrectly. So I'll compensate for the audio, follow the PIF gauge by turning right, and gauge the reaction of the instructor... Hey, it's working! He's smiling and we're still alive!"*

But now he's talking again and the PIF meter indicates the passenger rearview mirror. I figure I can continue to rely on the PIF meter and try to glean what I can from the Dutch babble...

"What's that? I should check the mirror when I turn? I need at least 50cm clearance due to the distance to the axle? And what's that about the back end and my driver's mirror? OUCH, the rear of the trailer almost clipped the street sign on the other side of the road!"

Now that's a loooooong load.

15 more minutes of towing through Dutch and German two lane back roads and single lane cow trails allow me to develop the "swing wide and scan the mirrors" technique.

In no time I feel like a pro. A quick check of my instructor reveals a smiling face and no white knuckles or pumping feet. Good signs all.

Once again, I get a "links!" command with a point to the right. Hey, this is too easy! I move out to the centre a little, turn right into a tidy suburban neighbourhood and check the mirrors for clearance. Perfect. Then, "Stop!" (thanks for International English). I glide to a halt by the roadside. What's up? Is he gonna give me my diploma right now? Does he live here and want me to meet his beautiful daughter?

"OK, Achterwaarts rechts!", commands the instructor.

"What!? Back-up? You want me to back this car, with a precariously attached 10 metre long beached whale, around that corner in this tidy residential neighbourhood with all those people looking on? I'M A GLIDER PILOT, NOT A FLIPPIN' TRUCKER!"

OK, OK, screaming's not gonna help you here. After all, you asked for this checkride. Listen to the man... uh-huh, something about the axle being the centre of all things. Obviously this is a "Zen" thing. Have to concentrate. Check that mirror, see the axle. No, FEEL, the axle. That's it, let it ease into the corner, take your time... uh-oh, I turned the wheel the wrong way! The line's divergent! The centre cannot hold! She's breaking up, she's breaking up, she's... BRAKE! Oh yeah, brakes! Let's try it again.

I move forward, stop and take a deep breath. I note that some of the onlookers

who earlier went back to their homes have returned with video cameras. I can ignore that, If there's justice on God's green earth, they'll all step in doggie-do.

Second attempt. I try to "feel the wheels", picturing the sweet trajectory of the inner wheel and the axle as they approach and bend around the curb: like a comet and its tail 'round the sun (*hmmm, not a bad simile*). Nice and slowly, the trailer magically follows the curb and nestles neatly along the intersecting roadway. An older, retired couple applaud politely.

Having passed this interim goal, the instructor motions to move on. We leave the quiet neighbourhoods for a connector road and then onto the divided highway. Merging seamlessly; with the transport trucks I accelerate — as is my usual habit — to the passing lane but ... *"Whoa boy! Settle down there... this is a jittery whale! Say again, Mr. Instructor? Don't EVER go more than 80 klicks!? Don't worry, I'm now a converted right-laner."* As future ground crew for some unsuspecting cross-country pilot, I'll probably never be in any great rush anyway.

Easing off the highway we now head towards the city centre — a maze of narrow roads, obstacles, traffic lights and roundabouts. *Wheeee!* I notice that my long load combined with a slightly vacant, drooly face presented to nearby motorists, cyclists and pedestrians makes for a lot of manoeuvring room. I only hope the instructor realises it's an act.

The light is now to be seen at the end of the tunnel, but one last test remains — the "acute angle, uphill and around obstacle" backing test. This is the ultimate, comparable in the need for intelligence, manual skills and stress management to no other soaring experience with the exception, perhaps of having a radio conversation with a non-native-English speaking Air Traffic Controller.

Finally, back at the field, the instructor climbs out of the car and speaks in serious tones to some other instructors in folding chairs. Meanwhile I display my new prowess by manoeuvring my white whale in between a bunch of other mammals resting in the hangar.

In the end the instructor writes, "Ophalen OK" on the back cover of my log book, handing it back without a word or even a wink of conspiracy. A typical anticlimax for what will undoubtedly be one of the defining moments of my "flying" career.

Now that I have done my part to redress the imbalance of attention paid to airborne towing tales, I hope that others will come out of the closet, so to speak, to give readers the benefit of more diverse experiences. We wait eagerly for your recounting!



Surviving the Bight

PETER BOLTON

Following many reports of record-breaking flights on the Great Australian Bight-and a recent visit there myself-I felt I should write this article to address the safety concerns of flying there. I currently hold the position of SAHGA Safety Director and the vast majority of the flying done on the cliffs of the Bight is actually within South Australia.

In fact, the only part in WA is the (SSW-facing) Eucla sand hills and the western Wilson's Bluff take off and top landing spot. The vertical cliffs (where all the records have been broken) start about 25km inside SA. I believe most pilots would realise that the cliffs are vertical, continuous and with no beach (or vehicle access) at the bottom for over 150km. The area is also very remote, though the main Eyre highway does get as close as 1km to the top in places. The biggest town in the area, Eucla, has very limited facilities, although what emergency services there are in the area are all based here.

Some readers may have seen a brief report on the TV news of one emergency rescue here last year, when visiting British women's hang gliding champion, Nikki Hamilton, had to be winched from the bottom of the cliffs. That was a very successful rescue, but certain aspects of it were fortunate to go as well as they did.

Firstly, Nikki did very well to land safely at the base of the cliffs. The cliffs descend vertically either straight into the water, or into a mass of large, jagged boulders in nearly all

places. She appeared to have found a scree-slope and got her glider onto it somehow (without injuring herself or drowning). Secondly, she was fortunate to be seen down there by another pilot flying overhead, who raised the alarm straight away (presumably by radio) and gave GPS coordinates. Thirdly, by sheer coincidence there happened to be a meeting in progress at the time in Eucla organised by the various emergency services (to discuss whether or not to disband the coastguard or similar!). Hence all the people needed were nearby and ready to respond quickly. The rescue method used relied upon a device known as a Larkin frame (often used in cave rescues for winching people up from caves to the surface). This is essentially a pulley on a cantilevered steel frame, with over 100m of rope or cable attached to a winch. This is not exactly the sort of gear everyone can carry in their retrieve car (but it's cheaper than a helicopter).

The emergency services for the area are coordinated by the Eucla police, although there aren't an awful lot of resources to coordinate. For example, the coastguard has only one boat to call on in an emergency. While there is a nursing centre in Eucla, the nearest hospital is located nearly 500km away at Ceduna (SA). Fortunately, the responsibility of the Eucla emergency services does not stop at the SA border.

As in any remote area, the more self-sufficient you can be, the better. If you want to be able to rescue pilots or gliders from the base of the cliffs, that really means you need





Nullabor Cliffs (approximately 300ft high)
showing the range of 'landing areas' available.
Photo: Peter Bolton

your own portable, powerful winch. I expect a 4WD vehicle winch would probably do the job (provided you can access the exact spot by vehicle), but you would still most probably need some sort of pulley or rope guide to reduce wear and friction on the rope at the cliff top. Otherwise, you would need to be a good climber equipped with specialised gear to climb a 300ft vertical cliff (with overhang in places) with only a fixed rope.

For communication, the local cop recommends channels 8 and 40 on UHF radio, presumably because many truckies use channel 40 and could relay a message when within range. From the bottom of the cliffs you wouldn't reach anyone except other pilots flying overhead (or people on the clifftop who could see you anyway). I found repeaters 7 and 8 worked near Eucla (range unknown).

Before my trip I thought of various other scenarios; for example, what if I landed in the water? I didn't want to fly wearing a life jacket, as that seemed to have plenty of its own risks. The best compromise seemed to have a life jacket in the retrieve car, which could be thrown from the cliff if the need arose, but it was a scenario I preferred not to think about.

The one small item which seemed to me to cover all evils at once was a personal EPIRB (or ELT-Emergency Locator Transmitter). These have enabled life-saving rescues at sea (as well as following plane crashes and other emergencies). They are now available for under \$300 from yachting or aviation shops, and no license or registration is

required. They send a radio signal on an emergency channel up to satellites, which then relay them to ground stations – you are not dependent on a plane flying over first. It is worth pointing out that if you set one off you could be liable for the cost of any ensuing rescue searches. They are a 'last ditch' measure (like throwing your parachute), but it's good to know you at least have a 'plan B' (or 'C').

Various other safety concerns arise. Most pilots who've flown there have had some lower limit of height they would not fly below (without excess speed). This is to make sure they don't get caught in decreasing lift conditions when up to 100km from the nearest landing spot. The plan sounds reasonable before getting too low, abandon the rest of the flight and land on top. I have also heard that in soarable winds, the rotor can extend about 1km inland. The trees vary in size and spacing, but I suppose anything's better than landing at the bottom of the cliffs.

I'm not saying don't ever fly the coastline near Eucla; I'm just pointing out some of the hazards and possible solutions. As always, a pilot is responsible for his or her own actions. It's always better to increase your awareness of hazards in order to improve your chances of avoiding them.


The following phone numbers are listed in Eucla: Doctor: 1800 125800; Ambulance: 9039 3470; Police: 08 90393470.

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A Cloud Somewhere...

Albury Corowa Gliding Club makes an Easter pilgrimage to Mt Beauty, this year towing an Astir CS77 (single seater). The few keen club members moved in with some Sale pilots shackled up in one of the many rental holiday cabins on the Thursday night 3rd of April 1998. A few relaxing drinks down at the local pub with introductions and conversation to ensure good relations and a comfortable night's sleep.

From the airfield Mt Bogong can be clearly observed and local summit clouds were constantly thrashing around in the southerly breeze trying to hide the barren peak. The next task was to prepare the winch for the day's events and wait for the days to build.

Gary and Scott Mason plucked up the courage for the first flight with an aerotow to little Bogong in the bright blue IS28B from Mt Beauty club. We took a winch launch and proceeded to the small hill south of the airfield not encountering much lift or sink. As a novice I handed over to Mark once at the slope. Mark unfolded his skill and hours with type as we passed smoothly along the slope, the needle just raising to 0. On the third pass the wind slowly turned anabatic which persuaded the vario needle into positive climb. It took about half an hour to eyeball the summit of this little slope with the occasional turn in lazy thermals. Once above the ridge we ventured over towards Rocky Valley creek. It was not before the horizon grew wider and lower and aspirations of visiting the summit more realistic.

Due to the river crossing we lost a bit more height than expected before reaching the back side of little Bogong, realising we may be alone as the IS28B called downwind. It was on this scrub covered slope that Mark began testing the friendship unbeknownst to him. I knew that suddenly I had become silent and tense as images of post collision and glider retrieval came to mind. He was doing everything an experienced ridge soaring pilot would but it was my

inexperience of close proximity flying that doubted what we were doing. As time past I noticed a broader separation and calmly expressed "This is a much nicer distance" his reply was "that's good, because that was as close as you'll ever see me fly and you should be nowhere near it at your level". Another instructor's test, I am glad that I haven't been doing the compressed gliding course or I'd probably have lost my ticker by now.

As the end of the first pass we barely skimmed through the saddle at the far end of the ridge and contemplated the alternative route home in case of bad sink. Continuing back and forth along the slope we began to climb above the ridge, surprising the line of hikers who waved frantically in amazement.

Realising the duration of our flight and line up for further flights we began a direct line descent back to the airfield. Mark had to watch all his hard work come undone on descent, the only compensation was a reduction in concentration.

After a short lunch hour I wandered back to the airfield not expecting to fly for the rest of the day. As soon as I entered the field Mark enquired "Would you like to fly the Astir now?". My reply was a definite "Yeh" as I stood frozen in confused mental registration contemplating the possible sarcasm in his delivery. Was this really happening or were my peers looking for a possible humorous occasion.

Off the launch I turned right 90 degrees with the intention of proceeding to the small slope that makes up south Mount Beauty. Prior to performing the next 90 degree turn

I flew straight into the centre of a 2 knot thermal. A flatlands student I thought this positive will do me for now even if it only served to put me above the smaller slope as the thermal drifts. Working quickly to establish the centre for a better rate of climb as I was only 500ft above a possible downwind tracking aircraft. Keeping a constant eye and ear out to give way at any time I continued upward at an increasing smooth climb rate. Minutes later I was established in a constant 4 to 5 knot climb rate and ascending faster than an aerotow that had taken off moments after my launch.

At 7,500ft I had drifted well back over Big Hill and decided to track for little Bogong. I arrived with considerable height but not sufficient to reach Bogong and topped up in a bumpy thermal at the Midgets summit. Aware of other aircraft in the vicinity I kept a constant lookout using the audible to continue with thermalling.

The Bogong ridge runs east to west and the Astir responded to the source of lift favourably. The groups of hikers again waved energetic greetings and I responded alike. I was a very satisfied aviator. The only thing better than this morning's Blanik flight was a solo in the Astir.

To all instructors and especially Mark Bland for the awe-inspiring adventure over Mt Beauty I am most humbly grateful. For me personally it indicates that to succeed all you need is the right advice and the courage to persist.



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The WA State Titles: Towing, Turbulence and Turkeys

B O M B E R

This years WA State Hang Gliding Competition was again hosted in Wyalkatchem (Wylie) situated 200km NE of Perth. The competition format was towing, with a mixture of ground towing and aero towing. 21 pilots registered on the practice day of the competition, with a total of four teams poised to fight out the coveted 'Andrew Humphries' memorial teams trophy.

This year we were all ready to go after the nationals warm up-we'd flown, we'd been swimming, we'd sat in the paddock for countless hours waiting for the wind to die down and, more importantly, we'd drunk big time. Now the guns had gone back home the weather was bound to come good - 'Gordo's world' was no longer upon us. ('Gordo's world' is a topic for another article. Beware, however, as you wouldn't want to go there.) All the competitors were local pilots, except for our Spanish friend Miguel 'MIG Weld' Ruiz-Sanchez and the 'Pommy Git' team, comprising Alan 'Lucky' Barnes, Steve 'Ashley & Martin' Elkins, Ronny 'Davron' Richardson and Dave 'the Hat' Holbrook.

Day 1: Wylie to Beacon - 98km

The first day's task was a 98km straight line task to Beacon. The day was rough as guts - one pilot, Mr Wallace, was heard screaming from 6,000ft while wrestling with his CSX on his first flight. Best height of the day was 7,000ft and with a NE drift the task was cross-tail.

Seven pilots made goal, with Mr Wallace being one of them. First in was Lucky (Allan

Barnes), followed by Ashley and Martin (Steve Elkins) and Kiwi Dave (Dave Wellington). Local pilot Dave Fowler showed up a few others by making goal in his XT (his Xtralite being worse for wear after the Nationals), a feat he was to repeat several times in the course of the comp. Jon 'Spike' Orders almost made goal.

Day 2: Wylie to Koorda and return - 94km

On Day 2 the conditions were 'light and scorable' and a 94km out-and-return task was called to Koorda. The day was tough, with pilots getting 400-500ft/min climbs to 6,500ft. Only two pilots made goal, being Lucky (again) and Ronny Davron. Dazza (Daryl Speight) landed 9km short after a grinding five hour effort.

Day 3: Wylie to Mollerin - 86km

Didn't know what was happening on this day - spending most of it on the ground due to bombing out. However, others tell me it was slow going with a low base early (3,000ft) which got better towards the end of the day (6,000ft). The wind was moderate, with a 15-20km/h drift towards the north.

Five made it into goal - first in was Lucky, followed by Kiwi Dave and Ashley and Martin. Great efforts from Scurge and Phil Wainwright. Dazza proved to be consistent by landing 10km short again.

Day 4: Wylie to Cadoux to Kalannie - 105km

Day 4 saw light winds with 1,000 up thermals to 7,000ft. The task was a dogleg run NW to Cadoux and then north to Kalannie. The flying was great and I made goal-about bloody time! Ten made it into goal, with Lucky only leaving the paddock just before 4:00pm and still making it in. First in was Ashley and Martin, followed by Lucky and Ronny Davron. Sam made it to goal with 6,000ft - to be sure, to be sure - after mistakenly thinking he was one town short and thermalling up 2km from goal.

Day 5: DNF

Tooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo windy; went to the pub. The task was changed to a pool comp in which Phil Wainwright blew away all the competition.

Day 6: Wylie to Calingiri - 91km

This day the window was opened a little later due to windy conditions in the paddock. A straight line task to Calingiri was called. Pilots seemed to be having more trouble getting out of the paddock, with the last pilot leaving shortly before 4pm. Most pilots went down between Dowerin and Goomalling.

Five pilots made goal, including Scurge for his third successive day (must have been using 'Scurge theory' - something for a whole separate article). First in was, guess who, Lucky, followed by Wood Chucka (Andrew Holmes) and Dazza. Dave Fowler also made it in his Moyes XT. Sam again flew well, passing ever so close to goal but missing it (didn't switch to goal channel).

Overall Results

Open

- 1 Allan Barnes (GB, Laminar)
- 2 Steve Elkins (GB, Avian)
- 3 Kiwi Dave (Aus, Enterprise Wings Elite)

WA State

- 1 Kiwi Dave (Enterprise Wings Elite)
- 2 Andrew 'Wood Chucka' Holmes (Airborne Shark)
- 3 Daryl Speight (Moyes CSX)

Intermediate

- 1 Mike Howden (Airborne Shark)

Novice

- 1 Jamie Oorshot (Airborne Sting)

Teams Event

- 1 Sky Junkies
- 2 Viper
- 3 Thermal Dynamics
- 4 CMF

Turkey Award

Nominations for this year's Turkey Award for the act of greatest stupidity included:

Son of Shaun: new innovations in towing to speed up the operation by responding to abbreviated command from another pilot radioing in his position. This innovation was further enhanced by modifications to the towing system to increase its effectiveness. Be afraid, be very afraid

Spike and Frilly Nightie: if communications is the key to effective flying then these two can forget it. Picture this: Spike, upon seeing Frilly, wonders what radio channel he's on. Solution: Fly close to him, point frantically at his helmet and shout a lot. Frilly sees some crazy guy getting really close



Wylie under clouds.

and pointing at his hang loops in a panic. Result: Frilly spends the rest of his flight worrying whether he's going to fall out of the glider.

Ruckus: so excited about his flight, he forgot to retrieve tip battens.

Bomber: very minor and brief PR disaster with an over inquisitive local after bombing early in the day.

Sam Blight: flying over goal at 6,000ft and wondering how come all those guns had bombed out in the same paddock.

Sam Blight: flying over goal the next day and landing 2km past goal.

Phil Wainwright: entering 'Gordo's world' for a day. Events started in the paddock when the tow car broke down and Phil had to set his car up. Phil then bombed out 12km from the paddock and waited four hours for a pickup. Upon being picked up Phil bogged his car. Phil unbogged the car by removing a small tree, and kept a small souvenir in his leg. Climax of the day was in the local hospital with a needle in his backside and minor surgery on his leg to remove said souvenir.

As the comp director I was given the authority to determine the Turkey Award winner. However, during the presentation I sensed a slight disagreement with my selection and was overruled.

The winners were Bomber and Phil Wainwright. Nice one Phil.



The Western Soarers Club

It was somewhere 'cross the country
In a land of rock and scrub
That they formed an institution
Called the Western Soarers Club

They were rough and wiry natives
From the rugged western side
And a glider's not been built
That those soarers couldn't fly

Well you'd think that to go gliding
You've just got to have a hill
But they didn't let that stop 'em
Well, there's a way if there's a will

They went east to Wyalkatchem
Just a tiny little town
For the rope and Dragonfly were there
To lift them from the ground

Up into a sky so blue
With not a cloud in sight
Why not hold the Nationals here?
Federation said "All right!"

So here we are in Wylie
Where the wind howls fierce and strong
As the trees blow down around us
We all wonder what's gone wrong

For it seems a pressure trough
Is parked just overhead
Another day, blown out again
So I hop back into bed

Well eventually the weather turns
As we all know it must
So I pull out my trusty glider
And clean off all the dust

Hook onto tow and it's GO, GO, GO
Up into western sky
Stop wondering what we came here for
Just go ahead and fly.

James Freeman

Special thanks go to Gordon Marshall, Nav Brennan, Sam Blight and Phil Wainwright for all the work required for both the state and national competitions. Also, all the people who volunteered their time for turnpoint and goal paddock selection; your work will be of value to the club for a long time to come.

During the comp I received invaluable assistance from Phil Wainwright (scoring); Nav Brennan (registration); Ruckus, Dave Fowler, Farmer Dude and Kiwi Dave (task committee); Frilly Knightie and Wood Chukka (weather); and Sue Speight (being there to help when it counted and letting me go flying with Daz on the weekends).

Mostly I'd like to thank the town of Wylkatchem for their support, not only during the competition but for the last three years. The town has been right behind our sport-and our club in particular - and we hope for a long association with them.

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Leeton turns on the Weather

FROM OUR STAFF REPORTER

Pilots at the 1999 National Inter-service Gliding Competition were delighted by the weather conditions at Leeton this year. The 1998 competition was all but washed out, but 1999 made up for that disappointment. Attendance at the competition was good, with 36 pilots competing in about 28 gliders, including several two-seaters. As has been the case in previous years, the competition was very friendly, with most pilots out to enjoy the gliding and to improve their own performance, while at the same time contributing to the performance of their service team. As competition director, I am very pleased to report that most pilots conducted themselves in a very safe and responsible manner, with no serious safety incidents occurring.

One of the best things about the Inter-service competition is that junior pilots are encouraged to attend and to attempt badge flights in conjunction with the main competition. This can involve flying the set competition tasks, or flying separate, non-conflicting tasks. The weather this year resulted in a record number of pilots achieving personal-best performances, which will probably keep the GFA Certificates Officer fairly busy over the next few weeks. A summary of these FAI/GFA recognised achievements follows:

Gold Height:	15 claims	Silver Height:	2 claims
Silver Badge:	9 claims	Gold Distance:	
Gold Distance:	1 claim	Diamond Goal:	6 claims
600km Certificate:	6 claims	Diamond Distance:	2 claims

A number of other pilots partially or fully completed their A, B and/or C certificate requirements, including 15 year old Adam l'Anson who went solo for the first time and achieved one hour of soaring flight. Other noteworthy achievements were those of 15 year old Adam Bland, who achieved his Gold distance/Diamond goal; and Pilatus pilot Paul Wetherspoon, who was awarded the George Edwards Memorial Trophy for completing his Silver badge, his Gold height and a 206km competition task in his first ever competition. James Godde, from Corowa, went home with his Gold distance/Diamond goal, Diamond distance and Diamond height.

As far as the competition was concerned, the results were equally impressive, especially considering the diverse spread of glider types and pilot experience to be catered for. Two practice days were flown, followed by seven competition days. Only two days were lost due to weather, with one of these being the last competition day. I have never seen so many smiling faces on a washed-out day at a gliding competition – a good indication of how tired most people were after a number of very hot days. Then again, five straight days of 40°C plus temperatures does tend to do that to you!

The overall competition results are summarised in the table at the end of this article, so I won't give a blow-by-blow account of what happened. Rather, I will highlight some aspects of the competition which I hope will convey a sense of what the competition was like overall. For example, the total competition distance flown, excluding the practice days, was just over 34,000km. The best handicap speed achieved was 140.6km/h, over a distance of 345.2km, and the best actual speed was 134.34km/h, over the same distance. Up to 19 gliders flew competition tasks on any given day, and the number of outlandings was surprisingly small (much to the relief of some very hot and sweaty crew)! Two German pilots attended the competition at the invitation of the Australian Services Gliding Association: they could not believe that they were able to achieve an actual speed of

120.8km/h (135.3km/h on handicap), over a distance of 345.2km, in an ASW-15 and a Libelle!

In concluding this article I would like to thank all those who helped make the competition a success. In particular, thanks to the Leeton Gliding Club, for treating us like fellow club members and unstintingly making their facilities and expertise available. Thanks also to the start/finish crew, the ground crew, the tug pilots and winch drivers, and the Leeton Caravan Park, which looked after us exceptionally well. For the record, RAAF won the overall trophy once again, followed by Navy and Army. Malcolm Ferguson, although the overall winner, asked to be left out of the final results on the basis that he did his own thing on a couple of days, in an attempt to achieve a 750km flight – a very sporting gesture which was appreciated by all. A summary of the overall results follows:

'Open' class

Pilot	Glider	Day 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Average
Ferguson	SZD-48		978.2				1,000	1,000	992.73
Mueller	Libelle	946.0	972.0	999.7	882.8		962.4	837.1	933.33
Tummes	ASW-15	945.9	972.0	1,000	882.5		962.5	836.9	933.30
Williams	SZD-38	977.9	988.2	936.4	932.8	988.8	936.7	847.3	929.73
Loder	DG-400	950.7	964.5	853.1	940.5	990.8		862.2	926.97
Hoffman	Cirrus				907.0				907.00
Bland	H301B	1,000	1,000	711.8	894.2		901.7		901.54
Edwinson	DG-300	914.0			1,000	893.4	819.8	878.2	901.08
Roden	Hornet			834.1	937.8		928.9		900.27
McLean	PIK-20			932.0				800.2	866.10
Mayger	Mini-nimbus	895.2	877.5	902.5	862.2		730.3		853.54
Browne	ASW-20	831.6	925.5	816.1	879.6			791.4	848.84
Pobjoy	Cirrus			726.6		1,000	822.7	786.7	834.00
Godde	Astir 77	799.5							799.50
King	Libelle	785.2							785.20
McGarry	Libelle		837.0		677.9		749.5		754.80
Moran	Astir 77	782.5	724.7						753.60
Bravery	Astir 77				709.6		712.4	678.1	699.93
Hart	Pilatus	622.9		778.1		689.7			696.90
Murphy	Hornet	778.2				588.9			683.55
Green	Pilatus				667.8				667.80
Forrest	Libelle			641.2					641.20
McCallum	PIK-20		711.2		147.6		723.0	791.4	593.30
Peruzzi	Libelle			267.8				775.0	521.40
Rock	Astir CS		759.0			280.3			519.65
Dickie	Libelle					279.8			279.80

Sports/2-seat class

Pilot	Glider	Day 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Average
Hoffman	Blanik		1,000						1,000.0
Illyes	Blanik			1,000				1,000	1,000.0
Cardew	Pilatus				1,000				1,000.0
Rock	Twin Astir			940.5			1,000		970.25
Winn	Blanik	1000				1000		854.8	951.60
Lindquist	Astir CS						940.9		940.90
Bowler	Cirrus							854.8	854.80
Leo	Blanik	893.9	883.1	785.9					854.30
Wetherspoon	Pilatus			764.3					764.30
Mason	IS-28			745.8			628.7		687.25
Forrest	Libelle	933.5					234.8		584.15

VSA State Comps

5th – 12th December 1998

It's a funny thing that socialising with competition gliding pilots is different to socialising with fellow club pilots. Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying they're better, but they are different – and it's always a great feeling to catch up with the good ol' state comps crowd again.

So it was that we gathered again at Benalla for the first week in December to see what weather and tasks would be our lot. We arrived the day after the front and so were set rather small tasks for days 1 to 3, in fact as short as the rules would allow – which was rather nice really because the retrieves were kept short. You always get some good stories out of outlandings, from comments about the famous dead sheep paddock (which was used for 3 days running) to a farmer's wife bemoaning to me "oh dear, is it glider season again" when I turned up at the back door. These early days were dominated by the Libelles, due to the more handicapped gliders being unable to get their speed up (or to be more precise – being able to land further around the course).

Phil Hearn's trace for day 1, was typical of many flights that day, generally working between 2 and 4 thousand feet above ground with 2 to 4 knot thermals.

Days 4 and 5 saw the weather heating up, fewer outlandings, even Simon Brown

made it home, and speeds over the 100. Day 5 was probably the best day with 440km tasks being won at around 125km/h. The GPS plot of Bruce Cowan's flight told the story – 6 to 8 knot climbs to 9,000ft – making life rather pleasant. Haidyn Dunn reminded us that it was wise to "beware the Dunn in the Sun" – with speeds in his ASW19 slightly faster than the 15m class entrants.

Days 6 to 8 were hot – damn hot. While the State fried, we flew high and cool. Tasks were all around 450 to 500km and somewhat challenging at times but with good heights. On day 8, which we didn't task through fear of overdevelopment and severe storms, Charles Day flew 600km in less than 5 hours, just to remind us that perhaps next year a POST task would make sense to enable us to fly safely around the storms that could eventuate.

At the end of it all we had another great night and awarded prizes to the winners. Uncle Graham, aka Graham Garlick, won Open/15m class and after a final night of drama involving turnpoint photography (I tell you, I'm sick of staring at pictures of Jerilderie), Haidyn Dunn won standard class.

On a personal note, it's a really interesting experience to be the weatherman. It's extraordinary how fellow competitors

totally trust you to get it right but are happy to boo and blame you if wrong (or correct)! The job was made easier by spending time with John Williamson and using the rules he has deduced for forecasting. They are simply magnificent and very reliable – in fact the weather was generally forecast correctly for all but the last day. An article for another time.

So in all, we had a week of 8 soarable days, 21 competitors (a slight increase again), many from interstate and overseas and a safe, social week. My only question is: Will you join us for next year's VSA competition? Keep the first week in December 1999 free and join in the fun.

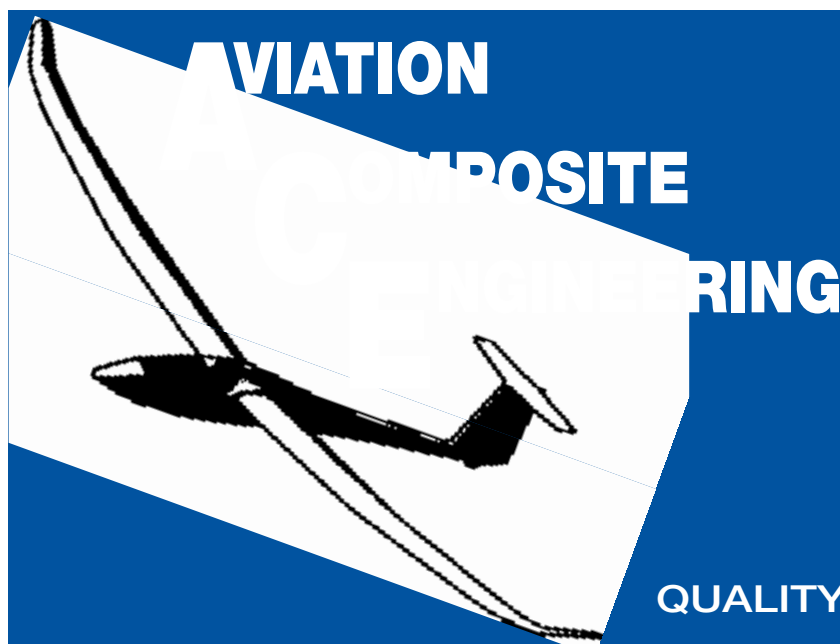
Scores

15m/open class

1 Eric (I only broke 6 Finnish records this year) Heinonen	964
2 Uncle Graham Garlick (15m class winner)	941
3 Bruce Cowan	934
4 Brian Bateson	917

Standard class

1 Haidyn Dunn	950
2 Peter Gray	949
3 Phil Hearne	905
4 Gary Stevenson	844
5 David Meredith	723



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Brett Tooker soars over Pirates Bay at Eaglehawk Neck in summer 1998. View is SW to Tasman Arch coastline.

Photo: Dave Lytton

BRETT TOOKER

It's bucketing rain outside. Mt Koonya is shrouded in cloud and a warm blue-grey dusk is descending on the valley. A good time, I think, to pen a national update on matters Tamanian.

The last time I recall reading something substantial of Tasmania in *Skysailor*, Bob Hawke was pulling his ear (and our legs) and 'uhmm'ing' and 'argh'ing' the double breasted Armani off Paul Keating. Since then, the focus of hang gliding in Tasmania has shifted from the more populated north of the state to the south-east, and in particular, Hobart.

With Tasmania's low population base, largely rural demographic and a kind of geo-parochial divide between the aforementioned north and south, it's no surprise that hang gliding has remained an underexposed and undeveloped sport. I once read in an old road atlas of Australia that Tasmania is the world's most mountainous island simply by virtue of its number of peaks. Therefore, it can't be argued that Tasmania lacks potential. However, the absence of a local hang gliding instructor, a situation that sees all prospective pilots having to go interstate to obtain a student certificate, is of course a major deterrent.

Over the past few years the Tamanian Hang Gliding Association has been on a site acquisition drive, seeking to address what we believe is a relative lack of developed sites in the midst of all this potential. Further, we hope to attract more pilots and, just as importantly, retain them. We've been pretty successful with acquiring sites so far. So much so that we now need the pilots to fly them.

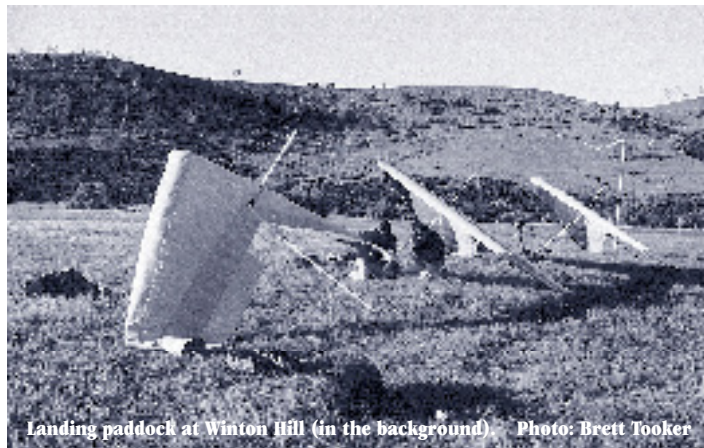
Here's a reasonable summary of what's currently on offer in Tasmania.

Within an hour's drive of Hobart we have acquired a number of sites that offer the chance to get in a quick fly before or after work and still be home in time for dinner (Whew! That was close...). Winton

Hill (private), 40 minutes drive north of Hobart, is in its third season and has proved to be our most important and reliable site. A 5km long and 200m high pastured ridge that takes Hobart's clockwork-like southerly summer sea breeze. Winton works up to several times a week and is a tremendous site for building up airtime, especially for student and novice pilots for whom it's ideal. Multiple take offs and landings in one session are possible. It also features one of Tasmania's only top landings; very much like Stanwell's monument landing, although restricted to light winds only. On most days in the height of summer the breeze can be quite fresh, but tapers off beautifully at day's end. Only for the grace and generosity of both the Paul and Roberts families do we go.

Jews Hill (private) lies about 7km away. A 300m high, almost treeless hill that takes a N to NE breeze, it is now in its second season. Further to the SE, and home to Hobart's closest surf beaches, is the South Arm peninsula, featuring some great coastal sites. Cremorne Beach North (private) is a gentle 180m pastured site that takes ESE to ENE winds and has a beach landing. At the southern end is a promising length of cliffs that local resident Mick Calvert is investigating.

Nearby is our most recently acquired site. Thanks to a sustained effort by Mick we've finally got our mitts on the highly coveted Clifton



Landing paddock at Winton Hill (in the background). Photo: Brett Tooker

Bluff (private) – a 150m pastured headland overlooking Clifton Beach. First flown by Mick several months ago, it's since been flown by Dave Lytton and by all accounts it's a cracker. Clifton takes the same direction as Cremorne.

Out to the east coast and one hour's drive from Hobart is Eagle Hawk Neck (public reserve). Our biggest and most spectacular coastal site, the Neck was first flown by Alan Coates back in the late 70s. It features two launches, over 15km of flying above Australia's highest sea cliffs, a beach landing and 2WD access. The upper launch was recently developed by the Tasmanian forestry department into a stunning coastal look-out and launch facility, bringing together local green groups, forestry personnel, Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife, local earthmoving contractors and, of course, the Tasmanian Hang Gliding Association. The result is a tremendous credit to all concerned, and has enhanced the status and appeal of the Tasman Peninsula. Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife, to their credit and our eternal gratitude, have agreed to retain the launch after the reserve is proclaimed part of the new Tasman National Park. The new 350m ASL launch is of landscaped earth dressed in pine bark mulch, has an ideal gradient and is eminently suitable for the launching of both hang gliders and paragliders. On good days heights of up to 1,000m are attainable. Far below, great fun and practice can be had soaring the lower launch cliffs directly above the beach. The upper launch takes SE to NE winds; the lower takes moderate to fresh NE only.



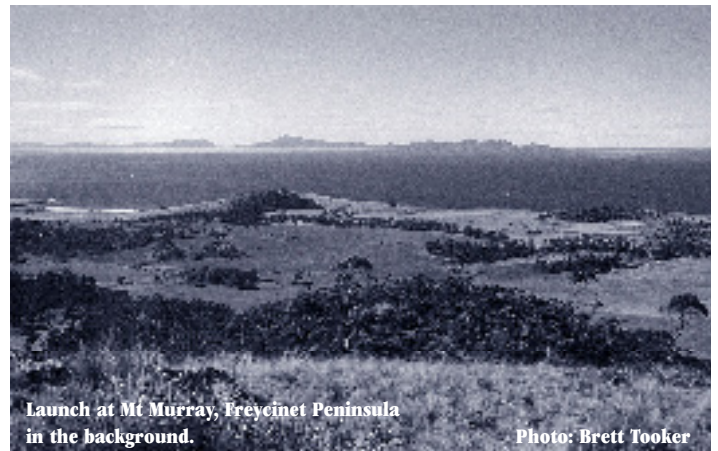
Launch site works at Eaglehawk Neck, winter 1998. Photo: Brett Tooker

Another hour's drive north through tall forest and rugged coastline brings you to Bougainville Head and Mt Murray (both private). This area typifies much of Tasmania's central and NE coastal area-dry sclerophyll forest and pastures undulating down to a coastline of bumper to bumper beaches. Bougainville Head is a 150m high pastured NE site that overlooks a superb beach landing. 2WD access. Unflown.

Mt Murray, a NE site at the north end of the same beach is a 317m high forested peak in the midst of the beautiful Grindstone merino stud property. It has an ideal grassy dome that, with a little help from us, has lent itself to the launching of paragliders and hang gliders. Below are the turquoise and cobalt-blue waters of Grindstone and Great Oyster Bays, with the pink granite of Freycinet beyond and the colossus of Maria Island to the SE. Unbelievable and unflown. It should be noted that NE winds blow all day and almost all summer long on the central-NE coast.

Further north toward Swansea great potential exists along a length of coastal cliffs above and below the highway route. Overlooking Launceston is the 1,470m rock massif of Mt Barrow (public reserve), probably Tasmania's best 2WD accessible thermalling site. A difficult launch (hang gliders only) gets you into great thermal activity over impressive dolerite rock faces with good cross-country prospects, though the last time I flew it there was serious tiger country over the back toward Mt Ben Lomond (another unflown, though potentially

spectacular, thermalling site). Below Mt Barrow, at Diddleum Plains, there are some good landing paddocks – something unfortunately absent below Mt Ben Lomond. Since there is little flying activity in the State's north, Mt Barrow is not regularly flown. Takes NW to NE winds.



Launch at Mt Murray, Freycinet Peninsula in the background.

Photo: Brett Tooker

Southwest of Launceston at the foot of the Great Western Tiers is Little Billop Bluff (private). It lies directly below its big brother, Billop Bluff, and has all the appearance of a gateway site to the Tiers, though as far as I know nobody's cracked it. Takes NW to NE. Further south, halfway between Launceston and Hobart, is Gaffs Hill (private). Gaffs and Little Billop were the mainstays of Tasmania's hang gliding activity during the 1980s. Like Little Billop, Gaffs is a treeless, 150m high hill, and takes similar wind directions to Little Billop. Gaffs is also a good training site.

Over to the NW coast is Table Cape, a terrific coastal site that unfortunately is within Wynyard Airport's controlled airspace. A real bummer. The cliffs further west toward Boat Harbour also show great potential and have probably been flown by Alan Coates and Co. Further west again is The Nut at Stanley. This volcanic, plug-type formation has a chairlift to the summit (yes, it's 150m) and takes just about 360 degrees. Nearby is Greenhills, a gentle pastured site that takes both westerly and easterly winds and is top landable.

Now back to the Great Western Tiers. Picture a 100km long, 1,200m high escarpment that overlooks the undulating Central Midlands plains. With very little vehicular access the Tiers represent, in my opinion at any rate, Tasmania's only serious offering in terms of a reliable and challenging thermalling site with enormous scope for exploration and development. The best access and topography for any launch is at Poatina. However, the Hydro-electric Commission remains staunchly opposed to any hang gliding activity from its property. Mt Franklin, at the southern extremity of the Tiers, has proven unreliable and is too low and peripheral to the action (although I believe Ian Jarman did have a good flight from there, making it as far as Millers Bluff). In the longer run other options must and will be pursued.

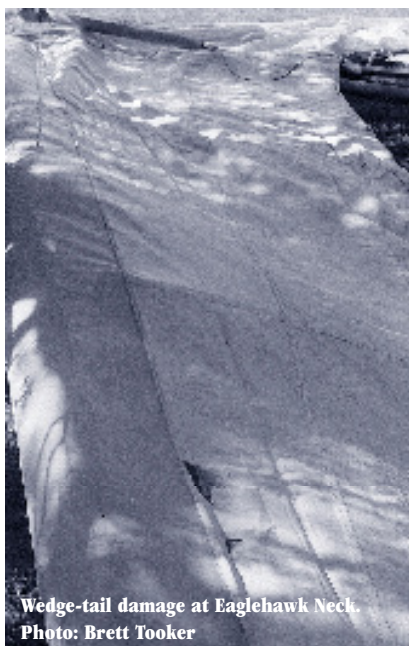
However, before we embark on that project another more pressing and, dare I say, feasible task beckons – the Holy Grail of Tasmanian hang gliding sites (or the 800 pound gorilla): Hobart's Mt Wellington. We are once again attempting to address the glaring anomaly of no established launch site on this colossal site. I used to question the sincerity of endless rumours about the remains of Noah's Ark on Turkey's Mt Ararat. 'Why doesn't somebody just go up there and check it out?', I thought. Alas, it's not so simple, but hope springs eternal it's said: We're as close now as we've ever been and stand a very good chance of success. Steve Bayley and Craig Semple – two new pilots won on the strength of Winton Hill – are putting together a comprehensive proposal that we think will address the myriad of considerations likely to arise. We envisage a launch on the NE face at around 1,270m ASL.

Hang Gliding

The designated landing area 1,200m below is on the vacant fields opposite (and owned by) Cascade Breweries. This is still subject to approval by parent company, Fosters Brewing. Without this approval, nothing goes ahead. Apart from the council landfill site at McRobies Gully, there are simply no other safe landing options. Should we be successful in our proposal, Mt Wellington will prove to be a world class site, attracting interstate and international pilots. Keep your fingers crossed and we'll keep you posted. (By the way, it has been flown by myself and others over the years.)

So there it is in a nutshell... OK, a coconut shell. A surplus of sites and a poverty of pilots. I've called Alan Coates who, along with others such as Rob Knox, pioneered hang gliding in Tasmania to verify some of my facts, but as yet no reply. So chappies, if you have flown any of the 'unflown sites', my apologies. The current season (it's mid February) – bar the heavy rain as I write – has been very dry, providing great thermalling and soaring conditions with most hours being flown at Winton. The north face of Jews Hill was flown for the first time as well as Clifton Bluff. Also, earthworks at Winton have enabled 2WD access to launch.

A prominent issue for us over the past few seasons has been that of wedge-tailed eagles. There are, I believe, 75 breeding pairs in the state – one on every launch – and are considered to be an endangered species. At Winton they are sporadic in their activity, but at The Neck



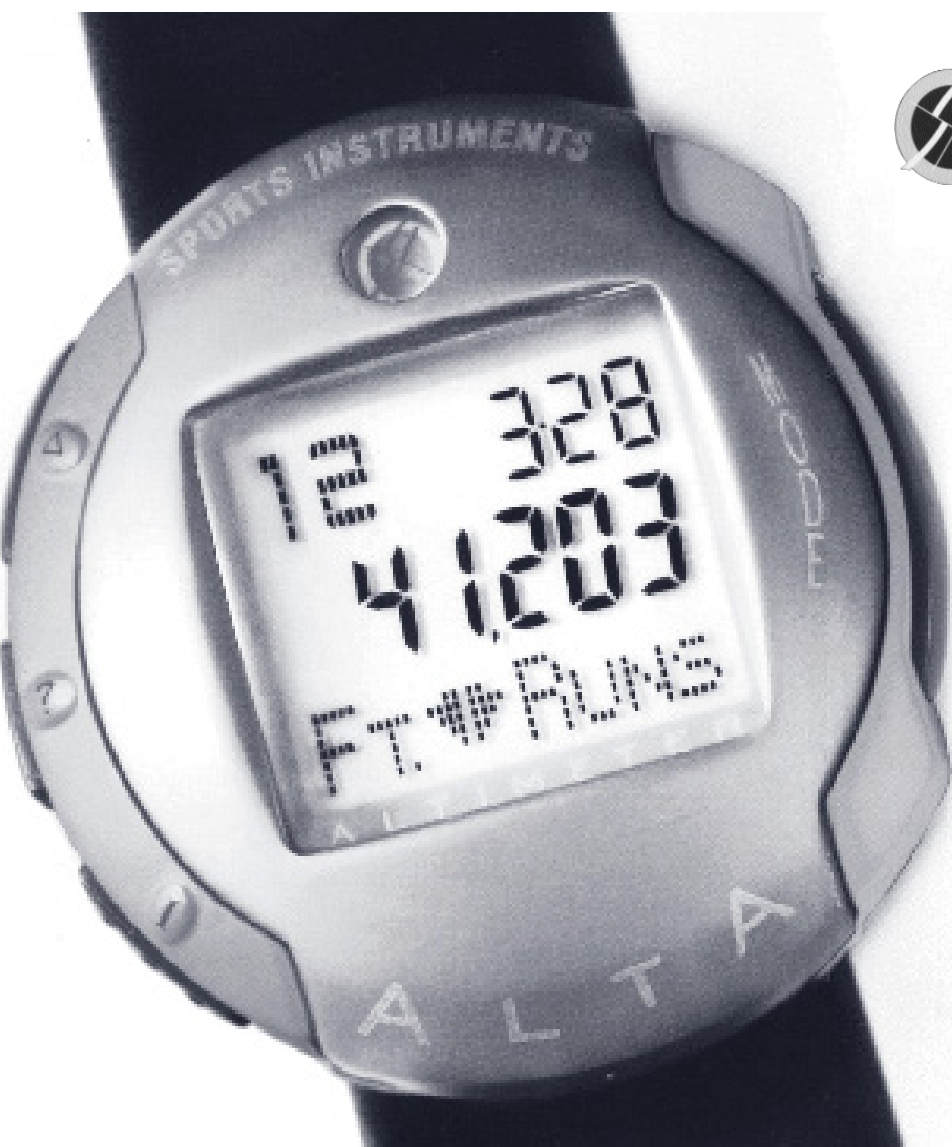
Wedge-tail damage at Eaglehawk Neck.
Photo: Brett Tooker

they are relentless. I flew this site without incident for ten years, but looking in my log book I read that Charles Mace and I were chased from the sky by two newly arrived wedgies in April 1996. Charles said, 'No big deal, just tell them very loudly to f*** off,' which I eventually did. It did work once, but has never worked since. According to Nick Mooney at Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife wedge-tails are very idiosyncratic, and worst of all they remember (having taken particular offence to my glider). This season we're all flying with airhorns-aerosol cans mounted with screw on horns available at most ship chandlers. They are very loud and quite effective, but will only keep the wedgies at bay. The best deterrent we've found is simply: safety in numbers. With three or more gliders in the air you rarely see them. If you're on your own (which you shouldn't be) you're a sitting duck. Wedgies represent a considerable problem at some sites so any

suggestions from readers would be most welcome.

Time to wrap up this rather epic update. If you are intending to visit Tasmania, the flying season is from September to April inclusive, with the best months being December to February. Be sure to contact the THGA before you fly any sites. They are, needless to say, precious.

It still rains unabated outside. Think I'll slip into my fez, smoking jacket and carpet slippers for a welcome nightcap. Take care and bye for now.



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Check out our web site on [www.
highadventure.com.au](http://www.highadventure.com.au)

New HGFA Pilot Certificates

Issued Between 1/1/99 and 23/2/99

The following statistics have been obtained from the current HGFA database. Some errors in the previous listing (February Skysailor) have been identified and we apologise to any members and instructors affected by those inaccuracies.

If a member has been issued with a certificate in the period from 1/9/98 to 23/2/99, and is not listed below or in the February listing, please notify the office so that we can include you in the next listing and correct the errors in our database.

The HGFA is currently developing a new database system, as the old one is proving too unreliable and is not Y2K compliant. Under this new system we are confident that such errors will be reduced to data entry errors only.

HGFA No.	Pilot	Suburb	Instructor (No. & Name.)
Paragliding Restricted Certificates – Issued 1/1/99 to 23/2/99			
53881	Rebecca Barlett	Murray Bridge	44306 T. Jenkins
53880	Tony Brown	Seaview Downs	53749 F. Wallner
200678	Ian Clarke	Boronia	34387 F. Gungl
18376	Barry Condon	Bondi	17391 E. Beker
200876	James Dowie	Cook	17449 P. Bowyer
38350	Sean Elliott	Bendigo	34387 F. Gungl
45829	Marcel Essling	Mount Coolim	45192 J. Lejaille
90513	Loic Francois	Bright	34387 F. Gungl
18377	Matthew Haes	Manly	14915 F. Park
200401	Steve Hampton	Blackburn	33985 H. Van Santen
200677	Elizabeth Jacka	Fairfield	44306 T. Jenkins
86190	Russell Jones	Mount Waverley	44306 T. Jenkins
200679	Bernard Kelly	Hunters Hill	34387 F. Gungl
45826	Olav Liebing	Canungra	16965 P. Hystek
45824	Ian Mason	Mudgeeraba	16965 P. Hystek
45823	Gerry Orchard	Rainbow Beach	45192 J. Lejaille
200680	Robert Parker	Fairfield	34387 F. Gungl
22395	Suzanne Richards	Weetangera	22809 M. Brady
38357	Wayne Roberts	South Bank	(Pilot from O/S)
38356	Christopher Robson	Caulfield South	33985 H. Van Santen
38366	Andreas Roesing	Melbourne	16965 P. Hystek

HGFA No.	Pilot	Suburb	Instructor (No. & Name.)
Paragliding Restricted Certificates – Issued 1/1/99 to 23/2/99 continued			
18369	Alan Simpson	Bonnells Bay	22809 M. Brady
38353	Rob Smith	St Kilda	34387 F. Gungl
38351	Lawrence Usill	St Kilda	34387 F. Gungl
22394	Keven Whitton	Scullin	22809 M. Brady

Omissions from Previous Listing

36883	Carolyn Pearce	Fortitude Valley	45192 J. Lejaille
45735	John Madden	New Farm	45192 J. Lejaille

Note: This will bring the number of certificates issued by J. Lejaille during the last three months of 1998 to six, and not four as previously printed (our apologies).

Hang Gliding Restricted Certificates – Issued 1/1/99 to 23/2/99

18393	Peter Burkitt	Dee Why	14352 L. Scott
38354	Dete Hasse	Sunbury	33915 R. Holtkamp
18391	Jonathan Marshall	Eastwood	12501 N. Mersham
53879	Grant McKenzie	Roxby Downs	33915 R. Holtkamp
18379	Daniel Peterson	Via Casino	12947 B. Rushton
18382	Nathan Poole	Mangerton	14191 T. Armstrong
64110	Anthony Weller	Scarborough	63979 S. Wallace
64111	Mark Weller	Scarborough	63979 S. Wallace
18371	Jonathan Whitley	Grays Point	14191 T. Armstrong
18386	Owen Wormald	Campsie	14492 C. Boyce

Weightshift Microlight Student Certificates – Issued 1/1/99 to 23/2/99

18370	Ken Adams	Rozelle	16818 P. Haines
38363	Malcolm Burton	Upwey	33219 S. Ruffels
18375	Michael Carpenter	Farmborough Hts	16818 P. Haines
18380	Robert Clark	Minto	16818 P. Haines
38361	Lauren Cowden	Bright	33219 S. Ruffels
45828	Jeff Curtis	Narangba	11085 B. Silver
18390	Ian Forsyth	Cheltenham	16818 P. Haines
18378	Malcolm Hardy	Engadine	16818 P. Haines
18385	Lawrence Morison	Nyngan	Was AUF Member
18383	Graham Pheasant	Tumut	15499 P. Wilson
38365	Richard Price	Woodend	33684 T. Dennis
45827	Warren Rawson	Seaforth	12342 K. Magennis
18381	Garry Roth	Medowie	12342 K. Magennis
18394	Tim Samuel	Annandale	16818 P. Haines



HGFA merchandise

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- ◆ \$50 Rugby top with embroidered HGFA logo in navy, green & grey (sizes 16 to 24)
- ◆ \$15 Cap (cotton or corduroy) with HGFA colour logo in red, black, navy or green
- ◆ \$1.50 HGFA Car sticker (no postage required)
- ◆ \$6 Embroidered Badge
- ◆ \$30 HGFA Hang Gliding Training Video
- ◆ HGFA Competitions Manual – no charge
- ◆ HGFA Towing Manual – no charge
- ◆ \$45 1998 Hang Gliding Grand Prix Series video
- ◆ \$5 HGFA Pilot Training Workbooks

- ◆ \$15 Beginning Coaching (Australian Sports Commission)

- ◆ \$20 Better Coaching (Australian Sports Commission)

- ◆ \$10 HGFA Operations Manual*

- ◆ \$15 HGFA Operations Manual Binder*

- ◆ \$5 HGFA Log Book*

* Replacement Prices only – These items are issued free with initial Full Membership

- ◆ \$3.00 Postage and Packing (Bulk orders sent C.O.D.)





Book Review

Sailplanes by Schweizer, A History

Authors: Paul A. Schweizer
and Martin Simons

Publishers: Airline Publishers Ltd,
101 Longden Road,
Shrewsbury SY3 9EB,
England

ISBN 1 84037 022 X

Price: (in UK, Sterling) £39.95

The three Schweizer brothers, Ernie, Paul and William, secretly built their first glider, a primary trainer, in their father's empty bark at Peekskill, New York State, in 1930 and taught themselves to fly it. This was the beginning of what became the Schweizer Aircraft Corporation which, from 1939, was based at Elmira, NY. The factory was and still is a short glide from Harris Hill, the historic centre of the soaring movement in the Eastern States of the USA. Paul in 1988 published his book, *Wing Like Eagles*, which is a general history of soaring in the USA, and in 1991 William produced *Soaring with the Schweizers*, which describes in detail the history of the Schweizer business over a fifty year period. Neither of these books goes into detail about the Schweizer aircraft themselves.

While Martin Simons was working on his own book, *Slingsby Sailplanes*, he pointed out to the Schweizers that there was a need for a companion work which would describe all their sailplanes. Nothing of the kind had ever been attempted before. After some discussion it was agreed that Paul should write the main text with editing and some additions by Martin, who would also do all the scale drawings using data provided by the factory, where details of the aircraft were preserved. The work continued over several years with numerous exchanges between the authors until an agreed, illustrated text was submitted to the publisher in 1997.

Since the Type SGU 1-3, all Schweizer sailplanes have been of metal construction except for the TG-3, which, under wartime requirements, had wooden flying surfaces to

economise on scarce resources of aluminium alloys. The book contains a full explanation of the thinking behind the choice of materials, aerodynamic and engineering options which went into each of the sailplane designs, and the necessary marketing and, often very tough, policy decisions which had to be made. There are very numerous photographs and detailed, accurate drawings on a constant scale of 50:1.

The result is a substantial volume of 224 pages, including index and appendices. The standard of production is very high and the success of the book in the USA and among model makers is assured.

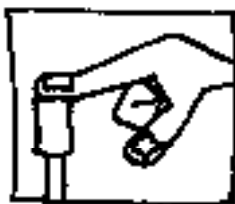
Not many Schweizer gliders were ever imported to Australia, although in retirement at Tocumwal are a TG-3 which broke some records in this country during the '50s,

and a solitary 1-35. A very rare SGS 2-22 has flown at Vintage Rallies in recent years and a 1-26 appeared on the GFA register at one time.

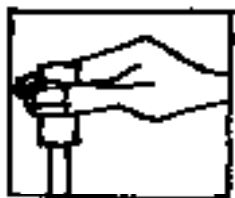
Schweizers now make no sailplanes, having been forced out of this highly specialised and difficult market in the early '80s, by the general adoption of plastic composite materials, rather as Slingsbys were. The Schweizer family remain in full control, the younger generation of sons and nephews having taken over when Ernie, Paul and William retired. The firm now produces helicopters and, using sailplane-like wings, highly sophisticated surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft like the 2-37, which appears in the final chapter of the book. It does not seem likely that there will be any more Schweizer sailplanes now. ✂

KNOW YOURSELF

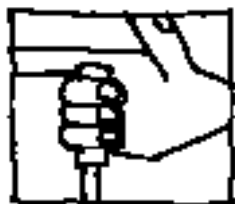
FROM THE WAY YOU HOLD THE CONTROL STICK.



- YOU ARE A "DOWN FLIGHT" APE.
- YOU ARE ACCIDENT PRONE.
- YOU ARE BEING WATCHED THROUGH THE CANOPY.



- YOU ARE A SHOW OFF.
- OR YOU ARE A CARPENTER WHO LOST THE OTHER THREE FINGERS ON THE BAND SAW.



- YOU ARE SOME SORT OF NUT.
- WHAT PERSUADES YOU TO FLY LIKE THIS!
- YOU MUST HAVE JUST GONE SOLO.



- YOU ARE NORMAL.
- YOU HAVE BEEN FLYING ABOUT 60 HOURS, YOU HAVE HAD ABOUT 20 INSTRUCTORS AND ARE ON THE VERGE OF GOING SOLO.
- YOU ARE MAKING GREAT PROGRESS.



- YOU ARE AN INSTRUCTOR.
- THE STUDENT HAS JUST FLARED - OUT AT APPROX. 50 FT.
- RELAX.

(Reprinted from *Uni Gliding*, June '84)



Battery Care

FROM THE GRAFTON EAGLE

Probably the biggest single problem we have with gliders is radio failure. And the biggest single cause of radio failure is battery failure. Why is it so?

I've never met anyone yet who seems to properly understand Sealed Lead Acid battery care and maintenance.

A fully charged SLA battery should be capable of holding around 13 volts (without load – open circuit). Check with a multi-meter before fitting to gliders. Occasionally an internal high resistance connection will make a battery, which seems OK useless. The best way to check this is to load the battery with a brake light lamp globe – say 20 watts, 12 volt. If it lights up brightly, and the battery voltage doesn't drop to less than 12½ volts it's probably OK.

A battery that has been overcharged may swell, the sides of the battery case will bulge out. Treat this battery with suspicion.

The batteries we use are rated at 7 Amp Hour. This means that over a 20 hour period, a good battery will maintain 350mA (a third of an ampere), which is much more

than you would normally drain from the radio and vario.

The trick is to properly recharge the battery after a day's use – most low voltage failures are due to improper recharging.

Maximum charge rate – 7 Ah SLA batteries can be recharged at up to 1 1/2-2 amps current – but this current cannot be maintained after they reach full charge, otherwise the battery can boil dry. Preferably a regulated supply which tapers off the charge rate when the battery voltage reaches full charge is preferable.

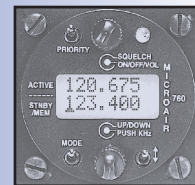
A current charge rate of 10% of the AmpHr rating (700mA) is a generally recognised rule-of-thumb standard charge rate. This would take 10 hours to fully recharge a completely flat battery. Again, when fully charged, the charging voltage should be backed off.

With a high capacity charger (like an Arlec 6 charger) it is possible to get an over-current surge which can blow the fuse. This is also a very good reason for a battery still being flat in the morning. Check the fuse when checking the batter.



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HGFA Operation



Happy 50th Birthday, Craig!
From all at the HGFA.

Replacement Parts

I have received several reports of problems arising from pilots replacing various hang glider components with non-standard parts. These have included pilots replacing leading edges with furniture grade aluminium; and sleeving uprights. These practices

drastically reduce the airworthiness of the glider; sleeving uprights can lead to unnecessary injury.

Several problems have arisen with replacement sails. One sail, when fitted to the airframe, caused the glider to be very unstable in pitch. This problem could not be remedied despite drastically shortening the luff lines, increasing tip wash-out and changing the batten profile. Other reports are of gliders having a bad turn when fitted with replacement sails. Ongoing airworthiness can only be assured if the replacement of any structural component is carried out by the aircraft's manufacturer or manufacturer's agent.

Chart Symbols

CASA has asked that applications for symbol inclusion on airspace charts be directed through me. I ask that club SSOs please advise me if any of your club's frequently used sites are not indicated on the charts; I will then put the application to CASA on your behalf.

Wings Loads at High Speed

In recent years the development of high performance hang gliders has reached a point where it is very easy to exceed the recommended top speed of the glider (termed the aircraft's VNE – short for 'velocity never to be exceeded'). VNE is established for all aircraft to ensure that aerodynamic forces which act on the aircraft in flight do not exceed the limits to which the aircraft is certified. Exceeding these load limits can lead to structural failure. Check the placard on your glider – it will show both the aircraft's VNE and its maximum 'manoeuvring speed' (the speed not to be exceeded in rough air).

Apart from exceeding VNE in a dive, or exceeding the 'rough air manoeuvring speed', rapidly raising the angle of attack when flying at speed can also dramatically increase the load on a wing. The amount of lift generated by the aerofoil increases greatly for a brief period. This increase in lift is termed 'overshoot' or CLO ('coefficient of lift overshoot'). This lifting force can place excessive loads on an airframe, to the point of causing structural failure. This was graphically demonstrated to me by Steve Moyes recently. His had some figures that showed a hang glider on a test rig being subjected to a load of almost 2,000lb (almost 1 tonne) when the angle of attack was rapidly increased at 70mph (112km/h). Though this force acted on the wing for only a second or so, and the airframe withstood the load without breaking, such a load could very readily cause structural failure in flight.

Five Yearly Microlight Inspections

We have now introduced the five-yearly microlight inspection system. After making the changes to the Ops Manual last year the question of legal litigation was raised by many microlight CFIs and pilots in regard

to the inspectors' liability – they were very nervous about the possibility of an owner suing them should they not pick up a defect that led to an accident resulting in injury or loss. We therefore sought legal advice on the matter and the advice we received was that, as feared, there may be some risk of action being taken against inspectors. Further inquiries established that the inspectors would not be covered by the HGFA Insurance Policy in such a circumstance. It was therefore decided by the HGFA Safety and Operations Committee to frame the inspection criteria so that owners themselves could conduct the inspection (with the assistance of an independent observer) – thus throwing the onus on the owner/operator as is currently the case. The revised inspection criteria has now been prepared and further Ops Manual amendments approved by CASA. These amendments will be issued in the near future. The revised inspection criteria will be forwarded to microlight owners as their aircraft come up for five yearly registration (a couple of months prior to renewal to allow time for the inspection to be completed).

The changes are quite a backward step given that those owners who are slack on maintenance can still continue to be so – though they will have to declare in writing that the aircraft has passed the inspection. However it does appear that the vast majority of HGFA microlight owners will better accept the amended system.

Accident Reports

I have received no paragliding accident reports at all this year, so will reprint one from overseas.

No 1

Pilot: Intermediate paraglider pilot
Glider: Intermediate
Harness: Back protection with foam plus airbag
Location: Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Description:

I had just bought my new and beautiful Swing Astral, but conditions had been quite bad, so I did not have the chance to really test it. It was late afternoon, and I decided to practice some launching on a plain field. It was more for the fun of it and to look how my new glider looked like, the wind was blowing at about 10-15 km/h, so everything seemed to be OK. And in a soft grassy plain field... who needs a helmet, right? Well, after a couple of launches, while still being attached to the glider, a strong gust, maybe a downwash from a cu which was forming nearby (did not see it, but some time later we had a nice thunderstorm), inflated the wing throwing me about 4m above the ground, to let me fall down again like a stone. While the foam protection kept my back safe (the airbag wasn't even closed), my head hit the ground leaving me half-unconscious. I was dragged about 20m along the ground, not being awake enough to pull the B-lines. Luckily, the glider was stopped by a small bush. At the end, my ankle was hurting, I had some cuts in my hands from the lines, and I could not remember several things which had happened that day, so I had to go to the hospital. Final diagnosis: head concussion with no further consequences.

Pilot's Analysis:

Don't be stupid: ALWAYS use your helmet, and NEVER underestimate the power of your wing. Be always aware of the weather conditions in the region you are at, even if you are not really flying!

Manager's Report

No. 2

Pilot: Intermediate HG pilot
Experience: Approximately 200 hours
Aircraft: High performance hang glider
Pilot Injury: Strained cruciate and medial ligaments
 Dislocated fibula
Aircraft damage: Nil
Weather: Light winds, light turbulence
Location: Out landing

Pilot's Description:

Coming in to land at a turf farm, I couldn't pick the ground wind direction. A pond to the north seemed to be calm at the margins, though a little ruffled in the middle. I opted to land into the prominent wind direction. On levelling out, I realised I was doing a downwinder, of a couple of metres per second or so. (Later on, the wind was strong enough to blow the glider over from behind.) Since getting a new harness which hung lower, I hadn't adjusted my hands up the bar to allow a good flare, and my flare timing was a little out. Anyway, my flare was weak and early, and I came down heavily on my feet, injuring my left knee, the glider nosing in. I honestly believe that if I'd done a good, well timed flare, I would have been OK. Failing that, maybe I should have got my legs out of the way and let the glider take it all. I was extremely happy to have water and a radio, as well as an ambulance subscription.

Comments:

The length of harness leg loops can make a big difference to flare authority – when getting a new harness the leg loops should be adjusted so that you are not hanging low when in the hang position. Prior to flaring the hands should be positioned level with the shoulders to allow maximum arm extension.

Fly safely,
 Craig Worth



NEW SAFETY EQUIPMENT

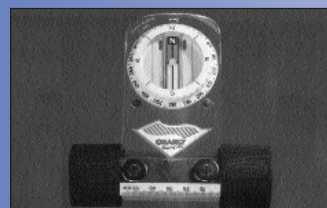
The Linkknife is a main release that works by cutting the weaklink

It is also a backup release which can be placed almost anywhere in the system. The two stainless steel blades form a V which will quickly and cleanly cut anything that fits into the 6mm slots, including perlon, webbing, towline and, of course, weaklink string of any strength.

Only \$29.50 plus p&h



Rapid link and weak link not included with Linkknife.



Precision Compass

This lightweight (80g) precision compass offers additional safety in the air or on the ground. In comparison to other flat compasses this model works accurately up to a tilt angle of approx. 35 degrees.

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Designed for pilots who occasionally land on them, these wheels serve as shock absorbers on hard ground and measure 200 x 50mm, weigh 450g and have a diameter of 35mm. They require adaptor sleeves to fit them to control bars.

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The following article appeared in the March 1999 issue of Australian Gliding/ Skysailor and was difficult to read due to a production fault.

Hoop Pine for Gliders

GARY SUNDERLAND

Hoop Pine is a local timber, from Queensland, that has been used for the construction and repair of aircraft in Australia since WWII. In recent times there has been some difficulty in obtaining selected grades of Hoop Pine, suitable for use in aircraft, but a new organisation has been set up to provide local timbers for aircraft construction and repair.

Graham Kevin is the proprietor of Pro-Mark (Queensland) Pty Ltd, a CASA Approved Organisation, number C541685, who select, test and distribute the best Hoop Pine timber obtained through the local industry. Not plantation timber, this bush

timber is some 20% heavier, and stronger, than spruce, and is a direct substitute for Douglas Fir (Oregon) and American Mahogany, European Redwood (Polish Pine) or Kiefer, and African Mahogany (Gaboon).

Many of these original timbers are now difficult to obtain in Australia, so that Hoop Pine may become an important alternative timber in construction and repair.

Pro-Mark do not supply large flitches, but specialise in small orders, made up to the finished dimensions of parts, to suit each individual builder. Each timber order is identified and tested, and a written compliance statement accompanies the timber. There is no wastage, so you only pay for useable timber.

Test results from Pro-Mark indicate that their selected Hoop Pine may be used as a direct substitute for Douglas Fir (BG-12 and Woodstock timber) and



Gliding

Kiefer (ES49 and Ka6), or Polish Pine (Bocian, etc.). It may be possible to obtain lower density timber for use as Spruce substitutes, where weight is a factor. (As it usually is with gliders!)

Pro-Mark are also starting the manufacture of plywood, in conjunction with a local plywood manufacturer, and can now provide the equivalent of USA marine grade mahogany ply, as used in the construction of the BG-12 and Woodstock.

For more information on Hoop Pine timber and ply contact:
 Mr Graham Kevin,
 PRO-MARK (Queensland) Pty Ltd,
 100 Berry Street, Churchill QLD 4305.
 Phone: (07) 3812 5122, fax: (07) 3812 5133.



Flying in the Gap

FRANK PENNAUER, YORK SOARING

Reprinted from free flight

For many years I have made three week trips to Europe to soar in the southern French Alps. Fayence is my usual destination, but I have also flown in Sisteron, St Auban, La Motte and Sondrio several times.

Then I read in the Aerokurier of Klaus Ohlmann's record-breaking alpine flights originating from Serres into Austria/Italy and back. Contacting his company, Quo Vadis International, I was able to secure a week in September '97 and again in September '98. Meeting Klaus and flying with him is very rewarding; he is one of the most dedicated glider pilots I have ever met, a true renaissance man of soaring. Flying in the French Alps for 20 years, he is considered by the French as one of the best.

The Quo Vadis operation is at the aerodrome La Batie-Montsaleon, three kilometres north of Serres, 34km north of Sisteron on Highway N75.

Klaus flies a side-by-side Caproni Calif and has LS4s for rent, although the majority of Europeans bring their own gliders, and two 235hp Ralleys complete the equipment.

I would like now to report on two memorable flights this year in the Calif. In my last phone conversation the day before heading to Serres I gave Klaus my estimated time of arrival at the field – he said simply, "I wait for you". A tip persuaded the bus driver to let me out 3 kilometres past Serres at the base of the elevated plateau on which the airfield is situated. It was now 12:40pm, walking up the steep hairpin-curved path, I quickly abandoned my heavy suitcase in the bushes. As I reached the top I saw gliders being launched and the Calif at the end of the line-up literally waiting for me. Within 15 minutes of my arrival Klaus and I were in the air. Flying conditions were a little tricky since we had an easterly wind regime which modifies and often degrades the well known lift source locations.

Tracking along at less than the higher ridge heights and taking altitude whenever possible, we finally found super conditions at Briançon in the upper Durance valley. Flying west in the Guisane valley towards Grenoble we could fly 160km/h without height loss at cloudbase. On radio checking with the other pilots flying with us, Klaus decided he had to go back to assist one who had lost too much height. Using the most direct route we crossed the Ecrins by passing Mt Pelroux (4,000m). Getting close to our struggling glider we found ourselves as low surprisingly fast! The location was just east and adjacent to the St Crepin paved airport, where normally with straight-on sun good lift is expected. It was not the first time that I had participated in a struggle to stay airborne at this same sport with Janus C or Duo Discus with very experienced pilots under an easterly wind environment. The proposition had become simply either climb here or land. Pressure concentrates the mind, especially when a safe landing was there right at your feet.

The solution was to find "micro locations" where the "easterly devil" could not destroy the lift. This was of course extremely wasteful in time; nevertheless every 100 metre gain was building hope. It was by now late enough in the day to expect some reversal of the airflow from shaded slopes to create some upward tendency in the middle of the valley.

There were two more likely slopes on the way home to make some height gain that late in the day. We managed to achieve very little sink flying to our next "source" but we found very feeble lift and gave up after gaining only 200 metres in ten minutes. Arriving at our "last chance" slope we found nothing better than the earlier spot. In a lucky move we flew deeper into the side valley and to our surprise found a steady half metre which allowed us to gain enough height to commence the final glide with some confidence. Crossing the large flat area around the city of Gap it became clear that flight height was now predictable. As we entered the valley towards Serres, we encountered only reduced sink which in turn allowed us to fly toward the home airfield at high speed and still land in daylight. Our struggler (straggler?) did land out at Taillard (Gap) and was retrieved in short order.

On the last day of my stay the gliding forecast from St Auban was rather negative. Two of our glider pilots from Germany decided to go home, but Klaus and I gave it try; sure enough after 25 minutes we were back at the field. Since there were low expectations we were not dressed for height and I did not take the camera along. On our next try we were encountering more turbulence than before; net gain was hard to achieve and we were kept on our toes by the cacophony of vertical currents. We had on board the latest GPS integrated flight director by Franz Poeschle which gave us wind direction and strength in almost real time, indicating strong variations in both components. We soon realised that thermal lift and wave above were in conflict. This "rotor rodeo" went on for hours rather aimlessly except for staying aloft. We had by now overflown many gliderports and could not detect any activity.

We ran suddenly into unadulterated smooth wave and climbed easily. As soon as we had enough height we went for the famous Montagne de Lure wave. There we climbed to 4,500 metres. At St Auban right under us we could make out two gliders circling up. Suddenly a Duo Discus with German markings sat right beside us and we acknowledged each other. The view towards the low sun was so fantastic that nothing I have seen in gliding publications could compare to it. To the left well below us a puffy rose-hued cloud deck and to the right of us a double decker long submarine lenticular cloud along its edge which we shot at high speed.

We were by now quite cold and spontaneously "boxed" each other for joy and may be warm up a bit. Taking in the scene we shot along towards Mt Ventoux 50km west of St Auban where strong wave brought us back to height. Checking time we realised we had to race home to land before nightfall. In fairly calm air we zoomed along up to 240km/h making sometimes near vertical "zoomies" to a stillstand. Arriving over our homeport with an extra 1,500m in hand we activated the Calif's 18 feet of trailing edge divebrakes for a high speed dive landing within legal daylight.





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Gliding Publications

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Specialises in up-to-date overviews of the world soaring scene and Omarama the N.Z. base for many of the current world records. \$A44 annually. (Send A\$25 for 12 months back issues). New Zealand Gliding Kiwi, Private Bag, Tauranga, New Zealand.

TECHNICAL SOARING/OSTIV: Quarterly publication of SSA containing OSTIV and other technical papers. Annual subscription 70DM. OSTIV c/- DFVLR, D82234 Wessling, Germany (BRD).

SAILPLANE AND GLIDING: The only authoritative British magazine devoted entirely to gliding. 52 A4 pages of fascinating material and pictures with colour. Available from the British Gliding Association, Kimberley House, Vaughan Way, Leicester, England — annual subscription for six copies £17.50.

SOARING: Official monthly journal of the Soaring Society of America Inc., P.O. Box E, Hobbs, N.M. 88241 U.S.A. Foreign subscription rates: \$US43 surface delivery; \$US68 premium delivery. Annually.

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SAILPLANE BUILDER: Monthly magazine of the Sailplane Homebuilders Association. \$US29 (airmail \$US46) to 21100 Angel St., Tehachapi CA 93561 USA.

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New FAI Badges & Certificates



Summary for February 1999

A Certificates

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Hoffman Glen Laurence	10250	RANGA

B Certificates

Stevens Peter George	10154	Southern Downs
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C Certificates

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Toth Joseph	10251	Southern Cross
Macready Hugh Lachlan	10163	NSW AIR TC
Trotter Lloyd Alfred	9895	Beverley

A, B and C Certificates

Rudgley Bjorn	10240	NSW AIR TC
Harigae Nobuo	10241	Waikerie
Uchida Michi	10242	Waikerie
Uchida Rie	10243	Waikerie
Perrott Peter Ian	10245	Beverley
Dixon Jon	10246	Beverley
Jacobs Mark Daniel	10247	Waikerie
Welham Michael John	10248	Southern Riverina
Hudson AllenWayne	10249	Beverley

Silver C Badge

Uchida Rie	4229	Waikerie
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Diamond Goal

Marshall John		Millicent
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Diamond Distance

Vinall Craig Laurence		Waikerie
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CLASSIFIEDS

Classified Rates

The magazine now has a policy of charging for classified advertisements. The rate is \$15 for up to 8 lines (40 characters per line); with longer ads charged at \$4 per extra line. All classifieds **MUST** be paid for at the time the ad is placed. Please direct ads, together with payment, to the HGFA office (credit card payment may be made by phone).

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The deadline for classifieds is the first day of the month prior to publication.

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Combat 152 adv, hot pink LE, fluoro yellow/white US, manuals, comp sleeves, wheels & batten profile, EC, \$1,400 ono. Air Support Wedgy harness (fluoro yellow), incl. recent packed High Energy chute, suit pilot to 6", VGC, \$350. Sjöström vario, EC, \$250. Icom IC40G UHF with ext. mike, \$300. Integral carbon/kevlar lightweight full-face helmet, built in mike & speaker, incl PTT cable set to suit UHF radio, \$150. Sell separately or the lot for \$2,300. Ph: 02 99990938 (h), 02 99302600 (w).

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Combat 152 adv, VGC, sail approx 100hrs old, white trilam LE, fluoro yellow/black US, comp sleeves, batten profile, flies great, \$750 ono. Ph: 07 49922865, email: prbarry@tpgi.com.au

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HGFA Adresses



All correspondence, including changes of address, membership renewals, short term memberships, rating forms and other administrative matters should be sent to:

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Ph/fax: 02 42941031.

For information about site ratings, sites and
other local matters, contact the appropriate
state associations region or club.

States & Regions

North Queensland HG Association

12 Van Eldik Ave, Andergrove QLD 4740; Pres:
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49555122, email: sitework@mackay.net.au;

Sec: Ron Huxhagen 07 49552913.

New South Wales HG Association

Sec: Steve Hocking, 19 Gladswood Gdns,
Double Bay NSW 2028, ph/fax: 02 93274025,
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Victorian HG & PG Association

PO Box 400, Prahran VIC 3181; Pres: Phillip
Campbell 03 53343034; Sec: Nicole Matthews
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nicolematthews@hotmail.com,
SSO: Jeremy Torr 03 97705770.

ACT HG & PG Association

PO Box 3496, Manuka ACT 2603; Pres: Michael
Porter 0415 920444; Sec: John Wilson 0419
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David Middleton 02 96236961; Newsletter:
Glen Tomlinson, ph: 02 95468028, email: glen_
tomlinson@orix.com.au Meetings: Last Tue/
month 7:30pm, Sportsman Hotel, Kildare Rd,
Blacktown.

Byron Bay Hang Gliding Club Inc

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au; Vice-Pres: Andrew Polidano 02 66843510
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Shirley Lake 02 66858147, lois@nrg.com.au;
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Pres: Tascha McLellan 02 49278867 (h), 1800
653935 (w), email: tascha.conrad@hunterlink.
net.au; V-Pres: Jason Turner 02 49408665 (h),
015 636384; Sec: Karl Kindl 02 49677711;
Trs: Tony O'Connor 02 49529146, SSO: Coastal
- Jason Turner 02 49408665 (h),
015 636384, Inland - Al Giles 02 49430674,
John O'Donoghue 02 49549084. Meetings:
Last Wed/month, Souths Leagues Club.

Northern Beaches Hang Gliding Club Inc

Pres: John Clark 02 99972842 (h); Sec: Mike
Warner 02 94521217 (h), 02 95573188 (w);
SSO: Mike Eggleton 02 94517127, Park 02
94502674, Glenn Salmon 02 99180091.

Stanwell Park Hang Gliding Club

Pres: Rob de Groot 02 42942173, fax 02
42943788, rdegroot@ozemail.com.au; Trs:
Karen Lederer 02 42942273, 0411 362273.

Sydney Hang Gliding Club

Pres: Dick Heffer 02 93872613; Sec: John
Trude 02 98873371; Trs: Greg Wilkinson
02 98184704. Meetings: 2nd Mon/month,
Moyes Factory Loft.

Sydney Paragliding Club

Pres: Rob Fakes 02 42942273 (h); Sec: Duncan
Cross, 48 Cormiston Ave, Concord NSW 2137, 02
97435128; Trs: Dave Worthington 02 9665
1465; SSO: Mark Mitsos 02 42949065.
Meetings: 1st Mon/month, St George Leagues
Club, Kogarah.

University of NSW Hang Gliding Club

Pres: Daniel Faber 02 93150727, email:
dfaber@kensocoll.unsw.edu.au; Sec: Jon
Ingles 02 93150571, email: jingles@kensocoll.
unsw.edu.au; www page: www.vision.net.au/
~gbing/Hang_Gliding.html

QUEENSLAND

Cairns Hang Gliding Club

Pres: Brod Osborne 07 40534686 (h), 07 4051
5555 (w); Vice-Pres: Ian Graham 07 40954466;
Sec: Lance Keough 07 40912117, 31 Holm
Street, Atherton QLD 4883; Trs: Kasanda
Brease 07 40532586 (h), 07 40512438 (w).

Canungra Hang Gliding Club Inc

Pres: Shauna Purser 07 66793404,
shaunapurser@yahoo.com; Vice-Pres: Andrew
Horchner 07 38707709,
0412 807516, afactor@gil.com.au; Sec:
Richard Glascock 07 55435057, 015 120874,
richardg@qldnet.com.au, PO Box 41 Canungra
4275; Trs: Fran Ning 07 55773260, ning@
ausinfo.com.au; SSO: Glen McLeod (HG) 07
55435716, John Botting (PG) 07 33002049,
bottings@bigpond.com

Capricorn Skyriders Club Inc

Pres: Brian Hampson 079 226527;
Sec: Geoff Craig 079 923137;
Brian Smith 079 287958.

Conondale XC Flyers Club Inc

13 Cottman St, Buderim QLD 4556;
Pres: Bruce Crerar 07 54451897; Vice-
Pres: Shane Gingell 07 32851668; Sec:
Mark Savage 07 54416423; Trs: Annie Crerar
07 54451897; SSO: John Blain
07 54948779; Visiting pilot contact:
Graham Sutherland 07 54935882.

Gladstone Hang Gliding Club Inc.

16 Far St, Gladstone QLD 4680; Pres: Colan
McGree 0413 941134; Sec/Trs: Natasha
Atkinson 07 49726840; PR: Brian Duffy 07
49922676; SSO: Geoff Craig 07 49923137, Paul
Barry 07 49922865, prbarry@tpgi.com.au
Sunshine Coast Hang Gliding Club
53 Yungar St, Coolool QLD 4573; Pres: Geoff
Pettigrove 018 061595; Vice-Pres: Mal Price
0412 07450883; Sec/Trs: Cathy Edmunds 07
54463037; SSO: Dave Cookman 07 54498573.

Townsville Hang Gliding Association Inc

Pres: Gary Rogers 077 538565 (w),
077 79264511 (h); Vice-Pres: Peter Scarfe 077
721766 (w), 077 212666 (h); Sec/Trs: Brad
Cooper 077 792853 (h), fax 077 815230;
SSO: Graeme Etherton 077 724467.

Whitsundays Hang Gliding Club

Pres: David Nash 07 49531817; Sec: Ron
Huxhagen 07 49552913, Fax: 07 49555122,
email: sitework@mackay.net.au

VICTORIA

Dynasoarers Hang Gliding Club

Pres: Peter Hannah 03 52632335; Sec:
John Norton; Trs: Rod Trevor 03 52811209;
SSO: Ted Remeika 015 841107;

Rob van der Klooster 03 52223019, hrt@
deakin.edu.au; PR: Warwick Spratt
03 52531096. Meetings: 1st Fri/month,
Bay View Hotel, 2 Mercer St, Geelong.

Eastern Hang Gliding Club

Pres: Geoff Tozer 03 97583250 (h); Sec:
Andrew Medew 03 98227861, 16/25-29
Brougham St. Box Hill VIC 3128; SSO:
Harry Summons 03 59646055 (h), Lance
Sheppard 03 59623570 (h), M/ship: Mark
Jeffree 03 59689015 (h). Meetings: 3rd Wed/
mth, Montrose Town Centre Meeting Room,
Cnr Swansea Rd & Mt Dandenong Tourist Rd,
Montrose.

North East Victoria Hang Gliding Club Inc

Pres: Jeanette McLaren 03 57544910;
Trs: Bill Graham 03 57501828; SSO: Geoff
White 03 57501244. Meetings: 1st Thu/ month
7.30pm, Pinewood Hotel, Bright.
www.home.aone.net.au/gilbert/nevhc.htm

Sky High Paragliding Club

Pres: Adam Nienkemper 03 94811122 (w), 03
93057442 (h); Vice-Pres: Phil Savory
03 959772537 (h); Sec: Jeremy Torr
03 97702775 (h), 03 97705770 (w).
Meetings: 1st Wed/month 8pm, Retreat Hotel,
226 Nicholson St, Abbotsford.

Southern Club

Contact: John Reynoldson 03 95970527.

Meetings: 1st Tue/month, Middle Park Hotel,
Canterbury Rd.

Southern Cross Paragliding Inc

Pres: Gary Clarkson 0419 319948; Vice-
Pres: Alister Johnson 0418 323692; Sec:
Nicole Matthews 03 57501884, 018 450626,
email: nicolematthews@hotmail.com Meetings:
Last Wed/month.

Southern Trike Club

Pres: Mark Howard 03 97511480, 0418
533731, fax: 03 97511584; Vice-Pres: Dave
Wentworth; Sec: Ben De Jong; Trs: John Amor.
Meetings: 2nd Tue/month 8pm, Jakes
Nightclub, 23 Church St, Brighton.

Western Victorian Hang Gliding Club

Pres: Phillip Campbell 03 53343034;
Vice-Pres: Tony Lowry 03 53356194;
Trs: Sandra Holtkamp 03 53492845;
Sec: Meg Bailey 03 53356194; SSO: Rohan
Holtkamp 03 53492845. Meetings: Last Sat/
month, The Golden Age Hotel Beaufort.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Avon Valley Hang Gliding Club

Pres: David Drabble, 08 93071816, wescoast
@iinet.net.au; Vice-Pres: Rob Stevenson 08
92211338; Sec: Stephen Hoeffs 08 95275782;
Trs: Michael Derry 08 92840750.

Cloudbase Paragliding Club Inc

Pres: David Humphry 08 95745440; Sec:
Julian McPherson 08 92279266. Meetings: last
Wed/mth, 8pm at the Sportsman Association,
access off Woodsome St, Mt Lawley.

Geralton & Midwest Hang Gliding Club

Pres: Des Hill 08 99216219; 231 Third Street,
Geraldton WA 6530.

South West Microlight Club

Pres: Brian Watts 0412 552363; Vice-Pres:
Don Wilson 08 97641007; Sec: Paul Coffey 08
97251161; CF: Brendan Watts 0408 949004.

WA Hill Flyers Club

Contact: Rick Williams 08 92943962 (h),
015 057961.

Western Soarers Hang Gliding Club

Pres: Sam Blight 08 93363738; Trs: Nav
Brennan 08 93397991; Comp coordinators:
Gordon Marshall 08 94519969, Nav Brennan.

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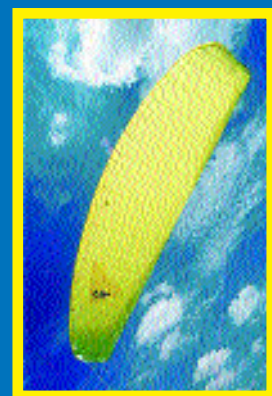
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