



Soaring AUSTRALIA

May 2003



**Paragliding Safety
Compared to Sailplaning**



Why Do I Do It?



Avalon Airshow



May 2003

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Contributions for the combined magazine should be sent to the appropriate sub-editor:

GLIDING

Editorial contributions to: GFA sub-editor Anne Elliott, PO Box 189, Narromine NSW 2821, ph/fax: 02 6889 1229, email: <annell@hwy.com.au>.

HANG GLIDING, PARAGLIDING & MICROLIGHTS

Editorial contributions and display advertising bookings to: HGFA sub-editor Richard Lockhart, c/o Blackheath Post Office, Blackheath NSW 2785, ph: 0418 130354, email: <skysail@ozemail.com.au>.

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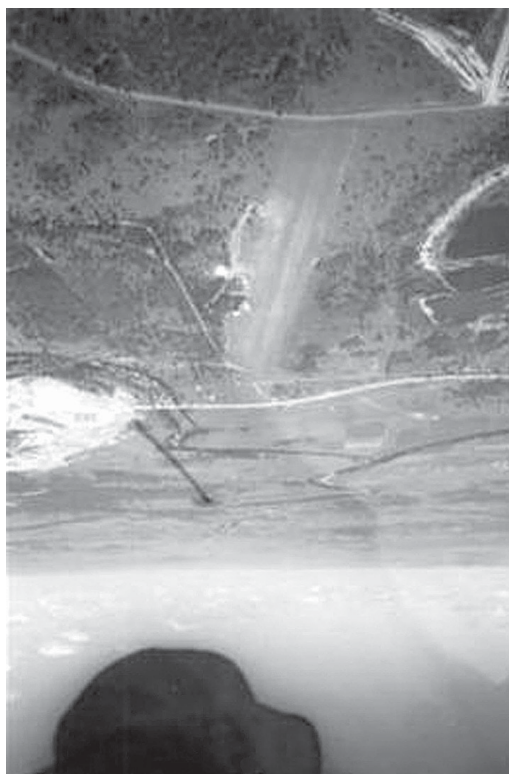
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Competition News	compnews@hgfa.asn.au	Information is forwarded to Soaring Australia and the maintainers of the HGFA website.
Articles, advertisements	skysail@ozemail.com.au	Soaring Australia only content and other content

WARKWORTH AEROBATICS



Inverted over Warkworth

Morgan Sandercock

AN INFORMAL, FUN AEROBATIC REGATTA TO BE HELD
ON THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY WEEKEND, 7 TO 8 JUNE 2003
AT THE HUNTER VALLEY GLIDING CLUB.

Each day will be conducted with a morning briefing, a morning session, barbecue lunch and an afternoon session. Local power aerobatic pilots will be invited to perform demonstrations during lunch. Each competitor will have one flight in the morning session and possibly two in the afternoon, depending on time available.

Saturday will be a practice day. Pilots must be endorsed by their own CFI and may require a check by a HVGC instructor in a Puchacz on Saturday to demonstrate current

cy. Sunday will be the competition day. You are scored on your best flight only. You can choose to compete in a two-seater with an instructor on board. This will enable less-experienced pilots to participate.

Only one tug will be available for launching. The order of launch will be determined on the first day and will not change during the competition. There will be no entry fee, normal club launching and glider-hire fees will apply. Parachutes are required but not supplied by the club, so please bring your own if you can.

ACCOMMODATION

The Hunter Valley Gliding Club is located at Warkworth, about three hours drive from Sydney and about 20 minutes from the nearest town, Singleton. The clubhouse has 14 bunk beds, showers and toilet facilities. Club members get priority for the beds but they are never filled. Tent and caravan space will also be available. There are several good motels in Singleton. The Hunter Valley vineyards are only 20 minutes away, offering many different options.

There will be a nominal charge for the BBQ lunch each day. For dinner each night, there are many good restaurants and pubs in Singleton and the vineyards. You're on your own for breakfast.

Non-flying family members may prefer to spend two days in the vineyards instead

of attending the airfield. The region is geared to the Sydney day-trip market so there are many tourist spots available.

ABOUT THE CLUB

The Hunter Valley Gliding Club is located 70km inland of Newcastle, north of Sydney. The David Parker airfield at Warkworth was constructed as a bomber base during the World War II. The club owns the airfield outright. Our neighbours are coal mines so no-one cares how much noise we make or where we fly. There are practically no air-space restrictions. The Singleton Army camp is usually restricted, so we just fly around it.

We fly every weekend, public holiday and every fourth Friday. There are more than 50 active members. The club owns four gliders: two Puchacz, a Junior and a Jantar Standard 2. The club has one Pawnee 260 tug. There are around 20 privately owned gliders including three self-launching gliders.

The Hunter Valley generates its own climate distinct from the general NSW air mass. Sometimes the valley floor gives off the best thermals but usually the hills on each side produce the best lift. The seabreeze effect can be very clearly seen while airborne, when it occurs. It is possible to use the seabreeze to soar to more than 10,000ft. Other wind conditions can produce wave lift from as low as 2,000ft.

Gold height and gold distance flights have been performed from Warkworth. Most club pilots prefer local soaring for long durations and don't feel the need to chase badges. Outlanding opportunities are limited compared to "out west" but I have performed one 300km triangle without straying more than 15km from an airfield.

The long-weekend holiday Monday will be a normal club flying day. Stick around and fly some cross-country with us.

Please see the Hunter Valley club web pages for more information: [www.hvgc. aus-soaring.on.net] or email: <HVGC@Sandercock.com>.



Gliding aerobatics are almost forgotten as a form of competition in Australia. In my five years membership of the GFA, I do not remember any reference to aerobatics in this magazine. A search of the GFA website reveals only a few occurrences in the operational documents. While aerobatics is unlikely to achieve the same status or attendance as the cross-country nationals, it is another aspect of soaring that will appeal to some.

Many pilots fly aircraft that are only permitted a few manoeuvres so they never attempt any. The annual "spin check" is regarded by most as a chore, not an experience. Some pilots enjoy the exercise of skill and judgement to put the aircraft into the exact position required. Others may just like the G forces. Whatever the reason, the purpose of this event is to allow like-minded pilots to meet and learn from each other.

STRUCTURE OF THE REGATTA

The Warkworth Aerobatics will be restricted to a known compulsory sequence that can be performed by almost all single and two-seater gliders. The standard GFA operations procedure – no manoeuvres below 1,000ft agl – will be adhered to. The sequence will be published at least one month in advance. Register early to get your copy.

LIFT – MAKING THE BEST OF IT:

Part 10

CHAPTER 4 – OUTLANDINGS (PART 1)

Wash yourself and you get wet, fly gliders far enough away from the airfield and you will finish up in a paddock one day. It's all in a day's work and no matter how experienced or how skilled we are it will happen to us sooner or later. Landing out is nothing to be embarrassed about – it belongs to gliding just as the occasional flat tyre is part and parcel of cycling.

Before we go further into this subject I would like to stress that it was originally written to help members of a gliding club in South Australia. For this reason it does not deal with issues which are peculiar to other parts of the country and readers are reminded to refer to official operational guidelines prior to undertaking any cross-country, flying and obtain briefings from coaches or instructors with local knowledge.

I guess most of us live a fairly hectic life these days and therefore it is understandable that many glider pilots regard flying with a risk of an outlanding as counterproductive to their weekend relaxation. Some of them even look at outlandings with a great deal of reservation or even some degree of trepidation. Their approach to gliding is to stay in close proximity to the airfield and maintain a conservative glide slope at all times. These pilots have obviously decided to deal with outlandings the easy way. They simply make sure that landing in a paddock is as unlikely as it is for a bull to use his udder. No ifs and buts, for these pilots the airfield always remains in view and within safe gliding distance.

Flying in this fashion is what some really enjoy, and if you ask me, there is nothing wrong with that. What matters most is that we all get enough enjoyment from our chosen sport and sufficient satisfaction to make us come back to it for a long time to come.

The other approach is very different. It is generally taken by aviators with a sense of adventure and by those interested in badge or competition flying. Such pilots realise that an outlanding will happen sooner or later and therefore they want to prepare themselves as best as possible.

If you are in this category please read on. However, if you belong to the other group the following hints will help you as well. Eliminating any possible fear or concern

might allow you to go a bit further away in future and enjoy seeing countryside never seen before. If that happens you have managed to open new horizons and we got you on the fast track to fully experience the beauty of our sport. Outlandings are neither “risky” nor do they require “luck”, it all comes down to mental preparation, application of basic skills and know-how.

Perhaps we should spend some time looking a bit closer at the subject and put the perceived risks and rewards into perspective. Gliders do not require bitumised runways – they were all designed to operate out of, or into, unsealed landing grounds or paddocks. It follows that outlandings do not represent a risk to our aircraft or even to ourselves as long as they are performed properly. They simply present another challenge in the quest to become more proficient. Having said that I must admit that I don't know a single glider pilot who particularly likes outlandings because they are always associated with some degree of inconvenience and/or unscheduled expenses. On the other hand they do make for some very fast learning indeed – something we will discover a bit later.

Unless we fly in a competition (tasksetter involved) almost all paddock landings are a result of some decision-making gone wrong. Perhaps we have misjudged the weather and failed to turn back early enough, we might have missed a few thermals or we did not get out of heavy sink quickly enough. Sitting under the wing of our glider and waiting for our crew to arrive gives us a golden opportunity to think about our mistakes. The events of the last hour or so are still fresh in our mind and a prudent pilot will use the time to reflect on the reasons he or she is sitting in a paddock rather than enjoying final glide.

It is said that humans tend to learn fast from the mistakes of others but even faster from their own mistakes. I tend to agree, and I'm convinced that a few outlandings make us more competent pilots as long as we analyse the reasons and ensure that the same mistakes are not repeated on the next flight (or the one after). If this is the outcome we have made a step in the right direction and our outlanding has served a purpose.

Back to outlandings now or “off field landings” as the yanks call them.

If an off field landing is performed properly it is not much different to a landing

Bernard Eckey

back at our home airfield. However there are two important differences relating to the use of the altimeter and the detection of wind direction.

Let us deal with the altimeter first. In fact we can save ourselves talking about it because in an outlanding situation it is as superfluous as a crank handle on a Mercedes Benz. Unless we know the elevation of the paddock we are going to land in our altimeter is not only totally useless but also very misleading. The only thing we can be sure of is that the altimeter is incorrect and therefore we should force ourselves to ignore it.

So what is the solution? Yes, you guessed it. We must rely on our own ability to estimate our altitude and plan our circuit accordingly.

You didn't have any problems when the instructor covered up the altimeter on your last check flight, did you? So what is the big deal? Just apply your best judgement and you will soon realise that missing an altimeter will not stop you from putting the glider down safely.

If you are still not sure about this just check with your instructor and find out whether he will allow you to cover up the altimeter on the next few landings at your home airfield. It won't be long before you are perfectly happy performing landings without reference to the altimeter and then you can consider yourself one step closer to cross-country flying.

Now let's discuss how to determine the wind direction away from the airfield. Back home the duty instructor selected the runway after taking the prevailing wind into account, but when landing in a paddock 100km away or so it's essential to check the wind direction ourselves. Not that that is a problem, because every self respecting glider pilot should always know the wind direction on the ground. After all, this information is absolutely crucial if we want to position ourselves correctly in relation to thermal sources and thermal triggers. If you are not sure what I'm talking about I suggest you refer to Part 6 of this series of articles.

Particularly when landing into an unknown paddock we should make sure that we are pointing the aircraft nicely into wind. Having said that I hasten to add that it is never a good idea to land directly into the sun when it is low on the horizon. Sure,

landing directly into wind gives us the lowest speed above the ground, but if we are looking directly into the sun on our round-out we will have very poor forward visibility which tends to become a safety issue in itself. If, on the other hand, we leave the sun 10 or even 20 degrees to one side we have traded improved visibility for a very small crosswind component and it is not hard to see why this is perhaps the better option in the far majority of into sun landings.

Now back to landing into wind. Let's assume we are flying on a day with plenty of cumulus clouds around. Under these circumstances we can be forgiven for keeping our eyes on the clouds and not on the wind at ground level. However, when we get down to a critical level where we have to think about a possible outlanding we need to establish where the wind is coming from. Unfortunately only very few paddocks feature a windsock and it goes without saying that we can not simply assume that the wind direction is roughly the same as it was back home. It is very seldom the case, making it necessary to check the wind right here and now.

By far the best option is to look out for cars driving on unsealed roads. Almost inevitably they trail a cloud of dust enabling us to easily determine the wind direction at ground level. Farmers working their paddocks leave the same trail of dust for us and so does moving stock. Generally speaking it is common in the countryside to still see people burning their rubbish and the resulting smoke is also giving a switched-on glider pilot a useful indication of wind strength and direction. Last but not least, smoke from houses or factories again serves as an excellent wind indicator.

If all else fails we can look around for a dam or small lake. Wind produces small ripples on the surface of the water but not close to the protecting windward shore. Again, we have found a wind indicator almost as reliable as a windsock.

Just before we leave the subject a word of warning on using the direction of travelling cloud shadows as a ground wind indicator. More often than not the wind at cloud level is very different to the wind at ground level. In fact a 100-degree difference in wind direction is quite normal especially on days with a high cloudbase.

Enough about that subject, let's now get back to circuit planning.

Landing a glider away from your home airfield and into a strange paddock is anything but boring. Unless you are the exception to the rule you will find that the adrenaline is pumping because all familiar landmarks you used for reference at your

home airfield are suddenly missing. All you can rely on is your best judgement of distance to the aiming point and your height above the ground. It is very easy for experienced outlanders to say that there is absolutely no need to get stressed about an outlanding, but doing it for the first time undoubtedly represents a real challenge.

Stress is the last thing we want in this situation because stress reduces our mental capacity and makes us more prone to mistakes. Therefore it is most important to remain calm and focused on nothing but this landing. The mind can play some funny games with us. It can suddenly remember that there might not be enough fuel left in the car for the retrieve or it could remind us that the last time we looked at our trailer one tyre was a bit down on pressure.

Don't laugh, because I'm not the only one to have experienced such irrelevant distractions. Many other pilots have reported the same thing and there is every chance that such minor details will flash through our mind when we need to concentrate most. The lesson is clear, we need to focus our mind on the job at hand and calmly perform every single landing check. More than anything else a cool head is needed and it is important to remind ourselves of that. Why not calm yourself down and say aloud, *"I have landed this aircraft many times before and I can do it again right here and now. My instructor would be very proud watching me now."*

Once a decision is made to land in a chosen paddock turn the radio off to avoid possible distractions and consider this field as our base of operation. In other words make a decision and stick to it – even if you discover some unpleasant surprises very late in the circuit. This is no time for indecision as experience shows that changing our mind at the very last minute is inviting disaster. Even if we find something troublesome on closer scrutiny it is usually too late for an alternative course of action – we simply have to cope as best as we can.

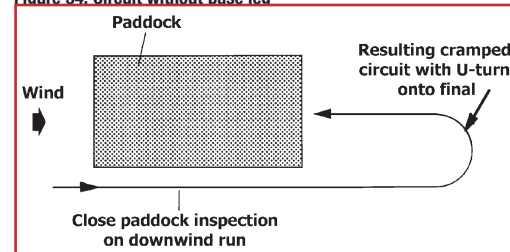
At this point I would like to pass on a few hints relating to circuit planning. Over the years I have done a fair few outlandings myself. To be quite frank with you initially I was never very impressed with my circuits because, inexplicably, I was leaving out my base leg. Just a few days after such an outlanding I was on my way to visit a nearby national gliding competition and happened to observe two pilots struggling to make it home into a seabreeze at the end of a long day. Slowly but steadily they were getting lower and eventually decided to outland next to the road I was travelling on. Both of them

put the aircraft down quite safely but without even the slightest hint of a base leg.

That made me think. I was not the only one struggling with proper circuits in outlanding situations and when giving the matter a bit more thought a day or two later it became crystal clear why pilots are performing unconventional circuits in such situations.

Let me share my findings with you right now. During outlanding training we were all taught to have a final and thorough inspection of the paddock on the downwind leg. Plain common sense and self-preservation instincts would suggest that that is a very good idea indeed. However, performing such a visual inspection means that we must fly a downwind leg very close to the paddock. The resulting circuit is illustrated in Figure 34.

Figure 34: Circuit without base leg



Although the base leg was invented for very good reasons it is completely missing in the above circuit pattern despite the fact that it is especially important in an outlanding situation. No ifs and buts, we must get the base leg back into our circuit. My answer to the problem is a slightly modified circuit as shown in Figure 35 below.

In my view such a slightly modified circuit solves the problem and offers

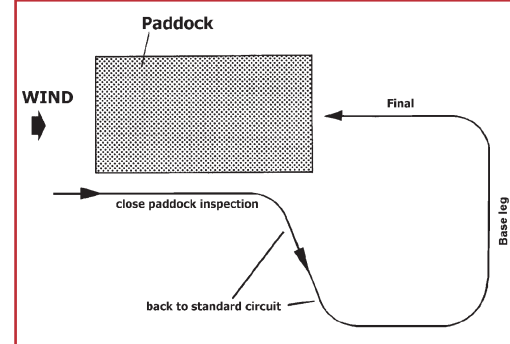


Figure 35: Modified circuit after a close paddock inspection

the best compromise between being able to inspect the outlanding field at close proximity on one hand and performing an almost conventional circuit on the other.

Perhaps we should leave it at that for today. In the next issue we will talk about the "5S" checklist.

See you then.



NUTTY FLYING IN MACEDONIA

Jiri Stipek



Mendo flying tandem above Mystic

First impressions can be rather deceiving sometimes. It took only a short time of watching his flying to realise this guy was worth having a chat with. Let's put it this way: if you see somebody entering a serious spiral at 30m and live to do it again a few minutes later, you become curious.

I soon discovered that Mendo has been flying for some 30 years, and for the last five years he's been concentrating almost exclusively on aerobatics. So much so, in fact, he even teaches it. Being interested in acro myself and trying some basic ones already, I interrogated him extensively and learned a lot of useful lessons. The most valuable one: *"Do not do it, except over water, under professional supervision."*

As I had a trip to Europe planned at that stage anyway to visit the Gradient factory, the inevitable happened. I added Macedonia (Mendo's home country) to my list of places to see. The evening before departure from Prague to Macedonia I was watching the evening news. Headlines: Some shooting in Skopje (the capital of Macedonia), tanks on the street – a messy situation... I immediately remembered what other pilots were telling me they thought about

IT'S BEEN ALMOST A WHOLE YEAR SINCE I FOUND MENDO VELJANOVSKI ON THE BEACH AT PORTSEA. WITH LONG BLOND HAIR, DRESSED IN A WETSUIT, FLYING A PARAGLIDER, HE WAS A STRANGE APPARITION INDEED!

my plans: *"Why to go to such a volatile place? Go to Bali instead!"* I picked up the phone and asked Mendo if I should cancel my airfare. *"Why? Everything is in perfect order, this is normal before every election!"* He put my mind at peace and in the morning I boarded Swissair to Skopje.

The flight was pleasant, and besides it being 11 September, there was nothing special about it. At immigration everything worked like a charm. I was painfully aware I was supposed to pay US\$100 entry visa on arrival. A uniformed official went through my passport and took his time punching something at the computer keyboard looking extremely unhappy. He probably had access to information about my bank account, because in the end he declared: *"Visa Gratis!"* and put a stamp in my passport with a bang. I was in.

The haze in the airport building turned out to be cigarette smoke. The tobacco industry is one of the main parts of Macedonia's economy, and you are not left with any doubts about it at any time. Mendo seems to be the only Macedonian who doesn't smoke. He doesn't drink alcohol either.

Outside the building I was swarmed by taxi drivers wanting my business. I brushed them away, as my driver, provided by Mendo, was there waiting. Although not female and blonde as per the original plan, he took me to Skopje and refused to take any money. Then he handed me over to Sylvia – Mendo's instructor and a lovely girl indeed. She put me on a bus to Kruchevo, a ski village in the mountains where Mendo lives. The journey was uneventful, with no sign of any shooting competition taking place.

My bus arrived on time and Mendo was awaiting me at the bus stop in his jeep. A huge bear was occupying most of the rear of the vehicle. It turned out to be a large dog actually, but the difference was hard to tell. Mendo drove slowly as the brake pads were long gone



These are better to watch from indoors



and new ones were hard to get. The number plate was also missing – you don't get one if the car is not registered. Otherwise the jeep was working fine.

In Kruchevo the accommodation was a surprise. A well-equipped modern holiday flat with everything one could possibly need – except a rubbish bin. The means of rubbish disposal in the country remained a mystery to me for the whole visit. Only the number of dogs of all shapes and sizes roaming the streets were offering any clues. The accommodation was cheap: some \$8 per night. If one decided to cook for oneself and use groceries from the shop across the road, the food could've been considered as a petty expense as well. Restaurants were not much more expensive, and a lavish dinner with a bottle of wine didn't make a huge hole in the budget. If you were a smoker – paradise! A packet of local cigarettes set you back under \$2. However, foreign brands cost about as much as in Australia.

The next day Mendo took me to the local site – a large grassy hill above the village with generous landing areas below. The enormous cross-country potential was obvious, as mountains of an impressive size and appearance surrounded the valley. The weather looked good and the place was getting busy. A couple of locals had unpacked their gliders already, and the local baker, a keen pilot as well, was handing out still warm bread rolls.

Mendo was running a basic skills improvement clinic for a number of students from Germany and Kosovo. The later group consisted of people employed by the UN at the Kosovo Peace Keeping Mission and contained one Australian pilot as well. This group also possessed a Land Rover with UK diplomatic number plates which took care of police road checks.

The thermal activity started early every day and it was quite wild most of the time. Unfortunately a fast overdevelopment always started early in the afternoon resulting in thunderstorms. It was a wise precaution to land well before this time, as clouds developed extremely fast and their size was intimidating. For this reason no great distances were achieved that week. Normally flights over 100km are made from this place, and taking into account the size of Macedonia, a passport is a must to have. The chances of landing in some of the neighbouring countries are very real.



Some spectators
May 2003



Mendo is demonstrating the basics

course for beginners, the acro part was aimed at the very basic acro manoeuvres like helicopters, wingovers and asymmetric spirals. The longer seven day course includes an introduction to SATS and loops.

The whole course was well organised, and even the rescue boat worked perfectly. It was needed badly. Three pilots ended up in the water, not being able to recover from the mess they got themselves into. The biggest surprise was a huge splash following a seemingly innocent tuck during a wingover with a DHV 2-3 rated glider – an experienced pilot went down from 200m within a few seconds. This was one of the moments I realised how lucky I'd been trying to learn some of these tricks myself and getting away with it.

Anyway, I'm going again this year, hoping to learn a loop this time. Why am I doing this? No, I do not expect to come back and start throwing SATS and loops all over the place. But I do want to try these manoeuvres in a safe environment and become more confident in the air. There is nothing like knowing where the limits of my wing and my skills are – and this course is the best way to find that out.



More information and pictures at [www.geocities.com/paraglidingaerobatics].



Dogs, donkeys and tobacco - trademarks of the Macedonian countryside

Photos: Jiri Stipek

But the real fun was to start the following week. It was the Acro Course for a group of Croatian pilots, conducted at Ochrid, about 100km away. The main attraction of the place is Lake Ochrid – an enormous mass of water surrounded by mountains. The set up with a 1,500m take-off is a serious challenge to Oludeniz in Turkey. In fact, it has a few advantages: the way up takes only about 20 minutes and the road is sealed. The water is fresh – if you do take a bath, your gear does not suffer too much. Otherwise, the whole place is as clean and civilised as one would expect from any major holiday resort, with plenty of nice restaurants and motels – all obscenely cheap.

The Acro course started with a basic SIV clinic: you are not expected to do a SAT if you do not know how to recover from an asymmetric tuck.

As this was only a short four day



Dedicated volunteers complete the DHGC hangar. Left to right: Daron Hodder, Ross Pearce, Peter "Barfly" Barwise, Cameron McNeill, Rod "Flocky" Flockhart, Gary Briggs, Paul Allen, Geoff Bailey

Photo: Peter Barwise



Cameron McNeill at a tad under 10,000ft – "The day was a bit inverted," he reckons – cranking it up over the patchwork quilt of farms that is Dalby

Photo: Yoda

If You Build It, They Will Come...

Cameron McNeill and Jason Reid

A LOT OF BLOOD AND SWEAT, BUT FORTUNATELY VERY FEW TEARS, SAW THE NEXT MILESTONE ACHIEVED FOR QUEENSLAND'S NEWEST HANG GLIDING CLUB!

In February, the Dalby Hang Gliding Club Inc (DHGC) completed construction on our hangar located at Dalby Aerodrome. The hangar, originally constructed by the Dalby Airport Board as an open structure, has now been fully enclosed by DHGC members. It will house the Dragonfly and provide club members with undercover glider set-up and storage as well as refreshments and amenities.

The hangar completion was a supreme effort from dedicated club members. They displayed previously unknown construction skills as well as providing a talent for scrounging materials and construction equipment.

We also need to thank the local Dalby community, who, in typically dependable Australian country tradition, have been fantastic. A special thanks to Dalby and Wambo Shire Councils and the Airport Board for the use of the hangar; to Keyland aviation for

the use of their forklift and previous use of their hanger; to Dingo Diggers for donating one of their brilliant diggers; and to Dalby General Steel for a great deal on the steel.

For those of you who haven't heard of us, DHGC was started by a group of ground based towing pilots who had a desire to take best advantage of this soaring Mecca. And so our aerotow operation was born.

Dalby, situated in the Wambo Shire in the heart of the Darling Downs, not only offers unique flying for soaring enthusiasts, but is also extremely accessible to major centres including Toowoomba (40 minutes), Brisbane (two-and-a-half hours) and the world famous Gold Coast (three hours).

The area is a hub for all forms of aviation, including the Darling Downs Soaring Club (a prosperous and internationally recognised sailplane operation), and has

been the home of past National Gliding competitions.

Part of what makes this area so attractive to soaring pilots is excellent flatland flying combined with a good road network and wonderful scenery, not to mention the cross-country potential. Records could easily be broken here!

Not only is the flying awesome, but the town is well serviced with all modern conveniences and a genuinely welcoming community, always happy to help out. Other attractions nearby include the Oakey Army Flying Museum, Jimbour House, the historic Jondaryan Woolshed, as well as a number of wineries close by. All ready to be enjoyed!

DHGC has been running for just under two years and we have only begun to scratch the surface of the fantastic cross-country opportunities this area offers. And we are willing to share!!! Watch this space, as we are planning an aerotow comp later in the year – hopefully a four or five day affair commencing Monday, 6 October, straight after the Canungra Classic (27/9/2003 to 4/10/2003).

With the hangar built and membership growing we are set to soar.

For further details of future and past activities, check out the DHGC website [www.geocities.com/sxtex/] or contact us direct:

President: Daron 07 3839 3028, <daron@powerup.com>; Treasurer: Cam 07 3891 3457, <cameronmcneill@energex.com.au>; Secretary: Flocky 07 3219 3442, <flockhartrod@hotmail.com>.



AFTERNOON TEA WITH MAUDE AND ALBERT

Hugh Alexander

THE WORD WAS OUT THAT A FEW PEOPLE FROM THE MELBOURNE HANG GLIDING CLUB WERE GOING UP TO BOORT IN THE MALLEY AREA FOR A LITTLE TOWING ON THE LABOUR DAY WEEKEND. SATURDAY MORNING CAME AROUND AND ABOUT 20 FUNSTERS ROCKED UP WITH THEIR DIVERS ON THE ROOVES. THE WIND WAS BLOWING AROUND 15KT AND GUSTING UP TO 25-ISH AS THE THERMALS AND DUST DEVILS MADE THEIR WAY DOWN THE Paddock.

The plan was to fly towards Kerang, a tailwind task which from the ground seemed achievable (many things seem achievable from the ground). Now, usually my directional skills are fine, however, this day they appeared to have been 60 or so degrees out. It could be because I arrived at a new place in the dark – well, that excuse will do for the moment.

Andy and Jeff left the paddock first and headed off down the planned route. After the second tow I drifted out of the paddock in a dribbly 1-200ft/min beast which eventually carried me back the five kilometres to Boort. I couldn't see either of the guys ahead, so I chose the road that went towards Kerang. It baffled me that up higher the task became more of a crosswind task than a tailwind one. But I pressed on relentlessly, catching each thermal up away from the road then flying crosswind back towards the road, and following the train line. When I got low enough and needed to land, I put out a message letting the others know where I was. Andy, who had previously landed, replied "I've got a visual on you," (relief from me), "You're at about 3,000ft and circling in what looks like a great thermal," (distress from me).

Andy was nowhere to be seen. I was at 500ft and coming down next to a train line which crossed the road... and on closer inspection of the map there was no train running through to Kerang from Boort. Goodness me! I glanced around and there were two eagles flying with me. One was just off the keel and the other off the right wing. They left me, gliding off to the north (I think) in search of another thermal. But it was too late for me. Too late to get a call out on the radio even.

I chose to land on the road, close to the only house around. Parking the glider in front of the CFA I walked across the road and knocked on the door.

An elderly lady answered the door.

"I don't recognise you. You're not from around here, are you?" she said.

I told her that I just landed my hang glider across the road, and asked where on earth I was?

"Gredgwin," came the reply.

I asked if I could use her phone, and proceeded to ring the caravan park at Boort to report my position. Even the chap at the caravan park said "Where?"

Maude told me she was making a cup of tea for Albert and would I like one? Albert was lying on the bed; his back was sore because (at 83 years old) he had been on his back under the Hilux fixing the starter motor. Also his arthritis had been playing up in his ankle.

"Albert, a young man has just landed his plane out the front and wants to use the phone."

Albert arose from his sick bed to see the commotion. We spent half an hour or so talking about where they had lived during their lives, all the stories of the children, grandchildren and the great grandchildren, with the relevant photographs. I then adjusted Albert's back as I had recently finished a naturopathic diploma.

As I walked out the door to pack up the glider there was a car horn tooting. Peter and Julie Batchelor had arrived to pick me up. They'd stopped at the caravan park to drop my car off and the owner had informed them of my whereabouts. On relating the story of Albert's condition and possible cure, Peter said, "Ah, the flying doctor comes to Gredgwin." Much laughter.

We packed up the glider, and said a goodbye to Maude and Albert. Maude asked that if I flew over Gredgwin again, that I should carry a horn and give it a blast so they can come out and see.

What a marvellous adventure.



Jules Sanderson 0405089709,
Mik Terren 0410745483,
Scott Ross 02 4294 3207,
Steve Pick 0422640427 are;

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Jantar insight

Ray Tilley

I SLEPT IN THIS MORNING, IN FACT I DIDN'T GET OUT OF BED UNTIL 8.20, AND IT WAS LOVELY. THE GRASS WAS GREEN, THE AIR WAS COOL AND THE OCEAN LOOKED GREAT, I WAS HOME. ENOUGH OF THAT AND NOW BACK TO 27 DECEMBER 2002.

Perhaps at this juncture I should describe the format of the Beverley Regatta.

Our Regatta is run along the lines of the state competition, but with one big difference – we rely totally upon the honesty of the contestants, therefore there is no need for any recording instruments such as Collibris, barographs and cameras etc. We also set fixed tasks for Sports and Standard Class, rather than having POST tasking for Sports Class.

Enough of that and now back to 27 December 2002.

27 DECEMBER

Day one of the annual Beverley Regatta. Up at 6:30 to start preparing for the day and rig the LS 3 Whisky Uniform Romeo. What a way to commence the day! Each

wing weighs 81kg and all the volunteers will be keeping a low profile no doubt.

But no, there were some people willing to help; perhaps they were unaware of the heavy wings.

Nevertheless WUR bird was rigged and ready to fly with some help from my friends, well I think they are still friends.

Now I needed some tasksetters and not the old ones who have set tasks for the last 20 years or more, some new blood was needed, but who?

How about Peter Perrot and Don Woodward supervised by Chris Runeckles?

All three have cross-country experience and some competition experience, particularly Don and Chris.

Yes, they agreed to set the daily tasks, thanks fellas.

So we now had John Welsh in charge of gathering the weather reports, Peter, Don and Chris as tasksetters and David Griffiths as scorer (supervised by John Welsh).

And so to briefing. The weather report was on hand, the tasksetters were ready, and the club lounge was full. What a lovely sight, so many pilots.

The weather report looked good, even if there was mention of thunderstorm activity east of Yalgoo/Pingelly. Our erstwhile tasksetters set two tasks, standard/racing and Sports Class as follows:

*Standard/Racing: Beverley to Shackleton 87.3km
Shackleton to Popanyinning 105.6km
Popanyinning to Beverley 61.7km
Total distance 254.6km*

Photos: Don Woodward

Sports/Two-seater: Beverley to Quairading 44km

Quairading to Pingelly 64km

Pingelly to Beverley 46km

Total distance 154km

Sixteen gliders lined up on the grid consisting of four two-seaters – an ASK21, a Twin Astir, a Puchacz, IS28 and a PW5, in Sports Class.

Standard/Racing Class consisted of a Pik 20 and an LS-3 plus nine Standard Class gliders, a Discus A, two Jantars, a Hornet, two Astir CS, a Cirrus 75, an SZD 55 and a DG100.

Launching commenced at 11:45am and all but three had to have a relight, including myself in the LS-3 – win some lose some!

The first leg to Shackleton was good with climbs up to 7,500ft, however when we turned for Popanyinning there it was, big with a capital “B” and black, CuNim about 15km east of Popo.

Fortunately that BIG fellow was drifting east and away from Popo, albeit slowly, therefore it was necessary to take a slight detour around the CuNim. Still, the flash of lightning and the drum rolls above were a little off-putting.

Once around Popanyinning the glide home was fairly easy with a little thermal just good enough to get us back.

WINNERS FOR DAY 1

Sports Class	Ann and Anthony Slaven (mother and son) ASK21
Standard/Racing Class	Chris Runeckles Discus A
Handicap Class	Don Woodward Pik20D

28 DECEMBER – DAY 2

Another lovely day dawned over Beverley. Gliders were prepared and ballasted for the coming contest.

The low had moved and a high was easing up to the lower south-west coast with a frontal system approaching from the south-west.

The maximum temperature was expected to be 31°C; from the temp trace the maximum height was expected to be 5,000ft.

Tasks:

Standard/Racing: Beverley to Meckering 55.3km, Meckering to Quairading 56.8km, Quairading to Brookton 53.9km, Brookton to Beverley 28.5km.

Total 194.5km.

Sports/Two-seater: Beverley to Meckering 55.2km, Meckering to Quairading 56.8km, Quairading to Beverley 44km. Total 156km.

The trough line was some 50km to the east of Beverley and the track to Meckering



Day 1 launching of the fleet



Ian Cook and Harry Oxer about to launch

was a little slow, with thermals topping out at 5,400ft.

I had one further complication in that my radio was very silent! No one would answer my calls, so I waited to see the other gliders making their starts and followed Rod Carter through the start gate, and off we went.

Rod and I stayed fairly close up until Meckering. The lift wasn't very good on this leg, but having one or two other gliders nearby helped in locating thermals.

When we turned Meckering I was a little ahead of Rod so, although the trough line was approximately 20km east of the track to Quairading, I decided to remain on track.

From there on I lost all contact with the others in Standard Class.

The leg to Quairading turned out to be very good with climbs to 6,500ft and 7,000ft. Approaching Quairading I saw one of the twins, I think it was the ASK21.

Turning Quairading at 6,000ft for Brookton I was again on my own. It is very peaceful without a radio: memories of yesteryear.

Halfway along the leg to Brookton things were becoming a little quiet so, with the lakes coming up, I decided it would be prudent to gain some height.

However the thermals became ragged and difficult to centre and with some 30km to Brookton I pushed on but with still no



Allan Phelps and Anthony Slaven entertain the crowd



Saturday night barbecue and drinks

thermals – only bubbles. Consequently I arrived over Brookton at about 1,200ft, and 28km to Beverley.

Fortunately I found a two-knot thermal, which after a few turns became four knots resulting in final glide height and home I went.

Imagine my delight to be first home in the Standard/Racing Class, yippee, but not for long.

Two minutes later my main adversary, Don Woodward, came across the finish line and yes, the handicap difference between us was sufficient for Don to beat me, darn!

Well day two was a good day, the conditions were trying enough and there were a few outlandings, but that is the luck of the game.

WINNERS FOR DAY 2

Sports/Two-seater Class	Justin Salas and Anthony Slaven ASK21
Standard/Racing Class	Greg Beecroft Cirrus 75
Handicap Class	Don Woodward Pik20D

That night a barbecue was held with time to tell all about your flight and why you didn't win, "he had them hacked but fell into a hole."

The barbecue, with salads then dessert, was fantastic – our ladies did us proud. They organised the food and the men did the cooking and washing up – we men have to do all the work.

As well as good food and company we were most fortunate to have Allan Phelps and Anthony Slaven entertain us with a guitar duet. This was a very nice way to end the day, thanks fellas.

29 DECEMBER – DAY 3

The weather pattern showed a large high pushing in and a front way down to the south of the state.

Winds in the area were forecast to be from the west and there was a possibility of "isolated drizzle"

Cloud isolated CB 6,000/35,000. The temp trace indicated thermals to 5,000ft. Dew point at 4,700ft!

Tasks:

Standard/Racing: Beverley to Yoting 63.5km, Yoting to Youndegin 33.5km, Youndegin to York 50.9km, York to Beverley 29.8km. Total 177.7km.

Sports/Two-seater: Beverley to Cunderdin 60.1km, Cunderdin to York 52.6km, York to Beverley 29.8km. Total 142.5km.

This was to be an interesting day where luck and tactics played a large part.

Today I had some limited communication with a handheld radio. This allowed me to communicate when necessary as I would have to conserve the battery, but at least I could communicate.

The sky was full of cloud and slightly overdeveloped, nevertheless the fleet of 16 gliders was launched.

The first leg of standard class proved very interesting with two large black clouds en route and rain showers (an unusual sight) between Beverley and Yoting.

I cleared the first shower at Mawson, but had to go north of track to get around the second shower which was approaching Yoting.

As much as I tried to beat the rain I ended up getting caught in the leading edge of the shower coming out of Yoting and subsequently found no lift under the cloud.

So I proceeded out into the sunlight and all I could find was weak broken thermals for the next 30km – it was struggle time.

Youndegin! I'd been there before, outlanded that is, and I thought I maybe repeating that day.

But no, I found a decent thermal and started climbing. Then, guess who flies over the top of me, Don Woodward again, and so on to York to try to make some lost ground.

Well I didn't make up the lost ground on Don, but we both made it home and that is priority number one.

I said earlier that this was to be an interesting day, a day of luck and tactics. Well the luck went to the sports class for they didn't have

to worry about the rain, and the tactics to those who waited for the rain to clear – that's life.

WINNERS FOR DAY 3

Standard/Racing Class	Chris Runeckles Discus
Sports/Two-seater Class	Ann and Anthony Slaven ASK21
Handicap Class	Ann and Anthony Slaven ASK21!

Yes the ASK21 with the Slaven team on board beat us all, well done.

30 DECEMBER – DAY 4 (FINAL DAY)

That day I decided to have a rest and not fly so I asked Don Woodward to provide a report.

The weather report was for wind from the south to south-east with the high ridging in to the bight and thermals up to 6,000ft. It looked about average.

We had 15 gliders on the grid, which is pretty much the same as the previous days. Among the pilots we had Felix Akeret from Switzerland who would be flying the Puchacz in Standard Class.

Tasks:

Standard/Racing: Beverley to Corrigin 90km, Corrigin to Yealering 36.5km, Yealering to Beverley 82.1km. Total 208.6km

Sports/Two-seater: Beverley to Bulgee 59.7km, Bulgee to Pingelly 43.8km, Pingelly to Beverley 46.1km. Total 149.5km.

The last day of the regatta was quite good with lift of about six to seven knots to 7,000ft.

The task was Beverley-Corrigin-Yealering-Beverley but the wind was blowing quite strong, about 15-20kt from the south-east.

First to start was Welshy in MY followed by myself in WK. Chris Runeckles in UF and Rod Carter in IZQ started last.

The leg to Corrigin was quite good with seven knot climbs to 7,000ft. There seemed to be multiple cores to the thermals. I kept full water to punch into the strong wind and I could see MY ahead of me. I also knew that there would be a Discus and a Jantar hot on my tail if I didn't get a move on!

Catching up to John I went around Corrigin thinking that the hard work was done. I thought that the crosswind leg and the downwind run home from Yealering would be relatively easy... boy was I wrong!

The leg Corrigin-Yealering was more difficult and I found myself circling in rubbish.

I got lower and lower until I arrived overhead the Yealering wheat bin at 2,000ft... still full of water. I heard John calling on the radio that he was low so I knew that being that far south was going to affect us all.

GFA Badges and Certificates

As soon as I rounded the bin I pulled the dump and released all the water then drifted with the wind towards home. I thought *"all I've got to do is stay in the air and the wind will blow me home."*

I was quite happy to be turning the upwind most point of the task low because any thermalling I did now would bring me closer to Beverley. At about 1,700ft agl and about five kilometres out of Yealering I struck a seven-knotter which took me to 7,000ft (always the way after you've dumped all your water!).

I set 20kt of tailwind into the computer and I had enough to get home. The run home was relaxing because I managed to get final glide fairly early in the leg. I later heard that Runeckles and Carter also had quiet spots at Yealering.

It was a good day, surprisingly. Everyone got home – even the two-seaters and the novice pilots.

WINNERS FOR DAY 4

Standard/ Racing Class	Rod Carter (GCWA)
	Jantar
Sports/Two-seater Class	Justin Salas/Anthony Slaven
	ASK21
Handicap Class	Don Woodward
	Pik20D

NOW FOR THE OVERALL WINNERS

Standard/Racing Class	Chris Runeckles (GCWA)
	Discus
Sports/Two-seater Class	Justin Salas/Anthony Slaven
	ASK21
Handicap Class	Don Woodward
	Pik20D

There is also one other trophy for the most Meritorious flight which is awarded to the pilot who, in the eyes of his/her peers, has made some outstanding effort or difficult decision for safety reasons.

This year the trophy was awarded to Jeff Woodward for his flight on day one.

When he completed the task, after an absence from gliding of many years, Jeff looked as though he had been in the sauna for he was in melt down. I reckon he would have lost a good number of kilos – what a way to lose weight.

Although the weather may have been "average" we had a good time, not necessarily easy but then again not too hard.

Many thanks to all those who participated in the regatta, whether they were pilots or crew, for without you there could be no regatta, see you on the 27 December 2003.



FAI Report – April 2003

A CERTIFICATE

Page Wayne Duncan	10805	Central Coast
Tanaka Jumpei	10810	Orana SC
Matz Rosemarie	10814	VMFG

B CERTIFICATE

Burke Patrick Thomas	10654	Lake Keepit
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A AND B CERTIFICATE

Cook Barry Allan	10809	Boonah GC
Gilby Brian James	10812	Boonah GC

C CERTIFICATE

Brown Rhys Nathaniel	10749	NSW AIR TC
Haywood Leslie	10515	Central Coast
Shepherd Ian	10733	Bathurst
Signorile Michael	10395	Beverley
Burke Patrick Thomas	10654	Lake Keepit

B AND C CERTIFICATE

Laub Manfred	10704	Central Coast
--------------	-------	---------------

A B AND C BADGE

Okada Nobuhiro	10806	Sthn Riverina
Graham Darren Lee	10807	Sthn Riverina
Davidson Russell	10808	Sthn Cross GC
Chapman Andrew John	10814	Lake Keepit
Duffy Michael Robert	10815	GC of WA

SILVER C

Dukat Adam Tadeusz	4472	Adelaide SC
Franklin John Stuart	4473	Goulburn
Adams Aaron	4474	Sthn Riverina
Okada Nobuhiro	4475	Sthn Riverina
Davidson Russell	4476	Sthn Cross GC
Davison Peter John	4478	Caboolture GC
Williams Sonja Jane	4479	Barossa Valley GC

GOLD C

Dukat Adam Tadeusz	1568	Adelaide SC
Harris Rod	1569	Mt Beauty
Bones Alan Richard	1570	Bathurst
Organ Phillip John	1571	Bendigo

DIAMOND GOAL

Dukat Adam Tadeusz	Adelaide SC
Harris Rod	Mt Beauty
McIlroy David Edward	VMFG
Mistry Bhupendra	Bathurst

DIAMOND DISTANCE

Turner Christopher Robert	Kingaroy GC
McIlroy David Edward	VMFG
Anderson Jay	Southern Cross

DIAMOND HEIGHT

Marbot George	
Conway Catherine Louise	Adelaide Uni

DIAMOND C

Conway Catherine Louise	209	Adelaide Uni
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700KM DISTANCE FLIGHT

Brown George Wayne	18	Adelaide SC
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Claims for all badges and certificates to:

FAI Certificates Officer Beryl Hartley

PO Box 275, Narromine NSW 2821

Ph: 02 6889 2733 (w), 02 6889 1250 (h)

Fax: 02 6889 2933, Email <hartley@avionics.com.au>

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WA STATE SOARING COMPETITION 2003

Bomber

THE WESTERN SOARERS HANG GLIDING CLUB AGAIN HOSTED

THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN STATE SOARING COMPETITION THAT COMBINES

BOTH THE SPORTS OF HANG GLIDING AND PARAGLIDING IN A SINGLE COMPETITION. THE WESTERN SOARERS HAVE HOSTED THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN STATE HANG GLIDING COMPS SINCE 1991.

This year's competition was run in the same manner as all previous years, with the emphasis being on providing competitors with a challenge, a chance for new pilots to make goal, whilst maintaining safety and a sense of humour.

The competition was hosted in Wyalkatchem (Wylie) situated 200km north-east of Perth. The competition format was a mixture of ground and aero towing. Twenty-two pilots registered, with a total of five teams poised to fight out the coveted "Andrew Humphries" memorial teams trophy.

PRE-COMP WEATHER

The practice day provided westerly winds and those white fluffy things that we don't see too often in the west – I think they're called clouds. This provided the teams a chance to test their tow gear, break in the driver and get some much-needed airtime. The aerotow crew set a short goal to Mukinbudin (approximately 75km) with a couple of pilots making it in – Daz and Mister Happy had a falling out which resulted in Daz landing two kilometres short of goal.

With the tow gear tested and the drivers broken in we were ready for day one of competition.

DAY 1: WYLIE – BALLIDU, 97KM

It's a windy day – approximately 15-20mph from the south-east – and we call a relatively short task to start the comp. We meet at the paddock and the window is open at 12 noon.

It's also a blue day, but climbs are good with a maximum height of 4,000ft. The drift is strong and along the course line. I win the day getting into goal in one hour 41 minutes. Second is Gary Wright, getting there quicker but losing out on departure and arrival points. Gordon Marshall is third in and Dave Wellington also gets to goal.

Mark Stokoe (Scourge) and Jon Orders

(Spike) just miss out on goal, landing short. Actually, Mark landed and Spike arrived. Spike left his final turn too late and his A-frame took most of the impact. Upon packing his glider away he noticed blood on the ground and looked round for any injured animals. It was then he noticed blood pouring from his bicep – the upright had "spiked" him when it broke. Luckily Scourge was able to stop the bleeding and Spike was taken to hospital – after stopping at the pub for a beer. Spike's arm was okay, but with some major bruising.

Most other pilots landed along the course line. After the first day the Scunge Buzzards (or Dave Wellington's Dick Speeds and the Scunge Buzzards) were leading the teams event.

DAY 2: WYLIE – PIAWANNING, 105KM

Jon Durand arrives – the question on everyone's lips is will he be able to make up the points from missing the first day?

It's another windy day – approximately 15-20mph from the south-east and we call a 105km task to PIAWANNING. Again the window is open at 12 noon.

It's another blue day but climbs are good with a maximum height of 3,800ft. The drift is strong and along the course line to begin with, but turns more to the south during the task. I fly with Dave Wellington and Phil Wainwright most of the day until Phil gets unlucky and misses the next thermal. Dave and I get in just in time to watch Jonny set up his landing in goal, with Gary landing shortly after. The landing is a vertical decent. Scourge arrives later.

Jonny wins the day getting to goal in one hour 38 minutes, followed by Gary Wright, Dave Wellington, myself and Scourge.

Phil Knight is the next closest to goal and the winner for the day in Racing Class.

Gary moves into first place and Jonny

moves into 10th place. After the second day the Scunge Buzzards are still leading the teams event.

DAY 3: WYLIE – KORRELOCKING – CALINGIRI, 101KM

Just to keep things consistent the wind is from the east. We call a task to the west with a turnpoint at Korrelocking. The window is open by 12:30pm and most pilots decide to leave early. Climbs are good and we get to 4,000ft over the start gate. I'm keen to get getting and Phil and I leave. We get another thermal over Wylie and then glide to the deck – aaagggghhh. We land a paddock from each other and watch another five pilots further back climb over our heads.

The day is a difficult one and only four pilots get around the turnpoint – three of which have king posts. Jonny beats Gary by 200m to win the day. Mark McCumber is next with an amazing flight given the conditions, to land only seven kilometres short of goal. Murray "Muzza" Woods also has a great flight landing past the turnpoint.

DAY 4: WYLIE – BALLIDU, 97KM

This is the best day of the comp. The winds are lighter in the paddock from the south-east. Due to a delay with a strip change the window opens later at 1:30pm.

Most pilots are keen to go. Thermals are either 800 up to cloudbase or 200-300 up dribbles out of the paddock. We have clouds today, which is great – especially for Karl and Phil who have a life changing cloud experience.

Climbs are to 8,000ft, which, when combined with multiple sightings of military training jets, make for an exciting day. We get eleven pilots in at goal with times from just under two hours to just over two hours 30 minutes.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN STATE SOARING CHAMPIONSHIPS



WYALKATCHEM WA FEB/MAR 2003

As we wait at goal news of Jonny's incident on the dolly arrives. The dolly has gone off to the right and his left wing has also been lifted, resulting in a low level lock-out. The good news is that he's okay with some minor cuts and bruises.

Dave Wellington wins the day, with Phil Wainwright in second, Gary in third and myself in fourth.

Murray Woods is the best placed racing pilot for the day, followed by Phil Knight and Mark McCumber.

DAY 5, 6, 7: CANNED

Tooooo windy. Spent a couple of pleasant days in the pub with hydraulic sandwiches.

OVERALL RESULTS

The overall results are as follows:

WA STATE SOARING OPEN

1	Gary Wright	Airborne C2
2	"Kiwi" Dave Wellington	Aeros Combat
3	Mark "Bomber" Thompson	Litespeed 4

HANG GLIDING - RACING

1	Mark McCumber	EW Desire with mouldy leading edge
2	Phil "Frilly" Knight	Moyes SX 5
3	Murray "Muzza" Wood	Moyes Xtralite 147

HANG GLIDING - INTERMEDIATE

1	Ivica "Ivi" Grbaurac	Moyes Xtralite
2	Graeme Sharp	Airborne Sting
3	Peter Harris	Airborne Sting

HANG GLIDING - NOVICE

1	Mirek Generowicz	Airborne Fun 160
2	Richard Breyley	Airborne Sting

PARAGLIDING

1	Dave Humphrey	Edel - Excel
2	Rod Merrigan	Gin Bolero

TEAMS EVENT

1	Dave Wellington's Dick Speeds and the Scunge Buzzards
2	Cosmic Mind F*****s
3	Thermal Dynamics
4	DGF (Dopey Girly Fellows)
5	Goldfield Dust Devils

Turkey Award

This year's winner of the Turkey Award for the act of greatest stupidity was: Jon "Spike" Orders. He takes off before the window opens and climbs to 3,000ft. While waiting for the start gate to open he bombs out half way down the tow strip. Thinking quickly, Jon organises to be towed from his position so he can get high enough to fly back to launch. After a not so successful tow he bombs out even further away from launch. Again thinking quickly, he decides to walk back towing the glider (it has wheels). However he fails to realise he's locked his radio on and flattens his battery.

Shenanigans Award

This goes to the Dust Devils for trying to stink out the CMF's house with industrial strength stench gas. The problem was that as the gas drifted across Wylie several residents called the cops to report a gas leak. The cops did a circuit of town, stopping at the local bottled gas supplier to check for gas leaks.

Sphincter Award

Goes to Graeme "look mum no hands"

Sharp for his low-level lock-out and recovery on day two. This was more impressive given his parents had travelled 200km to see it, not to mention that the manoeuvre also affected several other sphincters in the paddock.

Bogucki Award

Sam Blight took this one out for landing 50km from his radioed position – despite the assistance from GPS.

Dummy Spit Award

This goes to Shaun Wallace for being agitated by Spike!

Thank U's

Special Thanks go to Daryl Speight and Sam Blight who shared the role of comp director. Thanks also to Daryl, Mike, Sam and Phil Wainwright for all the work required to organise the State Championships.

During the comp invaluable assistance came from Phil Wainwright (scoring), Phil Knight (weather report and task committee), and the task, safety and protest committees.

Thanks also go to Moyes, Airborne and HGFA for their sponsorship for the state competitions.

Feedback from all pilots was that they had a great comp and I hope to see them all again next year for an even bigger comp.

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



A QUICK FIX FOR THE BOMB-OUT

Darren Morton

I AM SURE YOU TOO KNOW THE FRUSTRATION.

AFTER ENDURING THE MOST TERRIFYING PART OF THE DAY – DRIVING UP THE HILL – YOU ARRIVE ON LAUNCH ONLY TO BE MET WITH IDEAL CONDITIONS. IT HAS BEEN A LONG TRIP BUT IT LOOKS LIKE IT IS GOING TO PAY OFF! YOU FRANTICALLY SET UP AND THEN TRY AND CONTROL YOUR ENTHUSIASM FOR A THOROUGH PRE-FLIGHT. AT LAST EVERYTHING IS IN PLACE AND YOU TAKE YOUR POSITION ON LAUNCH. YOU WAIT FOR THE RIGHT MOMENT AND AFTER A STRONG LAUNCH ARE AWAY FROM THE HILL IN ANTICIPATION OF AN AWESOME FLIGHT.



Darren heads off in search of sink

But suddenly your vario starts making that ‘sick in the pit of your stomach’ sound that indicates you are going down like a lead balloon. You desperately scratch around but your destination soon becomes apparent. Shortly after – very shortly in fact – you find yourself in the bomb-out paddock, rocking in the fetal position, sucking your thumb, and secretly hoping that your mates encounter a similar fate.

After such experiences there is an overwhelming desire to redeem oneself and have another crack. But sadly, packing up the glider, finding some way to get back up the hill and launching again while it is still ‘on’ is often an unrealistic ambition. But recently I have become enchanted with a quick fix

for a bomb-out which I anticipate will provide many more flying hours for individuals like me that seem to have a knack for finding sinking air.

In October three fellow pilots and myself went away for a couple of days on a trip to the Breeza Plains to gain our ground towing endorsement under the guidance of Newcastle-based instructor Tony Barton. Breeza is about a 50-minute drive from Manilla and has to be seen to be believed. Flat, freshly ploughed paddocks stretch out for kilometres in virtually every direction. Rhet Rockman and ‘Col’ have developed a fantastic set up for ground towing with a well designed payout winch and an extensive network of tow strips that allow you to ‘get

up’ in any wind direction. The facility has allowed them to tow up to nearly 3,000ft!

I was a little nervous about the whole procedure, as I had heard several static tow horror stories, but with the right instruction I found towing with the payout winch easy to adjust to. The first day the conditions looked great and so in the interest of attaining our required number of tows for the endorsement a vario ban was declared. Even without the vario it was sometimes easy to stay up and very tempting to decide that getting the endorsement really wasn’t a priority. Alas we all behaved ourselves and consistently landed in position for our next tow.

Herein lies the beauty of towing. You land, you go again. No pack up. No set up. No transporting – subject of course to how well you can spot land, which was excellent practice in itself.

Towards the end of the course the varios emerged and mine once again testified to my uncanny ability to locate sink. But this time it didn’t matter. I just went again.

If you haven’t done so already, I would strongly encourage you to go check out the set up Rhet and ‘Col’ have at Breeza for both hang glider and paraglider pilots. There are numerous accounts of novice pilots who on their first inland experience have had long cross-country flights. Landing is never a problem – from the air the challenge is to find somewhere not ideal for landing! The endorsement was most enjoyable and we all greatly appreciated Tony Barton’s depth of experience and especially his patient and affirming teaching style. In all it was a fantastic trip. I know that I intend to spend a lot of time there this season. I can show you where the sink is if you like.



Flight Review:

NOVA ARTAX

Hakim Mentes

OVERVIEW

The Artax is the successor to Nova's very successful Carbon. I tested it at Bright for a day and also made goal (32.9km) at the Mystic Cup with it.

SPECIFICATION & SET UP

Glider weight range:	85-105kg weight range
Rating:	DHV 1-2 (AFNOR Standard)
Harness:	Edel ProLight
Risers Separation:	40cm
Weight in Flight:	93kg

CONSTRUCTION

The Artax uses a three risers system like its big brother Aeron, but there are more lines attached to each riser. As a modern glider it includes full internal stitching and diagonal V-rib construction. Lines are connected to the risers via typical triangular mallion arrangement. O-rings are used in mallions to reduce line movement on them. Only the A-risers are colour coded with a sewn red strap. I like to see the rear risers colour coded too for quick identification. The trailing edge is internally reinforced with a reinforcing strip.

THERMALLING AND HANDLING ROUGH AIR

Despite its DHV 1-2 rating the Artax is not a bus you just sit beneath and expect to have a smooth flight. It needs some input to make your flight more pleasant and relaxing. But during my two-and-a-half hour flight in the middle of a thermic day in Bright, it behaved very tamely.

TURNS

For a DHV 1-2 glider, it turns quickly and efficiently. Response to control line input is quick, but response to weight shift is only slowish. Weight shift combined with a slight control line input results in a nice turn.

CONTROL (BRAKE) LINE FORCE

Required control line input for cross-country flights is on the ball. It felt a bit heavier than its DHV 2 rated big brother, but I really can't complain about it.

TAKE OFF

This is the area I could have spent a bit more time investigating. I made only one reverse launch and it did not show any signs of bad behaviour.

ASYMMETRIC COLLAPSE

At this test I surprised to see how tame it was. Even when I pulled one of the A-risers deep to cause more than 50% asymmetric collapse, it did not turn more than 90 degrees. Also it did not show a tenden-



cy of quick diving to speed up to recover. I tried many times and each time the collapsed side opened before the glider turn 90 degrees.

BIG EARS

Thanks to the split A-risers system, big ears are a piece of cake. Easy to reach and easy to pull. Once released, they gradually open.

SPEED BAR

One step stirrup is almost sufficient. I can't call it hard, but it could be a bit softer. After flying a few hours, one might wish for a speed system a bit softer.

B-LINES STALL

Confident with its DHV 1-2 rating, I gave a full go on the B-line stall. Because of its three risers system, most of the glider shrunk when the B-lines were pulled in. You don't need to be an arm wrestler either to initiate or to hang on it. The rate of decent is beyond the range of my vario's eight metres per second scale.

CONTACTS

To find out more about the glider, contact Alpine Paragliding to arrange a test flight: <enquiries@alpineparagliding.com>, [<http://www.alpineparagliding.com/>], phone 03 5755 1753, mobile 0428 352048



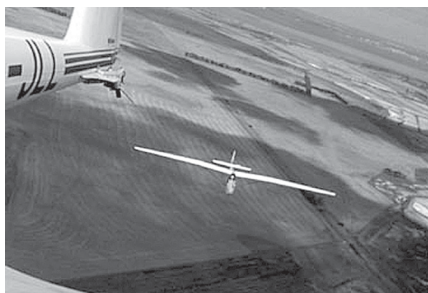
AVALON AIRSHOW

Alan Patching

SINCE AIRSHOWS DOWNUNDER WERE USING THE 2003 AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONAL AIRSHOW TO CELEBRATE THE CENTENARY OF FLIGHT – LATER THEY CHANGED IT TO POWERED FLIGHT ACKNOWLEDGING THAT THE WRIGHT BROTHERS HAD MADE A CONTROLLED GLIDING FLIGHT SOME YEARS BEFORE – THEY SOUGHT OUT SPECIAL INTEREST AIRCRAFT.



Alan Patching and the Golden Eagle



FU on tow



Bert Perssons in JLL

Hence I was asked to participate with the Golden Eagle, which is the oldest airworthy glider in Australia. For newer members, the Golden Eagle was designed and built by Geoff Richardson – a life member of the VMFG – and it first flew on 27 September 1937.

Thanks to Ian Patching and Dave Darbyshire, gliding and sport aviation were given a high profile display area adjacent to the main thoroughfare to the flight line. The facilities provided included a marquee and power with tables and chairs to view the airshow.

In our tent Ian was promoting gliding with a display and handouts, while next door the SAAA had a demonstration of fabric covering which was done by members from the Australian Gliding Museum since Dave was unable to be present. Naturally they were covering vintage glider components.

Adjacent outside was a display of gliders ranging from an early trainer, homebuilts, and the latest self-launching gliders. There were other motorgliders in the sport aviation display park and the Alpin was also being presented elsewhere.

The outdoor display consisted of a short wing Kookaburra courtesy Ian Patching, a DG 500M – Mike and Julie (nee Carney) Maddocks from Boonah, a Woodstock – Jim Garay SHA, a Duster – Peter Raphael SHA, a Monerai – Malcolm Bennett SHA, a Janus – Ian Hardy GGC, a Pawnee – John Gleeson

VMFG, a Super Dimona – Bert Persson and Phil Behnke, Caboolture, and a G109 – Baylee Roberts and friend, Murray Bridge.

Incidentally, Mike and Julie flew into Bacchus Marsh after having used only one-and-a-half hours of engine time for the four-day flight from Boonah in Queensland.

The flying display of the gliders was supposed to demonstrate silent flight, however a gyrocopter was airborne in front of the crowd during and for most of our segment!

The Golden Eagle was launched by the Dimona followed by the Janus and Pawnee which proceeded to do a touch and go while we gained 1,000ft of height.

After release a few turns simulating thermalling were done in front of the crowd followed by a spot landing. The Janus then made a competition type run dropping ballast followed by a landing with the tail parachute finishing alongside the Eagle facing the crowd in the gold stand.

Ian and I offered to sign autographs but you can guess the response, however we did get some claps as we manhandled the gliders back past the crowd of thousands!

We tried to get a car to retrieve the gliders, but were unsuccessful, and there is more to that story.

There had been some practice flights at Bacchus Marsh on the previous Wednesday since the Dimona was still in the process of getting GFA approval to tow, and Ian and John had to get their timing down to

as short as possible since our slot was for seven minutes of gliding.

The gliders were flown only on Friday and Saturday since we were put on standby on Sunday because of low cloud which could have cancelled some flights and we were to be used as filling.

The gliding segment of the airshow was made possible by the numerous helpers who came from all over Australia. Many stayed in the gliding clubhouse as it is only 30 minutes from Avalon. Unfortunately Bert and myself had to get to bed early as we had an 8am pilot briefings and so missed out on the (discussions) every night. On Saturday evening we held a barbecue with some invited guests to celebrate the event and to thank everyone for their efforts.

Was it all worthwhile? In contrast to previous years there were more enquiries about gliding and certainly far more visitors passed through the display. Over 2,000 posters were handed out of Bernard Eckey in the ASH25P soaring above Ayers Rock.

It will be interesting to see if Terry Cubley reports an increase in hits on the GFA website [www.soaring.com.au]. There were many active pilots who came and talked with us, and quite a few people who had done some gliding and are thinking seriously about getting back into the sport.

Those of us involved were thankful for the effort that Ian Patching had put into co-ordinating our involvement in the

Photos: Al Sim



JLL versus the Super Hornet

airshow. He knew who to speak to get the job done and his affable nature kept us on side with the numerous marshals with whom we had to negotiate constantly. His second-in-command, Caleb (turncoat) White [another story] was also outstanding in his behind-the-scenes involvement as well, as it was evident that much work had been done before we put foot on the airfield.


For some of us this will be our last Avalon. It is a lot of effort, but all involved believe it is worthwhile and, considering the nature of the event, it is one at which gliding must have a presence.

All reports are that the public found it a very interesting airshow, and for many it was great to see and hear the pre-WWI aeroplanes flying.



NSW State Competition 2003, Gulgong – Results

CLUB CLASS		REG	TOTAL	1	2	3	4	5	
1	Shorter, Dave	AUS	GQD	957.7	1,000	873.2	1,000	0	0
2	MacReady, Ric	AUS	DD	905.9	950.7	1,000	950.7	1,000	628.3
3	Singer, Nick	AUS	XP	832.5	574.5	793.3	897.1	897.4	1,000
4	Willis, Keith	AUS	AW	778.9	926.1	751.3	731.4	771.1	714.5
5	Musgrave, Rober	AUS	BP	721.5	0	888.8	893.9	389.4	713.9
6	Pincus, Richard	AUS	HX2	566.2	0	0	836.5	862.0	0
7	Gill, Adam	AUS	KP	468.4	0	721.4	683.7	0	0
8	Endicott, Phill	AUS	HX1	0	0	610.4	0	0	0
8	Eldridge, Phil	AUS	KD	0	973.0	916.0	0	0	0
8	Gilbert, Nick	AUS	QF	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	Boughen, Michael	AUS	FQD	0	747.2	746.9	0	0	0
8	Sweet, Eric	AUS	QN	0	525.7	344.3	0	0	0
FAI CLASS		REG	TOTAL	1	2	3	4	5	
1	Matthews, Paul	AUS	LG	986.0	0	0	958.0	1,000	1,000
2	Buskens, Peter	AUS	JG	942.9	991.6	938.3	1000	897.2	887.6
3	Medlicott, Harr	AUS	KZ	940.7	957.5	994.0	899.7	911.5	0
4	Gilbert, Tom	AUS	55	927.7	982.8	1,000	913.2	882.2	860.2
5	West, Trevor	AUS	LP	876.7	895.3	922.4	790.9	898.2	0
6	Holmes, Peter	AUS	BI	868.0	825.9	825.1	951.6	819.7	917.8
7	Geoff Sims	AUS	SI	850.9	838.2	871.4	862.2	912.2	770.6
8	Weston, Dion	AUS	WA	836.0	1000	857.1	766.2	820	736.6
9	Chaffey, Kerry	AUS	TC	783.9	265.9	957.4	898.6	939.7	857.7
10	Bones, Alan	AUS	AR	696.3	823.6	922.0	305.1	755.4	675.4
11	Leo, Kevin	AUS	IV	660.5	850.1	400.8	730.5	0	0
12	Anderson, Jay	AUS	MT	453.1	0	0	476.1	430	0



T&J Sailplane Services

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The new DG-1000. First example in Australia now flying with Southern Cross Gliding Club.

The GFA Safety Seminars

- Bi-Annual Safety Seminars will again be conducted this year by the GFA in all parts of Australia
- These important Safety focused Seminars are open to all GFA members
- Meeting items include:
 - review of recent accidents/incidents
 - lookout
 - personal responsibility for safety
 - outlanding accidents
 - local area accidents/incidents
 - open discussion periods
 - questions and answers

LOCATION PROGRAMME AS FOLLOWS:

11 May 2003	Rockhampton (Qld)
24 May 2003	Perth (WA)
25 May 2003	Narrogin (WA)
22 June 2003	Narromine (NSW Northern)
5 July 2003	Canberra (NSW Southern)
19 July 2003	Gawler (SA)
20 July 2003	Balaklava (SA)
3 August 2003	Bacchus Marsh (Vic/Tas)
17 August 2003	Woodbury (Vic/Tas)
31 August 2003	Bordertown (SA)
7 September 2003	Camden (NSW Central)
20 September 2003	Boonah (Qld)
21 September 2003	Gympie (Qld)
5 October 2003	Gosford (NSW Central)
12 October 2003	Corowa (Vic/Tas)

Kevin Olerhead,
Chief Technical Officer Operations

New Airworthiness Charges to apply from 1 May 2003

Charges for airworthiness items have been reviewed and the following apply from the start of the GFA Financial year for 2003/2004.

ITEM	PRICE INCL. GST
1 Form 2 Kit	\$143
2 C of A Renewal	\$33
3 Registration, Change of Ownership	\$33
4 Aircraft Log Book**	\$44
5 Initial Registration ##	\$363

Notes: **Does not include packing and postage
Includes items 1 through 4

The modest increase in the items 1 through to 4 has allowed us to reduce the initial charges for gliders coming on the register for the first time (previously \$511) and remove charges for survey completely (previously \$247) and still have unchanged total revenue.

The no-charge for survey work is conditional that any RTOA work can be coupled with a normal club visit.

If survey work requires the services of an RTOA outside normal club visits then the operator can expect to be required to meet any RTOA expenses involved.

The Form 2 document in use now for nearly 12 months provides for notification of future surveys to allow your RTOA to plan club visits around survey requirements. If

you don't provide this information in a timely manner you cannot reasonably expect instant free service from these hard working band of volunteers.

Reservation of Marks

A new charge is being activated for reservation of marks. This is \$22 and is an annual fee payable on 1 May each year. Some members have been in the habit of reserving marks for years on end, apparently never to be used! This is unfair on those who could have used those marks, particularly those few unused marks we have left which start with the letter "G". Reservation of marks will need to be accompanied with some evidence of real intent to make use of them in the not too distant future.

If the initial registration package fee is paid at the time of reserving marks, no separate charge is made for the reservation of marks as the glider is deemed to be registered at that time even though it may not yet be in the country.

Concessional Fee for Historic Gliders

Council regulation 4.8 allows for a reduction in the annual Form 2 kit fee for certain gliders. This is only available to members of the Vintage Glider Association and where the glider is not in general use and would otherwise not be displayed as the owners have access to other gliders for their normal flying. For further information contact the Vintage Glider Association.

2003 GFA Best Distance and Height flights

The GFA Trophies Officer, Fred Foord, is calling for applications for the three flying trophies contested annually for outstanding flights made between 1 May 2002 and 30 April 2003 – the Wally Wood, Martin Warner and Bob Irvine Trophies.

The criteria are:

Wally Wood Trophy – for the greatest outright distance achieved in one flight within Australia

Martin Warner Trophy – for the greatest height gain in one flight within Australia

Bob Irvine Trophy – for the greatest distance points score after application of the appropriate handicap factor in one flight within Australia.

The awards are for solo flight, the pilot must be alone in the aircraft even though multi-seater sailplanes are not excluded.

The outright distance trophy is for any category of sailplane. The handicap distance trophy is intended to give pilots of less competitive sailplanes a chance, therefore it will not be awarded for the same flight as the outright distance. The handicap

factor will be that published on the DCE web page. If you know someone else has made a longer or higher flight than you, do not be deterred from putting in your application, that other pilot might choose, for whatever reason, not to make a claim by the published closing date.

Applications must include normal verification details by an FAI Official Observer.

Note that these awards are not a part of the Decentralised Competition, they are not administered by the DCE Convener, so separate applications are necessary.

Send your application to the GFA Trophies Officer, Fred J Foord, 18 Fremantle Road, Port Noarlunga South SA 5167, or email <fjpfoord@senet.com.au>.

The closing date, which will be strictly enforced, is 31 May 2003.

FAI NEWS

Keeping Air Sports Free of Doping

The FAI played an active part in the recent World Conference on Doping in Sport, working to ensure that air sports remain free of this objectionable form of cheating, which also constitutes a threat to flight safety. The FAI community will soon be invited to adopt the new World Anti-Doping Agency's (WADA) Code, replacing the Olympic Movement Code which FAI competitors have had to follow until now.

The conference, held in Copenhagen from 3 to 5 March 2003, was attended by over 1000 delegates from governments, national anti-doping organisations, Olympic Committees, and international federations. Many governments were represented at ministerial level. The conference accepted the new World Anti-Doping Code (may be down-loaded at [www.wada-ama.org/en/t1.asp]).

This code aims at achieving a universal and effective anti-doping regime, applicable to all sports throughout the world. The conference was widely seen as marking an historical turning point in the fight against doping in sport. Conference participants undertook to try and obtain agreement from their respective organisations to enable the code to be formally signed and implemented by mid-2004.

Governments will use statutory instruments of various kinds to give legal force to the code in their countries. The International and National Olympic Committees will withdraw financial and other support from any federations that refuse to comply with the code. The final text of the Code met most of the earlier concerns raised

by international federations, including FAI. There is now a new, clearer definition of what constitutes "Doping". There is provision for Therapeutic Use Exemptions (TUE), in cases where athletes have no option but to take substances on the banned list, for medical reasons. And it is left to FAI to decide what should happen, in team events, if an individual team member violates the anti-doping code.

Unchanged is the principle of "strict liability". This means that it is the personal responsibility of each international air sport competitor to ensure that no prohibited substance enters his/her body. It is not necessary for intent, fault, negligence or knowing use to be proven for a violation to occur.

The current (Olympic) list of prohibited substances is at [http://multimedia.olympic.org/pdf/en_report_542.pdf].

This list will be replaced by the new WADA list in due course.

The FAI General Conference in Krakow in October 2003 will be invited to adopt the World Anti-Doping Code.

Meanwhile, those who wish to learn more about WADA's campaign against doping in sport may wish to look at True Game, a program specially developed by WADA (link to: True Game).



Who – What – Why – Where – When

SEVERAL OLD PHOTOS FROM A COLLECTION OWNED BY THE LATE MAURIE BRADNEY OF UNIDENTIFIED PEOPLE AND PLACES APPEARED ON PAGE 13 OF THE MARCH 2003 EDITION OF SOARING AUSTRALIA. THESE JOGGED THE MEMORIES OF SEVERAL PEOPLE IN THE GLIDING FRATERNITY THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA AND RESULTED IN THE FOLLOWING:



Top left: The Southern Cross Gliding Club, Camden operating on runway 24 with a Kingfisher, a Shortwing Kookaburra and a KA6. The wire retrieve car was an A-model Ford. If you look carefully it had two plastic aero screens which did nothing when the radiator boiled. I remember that the club did 115 launches with one wire and the side valve V8 winch in one day. This photo would have been taken about 1962-3. We had a table for log keeping when I joined in 1964!
– Graham Watts



Left: Maurie Bradney at Benalla with Bob Rowe behind the wing of Waikerie's ES60
– Chris Cullinan

The refurbished Kookaburra (read below)



This photo was taken, possibly, in 1961 when the Leichhardt Soaring Club, Mt Isa towed the club Kookaburra to Cloncurry to an airshow. The man near the car would be Don Stewart, a friend of Maurie Bradney – Jim Sawdy The Kookaburra VH-GFK is alive and well and now flying from Benalla. It was first flown on 17 July 1955 and has flown with clubs at Mt Isa, Townsville, Wagga Wagga, Laverton and Bacchus Marsh, amongst others. Doug Vanstan carried out major modifications and refurbishment in 1985-1986 – David and Jenne Goldsmith



Imagine Helen Bartley's surprise when she opened Soaring Australia and spotted a photograph of her mum, Margaret Jones, and her dad Don (behind the bar) in Mt Isa gliding club's clubhouse.

The man sitting on the chair is Gary Windsor and the one at the end of the bar is Brian Doherty. The photo was taken in 1958 and Margaret was the only female member of the club at that time. It seems like flying still runs in the family as Helen's husband, Mal, is a hang glider pilot and their three-year-old daughter Zoe, is mad about aircraft. She is the first in the family to tear open Soaring Australia when it arrives in the mail to look at the photographs.



This looks like a Kingfisher operated by the Southern Cross Gliding Club at Camden. The pilot could be Max Reilly – Graham Watts OR: Bob Martin in an ES57 Kingfisher
– Chris Cullinan



Horsham East competition, April 1966 – VMFG's ES52b Long Wing Kookaburra on Jim Moleneaux paddock at Doon. Sue Martin flew the Waikerie ES60 Boomerang. Jarko Borensma is in the peaked cap – Chris Cullinan



On downwind for runway 06 at Camden in a KA6. The area in the foreground is now a housing estate – Graham Watts



GET A BIG GREEN ONE UP YA'!

– Part 2

Brian Lowry

...THEN IT HAPPENED... ANOTHER SURGE OF LIFT DIRECTLY ABOVE LAUNCH PERSISTED A LITTLE LONGER THAN OTHERS, SO I WHEELED THE GLIDER AROUND, THEN AROUND AGAIN, AND AGAIN. WITH GOOD CONSISTENT LIFT I MONITORED MY DRIFT OVER THE TOP OF THE HILL AND STARTED TO CLIMB OUT... 750FT... 1,100FT... SO LONG AS I COULD MAKE IT BACK TO THE HILL I WAS COMFORTABLE THERMALLING UP.

The lift and wind were strengthening as I climbed, and with each turn it started to look more like 50/50 that launch was still reachable! With the consistent tone of the vario fuelling my idea for a cross-country flight, I was momentarily caught between two possibilities. Then... I was too far back! My drift over launch was far greater than I had estimated only two turns before. Panic encroached as each subsequent turn confirmed that my ridge soaring flight was gone. However, I was still climbing and felt safely centred in the lift. This was new territory for me. Concentrate, relax, stay with the lift, I told myself as I felt my way around each half turn. The back side of Ben More is ugly country; I needed height and my attention moved from ground features to sky. I quickly composed myself and radioed my intention to stay with the thermal and go 'XC', though there was no response. By the time I checked my vario again I was 1,900ft above launch and climbing at 600ft/min.

I had been watching the country "over the back" open up, and I relaxed a little as a safe glide to the flat paddocks near the turn off to launch was now within reach. Harry would surely come and pick me up. I'd got him off the hill earlier, and now I could tell him all about my cross-country flight – two lessons in the one day, win-win I reckon...

The lift took me to 5,700ft before I lost it and turned to glide downwind. I got down to 3,300ft before finding another thermal (or it finding me) and climbing in stronger lift to 5,200ft. Being on glide at that height permitted a few moments of departure, which reminded me of my inability to now gaze at aerial photographs without continually thinking "s**t, where am I going to land?" The ground had flattened out with altitude, but I knew it to be undulating as I studied the creases and folds in the yellow and dark green terrain beneath me, highlighted by the afternoon sun. I had lost a lot

of height, but more importantly I was flying into slightly rising bush country. I still had about 2000ft, but not enough to glide over it without more lift. Why hadn't I seen this situation approaching?? Bugger! Where was I going to land?! I immediately changed course by 45 degrees to head away from the rising terrain, concentrating on feeling for anything I could turn in. Then I added another 45 degrees to head toward the paddocks, finger tips on the bar, feeling and waiting for a nudge...

Precious seconds were elapsing, then, oh yeah... The glider and vario pitched up and up for... three ... four seconds... around she goes and we were dancing again. Relief! However, after three or four turns, trying to find the best tone for the vario, I relaxed and it was gone! I elongated my turn downwind and found it for another two or three turns, but as soon as I relaxed it was gone again. Concentrate, dammit. I elongated upwind, had it for another two turns, then lost it again. Feeling more on the right wing I headed there, but gone again. Focus! I chased the slippery beast around, but was losing altitude and drifting where I didn't want to go... Straightening out in the direction of the now distant paddocks I got a few more bubbles, but didn't have time to turn as I headed anxiously crosswind to the nearest edge of the bush country and the flattish paddocks beyond. Flying in trim I waited, hoping, and watched the angles change. When I was certain of clearing the trees my anxiety turned to anger as, in what seemed like only minutes, I had gone from being on top of the world to flying for my life. I tried to put it behind me, and did a 'once over' of the first paddock to confirm that it contained grass and sheep only. I turned into a reasonable wind for a landing approach, and a small flair set me on the ground with a perfect two-point landing... witnessed only,

yet again, by a dozen or so sheep (50m away and too dumb to run).

Ruing my missed opportunity for lift because of distraction, I noticed while packing up that my radio was unplugged. I tried calling again, but from the ground now unsuccessful. I was alone...

The sight of a ute approaching gave me some hope. Darlene, as it turned out, was the local landowner's daughter and seemed very interested in the glider and flying. Her general enthusiasm was infectious, and it improved my mood greatly after the recent realisation that the reason I was there in the first place was because I had the attention span of a house brick! I explained my flight in detail, and the lack of communication with my fellow pilots.

"No worries," she said. "You can ring them from the house."

We loaded the glider onto the ute and slowly drove out to the road.

I followed her into the house and – oh, yes – she pulled a couple of cold beers from the fridge. The conversation crackled along until our drinks were finished, at which point she slammed her glass down with some finality and said with a giggle, *"Well, we haven't got much time"*.

As it transpired, her father, a pre-loved caravan collector, hates hang glider pilots ever since a gate was left open and he lost a dozen or so sheep. He was out for the day, but the afternoon was wearing on.

"No, we haven't," I agreed, hoping for another beer.

"Come with me, I've got something to show you."

I followed her curiously out of the house, and was immediately bowled over by Kato, the blue heeler-cross. I picked myself up and headed with her toward a big shed out the back, with parked caravans everywhere. The farm sat in the middle of a long flat valley, with the treed hills I was flying



over an hour ago behind us. Could it come true, I wondered, the ultimate hang gliding fantasy? Cross-country flight, instant retrieval, cold beer and...

"Up here," she instructed, climbing a ladder to a mezzanine. With a growing sense of anticipation I climbed up, reminding myself to relax, and concentrate... I moved over to her, standing by a window, the sunlight dancing over her body.

"Hey," she said, flicking back her hair.

"Yes, Debbie?" I enquired.

SLAP! Wrong name!

"Sorry," I quickly added, getting up from the hay covered floor, hoping no major change in the current course of the afternoon's adventure would occur, and again forgetting the very thing I had just remembered to...

"Check this out," she said with a growing smile.

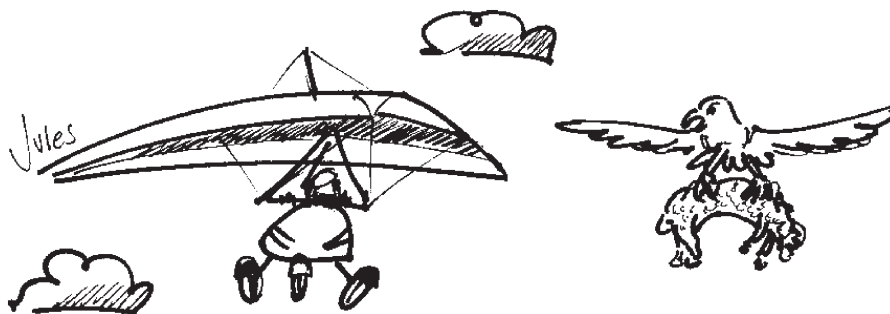
And then it happened....

Next month's issue will conclude with either:

- a) *mud wrestling in an inflatable pool with Darlene*
- b) *a tree landing*
- c) *being shot at by a caravan collecting farmer driving a ute with 17 aerials and nine spotlights.*



Jules Cartoon Caption Competition



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HGFA News

Australia to Host the Worlds!

Top news item this month is that the next Hang Gliding Worlds (and Pre-Worlds) will be organised by Dynamic Flight and held at Hay, NSW. The Pre-Worlds will be held in January 2004 and the Worlds in January 2005. Congratulations to Rohan Holtkamp and the Dynamic Flight Team for their successful bid to host here in Australia the two premier events of international hang gliding!

HGFA Office, Craig Worth
and the HGFA Board

The Paraglider Show

The Paraglider Show, hosted by David and Gabriel Jebb, will be relocating to a new broadcast station beginning 9 April 2003. Tune in to the live broadcast or the archive by going to [www.worldtalkradio.com]. The only paragliding radio talk show in the world will be featured on World Talk Radio live every Tuesday from 9 to 11am (Pacific Standard Time). The Paraglider Show features interviews with internationally renowned paraglider pilots and paraglider designers as well as entertaining and educational discussions related to the world of foot launched aviation. The international telephone number is 858 268 3068 and the toll free number for America and Canada is 888 514 2100. If you would like to email in ideas for the show or questions about paragliding in general send them to <davidj@flytorrey.com> or <gabrielj@flytorrey.com>.

David and Gabriel Jebb

CLUB NEWS

Southern Microlight Club – National Trike Gathering, Wangaratta Airfield, 3-4 May 2003

The Southern Microlight Club will be running the 2003 National Trike Gathering at Wangaratta Airfield in North-east Victoria on the weekend of 3-4 May 2003.

The activities for the weekend will be similar to the events conducted at previous National Fly-ins. Subject to satisfactory weather, on Saturday we will be flying to Mt. Beauty airfield via Happy Valley and the Kiewa Valley. This is always a popular flight with spectacular scenery. Pilots can return via the Kiewa Valley and Happy Valley or via the Tawonga Gap and Bright. On Sunday, we will conduct a spot landing competition and other events. A group flight to one of the local towns will also be organised. Trophies will be awarded for several events.

We expect some pilots to arrive on Friday evening and others on Saturday morning. There will be a compulsory pilot briefing on Saturday morning at 9am at the airfield. All pilots will be expected to have HGFA or AUF licences.

The Wangaratta Aero Club is providing our catering for weekend. They will supply breakfast and lunches on both days at the airfield. A packed lunch will be ready for pilots to take on their flight to Mt Beauty on Saturday.

The entry fee for the weekend is \$30 per person if paid before 15 April. Payments received after this date will be \$50. The entry fee includes a cooked breakfast



Scott Barrett flying at Eagles Nest, Victoria
Photo: Courtesy Scott Barrett

and lunch on both days as well as all events. Friends and family members are welcome. If the four meals are required by non-pilots, please include an additional \$30 per person to cover the cost of food. Kids under 10 years old are free. Please enter as early as possible to permit catering requirements to be confirmed.

Our club has also arranged for dinner in town on Saturday evening at 7:30pm at the Wangaratta Club in Victory Parade. All pilots and crews are welcome. We look forward to seeing as many pilots as possible. Entry forms are available from Ian Rees: email <ianr@anca.com.au> or phone 03 9762 1364 after hours.

FAI NEWS

World Record Ratifications

FAI has ratified the following Class O (Hang Gliders) record:

Claim numbers 7570 and 7571:
Sub-class 0-3 (Paragliders) – General
Type of record: Straight distance to a declared goal

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Course/location: Quixada – Pedro (Brazil)
 Performance: 278.3km
 Pilots: Peter Simonics and Szilard Forgo
 (Hungary) – Joint flight
 Paraglider: Aeron M
 Date: 21/11/2002
 Previous record: 273.7km (03/08/2002
 – Bruce Goldsmith, UK)

FAI congratulates the pilots on their splendid achievement.

WPRS Update

Hang gliding (Class 1)

The South African National Championships were added. Deleted were the UK Open, Podrezova Cup, German Open and the US Nationals. The Korean HG League and the Open Canarias were not valid.

Oleg Bondarchuk (UKR) still leads with Gordon Rigg (GBR) 2nd, Gerolf Heinrichs (AUT) 3rd, Antoine Boisselier (FRA) 4th and Mario Alonzi (FRA) 5th. Manfred Ruhmer (AUT) is still 6th and Jean-François Gérard (FRA) 7th. Richard (FRA) and Paris Williams (USA) re-enter the top 10 at 8th and =9th, congratulations to Bruno Guillen (FRA) for making the top 10 for the first time at =9th.

In the nations ranking USA leaps four places to take the top spot, shifting France into 2nd. Australia moves up to 3rd.

Full details of the HG rankings can be found on the FAI website: [www.fai.org/hang_gliding/rankings/class1/].

Class 5

Christian Ciech (ITA) still leads, Alessandro Ploner (ITA) and Johann Posch (AUT) swap places to 2nd & 3rd.

In the Nations rankings, USA leads, Switzerland 2nd and Germany 3rd.

Full details of the Class 5 rankings can be found on the FAI website: [www.fai.org/hang_gliding/rankings/class5/].

Class 2

No changes, Manfred Ruhmer (AUT) stays 1st.

GBR is in the nations top spot. Full details at: [www.fai.org/hang_gliding/rankings/class2/].

Keeping Air Sports Free of Doping

The FAI played an active part in the recent World Conference on Doping in Sport, working to ensure that air sports remain free of this objectionable form of cheating, which also constitutes a threat to flight safety. The FAI community will soon be invited to adopt the new World Anti-Doping Agency's (WADA) Code, replacing the Olympic Movement Code which FAI competitors have had to follow until now.

The World Conference on Doping in Sport, held in Copenhagen 3 to 5 March

2003, was attended by over 1000 delegates from governments, national anti-doping organisations, Olympic Committees, and international federations. Many governments were represented at ministerial level. The Conference accepted the new World Anti-Doping Code (may be downloaded at [www.wada-ama.org/en/t1.asp]).

This Code aims at achieving a universal and effective anti-doping regime, applicable to all sports throughout the world. The Conference was widely seen as marking an historical turning point in the fight against doping in sport. Conference participants undertook to try and obtain agreement from their respective organisations to enable the Code to be formally signed and implemented by mid-2004. The text of the resolution adopted by the Conference is at [www.wada-ama.org/docs/web/corporate_planning_programs/world_conference/resolution_en.pdf].

Governments will use statutory instruments of various kinds to give legal force to the Code in their countries. The International and National Olympic Committees will withdraw financial and other support from any federations that refuse to comply with the Code. The final text of the Code met most of the earlier concerns raised by international federations, including FAI. There is now a new, clearer definition of what constitutes 'Doping'. There is provision for Therapeutic Use Exemptions (TUE), in cases where athletes have no option but to take substances on the banned list, for medical reasons. And it is left to FAI to decide what should happen, in team events, if an individual team member violates the anti-doping code.

Unchanged is the principle of 'strict liability'. This means that it is the personal responsibility of each international air sport competitor to ensure that no prohibited substance enters his/her body. It is not necessary for intent, fault, negligence or knowing use to be proven for a violation to occur.

The current (Olympic) list of prohibited substances is at [http://multimedia.olympic.org/pdf/en_report_542.pdf]. This list will be replaced by the new WADA list in due course.

The FAI General Conference in Krakow in October 2003 will be invited to adopt the World Anti-Doping Code. Meanwhile, those who wish to learn more about WADA's campaign against doping in sport may wish to look at True Game, a program specially developed by WADA.

FAI, Lausanne



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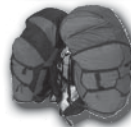
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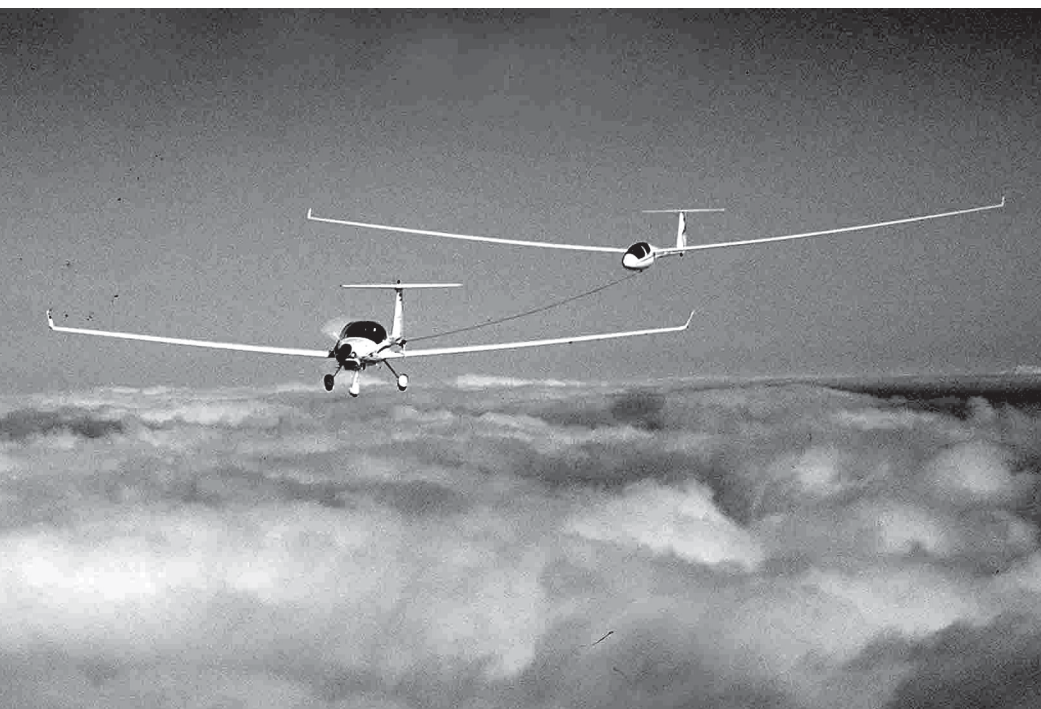
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Photo: Courtesy Icaro 2000 "Laminar"

The Soaring, Touring Tug Plane or An Extremely Useful Item



The Dimona

Photo: Courtesy Bernard Eckey

Courtesy of Dave Unwin,
Editor, 'Today's Pilot'.
Originally appeared in 'Flyer'

AS THE WINGLET SLIPPED
INEXORABLY BELOW THE
MOUNTAIN TOP I TURNED
TO HANS AND SHRUGGED
RESIGNEDLY. "YOU KNOW, ONE
OF US IS GOING TO
HAVE TO START DRINKING
LESS BEER!" "BOTH OF US,
I THINK," REPLIED HANS
WITH A GRIN. NOW,

CONSIDERING THAT IT IS CLEARED TO TOW SAILPLANES UP
TO 600KG THE SUPER DIMONA IS A FINE SOARING MACHINE IN
ITS OWN RIGHT BUT LET'S FACE IT; A SOFT EVENING
RIDGE WAS NEVER GOING TO HOLD UP THE WEIGHT OF
TWO BLOATERS, AN ELECTRIC WINCH, FULL FUEL TANKS
AND A MOTOR THAT WASN'T TURNING!

Diamond's U.K. base at Staverton to enquire about the possibility of a test flight. Owing to the incessant demands of glider pilots wanting a launch I was unable to get across to Staverton but Diamond's UK rep Hans Braun generously offered to bring the demonstrator over to Talgarth.

And so a few weeks later I spotted the Super Dimona's sleek shape sliding across the slopes of the Black Mountains. Diamond currently offers the Dimona as either trike or taildragger and with a choice of either 81 or 115 horsepower. Hans was bringing in the nosewheel version with the 115hp turbo charged engine, otherwise known as a HK 36TTC (Turbo-charged TriCycle gear). The tailwheel answers to HK 36TTS (Turbo-charged Tow and Soar). During

the pre-flight one of the first things I noticed was that this is an aircraft that has been built to a specification, not a price. The overall standard of finish is extremely high and the beautiful curves that can be formed with fibreglass almost make some parts of the Super Dimona's airframe seem more like a sculpture than an airframe. From a tug pilot's point of view I was intrigued by the electric winch installation and impressed by the ease with which the towing mirror was fitted. Designed by Wolf Hoffman the Dimona first flew in 1981, although the current Super Dimona is considerably different from the earlier models, which were produced in Austria by Hoffman Flugzeugbau-Friesach GmbH. Starting at the spinner, the prop is no longer electric but a fully

As the manager and tug master of a busy gliding club I am very aware of how under-utilised most tugs are. Generally, on most soaring days a tug will work hard for an hour or two and then spend the rest of the day lounging around on its big fat tyres doing nothing. Consequently I have long been appreciative of the fact that if you could also get some other use out of your tug it would go a considerable way to making the club more economically viable. This is not a new idea, as long ago as 1962 Derek Piggott wrote an article proposing that a motor glider that was powerful enough to tow a sailplane would be a useful item. Unfortunately none of the airframe manufacturers managed to get around to actually building a powerful enough aircraft, preferring to continue production of the same gutless old ground lovers. Now, anyone who has ever had the experience of seeing the trees looming in a Falke's windshield will know what I mean when I say "ground lover". Indeed, some of these contraptions were so underpowered that it was all the thing could do to haul its own sorry ass off the ground! However, when word reached me in the mountains that the Diamond Super Dimona had at long last been certified by the C.A.A. to aerotow all but the heaviest gliders I wasted no time in contacting

feathering hydraulic constant speed unit.

It's spun by a 115hp Rotax 914F, the blown version of the familiar 81hp 912A. Being liquid cooled the engine is very tightly cowled, although judicious use of dzus fasteners means access to the engine compartment is both quick and easy. The wingspan has been increased to 16.33m and the aerofoil changed to a Wortman FX63-137 section. An excellent feature is the very clever wing folding mechanism. In a similar fashion to the Grumman Avenger the wing is turned through 90 degrees and then folded back to the tail. This manoeuvre can easily be done by a single man, although the relevance of his marital status is unclear, at least to me. Anyway, folding the wings reduces the span from over 53ft to less than seven feet, or for my metric readers from 16.33m to 2.14m. Pretty impressive and also very useful, as it means the aircraft can be tucked into a corner of the hangar where nothing else would fit.

The original Hoffman Dimona was conceived as a motor glider and considerable work has been done by Diamond to improve the Super Dimona's gliding performance. Earlier Dimonas were compromised in the glide by premature airflow separation at

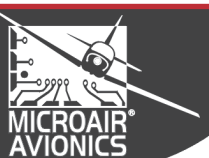

the wingroot, but a comprehensive re-design of this area has rectified the problem. The addition of winglets and the new aerofoil section has also improved its gliding performance, making the published figures for the TTC's best glide a respectable 27:1 at 56kt while minimum sink is 234 ft/min at 52kt.

Access to the cockpit is good; the TTC has a small step built into the side of the fuselage while on the TTS the main wheel spats double as steps. The canopy is huge and appears more than a little vulnerable to strong winds when fully open. However it is actually well supported and probably impervious to all but the strongest of winds. Overall, the cockpit is excellent. Roomy and well laid out, the rudder pedals adjust over a good range while the sunshade built into the canopy is a nice touch. The seats are extremely comfortable and feature removable seat backs, affording the occupants the option of wearing parachutes. The instrument panel is big, making the compensated variometer even more noticeable by its absence. The Super Dimona is quite a capable soaring machine and really should be fitted with a decent variometer and total energy probe. The rest of the panel is logical-

ly laid out with flight instruments on the left and engine gauges on the right, leaving plenty of room for the avionics and associated switches in the centre stack. Trim, throttle, propeller and carb heat levers are all mounted on a neat consul between the seats and I must admit that I would have preferred to see the airbrake for the right seat here as well. The right seat airbrake is mounted on the right side cockpit wall and is the only part of the cockpit I did not like. For this reason I sat on the left which meant taking off left handed, although I intended to soar and land right handed.

Starting is Rotax-simple and taxiing was easy with good visibility and a generous turning circle, facilitated by the hydraulic toe-brakes. With trim set, prop at fully fine and electric fuel pump 'on' I lined up and smoothly opened the throttle. As the revs increase the blower cuts in, producing a definite shove in the back and rapid acceleration. A touch of right rudder kept things straight and we were off in about 200m of Talgarth's short, dry grass. Reduction gearing of 2.43:1 means that even at full power the prop is only turning at 2,400rpm, making the Super Dimona one of the quietest motor gliders around.

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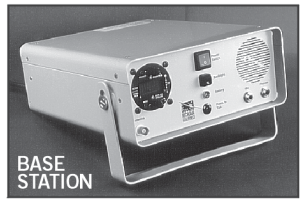



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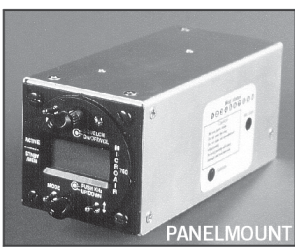
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The published noise output is 58dBS and Observers (or rather Listeners) on the ground confirmed that it was indeed extremely quiet.

At 60kt indicated the VSI settled at just over an impressive 1000 fpm. As we passed through 500ft I pulled the power back to METO (Maximum Except Take Off), turned the electric fuel pump off and re-trimmed. In common with some other Rotax engines there is a limit of five minutes for maximum power, although it can be run at METO continuously. Should the five minute limit be forgotten a warning light illuminates to warn the pilot to reduce power and if this is ignored the waste gate on the turbocharger opens automatically. Now, when I was a lad I was always told to "rev up and throttle back" (increase prop then throttle, decrease throttle then prop) but Hans surprised me by suggesting reducing rpm first. I imagine that the turbo's automatic waste gate prevents the engine being over-boosted.

With a few thousand feet under our belts I performed a clearing turn and began to feel the machine out. For a big span aircraft the roll rate of three to four seconds from 45 degrees to 45 degrees was impressive, although it needed plenty of rudder to help it on its way. In the turn (and every other phase of flight) the visibility is nothing less than exceptional. Slow speed handling was equally benign, making it possible to soar the smaller thermals usually found in the U.K. It actually seemed quite reluctant to stall, making me suspect that up elevator travel was restricted. Indeed, this was confirmed when Hans completed a full 360-degree turn in the buffet. Hans then demonstrated the extremely rapid let down that is possible with liquid-cooled engines. With throttle at idle, prop fully fine and full airbrake a steep spiral saw us descend at a prodigiously precipitous rate and the needle of the VSI threatening to fall out of the bottom of the instrument. Next item on the flight test schedule was high-speed cruise and 75% power saw the ASI nudging 110kt at 3,000ft. This is a perfectly satisfactory going-places speed and is achieved at a quite respectable 20 litres per hour. Cockpit noise levels remained low, even at high speed. After waiting a couple of minutes for engine and coolant temperatures to stabilise we ran through the shut down procedure and then feathered the prop. The starter motor was then used to move the prop to the horizontal and all non-essential electrics selected off via the "Soaring" switch. This precludes the possibility of accidentally flattening the

battery in flight, although an airstart can be effected quite easily as the prop unfeathers readily.

At a steady 55kt we sank silently towards the windward slopes of the Black Mountains, the man from FLYER bemoaning the lack of a variometer all the way (obviously this is an option, but the demonstrator is visibly lacking one). For the first time the stick felt noticeably heavy, an inevitable consequence of the JARs which stipulate that the ailerons must be self-centring. Springs are used to achieve this and they do firm the stick up. The published minimum sink is 234ft/minimum but unfortunately the air on this particular evening appeared to be ascending at only about 200ft/minimum. Faith can move mountains, but where gravity is concerned blind optimism will never overcome meteorological certainty. The wind was light and the ridge correspondingly soft; consequently the air we were in was going up more slowly than the glider we were in was coming down. A further complication was that Hans and I both come in for meals. Our combined bulks along with nearly full tanks, the weight of the electric winch and various other odds and sods meant that the likelihood of soaring a soft ridge was never very good. It was very much a case of one pace forward two paces back, or one foot up two feet down. Either way gravity seemed to be winning, as the overall trend had a distinctly downward feel to it. Not wanting to be too pushy I suggested that I would be delighted to re-start the engine, but showing considerable and probably unfounded faith Hans indicated that he would be equally happy for me to land engine-off on Talgarth's 315m south-west runway. So trim forward, unlock the airbrakes and in we went. The powerful top surface airbrakes have a nice, progressive feel to them, making it a cinch to nail the airspeed at 55kt. If the approach is made under power a detent holds the airbrakes partially open, allowing them to be used to cut down on the float in a similar fashion as flaps. The Super Dimona is powerful enough to go around in this configuration. Approach control is excellent and the landing was easy, requiring just a touch of the hydraulic toe brakes at the end of the ground run. Hans then demonstrated a very interesting feature; with the engine off he pushed the prop lever fully forward and the prop promptly unfeathered. This was very impressive. I now had a pretty good idea of what it was like at one end of the rope, but what would it be like at the other?

By a happy coincidence a K-13 was loitering at the launch point as we taxied back and I slipped gracefully from one cockpit to the next. While I was securing the glider's back seat and strapping in Hans quickly fitted the mirror, unwound the towrope and launched a Discus. Talgarth's Pawnee, the famous "Old Gasper" has more than twice as many horses as the Super Dimona and, particularly at the start of the ground roll, it showed. However, as soon as the K-13's wings started to take the weight off the wheel things improved considerably. Once both aircraft were airborne the climb rate was only a few knots down on the average glider tug and needless to say far less noise was made and fuel burnt. I released in the soft ridge lift and Hans promptly shut down and joined me. Solo, he appeared to have no trouble staying up, testimony to either the Super Dimona's soaring potential or my own vast weight!

At this stage in a FLYER air test it is traditional to summarise the test aircraft's virtues and shortcomings. However, the Super Dimona is probably the first true multi-role gliding club aircraft, consequently it can only be properly evaluated when it is considered in each of the individual roles that it can perform as either trainer, tourer or tug plane.

For basic training, navigation exercises and particularly field landing practice I would rate it very highly indeed. The low noise output and high rate of climb being especially advantageous in the field-landing regime. Engine-off it soars well, only the slightly heavy controls marring the handling. Overall, very nice indeed with my only real gripe being the position of the right seat's airbrake lever.

As a tourer it can cruise in excess of the critical 100kt threshold with very reasonable fuel flows. It should also be pointed out that, unlike most General Aviation touring aircraft it is almost impossible to give absolute figures for range and endurance. In optimum conditions and the right hands it could certainly remain aloft for several days and also potentially cover vast distances. Under such conditions the deciding factor would be pilot endurance and even here the Super Dimona scores highly; the cockpit is comfortable and quiet with adequate heating, ventilation and an integral sunshade. The capacious baggage area is accessible in flight and can take up to 20kg in weight. Amongst the many options available is a larger fuel tank of 80 litres. This takes the engine-on endurance (with reserves) to about six hours.

As a tow plane it is perfectly adequate, as long as you are operating off a hard surface. Should the ground be in any way soft or the grass long and/or wet, then 115 horses simply aren't enough. Indeed, less than 200hp probably would not even pull a heavy sailplane out of the mud, let alone propel it to flying speed in any reasonable runway length. Needless to say, field retrieves would be out of the question. Let's face it, the best thing to pull you out of a farmer's field is a tractor, and that's exactly what a Pawnee is! Apart from the lack of sheer grunt in most other respects the Super Dimona is actually a very good tug. Visibility is good and a liquid-cooled engine is a must for any tow plane. With the dreaded ogre of shock-cooling removed the powerful airbrakes can be used to great effect. Although the Super Dimona is slightly slower in the climb it is definitely quicker in the descent, making the total time for the tow comparable with most current tugs, but quieter and at a much reduced fuel consumption. Overall maintenance costs should be lower too, for although the TBO's of both engine and prop are lower than American-engined tugs the cost of the actual overhaul is considerably less. As pre-

viously pointed out the Super Dimona is an exceptionally quiet aircraft and in the environmentally conscious times that we live in this is a not inconsequential plus. Many gliding clubs are not allowed to aerotow because of the noise created by the average tug, but have planning permission for motor gliders. Could the Super Dimona be the machine they've been waiting for? I must admit that initially I wondered if the fixtures and fittings (ie, canopy latch) would be rugged enough for club use. I have been a Tug Master for five years, and in that time I've seen gorillas masquerading as tug pilots that could rip the trim winder out of an Ag-Truck while eating a banana with the other hand! However, the Super Dimona is very similar to the Katana, an aircraft that is operated successfully by many flying clubs so I suspect that it is probably more rugged than it looks. Another big plus is the ability to fold the wings, making it possible to tuck the Super Dimona into a corner of the club hanger. One thing's for sure; – it's a far better tug plane than a Pawnee is for field landing practice!

As already mentioned the aircraft is offered with either nose or tailwheel undercarriage and as we close I must admit to a strong preference for the tailwheel configuration. Quite apart from the multitude of practical considerations regarding having the wheel at the back when you're operating off of grass, such as the improved ground/prop clearance, for me the aesthetics of the taildragger win over the trike every time. It is a little known but fundamental law of aerodynamics that if a flying machine is not huge and is powered by a propeller then the third wheel should be at the back. The converse of this law is that should the flying machine be quite large, or is jet or rocket propelled then the third wheel must be at the front. Quite apart from the fact that the trike layout of the TTC is not as attractive as the TTS the taildragger is also slightly faster, has a better best glide, lower minimum sink and uses less runway to take off. I'm sure that some of you will be thinking "*Diamond offer the Super Dimona as a taildragger, so why not buy the TTS?*" Well, if you all send me enough money, I will.





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Ground operated radio (mobile in vehicles)	Channel mode only	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	E1-299 606, E11 per advice
Ground operated radio (fixed base)	Channel mode only	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	EU 160 626, E11 per advice

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Queensland Soaring Association
Club Development Seminar
and
Annual General Meeting
Saturday 31 May - Sunday 1 June 2003

The Queensland Soaring Association Club Development Seminar will be held on Saturday 31st May 2003 commencing at 10.00 am and continuing on Sunday 1 June until 3.00pm, at the Scout Aviation Centre, Archerfield Aerodrome.

The Annual General Meeting of the Queensland Soaring Association will be held as part of the seminar on Saturday evening 31st May 2003 commencing at 7.30 pm.

The seminar theme will be - Increasing our club activity levels

The objectives for the seminar will be

- To share knowledge and information
- To learn from each other
- To learn new ways to increase our membership and participation levels statewide

The keynote presenter will be Terry Cubley, GFA Development Officer.

All meals and overnight accommodation will be available at the centre.

All members of QSA clubs are invited to attend and participate.

Please advise Ralph Henderson if you plan to attend so that we can arrange catering and accommodation, everyone is welcome.

Ralph Henderson, Secretary

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PARAGLIDING SAFETY COMPARED TO SAILPLANING

“Experience is what we get only after we need it”

R. Schierbeek



PARAGLIDING IS EASY?

A paraglider looks like an easy machine to fly when you see an experienced pilot take to the air, effortlessly being lifted off a grassy mountain slope. No difficult controls like ailerons, side-rudders, flaps, etc – just two toggles for left and right. If you look at the cockpit of a sailplane it is obvious that some skills are needed to understand the instruments and use the controls. Flying a paraglider, however, doesn't need much knowledge or skills, right? Wrong!

A paraglider pilot needs perhaps less knowledge than a sailplane pilot, but at least as much in the way of skills. When I started a paragliding course in France in the summer of 1994 it was soon clear to me that I needed different skills than what I had learnt from sailplaning (though my flying experience and meteorological knowledge would be useful). In gaining experience, sailplane pilots have an advantage. Two-seat gliders always have double controls, making it much easier to teach gliding. Before they can fly solo, sailplane pilots get at least a two-week 40+ flights course with an instructor in the back ready to correct errors. At my first paragliding course I could make a reasonable forward launch after one day of training. Later I would learn that a reverse launch is a lot more difficult, especially if the cliff starts only three metres behind you. The art of reverse launching took me a long time to learn. In the first years I was really impressed by cool paraglider pilots who would love to tell you a strong story over a glass of beer. What impressed me most were the small things they noticed. Once I was sitting on a hill next to an instructor, when he pointed somewhere way down the slope to a bush that was moving a little bit: “*There's a thermal coming up.*” In a sailplane everything is more global; a thermal you recognise by

your vario, not by branches or bushes. Usually you are flying so high that even the movement of trees is hard to see.

Though the control of a paraglider is easier, the flying itself is just as difficult as flying a sailplane. Perhaps more so, because a paraglider pilot needs skills for handling his wing. A glider pilot doesn't have to worry about his wings; these will stay on the aircraft unless he collides with another aircraft or an object (both unlikely occurrences). A paraglider, however, has a wing which can “tuck”: the folding of a small or large piece of the wing. I will call it a “floppy” aircraft, in contrast to “fixed-wing” aircraft (gliders and powered aircraft) and “flex-wing” aircraft (FAI category for hang gliders). The foldable wing is the major advantage of a paraglider. It is in fact a backpack airplane, portable anywhere. However, the same floppiness is a disadvantage in the air, as the accident statistics show.



ACCIDENT STATISTICS FOR PARAGLIDERS

Research by the DHV in 1996 showed that big collapses are the most frequent cause of accidents. Most accidents happen between 1pm and 3pm when thermal activity is at its peak. The next most frequent cause is a badly planned landing. Stall and/or negatives are not listed as a separate category, but will probably cause serious accidents.

The accident reports on Big Air paragliding also show that collapses are a major cause of accidents. The accidents in 1998 from the Big Air reports are caused by:

<i>Collapses:</i>	6
<i>Launch errors:</i>	3
<i>Collapses followed by stalls:</i>	2
<i>Stalls:</i>	2
<i>Bad landing planning:</i>	2
<i>Other causes:</i>	4

Of the 19 accident reports, collapses (eight) are clearly the most common cause. Both sources of accident statistics indicate that paraglider pilots flying in thermic mountain air should be aware of the possibility of tucks and collapses and be prepared to counter them.

I want to talk more about the paraglider stall because it illustrates how a paraglider flies and reacts in a totally different way compared to a sailplane. It is a manoeuvre that should be understood and avoided. A stall in a sailplane is impressive, but the recovery is easy. The aircraft dives, picks up speed and 50m lower you fly normally again. A stall in a sailplane is therefore quite tame, whereas a paraglider stall is a spectacular manoeuvre more like aerobatics. A paraglider, because of its floppiness, doesn't only stop flying, it will also lose its shape. Suddenly the wing shape is gone, and above you is a flapping horseshoe shape thing which doesn't resemble a wing anymore. After stalling and moving behind you, the paraglider will inflate and then fly forward at high speed. The better the paraglider, the faster it will fly. A beginner paraglider is designed not to react violently, while an advanced wing can really snap forward fast, and it can do this with such force that it may end up in front and below you, which can make you fall into the wing.

An experienced paraglider pilot will fold the brake-lines several times around his hands before stalling. After the wing is stalled the hands are pushed below the harness and held there to stabilise the stalled wing. Then, when the wing is more or less steady above you, let go slowly of the brakes to get the wing flying and recover it in a controlled way. This way you can prevent the wing from flying forward too much. Warning: don't try this without an instructor and above water. If you don't brake the wing



Photos: [www.bytelife.com/safe/english.htm]



when it is behind you it can shoot forward quite far after it reinflates. If it gets in front of you it can be difficult to recover. If it gets even further in front or below you, you can end up with the paraglider folded around you; the best thing to do then is to pull the reserve – if you still can.

A paraglider can also do a full frontal stall or frontal collapse – this is when the leading edge tucks downward and breaks the wing abruptly. This usually happens spontaneously and at a high speed or with changes in vertical windspeed, for example when exiting from a thermal. My first time experiencing this was when I flew out of a nice big thermal above Oludeniz at cloudbase somewhere above 2,000m. Because of the sudden change in vertical airspeed from an upward to downward current, the wing collapsed and shot backwards before I realised what had happened. One second later I was even more surprised when the performance wing shot forward and was on the horizon before me. After that I was able to dampen it and fly on. At 2,000m you don't have to be really worried, but it was a nasty surprise. A wing can also get small and large collapses; this happens often in mountains because of turbulence. A large collapse means half your wing is gone – inconvenient when you are flying along a rock face.



THE KICKS AND THE RISKS

My first experience with a full-stall impressed me. I had never seen one... for good reasons because no paraglider pilot will even consider doing a stall manoeuvre unless he is quite high. However, in sailplanes I had made hundreds of stalls, so it couldn't be much more difficult, right? It turned out to be a lot more difficult, for the simple reason that, contrary to a normal wing, a paraglider deflates fully.

Ridge soaring above the Goa beach I was flying a beginners wing, and was at about 100m above the Indian

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Ocean, very close to the beach, when I tried my first stall. Slowly I pulled down the brakes, until I was flying very slowly and could feel the wing getting close to stalling. A sailplane wing usually starts shaking at this moment: a last minute warning that the laminar airflow is letting go of the wing and you are close to stall speed. A paraglider wing gives less warning, but starts feeling soft ("mushy") as the air pressure drops. Just before the stall the outer wingtips will start moving back as they stop flying first.

Then I pulled firmly down and went into a full-stall. The wing shot backward, and I observed it deflating fully. Then time started slowing down... 100m is not that high, and the wing seemed to take a long time to inflate again. In retrospect it probably took not more than four or five seconds, but five seconds of falling down is a very long time. If I had kept my arms up all the time things might have worked out nicely, but during the recovery I must have pulled down one arm a little bit, or done something else to influence the wing, because after it zoomed forward fully inflated it went negative immediately. I did one quick 90 degree turn left and then found myself flying towards the ridge I had started from. No time to turn, wind in my back, I flew straight towards a tree. I managed to put one of my boots on a big branch to break the crash, and there I was hanging in the tree. A few scratches was all the damage. A friend and I got the paraglider out of the tree in one piece... with a lot of cursing. Well, a floppy wing stall is quite different from a fixed wing stall.

Why all this talk about a manoeuvre many beginning pilots probably don't want to know about? Two reasons. One: it is best to avoid a stall, or the even more dangerous counterpart, the negative. In order to understand a stall it is necessary to try it, or at least get close to it in a safe situation. Two: when in serious trouble, where the lines are tangled or in some other situations, a stall may be the only way to recover your wing.

I am now a recreational paraglider pilot with about 70 mountain flights under my belt. I am very happy with my intermediate paraglider, an APCO-Sentra. The mountain flights were made mostly above hills on the seaside where, because of the stable sea-breeze, the chance of tucks is minimal. Paragliding still is a great kick – I can feel the wind, the thermals, the smallest change in the airflow. At a thousand metres above the sea at Oludeniz I can look down between my knees and see nothing between me and the azure-blue water of the Mediterranean. A thousand metres of empty air.

In a sailplane four kilometres high, there



is also a lot of empty air below you, but you are not aware of it. In a cockpit you are removed from the airflow and the elements. It makes flying both safer and more remote. Sailplaning is a different sort of kick to paragliding – it is a totally different feeling. In a sailplane you can fly at 100km/h, 10m from a rock wall. With a paraglider you can fly at 30km/h a few metres from the rocks (in stable conditions of course, for example in a nice smooth seabreeze). This low speed has advantages: you can fly more precisely, land on any grassy field, and use small thermals (microlift) to go up.

A Schleicher Ka-8 is an old-fashioned, small and light wooden sailplane that can fly much slower than modern glassfibre sailplanes. Because you can fly at 65km/h in thermals where glassfibre gliders have to fly at 80km/h, you can turn smaller circles. Many times I have outflown glassfibre gliders in a Ka-8 because I could get into the centre of the thermal where the upward flow is best. My impression is that paragliders thermal better still because they fly at about bird-speed.

But there are also risks for paragliders. My experience is that there is a real chance of injuries and broken bones. I sprained an ankle: it took half a year to heal. A friend of mine planned his landing badly, landing on dry and hard polder grass and forgetting to bend his knees: a broken leg which healed in six weeks. An English friend of mine tried a new performance wing with just too much wind; he went negative in a gust, was thrown against the hill and felt first his ankle break, then his leg and finally his hip. He's now walking okay again, but will recover slowly. I did some safety training only after having a few rude surprises. It is an interesting experience, and almost 100% safe, because it is done above water. You can, for example, make the right half of your canopy collapse. If you then lean towards the left in the harness you will fly straight ahead. Lean a little bit towards the right, however, and within seconds you'll go down in a spiral dive.

SAFETY SUGGESTIONS

Are paragliders less safe than sailplanes? No, safety is in the hands of the pilot more than in the material. Paragliding is the ultimate

freedom and at the same time a minimum of protection; if the pilot is aware of his limitations then he will have respect for wind, clouds and the elements. An error in judgement of the flying conditions will probably have more severe consequences for a paraglider pilot than for a sailplane pilot. A paraglider is vulnerable; where a sailplane pilot will only feel a bump at 100km/h, a paraglider pilot may get a big tuck and get stuck against a mountain. Flying is much less forgiving than other sports. This is obvious for parachute jumping, but many people who start paragliding don't realise this. A good place to start is a site that gives friendly big thermals and no serious turbulence when the windspeed is low. In 23 years of sailplane flying I only remember a few instances of serious turbulence, and that was at a windspeed of five or six Beaufort, well above what a paraglider can fly in. In mountains the thermals can be strong and violent, and there is always turbulence. At coastal sites you can rely on a nice and stable sea-breeze without turbulence.

Last, but not least, a few safety suggestions:

- *Start paragliding with a training course given by a good instructor.*
- *Learn flying with a beginners wing.*
- *Find good landing gear: sturdy mountain boots or special paragliding boots.*
- *Learn a good landing technique (knees bent), or even better, learn the Parachute Landing Fall (PLF) to cushion a hard landing.*
- *Do a safety training course above water before you fly in thermic mountain air.*
- *Try to anticipate where turbulence and rotor will occur – ask the experts.*
- *"It's better to be on the ground wishing you were in the air, than in the air wishing you were on the ground!"*



HGFA General Manager's Report

With the 100 year anniversary of powered flight, I read an account of an address by Wilbur Wright describing he and his brother's experiments at Kitty Hawk. The following excerpt from the article was quite prophetic – it followed his description regarding the complexities of adding power to their un-powered prototype.

"There is another way of flying that requires no artificial motor, and many workers believe that success will first come by this road. I refer to soaring flight, by which the machine is permanently sustained in the air by the same means that are employed by soaring birds. They spread their wings to the wind, and sail by the hour, with no perceptible exertion beyond that required to balance and steer themselves. What sustains them is not definitely known, though it is almost certain that it is a rising current of air. But whether it be a rising current or something else, it is as well able to support a flying machine as a bird, if man once learns the art of utilising it.

In gliding flight it has long been known that the rate of vertical descent is very much retarded and the duration of the flight greatly prolonged if a strong wind blows up the face of the hill parallel to its surface.

Our machine, when gliding in still air, has a rate of vertical descent of nearly six feet per second, while in a wind blowing 26mph up a steep hill we made glides in which the rate of descent was less than two feet per second. And during the larger part of this time, while the machine remained exactly in the rising current, there was no descent at all, but even a slight rise.

If the operator had had sufficient skill to keep himself from passing beyond the rising current, he would have been sustained indefinitely at a point higher than that from which he started.

The slow glides in rising currents probably hold out greater hope of extensive practice than any other method within man's reach, but they have the disadvantage of requiring rather strong winds or very large supporting surfaces. However, when gliding operators have attained greater skill, they can, with comparative safety, maintain themselves in the air for hours at a time in this way, and thus by constant practice so increase their knowledge and skill that they can rise into the higher air and search out the currents which enable the soaring birds to transport themselves to any desired point

by first rising in a circle to a great height and then sailing off at a descending angle."

There you go – too easy – all we need is "constant practice" to enable us to "transport ourselves to any desired point".

Motorised Operations

State organisation and clubs members are currently assisting me to identify a couple of motorised paraglider pilots doing the wrong thing. I remind all operators of these aircraft that they are bound by the requirements of CAO 95.8 and the Operations Manual (as are we all). The pilots in question have generated complaints from householders by flying low over built up areas (one was reported flying down the middle of a suburban main road early in the morning – a great way to generate public angst).

Amendment to Microlight Registration Requirements

Following concern with the federation's aging trike fleet, the Safety and Operations Committee have decided to implement a change to registration requirements. On completion of the five-yearly inspection report (after the initial five-year registration period), subsequent registration will be provided for two year periods, following which another inspection will be required. I appreciate that biennial inspection does entail some added effort from owner operators, but safety is the winner. The change will be made in the coming month or two – the two-year rego fee will be \$50+ GST.

IPPI Cards

Some members appear to misunderstand the purpose of the International Pilot Proficiency Identification Card (known as IPPI card). It is, as the name implies, simply an identification of the level of pilot standard for use internationally. The federation buys the cards from the CIVL (the FAI commission relating to hang gliding and paragliding) and on-sells them to members. A card shows the pilot's HGFA rating level as an international rating, and the card can then be used to verify pilot skill level throughout the world. Similarly we ask that overseas pilots coming here carry an IPPI card to enable us to verify their skills prior to issuing a Visiting Pilot Membership. We have had several members ask for IPPI cards to take overseas when they have no pilot certificate issued here – obviously a waste of time and money (the current fee for an IPPI card is \$15 which only just covers the costs of the card, administration and postage).

We don't have an equivalent card for microlighting, as usually to determine skill level, a microlight pilot undergoes a check

flight with an instructor or a similarly qualified person to gain a reciprocal certificate in another country.

Accident Reports

No 1

Pilot: Advanced HG pilot
Experience: 200+ hours total, 15 hours last 90 days
Glider: High performance HG
Pilot injury: Possible broken ribs, deep laceration to thigh
Glider damage: Broken keel, leading edge, nose fittings and hardware
Location: Inland out-landing
Conditions: <10kt wind, light/moderate turbulence

Description:

After an hour in the air, the pilot flew cross-country until encountering strong sink, and having few options, was forced to land in an oval. After turning onto final he realised that he had failed to recognise that the seabreeze had come in. Finding himself tailwind and overshooting the oval, he was forced to turn cross-wind; and hit a fence as the upper wing clipped powerlines.

Comments:

The pilot left himself few options and little time to make a critical decision once he hit strong sink – never a good combination.

Several very similar reports were received as follows:

Pilot: Restricted/intermediate paraglider pilots
Experience: Three reports 6 to 36 hours experience
Glider: DHV 1-2 or 2-3 PGs
Pilot Injury: Broken ankle, bruising, lacerations, nil
Glider Damage: Nil
Location: Coastal soaring sites
Conditions: 12-15kt nil/light turbulence

Description:

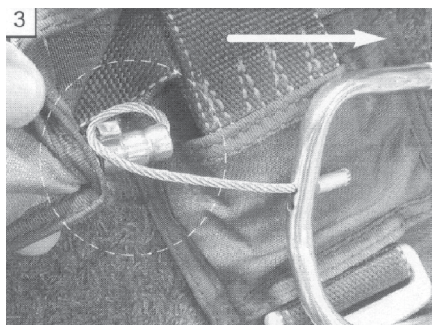
All these three reports had a similar theme, each failed to be able to get safely off the hill due to wind strength. One pilot pulled the glider up on his own and was immediately lifted a metre and dragged backward and sideways, breaking an ankle on landing. Another was also dragged backward and sideways and was lucky to suffer minor lacerations when collecting a rock outcrop. Despite using an anchor, the third was dragged along the ground and was unhurt.

Comments:

These accidents appear a result of the Man misjudging the Air – AirManShip is the key! Fly safely, Craig Worth



Letters to the Editors



PDF Handle

Parachute de France bulletin – P512 Flexpack pilot's rig

There is a new bulletin warning of the possibility of pigtailing the ripcord on the clamp that secures the end of the ripcord housing on the Flexpack pilot's rig. It would not be as obvious as the photo shows since it would be covered by the handle pocket and could occur if the handle was knocked from its pocket and replaced in the field. The bulletin is also concerned that the handle can be positioned out

of its pocket incorrectly and insecurely.

The Parachute Federation is not aware of any of these rigs being in Australia and it should be assumed that the handle security and free movement of the ripcord would be part of any final checks at any repack.

If anyone has a PdF Flexpack could they contact me.

This entire bulletin is available through our service bulletin web listing at [www.apf.asn.au/apf_services/sb.asp].

John Chapman, APF Technical Officer
<chappo@apf.asn.au>, ph: 02 6281 6830

Soaring Calendar

AUSTRALIA

National Gathering of Trikes 3-4 May 2003

Wangaratta Airfield, VIC. This will be an event consisting of social flying and flying activities such as day trips in the local area, informative seminars and skills improvement exercises.
For details contact Ian Rees on 03 9762 1364 or see Club News section this issue.

Warkworth Aerobatics 7-8 June 2003

An informal, fun aerobatic competition to be held on the Queen's Birthday weekend at the Hunter Valley Gliding Club. See the Hunter Valley club web pages for more information: [www.hvga.us-soaring.on.net] or email: <HVGC@Sandercock.com>.

GLIDING FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA

Airworthiness Inspection

FORM 2 AND C OF A NOTICE

- ☐ A form 2 inspection is due and a cheque for \$143* is enclosed
- ☐ The C of A requires renewal. A cheque for \$33* is enclosed for renewal and the existing C of A document is returned
- ☐ Initial registration package is required and a cheque for \$363* is enclosed

* Fees include GST

A) DOCUMENTATION REQUEST

- ☐ Please send me a change of certificate and owner document
- ☐ Please send me an application to register an aircraft form

Aircraft Type

Registration marks VH –

Address to which documents are to be sent is:

Name

Address

State. Postcode

Forward to: GFA Airworthiness Secretariat,
130 Wirraway Road,
Essendon Airport VIC 3041

St Bernards Canungra Classic 2003 27 September – 4 October 2003 (East Coast and SA school holidays)

Canungra, Qld. Registration Friday 26th (not Saturday morning). Entry fee \$120 (\$150 if paid after 31 August) + \$40 site fees. GPS mandatory, intermediate with inland experience. Cheques/ money order made out to 'Classic Account CHGC', Rod Stead, 9 Griffith St, North Tamborine 4272; or preferably EFTPOS/Visa to Vicki Smith at St Bernards on ph: 07 55451177. Any registration enquiries to Rod Stead on 0428 132215, 07 55450969 or email <canungrahg@hotmail.com> (please note change of email from last year). To register visit [www.triptera.com.au/canungra] and follow the links to the 2003 Canungra Classic. Accommodation at the motel for nine nights is \$460 per single, \$550 per couple, \$640 twin share and family \$730. To stay in the hotel rooms will be a flat rate of \$25 a day per person. For enquiries and bookings call Vicki or Chris Howes on 07 55450088. We had a great week last year with seven valid days of flying. Max number of pilots 75. PGs, floaters and int's welcome.

The Dalby Big Air Carnivale 6-10 October 2003

Dalby Aerodrome, NSW. The Dalby Hang Gliding Club Inc is running an aerotow HG competition at the Dalby Aerodrome from Monday 6 to Friday 10 October 2003. This is the week directly after the Canungra Classic, so come on up to sunny Queensland for a fantastic fortnight of flying, firstly in the scenic panorama of mountain ranges surrounding Canungra, followed by soaring the endless cotton-ball dotted skies over the vast patchwork of crop farms that is the Darling Downs. The Dalby Big Air Carnivale promises to be an enjoyable event with the emphasis on safe towing and getting pilots airborne with many hours and miles under their belts. Register online to secure your place now! [www.triptera.com.au/pteraComp/index.php].

Gulgong Classic 2003 19-23 November

Gulgong Gliding Strip, NSW. Comp to be held in the same format as 2002. Come and see if it can be epic two years in a row. Comp dates: 19-22 November, 23rd as reserve. Entries will be strictly limited to 50 aerotow qualified pilots. Entry fee is \$100 plus \$35 for strip fees (total of \$135). Pay per tow. Due to the complexity of organising tugs, a late fee of \$50 will be imposed for entries received after 30 September. Enquiries to <gulgongclassic@telstra.com> or ph: 02 4942 3131 or 0412 423 133. On line rego at [www.triptera.com.au/pteraComp/index.php].

OVERSEAS

Russian PG Open 2003 30 June – 6 July 2003

Koessen, Austria. The Russian PG Open will be held in Austria this year. It will be FAI Cat 2 and so count towards WRPS. Please find full invitation and local regulations at [www.tirol.com/fly-koessen]. This event will be a milestone for Russian PG, with the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, expected to visit.

Third Junior World Gliding Championships 2003 5-19 July 2003

Nitra, Slovakia. Preliminary entries for the event will close on 15 January 2003 and final entries must be made by 31 March 2003.
If you are interested in taking part in the event contact: Tim Shirley 0417 268073 or <tshirley@bigpond.net.au> for further information.

The Red Bull X-Alps 14 July 2003

Austria. 15 athletes will launch from Austria's Dachstein Massif and embark on the world's toughest PG comp. The race requires the pilots to cross the Alps from east to west without any other means of transportation. Monaco, the destination, is 800km from Dachstein and must be reached in three weeks or less. Prize money: 20,000 Euros. Teams can choose their own routes from Dachstein to Monaco. Each of the 15 PG pilots is backed up by one ground supporter, who provides food, replacement parts, equipment and information such as daily weather forecasts. The comp is limited to three weeks: if no team has reached Monaco by then, the Red Bull X-Alps 2003 will be stopped and the entire prize money will jackpot for 2004. If inclement weather makes flying impossible, the participants must make up for lost time and distance in the Alps by covering as much ground as possible by foot: mobilised transportation of any kind is forbidden. The Red Bull X-Alps is an invitational race, but teams can register for this spectacular event and hope for a wild card spot by the organisers. All information at [www.redbullxalps.com].

Bolu PG Festival 2003 July 20-26

Turkey. Festival includes an international paragliding festival. All expenses during the festival are covered by the organisation, including accommodation, meals and transportation. Registration fee: 45 Euro. All PG pilots are invited.
Email <info@bogaziciparagliding.com>, ph: +905325600692, see [www.bogaziciparagliding.com].

Manfred Rueff and Ray Addinsall Awarded Life Membership

Andrew Wright

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

CERTIFICATES WERE AWARDED TO FOUNDATION MEMBERS OF MT BEAUTY GLIDING CLUB, MANFRED RUEFF AND RAY ADDINSALL BY CLUB PRESIDENT ANDREW EVANS AT THE CLUB'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ON 9 MARCH 2003.



President of Mt Beauty Gliding Club, Andrew Evans presents Life Membership certificates to Manfred Rueff and Ray Addinsall

Manfred and Ray have been actively involved with the club since its inception in 1976. Ray had been president of the club from 1976 to 2002, while Manfred has been a mainstay of the club, putting in many hours of voluntary work in the training of new pilots, maintaining the glider used by the club, mowing of the Mt Beauty airfield and secretarial duties for the club.

The IS28 dual seater glider used by the club is owned by Manfred and Ray and without this generous gesture the club could not operate.

Mt Beauty Gliding Club is a very active, small club with 23 members, which is reversing the current national trend in many gliding clubs, by experiencing some growth in membership. Members enjoy flights over the alps, regularly flying over the summit of Victoria's highest mountain, Mt Bogong.

Enquiries about Mt Beauty Gliding Club may be directed to President Andrew Evans on telephone number (03) 5833 5583 or email <andrew@g-mwater.com.au>.



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GFA Development Officer's Report

Terry Cubley

A Look at Packages

I have mentioned the value of having a package deal to offer your new members. It is all about getting people through the door, giving them an opportunity to really try the sport, and with a fixed cost they can quickly determine if they can afford to participate. And remember, ours is a relatively inexpensive sport.

1. Passenger flight (AEF, TIF, etc)

- Aerotow to 3,000ft, 25-30 minutes
- Winch launch: One to three flights. Maximum of 30 minutes (some say that multiple flights add value). Three winch launches cost similar to an aerotow?
- Free video, certificate, poster
- Club membership information pack (up to date)

If they enjoy this, offer them the following option

2. One-month package

- Reimburse AEF cost
- One month GFA membership
- One month club membership
- Twelve flights aerotow (four to 2,000ft, eight to 1,500ft) or say 15-20 by winch
- Logbook, trainee card, Basic Gliding Knowledge, club T-shirt or hat

You need to make sure that you can provide the number of flights offered. Say one day per weekend means at least three flights per day, probably at least four.

3. Three-month package

- Reimburse AEF cost
- Three month GFA membership
- Three month club membership
- 30 flights aerotow (10 to 2,000ft, 20 to 1,500ft) or say 50 winch launches
- Logbook, trainee card, Basic Gliding Knowledge, club T-shirt or hat

You do the calculation – how much would this cost your current members? You can either discount this amount as an attraction, or add something too it to compensate for the work that your current members have to put in.

The aim of the game is to make their experience as positive as possible – success means that they take up a 12-month membership.

A Role for Commercial Organisations in Australian Soaring

I recently visited Tocumwal. It has been a few years since I was there, and I must say that I was impressed by the improvement of the look of the place, the great facilities and their very professional approach to making the sport enjoyable.

I have been a "club member" since I started gliding many years ago. I believe that the club approach to gliding is great, it really suits my style of flying and certainly my budget. I don't mean this section to be an advert for Tocumwal, but I must say that their professional approach, and that of the other commercial organisations, is very important for the growth of our sport and all clubs and pilots need to look closely at the value provided by these gliding enthusiasts.

Tocumwal is focused on customer satisfaction. Predominantly it has an international clientele, only a relatively small percentage of Australian pilots, but the number of Australian pilots is increasing.

What is the offering?

- They have focus on fairly high quality aircraft that are easy to fly (LS4/LS6). Often not readily available in club operation, people can often fly an aircraft above what they would typically fly in their club. This is not dangerous, the aircraft are all easy to fly, but clubs have many other considerations in terms of satisfying a variety of people, ensuring utilisation, creating a desire for progression, etc.
- Australian pilots come up for a few days or a week's holiday. They can fly aircraft that may not be available in their club,

concentrated flying, positive atmosphere. Lots of flying. Lots of fun.

- A Swedish pilot said that he does more flying in a week at Tocumwal than he can achieve in a season at his club in Sweden (weather, waiting for his turn in club glider, etc)
- A lot of attention on aircraft appearance (their IS28 has been painted and looks like a fibreglass aircraft).
- Instruments being updated (B2000).
- Loggers are provided – using Volks-loggers as these are easy to use and download.
- All flights are downloaded on a computer set up in the bar, to verify badges, records or just to analyse flights.

Training Courses

- Train in Blaniks as these are easy to fly for short courses – easier to get people to solo
- Off-season courses cost approximately \$1,600 for six days, 30 flights, six night's accommodation (an average of \$53 per flight). This seems like quite good value to me. Many clubs would benefit from promoting this option to their new members. If the new member were to attend any of the full-time commercial organisations, they can make rapid progress and cut out maybe six months of flying at the club over weekends.
- The club will still need to spend some time training the new member, but they are starting from a much higher base and the member will see much faster progress into the sport.
- Consider the cost to your club of providing the basic training to new members – equipment, instructors, time of other members, etc. And if the person leaves because progress is too slow, then all this effort is wasted and we have lost a member to the movement.
- Your committee needs to look closely at the advantages of promoting the commercial organisations to new members. This may require some very old-fashioned views being turned around.
- These courses are not for everyone – it requires time and money up front.
- The total cost is probably not much different from achieving the same level in the club at weekends.

Trend in people taking up gliding

In my trips around I am starting to see evidence of a few different groups that are taking up the sport of gliding. Two of these groups are



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- **Ex-airline pilots**

These people are keen on aviation, they want to keep flying but want to enjoy the flying that they do.

- **Hang glider pilots**

Some of these pilots are older hang glider pilots who find they take a little longer to 'recover from the bruises' than they used to. However, many are young hang glider and paraglider pilots who still want to continue with their preferred sport but realise that they can go soaring on more days, in rougher weather, and that they can experience better performance.

Of course, there are many glider pilots who are moving in the opposite direction. Many continue with all three forms of soaring, and have a great time doing it.

A couple who I have spoken to have mentioned that the combined magazine (Soaring Australia) has been instrumental in them finding out about the other sports and having a trial flight.

For the competitively minded, it is no surprise that ex-hang glider pilots are demonstrating their skills by winning at the highest level in gliding competitions. (Thomas Suchanek is probably the most well known, as is Terry Delore)

Promotion ideas

Someone asked recently, what are some of the easy-to-implement promotion ideas that clubs can use.

The following are some of the ideas that clubs have used around Australia. They are by no means exhaustive but all have resulted in success.

One point of caution. Even easy ideas have to be followed through. There is no value in starting something unless you are prepared to make some time commitment, enough to see the success, and to measure the success. Three months may be enough in some examples, 12 months in others.

- *The personal approach is by far the most successful.*
- *Have lots of children – most juniors flying in Australia are the children of current or previous members*
- *Tell your friends. Follow through on those casual conversations, invite them out for a flight, offer them a lift to the club.*
- *Some clubs have offered a finders' fee. If you introduce a new member, you get a discount on your flying or membership fee.*

- *Beaufort Gliding Club members have placed notices in supermarkets leaving their personal contact number. Having a personal contact encourages a number of people.*
- *Placing small adverts in local papers, in particular community newspapers. The Balaclava club attracted quite a few new members from their farming/ small town communities.*
- *Weekly or monthly articles in local papers. The Wagga club regularly places an article in the sports section of their local paper. A number of people have followed up and come out to join the club (note – they have a member who does this every week/month. You must have this consistent approach otherwise people just don't notice.)*
- *The Wagga club members also pass out numbered postcards to interested people. A raffle is drawn monthly, the winner gets a free flight.*

Please send me in some examples that your club has used with success and I will record in future editions.

Remember [www.soaring.com.au]



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WHY DO I DO IT?

Jeanette Walker



Jeanette Walker at Mansfield with the trike she shares with her husband Stan

WHILE DOING A BIT OF SOUL
SEARCHING I WAS TRYING TO
PUT INTO WORDS WHAT TRIKE
FLYING MEANS TO ME AND
WHY DO I DO IT?

Firstly, every time I have been in a small plane I have been enthralled with the scenery – everything from the way dams shimmer as wind ripples over the surface and whips grassy paddocks into frenzies of swirling patterns, to the little cars travelling along roads reminding me of matchbox cars on playmats. Now we fly our own trike we have uninterrupted views and I enjoy everything I see. Miles of paddocks stretching to the horizon, where, depending on the day, hills are either clear or struggling to be seen through haze. Paddocks that continually change according to their use – horses, cattle or sheep; grass long or extremely short, some paddocks virtually bare. Market gardens with hectares of land looking like a huge patchwork quilt flung carelessly across a bed. Creeks and rivers winding their way back and forth through the paddocks, some with majestic trees hiding the water from all above and others with dry beds patiently waiting for streams to return. Cattle on farms being herded by dogs which are often easier to detect by their shadow on the ground than

actually seeing the dog. Seeing flocks of white cockatoos flying into tree tops way below, then being surprised by a swallow flying at over 1,000ft and wondering if it, too, was just enjoying the view. And of course the houses – from tiny cabins to immense homes – each one has something of interest to catch your attention, whether it be large colourful gardens and bright green lawns to discarded car bodies and other assorted junk. And then if you are lucky enough to fly along a coastline, the ever-changing patterns and colours caused by the differing depths of water are unbelievably beautiful.

I remember flying one day out from Benalla and seeing a graveyard which had me puzzling for some time over what on earth it was. Also, near Benalla, watching out for suitable landing paddocks should one be required and thinking I had found a good even area, only to be shocked shortly after to discover it was a vineyard! Sure looked smooth from several kilometres away!

WHY DO I DO IT?

We were at a stage in our life when we needed a diversion. Stan had always hankered for flying and was more than interested when we drove past Tooradin airstrip one day and saw someone with a trike on a trailer. Our car veered in and Stan ended up with John Oliver's phone number. Within a few weeks we organised trial flights for our two sons and ourselves at Point Cook, and Stan and I commenced lessons soon after.

Looking back, being just on the right side of 50, I saw it as a challenge. Not a "would I be game enough to do it?" sort of challenge, but a challenge of "would I be capable of putting in the hours required to learn something totally different and achieving a trike pilots licence?"

After starting lessons at Point Cook, where we had trouble fitting in lessons around suitable weather, we went to Benalla. Somewhere in our early days of trike meetings I think it was Jenny Ates who said, "We love Benalla." Couldn't relate to that at all, but in a short time we too loved Benalla.

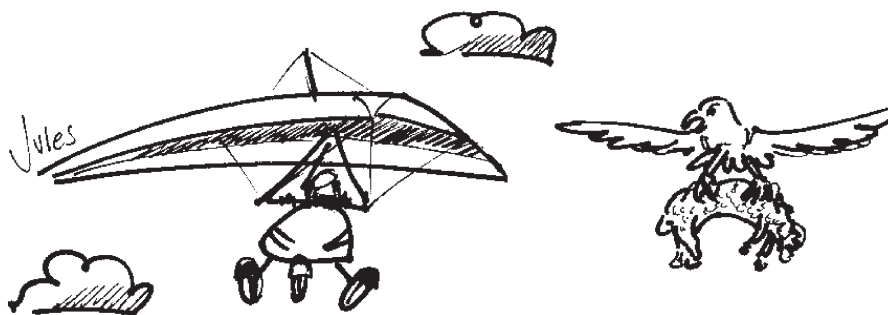
We purchased our trike from Bill Worrall a week before his untimely death. One afternoon a few weeks previous to that I was flying with Tony Dennis while Stan was with Stuart Malone and our son Max was a passenger with Bill Worrall. Tony said, "Wow, all the Walkers are in the air at once, we'll have to call you the Sky Walkers."

And so our trike was named.

Everywhere in the triking fraternity we met friendly, helpful, normal people, and thankfully, quite a lot of women, both pilots and pilots' partners. I say normal, as we have often found when we tell people we fly a trike and then explain what it is, we seem to grow tails or something and end up very 'un-normal' in their eyes.

It has been interesting to see the reaction of friends when we said we were flying a trike. Some always maintain we are mad, and others are so unbelievably enthusiastic. I don't think I told my workmates I was having lessons until after I had completed my first solo the evening before, and I was on such a 'high' that I think I just blurted it out.

Talk about a high. My solo was late in the day as we waited and waited for the conditions at Benalla to be just perfect. So it was last light when I took off, feeling rather naked without Tony's cocooning legs, and completed an uneventful circuit followed by a great landing way down the end of the runway. I was only disappointed that I landed so far from my 'spectators' that they wouldn't have seen it in the dusk, but I remember Therese Dennis saying,



"We know it was a good landing as your trike light didn't wobble."

We arrived home at Pakenham at 10pm after three hours of driving that Sunday night, worn out after the weekend of flying, to find one of our son's had bought me a celebratory cake. It was tremendous.

For me the hardest part of the training was doing the 10 hours solo before you could get the passenger endorsement, going out on freezing cold mornings trying to get the hours up and forcing yourself to stay up just that little bit longer. Then I could thaw out in a patch of sunshine with a hot coffee while Stan pulled on the freezer suit and put in an hour or so. (I could never work out if they're called freezer suits because they are supposed to stop you from freezing or because they don't prevent you from freezing!)

However we persevered through and made it. We obtained our cross-country endorsements at the same time, as we decided we would never make the effort to go back and do it at a later stage – a decision we have never regretted.

Now a few years on the wrong side of fifty, we have a lot of flying to look forward to, but have often found during the past twelve to 18 months the weather has not been suitable at a time we have been available to fly – we've been struggling to make our 10 hours to keep licensed. We have our trike at Tyabb (a 40 minute drive from home) but find it really nice to hangar it at Benalla for a few weeks each year, where, after a three hour drive, we can usually put in some concentrated flying hours.

Some terrific flying trips we have had to date and have stayed overnight at have been from Tyabb to Yarram, Coldstream, Merrijig and Barwon Heads. We've also towed the trike and flown from Orbost, Wangaratta and Mt Beauty on several occasions.

Early in our training we started attending meetings at Jake's in Brighton, a suburb we had never ventured into before. Having a like interest with all others attending, it took only a few meetings until we felt amongst friends. And everyone at those meetings, and all meetings since, had flying experiences to talk about, good and bad, and from everyone we

learnt and continue to learn a lot more about flying.

Advice for anyone attending a trike function is, if you have a question regarding any aspect of flying or your trike maintenance, and someone gives you an answer but you are still unclear, keep asking different pilots, until someone explains it in a different way that you will understand. No one will ever know everything about flying, particularly with a sport which is so weather dependent, but we feel even if we learn one thing at each meeting that might make us stop and consider another safety factor, then the trip to the meeting has been worth it.

We have found the meetings to be an extremely important part of our flying, picking up various hints from others with many years of experience. Every pilot we have come in contact with has helped make our journey happy.

Fly-ins, like our National Gathering at Wangaratta at the start of May, are also important to us all, to experienced and novice pilots alike. A time when we can all give and gain from the experience, and to make welcome all new and prospective trike pilots. We have gained so much from weekends similar to the one planned this year, even down to hints on making packing and trailering your trike easier and more enjoyable. As good camping facilities are available on site at Wangaratta it makes the weekend affordable and family friendly. For those not wanting to camp, great accommodation is available close to the airfield at Wangaratta. The runways are long and wide and usually very few aircraft are in the vicinity compared to other airfields.

We have no idea how many years we will continue to fly before we move on to a new venture, but whatever we do it will be hard to find something as enjoyable as the time we have experienced in our trike club.

After our Trike Club Christmas Party at Tyabb in December, I said to Stan that it was the only place we have ever been where we could go up to every person in the room and enjoy a conversation with a friend.



ZEN AND THE PLEASURE OF NO EXPECTATIONS

Emilis Prelgauskas

CROSS-COUNTRY FLYING GENERALLY HAS A CERTAIN INTENSITY AND STRESS ATTACHED TO IT, WHICH BECOMES NOTICEABLE ONCE OUTSIDE THE GLIDE SLOPE RANGE FROM 'HOME'.

HOME CAN BE DISPLACED AT A CONTEST, OR FOR A DELIVERY FLIGHT, BUT THE STRESSES DURING THE FLIGHT ARE STILL THERE.

Stresses ramped up when no retrieve crew is hovering nearby, or in fact there is a question mark over the availability of a retrieve crew, towplane, car or trailer at all. The towplane may have flown off to help someone else, there may be worrying smells coming from under the car bonnet, and the trailer's still where last parked and has grass growing up through the tyres.

At the beginning of this year I wanted to bring a glider home. By air seemed preferable to tackling holiday road traffic with an ungainly load.

The stress was removed by the availability of a crew, car and trailer in place at both ends of the trip. My own at the home end plus one from the departure end, all borrowed from amongst the gathering for the 2002 vintage glider rally.

The real stress remover was the Kookaburra herself, only a little younger than myself and catching up the gap fast as the years go on, and not a hint of electrics or electronics to be seen. No one would ridicule such an outlanding.

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Club enquiries welcome

The day itself, with moderate thermals going to 3,500ft, made this all the more likely. The distance, only 94km. Time available – all day. Departure included one precautionary return to Stonefield, after the first glide out felt like it would continue to the deck, and there were thermal markers over the strip.

Then burn the bridges, onward ho, the steady climb/glide pattern of cross-country. Each glide feeling this one would end up on the ground – 32kt in the climb, 45kt in the glide. Careful ground track, taking in every possible thermal or reduced sink source while generally on direct track for home.

Brown ploughed paddocks, tree lines along creeks, bitumen road, township; each directly connected or with only a short tippy-toe across unfriendly sink-producing ground.

It all takes time, so there is plenty of that to get lunch and drinks from the strapped-in box on the seat alongside, while also flying: trim back to circle, trim forward to glide. An hour out, 40km, and all is going well.

Designed as a circuit-bashing trainer, the Kookaburra has seats and seating to suit: a narrow padded area and bolt upright pilot position. By the second hour I'm over the strip at Sanderston, a 'home' from the past – a known place, and hangarage available if needed. We climb away from base in the house thermal.

By the time we approach Apamurra, in the cockpit there is squirming going on, 10 minutes on this cheek, then 10 minutes on the other. About this time the thermal gets real rough; possibly seabreeze pushing in from the intended path ahead.

Past Palmer and the air is much quieter. The challenge now is to either get a decent climb or get on the ground to end the physical agony in the pilot's lower body. Much wandering towards home and yet across a succession of thermal sources, while generally staying

with the bitumen below, and it's time to give it away.

A nice long paddock with furrows into wind and parallelling the road alongside. Spoilers bring us onto the imaginary piano keys past the fence and a nose skid in the sand brings us to a stop.


General feeling? Very satisfied!

Remove from box and turn handheld GPS on. Only 25km from home, on direct track, with a direct bitumen road home alongside. Perfectly acceptable. Tie the Kookaburra down. Mobile coverage, yes, one call, crew activated, all going well. Walk to the farmhouse while checking the fence for an access gate, a friendly chat, all fine.

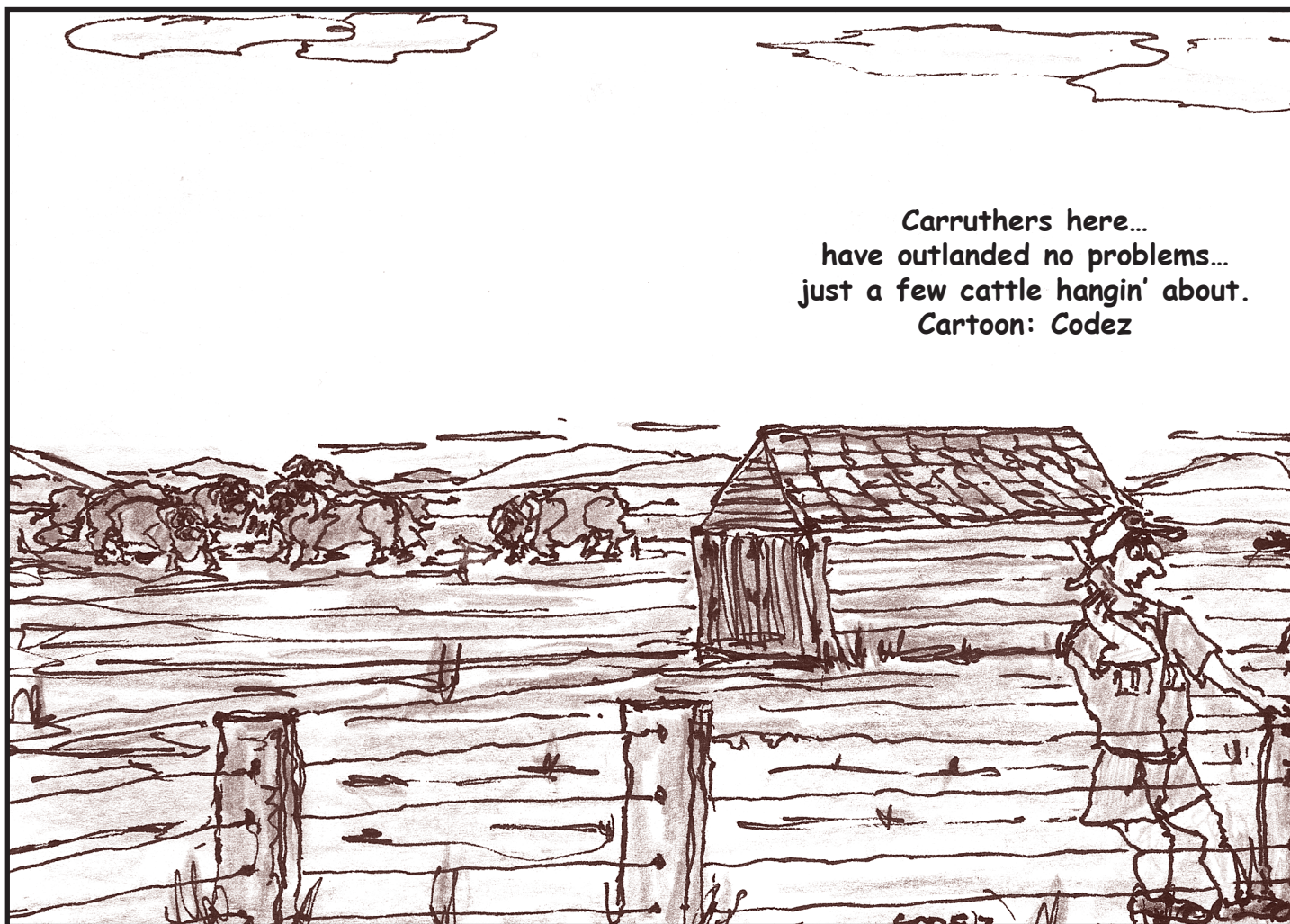
Return and sit by the glider, and let the satisfaction of the day wash over. (Dusch, dusch, maate; what ya doing thair.) Ah, the end of quiet reflection.

With its stubby wings, the Kookaburra looks like a power plane with bent gear legs lying on one wing. Cars stop, worried about the prang. People stop to offer a lift to a phone, a pub, whatever. Progress calls from the crew – be there soon. And again dusch, dusch, what ya doing thair, maate.

Crew arrives, two cars, borrowed trailer, and five people. (When you're dealing with a two-seater, we know from experience that you need a real crew.) The gate, of course, is way over the other end of the paddock. The sand is, of course, soft. As the car pulls up by the glider, the normal sishing sound of a broken heater hose comes from under the bonnet (as usual on a retrieve). So we fix the car first. Then put the glider on, one-piece wing on top overhanging the car, fuselage under.

We convoy the short distance home, rig and hangar the old girl, and go home via the local Chinese cafe (for the crew) and the repair shop (for the heater hose). And so we get home at midnight, just like any normal self-respecting retrieve would. 

**Carruthers here...
have outlanded no problems...
just a few cattle hangin' about.
Cartoon: Codez**



Boomerangs Do Come Back

Ian Patching

PRIDE OF THE VICTORIAN MOTORLESS FLIGHT GROUP FOR MANY YEARS, THE ES-60 BOOMERANG VH-GTR, WAS THE GLIDER I DID MY SILVER C DISTANCE AND HEIGHT LEGS. IT WAS SOLD BEFORE I HAD A CHANCE TO GO FOR GOLD. IN A ROUNDABOUT WAY THE GOLD BECAME A POSSIBILITY WITH ITS RETURN IN 2002.

Current owner Theo Van Alkemade approached me in 2002 asking if I would be in a position to give Tango Romeo a Form 2 inspection. I figured with a little juggling and putting off the Kookaburra's Form 2 I could, for old times' sake, do the job for him. The airframe was found to be in pretty good condition – a tribute to the efforts Theo has put in since he purchased the glider some 20 years before. Minor jobs such as re-covering the rudder and changing a vario around were the major items that required further than expected work.

With all the paperwork done it was time to strap in and renew my enjoyment with it. Checking my log book I found it was over 19 years since I had last flown it and the memories came flooding back to me as we were launched into a late afternoon sky. So light on all the controls and yet so positive, the flight was too short and soon I was back on the ground. The only defect was the vario which was giving some major abnormal readings. The instrument would handle a simple puff test, but once in the air would not work at all.

So began a series of tests that would see my fly the Boomerang for over three hours in the following two weeks. We finally sorted the thing out and were able to sign everything off as present and correct. Theo had offered to reimburse me for my work but I had a thought that would give me the opportunity to fly the glider some more. I asked Theo if I could take GTR to the vintage rally at Stonefield as payment for the work. Theo said he would get back to me and after he discussed the proposal with Marg came back to me with an offer I really couldn't refuse.

Yes, he was happy with the idea of GTR going to the rally, AND if I wanted to look after the glider on an ongoing basis I could keep flying it. Now, this may sound attractive but keep in mind I am already looking

after about six other gliders for myself and a couple of others so I suggested we also include Caleb (Turncoat) White in the arrangement. A week later Theo came back with his approval and so began another chapter.

In short, the rally at Stonefield was a great success and you will read about it later in the magazine. For the purposes of this article we have to skip forward to the Sunday after the wind-up dinner and with me sitting in the cockpit waiting to launch on a flight that would hopefully see me back at Bacchus Marsh some 600km away. It was hot and at 12pm the dust devils were starting to crank up so it was time to go. The crew and the rest of the convoy had already left some two hours before.

Over the week of the rally we came very close to wearing out two winches and today the winch decided it had had enough. Take up slack started, the wire moved then stopped. About 30 seconds later the call came from the winch. It had stalled and was refusing to even fire and the battery was flat. The rescue/repair crew set off in the now familiar cloud of dust while I sat in the cockpit under an umbrella keeping cool and drinking lots of water. I am a firm believer in Murphy's Law and didn't get out for about half-an-hour, when the call finally came that more major tools were needed. I think that meant a bigger hammer.

I got out and went back to the clubhouse and waited. It would be a long way back for the crew if it couldn't be fixed. After another hour the call came that the winch was ready. Take off finally took place at 1:45. There was plenty of lift about but a bit haze so after reaching 6,000ft I called Barossa base and asked them to relay to my crew that I was on my way.

What followed was a really fun flight. I didn't have any major problems, I stayed high and cruised at around 70 to 80 between thermals. Six thousand feet appeared to be the upper height with some reasonably long

glides in between. Thermals gave an honest four knots average and I was really enjoying myself. Until!

The track was generally over good open country with the Big Desert in the middle. This was about 200km into the flight. I hadn't seen the big desert from the air before and decided I would make my decision whether to cross it when I got there. What greeted me was absolute barrenness. Fires had recently burnt the area and all I could see was a moonscape. Nothing was there and I quickly came to the conclusion that a major detour was in store. I then tracked south towards Keith and continued. It was clear that the smoke haze which had been around was also getting worse and by the time I reached Bordertown the visibility was rapidly falling to unacceptable levels. On top of this the thermals were now only going to 4,500ft with the last 500ft virtually in IFR conditions. Thankfully I had caught the crew and could see them. I called and told them the flight would soon be over as the conditions were so bad.

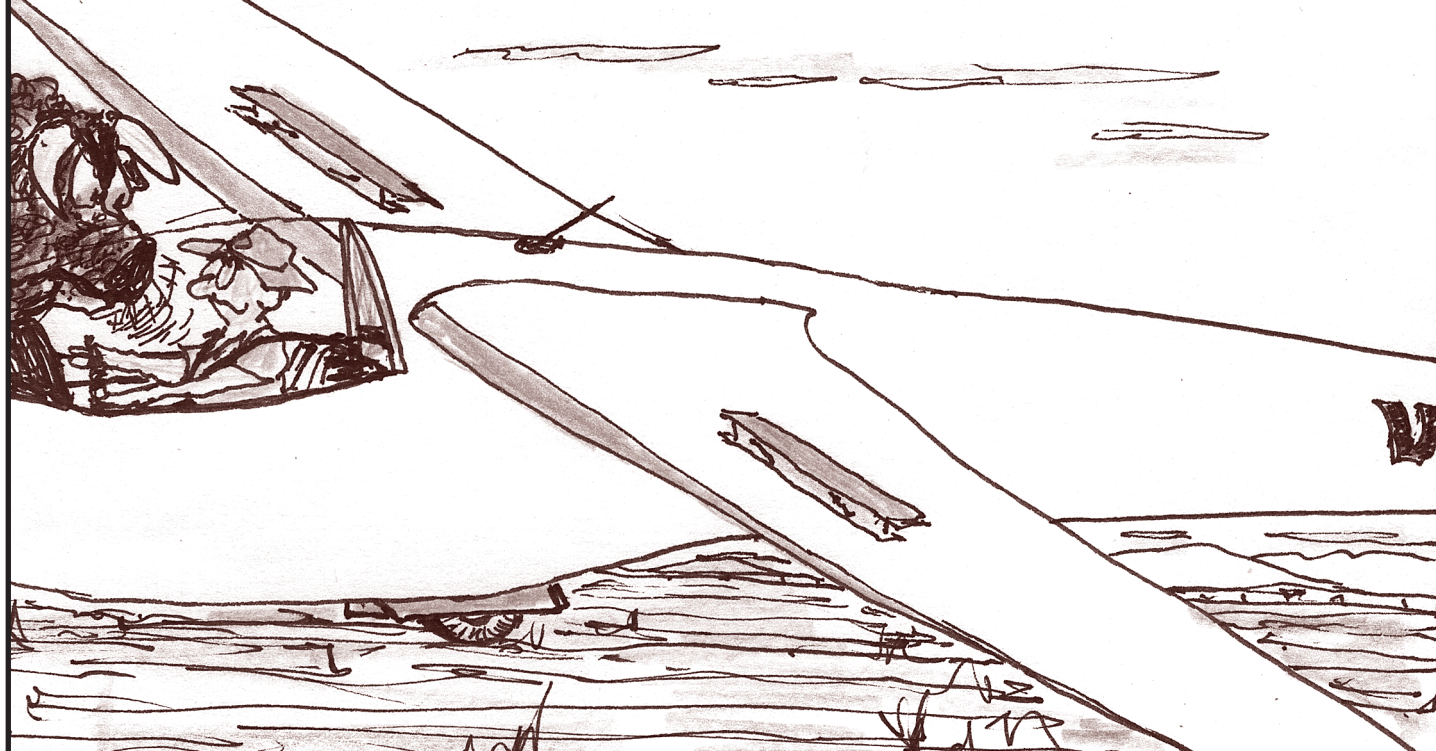
I continued past Bordertown and followed the highway to just past Kaniva and spotted a lovely paddock. With 3,500ft in hand I called the crew and gave them directions to my intended landing spot. Opening the brakes I spiralled down, taking that perverse pleasure in wasting height to a safe conclusion to the flight. The good part was that my crew were there within five minutes, the glider de-rigged and we were back on the road within half an hour. Surely my easiest retrieve ever.

Distance covered 310km, total flight time three hours 55 minutes and after waiting 20 years, Gold C distance in wood.



PS: Anyone have a spare Boomerang for sale?

Until this point in time,
Smithers had thought the red trim on his aircraft
had made it stand out splendidly.
Cartoon: Codez



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188 Bathurst St, Hobart TAS 7000,
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3373, ph/fax: 03 53492845, 0409 678
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Rob Woodward (Treasurer)

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Bruce Goldsmith over Monaco

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