

Soaring AUSTRALIA



August 2005



**Car Top
Triking**



**Review: Airborne
Climax C4**



**The Airborne
Expedition**



**Flak, Night Fighters
and a Kookaburra**

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Peter Burkitt soars above Argalong, Tumut NSW

Photo: Dawson Brown

Soaring AUSTRALIA



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Contributions are always needed. Articles, photos and illustrations are all welcome although the editors and the GFA and HGFA Board reserve the right to edit or delete contributions where necessary. Materials of unknown origin won't be published.

All contributions should be accompanied by the contributor's name, address and membership number for verification purposes.

Photographs should be printed on gloss paper either in black and white or colour or submitted on CD. Drawings, maps, cartoons, Diagrams, etc., should be in black ink on white paper. Lettering may be pencilled lightly but clearly on the drawing, for typesetting.

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News, Letters to the Editor, New Products, Events Calendar entries

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Classifieds

HGFA members should submit classifieds (secondhand gear for sale) to the HGFA Office <office@hgfa.asn.au>. See HGFA Classifieds section at rear of this magazine for more details.

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Email Club News to <clubnews@hgfa.asn.au>
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DEADLINE FOR ALL CONTRIBUTIONS:

25th of each month, five weeks prior to publication. Photos and materials will be returned after publication only if a stamped, self-addressed envelope is supplied. Otherwise, photographs, whether published or not, will be filed and may be used subsequently in further publications.

A DAY'S FLYING

Steve Donahue

THIS IS A TALE THAT JUST HAPPENS TO INCLUDE A BIT OF HANG GLIDING.

IT SHOWS THE LENGTHS YOU SOMETIMES NEED TO GO TO FOR THIS SPORT.

Mt Donnabuang is 3,150ft agl, about an hour's drive east of Melbourne. It faces south across an east-west valley. It is a summer site – the road is closed in winter due to snow. Some nutters prefer a light northerly at the site. I like to know there's a fair chance of clearing the trees at the end of the slot.

It was mid-December 2003. A seabreeze was forecast on top of a light southerly. It'd been a fortnight since I'd had a fly and I was getting toey again. I rang around in the morning and got piss weak commitment from my flying cronies. A couple of guys said they'd maybe meet me at the bomb-out, and another's missus said he'd be back later, give him a call. So I put my treading in the back of the ute, with a view to push biking up the hill to retrieve my car if I had to.

I got out to the bomb-out (about six kilometres out from the hill) about noon and waited for nearly an hour. I tried contacting my flying buddies by radio, but to no avail. I was then overcome by impatience – the day was looking great – nice cu's, gentle breeze and it was heating up. So I headed up the hill, about a half-hour drive via Warburton.

At the set-up area a couple were canoodling. I chatted to them as I put my SX5 together, but couldn't talk them into taking my car back down the hill. *"Oh no, it's a 4WD, it'd be much too hard to drive."* *"But it doesn't need to go into 4WD to take it down the hill. It'd just be like driving a normal car."* No response. They packed up and left as I finished setting up the glider.

I carried the glider across the road and put it on the start of the ramp. Then I grabbed my gear out of the car – harness, radio, water, etc. Another couple of car loads of tourists turned up. I got one of them to hold the front wires while I attached the harness. I asked a few of them if they'd be kind enough to take my car down the hill. All of them said no; they were going a different way and the like.

At about 3pm I launched, straight into a gentle thermal. My vario was telling me it was pleased with the launch and it suggested

I head left, which I did. I kept it happy doing figure eights to the left of launch till I got enough height above the trees to start circling.

Mt Donnabuang is a gigantic bowl five kilometres across. The valley usually pumps from the west, so if there's a bit of east in the forecast it makes it easier to use the entire bowl. Today was perfect, although a little light and a bit inverted (which is annoyingly usual for the site).

I climbed to about 300ft above the road that goes past launch, then crawled my way along westwards hoping to get to Ben Cairn, which is usually a good thermal trigger. But about a kilometre along the ridge line I hit sink and lost 500ft, back to just below launch height.

Donnabuang has a number of smaller triggers – usually spur line knees. I was able to get the glider out of sink on one of these, but I couldn't get back above launch again. I kept my line following contours westwards finding alternating small patches of lift and sink.

I eventually worked my way around Ben Cairn, but at about 500ft below the top. Usually around here it can get quite thermic and you end up in a washing machine till you get above the hill. This time it was only slightly buoyant. I decided it wasn't going to be a day to save the flight at all costs, so I headed for the bomb-out before losing much more height. It was buoyant all the way to the bomb-out, but not enough to gain height. Not even over the monastery, which is usually quite consistent.

I managed a one step landing – rare for me in this landing paddock. I packed up, got changed into shorts and T-shirt, unlocked my bike, and locked up my glider and harness.

It was about 4pm and 35°C and very bumpy on my road bike along the dirt road. Halfway to Warburton I got a puncture. I've clocked up more than 10,000km over the past 15 years with this bike and have only ever had one puncture. I wasn't expecting it. I had no puncture repair kit or spare tube. I walked the rest of the way to Warburton but there wasn't a bike shop to be found.

I tried a hangie's place, Tony, about a half-hour walk up a steep hill. No one

home. (Little did I know that in fact he'd moved house). Then I thought I'd better phone the missus. By then it was about 5pm. She was real crook on me and said it was my own fault and that if I couldn't organise transport then I should stay home. She wouldn't pick me up till after our smallest boy Danny had finished his school recital – about 9pm! I said the sun was going down and I was going to freeze to death and that I thought she'd have enough time to rescue me and still make it to the concert. She told me to rack off and hung up.

So there I was – at Warburton with 70 cents to my name, in shorts and a T-shirt with the sun going down behind the hills. I walked my injured push bike the 15km back along the highway to the bomb-out paddock.

By the time I got there it was about 8pm and I was freezing. I put all my glider clothes back on and then walked three kilometres back out to the highway to wait for my missus. I sat across the road from the Wesburn pub at 9pm. At about 9:30pm Dianne drove straight past me. I was yelling and jumping up and down but she didn't notice me. I sat and waited some more. An old dog came over from the pub and kept trying to lick me. Then at 11pm Dianne came back again – but she drove past without seeing me again. I screamed my head off until I saw her brake lights come on. She stopped and I ran after her and got in the van.

She said she was nearly out of fuel and we'd have to head back away from Warburton to try to find fuel. We filled up at Launching Place, turned around and headed back through Warburton and then up the hill. We argued all the way up the hill – she should've picked me up before Danny's concert, I should give up bloody hang gliding and stop being so self-centred. We got to my car about midnight.

I drove my car back down the hill and picked all my gear up from the landing paddock. It was 1am when I got home. We continued to argue over the day's hang gliding for another couple of months.

I don't know what all the fuss was about – after all, it's just a typical day's flying.



Car Top Triking

Marc Dedman

I CAN STILL RECALL THE AIR OF EXCITEMENT WHEN I STARTED HANG GLIDING IN 1975 AS A 13-YEAR-OLD. AT THE TOP OF A 100FT HILL, WINGS CONDOR BALANCED ON MY SHOULDERS, HEART POUNDING AND MIND RACING WITH THE ANTICIPATION OF REALISING THE DREAM OF FLIGHT. I RUN AND MY FEET LIFT OFF THE GROUND. AT THE BOTTOM I PUSH OUT LIKE IN THE BOOKS BUT I PLOUGH INTO THE Paddock.

No money for lessons so I persist on my own. Many bent tubes and bruises later I finally work it out and fly from top to bottom flawlessly in 30 second airborne hops. In the next five years, 20 minutes airtime, take offs around 200.

Finally leave home and think things will get better. Go to university, now no time or money. In the next five years, airtime around 10 hours, take offs around 30. Leave university and get a job. Great, got the money but time is pretty short. Get married, try fatherhood, money vanishes and more responsibilities pile on. In the next 19 years, airtime 80 hours, take offs around 50. I try paragliding, paramotoring and triking, more airtime is still scarce. What's my point? I love flying, but our sport and rating system can be incredibly frustrating if you live in the real world and aren't prepared to put hang gliding before all else. Many give up, unable or unwilling to become complete hang junkies.

It's taken 30 years, but I've finally found a way of combining a "normal" life with accessible hang gliding: Car Top Triking.

I travel all over Australia on family holidays, often in the Outback. Large trikes travel poorly on Outback roads and they exclude bringing along camper trailers or caravans. I know because I have tried this option too. Planning a trip to Flinders Ranges last year I yearned to be able to fly without impinging on my family. Lower back problems ruled out the use of a paramotor. So I bought a secondhand Airtime nanotrike and Airborne hang glider and set about finding an easy practical solution for its transport.

Firstly I must congratulate Bob at Airtime for his fantastically well built and thought out trike and its ability to fold into a bag in around five minutes. With a little reinforcement of the bag's cradle and the addition of a couple of attachment points on the base, the trike was ready to carry on the roof rack. But how do you get 50-odd kilograms up on the roof without assistance? Unless you happen to be Arnold Schwarzenegger it's pretty hard. So straight to the shed I went. Around \$200 later and with the help of some scrap steel, two cheap winches and



Car top trike ready to go



Trike attached to roof crane



Arkaroolla strip

a couple of old diff bearings, I now have a roof-mounted crane. Apart from looking a bit eccentric and being the topic of local conversation and finger pointing for a while, I can now put the trike on the roof in around two minutes, and with the help of two 6mm aircraft bolts, attach it to the roof in seconds. All single handed! Eat your heart out, Arnie. I'm sure the design could be adapted to most roof racks, being held on with three aircraft bolts.

We set off for the Flinders a couple of weeks later and I'm wondering why I didn't do this sooner. First flying stop, Blinman airstrip, highest strip in South Australia. There really is no better way to see the vastness of the Australian Bush. Caught a few



Rolling for take off

thermals with the local wedgies; spotted some unspoilt ruins which I marked with the GPS for later exploring; checked out the rugged scenery and abandoned mines. Set-up time around 50 minutes from car top to take off, only around 10 minutes longer than just hang gliding. You couldn't wipe the smile off my face; it was like being 13 all over. The dream was back. But it only got better. Chambers Gorge, Wilpena Pound, Arkaroola, Gammon Ranges and Lake Eyre followed in the next couple of weeks. Turned off the engine and experimented with ridge-lift, which I look forward to doing more of. And all this with my family happy and in comfort. It just doesn't get any better.

Take off points are as numerous as your imagination. Airstrips are reasonably common, as are salt pans, open plains and grader scrapes. Generally you find you can get permission pretty easily and it's always better and legally necessary to ask. Arkaroola proved to be a fantastic location for flying. The property is owned by Doug Sprigg, a very approachable antique plane buff. He was more than happy to allow take offs from Arkaroola strip and the larger sealed strip which he leases at Balcanoona in the Gammon Ranges National Park. The ranges around both are spectacularly scenic, as are the neighbouring Lakes Frome and Eyre to the east and north respectively. Further south, Rawnsley Park Station has a strip right at the southern end of Wilpena Pound... fantastic!

A couple of things to note about nanotrikes may be helpful to anyone else considering this option. Total weight of trike and wing, excluding fuel, must come in under 70kg. The wing must be rated for the weight of trike, pilot and fuel. The Airborne Sting 175 is a great wing for the job with a maxi-



Marc checking the spark plug

mum hook-in weight of 135kg, the highest of any single-place hang glider on the market that I am aware of. I have added an additional one metre sleeve to allow for the greater torsional forces a rigid attachment imposes on the keel. Best to consult the wing's manufacturer before doing this! Licensing is a little unclear, except that after long communications with the HGFA, a trike license is not sufficient. You must obtain a Powered Hang Gliding Endorsement, involving five hours of trike instruction and at least a novice hang gliding rating with 20 hours logged experience.

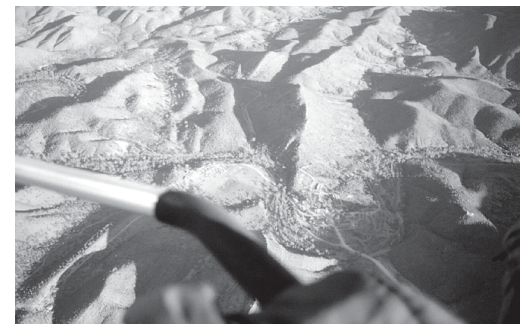
The Airtime trike performed faultlessly. The Sting 175/Powerlite combination showed impressive performance. A cruise of 32kt and a climb of around 500ft/min is fantastic for a 70kg aircraft. With 10 litres of fuel endurance is around two hours, more of course if engine off flying is used. The electric start is an absolute dream for in-flight restarting, although I had to extend

the fuel hose so that the squeeze primer could be reached when seated. Parachute mounting points are limited, but I eventually settled on a triangular container held to the side of the seat with stainless quick links. Very neat and the deployment handle is just below my right elbow. Sadly Airtime has discontinued production of the trikes, so the only options for anyone considering this are to buy secondhand or to build.

This may not be the answer for everyone, but if you have a normal life with all its associated ties and need to put them before your passion for flying, it may just be an option. Ways of making our sport more family friendly may help retain members. It worked for me, but I'm a die hard closet hang junkie. Since buying my nanotrike 10 months ago, airtime 120 hours, take offs around 40, smiles... endless.



The Gammon Ranges



Ruins from the air



Photos: Courtesy Marc Dedman

WAVE FLYING – HOW TO DO IT (SOME GUIDING COMMENTS)

Part One

Rick Agnew

Having given up hope that it will ever rain again, I thought that with wave season just about upon us it might be timely to remind avid sky-surfers of some of the salient points. Time to 'blow the cobwebs out' and get us all thinking about wave flying – potentially the most exhilarating flying anyone can do! (Not that I would be biased!)

What follows is provided as 'food for thought'. It is only one perspective based upon my experiences, and my distortions of what I have picked up in developing and extending my wave-flying 'technique'. So, after these so-called 'cop-out comments', you would be wise to read widely, listen and discuss – as well as practice.

I find that those who seem to have luck in any endeavour practice a lot; and, funnily, their 'luck' increases. I have been lucky to contact wave more than most, but then, I have organised and prepared myself to be ready to go when the conditions are favourable. You can also.

This article will cover only briefly:

- *pre-fighting for wave flying*
- *how to fly a typical 'classic' wave day from Bunyan, NSW (the techniques I discuss have also been successful for me at other wave sites in Australia and overseas); and*
- *post flight*

PRE-FLIGHTING FOR WAVE FLYING

Careful pre-flight planning can assist greatly in making your flight calmer, potentially trouble-free and a real hoot! (Be warned, this wave flying stuff is addictive!)

As I have stated before in previous articles and discussions, being prepared is more than half the battle in wave flying, or in anything else. Flight planning is never wasted. You are already ahead of the pack if you understand the potential hazards, know your limitations, know your aircraft and associated procedures.

Your wave flight should really start days before the actual flight.

Knowledge of the aircraft's limitations is a must – stall speed, V_{NE} , V_B , V_A , etc. Other useful knowledge could include things such as:

- *the glider's best L/D*
- *its minimum sink (both rate and air speed)*
- *rate of descent with extended dive brakes*
- *the length of time it will take to descend at maximum rate to a breathable altitude; and*
- *if I fall out of the wave system, how much height will I need to get back home and safely do a circuit?*

A knowledge and understanding of your aircraft's limitations and performance may one day save your life.

Altitude effects and air speed

As we all know, as altitude increases, air density decreases. The maximum air speed of your glider is limited by flutter. Flutter is prevented by the density of the air. Therefore, as you climb and the density of the air around you decreases, flutter occurs at lower air speeds. Fast flying at altitude must be monitored. At worst, your glider's wing and tail may break off if you exceed the manufacturer's design tolerances!

A table of altitude reductions for V_{NE} should be placarded in every aircraft that has oxygen fitted. Some relevant figures are (in knots):

Altitude (1,000 ft)	Puchacz	Astir	Jantar Std 2	DG 300	Hornet	Libelle
0-6	116	135	154	146	135	135
6-10	116	126	144	138	126	126
10-15	107	117	133	127	117	117
15-20	98	107	123	117	107	107
20-25	90	98	112	107	98	98
25-30	82	90	102	98	90	90
30-35	74	81	93	89	81	81
35-40	67	73	84	80	73	73

Map Work

You can check your navigation charts in the warmth and luxury of your home. Be familiar with where you are going to fly. Knowledge of possible outlanding strips will also take some pressure off you, and knowledge of the air space rules and regulations is mandatory. At Bunyan, ask your instructor for details. It has taken us years to 'train' the friendly air traffic control staff at Melbourne Centre, as well as the Regular Public Transport (RPT) pilots, that gliders in the Cooma Monaro area, in the right conditions, regularly reach up to around 25,000ft and are capable of reaching heights in excess of 30,000ft.

GPS users

Just because you have one (and can use it!) doesn't mean that you have forgotten about the tried and true usage of maps. What will you do if your batteries give out? Have you thought of a back-up system? As 'they' say, "GPS's are probably the greatest on-board distraction device of all". Remember the old adage: Aviate, navigate, and communicate.

Official observer

Organise an official observer prior to your badge flight. It's always the day that the diamond is 'on' that you don't have an observer to verify your barograph. You may then wait years (literally) for the right day to come again.



Trusty tug – VH-MLS

Tuggy

Again, vested interest works every time. You will need a trusted tuggy for that tow in order to achieve the flight – otherwise, you will just have to watch from the ground wishing for one to appear. The wave is generally best very early in the day, before thermal activity starts. Therefore, if you are keen you may even bring your tuggy and other crew with you on the day of your anticipated flight. Here, at the Canberra Gliding Club, our tuggies are all generally very knowledgeable about the best place to be towed to and where best to release. Local knowledge, I believe, is very valuable, and it also takes some of the effort and luck factor out of contacting the wave system. Always be very



Dling the DG prior to flight

nice to tuggies. Without them you won't be going anywhere!

Pre-flighting the aircraft

Do a thorough daily inspection (DI) of your glider, remembering that every wave flight is a cross-country flight. Never wash your glider before any high altitude flight, as freezing water can damage the aircraft. Having your 'steed' sorted out, finding somewhere all that 'junk' (personal effects, etc) will fit, and still being comfortable and having confidence in your aircraft, will also reduce stress.

Check, and know thoroughly, the glider's oxygen system (see previous articles about these). All pilots who intend participating in high altitude flying should (read: have to) have an intimate knowledge of the use and function of their oxygen equipment. Your life depends upon it! Before any flight, a pilot should check such things as:

- *mask fit*
- *regulator usage*
- *cylinder condition ("do I have enough oxygen for my flight?")*

Oxygen masks need to fit the user well. Poorly fitting masks waste precious oxygen, but more importantly, have the potential to reduce oxygen flow to the user and cause hypoxia. Mask maintenance is essential for serviceability and hygiene. Cleaning masks after use with pure alcohol assists in killing 'bugs' and maintains good condition.

Oxygen regulators should be checked thoroughly during the aircraft's Form 2 inspection, and during your DI. Make sure it works as advertised – it is part of your life support equipment.



Sky Surfer

GlideFast Coaching Course at the Kingaroy Soaring Club

10-16 September 2005

- Peter and Lisa Trotter are offering coaching at Kingaroy in the week prior to the Qld State Championships.
- The format will be lectures/discussion, briefing and post-flight analysis.
- The course is aimed at advanced cross-country pilots who are interested in competition or who are attempting 300km or greater distances.
- There are a limited number of places available. To secure a place, send a cheque for \$150 made out to QLD Soaring Assoc Comp Acc to:

Gliding Queensland

PO Box 15322

City East QLD 4002

with your name and email address.

- For more information contact Ralph Henderson by email <rhenderson@iinet.net.au> or by telephone 07 3843 6178 or 0409 596 579.

GFA NATIONAL COACHING PROGRAM



Dr Doctor (Dr Stewart May) and author
– with masks on...

Oxygen cylinders

Check that there is enough for your intended flight, both up and down. You should never breathe all the oxygen out of your cylinder (completely emptied) as condensation can form inside the bottle. Only dry breathing oxygen of aviation quality can be used with safety. Oxygen and refilling a system are potentially dangerous. As the experts say: A fully charged oxygen cylinder is a potential bomb... the fire and explosive hazard associated with high pressure oxygen coming in contact with even a minute blob of oil or grease, organic matter or metal filings cannot be over emphasised. Ensure you have the oxy system topped-up by the appropriate person well before the flight – preferably the previous day.

Regular oxygen users will (of course!) know the useful mnemonic PRICE. A PRICE check is undertaken by everyone utilising oxygen equipment:

P = Pressure (*Have I got enough oxygen pressure for my intended flight? You need enough for the flight and some in reserve.*)

R = Regulator (*Is my regulator working 'as advertised'? Check all switches – are they in the correct location? Cycle through all the regulator functions, testing the 100% function as well.*)

I = Indicator (*Is the blinker indicating that oxygen is flowing? The blinker should*

remain open when the regulator is set to 100%.)

C = Connections (*Are all hoses connected correctly, and do they have tight seals?)*

E = Emergency (*Check that the emergency flow is operable and, if fitted, that the emergency bottle is secure and connected correctly.*)

This basic check is done regularly throughout a flight, and may save your life!

Other pre-flight DI items include:

- *Batteries are less efficient at low temperatures, so replace suspect batteries with new ones. (Note: some types of batteries explode at high altitudes due to lower atmospheric pressures and freezing temperatures.*
- *Check your radio. A functioning radio is an added safety item for the high altitude pilot. A pilot can regularly talk to the base station on the ground, reporting his or her progress; and the ground crew can also monitor the pilot and alert them of any changing conditions back at the home field.*
- *Ensure that cockpit sealing is efficient; this will more than pay off later! A whistling, freezing wind around the canopy will be at the very least distracting, and take the 'edge' off your experience.*
- *Beware of water in the dive brake mechanism – eg: from washing the glider.*
- *Wind-up and switch on your barograph! I can still see the look on several pilots' faces when they get back from their greatest, highest, most brilliant flight to the disappointment that they forgot to wind and check the baro. Not an experience you need, trust me...*

Pre-flighting YOU, the pilot

This is obviously a personal thing, but having the right attitude prior to your flight is important. If you are tense, aggravated etc – don't fly. There will always be another day. Having adequate sleep prior to the flight is also important. Again treat this wave flight



View from 33,000ft-plus



like any other cross-country flight – if you are tired, things are bound to ‘stuff-up’. Potentially, checks will not be undertaken properly, and you may forget things – all symptoms that an inquiry (coroner or other) will document, after your accident, while searching out ‘what went wrong’.

Other things to consider in preparing yourself prior to the flight include:

Food – *It's not a good idea to have baked-beans the meal before (think about air pressure and your gut – or your colleague, if you are in a twin seater!)*

Drink – *Avoid diuretics such as coffee and tea, alcohol etc (Don't drink and fly – twelve hours from 'bottle to throttle'). Remember that even if it's cold, you still have to watch out for dehydration.*

Medication – *Should you be really flying if you are 'on' anything?*

Clothing – *Boy, I could really go to town on this one! I dress for the really cold day. It is easier to cool down than warm up once you are inside the cockpit and flying. I wear ski-type clothes and electric socks (see previous articles).*

Other ‘kit’ may include a barograph, dataloggers and munchies.

Other considerations:

- *physical fitness is essential (it increases your efficient use of oxygen)*
- *warm clothing, too, is a basic essential; note that an uncovered head loses vast amounts of heat*
- *avoid over-exertion prior to the flight; frozen perspiration can be most uncomfortable*
- *wear a serviceable parachute (part of your emer-*

- *gency kit that you hope never to use!); and settling into the cockpit; this may sound silly, but try it out. Do you and all your 'kit' actually fit? Can you reach everything? Flight comfort actually does have a direct bearing on your flight.*

THE BASICS OF WAVE FLYING

What follows is only a very brief description of how to contact ‘classic’ wave and move about a wave system. To really do justice to ‘how to fly wave’ would take a book (this is pending). Again, read widely, ask questions – and practice, practice, practice.

So, you are on the ‘grid’, all kitted-up in your glider, about to launch behind your ‘ace’ wave tug pilot.

There are basically two different flying techniques that can be used to exploit the lift generated in a wave system. Which you choose depends on whether you are flying in:

- *the under-laminar layer air mass (the rotor); or*
- *within the laminar layer or air stream (the wave proper).*

Your launch will hopefully be fairly straightforward. Occasionally, tows in very rough conditions can really get the heart pounding, but it is essential to remain ‘cool’ and maintain station behind the tug. Anticipation is the name of the game. Make sure that all loose objects are stowed. I have had a whack in the nose from a camera that I thought was stowed correctly — I saw stars and got a bloody nose!

Your release should be normal. Now the fun begins...

(Part Two next issue)



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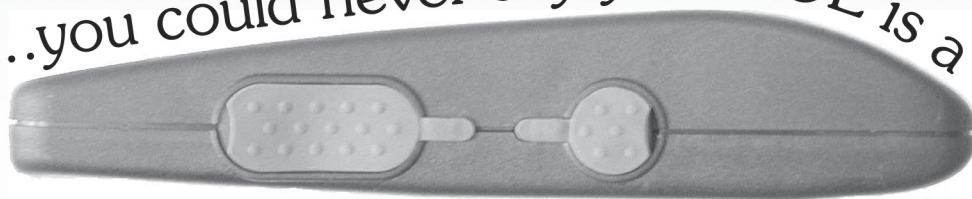
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A TRIBUTE TO DAVE DARBYSHIRE

(1930-2005)

Jim Barton

DAVE DARBYSHIRE, LONG TIME LIFE MEMBER OF THE GLIDING CLUB OF VICTORIA, PASSED AWAY ON 11 APRIL 2005, AFTER A PERIOD OF ILL HEALTH.

Dave joined the GCV in 1947 at the age of 17, shortly after commencing his working life as an apprentice carpenter. He soon became a most valued member, particularly when repairs (of which there was no shortage) to the club's wooden gliders needed attention. Dave was a leading member of the team which built the Club's Slingsby T31 two-seater in 1952.

In his early years with the Club, he served on the committee and was an instructor and editor of *Airflow* before accepting the Presidency in 1955. He was at the forefront of club operations, especially in the early development of Benalla as our permanent home, and was involved in endless negotiations with the then Department of Civil Aviation.

In 1958 he stepped down from the President's position. This enabled him to devote himself to his rapidly developing construction business, which blossomed out into a number of associated companies. Dave, who never lost his interest in the GCV and the general aviation scene, became a power pilot and moved into the aircraft home-building scene, building a Pitts Special and a Skybolt, as well as several ultra-lights in association with the Sports Aircraft Association of Australia (SAAA) as fund raising projects. The machines were raffled by the SAAA. Dave served on several SAAA committees, and along the way was a leading personality in the Easter Mangalore SAAA conventions and airshows.

Moving away from the construction industry, Moorabbin Aircraft Spares (MAS) was established, specialising in the supply of materials for aircraft homebuilders. MAS



Dave Darbyshire

was eventually sold. His next organisation, Aviaquip, was established to supply major hardware items to the aviation world, including airlines and the military. Aviaquip remains within the Darbyshire family, his son Russell now heading the organisation.

During the period of his aviation career, Dave owned several aircraft and two airlines: Air Tasmania and Bass Air. Whilst easing towards retirement, he became a driving force in the establishment of the Australian Gliding Museum (AGM) and worked tirelessly in helping the museum develop to its present status. He refurbished the primary glider at Benalla, which he had helped to build, to flying status and had completed restoration of the fuselage and tailplane of the AGM's Olympia sailplane. He was an original member of the syndicate that imported this machine, badly damaged, from the UK around 50 years ago.

Since his initial association with the GCV and gliding generally, Dave maintained a very active interest in the Club, especially when major events such as the World Competitions, air pageants (of which the Club organised several) and the like were being planned. Dave excelled at being a hands-on, get-up-and-go person.

Besides his many interests, Dave was a devoted family man, a genuine homebody. He will be deeply missed within the aviation fraternity, and our condolences go to Mavis and family.



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 -

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Name

Address

.....

State. Postcode

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130 Wirraway Road,
Essendon Airport VIC 3041**

A Los Zaucos Encounter

Ole Olsen

LIKE A GIANT CENTIPEDE, THE EIGHT SMALL MEXICAN BOYS CARRY MY GLIDER FROM THE FIELD WHERE I LANDED, AND DEPOSIT IT AT THE SMALL TIENDA. HERE, SHOULD MY GENEROSITY COMPEL ME AND MY PESOS CONTINUE TO FLOW, I COULD BUY US ALL A FROSTY SODA POP. WE ORDERED UP THE DRINKS AND ENJOYED THEM IN THE SHADE OF A PINE TREE. ISRAEL, THE OLDEST, LARGEST AND BOLDEST OF THE BUNCH, SPEAKS UP: "ESTAS CASADO SEÑOR?" – ARE YOU MARRIED?

I look forlornly at Israel and reply sadly, wistfully, "No, amigo." "Porque no?" asks the child. Why not? Genuine concern is etched across his grubby face. He glances at his amigos, who mirror his concern.

"Pues, nadie me quiere!" I lamented.

'Cause nobody will have me!

"Hay que buscar," said Israel with conviction. He slurps the Coke and his amigos nod in agreement. You must search.

"Ha busce por todos lados," I say. I've looked everywhere.

Israel throws out his arms and gestures to the cluster of shacks around him. "Buscate por aqui!" he exclaims. Look around here!

Los Zaucos is one of the first towns up the pass toward Toluca, just a collection of wooden and cardboard dwellings spreading humbly over fields of sustaining 'milpa'. The earth rises from here to the snow-capped summit of Zinacantepec, 15,600ft asl. A glance through the window hole of the 'tienda' showed a view of the volcano, and a local 'campesino' struggling with a plowshare and a brace of oxen.

"De acuerdo." I agree.

Israel and his buddies seem satisfied with that. They continue to enjoy the cokes, evidenced by a round of loud slurping. A mangy spotted dog wanders across the high-way, flops next to Israel and licks his foot.

It's time to pay my little posse of helpers a few pesos each for their work packing and carrying my wing. Figuring Israel, as spokesman, was also the boss, I asked, "Quanto seria, amigo?" How much will it be, friend?

Israel's countenance brightens at the suggestion. "Quanto paga usted, señor?" How much do you pay, sir?

I ponder deeply, then let my face brighten as I arrive at the perfect solution. "Le pagan con el puro amistad." I'll pay with pure friendship.

Israel, underwhelmed at my generosity, scrunches up his face at me and consults his minions. They also are not exactly thrilled with the offer and they squirm uncomfortably in their seats.

"Esta bien?" I ask. "La amistad?"

More squirming and some obvious disappointment. A moment ago, Israel was going to help me find my bride. Now he's not so sure that I'm worth the trouble.

"Bueno," I say. "Un cancion, entonces?" A song, then?

They brighten and nod their collective heads. This, at least, may be some reward. I burst out in a few bars of "When You Wish Upon A Star". I sing loud and strong, trying to be worthy. I sing the first verse twice while my amigos look on, astonished. I juggle a few stones and finish with a flourish. "Esta bien?" I ask. Is that all right? I jingle some coins in my pocket.

Israel is happier now, but disappointed, too. "Es muy codo, señor," he replies again. It's very cheap.

They say that you can count your wealth by the number of your friends. Israel has lots of friends, but he is no philosopher. He wants coin of the realm. I relent, pull out the coins and give them all five pesos each. A heartfelt gracias from all before they retire to fantasise over their newfound wealth. I expect them to bite the coins, for authenticity, but they do not.

I calculate what this encounter has cost: five pesos per kid times eight kids, 40 pesos. Eight refrescos at 1.5 pesos each is another 12, totalling 52 pesos, or around \$10. It had been a pricey retrieve, but there were lots of kids, and it had been a long, dusty trail.



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Paraglider Harness Review:

SWING CONNECT HARNESS

Hakim Mentes



SPECIFICATIONS

Brand:	Swing
Manufacturer:	Woody Valley
Model:	Connect
Size:	Large
Harness weight:	approximately 6kg

CONSTRUCTION

Proven wear resistant DuPont Cordura cloth is chosen as the main material.

Wearing the harness is easy as there are only two quick release buckles to be clipped in. It is a bit different to T-buckle systems, as the adjustment point is in between two buckles.

Crash protection comes in on various levels:

- *rigid wooden plate under seat*
- *pre-formed, varied thickness (up to 17cm) back protection foam covering the back and bottom*
- *flexible plastic plate (Lexan) all along the back and underneath*
- *optional side protection (a pity this isn't standard)*

The reserve is in a side-mounted pocket. Problematic velcro fasteners are not used to keep the reserve in place, instead there is a rigid handle tucked into an elastic pocket, which is easy to pull out. Two plastic rods secure the reserve pocket lids in place.

This is not the most compact harness on the market, it's rather bulky. Good protection comes at a cost, I suppose.

STORAGE

The harness is fitted with a large sized storage compartment at the back. There is only one large sized inner pocket in it, which could be handy as storage for a water container. There are no separate pockets here for radio or other equipment.

A medium sized elastic pocket on each side of the harness are big enough to store a few fruits, snacks and some accessories, but not a three course meal.

COMFORT FACTOR

It is a very comfortable harness if sitting up is your preferred flying position. However, I did not feel that comfortable when in a supine (laid back) position – possibly due to incorrect adjustments.

Walking around with the harness on your back even when the shoulder straps are at their limit would be irritating (but of course that's not what paragliding harnesses are designed for).

The harness is fitted with a chest strap to prevent the shoulder straps slipping off your shoulders, but I did not need to use it.

ADJUSTMENT

There are plenty of adjustment straps and buckles. They are all very visible and it's easy to figure out what their function is.

The adjustments are:

- *shoulder strap adjustment*
- *seat depth adjustments (back depth and bottom depth)*
- *leg support adjustment*

It's not difficult to adjust things while flying.

SPEED SYSTEM

The harness is equipped with a basic two step speed system, consisting of a cord and aluminium rod. The edge of the leg support section is fitted with elastic eyelets to keep the speed system tucked in while not in use.

EXTRAS

Extras include flight deck attachment points (under carabiner connections) and the chest strap to reduce slippage of harness from the shoulders.



Contact: Andrew Polidano, email: <info@poliglide.com>, phone: 0428 666843 or 02 66843510.



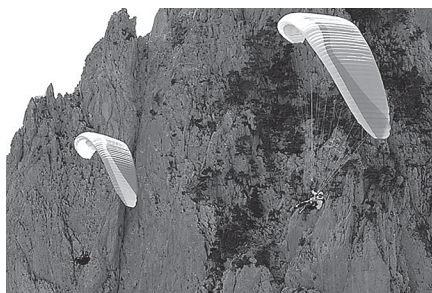
Left: Protection foam

Above: Side view

Prospective HGFA 2006 Calendar

HGFA is calling for photo submissions and advertisements (both small and banner) for a potential 2006 calendar. Please submit 300 dpi TIFF images in landscape format to <office@hgfa.asn.au> with full captions and photographer's name by Friday 19 August 2005.

NEW PRODUCTS



Aerodyne Shaolin

Thanks to Aerodyne's experience in this category of gliders, and with the help of pilots' feedback, the Shaolin is designed for all pilots in search of serenity and pure sensations as well as great handling precision.

The Shaolin (CEN Standard) is a turning point in this category of gliders; the pleasure of precise trajectory and accessible performance.

You'll feel confident and safe under the Shaolin, built with the highest quality materials currently available, your journey will last and last.

Please contact us for more information on 02 9999 1270 or send us an email at <info@windworks.com.au>.

Paramania Revolution

With the huge successes of Paramania's powerwing, the Action, the team have been working on a new wing aimed at beginner and intermediate paramotor pilots called the Revolution. With over a year of development and testing this wing is said to be the 'easiest wing to launch', so easy it can even be done without holding the risers, simply by moving forward!

Designer Mike Campbell-Jones wants to give paramotor pilots the advantage of Reflex Technology (previously used in the Reflex and Action), with proven resistance to collapses and a huge speed range all in one easy-to-use wing. The team believe the Revolution will have an even bigger impact on paramotoring than any wing currently available for powered flight.

A perfect first powerwing for the beginners and a good fun all rounder for the intermediate paramotorists!

The Revolution will be available from the end of July from all Paramania dealers.

Visit [www.FlyParamania.com] for more news or email <info@FlyParamania.com>.

FAI NEWS

World Pilot Ranking Scheme

Paragliding

The top 10 has changed quite a lot because of the addition of the Europeans. Christian Maurer (SUI) now leads closely followed by Bruce Goldsmith (GBR) in second. Christian Biasi (ITA) is two points behind in third and Torsten Siegel leads the Germans in fourth with team mate Achim Joos in fifth. Nikolay Shorokhov (RUS) is one point behind in sixth, Paolo Zammarchi (ITA) one point behind him in seventh, Jin Oh Kim (KOR) is one more point behind in eighth and tying ninth place is Tomas Brauner (CZE) and Xevi Bonet Dalmau (ESP). In the nations rankings Italy lead, well clear from the Czech Republic, with Germany in third.

Hang Gliding

Oleg Bondarchuk (UKR) leads, with Mario Alonzi (FRA) second and Gerolf Heinrichs (AUT) in third. The nations rankings show France in top place, followed by Australia and Austria.

Class 5

Alex Ploner (ITA) leads from compatriot Christian Ciech (ITA) with David Chaumet (FRA) in third. In the nations ranking Italy lead, Austria is second and Germany third.

Paragliding Accuracy

Slovenia still take all top 10 places but with small changes in the order: Matjaz Sluga and Matjaz Feraric stay first and second but Jaka Gorenc moves up to third pushing Robi Zupan into fourth. Matej Goste slips a place to fifth while Dusan Gorenc keeps his sixth place to tie with Tone Svoljsak, and Alen Cizej. Frank Unuk drops a place to ninth and Rafael Kerin completes the top 10. The nations ranking stays the same, Slovenia lead, GBR is second and Serbia and Montenegro third.

Class 2

Brian Porter (USA) leads with Mark Mullholland (USA) second, Manfred Ruhmer (AUT) third and Junko Nakamura (JPN) fourth.

For full details of all the above rankings, please visit [www.fai.org/hang_gliding/rankings/].

Red Bull X-Alps – Log on right now

The 2005 Red Bull X-Alps: Be "right there" with live online tracking and viewing to follow the athletes on their 800km human-powered race across the Alps. See the X-Alps online in a wild new way at [www.redbullxalps.com], starting 1 August 2005.



Photo: Copyright Ulrich Grill

The athletes in the Red Bull X-Alps face long days of flying and longer nights of walking. Now the public can be "right there" with the athletes thanks to one of the world's best live, online tracking and viewing system. Perhaps a pilot is flying his paraglider at 4,000m on the side of Mt Blanc – the web visitor can see exactly where on Mt Blanc the pilot is flying and what the terrain looks like. Is he over the big rock faces, a glacier, or gliding out 3,000m over the valley floor?

During the 2003 Red Bull X Alps thousands of people watched the competition online, staying up through the night with the competitors and urging them on. This year's communication system is radically improved – viewers who visit [www.

redbullxalps.com] can see whether competitors are flying, walking or resting, and where they are compared to the other athletes on the 800km course across the Alps. New, detailed "Vector Maps" of the Alps show exactly where the competitor

is. The website maps are satellite photos and/or vectorised terrain maps, allowing the viewer an amazing new way to see and experience the Alps.

The communications technology behind [www.redbullxalps.com] is innovative and critical. All pilots must carry a Bräuniger Competino flight computer connected to a Sony Ericsson mobile phone at all times. The Competino is a flight instrument that tells the athlete his speed, the rate of climb or descent in the air and his position through a built-in GPS receiver. Every two minutes the Competino flight computer sends the GPS location to the phone, which then uploads it directly to the website. If an athlete has a serious accident he can use the system to

automatically SMS his location to the organisers and initiate a rescue.

Athletes will also use the MMS phones to post daily logs and photos – one of the most popular sections of the website in 2003 will be even better this time around.

Many technical users in 2003 wanted to see “IGC” files, more commonly called GPS track logs, of the flights. These will also be available this year for the first time.

More information as well as current list and fact sheets on the participating athletes can be found at [www.redbullxalps.com].

This event is happening with the special support of Nike ACG, Sony, Sony Ericsson, Zugspitze/Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Dachstein Bergbahnen and Ramsau am Dachstein.

New Representative to ICAO

The FAI has appointed Ms Mary Anne Stevens, current President of the Aero Club of Canada, as its new representative to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

FAI President Pierre Portmann introduced Ms Stevens to ICAO President Dr Assad Kotaite at a meeting in ICAO Headquarters in Montreal on 30 May 2005. She replaces FAI's outgoing representative, FAI President of Honour and former Regional Director of Civil Aviation in Transport Canada, André Dumas. Mr Dumas decided to retire after several decades of distinguished service to FAI and the world air sports community. He and FAI's Finance Director, Robert Clipsham, were also present at the meeting with Dr Kotaite.

Mary Anne Stevens is a balloon pilot and instructor. She was President of the Canadian Balloon Association from 1993 to 2004, and national Hot Air Balloon Champion in 2001. She holds a Masters degree in public administration and is a senior public servant in the Government of Canada. In this capacity, she has acquired substantial experience in the interpretation, review and amendment of legislation and regulations, as well as with intergovernmental consultations, all of which will be very useful experience in her new ICAO role.

FAI President Portmann paid tribute to the great work done over many years by André Dumas and expressed his full confidence in Mary Anne Stevens' ability to ensure that the interests of all air sports continue to be properly represented and promoted at ICAO in the years ahead.

Mary Anne Stevens has already started work defending the interests of sporting aviation in the ICAO Flight Crew Licensing and Training Panel.

CIEA Plenary Meeting

The FAI Aviation & Space Education Commission (CIEA) held its Annual Plenary Meeting on 17-18 June 2005 at the Aéro Club de France and at the Le Bourget Air & Space Museum in Paris. CIEA President Raymond J. Johnson reported on the CDROM “An International Collection of Aviation Art from 1986 to 2004”, containing winning paintings of the FAI Young Artists Contest. The production of this archive was made possible thanks to the cooperation and work of students and staff of the Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Prescott, AZ (USA). To contribute to the promotion of air sports amongst young people, free copies of the CDROM are available for FAI Members <sec@fai.org>.

Mr Michiel M. W. Kasteleijn (NED) was elected as the new CIEA President, replacing Mr Raymond J. Johnson (USA), who presided over the Commission for the last five years, and was unanimously elected President of Honour. Mr Gordon Hoff (USA) was elected as first Vice-President, while Contessa Maria Fede Caproni (ITA) was elected as second Vice-President and Raymond J. Johnson as Secretary.

The International Jury met in Paris to determine the winners of the 2005 FAI Young Artists Contest, whose theme was “Create an Airshow Poster – More than 100 years of human flight”. Visit [www.fai.org/education/contests/artists/winners] to view results and winning paintings. The theme of the 2006 Contest will be “Air Sports and Nature in Harmony”; updated rules and interpretation of the theme will be published on CIEA webpages as soon as available [www.fai.org/education/contests/artists/].

The Nile Gold Medal was awarded to Mr Raymond J. Johnson (USA) in recognition for his lifetime contributions and achievements for the advancement and enhancement of aviation and space education.

The next Plenary Meeting will take place in Lausanne (SUI), 28 to 29 April 2006.

And The World Could Fly

To celebrate the centenary of FAI, the International Hang Gliding and Paragliding Commission (CIVL) produced a new book titled “And The World Could Fly”.

Edited by Stéphane Malbos and Noel Whittall, “And The World Could Fly” tells the story of how flying for the masses became a

possibility, and then a reality, with the rapid development of hang gliding and paragliding. “And the World Could Fly” contains contributions from many parts of the world as well as much new writing. Together, the editors have more than 50 years of undiminished enthusiasm for foot-launched flight.

For further information, please refer to CIVL webpage: [www.fai.org/hang_gliding/And_The_World_Could_Fly].

World Record Claims

Claim number: 11640

Class 0 – Hang Gliders/Sub-class: 0-3 (Paragliders) Category: Multiplace

Type of record: Out-and-return distance

Course/location: Location to be confirmed

Performance: 153.4km

Pilot: Klemen Peljhan (Slovenia)

Co-pilot: Tanja Kompan (SLO)

Paraglider: Mac Para technology Pasha 2

Date: 28/5/2005

Current record: 129.6km (15/5/2000, Jürgen STOCK, Austria)

The details shown above are provisional. When all the evidence required has been received and checked, the exact figures will be established and the record ratified (if appropriate).



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FIRST TEST IN THE WEST



Sean, Geoff Pepper, Ollie, author. All smiles after a successful flight.

Flying the TeST-8 Alpin DM Motor Glider

Hilmer Geissler

I HAVE JUST HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO DO THE FORM 2 EVALUATION FLIGHT (MAIDEN FLIGHT, ACTUALLY) ON A TEST-8 ALPIN DM MOTORISED GLIDER. THIS GLIDER IS OWNED BY GEOFF PEPPER (NOW THE AUSTRALIAN

AGENT FOR TEST) AND IS BUILT THE 'OLD FASHIONED' WAY OUT OF WOOD AND FABRIC, WITH ONLY THE FRONT PART OF THE FUSELAGE BEING COMPOSITE.

This aircraft is a two-seater, has a fixed dual undercarriage and steerable nose wheel, no flaps and a retractable Rotax 503 (50hp) engine as power source. It was built about two years ago.

The obvious question is: Why would one build a glider out of wood these days? The answer to that: Who knows! (Cost and expertise may have been a consideration).

The Czech manufacturer TeST also had second thoughts, and is now only producing composite single- and two-seater aircraft.

I was originally somewhat apprehensive about flying the Alpin DM. It looks a bit odd, with three wheels under the front fuselage, made out of wood and fabric, a big engine sticking out of the fuselage at an unusual angle, tiny tail wheel, small fin and rudder, etc. Also, I had never flown a motor glider with a centre-mounted retractable engine before. There aren't any in WA.

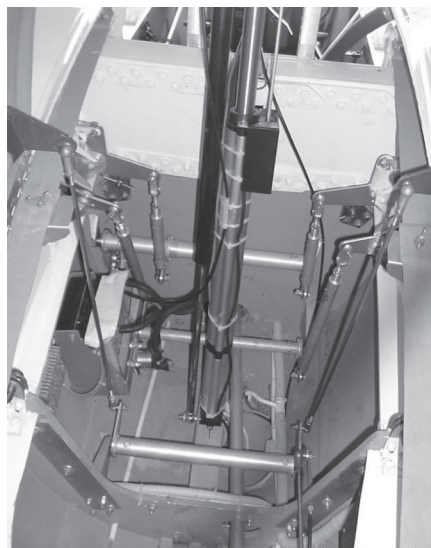
A closer look at the glider, however, convinced me that it was well designed, built and finished and that the engine and its associated mechanisms were all very neat and tidy – and as it turned out, practical and easy to use. Access to all parts, nuts and bolts, bell cranks, etc. throughout the glider is excellent. The engine bay is one of the roomiest and most accessible one can wish for. I am sure 'Ollie' Waywood, who did the Form 2 and who is one of the very few Form 2 'wood-men' left, agrees with me on this.

As I have mentioned, the glider has two wheels as main undercarriage and a small, steerable wheel about a metre in front of them. I was a bit sceptical about the practicality of such an arrangement, particularly

considering the narrow main wheel base. I should not have worried. When taxiing the glider, steering was not a problem at all, and even on Geoff's fairly rough grass/dirt strip the main wheels kept the aircraft surprisingly well on an even keel. Should a wing drop, a small wheel near the tip will protect the surface against damage, and the glider from a possible ground loop.

THE COCKPIT

The tandem cockpit could have received more attention by the manufacturer, particularly as far as seats and size are concerned. The seats are basically half-bucket type back rests (for a small parachute) and a flat floor. Geoff had modified this with energy-absorbing foam cushions which turned out to be quite comfortable.



The front cockpit is quite narrow and takes a bit getting used to. Pilots over 1.8m and/or broad-built will not fit. The back cockpit is roomier, but again tall pilots will find it cramped. The cockpit weight limit of 160kg for two pilots does not allow large people to fly this aircraft anyway, and this limitation is probably one of the major drawbacks of this glider.

In the front cockpit, control handles for the throttle, airbrake, wheel brake and trim are on the left hand side. The airbrake handle is very hard to locate and operate, as it hangs downwards and must be rotated upwards past one's leg before it can be used. The handle may be kept in the upright position with one's leg – but this is not very comfortable. This problem is in my opinion one of the very few design flaws of this glider. I am sure, however, that a relatively simple modification can be made to hold the lever in the upright position.

The joystick is in a comfortable position. The rudder pedals are adjustable by about 10cm (not in flight though). Pilots with large feet will have a problem, as the pedals are very close together in the narrow nose of the fuselage. The view from the front seat is as good as it gets, and from the back seat is not too bad either.

Instrumentation is very simple, uncluttered and ultra-modern with a Bräuniger Alpha MFD (glass) front and back. Airspeed and vario are in round form, while all other data (and there are as many as you can think of) are analog read-outs.

Engine room – neat and tidy

Below the 'glass' instruments are two ignition switches, two buttons for engine 'up' and 'down', an engine primer, and a key-operated electric main switch. All very simple, functional and certainly user-friendly. To operate the engine 'extend', 'retract' and 'start' mechanisms, only minimal action (which equals distraction) by the pilot is required. If the correct buttons and switches are pushed in the right sequence the engine retracts, extends, and starts electrically without any hassle. On my first attempt to extend and start the engine in flight, the whole process took about 40 seconds, and the height loss was in the order of 250 to 300ft. Quite acceptable, I thought.

FLYING AND HANDLING

So, how does this baby fly?

After familiarising myself with the cockpit layout and instruments, I started the engine and let it warm up for a couple of minutes. Then came the moment we had all been waiting for, particularly Geoff of course. With joystick full back (as per instructions) and full power the aircraft accelerated very fast, and after about 25 to 30m literally leapt into the air. I had to quickly ease the stick forward, and a climb-out at 600ft/min followed. After throttling back to 6,100rpm the aircraft still climbed rapidly and all controls felt light and responsive.

I must say that I am very impressed with the acceleration and climb rate, which for a motorised glider are excellent. This applies even to the fully laden aircraft. I did put the glider through its paces, with the engine 'out' and idling – no surprises there. Then I flew a full approach and landing in the same configuration. Again, the glider handled well at all stages. After climbing to 4,000ft agl on the second flight, I retracted the engine and finally had a 'proper' glider to fly. Handling and performance are a bit like flying a Blanik or Puchatek. Speeds are also similar: V_{SO} about 35kt and V_{NE} 97kt.

Rate of roll is good, owing to a 15.4m wingspan, and stability in the turns appeared to be good. Unfortunately there weren't any thermals to test this properly. Approach, round-out and touch down are no problem at all, but on final it did become obvious

that the small air brakes are not as effective as one would like them to be. The two wheel brakes are effective, and bring the glider to a quick stop.

In all the flights I did, regardless of the engine configuration, I never experienced any unexpected or rapid pitch or speed changes, or anything that did not feel 'right'.

IN A NUTSHELL

To sum up, the Alpin is a docile, economical, self-launching two-seat glider ideal for training and local soaring. It is not a racing or cruising motor glider, as it has only a 12 litre tank. I believe that the Alpin is an ideal aircraft to convert glider pilots to motor gliders. It always remains a 'glider', and the engine operations simple and easy to manage.

Good points: a very pleasant aircraft to fly, no vices, plenty of power, simple user-friendly engine operation, economical to operate (Geoff bought his for A\$75,000), good accessibility to all parts of the aircraft.

Not so good: wood/fabric construction, small front cockpit, limited cockpit loads (total 160kg), airbrake performance on the lower end of the scale, airbrake handle difficult to operate.

The latest news from the TeST factory is that they are replacing the Alpin with a full-composite, self-launching two-seater.

Apparently, initial performance testing indicates a glide angle of just below 40 to 1!

I am looking forward to getting more info for this aircraft, as the price may also be very competitive.

TeST make a full-composite, self-launching single seater (TeST-10) with a 40 to 1 glide angle. Several are on order and should be in the country shortly. (Geoff, I am volunteering to do the evaluation flight!)



First landing

Photos: Margaret Geissler



Ready for take off from neighbour Garry's property
Photo: Jo Pepper

For further info on all TeST aircraft, get in touch with Geoff Pepper (email: <gjpepper@wn.com.au> or phone 08 9641 6085).

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Geoff and family, Ollie, author

Coach and Pilot Wanted

A team manager/coach is required for the Australian team attending the Club Class World Gliding Championships to be held in July 2006 at Vinon, France.

Also, a pilot is required to represent Australia at the Tasman Trophy to be contested at the Multi Class Nationals in Gawler in January 2006.

If interested or if you require further information, please contact me by email or mobile before 31 August 2005.

Peter Trotter, Chairman – Team selection, mobile: 0417 888040 (Peter), 0425 769890 – (Lisa), email: <gliderpilots@bigpond.com>, postal address: 13 Grant Avenue, Kingaroy, QLD 4610.

GFA 2005 Flight Safety Seminars

The Chief Technical Officer – Operations is conducting the 2005 Round of GFA Flight Safety Seminars, with seminars being held in each GFA Region.

All Clubs are to be advised of their nearest seminar. Please watch club notice boards and club newsletters, etc., for details. Flight Safety Seminars are conducted for the benefit of all members; your attendance is encouraged regardless of whether you have been gliding for a week or a lifetime.

Kevin Olerhead

44th Multi-Class National Championships

Adelaide Soaring Club will be hosting the Multi-class Championship at Gawler airfield from Monday 2 to Friday 13 January 2006. The competition will run two classes, the 15m Class and the Open Class, and all gliders will be handicapped according to the current Multi-class handicaps. However, if sufficient

entries are received the 15m Class will be split into Standard and 15m Racing, and the Open Class will be split into 18m and Open.

The task area to the north of Gawler features gently rising ground, with very wide valleys and large safe paddocks, the area to the east extending out past the Murray River to the south of Waikerie. The club has applied for an increase in airspace to minimise the possibility of airspace incursions. The airfield has plenty of room for landing, and the tie-down area will be near the club facilities and have water provided.

During the competition there will be meals available in the club rooms adjacent to the bar. There is limited camping available on the field. Roseworthy College is only 10 minutes from the field and has houses to rent during the event. Contact the club to arrange bookings. Gawler Township has a large number of accommodation options.

Gawler is the gateway to the Barossa, and has numerous wineries to tempt the connoisseur. We are receiving excellent support from the local community and businesses, and negotiations are in place to secure significant sponsorship for this event from the Barossa region. The city of Adelaide is only 45 minutes away.

Gawler Week will be held immediately prior to the event. There will be weather briefings and tasks set, all are welcome to attend and get some practice in before the start of the competition. Online info and entry is available at [www.adelaidesoaring.on.net] or phone: 08 8522 1877.

Phil Ritchie, ASC

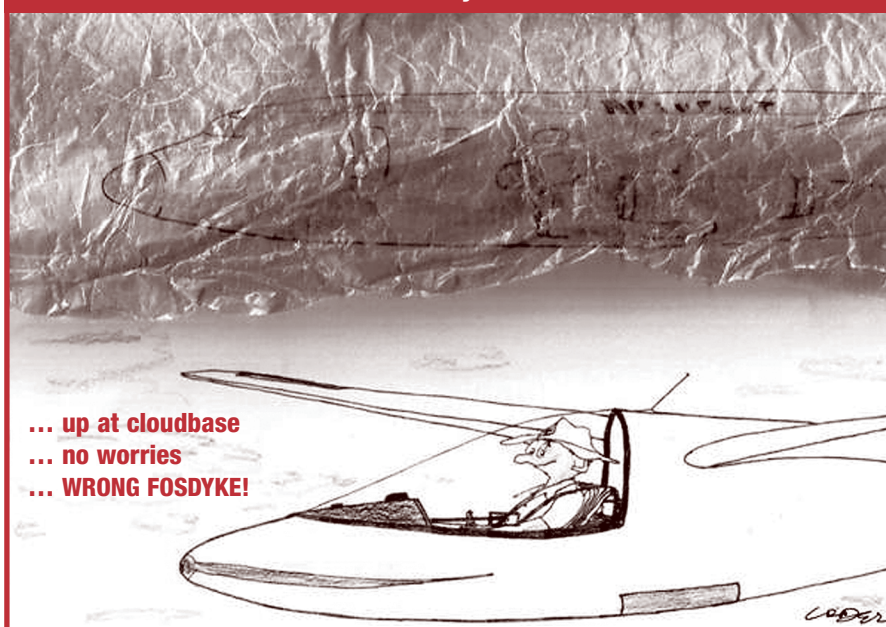


New Datalogger for Temperature Monitoring

Onset Computer Corporation recently introduced the HOB0 Pendant Logger, a miniature datalogger for monitoring temperatures. The waterproof logger is designed for use in a wide range of environments, providing 0.5°C accuracy and up to 52,000 readings. LED visual alarms are activated if temperatures exceed user-defined limits.

For plotting and analysing temperature data, Onset offers a graphing and analysis software package for Windows which enables graphs of temperature conditions can be printed out. The logger offloads data to a PC via an optical USB interface, which enables high-speed data offload. Contact OneTemp Pty. Ltd, phone: 1300 768 887; [www.onetemp.com.au].

Cartoon by Codez



... up at cloudbase
... no worries
... WRONG FOSDYKE!

Sportavia Sponsorship

Paul Mander reports "Late and exciting news, just to hand, is that Sportavia have announced that they are sponsoring our pilots to the tune of \$2,000. This makes them our largest single sponsor, and gives them T-shirt naming rights! In appreciation we will be displaying their logo whenever possible on our equipment and apparel. Thank you, Sportavia.

This welcome development makes our ambition of leaving funds in the Juniors' account more achievable, and our pilots have expressed the wish that this residual should be applied to helping some junior pilots from Western Australia to make the long and expensive journey to the next JoeyGlide which, if you haven't heard, is to be held at Leeton from 4 to 10 December. Can anyone think of a better sentiment?"



An Old Solution For a New Problem?

Peter Carr

The present fleet of Australian glider tugs, mainly old crop dusters, Piper Cubs or Austers, is getting rather old — older in some cases than many members of the gliding clubs. In spite of loving care and attention, they are getting creaky in their bones, necessitating ever more loving care and expense.

Alan Patching has been saying that clubs should buy new aircraft, such as Gippsland Aeronautics GA 200. In spite of a substantial discount (since a tug does not require a hopper and associated dumping gear), the cost is still \$350,000. Secondhand Piper Cubs go for \$60,000 to \$100,000, according to recent advice from an aircraft sales organisation.

I recently received an enquiry about pressed sheet metal ribs for a rebuild of a Piper Pawnee, intended to replace the built-up girder type of rib made by Piper. The new ribs are similar, but not quite the same as the Gippsland Aeronautics GA 200 ribs. These have now been dispatched to a very happy maintenance engineer.

The above two happenings prompted the following thoughts.

Rather than a rugged cropduster designed to carry a tonne of fertiliser, why not a basic, old-fashioned aircraft such as a Piper Cub with a 180hp 0360 or 200hp 10360 Lycoming, and very little else. After all, what is needed is a tractor, not a low loader semi trailer to carry an army tank.

Some years ago, an American firm brought out plans of an aircraft they called the CUBy. This was a homebuilt clone of the Piper Cub. They later changed the name to the Sport Trainer, apparently under pressure from Piper.

So, using a metal-covered wing with CARR ribs and a welded steel Cub type fuselage and fabric covered rear, and a thumping big Lycoming engine in front, we would achieve a simple, rugged tractor.

The experimental category allows us to build such an aircraft without the expense of full FAR23 certification, which consumes millions of dollars before the bureaucrats are happy. The basic design has had only 70 years of operation to debug deficiencies in the design.

The above facts should suffice to start discussions, eg:

- 1) *Is there a market for such an aircraft, and how many?*
- 2) *What features are needed (not merely wanted!)*

Such a project should not proceed on a speculative basis, building up stock before finding out if there are buyers. Nor should it be started with delusions of grandeur that there would be hundreds sold. But there might just be a niche market for a small, steady production.

Comments and enquiries should be phoned, faxed, emailed or posted to:

Peter Carr, 123 Aphrasia Street, Geelong VIC 3220, phone/fax: 03 52213505, email <my_image @big pond.net.au>.



NB: The author was co-founder (with Bob Muller) of the Geelong Gliding Club in 1954. Later, he was Project Engineer on the Victa Air Tourer. For the last ten years, he has earned his living manufacturing pressed sheet metal parts for Gippsland Aeronautics aircraft and many others.



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Review: AIRBORNE CLIMAX C4

Adam Parer

**"A COMPLETE PACKAGE:
EASE OF HANDLING WITH TOP
PERFORMANCE" – ADAM PARER
FOLLOWING THE DALBY BIG
AIR 2005 COMPETITION**



The Australian Airborne C4 on aerotow at Quest Air, USA

Photo: Scott Johnson, US Airborne



Left: Phil Schroder and Adam Parer with their C4s, Dalby 2005. C2 in background belongs to Peter Aitken
Photo: Peter Aitken

Good competition results and positive comments in the Oz Report have fuelled curiosity about the new Airborne C4. Competition is the best field test for assessing a new glider and Airborne's latest product obviously performs very well. While top-end performance is critical for a glider to be successful, it is only part of the overall character of this new wing.

At first glance the thin profile suggests speed, and immediately identifies the C4 from other topless wings including its older cousins the C1 and C2. This very thin wing section, along with the increased double surface and new sail pattern, are its main distinguishing features. On closer inspection a cleaner nose cover design that blends smoothly into the mainsail also contributes to the impressive look of the C4.

Like its predecessors, the Airborne C4 stands out as one of the best finished gliders around. The extensive use of CNC milled components contribute to this, but what instantly catches the attention is the sail finish. Wingtech, who provide the sail work for Airborne, deliver exceptional quality and set a standard hard to match. Before its maiden flight many came over to the Dalby hangar where the C4s were set-up and commented on how good the glider looked.

During the competition other pilots remarked on how clean it looked in the air and on day three I was to see for myself exactly how good it did look in flight. I flew with Phil Schroder (also on a C4 proto) for the last 30km of the task and I was amazed how his sail sat totally clean on all rope settings with sail tension distributed smoothly throughout span and chord. No hint of span-wise undulations with rope-off and full-rope had the trailing edge looking completely flat. It was evident much of the improvement in performance is the result of trialing many sail modifications.

Airborne gliders are renown for their sweet handling and the C4 is also blessed with this characteristic. With rope-off roll control is docile and the pitch is positive.

With rope-on the glider naturally stiffens-up but even at trim-speed it is still roll responsive, a very nice improvement. With rope-on the pitch lightens but remains positive even during the fastest of glides, making this part of the flight envelope very comfortable. This sort of handling allows for trouble free aerotowing and the large flare window offers the pilot slow and controllable landings. Roll/yaw co-ordination is balanced and promotes good thermalling performance where only minimal high siding establishes a carving feel to the bank.

Since the prototypes were built the C4 has been entered in three competitions and the results speak for themselves: Third in the NSW State Titles, third in the South Florida Invitational, and first in the Dalby Big Air. Number two ranked Australian pilot, Dave Seib, flies the excellent Moyes Litespeed S4, which he claims had a glide on par with the best at the 2005 World Titles. At the Dalby Big Air Ricky Duncan and I were flying relatively untuned C4 prototypes that matched that Litespeed on glide! Combine this performance with the excellent handling and the result is a glider that is safe, easy to launch and land, a delight to fly and can hold its own in top-end glide. The Airborne C4 is a complete package: ease of handling with top performance.



THE ART OF FALLING

Andrew Talmage

IT WAS ONE OF THOSE DECISIONS THAT HAUNT YOU AS A PILOT: A DECISION TO IGNORE BETTER JUDGEMENT AND GIVE IN TO THE LITTLE VOICE WHISPERING 'MUST FLY'. IT WAS A BEAUTIFUL DECEMBER MORNING IN KALGOORLIE. CLEAR BLUE SKIES PROMISED AT LEAST A 10,000FT DAY. I WATCHED THE SUNRISE ON MY WAY HOME FROM WORK AND KNEW IT WAS GOING TO BE A BEAUTIFUL DAY FOR FLYING. PITY I HAD JUST WORKED A 14 HOUR NIGHT SHIFT AND WOULD HAVE TO SLEEP THE DAY AWAY.

Sleep, however, would not come, and around midday I headed out to join the boys at Lake Perkolili, our local tow strip. The cycles were rolling through beautifully and my resolve to only watch soon gave way. Hoping to get another cross-country flight under my belt before the State Soaring Championships, I set up my paraglider and was towed up to 1,200ft. The conditions were powerful – tight 1,600ft/min up thermals surrounded by heavy sink.

I glided back towards launch, arriving above the trees at about 600ft and desperately needing a thermal to stay up. I felt the glider shiver and start to pull to the left. I began to turn into the thermal that I knew would be waiting there to take me up to 10,000ft, but it wasn't to be. I turned harder trying to break through into the rising air – too hard. My wing rippled then spun. The left half of the wing had stalled and had started to spin. I released the brakes and the wing re-inflated and surged ahead of me into heavy sink. In a heartbeat it was nearly below me and I was falling. Part of the wing caught the lift and it turned violently, twisting my risers once, twice, three times. I tried to correct, pulling on the twisted brake lines, but too late. I was hurtling through the air, spinning and falling around a twisted wing that refused to fly. A quick assessment of the situation left me with only one conclusion, *"I'm dead!"* My risers were twisted six or seven times, I was only at 500ft and I was falling fast. Too low to use my reserve or recover, too high to survive, *"I'm dead."*

I pulled hard on my right brake, stopping the wing from spinning, and the twists started to release. Six... Five... Four... I was spinning below my still flapping wing watching as ever so slowly the twists released and I started to regain control. Maybe there was hope. I looked down. I was barely 100ft above the ground and I was still falling fast,

very fast, too fast. My risers were still twisted, my wing refused to respond and I had a couple of seconds to live. *"Bugger!"*

Frantically I reached up as high as I could with my left arm and pulled on everything and anything. For a second my wing stabilised and turned. Then I hit. Rocketing through the branches of a small tree I felt leaves and twigs clawing at me trying to catch me. And then I was down, lying on my back on the ground... alive, yet scared to move, scared to breath in case it was only an illusion and I was actually dead.

I remembered my friends and what they must be going through having seen me fall. I reached a tentative arm up to my radio and announced, *"Just thought I'd let you know I'm alive and that was better than any rollercoaster I've ever been on. I thoroughly recommend falling out of the sky."* My friends, now suspecting a head injury, rushed to my side.

Muz (Murray Wood) was the first to arrive. He had been trying to convince my girlfriend, Jodanne, to let me buy a new vario when they had seen me fall. *"That's not good,"* he explained to Jodanne before taking off into the bush to find me. He immediately inspected my helmet and frowned when he found both it and me intact. Scurge (Mark Stokoe) arrived next with a lecture on trying to catch violent thermals at low height. Jodanne, sobbing and in desperate need of a hug, arrived soon after.

My friends had all expected to find a pile of crushed bones needing resuscitation, not a walking talking paraglider pilot requiring a hug and a very cold beer. I had survived, but only barely. My wing had caught the tree at the last instant and had saved me from digging my own shallow grave. My decision to fly after having been awake for over 30 hours nearly saw me taking a permanent sleep. My only injury was a slightly bruised forearm where I had hit the

tree. My glider was completely undamaged. Unfortunately the tree, my saviour, was not quite so fortunate, sacrificing a few limbs and branches to my cause.

Like many novice paraglider pilots out there I had assumed the DHV-1 rating of my glider was a shield that would protect me from major collapses and 600ft falls into the ground. I hope that my mistake can help remind us all that equipment cannot protect a pilot from himself and that any aircraft, no matter how safe, can still fail in the wrong conditions.

I was lucky, but I should have been smart. Two weeks later I asked Jodanne to marry me, and now whenever I fly I remember everything I nearly lost that day and I fly smart and stay safe.



Rob Steane launching from Mt Pleasant, the centrepiece of a whole new XC area just "found" in midlands Tasmania

Photo: Courtesy Rob Steane



...AND THE HUNTER, HOME FROM THE HILL

Tony and Kay Hayes (With thanks to Recreational Aviation Australia)

MIKE VALENTINE IS DEAD. I AM NOT GOING TO PUSSY-FOOT AROUND FOR MIKE ALWAYS TOOK ON ISSUES FACE TO FACE AND DEALT WITH THEM IN A MATTER OF FACT MANNER. I SHALL DO THE SAME – FOR THE FINAL DIGNITY OF THE DEAREST FRIEND KAY AND MYSELF EVER HAD, A FRIENDSHIP SPANNING 40 YEARS AND BUILT AROUND RECREATIONAL AVIATION.

Mike took his own life so let's have it up front and not mess about being 'socially polite'. None of us have any choice about coming into this world but we have free choice while we are here and that includes deciding it is time to move on.

That decision was made, arrangements were made and the situation happened. Mike had his own reasons, they were personal and I respect the decision because it was Mike's to make. He was not a man to act on impulse, leading a very ordered life – and what a life!

That said, the loss is shattering to those of us who remain, including the hundreds of people around the world who held him in such high esteem. Australia has not just lost its greatest recreational instructor/administrator/systems man – the entire recreational Aviation World has also lost badly. For Mike was truly international and looked upon our aviation world as international. He was (to my knowledge) the only person to have had been awarded one of the most prestigious international awards for services to recreational aviation.

It is impossible to recount a life like that in a few paragraphs – there was simply too much of it, but have a glimpse. Very personal and retiring in his private life, Mike loved classical music, fine wine and food yet abhorred any form of pretension in any area. But he was equally outward and at home in a pub or aero club bar enjoying a beer and joke with anyone with any love of flying no matter their 'status'. It was his retention of the 'common touch' and acknowledgement of the meaning and importance of this that endeared him to hundreds. No matter his

status and experience Mike could and would sit down with anyone and talk evenly with them on their own terms and empathise with their own challenges, seeking for solutions and usually finding those. That takes a very special person!

Mike, a Welshman by birth and an Australian at death, had an abiding love of the hills and mountains. He was a great hill and mountain pilot and one of his passions became trekking in the Himalayas that echoed his flying interests.

He started flying at 14 with the UK Air Cadets in gliders then joined the RAF and continued building a base in gliding in Cyprus. He carried on to include powered aircraft licences, became a tug pilot, and had a period of employment flying military piston and jet engine aircraft. He was involved in the first real development of training systems in motor gliders and then moved to Australia.

His greatest mark was made through the Gliding Federation of Australia and he is the only person who has (and probably will ever) hold the successive paid appointments of Secretary, National Coach, Director of Operations and the senior officer in Airworthiness. Meanwhile he was serving on International Standards committees outside the country.

But they were not positions just for the sake of having them – Mike used them! From this came his greatest achievement – where he, in principle and in practical terms, pinned down low speed loss of control in definable terms that pilots and instructors could use. I have not got a clue how many lives that has saved over the years since.

There was so much else and GFA is reeling under the shock of the loss. But

Mike in the past few years moved into the ultralighting world, continuing to instruct, using his considerable airworthiness qualifications for the benefit of others and, at the beginning of 2004 becoming Assistant Operations Manager and then Operations Manager half way through the year. In that short time he sufficiently impressed the membership that Recreational Aviation Australia is now also reeling under the shock of his loss. Perhaps fortunately they do not know the depth of the loss, for Mike was intending to give to Recreational Aviation Australia what he had already given to GFA.

So Mike has gone! The hearts of Kay and myself go out in particular to the others of Mike's very close friends – Dave and Mad Serle, John Viney and Chris Cullinan (the latter of whom has taken in Mike's dog Tess, who more than anyone was the actual centre of Mike's life).

But equally our hearts go out to the rest of you and I will be as hard and as cold as I started this with. Now it is our turn to pay and the payment is simple enough. Grieve certainly, as we have done in trumps! But give Mike his final dignity, allow him his final expression of quiet personal affairs and simply respect his decision – because he made it!

Damn we miss him, we all do, but let him go now in peace. Ave!



The GFA wishes to thank the Recreational Aviation Australia for permission to republish this article. It is unfortunate that it has taken so long after Mike's death for it to appear in Soaring Australia, nevertheless it is important for it to finally be available for Mike's many friends in the GFA.

Wilpena Pound

Emilis Prelgauskas

THE TRADITION OF EXPERIENCED PILOTS GOING ON SAFARI INTO THE REMOTE NORTH OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA CONTINUES. ALTHOUGH WILPENA POUND IS NO LONGER REMOTE IN TERMS OF ACCESS (BITUMEN ROADS PLACE IT WITHIN FOUR TO FIVE HOURS DRIVE FROM ADELAIDE), ITS ATTRACTIONS STILL REMIND VISITORS THAT THIS IS AUSTRALIA'S DESERT INTERIOR. BROAD, RUGGED BEAUTY OVERWHELMS MAN-MADE INTRUSIONS; BUT THE COUNTERPOINT IS THAT THIS PLACE CAN BE DANGEROUS. BREAKDOWN CAN PLACE YOU DAYS AWAY FROM HELP.

For glider pilots, the region offers ridge, wave, thermal and cloud convection, often all at the same time, and interacting through the effect of the random rippled landform below. From the air, it becomes clear the landing options are limited to the prepared surfaces at Wilpena resort, Rawnsley Park tourist park and the 'million star' Arkapeena bush camp.

In summer, the place to be is transiting over at high altitude from the civilised south – 1,000km tasks north are common – well above the unsurvivable hot, dusty ground. Winter is the time for safaris. South Australian clubs timeshare the area in May, June and September. I joined in a university club's June excursion, which brought together a dozen sailplanes and powered sailplanes from Port Augusta, GCV, Adelaide, and university clubs and associated private gliders; and Renmark's Pawnee.

Rain is always a risk at this time of year, the local area turning quickly to slush, bringing ground movement challenges. This year it remained fine, with enough rain beforehand to settle the dust. The Rawnsley Park gravel airstrip, being close to civilised accommodation in cabins, is the preferred operating site. However, the wind this year favoured Arkapeena dirt strip, across the main road and accessible to the Chase Range. It lies slightly higher, and provides postcard views of Wilpena Pound from the launch point.

Flying in this area always requires pilot experience, self-preservation awareness and forward planning. The locale throws up rapid, random changes in conditions. On one sortie, changing humidity brought with it lowering cloud, with cell rain drifting over a ridge that was holding a half a dozen gliders. Some chose to land back at the launch point; others travelled to the end of the ridge to hold, then dived back through the last of the rain curtain as it passed. Some worked the cloud windward-edge up over the top.

There wasn't room for all of them to try all these actions, but there were plenty of options to consider.

On past excursions, I've heard it said by low-hour club pilots that these pilots must be mad to scrape the hills in such a place. You don't fly in this region if you don't fully know your plane and your capabilities, and limitations.

Wave can be weak and hard to transition into. Also, even with GPS logging the rising wind with height can drift you out the back into turbulent and heavy sink. Only when basic flying skills have been fully mastered can the pilot's full attention be on these external challenges.

But the visual payoffs are many: the sailplane's silhouette on a cloud face, surrounded by a rainbow corona; an apparently stationary handful of sailplanes facing into wind, as the wave slowly lifts them to ever expanding vistas; a salute from walkers as we round the rocky outcrop onto the next vertical section of hill.

Yehaaaa!



HAPPENED RECENTLY ON AN AIRFIELD

Martin Feeg

A gaggle of about eight aircraft is thermal-ling at pretty much the same altitude. Things are all nice and quiet until the one in front of me rolls up – okay, he's leaving the thermal! But no, he's banking in again. A bit hard-pressed not to clip into his now quite different orbit, I force my glider to follow him on this slightly off-centre circle, just to restore safety. Precisely 360 degrees later, the same again – only this time he banks back so late, and so close in front of me, that I have no option but to pull on airbrakes and dive, and hope there is no-one below me. I go straight for cruise, and try to discuss the incident with him in the evening.

Close shave? Yes, definitely. When you are in close vicinity to other aircraft, you should manoeuvre first of all carefully, and secondly with a pattern that is common – in this case either in the orbit of everyone else, or rolling up and making sufficient distance to the gaggle.

Safe soaring.



GlideFast Coaching Course at the Gliding Club of Victoria

11-16 December 2005

- Peter and Lisa Trotter are offering coaching at Benalla in the month prior to the Club Class National Championships.
- The format will be lectures/discussion, briefing and post-flight analysis.
- The course is aimed at advanced cross-country pilots who are interested in competition or who are attempting 300 km or greater distances.
- There are a limited number of places available. To secure a place, send \$150 to GCV (PO Box 46, Benalla, Vic) with your name and email address.
- For more information contact John Switala by email <john_switala@ptp.com.au> or telephone the GCV on 03 5762 1058.

GFA NATIONAL COACHING PROGRAM



KIA ORA, AND ALL OUT*!

Mitch Preston

OMARAMA. SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE WAVE-SOARING MECCA, AND OBJECT OF DESIRE FOR LEGIONS OF GLIDING ENTHUSIASTS. QUITE A PLACE – OR SO I HEAR. ACTUALLY, I’VE NEVER BEEN THERE, HOWEVER I HAVE BEEN TO THE NORTH ISLAND OF OUR NEIGHBOUR ACROSS THE TASMAN, AND THIS IS AN ACCOUNT OF THE RIGHT WAY TO MIX BUSINESS AND PLEASURE WHILE IN THE LAND OF THE LONG WHITE (AND, MORE OFTEN THAN NOT, LENTICULAR) CLOUD.

(*Full Power, Kiwi-style)

Auckland GC clubhouse, hangars and trailers

The period 4 to 15 May saw me in Wellington and Auckland on business. Being like many other hopeless gliding types, I had made contact with the local clubs of each city even before my ‘official’ arrangements were complete prior to departing Oz (it’s all about efficiency and priorities, y’know...) Subsequently I was ready to make contact with our Kiwi brethren (and ‘sistren’?) as soon as the opportunities presented themselves. First stop: Wellington Gliding Club.

This club flies from two locations. I visited the non-soaring season site, the local GA airfield in (and well and truly surrounded by) the town of Paraparaumu, about an hour north of Wellington on the west coast of the lower North Island. The locals tend to say Paramu, and I could see why after my several attempts at getting within even radio-telescope proximity of the correct pronunciation. Much flying activity was apparent at the field; GA fixed-wing and rotary-wing traffic was seen in abundance during my few hours there. All seemed to coexist peacefully, aided and abetted by strict radio procedure and designated circuit directions for fossil fuel- and solar-powered machines.

I have to say the weather was dicey. A north-westerly airflow was bringing moisture from low pressure lurking nearby,

so there was the charming combination of fresh wind and plenty of low cloud. Nonetheless, the duty instructor, Richard Downer, suggested that we fly anyway. I suspect I didn’t have much choice as I had booked a flight, and when I arrived I found a Twin Astir out ready for me, and several club members standing around in apparent anticipation of my arrival. Try backing out of this, I thought to myself...

As it turns out, the next 39 minutes were immensely enjoyable. We took a tow to 2,000ft asl (we were on the coast), where after a couple of minutes’ exploration we contacted what Richard described as a ‘pressure wave’ system. The simple explanation is that the lower level (0 to 1,000ft) airflow was coming in from the Tasman, backing up against the range of hills adjacent to the coast, and only some three kilometres inland. This, in turn, caused the next layer up to ride over in a classic laminar fashion. What did this mean for us, I hear you ask? It meant that Richard and I managed to cruise along the leading edge of the system directly over the beach and parallel to it, maintaining height in zero sink, and even climbing ever so sedately at half or even one knot here and there.

Our little excursion took us north, away

from the town for a modest 15 kilometres or so, ambling along over the breakers, the steel-grey Tasman on our left and the gently swollen pressure-wave cloud on our right and below. More cloud lay overhead at about 3,500ft, and the inland hills were obscured by the lower level cloud. Despite this, the view was indeed a beautiful panorama, as we watched the coast below curve up and away into the South Taranaki Bight. Richard even had an opportunity to point out the small town where he lives; from our best height of 2,600ft it was an intimate tour of his locale.

The whole system was kind enough to remain established for our gentle cruise back to the field. Interestingly, the next flight failed to make any contact with the pressure wave. It seems that a fractional change in wind direction and velocity had removed the right local conditions, bringing about the rapid disappearance of the whole arrangement. As Richard later pointed out, it was most convenient for us that this hadn’t happened at the furthest extent of our ‘wee trip’ – otherwise I may have seen some of the coast from a rather closer vantage point.

On to Auckland for the second fix of Kiwi gliding. Like the Wellington ops, the good folk of Auckland Gliding Club fly from a field very close to a built-up area.

August 2005

However, in this case it is the rather sizeable 'town' of Greater Auckland, population 1.2 million. About 35 minutes drive south of the city centre is the town of Drury; it's here that the Auckland club has made a home, and a rather attractive home it is.

This club has the privilege of owning its field, which, given the extent of development around it, can only be a very good thing. The total strip length is one kilometre – sufficient for aerotows with the club 250hp Pawnee, and even just enough for winch launches to about 1,000ft agl using poly rope. One distinct advantage for the latter is the 300ft ridge running parallel to the strip right next door. This terrain feature is a reliable thermal generator, so once off the rope the club members may wander over to the ridge and see what may be cooking. The numerous sustainer engine-fitted single seaters in the private ranks apparently make regular use of the winch/ridge combination. I was told that on more than one occasion, red-faced Ventus T or similar owners have found themselves hurriedly lining up on final with a rather fancy (but not altogether co-operative) protuberance standing proudly from the fuselage like some sort of internal combustion meerkat.

I was afforded the luxury of three flights during my day with the Auckland crew. Two of these were in the club's PW-6 two-seater, the 'extra growth hormones' version of the PW-5. It proved to be a most pleasant craft, although it took a little adjusting to the single-seater-like stick loading contrasting with the 'Queen Mary'-like rudder loading. Nonetheless, it went well, was quite comfortable (in the front at least; the back cockpit had a distinct 'deep bath' appearance, and I wondered about the long-term comfort) and did its best to keep me up for a little while in the meagre thermals available.

A club member by the name of Ross offered me a flight in the Grob 109, of which he was a part-owner. This gave me a chance to go further than the circuit area, which was interesting as Ross pointed out the local cross-country 'escape routes'. Looking at the rising terrain in many directions only served to reinforce my respect for the skills of the local cross-country pundits, although of course they only set off when the convection allows enough 'headroom' to substantially relieve the lower body 'pucker' factor. This factor is possibly reinforced by the 3,500ft airspace ceiling in effect for some distance from the strip. Even so, it's in stark contrast to say heading out from Narromine, Benalla, Temora or any of our soaring sites that offer such a tremendous choice in cross-country tasks.

Looking down at the petite green paddocks, I could only imagine that the locals know every possible outlanding opportunity,



Wellington wave – north again, pressure wave cloud on right

and can subsequently soldier on confident in the knowledge that a safe (and most likely very precise) outlanding may be carried out if required. No wonder they shake their heads in mock disbelief when they set eyes on our 'small European country-sized' paddocks.

Of course, I left the camera behind when I went up in the Grob, and had to hastily organise my second PW-6 flight in order to grab some photos before the day finished.

That flight was memorable for its downwind leg over the ridge next-door to the strip, completely sanctioned by the club instructor. There is nothing more capable of extracting a commitment to precise speed control in the circuit than the sight of large pine trees slipping past, a wingspan-and-a-bit below, as one contemplates turning from downwind to base leg. Try it – it's a real tonic...

The final analysis is this: If you plan to go to New Zealand, see if your itinerary can be modified to slip in some Kiwi gliding. If my Wellington and Auckland experiences are any indication, you'll be warmly welcomed and made to feel less like a visitor and more like a club member. Our Kiwi cousins are a




Wellington wave heading south. Kapiti Island at middle right



Wellington wave – looking north toward South Taranaki Bight

friendly and accommodating bunch. I'd like to single out some by name for a public vote of thanks: Richard Downer (Wellington GC); Robert Smits, Ross Jones and Peter Hammill (Auckland GC). I flew with another Auckland GC instructor whose name I can't recall, but no less friendly and helpful.

The gliding experience across the Tasman has my hearty endorsement. Now all that remains is organising a business trip to the South Island. I wonder if I can work diamond height at Omarama into my professional development plan? 

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BALAKLAVA ADVENTURE

Henry Leschen

ON FRIDAY 27 MAY, MY TWIN BROTHER RICHARD AND I SET OFF FROM ARARAT FOR THE BALAKLAVA GLIDING CLUB IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA. WE HAD HEARD THAT THEY HAD A PARTICULARLY FINE SET OF TWO-SEATER AND SINGLE-SEATER SAILPLANES WINCH-LAUNCHED FROM A RED GRAVEL AIRSTRIP.

We arrived at the BGC around 3pm Saturday after seeing an ASK 21 two-seater rise swiftly from a field to our right less than two kilometres from the airfield entrance. As we walked quickly across the airstrip, one of the club members asked me where we had come from. "We're from Ararat in Victoria", I replied.

"Would you like to fly?" asked John, the club's CFI.

"Yes thank you, perhaps a little later", I replied. The ASK 21 had just landed, and a young girl of about six emerged from the rear cockpit. This was her first flight, she told me, and remarked how small the houses

and cows looked from above. She wanted to fly again.

"Look, there goes Lee!", shouted a trainee pilot. "If he gets a good high climb on the winch he may do some aerobatics". At the top of the launch we saw the parachute drop away from the ASK 21. Lee lowered the 21's nose and began a shallow dive, then lifted the nose a little and executed a half roll followed by two inverted figure eights, two loops and a graceful chandelle. Lee's aerobatics ended with a spot landing.

By 5:30 the club members had hangered the ASK 21 and winch. "Come and have a drink you two, and meet the other club members" called an older pilot.

The clubhouse bar and lounge were large, with numerous photos and flying tasks adorning the walls. We were introduced to seven other club members, some of whom were power pilots. One or two knew the Grampians region of Victoria very well.

"What brought you two to our club?" enquired Wally. Richard explained that he and I were looking at the internet months ago, and the information about their club and the supporting photos had aroused our interest. Later we were shown the club's four bunk houses, showers and toilets which were thoughtfully and neatly laid out.

Next morning, Sunday, dawned crisp and clear, and after breakfast John the CFI said that Richard and I would be among the first to fly. John invited

Richard to step into the front cockpit of the 21, which he did, after first doing a smart walk-around and inspection of the sailplane as is customary at our club. One of the members said "Your brother is very thorough isn't he?" I replied that he was, as I hoped all sailplane pilots were – you rarely get a second chance when something goes wrong.

"Guess you're right mate", he mumbled in assent. As the winch cable came tight Richard called "All out!", and moments later the two-seater accelerated smoothly along the red gravel runway and climbed away. At 1,400ft the cable released, and a weak thermal gave Richard and John a flight lasting eight minutes.

I flew next with John, and found the 21 to be a delight to handle. Throughout the winch launch it was responsive yet light on the controls. Airborne for only four minutes, it was long enough to view the parched countryside and its lakes and creeks.

Our short stay at the club was very enjoyable, and we had been made most welcome by John and the members. If you want a different experience then visit the Balaklava Gliding Club where the winch launching is smooth and gentle and their aircraft among the finest and best-maintained I have seen in a long time.

Our return to Victoria was via Adelaide. Feeling peckish, we turned off the super highway and stopped at Hahndorf to stretch our legs and have afternoon tea in this very popular and historic town. Outside the tea house, a lot of tourists could be seen strolling the narrow streets of this famous and colourful hamlet. The following morning, Richard suggested we should visit the Horsham aerodrome and see how work was progressing on our Pik 20B. Joe Luciani had done a beautiful job on our aircraft. Its wings were smooth and shiny, and a brilliant white with an overall finish better than twenty nine years ago when it arrived brand new from Finland.

At 6pm the outskirts of Ararat town appeared. We were glad to be home again after four very busy but fun filled days.



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Is flying the Pitts?

Andrew Wright

WHAT HAS THIS PITTS SPECIAL S-2A GOT TO DO WITH GLIDING?

Aerobatic Instructor Adam Cattonar pre-flying the Pitts

Photo: Andrew Wright

Well, as a glider pilot for more than 35 years, I have developed a real interest in glider aerobatic flying. I love it! It's fun, challenging, and if done carefully, very safe. Despite doing a lot of glider aerobatic flying, I have long had a dream to do some serious powered aerobatics, and recently got the chance to live that dream. Thanks to a very generous offer from glider canopy manufacturer, Ian Linke of Aviation Acrylic Mouldings, I recently had a series of aerobatic flights in a Pitts Special S-2A, VH-CKS. This Pitts is owned and operated commercially by Forsyth Aviation at Parafield Airport, SA and is available for Aerobatic TIFs and training at just under \$300 per hour. A real bargain! My reason for wanting to fly in the Pitts was to gain some training and experience in rolling manoeuvres and sustained inverted flying. My club has just ordered a new 'Aerobatic' DG1000 and I believe that this would be a good introduction to flying 'Dunlops Up'

After an extensive briefing from my instructor, Adam Cattonar, I finally got to do some flying after a couple of delays due to mechanical problems. Under instruction and with painfully tight harnesses, I practised rolling the Pitts to and from the inverted, and flying around inverted for about 10 minutes. Then came the wild bit! Adam offered to show me what the Pitts could do. He told me to really tighten my harness and hang on. Those who get airsick should leave the room now!

We did (from the best of my memory):

- Inside loop, +6g.
- Roll to inverted and outside loop, -4g.
- Push flick roll from the inverted followed by a pull flick roll from the inverted. (At this point I do not recall the g-loads as it was all a blur.)
- Inverted push to a vertical climb and stall turn.
- A series of rolling turns (this takes an amazing amount of skill)

At about this time I started to feel funny, but fortunately Adam was ready to call it quits and go home. I could not have taken any more! My impressions from the flight are:

- Absolutely AWESOME. (I want one, Mum! I want one!)
- Negative g is nowhere near as upsetting as positive g.
- Sustained +6g really hurts. I weigh 60kg, so my body experienced 360kg during the inside loop. My neck and shoulder muscles were sore for days after.
- Sustained -4g really hurts shoulders and

hips as 240kg of body is forced on shoulders and hips from the straps.

- The rolling turn is the most sickening manoeuvre as you alternate between +2g and -2g once per second. You can actually feel your stomach bouncing up and down. The Pitts rolls 360 degrees in a little over two seconds.
- I finished the day by thanking Adam, helping to hangar the Pitts and then proceeded to vomit just after driving out of the airport. All in a day's fun!

I have another flight scheduled soon, when I will experience entry to and recovery from inverted spins, plus some more of the manoeuvres we did on the last flight. I can't wait!

In conclusion, I would seriously recommend the experience to everyone. But be warned, it does hurt! I would also point out that flying a Pitts in this way does not qualify anyone to do these things in gliders. I have learnt that proper training by a qualified gliding instructor in a suitable aerobatic glider is essential to safe glider aerobatic flying. Without the proper training you will at least break a glider, perhaps even worse. Do not try to teach yourself. Confucius say, "Man who fry upside down in grider have crack-up".



The Airborne Expedition – A QUEST FOR ANCIENT TRIBES

Kym Fielke

SOMETIMES YOU READ OR HEAR OF PEOPLE BEING INVOLVED IN A UNIQUE AND OFTEN LIFE CHANGING ADVENTURE, JOB OPPORTUNITY OR PROJECT OF SORTS. I NEVER THOUGHT SUCH AN OCCASION WOULD ROLL MY WAY ONE DAY.



'The Rock' – the iconic but always majestic Uluru/Ayers Rock (NT)

Photo: Kym Fielke

Paragliding has dominated and reshaped my life over the past 10 years, providing an abundance of joy, *"a head full of great views"* (to quote Ozone's Robbie Whittall), a heart full of amazing sensations and sometimes touches of sadness. The positives always outweigh any negatives arising.

Early in 2003 I had the 'coincidental' pleasure to meet – and only for a few hours – adventurer/mountaineer/paragliding novice Kris Coppieters from Belgium while on a paragliding holiday in Wanaka. New

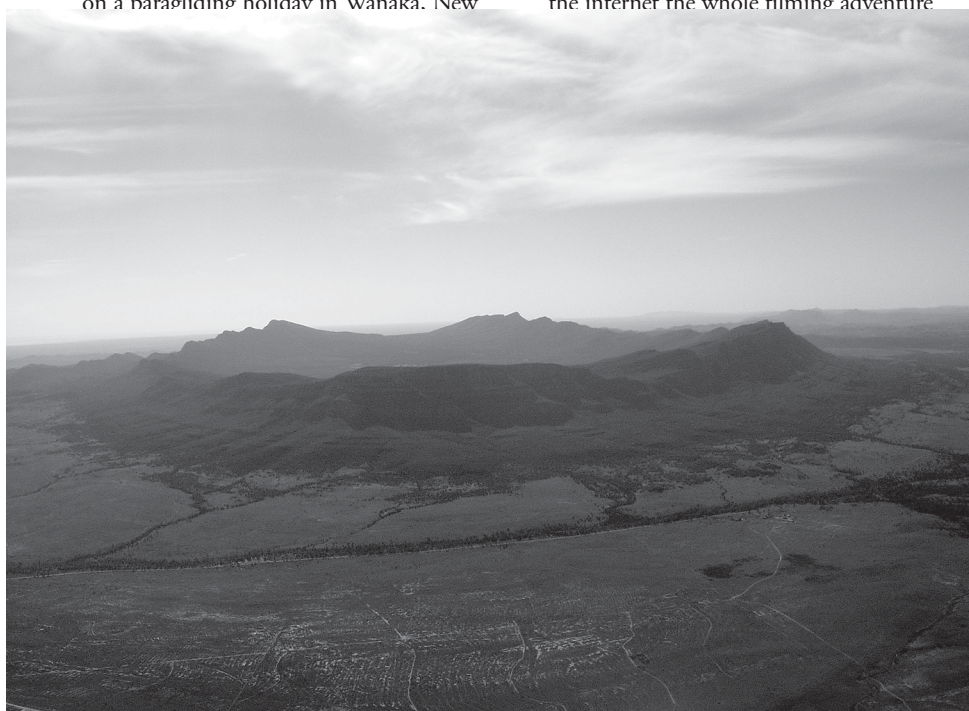
Zealand. Staying in email contact, one year later Kris invited adventurous French woman Aude Piercy (now his girlfriend) and I to form an international team, embarking on a world first 'ethno-paragliding' filming expedition.

May 2004 and we were enthusiastically approaching international TV production houses and stations and potential sponsors. We were well on our way to excessive amounts of late nights with our hands glued to our keyboards. We fully recognised that without the internet the whole filming adventure

would not have come together so rapidly for an international team. Then the expedition website had to be built, allowing anyone to follow our 2005 adventures. Work, work and more work!

The basis of the project is to visit indigenous cultures in often remote regions of the globe, searching for new flying sites and then aiming to share tandem flights with indigenous people. We learn of their cultures, and in return teach them about the wonder of minimal flight suspended under a big piece of nylon cloth. This could get interesting!

Kris and Aude flew to the first destination, Colombia, South America on 1 January 2005, without a film crew. Disappointingly, early negotiations with an independent Belgium TV production house failed to secure us the full funding required for such a bold and prolonged filming expedition. So we kicked Plan B into action after securing sponsorship to purchase broadcast-quality DVCAMs and sound equipment so we could film the journey ourselves. As an avid paragliding stills photographer, I've thoroughly enjoyed developing and honing video camera skills during our travels so far. Some areas have provided incredible footage! We're still searching internationally for a TV production house or independent producer interested in



Aude's lucky view of Wilpena Pound after snagging a weak thermal off tow (SA)

Photo: Aude Piercy

editing our footage into a documentary series (or less preferably a single film). We've already been invited to submit one of the documentaries/film at the acclaimed St Hilaire Free Flight Festival, as well as for the French Val d'Iserre adventure and discovery film festival in 2006. We keenly invite any interested producer of any skill level to contact us via email <airborneplanet@yahoo.com>.

Colombia, Costa Rica and Guatemala provided many wonderful flying opportunities for Kris and Aude in the first three months (and occasional scary moments while ON terra firma)! Unable to join Kris and Aude until they arrived in Australia, final preparations continued for me until the minute we drove out of Adelaide in our hire van late at night on 22 April.

To increase flying opportunities and provide extra company for some of the way, we were pleased to have Dave, his girlfriend Tanja, and Swiss pilot Hedy Schindler travel with us in Dave's 4WD equipped with his fantastic new pay-out winch.

Our first port of call lay 500km north of Adelaide at the spectacular Wilpena Pound in the rugged Flinders Ranges. On the way we stopped at the Yourambulla Caves to view the 6,000-year-old cave paintings of the Adnyamathanha ('the hills people') Aborigines. One of the few remaining samples of ancient Aboriginal rock art in this region, the simplistic ochre paintings feature animal track and ceremonial symbols. Viewing these paintings marked our first exposure on this journey to Aboriginal art and the Dreamtime culture.

A short while later along the road, we glimpsed the outside of impressive Wilpena Pound and its surrounding ranges. The 'Pound' appears to be a large oval meteor crater with walls up to 650m high, but in fact it is the base remnants of eroded primordial Himalayan-sized peaks – the flat Pound centre was the valley between.

After setting up camp, Kris tested his strong wind flying skills on a 20m high mesa. The setting sun on the adjacent Pound walls with a rising moon in the foreground made for rare flying footage, but a strong gust dragged Kris face down along the rocky outcrop. Several splinters embedded in his upper thigh from dried prickly bushes gave him a bad limp for the next week. Thanks for doing it all for the cameras, Kris!

The fact that most low hill and mountain ranges in remote Australia are extremely harsh on paraglider fabric and lines was becoming evident to Kris and Aude. In most cases it's tow launching along roads, paddocks or airstrips, or it's no (free) flying at all. Over three days we completed numerous tows at the dusty Arkapeena airstrip on the August 2005



The Heysen Range at sunrise from St Mary Peak summit on Wilpena Pound (SA)

Photo: Aude Piercy

outside of the Pound with Dave's pay-out winch. The conditions were too stable to consistently catch thermals, but Aude scored the best flight with the guidance of an eagle to around 1,000m agl – an adequate altitude to see the full splendour of the Pound, creating a big grin on her face.

When it came to flights, Dave had the upper hand. He lazily climbed, under power, to 2,000m during a superb late afternoon flight with his paramotor. His in-flight footage caused sufficient jealousy among us and had Kris seriously consider learning paramotoring!

With Kris side-lined due to his annoying thigh injury, the following morning the rest of us took a magical two-and-a-half hour moonlight hike to the highest peak on the Pound, St Mary's Peak (1,170m asl), just catching the sunrise at 6:30am as we arrived at the summit. What a stunning way to end our time in a significantly beautiful area of South Australia!

A week into the road trip, heading towards Coober Pedy, I found myself dealing with mixed feelings on leaving my job, a house with great flat mates, and on leaving my beloved girlfriend Kaye back in Adelaide for eight months. I've travelled overseas twice and throughout Australia all my life, but I'm totally new to this hyper-extended journeying. My well-travelled team members optimistically assure me it won't take long to fall into a nomadic way of life for the remainder of 2005.

Time consuming rental van problems plagued us for the next two weeks while we headed further north. Obliging the van owners made emergency repairs at Coober Pedy. They astonishingly provided super service by driving 900km from Adelaide to replace a broken windscreen and a water pump! But in the process, at night, they hit a large kangaroo which caused damage to their own small hatchback. Doh!

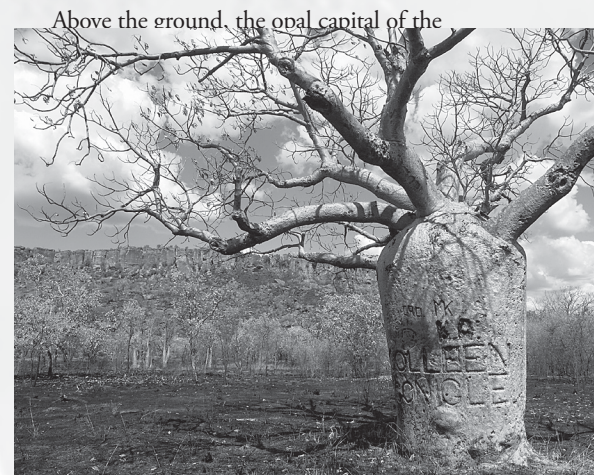


Kris leading Aude slowly up Uluru with his injured thigh (NT)

Photo: Kym Fielke



Kris, Aude and Kym relaxing at a secluded campground in the Kimberleys (WA)



A roadside Boab tree doesn't escape graffiti in the form of name carving (WA)

Both photos: Aude Piercy

world – Coober Pedy – is pockmarked with large mounds of dirt removed by the miners. Underground, over 60% of its residents live in 'dugouts' (underground houses). It's a wise way to survive the long scorching summers here. Of course we had to give underground camping a go! It was quite surreal to lie back on our Therm-a-rests on pebbled ground five metres below the surface, without any

Background: White Ghost Gum at the Devils Marbles (NT)

Photo: Kris Coppieters



Friends for life once the wing finally comes out of the bag! Aboriginal children at Oombulgurri Community football oval with Aude (WA) Photo: Kris Coppieters



The team at Mushroom Rock, Rainbow Valley (NT)



Five metres below ground at Riba's in Coober Pedy. Yep, an underground camp site! (SA) Photo: Aude Piercy



There were a few flies on Uluru. A million or so (NT) Photo: Aude Piercy



Kym walking in the dry Todd River bed after a filming session with respected and inspirational Aboriginal artist and musician Tommy Crow (NT) Photo: Aude Piercy

stars to look up at. Just beware that the snoring of fellow underground campers in other rooms is amplified a little...

Flying here was supposed to be of the tow launch nature at the local airport. Instead one afternoon we all managed strong wind sunset flights at the stunning formation of the sacred Breakaways, once a coastline for an ancient inland sea. As the sun headed towards the horizon the lift only got better...

Continual overheating problems with our van caused us to separate from Dave, Tanja and Hedy, as we drove at a slow 85km/h along the sealed road from Uluru to Alice Springs. Dave instead took the 4WD unsealed road through the Western MacDonnell Ranges. He scored more great early morning paramotor flights and found a potentially great flying site at the Gosse Bluff crater.

Our first flights at 'Alice' took place at the nearby Bond Springs airstrip, an impressively wide red sand strip mainly used by local glider pilots. The prevailing easterly winds still weren't providing the thermic lift we hoped for though. However, I notched up the longest, highest and most scenic flight of our Alice stay, climbing under airport control tower clearance to 4,000ft off the main hill launch site that conveniently overlooks the Alice Springs township. Being so close to the airport, you must fly with a VHF radio at the Heavitree Gap north and south launches – please speak to the local paraglider pilots before flying there. Unfortunately Kris and Aude had problems getting off the small, spinifex-surrounded and steep northern launch. They only scored short flights. One-by-one we seemed to be taking turns with the best flights in each region.

Once in Alice we began the search to take a full-blood Aboriginal for a tandem flight with Kris. A friendly staff member at the largest indigenous TV and film production house, CAAMA, was most helpful in recommending a community 70km away called Santa Theresa. Great! One small problem though: our van would fall to pieces along the extremely corrugated and dusty road – even 4WD's suffer badly, we were advised! Disappointingly we realised we'd have to abandon an originally positive lead.

Instead, with the help of local paraglider pilot and prison officer, Rick Jones, we lined up co-worker and comedian 'yellow-fella' (half-white, half-Aboriginal) Les for a tow launch tandem flight. Two days later on the tow strip, a constantly laughing Les became strangely silent as Kris wrestled the wildly thrashing tandem McDaddy in the strong wind. Maybe Les was wondering what the hell he was doing strapped to 41m² of yellow nylon and thin Kevlar lines. When

the wind had calmed, Kris inflated the glider and they left terra firma rapidly. Only 20ft off the ground and already I hear Les exclaiming, "This is awesome!" Another totally satisfied (non-paying) customer!

Rick also had a flying friend, Curly, with a wealth of mechanical knowledge and tools to help us fix the nagging overheating of our van's radiator. A replaced thermostat, together with tightening several exhaust bolts and sealing a manifold hole, and we had a seemingly new van! Fantastic!

How far should one drive for great flying (repaired van or not) before you class it as just a little too far? Add another 1,800km drive north of Alice Springs and 5,000km ticked over on the odometer as we arrived in far north Western Australia (the 'Kimberley') at Kununurra. We'd driven a long way to discover if the stories are true about long hours of autumn and winter thermalling almost everyday. The 300km of incredible cumulus laden sky above us during the drive in from Victoria River screamed, "Record flights region!"

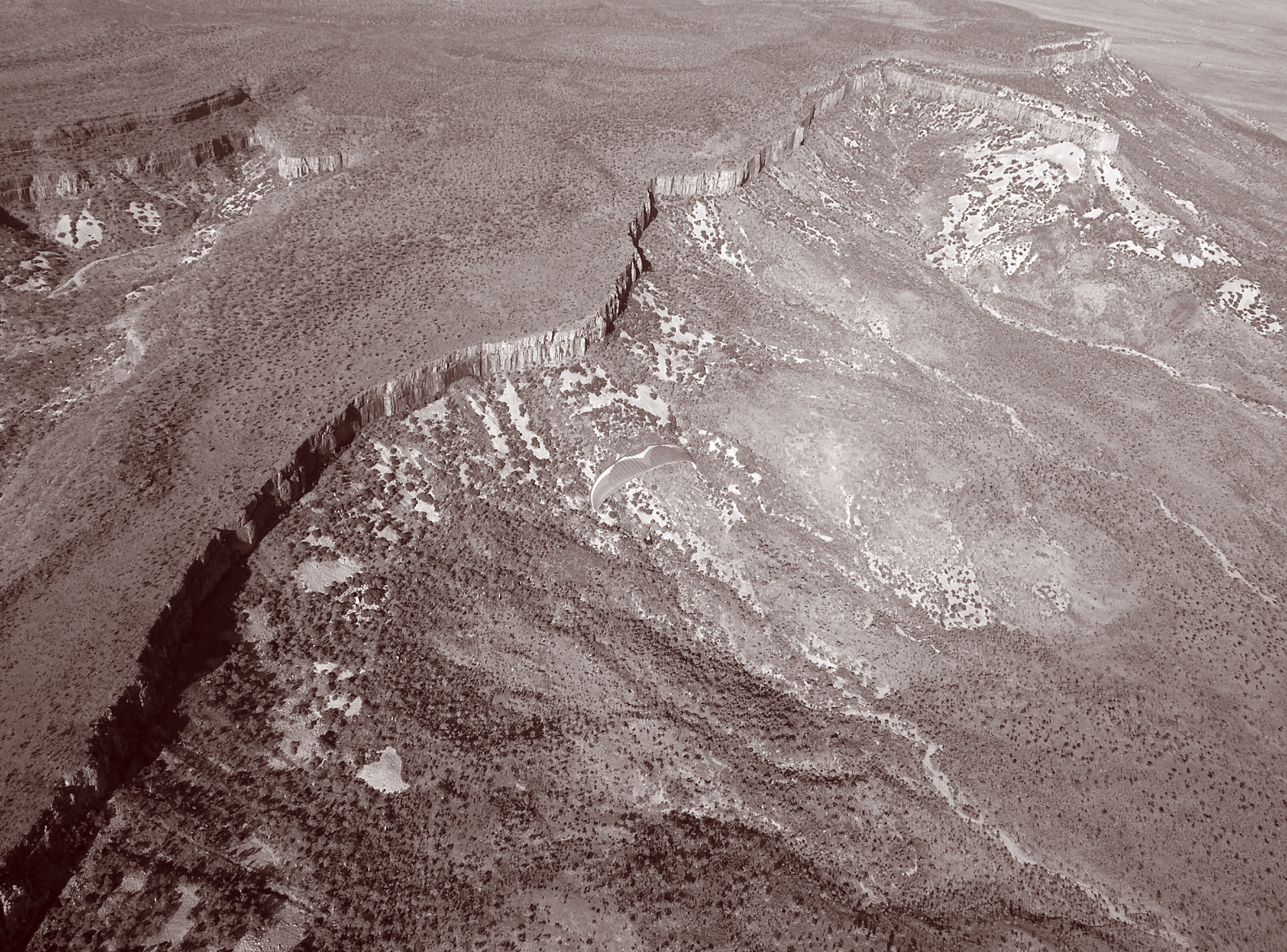
The rugged Kimberley region is also rich in Aboriginal culture. It's sad to see alcohol abuse is an issue here also, but it appears to be much less of a problem than we found in the Northern Territory. The local indigenous are very friendly when we ask for directions – the young children in particular are always welcoming and smiling.

Lone local pilot, John Piercy, led us to the two established flying sites – Mt Harrison for cross-country flights in the dry season easterlies, and The Bastion at nearby Wyndham for northerly seabreeze flights. The Bastion never did come on during our week long stay. Mt Harrison on the other hand...

Advised to arrive on the hill top as early as 9 or 10am by John, after a sweaty hike up we found a small take off area only wide enough to lay out one wing.

Aude elected to be wind dummy and immediately found a good climb. Yippee! A great sign the flying would be good today. Kris launched next and experienced a similar climb. Armed with our smallest video camera to film them both in flight in a rugged region of Australia, I was eager to join them in the sky. But my day was about to rapidly deteriorate.

Inflating the Rush in a strong thermic cycle, it lurched to my right too quickly to correct. The wing parked itself gently in a 'Glue tree' near launch (thus named because Aborigines use the extremely sticky sap from the branch tip buds for glue). Oh boy! How utterly embarrassing! Frustrated and cursing loudly, it took an hour or more to carefully extract the wing. The Glue tree has soft



Kym engulfed in the Kimberleys' rugged scenery on the Rush (WA)

prised by the rapid response by the Oombulgurri chairperson, Floyd Grant.

To get there it's a 15 minute flight in a single-engine Cessna out of Wyndham airport, over stunning views of the Wyndham landscape where five crocodile and barra-mundi loaded rivers meet in one gulf.

When three 'white fellas' walk into an indigenous community, it becomes a case of them observing and questioning us rather than the reverse. A warm and friendly welcome was extended to us by everyone on our arrival. Within hours we were invited to a birthday celebration for Floyd's mother. The children were infinitely curious, kind and helpful to us from the onset. We strolled with them later that night along the Forest River and they told of the largest crocodiles – up to 12ft long – inhabiting the river. The names 'Big Oombi' and 'Brutus' had Kris and Aude realising this might not be the best place for one of their swims.

The following morning we took a bumpy 4WD ride to the big cliffs the community suspected we might be able to fly from. There were great views from the top of the high river bend cliffs, but landing options were extremely tenuous with only muddy

mangroves below where big crocs can lurk. Kris concerned me when he suggested he might try to fly! I really didn't want to film him being eaten by 'Brutus'. However groundhandling the Rush later that day on the football oval had the children screaming in delight at our "big kite". Their smiles and intense inquisitiveness were worth it. How can you not let their joy feed back onto you?

The Kimberley has ever present grass fires burning day and night. Most of them are lit to clear the tall bamboo grass inundating the land after the wet season's downpours. At Oombulgurri we watched the children start fires with cigarette lighters anywhere they felt like! *"Don't play with fire"* us white fellas are taught by our parents. Not here! The Kimberley is home to seven of the world's most venomous snakes – thus clearing of dense bamboo grass where the snakes can hide is crucial around the community perimeters.

Two days was a short stay, but it was a rewarding cultural experience for the team. Thank you Oombulgurri Community for your hospitality!

Kris and Aude knew I was extremely frustrated with my two bomb-outs from Mt



Dave Humphrey test flying Aude's lightweight Ozone Geo mountaineering wing in strong winds at The Breakaways, Coober Pedy (SA)

Both photos: Aude Piercy

Harrison on previous days. So on our final day in the Kimberley we gave it one more shot, and a flat tyre on the drive to the range didn't deter my resolve to get a great flight. My luck HAD to change.

I launched first to avoid the Groundhog Day effect, and eventually snagged a good ride to 4,000ft. Kris and Aude gave chase, this time together in the tandem McDaddy. The inversion layer proved impossible to penetrate during the first 15km. I played it safe rather than for speed, bumping along under the inversion layer determined to find



Kris working the tandem Mc Daddy in a punchy thermal above the Cockburn Ranges (WA)

Photo: Aude Piercy



Arise at 3:00am to do a moonlight hike and a view like this of Wilpena Pound from St Mary Peak is the reward (SA)

Photo: Aude Piercy



Daily life inside the memorabilia-laden Daly Waters pub. Pin your undies up. No problem (NT)


Photo: Aude Piercy

a stronger thermal to punch through for a higher climb.

The scenery revealed a unique rugged landscape, with the stunning Cockburn and False Cockburn mesa ranges dominating the landscape below. These tree and bush covered tabletop mountains were not a safe territory to land in if you ran out of lift. Two wedge-tailed eagles circled with me to a reassuring safe altitude, giving me the margin to cross the Cockburn Range and exit out over the Emma Gorge Resort. Further down, out over the Gibb River Road, I caught a whop-

per thermal to 6,500ft, accompanied by an incredible gaggle of around 30 black hawks circling 100ft above me – one of those moments in life that makes your jaw drop in awe! What a privilege it was to be up here! “Mt Harrison, you are forgiven!” I yelled out.

I rejoined Kris and Aude near the Pentecost River crossing at the 40km mark. They had taken a risky north-westerly route over no-man’s land between the two tabletop ranges – a crazy long, hot walk out if they went down. We took photos of each other thermalling close together for the first time as a team. Nearing the isolated river crossing, we punched headwind back to Mt Harrison as far as possible, but we were grounded five kilometres later. On the way down I celebrated with a SAT, wingovers and spirals before touch down alongside the tandem. “Mt Harrison, I love you!” We hitched a ride back along the road to our van, totally stoked to have flown over 300km total in three days on our DHV 1-2 wings in the wild, beautiful Kimberley.

Leaving Australia for Papua New Guinea required we finish our epic 9,000km crossing of Australia in the tropical tourist town of Cairns. Whilst preparing to leave Australia, of great concern were the numerous reports of rampant crime and the recent problems concerning policing tensions in Papua New Guinea. We obviously got the jitters, wondering if we were about to visit and explore a high risk country. What was the true degree of crime, and what was the true degree of crime against visitors? And why wasn’t the January 2005 edition of Lonely Planet’s guide to Papua New Guinea smattered with safety warnings? With caution in mind we’d have to go and see for ourselves... 

Author’s note: To follow our continuing journeys throughout 2005, please visit our expedition website [www.airborneplanet.net]. You’ll find an in depth project description, tons of stories by Kris and I in English and stories by Aude in French, a swag of photos taken in each country we visit and a map of our year long journey. We hope you enjoy reading our wide range of adventures! Massive thanks must go to our sponsors: Ozone for providing us with a great bunch of safe DHV 1-2 wings; Francis Geothals of BoulevArt for creating an impressive website; Go4 Consulting for camera equipment; Passage – Fitness First for some financial assistance; Icebreaker for incredible adventure clothing and co-sponsor Mountain Designs for our outer layers and packs. We continue to invite interested parties to support our project further, to see it through until the end of December 2005. Email us at <airborneplanet@yahoo.com>.

In memory of my belated flying buddy Daniel Streit. Now you’re truly free-flying my friend!



leaves and branches, so happily there was no damage to the wing. It was a painstaking process though, line by line through the densely packed leaves, ever mindful the branches I stood on could break any time.

Meanwhile Aude and Kris were merrily thermalling their way to their personal best cross-country distances over inhospitable countryside. To add salt to the (mental) wound, by the time I was ready to re-launch the thermic strength and activity had decreased substantially. Taking off in one of the now weaker cycles, within 10 minutes I was... on the ground! I quietly threw my hands up in defeat. The long hot walk back to the van through dense sharp spinifex bushes only added to the 'fun'.

Aude arrived very elated back at the van two hours later and we drove down the dusty Gibb River Road to retrieve Kris.

Back on the hill the next day, we all launched in the same sequence as before – Aude first, Kris second, me last. I found a good climb but it stopped at 1,000ft above the hill. Strong sink kicked in next and 10 minutes later I was... on the ground! Again! Groundhog Day was just starting. Kris and Aude yet again found better climbs and proceeded to head cross-country.

I quickly climbed back up to launch to avoid a repeat of yesterday. The thermals had yet again decreased in strength and frequency by midday. I launched anyway and five minutes later I was... on the ground! To add salt to the (now totally mental) wound, on landing in the spinifex covered ground my



Thermalling above Mt Harrison before Kris takes off on a 65km XC flight (WA)

Photo: Aude Piercy

wing draped over two low dead trees! Forty-five minutes later the wing was out and damage was nil, again. *"What the hell is going on with my flying at the moment?! This is all like a really bad dream!"*

However Groundhog Day was not over. Aude arrived back at the van two hours later making some crazed statement like, *"I must have flown over 100km!"* Not so. She made 15km, landing five kilometres from the Gibb River Road. She walked out in the roasting heat and found herself at a place signposted 'Hell'. 'Heaven' was signposted across the road. Hell was an appropriate name for the harsh and unforgiving terrain she had walked through.

Kris pulled an even bigger flight than his previous day's 65km, notching up a 105km out-and-return style flight on the lightweight Geo mountaineering wing. He was over the moon and we were happy with his grand effort. Meanwhile it felt like the proverbial moon was crushing me.

We were fast running out of time to take a full-blooded Australian Aboriginal for a tandem flight. Kris made a few pleading phone calls to the remote Kimberley Oombulgurri Aboriginal Community and amazingly within four days we were given the okay to stay for two days! After all the red tape I dealt with in trying to gain access to Central Australian communities, I was sur-



A bit too strong to paraglide today? Early morning lenticulars above Devils Marbles say it's so. (NT)

Photo: Kym Fielke

HALO

Emilis Prelgauskas

OUT ON THE GLIDING FIELD, THE EARLY MORNING IS A GOOD TIME TO CONTEMPLATE THE MEANING OF LIFE. RECHARGE THE SOUL AFTER THE RAVAGES OF THE DAILY WORLD OF WORK AND THE HUBBUB OF CLUB GLIDING OPERATIONS. QUIET EXTENDS INTO THE MEDITATION THAT IS THE MORNING DI OF A SAILPLANE, PREPARING IT FOR ITS DAILY ACTIVITY.

Motion arrives in the form of other pilots, busy waking up the club gliding operation. I push out onto the take off pad. Peter finishes the Pawnee breakfast duties, and taxies out in front. I climb in and contemplate the elements ahead – the mount, the rider, the outside arena. Morning cloud still hangs low. Wind is picking up. Occasional tendrils of rain cells line up into view. Will they come over us? Drift past alongside, hover over the ridge, or brush onward?

Anticipation; what to do? Retreat down the ridge to where it may remain clear, or risk the performance penalty of getting the sailplane's wings wet? Other options – and when others join in the ridge soaring dance? Sarah hooks on and waves, doing the tip duties. The task at hand is all-consuming. Where to if the rope breaks? Now. Or now. The hill face is now within reach. Release; Peter feels and sees the sailplane unhook, then dives away to collect the next unpow-ered wanderer.

I set up in the familiar groove of soaring the airflow over the hill, visually revisit those rain cells. They will pass alongside the strip, so others will soon be at this height. I anticipate that cloud will form at the hill face as humidity rises locally and temperature drops for the moment. What to do? I move to the far end of the hill and track back and forth, giving new arrivals some hill face to settle on.

As the rain attaches itself to the ridgeline, others scuttle to join me in the clear area. As a precautionary measure, a late arrival orbits out and back to the strip. It's getting crowded in this section. I dive through the last rain curtain, back along as the last arrival passes by, heading out of the rain.

Cloud begins to lower onto the hill, obeying the laws of physics and weather theory. I move out, away from the hill face and the cloud face extension above. Now, others can cruise in the narrow space between the overcast and the rocky ground below. Weak lift keeps me at cloudbase, and as it slopes up towards its vertical face I'm there, working the lift through its wisps.

Sun breaks through between the clouds, and there it is – the classic sailplane silhouette spread on a white cloud face, a rainbow halo surrounding it in perfect symmetry. It flickers in and out of the undulating cloud face beneath the sailplane's straight flight path. The smooth air allows some cloud pirouettes to move around and into bowls of clear air, while the cloud bulges and forms new, soft outcrops and valleys well above the hard and undulating ground.

As the rain cells drift downwind past the ridge, the air clears. I can slowly drift back down, while others clamber upward as the full height of ridge lift airspace becomes available again.

These are the brief moments, not easily explained to those who haven't been there, that keep the pilot coming back year after year. The flight might go for hours more, but the lingering memory is that brief time spent with the companion silhouette and its halo.

Alone, yet not alone; of this planet, and yet separate.



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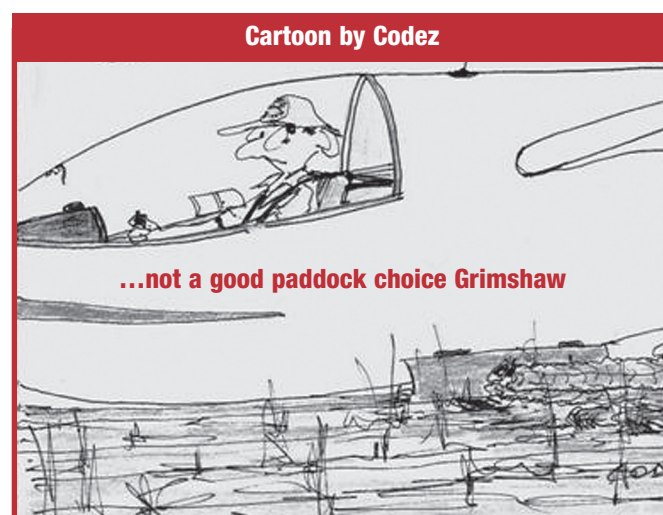
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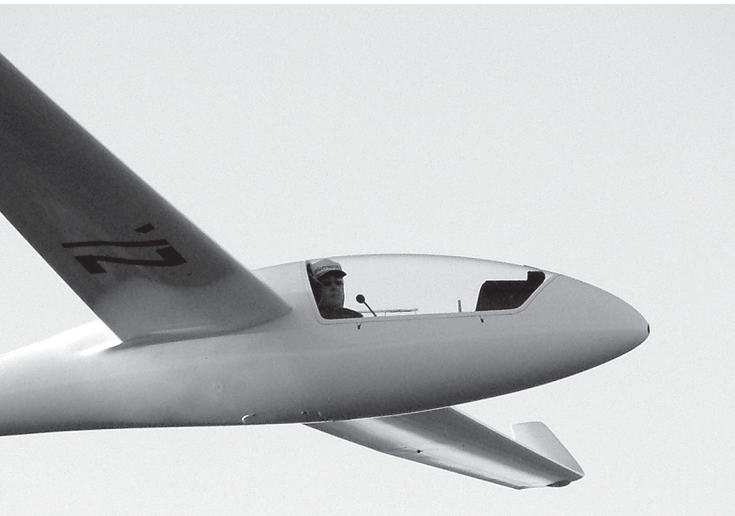
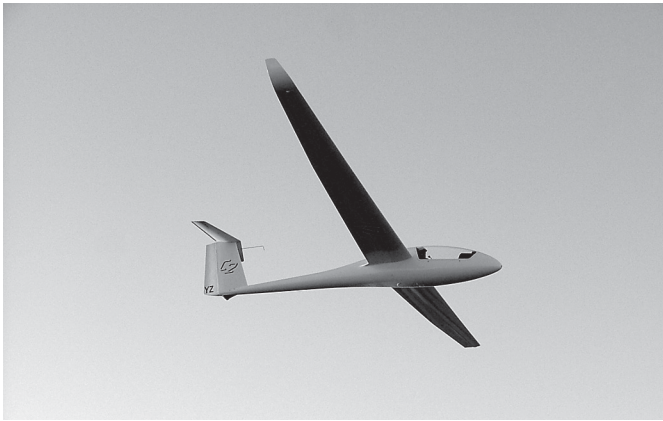
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Nick Gilbert in his Standard Cirrus (VH-GYZ)



**Photos: Taken on 11 and 12 June 2005 by
David Stewart from a glider flown by Craig Blunt**



Flak, Night Fighters and an ES-52 Kookaburra

Gary Crowley – Victorian Motorless Flight Group

OLDER GLIDERS CERTAINLY DON'T APPEAL TO EVERYONE.

THEIR FLYING PERFORMANCE IS PRETTY 'ORDINARY' BY

MODERN STANDARDS, THEY MAY REQUIRE CONSTANT MAINTENANCE, AND YOU OFTEN HAVE TO DO EVERYTHING YOURSELF TO KEEP THEM FLYING.

However, there is more than one facet to owning an old sailplane. For a start there is Vintage Gliders Australia (VGA), and a greater bunch of people won't be found anywhere, in or out of gliding. To me, this was the best motivation for getting involved in old sailplanes.

Mostly for that reason, I didn't hold back when the chance came my way for part ownership in a MK.IV Kookaburra some 18 months ago. This was followed by a winter-long project to restore and modify a decrepit trailer into something decent in which to tow the aircraft.

Since Kookaburras are a 1950s machine, I decided to match it up to another 1950s machine of mine, an FX Holden. The result was a pretty much authentic statement of how gliders were road-transported in the middle decades of the 20th century.

By year's end the work was done, and coincidence provided me with the opportunity to attend two vintage rallies: one for early model Holdens at Loxton, SA; the second, Vintage Gliders Australia's annual rally at Bordertown, 200km from Loxton.

Towing a glider 700km from Melbourne to Loxton in a 51-year-old car proved easier than might be expected. Although the trip presented no dramas, it goes without saying that you need to be patient and allow for any reasonable contingencies.

Arrival at Loxton caused quite a stir among the Holden enthusiasts, many of whom had not seen a glider before – and never imagined that the first model Holden could be used to tow anything like an aeroplane. Their reception was fantastic, and by

the end of the gathering many people went away with new concepts about aviation.

The Kookaburra attracted a good deal of interest and questions, even though the rally was focused on early Holdens. In the midst of this, a dapper elderly man came to look at the Kookaburra, and we started chatting. It transpired that he had belonged to a club at Waikerie in the 1960s and had flown Blaniks back then. A chance remark, however, revealed a great deal more. He stated that his late wife had asked him to give up gliding, because after all, he'd survived flying once already and she dreaded the prospect of their young daughters losing their father after what he had flown through before.

"Survived?" "Flown through before?" I asked.

As matter-of-factly as you please, and with no pretension at all, Flying Officer Howard Hendrick, Distinguished Flying Cross, introduced himself. As a 21-year-old Howard had captained Lancaster bombers, completing a full 30-mission tour starting just after D-Day in June 1944. Post-war he joined BOAC, and flew Lancastrians to South Africa and Australia while based in London.

Second World War aviation has been relentlessly documented over the last 60 years, and it's not what this magazine is about; however as I listened to Howard I couldn't help making some comparisons. At age 21, my own concerns centred around keeping my old car going long enough to get me to my next flying lesson – and taking out the latest girlfriend on the weekend. At the same age, Howard was confronted with flying his four-engined Lancaster as

a tri-motor after flak put one engine out in the black of night, resulting in a decidedly dodgy performance for the 200 miles to home base.

About the worst experience for me at 21 was a minor accident at an intersection, when the other driver came through a stop sign (slowly, as luck had it).

On one raid, after bomb release, Howard had turned for home. The aircraft was flying normally when, in a microsecond, all was nearly lost. With no time to blink, let alone react, a radar-equipped, twin-engined heavy German night fighter streaked past the Lancaster's starboard side in the opposite direction. Its starboard wing actually passed over the top of the Lancaster's, and only by a fraction were the respective propellers kept from gnashing into vulnerable wing skins. To this day, Howard is able to vividly outline not only the night fighter (a Bf 110, from his description) but even the flying gear worn by the pilot.

Possibly somewhere today an ex-Luftwaffe pilot still has clear recollections of what a 460 Squadron Lancaster looks like, up close and personal in the dead of night.

Owning the Kookaburra gave me the opportunity to meet this dignified and most interesting man. Hopefully, it won't end there. The 2006 VGA rally is again to be held at Bordertown, some 200 kilometres from where Howard lives. Hopefully we can convince him to spend some time with us and, perhaps, place one or two more entries in his fascinating log book. Who says there is no value in operating a vintage sailplane?



FOCUS ON CLUB DEVELOPMENT

Terry Cubley

The organisational structure of gliding certainly reflects the history of our sport – with a major emphasis on Operations (training, safety) and Airworthiness (making sure we have gliders to fly). The Sporting arm is growing in strength, ensuring that the badges, records, competition and coaching aspects are promoted and looked after at regional level, and increasingly at club level. Sporting is less structured at club level when compared to ops and airworthiness. Many clubs do not have a structured coaching program or certificates officer, or the organisation of sporting aspects is left to the instructors panel – in my view diminishing the emphasis on the sport as the panels have a different focus.

This says something about the way that many club committees are avoiding responsibility for the overall operation of their club. In many cases, sporting aspects are left to the instructors panel because the panels are well organised, and this is the easy option. However, an alternative approach is for the committee to accept full responsibility for the development of current members, ensure that coaching panels are established, and full support is provided for promoting post-solo training, badges/certificates and goal achievement.

With the introduction of Marketing & Development as a fourth arm of the GFA, we really cannot wait for clubs to gradually do something about development, or many clubs will disappear in the interim. If the response from club committees to development is the same as for sporting, then too little focus will be made and no deliberate plans implemented. It will eventually all come together, but this may be too late.

Club committees must grasp the opportunity to manage the club and to ensure that development gets a greater emphasis than operations and airworthiness. Ops and airworthiness are already well established, with excellent systems and structure. Club and membership development, however, is something that we just aren't good at yet.

Club committees should try to record how much time and focus is placed on membership development compared to other areas of our organisation. If the time you spend discussing operational aspects

is greater than that spent planning how you will encourage members to fly more, and how you will increase your membership, the chances are that your club will continue to operate at current level, with lowering hours and lowering membership numbers over the next few years.

When you look at clubs like Lake Keepit, Gympie, Boonah, Wagga and Southern Cross, where a conscious effort has been made by the committee to promote and develop their club, their membership has grown significantly over the past few years. There are many other clubs that continue to do ops and airworthiness very well, but haven't made the necessary efforts from a development perspective. They continue to suffer a decline in membership and/or activity levels, and the future looks a little bleak. Responsibility for this can often be pointed at the committee's lack of focus on membership development — it's just 'too hard' to worry about.

HOW WELL DOES YOUR CLUB FOCUS ON DEVELOPMENT?

You can consider how the focus of your committee rates by considering this '7 S' evaluation:

Structure – Do you have appropriate structures (eg a marketing & development group, sporting group, ensuring new people come into your committee) to manage your club's development and activity? Are these groups represented on your committee?

Strategies – What specific strategies do you have, such as camps, use of technology, youth promotion, coaching, advertising, open days, etc?

Systems – What systems do you use, such as on-line contest, cross country records, badge claims, member communication?

Shared Values – such as a focus on youth, ensuring that everyone has fun, involvement of members, open communication.

Staff – How do you get people to help with club activities? How do you support them?

Skills – Do you know what skills various members have? How do you train people to improve their skills?

Style – What is the management style of your various committees? Are these styles attracting members or pushing them away? How do you utilise your state association?

If your committee or AGM were to discuss these ideas, it may be possible to identify a range of activities that can improve your overall performance.

ADVERTISING

Even though our major focus is on developing current members, we also want to improve the image of gliding in the community, and advertise to some target markets so that we increase the number of people joining the association.

We want to ensure that people who do come and try gliding as a result of the advertising receive the best attention and best service at the clubs. To this end, we will be advertising the visitors' website [www.soaring.org.au] where people can see a list of accredited clubs in their area and contact the clubs directly. If your club is not currently on the visitors' web site, and you are keen to welcome new members, then you need to complete an accreditation self-assessment form, which is available on the GFA members' web page (www.gfa.org.au). The self-assessment asks you to declare how well prepared and organised your club is with regard to looking after visitors and converting them into members. There are 16 criteria, covering signage (getting to the club and out to the launch point safely), a welcoming approach, membership packages, facilities, etc.

The initial advertising campaign will focus on people already in aviation, and who may just need some encouragement to come and try gliding. We will be advertising in *Flight Safety Australia* and *Australian Flying* magazine. *Australian Flying* will be publishing an article on gliding in their October edition, and we will take advantage of this.

We will also be tracking the effectiveness of these adverts by monitoring hits on the web site, so that we can decide whether to conduct further efforts in these markets.



Surf's Up

Steve Hindley

HE'D BEEN WATCHING HANG GLIDERS FOR YEARS. HIS OLD MAN HAD BOUGHT ONE OF THE EARLY ONES, BACK IN THE SEVENTIES. AND HE'D LOOKED ON IN AMAZEMENT. AS THE LUNATIC STRAPPED THE OLD SHEET TO HIS ARSE, AND LEAPT OFF THE SIDE OF A HILL. ALMOST TURNING THE THING INTO A SHROUD IN THE PROCESS. HIS MOTHER HAD TAKEN THE AXE TO IT WHILE SUPERMAN WAS STILL IN HOSPITAL, AND IT WAS NEVER SPOKEN OF AGAIN. END OF HANG GLIDING FOR THE FAMILY, 'NUFF SAID.

But of course, it was a lot safer now than it used to be. They were all over the place these days, great crowds of 'em down at the coast. Blocking the sand crests and hampering his trek to the surf. Chattering away like idiots next to their contraptions and taking up all the parking space in the dunes. Usually in the unfavourable onshore conditions.

He didn't enjoy it much himself when it was onshore. The surf face was always so bumpy. Nothing like the smooth laminar flow of a light offshore wall. Fast and steep, making gravity-defying turns possible, climbing and dropping almost at will. Big roundhouse cut backs to bleed off the speed between sections. Carving back to the pocket before stalling, slide slipping and banking to regain flow.

Those poor guys didn't know what they were missing, hanging about up there. It was a pity they never saw the good days, really. They'd all be down in the ocean like a shot if they knew. Well, it must be pretty boring up there after a while, when all said and done. Hanging about for hours, with nothing but the odd nudist and the seagulls to amuse them. No wonder they all brought their sleeping bags along for the ride.

Mind you, as for the nudists, he quite often surfed the al-fresco end of the beach himself these days. When the sun was out. No harm in a spot of nature worship after all, when you were out in the elements yourself. And besides, the environment made things easier for him. Take-offs were just that bit sweeter, with plenty of lift. And that was the thing about surfing, really. It was so uplifting. The attraction lay in its sheer, uninhibited freedom. Completely unshackled from the pedestrian land-locked mob, gliding naturally along the face of the wave. The dance floor forming around him as his

matador's body swayed gracefully, in sync with the surging giant he partnered.

Every wave was an unwritten page, waiting to be filled with spontaneous, swooping script. Dashed off strictly between the lines of ability and physics, of course. It was much more than just a visual thing, too. There was the sublime thrill of the contact between the eave and the planing surface. The nuance of every pressure change coming up through the feet as you trimmed the board. Harnessing the surging energy, for flight from destruction. Until the technical skill finally merged with the body English, and you danced on the horns with impunity. Instinctively reading the conditions. Carving a path through the avalanche all around. Humanity slept on the glide through the perpetual moment. Safe, sound and earth-bound in its continuous daydream of life.

Not that he did very much horn dancing himself, these days. After thirty years the atmosphere in the plaza del Toro was often a good deal less frenetic. It was all right for these kids on their 'Frisbees', but the waves weren't so easy for him nowadays. The good sessions were fewer, and the crowds a lot thicker. Part of the problem was his board, though, to be fair. It was too short, or too long, depending which one he took out. And the wind usually ruined things, somehow. Nor did the Frisbees help; always some bastard on a tray hurtling along behind him, lying prone and yelling at the top of his voice. That didn't look like much fun in the water. Try getting up off your belly, son. Let's see how fast you are then. Get yourself a proper board and throw that bloody thing away for the dog.

Some days it just wasn't worth it, to be honest. It was only his mid-life crisis, he knew that perfectly well. And it wasn't as painful as he'd imagined it would be. He was

older and wiser, and a little bit stiffer. It was nice just to cruise for a change. Watching the youngsters flog themselves with the chains of rebellion. Smiling to himself as he recognised their eyes as his own.

But while cruising through life was good, there was always the same nagging question. What was it, exactly, that he was supposed to enjoy? Surfing just didn't pop his cork any more, so something else must be involved. Well, there was a world of opportunity out there, he would have to search until he found it. He already played sport, so he thought something cerebral instead. Challenge the mind as well as the body, now the angst of youth had fled.

But his saxophone filled up with spit. And the piano moved his soul, not his fingers. He couldn't rest his beer on the violin, so that never did get off the ground. The same could also be said for the bonsai lessons and the yoga. Peace of mind steadfastly eluded him.

One day he was staring down hard at a Buddhist meditation, when the adjacent advertisement caught his eye. It was from a nearby hang gliding school, the offer of an introductory day. Well, it would be more fun than chanting, he supposed. And he was slowing down, after all. A good opportunity to shoot the breeze with a few anoraks flying their kites. They couldn't be any more smug than the enlightened, and it would be an awful lot easier on the knees.

He got there early, not having read the leaflet very well. A normal-looking sort of geezer came over and sat him down with a video to watch while he waited for the others. He froze in the chair as the screen came to life. Motionless for nearly an hour, as the fabric on his gestalt was ripped to shreds. He saw for the very first time the

pilot's eye view of flight. In a world he'd never realised existed.

They were hang gliders, not hang about gliders, after all. And he gaped disbelievably as men flew like gods across the sky. The air mass determined their apparent speed, but not their acceleration. Exactly the same as the water moving up the face of a wave, when the surfer hangs suspended at full throttle. He watched, rivetted, as they worked the G-forces in flight. Surfing their own playground, just like the dolphins he'd envied for years. Within the element, not on it. Pure freedom, with magnificent grace.

The day was cold and miserable, but he couldn't get to the airfield fast enough after

the video. These gliders looked more like stork's wings than shrouds all of a sudden, and his heart beat nascently as he was clipped to the frame.

On the way home he couldn't forget the feel of the wind through the bars, as his feet had left the trailer for the first time. Solid and navigable, not like he'd imagined at all. He rested his hands lightly on the steering wheel as if it were a control bar, and re-lived those few moments as he drove. He hadn't felt this stoked for years. He'd been air born, at last.

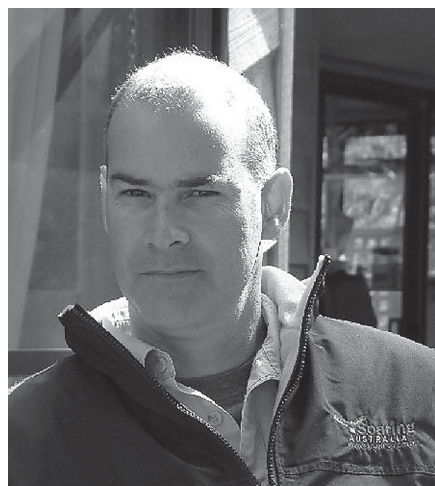
Reflecting on the day, he pulled up in his driveway. The three hour journey had flown as his thoughts traced circles in the air.

He was a beginner again, all possibilities once more stretched out before him. His zen-mind was content at finally having moved on, and his smile was as wide as the sky as he unlocked his door. A new teacher had arrived, and he'd been ready in the nick of time.

But he wasn't entirely happy with life if the absolute truth were to be known, he ruminated later over a beer. Those pilots were a tight-lipped bunch. It must have been due to all the grinning. All those bloody years he'd spent plodding down to the beach, and not one of the swine had ever said a word. He'd have been up in the sky like a shot. If he'd known.



HGFA General Manager's Report



HGFA GENERAL MANAGER

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The Right of Entry Chronicles

I am sure most of you know something of the chronicle that has taken place over the past summer months concerning a decision to restrict certain pilots from accessing a privately owned flying site. Naturally enough this course of action sparked some heated reaction and in true human form the comeback from a certain few was to incite a campaign in an attempt to achieve... well, one can only guess at what the campaign was intended to achieve, for it surely did nothing to accelerate any solution to the situation.

The intent of the campaign may have started off in a sense of jovial satire to raise disbelief that this sort of action was being taken, but it soon escalated to a world wide campaign through anonymous postings to the various web forums that document our

sporting activities. Now perhaps the decision to restrict these pilots' access to the site was not the best made action to begin with, but this counter campaign not only inhibited the speedy resolution of the issues behind the access restriction, it also demonstrated that side of our personalities that revels in insulting and demeaning those we do not agree with.

While I have no objection to the rights of free speech, I was particularly saddened at seeing the spread of this campaign across the world forums and in the spiteful forms that it was presented against the site owner, particularly the anonymous manner in which the campaign was conducted.

That being said, I was also disheartened to initially hear of the action to restrain access to a site when the cause for the decision was not due to any malice or property damage against the site owner.

When hearing of the initial situation I responded in an attempt to dissuade the action being taken. It was clear that there would be repercussions from the action if access was restricted, especially given the reasons presented for the restriction, and as time went by this was clearly proven.

So, why did the HGFA not step in to do something about it? Behind the scenes the HGFA was very actively trying to assist a resolve to this situation. On a few occasions early in the proceedings the HGFA had very nearly established a resolution with the site owner, but just as agreements were being drafted the counter campaigners actively stepped up their game and suddenly the situation was aggravated by the repeating world wide exposure of it. Had these protagonists not had such fun in making ridicule of the situation it may well have been all resolved many months ago.

And what is the official HGFA stance on all of this? The official capacity of the HGFA regrets that this situation ever came about, as it only demonstrates non-unity of our membership and the lack of respect certain members have for others within our community, both as site owners, as fellow pilots, and most importantly as fellow humans. It has, however, established certain flaws in the systems which we had at the time and highlights areas of work that need to be addressed and resolved.

The selection process for international competitions, being one of those areas, has now been resolved to the point of trialling another approach. For future national team selections the national ladder will be used as the sole means of choosing national team members, with the exception that if any additional national team places are earned through improved national rankings then those pilots that earned the extra places will have automatic placement on the national team by virtue of the credit that they created.

The other major factor that this whole situation highlights is the need for clubs to establish documented access policies to their flying sites which qualify the agreement of terms where a landowner should be able to retain their rights to deny access on grounds that are clear and pre-drafted. The agreement should also document what steps the club would take if any member abuses the privileges of the agreement, thus making it clear for all parties concerned (the club officials, the landowner and the member users of the site) the terms on which they are provided the access privilege and the responsibilities they have for upholding that agreement. In the case in question, there were no such terms and therefore there was no

HGFA General Manager's Report

legitimate recourse for the club or HGFA to take other than appealing to reason and conciliation.

As it now stands, the purpose of restricting the access (namely the lack of any right of appeal to national team selection decisions and review of the selection criteria) has been attended to and all access privileges have been reinstated from the initial restriction.

Member Grumbles

The HGFA came under some criticism recently when a member made a posting to the HGFA forum and copied it to several prominent clubs with the intent to destroy confidence in HGFA Board members and to bring to somebody's attention some concerns that had been bothering the author. The author declared themselves as being a self taught pilot, holding little respect or regard for the regulations and practices of the HGFA and even less regard for the Board and the Operations Managers, both current and past.

A response to the forum posting has now been made following a personal visit to the author by one of the club executives to whom the original posting went out to.

I will leave you to read through the forum yourself if you wish to know more on the views that have been expressed by this member, but I would like to make a few comments to all members from matters raised in his post.

Firstly, now being in the position of General Manager, I know what demands there are to perform the General Manager role and the time it must have taken to develop the many forms, relationships and infrastructure that is now the HGFA. I commend Craig Worth (and Ian Jarman) for the work done over the years, elevating the organisation and safety levels to what they are today. Craig has left us with a great legacy and the comments of the author in regard to his labours and his person are totally unwarranted. Similarly unwarranted are comments made (which in places are nothing short of libel) in disrespect to Board members who provide an enormous amount of personal time for the overall benefit of the membership.

Secondly, for all the accusations aimed at myself, I am quite content with the responses that I have provided the author through previous lengthy emails and phone calls, to the demands, accusations and imprudent directives he made to my office.

However, for all the misguided wandering logic that this member presents in the post, it is evident that they spent some time in their review of the organisation, its systems and financial balances, evidenced in part by the length of the post. I wonder how many other

members have put the same amount of time into looking at their organisation and thinking of ways that it could be improved, and then taken the added time to document those ideas? It is a shame that the conclusions and suggestions for organisational improvement offered in the post are not very well thought out, but at least the interest and intent was there and that in itself is commendable.

Lastly, the post concluded by presenting the member's resignation from the HGFA, thus forfeiting their legal status to fly HGFA administered recreational aircraft. The probability however is that this renegade pilot will continue to fly and it is fair to assume also from the comments stated in the post that the author will actively engage in teaching other would-be pilots to fly, finding them cheap gear and fuelling them with the same anti-regulation philosophy. Sadly however, the probability is also that the author or their followers will one day wander onto one of the club sites without insurance or licence to operate, threatening all the works that have gone into securing the site. Beside the threat to site access they add the irritation for us in meeting our responsibility (under our Contract with CASA) to report them to CASA.

Personal Insurance Likely to Take a Price Increase

Word has come that the cost of the NSW sport insurance is likely to jump significantly at renewal time next March. The new Head of the NSW Sporting Injuries Insurance Scheme has said that they have had a review of the Service's finances and the premiums each sport was paying and that they would have to increase premiums substantially, ours from about \$15 to \$65 as from March 2006.

The NSW state body for the HGFA is now discussing the issue and will work to hold this cost down, but it may come to a vote as to whether to continue being members of the scheme or to drop it as being too expensive and unsupported by the HGFA NSW membership.

In real terms the fee for the insurance is only increasing by \$1 per week per member. The benefits of the scheme are covers of accidents causing permanent personal injury, physical or psychological, for members of a Club affiliated to the NSW.HGPA while engaged in a competition, or training or practicing with others for a competition, authorised by their Club, with compensation to the victim or next-of-kin up to \$180,000 for each accident.

Ironically, the same sporting insurance organisation that provides the insurance has recently granted a study to the Medical Biometrics Department of the University of Wollongong into causes of hang gliding

injuries. This study will kick off in earnest next Easter but planning sessions are being made in the near future. The aim of the investigation is to establish the mechanics that contribute to the main injuries in hang gliding.

Competition Committee Meeting

Early in June the Comp Committee met in Sydney to formalise the competition calendar and review the issues arising from the recent flying season. Items of discussion included the selection process, towing practices at competitions, review of the Nationals title, the comp scoring systems, supports for new comp organisers and a myriad of other inter-related topics.

The minutes of the meeting will soon be posted, which will cover all of the items in fair detail. As noted above, there will be a new selection process trialed for the national team selection based almost exclusively on the positioning of the national ladder. Pilots who are aiming to gain positions on the national team should consult the requirements for gaining points on the ladder and aim to participate in competitions in a manner which will avail them of the highest ranking possible. The process will be posted as soon as it has been confirmed, after consultation with our top 20 pilots as is the process for changing the procedure.

Motorised Hang Gliding and Paragliding Operations

John Reynoldson and Andrew Polidano are currently working to develop a document that will append to our Operations Manual which will legitimise our motorised paragliding and hang gliding operations. The documents are now at first draft status and require review by those who operate these craft. The HGFA Office will be emailing out copies of the syllabus to motorised endorsed members. The email will give instructions on how to respond with comments and suggestions arising from your review of the syllabus. We are trying to cover all aspects of current operations and need your support to ensure that we effectively do this. Should you not have an email address or do not receive the syllabus because the information held at the office regarding your email address is incorrect, then please contact the office to offer an email address where the document can be sent to. I encourage you to look through the syllabus when it arrives in your inbox and participate in getting it right for you.

More on Airport Security Checks and ASICs

To apply for a Flight Crew Photo Identification, you need three forms:

- *Flight crew photo id/pilot ID* [www.casa.gov.au/manuals/regulate/fcl/form639.pdf]
- *Aviation security status check* [www.casa.gov.au/manuals/regulate/fcl/policecheck.pdf]
- *Aviation reference number ARN* [www.casa.gov.au/manuals/regulate/fcl/form1162.pdf]

Download these forms, fill them out and send them in along with the supporting documents.

Gear Checks

With winter now on us and the days stretching further between those that can be flown, it is a good time to check your equipment for wear and tear that has occurred over the harsh summer months. Porosity checks and Bettsometer tests could be good insurance strategies before taking to the air next summer. Reserve repacks are also in order and the careful check of your harness, lines and carabiners. All require maintenance checks as per the Operations Manual.

Eungella Accident's Tragic End

The summer of 2005 has ended with the tragic loss of an aspiring young pilot, Tami Stone. Tami lost her struggle for life in hospital on 26

June 2005, never regaining consciousness after suffering severe head injuries from an accident two weeks earlier while attempting to land at Eungella, Qld. An investigation into the accident is being conducted and a report will be presented to the Coroner once all information regarding the accident is collated. Our deepest sympathies go out to her family for their loss.

This tragedy brings us to a total of five lives lost this last summer season. One microlight, three hang glider and one paraglider pilot. Two while under instruction, one in competition and two while free-flying in questionable flying conditions. The following chart notes some of the particulars regarding these accidents.



SITE/STATE	AIRCRAFT	EXPERIENCE	WEATHER	SITUATION	MAJOR CONTRIBUTING FACTOR(S)
Maitland/NSW	WM	Trainee solo, substantial airtime GA pilot including aerobatics	Favourable/ some turbulence	First solo	Low airtime as pilot in command of aircraft type/ confusion with aircraft controls (inconclusive)
Hay/NSW	HG	Advanced	Calm	Aerotow foot launch	Poor launch technique/tow bridle failure/inappropriate weak link
Sorrento/Vic	HG	Advanced	Moderate-strong turbulence	Soaring low broken sea cliff line	Turbulence while flying close to cliff
Tunkalilla/SA	PG	Advanced	Squalls	Soaring between squalls	Turbulence from squall
Eungella/Qld	HG	Restricted, low airtime	Favourable	Inland solo under radio instruction	As yet not established



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Soaring Calendar

AUSTRALIA

Canberra Gliding Club Annual Wave Camp

21-27 August 2005

Bunyan, NSW. This camp presents an opportunity for those wishing to experience wave flying for the first time to those chasing their Gold and Diamond height gains. Site Check required for all first time visitors, and as required by club instructors. Airspace and procedures briefings provided, with access to A Class airspace available (conditions apply). Oxygen refills, and limited accommodation available at reasonable cost on the airfield. Three oxygen equipped club gliders (including one two-seater) available for half-day periods, bids required. For further details see our website [www.canberragliding.org] or contact Allan Armistead on 0413 013911 or <aaci@hotmail.net.au> with your booking.

GlideFast Coaching Course (GFA National Coaching Program)

10-16 September 2005

Kingaroy Soaring Club. Peter and Lisa Trotter are offering coaching at Kingaroy in the week prior to the Qld State Championships. For details see separate advertisement. To secure a place, send a cheque for \$150 made out to QLD Soaring Assoc Comp Acc to: Gliding Queensland, PO Box 15322, City East QLD 4002 – with your name and email address. For more information contact Ralph Henderson by email <rhenderson@iinet.net.au> or phone 07 38436178 or 0409 596579.

Picolight Fly-in

16-18 September 2005

Milbrulong, NSW. All powered paraglider, powered hang glider (and powered parachute) pilots are invited to the 8th annual Picolight Fly-in. Again in Milbrulong (east of Lockhart), with plenty of open paddock, roos to chase, foxes to hunt and sheep to muster... and no powerlines to be afraid of. Camping as usual at the sports ground and for the rest... byo everything. Join us for a weekend of flying fun. Contact Jos on 02 60265658 for details.

Jimbour Wines Qld State Gliding Championships

18-24 September 2005

McCaffrey Field, Jondaryan. Organised by the Darling Downs Soaring Club. All classes, practice day Saturday 17 September. For more information contact Ralph Henderson, ph: 07 38436178, <rhenderson@iinet.net.au> or go to [www.ddsc.org.au].

Canungra Classic

24 September – 1 October 2005

Canungra, SE Qld. AA sanctioned comp. The Canungra Classic has become an annual event for hang glider pilots around Australia every spring. It is well known for world record flying conditions, big parties, great food, and fun activities for the whole family. Registration and BBQ on Friday 23 September. This year headquarters will be based at the Canungra showgrounds in the heart of town. Camping is available at the showgrounds and only a few steps away from all the action. Alternatively you can book accommodation with one of the hotels in town. For accommodation information visit [www.triptera.com.au/canungra/area/index.html]. Pilot numbers are limited to 75 so book now. Entry fee: \$180, site fee: \$40. GPS mandatory, intermediate pilot rating with inland experience. For registration send cheque or money order made out to "Canungra Classic", addressed to Jon Durand, 32A Jardine Rd, Beechmont 4211. To register online contact Reagan <rkowald@centrepoinfinance.com.au>. For entry enquires contact Jon Durand on 07 55333596 at home,

or at work 07 55333611 or email <durand@ausinfo.com.au>. Don't miss the best comp of the year!

Canungra Paragliding Cup

8-15 October 2005

Canungra Qld. Paraglider pilots are invited to compete in the sixth year of the AAA sanctioned Canungra Paragliding Cup. Only 85 entries will be accepted to compete this year for the eight day event. Pilots must have a minimum of Intermediate rating. Entries will be accepted based on the requirements in the latest edition of the HGFA Competitions Manual. Last year saw six days of epic flying, all high scoring 900+ point days! Come and experience the fun and games, supportive and diverse flying Canungra has to offer. Entry fee will be \$390. This includes full retrieve service, pilot pack, official comp T-shirt, map, presentation dinner and day prizes. Package includes pickup and return from Brisbane Airport on Friday 7 October. Accommodation in Canungra is limited, so book early for rooms at the Motel, B&B and Hotel. Details available at [www.chgc.asn.au] (click on the "Competitions" link). Registration can be made online. Email enquiries to the Competition Organiser, Brandon O'Donnell, on <canungracup@chgc.asn.au>.

NSW Comps

12-19 November 2005

Lake Keepit. Contact is Dave Shorter, email <dave@shorter.net>.

Mystic Cup

19-20 November 2005

to 1 April 2006

Bright, VIC. B sanctioned comp, held on the weekends of 19-20 November 2005, 3-4 December and 17-18 December 2005, 7-8 January and 21-22 January 2006, 25-26 February 2006, 18-19 March 2006 and 1 April 2006. An introduction to competition flying for XC pilots. 1 April final day and presentation night. 5km, 25km, 90min, 15%. Contact Craig Collins <craig@alpineshire.viv.gov.au>.

AirBorne Gulgong Classic

22-26 November 2006

Gulgong, NSW. Entries for this aerotow competition will be strictly limited to 50 aerotow qualified pilots. Entry fee of \$350 covers T-shirt, presentation dinner, strip and hangarage fees and all tows on competition days (practice days are pay per tow). 21 November is set as a practice day. Due to the complexity of organising tugs a late fee of \$50 will be imposed for entries received after 30 September. Enquiries to <fly@gulgongclassic.com> or phone 02 49423131 or 0412 423133. Online info and rego at [www.gulgongclassic.com]. GAP parameters: AA grade, 5km, 70km, 10%.

Australian Junior Nationals (JoeyGlide '05)

3-10 December 2005

Leeton, NSW. See [www.JoeyGlide.com/JG2005/] for more details.

GlideFast Coaching Course (GFA National Coaching Program)

11-16 December 2005

Gliding Club of Victoria. Peter and Lisa Trotter are offering coaching at Benalla in the month prior to the Club Class National Championships. For details see separate advertisement. To secure a place, send \$150 to GCV (PO Box , Benalla, Vic.) with your name and email address. For more information contact John Switala by email <john_switala@ptp.com.au> or phone GCV on 03 57621058.

Australian Free Flying Festival

31 December 2005 – 5 January 2006

Bright, Vic. To promote all free-flying sports to the public and to have fun! The comp will be an accuracy landing and XC distance comp in the Bright area in a safe environment. The fifth day will be a club fundraiser. Contact Carol Binder <binder_carol@hotmail.com>.

Bogong Cup

7-14 January 2006

Mt Beauty, Vic. AAA sanctioned comp. Registration and practice day 6 Jan. Strictly 70 pilots max. Minimum rating int with inland experience. Entry \$195 before 10 Dec 2005 (\$205 thereafter). Club, Open, Kingpost, Floater and Female categories. Also, the Joel Rebecchi award for most improved Australian pilot. The dynamic team of Carol Binder (Organiser) and Heather Mull (Director) will once again ensure heaps of fun, prizes (serious and novelty) and social events. GPS, radio, parachute and a passion for flying mandatory. GAP parameters: 5km, 50km, 90min, 25%. Contact Carol Binder <binder_carol@hotmail.com>, phone 0429 403606.

44th Multi-Class Championship

2-13 January 2006

Gawler Airfield, SA. Adelaide Soaring Club will be hosting this event. The competition will run two classes, the 15m Class and the Open class and all gliders will be handicapped according to the current Multi-class handicaps. However, if sufficient entries are received the 15m Class will be split into Standard and 15m Racing and the Open Class will be split into 18m and Open. Gawler Week will be held immediately prior to the event. There will be weather briefings and tasks set. All are welcome to attend and get some practice in before the start of the competition. See News note for further details.

Sky High XC Cup

14-15 January & 4-5 March 2006

Mt Cole area, VIC. C sanctioned comp. The intention is to run a competition similar to Mystic Cup to actually get pilots flying XC at sites other than Mystic in Victoria. Contact Geoff Wong <geoff@zikzak.net>.

Corryong Cup

15-21 January 2006

Corryong, VIC. B sanctioned comp, practice day & rego 14 Jan. A relaxed, fun meet, aimed to foster the development of competition and cross-country flying skills. Maximum enjoyment at one of the sport's best venues – Mt Elliot. Open Class and Entry level tasks. 65 pilot limit, entry confirmed with payment. Enter online at [corryongcup.com]. Entry fee: \$110, includes comp T-shirt and Presentation Dinner. HQ: The Court House Hotel, Corryong. Intermediate rating and inland experience required. GAP parameters: 4km, 40km, 90min, 15%. Contact: Cameron 0407 418295.

Club Class Nationals 2006

16-27 January 2006

Hosted by GCV. While Benalla has had competitions in the recent past, this one is being held during the prime soaring season. We hope this will guarantee some excellent weather for your tasks. Benalla has large areas of flat land to the north and the foothills and Alpine Mountains to the south, so these lots of variety for tasks or directions to fly. The airfield has a large (long and wide) grass east/west (08-26) strip, as well as a sealed power strip running parallel. Two grass parallel runways are also available for north/south (17-35). Two tie-down areas are available. The first is adjacent to the runways and can accommodate approximately 20 aircraft. Further space is available in front of the club hangars. The

clubhouse has a large room well suited for briefing and evening meals. The clubhouse is airconditioned and has a licensed bar and meals will be available for around \$10 a meal so you'll you can save your pennies at the clubhouse or sample the variety of restaurants around town. Benalla has a variety of restaurants, clubs and take away to fill your tummies. The clubhouse has a number of PCs wired up to our network and broadband internet connection so you can download you emails fast. For those with wi-fi capability on their laptop or handheld will find connectivity in and around the clubhouse. Limited camping is available at the airfield and there are additional camping options at the town's caravan park. A variety of motel/hotel accommodation is available around town. The closest only 500m from the clubhouse. The township of Benalla is close by, about 1.5km, or about a nine-minute walk. There are many activities to amuse in the local region should the day not be flyable. Many wineries are available for tasting with the nearby Milawa region renowned for its good food. The nearby hills offer many trips, walks and sights. If you need a real shopping trip, Melbourne City is just over two hours down the freeway offering its famous Victoria Market or bevy of fashion and food shops. The Gliding Club of Victoria welcomes all pilots and their crews and look forward to hosting a successful and safe competition for you.

Top Gun Apprentice Challenge

16-19 January 2006

Sportavia, Tucumwal, NSW. Combined XC clinic and competition. Open to all pilots eager to learn about XC flying. Top rated international pilots (the "Top Guns") will be hosting XC competition clinics during the event. A number of Top Guns will each coach a team around the course each day with the scores being the sum of the scores of the learner pilots. Cost \$450, which includes all tows and all clinic sessions. Contact Tove Heaney <info@sportavia.com.au>.

Sportavia International Hang Gliding Championships

21- 28 January 2006

Sportavia, Tucumwal, NSW. AAA aero competition. Open to all pilots (floaters to topless), but all pilots need an aerotow endorsement (even a Fun can be aerotowed). Entry fee \$200 plus \$400 for tows. Will be run at Sportavia or a paddock nearby. GAP parameters: 10km, 80km, 90min, 25%. Contact Tove Heaney <info@sportavia.com.au>.

Killarney Comp

28 January – 4 February 2006

Killarney, Qld. AAA HGFA Sanctioned, FAI Category 2 paragliding competition. Killarney is three hours drive inland from the Gold Coast and 2 hours from Brisbane. The take-off has been bought by Queensland pilot Andrew Horchner, who will be hosting the event; local, national and international pilots are all invited. Killarney offers some of the best cross-country flying in Queensland and nationally; it has numerous launch sites that cover most directions in a very close proximity of each other. In this area there are 1000's of km of wide open flatlands to the west with excellent road networks throughout the area. In the past people have accomplished rewarding flights, flying over and gazing down upon extinct volcanic plugs and the picturesque flatlands of the Darling Downs – a must for your paragliding calendar. Organisation supplied 4WD bombout retrieves back to launch or back to serviceable roads, but this service will be limited, so to guarantee your chances of an effective re-fly retrieve system organise your own. Note that from the SE bombout there may be some water crossings depending on previous weather, so a 4WD vehicle could be of benefit for a team's retrievals. Entries accepted based on requirements in HGFA Competitions Manual Edition 6.4, section 3.4, with 85 positions available. Pilots should have a good, comprehensive level of inland

experience. Other pilots considered at organisers discretion. Accommodation is limited, so early bookings are recommended – details on the competition website [[http:// www.chgc.asn.au/killarney/](http://www.chgc.asn.au/killarney/)]. Entry fee: \$190 before 20 December 2005, \$220 thereafter no exceptions. Payment by Money Order, Bank Cheque or Direct Deposit. Account: Access Factor Pty Ltd, BSB 124-050, account number 10583935, please place HGFA number in detail section. Post: Killarney PG Classic, PO Box 70, Killarney, Qld 4373. Email enquiries to <afact@gil.com.au> or contact the organisers on 0427 807 516 (Andrew Horchner) or 0418 807 516 (Wendy Mugridge) for further information.

NSW State Titles

5-11 February 2006

Manilla, NSW. AA sanctioned comp. GAP parameters: 5km, 50km, 90min, 10%. Contact Bill Olive <william.olive@telstra.com>.

Bright 321 – Australian Paragliding Open

11-18 February 2006

Bright, VIC. The Bright 321 Australian PG Open will be held in and around the picturesque town of Bright. It will be a Category 2 event and has a AAA Australian sanction. Following the popularity of last year's event places will be increased to 120 this year. Cash prizes include \$3,000 1st, \$2,000 2nd, \$1,000 3rd. Entry fee \$220 (incl. GST). There is a \$20 discount for cash/cheque entry fees received before 1 January 2006. GAP parameters: 5km, 30km, 90min, 20%. Full details found at [www.bright321.net] or contact Geoff Wong <geoff@zikzak.net>.

Tucumwal Challenge

25-26 February 2006

Sportavia, Tucumwal, NSW. Fun national fly-in fly-out weekend for all pilots, run in conjunction with Tucumwal town festival. Mega parties and all sorts of activities, flying sports and other things. Contact Tove Heaney <info@sportavia.com.au>.

Kiwi Open

24 February – 2 March 2006

Manilla, NSW. FAI Cat 2 + NZL PG League round. Entry fee: \$140 (\$170 after 1 Jan), includes hill transport, 1x dinner, \$2000 prizes, heaps of fun Kiwi pilots to fly and drink with, and all the usual things you would expect from a Manilla event (big XC tasks). Register from 1 Oct via [www.manilla2007.com]. Max 150 pilots. Entry place allocation on 1 Nov if oversubscribed. See website for details. Organiser: Godfrey Wenness, ph +61 (0)2 67856545, <skygodfrey@aol.com>.

Manilla Pre-Worlds

5-11 March 2006

Manilla, NSW. FAI Cat 2. Entry fee: \$170 (\$190 after 1 Jan), includes hill transport, 2 x dinners, over \$5,000 in prizes, expert organisation and legendary Manilla tasks. A unique opportunity to fly with some of the world's best as they practise for the 2007 Worlds. Register from 1 Oct via [www.manilla2007.com]. Max 150 pilots. Entry place allocation on 1 Nov if oversubscribed. See website for details. Organiser: Godfrey Wenness, ph: +61 (0)2 67856545, <skygodfrey@aol.com>. Note that free-flying at Mt Borah will be limited during the double header event period (24 Feb-11 March) – generally launching is permitted after the bulk of comp pilots are on course.

[Note: GAP parameters, where listed in the above events, are: bomb-out distance (minimum scoring distance), nominal distance (minimum task length), nominal time (minimum expected winners time), and goal percentage (nominal percentage in goal).]

OVERSEAS

Red Bull X-Alps

1 August 2005

Dachstein, Austria. Participants race across the Alps from east to west by flying their paraglider or by hiking and without the help of any other means of transportation. Monaco, the destination, is about 850km from Dachstein and must be reached via Zugspitze and Mont Blanc in three weeks or less. Teams consist of one paraglider pilot and one support person. For the pilot, mobilised transportation of any kind is forbidden. The support person can use any means of transportation except for flying, and helps his/her teammate with the supply of food, equipment and information. Online registration for athletes opens 25 April on the competition website [www.redbullxalps.com].

8th Red Bull Vertigo

18-21 August 2005

Villeneuve, Switzerland. Lofty loops, breathtaking stunts and blue skies, the 8th HG and PG Aerobatics World Cup will take place from 18-21 August above Lake Geneva in Villeneuve, where the world's best pilots are expected to meet for the Red Bull Vertigo 2005. Approximately 50 pilots will be making the journey from many countries – such as Switzerland, Turkey, Norway, Germany, Austria, Italy and Spain – to explore the limits of their flying skills.

Paragliding World's Ridge Race (PWRR)

7-16 September 2005

Timbis, Bali. This is the paragliding competition that brings the FUN back into paragliding! This competition is not just about the pilot disappearing in the distance, it's about having fun and involving the family every day and night. There will be non-paragliding events happening, where the other half will have the opportunity to see all the exciting things Bali has to offer while the pilots do their thing. The competition/tour is all about having fun. Just being part of the competition will be as good as winning. The competition consists of a ridge race where you will be competing against other pilots with similar gliders to your own. We will strive to create a race as fair as possible, and the comp is designed for all pilots – from novice to advanced full time pilots. It will be a relaxed competition whose aim is to be fun for all involved. The first three places of each division get a Bali style trophy for their efforts. The four divisions are: DHV 1, DHV 1-2 (AFNOR Standard), DHV 2 (AFNOR Performance), Open class (DHV 2-3, 3 Comp, AFNOR, Competition, proto, paramotor wings, and un-certified wings). Anything goes as long as it's safe and a paraglider of some sort. Timbis Flight Park will be closed to all non-comp related pilots during the week of the competition. The cost will be Rp. 350,000 (approximately AU\$50.00), which is inclusive of site fees and a comp t-shirt. There will be a discount available for all non-paragliding events for the pilot's family and friends. For more info visit [<http://www.baliparagliders.com/events/2005/index.html>] or email <balicomp@hotmail.com>.

Ladies Open Distance Comp

11-16 December 2005

De Aar, South Africa. This Cat 2 competition is not restricted to women only, but they do hold the upper hand! Every woman who enters the comp gets 4 nominations. These nominations can be used at her discretion; for every spot used (male pilot nominated), she gets 1/4 of her entry fee discounted, i.e. 4 nominations = Ladies Free entry. Payment per nomination must be received by 10/12/05 for the entry and discounts to be valid. For international ladies, should you not have enough pilots coming with you, we can find local nominations for you and in return these local pilots on your "team" will assist

continued next page ►

Letter to the Editors

Soaring Calendar

continued

you with local site knowledge. As this is a winning event there will be limited entry space available, so don't leave your planning too late. Contact us for more information: Des and Arnold ph/fax: +27 (53) 631-1555, web: [www.pottiesbnb.co.za].

Mauna Kea Thermal Clinic

27-31 December 2005

Mauna Kea, Hawaii. Achim Hagemann will be organising the 2005 Mauna Kea Thermal Clinic on the Big Island of Hawaii. Mauna Kea (13,796ft) has flying sites at various altitudes. Pilots flying here should expect big air, high altitude take offs and challenging XC flying. Mauna Kea and the surrounding areas are still unexplored to a large extent. Our plan is to pioneer several peaks around Mauna Kea between 11,000ft and 13,000ft that have never been flown before. To register for the clinic contact: Paraglide Hawaii, PO Box 797, Mountain View, HI. 96771, USA; <tofly@excite.com> or ph 808 895 9772. Clinic requirements: int or better (nov with instructor sign off; bring everything you need for high altitude XC flying; food and gas money extra; cost \$275. Clinic incl: 4WD transportation, airport pick up, guide service, free camping, daily weather report.

IGC World Gliding Calendar

2007 and beyond

2007 WGC – Juniors, Bid selection 2005
2007 WGC – Women's, Bid selection 2005
2007 Alternative Events, Bid selection 2005
2008 WGC – 15m/18m/Open, Bid selection 2005
2008 WGC – Std/Club/World, Bid selection 2005
2009 WGC – Juniors, Bid selection 2006
2009 WGC – Women's, Bid selection 2006
2009 Alternative Events, Bid selection 2006
2010 WGC – 15m/18m/Open, Bid selection 2007
2010 WGC – Std/Club/World, Bid selection 2007
2011 WGC – Juniors, Bid selection 2008
2011 WGC – Women's, Bid selection 2008
2011 Alternative Events, Bid selection 2008
2012 WGC – 15m/18m/Open, Bid selection 2009
2012 WGC – Std/Club/World, Bid selection 2009
2013 WGC – Juniors, Bid selection 2010
2013 WGC – Women's, Bid Selection 2010
2013 Alternative Events, Bid Selection 2010
2014 WGC – 15m/18m/Open, Bid selection 2011
2014 WGC – Std/Club/World, Bid selection 2011

NOTE: Shown as running through 2014 for illustrative purposes only. Calendar and structure of the World Gliding Championships will continue on as shown after 2014 (until changed or modified by the IGC Plenum).

14 years later...

The end is in sight ...



"Washing Daddy's glider." Tom Gilbert will be in strife in 20 years' time if this photo re-surfaces. He caught Vaughan Sweeney with Pik 208 VF owned by Geoff Sweeney of the Bathurst club.



I thought this would be quite a nice story for readers. The photo (left) of Vaughan Sweeney washing his father Geoffrey's glider appeared in the May 1991 issue of Australian Gliding. Below is father and son in the air: Geoffrey towed his son Vaughan on his first solo flight last March at the Bathurst Soaring Club. The third photo shows Armin Kruger, who sent Vaughan solo, congratulating him.

Elsie Pahic



GFA Badges & Certificates

FAI Claims to 30 June 2005

A CERTIFICATE

BUTLER, Daniel Glen	11106	SA AIR TC
PAYNE, Daniel	11111	Bathurst SC
SEE, Allan Thomas	11113	Boonah GC
ASH, Jonathan	11115	Adelaide SC

B. CERTIFICATE

TILLEY, John Peter	10994	SA Air TC
LOXTON, Benjamin Jared	11065	VMFG
RICHARDSON, Ross James	11096	Beverly SC
PACE, Anthony	10941	NSW AIR TC
OSBORNE, Ashley	11027	Byron Bay Soaring
ROBERTSON, Joel Peter	11092	Bathurst SC

A & B CERTIFICATE

HESTON, Robert Alan	11105	Boonah GC
BLUNT, Jeffrey	11108	Hunter Valley GC

C CERTIFICATE

STEVENTON, Ian Michael	11047	Hunter Valley GC
CARPENTER, Dylan	11903	Byron Bay Soaring
TILLEY, John Peter	10994	Adelaide SC
JOWETT, Peter Richard	10975	Boonah GC

A, B & C CERTIFICATE

VERCO, William James	11107	Adelaide SC
MINCHENKO, Jacob (Jack)	11109	Murray Bridge GC
PENROSE, Scott Dustin	11110	GCV
RALL, Kurt	11112	Southern Cross GC
MARRON, Reg	11114	Mangalore GC

SILVER C

WISHART, Graeme William	4596	Beverly SC
MOORE, Michael	4597	Soar Narromine
GILBY, Brian James	4598	Boonah GC

GOLD C

PERROTT, Peter Ian	1606	Beverly SC
--------------------	------	------------

DIAMOND GOAL

GILBY, Brian James	Boonah GC
--------------------	-----------

DIAMOND HEIGHT

GRANT, Ian Stewart	VMFG
--------------------	------

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>.

Decentralised Competition entries to:

Chris Stephens
PO Box W48 Wanniasa ACT 2903
Ph: 02 6231 4121,
Email <poboxw48@dynamite.com.au>.



Retrieving the 'Come and Get It' Trophy

Ulrich Stauss

"DAD, I'VE NEVER HAD A TROPHY IN GLIDING. CAN I GET ONE TOO?" "SURE, JESSIE, BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO WAIT A FEW MORE YEARS UNTIL YOU CAN FLY ON YOUR OWN." "NO, I MEAN GET A TROPHY NOW! THE BOYS DID BEFORE THEY COULD FLY THEMSELVES – WITH YOU."

Eric had indeed been with me on a cross-country flight for which we received a club trophy, and Colin got his wings that year.

It also dawned on me that this was only the opening argument. I took the bait: "Well, what do you have in mind, Jessica?"

"You know, the Adelaide Uni Club has the 'Come And Get It' trophy. Could we fly there and get it?"

I was looking into the puppy face that, for some reason, I can't say no to.

"You said last year that it's easy."

"That was when the Uni club was still

now and that's a bit further."

"Ah. We could just get it from there then." Eyes blinking. "Where is Stonefield?"

That was several weeks earlier. The season had not exactly been fantastic, and was now waning. Friday after work, the temperature trace and synoptic charts looked promising for the weekend, and my growing hope for a good cross-country flight did not go unnoticed.

"Can we pick up the trophy tomorrow?" said the puppy face. What could I say?

My provisional "But only if the weather is right" fell on deaf ears.

boys had lunch in the air on their cross-country flights." – "Sure, Jessie, if..."

A triumphant "YES!" drowned out the rest of my reply. In no time at all she had her gear packed and clothes ready for the morning. She went to bed early a very happy girl.

Predictably, we got an early wake-up call Saturday morning. Jessie filled her Camelbak, packed her camera, and prepared an airline lunch pack – only the crayons and colouring-in book were missing. The nappy-in-a-freezer-bag 'in-flight toilet' was very important, too. Jessica was going to be ready for this adventure!

The first unexpected hurdle was the mother of this daughter of mine. Joanne isn't quite the pushover that I am when it comes to bending to an 11-year-old girl's wishes. When she realised that we were serious about our quest, she voiced her objections in no uncertain terms! What does she know about father/daughter bonding stuff? Eventually she succumbed to our combined skills of persuasion. On the trip to the airfield, she joined in the boys' bantering about my recent string of outlandings and their speculations on the chance of achieving our mutual objective.

On arrival at the field, Jessie went straight for the hangar to reserve 'her' aircraft. While I DID the ASK21, she washed and polished

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Steve will provide an overview of his ideas for enhancing the involvement of the Air Cadets and ways for clubs to improve the transition to normal gliding

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The coveted prize!
airfield

Photo: Taken by Jessica Stauss at Stonefield



Home with the trophy

Photo: Taken at Balaklava airfield by Joanne Stauss

performance it had to offer.

At the pilot briefing, good thermals – some to 8,000ft – were forecast. A 15kt north-westerly was expected to help us towards our goal, but also meant that all gliders had to be towed to the other end of the airstrip to launch into wind. I was eager to get underway early to leave enough time for the return flight into wind.

Eventually the ASK21 sat in the launch line-up on runway 34. Jessica carefully stowed her gear, and made herself comfortable in the front seat before being strapped-in tightly.

So far, only the glider in front of us had gotten away. The first two had merely managed to fly a more or less extended circuit. The thermals were obviously just starting to develop now. It was around 12:20 when we finally took off. Our first thermal, almost straight off the winch, was narrow and rough but lifted us quickly to 2,700ft where it topped out. Having drifted a fair way downwind, I cautiously headed off on our track and found another climb on the northern outskirts of Balaklava. This one took us to 3,500ft. The air was obviously about to warm up, and if my theory was right the next thermal should take us to a more comfortable altitude, both in terms of temperature and my peace of mind.

My precious charge in the front seat was happy, enjoying the sights, pointing out landmarks she knew, and occasionally sipping on her drinking hose. Little did she know or care about the emotional rollercoaster ride I went through in tune with the ups and downs of the altimeter. Crossing the higher ground of the ranges that would reduce my working band, and with its more difficult outlanding conditions, I really wanted some extra height in preference to scraping low across the rising terrain.

Right on cue, before the first line of hills we found the lift I craved – much stronger this time, a steady 4.5kt topping out at 5,300ft. This gave me the confidence boost I needed to relax in my seat and settle into a steady rhythm of cruise and climb. All the tension was gone; I really enjoyed the flight from there on. The next thermal near Rhynie carried us even higher, and I gave away the 5kt climb

at a little under 6,500ft because of airspace. On the way up, I discovered important trivia such as the fact that Riverton has a swimming pool, whereas Auburn, Saddleworth, and Tarlee don't. Jessie in turn learnt the names of the towns either side of our track as the landscape slowly scrolled past below us.

Sensing the invisible air currents with 17m of white fibreglass composite wing as feelers, I gently weaved my way through the convection-stirred air, trying to maximise the time we spent in the rising currents by gradually slowing down, and flying faster and away from sink. We made good progress without thermaling. Jessie's delight was apparent and very infectious!

Soon there was only one last set of hills to cross. I was able to make out what I thought was the Stonefield runway intersection, although I wasn't quite sure. With the terrain ahead stepping down onto the vast flats, we would instantly have more air between us and the ground again, and with the tailwind providing the extra push, this should be easy final glide distance. However, I decided to play it extra safe for the sake of my passenger, and stopped in a nice thermal for another 1,000ft in case I was wrong and needed to search for the airfield.

Speeding up in the conviction that we had the trophy in the bag, we crossed the escarpment near Neales Flat. Jessie spotted the Murray River, and I pointed out the roads across which we had towed the ASK21, earlier in January, to and from Performance Week at Waikerie. In the far distance, beyond the tree- and scrub-lined brownish-blue band that bisected the plains in front of us, we could make out the orchards surrounding the township. This brought back memories of Jessie's first aero tow, her faithful crew duties, and the other kids and the dogs she had made friends with... but I am digressing.

It turned out that my cautiousness had been superfluous. We flew past Stonefield in buoyant air with a good 2,000ft to spare. Extending the glide south of the highway at Truro, we flew a wide circle around the Truro Flats Airpark for a good look at the airfield there, before joining the Stonefield

circuit and landing after 76 minutes at the south-eastern end.

The usual mob of glider pilots greeted us, and Jessica stated the purpose of her mission. The trophy was duly retrieved from its shelf and relinquished to this very determined little girl. As we couldn't get an immediate relaunch due to winch problems, we hitched a ride to the clubhouse for a pit-stop and an ice cream.

About an hour later, our ASK21 lifted off again – but only for a short hop, as a cable break prematurely ended our climb. By the time the cable was fixed and the glider hooked on, ready for launch again, I was very conscious of the time. It was nearly 15:30 when we got airborne again. I doubted that the thermals would last until 17:00 which would give us maybe one-and-a-half hours to get home.

A rough thermal quickly brought us to 4,500ft before I lost it. We had also drifted a fair way downwind to the southeast of the airfield. I headed north of our track towards Eudunda, intending to circumnavigate the restricted airspace instead of taking the direct route. This would give us an extra 2,000ft of working band to push into the headwind component on the way home. It was immediately apparent that the convection was more organised now as we were still climbing at varying rates for the next few kilometres, reaching 5,200ft without a single turn. This would make up for the head wind, I hoped. With the late launch, the flight had now literally become a race against the sun if we wanted to make it to Balaklava without a stopover in a paddock. We needed to get into final glide range before the thermals were going to quit.

Somewhat unexpectedly, the streeting changed into massive sink and we were soon below 4,000ft with the escarpment ahead starting to loom larger every minute. I turned north-east, deviating at virtually 90 degrees from our track to escape the torrent of air that was dragging us relentlessly down. I told Jessie that this course would bring us closer to the main Eudunda-Morgan road in case we needed a retrieve, but that I expected we would pick up the next lift 'street' before we hit a paddock. A few minutes later, another continuous band of smooth lift carried us slowly

but surely – again without circling – from 3,000ft to over 4,000ft by the time we crossed the road about three kilometres east of the township. Meandering in a northerly direction with the better parts of the weak lift, I finally found us an embedded core. With 6.5kt on the average the maelstrom of rising air swept us to 8,300ft, the highest point in our flight.

The vista north was nothing short of spectacular in the clear air. The sky was a brilliant blue. With the shadows already lengthening as the sun moved lower towards the western horizon, the relief of the Totthill and Bald Hill ranges contrasted starkly in dark blue and grey hues against the light brown and ochres of the surrounding country side. Further west, the Camels Hump and the Yackamoorundie ranges produced a similar display. The Flinders Ranges delimited the northern horizon while the waters of the Spencer and St Vincent gulfs glistened brightly where they merged with the sun. Moments like this make gliding – especially cross-country soaring – the uniquely overwhelming experience that it is. Sharing this pleasure with my little girl turned this moment and indeed the entire flight into one of the unforgettable pinnacles in many years of gliding.

As we enjoyed the majestic view, we heard a Stonefield pilot report 10,000ft in wave not far to the northeast of us. Since before our landing we had seen broken, slowly changing lenticular clouds to the north and east of us. I didn't give them too much attention in the belief that this was high-level shear wave that we wouldn't be able to reach. This bit of information, however, changed my view drastically. Instead of the lift streets being aligned with the north-westerly, they were actually running north-south, almost parallel to the ranges due to the wave. The wave also reinforced the thermals under its rising edge. The heavy sink we experienced was obviously where the air plummeted down the other side and suppressed the thermals, in this case reinforced by the lee of the ranges.

This was quickly confirmed as I changed tactics: heading north in the lift and then running west at high speed through several kilometres of rather heavy sink, thus roughly following the curved airspace boundary.

Diamond Lake started to emerge on the horizon as a tiny white streak below the sinking sun, marking our as yet invisible destination. Jessie had difficulty finding it just to the left of Lake Bumbunga, which dominated the scene as a big white blob.

A kilometre or two north of Marrabel we picked up our next thermal. It was still strong, but suspiciously wide and smooth in comparison to what we had earlier in the

day. Given the current conditions, we only needed one more climb after this – but would the thermals last that long? The sun was relentlessly moving down the western sky, which already took on an orange hue.

We were climbing through 7,000ft when I heard "Zulu Bravo Golf, Hotel Tango" over the radio. Our friends in Balaklava were about to pack up for the day, and probably wondered whether we would need the trailer or not. I responded with a brief position report but neglected any indication of our expected progress, leaving them in the same suspense that we were in. The thermal topped out at 8,000ft and we cruised west again.

Ahead and to our left we could see a tongue of milky haze creeping low to the ground from the southwest across our track: the seabreeze. There was not much hope of any lift on the last 25km, and once we descended into the seabreeze air, it would add to the significant headwind component. To the south, the haze turned a brownish tinge and obscured the city of Adelaide from us. Little did the people there know about the two aviators floating silently up here, taking in the serene beauty around us while breathing the cool, crystal-clear air.

The sink was not quite as pronounced as it had been earlier, but all too soon, we were down to less than 5,000ft. Tantalisingly close to final glide range, yet marginally out of reach. Abeam Saddleworth I finally felt the air become buoyant again and shortly

thereafter got that solid feel. In a rather limp 2.5kt we spiralled upwards, topping up to 7,500ft and final glide. I settled back in my seat, trimmed the glider to almost 70kt and let the aircraft take us down the glide slope towards our home base with only the occasional minute corrections on the controls.

The air became silky smooth as we approached Halbury. Diamond Lake was now right on the nose and creeping higher in the canopy – imperceptibly at first, but more pronounced with each kilometre that ticked by. Gradually I lowered the nose and let our airspeed build up. I have always loved that last flight of the day when the air is still and oily, and the sun casts long shadows on the ground below. This time it was even more enjoyable with 'Jessie's' trophy stowed in the wing root compartment and a successful cross-country flight coming to an end. We crossed the runway and the waiting onlookers in front of the clubhouse in a low, 120kt competition-style finish after one and three quarter hours in the air.

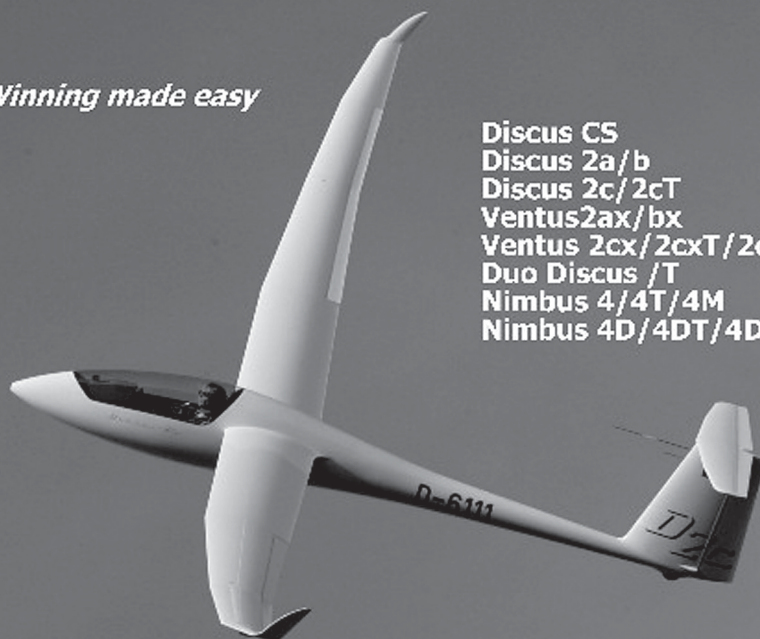
Jessie beamed as we taxied up to the hangar and opened our canopies to the warm, humid air. As she proudly told the family on the drive home, this was her first real cross-country flight, her first gliding trophy, and she also had her first cable break. Had she not been too excited to have her lunch, it might well have been her first meal in a glider, too.

For me, it was a privilege to have been her 'chauffeur'.



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Photo R. Selinger

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NEVER TOO OLD TO MICROLIGHT!

TWO RECENT NEWSPAPER ARTICLES SHOW THAT YOU'RE NEVER TOO OLD TO MICROLIGHT.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THESE TWO NEW HGFA MEMBERS.

Father Learns From Son

(Courtesy 'Tablelander')



Lance and David Keough
Photo: Courtesy Tablelander

Atherton's Lance Keough has added a new twist to the saying "like father, like son". In this case, it is more "like son, like father". Seventy-one year old Lance has just earned his wings to fly microlights and is now defying gravity whenever he gets the chance.

David cut his teeth soaring the skies in hang gliders but turned to microlights a few years ago and his father has become the latest graduate from his flying classes at Atherton airport.

Now Lance is hooked and describes flying the tiny machines as like riding a motorbike in the sky. He has dreamed

of adventures in the air since, as a boy, he watched Tom McDonald fly one of the first planes around Atherton in 1938. And it was as a young boy, at about two-and-a-half, that David had his first flight with his father and the taste for flying like a bird took hold.

David tinkered with hang gliding in the 1970s when the sport was in its infancy and he later had a few jumps from the Seven Sisters when the family moved to North Queensland.


But reliance on the whims of the wind, as well as humping the hang glider to a suitable cliff for launch, and the occasional bumpy landing saw him look to wider horizons.

Rapid developments in the design and airworthiness of microlights saw David develop a passion for the tiny flying machines. Lance was envious of his son's adventures and decided to have a go himself.

Now he has got his own licence, he is amazed he did not have a go earlier.

"These are tremendous," he said. "Just chuck your camping gear in and you can go anywhere."

The microlight is powered by a 462cc engine (smaller than many motorbikes these days), it has enough fuel for a 250km journey and a top speed of 110km/h. Lessons taking a beginner to pilot level total about \$3,000 and a microlight costs \$20,000, less than most new cars.

"The most dangerous thing about flying these is driving to the airport to take off," Lance said. 

Octogenarian Flies Microlights

(Courtesy David Watson, 'Tumut and Adelong Times')

At 80 years of age Englishman Eric St John-Foti isn't the oldest pilot to go solo, but he could well lay claim to being the oldest to solo in a microlight without previous three-axis aviation experience. That memorable event took place at the Tumut aerodrome last week whilst Eric was enjoying a three week visit to Australia in order to attend his grand-daughter's wedding, and do something he has long wanted to do – learn to fly.

Six days of intensive training by local instructor Peter Wilson of Air Escape in a microlight, commonly referred to as a "trike" or powered hang glider, had Eric ready for

his first circuit on his lonesome, and his euphoria was undeniable.

"Simply brilliant, I wish I had decided to do this years ago," the octogenarian told the Times.

He had made enquiries about learning to fly after a strip was installed at a neighbouring farm in England, and after being told he would have to complete 30 lessons cancelled on account of his impending trip to Australia.

He set his mind on an intensive course whilst out here, rather than contend with the far less predictable weather in his own country. That in turn produced an amazing coincidence.

"Back in England I was told that if I was going to learn to fly an ultralight or microlight out here, the best man to teach me was a fellow named Peter Wilson, one of only two instructors with both three-axis and two-axis credentials. How surprised was I when it turned out the leading microlight guy was teaching here in Tumut, the very town where my son and his wife had recently purchased the property known as Elm Grove Sanctuary."

Each day over the week Eric completed two to three hours theory and practical training, learning to control the Rotax engine powered wing at various heights until he eventually got to fly it on his own.

Mr St John-Foti said he was "over the moon" at going solo, and had enjoyed a drink to celebrate.



"What a brilliant feeling; it's now my plan to come out here to Tumut for good, to buy an aircraft and install a strip at Elm Grove," he said.

"As you get older you need something to stimulate you, otherwise you'll just become old and crotchety, and flying for me at least is the ideal answer."

He paid special tribute to his instructor.

"It's quite incredible for an instructor to have the courage to allow an old man to take on the sport and go solo, but he obviously had confidence in me. Learning to fly close to the ground can be interesting but I also had plenty of confidence after having logged plenty of hours and been intensively examined on the theory I had been taught by Peter."

He also had plenty of praise for Tumut's aerodrome.

"You could eat your diner off this tarmac; it's a wonderful aviation facility and I'm amazed more people aren't taking up the opportunity to make use of it. I have no doubt that will come as the word spreads, just as it has about your genius of a flying instructor."

Eric's instructor believes his latest pupil to go solo can reasonably lay claim to being the oldest "first-time" flyer.

Well known Tumut identity Sam Sturt



Elation!
Photo: David Watson of the Tumut and Adelong Times

was a similar age when he soloed, but had the benefit of previous aviation experience in more traditional aircraft.

Peter also has the distinction of having taught the youngest person to go solo in Cooma student Emma Waterhouse, who did so on her 15th birthday.

"Eric is a lovely man, an adept student who progressed more quickly than some less than half his age, and an extremely young eighty – if I'm like him at his age I'll be very happy indeed," said the instructor.



RED BULL AUSSIES!



A long walk – 2003 Red Bull X-Alps

All photos: Red Bull

On 1 August 2005, 20 top pilots will launch their paragliders from the Dachstein glacier in Austria and fly into a world of pain – the 2005 Red Bull X-Alps! The rules are very simple: fly as far as possible in the turbulent air high over the Alps, land safely, walk most of the night with a 20kg pack containing your paraglider, sleep as little as possible, hike 1500m up a peak for "break-fast" (always with the glider!), launch, repeat until reaching the ocean at Monaco 800km later. Go!

And this year, for the first time, an Australian team will be competing – Benn Kovco and Bryan Anderson!

Benn sends Soaring Australia a few words before departing for Austria:

Hi all!

By the time you read this, the 2005 X Alps should be under way and hopefully I'll be moving west as quickly as my glider and my legs will take me. I will be well supported by Bryan Anderson, a long-time friend and climbing/skiing/bushwalking partner in crime.

We only had a little over 10 weeks between selection and race start, so to say life has been a bit hectic would be the understatement of the century! However, help came from a lot of people which has made life much easier, so I'd like to take the opportunity to say a huge thank you to everyone who assisted with preparation, equipment, training advice, route selection and moral support.

I have sponsorship from Advance, who were keen from the beginning and have supplied me with a lightweight Omega 6 for the event – every gram counts so that was fantastic. Adidas are providing a truckload of sunglasses

and Manilla Paragliding are supplying a harness and lots of extras.

The race begins on 1 August and can be tracked live at [www.redbullxalps.com]. We'll be about eight hours behind you all, so log on in the evening and send a message. Apologies if I don't reply while I'm flying! See you all when we get back, sore but hopefully satisfied.

*Cheers,
Benn and Bryan*



Left: Heading west. Pilot launches from the Dachstein in 2003

Below: Dav Dagault over Monaco at the end of the 2003 X-Alps



Contact Addresses

HANG GLIDING • PARAGLIDING •

GFA

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Australian Air League

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PO Box 1682, Bathurst NSW 2795.

Byron Gliding Club

PO Box 815, Byron Bay NSW 2481,
02 66847627, 0428 847642.

Byron Soaring Centre & Aeroclub

PO Box 549, Byron Bay NSW 2481
02 66844244.

Canberra Gliding Club

PO Box 1130, Canberra City ACT 2601,
02 64523994, 0428 523994.

Central Coast Soaring Club

PO Box 1323, Gosford South NSW 2250, 02
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Cudgegong Soaring Pty Ltd

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Forbes Soaring & Aero Club

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Harden Gliding Club

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62585554, 02 62578280, 0418 670291, Sec:
Richard Hart 02 62585554.

Hunter Valley Gliding Club

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Lake Keepit Soaring Club

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Leeton Gliding Club

PO Box 607, Leeton NSW 2705,
02 69536970.

Narramine Gliding Club

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NSW AIRTC Gliding Club

41 Simpson Ave, Forest Hill NSW 2651,
02 69227526.

NSW Police Gliding Club

27 Bourne St, Wentworth Falls NSW 2782,
0427 592744.

RAAF Richmond Gliding Club

RAAF Base, Richmond NSW 2755.

RAAF Williamtown Gliding Club

c/o Mr AJ Lee, 10 Federation Dr., Medowie
NSW 2318.

Royal Australian Naval

Gliding Association

PO Box A37, Naval Air Base, Nowra
NSW 2540.

Scouts NSW Air Activities Gliding Wing

RG (Bob) Balfour, 80 Malvern St, Panania
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1100 (w), <rbalfour@tpg.com.au>.

Soar Narramine Pty Ltd

PO Box 56, Narramine NSW 2821,
02 68891856, 02 68892488.

Southern Cross Gliding Club

PO Box 132, Camden NSW 2570,
02 46558882.

Summerland Gliding Club

PO Box 820, Lismore NSW 2480,
Sec: David Wright, 02 6621 6495 (w),
<wrights@nor.com.au>

Sydney Gliding Inc. (Concordia GC)

PO Box 633, Camden NSW 2570,
0412 145144.

Temora Gliding Club

PO Box 206, Temora NSW 2666,
02 69772733.

Wee Waa Gliding Club

(formerly Warrumbungle GC) **PO Box 586,
Wee Waa NSW 2388, 02 67954333.**

Queensland Soaring Association (QSA)

Boonah Gliding Club

PO Box 107, Boonah QLD 4310,
02 54632630.

Bundaberg Soaring Club

PO Box 211, Bundaberg QLD 4670,
02 41553158.

Caboolture Gliding Club

PO Box 920, Caboolture QLD 4510,
0418 713903.

Central Queensland Gliding Club

PO Box 953, Rockhampton QLD 4700,
07 49371381.

Darling Downs Soaring Club

**PO Box 584, Toowoomba QLD 4350,
07 46637140.**

Gympie Gliding Club

PO Box 103, Gympie QLD 4570,
07 54867247.

Kingaroy Soaring Club

PO Box 91, Kingaroy QLD 4610,
07 41622191.

Moura Gliding Club

PO Box 92, Moura QLD 4718,
07 49973265.

North Queensland Soaring Centre

PO Box 1743, Aitkenville QLD 4814.

No. 229 Squadron Australian

Air Force Cadets

3 Hedlow Court, Carindale QLD 4152,
07 33989745, 0148 984752.

Southern Downs Aero & Soaring Club

PO Box 144, Warwick QLD 4370,
07 38923473.

Tarwan Soaring

PO Box 34, Wandoo QLD 4419,
07 46274080.

SA Gliding Association (SAGA)

Adelaide Hills Soaring Group

PO Box 1, Bridgewater SA 5155.

Adelaide Soaring Club

PO Box 94, Gawler SA 5118, 08 85221877,
08 85223179.

Adelaide University Gliding Club

Adelaide Uni Sports Association,
the University of Adelaide, SA 5005, 0412
870963.

Air Cadet Gliding Club

PO Box 2000, Salisbury SA 5108.

Alice Springs Gliding Club

PO Box 356, Alice Springs NT 0871,
08 89526384.

Balaklava Gliding Club

PO Box 257, Balaklava SA 5461,
08 88645062.

Barossa Valley Gliding Club

PO Box 123, Stonefield via Truro
SA 5356, 08 85640240.

Bordertown Keith Gliding Club

PO Box 377, Bordertown SA 5268.

Millicent Gliding Club

PO Box 194, Millicent SA 5280.

Murray Bridge Gliding Club

PO Box 1277, Victor Harbor SA 5211.

Northern Australian Gliding Club

PO Box 38889, Winnellie NT 0821.

Port Augusta Gliding Club

PO Box 272, Port Augusta SA 5700,
08 86436228.

Renmark Gliding Club

**PO Box 450, Renmark SA 5341,
ph/fax 08 85951422, mob 0417890215.**

Scout Gliding Club

22 Burford Crescent, Redwood Park
SA 5097.

Waikerie Gliding Club

PO Box 320, Waikerie SA 5330,
08 85412644, 08 85412761.

Whyalla Gliding Club

PO Box 556 Whyalla SA 5351
08 86452619, 0413 876642.

Victorian Soaring Association (VSA)

Albury Corowa Gliding Club

PO Box 620, Wodonga VIC 3689.

Beaufort Gliding Club

116 Tennyson St, Elwood VIC 3184.

Bendigo Gliding Club

62 Lawson St, Bendigo VIC 3550.

Corangamite Soaring Club

Kurweeton, Derrinallum VIC 3325.

Geelong Gliding Club

PO Box 197, Bacchus Marsh VIC 3340.

Gliding Club of Northern Tasmania

58 Hales Street, Wynyard TAS 7325,
03 64422108.

Gliding Club of Victoria

PO Box 46, Benalla VIC 3672, 03 5762
1058, 03 57625599.

Grampians Soaring Club

PO Box 468, Ararat VIC 3377,
03 53524938.

Latrobe Valley Gliding Club

PO Box 625, Morwell VIC 3840.

Mangalore Gliding Club

PO Box 80, Avenel VIC 3664.

Mount Beauty Gliding Club

44 Roper St, Mount Beauty VIC 3699.

Murray Valley Soaring Club Ltd

PO Box 403, Corowa NSW 2646.

RAAF East Sale Gliding Club

c/o Gary Mason, 9 Weir St, Sale VIC 3850.

Soaring Club of Tasmania

c/o Bruce Thompson, 34 Clinton Rd,
Geilston Bay TAS 7015, 03 62552191 (h),
03 62252561 (CFI).

South Gippsland Gliding Club

PO Box 475, Leongatha VIC 3953.

Sportavia Soaring

PO Box 78, Tocumwal NSW 2714,
03 58742063.

Sunraysia Gliding Club

PO Box 647, Mildura VIC 3500.

Swan Hill Gliding Club

PO Box 160, Nyah VIC 3594.

Tumbarumba Gliding Club

Mundaroo, Tumbarumba NSW 2653.

Victorian Motorless Flight Group

(Operates out of Bacchus Marsh aerodrome)
GPO Box 1096J, Melbourne VIC 3001, 0402
281928, 03 98486473.

Wagga Wagga Gliding Club

25 Beauty Point Ave, Wagga Wagga
NSW 2650, 0427 205624.

Wimmera Soaring Club

PO Box 158, Horsham VIC 3402.

WA Gliding Association (WAGA)

Beverley Soaring Society

PO Box 136, Beverley WA 6304, 0407
385361.

Gliding Club of Western Australia

356 Abernethy Rd, Cloverdale WA 6105,
08 92774148, 0409 683159, 08 96351023.

Morawa Flying Club

PO Box 276, Morawa WA 6623.

Narrogin Gliding Club

PO Box 232, Narrogin WA 6312, 0407
088314 or 08 98811795 (weekends).

Stirlings Gliding Club

c/o Post Office, Lower King WA 6330.

WA Squadron Australian Air Force Cadets

Headquarters, RAAF Base, Pearce,
Bullsbrook WA 6084, 08 95717800,
08 95717877.

HGFA

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

HGFA National Office

PO Box 157, Hallidays Point NSW 2430. Ph:
02 6559 2713, fax: 02 6559 3830, <office@
hgfa.asn.au>.

HGFA General Manager

Chris Fogg, PO Box 258, Helensburgh
NSW 2508, ph/fax 02 4294 9300, 0417
766356, <general.manager@hgfa.asn.au>.

Information about site ratings, sites and
other local matters, contact the appropri-
ate State associations, region or club.

Board Members

**Pres: Rohan Holtkamp RMB 236B Western
Highway, Trawalla VIC 3373, ph/fax: 03
53492845, 0409 678734, <President@
hgfa.asn.au>.**

**Vice-Pres: Rohan Grant 188 Bathurst St,
Hobart TAS 7000, 03 62334405 (h), fax: 03
62243598, <Rohan.Grant@hgfa.asn.au>.**

**Sec: Carla Pierce 33 Edmonds St,
Diamond Creek VIC 3089 Ph: 0407
788710, <Secretary@hgfa.asn.au>.**

**Trs: Stewart Dennis PO Box 118, Dickson
ACT 2602, ph/fax 02 62470008, 0429
158721, <Treasurer@hgfa.asn.au>.**

**Hakim Mentes 16/59 Riversdale Rd,
Hawthorn VIC 3122, 0412 617216,
<Hakim.Mentes@hgfa.asn.au>.**

**Bill Moyes 173 Bronte St, Waverley NSW
2024, 02 93875114, fax: 02 96933342,
<Bill.Moyes@hgfa.asn.au>.**

**Andrew Polidano PO Box 1903, Byron Bay
NSW 2481, 0428 666843, <Andrew.
Polidano@hgfa.asn.au>.**

**Kathy Little Lot 108, Pinjarra Rd,
Ravenswood WA 6208, 08 95376204,
<Kathy.Robinson@hgfa.asn.au>.**

**Mark Thompson 40 Hovia Tce, Kensington
WA 6151, 08 94912417 (w), 0428 729028,
<Mark.Thompson@hgfa.asn.au>.**

Microlight Public Relations

Paul Haines ph/fax: 02 42941031.

GFA MEMBERSHIP FEES 2005

Membership:	Normal	Family
NSW/QLD	\$175	\$139
Victoria	\$176	\$140
South Australia	\$179	\$143
Western Australia	\$180	\$144

Student membership:	Full	Family
NSW/QLD	\$108	\$72
Victoria	\$109	\$73
South Australia	\$112	\$76
Western Australia	\$113	\$77

Short-term membership:	1 Month*	3 Month*
NSW/QLD/VIC	\$48	\$60
South Australia	\$57	\$69
Western Australia	\$58	\$70

*Note: Once only purchase to Australian residents,
thereafter 12 month membership to be
purchased.

International postage for Soaring Australia
to be added to membership fees:

Zone	Country	Price
1	New Zealand	\$54
2	Singapore	\$60
3	Japan, Hong Kong, India	\$60
4	USA, Canada, Middle East	\$66
5	UK, Europe, South America, South Africa	\$72

States & Regions

ACTHGA

PO Box 3496, Manuka ACT 2603; Pres: Steve Foggett 0417 313589, 02 62884351, <steve.foggett@hotmail.com.au>; Sec: Mark Elston 0428 480820, 02 62655718, <mark.elston@defence.gov.au>; Trs: Tony Davidson 02 62392019, <td@silktel.com>; Sites officer: Michael Porter, 0415 920444, <michael.porter@jllrld.com.au>; Committee: Nicolas Siefken, Barry Oliver, Stephen Harris; SSO: HG – Peter Dall, PG – Peter Bowyer 0412 486114. Meetings: 1st Thu/month 7:30pm Yamba Sports Club, Phillip.

Hang Gliding Association of WA

PO Box 146, Midland, WA 6936; <hang_gliding_association_wa@hotmail.com>. Admin: Rick Williams <hang_gliding@dodo.com.au>; V-Pres/Sec: Nigel Sparg <nsparg@bigpond.net.au>; HG Rep: Gavin Nichols <gknichol@tpg.com.au>; PG Rep: Gordon McCabe <sikacro@yahoo.com.au>; PM Rep: Mark Wild <mark@gastech.com.au>.

NSW Hang Gliding Association

Sec: Steve Hocking, 19 Gladswood Gardens, Double Bay NSW 2028, ph/fax: 02 9327 4025, <nswhga@s054.aone.net.au>.

North Queensland HG Association

12 Van Eldik Ave, Andergrove QLD 4740; Pres: Graeme Beplate 07 49552913, fax: 07 49555122, <sitework@mackay.net.au>; Sec: Ron Huxhagen 07 49552913.

Queensland HG Association

Pres: Greg Hollands <greg.s.hollands@transport.qld.gov.au>; PO Box 61, Canungra Qld 4275 07 38448566.

South Australian HG Association

1 Sturt St, Adelaide SA 5000, ph: 08 8410 1391, fax: 08 82117115; Pres: Stuart McClure 08 82973452 (h), <stuart.mcclure@csiro.au>; Sec: Mark Tyminski 0411 414 816, <marknjan@senet.com.au>; Trs: Robert Woodward 08 82977532 (h), <rob_woodward@alternatopositioning.com>.

Tasmanian HG & PG Association

19 Christella Rd, Kingston TAS 7050, [www.thpa.net]; Pres: Anthony Mountain (Sth HG pilot) 0407 299011, <president@thpa.net>; Sec/Trs: Mico Skoklevski (Sth HG pilot) 0418 398624, <secretary@thpa.net>; PG contact: Rob Steane (Sth PG pilot) 0418 146137, <paraglide.info@thpa.net>; Bill Brooks (Nth PG pilot & HG info) 0409 411791, <northern@thpa.net>.

Victorian HG and PG Association

PO Box 157 Northcote VIC 3070, [www.vhpa.org.au]; Pres: Carolyn Dennis; Sec: Steve Norman; Trs: Lisa Charleston; SSO: Rob Van Der Klooster 03 52223019 (h). Site weather-boxes: Three Sisters 0409 864700, Buck-land Ridge 0407 356295, Mt Buffalo 03 57501515, Ben More 0417 112062.

Clubs

New South Wales

Blue Mountains HG Club Inc.

Pres: Peter Burkitt 0418 435204 <pburkitt@ozemail.com.au>; Sec: Andrew Paterson 0425 305984 <apaterso@bhsc.nsw.gov.au>; Trs: Allan Bush 02 47738037 <fairallan@pnc.com.au>; SSO: Allan Bush, Paul Hunt 0408851876 <huntp@ozemail.com.au>; Newsletter: Paul Hunt. Comp Director: Alan Bond 0408470544 <skybond@iprimus.com.au>. Meetings: 4th Wed of Jan/Mar/May/Jul/Sep/Nov, Blue Catheadog Tavern, Banks Dve, St Clair.

Dusty Demons Hang Gliding Club

6 Miago Court, Ngurnawal, ACT 2913. Pres: Trent Brown 0427 557486, <trent.brown@anu.edu.au>; Sec: Peter Dall 0428 813746, <peter.dall@casa.com.au>; Trs: Dan Watters 0410 347801, <dan.watters@csiro.au>; SSO: Grant Heaney 02 48494516, 0419 681212, <grant@dustydemons.com>; Editor: Kath Kelly 02 64561590, 0427 220764, <phase9@snowy.net.au>.

Hunter Skysailors

Pres: David Holgate 0410 112381, <david.holgate@hotmail.com>; V-Pres: Meg Butler 0408 446358; SSO: James Thompson 0418 686199, <james.b.t@hunterlink.net.au>. Meetings: last Tue/month 7pm, Hexham Bowling Club.

Illawarra Hang Gliding Club Inc.

27a Paterson Rd, Coalcliff NSW 2508. Pres: Frank August 2005

Chetcuti 0418 252221 <chetcuti1@bigpond.com>; Sec: John Parsons; SSO: Tim Causser 0418 433665 <timcau@ozemail.com.au>.

Kosciusko Alpine Paragliding Club

[www.homestead.com/kapc]; Pres: James Ryrie 02 62359120, <rymicalago@netspeed.com.au>; Sec: Alex Johnson 0411 748713.

Manilla SkySailors Club Inc.

PO Box 1, Manilla 2346, [www.FlyManilla.com]. Pres: Brian Shepard 0401627830; V-Pres: Suzy Smith 02 6785 6545; Sec/Trs: JJ Bastion 0427 161504; SSO (HG): Patrick Lenders 02 67783484; SSO (PG): Godfrey Wenness 02 67856545, SSO (Towing): Rhett Rockman 0428 428962; Trikes: Will Ewig 02 67697771.

Mid North Coast HG and PG Club

Pres: Nigel Lelean 0419 442597, <tlelean@smarchat.net.au>; SSO: Jason Turner 0419 997196, <jasonfnyts@hotmail.com>.

Newcastle Hang Gliding Club

PO Box 64 Broadmeadow NSW 2292; [www.nhgc.asn.au], <fly@nhgc.asn.au>. Pres: Mick Hurley 02 49432903; V-Pres: Matt Olive 02 49436791; Sec: Simon Ross 02 49447915, 0407 528966; Trs: Monica Barrett 0425 847 207; SSOs: Tony Barton (coastal) 0412 607 815, John O'Donohue (inland) 0419 765715, Alaric Giles (inland) 02 49430674, James Thompson (PG) 0418 686199; Newsletter: David Stafford 02 49215832 <editor@nhgc.asn.au>. Meetings: Last Wed/month 7:30pm South Newcastle RLC, Llewellyn St, Merewether.

Northern Beaches HG Club

Pres: Wayne Fitzgerald 02 99827094; Sec: Brian Clarke 0418 280407, <trincotti@bigpond.com>; Trs: Jim Gaal 0414 799822, <jimg@acay.com.au>; SSO (HG): Glen Salmon 02 99180091; Wayne Fitzgerald 02 9982 7094; SSO (PG): Wayne Fitzgerald 02 9982 7094. Meetings: 1st Tue/month 7pm Mona Vale Bowling Club.

Northern Rivers HG and PG Club

PO Box 126, Byron Bay NSW 2481, [http://bbhgc.tripod.com/]. Pres: Eddie Gray 02 66841795, <edgrey@linknet.com.au>; Vice-Pres: Maggie Clark 0404 263524; Sec: Mick Mackender 0414 867820.

Stanwell Park HG and PG Club

PO Box 258 Helensburgh NSW 2508; Pres: Chris Fogg 0412 904800, <fogg@idx.com>. Pres: Adrian Le Gras; Sec: Scott Zwanenbeek <scottz@internode.on.net>; SSO: Tony Armstrong <tony@hangglideoz.com.au>, 02 42949999.

Sydney Hang Gliding Club

Pres: Bruce Wynne 0417 467695, <bwynne@bigpond.net.au>; Trs: John Selby 02 9344 7932, <johnselby@idx.com.au>; Sec: Steve Hocking 02 93274025, <nswhga@s054.aone.net.au>; SSOs: Bruce Wynne, Doug Sole; SSO: Ken Stothard. Meetings: Monthly 7:30pm Endeavour Hotel, Botany.

Victoria

Dynasoarers Hang Gliding Club

Pres: Darren Brown 03 93971233 (w), fax: 03 93974566, <dbrown@bmlgal.com.au>; Sec: Dale Appleton 0408 382635; Trs: Greg Holt 0418 516058; SSO: Rob Van Der Klooster 03 52223019, 0408 335559; Publicity Officer: Harry Buckle 03 52214544, <monument@pipeline.com.au>. Meetings: 1st Fri/month, venue see: [vhpa.org.au/dyna].

Melbourne Hang Gliding Club Inc.

PO Box 8057, Camberwell North VIC 3124; [www.hgfa.asn.au/~melbourne/], <melbourne@hgfa.asn.au>. Pres: Hugh Alexander 03 97101214 (h), 0417 355578, <wurundjeri.lane@bigpond.com>; Sec/VHPA rep: Steven Ross 0410 600595, <steven@pchelpathome.com.au>; Trs: Leif Gorander 03 97080136 (h); 0407 540502, <leif.gorander@varianinc.com>; SSO: Peter Batchelor 03 97353095 (h), <pbatch@netspace.net.au>. Meetings: 3rd Wed/month 6:30pm Palace Hotel, 893 Burke Rd, Camberwell.

North East Victoria HG Club Inc.

Pres: Heather Mull 03 437134573, <hmull@bigpond.net.au>; V-Pres/Trs: Isla Christian 03 408362277, <islapeter@bigpond.com>; Sec: Brian Webb 03 417530972, <brianmwebb@bigpond.com>; Mship: Simon Taylor 03 404942933, <stayl@cs.mu.oz.au>; Comps: Karl Texler 03 428385144, <brightvt@netc.net.au>; Comms: Geoff Wong 03 403441147, <geoff@zikzak.net>; Committee: Vivian Williams

ALL CLUBS PLEASE CHECK DETAILS IN THIS SECTION CAREFULLY

Could all Clubs please ensure they maintain the correct and current details of their Executive Committees and contacts here in the magazine. Specific attention is directed to the listing of SSOs and SOs for the Clubs. Please ALL CLUBS and nominated Senior SOs and SOs confirm ALL SSO and SO appointments with the HGFA Office <office@hgfa.asn.au> to ensure that those holding these appointments have it listed on the Membership Database and can receive notices and correspondence as required. Appointment of these officers is required to be endorsed by Clubs in writing on the appropriate forms. Sometime in the future if confirmation is not received, those listed in the Database where no current forms or confirmation is held, the appointment will be taken as having expired.

General Manager, HGFA

03 409505812, <viv@forwardsixty.com>. Meetings: [www.hgfa.asn.au/~nevghc/].

Sky High Paragliding Club

[www.skyhighparagliding.org]; Pres: Colin Page 0411 555128; V-Pres: John Styles <jdstyles@hotmail.com>; Trs: Clinton Arnall 0415 229315, [membership@www.skyhighparagliding.org]; Sec: Georgia Buckingham <secretary@www.skyhighparagliding.org>; Web: Tony Tidswell <webmaster@www.skyhighparagliding.org>; APN Editor: Julie Sheard 0425 717944 <editor@www.skyhighparagliding.org>; SSOs: Kevin Gingell-Kent, Alister Johnson, Adam Neinkemper. Meetings: 1st Wed/mth 8pm Retreat Hotel, 226 Nicholson St, Abbotsford.

Southern Microlight Club

[http://home.vicnet.net.au/~stclub/]. Pres: Kel Glare 03 94395920 (h), 0421 060706; V-Pres: Mark Howard 03 97511480; Sec: Dianne Pierpoint 03 9735278; 0429 938426. Newsletter: Barry Wood <jbwood@bigpond.net.au>.

Michael Rose <mrose3@bigpond.net.au>. Meetings: 2nd Tue/month 8pm Manning-ham Club, 1 Thompsons Rd, Bulleen.

Western Victorian Hang Gliding Club

PO Box 92, Beaufort VIC 3373, [www.vhpa.org/vvwhgc]. Pres: Glenn Bachelor 0419 324 730, <GlennB@pocketmail.com.au>; V-Pres: Mark O'Keefe 0412 473724, <mokeefe@bigpond.net.au>; Trs: Stuart Coad 0408 524862, <scoad@edlyn.com.au>; Sec: Lisa Miller, 0407 319397, <lisam130@hotmail.com>; Web/Database: Damian Georgiou 0413 677090, <damiang@bachomp.net>; SSO: Rohan Holtkamp 0409 678734, <dynamic@netconnect.com.au>; Paul Rundell 0418 348948. Meetings: Last Sat/month, The Beaufort Hotel, Beaufort.

Queensland

Caboolture Microlight Club

50 Oak Place, Mackenzie QLD 4156. Pres: Derek Tremain 07 33957563, <derekjo@gil.com.au>; Sec: John Cresswell 07 34203254, <crezz@lineone.net>; SO: Graham Roberts 07 32676662, <trike@tpg.com.au>

Cairns Hang Gliding Club

Pres: Russell Krautz <rkrautzr@yahoo.com.au>; V-Pres: Joe Reyes 07 40555553, <reyes@ledanet.com.au>; Sec: Lance Keough 07 40912117, 31 Holm St, Atherton QLD 4883; Trs: Nev Akers 07 40532586, <nevjoy@ozemail.com.au>.

Canungra Hang Gliding Club Inc.

PO Box 41, Canungra QLD 4275; [www.chgc.asn.au]. Pres: Brandon O'Donnell 07 3399 9850, 0416 089889, <president@chgc.asn.au>; V-Pres: Raef McKay 0408 994104, <vicepresident@chgc.asn.au>; Sec: Phil Hystek 07 55434000 (w), <secretary@chgc.asn.au>; Trs: Cameron McNeill 0419 706326, <treasurer@chgc.asn.au>; Gen. Exec. Member: Greg Hollands 07 32534239 (w), 07 3844 8566 (h), <gem@chgc.asn.au>; SSO PG: Phil Hystek 07 55434000 (h), 0418 155317, <ssso@chgc.asn.au>; Senior SO (HG): Ken Hill 0418 188655, <ssso@chgc.asn.au>.

Central Queensland Skyriders Inc.

915 Yeppoon Rd Iron Pot Qld 4701. Pres: Bob Pizzev 07 49387607; Sec: James Lowe 07 49309298 (w), 07 49363836 (h); Trs: Adrienne Wall 07 49362699; SSO: Alister Dixon 49861984; Towing Bioloa: Paul Barry 07 49922865, <prbarr@tpg.com.au>.

Conondale Cross-Country Flyers Inc.

[www.entrypoint.to/conondale-x-country-flyers]. Pres: Peter Buch 07 54352421, <buchy9@bigpond.com>; V-Pres/SSO (PG): Graham Sutherland 07 54935882, <grahamsuth@optusnet.com.au>; Sec: Sue Buch, 531 Balmoral Rd, Maleny QLD 4552, 07 54352421, <spbuch@bigpond.net.au>; Trs: Kim Hodson 07 33541910, <khod@samford.net>; SSO (HG): Russell Groves 07 54450084.

Dalby Hang Gliding Club

27 Van Gogh Pl., Mackenzie QLD 4152, [www.hgfa.

asn.au/~dhgc]; Pres: Daron Hodder 0413 515160, <daron@powerup.com.au>; Sec: Rod Flockhart 07 32193442, 0412 882639, <flockhartrod@hotmail.com>; SSO: Jason Reid 0418 771400; Trs: Cameron McNeill 07 38913457.

Sunshine Coast Hang Gliding Club

PO Box 227, Rainbow Beach QLD 4581; <intheir@ozemail.com.au>. Pres: Geoffrey Cole 0408 420808, 07 54554661 (h); Sec/SSO (PG): Jean-Luc Lejaille, 0418 754157, <rainbow_flyer@hotmail.com.au>; Trs: Gary Allan 0417 756878; SSO (HG): David Cookman 07 54498573.

Whitsundays HG Club

Pres: Graham Lee 07 49546726, <gdsrlee@hotmail.com>; Sec/Trs: Ron Huxhagen 07 49552913, fax: 07 49555122, <sitework@mackay.net.au>.

Northern Territory

Alice Springs HG and PG Club

Pres: Ricky Jones 08 89551088, 0402 805 099, <paragliding02@austarnet.com.au>. Please contact for paramotoring, PG ridge soaring & thermal flying.

Western Australia

Albany HG & PG Club

Pres: R D Jones, 1/14 Lyndavale Dr, Alice Springs NT 0870, 08 89551088, 0402 805099; SSO: Simon Shuttleworth 0427 950556; Sec: John Middleweek 08 9841 2096, fax: 08 98412096.

Cloudbase Paragliding Club Inc.

334 Belmont Ave Kewdale WA 6105. Messagebank 08 94875253; Pres: Nigel Sparg, <president@cloudbase.asn.au>, 0427 476629; V-Pres: Mark Wild, <vicepresident@cloudbase.asn.au>, 0411 423923; Trs: Colin Brown, <treasurer@cloudbase.asn.au>, 0407 700378; Sec: Lachlan Byrd, <secretary@cloudbase.asn.au>, 0439 922510; Committee <committee@cloudbase.asn.au>; Mike Allen 0408 947048; Gordon McCabe 0407 776462; Alain Latino 0408 099679; SSO: Gordon McCabe; SO: Mark Wild, Nigel Sparg

Meetings: 2nd Tue/month, 7:30pm, The Windsor Hotel, 112 Mill Point Rd.

Goldfields Dust Devils Inc.

9 Broadarrow Rd, Kalgoorlie WA 6430. Pres: Richard Breyley <richard.breyley@harmonygold.com.au>, 0427 778202; Sec: Andrew Talmage <jodandrew@bigpond.com>, 0413 992960; Trs: Nick Holthouse <nick.holthou se@harmonygold.com.au>; SSO: Mark Stokoe <Mark.Stokoe@health.wa.gov.au>, 08 90911297.

Hill Flyers Club Inc

<hillflyers@dodo.com.au>; Pres: Rick Williams 0427 057961; Sec: Gary Bennett 0412 611680; Committee: Dave Longman 08 93859469, Mike Ipkendanz 08 9255 1397, Gavin Nicholls 0417 690386. Meetings held on site during club fly-ins, at either York, Toodyay or Seabird.

South West Microlight Club

Pres: Brian Watts 0407 552362; V-Pres: Don Wilson 08 97641007; Sec: Paul Coffey 08 97251161; CFI: Brendan Watts 0408 949004.

Western Soarers

<wshgc@hgfa.asn.au>, PO Box 483, Mt Hawthorn WA 6915, [www.westernsoarers.com]. Pres: Mirek Generowicz 0427 778 280, <mgenerow@bigpond.net.au>; V-Pres: Mark Wild 08 94098581, <mark@gastech.com.au>; Sec: Ben Griffith 08 94724068, <benandrobym@aardvark.net.au>; Trs: Sun Nickerson 0401 135042, <Sunny@iinet.net.au>; SSO (HG): Shaun Wallace 0411 885178, <swallace@iprimus.com.au>; SSO (PG): Jules Sanderson 0405 089709, <cairoz@speedlink.com.au>. Meetings: Last Tue/month 7:30pm The Como, 241 Canning Hwy.

Classifieds

GFA

Single-seater Sailplanes

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HANG GLIDING EVENTS 2005/2006

- Intermediate Tour/Clinic (Aerotow course plus more), 26th Nov - 3rd Dec 2005
- XC Tour (Aerotow Moyes Dragonfly), 10th - 18th Dec 2005
- Sportavia Top Gun Challenge, 16th - 19th Jan 2006
- Sportavia International Hang Gliding Competition, 21st - 28th Jan 2006
- XC Tour (Aerotow Moyes Dragonfly), 4th - 12th March 2006
- Intermediate Tour/Clinic (Aerotow course plus more), 1st April - 9th April 2006

For more info visit the Sportavia website www.sportavia.com.au or contact Tove Heaney M - 0419 681 212 **T - 03 5874 2063** E - info@sportavia.com.au