

OUTLANDING

The Taupo Gliding Club's Newsletter



March 2023

Welcome everyone to this edition of Outlanding. Apologies, for not getting any editions out as I intended over the last couple of months, life got in the way.

As we all know, the soaring season weather hasn't been favourable with a number of competitions cancelled and a severe lack of good flying conditions. However, there have been some awesome flights out of Centennial Park especially when the Piako Club visited in January. We are approaching winter so make the best of the autumn conditions.

If anyone has an article or notification to be included into the next newsletter, please have to Trace by 20 April 2023.

Fly well and have fun!

Cheers, Trace

Inside this Issue...

CPSC

Article — Peter Cook

Article — Brad Rock

Article — David Smith

Grand Prix

New Members

Pics

Humour

Central Plateau Soaring Competition

At last! We had our first competition in two years. Much to the relief of pilots and organisers. Day One was fine but overcast. The briefing was led by a welcome from the Mayor, David Trewavas, who said what a great asset the Taupo Gliding Club is, and welcomed our visitors from all over the North Island as well as Australia and Germany.



A task was set, but the cloud base stayed low, and the thermals were unreliable, so after an hour's wait the task was cancelled and the day set aside for free flying. Most pilots enjoyed a good local flight, but hoping for better things in the following days.

Day Two had a task, but it proved to be a difficult day which limited the scoring opportunities with a number of landouts and engine starts.

Day Three was great, and one pilot (not the winner!) said it is the best day's gliding he's ever had! It was very satisfying to at last get a good day in. The task setters had it right.

Day Four had us fooled! We gridded optimistically under blue skies not expecting a great deal and sent up a "sniffer" who surprisingly reported thermals, and recommended a start. There were no immediate land backs, but it tough going. A good day to put down to experience!

The weather then deteriorated and it was up to the final day to determine the winners. In both classes, there was only a couple of hundred points separating the top three pilots.

Day seven promised much, and delivered - well.....quite a lot, but made the pilots work for every kilometre. We went for an early launch so as not to get too late at the end of the day. There were four land backs, but each pilot relaunched, and at the end of the day there was only one landout. Pilots had to work hard for the first leg or two, but those who got further into the task were rewarded with a good convergence and some good flying.



In the end we had a contest, we had fun with great camaraderie. A HUGE THANK YOU to all the volunteers for your help and support. Without you, we pilots would not get off the ground. Another HUGE THANK YOU is to Trev Terry for his support in sponsorship. Thank you all.

The next Central Plateau Soaring Competition will be in November this year.

Champions

Open Class

- 1st – XB - Brett Hunter 2,372pts
- 2nd – DK - Tony Van Dyk 2,182pts
- 3rd – HW - Jason Shields 1,807pts

Racing Class

- 1st – OZ - Anton Lawrence 1,474pts
- 2nd – ZD - David Moody 1,349pts
- 3rd – NM - Trace Austin 1,280pts

Wee Terra Firma Tales...

Each gliding competition has its own nuisances, in varying and entertaining guises however, there is a common theme driven by the earth's inextricable pull - **the probable land out**. Most occur with glee, wee, relief and embellish for years later, unfortunately a few have regretful outcomes - all offer learnings.

Club Class able comp director Hugh, along with others in the movement, have noticed a trend amongst NI pilots, i.e. their somewhat lesser ability to safely land out without damage.

Such prompted a new prize for the safest land out during the comp, no less a bottle Alfa Domus (pilot) wine, maybe to sharpen the mind and tales, a prize akin to winning the day!

Is it easier to prestigiously win the day or out land out? What are the chances this soggy season?



The inevitable arrived, a fine but weak thermal day, wind chopped thermals and a task set. The field contestants were off out west toward Mangakino then back up the valley around the chimney and home. Ordinarily easy with a good cloud base, ok lift and short enough too. Out in front was Anton in OS, chased by Trace in NM and Peter in YT. Initial climbs were ho-hum but the intrepid trio pushed on to Tram Road's basin where only OS made a skinny exit, going on to win the day. NM and YT became marooned below the crater rim so landed out within a few Km's of each other near the infamous section of SH1 in constant repair.



Both selected hay paddocks into wind, YT's with humps, an added bonus of promoting gliding to keen farm hands. Good with machines and likely YG members for us to follow up with.

Peter had the necessary details to meet the Landout comp conditions; safe, into wind, uphill, farm and owner details, photo of approach and coordinates, equals wine!

Martin and another Peter to the rescue with preference given to NM given it was closer to Taupo. Wrong trailer though and that's happen before too.

As the comp progressed so did the weak conditions on all but one great thermal and convergence day did arrive with much joy to Kawerau, Tarawera and out west a bit. Could have the LO that day by others?

On the other weak days YT made it to a long most desirable but shitty cow paddock on Forest Road, near Mokai, whilst on a free fly over the CFI's Oranui ranch to check to lay of their recent acquisition.

Orakei Korako presented another humpty hay paddock - chosen by YT whilst being chased down by NM, near the invisible Orakei K airstrip – luckily NM got away from circuit height on a whiff of a dairy shed at milking.

Neil Dunn, our flat land Aussie tow pilot, came to YT's rescue. Neil was most taken by the rugged remoteness, not far from CP's bar, which was keen to get to.

Preparation and practice is critical, as even the best paddocks and airstrip carry elements of risk; wind direction, gradient, trees, wires, fences, undulations, stock, crops and hidden objects. Of YT's three CP Comp land outs one was really ideal, the two hay paddocks weren't so due to ground shape, they appeared flatter, even from a 1000ft.



NZGA's training notes are well worth review, BFR questions are likely and short field practice on every landing benefits the pilot too.

In all another enjoyable, well directed and catered Taupo comp. May next season's be uplifting, with many happy landings.

Parachutes

Parachutes for glider/sailplane use. I am a parachute rigger, based in Taupo. As parachute riggers, we don't get to rub shoulders with the glider pilot fraternity often. Usually about once a year when you folks need your parachutes packed.

We are seeing increasingly aging equipment (much like ourselves!). There are a few considerations that I'd really like to be taken into account:

- Calendar limit: some manufacturers put a life limit on their equipment, from date of manufacture. One relevant example is Parachutes Australia. They make a "Sлимпak", which is a popular model here in NZ. It has a limit of 20 years imposed on it.
- Common sense limit: There often is no official limit on a parachute system. This can create some ambiguity, when the decision now becomes subjective. Bear in mind that a parachute system is made of fabric, unlike your glider, that may be replaced, bit by bit, as long as the data plate is intact. Fabric degrades over time - we don't know EXACTLY how much. Personally, I'd rather not find out when I'm freshly in freefall after a midair collision! I don't wear a lot of 40-year old T-shirts, so why would I entrust my life to a 40 year old parachute? Opinions are like a@#seholes - everybody has one! Mine is that 20 years is probably a reasonable number for a parachute system, mandated or otherwise.



How they are treated bears massively on their condition, over any time period. If you leave them in the cockpit, in the sun when you're not flying, please put a tea towel, or similar, over it - the sun will destroy it very quickly. When you're done flying, please keep it in a bag, so it's safe from damage while you're in the clubhouse, refreshing yourself.

It's hard to justify the expense of a new parachute system. Please look at it like insurance - it's expensive and you really hope to never need it. But when/if you DO need it, it's bloody good to be well covered!

Regards Brad Rock, Master Parachute Rigger, Rockfall Rigging, Taupo

The Tubing Invariably Leaks

Its early morning on a very overcast day at Omaka. Light drizzle can be seen falling on the high hilltops and it just feels like it won't be long before it rains. Indeed, the forecast is for light rain after lunch.

On the field, two gliders have been pulled out of their trailers. Each canopy has been removed and stored out of the way with other bits of rigging kit and the usual dunnage that inhabits trailers. Power cables have been run out, instruments plugged in and three men are seen poking and prodding at this and that in tune with a continuous stream of technical mutterings. The fourth, the owner, is seen pacing up and down and wearing a track in the mown grass out of nervous anticipation and in abject fear of hearing the worst.

By mid-morning the owner's stress is alleviated and all three technicians stand back, cast knowing looks skyward and quickly move across to the second glider. They kneel beside the cockpit and become totally immersed in the mysteries of that they are seeing while discussing these with each other. For them the outside world beyond the cockpit has, for all intents and purposes, ceased to exist. Every now and then one or other would tentatively extend a hand forward, tweak something then quickly retract it. Usually, to the accompaniment of more collective technical mutterings. To the casual outside observer this little pantomime looked as if three grown men were seriously trying to evict an ensconced hedgehog.... and losing the fight.

Deep in concentration, none of those leaning into the cockpit heard a farmer's truck pull up. Nor did they hear the steady tread of the driver (the local *éminence gris* of gliding) as he approached. The first inkling that they were no longer alone was when a quiet voice, tinged with a tone of command, spoke.

"Somebody is in really big trouble...."

No reaction.

"with AIRWAYS".

Spines tensed, necks straightened, heads whipped up and three somewhat startled faces turned to the speaker.

"AIRWAYS want to know why Roger Rabbit [GRR, ed.] is in airspace without clearance and yo-yo-ing about at 19,000 feet".

Oh dear, "AIRWAYS". That's an authority to be ignored at your peril.

Unlike that other aviation lot, they don't ponce about with insincere smiles begging to be chummy mates with pilots. Nor do they dress up trivia to treat it like it's "man's work".

I mean to say, they simply don't have to. "AIRWAYS" has data screens and track plotters. Their records of individual flights cover ancient history, past history and near present history right up to present history. They even have predictive history to tell them what a pilot is about to do next before the pilot knows it himself. And all this quantitative stuff is recorded in an encoded data base: the ultimate goldmine for an incident investigator. So, an "inconvenient" six minutes of a

flight track record simply does not go “missing” with AIRWAYS. Ah, the penny dropped. The realisation dawned. Somebody had blundered. A hand carefully reached out and turned off the transponder. A second, flicked off the power switch as if to emphasise the point. “Sorry” was definitely not going to serve as a safe refuge for this one. Some serious grovelling was called for. `

The least experienced of the three was unanimously nominated group spokesman, given a crash course on mitigating circumstances, to wit; no break in the last 16 days, working 12 hours per day, pressing work load ques and oncoming rain. He was then sent off to a phone to consolidate his “negotiation” skills. You know it takes months for instrumentation engineers to deign to install and test ADSB systems in gliders. Mind you, it is little wonder because it strikes me that the relationship between these folk and gliders is on par with the relationship of the local vet to my sheep; they are to be avoided until there is absolutely no alternative, they are difficult, they are finicky, the tubing invariably leaks and they fight back.

MSC Grand Prix

With gliding competitions we have three formats, Racing tasks, AATs and recently we included Grand Prix racing. The GP format is the purest form of gliding competitions. It is simple, the first one home wins. The world Grand Prix is slightly different to our own as each contestant



has the same wing loading and therefore, each glider flies the same distance. As we can't all have the same wing loading our contest has varying distances to suit the glider's handicap. The higher performance glider will have to fly further than the lower performance glider. This makes it challenging but fair.

The start sees all gliders start at the same time, just like yacht racing, and the live tracking makes it interesting for observers. The finish will generally see a number of gliders racing one another to the finish line and there was no exception to this year GP in Matamata.

As with all contests the weather plays the major roll. The first day saw all the gliders lined up on the grid waiting patiently to see if the day's task was achievable. The first three gliders went up and the pilots' reports cloud base was 2000', so the day was scrubbed. Some pilots elected to go free flying.

Day two also had a low cloud base of 3000' but the start gate opened for each class and the race was on. The day proved to be challenging for all with a few landouts and engine starts. In both classes there was only a couple of minutes separating the first three.

Day three was a rest day, well a forced rest day as it was raining. Day four arrived and the task was south first to Putaruru then up north off the ridge, back to the south and home. The fastest way was to use the ridge but a number of pilots went up the middle. Day four also showed how cruel the penalties can be for doing something wrong or to miss a turnpoint.



Day five bloomed and a task was set. There was a bit of waiting around to see if the clouds would pop, and they did. Conditions were difficult and a lot of low saves were rewarded by getting around.

Day six proved to be another challenging day. Cloud base wasn't all that high and the task was down to Tokoroa, Arapuni dam, Waitoa and back to the field. There more low saves and a few disappointed pilots. The leader board was very close and the trophy was up for grabs between a number of pilots. In Class A, Brett Hunter was on 27pts, Tony Van Dyk on 26pts and Jason Shields on 24pyts. Class B saw Phil Rees on 28pts, Steve Care on 27pts and Anton Lawrence on 26pts. Bring on day seven.



Day seven, final day. The day dawned with a bright sun shining through a reasonably foggy valley which quickly burnt off. Everyone was expecting a ridge day for the final race as a westerly breeze was expected. A ridge day it was. Although not a strong day, the ridge was working and two separate task were set. Once again there were landouts and motor starts but an enjoyable day was had all. And of course, there would be only one winner from each class and they were:.....

Champions

Class A

1st - Brett Hunter 35Pts
2nd - Tony Van Dyk 28Pts
3rd - Jason Shields 23Pts

Class B

1st - Anton Lawrence 36Pts
2nd - Steve Care 35Pts
3rd - Phil Rees 33Pts

In the end, we had a successful Grand Prix and those pilots that flew in the contest all agree that it is a great format and everyone is looking forward to next year's event.

New Members

We would to welcome to the club the flowing new members:

- John Bruce Thomson
- Zane Waenga Zwaenga
- Gerard Te Heu Heu
- Peter Lynch
- Erich Schleifer

PICS



Tim's Hang Glider



Steve Foreman's flights Taupo & Matamata



Club's New Swimming Pool



Maybe not ducks, but close



This is a wedding ceremony at the club. They flew in got married and flew out



Storm Damage



Bill's Handiwork





**THIS POST HAS
BEEN REMOVED
INCASE IT
CAUSES A FENCE**

