

THE FLYPAPER

March 2007

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From The Presidents Cockpit

Since November last I have had the opportunity to visit and talk with members of a number of Gliding Clubs from throughout the North Island. What strikes me is how fortunate we are as a club. Not just with our facilities, and certainly there are better club fleets about, but with the good will, both to the club and between members of our club.

Gliding is an activity which depends on mutual co-operation between members. As a voluntary organisation there is only the good will of others that will get you towed, rigged, retrieved, the maintenance done, the club run, the politics looked after and our interests promoted. The friendliness and mutual support offered at our club is exceptional, may it long stay that way.

Looking at my log book I have done 91 hours since the beginning of the Northern Regional championships in late November. There has been a lot of good flying available this summer, locally, and on our Club away trips. The Auckland Club had a great time at Matamata over the Christmas Camp. For those of you that missed it, you may like to think of spending some time next summer holidays flying at Matamata at the best soaring time of the year. However the soaring season is far from done. There is still time yet for some great flights.

I must confess that a lot of my hours were due to me taking Jan on a well deserved holiday (after working in the kitchen at the Competitions during February) to Waipukurau while I flew in the Central Districts Championships. It is just a real shame that she didn't get to see the shops or other attractions of the area, although she did get to see a lot of the back country, roads less travelled, and sheep stations. Oh well another time.

I would just like to thank those that have stepped forward to make the away trips a success. Malcolm, Steve, Phil, Rainer, Anna, Dennis, Les, Harold, Richard and a lot of others. There is always a danger of missing some people when you start naming those involved particularly when I was not there. Regardless we appreciate your efforts.

What a good lot of publicity we have enjoyed of late. Ritchie McCaw has been great for the sport, I hope he keeps at it, and well done Trevor for capitalising on it. Ahead is the big day up combined with the land out BBQ. Please try and avail yourselves of the opportunity to introduce our sport to those that have helped us and those that are interested in becoming glider pilots.

Looking back it is three months since the last Flypaper was published. Circumstances such as holidays and work demands have got in the way. Communication has been kept up through emails and the club web site. While there is good value in a news letter that sits on the coffee table and has a definite life, it can just as easily be out of date with the speed that things happen these days. The committee is going to try a weekly email that can include items that are pertinent from members and club executives and will include the weekend's roster. It will also be on the website. This is all in order to make things easier for the committee and more up to date for members. We may bundle this into a quarterly Flypaper. We know some are not on the internet. Do you have a friend who could give you an email address of your own on their computer? Failing all else I would print them off and post them to those involved if you gave me the stamped addressed envelopes. Copies will be available at the clubhouse.

I will be in Australia from just after the Big Day Up until 26th April. Dennis Cook will be stepping up to the plate in the meantime. I would love to come back and hear of some great soaring achievements before the summer is finally gone and the westerlies of equinox have passed us by.

Safe flying

Bill Mace

President

The twins on their way to Thames for the weekend

Photo from Alan Miller.



New Trial Flight Prices

Here's a reminder that trial flight prices have been reviewed. Also take note of the approximate duration, I've seen flights well over an hour which may be great for the instructor but not so good for everyone else.

The new trial flight prices are:

Tow Height	Approximate duration	Price
2000'	15-20 minutes	\$ 90
3000'	20-30 minutes	\$ 130
5000'	30-45 minutes	\$ 225

Existing vouchers will still be honoured without any additional charge.

Bar Talk and Boiling Frogs

Fifty feet above the ground and staggering towards the end of the runway at 48 knots but not accelerating – and I was thinking about boiling frogs and safety cultures!

It all started a couple of weeks before at the Sports Class Nationals. One of the tow planes was pretty underpowered and at the bar after flying that day I mentioned that my hand had been twitching near the release handle that morning. The discussion naturally turned to various towing incidents we had experienced over the years, and an interesting discussion followed about when and why different people had aborted an aerotow. It was an interesting discussion, very open, and I thought a great sign of a good safety culture where everyone felt free to share their experiences in a non-judgmental atmosphere.

In that discussion The Boiling Frog Syndrome was raised (whereby one just sits and watches things fall apart if events are unfolding gradually – just as supposedly a live frog will sit in a pan of water while it is raised to the boil as long as it occurs slowly), as were a number of parameters that different people monitor during a launch. One comment that really struck a chord about things that trigger a decision to abort was the observation “are we accelerating is a key feature for me... is the launch getting better or worse while I still have time to land ahead”.

Flash forward a couple of weeks: Launching behind Piako's mighty BZA, and watching the fence come up. PULL THE BUNG sprang to mind, so off we came, and we landed straight ahead short of the fence. I explained to the Trial Flight passenger that I had not been comfortable with the launch and so had pulled the bung. Though to be honest, I was feeling like a bit of a dip - until it turned out that the carb heat control was malfunctioning, and the launch had indeed been turning to custard. The lack of acceleration just before we got to the limit of landing straight ahead was enough to trigger the decision - I smiled and silently thanked a safety culture that enabled bar talk of boiling frogs and sharing different ways of monitoring a launch.

Trevor Atkins

Gossip and Stuff

≈ Congratulations go to Trevor Atkins for achieving his Gold height gain and the consequent Gold Badge.

≈ Congratulations also to Las Abeyewardene for his first solo and his A certificate, to Alan Miller who gained his winch rating and to Sefton Crandall for a four and a half hour thermal flight. Not too bad for someone who just went solo.

≈ We want you to put BZA to the south of the hangar instead of near the fuel pumps when we are readying the aircraft for the day's operation. This is to try and reduce damage to BZA that has occurred near the pumps and as BZA is fuelled at the **end** of the day there is no need to push her all the way over there. If you want an early tow then let the duty pilot and tow pilot know and arrange for BZA to be pushed to the north so she is not trapped behind the club gliders.

≈ We are on the look out for a replacement caravan, nothing too fancy and not too much required on the inside but one that is in better condition than the one we have. Give Bill Hewitt a call if you know of one.

≈ We have just set the charges for aerotow retrieves at \$4-00 per minute which is equivalent to the \$240 per hour recovery cost we budget for BZA and easy to calculate. The time is to be recorded by the tow pilot using the tacho time. This works out at 42 minutes (0.7 of an hour on the tacho) and \$168 for a retrieve from Tokoroa which was \$150 four years ago before the price of fuel increased. The time sheets will be amended to show this charge.

≈ Don't you get a big Flypaper when I wait 3 months to publish. If you are happy getting more frequent, even weekly, email updates we may end up with a quarterly newsletter. Let me know what you think.

Dennis

SPORTS/PW5 NATIONALS – PIAKO 2007

This is just a wee article about a wee flight (four bloody hours) I did in the back seat of a PW6 at Matamata. The story began with a late night phone call from Peter Miller, "Steve, Peter here, I've just been talking to Ralph Gore of the Piako Gliding Club and the upshot is I've booked you and Richard Arden to fly the Sports/PW5 Nationals in a PW6 with one Ian Finlayson" "Er thanks Peter but who's Ian Finlayson and what's this all mean?" "Ian's a great pilot, really nice guy and past winner of many NZ gliding titles, you would be flying a task with him and this would be of immense value to you in understanding cross country soaring".

Well I thought, I've only just gone solo in the club PW5 and cross country long distance (long time) flying hadn't yet registered on my horizon. I also had to consider my Woolworths/Warehouse bladder. "How long would a typical task take Peter?" "Probably two to maximum three hours". As it turned out Richard did five hours and I did four. Just as well the glider came equipped with the appropriate comfort device. Turned out neither of us need it though.

After much debate with myself on what I could learn from this idea I decided I should go as a lot of people had gone to a lot of trouble to make all of it possible. All I can say is I'm very glad I did go, I had a really good time, I met a lot new great and friendly people and learned a lot about cross country and competition flying. I can thoroughly recommend this to any glider pilot interested in starting out on a cross-country flying career. Many thanks to all those who had the foresight to set this up.

The Road Trip

Richard decided we should both go up together in his small 4 wheel drive. Pleasant journey and we managed to solve all of the problems of the Taranaki Gliding Club, Gliding NZ, Gliding in general and the war in Iraq.

I did offer and am sure the trip would have been more comfortable in my Holden.

Thanks anyway Richard.

Piako Club

The set up at Matamata is great. The people I met, competitors, helpers and organisers were friendly and helpful and this really went along way toward encouraging any future interest Richard or I may have in competition flying.



Matamata Grid

That Night (and every night)

My partner Deborah had warned him, I had warned him, friends had warned him.

“Don’t sleep with him”

Well what they actually meant was, Richard don’t sleep in the same room as Steve, he snores.

“Can’t be that bad.” said Richard. You will have to ask Richard if it was bad, as far as I know, I don’t snore as I cant hear it.

The Flight

demoralizing!) and generally was about to throw in the towel and go home with tail between my legs when the vario sparked up with 1-2 knots. What the heck, might as well try one more time, maybe if I was really lucky it would finally be late enough in the day for the convection to stop disrupting the wave.

I crawled back up to 6,500’, calling Christchurch on the way and explained the height gain attempt and promised I would clear her airspace once I got my Gold height gain. No problems, start with permission for not above 9500’. I was getting 1-2 knots up to 8,000’ in the secondary, and watching a strong primary develop... but it looked a bit high to get into, and the wind strength was only about 9knots. Odd! At 8,000’ I pushed forward hoping to get to the primary, and contacted lift which settled down at 2-3kts. Getting excited now, I requested 11,000’ and my favourite controller came back with an immediate clearance. Passing through 10,000’ I was into 5 knots and begging for clearance to 13,000. A short pause. Oh gawd nooooooooooooo.... “Cleared for 13,000”! Yesssssss! Without thinking I quipped “yippee” which earned me “unreadable, please read back clearance!”. By now I was hitting 8-10+knts and feeling pretty satisfied with life. The controller was watching me make excellent progress on radar and called up off her own bat and cleared me to 15,000’. I only needed 13,000’ to make my Gold gain of height, so took 13,500’ just to be safe and decided it was time to head home. It was highly unlikely the wave would get to Diamond height that night, I had been flying over 6 hours by now and was feeling a tad tired, and I really wanted to make good on my promise to give the controller her airspace back once I had my height gain. So very happily I floated back towards the clubhouse enjoying the evening sun and savouring a rather pleasant goodwill to all!

Thanks to Nelson Badger who said I could use his portable oxygen system anytime (now that is generosity!), and thanks to the unknown controller in Christchurch who really came to the party. She runs a very friendly and efficient sky!

Trevor Atkins

My thanks to Fin for the lesson and I hope to do it again with him, also I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Matamata on a well run Competition, last but not least Peter Miller for organizing this.

I have but one more request and that is Fin too put down his knowledge and experiences, I believe that he has such a wealth of the above that we would all benefit from them.

Rick Arden

Taranaki Gliding Club

Gold Height and it only took 6 hours!

During the Sports Class Nationals we had a day of strong Easterly conditions that were flyable locally, but no good for contest flying. The wave looked to be well in action so I pulled out JO with the intention of finishing off the last leg of my Gold Badge.

Bill Mace in RR and Aucklander Rob Smits in DX also decided the day was a goer and came flying. They got their call in first to ATC and when I called up for clearance was told to hold at 9,000'. Drat! A sense of déjà vu overcame me as one year before on a pumping wave day I got held by ATC and not released until the wave had collapsed.

Sure enough when ATC finally released me the wave had done its dash. Convection on the eastern side of the Kaimais was really disrupting wave propagation - though every now and then a puff of sea breeze on the coastal side would reduce convection and you could actually see a swathe of cold air cut through the tops of the cu's and then downwind the wave would form up. So I amused myself for 3 or 4 hours chasing these scraps but of course by the time I had climbed up to 8 or 9,000' the convection would have started again and the wave fallen apart.

Finally, after 5 hours of flying my day had completely fallen apart. I was back over the airfield at 5,000', been told to squawk 1300 (man was that

Eight sailplanes to launch and only one tow plane, cant start until 10 minutes after the last glider is released, well this meant we were in the air almost as long as my longest solo flight and we hadn't even started.

The task was a start at Walton (near the Matamata strip) first turn point was 47km north over the swamp at Kaihere, back over the swamp 20km to the second turn at Tirohia (near Paeroa) then down the Kaimai Range 51km to Te Poi then back 17km to finish at Matamata strip.

After the start (12.30) Ian headed straight for the swamp hoping to get good thermal activity near its edge, alas things weren't as good as expected and we were soon down to 900 to 1000' over the Wallace meat works and scratching for lift. It was great to observe an obviously seasoned thermal pilot working small developing thermals. I especially noted the calm, smooth and well balanced execution of the turns, always searching and consistently adjusting bank and drift while keeping a good look at the forming cloud above.

After a trying time at 1000' and hard intense concentration Ian soon had us on the side of Te Aroha and was heard to say "Well, two's better than one". We (I mean Ian) soon turned the 2000" into 2500' and we headed around Te Aroha and onto a sea breeze front that took us all the way to Kaihere. As an aside I don't think we got above 3500' the whole flight.

Unfortunately, due to our earlier troubles we were passed by two of the PW5s going the other way, having already been to the first turn point.

Never mind the aim here is to complete the task (it's not over till the weight challenged person sings) as you never know what may happen to others during the course of the day.

By the time we reached Kaihere the sea breeze front had retreated back out to the coast, but a good cloud middle swamp showed us the way direct back to the second turn point at Tirohia.

From Tirohia it was an easy (well easier than scratchy thermals) and fast run down the Kaimais to Te Poi, around Te Poi and an easy run home. Well that's what we thought!!!!

The wind speed had increased slightly and was enough to provide the fast run down the range but when we turned Te Poi and tried to make a direct run to Matamata things again went against us.

Not wanting to risk it Ian elected to turn back to the range and make the flight back up to Matamata using predictable thermals off the valleys of the range. All that I heard said was "I don't know it should be working

here” Alas that’s gliding and things weren’t working as well as would be expected, however we eventually worked our way back to home. By the time we finished I’d had my longest ever flight in a glider, I’d managed to avoid the other wee considerations, had very sore knees, a sore arse and a real need for a cold beer. I had also had one of my most memorable flights and had enjoyed the company of a great pilot.



What a relief, two's better than one

Conclusions

The upshot of all this is I’m amazed at the distance you can actually go in a PW5 if you try. Lots of things have been said about the PW5’s performance but if you’re all flying the same wing then it’s all down to pilot skill in the end. I think the idea of running a friendly games type competition atmosphere is bang on; it was nice to arrive and find a small and friendly crowd.

Clouds that are formed have often stopped working. (But there are no hard and fast rules.)

Everything looked good and then the Gods did it again and took away all the lift. So, we started scratching around once more and not being one to heed my own advice I made the comment at one point, when we were rather on the low side, that there was a landing strip just over there.

HUMPH

Was the only remark that came back, thought I did read into that comment volumes and decided that I should do what many a teacher in the past has said to me and that was shut up and learn.

Well, we scratched around some more and then Fin got a thermal off a cow shed and implement yard and up we went, all be it with a bit of work, then we headed back to where we had come from. At this point I thought, yes I know don’t, he’s going the wrong way!

But once again this was a lesson in patience and good thinking, because we went back too where we had found lift, picked up a heap more of height and then headed out towards Putaruru, we got about half way there and struck another thermal, of which I am sure Fin knew was waiting for us (though by this time I was of the opinion that he manufactured them by himself and really didn’t need them), we made a mad dash for the bottom end of the circle did a sharp about face and headed back. A thermal or two and we were back on the Kaimai’s and off home. Fin put the pedal to the metal and we were zipping along very nicely thank you. Past one chap on the top of the hills and reached out and shook his hand as we went by, then Fin radios in that we are on finals, this is obviously something that Matamata does, I look around for strip thinking oh boy to be able to straighten my legs will be oooooohhhhhh! So good. See field is still some way off but we are definitely on finals and here we come.

Flight time was about 4 hours 55 minutes approx. I think I learnt more in that time than I learnt at school. Now all I have to do is put it to use.

Fin says, you can get some good thermals off cows walking along the race.

And here I must admit I thought to myself, Yeah Right, and then I look down and think, Boy why don't I just shut up and listen. Because down below us was a herd of cows heading towards the shed for milking.

Lesson number four

Look for thermals anywhere. Stock on the move, Milking sheds, Implement yards, Ponds, Rivers, Factories, Towns, the list is just about endless. Don't just expect thermals to be under clouds.

Well in the hands of Fin we climbed up to 3000ft and off we went for Te Aroha, thermalled some more up to 3500approx and then headed down the Kaimai's for the Tokoroa turning circle. This for me was one of the high points of the flight for I have always wanted to soar down this range, and now next time I will do it on my own.

At about this time I also made another discovery about the PW6, if you are 185cm tall and have been sitting in the back seat for three hours you need to have great control over the pain you are by now feeling in your knees. But not being one to complain I just weathered on, boy what a hero. On the way down we did a couple of turns but most of the time we just went for it.
Great fun.

Upon arriving at about a point adjacent to Putaruru, the turning circle came up to just south of said township, we took a look at what we would have to do to get there. My immediate thought was, walk.

But by this time I was getting used to Fin pulling thermals out of nowhere and so off we went. We headed towards what I thought was a couple of wisps of stuff, you couldn't call them clouds and once again we were in some good lift. 5 knots or thereabouts.

Lesson number five.

I think that any new person new to competitions can find it a bit overwhelming to be faced with lots of fast ship gliders and top gun pilots. Having a top pilot provide their time, effort and impart their hard earned knowledge this way was great, it should be remembered that to run a successful competition both flying wise and financially you actually have to have competitors and that means encouraging (as Piako have done here) new pilots into the competition side of gliding.

Thank You.

Steve Barham

Taranaki Gliding Club

Flying With Fin (Ian Finlayson)

Confucius once said about learning; I hear and forget
I see and recall
I do and remember.

When Peter Miller rang me and said that all was organized for me to fly with Fin, I looked forward to it with great anticipation. Because I am one of those people who need to do it to remember it.

On the morning of the 31st January, we got the PW6 out and gave it the usual morning clean, DI, etc; and then went off to the morning briefing. Our task for the day was a max; of 309 kms, start line was Walton, then up to Maramarua, back down to Tokoroa and then home. The Maramarua end had a turning circle of 10kms with Maramarua at the top and the Tokoroa end had a turning circle of 20kms, Tokoroa in the middle. Piece of cake I thought, Yeah Right, considering that I hadn't flown more than 5kms from Stratford in any given direction. BUT I was flying with Fin and when Peter asked him what his plan was for the flight I waited with great anticipation for a lengthy briefing on how we, well actually that is Fin, would fly the course.

The reply; “Oh, says Fin, just go for it!!”

Lesson number one.

You can't plan what you can't see.

Hooking up the PW6 to the car, off we went down to the grid, we were in row 4, which gave us time too organize ourselves and get into the glider, it was at this stage that it dawned on me how much room there wasn't in the back seat, I wondered if Fin would consider swapping but thought better of it to ask.

Finally it was our turn and we were hooked up to the tow plane and off we went. Not a bad tow, I thought, Fin kept it reasonably straight and in a good position behind the tow plane, mind you, I didn't say anything to the Fin, thought keeping mouth shut and opinion to oneself was the best course of action. Now all we had to do was stay up here until the other gliders arrived, then hold on until the start gate opens and then start our task.

Hey man, this is easy. Yeah Right.

Well, off the tow plane we went and started thermalling, all went well for about 10 to 15 minutes and then the sky over developed and we were in the proverbial poo, but not to worry because our man Fin just kept on doing his thing and I learnt another lesson.

Lesson number two.

PATIENCE.

Of all the things I learnt that day this would have to be Number One.

Well, we got across the start line and off we went, I kept on thinking to myself, man, if only I could do this in the Taranaki.

It was about this time that I started to think about suggesting we change seats, as I couldn't feel my bum, oh, can I say that word? Oh hell why not? Can't spell the other one anyway, but since the passenger aisle was full I kept this suggestion to myself as well. I mean, since I couldn't feel my you know what, then it wasn't a problem.

It was something of a bit of an up and down trip up to the Swamp and this is where local knowledge takes over because Fin says, we always get good thermals over said swamp, and sure enough we did. Then a left turn and off to the Maramarua circle.

Looking down when we got to the hills before the turning point I saw another glider quite low and passed the remark that he could be in some trouble if he didn't pick up some height soon. Boy, should I have kept my mouth shut and opinion to myself. Because a short time later we weren't that flash ourselves.

Any way I get ahead of myself.

We went into the circle by about 5kms and then turned back, aiming to go over to Te Aroha, well that was the intention but the Gods had other ideas. Back to old faithful, the swamp, we went but this time it was not working so we just kept on going but headed towards Paeroa instead. It was closer and Fin thought that we would have a better chance of picking up a thermal there.

Lesson number three

Be positive, even when you can reach out and pick the daisies.

We were a bit short of Paeroa and down to about 800 feet, I was looking very seriously at several attractive paddocks, when from the front seat comes a rather laconic comment,

Hmm, some of those paddocks look pretty good down there.

Oh doggie doos thinks I, Steve my mate, will give me hell if we land out. But there is a good pub not far from here.

And then Fin starts doing his magic, we scratch a bit of lift off the ponds and river, never would have thought about using them, then we head towards the back of Paeroa and get a bit off lift of the town I guess, then he heads out towards the edge of the hills and I think to myself, another small lesson for me here, don't think, he is going in the wrong direction, when all of a sudden we cotton onto a good thermal and climbing at 4 to 6 knots.