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The Rather Late March- April Edition

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From The Presidents Cockpit.

People had really good flights all through March and April was quite good as well. Couple of badges were won, more new members joined than we had in a long time (more about both subjects elsewhere in this edition) and generally people having a good time around the airfield.

The summary of feedback about 'staying at home' over Easter was that it was a good idea – anybody feeling otherwise, please let somebody from the committee know to make sure that everybody can have a say. At the same time, though, the Piako Gliding Club needs also make sure that we keep in touch with other clubs, and we'll need to think about how we can do that as well. Good flights, some visitors, AAAAAWSOME dinner (Thanks Phil and crew!!), all round a good long weekend.

An other good event was the land-out BBQ on ANZAC day, good turnout, big thanks to David and Laurraine for organising it and big thanks also to everybody who turned up to help (more elsewhere).

Planning for the way ahead is moving forward, but it's probably still quite a way away from having anything formalised enough to talk about it here.

A winch motor is on the way and will be installed shortly, just in time for the winter months and lots of training and hopefully some good high launches as well. You might have noticed the alarm in the hanger, and shortly it will also be hooked-up to the outside world via a phone line, so PLEEEASE don't set it off!!.

The new trailer for the twins is now fully operational, Alistair Haigh has bought the old one, and so it will go shortly.

Also, the club now has an electronic data logger for badge flights, and hopefully everything should be down to routine shortly and the preparation for a badge flight should shortly be just as 'normal' as it was with a barograph.

You'll notice a few new signs around the airfield shortly, some are just for us, others are for all airfield users and we have carried our share.

We are in the process of getting a new web page, and are when you are logging in a little while you might notice a few changes.

So, summer is over, but the flying just goes on and on and on and...

See you at the airfield

Anna

C F I Bits N Pieces

New Members

I understand we have 10 new members join recently, and I would like to extend a very warm welcome. I hope you enjoy your training in our challenging but very rewarding sport

New Instructors.

Phil Smith and Nelson Badger have recently qualified as C Cat. Instructors and Alan Eccles has re-rated his D cat. A recent instructors course at Taupo.

Di's.

We have had a couple of maintenance type instances recently. If you are doing a DI and find something is not quite right, either get it fixed or ground the aircraft. Sometimes the pressure of time, a good flying day or a group wanting to fly can cloud our judgement on what is acceptable and what is not.

Wind Gradient.

Julian may have published an article in this flypaper on wind gradient and I would also like to touch on the subject.

It is one of the least understood yet potentially dangerous aspects of landing. It calls for extra judgement and the only way to develop that judgement is to make sure that you fly in a variety of wind conditions. We have pilots that only tend to fly in light wind conditions and others that fly on ridge days. This can lead to misjudging [over and under] the strength of the wind gradient. If you fly in light conditions and strike a windy day, be mindful of your limited experience in these conditions and 'closely' monitor your airspeed in the last 100ft or so of your landing. If you only fly on ridge days and strike light conditions, don't expect the same wind gradient you have become used to.

Easter

It was great to see four ridge days in a row, and good to see those making full use of the conditions

Medicals and BFR's.

I have recently sent some e-mail out regarding medicals. Remember, no medical, no solo flying. We need a copy.

The BFR is a form OPS 11 Flight Review. An endorsement in a logbook is not enough. No form, no BFR. You need to hold a copy and the club needs a copy. To get your BFR you need your logbook and medical.

GNZ Web Site.

There is a wealth of information available on the GNZ web site. www.glidering.co.nz
Huge resources are available for students and instructors including MOAP, advisor circulars etc. Another good site is the CAA site www.caa.govt.nz where many of our rules and regulations are shown.

Recent Badges

Dennis Cooke – Diamond height. Murray Pinkerton – Gold distance and Gold badge. Kevin White – Gold distance Bill Mace – Gold distance. Jacapo Detti – Silver height and Silver badge

Safe flying

Steve.

And from The Treasurer **Dept of treasury report**

Hi everyone

We have had a very good March with quite a few good soaring & good ridge days. We seem to have quite a few new members, welcome to our club. I hope you have had some enjoyable flights.

The Pawnee & Harold have been getting a good workout on Wednesdays, here are the March stats. 3rd 15 launches, 10th 20 launches, 17th no fly, 21st 24 launches, 31st 25 launches. Thanks Harold for your very quick towing turnaround & Mavis for you perfectly added & recorded duty pilot sheets...

The airfield had all the cars looking like we should get a valet parking attendant.

As for big wing Bill Mace getting away two Wednesdays in a row from 1000', then thermal flying for 3 hours for only \$17, the treasurer may have to deal to him....

Happy & safe flying
Murray

And Quick Note from the Secretary

Two requests from the Secretary

1. New members

The Club rules require that applicants for membership complete an application Form, and that a subscription payment accompanies the form. We are delighted that A number of new members have been signed up recently, but in several cases the Club has received a form and no subscription. This wastes time for the Treasurer, and until a subscription has been paid the validity of the Membership is doubtful. So if you are taking an application form from a new member, please don't let them think the payment can be sorted out later. Make sure a subscription is Included.

2. By-laws

Many years ago, long before Robin and friends devised the booklet How We Do Things, the Club used to have both rules and by-laws. The Club rules are widely Available, but I have been unable to find a copy of the by-laws. Does anybody Know where the by-laws were kept, or perhaps even have a copy they could lend me?

Many thanks Chris

Important Announcement

DearGliderPilot

A situation has arisen at Omarama where the property owner at the Eastern end of the runway has applied for Resource Consent to subdivide his land into at least 21 small life style blocks.

If this subdivision were to proceed we see the inevitable noise complaints as a threat, possibly leading to restricting or even shutting down our airfield operations. We are also concerned about the safety issues of having buildings, trees and people immediately off the end of the runway. This area needs to be kept clear for a potential undershoot, overshoot or emergency landing resulting from a power failure on take off.

We would request that you help Omarama Airfield Limited and its owners, the **Omarama Soaring Centre** (the gliding clubs) and the Waitaki District Council, by making a submission opposing this application. We hope that if there is enough opposing submissions the application will be turned down and we can continue with our operations safely and without complaints.

The attached PDF files have a copy of the notice in the newspaper, the subdivision plan, a plan of the airfield boundary showing the triangle to be subdivided off the Eastern end of the runway and lastly a two-page submission form.

[Submission forms were too big in space to be included in this newsletter. Please contact the email address Ed]

To secure the future of the Omarama Airfield we ask that you complete the two-page submission form and send a copy to each of.

The Waitaki District Council
Private Bag 50058
Oamaru.

Prohibition Properties Ltd.

C/o Loe Pearce and Associates
182 Main North Rd

Christchurch 5

If I can be of any assistance to you or supply any further information, mail me on morganjones@xtra.co.nz

The dead line for the submissions to be received at the council is 10th May 2004, so can you please fill out the form and post them now!!

Thank you for your help

Terry Jones

On behalf of the Omarama Soaring Centre and the Omarama Airfield.

Footnote.

It is in all our interests to support the Omarama Soaring Centre on this issue. Reflect a little to how our operations would suffer if a similar proposal were ever instigated at our airfield here at Matamata

So please respond. They badly need every ones support on this one. Ed

The Public Notice Board

If anyone is interested in forming a syndicate in a motor glider or similar, I am in the early stages of looking around at what is available. It would probably be operated from the Hamilton area, but very flexible. Give me a ring (if it happens I will have a 1/2 share available in my DG 101)

Murray 8463328

Murray & Kathryn Pinkerton

14 Silhouette Way

Western Heights

HAMILTON

Recent Happenings

Welcome new members. **Ron Courtney, Ray Bucknel, Chris Batten, Paul Castle, Benjamin Knyvett, Charl Marais, Andro Marais, Geoffrey Sutton, Roger Van der Zanden.**

Nelson Badger seems to have followed the examples of some other well-known adventurers by landing out in the wilderness at the back of Putaruru. Must be a story there somewhere?

The new hanger alarm obviously works very well as **Gordon Scholes** found out one morning as he unrepentantly opened the hanger door to start his day of instructing.

The clubs new GPS logger has arrived.

The ever-persistent Murray Pinkerton has this time got all his recording gear actually recording, and re flew **once again** his 300 quadrilateral tasks to officially claim his 300 km., which now completes his Gold badge. Great stuff **Murray**

The rumour mill is in overdrive with the suggestion that ex long time member **John Shuttleworth** may be coming back to the Piako family complete with a glider. We may need to watch this space.

24th March saw a very big day of Wednesday flying with over a full page of time sheets being filled. At one point there were some 21 cars parked about the launch point. Caravan.

Dave Reed and **Domonic Stevens** have now converted on to the PW5 SN

The Easter break saw Auckland Aviation Sports club from Whenuapai, arrived for an Easter camp with Piako. The weather was kind and a lot of flying was achieved. Unfortunately they had to leave their tow plane behind with a fuel tank leak.

Another Easter visitor was The Auckland ATCs Motor Faulke. appropriately registered as GOD. **Julian Mason** was in charge of this a/c doing a great job flying with some of the members doing paddock landing training sessions with them. This a/c being ideal in so far one can keep repeating the exercises or choose a variety of different paddock scenarios.

Members who took part flying GOD were **Cameron Wine, Allan Scott, Alex Milligan, Dave Reed, Domonic Stevens Dennis Cooke.**

Phil Smith Jnr has truly hidden talents it seems as according to the full house of hungry people that turned up to his Easter Curry meal that he produced for the Easter Camp. In one word - Superb.

Cameron Wine and Mark Dryson have both now converted into Std Astir NI.

Tauranga Gliding Club celebrates its 50th jubilee on 15 – 16th May they have invited Piako members to come along for the festivities.

Godfrey Larson had a great flight in his Libelle IB recently it was reported. Really great to see this talent back in the air again.

Recently reported in ‘The Tool Shed’ newsletter. ‘Congratulations to **Dave and Lorraine Qualtrough** as they have won a brand new Masport lawn mower as a prize when they recently purchased a cordless line trimmer.’ [He may wish to try it out around all of our hangers eh?]

The Annual Land Out BBQ was a great success with some 80 farming guests attending. Obviously the sign of a bad soaring season. Great to see a good number of club members helping out there. And it also great thanks to **David and Lorraine Qualtrough** for organising yet another ‘great one ‘

Stop the Press. Yes it is true it seems. **John Shuttleworth** is in fact back, and with NC the Standard Cirrus, which was Auckland, based for many years.

Congratulations to Kevin White for completing his 300km Goal flight

And its also congratulations to Dennis Cooke for gaining his Diamond height with a flight to some 20,000ft in the big wave recently.

Burglars have again struck the airfield and this time removed the wheels from at least four glider trailers that were in the trailer park. The only good news was the fact all the trailers involved were built around the late 60s –early 70s and if you are really into Morris Oxford or wheels of that vintage then good luck. The Matamata police have been notified.

The Land Out BBQ

What a great turn out. Farmers came from all over. Some brought their entire [extended] families, all had a good time despite some rain, talked, renewed their acquaintance with each other, took some flights, had a bite to eat.

Probably, about 60-90 came, hard to say as there was a constant coming and going, some were hanging around the caravan, others around the gliders, the BBQ, inside the club house and the hanger. They were everywhere. Most visitors appeared to know each other, so their networking amongst each other probably contributed a lot to the turn out. Some of them even met their pilots and took the opportunity to get to know them even better.

David and Lorraine Qualtrough had done a marvellous job of firstly writing about 70 letters to the farmers who had extended their hospitality to us by providing a suitable paddock for us to land in. Then, together with Bill Mace they phoned up to 2-3 days before the event to remind people that they were really welcome as well as confirming the numbers. When David found out how many were planning to make their way over to the airfield, he called for re- enforcements to make sure we had enough people around the airfield to ensure a good day was had by everyone. Thanks crew for turning up, making people feel welcome, talking to them about gliding, and all the many other things required to help with the BBQ.

About 20 visitors took the opportunity to get into the air, and I would not be surprised if some of them come back for a second bite, and who knows, some may even join. The others definitely learned a lot about gliding and generally had a great family day out.

This was the seventh Land Out BBQ that David has arranged since 97, so he has had some practise by now. He said that this was probably the biggest one we have had.

Things that we could do better next time? Nothing on the organisational side, that was an excellent effort. But, maybe the club members could support the effort a little more. Could be by filling out a land out slip [with sufficient info and readable]. Another actually turning up to the event itself. Remember whenever we land out we are not only trespassing but have possibly inadvertently disrupted their day. This free BBQ is the only way that the club, on your behalf can really thank them and in some way repay their hospitality that was no doubt offered to yourself.

In summary, the best and biggest land Out BBQ so far. Thanks team!!

Anna

The Personal Confession Column

Be our guest and get it off your chest

Newsletter Editor, subject FOD (Foreign Object Damage)

Dear Sir,

The enclosed plastic clothes peg was lying under the front rudder pedals of PC when it was D.I.ed on a recent Sunday. The peg was removed of course. So what you ask? No problem when flying straight & level or in medium turns.

Picture yourself at 2500' flying between thermals when the instructor says, would you like to do a loop? Yes, fine you say.

You do a HASEL check, down with the nose then up you go to be inverted at the top. Then the peg drops into the rudder pedal mechanism. You finish the straight loop then with the stick, bank to the left to start a tight turn. Banks ok but 'oh shit' here we are with 50 degrees of turn & no rudder to balance it up, you take the bank off & it slips & skids all over the sky. Suddenly you both realise you have to fly PC back to the field on bank (roll) & pitch control.

With shallow banked turns & good pitch control you make it back after your mayday call & scorched undies.

Many have been killed in all types of aircraft through F.O.D. damage.

This article written by **Stu. Rogerson** after finding the peg in PC on 28th March.

ps a similar thing happened to me at Raglan, a \$1 coin had fallen out of a passengers pocket & found on the front floor of PC

Same story as above, or could be worse by somehow getting lodged in the elevator mechanism! Moral of the story, always check carefully!

M

A mini note from Colin Ross in response to Dennis Cooke's excellent article on the NZ Nationals

Strategy. *Obviously I don't know what strategy each pilot had but by looking at how they flew Each task but listening to the chat around the clubhouse I could make a pretty good guess.*

'This note in the flypaper reminded me of a comment once made by the late Ross Reid, one of our most determined and successful contest pilots. He had won a day in his KA6 and was asked to describe 'how he did it'. He replied. 'Stay high – Go fast'

I was also given the book by Dick Georgeson for Christmas 'The leading edge' A wonderful record of fascinating detail.- highly recommended.

Colin Ross

A mini report from your Committee

We now have a new Duty Pilot jacket for use at the launch point.

Two new quotes have been received to re engine the winch.

NI s elevator mod to be fitted shortly by Sailplane Services at Drury

Security system now fitted to the clubs hanger. The connection to the clubhouse to be laid shortly.

Some reinforcement adjustments are required to the new trailer

Aviation Full will now sell for \$1.40 litre.

BZA is due for an engine change in about 12 months time - based on current usage.

This and That

The club has a good stock of the GNZ video ‘Soaring. Your Sport for the new Millennium.’ These are free promotional give aways. Newer members are encouraged to take one and pass onto another person who may have shown interest in our sport. It is a very good video to view. . They are stored in the bar.

The club also has new stocks of the QGP manuals and Log Books.

Prices are – Log Book = \$14.50. QGP manual = \$32.00

These are sold to members at cost.

GNZ AGM set for Sunday June 13th in Wellington. . Members who may wish to attend can contact any committee members for full details.

GOD Visits Piako Gliding Club for Easter

I refer of course to the venerable Motor Falke Glider, OD, affectionately known as the Motor Mouse.

As we currently have an enthusiastic bunch of near QGP Pilots and the Committee had decided to stay “at home” for Easter, Steve thought it would be a good idea to bring the Motor Mouse down to Matamata for some paddock landing training.

The Motor Mouse is an ideal platform for such activities, as with careful manipulation of the throttle (and carb heat!), the performance can be set up to be quite similar to that of our two seaters and Club single seaters, with the exception that the spoilers in OD are not as effective as any of our “real” gliders.

With the generous co-operation of the Auckland ATC, OD was made available and on the Thursday before Easter, after a through DI, I lined up OD on the strip at Drury into a 15~20 knot northerly. OD & I sort of hovered off the ground after a very short take off roll and took the usual beating from the curl-over off the ridge and after crabbing into the wind through the Maramarua gap, it was a very quick trip to Matamata; 35 minutes from take-off to parking outside the hanger at Matamata. I was more than a little pleased that it was a 30 knot tail wind, as OD cruises at about 70~75 knots and it would have taken all day if the wind had been a Southerly! I think the trip used about 6 litres of fuel! Les was of course on hand to help put OD in the Club hanger and I settled in to wait for my wife to arrive in the campervan from Auckland the slow way!

As is often the case around the autumn equinox, the wind was predominantly South Westerly for all of Easter. This made for some interesting paddock selections, as most of the farms in the Matamata area are laid out North-South, with few good-sized paddocks going East-West. It also made getting off the ground in the strong cross-wind a bit of a challenge for the Mouse, which is not over endowed with power at the best of times!

So the general pattern of the flights was a briefing followed by a climb out towards the ridge and at around 2000 feet, reduce the engine power to 1500 RPM and let the Student select and shoot an approach on the chosen paddock. This is always a period of intense concentration for the PIC, as not only does the aircraft and engine handling need to be watched, but also of course, the chosen paddock, with particular attention to any obstacles on approach and even more attention to making sure the exit is also clear of trees and other obstructions, given the rather leisurely rate of climb! Other things such as not scaring cows, horses or people need to be considered as well.

I was very impressed with all of our Students. Given that for most of them, it was their first flight in a low performance powered aircraft and for all but one, their first flight on type, they all did an exceptional job. A couple of things did show up, as they tend to do and I make the following observations that could perhaps apply to everyone faced with a paddock landing:

- Choose the paddock as early as possible. Always have in mind an area for landing, no matter what altitude and as you get closer to the ground, making the decision to land early enough to plan and execute a proper circuit, exactly the same way that you do on the airfield.

- Don't forget the pre-landing checks! Loose straps can change a minor collision into a major injury and doing the check also ensures you have identified the airbrakes and put down the undercarriage.
- On windy days, be prepared for the gradient. What was experienced over Easter was much more pronounced and severe than occurs on the airfield and of course is the reason for the formula: stall speed +10 + ½ wind speed. Undershooting on approach is always going to be more serious than hitting the far fence at a much lower speed.

At the end of a very sociable Easter, I had to fly OD back to Drury. Easter Monday weather was not very promising with strong South Westerlies and frequent showers. After waiting around and talking to Dennis (who later on in the day got his Diamond height gain!) who was on the ridge, I departed after another large squall had passed through. The original idea was to fly up the ridge to Thames and head directly into wind to Drury, but it was pretty obvious once I was airborne that the showers were too frequent to try ridge soaring. I flew pretty much up the middle of the valley and it became apparent that I wasn't going to outrun another horizon-to-horizon squall, so I turned down wind and landed at my old home airfield, Thames. It was great to pass the time talking to one of my first instructors, Revell Stuart and to note that the gliding is starting to flourish again at Thames.

I spoke to Roger Brown at his home in Auckland and Roger jumped in his car to go and check out the weather from a good high spot. (Thanks, Roger. What would we do without cell phones?) Roger gave me an encouraging report so it was off again, directly into wind and staying around 1500 feet to avoid the worst of the headwind. I could see another squall coming, but I could also see through it and decided to press on, directly over Miranda. The rain was reasonably heavy for a few seconds & I was busily trying to divert the drips of water flowing in from the vent away from the electrics. The squall passed and I was relieved to see all the way to the West Coast and it was just a matter of plugging away into the headwind and hoping that the engine kept going over the rather inhospitable Clevedon and Happy Valleys. It was a great feeling to see the quarry and to join downwind for the Drury strip after a combined flying time for the two flights of 80 minutes.

Julian

My 300k ridge flight, 900k's later...

My flight(s) have been reported to TSC, by one of their spies & I was contacted for an article. Here goes...

My goal this season was to fly a thermal diamond goal of 300k, this would have given me my 2nd Diamond & finished my gold badge in 1 flight.

However the weather had not been good enough. (I tried 3 times, the best I got was 200k) so a ridge task was the only way to finish off my gold.

Well, I did 3x 300k ridge flights; unfortunately I only have evidence of the last one!

Here's how it happened.

1, 4th October 03, I was very unorganised but the day was clear & windy, Bill Mace had declared a 300km so I thought I would give it go also. Off I went to the start at Kaimai road woolsheds for the 1st photo, using my flying hand for the photo & flying with my left hand, very strange, photo taken, I was off to Te Puru bridge, a very fast low level flight until North of Te Aroha to top up height & float back to the bowl at Paeroa. From here on it was thermals all the way to Te Puru .I got there at 4000' out over the sea then back to the Kaimai road for another photo, then Hikutai for the last photo, then back to the airfield.

I had done it, 3 hours 45 on task & turns out I had flown 326ks, I was elated, as the barograph had also recorded my flight. Bill landed a few minutes later also with a grin from ear to ear.

I was not very impressed the next day at the photo shop to find nothing on the negatives; apparently the film had slipped under the windy thingamy & not onto the turny whatchamacallit.

2, 25th Feb

Another really strong SW clear day was forecast for a Wednesday. I convinced Kevin White that flying is better than work & he came out too. We both did our declarations; OO etc & we were off.

I filled up with water ballast for the 1st time & the difference was incredible, it felt very smooth on the ridge & if you did a pull-up from 110knots it seemed to keep going up.

A slightly different course, start Kaimai road lookout – Windy point –BOP fertworks-Hikutai then back to the field.

Once again really fast & below the ridgeline til Te Aroha then slowed up for height & drifted to Paeroa bowl. Thermals to Windy point & the remainder of the flight were fairly straightforward.

My elation was short lived when I landed & downloaded the GPS to find I had missed windy point by 1 k !!! I had never been there before, but was sure it was the next corner from Thames. I guess my dead reckoning wasn't quite right! (One day all the GPS satellites will go off line during a comp & that will sort us all out!) You guessed it, I missed out on that one too ..., 3 hours 45 again, but still good fun, (I could have been at work instead...)

3

Wednesday 24th March, clear skies & a good SW breeze

I filled with water ballast again, launched & 16minutes later I was through the start. (Same course as No.2)

Another 100-knot blat to Te Aroha then to Paeroa bowl where the wind had dropped & the thermals didn't look good at all on track. I dropped all my water, as the climb wasn't great & scraped up to 3000'. I doodled along to windy point (now in the GPS), flew over it then 1 k past it to make sure! Took a photo & thought I would be landing at Thames. At 1500' I got a good climb behind the sawmill & got to 4000'

That got me back to Paeroa bowl, a slow climb then over the gap & got to go full noise again. At BOP fertworks I was going to give up as it was getting late (the 1st flight without daylight savings) & the wind was quite noticeably dropping off. I went to Te Aroha again to see what was ahead, no thermals left & everything had gone really smooth but still windy. I drifted along in 0 sink to the bowl & could only get to 2000, pushed onto Hikutai in the same conditions & got there about 1700. I was convinced I was going to land out now but flew back to the bowl as carefully as I could, picking up a really slow climb of 1 knot. It seemed to taper off at 2000' which wasn't enough to get back over the gap. I pushed out to the back of the gorge & got very smooth lift until I had about 2600 which was enough to clear behind the Tirohia gap.

Once past the power wires the climb was better, so around Te Aroha to the very steep cliffs just a couple of k's south into very smooths 5 knots. Next to a lenticular forming in the pressure, which I took up to, 4500' (it felt like it would have gone to 9000') but I wanted to get back.

Total time on task 3 hours 50 minutes (I'm getting slower!) the barograph was checked, papers signed & the next day the photos came out ok.

Well, a ridge 300k is probably easier than I thermal one, I tried both & was disappointed not to get the "real one", but it was my only option as the conditions haven't been good enough.

A 300k flight on the ridge shouldn't be labelled fools gold or an easy task. (My 3 tries were in very different conditions) ok, the fast blast up to Te Aroha is easy but beyond Paeroa you could be on the ground very quickly if you aren't careful.

Congratulations to Bill, Kevin & Dennis who got theirs in only 1 flight.

Thankyou Steve for your challenge on setting personal goals, in a flypaper last year, it encouraged me to stretch my own limits & I pass the challenge on to others, both new & old to set some goals beyond the MBZ. (A thermal flight to Walton golf course used to scare me! – & I once landed out in the PW5, opposite the main gate!)

As I write this I have just got my certificate & gold badge in the mail, yippee! The kids & cats are wondering what all the fuss is about. (I must admit I was still a little concerned as the camera had moved from the cross marks, as I wound the film during the flight)

My next goal is to complete my diamond badge 300k thermal, and then the one I am dreading, 500k's without a motor!! Then one day maybe a decent placing in the nationals.... now that will need practice! **Murray**

Easter at Matamata

This year we broke the tradition of taking the Pawnee and the two seaters to Taupo in favour of staying at home and encouraging members to get together. Although I would have liked to have seen more of the non-regulars turn up we still had a very good turnout and all the flying you could wish for. Personally I had a fantastic weekend and stayed over on Saturday and Sunday nights along with Gerald, Julian, Alex, and Murray Wardell from Auckland and about four or five people from Aviation Sports.

More than half of our members turned up during the weekend, which was great, and Phil (GK) Smith, with help from Shirley Finlayson and Phil's new lady, put on a fantastic curry meal on Saturday night that was enjoyed by more than thirty people. This was one of the highlights of the weekend for me and I'll be doing my best to keep Phil involved in this sort of thing in the future. He really is a great cook, a great host and a great organiser. The curries were fantastic.

The strong westerly winds meant that we could not do some of the things that I had hoped like landing on a spot after crossing a Toi Toi fence or gaining experience in double tows but the best ridge flying for months made up for this. Julian Mason also brought the Auckland ATC's Slingsby 'motor mouse' down and many people (including me) got the opportunity to practise paddock landings in a machine with 'go around' capabilities. This motor glider (GOD) is a great teaching tool for this sort of thing and I'd certainly like to do this at least once a year just to bring the reality of the difficulties of paddock selection, circuit planning and out landing back to mind. I am totally convinced that we need to have GOD visit us at least once a year to do circuit planning, paddock landing and ridge soaring training. If one of these ever comes up for sale I'd be very keen to get a syndicate together to get one based at Matamata.

Apart from the very good social side of the weekend and the very good turnout we had fantastic ridge soaring conditions. I flew to Thames and back on three of the four days along with many other pilots. On one day Steve Care, Ross Biggar and myself flew back from Thames to the radar dome in about half an hour then pushed out in a cloud street to Pairere near the Waikato River. At one stage I climbed in a thermal near Pohlen Road to 4,200 feet at a five-knot average and Ross and Steve Wallace were thermal ling over the Cambridge hills twenty kilometres away from the ridge. This is not unusual except that the prevailing wind was a thirty-knot westerly, which really indicates how good the soaring conditions were.

Just to top things off there was wave present on most days and on Monday I had the opportunity to follow Alan Eccles over the back, something I have been planning for a long time. Thank you very, very much Alan it was an absolutely awesome experience and possibly the high point of my gliding experience.

Dennis Cook

My First Wave Flight

On Easter Monday 2004 I achieved a goal that I had set myself almost a year ago, I set a milestone in place along life's journey and I set myself buzzing for a week. I had my first real wave experience, not the wave in front, not the wave behind the Cambridge hills but the Kaimai Westerly, the wave over the back! It was awesome, it was scary, it was beautiful, it was challenging, the wave demanded respect and discipline but it gave me so, so much.

I have flown in the so-called pressure wave in front of the Kaimais on many occasions, up to 10,000 feet. I have flown in the primary behind the Cambridge hills, climbing at six knots to 6,500 feet until ATC kicked me out because the controller "wasn't happy" (I complained about this but to no avail). I have climbed to 9,000 feet in front of Mt Te Aroha but I had never been 'over the back'. To me this is the real thing, the wave goes to at least 40,000 feet but we really don't know the limit because at the moment it exceeds our own limits.

I took a trial glider flight in 1982 with Ann Johnson and she told me about a record-breaking wave flight to some unbelievable height over the Kaimais. I still remember that flight with Ann in great detail (200 feet above the base of a CB in a huge upturned dish) and very much regret that it never convinced me to give up hang gliding and do the 'real thing' but the thought of Ann at 30,000+ feet has remained with me for more than twenty years. One day I'll be up there in the same sky that she was, records are there to be broken.

I'd prepared for my first wave flight for a long time, mostly in my mind but also in a more practical way. I'd set up my glider with navigation aids, an oxygen system was installed and tested, and I listened to the ATC radio traffic many times. I watched Dave Reid and Alan Eccles drop over the back and followed their progress for as long as I could. I considered all the things that could go wrong, I planned escape routes if they did, I practised emergency descents, I studied weather maps and satellite pictures, I read articles on the use of oxygen, I attended an oxygen training programme, I questioned and listened to Adrian Cable and Alan Eccles. I felt that I had done everything that I could apart from flying over the emergency landing areas although I had them plotted on my GPS.

I was ready!

I made a plan; wait for a good wave day, a day with good visibility and not too much cloud cover, a day that I could climb to 5,000 feet plus before committing to the jump over the back, a day when the wave was clearly visible and a day when Alan was prepared to lead the way. Easter Monday 2004 was the day!

Alan took off first and I followed about twenty minutes later. By the time I got to the ridge he was at 5,800 feet in pressure wave and climbing faster than me. I couldn't find the lift to get me up to where he was above the stratus and by the time I was at 5,800 he was at 8,000. I contacted

ATC to get a transponder code and clearance to 11,000 feet and tried to get up to Alan. I couldn't but then Steve Care gave me a call and guided me into the pressure wave. I soon climbed to 7,000 feet but the stratus closed in and I was forced to spiral back down to 5,600 feet into a rapidly diminishing hole back under the cloud. Luckily for me Alan was also forced to descend and we finally made visual contact. Alan then headed over the back towards Katikati, I did a 180 and followed him. Shit, where is he, I had lost him and I was doing 100 knots over the ground. I figured he must be going in a straight line so scanned the sky and soon found him. Watching the vario I soon knew that I was almost in the wave, going down at five knots instead of ten, so turned back into wind and went up at eight knots. For the first ten minutes I followed Alan like a shadow, adrenalin pumping and thinking about how high do I need to be to get back, is the oxygen system going to work, will ATC let me climb, can I make it into Tauranga, don't lose sight of Alan at all costs. After another few minutes though I was at 10,000 feet and asking for clearance to FL 150 and confident that I could make it to 20,000.

Alan had his own objectives and headed off towards Tokoroa giving me a final bit of advice to stay behind the high point for the best climb rate. I was now on my own. The vario was showing a climb rate averaging five knots. I kept monitoring the oxygen flow, the capacity of the cylinder, the clear sky towards Matamata and other escape routes, the GPS track and heading and my own sanity. I started doing mathematical calculations in my head to gauge whether I was suffering from lack of oxygen and due to my poor performance immediately increased the flow. I very soon came right and figured that I needed to climb to 17,800 feet to achieve a diamond height gain, (my low point was 1400 feet). Still 17,800 feet just didn't inspire me and I was almost there so decided that the goal was going to be 20,000 feet, a nice round figure that would be easy to remember and easy to say.

As I climbed at a slowly reducing rate towards my goal I looked down towards Rotorua, then down to Waihi Beach then down to Tauranga, across the Waikato almost totally covered in cloud. I was four miles high; it was fantastic, almost unbelievable. I want to do this again and again.

Watch the flow metre, watch the cylinder capacity, watch the escape routes, watch the GPS, and watch the compass. Finally I hit 20,000 feet, I called ATC then descended as fast as I safely could, peaking at 30 knots down with 90 knots airspeed, eventually bursting from the bright sunlight above the stratus into the dark and cold Waikato at five o'clock. My phone rang, Hi Ross. Definitely the flight of the year and probably the most exciting flight I have ever had.

Do this stuff wrong and you'll die, but do it right and it's a high point in your life.

Thank you Alan for giving me the confidence to accept the challenge.

Dennis Cook

(Wave Pilot)

Piako Gliding Club: Flying Roster March to May 2004

Day	Date	Tow pilot	Event	Instructor	Instructor	Duty Pilot
Sunday	29-Feb	McGregor		Care	Kunnemeyer	
Wednesday	3-Mar	Oates		Reisterer		
Saturday	6-Mar	Scholes		Shanks	Pryce	Reed
Sunday	7-Mar	Bowling		Gore	Mace	Hermann
Wednesday	10-Mar	Oates		Reisterer		
Saturday	13-Mar	Anderson		Care	Gore	Emmerton
Sunday	14-Mar	Carter		Care	Jeffrey	Larson
Wednesday	17-Mar	Oates		Reisterer		
Saturday	20-Mar	Nicholson		Mason	Milligan	Temple-Cox
Sunday	21-Mar	Hawes		Milligan	Gray	Scott
Wednesday	24-Mar	Oates		Reisterer		
Saturday	27-Mar	Harding		Britton	Kunnemeyer	Annabell
Sunday	28-Mar	McGregor		Scholes	Mace	Rodgerson
Wednesday	31-Mar	Oates		Reisterer		
Saturday	3-Apr	Nicholson		Shanks	Gray	Atkins
Sunday	4-Apr	Hawes		Davies	Pryce	Drayson
Wednesday	7-Apr	Oates		Reisterer		
Friday	9-Apr	Harding	Easter - Matamata	Britton	Kunnemeyer	Doerr
Saturday	10-Apr	Shanks	Easter - Matamata	Mason	Mace	Beale
Sunday	11-Apr	Bowling	Easter - Matamata	Brown	Gray	Sherrard
Monday	12-Apr	Davies	Easter - Matamata	Jeffrey	Gore	Taylor
Wednesday	14-Apr	Oates		Reisterer		
Saturday	17-Apr	Harding		Mason	Milligan	Cox
Sunday	18-Apr	Rowe		Milligan	Mace	Pinkerton
Wednesday	21-Apr	Oates		Reisterer		
Saturday	24-Apr	Petch		Gore	Pryce	Randrup
Sunday	25-Apr	Scholes	Anzac Day	Britton	Pryce	Thompson
Wednesday	28-Apr	Oates		Reisterer		
Saturday	1-May	Bowling		Care	Gore	Wyatt
Sunday	2-May	McGregor		Care	Jeffrey	Robinson
Wednesday	5-May	Oates		Reisterer		
Saturday	8-May	Rowe		Davies	Kunnemeyer	Chapman
Sunday	9-May	Carter		Britton	Gray	Falconer
Wednesday	12-May	Oates		Reisterer		
Saturday	15-May	Harding		Mason	Milligan	Hogg
Sunday	16-May	Anderson		Milligan	Pryce	Johnston
Wednesday	19-May	Oates		Reisterer		
Saturday	22-May	McGregor		Scholes	Mace	Money
Sunday	23-May	Davies		Jeffrey	Kunnemeyer	Thomas
Wednesday	26-May	Oates		Reisterer		
Saturday	29-May	Nicholson		Gore	Gray	Howell-Round
Sunday	30-May	Nicholson		Brown	Care	Hall

