

1909

The Boys & Girls  
**Bumper Christmas**  
Annual

**Amazing Stories!**

**Gripping Tales!**

**Fantastic Flights!**

**Christmas Reading!**

**Keep Reading!**



# KEEP SOARING

DECEMBER-JANUARY 2010

## WELCOME TO THE CHRISTMAS EDITION!

It's jam-packed with holiday reading from the comps through to the safari as well as the normal contributions from Geoff Neely, the President and our new CFI. Anyway, everyone else does a Christmas edition and why not us?

There's a lot going on up at the club between Christmas and the New Year and in the week following. It is always a busy time and normally has great weather. Last time I looked there was still accommodation available at the club. If this might get you in trouble with the Authorities, get a cheap flight back home for NYE and come back up to Keepit while they are still in recovery. Chances are, they won't even know you are gone.

I was away in Europe in November and missed the comps up at Lake Keepit. I did manage to read all of Jenny's blogs and see the results which Chris Carr managed to get onto the site about the time we had breakfast on that side of the world. This was more fun than most of the available reading matter in Amsterdam.

It appeared to be a cracking competition with what we would call typical Keepit weather almost every day with all days flyable. Well done whoever arranged that!

We also had typical weather on the 2009 edition of the Keepit Safari. No doubt conditions were balmy at Keepit, but we managed to find a headwind wherever we went on most days which did nothing to slow the enthusiasm or progress of this mighty event. You can read more about both these goings-on in this newsletter.

There's also news of a Regatta in February which is designed to get those of us who have less than stellar performance to soar cross country like Sky Gods. So that means most of us in the club then...

No doubt most of you will have already made a version of Mrs Bzik's Christmas cake and pudding and no doubt most of you are getting ready to stuff the turkey so the cooking items in this issue are quick and simple and can be done on Christmas even between glasses of wine, or as in Woitjec's case, large quantities of vodka.

*The Editor.*

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## DRUGS IN SPORT

### OR... DON'T TOUCH THAT WIFE!

The Court of Arbitration for Sport cleared French tennis player Richard Gasquet of doping and dismissed appeals by sports authorities for a tougher penalty.

"On a balance of probability, the CAS panel concluded that it was more likely than not that the player's contamination with cocaine resulted, as Gasquet always asserted, from kissing a woman in a nightclub in Miami on the day before the anti-doping test."

"It was impossible for the player, even when exercising the utmost caution, to know that in kissing a woman who he had met in a totally unsuspecting environment, he could be contaminated with cocaine," the statement added "It is très important for people sportif to only kiss someone that they know".

Large sections of the public are reportedly amazed at this decision and sporting bodies around the world are advising sportsmen and women to avoid kissing anything, even their long-time partners without either wearing suitable full-head protection such as a plastic bag or pre-kiss on-the-spot biochemical analysis.

However in another move, the maker of a well-known GPS tracker is now advertising their product and offering a way to combat this new threat to sports. The company has set up a website, [www.wifetracker.com](http://www.wifetracker.com) which offers real-time live tracking for those who are concerned about secret or undisclosed kissing by their partner. The company was quick to point out that the website name was not gender specific and the name stood for Worldwide Investigations of Follies and Errors. Oh yeah!

A straw poll of Australian sports identities revealed a lack of support for the device when used like this. Said one who refused to be named, "I don't need a tracker to find my wife. She is either at home or at the shopping mall."



## CFI-CARE

Please note that; CARE stands for Consistent Aviation Rigor and Excellence, at least until one of you can come up with a better explanation.

I challenge you-all to come up with a better one?

The best ones I will print in this column if I am allowed to write another. Anyway!!

**The way I see it my role as CFI is to lead our training team to enable;**

Safe flying with no damage to person or craft.

Training which allows members to keep improving their skills

Challenges to members to achieve more fun and advance their knowledge and skills

Advise on new procedures and practices.

So on Safety, I and all members should keep an eye out at all times for practices which need to be improved. I would like our club to achieve the highest level of a "learning organization" where we can all openly bring up concerns to advance our safety. Please report (by email to anybody on the Training Panel TP) anything you want looked at which could help. Then each T P meeting we will review all and we can all learn.

Two issues I want to mention here is:

In the Options portion of the CHAOTIC you must start with...

**If I have a launch failure I will;**

1. Establish a normal flying attitude.
2. Achieve safe speed near ground which is .....knots today...  
And point to it on ASI.
3. Then List the Options for landing places.

It all follows the basic principle Aviate, Navigate Communicate.

In your circuit planning ensure that you do not stay in too close and cramp the downwind leg. I have seen many making the turn onto base and final more difficult by being too close in on downwind.

Improving Skills. One good way to do this is to fly with other pilots after solo stage. Take the chance to do some advanced pilot training with our instructors or Coaches. Fly mutual with other pilots and exchange ideas. I know that I have learned many of my skills by this method.

**Advance your skills;**

When doing your New Year's goals consider what you want to do better at the end of 2010 that you can now, or what you want to do that you cannot do now. Then with the help of a Training Panel Member put in place a way to achieve this.

**New Procedures:**

Well we have the Glider Pilot Certificate (GPC) system in place and working now. So far we have approved 6 pilots for the new GPC. It costs \$20 and you end up with a nice GPC with your photo ID on.

This certificate includes all of the ABC certificates and some controlled airspace work and Independent operator. So maybe make this one of your goals for 2010. Talk to a TP Member for details. All student pilots are now trained on the GPC syllabus.

Safe flying

Ken Flower



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Well another year has almost come and gone! A big merry Christmas to all our members, and hopefully you have all been good boys and girls and Santa will be bring you new toys!

### NATIONALS COMPETITION

Well done on the whole team for an expertly run Club & Sports Class competition in November. A huge effort was put in by many of the team to ensure that event ran smoothly. Special thanks go to Dave Shorter for the organisation, Jenny Ganderton for the comp direction and Wendy Medicott for the excellent catering.

There were however, countless others who also lent a hand to ensure that all our visitors had an excellent comp experience. Thanks very much to all those who assisted, in what were some trying conditions. The response from our visitors was overwhelmingly positive! The pilots voted unanimously to come back again next year, so hopefully we will have the opportunity to run this again in 2010.

Running a competition like this, while taking a mammoth effort to organise and run, significantly helps to boost the bottom line of the club, so I would like to ask for any members who would be interested in assisting us in hosting the event in 2010 to let the Committee know. All this activity helps us to maintain your fees as low as possible, so please pitch in.

I managed to get out of Sydney to fly in the comps, also having the pleasure of piloting the club's new Duo Discus XT around the sky. With assistance from a variety of co-pilots, I managed to finish in 24th place in sports class (I know what you're thinking, and no, there were more than 24 entrants!), which I thought was pretty good for my first nationals in a new ship in which my first flight had only been the practice day of the comp.

Over the comp we had some really tough, windy blue days early causing a couple of technical outlandings which tested out the Duo's sustainer, but the conditions improved over the comp to the extent that we had several days on oxygen up to 14'000 feet. It was much cooler at that height than it was on the ground, with record temps in the 40's for most of the second week. Overall a fantastic two weeks of gliding.

### KEEPIT REGATTA

Last year we organised an event over Easter called the Keepit Regatta. However we found that many of our members had family commitments to attend. So for this year and onwards we have

brought the Regatta forwards to the last week of February. This year being Sunday 21st to Saturday 27th of February.

The basic idea is that the Regatta is a mentoring event where pilot pairs are scored together around an AAT task. So we match up early cross country pilots with a seasoned pro, and they compete together as a team, either in two gliders or in a twin. Only the slowest time of the pair is scored, so it is in the interest of the more experienced pilot to coach and assist right throughout the flight.

Coaching, team flying and mentoring are all encouraged at this event. Really, this is a great opportunity to introduce budding cross country pilots to competition type AAT flying, while not getting caught up in all the formal competition hoo-hah. It will be run in a low key and relaxed way, all the while making sure people have fun. We will be running information briefing sessions and having presentations from experienced pilots about all the tips and tricks they have learnt during their flying careers.

We have limited numbers to 30 gliders, and so far we have bookings from ten entrants. So if you are interested in a great week of flying, please drop me a note to register your interest. We need both more pilots to train, but also assistance from our members who are willing to be coaches and mentors for the week. All the information is up on the website including the entry form. This is shaping up to be a great week, and I seek support from members to help facilitate the week.

### CENTRAL COAST SC SUMMER CAMP

Early February this year will see the return of our friends from Central Coast Soaring Club for their annual summer camp. We are expecting 10-20 members to attend the camp and will be at Keepit from Saturday the 30th of January through to Sunday 7th of February. Please join the Committee and I in ensuring that all our visitors feel welcome. CCSC would welcome any of our members joining in with their activities during the week. Many of their members will be trying for badge flights, outlanding checks, tug endorsements and so forth. Overall it should be a great week to make some new friends.

Please have a safe and enjoyable you festive season, and see you at Keepit in the new year.

Tim Carr

## CHRISTMAS CAPTION COMPETITION



← Here's the new challenge.

Day 2 of the 2009 Keepit Safari. Most of the crew had been airborne for over 6 hours. The battery went flat on ZAB and Ray Tilley wisely decided to land at Walgett and get aerotowed to Lightning Ridge where the landing was into a 24 knot wind and the temperature on the ground was over 40 degrees.

There was a bum's rush for places to tie down the gliders, and several futile attempts were made to nail the gliders down in the concrete hard ground with a mixture of Screw-its, those things you use to screw dogs into the ground, circus tent pegs and a jeweller's hammer.

Following this, several plans were voiced by one or other of the pilots of ways to tie the gliders down to the available wires which were universally not understood by any of the other pilots.

So what is it that Ray has *really* said to Ian?

## LATE SPRING CAPTION COMP ANSWER

I think the rules have to be restated here.

Rule 1. There can only be one winner.

Rule 2. Inside knowledge from family members doesn't count.

Rule 3. The judges decision is final.

In this case, both Errol and Tim would have known of the long history of carpet slippers, wooden spoons and other kitchen utensils which a mother might use on a recalcitrant son.

They both would have instantly recognised the heirloom 1955 Sunbeam Handimix DeLuxe which Chris was using and it would not have been difficult to put one and one together.

So, no prize for Tim. Errol can get a free ride on the new quad bike any time he wants though, after masterminding the beautiful concrete plinth in my glider shed.





# KEEP SOARING

DECEMBER-JANUARY 2010

## MEMBER PROFILE

GEOFF NEELY

### AS FAR AWAY FROM IRELAND AS YOU CAN GET

Jim Hackett was born in Dublin. Following such notable examples as those of Frank McCourt and Francis DeGroot (who opened the Sydney Harbour bridge) he decided in 1974 to get as far away from Ireland as he could.

This was at a time when Ireland was still an ultra-conservative society and the population had never recovered to the pre-famine level. Since then Ireland has joined the European Union and with financial help from the EU it has developed a prosperous service economy whose people can afford to pay A\$11 for a beer in Dublin. People came home to work in Ireland, and village high streets became clogged by new cars.

With a history of Australian-born Irish sympathisers such as Tom Kenneally, 'Diamond Jim' McClelland and Ned Kelly (I am allowed to say this, I am three-eighths Irish myself) Jim expected Australia to be congenial. His first home, the ANU at Canberra where he gained a second Ph D – in microbiology – was not.

He says Canberra is not an organic Australian city. It struck him as a cold society with no history and no soul. Most Canberra residents were not born there and did not seem committed to the place. The Australian larrikanism he had expected was not in evidence in Canberra but he soon found it elsewhere.

Things changed altogether when he moved to Adelaide but his view of Adelaide is no doubt coloured by his having, as he puts it, met a beautiful woman... Maria is still with him.

The child Laela who charmed him in Adelaide has kept in touch and he is going to Adelaide soon to see her little son. Birdwatching is a major interest. He has sighted 7,000 species and this number puts him well up on the list of world birdwatchers.

*Jim's story can not be told better than in his own words so here it is:*

Jim Hackett was born in Dublin in 1952, and life proceeded uneventfully until his father died at age 40 years (from fast-acting leukemia) when Jim was aged 11 years, thus plunging the family (then of five children; Jim was the eldest) into strife. Nothing unusual in this; many Club members have had torrid youths.

Jim was fortunately of an academic bent, and proceeded on scholarships through high school and University, graduating with a BSc in Biochemistry in 1974. A Masters' degree in Dublin turned into a PhD, which posed a mild problem. Jim had already been accepted for a PhD program in the Australian National University (ANU) in Canberra, and the offer might have been withdrawn had he told Canberra he already had a PhD, so he decided to simply stay quiet (you can't have too many PhDs, really).

Thus, in 1974, a pallid Irishman came to the wide brown land, and graduated in 1978 from ANU. Canberra was cold, both climatically and emotionally, and Jim was glad to get to Adelaide (and a job in Adelaide University) in early 1979.

Emotionally, things changed dramatically. First, Jim lived in a shared house (the others were students/workers at University) and a small girl was shoved over to us once a week to be minded by a woman of the household because the child's mother worked nights as an usherette.

An odd child; ran out of a room when I came in. I soon learnt that Dad was absent; Mum in strife; and the child (Laela) was rather lost. However, she had a weakness for pizza, and liked to be carried. So I found myself with a daughter. Thirty-one years later, Laela and her partner Chris have presented me with a grandson, Max, who (aged 2 years) can burble "Poppy Jim" and who already has me wound around his little finger.

Shortly after finding Laela, there was this gorgeous woman in a folk club where she was accompanied by her brother Frank. That was Maria. We've been married for 26 years (was that 126?). She's great. Makes wing-covers. Feeds me. And that's only part of it!

A simple life in Adelaide beckoned. Jim joined the Balaklava Gliding Club (about 100 km N of Adelaide) soon after arrival. An all-volunteer weekend-only winch-launching outfit; they told the newbies that we would both learn to fly and drive the winch! Jim soloed in a Blanik, and progressed to ownership of Standard Libelle VH-GBK, which gave him 350 hours and many kilometres of pleasure (Jim has perhaps ten 300 km flights and two of 400 km-plus). A memorable day was when wave was present just off the winch drop-off; Jim released, trimmed back to the stall, and rose from 1,200 ft to 14,000 ft in ultra-calm air.

Another memory is when he outlanded 150 km N of the field. A very hot day. Maria drove through misery to reach him; the local cocky had invited Jim into his aircon lounge to spend a few hours watching a Test on TV. The young lad of the family insisted on sitting in a ditch watching the glider, tho' Jim told him it was going nowhere soon.

A final thought is the ascent to 16,000 ft on his first 300 km attempt (successful); Jim could see the whole task below. While at Balaklava, Jim was encouraged to get a Form 2 rating, which he did; he has number G1541 which, to his amusement, places him among the veterans.

In Adelaide, Jim became very interested in birding (as in seeing lots of different species and recording them). It became time to go overseas. Laela was 16, with a nice boyfriend, so surrogate Dad did not need to be there all the time.

On a birding trip to Malaysia with a mate he learnt of a new University in Hong Kong (HK) (while sharing a very tough steak dinner with the ex-Registrar in the caf at Taman Negara National Park). He fired off a CV and was ordered up to HK for an interview at 72 hours notice.

So, in 1992, the Hacketts forsook Australia temporarily, spent 13 years in the Colony, made masses of money (useful when it comes to purchase of an ASH 26E), and enjoyed themselves. Jim worked on typhoid fever (this is caused by a Salmonella bacterium; the only one to invade the body [through the gut]; it does this by making protein hairs termed "pili" that allow the bugs to form a phalanx prior to invasion; the body cannot resist a combined onslaught; there really is power in numbers).

The Hacketts got to travel a lot from HK, and the bird list (with additions from some later ex-Australia trips) now approaches 7,000 – Jim would be about #20 in the world.

HK is not for ever; Australia beckoned. Jim had become a proud citizen in 1983. Cairns was attractive; small-townish but with facilities like an airport and hospital. So, in 2006, the Hacketts settled there, in a nice house set in 10 acres of rainforest, with World Heritage reserve starting at the back fence.

It got a bit boring watching the trees grow, so Jim is now in the middle of a Law degree at the local University, and may, in future, defend those who torch your car when drunk! Tho' Jay (Anderson), a valuable club member, makes Negligence sound fascinating. Nowadays, the Hacketts commute from Cairns to Keepit for blocks of weeks, usually in the soaring season.

Aims? To fly 1,000 km. To get younger people into the club. To enjoy the Keepit experience.

## DO YOU NEED A HANGAR SPACE?

The LKSC Committee is seeking expressions of interest from members who wish to invest in a 1/4 share of a new hangar. The hangar proposed is the same as the last two built i.e. 18m x 24m, and is to be located uphill of the current two. We already have an approved DA and power/water to the site.

We currently have two parties who have noted their interest in taking up a space, and require two more in order to progress to construction. There will be 4 spaces in the hangar in total. Indicative costings are \$20k for the hangar and an optional \$5k for concrete floor.

## EXAM ANSWERS PART 1

What was Sir Walter Raleigh famous for?

He is a noted figure in history because he invented cigarettes and started a craze for Bicycles.

Name one of the early Romans' greatest achievements.

Learning to speak Latin.

# KEEPIT SAFARI 2009

## PIRATES... IN PRANES!



### **The 2009 edition of the Keepit Safari left Lake Keepit on Monday 9th en route to Narromine and the promise of a barbie put on by Beryl.**

The fleet was less than originally expected to being nearer to Christmas than usual and immediately after the comps. Ken Flower and Ross Edwards were in the Grob 109, Ray Tilley and Al Giles flew the new Duo Discuss. There were two self-launchers, Geoff Neely in his DG-400 and me, John Clark in a DG-808. The party was led and followed by the team leader Ian Barraclough in his Super Cub and on the ground, Geraldine Clark. She was a bit nervous about carrying half a dozen petrol containers so we decided to drop her call sign of "Safari Fireball", though the petrol smell still lingered.

My own departure from Keepit was interesting in that as soon as I reached for my camelback tube after take off, I found I sitting on it. I had been stowing the bladder in the tube beside the seat for oxygen cylinder, but since I was now carrying oxygen and had a second backup water bladder, I had not properly tested the plumbing for the new layout. As I pulled on the tube, the mouthpiece came off (it's only slip-on) and suddenly I was hosing water all over the inside of the cockpit and canopy. I stuck the tube in my mouth for the next hour until I had worked out a fix. Being somewhat over hydrated by then, I had to set up my "pilot relief" system and remembered that it had a clamp on the flushing line which fitted over the camelback tube nicely. But by then all the maps I had tucked under the 'chute were soaked and falling apart!

The Safari is a cooperative affair and there are no winners, except that on that first day, Geoff Neely clearly won the leg to Narromine. The day was difficult. A blue day into a headwind that measured

over 20 knots. Initially, some managed to get up to 13,500 but it was still very hot in the cockpit. Anyone who got on the eastern side of the Warrumbungles soon realised that this was a major bungle. Probably a rotor over the back of the range, quite likely under the conditions, caused massive sink over a very wide area which Geoff avoided by flying on the far side.

The Grob 109 was caught in sink so bad and so long that starting the motor would not have allowed the crew to climb out of the valley they were in, but they were saved by a low thermal. In a little over 20 minutes, the DG-808 went from 13,500 down to 4500' or around 2500' agl, well into the fear zone. Down low, the temperature in the cockpit was oppressive since it was in the mid 30s on the ground

Initially, the course was Keepit, Coonabarrabran, Coonamble and Narromine but most voted to shorten the course and skip Coonamble. Things were easier after Coonabarrabran, but still slow with most people barely averaging 60 kph.

Jenny Ganderton followed the Safari up to Coonabarrabran and then set out towards points north accompanied by radio calls of "Go Jenny, go!"... I guess nobody thought she would make it. In fact she appears to have made it but since most of the flight must have been downwind, her 450 km was regarded as just showing off.

Fortunately Geraldine was waiting for the Safari at Narromine with a bucket full of ice and cold beer which was downed well before the promised barbie. After this we all enjoyed some of Ken Flower's own red wine which made life bearable and eased the shock of the diesel air conditioners at the Narromine caravan park.



Meanwhile the young Joeyglide folk at Narromine were enjoying a game of night cricket to work off their excess energy after the day's 450 km task... Score 1 to the young folk.

Day 2 saw us leave Narromine early with a task to fly to Lightning Ridge and a grim forecast. An easy 300 km, unless you have a headwind of 20+ knots again. The course is approximately 340° and the wind was 295° and never below 20 knots. A front was visible over the Narromine strip as we took off and though it was possible to get a climb right off the strip up to 9000', the next thermal was a nervous 20 minutes later, a pattern which was repeated almost all day. The sink between thermals was epic, so much and so difficult to get out of that at one stage Ken in the Grob 109 was finding it difficult to stay up even when Volkswagen powered! We learned the Joeyglide people decided to call the day and not fly... Score 1 to the old folk.

As the day wore on, the front came through and what blue sky there had been was covered with strato cirrus and some odd lenticulars. Ian Barraclough radioed that you could "line up the lennies" and stay in lift, and this was true to a large extent. There were large energy bands, but these seemed outweighed by several much larger sink bands. Finally, by 4.30 the sky was completely grey on track and the ground almost completely shaded, except to the west where there were some "Golden Cumuli".

These clouds looked like towering CU and seemed to have bright sunlit fields under them. Maybe I was hallucinating. I got a slow climb to 9000' about 76 km from Lightning Ridge in a thermal so smooth and steady I don't think I moved for minutes. I was about 900' under final glide but I thought I would divert to the nearest Golden CU, get a seriously good climb and then overtake Ray Tilley who at that stage was the closest to Lightning Ridge, about 20km ahead of me. The bearing on these magical CU started at about 25° off track and in an amazing 30 minute glide under the leading edge of the front in very buoyant air where I hardly lost 300', the bearing to Lightning Ridge widened to 100° or worse... 6 hours in the air is my excuse (for a piss-poor 330 km of distance). I chucked in the towel and started the noise maker with a profound sense of defeat. For those of you who don't fly self-launchers, pressing the starter button is always accompanied by a sense of relief that the motor is actually running and an equal dose of shame for having done it!

10 km from Lightning Ridge, the strip appeared out of the gloom ahead. Lightning Ridge is a bizarre sight from the air, looking more like the surface of the moon than anything else. I lost some spare height over the diggings and joined the circuit. At that stage, the air temperature was a less than optimal 40° in the cockpit. The strip is interesting. A bit like a foreshortened version of Keepit or the top of a hot cross bun. The approach on 28 is quite uphill, then level with the taxi-way, it goes quite markedly downhill. Add to that a brisk 24 knot topsail breeze on the nose with a lot of rotor from the trees bordering the strip, Most of my landings on the uphill bit were OK but the downhill ones were not so special and landing-long took on a new meaning. Thank goodness the CFI (AKA See if I care) Ken Flower, was in the pool at the motel and I was the only witness.

As I dragged the glider off the strip, I heard Ian Barraclough radio in to say that he was 10 km out and inbound with a glider on tow. ZAB had run out of electricity and height and unwilling to attempt to start the sustainer, Ray Tilley had sensibly elected to land at Walgett. Ray's landing looked ace from a distance, but even he complained about the conditions and his performance. Need I say that Geoff Neely "won" day 2? He took off early and followed the rhumb line all the way, perhaps staying just ahead of the conditions the rest of us enjoyed. (Alternative excuses are more skill and experience of course!)

After tying the gliders down, and yes, the screw-its don't actually work in the concrete hard soil of Lightning Ridge, we got a lift to the caravan park. It was 8.30 and the temperature had cooled to a pleasant 39° and the early arrivers were cooling off in the pool over a few beers. After a shower which was almost too hot to bear (in Lightning Ridge, hot water comes out of the cold tap and only steam comes out of the hot tap) it was off to the bowling club for dinner.





Apparently they had been told to hold the kitchen open for “a group of Pirates” who were on their way. I guess Geoff Neely with his beard might be taken as a retired pirate... but Al Giles set them right. “Not Pirates. We fly pranes.”

What’s the average rainfall in Lightning Ridge? Probably about 1mm per year judging by the vegetation all around. Well, true to form, Ian Barraclough brought rain to dry ground again. We didn’t hear this rain falling since it would have been drowned out by the noise from the diesel airconditioners.



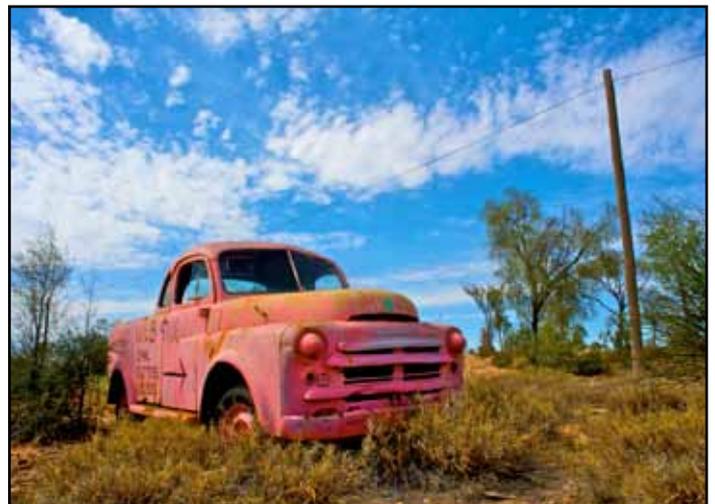
We woke on Wednesday to a horizon to horizon cloud cover in ToddAO... you remember... “When the sky is a bright canary yellow...”

With flying as we know it off the agenda there was a slight feeling of relief from pirates who had spent 6 or more hours lashed to the wheel the day before. Sure, 6 hours is not a record, but 6 hours under the conditions we had had the day before... 24 knots on the nose and almost complete cloud cover was too much like hard work. So we set about being tourists and booked a tour of the opal fields of Lightning Ridge.

Our tour guide was the real thing. Quick to explain that the Ridge was not a politically correct kind of place and that Wogs came from Italy and Serbs did not and were therefore not Wogs.

It is difficult to get a handle on a town where the suburbs appeared to be valued by what is dug from the ground rather than anything else. I suppose Lunatic Hill would have been one of the better suburbs, but like all the others it looked like the surface of the moon, riddled with holes and covered in slag heaps and wrecked cars.

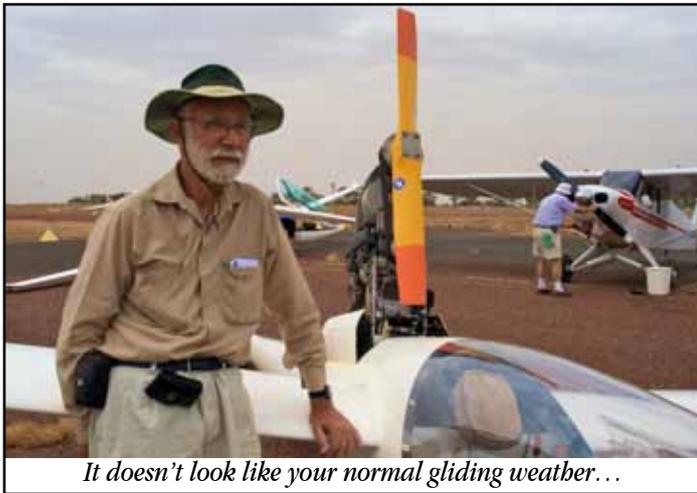
We discovered that the Ridge Bowlo was the second largest Bowlo in the Southern Hemisphere (Dapto may be bigger) but were surprised that it did not seem to have much of a focus on actual lawn bowls. Fortunately the meals were huge and cheap and we had dinner there every night. Probably there wasn’t anywhere else. Breakfast was at Chats internet café where Al Giles interpreted the weather over scrambled eggs and toast and we worked out where to go next.



On Thursday, the blipmaps looked promising... if you were a farmer. Cloud base at 4000’ and thermals of 0.5 knots. Everyone packed the tour vehicle and bussed out to the strip, washed rivers of red dirt off gliders and got ready to launch. Poor Ian B seemed keen to get going. Possibly to try and shake off the rainmaker spell! But the mumblings from pirates with less reliable or powerful engines got louder and louder until we abandoned the day again and went back into the Ridge.



It's amazing what you can find to do in a place like Lightning Ridge on a dull day. It's a great place for washing and drying, both clothes and canopy covers. There's shopping for rope for washing lines and tow-outs, lawn bowls for the active or sitting beside the pool warming a stubbie of beer. Paradise of a sort...



*It doesn't look like your normal gliding weather...*

By Friday the pressure was really on to get going. Some of the crew had cabin fever badly, possibly because they had their brains fried by cold showers in boiling water... brushing your teeth in something which smells like warm swamp water is a taste which is hard to get used to. There's no doubt that everyone was affected but probably Geraldine got it the worst.

The big event on Friday night at the Ridge was the much lauded visit of "Body Heat", a troupe of male strippers. Attempts to persuade her that they no doubt batted for the other team and probably already had enough women of a certain age who wanted to take "artistic" photographs of them fell on deaf ears. So on Friday, fly we must, to rescue her from a fate worse than a bad fête.

Though the day dawned relatively sunny, the blipmaps, the BOM forecast and the Air Services forecast were all at odds. Well, mainly they disagreed about the strength and direction of the headwind. The decision was taken to fly to Coonamble, an easy 185 km away which would be a reasonable starting point for the leg back to Keepit and with the wind behind us for the first time.

Once again the mud was squeegeed from the gliders and the tie-downs released with a quick check for opals in the tent peg holes. The forecast was not great. Perhaps 4 knots to 6000' with a 15+ knot wind which might be on the nose and a day which might end early. And this is summer!

The strip at Lightning Ridge is like a hot cross bun in that the two strips cross at the highest point and it looks decidedly sticky in places. There are two strips, one gravel and one bitumen and the gravel one pointed into the fairly fresh wind when we got out there. This looked like a bad option for the Duo Discuss in that the canopy could get damaged by the gravel on tow. If the two self launchers took off on the gravel strip, they could not see the action on the other strip and might not be able to radio.

In the end the wind dropped off in the middle of the day and everyone launched on the bitumen, downhill in the classic Keepit manner. First off was Geoff Neely who radioed in to say that the lift was a good 5 knots up to 6000'. Excellent news!

Second off was me in the DG-808. I don't relish cross wind take-offs in a self launcher after hearing some horror stories about power-on ground loops, but the wind was light and the take off was easy. However I climbed out to over 3500' in what felt like moderate sink. Just as ZAB and Ian B in the Super Cub were taking off, Geoff Neely radioed in to say gruffly.... "If you find a half a knot up, take it." BUMMER!





In fact, the day turned out to be fairly predictable. There were almost three decks of air separated by wind sheer of up to 70°. Ken Flower and Ross Edwards “chose” the lower level, from 2500’ to 4000’ and could not seem to get above this. Ray Tilley and Al Giles somehow used the upper level from 5200 to 7000’ and the rest of us used the bit in between from 3600’ to 5200’.

The track to Coonamble was cross wind and for once the wind was mainly less than 15 knots so the thermals were not too broken. There were strong bands of sink regularly interspersed with bands of moderate lift where you could dolphin fly and only circle if the lift was good... and if you got 4 knots up you were very happy. Normally this would have made me very nervous. As a rule I have a minimum working band between say 10,500’ and 11,000’ and feel uneasy about pushing this. However today the lift was where it was expected to be and though it was not strong or smooth, it always delivered a good climb when one was needed.

The leg took over three hours. As Ray Tilley pointed out, almost the stall speed of the Duo! And if it was won by anyone, it was won by the DG-808 since everyone else used their motors after launch. After nailing down the gliders outside the aero club, we went into town to the motel to find the most unusual things... cold water from a cold tap and air conditioners which were just noisy. Another great day of adventure flying!

The 2009 Safari Pirates seem to attract bowling clubs like rain because about the only place to eat in Coonamble was the local bowlo, just across the road from the good motel. Courtesy of Ken and Geraldine, we got together for a wine and cheese tasting on Ken’s bed in a motel room big enough for 20 and at least one of us was fairly lit up before dinner.

So when the only table free at the bowlo was right by the “band” the warning lights went on for anyone who has seen what happens when Geraldine gets the urge to do some “interpretive dancing”. Fortunately the band (all one of him) took a break for the chook raffle and the moment passed without an ugly incident.

Saturday morning dawned grey and cool... mainly because the view outside our motel windows was a huge tin shed which completely blocked the sky.

After looking at the real sky, it was clear that another band of dense high cloud was stretching from horizon to horizon right over the top of us and only a small strip either side was clear blue.

After getting a tailwheel tyre repaired (how can any workshop charge \$5 for 15 minutes of a man’s time is beyond me!) we drove out to the strip in ones and twos and on foot (Al’s size 15s.) to get the praners ready. By the time we were ready to leave, the northern hemisphere was entirely white and the southern was entirely blue. Which was fine since we were not going north.

The forecast was for booming 3-4 knot thermals up to 5,000’. Because of the Dread Pillager Scrub and the Cliffs of Insanity at the Warrumbungles in the way, we had elected to go via Coonabarrabran. The strip at Coonabarrabran is at 2,100’ so the flight was going to be well outside my personal working band in oxygen territory.

Once again, the thermals were small but perfectly formed... at least for some of us and there were very few nervous moments spent below 3500’ as we tracked across the flat plain from Coonamble until the feet of the Warrumbungles were reached. These are a very fine group of bungles which tower at least 17,000’ above the plain topped by the Siding Springs observatory and although climbing up and crossing looked attractive and would have shortend the course, it would undoubtedly have been scary. By this stage, Ken and Ross in the G109 were skirting around the dark green and Dread Pillager northern side of the bungles, VW powered while Geoff, Al and Ray and myself were semi-cooperatively working around the south side.

Geoff decided to try the band between the foothills and the plain. Ray and Al were suckered into following him until it was seen that the thermal he was using to climb was made by Rotax and he was going, like Lord Nelson, to “damn tactics! Go straight at them”.

I went south, and into thermal heaven. The rocks at the foothills must have been roasting since there were good thermals of 6-8 knots up to 7,000’ and more. The Duo glides like a dream but does not have the climb rate of the DG 808 (with +8 flaps at this stage) and it fell to the junior member of the team to mark the thermals for the grown-ups as we skirted around the foothills of the bungles. I don’t know how much height you would need to glide over them without a worry, but a lot more than we had, bearing in mind the sink hole in the downwind rotor (which Ken probably flew through!).



As we got nearer to Mullaley, the third stage of the flight began. By now the Duo and the 808 were regularly topping out at 8,000 and had final glide just after Mullaley. Justin Smith came out to join us from Keepit which caused some alarm...

We'd been hearing odd reports of smoke and from 10 km east of Coonabarrabran the sky started to look like Bangkok with a bromine-like haze everywhere. It was so dense by Mullaley that we were concerned that we would not even see Justin in Yankee Lima as he flew towards us. He finally appeared between Gunnedah and Mullaley, scratching the deck at about 6,000'.

Although the Safari, like me, is intensely uncompetitive in nature, I had planned to race Ray and Al to the finish so Justin was left friendless in the smoke. Geoff was home and in the shed by the time the 808 and the Duo were on the ground and Ken landed in a few moments later in the G109.

I finished what seemed like hours in front of the Duo but Ray claimed that they had launched 15 minutes later than me. (He would say that wouldn't he?) When I asked him for his flight time he said "3 hours 15 minutes..." stared at me for a while and then said "3 hours and 14 minutes". He must have been reading my log book.

So (until the protest committee finishes it's hearings) the day was provisionally won by Ray and Al in the Duo who probably

deserved it far more than me since I always had an iron thermal in the aircraft (as well as a printout from the engine log to prove it was not used after take off!)

So the Safari drew to a close on a fine note. This was undoubtedly the best day's flying. 220 km of very varied soaring from challenging to scenic to awesome. My DG-808 used less than 12 litres of fuel for the trip, and by that measure, I should have saved enough by 2042 to justify the cost of the glider. It's difficult to remove the batteries for charging, so I had to rely on the built-in solar cells for charging and they worked brilliantly. I was happy to see that at the end of the trip, it took only 10 minutes on the charger in my hangar before it switched to trickle.

For me, the Safari has been everything I expected. A challenge which took us all to places we had not expected to fly to and land at strips where normally only the big planes fly. We often flew in conditions where normally we would have been heading for home by the short route, but we still found thermals and stayed airborne. The shared experience of flying under these conditions built a great feeling between the Pirates who all flew their pranes very well.

Thanks to Ian Barraclough and Geraldine who made it possible... (even though one of them spent most of the nights adjusting the air-con). ***Vive le Safari!***



*Ray Tilley lost his hat. So he bought a new one in Lightning Ridge. It did not cost very much.*



*The Lightning Ridge Gliding Club Winch.*



*Ray and Al find a natural source of petrol.*



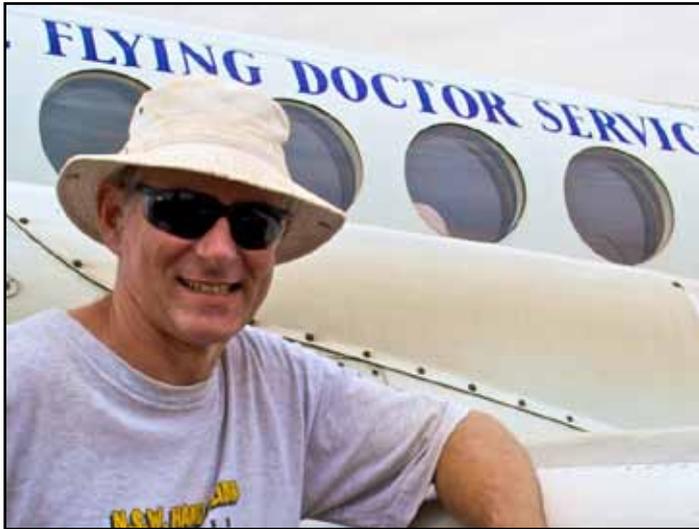
*Everyone has their own ideas about the weather.*



*Running out of steam, trying to whack pegs into concrete.*



# KEEP SNORING



## THE FLYING DOCTOR'S GUIDE TO COMMON MEDICAL DISORDERS.

**Patient Presenting Problem:** Patient complains of a rushing sound, variable in volume although constant in pitch, mingled with intermittent beeping noises, occasionally high pitched and brief but more commonly low pitched and sustained.

**Diagnosis:** this is tinnitus, defined as 'the hallucination of simple sounds', which also describes pilots' after-flight beer-fueled conversation.

**Note:** occasionally cicadas have been found to be the cause of apparent tinnitus, and also check that the patient is not getting God-like delusions of levitation as well as hallucinations.

There's an easy test to distinguish the soaring pilot from the genuine loony: loonies have clouding of consciousness with flight of ideas, whereas the pilot has ideas of flight with consciousness of clouds.

Of the two, the pilot is considerably the more dangerous to the population at large and should be immediately scheduled.

Medicare card please. *Ker-ching!*

*We are of course unable for ethical reasons to reveal that the real name of the "Flying Doctor" is really Alphonse de Gilles.*

*People benefitting this column are requested to send a postal order or stamps to the value of 2s 6d in a sealed plain envelope to FDS Retirement and Beer Fund, c/o Lake Keepit Soaring Club at the normal address.*



*The stuff I'm proscribing won't actually make you better but you will be so high you won't care at all.*



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# KEEP SOARING

DECEMBER-JANUARY 2010

**This is the complete and unabridged Diary of a Competition Director during the National Club and Sports class competition which was held at Lake Keepit Soaring Club in November 2009. It is an honest record of events showing dedication, self sacrifice and a sense of duty above and beyond...**

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

**Day 1.** The weather itself was very difficult - high pressure, very little cloud - only over Mt Kaputar - and a late start. The same task was set for both classes except that sports class had two hours, and club class had 2.5 hours. Club class launched first. The task was Boggabri 30 km, Edgeroi (40 km) Splitrock Dam 20 km. Minimum distance 149 km max 394 km.

We launched a sniffer, Greg Smith in the club's LS6, at about 1215, but he was unable to stay up. Then at 1300 we launched Ray Tilley and Greg again, both together, and this time they managed to soar - just. We held on to 1325 and launched the first group on the grid. Then a slight pause as they were not doing terribly well, and then we continued to launch the whole field. There were a couple of relights in club class, but all the sports class got away OK.

There were about 6 out-landings, and no - Christian was not one of them this time. 3 couple of gliders did not start. A very difficult day for the competitors and for me, but those who got around had good flights, some of them getting in excess of 9,000' over Mt Kaputar. It amazes me how people manage to race in these conditions - I would have been in survival mode the whole time!!

I had no trouble getting people to retrieve those who outlanded - even though not everyone has a crew. All the pilots are really good about helping one another out.

The finishes were spectacular, with most pilots opting for a straight in landing on runway 14, and at one stage we could see four coming in together over the water. Lucky we have such a big runway! Jo Pocklington did another superb job on the radio, keeping track of the finishers.

Phillip Ritchie won Club Class and Ivan Teese won Sports.

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

**Day 2.** A difficult day for the pilots, but much easier for me - at least at the launching side of things. We gridded at 1105 after observing a minutes silence for remembrance day, and the gliders started taking off at 12.30 on the dot. Greg Smith took off earlier as a sniffer, but soon climbed out, so we launched the whole field as quickly as we could.

Still short of rope runners, but Lauren Goddard helped out today, and Scorer Chris Carr, and me too!! Lots of running. We managed to launch both classes in 1hr 20 minutes - not too bad for five tugs. We will have six tomorrow with the arrival of a Maule, EMA, this afternoon so it will be interesting to see if it speeds up the launch.

Some gliders have been hanging on after getting to 2,000' on tow, which annoys the tuggies because it stuffs up their pattern. We suggested they start descending with the glider on tow if it happens any more!



The task was Mullaley 10 km, Togo 40 km Splitrock Dam 20 km 227.3/339.4/457.5 km and 3 hours for Sports Class, and Merrylands 20 km Narrabri A/D 30 km Splitrock Dam 20 km 155.2 km/257.5 km/367.5 km and 2.5 hours for Club Class.

Gliders reported getting good height, but the thermals were a long way apart and the day shut down early. There were loads of outlandings amongst the Club Class gliders, and quite a number in sports class which really tested the outlanding retrieve system. However all are accounted for and once again I had no difficulty in getting people to go out - most of them pilots who had completed the task.

Its 9.30 pm now, and many still have not returned, but some are staying in Manilla and as the retrieve had to go past there they will not return to Keepit until tomorrow morning. It all pays havoc with the catering, but Wendy Medlicott takes it all in her stride - just part of the game she says.



Jo Pocklington worked wonders on the radio once again and sorted out who was missing and who accounted for - I had my hands full on the phone taking the pilot's calls. Some of the pilots called inbound at 20 km and then landed out, which made it hard.

The Twin Astir and the Grob 103 Twin II both landed at an airstrip so were able to be aerotow retrieved - Phew! Thank goodness for that. The Duo Discus had to start its motor again, and then flew into a thermal just after. But they wouldn't have got the thermal without, so no way they could have avoided the technical outlanding.

I could tell you who was first in each class, but I'll save it to the briefing tomorrow. Will be a bit late getting the scores out as no traces from the outlanders yet, and some pilots have either not put in a trace, or put one in from a different logger, without notifying the scorer so he doesn't know whose it is.

Many of the top guys in club class landed out so there will be quite a shuffle in the scores.

Peter Trotter won Club Class and David Jansen won Sports.



**Day 3.** Everyone managed to get back from their outlandings yesterday, and only one pilot elected not to fly today. However the scorer did not get all the traces until later in the day, so the scores he posted last night were very approximate. However he's got them all now. Peter Trotter won Club Class and David Jansen Sports class.

I had a call from a landowner in the morning today saying that he has a perfectly serviceable airstrip with two runways 800 m long, and why did all the gliders landed in a rotten paddock when they could have used his strip? Why indeed? Anyway he's mowing it today so it should be easier to see. He'll be disappointed if a glider doesn't drop in one day during the comp!

Today the weather was a bit problematic, in that we were not sure if it would be a really good day or a really bad day. The temp trace indicated that that once the trigger temperature was reached,

gliders would be able to get very good height, but that this would not last for very long, and when it cooled down the convection height would drop again quickly.

After much deliberation the task committee set a 2.5 hr AAT task, the same for both classes with Bellata Silo 40 km and Barraba Aerodrome 30 km as the two areas. Club class gridded first and Sports class second.

Prime news came out and interviewed me and Bruce Taylor - possible some others too, and filmed the gliders, and the start of the launch. If it was on it would have been on tonight's local news, but I missed it. Probably just as well!

We started launching at 12.30 and sent off the first three gliders on the grid. Then waited to make sure they would climb out OK. They seemed to be doing OK so we launched the rest of the gridding row, and the next. There were a lot of gliders all at the same height - not very high, so we held for about 5 or 10 minutes until they reported that the climbs were going about 4500'. We restarted the launch, and got through the rest of the fields as fast as we could. We had an extra tug today, but were so short of people to run ropes and hook on gliders that it still took us longer than yesterday to launch the field. We really need some young fit people for this job!

As I am writing this, a change has just come through, a few spots of rain and strong winds. So the weather will be quite different tomorrow I imagine.

The gliders all came back except two today. One of these has landed out every competition day so far, but luckily for his mates, he was only at the Sky Ranch today. Gliders reported achieving heights of 1,0000'. I notice that most did not start on task until well after 2pm, and the fastest sports class glider only flew 30 km further than the fastest club class glider!

Bruce Taylor won Sports and Paul Mander won Club class.





Day 4. After the change that came through last night, it was overcast in the morning, making a temp trace impractical. So we relied on Harry's experience and the aviation forecast (always pessimistic) and the blipmaps to set the task.

Thunderstorms were expected in the afternoon - a double edged sword. Good lift where the storm is, but no lift at all where the sun is blocked out, or in the blue areas. Because of the thunderstorm prediction we set a short task yet again. 2.5 hours for Sports Class and 2.00 hours for Club class.

We launched at 12.30 again and there we CUs about. Went right through the field with no hold ups except one glider kept releasing on tow. This held us up a bit but we got the field launched in 1.5 hours.

Quite a few sports class gliders out-landed. Two got a long aerotow home, one made himself at home at the Tambar Springs Hotel. A few club class gliders outlanded too, but the majority of the fleet made it home again.

The pilots told me that the conditions were very difficult near Wimboyne and Tambar Springs - blue and very still. However if they got past that the conditions were stormy. Nevertheless the bast majority made it home.

Paul Mander won Club class and David Jansen won Sports Class.



Day 5. Pilots are requesting that the briefings be briefer, so I think I will have to apply a strict guillotine tomorrow! This morning the pilots were a bit restless, and were not paying serious attention to the safety briefing, and had obviously completely switched off by the time the operational briefing came around, judging by the number who did a right circuit instead of a left circuit at finishing.

We introduced a control point with a 2 km radius today, so that everyone would finish from the same direction. It gets very hectic with all the gliders coming in very close together in time, but luckily our strip is so large we can cope with it OK.

Anita Taylor helped with the formatting and printing of the task sheets this morning - much appreciated - and they should be even better tomorrow. I am saving all this stuff in case we ever have to do this again.

The pilots are all getting used to the drill, all got ready for a 12.00 launch, and the launch started bang on time again. We had much more help with running ropes and hooking on today, and the soaring conditions were better, so we were able to launch the gliders quite a bit faster. So fast in fact, that I missed the end of the club class and forgot to tell radio operator Jo when to open the start gate! We also had a bit of a to do with a glider with a faulty release again at about the same time which distracted me.

The task was Bingara 40 km, Bellata 30 km, Emerald Hill, 30 km and Start point B2 as the control point. 3.5 hours for Club Class, and 3 hours for Sports class. Not a lot happened on the ground, so some quotes from pilots...

Bill Hatfield *"lovely day, got to cloudbase, good lift over Kaputar 12 kts for a short time"*

Nick Singer's experience *"Good first leg with reliable lift under CUs. Continued north of both turnpoints - set TP at Gurley on the northern edge of TP2. Turned around at cloudbase to find all the clouds in the valley gone! Major detour to Kaputar (unnecessary) and slowed up (mistake) went to mine E of Edgeroi and came home on final glide at 120 kts over the lake for a straight in landing. Brad Edwards came under me just as I lowered the undercarriage!!! 10 gliders landed in 90 seconds but no conflicts - good airmanship."*

Bill Wilkinson *"Cloudbase at around 8,000' - dome under the cloud. Almost went into cloud gliding away from the thermal as the lift was so strong. Rough flying fast in unballasted glider"*

Tuggies:

Val *"All gliders released in a timely fashion - except one hung on a bit too long. Good lift on tows speeded up the launch."*

Juho: *"Only had to throttle back twice to get gliders to leave."*

Garry: *"One glider pilot very politely said he was going to release but that there were two gliders on my left to watch out for - how thoughtful"*

Phillip Ritchie won Club class and David Jansen won Sports.

# KEEP SOARING



DECEMBER-JANUARY 2010

**Day 6.** Task setting was difficult today. A brisk southerly was forecast to come in in the afternoon, so Bruce wanted to keep the field to the east, where it was thought the southerly would not have such a great influence, but we didn't have quite enough turn points in the right area. Eventually we set Gunnedah 20 km, Bingara 30 km Edgeroi 40 km and Splitrock 20 km with a 3.5 hour task time for Sports class, who launched first, with the same task for Club Class with a time of 3 hours. In the event we shortened the club class task to the B task which was Upper Horton 15 km, Edgeroi 40 km and Splitrock 20 km.

I set a goal to complete the briefing in 20 minutes - it blew out to 25, but much briefer than other days. Unfortunately this means we do not get to hear the winner's story, but them's the breaks.

We scheduled a 12.30 start, but Hank Kaufman approached me to make it earlier, so I asked him to be a sniffer. He agreed to this, and launched first at about 1210. He climbed out easily, but the pilots were not really ready - we have been starting on the dot most days, so I suppose they thought that would be the case again. We managed to start launching the field at 1220, and then went straight through. Took 1 hour 20 minutes today I think it was, but one tug had an ASI problem and dropped out for a while. The glider with the problem release had no problem today - they took it out, cleaned and tested it and put it back with no alteration. Maybe it just needed cleaning.

After the launch, it was pretty quiet on the airfield, Vic did some mowing on the big tractor, and I enlisted the help of Ron Cameron to put the small slasher on the small tractor - but by the time we had done it, the gliders were coming back. Juho did some mowing with the ride on mower.

All the gliders came home except one - but that one got an aerotow retrieve, so no crews out on the road. One glider came in much later than the rest, but made it!!

Some pilots reported getting into wave at the start.

Ian Aspelind from Kingaroy flew with Charles Yeates from Nova Scotia in the Kingaroy Club's Duo Discus - not in the comp. "Our best thermal was straight of the tow, 12 kts peak, average 8.5kts. We went to Narrabri - conditions were good but blue. However on the way back we hit heavy sink and were down to 1200' more or less abeam Boggabri, without enough height to get to the mine, (usually a good thermal source) we thought we were done for. Then we hit a boomer which we took to 8,000' and made it home from there." I bet Kris, Charles wife was relieved!!

Todd Clark - Club Class, LS4: "Going really well until the ground

got too close!" Todd admitted that perhaps he had pushed to hard. He said he took a 5.5kt climb which was too slow - he hadn't been working anything less than six. So he left it with his glide computer showing 2,000' below final glide - and unfortunately the computer proved to be correct.

Jay Anderson - Sports Class, LS6: "Started high 7,000' (other pilots listening at this point said they thought 7,000' was low) and had a good first and second leg working 6 and 7kt thermals. Went deep into the second circle, Bingara, a short leg to the third circle, and ran south along a thermal street showing 12kts on averager. Got slow at Barraba and had to limp home!"



Allan Barnes - Club Class, LS1. "This was my worst day. Last to launch and rushed to start - started only a couple of minutes after the gate opened and had to fly alone. The gaggles did much better. Went too far to the east where the land was green chasing cumulus, but they disappeared as I got there. Nothing seemed to be working, got down to 3,000' with no obvious thermal sources in sight. Average speed at this point was only 78 kph. However got up again and managed 120 kph on the last leg, which brought the speed up to 98 kph (handicap speed) but not fast enough!"

I pointed out the Allan that at least he had been flying - some of us were stuck on the ground :-)

Chad Nowak won Club class and David Jansen won Sports Class.

**Day 7. The best flying day yet!!** It was really hot today, very difficult for those of us stuck on the ground. The aviation weather promised showers everywhere, but it was wrong - although there are some storms about now - after dark.

The temp trace indicated a good day, but the blipmaps seemed to indicate that the day would end early. The task committee set two tasks, one to the west and the other to the east, in case there was overdevelopment in one direction or the other. The launch was planned for 1200.

We had a meeting of the safety committee to discuss weather we should declare a rest day for the pilots. The consensus was that pilots that were feeling fatigued should be encouraged to take a day off, but that we wouldn't declare a rest day unless we had a day of mass outlandings when everyone would be back late. Those of us on the ground would very much like a "rest" day, so that we can go flying ourselves!

Only two outlandings today - one of which was at the farthest extreme of the task.



Tales of the heights achieved were rather like a fisherman's tale - got higher with every repetition. However the scorer informs me that just over 15,000' was the height they got to in the shear wave, up above the clouds. I understand cloudbase was about 13 or 14,000'. Lucky so many of them carry oxygen.

Lars Zender said it was "all right". He did 145 kph (unhandicapped), but it wasn't fast enough he said. He lost time by taking a 6 kt thermal when there were 8 kts about. He said he had a couple that averaged 10 all the way up.

Maren and Garry had a good flight in the Twin Astir, coming 11th for the day in Club Class. The flight is up on the OLC. Their

OLC distance was 419 km. David Jansen's flight is also on the OLC - he won the day again with a *HANDICAPPED* speed of 133 kph. His actual speed off the stick is rumoured to have been 155 kph.

Allan Barnes won Club class and David Jansen won Sports Class.

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**Day 8.** Eight days flying on the trot was a bit too much for some to take, and a few of competitors wisely decided to have a rest today. For those that flew it was quite a wild ride!



We started off by setting the task for yesterday's weather as usual! We set 3.5 hours for both classes and sent club class off first again as otherwise the grid shuffling meant that some were either right in front or right at the back, but never in the middle. Competition pilots worry about these things! We picked a task to the west and one to the east so we could pick on the grid the one that went in the direction that the storms weren't. At least that was the theory.

In the end we picked west, because there was a strong westerly. I think in the event it was the better choice, although a big storm did build up to the west of us, but it eventually moved eastwards and was clear of the field before the gliders came back. It must have been very difficult for the club class battling against the wind, but surprisingly only 3 outlandings.

Tim Carr (flying Duo Discus with Ross Edwards) "*Another magic Keepit day. Launched at 1300 into a booming sky. Started at 1410 at 8,000' and followed an energy line west to Coonabarabran. Edged into the circle and then drifted north in the 20 kt winds looking for our next climb. Had a great run north of Kaputar, so turned for home at 12,000' for an 80 km final glide through the last two sectors. Magic!*"

# KEEP SOARING



DECEMBER-JANUARY 2010

Garry Speight's (Twin Astir with Maren Goerdel) *A very difficult day - unable to get high before the start. Gradually got higher as made way to the south west. Long glide with no lift to touch the circle and come back to the clouds, which were not really on the way to the second turn. Lot of smoke in the atmosphere from a fire burning in the Pillager Scrub. On the way back from the second turnpoint there was good lift at Emerald Hill, but the constant warnings about strong winds at Lake Keepit distracted me from making a proper final glide decision and we arrived back much too high.*



Tim Wilson also found very little lift in the vicinity of the first turn point and after that proceeded north along the edge of the Pillager. At one point his computer read winds of 48 km/hr - very slow flying into the wind. Got to 11,000' near Mt Kaputar. Rough!

Brian Heyhow claimed a height of 14,500' in thermal lift - that was cloudbase he said - yes he WAS using oxygen.

We had a bit of a dilemma on the ground when the gliders started arriving back because runway 20 was much more into wind than 14, but no briefing had been given for runway 20 being the preferred one. A couple of non-competition gliders had landed there and found it very turbulent. In the end we warned the pilots that there was a strong and gusty wind from the left and fortunately they mostly came in with enough height for a circuit on 20. A few did land on 14, but it would have been a nightmare if all had done so with such a strong cross wind. One glider had a very nasty looking ground loop on runway 20, but no damage appears to have been done.

The trouble will start tomorrow morning as there appear to have been several incursions into the Tamworth airspace, which incurs a penalty of zero points the first time, or complete disqualification if it occurs a second time.

Allan Barnes won Club class and David Jansen won Sports Class.

**Day 9.** The pilots are keen to keep flying, but I and safety officers 1 and 2 (Vic Hatfield and Trevor West) and also Witches Cauldron staff are feeling very tired. We are sitting on the ground in 40° heat while the pilots get high and cool.

The forecast today was problematic - a one degree change in expected temperature made a large difference to the predicted outcome. The task committee set a bit shorter time today - 3 hours for each class, with sports class taking off first. The winds were much lighter than yesterday thankfully - the typical Keepit light westerly.

It was hot by the time 12.30 came around, but pilots were not ready in their gliders, so we were a bit late starting the launch. We sent up the first group of gliders, and then waited for a few moments to see if they climbed out OK. They did, and Val Wilkinson, one of the tuggies who is also a famous glider pilot, said there was good lift about. The launch then continued smoothly. Al Giles did a magnificent job of running ropes. The hooker-owner had to be quick to stop the rings disappearing away from the glider!

A few pilots were feeling the strain of flying every day for so many days, and elected to take a day off. Those who didn't fly yesterday felt refreshed enough to have another go today.

I have not heard much about the flying from the pilots however I did hear that someone had got to 9,000', and some one else "only" got to 11,000" during the day. It was very blue around Keepit, but high cumulus on the hills. We tasked them to the north - the old favourite Bingara Edgeroi Splitrock again.



# KEEP SOARING



DECEMBER-JANUARY 2010

All the gliders got back except one. A couple landed back at the field, decided that they did not have the energy to fly again after all. There were no relights. Kerrie Claffey described grovelling at about 2,000' AGL near the Carolls for ages without the height to get back to the field. She did get up eventually and flew the course.

Prime TV came out and interviewed some of the pilots and Vic- I missed watching it again.

Yesterday we had some excursions from the defined contest area, and we applied a penalty of 1 point per metre outside for this as defined by the rules. Naturally this has provoked a protest, so the protest committee will meet tomorrow morning to sort it out. The flying is the easy part! The politics are harder.

Paul Mander won Club Class and Tom Claffey won Sports.



**Day 10. Yet another flying day!** The weather forecast today did not promise much, but there was talk of storms over to the east. There was high cloud to the west but quite a long way away.

First of all we had a meeting of the protest committee, with resolved in favour of the the protesting pilot. I hope they make the rules clearer for the next competition organisers. Then there was the task setting committee, and the safety committee. Despite all the meetings we managed to get things moving on time.

The task committee set two tasks, an A and a B. As the soaring conditions were slow to get going on the grid, we changed to the shorter B task which was Edgeroi 30 km Keera 40 km, Rangari 20 km with a time of 3 hours. Launching proceeded slowly in the terrible heat, no one had much energy, and gliders were not climbing out very well.

The Sports class task was further modified to 2.5 hours. It was difficult to communicate these changes to the pilots as they were not in their gliders but in cars trying to keep cool. Jim Staniforth our launch marshal was sick today, Vic stood in for him directing tugs, Laurie Murray did the record keeping and Trevor stood in for Vic. Luckily we had Geoff Sim, Peter Sheils and Ian Barraclough helping.

We eventually launched them all and were able to rest in the shade until they came back. Geoff Sims weather station recorded 42.5°s.

A few gliders landed back and decided not to go again, and a few decided not to fly at all. It was a difficult day, but only three gliders landed out, though one or two flew back early. Two landed out at Brigalow ag strip and were able to be aerotow retrieved. It was difficult for the tug to take off to get them with all the gliders coming in. The second glider came back with the tug at about a quarter of an hour before last light. The third glider had a long trailer retrieve - 3 hours drive away. He is not back yet. Darian Thom (tuggie) had done his paddock rating yesterday and put it into practice today by doing the retrieve from Brigalow.



As I was walking out to the tie down area to check on who was back and who was missing I passed Garry Speight and asked him if he had had a good day, expecting a negative reply. However he smiled and said he and Maren had had a good day! They left at about 5,500' and flew northward, getting gradually higher all the time until they got to cloudbase over Mt Kaputar.

# KEEP SOARING



DECEMBER-JANUARY 2010

Then they turned eastwards to the Keera circle where it was a bit grey, and difficult so they just clipped the circle and headed back. Garry said they saw Paul Mander heading west, and followed him. He was trying to get away from the high ground and make up some distance in the Rangari circle. Garry said that he thought he had done better than he otherwise would have by following.

This evening there was a pilot's meeting in the hangar. I had had enough of pilots, so I had a shower and cooled down instead of attending!

A big cu-nim built up over Tamworth, and another out to the west in the evening - the sky has clouded over so it will be a hot night.

Only one more day to go thank goodness, we are all getting worn out!

Jim Crowhurst won Club class and David Jansen won Sports.

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

**Day 11.** Good looking trace from the temp flight, but the weather actually feels sort of stable and hot like yesterday. Forecast 42°s in Tamworth again today and tomorrow. Keepit is usually hotter than Tamworth. After telling us earlier that pilots did not want us to call a rest day, the people setting the task said that in Europe, they have an enforced rest day after 7 days continuous flying. However if we had done that, we would have missed one of the best days of the competition. Luckily quite a few are electing not to fly if they feel its too much, and that is a very wise choice.

A couple of people from the National Competition Committee wanted to say stuff at the briefing, and this started to degenerate into a pilots "meeting" read argument. I feel quite pleased with myself as I shut them up and got on with the briefing. I'm hot tired and cranky and no patience for them any more.

During the briefing one of the CT4s from Tamworth did a beat up of the strip followed by a barrel roll, which was entertaining. We've been ringing them up every morning to let them know what the task is.

Only short tasks set today as its the last day and everyone is tired. We were not too sure about the weather. Pilots are requesting a later start but we'll get them all marshalled.

NBN TV turned up and were interviewing me just when the launch was supposed to start, so we postponed it by 10 minutes. There were cus popping to the east, so we started launching the gliders at 1240, and none had any problem staying up. No relights.

The clouds were looking good but it was hellishly hot on the ground. I gave them about 25min before opening the gate.

After the launch I decided it was just too hot on the ground, and the only way to cool off was to fly my glider. Last day of the comp so they couldn't sack me. I got it ready and launched about 1545.

Good lift near the strip, though not very fast then flew out to the Carrols where there was a nice cu. Good 8kt thermal nearly to cloud base. Big stormy mass developing over Kaputar - oops thats where we sent the competition gliders. Looked nice out to the west, so I went that way, all they way out to the edge of the Pillager Scrub. Maximum height 12,000', spent most of the time between 10 and 11 thousand.

The nice cloud I was heading for at the edge of the Pillager dissolved just as I got there, and I turned back for Keepit. Got down to about 6,000' on the way back - it felt very low. But worked back up to 11,000 for a nice easy glide back - after all the comp gliders had landed.

A couple landed out at Barraba, one somewhere south west of Keepit and another somewhere along the Boggabri road. Garry and Maren went way out toward Narrabri to avoid the storm and got home, but missed the turnpoint at Barraba so only got distance points. The G103 landed at Barraba, beating Garry for the day, but incurring the expense of an aerotow retrieve. Another pilot missed the Barraba turnpoint because he thought it was 30 km not 20 km, (wishful thinking probably) but made it home.

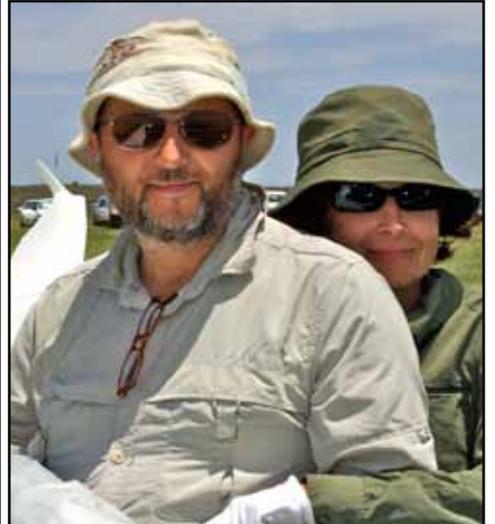
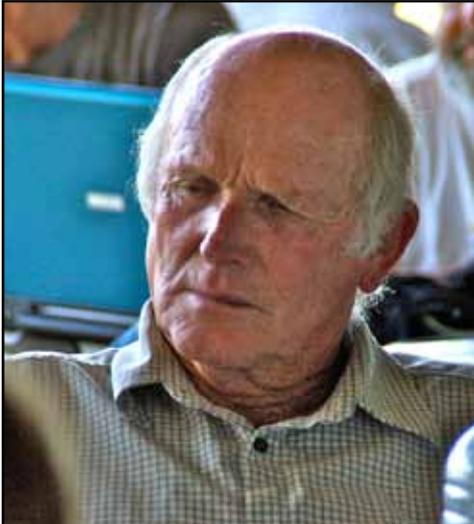
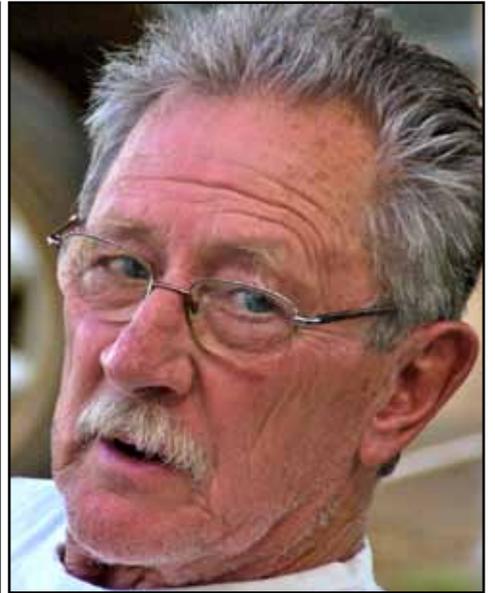
It was lovely to be in the air again, and nice and cool up at 10,000'.



# KEEP SOARING



DECEMBER-JANUARY 2010



*All photographs on these 2009 comps pages were taken by Ziggy Nowak. Thanks Ziggy!*



## 2009 CLUB CLASS NATIONALS. LAKE KEEPIT SOARING CLUB

Place	Points	Rego	Pilot(s)	Club	Glider
1	9909	IIC	Trotter Peter	Kingaroy	ASW 20A
2	9651	GAK	Mander Paul	Narromine	Libelle
3	9629	GMF	Barnes Allan	Darling Downs	LS 1 f
4	9542	FQM	Codling Mike	Darling Downs	Hornet
5	9232	EAT	Collings Craig	LKSC	ASW 19
6	9131	XKD	Kauffmann Kris	Kingaroy	Discus CS
7	9021	VWV	Crowhurst Jim	Kingaroy	ASW 19
8	8891	GWR	Woolley Adam	Kingaroy	LS 1 f
9	8039	GWL	Davis Jo	Darling Downs	ASW 19
10	7878	GZZ	Peitsch David	Canberra	ASW 20
11	7808	GMV	Nowak Chad	Darling Downs	Hornet
12	7436	XJY	Greig Andrew	Beverly	LS 7
13	7408	GLB	Dalton Mark	Kingaroy	Libelle 201B
14	7321	GOP	Southgate Phillip	SDASC	Std. Cirrus
15	7295	IKX	Speight Gary	LKSC	Twin Astir
16	7043	WQF	Mosiejewski Jaroslaw	Geelong	PIK 20 B
17	6994	GJJ	English Brendan	GVC	LS 7
18	6944	GKO	Hoskings Richard	Darling Downs	ASW 20c
19	6935	GJE	Hayhow Brian	Temora	Discus BM
20	6882	IID	Clark Todd	LKSC	LS 4
21	6544	HDY	Stevenson Gary	Grampians SC	
22	5971	IZE	Ritchie Phillip	Adelaide	LS 4a
23	5682	XOT	Wilkinson Bill	Southern Downs	Discus B
24	5680	MXP	Ken Flower/Nick Singer	LKSC	PIK 20 E
25	5571	XKE	Sly Mike	Kingaroy	DiscusCS
26	5149	ZXT	Kusiak Ziggy	Kingaroy	SZD-55
27	4777	VCS	Volk Phillip	VMFG	Discus CS
28	4042	XQV	Linnet Christian	LKSC	Std. Cirrus
29	3979	IUZ	Buttenshaw Allan	LKSC	Std. Cirrus
30	3518	GFP	Walker Robin	LKSC	Grob 103

## 2009 SPORTS CLASS NATIONALS. LAKE KEEPIT SOARING CLUB

Place	Points	Rego	Pilot(s)	Club	Glider
1	10446	IDJ	Jansen David	Kingaroy	ASG 29E
2	10106	ZKT	Taylor Bruce	LKSC	Ventus 2cxt
3	9818	XTK	Claffey Tom	AAFC Warwick	ASG 29
4	9279	XGK	Kolb Greg	Kingaroy	Ventus 2cxt
5	9196	YHK	Kauffmann Hank	Kingaroy	ASG 29
6	8681	PNL	Trotter Lisa	Kingaroy	LS 8
7	8589	ULZ	Zehnder Lars	Darling Downs	Ventus 2cx
8	8407	ZDW	Wilson Dave	VMFG	ASG 29
9	8355	VTT	Tabart Tony	Corangamite	Ventus 2CM
10	8296	VIT	Teese Ivan	Kingaroy	ASG 29 E
11	8086	OBH	Hatfield Bill	Kingaroy	LAK 17/18m
12	7937	FQF	Buelter Rolf	Geelong	LS 8T/18m
13	7778	OKZ	Wilson Tim	GCV	LS 8
14	7741	KRJ	Medlicott Harry	LKSC	Ventus 2CXT
15	7138	GKU	Spletter Errol	Southern Downs	LS 8
16	6888	KTC	Claffey Kerrie	Narromine	ASW 28
17	6548	ITB	Smith Andy	Mt Beauty	Ventus B
18	5967	GMT	Anderson Jay	LKSC	LS 6a
19	5920	VCX	Turner Frank	Kingaroy	Ventus 2CXM
20	5324	GWB	Mclean Ross	Narromine	LS 8a
21	5046	ZDS	Shorter Dave	LKSC	Discus 2B
22	4916	VSL	Lutton Stuart	SDSC	LS 8/18m
23	4907	XGG	Schmidt Greg	Kingaroy	LS 8
24	4512	ZAB	Carr Tim	LKSC	DuoDiscus XT
25	3755	XBE	Edwards Brad	LKSC	ASW 29E
26	2983	XJS	Cleaver Mike	Temora	LS 6
27	2062	XOZ	Hedley Steve	LKSC	Nimbus 3DM
28	1539	IUO	Brown Simon	GVC	Discus 2c
29	3979	IUZ	Buttenshaw Allan	LKSC	Std. Cirrus
30	3518	GFP	Walker Robin	LKSC	Grob 103

## A BARMY CHRISTMAS!

Since this is the Christmas edition of *Keep Soaring*, we thought it would be a great idea to bring you this Christmas message from a special foreign correspondent. However, as the editorial staff read through it, it became clear that this was not your normal Christmas message... so be warned!

As you know, there are many other types of Christmas around the world from people who don't celebrate Christmas at all, to those who adhere to the pagan tradition of celebrating the mid-winter solstice. And in the middle there are a lot of different traditions which normally include some festival of eating, drinking and present giving with more or less commercial overtones. In Europe, Christmas markets are huge. The one at Strasbourg attracts people from all over France and Germany and special trains are put on to carry the visitors in and out.



Much of what is sold is beautiful, traditional Christmas decorations for the house and tree along with an enormous variety of food. Australians would easily relate to this, even though Christmas in Australia is a time for sun and the beach.



But there are many Christmas traditions which would be much harder for us to recognise and harder to understand. The Spanish are known for doing it their own way; even within Spain, the Basques and the Catalonians continue separate traditions from the rest of Spain.

Nowadays, much of Spain can be said to be post-Christian, almost as a reaction to the dark and repressive days of Franco. After Franco's death, the speed of transformation from the most Catholic country in Europe to the current version of Spain was breathtakingly fast. That being said, traditional and very elaborate nativity scenes are very popular and just as in Strasbourg, the Christmas markets are a great place to buy wonderful little statues of Christmas figures.

However in Catalonia, they do it differently... In these scenes there's almost always one or more "caganers". Literally, this means "shitter". The traditional Caganer, a figurine of a defecating man, has been gracing nativity scenes in Catalonia since at least the 16th century and there's a huge range of figures on sale from traditional Catalan peasants to Father Christmas, George Bush and players from the Barcelona soccer club.



Currently, the local government in Barcelona is trying to sanitise the city and has moved to ban the Caganer from the official Christmas display. Locals and academics are outraged, claiming that this is a return to Franco era repression.

Of course, the Spanish don't actually *have* a Father Christmas, that's seen as a US tradition. The Three Wise Men fill most of that role in Spain. And what's left out by the 3WM is eccentricity fulfilled by Caga Tio. If you are lucky to have Caga Tio explained to you by a Spaniard, especially one whose English is not so good, you are in for a treat. Partly because you will have a very difficult time understanding who or what Caga Tio is.

Caga Tio is a hollow wooden log with stick legs and a smiley face which is bought from a Christmas market or made at home, and appears like our Christmas trees, about December 8th.

Caga Tio is kept warm with a red blanket and daily fattened up with nuts, dates and oranges until Christmas. Then the children surround the Caga Tio and sing a song which goes like this: *Uncle Poob!, toasted poob! Hazelnuts and cheese... If you don't poob well, I'll beat you with a stick, Uncle Poob!* And then the children do beat the shit out of Caga Tio with sticks until he bursts and spills out all the presents which have been hidden... which is apparently huge fun and a lot more memorable than hanging a stocking from the mantelpiece.



However for a really zany Christmas, there are few like the Dutch; not a gang who are otherwise well known for their zaniness. The Dutch version of Father Christmas is called Sintaklass or Saint Nicholas. As you would remember, Nicholas was the son of a wealthy family, and a devout Christian. After the death of his parents in a plague, he gave away all his money and possessions and became a priest ending up as Archbishop of Myra in present day Turkey.

There's a bit of uncertainty about what happens next... uncertainty is a common element in the Dutch Christmas story. In some versions, Nicholas retires as Archbishop and goes to sea. In other versions, Nicholas just dies and becomes the patron saint of seamen.

In any case, the Dutch Sintaklass dresses like a bishop complete with a mitre with a cross on it. He doesn't have elves or reindeers or a sleigh. He's got a steamship and a white horse. As everyone knows, Sintaklass lives in Spain for most of the year where he works away diligently recording the behaviour of all the kids in Holland and Belgium... (no doubt only the Flemish speakers in Belgium).

Living in Spain is infinitely preferable to living at the North Pole. It's warmer, food is great and alcohol is cheap. But every year in mid November, Sintaklass turns up on his steamship at some sea port in Holland; port towns bid for his arrival the same way towns bid for a stage of the Tour de France. He then mounts his white charger and rides through town where huge processions are laid on in his honour.

Sintaklass used to be accompanied by a guy who was thought to be a black slave called Zwarte Piet or Black Pete. In some versions of the story, Black Pete is the devil who was enslaved by Sintaklass, in other versions some black child who Nicholas rescued. (Black Pete sounds more like a pirate's name to me.)



Anyway, Pete used to be a slave until he was freed some time early in this century and just became just Sintaklass's dark-skinned helper. The Germans frowned on all this silliness and during the second world war, Sintaklass remained resolutely in Spain.

At the end of the war the Canadians appear to have organised the return of Sintaklass to Holland to cheer up the Dutch and those same jolly but logical folks appear to have suggested that there was too much work for just one "helper" and the job could be done better by more than one of them; so the tradition evolved so that Sintaklass now officially has "six or eight helpers".

Six or eight is the universally accepted number. How incredibly vague! We know exactly how many reindeers there are, how many dwarves Snow White has, how many wise men and we even know their names... but the Dutch don't know exactly how many of these helpers there are. Six or eight. But definitely not seven.

Holland has a strange version of political correctness for many visitors from the western world. Their very public tolerance of drugs and prostitution are at times, difficult to get your head around.

Like the French, the Dutch also have exposed urinals for men in many public squares, however unlike the French, the Dutch have reduced theirs down to a bare minimum... just a shape like an enlarged plastic star picket post attached to a flat tank stuck out in the middle of a public square. Hope your undies are nice and clean!

Back to the six or eight helpers. At the street processions all over Holland before December 6th, hundreds and hundreds of people dress up as helpers and walk along before Sintaklass entertaining the crowds and distributing small biscuits called Kruidnoten. And every helper is in black-face. Even the bands which accompany the procession are black-face minstrels.



For all the fuss which was made about the Jackson Jive skit on "Hey Hey It's Saturday", this Dutch black-face getup does not appear to ruffle too many (American) feathers. As a collector of politically unsound Golliwogs, I was delighted to be able to buy a couple of dolls of brightly dressed but unnamed helpers to join the gang at home. They have an unnerving habit of going walkabout whenever my politically correct wife has people around.

Back to the six or eight helpers... Their role has changed a bit over the years. They have always carried hessian sacks. Now they are filled with biscuits, but originally they had a different purpose.

The helpers carried stout canes or birch branches and following clear instructions from Sintaklass, they soundly beat each child and demanded to know whether they had been good or bad during the past year.

If the child has been good, then the helpers may fill their shoes with sweets and biscuits. If the child has been bad (and presumably Sintaklass knows the facts here) then the helpers will stuff the child in the sack and carry them off to Spain for the rest of the year... which looks like a nice reward to anyone who has spent a winter in Holland.

There's a northern European logic in beating the children before they have a chance to say if they were good or bad which I am sure I will get if I think about it long enough.

Of course, political correctness has now stepped in again in Holland and the helpers and Sintaklass are only allowed to give each kid a quick kick or a backhand slap and hardly anyone is offered a free trip to sunny Spain in a brown sack.

There were those who were offended about the cross on Sintaklass's mitre, but that's not open to negotiation. Within limits, the Dutch couldn't give a damn about what anyone else thinks. "It's our culture... get used to it!" seems to be the message.

If you *have* got used to it, a look a "Darkie Day" in Cornwall might stretch things a bit further... Entire towns get dressed up in black face in a tradition where nobody seems to know the origin. Last year, police were on hand to photograph the revellers, but there is safety in numbers and nothing was done with the snaps.

The Israeli conductor Daniel Barenboim said, "*Has not liberated thinking become the most valued freedom at a time when political systems, social constraints, moral codes and political correctness often control our thinking?*"

*"Both political correctness and fundamentalism give answers not in order to further understanding, but in order to avoid question."*

Australia is a young country and we try very hard to be all grown up and modern and politically correct about everything. However, when you look at the fun that other, older, richer cultures have being anything but politically correct, you wonder why we bother to try so hard.

***Have a Happy and tolerant Christmas and  
Vive la difference!***



## THE FINAL TOUCHDOWN

During a lifetime in aviation, I have experienced only one forced landing. It was not difficult. The dead-stick glide began at three thousand feet. There were several suitable fields from which to choose. Things worked out nicely.

Yet I know that I have one more forced landing lurking and waiting for me out there. I believe that at this stage of my life, I am ready for it.

Perhaps there will be warning, maybe not.

Will there be time for me to plan a good approach to this final touchdown? Will it be a hasty no power, no options, straight ahead steep descent to a walloping hard touchdown? Or will it be a soft afternoon peaceful glide?

Whatever, for this final glide, I ask only for an open cockpit, so I can, however briefly, savour for the last time the feels of flight, as biplane wings forward of me exquisitely frame and record the slowly changing, tilting scenes as I manoeuvre and silently bank and glide onto what I have long known will be my very final approach.

Please, no helmet, so old ears can best sense vital changes in speed, relayed through the lovely sounds of whistling interplane struts and wires, and so cheeks and bared head can best read changing airflows swirling behind the cockpit's tiny windshield.

Below, in a forest of trees lies a grassy field long ago set aside for biplane flyers of old. It looks small, tiny.

With lightly crossed aileron and rudder I'll slip her a few inches over the fence. I'll level her off, then hold her off, with wheels skimming the grass tips.

The lift of the wings, the sounds of flight, rapidly diminish. With stick full back, lift fades, a slight tremor, then she and I are bumping and rolling across the beautifully sodded field. The wooden propeller remains still. We roll to a stop.

I have no belt to loosen. I raise goggles and slowly climb out. Suddenly there is applause, then bear hugs and slaps on the back. "Hey, you old goat, you really slicked that one on!"

I am with old friends.

*Dutch Redfield*

## THE OLD KA6 DREAM

A standard class glider, they said with a smile.

The Ka6 was outclassed by a mile.

It had been retired a number of times  
but the thirty-yearly had been just fine.

All the 'glass ships loaded with water,  
computers, flaps, tips, final glide sorters.

300 K's was set for the task  
and the Ka6 pilot didn't intend to be last.

So after the launch, he set the course straight away  
while the thoroughbreds all intended to stay  
for the conditions to improve, they knew they had time  
to thermal around behind the start line .

300 K's is only a jaunt

There was something different about the weather that day,  
for behind the line the clouds did fray,  
and out in front - what a beautiful sky.

There were Hutterers, Grunaus all nice and high.

They marked all the thermals with the very best climbs  
And waved their wings indicating further good finds.

An old Kingfisher made sure he turned right.  
With this he climbed to a soaring great height.

When he turned for home there were cloud streets for miles  
and Kookas, K8, Hutterers had smiles.

Because way behind, thoroughbreds struggled  
as conditions deteriorated they were all in a guggle

Waiting for someone to show them the way.

For old Ka6 was first home that day.

He was tied down safe, and without any doubt,  
as they called on their radios, "We are five miles out".

... Ka6 has had his day

*Wal Stott*



## GROENHOFF AND THE FAFNIR

The Fafnir was perhaps the first truly elegant sailplane. It was designed in 1930 by Alexander Lippisch for Guther Groenhoff. With Hirth and Kronfeld, Groenhoff was one of the stars of the early German gliding movement. Small of stature, Groenhoff was both daring and skillful and had a haircut young people of today would spend hundreds of dollars in “product” to achieve.

The Fafnir was very high aspect ratio for the time and had highly tapered wings. Lippisch controlled what would otherwise have been a dangerous tendency to tip stall by changing the almost standard foil section of the time at the root, a high camber Goettingen 652, to a basic Clark Y section at the tip with a few degrees of washout. The result was a heavy glider which was nevertheless very efficient and which could bank steeply with minimal loss of height. This was important at the time because although Hirth had just “invented” banked turns in thermals, most flyers still thought that flat turns were the way to go. Groenhoff and the Fafnir would prove them wrong.

The Fafnir had for the time, some unusual features. First was the gull wing. There appears to have been no strong aerodynamic reason for the his shape. Lippisch stated that it held the wing tips clear of the ground to avoid damage, but a straight tapered wing would have done the same. Undoubtedly it was elegant and set a fashion which would last until the ‘50s. The other remarkable feature was that the pilot was completely enclosed and had no forward vision. The only way Groenhoff could see out was through two circular portholes, one on either side of the cockpit. No doubt the wind noise during a side slip from each porthole would have encouraged well coordinated turns!

The Fafnir was not immediately successful. The earliest design had poor fairing between the fuselage and wing root. When this was corrected, the Fafnir achieved all its designer and pilot expected of it. In 1932, when the Fafnir was a year old, Groenhoff flew a record 272 km flight from Germany into Czechoslovakia. At the time, the FAI only recognised records from gliders launched by the “classical” bungee launch method. But for this flight, Groenhoff was launched by aerotow and the record was not accepted.

The following extract is from Groenhoff’s own account published in his book, “Ich fliege mit und ohne motor.”

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

With the flight to Buehl the usefulness of the aero-towing of gliders had been proved. On behalf of the Rhoen Rossitten society I would demonstrate this new method and the flight should also prove useful for the research into areas of meteorology for the Munich Meteorological Conference.

On 4 May 1931 the weather briefing in Munich began in the morning. With the dominant northwest wind the plan emerged to try an alpine sail flight. I had arrived at Munich the day before with the Fafnir and the tug.

On the Oberwiesenfeld airfield everything is clearly ready for the start and I want to begin to collect good information for the Meteorologists, but typically the wind turns and throws out our plans, but there is so many beautiful cumulus clouds in the sky. Amongst them one had to be able to hold a glider steady. Peter Riedel in the sluggish engine machine gives full power and soon pulls me with the long towrope over the airfield at 120 meters.

The Fafnir makes an efficient bounce on the molehills and then floats steadily behind the tug. Humans and houses down below become ever smaller. We have enough height to fly us over Munich. I observe carefully each movement of the Fafnir, in order to get the correct moment for releasing the tow-rope. There is a slight jerk, the tow-rope falls downward. Riedel immediately flies back to the airfield and leaves me to my fate.

The thunderstorm forms. The first hail falls with uncanny uniformity on the structure. Thick, down-torn clouds hang down before me. The thunder follows, each time with lightning and terrible rumbles as if everything would have become an empty space. I strain to hear whether my instruments are still functioning, because of the way that the flight had started. What will now happen will be of extraordinary importance for the scientific evaluation of the flight.

Again I consider whether I dare to continue this flight into these enormous natural forces outside, but the options had already been forged as I had sufficient time to consider what I wanted to do in such a situation. Thoughts come and go.

Finally the time approaches. In the middle under the heavy dark clouds the Fafnir begins to rise evenly at 5 meters per second. The view becomes ever worse downwards. Behind, the earth slowly disappears. Laterally, lightning flashes in the grey, but of the thunder nothing is to be heard. The hail strikes noisily on the Fafnir.

My instruments still shows: 'Climb'. The Air becomes jerkier. It becomes more difficult to hold the Fafnir in a normal position. The Air Speed indicator decreases then returns suddenly. I descend fast, in order to keep flying speed, but the pointer jumps back and forth, and the Fafnir whistles loudly with the excessive airspeed. The speedometer is clogged by hail and precipitation. Similarly the artificial horizon is affected. Only with the compass and my senses am I able to continue the flight.

The gusts become stronger. The hail falls in cherry sizes and hits with such force against the covering that slowly large tears develop. The elevator is of little use. A strong gust lifts me into the canopy cover above the top of my seat. The machine reaches such high speeds that I watch the wing in order to see how they will break. But they only bend into degrees I would never have considered possible.

Occasionally lightning flashes, apparently in close proximity. The thunder cracks, as if the lightning would be struck into the machine, then rumbles slowly afterwards from above. I try again and again to fly N.E. using the compass in order to come ahead of the thunderstorm.

Finally, I succeed. The hail patters more quietly and then, in time, I see the earth very hazily beneath me. I immediately push the Fafnir into a steep spiral dive.

It is, as if I could breathe deeply again for the first time in a long while. In the brightness I view my wings. They have long tears and many small holes. Water and hail lie as a thick layer on the wing, but the faithful bird still flies so beautifully that I do not need to feel concern.

The heavy thunderstorm was perhaps a hundred meters behind me. The whole grey of the storm is continually in motion. Large eddies form. An area for aeroplanes that would be difficult to overcome. Before me a marvellously illuminated landscape lies to the N.E and in the South, ahead of the thunderstorm, can clearly be seen the long Alpine chain lit by from the sun.

First I go on patrol, in order to see, what size the "front" is and where the best rising air is to be found. That can be done fast. The thunderstorm is judged to be small, perhaps 15 kilometres in expanse.



# KEEP SOARING



There are fronts of 1000 kilometres width. Ahead of the thunderstorm the rising air is even and strong so that I climb fast to approximately 2200 meters. From time to time clouds form around me. But in blind flight I fly again and again with course N.E. to head out of the front. I fly for hours following the thunderstorm.

At one time I discover a butterfly at these unbelievable heights. I wonder if, like me, this small chap freezes; but already I am past it. My seat becomes damp. The hail, which collected on the surfaces, is melting. The water gathers in the fuselage and begins to slowly rise. For a long time I bore into the floor until I have a hole through the plywood by which the water can leave.

Blind flight! It is interesting to observe what takes place down on the ground if a thunderstorm arrives. If a large smoke trail emerges somewhere, I observe the exact direction that the smoke takes. I can see exactly how the wind slowly turns ahead of the thunderstorm and how the thunderstorm lifts the smoke upwards at it's front. On the edge of the thunderstorm, long spirals are pulled upwards.

Down on the roads the vehicles dash. They want to get home before the cold rain shower. Sometimes I can observe, how the rain approaches them and then steadily pours. In the trees the storm before the thunderstorm begins. Lightning flashes continuously to earth and sometimes into my locality. Has it caused a fire somewhere? Nothing is to be seen.

After a long flight I recognise before me the course of the Danube and then beneath me the Valhalla. From Regensburg I cannot see much any longer, because clouds form everywhere around me and completely surround me. In blind flight I try to fly again a N.E. course to the front, but it seems to last for an eternity.

Again the hail begins. It is unexplainable. I assumed that the compass had failed and I had again flown back into the thunderstorm.

The Fafnir suddenly falls steeply downwards. I come out from the clouds and approach the ground quickly. I recognise that I had come into a developing thunderstorm in blind flight and am now being pressed down in the descending air on the back of the storm.

I circled back to where I had come from, but it seemed too late. At, perhaps, 150 meters above ground the descending air finally stopped. I still had sufficient height in order to look for a landing place. Before me I discover a small slope. I must try and hold there for a few minutes. With great caution I circle for approximately ten minutes back and forth and maintain my height.

The thunderstorm catches up with me again, the updraft strengthens and then the thunderstorm pulls me back to my previous height of 2000 meters. The thunderstorm passes now

over the Boehmerwald, strengthens again and unloads itself with force over the mountains. Slowly the evening approaches. The sun appears on the clear horizon and floods everything with a red glow, a powerful picture after those many exciting events. In order to land before darkness, I fly away from the front and the good lift.

Slowly I lose my height in gliding flight, but the darkness comes much faster than I had expected. When I am still scarcely 1000 meters high, the first lights below are already turned on. The view becomes ever worse. I see after some time, how in a larger city before me the road lighting in a quarter is switched on one by one. I fly on in the direction of the city where I will get assistance.



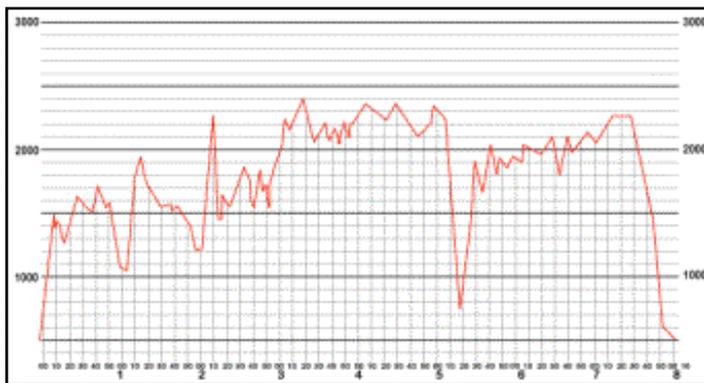
I can no longer recognise the area below me. Suddenly, I see the lights of a house close beneath me. It is clear I must land immediately. I shout as loud as I can to catch attention, however, suddenly I am again over a deep and steep river channel. Between these steep slopes, without any embankment, flows the Eger. I wanted to circle back, but I cannot reach the edge of the slope as I had no height left.

The far side of the river lay lower and I tried to fly over there. Now I notice how bad the Fafnir has become with the hail damage. It descends fast and becomes very exciting, but with a few meters height I arrive at the other side and land smoothly in a young oat field, just before a high voltage line. Since I hear no one, I call out loudly: Hurrah! I lift my rigid members from out of the fuselage, but my limbs no longer want to move. Soon I find myself standing beside my dear Fafnir, the faithful bird. She seems badly mangled. The instruments still tick to their even work.



After I had called aloud for one quarter of an hour my throat was hoarse and there was still no curious appearance from the public, I decide, to follow the high voltage line along to the next settlement over fields, meadows and fields. From time to time there is still more lightning in the distance. On the opposite side of the Eger, along which I am walking, there are so many houses, but nowhere is there a boat to be found with which I could cross over there.

After three-quarters of an hour I see a peddler, an old man with a large box on his back. I call him. He gets such a fright that he immediately drops his box and tries to disappear behind a few shrubs, but I am much faster. I calm him down with some words and find that he is going to the next locality after Kaaden. I tell him that I had landed with a glider, an aeroplane without engine, in the proximity, so he might be a little interested.



Along the way, he described the interesting life he had as an organ player. Thus we drew into Kaaden as good acquaintances and said our cordial good-byes.

The authorities in Kaaden had more interests in me. They seized the Fafnir and took it and me into military custody. I had to disassemble the Fafnir in the night onto three horse carts, and with the aeroplane bedded on straw, we drew into the barracks at five o'clock in the morning. At seven o'clock the telegraph office finally opened. I could now telephone the message of my safe arrival. This was probably the most beautiful moment of my flight, because I knew that everyone had waited for my message and with everything else, they were pleased.

In eight and a half hours flight I had flown 272 kilometres and had brought rich information for the meteorological research at home.

When the news came through that Herr Groenhoff was expected back at the Wasserkuppe after his record flight,

arrangements were made immediately to offer him a right, royal welcome. Small trees were felled, wood collected, and three cans of petrol obtained. Out at the cross roads a huge beacon was built with the petrol amply scattered around. Inside the Deutscher Flieger Hotel tables were set in one long line, and all was bustle.

At 8 p.m. a telephone message informed us that the hero had left Gersfeld, which is the village at the foot of the high ground. In ten minutes the beacon was well alight, and the blaze on the top of the Wasserkuppe could be seen for miles around.

The ambulance man had brought one of his stretchers on which was placed a chair. The car arrived and "the Boy" (Herr Groenhoff) was pulled out by his hair, placed in the chair, carried round the Kuppe and then into the Hotel. Still in his chair, which was placed on a table, all students and everyone present passed in front of him and congratulated him.

We were then seated, with Groenhoff at the head of the table, and beer provided for everyone. He had a look round and saw that the workmen who had made his machine, were not present. asked why, and was told that they were still working on his next machine. They were promptly sent for and he thanked them very much for putting such good work into the machine, thus enabling him to attain the record.

Herr Hirth then proposed that Groenhoff should relate to all his experiences.

"Well Boy," said Groenhoff, "*I was towed of by a Flaming to 600 metres...*" ...and the rest is history.

A year later, Groenhoff was dead, killed in a crash in his Fafnir. He'd had two bad accidents in the days leading up to this. In one, the rudder became detached and in another half the elevator broke off the Fafnir after launch but both times Groenhoff managed to land OK. Groenhoff was suffering from depression. He'd been driving an open car where the tug pilot, Peter Riedel's sister was killed and Groenhoff was at fault.

At the 1932 Rhön, a few months later, after the wind had changed on the hill, Groenhoff tried a downwind bungee launch. The heavy Fafnir skidded and bounced down the hill, the low-mounted elevator hit a rock and jammed. Groenhoff was airborne for a half a kilometre before the fuselage broke near the tail and the glider went into a spin. A body was seen to leave the cockpit and a parachute open... but it was too late to save the life of poor Groenhoff.



# MAINTENANCE MATTERS

It is unfortunate that, at the peak of the season, there is still maintenance work to be done on our Club fleet. The Junior and Puchatek are due for 50 hour services, and the Jantar is coming up for a 100 hourly. A 100 hour servicing has just been completed on the Grob 103.

With all going well, the 50 hour services should only take a few hours, but the 100 hour services are an all day affair with de-rigging, re-rigging required. Fortunately, the LS6, LS7 and Duo Discus do not require maintenance based on hours with the Form 2/annual services being the only requirement.

A reminder to all members flying club gliders to thoroughly check all relevant sections of the maintenance release before flying. Over the last few months there have been two instances where gliders have been flown and should not have been.

On one, the Form 2 had not been finalised, and the other was over-due for a 100 hourly servicing. From the front of the maintenance release, make sure a Form 2 has been signed off, is current, and an evaluation flight satisfactorily completed.

Next, noting current hours and landings, check whether any maintenance or inspection activity is due or imminent.

Finally, ensure there are no major defects outstanding.

I have started monitoring hours for Club gliders from the FltOps program to hopefully be able to provide early warning of imminent maintenance/inspection requirements, however, responsibility ultimately rests with the pilot intending to fly the glider.

Airworthiness and maintenance of the new Duo Discus is being managed in the same manner as the other Club gliders so we are now responsible for seven gliders all up.

The first issue with the Duo Discus is that the Form 2 falls due in February. Whilst this is not ideal, we need to turn this around fairly quickly so we don't lose any possible utilisation. Fortunately, Geoff Sims and Todd Clark have undertaken to do this job. The Jantar Form 2 also expires early March.

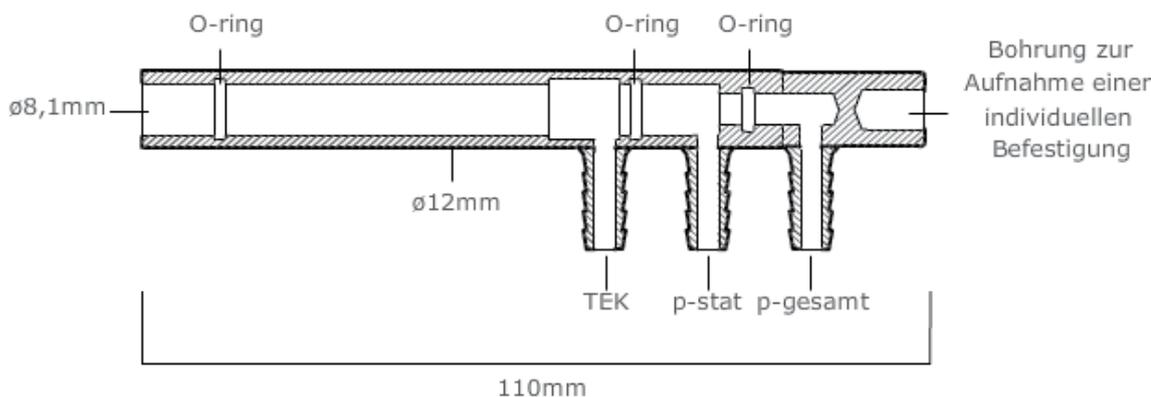
A problem arose recently with the total energy supply on the LS6. The LS6 employs a multi-probe to supply pitot and total energy to the electro vario and flight computers. Whilst this might have been a good idea at the time of design, 20 years down the track it is not an ideal system as success of the system relies on a number of O ring seals to separate the various air supplies as they pass from the probe to the socket.

I have included a diagram below showing the socket and O rings and it can be seen that for each supply to be airtight, we are asking a lot. Fortunately, in the LS6, alternative sources of pitot and static are available so we can replace the multi probe with a TE only probe, and blank off the pitot and static supply lines from the multi probe in the cockpit.

One issue arising from this exercise is that the focus of Form 2 and annual servicing activities is airworthiness, so consideration of systems not related to the safe operation of the glider are of secondary importance. Hence checks of the TE supply can be neglected. TE supply needs to be leak-free to work effectively, and it would be good practice to check this when checking pitot and static system during the Form 2.

John Trezise

December, 2009





## Winning with Woitjec!

*Keep Soaring is honoured to have the legendary Polish soaring champion Woitjec Bziktk writing for the newsletter. Countless are the numbers of members who have been imploring Woitjec for clues and tips to his enduring success in the air and on the ground.*

**AG of Temora asks:** Woitjec, I keep on losing in comps. What do I have to do to get my head in the right place?

**Woitjec:** Ha! Czech in the mirror! You can see if your head is in the right place! The will to win is about training this your head. We are not interested in the possibility of losing. Losing does not exist.

**SP of Kingaroy asks:** At the last comps, I tried to play the odds and win by not losing. I didn't do too well. Any suggestions?

**Woitjec:** It is far better to dare powerful things to win splendourful triumphs although hunted daily by loss... than to run with that poor spirit who neither much enjoys nor suffers much, because they live in a grey dawn, which does not know victory or defeat..

Anyway, now is winter in my country and now we drink and sometimes eat. I ask my mother for give me the recipe to mince pies. She gives me the long recipe where you must catch your own suet. Life is too short! Drink, drink and eat some, but do it fast!

So I give you my recipe which takes 5 minutes so when you eat all mince pies in 5 minutes you are not cross. For eating mince pies in cockpit, remember to take sick bag.

*Wow! Thank's Woitjec! Can't wait until next month's tips! Woitjec's Gran's recipes have had to be held over due to lack of space. Watch for Gran's heavyweight pudding de Noël in the next issue of Keep Soaring.*

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Geoff Sim



## WOITJEC'S OWN FRUIT MINCE PIES

You need stuff for pastry... One times butter, two times plain flour, some salt, lemon juice, maybe an egg and cold water. Make at least 2 kgs if you have friends. Don't worry, it is not rocket science if my wife and sister can do it.

Mix butter with flour and egg and salt. Then add cold water and mix as little as possible or you get hard cardboard not pastry. Put outside in the cold or in fridge and rest with a glass of Zubrowka.

Now roll out pastry good and thin and press into tin which you have painted with much butter. Now my mother uses home made mince but I use the stuff from the jar with the golliwog because I like the label and is nice and fast. Spoon stuff into the dents in pastry and make nice covers. I make one with cross to remind me of Lightning Ridge landing field.

Now relax with a glass of Gdańska with oven on 175° for 25 minutes. Take out trays and let it cool or they break when you get them out. Pour a glass or two of Wyboroaw for all and enjoy!



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# KEEP SOARING

DECEMBER-JANUARY 2010

## Coming Events 2010

26th > December	A gentle Christmas Butt's Bash	Allbutts
21-27th February	Keepit Regatta	Tim Carr
January 2019	Errol doing the gardening around the club	
	Keepit Safari	
	Winch Weekends	
	Cross Country Weekends	

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