

Fur & Feather

A black and white rabbit is lying on its back on a brick surface. The rabbit's front paws are held up near its eyes, and its hind legs are also held up. The rabbit is surrounded by various green leaves and a small green plant. The background is a brick wall.

Spring 2021

*War Rabbits
Breed for Victory!*

Dust Devil Dash

Are Tigers the best Pet yet?

WAR RABBITS

The Great War took both the Government and the Rabbit Fancy by surprise. The younger fanciers hurried to enlist, either selling their stock or handing it over to fathers, mothers, brothers or wives to eat or care for until the day of their return. Older fanciers tried to keep the shows going, despite the chaos on the railways as troops mobilised, and the commandeering of show halls for training soldiers.

Others started to breed basic utility rabbits for food. The soldier-fanciers “somewhere in France” (their precise location could not be given) wrote to Fur & Feather about their rabbits and cavies and their plans for their studs when the war was over. Sadly, many rabbits would not return.

Among the show reports and cancellations, letters, advertisements and exhortations to breed table rabbits in Fur & Feather were recipes for rabbit, some handed down from mother to daughter and others sent back by dutiful sons from the front where they’re call La Pins.

La Pin Stu.

Cut a rabbit in small pieces. Mice can be substituted but do not need to be cut into small pieces. Rats may be divided in two or four if they are particularly large.

Shred onion small and fry in butter. Sprinkle rodents with flour, salt and curry powder, and fry till a nice brown. They can be fried longer if you’re feeling particularly vindictive.

Then add a pint of stock. Stew slowly to half-

Of Mice (And Rats) and Men (and Women)

To the casual observer, rats and mice are very similar. From a distance, rats may be easier to see than mice, and if one runs across your bed in the night, you can feel the weight difference. However, if one pops it’s furry head up in the cockpit, perhaps peeping up from the undercarriage mechanism, there’s no quick way to tell the difference. What follows are the main differences but be warned, this is by no means an exhaustive list.

A. Mice can cure Covid 19 while there is no evidence that rats offer any cure at all. ¹

B. Blending mice with Ivermectin is even more effective, eliminating 99.99% of cases. The same cannot be said for blended rats, partly because it has proved difficult to get patients to eat sufficient quantities for a proper trial. ²

C. Hackers have discovered that a cocktail of mice, Ivermectin, Dettol, toilet paper and aquarium cleaner was given to the real president of the USA, Donald Trump with almost miraculous results. ³

1. There have been *no cases of Covid at LKSC but there have been thousands of mice.*

2. Nobody has caught Covid after ingesting blended mice and Ivermectin. This is a proof that even Dr. Faustus has suppressed.

3. Do your own research! Is there a shortage of Ivermectin? Yes! Is there are shortage of aquarium cleaner and toilet paper! Once again, yes! Reports early in the pandemic suggested also that Dettol was

Private Bob

Private Bob lay in the trench, and mopped his streaming face. Phew! It had been hot, that march had, and no mistake about it. He used to think the long route marches during his training at home hard enough work, but they were not in the same street compared to this.

It was four o’clock in the afternoon, and the day, with all its heat and dust was fading away to a beautiful calm spring evening. The storms and mud were now things of the past. The actual trenches occupied by the Midshires were dug at the summit of a small hill.

The country that lay stretched before the slope was not unlike England. The fields, the occasional woods and plantations, the farms but the latter were all silent and deserted. From the little belt of trees just at the foot of the rise, the birds sang beautifully and clearly: was this really the red land of blood and strife?

Private Bob was just closing his eyes when they fell on something just outside the little copse at the bottom of the rise – a rabbit nibbling at the sweet young grass under the shade of the trees.

That rabbit reminded him of something – his unopened FUR & FEATHER was in his pocket. The post, bringing it and his wife’s letter, had reached the Midshires at the Base, just before they left and he had time to read the small ads only. Private Bob refilled and lighted his pipe. Again his thoughts wandered back to home and all it means...

A Headmaster Writes



It gives me great pleasure to welcome boys (and girls) back after such a long break. No doubt you'll all be keen as mustard to get back to work and brush those cobwebs away. Extra exams have been set at the beginning of term to make sure you're all up to the mark and extra tuition is available for any of the lesser brethren (and brethrenesses) who may find the going hard to begin with.

The bursar has sent instructions to your parents on the behaviour expected from each and every one of you this term and the staff and I expect you to follow these instructions to the letter.

A copy of these instructions has been posted on the main noticeboard for those who find it hard to remember rules. Housemasters and prefects have been instructed to enforce the rules without mercy and report any rule-breakers directly to me.

There are many at St Keepits who find academic work a challenge and who thrive on sport and we're rightly regarded as a shining beacon in this area. For that reason, it pains me to refer again to reports of what can only be described as *second-eleven behaviour* from a few pupils last year. During an away match, a cross country run to Bellata Silo, a number of boys were overheard discussing the difficulty of the day and that turning early might be a good plan. Anderson, J and Taylor, B, you know who I am talking about. This isn't the behaviour we expect from senior boys! Brace up chaps and when a task is set, fulfil it with verve and dash to uphold the good name of St Keepits!

It goes without saying that we will all miss both Shorter, D and Simm, G this year in many different ways. Shorter will be missed, not just by prefects and games organisers for his all-round abilities but by us all as a sportsman and a leader.

Simm will be missed by other people in other ways. Security cameras have been installed behind the bike shed and Matron has informed me that she hopes standards in school uniform will see an improvement.

I hope I don't have to remind you all that pets are forbidden at St Keepits. Last year's craze for mice got well out of control and caused a lot of problems both in and outside the school.

On a serious note, I have to discuss discipline at St Keepits. I read recently the sad news that the Bognor Cane Company had ceased selling their excellent products, though it grieves me to say that they were used recently more for recreational rather than disciplinary purposes. From my earliest days as a teacher, the Bognor cane was my first choice and I still recall the musical swish as it sliced through the air... but it's not just me who enjoyed them.

A former pupil wrote to me recently to say "I cannot thank you enough sir, caning taught me good manners, respect, high work ethics, drive to perform at my best, loyalty, determination. It made me a very successful human being." So you can look forward to developments in the area of discipline at St Keepits. On that topic, I would like to see the following after assembly. Downes, I. Burgess minor. White, A. and Davies, L. You have all had plenty of time to finish your homework. Saying that a mouse ate it or that you had to use the paper elsewhere is not good enough when other boys - hand up Stanniforth! - have finished and sent in their homework in plenty of time. Line up outside my study and remember, newspaper in your shorts will mean double.

Finally, matron requests that anyone who is experiencing tiredness, blurred vision, headaches and a sore throat after a big evening in the great hall to go straight to bed and isolate.







HERE WE GO AGAIN!

In the interests of economy, this headline has been reused from the previous issue. Originally referring to the lockdown on the Northern Beaches which was just beginning. That was a stressful time since the giant turkey had been ordered and there weren't going to be enough people to eat it.

By enough people, I mean more than just two but not so many that there isn't a lot left over for turkey sandwiches, turkey pie, turkey for dinner etc.

The turkey was finally cooked and eaten in October, a week after the mid-year lockdown ended and all survived. It's a relief to wake up on the morning after cooking like this and find everyone is down to breakfast. You never can be sure.

LOOK WHAT THE CAT'S BROUGHT IN

Please accept the apologies of the editorial staff for the problem with the front cover of this issue of Keep Soaring. It was sent to the typesetters with clear instructions for the title. It was obviously meant to read *Fast and Further*.

The cover picture reminds me of happy times living near Sirius Cove in Mosman when we'd wake up to the sound of lions roaring and often find a present from the cat on the doormat. These were occasionally stored in the freezer waiting for the chance to shoot a still life (or vie mort as the submariners in France would say.) Times change and I have a feeling rats in the freezer wouldn't be tolerate by the authorities now.

FAST AND FURTHER

Given that few of us southerners have had a chance to fly since last autumn, it's going to be good to get airborne again. And why not fast and further?

Jacques has got extended comps planned to make up for lost time but for those who prefer to fly longer and further, there's no better way to brush of the cobwebs than heading out into the big sky for an anus-clenching adventure.

Todd Clark suggested some time ago that people set themselves personal goals each season from doing a loop to flying east until you can see the sea. Why not set some challenge for yourself this year - plan it and then fly it, to expand your horizons?

PRESIDENT'S (SHORT) RETORT

Hi All

Despite lockdown, it's been a busy time on the committee. I plan to hold a Town Hall meeting via Zoom in the next few weeks to update you on what has been happening and what we've achieved, so I won't preempt that here. *(Not even to fill up space? Ed.)*

The most significant achievement of late has been the submission for a government grant for new ablution blocks at the flight centre and 32 shade house, replacement of the sewerage plant (a requirement under our lease) and facilities for people with a disability.

The total sum was approximately \$600,000. We find out if we are successful in early December. If we don't get it, it won't be for the lack of effort.

I am very much looking forward to getting back to some normality commencing with the first GP next weekend. I believe there are over 20 gliders registered which is great restart for the club.

Anyway, more from me at the Town Hall. Looking forward to seeing you all again and having some fun in the air.

Space this out a lot mate if you want to fill the column.

Kel

A^(VERY) LITTLE FROM THE TREASURER

I've got nothing other than being locked down in Sydney. What can I say? Get everyone to the club and spending money? Don't donate to plurry Justin when you could be buying expensive beer from the clubhouse fridge - *reminder to self to increase all prices.*

Our plan is to add facilities to better support women in gliding and to offer the gliding experience to people with disabilities. That means

- A toilet at the 32 end
- A better toilet at the flight centre (out with the old one)
- Upgraded septic system
- A host / lifting device to get people into and out of a two-seater.
- Both toilet upgrade to have an accessible and female allocated facility
- DA, S68, designs, crown lands are all in place. All depended on a big grant from the NSW government. Working on that now .. so many questions and forms, etc.

There is much more to it – and a lot of background work but probably Kel has said all that. Has he?

I would love to be able to one day contact a local disability organisation and offer joy flights or full on training to anyone who thought they could not do that but were keen to do so.

Does this fill the column? Maybe space it out biggly and add a few carriage returns?

Andrew

This space unintentionally left blank



Oxygen Bottle Refills
Minor and Major Repairs & Form 2 Work
"You bend it, Grant will fix it, at least when he's feeling better."
Keepit Glider Tech
keepitglidertech@outlook.com

Musings from
THE FLYING DOCTOR
 (The new, improved one).



RETURNING TO FLYING AFTER A LONG, IRRITATING LAYOFF.

Gliding is seasonal and we often return to flying in the spring after little or no flying over winter. This year most of us are coming back to flying with little or no flying over a much longer period. Thank you COVID19.

The GFA has put out a substantial document discussing many issues related to resuming flight. For anyone with insomnia I can only commend it. Alternatively, you could try the following:

If you haven't flown for 90 days or more and you want to fly at Lake Keepit you need to arrange a flight

with an instructor. This is not a test or a flight review, it is a chance to fly with someone with better recency while you take your first flight in a while. There will be no low turn backs or nasty surprises.

Review your checklists:

- ABCD
- CHAOTIC
- FUST
- HASSL

Review the frequencies and local operations

- Keepit CTAF 132.25
- Gunnedah CTAF 127.4
- Keepit runways 14/32, 20, 27
- Don't land on 14 if the tug is operating off 32

Do a proper pre-flight of your glider. We have had a great couple of seasons. The mice have loved it, the insects are loving it. Remove any corpses from the aircraft seat pan and Pitot/Static system. Make sure the electrics work. Make sure the ASI and variometer work. Check the aircraft tyres. Check the tow out gear tyres.

Take time on the grid to do your checks properly.

Don't make your first solo flight a competition flight. Take a tow well into thermal activity and spend an hour or more in soaring flight in airspace which is not crowded.

Fly at minimum sink and best L/D. Trim for flight at 70, 80, 90, 100 knots. Practice stalling in level flight and 30 degree banked right and left turns. Do some rolling on a point.

Set your safe speed above the ground at 1000 feet AGL. Make it the approved 1.5 X your stall speed

plus half any ground wind. Make a really nice circuit and approach and give the correct call, "Lake Keepit Traffic, Glider ABC is a left downwind for runway 20, undercarriage down and locked, Lake Keepit".

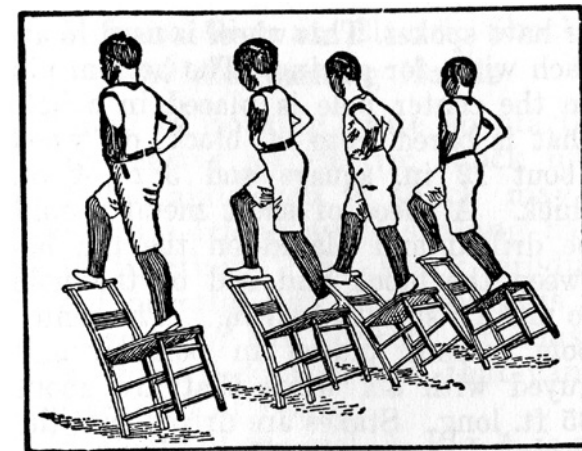
Don't put brakes out until you have established an overshoot. Get rid of any crab with rudder on short final. Aileron as required to stop your drift.

Watch the far end of the runway as you flair. Try and make the main and tail wheels touch at the same time. After touch down, pull the stick back into your stomach and keep it there through the rollout. Don't let a wing touch the ground until the glider has stopped.

Happy summer,

Leo Davies CFI

PS, can you use this amusing cartoon to fill in any blank space? I guess people can always colour it in if the weather is off and they've worked out what HASSL means.



Feat of Balancing on Chairs



Dust Devil Dash 2021

Mountain Valley Airport –
Tehachapi, California

Jim Staniforth and Kathy Fosha

The Annual Dust Devil Dash, where the only task is to fly as far away as possible, was held on Saturday the 11th of September.

Jim S: Since tow vehicles go more than twice as far as the flight, fuel prices added to the smoke from wildfires and the current medical considerations to provide a low turnout this year. There were only 14 entries.

Jim Neff had a new-to-him Stemme S10. For taxiing and refueling logistics he was given permission to launch from Tehachapi Municipal Airport but had to attend the briefing and start in the same area as the others.

As usual, I asked John Leibacher to publish our current database on the Soaring Turnpoint Exchange a week or so ahead of the Dash.

Looking at the SkySight forecast 5 days out showed that the Dash would be much better than the last couple of years. Each new model run would cut into that



Blue sky through Red Rock Canyon

optimism, but it was still looking very good on Saturday morning. The route of flight was going to be pretty standard, heading north up the Sierra Nevada, crossing to the Inyos and Whites, then turning NE into Nevada.

Recent fires in the Sierras had made us all forget about the route to the NNW past Minden. Ramy Yanetz – safari pilot extraordinaire - used that route the same day, between Warner Springs and Truckee, but it's north of there that the fires are bad.

I had been sending weather and TFR (temporary flight restrictions for fire fighting) updates every day. We had reviewed the probable route early on Saturday and it appeared that Elko or Battle Mountain were possible, with Crescent Valley, Eureka or Austin as alternates.

There were no clouds in the forecast for the first hour of flight, so it was a surprise to see some wispy cu over the Tehachapi Mountains at 10am. Nobody saw that as a good sign, waiting another half an hour. For a change, I didn't give anyone grief.

Launches started at around 1030 and pilots were able to find good climbs right away. This was an indicator that we were running late.

Once OF (Kathy in her Discus) was ready for a tow, I packed up and started driving.

The forecast had a small area of weakness between the Scodie Mountains (aka "the Walker Plateau" or "the Mesa") and Nine Mile Canyon. Kathy like many others had trouble there.

It was an opportunity to get fuel while I waited, then after hearing “9000’ still climbing” continued up the road. You find on a trip towards an unknown destination that the fuel tank feels empty when only at half.

Kathy. Jim wanted me to launch at 10 and then push out on task at about 1030. I thought he was nuts, but sure as shit the first wispy cu formed over the Tehachapi’s at 10. I ended up launching at about 11, number 5 behind Thorsten (KD), and quickly caught 6kts to 10kft (should have launched at 10!) and pushed north to the clouds over Cache Peak and Cross mountain.

I heard up ahead that it was a little weak, and tip toed up the east side of Kelso (keeping an eye on the convergence lines I had downloaded in my Oudie that morning). A cu popped right in front of me east of Rock Pile and I climbed up to 10kft and pushed northward, expecting lift over the Walker plateau, aiming for Skinner Peak and McIvers.

I noticed probably twice while crossing the plateau that both my Oudie and ClearNavs were showing W/SW winds at about 20kts, but at the same time knowing that the winds in the valley would be coming from the SE creating a convergence. I went to the east side of Owens peak, and got hammered all the way down to 5900’.

I briefly thought, well crap, this is going to be a short DDD. The fun thing about the DDD is that you’ve got crew and you’re going to land out no matter what, this changes the mindset. I decided I was just going to carefully push north and work the ridges to get past 9 mile canyon. Getting impatient at this point was going to ensure I landed at Cinder Cone or Coso.

Meanwhile, I watched KD, 20C, BB, TR, and I think



Back up on the ridge near Coso – northbound again

the Stemme and GT pull away or pass me on the ridge top above.

Jim: The Owens Valley looked nice, but the Inyos only had clouds where forecast by SkySight. They were also, as forecast, on the east side of the Whites. Bases were a little low, and apparently lift was not as easy to find as it appeared.

For those able to connect with the clouds in the Owens Valley, progress was good. Some were unable to reconnect and flew in the valley or picked up lift

along the spines. Falling below 9000’ in the Owens, still 5000’ above the valley floor, can be difficult. This was mentioned in a ‘Platypus’ article in S+G decades ago, contrasting how flying at 5000’ feels in Britain.

Now pilots heading up the Whites were starting to “go off the back” on a more northeasterly track. This is when communication becomes difficult. Not only are there mountains between pilot and crew blocking radio transmissions, mobile phone coverage becomes sparse.

Kathy. I arrived at the Inyos below ridge height and began to push north, ridge soar, figure 8 and try to find a decent climb. Below me, BB was climbing out of Independence, looking like he was having quite the struggle. As I slowly worked my way up and north, I saw BB head back to Independence, where I assumed he landed. I pushed north following the west side of the ridge, until I was finally able to climb up in a low spot on the ridge near Mazourka.

At about this point, I realized that the clouds were all on the east side of the ridge, and it would make more sense to commit to that side (meaning abandoning Bishop as my next alternate). This was my next big decision - and it meant bailing off into the mostly great unknown.

Bumping along the Whites, I had some analysis paralysis - it looked like there was a big hole in the direction I wanted to go, so I erred on the north side. Since the wind was out of the south, this hole likely drifted and caused me trouble later.

Bumping along between 10 and 12kft aiming for Austin (or the Toiyabe ridge to the east of it), I did my best not to spend a lot of time looking down (cuz I didn't like what I saw!). Coaldale dry lake was in glide and then some other roads in the database, all the while working to get to Hadley. The clouds turned toward the north, and the path to my right (toward Hadley) was blue. If I kept working toward Hadley, I was going to be forced to leave the clouds, and basically end up committing to Hadley. Problem was, I didn't really have glide to Gabbs (45km out) as my alternate off my left wing. But the really good cloud line was to my north east. UGH!



Coming into Tonopah, Nevada, a shadow of its former shadow.

So, with ~200ft over Gabbs on an MC 2, I turned north, and promptly fell out of the sky like a set of car keys. Headed toward what looked like a really juicy cloud, my next alternate became what looked like a very landable wide spot on HW 89 – a 2 lane road, with extra wide shoulders.

Jim: This year we had Kathy's InReach Mini in the glider and my SE in the van, each connected to the phone app, hoping that we could get texts when out of mobile range. But we had two problems: The texts from an InReach didn't appear in the phone app, so we needed to look on the devices.

This is difficult enough with the Mini, let alone in a pouch on the parachute harness. There was also latency, sometimes over an hour! Spoke with Garmin, this is an issue with the Mini. With a small battery it does not check for initial messages often.

To overcome this, users should send a message each way before the flight, and always reply to that conversation. Lesson learned.

Even after a struggle when away from the White Mountains, Kathy was now getting ahead of me, as the detours around mountains in the Great Basin are large.

There were a few pilots on the radio reporting similar “low spots” while trying to connect with the ranges.

Kathy. Down to 2500ft AGL and ~9300 MSL, I rolled into 5kts and climbed 4kft. Glad to have that behind me, I pushed north on the southern end of the Toiyabe range only to get low again (1500ft AGL) and kind of fall off the ridge, this time with O’Toole as my alternate.

Maybe this wasn’t all that low, but this is tiger country and it sure felt like it. Finally I climbed up on the ridge, and was able to convergence cruise (mostly no turning!) until well past Austin. I couldn’t quite get up to glide on Crescent Valley, and although the clouds ahead looked like they were still working, I was concerned about landing on a dry lake or somewhere else late in the day (tired became a thing).

Austin seemed like a good bet. And I’d landed there in 2009 and had fond memories of the place. BUT... I had time and decided to push a bit on course line to see how the clouds were working. 20C and I radioed some and I tried to contact Jim. No Joy.

I decided to turn back and then BAM! Up at 5kts to 13kft (cloud base). I had ~1500ft over glide into Crescent Valley on a MC 2. It was over 50 miles away (eep!), but the clouds looked good so I decided to go for it. Two things happened at this time - 1) BB announces he’s landing Hadley - good on ya! And 2) I radioed Jim but got no response. For whatever reason, I didn’t think to ask for a relay, even though I had relayed for GT multiple times during the day.

It wasn’t until arriving at Austin airport that I received the message about Crescent Valley. After



Right before deciding to push to Crescent Valley - Mt Tenabo is in the distance. CV is in the low spot beyond.

Austin, the road turns to gravel and dirt, so I replied: “2 hours out.”

Committed to a back road through open cattle range, with no mobile phone coverage approaching sunset...

Jim: At least the road improved after passing the gold mine at Mount Tenabo.

Was hoping to get back into mobile phone coverage nearer to Crescent Valley, but that was only a hope.

Kathy. I was able to bump up to a 2kft glide over Crescent Valley and pushed for the airport. Battle Mountain was on the opposite side of a ridge and Elko totally seemed like it was on a different planet, so Crescent Valley it was.

I couldn’t see anything - the valley itself was shaded and I didn’t find the airport until basically over it. I circled down trying to figure out which of the two runways was best - looking at slopes, wind, bushes etc, and had a perfectly smooth landing on an excellent dirt runway.



Grass Valley Road, with an hour or so to go

I got out my in reach and messaged Jim, who eventually responded saying he was in Austin and it'd take 2 hours to get to my location. 2 hours later, Jim rolls up having driven on dirt roads and through a gold mine. The only paved access to Crescent Valley is from the north from I-80 and Battle Mountain.

Some locals came out to see what had arrived - I flew right over the town on final - and they were super nice. I killed some time in the local bar (the town has about ~400 folks in it, all mine employees or support services) and took me back to the airport when Jim arrived.

Apparently, it had been quite the drive! The trailer was FULL of fine dust, and one of the rear windows in the van was cracked - likely due to a rock from a passing mine truck.

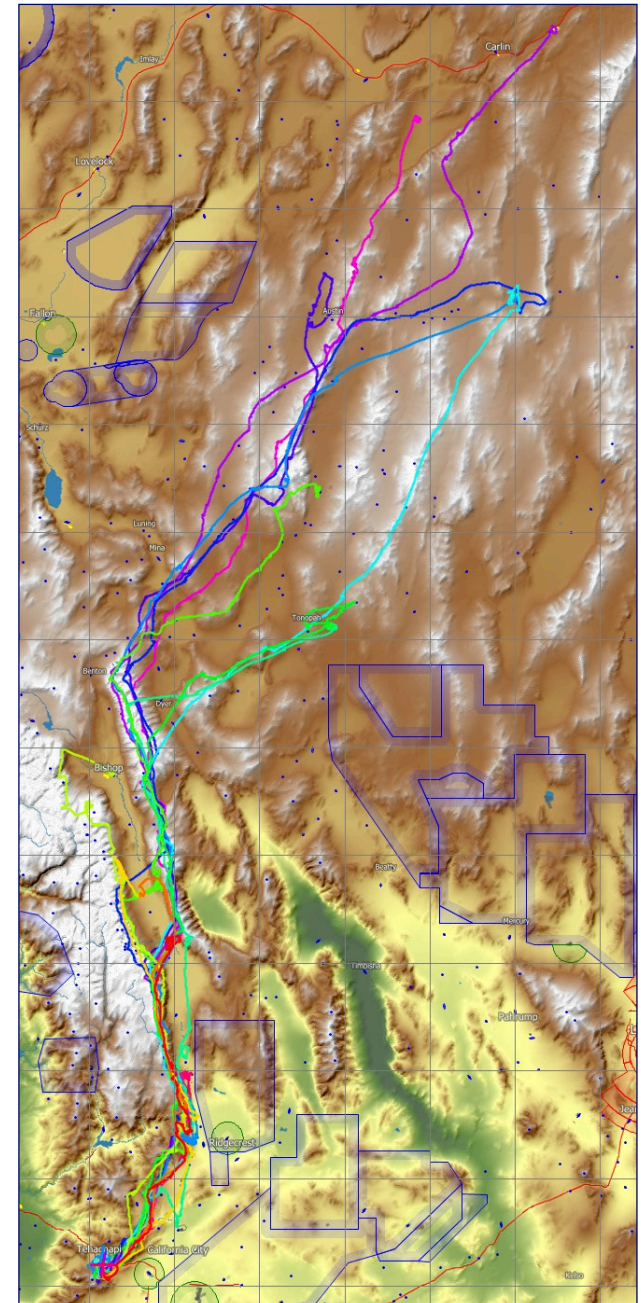
At 930, we had OF put away, and towed to the end of the runway, where we camped for the night.

One of the locals came back with a burger and fries from the only restaurant open (1 of 2) and said we were the most exciting thing that had happened in Crescent Valley in 5 years.

Jim: Confirmed the following morning, Kathy's flight was good for second place.

A couple of days earlier I'd found a crew for Thorsten Streppel, who would commute from Boston, do some needed work on his LS6a, and fly to Elko, 677km.

The Dash has always been scored in Statute Miles and using the SSA handicap system.



For viewing the comp area, waypoint files in CUP, CUPX and KML: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/0edqtqax4mun3cd/AACIJ_1tCcwSwViuUdFWw6La?dl=0
Or:
<https://soaringweb.org/TP/Tehachapi>



Finish and Track	Name	Sailplane	ID	Launch Pos.	Landing Location	Distance (sm)	H'Cap	Official Distance
1	Thorsten Streppel	LS-6	KD	4	Elko, NV	420.78	0.899	378.28
2	Kathy Fosha	Discus CS	OF	6	Crescent Valley, NV	381.21	0.91	346.90
3	Tom Riley	ASW-27	TR	12	Eureka, NV	338.66	0.878	297.34
4	David Heffel	ASG-29	GT	3	Eureka, NV	338.66	0.845	286.17
5	Niv Levy	ASW-20C	20 C	1	Austin, NV	309.13	0.912	281.93
6*	Jim Neff Scott Lance	S10-VT	ILS	5*	Kingston, NV	293.03	0.886	259.62
7	Chris Dowell	ASW-27	BB	2	Hadley, NV	257.97	0.878	226.50
8	Larry Tuohino	PIK-20D	HU	8	Tonopah, NV	218.00	0.95	207.10
8	Tom Coussens	PIK-20D	Z9	10	Tonopah, NV	218.00	0.95	207.10
10	Mike Hagoski	PIK-20B	3Y	11	Bishop, CA	157.04	0.95	149.19
11	Quest Richlife	LS-4a	5 W	13	Independence, CA	119.17	0.95	113.21
12	Bill Laningham	ASW-24	DB	7	Independence, CA	119.17	0.94	112.02
13	Oscar Alonso	ASW-24	RO	9	Lone Pine, CA	104.89	0.94	98.60
14	Jennifer Bauman	Libelle 201	4P	14	Cinder Cone, CA	67.55	1.02	68.90

* Jim Neff launched from TSP to the Bald Spot at 7700', restarted above Kingston AP.



Hello Mates and Matesses'

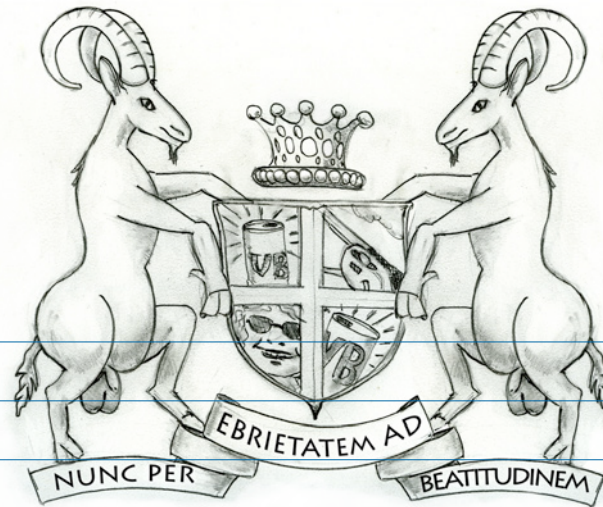
Not sure if Matesses is a word but the plurry editor will sort all that out - condescending pommie bastard that he is. I've had people say I write every bit as good as that Banjo chappie but by the time youse lot get to see it, it looks like something from the men's funny wall Murdoch lot. completely different.

I guess you lot think that we have been hiding under the office table while you have been locked down but nothing could be further from the truth. It's been non-stop, go go go since June or even July. JC, if "that bloke from down under" can get away with some of the porkies he's been telling recently, I should be OK with that shouldn't I?

I see that last time I wrote to youse all, we had had a big thunderstorm thing and the lights went out and I spilled a tinnie on that electropad I was using and spoiled my homework so I can't use that excuse for being really late. In fact the mice appear to have gone at last so I can't use that either. I might use the "writing by candle light and the homework catching fire excuse". I don't think I have tried that.

The big problem with a Biannual (biennale?) flight review is you can't threaten people with a fail quite so often. Bummer! So he's been pestering me for plurry weeks! I done good though as I think youse'll agree.

Hello All of youse!
It's GREAT
TO BE BACK!
TO HAVE
YOUSE BACK!



FROM THE
OFFICE OF THE
~~PRESIDENT~~
Manager

.....~~My arse is cold~~ the grass is green,

~~my beer is hot~~ the sun is riz

~~What a plucky waste,~~ I should have drunk the lot

I wonder where the birdies iz.**

This would have been an apt little pome a few months ago when we were in the grip of Covid lockdowns. No more - we are up and about and looking forward to welcoming some members back over time though not you feisty buggers from the city, particularly the Freedom GP.

In the meantime, we have been "engaged" in work around the club primarily on Runway 20. I have a few snaps of Brad Edwards hard at it with bucket and spade on the runway while we bludged off filled in some essential paperwork over a few beers under the shade structure but I lost them.

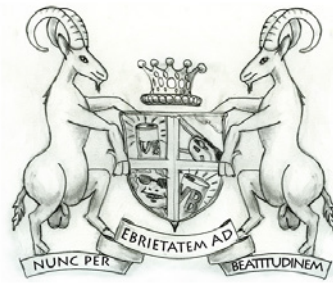
** Who is this attributable to? A small but valuable prize is available to the first, neatest correct entry.



Hopefully the success of his work will continue with much needed work particularly down around the Runway 14 end ~~where we can't see the work going on~~. Many thanks again to Brad Edwards for his time and having his equipment on site. I think that's him in this piccie but ~~that's as close as I'm going to get~~ he's too far away to see.

All has not been lost as far as flying is concerned.

Weekend flying started late September, beginning of October when the Tamworth and Gunnedah LGA's opened ~~and we had to let the gemy masses in~~. We were able to do training for Phil and Simon Mattheus from Tamworth for a few days but unfortunately ~~crook~~ inclement weather delayed progress. Simon will be back in December once school is over to continue. Simon's dad Phil has an aviation background having been a pilot in the ~~yarpie~~ South African Airforce and more recently as an instructor at BFTS in Tamworth. Who knows, we may see Phil in the back seat of an LKSC glider or the right seat of the RA Aus Eurofox.



Speaking of the Eurofox, this is now our RAAus training aircraft. Several of our members are ~~transitioning to it~~ flying it.

I have done ~~some exciting~~ a limited amount of towing of the lighter single seaters. We also have the ability to train tuggies in the aircraft so future ~~utilization~~ use looks ~~plummy~~ very good.

That's Andrew White who has paid handsomely to lean against it. While we're talking about the hon treasurer, he's asked me to tell youse that ~~unauthorised~~ BYO drinks ~~après~~ fliegen will be charged a standard airfield charge in these difficult post-covid times. (Note to foreign students; that's about the limit of my Spanish!)

— And another thing! Fat shaming! As an inclusive club, where a few of us didn't get up off the couch during Covid, Fat shaming is off limits and where found, some form of revenge will be taken.



During lockdown we had a couple "happy campers" stranded at the club. Pete and Janey came to the club on the recommendation of Christian Linnet who they met at Burketown a few years ago. Surprisingly they turned up at all considering it was Christian's suggestion!



Their stay here coincided with Jack the tuggie's birthday for which Janey had prepared something earlier. I let Michelle have a little treat and come to the club house for 5 minutes to watch. Look at her staring longingly at the cake!



By the time this tome hits the stands our Freedom GP, which was truncated cut short by weather, has been and gone. Everyone was looking forward to flying after the extended layoff and some good flights were had prior to the GP.

During the GP we had a couple of "hangies" converting to Russel Morris's kit. Seen here are Rick and Mark putting GCI to bed after a great week of flying.



Both Phil and Mark have joined the club as full members and will be back in December to continue their training.

Isn't it funny how old hangies look almost like the rest of us? ~~Can't honestly say the same thing about the other lot though~~

Some of youse will all be aware ~~from the state of the dunnies~~ that Wendy Gardner has decided not to continue working at the club as she wants to slow up a bit and do a bit more travelling with husband George.

We were able to get Wendy to the club on Friday night and presented Wendy with ~~several fishing related items~~ toys which we hope will bring back fond memories of LKSC when she is either on the bank or in a tinny with a tinny in hand. Enjoy life Wendy! Here is Wendy being escorted to dinner by that old lethargic Vic Hatfield, ably assisted by Ian Sawell





I look forward to seeing you back at the club as we regain our post Covid freedoms. For most it will have been a long time between flights and you will have forgotten everything. Please don't hesitate to ask for a check ride with an instructor so that you can be confident of your abilities when you blast off into the wild blue yonder.

Finally, this past year or so has been a difficult time for everyone what with the germs and all though unlike some, I have kept in shape.

As we approach Christmas may I take this opportunity to wish every one a very happy and joyful time with family and friends and hopefully youse will all get something in your stockings from santa (or santaess).

The New Year can only be better.

All the best!

Ian

PS, I found that piccie of Brad - I didn't think someone his age should be up that high but it looks as if the bugger is going to jump!"





A TIGER BY THE TAIL

If you are a cat person, the idea of having a pet which has the grace and beauty of a cat but large enough and fierce enough to see off any dog is an attractive idea. Something like a pet tiger cub or even a leopard, cheetah or jaguar might do. The problem is, they're wild animals and nice as they may be, they have a mouthful of teeth which can bite at any moment. Tigers kill hundreds of people each year.

I've seen zoo keepers hand feeding tigers and lying on the ground with their head resting on a tiger's flank somewhere like Dismalworld on the Gold Coast. They look relaxed but you can bet the keepers are alert to anything which could turn the tiger back into a tiger.

Thunderclouds are like tigers... best seen at a distance, especially if they have electricity in them. One reason for this is that if you're up close to a thundercloud, you have a very limited view of how big and bad it is and the chances of giving its tail a tug and getting away with it. It's probably a lot worse in places like the UK where they're allowed to fly up into black clouds. But in spite of everything, giving this tiger's tail a tug can be a lot of fun.

I don't know much about thunderstorms as will probably become apparent below but thunderclouds can make for memorable flying and though they should be treated with the utmost caution, really, *what can possibly go wrong?*

Many glider pilots died in the first few years of gliding investigating thunderstorms. Sometimes several in the same cloud. Shortly before der letzte Krieg, a group of pilots launched off the Wasserkuppe into a ferocious thundercloud. A world altitude record of 21,400' was set with several pilots making over 17,000' before cold and hypoxia forced them down.

The frail wooden gliders broke up in the storm and pilots parachuted down to safety - except for three. The bodies of these pilots were never found, having been sucked up into the cloud and spat out tens of thousands of feet above the ground, to land who knows where.

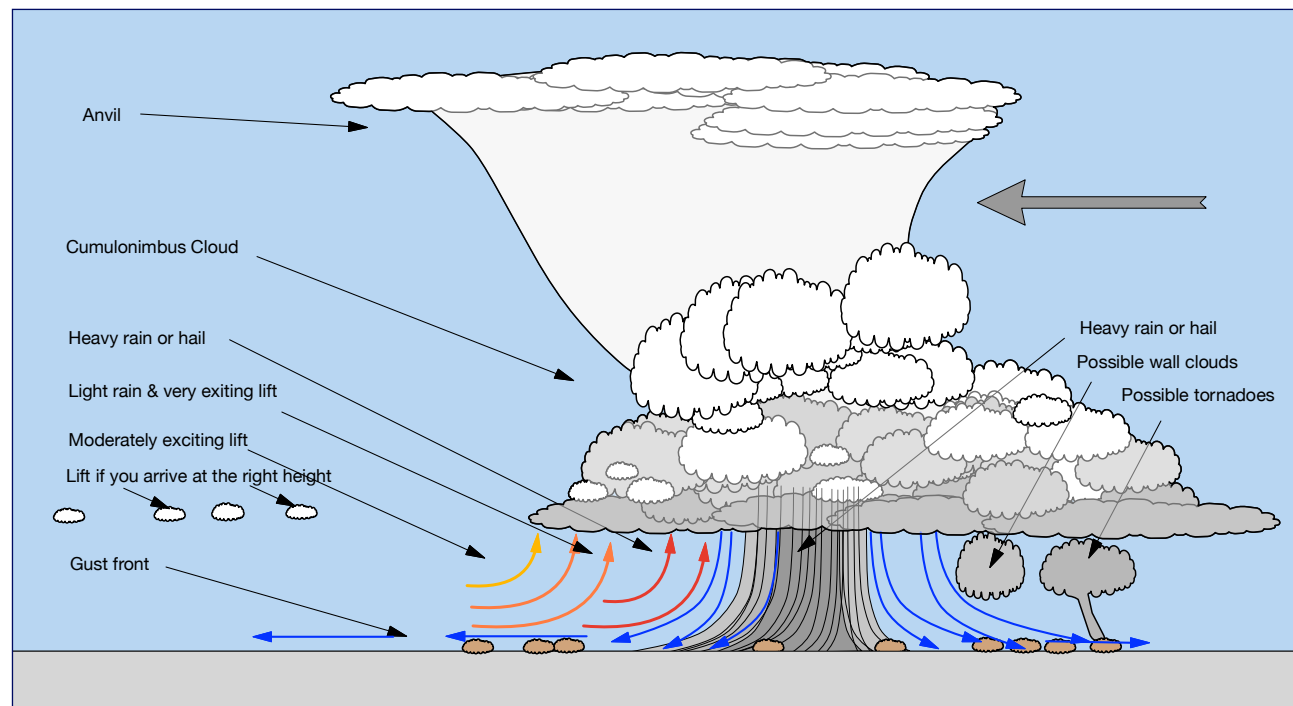
George Moffat edited a book called *Advanced Soaring in the 70s*. (This book was not intended to make the subject easy.) There were a few articles which put many, certainly me, off gliding for decades if not for ever. One involved George trying to land an ASW12. This glider was not fitted with airbrakes. Instead, it had a very unreliable tail parachute which was inclined to part company with the glider when it was most needed. So George decided that he had to learn to land without airbrakes. That was a terrifying story.

Another chapter involved a tail parachute. The writer was a little low on the final leg of a task and thought he might ease into the edge of a thundercloud to gain a little height to get him home. This is akin to being nearly pregnant. Some minutes later, he's in a full dive and still climbing at over 10 knots. To avoid exceeding VNE, he thinks it might be a good idea to pop the tail chute - which lasts a second or two before ripping off. More terror.

It was only after hearing a talk at Narromine and hearing Bruce Taylor and Jay Anderson on the radio, larking about under a thunderstorm which was passing over Keepit, that I relaxed enough to give the tiger's tail a tug.

THE DOWN SIDE.

While training, John Hoyer took me on a remedial flight in the (awful) Puchatec. It was a summer of big storms, a few days before a Polish/German paraglider pilot set a world altitude record after being sucked up in a huge storm over Mount Borah. There was a black cloud dumping rain near that ridge and John directed me over towards it.



As we got under the black, he asked me to look at the ground below and to note the lack of a gust front, which is often made visible by the dust clouds. There was none which meant that the cloud was unlikely to be a real thundercloud - because of course when you're under one, you cannot tell much about its size.

Timing is important. On the day of Ewa Wisnierska's paragliding altitude record, there were several storm cells dotted between Tamworth, Manilla and Kaputar with a high spread out covering almost half the sky. Within minutes, all these cells had combined into a wall of storms. The group of paraglider pilots had thought they could fly between two cells but they rapidly closed up and swallowed the paragliders. A Chinese pilot was found dead the following day.

When a thundercloud starts dumping rain (and possibly hail) there's an enormous mass of cold air

entrained in this downward moving torrent. In the bush, this gust front is marked by clouds of dirt kicked up and blown away from the storm in winds which often exceed 40 knots. The dust clouds give you good clues about the size and fierceness of the tiger.

In more extreme storms, rivers of cold air can descent rapidly and violently from the upper level cloud forming turbulent vortex rings at ground level as wide as 4km with wind speeds measured over 120 knots which are very dangerous to low-level aircraft, especially those taking off or landing.

A properly big thundercloud seems to suppress thermals for a considerable distance around it. Initially, winds are drawn towards a big cell from tens of kilometres away as it develops so when flying towards the cloud, expect to get no climbs until you are close.

Then when the rain or hail starts, the downdraft rapidly reverses the wind direction. Instead of blowing towards the cloud it reverses and increases in strength. If you get low in the vicinity of a thundercloud with little or no chance of escape, it's best to land well in advance of the wind change being aware of the chance of a wind change and tie down with the glider facing the storm cloud.

The cold downdraft undercuts warm air surrounding the storm cell and pushes it upwards. This can lead to anything from pleasant floaty conditions to off-the-dial rates of climb. The height of the cold air mass may be only 1500-2500' and this can lead to variable wind and lift over a wide area. Last season, a lot of gliders were returning to Lake Keepit in the late afternoon. Someone on the ground was answering inbound radio calls with the wind direction and preferred runway. Over a period of less than 10 minutes, the wind increased from 5 knots to gusting over 25 and the preferred runway became somewhat mandatory.

Gliders inbound at lower altitudes saw increasing headwinds and sink which made an embarrassing mess of final glide calculations in a few cases. Gliders which were at 3500' or higher saw a completely different set of conditions with little or no wind detected on the wind-o-meter and good lift and got a good telling off for doubting the authority of those on the ground.

Be wary of storms if you are at low altitude. If you're landing, look well beyond the landing area to see if there's a rain cloud which is going to affect wind conditions and if possible, aim to do a full circuit rather than a straight-in approach which doesn't leave many options.



THE UP SIDE.

A few years ago, a group of us were on a mini-safari. The day was unstable and storms were forecast but the task was fairly short and seemed manageable. I helped Geoff Sim and Ian Barraclough launch in the ASH 25 before self-launching. I have some pictures of them faffing about, getting ready to climb into their glider.

Above and behind is a rapidly growing cloud which I should have watched more closely. My glider was parked at 90° to the strip, so the cloud might have been visible as I closed the canopy and taxied out to the strip... but I didn't look. It was only when I was fast approaching the middle of the strip with no sign that the glider was going to lift off that I worked out

that I was taking off in a fairly brisk tail wind caused by the downdraft from the cloud.

We headed for Coonamble. Beyond Coonabarrabran and the Bungles, storm clouds were dotted across the plain like cauliflowers, each with a firm stalk of rain. We'd all got height over the Bungles and once up, there was little risk of losing height again.

The black spread-out round the core of the rain bucketing from each cloud was lifting. Lifting like mad in places. We watched a storm moving slowly over the strip at Coonamble, pushing out dust clouds all around. We all hung around our separate clouds waiting for the strip to be clear, edging inwards to get a big pull upwards, then drifting out to enjoy the dramatic view below in what was strangely relaxing flying.



We'd tugged the tail of various tigers who hardly noticed we were there.

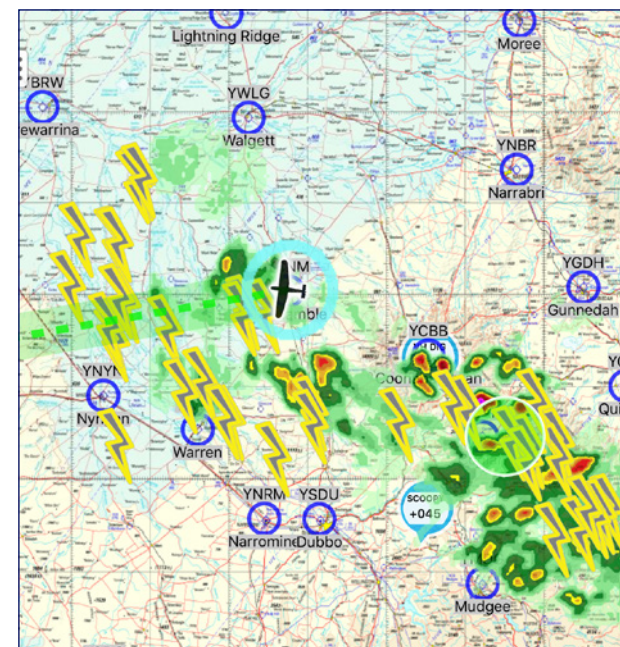
It's not always so trouble-free. Trying to avoid the gaggles during the Women's pre-worlds, I headed across the Pilliga towards a developing thundercloud near Coonabarrabran. My cloud was lit brilliantly white against the murky grey stretching westwards. To the east, back towards Mullaley, it was all sunshine and spotted CUs. It must have been a big cloud because the gliders over Narrabri were discussing whether there was lift in it... apparently there was little over the Pilliga. I was low going in and had a lot of trouble connecting with lift under the black and wondered if there was more in the gloom to the west than I suspected.

Keep Soaring

In the picture above, the dust front can be seen in various places in the lower half of the frame as a series of brown clouds. From 10,000' not much movement is visible so you have to watch out.

Coonamble is under the cloud in the centre of frame. 30 minutes later, the strip was clear of the storm but wet and we all landed without a problem putting on a little show for a few GA pilots at the aero club.

Later on, someone, probably Mr. Gloomy flashed around his phone with this picture of the area showing the heavy rain we'd skirted around. Not sure what those zig-zag things are.



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While scratching around, I noticed dust clouds on the ground being pushed out by the gust front but still couldn't connect with any serious lift. I was around 4500' which was low enough but then I saw the ground to the east rapidly falling into shadow as a curtain of high altitude cloud spread out from the top of the thundercloud.

I turned towards Keepit and found that the cloud shadow was moving considerably faster than I was prepared to fly. At last I found some lift to circle in. This was nervy because as I climbed, the thundercloud got closer on one side, the downdraft blew more dust below and the high spread-out blocked more sun from the ground on the other side to the east. Quite exciting.

More exciting was the line of storms I saw when returning from Moree one day, running for 100 km or more from Kaputar to the west. I'd read stories from many Keepiteers about long distance runs under cloud streets without turning and this line of clouds looked like a real tiger. After a struggle around Kaputar to

connect with the lift, I finally got high enough to turn and head west under the black spread out... faster and faster. How unpleasant it was!

I found, or at least I thought I found that I could maintain height and control the lift quite easily - turning away from the street, I could get a little less lift and lose height and turning back, I could gain height and speed up. Faster and faster, bang bang bump bang with the vario screaming away - but then a strange noise - a sound I had never heard before. What was the vario saying? "Overspeed - overspeed." Well, at 132 knots I wasn't exactly exceeding VNE but if I didn't do something about it at 12,000', I might soon be.

It's difficult to slow down and lose height when everything around is going up at 10 knots but eventually I got away from the black and into the grey and tried to relax a little. It was a long ride home. Once I had calmed down, I turned and tried to take some pictures but they barely hinted at the drama available closer to the storm.

The picture above is looking north-west towards Narrabri with the line of storms extending westwards to the left of the picture.

I don't know how many thermals I have flown. Probably, like you, thousands. The rare beasts, stronger than 10 knots are fairly memorable. Scraping away from a certain outlanding at half a knot can be memorable, if only from the fact you spend a lot of time doing it. Pulling a tiger's tail in a thunderstorm can be searingly memorable.

This politically incorrect article was written at the suggestion of Carol Shorter who feels that we'd get more young people into gliding if there was more emphasis on the frightening and dangerous aspects of gliding. It's open to debate... consider flying in this sort of weather in a hang glider or a paraglider. Dave Shorter was on the safari and claimed it was one of the most memorable day's flying he had done.

