

WARM AIR 21Dec 13

Aviation Sports Club Gliding Newsletter

THIS WEEKEND:

Club Cellphone 021 745 433 www.ascgliding.org

Saturday.

Instructing: Peter Thorpe

Bank Acct 38-9014-0625483-000

Towing: Jaime Wagner

Duty Pilot: Mark Belcher

Sunday.

Instructing: Lionel Page

Towing: Derry Belcher

Duty Pilot: Kishan Bhashyam

MEMBERS NEWS

SATURDAY *Towie Peter Thorpe starts off*

Saturday dawned mild and sunny with the wind mostly light and variable but just favouring 08 (in my opinion). After much discussion it was agreed that we would use 08 so after repairing a broken exhaust spring on RDW we duly moved to the other end. The tower was on watch which kept everyone on their toes but did create a lot of congestion on the radio. Jamie was there bright and early, keen to complete the tow rating we started last week and the first launch at 1220 was a trial flight to 2500ft which gave them a good 30 minutes in active thermal conditions. Another trial flight then Steve F launched in KP followed by Neville in SWN. At



last the Silent modifications are complete and a very sleek looking glider vanished for over 2.5 hours. Steve had troubles with his transponder and Neville had trouble hearing the radio when his engine was running but the duty controller was very tolerant and helpful and allowed them to continue. After aligning all the stars and most of the planets Jonathan launched in MP to try for a 50km flight to Springhill. David Foxcroft and Tony P each gave VF an airing and there was another trial flight. I needed a training sortie with 'the student from hell' to test Jamie in some of the non-normal situations so Roy and Ian volunteered to be the guinea pigs. Their attempt to box the tow certainly was a very good rendition of an ab-initio student having trouble remembering which way the controls should be moved and gave Jamie a very good idea of what he might experience in the future. After descending on tow and waving them off we had completed the syllabus so I was going to send Jamie off on a solo tow when we were told that Jonathan had landed at Springhill and was asking for a tow retrieve. So a quick refuel, fish the

VNC, airfield chart and GPS out of the bag and off we went. Jonathan was waiting with some local helpers which was good as we did not have to consider a wing down launch on a sealed runway. An uneventful (for us)

flight back although Jonathan didn't quite agree but we were soon back at WP to pack up and spend a few minutes reviewing the day over a beer.

Ten flights and nine tows for the day, a completed 50km flight, two land outs and a newly qualified tow pilot.

Instructor Ivor Woodfield continues: Saturday was forecast to be quite a reasonable flying day. I therefore I set off for the field early and was surprised to find someone had got to the base before me, I duly arrived at the field shortly after 9 to find Gary already hard at work on the fleet as all 3 gliders needed an inspection. It turned out that the twin required some extra work which delayed the start slightly. None the less we soon had a keen group of pilots all looking longingly at a reasonable sky, and as Gary signed the gliders back into service they were duly shipped down to the 08 end, which was slightly favoured in the 'light and variable' breeze. Many thanks to Gary for getting in so early and getting things sorted so we could get in a day's flying, and to Derry who came out to do a final extra check on MW before we could fly her.

Due to a couple of movements scheduled during the day the tower was on watch, and we also had Jamie, a new tow pilot, flying under the watchful eye of Peter Thorpe. The first flight away was an enthusiastic trial flyer who was keen to understand as much as she could about gliding. We got away at 12.30 for an enjoyable 30 minute flight. By the time I landed we had a couple more young trial flyers waiting so after watching Steve head off in GKP I set off on the next trial flight .. another enthusiastic flyer. While she had never been up in any sort of small plane previously she really took to the whole idea of gliding. We did a couple of exercises with Jamie on the way up, which went well. While we were up we watched a King Air arrive, and also watched as Neville took off on his maiden flight with the newly converted SWN.

Over the next little while Jonathan, Dave Foxcroft and Tony all took turns with the singles, while I got to take yet another trial flyer up into what was becoming a very warm and quite buoyant sky. Jonathan had cleared with the tower to fly north through a 'gate' overhead the field, whereupon his plan was to set off on an adventure.

The final launch for the day was Roy and Ian O'Keefe in GMW, going off for yet more Calibre trials, as well as providing a few more final exercises for Jamie. In the meantime Jonathan and Steve were well up north. It was not long before we heard that Jonathan had landed out at Springhill after a good 50K flight, and called

for an aerotow home. Well done Jonathan :)



A short while later we got a call from Steve to say he had landed out at Waitoke, and as there was no more flying expected I headed off with Tony on a retrieve, while Neville agreed to keep an eye on the caravan and await the return of Roy and Ian, Jonathan and the tow plane. Thanks Neville.

The retrieve was fairly uneventful,

apart from the bit where the road Steve had landed near had been blocked from the direction we were

approaching and we needed to find a way around. It seems talking to the farmer later that this had been done by one of the land owners further along. On arriving at the paddock we could only look on in awe at the great landing Steve had made on this strangely, and steeply sloping paddock which also had some hay bales to challenge the accuracy of his approach. On looking around it clearly appeared to be the best available choice; none the less an great piece of flying by Steve.

By the time we had gathered him and his glider up, said our thank-yous to the very friendly farmer and her over friendly pet lamb, and got back to the field it was around 1820, We managed to down a few beers and listen to a few stories about the day's exploits before locking up and heading home around 1900 All in all a good days flying, with 10 flights in total including two outlandings, a 50K, a good maiden flight for SWN and some happy trial flighters.

Folks from the Northern Microlight Club were at Springhill for their Christmas fly in when Jonathan arrived Brian Millett wrote:

Thanks to all of you who came along to join in with us at Springhill, and a very special thank you to the helpers who made the food appear right on time when it was most needed. I really appreciate the amazing way people offer to volunteer and then get on with the job. I enjoy having the freedom to go out and greet the new arrivals to make them feel welcome, and it's a great way to keep in touch with everyone.

David Wilkinson arrived in his brand new RV-8 that had only just flown for the first time the previous day and had successfully clocked up the flight time required to make the brief cross country flight, and we all were impressed by his efforts.



Rex welcomed everyone who was there and thanked the team for their effort then wished everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

After most of the aircraft had left an influx of people arrived from Dargaville so it on with the kettle again for tea or coffee. Unfortunately the food had all gone but fortunately the jovial atmosphere seemed to overlook the fact and all was well.

Just when we thought all was finished, a silent approach by an unfamiliar aircraft had us all guessing what it was and who was flying it until Jonathan Pote raised the canopy to reveal who was at the controls of the newly arrived glider. Another brew was made while we waited for the towplane to arrive and shortly afterwards the sailplane was relocated to the beginning of the runway ready for a quick getaway.

Thanks go to Tony Lentino and the Springhill Aviation Club for making the excellent facilities available to us. The total number of aircraft that turned up was 29, plus two gyrocopters and 1 sailplane..

Photos can be seen at:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/65227207@N03/sets/72157638686817855/>

SUNDAY *Instructor Steve Wallace does the honors*

Sw Weather wise Sunday was shaping up to be quite similar to Saturday with little wind and strong instability, meaning good skies from mid morning and afternoon sea breeze convergences. With no inversion to stop the vertical development Dr. Jack¹'s squiggly lines were showing cloud tops up to 28,000¹ by mid afternoon, hence the metservice thunderstorm warnings. Following on from Jonathan Pote¹'s fantastic success in achieving his 50km flight on Saturday, Roy Whitby was nervously keen to give it a go. So Roy was first away at 1153. Good climb straight off tow but unfortunately the start point was the big blue hole which was Whenuapai so gliding out to this and then back to the clouds left Roy too low to reconnect with the lift and he was back after just 34 minutes. Better luck next time Roy. There will be lots of good 50km courses on offer at the Xmas camp at Matamata so for those wanting to knock off their first x-country flight, xmas camp will be an ideal opportunity.

Tony Prentice was first up in MW with a 53 minute flight in which he managed to get all manner of B Cert stuff signed off as well as trying out the lift in both the East and West convergences which were yet to join up. Young Jack foot got in a 1,000¹ circuit and showed some good low level accurate thermal flying skills as well as completing his first full take off, circuit and landing.



Rudolph also had a nice flight in the convergence, coming off tow at 2,000¹ climbing in the convergence as we headed to the northern side of the Riverhead forest and then flying back to Whenuapai in the convergence, arriving back with enough height to do some spiral dive training.

Also getting to have fun in the exciting sky in the singles were Kris Pillai, Gary Patten, Ian O¹Keefe and Steve Foreman. In addition a group of trial flieters turned up keen to give flying a glider a go. I managed to get one nice value for money with a 32 minute flight and then had to hand over the reigns to Neville Swan to kindly finish them off for me as I had a family xmas BBQ to attend. As I drove away I had the wonderful sight of one of the local CuNim¹'s just a few km¹'s south of the airfield starting to dump its load of rain accompanied by the odd flash of lightening and rumble of thunder.

Towie Rex Carswell continues. Quite a busy day as it turned out. Gliding time totalled 12 hours & 12 minutes for the 13 launches made. Longest flight was by Steve Foreman in GKP - with 2 hrs 58 mins. Duty instructor Steve Wallace needed to get away before days end, so Neville Swan carried on with two more trial flights before local convergence produced a lengthy spell of heavy rain. The final trial flights awaiting, had to be cancelled. With everything dried off and put away, our FK9 tug was delivered to Parakai for scheduled maintenance - prior to our anticipated busy holiday period. It is always reassuring to know our club has a willing band of volunteers to provide transport to, and from, Parakai - as is required from time to time. For me, just a short 11 minute hop to Parakai Airfield. But for the 'road crew' - obviously a much bigger chore. In this instance, my "thankyou" to Ian O'Keefe.

JAMIE WAGNER - OUR NEW TOWIE DOES A SELFIE

Hi, I'm Jamie Wagner, the latest addition to the tow pilot ranks of the ASC Gliding Section. I am employed as an Air Force Aircraft Technician, currently posted to 5 Sqn, carrying out maintenance on the P-3 Orion. I have also done stints at 40 Sqn and the Base Drawing Office. A relative late-comer to the flying scene, I commenced training for my PPL at the ASC Power Section in 2009. Since then I have amassed over 350 hours, several type ratings and earlier this year attained my CPL. I have also risen to the dizzying heights of Power Section CEO. I am the current Regional Champ and past National Champ in Cross Country Navigation at the Flying NZ Annual Competitions. I have won the Great Northern Air Race twice in the last 3 years. A venture into Glider towing appealed to me as a fresh challenge and an opportunity to obtain a rating that few powered pilots ever do. It has also been a great way to meet fellow airfield users and a chance to experience first hand, flying ops out of WP from the Gliding Section perspective. I want to thank all the members I have met to date for the warm welcome into the club and particularly to Graham and Peter for your time, your guidance and your patience in assisting me in gaining my Tow Rating. I look forward to spending many more days out at the club, heading up into the Whenuapai skies with you in tow - and maybe a beer or two afterwards!

GLIDING – THREAT AND ERROR MANAGEMENT – or How to Reduce Mistakes and FLY SAFELY

Part 3 of a 3-part series

Arthur Gatland

Arthur Gatland started flying in 1963 at age 13 and has accumulated 17,000 flying hours including 2,500 hours in RAF fighters such as Harriers, Hunters, Hawks. He is currently a Boeing 777 Captain and instructor, and for ten years was Manager of Training and Flight Standards for Air New Zealand. He is an A Cat glider instructor, with a Gold C and 3 Diamonds, and was a previous CFI of the Auckland Gliding Club.



COMPETITION SOARING and other specialist flights

In the last two *SoaringNZ* articles, I introduced Threat and Error Management (TEM) as a simple yet powerful technique for assessing threats affecting any and every glider flight, and discussed how to use TEM in local and cross-country glider flights. Recognising threats allows pilots to predict situations where they might make errors or forget something, which increases the possibility of accidents.

As I said in the last issue, our accident rate in NZ is poor and yet none of our spate of accidents has been the result of structural or mechanical defects – all have resulted from pilots intentionally putting themselves in a situation that for various reasons has resulted in a crash. Ridges, rocks and trees do not suddenly leap out and hit gliders – yet we manage to collide with them on a regular basis.

This series of articles apply to every glider pilot in New Zealand, regardless of experience.

In this article I will continue the theme of TEM as it applies to competition flying, which of course includes all the threats for cross-country flying, but add a few important extra threats and pressures. Remember that to assess what constitutes a threat, we use the concept of a pristine flight, and look for anything that introduces a variation to this theoretical flight. Let's look at a pristine flight in the competition context.

PRISTINE FLIGHT (COMPETITION):

Recall from the last issue of *SoaringNZ* that a pristine flight relating to cross-country flying would be a 'straightforward' cross-country soaring flight where everything goes exactly to plan. In brief, it involves a well-prepared glider, a current and healthy pilot, and ideal soaring conditions over friendly terrain, with no time pressure. Additionally you will have chosen the task and this is likely to be based on the best conditions (predicted or observed), and you have ability to select your launch time, length of task, and the choice of shortening it if the weather deteriorates.

Of course, in competition flying there are many differences from a weekend cross-country flight, and these constitute additional threats for the competition pilot, and you need to have a strategy or plan to manage these threats. Let's review some of these:

Threats	Considerations	Strategies
Unfamiliar airfield	A percentage of pilots competing in any competition will not be familiar with the airfield or local area, particularly when entering the Nationals which will be out of region for many pilots.	Arrive at the site early, check on local rules and procedures, fly a few familiarisation flights. Get used to finding the airfield from several directions. If you can't arrive early, try to arrange a short local flight early on day 1 of the contest (in a glider, or hire a light aircraft).
Time pressure (ground)	Pre-flight: this is present every day in a contest; you simply can't afford to be late getting ready for launch. This can lead to rushed pre-flight, distraction from simple tasks, and forgetting critical items such as drink, snacks etc.	Always allow far more time than you think you will need to allow for likely delays. It is far better to get the glider to the launch point very early, allowing time for a relaxed drink / snack before earliest launch time. Use preparation checklists to ensure you have covered everything. Delegate this to your 'crew chief' if you have one!
Time pressure (in flight)	In-flight: Time is everything. The pressure to <i>keep pushing on</i> is ever-present, and every time you do one too many turns in a thermal, or choose a cloud which doesn't work as well as you hoped, the frustration and impatience increases. Time pressure can be compounded after what is perceived as a poor result the previous day. <i>"I only came 3rd yesterday, I have to push on even harder today (i.e. take more risks)!!"</i>	Preparation: on your weekend cross-country flights you should give yourself realistic tasks and timed challenges for practice. You quickly learn that effective speed-flying is surprisingly relaxed, based on good decisions made by thinking ahead all the time. If the thermals are weak, relax by realising it's the same for all competitors. Try to have a Plan B – <i>"If this thermal isn't at least 5 knots, I'll go straight to that cloud over there."</i>
Launch delay	By the nature of competitions, you can't launch exactly when you might like. Pilots can allow themselves to get frustrated by apparent delays in launching and by their place at the back of the grid.	In fact this should make very little difference to the task success. You must accept that (a) you have no control so accept your start time and (b) it's unlikely to penalise you and it could actually be an advantage. Relax and don't stress about it.
Navigation	Navigating over possibly unfamiliar terrain or routes that are not of your choosing add considerable pressure.	On your weekend cross-country flights, set yourself tasks over unknown country for training. At the competition, try to arrive early so you can fly a few local familiarisation flights. Consider hiring a light aircraft for a local scenic familiarisation flight (share the cost with other pilots).
Risk of landout	This increases in competition because you will try to complete the tasks regardless of the weather, whereas in weekend flying you would probably turn around and go home. When you start a contest, you should tell yourself that you <i>will</i> land out 2 or 3 times during the contest – and that you will make damn sure it doesn't result in a damaged glider or worse.	Landouts should not present significant safety risk if you obey basic safety rules. Be practiced at short landings, ensure you are <i>always</i> within range of good landing areas, and continually monitor wind direction and local weather effects. Never take a risk where a safe landing is jeopardised.
Pressure to get home	Landing out on a cross-country flight is always inconvenient, but in competition it means loss of points, possibly cancelling any chance of winning the contest, and could mean a long retrieve resulting in a late night and	In your mind, carefully separate 'tactical risk' from safety risk. It might be smart to ignore a weak thermal and push on to a better looking thermal – albeit getting a bit lower – <i>as long as</i> there are good paddocks around. However

	fatigue for tomorrow's task, or even missing the start time. There is an overwhelming temptation to push the boundaries to prevent landing out.	NEVER defer the decision to land out <i>hoping</i> another thermal will appear by magic – because it won't. If you damage the glider, you can forget any chance of winning the contest! A safe landing is <i>always</i> highest priority for the competition points as well as your life!
Few landing areas	Many competition flights in NZ involve flights over areas with few landing areas. It is very tempting to just say "I won't have to land out" and push on regardless. This is called DENIAL and has been the undoing of many pilots in all forms of aviation. See also "impatience" below.	Always always always have a landing area in mind at all times. Make sure you have sufficient height to reach your designated paddock, and know your minimum height required to reach it. Do not leave the area until you have enough height to reach the next landing area. To win a competition you first have to finish the contest. If you take risks that <i>will</i> eventually result in damage, you will miss out on several days flying which really wrecks your points total (apart from the minor detail of risking your life, incurring repair costs and increased insurance premiums).
Impatience	Competitive pilots are always aware of the need to keep pushing on. This can lead to bad decisions based on impatience. You know you need 5,000 feet to move on, and be able to reach the next safe landing area. But at 3,500 ft the lift drops from 5 knots to 3 knots – you say "I can't waste time, I've got to go now – I'm sure it'll be OK..."	Listen to the little voice in your head that is telling you the required truth – that you are pushing your luck. Safety is paramount at all times – no exceptions. Gliding is a sport and should never be a life-or-death situation, however the evidence proves that some pilots have allowed it to become exactly that.
Frustration	Impatience always leads to increasing frustration, as things never go as well as you would like.	You must be self-aware and recognise when you are becoming frustrated. Then make yourself be careful, be methodical, and double-check all your decisions.
Weather changes	Unexpected weather changes have caught many pilots unprepared. "I didn't expect the wind to change direction"; "Unexpectedly the lift dropped from average 8 knots to about 2 knots"; "I didn't expect that sea breeze"; "Suddenly it started raining and I was forced to land in a rough area."	The term "unexpected weather change" is a contradiction. Nothing is more certain than the fact that the weather is <i>constantly</i> changing. This is a threat that you must <i>expect</i> to occur, and be ready. How many competition pilots have won the day because they were alert to the "unexpected" changes in the weather? Why do other pilots moan that "he was really lucky!"?
Inexperience	We all have to start somewhere! Pilots who have never flown in competitions can easily be a bit overwhelmed by the event, and excitement or adrenalin affects their thinking.	You must ensure that your first competition flight is the same as your last cross-country flight. Fly within your abilities and don't worry what anyone else is doing. (In fact, this is what the top pilots are doing anyway!) Set realistic goals for each day.
Fatigue	As soon as you wake up and start your daily activity, you are starting to accumulate tiredness! This fatigue is more rapid when you undergo challenges, continual decision making, stress/adrenalin, heat or cold, dehydration and hunger.	If you ever say that you don't suffer from fatigue, you are severely mistaken. Adrenalin enables many sportsmen to operate to a high level of physical activity for a period of time, but their decision-making often suffers. Glider pilots <i>will always</i> experience fatigue and their decisions at the end of a competition flight are often flawed. You must make safe conservative decisions and be aware of the risks of poor decisions.

Cloud flying	Instrument flying in gliders is a challenge, and requires training and practice. Threats include disorientation, navigation problems, rain or icing on the wings, procedural / radio requirements, inability to see where to go next etc. <i>I won a day at the Nationals once with lucky cloud climbs, but more often it's been a mistake – examples include icing on my wings which turned the Discus into a K6, or compass / navigation issues which meant I lost any likely gain etc.</i>	Cloud flying, like any specialist skill, requires training and practice and we don't often get the opportunity. More often than not there is no advantage anyway. I have heard pilots say they can maintain orientation in clouds without instruments – which is utter rubbish – gliders <i>do</i> have some natural stability but humans' eustachian canals are <i>very</i> easily disoriented. If you're not an expert in instrument flying don't try it in a contest!
Water ballast	Gliders handle differently when carrying water ballast, including during take off, aerotow, thermalling etc. Additionally it is another threat that needs to be handled before landing in a paddock or back at the airfield. There are weight and balance limits to observe, and with high altitude flying a risk of icing.	Don't underestimate the threat. Brief your wing runner, brief the tow pilot, ensure you have clearance on both sides in case of ground loop. Know your best thermalling speed. Allow extra space from other gliders when thermalling because of reduced manoeuvrability. Have a contingency plan in case the water won't jettison correctly (or does so asymmetrically). Basically, <i>practice</i> flying with ballast routinely before you enter a contest. Also you <i>must</i> observe your glider's weight and balance limitations – do you know these?
Overconfidence	It takes a strong person to make an accurate assessment of their abilities and shortcomings, and over-rating your abilities can be fatal. Typically, all pilots go through periods of overconfidence in their flying careers – typically at 100 hours total time, then 100 hours on a new aircraft type or 100 hours after getting a Commercial Licence, or 100 hours of cross-country flying etc. Competitions tempt pilots to push their personal limits, and after one successful contest day you can easily convince yourself that you are a god and can handle anything. Well ... you're not and you can't.	"Pride comes before a fall", Proverbs 16.18, which shows how long humans have been aware of the dangers of overconfidence. Ask any pilot who has flown 10,000 hours and they will openly admit you <i>never</i> stop learning about flying, and you will <i>always</i> make errors of judgement. Anytime you read accident reports and find yourself saying "what an idiot", or "I would never do that", or "I could have coped with that" – then YOU are overconfident. Always look for your mistakes – because they are there! The important thing is to recognise the big ones!
Poor preparation	Poor preparation can stem from overconfidence. ("I don't need careful preparation because my experience or natural ability will see me through".) Or it can stem from laziness, or lack of organisation or lack of time.	In all cases, don't underestimate the dangers of lack of preparation, which can lead to errors in rigging, forgetting essential equipment, not being mentally prepared, added time pressure, and finally that little nagging voice that says, "I think I've forgotten to do something" which is a huge distraction (but it's probably correct!).
Final glides	Final glides are a huge threat due to their nature – intentionally flying lower than normal, often based on a calculated glide distance which may or not be correct, through unknown lift / sink, coupled with fatigue at the end of a long flight and hours of adrenalin. There is a common threat of crossing the finish line and having no plan on	Firstly, practise final glides regularly (this doesn't mean a beat-up – it means practising the judgement involved with appropriate radio calls and local rules etc.) Secondly, make sure you always have a safe speed, and <u>plan</u> how you will land. If your plan is to pull up into a

	<p>how to actually land! This is partly caused by the phenomenon of 'anti-climax' – after stress or pressure is removed, particularly after a success, the earlier continual adrenalin causes an anti-climax, and people feel very flat and suddenly tired. This shows up as pilots finish a task but actually relax and forget to think about landing safely. <i>I have personally seen several accidents after misjudged final glides, including trying to pull up into the circuit with insufficient speed.</i></p>	<p>circuit, you must always have a Plan B – usually landing straight in if you don't have over 100 knots at the finish line.</p> <p><i>Frank Gatland – who was still doing safe final glides at age 85 – was a firm advocate of always landing straight in – it is safe, just as fast, and removed the extra threats and challenges of a low circuit when you are tired.</i></p> <p>If you commit to a final glide and it is looking doubtful, <i>don't wait</i> until 500 feet to decide you're not going to make it. Start looking for lift at say 1500 feet, and commit to a paddock landing in good time.</p>
Other gliders	Competitions involve large numbers of gliders often in close proximity. Mid-air are invariably fatal.	<p>Lookout, lookout, lookout.</p> <p>Particularly pre-start and at turnpoints – but just as important at all times.</p>
High altitude	<p>In Part 2, I talked briefly about some of the threats in wave flying. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of oxygen • Cold temperature • Higher wind speeds • Icing • Terrain • Aircraft limitations – IAS/TAS relationship • Turbulence <p>In competition the threats are the same but the temptation is greater to push on when you are cold, low on oxygen, or otherwise uncertain about some aspect of the flight.</p>	<p>Without overstating the issues, any of these can kill if you don't understand the issues and procedures. However with correct training, preparation, and self-monitoring and self-discipline, there should be no issues with any of these. Never be complacent with wave flying. Remember the 'catch 22' that hypoxia can lead to euphoria, over-confidence and loss of self-criticism – so if you find yourself thinking everything is fantastic, check your oxygen!</p> <p>All glider pilots should undergo RNZAF hypoxia training – it is an invaluable experience!</p>

I could go on and on – but hopefully you have picked up the themes involved here. It's all about recognising threats on any flight and managing them so that they do not lead to errors or significant risks. In other words, AWARENESS of the Threats and the right ATTITUDE for safe competition flying. As I said in Part 2 of this series, cross-country flying by its very nature has a significant number of threats, including continual possibility of landout, weather changes, unpredictable lift, different terrain with changes in height above sea level, often areas of partly unlandable country, or flat but very small paddocks, use of unfamiliar hills to find ridge lift, navigation challenges, and so on. It is actually the presence of these threats that form part of the challenge, the fun and satisfaction of cross-country flying. Competition raises this to a higher level, as you test your skills against some very skilled and experienced pilots. However you **must not** underestimate the risks that these challenges present. Because of often longer duration flights, dehydration and hunger are always present to some extent, and have an insidious effect on your decision-making. *In the Nationals at Omarama years ago, I pushed a bit too far past the last good paddock but didn't find lift and had to turn back to the paddock, and only just made it, ground-looping and giving myself a scare. I should have made the decision to land much earlier. I actually won the day but almost damaged the glider – why? – if I had landed in the paddock first time I would still have won and not risked injury or damage, apart from the embarrassment!*

MANAGING THREATS:

All these threats increase your likelihood of making an error. In this context we are not talking about errors in speed-flying, like not picking the strongest thermal, or incorrect speed-to-fly technique. We are discussing errors that result in reduced safety margins, or ultimately could contribute to an incident or accident. Most pilots can very easily recognise all threats if they think about it, but a superior pilot will implement a strategy to prevent an error resulting from any of these threats.

INEXPERIENCE and INSTRUCTOR RESPONSIBILITY:

Once again, instructors and experienced competition pilots must help us lift our game. They should be aware that inexperienced competition pilots (and even experienced ones!) may not recognise all threats existing on any particular day. You can help these pilots by simple discussions about the task, the weather, the terrain etc. A short helpful chat to ensure he is fully prepared, and has a plan, and is mentally prepared to land out if necessary, may save his life. It will actually help you to think about the Threats and focus your own mind on safety.

As I said previously, the main ways that new pilots can gain experience and knowledge is by instructors or experienced pilots passing on these thoughts, OR letting them learn by making mistakes! Which method is better??!!

CONSEQUENCES OF ERRORS:

When competition flying, the most common and most serious safety-related errors – that of late paddock selection and speed maintenance when ridge flying – have consistently proven to have serious implications including major damage, injury or death. Yet collectively we persist in committing these errors. To be blunt – why are we that dumb? I don't know ... but I suspect it's gross over-confidence, or ignorance, or denial – “it'll never happen to me.”

All I can say is that if this applies to you, then **YOU** need to wake up and realise how illogical your attitude is. Just ask your wife/husband what they think about your attitude to survival...

SUMMARY FOR ALL GLIDER FLYING:

Every glider flight, whether local, cross-country or competition, involves some threats, and all pilots must ensure they recognise these and have a strategy to manage the threats and prevent errors, and/or have a process to catch errors or slips that may have occurred. Remember we ALL make some mistakes on every flight – the important thing is to ensure they are not critical ones, or that they are captured before they lead to an undesirable position.

WHAT ARE THREATS?

- Any variation to our straightforward pristine flight is a threat
- Every threat increases the likelihood of an error being committed
- Every threat requires a positive strategy to manage it and prevent errors

USEFUL STRATEGIES: A reminder that the following are just a few examples of TEM strategies that should become automatic to be a skilled and safe pilot.

TEM STRATEGIES:

- Use SOPs / Procedures diligently
- Don't succumb to time pressure
- Always fly the glider first
- When fatigued be more careful and conscientious
- After interruptions, say “Where was I?”
- It is important to carry out a Situation Awareness review after a period of high workload
- Don't 'see what you expect to see' – look for errors
- Listen to 'that little voice' that questions what you are doing
- Take advice from other pilots, especially experienced glider pilots
- Check your ATTITUDE – safety above all else – it is after all a sport and should never become a life-or-death situation.

TO EVERY GLIDER PILOT:

Acknowledging your vulnerability to mistakes is actually a sign of strength. In flying, you never stop learning. Every flight, whether you have 50 hours, 500 hours, or 15,000 hours, presents you with the same threats that must be recognised and managed. On every single flight you need to ask:

- What are my threats today?
- How will I manage and mitigate these?

HAVE FUN OUT THERE – BUT BE SAFE

DUTY ROSTER FOR NOVEMBER, DECEMBER 2013, JANUARY 2014 Final

Month	Date	Time	Duty Pilot	Instructor	Tow Pilot
NOVEMBER	2	am pm	B Hocking -	L Page -	C Rook -
	3	am pm	B Mawhinney -	R Burns -	R Brookes -
	9	am pm	E McPherson -	P Coveney -	P Thorpe / Jamie Wagner
	10	am pm	W Harman -	I Woodfield -	R Carswell -
	16	am pm	T O'Rourke -	S Wallace -	D Belcher -
	17	am pm	K Pillai -	R Burns -	G Lake -
	23	am pm	R Pitt -	R Carswell -	C Rook -
	24	am pm	J Pote -	R Burns -	P Thorpe / Jamie Wagner
	30	am pm	T Prentice -	P Thorpe -	D Belcher -
DECEMBER	1	am pm	G Rosenfeldt -	I Woodfield -	R Carswell -
	7	am pm	J Rosenfeldt -	A MacKay -	P Thorpe / Jamie Wagner
	8	am pm	R Struyek -	R Carswell -	C Rook -
	14	am pm	R Thompson -	D Todd -	P Thorpe / J Wagner
	15	am pm	G Healey -	S Wallace -	R Carswell -
	21	am pm	M Belcher	P Thorpe	J Wagner
	22	am pm	K Bhashyam	L Page	D Belcher
	28	am pm		XMAS ROSTER	
	29	am pm		XMAS ROSTER	
JANUARY 2014	4	am pm		XMAS ROSTER	
	5	am pm		XMAS ROSTER	
	11	am pm	R Forster	P Coveney	G Lake
	12	am pm	K Bridges	R Burns	C Rook
	18	am pm	S Foreman	R Carswell	P Thorpe
	19	am pm	K Bridges	I Woodfield	D Belcher
AUCKLAND ANNIVERSARY	25	am pm	D Foxcroft	S Wallace	J Wagner
	26	am pm	J Pote	P Thorpe	R Carswell
	27	am pm	C Hall	L Page	G Lake