

Pilots' Meeting Held on 20 November 2015 in the Omarama Terminal

Attended by lots of pilots, took about half an hour.

1. Outlined lack of South Island representation on the SRC had the potential to lead to them having no voice. No-one in the room volunteered, but Grae Harrison was making an effort to find someone appropriate.
2. Pilots displayed some lack of understanding of the new classes, handicap split, whether the Nationals would be handicapped or unhandicapped etc – answered by Lex McPhail who had read the rules.
3. Pilots also confused about what trophies would be awarded and which would be retired. Hopefully this will be clear by next December when the Nationals will be held in Omarama.
4. Pilots said they understood the reasons for the changes for the North Island pilots and competitions, where there are relatively few 18m and open class gliders – but one set of rules for two different gliding areas & conditions was frustrating for all in the south.
5. Pilots said the minimum of 8 for a class is high (impacted on the racing class this year) and five was fine.
6. Derek Kraak prefers racing tasks, no AATs. Kevin Bethwaite's aim is no more than 2 AATs in a week's competition, but sometimes weather dictates that this is a good choice on other days.
7. Extensive discussion on attracting new entrants to competition. Encouraged use of club owned two seaters at competitions– but those present acknowledged the difficulty of getting keen racing instructors in them when they would rather be flying their own gliders.
8. It is seen as important to convert the 10 people at 'Jerry's course' (run by Gavin Wills the week before the Regionals) to racing. Kevin Bethwaite will talk to Gavin Wills about some small date changes, where the Jerry's course starts say 2 days before the competition, to get lectures/theory and flying skills assessed, then set novice style Pro Am tasks for participants, and meld them into the competition with one-on-one mentoring by senior competition pilots to build skills and personal connections. Suggest drawing names to match up senior pilots and novices.
9. Initial aim will be to help people get to their first turnpoint, and celebrate each small step as a success.
10. Those present supported the idea of open/racing/ pro am all having tasks at the same time, to suit the level of comfort of each pilot rather than necessarily the particular glider they owned. One pilot was flying hor concours in racing class for this reason, as he was not prepared for the potentially longer open tasks. This competition offered a pro am class but had only one entrant, who then did some 2 seat racing. Other potential entrants had done Jerry's course then gone home.
11. Club members are planning to spend the next year encouraging their newer members.
12. Meeting also recommended Gavin Wills be asked to market 'task' flying, competitions, to his customers.