AGC Weekly News

### Weekend Roster

#### Saturday

Tug Pilots: John Bongraine, Dion Manktelow Instructors: David Moody, Christian Derold Duty Pilot: John Robertson

### Sunday

Tug Pilots: Ron Burr, Wayne Thomas Instructors: Norman Duke, Anton Lawrence Duty Pilot: Jolyon Reeves

## 500km Day – 7 March 2021

David Moody

It all starts with planning! Over the summer I've shared with Murray Wardell that I've long had an ambition to complete a 500km FAI triangle in the North Island. So, he suggested that I should practice setting up my fancy variometer so I could make a declaration, enter FAI start and finish lines (0.5km radius, way smaller than the 5km competition start line and 3km radius finish circle) and sectors (not compulsory, just gives a bit more freedom than the 0.5km radius "beer can" alternative. Several experiments were required before I could make this work, with frequent reference back to the manual to see where I was going wrong. Turns out it was great advice.

Second piece of planning was to look at the weather Thursday evening, selecting if Saturday or Sunday was a better bet. Looking at Skysight, the answer was clearly "Not going to be a thermal day at Drury":



OK, lots of stippling...what's going on? Better have a look at the wind

"Goodness me!" (or similar words to the same effect...), looks like a decent sort of ridge day, let's see what Skysight reckons about that:

(The blue patches are forecast showers, just to introduce another bit of uncertainty/challenge to the conditions).



Looks promising. Maybe we'd better have a look at the wind direction in the Firth of Thames (often the wind North of Thames has a different direction from further South, and the ridge can be affected by wave off the Hunua Range, so needs a bit of careful study).



Forecast for 1400, quite Westerly



Forecast for 1600, wind has backed towards South West.

The best wind direction for the Kaimai ridge is about 230 degrees (have a look at the Holfuy website for the weather station near the hang glider launch point at the Golf Ball).

So, end of planning phase, crazy plan to do a 500km run up-and-down the ridge (twice) was hatched with Anton Lawrence, intended to accrue

some more OLC points. Previously I'd discussed this 500km trip on the ridge with Edouard Devenoges (GNZ Awards Officer) and established that the "old" requirement for turnpoints to be several km apart was no longer applicable, so we could use only two points, one for Start/TP2/Finish, and the other point at the opposite end of the task as TP1/TP3. So, a bit of work with Topo Maps came up with Kakahu Stream Fork, a little bit North of Fitzgerald Glade on the Rotorua Road, and Solomon's Point at the other end. I've read about a task invented by Steve Care that used a point out over the water called "HauOsh" as the first turnpoint, but I didn't want to risk missing a point if I wasn't high enough, so I figured the end of a point would be close enough. With hindsight, it would have been easier to choose somewhere like Kirita Bay, all that would ned is a quick 180° turn while still in lift; my turnpoint meant I had to take a couple of swipes in front of Pukewhakataratara, taking me up to about 1700 feet, so I could cruise out to the end of the promontory over the Mussel Farm to hear that satisfying "beep" as I passed through the quadrant.



Anyway, a good couple of hours were spent on Saturday night finding and naming my turnpoints, adding them to turnpoint files for the Oudie and my LX Navigation vario, after considering other options. Same mistake at the southern turn, my chosen point was a bit far back into the bush, I could have saved time by using somewhere closer to the escarpment, especially given that the forecast wind was a bit more Northerly than ideal, and the ridge turns away to the East in this southern bit.



Quick confirmation call to Anton at 7:30 on Sunday morning, and we agreed to set off on our mission. Arrival at Matamata around 11, where we found John Robertson rigging BI for a fly while on his return trip from Waipukurau, so we shared our plan with him, and set about rigging our machines. Thanks to Sarel Venter who assisted John and Anton by creating some turnpoints and getting them loaded into various electronics. Locals Dave Jensen (VR) and Tony Davies (XP) were ahead of us and launched while we were still getting ready. They headed North, and reported some decent showers, and that the wind North of Thames had quite a bit of Northerly in it, the ridge was "a bit soft". They chose to return to Matamata without venturing much past Windy Point.



A shower (Dave Jensen photo)

My own launch was delayed while a shower went through after John and Anton had departed. The shower had surely passed the airfield, but I'd overlooked that the ridge was downwind, so I was towed into the back of the rain, at least that washed the Waipukurau bugs off before I started on my task. Simple cruise South past the Golf Ball and Tauranga Road, then I had the challenge if finding my 1km start line over a fork in a stream deep in a gorge back in the bush. Not a big deal, but required a bit of focus, then a quick 180 to start the task. With about 25 knots of wind, the ridge was working well, and I decided to take the easy (high) road, cruising about 80knots above the ridge top...the turbulence was pretty solid down low. Besides, John and Anton were well ahead, as we'd agreed not to wait and fly as a group.

The run North to Te Aroha was straightforward, even a bit routine, apart from one colossal bump that made me pleased I kept the straps real tight, and I had a bit of re-arranging of maps and battery packs after that one! I debated jumping across behind Te Aroha, but didn't really have the height, cloud base was only just off the top, so not worth the risk. Further North, busy time changing to Harbour frequency to cross the Paeroa Gap, while pushing forward to stay clear of the 3,500foot airspace limit south of Karangahake. The ridge north of Paeroa wasn't that flash, required a bit of thinking to avoid the sink on the southern side of each spur, with relatively modest up on the northern sides, but easy enough to "sort of" maintain height. Actually, I drifted down along this stretch, passing behind Thames around 1100 feet at Windy Point, where I looked up at Anton southbound.





"Piece of cake from here" he asserted, turns out he was right, the Westerly wind worked well with the ridge direction, although once again lift was localised in the heads of gullies and the odd straight ridge line. Typically, the wind can be monitored around Thames (once the river gets wider) by looking at the wave pattern on the water; once north into the Firth, the wave pattern on the water is much more evident. There were plenty of whitecaps, and a quick check confirmed there was quite a Northerly component (roughly 270/17 knots for this part of the trip). As

mentioned before, there is usually a bit of concern about wave from the Hunuas, and once I got past Te Puru there was evidence – a cigar shaped cloud sitting above the lower cumulus, not very thick, but an indication of some wave action; a look upwind across the water showed there were three bars across the Firth, quite small, and not enough to obliterate the ridge lift (quick check while I still had glide for Thames airfield, just in case). There are also a few landing places up the peninsula, not ideal, but likely better than landing in the tide. I arrived at the northern end of the ridge around 1200 feet and took a couple of swipes at the vertical rock face of Pukewhakataratara to get the altitude I needed (1700 feet) so I could lose 500 feet into wind to round Solomon's Point.



The southbound trip was somewhat easier (tailwind component) as I'd already figured out where the lift was, so a straight flight back to Thames, rounding Windy Point at around 1800 feet, more than enough to set off over the more broken terrain south of Thames. A few S-turns here and there to top up for crossing some of the wider valleys (yes, I know I shouldn't stop, kills the average speed, but the lift wasn't especially strong or consistent in this section, and I didn't want to wind up low on the front of the hills with big gaps and limited height to glide across (conservative and comfortable, remember?). As I approached the Paeroa bowl, ther was a rain shower towards Tirohia, so I topped up another 1,000 feet - convection was working guite well under the cloud streets, although the lift band was very narrow, turning didn't work, climbing straight ahead was the trick. That put me above the ridge again, then the easy bit from Tirohia Spur, onto Te Aroha, and south down the well-known bit to the Tauranga Road. Not so flash South of there, but still working and predictable, and this time I knew where Kakahu Fork was.

After the 180 into my quadrant turnpoint, I looked back up the ridge and thought to myself "Really, do I want to go and repeat that?" Guess I chose, so off we went. Basically, rinse and repeat, with a couple of differences. After the shower at Tirohia, the wind backed about 30 degrees (about 240 versus 270 prior). It also picked up a bit during the afternoon mostly around 25 knots for the second leg of the flight. Once I got North of Thames, this was evident by the two wave patterns on the water, the more northerly big ones, and a rising pattern more SW. This time I reached Pukewhakataratara a few hundred feet higher, so I didn't need to stop before heading out to Solomons Point, quick view of the mussel farm just offshore, and I had more confidence that the ridge southbound was more consistent and stronger, so happier to push a bit harder (still in "old-man" mode, only about 80 knots though).

When I got back to the Paeroa Bowl there was a solid shower on Te Aroha, so (remembering one of Tim Bromhead's videos) I thought I'd just push into wind and see if I could climb. That worked really well, I delayed for the shower while climbing in 3-5 knots, and arrived on Te Aroha above 3,000 feet from the upwind end of the cloud street, no need to stop, just topped up height as I cruised around the mountain, then off the Thompson's Track and back onto the ridge for the "milk run" to Kakahu Forks.

Didn't quite have final glide from the Southern turnpoint (although I had an excellent run south of the Tauranga Road, clouds were kicking off the ridge and sucking strongly), so back North to about the Golf Ball, then another "Let's race into wind up this cloudstreet and see what happens, leading to a long final onto 28 with full brake from 2,000 feet.

As always, a great welcome from Piako Club members, who assisted with collecting flight records, de-rigging and helping us get back on the road for the trip home. A great Sunday's flying. \* very-near mid-air collision - glider joining a thermal did not give way to glider in thermal

\* near mid-air head-on, single seater took avoiding action, not seen by other glider (2seater)

\* radio request to lower undercarriage in late stages of final approach - better to say nothing

\* struck in the face by winch cable after starting tow-out, weak link broke, no serious injury

\* airbrakes open on ground roll, microlight tug, radio call not heard, rudder waggle not given

\* glider on final flew low over launch queue, other options were available but not taken

\* heavy landing to avoid 2 youngsters running along path across centre of runway (Raglan)

contest outlanding, downwind + downhill, ground loop to avoid end fence, minor damage

drinking water leaked onto avionics battery terminal behind pilot, caused sparking

undercarriage collapse on winch launch after bump on ground roll, launch proceeded okay

undercarriage collapsed on landing, possibly not locked down or fault with lock mechanism

wheel brake grabbed when applied on landing causing undercarriage to collapse

tow upset behind microlight, circling under thermal cloud, both aircraft released rope

unintentional ground loop after landing in long grass, no damage

unintentional breach of airspace protocols after losing more height in wing-drop stall

tug and glider on different frequencies when operating in controlled airspace

\* Commentary on Selected Incidents:

**Mid-Air Collision**: This is a very effective way to kill yourself and take another pilot with you. These incidents are being reported more

frequently now - which is a good thing, because it helps us to work on avoidance strategies.

There are two points to make here: the first is that a glider in a thermal always has "right of way". This means that if you wish to join a glider in a thermal you must do so without disturbing the flight path of the circling glider. Do not assume the circling pilot will see your approach and "make room". Safe joining requires adhering to the Safe Gaggle Flying Etiquette as published in the Training Program under To Cross Country Pilot, including complying with the 11 rules. Joining at the same height is particularly hazardous, so it may be safer to delay your entry until the circling glider has made another turn and climbed above you.

Secondly, "keeping a good lookout" has a very different meaning in aviation than everyday use, and involves a more disciplined and systematic scan of the surroundings. In case you missed the original training, or your proficiency has degraded somewhat over the years, there is relevant study material in the on-line Training Program under To Solo (Part 1) and To Soaring (Part 2), plus further excellent material in the Human Factors Study Guide.

The Operations Team will be following up some of these near-miss reports, engaging with the pilots involved (and their CFI's) to assess their level of knowledge and proficiency.

Wheel-Up Landings: These still occur regularly, often due to the pilot being distracted and not completing the pre-circuit checks. So, what do you do if you see a pilot on short finals with the wheel still retracted? The experience in NZ is that making a radio call can startle the pilot so much that they lose control and crash-land, whereas a wheel-up landing on grass causes little or no damage and certainly no injury. The advice is to not make a radio call to a pilot on short final, and if you are that pilot then don't try to lower the wheel at the last minute - you risk a worse outcome.

**Winch Cables:** A timely reminder that winch cables need to be handled carefully or they can cause injury. It's also helpful if everyone follows a "standard" procedure so there are no surprises.

**Contest Launches**: In this incident the glider was rolling over bumpy ground, being towed behind a

microlight. The pilot was not certain that his pretakeoff checks were done properly, or whether the airbrakes bounced open on the takeoff roll. There was a lot of radio traffic from the contest launch, and the pilot was concentrating on staying in line behind the tug. This focus tended to filter out the radio calls (it happens). The tow pilot did make a radio call about the airbrakes open, and wondered why there was no response. If the rudder had been waggled the glider pilot would certainly have noticed this and responded. Another reason to follow well-established procedures.

**Circuit Options:** Glider pilots typically become anxious when an aircraft approaches directly over a launch grid. If the aircraft is high and fast then there is usually no hazard. There were two gliders in the circuit and a tug and glider about to roll. The higher glider had not seen or heard the lower glider, so told the tug to launch, but the lower glider then asked for a stop. Despite other circuit options being available, and possibly in anticipation of having to avoid a launch in progress, the pilot of the lower glider chose to land short, leading to the very low pass over the grid.

It was pointed out that landing with gridded gliders at the launch point can be stressful: the landing is watched by many people so there can be pressure to make a good landing. The pilot might wish to land in a way which doesn't impede the launch sequence, even though this would only be for a few minutes. He may wish to land behind or near the grid to make a relaunch easier. He may concentrate on one option to the exclusion of others.

It's possible that "being considerate of others" can over-ride the primary requirement to make a safe landing in the space available. The main teaching with circuits is to follow a pattern which keeps options open to land in a different part of the airfield. The follow-up teaching is to ensure pilots actually make use of these options when it is prudent to do so, such as turning in early or changing the aiming point if better options present themselves.

Raglan Airfield: This airfield has a public walkway (access to a beach) across the runway halfway along. This is known potential hazard and is noted in Piako GC SOP's for Raglan camp. All pilots are aware of the hazard and this incident is an example of how difficult it to see people crossing the runway. The response was to land heavily to avoid hitting two young girls, who clearly did not know how to respond - the pilot reports that "they saw the approaching glider but appeared to be fixated on getting the beach side of the path and at no time seemed to have considered stopping, or returning to the side they had come from". In hindsight the pilot stated he could have treated the pathway as an "obstacle" and landed before or after it. The airfield is controlled by Waikato District Council and they have been made aware of the incident.

# The All-Important TIMESHEET

### Keith Macy

To the average glider pilot, a day's flying is a joyous experience. Competing with nature to stay airborne as long as we can and making the most of the gift that is a thermal. While you are enjoying this experience please take a moment to think about what goes on in the background to make this flight happen and keep the club rolling along. Sure, you have paid your membership, provided assistance in the morning to get the gliders out of the hangar, towed them down to the launch point, towed the caravan down and eagerly awaited the lift to arrive. But what else goes on behind the scenes? In this short blog I don't want to cover all of the background tasks and duties but solely focus on a subject that is dear to my own heart. It is dear to me personally as I am the one who has taken on the large task (Graham can testify to just how enormous this task is for a volunteer role) of AGC Treasurer. Apart from paying all the normal bills that we

have, my job as treasurer involves trying to match each and every flight with the correct member, check their membership status (A scheme, B scheme, Youth, etc., etc.) and then reconcile this with the amount of money paid on the day. This task is essentially a paper-based system. Up until this point we have been doing the following:

- Duty pilot hand writes an entry into daily flying sheet
- Pilot is supposed to fill in a launch ticket (aero tow)
- Pilot is supposed to pay EFTPOS for tow height
- EFTPOS transaction ID is written onto tow ticket
- White tow ticket is kept with pilot to pass onto wing runner/tow pilot
- Blue copy plus EFTPOS receipt stapled together and given to duty pilot

- Duty pilot enters ETFPOS and tow ticket number onto flying sheet in comments field
- Pilot can then go out and line-up, pass the tow ticket to wing runner, prior to getting into the glider
- Duty pilot records take-off and landing times
- After the flight, payment is supposed to be made for glider time, if you are an Ascheme member
- At the end of the day ALL flights should have these complete details
- Duty pilot scans the flying sheet into the clubhouse printer and selects from the favourite list "daily flying sheet"
- Treasurer then has to read the scanned hand written sheet and manually enter these details into Gliding OPS

Daily Log Sheet for: 14/03/2021

 EFTPOS and flying records need to be manually reconciled to see who has paid and who has not. Invoices then need to be raised

All of the above needs to be completed fully and accurately for the process to flow properly. What we often see is a considerable amount of missed or unreadable data, incorrect EFTPOS amounts (\$7.50 instead of \$75:00 is an example), incorrect glider time payments and no flying sheet scanned and sent to the treasurer.

This paints a very small picture of what we are currently are doing. Each step is connected to the previous one and requires someone to complete the desired tasks. It is fair to say we can improve. Below is a capture of just how we are trying to improve one of the above processes discussed above.

TOW

SEQ	TOWPLANE	GLIDER	VECTOR	TOW PILOT	PIC	P2	DURATION	HEIGHT	CHARGE	COMMENTS
1	Self Launch	GCB	18		Conal Edwards		02:55		Charge PIC	
2	CEB	GXY	18	Shaun McCarthy	Christian Derold	Vincent Johnson	00:14	2000	Charge P2	Actually #3 Sqdn not trail
3	CEB	GAK	18	Shaun McCarthy	Sam Tullett	Aarian Vermey	00:17	2000	Charge P2	Actually #3 Sqdn not trail
4	СЕВ	GDX	18	Shaun McCarthy	Dion Manktelow	Karen Shaun's GF	00:25	2500	Charge P2	T6918 Pay at EOD
5	СЕВ	GXY	18	Shaun McCarthy	Christian Derold	#3 Sqdn Devaraj-M	00:23	2000	Charge P2	Actually #3 Sqdn not trail
6	CEB	GAK	18	Shaun McCarthy	Sam Tullett	#3 Sqdn Paki	00:17	2000	Charge P2	Actually #3 Sqdn not trail
7	СЕВ	GDX	18	Shaun McCarthy	Russell Thorne	#3 Sqdn Mohammad-Ali	00:26	2000	Charge P2	Actually #3 Sqdn not trail
8	СЕВ	GXY	18	Shaun McCarthy	Christian Derold	#3 Sqdn Goel	00:31	2000	Charge P2	Actually #3 Sqdn not trail

This is an example of what can happen when we have a duty pilot complete the daily flying records using an electronic system in the caravan (this is an actual example from last weekend). It was a busy flying day with a group of air cadets. The manual duplicate entry from a scanned-in flying sheet was not required. This saved the treasurer at least half an hour of tedious data entry. The duty pilot job was easier as most of the names are already in the system prior to flying day. It becomes a matter of simply selecting the correct person. Charging also becomes easier as the amounts are automatically calculated.

As a club we are trying to move forward and improve our systems to make everyone's jobs easier. If we had paid staff completing this work you might say "well it is their job" but ALL people on the committee, instructors, tow pilots, duty pilots, treasurer etc are volunteers and give their time freely. This is a substantial amount of time, given freely so that we all can go flying, at reasonable rates. I personally know how much time the instructors have invested in me to get me solo this year. For this I am truly grateful as without this gift I would not be flying.

So, what am I asking here? It's simple really. As we move forward with new and improved systems like the laptop in the caravan, can I please ASK NICELY that we follow our basic procedures. Following these procedures means that the volunteers can also spend more time flying, like you do. Following some of the steps below will make everyone's day easier and make our flying more fun. So this is what we asking you to do:

- If you are Duty Pilot, please fill in ALL fields of the daily flying sheet. Please print clearly.
- A laptop will be appearing in the caravan over the coming weeks. There may be some small teething issues but please bear with me in this, as it will help to streamline our processes. Documentation

will be provided as well as training assistance

- If you are using a paper flying sheet, please make sure the sheet is <u>completed</u> <u>and sent to the treasurer</u> at the end of the flying day
- As a pilot, it is a requirement to have a tow ticket prior to seating in your glider, or lining up. To date we have been very lax in this regard. This procedure will be tightened up and you may find you are pushed off the launch area if you do not have a launch ticket
- Tow ticket and EFTPOS receipt filled in correctly and handed to duty pilot

 Duty pilot enters this into the flying sheet or laptop

These processes will be changing and improving going forward. The goal is to hopefully reduce the workload on key people and make us more Further updates will be distributed efficient. through the newsletter as we make these Constructive changes. comments and suggestions can be sent to treasurer@glinguckland.co.nz

Signed

Your "I Want To Fly More" Treasurer

### For sale/wanted

**ASH31Mi:** Accident free, built in 2015, 30 engine hours, 600 hours airtime accumulated 2018-2020, flawless engine performance, five-year check/overhaul in 2020, complete documentation, aluminum Cobra trailer, LX 9070 etc. \$356 000.00. Serious inquiries only to Ross Gaddes +64274789123

**Ventus 2a**: S/N 10 Equipped with LX9050 with Flarm and control column unit. Maughmer winglets - Refinished in 2008. Imported ex USA - no major damage history. Dittel FSG71M com and Trig TT21 Mode S (ADS-B out capable). Aluminium top Cobra trailer, wing wheel, tail dolly and tow-out bar. Re wired with LiFePo4 batteries. My partner Malcolm wishes to sell his share as he is no longer based in Auckland. I will either keep my 50% share or sell outright (#2 choice). This aircraft is one of the best performing gliders in 15mtr class yet is a delight to fly, even when tanked, and exceptionally easy to handle. They land short and rig in minutes. MY PARTNER IS VERY KEEN TO SELL HIS SHARE. Contact me - Ross Gaddes - for more details.

Has anyone got a copy of the Glide Omarama booklet of <u>country air strips</u>? I would very much like to obtain one and will pay your price. Contact Peter Wooley 021 170 2009.

Thanks to all those who have contributed to this edition. If there is anything you would like to share with the members via this newsletter, text or photographs, please e-mail me. I will be grateful for any contributions, whatever they may be.



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