

# WARM AIR 28 May 2022

## Aviation Sports Club Gliding Newsletter

### THIS WEEKEND:

[www.ascgliding.org](http://www.ascgliding.org)

Bank Acct 38-9014-0625483-000

#### Saturday

Instructing: I WOODFIELD

Towing: D BELCHER

Duty Pilot R WHITBY

#### Sunday

Instructing: S WALLACE

Towing: F MCKENZIE

Duty Pilot C DICKSON

### MEMBERS NEWS

#### In Warm Air this Week;

- Club News
- Weekend Reports
- TOST Weak Link Safety article
- Roster

Thank you for the pictures, stories and contributions from members.

## Club News

Unfortunately, Pw5 VF is unserviceable this weekend due to some technical issues with the Transponder. This is hoped to be resolved soon, but not before this weekend.

## Coast Running

Well, the weekend was wild and exhilarating. It was a West Coast Run Weekend. A weekend of firsts in many respects. Three glider pilots being Alex, Izzy, and Shiv taking their first flights down the coast. A first instructor sortie for Andrew Fletcher taking Alex down the coast in the twin. And a first for Tow Pilot Paul Eichler hauling a glider out to Muriwai. Everyone did a splendid job and had a great experience. Well done to each of you and a thank you for the members who were the support crew.

## Weekend Reports

### Saturday – Peter Thorpe reports

The hot word was that there would be a West Coast run on Saturday morning with Steve Wallace and Izzy Burr leading the charge. We met at 0900 with Steve, Jonathan and tow pilot Ruan waiting at the gate. Izzy soon followed along with Kazik and we set about preparing NF and RDW. Some consternation arose when we found the tower was still off watch but a quick call to Base Ops assured us that the controller would be there by 1000 and we proceeded to tow out on to the 26 threshold. Steve thought he could manage two runs so a call went out to Shiv who was the next keen candidate for a thrill ride down the cliff tops to Raglan. Steve and Izzy launched at 1020 and we then had nothing to do but shelter from the wind and wait for them to return.



We were able to follow their progress using Flightradar24 for RDW and the GNZ tracking app for NF using Steve's phone. We were able to see NF all the way and even when low on the cliffs. They returned at around 1300 after a great run and Steve then launched again with Shiv at 1320. Again a waiting game for the 'retrieve crew' until they returned at I think about 1530. Wash the salt spray off the wings and squirt some CRC on the metal parts before packing them in the hangar and retiring to the club rooms to wind down after a satisfying day for three pilots.



### ***Izzy finally gets her turn after 6 years.....Righto let's hear all about it.....***

It all started the weekend before when I was duty instructor and some comments were made about a potential coast day next weekend. As we didn't end up flying, Andrew, Craig, Alex, Shiv and I piled into cars to go look at landable paddocks between Whenuapai and Muriwai. I then got an email from Steve on Tuesday asking if I'd be keen on Saturday as it was looking promising. My initial reply said maybe but I did have a lot of uni work to do so I wasn't sure. After 3 club members responded saying this wasn't acceptable and gliding was my top priority, including one email stating my brother is expendable and even him dying wasn't an excuse (thanks Ray!), I realised I would be going, uni work or not.



Saturday dawned and for once I turned up on time at 9am, after we found a controller and it stopped raining we were off! The first part of the flight was probably the most exciting and scenic part, flying down the West Coast beaches of the Waitakere ranges, above steep, bush-covered cliffs and watching people at track lookouts waving at us in the distance. After getting up to 1500 ft we headed out over the Manukau harbour, my first time crossing a large body of water in a glider. After this we really started making progress, flying along the cliffs at around 100kts, often not losing any height at all due to how strong the lift was.



Soon enough we were at port Waikato, by this stage we'd dropped down to around 500ft, so needed to gain some height for the required 2000ft to make the crossing safely. At this point Steve took control and thermalled in some seemingly non-existent lift which anyone else would've been going down in, and after about 10min we were ready to continue our journey South. The flight down to Raglan was more low and fast flying, making the most of the strong lift off the cliff faces, you could actually see the grasses and sea spray blown up the cliffs and over the top. Just before we got to Raglan, a heavy shower was passing through, so we





waited for that to finish before having a look at the town itself.

Raglan was the furthest South we could go, so we turned around and headed back up to Muriwai again, with more fun dodging showers and flying along the dramatic coastal scenery. Unfortunately around Port Waikato my bladder decided it was getting a bit full, so by the time we were back at Piha, I was getting desperate and sent a text to the ground crew who organised an emergency vehicle for when we landed, much to their amusement. After scratching away in a thermal, we were up to 2000ft and ready to head back towards the field, a quick 10 min flight with the strong tailwind followed by a left hand circuit onto 26 and it was all over.



Thanks to everyone for making my first (finally!) coast flying experience possible, including Ruan for towing us, those on the ground for launching and record keeping and especially Steve for what I would say was the best flight in my life so far. Can't wait to do it again in MP next time!

### Sunday – Andrew Fletcher Reports

As usual when it looks like there might be a coast day coming up I am watching the weather from around Wednesday to see how it is developing. I was duty instructor for Sunday, Alex Micheal had expressed his interest in experiencing the coast for the first time, so it was all down to the weather on the day.



I arranged to meet Alex, Ray and Kazik for breakfast at our usual cafe at 0815 on Sunday morning to assess the weather and have breakfast. Sunday morning arrived; the weather looked like it may not be strong enough for a coast run. However, I felt that all was not lost and as the day progressed the wind might strengthen enough. With that thought in mind we opened up and got GNF out and D.I done ready to go. The wind gradually strengthened, the 2000-foot wind had remained constant at 230 degrees at 30 kts. This gave me confidence that the surface wind would become strong enough and

consistent enough to go. It did and we launched at 1130 after a large shower had passed.



This was my first flight as an instructor on the coast and Alex's first coast flight, a double first, thanks Alex it was a great flight. At this point I will shut up and let Alex tell his story.

### ***Alex time to share your story***

I had been closely monitoring the forecast over the past week and saw that things were looking good on Saturday for a coast run. Of course, it just happened to be the one day I could not fly due to a prior commitment. Sunday was looking OK though the wind was forecasted to be quite a bit weaker.

I was absolutely transfixed by the photos and videos Izzy and Shiv had sent me of their adrenaline-packed adventures on the coast. I prayed to the gods that they be so kind as to let me fly the coast too.

Andrew had arranged for us to meet nice and early on Sunday morning to make the final go/no-go decision. Tortured by the anticipation I had difficulty getting good sleep. The first dream I had was that the wind was too weak and we couldn't fly the coast. After waking up from this nightmare the second dream I had was that the wind was too strong and we couldn't fly the coast. Hopefully the real world would be better.



I arrived at the gate at 0730 to see the windsock with my own eyes but was rather disappointed at what I saw: a pretty limp windsock. However, as more time passed the wind was slowly getting stronger and stronger and the coast becoming more and more of an option. Then it was so good that Andrew gave the thumbs up. YES! It was finally going to happen!

Following a surprisingly smooth tow out to Muriwai we released onto the cliffs and started making our way south. I was a bit suspicious of how weak and how far apart the beeps on the vario were at the beginning but Andrew said that should not be of concern. We were losing altitude and not getting much lift from the cliffs. Uhhhh how long is this supposed to last?



Thankfully things started to develop, and we were able to maintain our height and then start to climb as we found the energy lines. Now that we were confident the cliffs were working, we could start to



have some fun. Down went the nose and up went the speed. My favourite part was zooming along the ridge lines nice and close and low banking sharply to follow the profile of the cliffs (that is to say almost all of it was my favourite part!!!)

Then there were the crossings. They were nowhere near as bad as I thought. Once we had the requisite height, which we had to work for by milking the clouds, we were able to easily tip toe across the other side of the water. Andrew impressed upon me the importance of not drifting downwind of the range during the crossing because the headwind and sinking air will put you in a bad place trying to crawl back to the lift. So we had to plan our glide path carefully, minimise control movements, slow to soak up any lift along the way, then back to our nominated glide speed.

Words fail to convey the magic of flying along the west coast. You're so far away from the rest of humanity. You're on the edge (literally and mentally) in the best possible way. Pure flow state. It was the quickest 3 hours I had ever experienced. Many thanks to our stellar ground crew for facilitating the flight, Paul for the excellent tow, and Andrew for granting me the honour of being his first student for the coast run and for being an outstanding guide.



The goal now is to tick off all of those XC syllabus boxes so I can do this again solo! In a glider, I have peed, I have vomited. Hopefully this won't be the one where I shit myself. *Get those double layered nappies*



## Up Up and Away

We should also note that Ivor rigged the Libelle during all of this. Actually we should say most members on the ground rigged the Libelle. His mission was to test the ADS-B in the local area. He waited for the weather to turn a bit nastier to launch and then fearlessly headed into yonder up to 3000ft. We understand Paul in the tow plane said this was a most turbulent flight, compared to the coast run.





The Support Crew



For the Support Crew, a West Coast flight is the quest to stand in the cold wild wind and rain and talk rubbish until finally someone says “why are we standing out here” in this.

Once the intrepid top guns took off, coffee, food, reading and maintenance work took place.



On Saturday we had the frontline view of Team NZ trial running their new Land Yacht on the sealed runways. Very elegant, amazing machine.



## TOST Weak Link – An article from Australia on the incorrect assembly

From: <https://magazine.glidingaustralia.org/mag/GA-59.pdf>

### What Happened

The tow pilot identified that the TOST weak link fitted to the tow rope had been incorrectly assembled and was double the rated strength.



### Analysis

The tow pilot was inspecting the weak link and tow rope for serviceability as part of the Daily Inspection before the day's operation when he noticed there were two equal link inserts fitted to the weak link. Both inserts had round holes rather than one having an elongated hole, which effectively doubled the breaking load (see photograph). There were no records of when the weak link had been changed, but it is believed many aerotows had been performed in this configuration. The tow pilot replaced the weak link and ensured the correct inserts were fitted.

### Safety Advice

The TOST weak link system is an engineered and approved system which prevents aircraft overloading in winch, autotow and aerotow operations. By using this system, the operator is assured of maintaining the manufacturer's airworthiness requirements for protection of both tow plane and sailplane. The GFA recommends clubs and operators use the TOST reserve insert and sleeved weak link system. This uses two weak links in parallel protected by a steel sleeve. Both weak links have attachment holes at each end and are 8 mm in length. The reserve has oval attachment holes and carries no load in normal operations. If the load exceeds the rating, the weak link will fail and the reserve link will take up the load. If the load is more than a momentary jolt both weak links will fail. For further information, refer to Operations Advice Notice (OAN) 01/13 'Weak Links – Selection, Application, Safety and Testing of Glider Weak Links'

[http://www.doc.glidingaustralia.org/index.php?option=com\\_docman&view=download&alias=1393-oan-01-13-weak-links&category\\_slug=operations-advice-notices&Itemid=101](http://www.doc.glidingaustralia.org/index.php?option=com_docman&view=download&alias=1393-oan-01-13-weak-links&category_slug=operations-advice-notices&Itemid=101)

*Thanks, Gus, for finding and sending through.*



## Duty Roster For Apr,May,Jun

Month	Date	Duty Pilot	Instructor	Tow Pilot
Apr	2	E LEAL SCHWENKE	I WOODFIELD	P THORPE
	3	R MCMILLAN	R BURNS	R HEYNIKE
	9	A MICHAEL	A FLETCHER	G CABRE
	10	R WHITBY	S WALLACE	F MCKENZIE
Easter	15	C DICKSON	L PAGE	D BELCHER
	16	K JASICA	S WALLACE	R CARSWELL
	17	J DICKSON	I WOODFIELD	P THORPE
	18	S HAY	A FLETCHER	R CARSWELL
Anzac Weekend	23	R BAGCHI	S WALLACE	G CABRE
	24	T O'ROURKE	R BURNS	P THORPE
		M MORAN	L PAGE	R HEYNIKE
	30	I O'KEEFE	P THORPE	R CARSWELL
May	1	K PILLAI	A FLETCHER	D BELCHER
	7	K BHASHYAM	I WOODFIELD	F MCKENZIE
	8	T PRENTICE	S WALLACE	P EICHLER
	14	C BEST	R BURNS	G CABRE
	15	E LEAL SCHWENKE	L PAGE	P THORPE
	21	R MCMILLAN	P THORPE	R HEYNIKE
	22	A MICHAEL	A FLETCHER	P EICHLER
	28	R WHITBY	I WOODFIELD	D BELCHER
	29	C DICKSON	S WALLACE	F MCKENZIE
Queens Birthday	4	K JASICA	I WOODFIELD	R CARSWELL
	5	J DICKSON	L PAGE	G CABRE
	6	S HAY	P THORPE	D BELCHER
	11	R BAGCHI	A FLETCHER	P THORPE

	12	T O'ROURKE	R BURNS	P EICHLER
	18	M MORAN	R BURNS	D BELCHER
	19	I O'KEEFE	S WALLACE	R CARSWELL
Matariki	24	K PILLAI	L PAGE	F MCKENZIE
	25	K BHASHYAM	P THORPE	R HEYNIKE
	26	T PRENTICE	A FLETCHER	P EICHLER