11-12 November

AGC Weekly News

The weekly newsletter of the Auckland Gliding Club at Drury, Auckland

From the CFI

The last of the ATC visits took place last weekend, with another 18 cadets getting a winch and aerotow launch over both days.

The orange Landboss has developed a clutch problem, in that it grabs and doesn't always release adequately. It was subsequently involved in an incident that, while no one was hurt, had the potential to be serious. On that basis I am making the following announcement:

The Orange Landboss is not to be used until it has been checked and fixed by the agent, which should be next week. It is only to be moved in and out of the hanger until fully repaired.

While it is already a rule, be aware that only licenced drivers are permitted to drive the Landboss vehicles.

It is important that the driver must have one foot on the brake when putting any vehicle into gear, especially the Landboss, which appears not to have a lock out until the break is depressed.

All members should treat the Landboss vehicles carefully and operate them as you would your own car. This includes not driving around in 4WD with the diff locks on, as this is a sure way to break an axel or diff, especially when turning on hard surfaces.

Please don't over-rev and thrash them. If it's not working, look for an alternative, such as one of the tractors. It might take a bit longer, but will help to lengthen the life of the kit and save the club costly repairs.

It is also important that no one is to ride in the caravan while it is being transported and no one is to be in the caravan whiles it's being hitched up.

Be extremely careful when hitching the caravan. Ideally, bring tow vehicle up as close as possible with the help of an observer. Then put the vehicle in neutral with the brake on, before getting between the two vehicles.

Please remember to use low ratio when towing heavy trailers and use the front tow ball instead of reverse for pushing back.

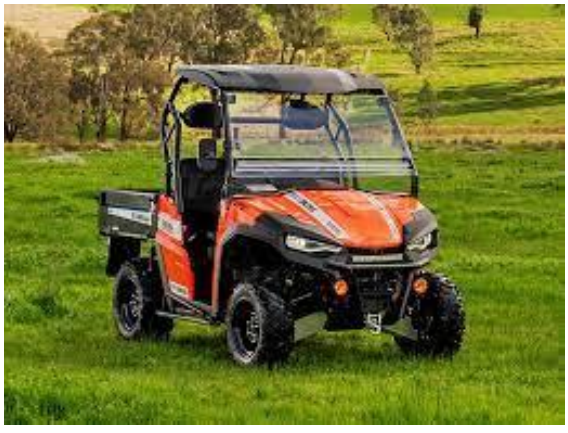
DX is on the way to the South Island, so we wish all those travelling good weather and good luck.

The forecast for the weekend is looking quite nice at this stage. Light and variable for Saturday and a light SW on Sunday. Cloud base around Drury should be over 4500' for both days. Last weekend saw at least one 300km plus flight from Drury and this should be possible again this weekend.

Peter Himmel has, for the time being, resigned form glider maintenance duties. Please refer any glider issues to myself until a new maintenance officer is assigned.

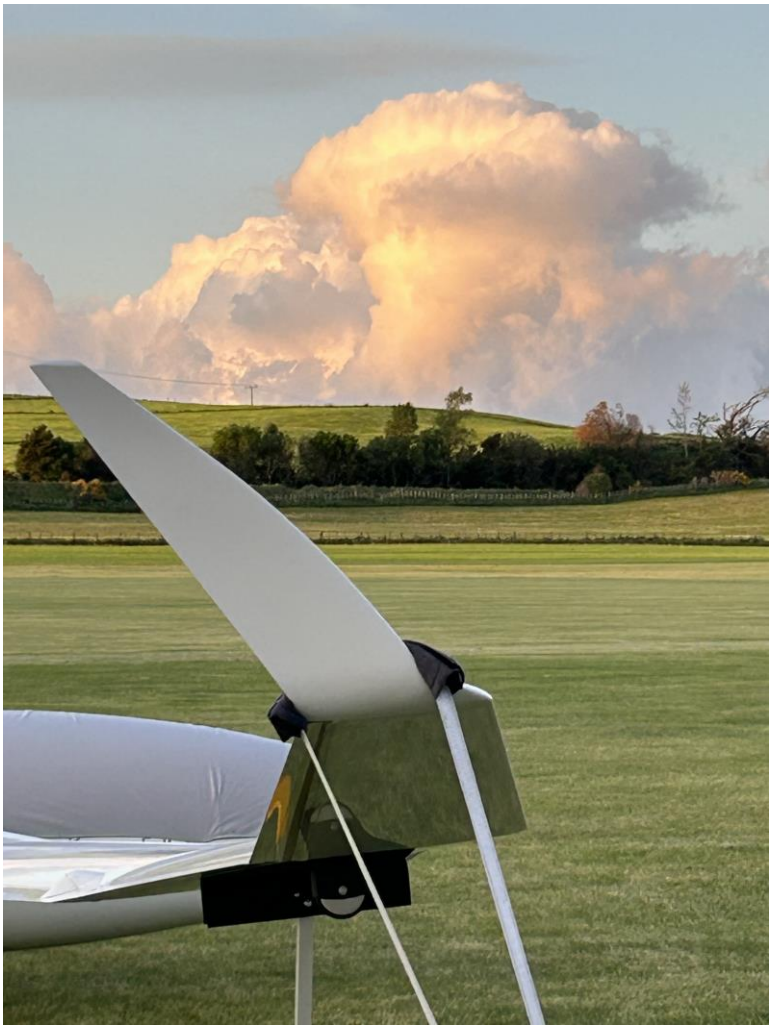
On the membership scene, we welcome Craig Miller and Dusty Chapman to the club.

Anton Lawrence
CFI Auckland Gliding Club
021 280 188



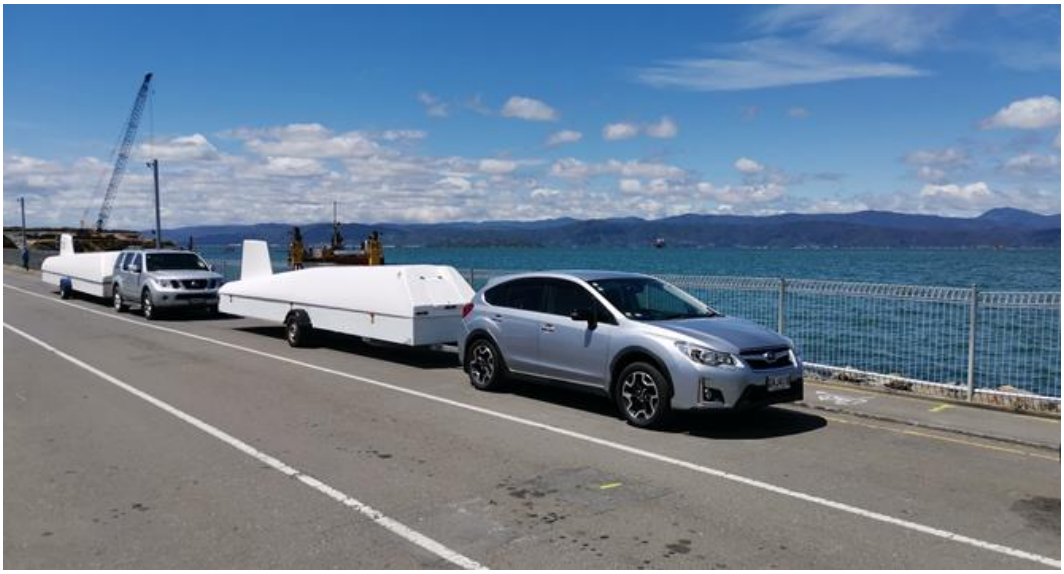
Taupo clouds – Wednesday 8 Nov

Gerard Robertson



Gliders heading to South Island

Russell Thorne



Two hours wait on the lineup for the Cook Straight Ferry at Wellington, after an easy journey for DX from Bulls with David and Marion Moody with ZD.

Look at those skies full of energy, all the way down country. Should have bin flyin.

Finding Thermals at Low Altitude

Adam Woolley
Courtesy Wings & Wheels

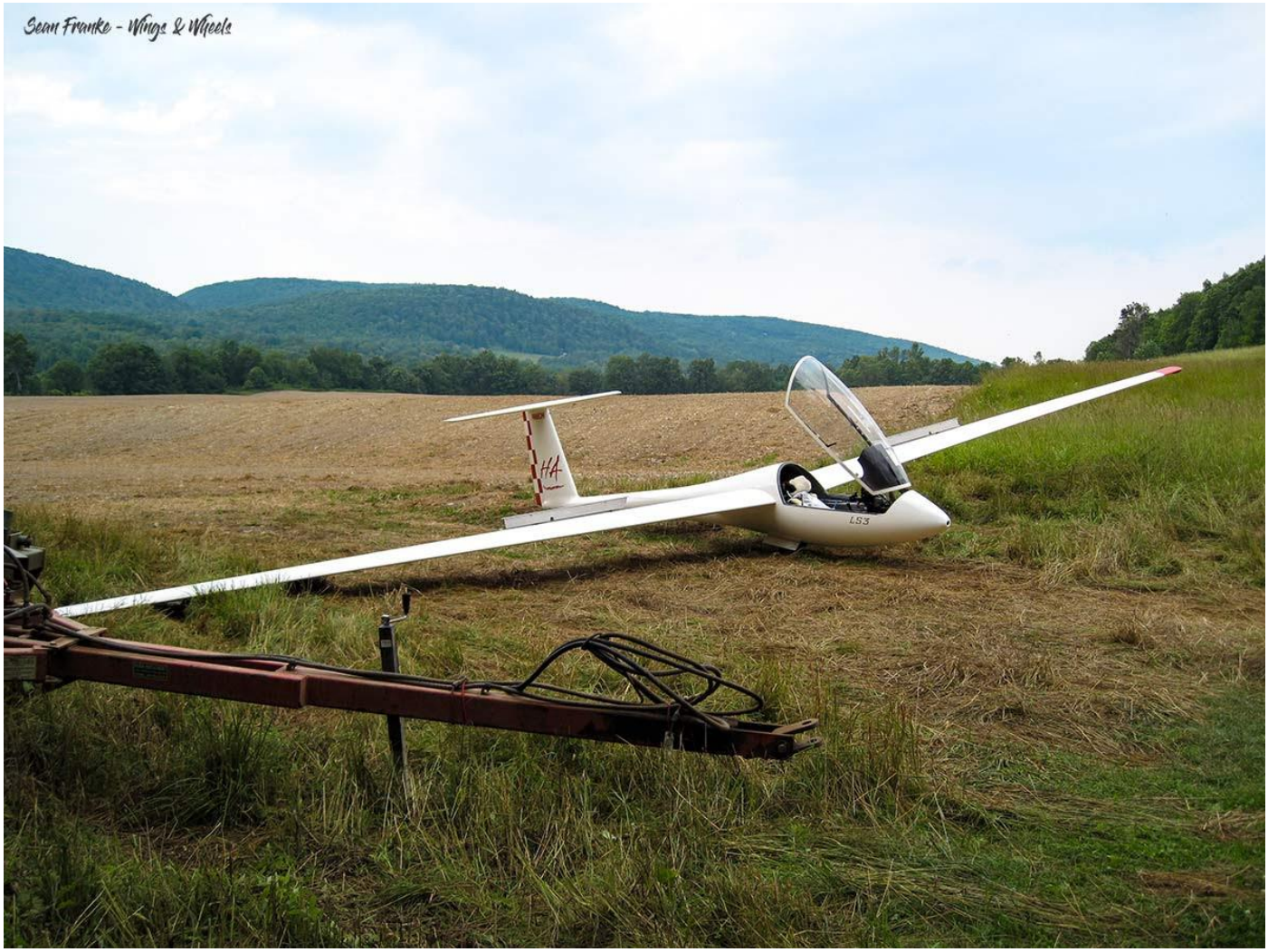


Photo by Sean Franke

Thermals, those invisible columns of rising warm air, are a glider pilot's best friend. These natural updrafts allow pilots to soar effortlessly through the skies, conserving energy, extending flight time, and distances covered. While thermals are commonly associated with high altitudes, where they can carry us to great heights, they also exist at low altitudes, naturally, where they first begin their life! In this article, we'll explore the art of finding thermals at low altitude and the basic techniques we can use to stay afloat.

Understanding thermals

Thermals are essentially columns of warm air that rise due to temperature differences between the ground and the surrounding air. As the sun heats the earth's surface, it warms the air above it, causing it to rise. The rising air creates an updraft, which of course is what a glider pilot takes advantage of to stay airborne.

Low-altitude thermals

While thermals are definitely easier to find at higher altitude and are more commonly stronger, they do occur at the lower levels too. They are typically weaker and smaller, less organised than their high-altitude counterparts, making them a bit trickier to find, work and exploit. However, with the right knowledge and skills, we can still find these thermals which will again take us to great heights.

Local Geography

Knowledge of the local geography is essential for identifying potential thermal triggers. Features like darker soiled ploughed fields, dry creek beds, subtle changes in the elevation of the ground with the sun's energy facing onto a windward face, an asphalt road with traffic along it, etc. The simplest way is to imagine yourself walking on the surface with bare feet, wherever you would find it the hottest and most uncomfortable, is usually the best place to go and try.

Wind Patterns
Keep a keen eye on the wind direction and its impact on thermal movement. Wind blowing into the sunny side of a slope can create lift while waiting for a thermal to come up the face. Often hot air will pool against a tree line surrounding a paddock, the wind will then trigger the thermal overhead or just downwind of this tree line, this is just one example.

Birds and Wildlife
Nature often provides clues about thermals. When you are low, it's so important to look up, look out, look down. Don't tense up and focus solely on the instruments, watch for birds circling or just taking off out of a tree, they sure are experts at low-altitude thermals!

Thermal sniffing
While in flight, continuously scan the terrain below and be prepared to go over many trigger sources,

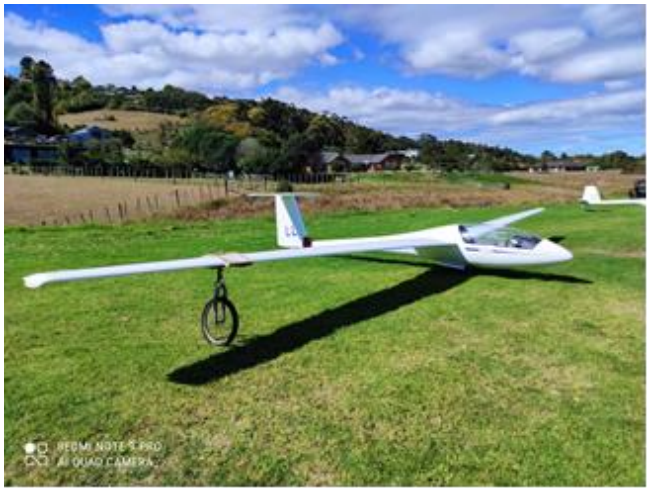
Adam Woolley was born into the gliding world, being the 3rd generation in his family. Going solo at 15, his thirst for efficiency in soaring flight & quest for a world championship title to his name has never wavered. One big passion is sharing his experiences & joy with other glider pilots all around the world. Adam is an airline pilot in Japan on the B767 & spends his off time chasing summer around the globe. He has now won 7 national Championships & represented Australia at 5 WGC's & 1 EGC.

always have a plan B, C, or even D in mind before you absolutely have to commit to landing in a field.

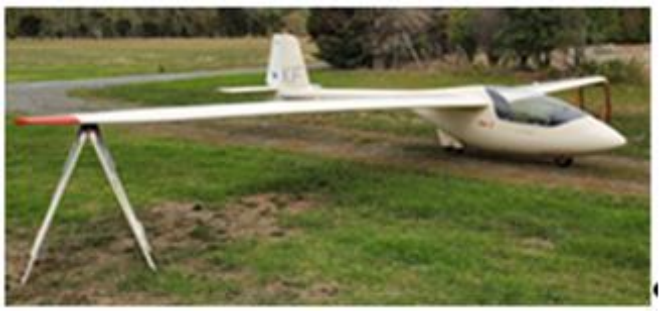
Be Patient
Finding thermals at low altitude requires patience and practice. Patience may be circling over a hot field with a farmer ploughing, in zero sink, just waiting for the thermal to trigger and form.

Safety First
When soaring at low altitude, remember it's always essential to prioritise safety first. Always have a plan for landing in a field, remember it's only a game, so if you're in a difficult situation, it's far more important to stop looking for lift early and focus on a good safe off-field landing. When flying at low altitude, you will also need the appropriate training and a deep understanding of your own abilities, and your sailplanes.

Member's Ads



LS3-A for sale (ZK-GLL). Has been refinished and is in excellent condition. Recent upgrades include LXNav S100 plus remote stick, Trig ADSB, new front panel, Flarm mouse, new galvanized tilting open trailer that I am in the process of making a full cover for. Glider fits in the trailer the same as a cobra trailer with the fuselage and wing trolley's being visually similar to what the expensive trailers use. After several landouts the trailer proves to be successful and easy to use. Comes with tail dolly, wing walker tow-out bar, oxygen bottle and EDS system (I have never used this so cannot vouch for its functioning) Annuals recently completed. A great performing 15m flapped glider. $45,000
Contact Keith Macy keith.macy@outlook.com



PW5 KF. Current Annual until Dec 2022. Ready to fly. Approx 800 hours flying. Radio, altimeter, airspeed indicator, electric and mechanicals varios. Includes open trailer. Priced to sell at $8,000. Ideal for single ownership or cheap syndicate. Reason for sale is that glider is surplus to requirements.
Phone Murray on 0275 875 438

This edition of the newsletter was compiled by Peter Wooley – wooleypeter@gmail.con – 021 170 2009