

AGC Weekly News

9-10 December

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

From the CFI



Anton Lawrence

Greetings from the South Island. The weather so far this week has not been good, although Ross and I did manage to get to 9500 in wave almost directly over Springfield late on Saturday. Unfortunately, it was impossible to do anything with it.

We flew QQ for the first time as an Auckland Club glider and found it very nice to fly with an extremely quiet cockpit due to very good canopy seals.

Our summer instructors and tow pilot will be

arriving soon after the Gliding World Championships in Australia finish. Currently Hugo is coming fourth, including winning a day in the Club Class.

A PDF copy of our **Airfield Emergency Plan** is attached together with this newsletter – I ask that **everyone** reads this document - you never know when it will be needed.

There are two very important numbers you should remember: **111 for ambulance and police and 0508 ACCIDENT for CAA.**

Notes on the Duo Discus XL ZK-GQQ

Russell Thorne

There are some aspects of the DuoDiscus XL that pilots need to be aware of, as obtained from Schempp-Hirth website. These items make it (QQ) different to DX. <https://www.schempp-hirth.com/en/sailplanes/duo-discus/duo-discus-xl>

The following list covers most of the differences between the DuoDiscus XL (QQ) and the DuoDiscus X (DX):

Increased fuselage length by 10cm forward and also rearwards behind rear seat;

Greater headroom for taller pilots;

Greater flexibility in rudder adjustment for shorter pilots;

No restrictions in flying from back seat;

Better view from back seat giving steeper view of approach angle;

Front seat instrument panel now tilts upwards, allows easier entry;

Extension of flaps enhancing ability to land with greater airbrake (a welcome change from DX);

Lower approach and landing speed;

Airbrakes and flaps mechanically linked to remove possibility of airbrake deployment during takeoff;

Airbrakes are now extended more, to improve effectiveness;

Duo Discus XL is approved for simple aerobatics including spinning.

The current batteries are three years old SLA, two are in the usual place, plus two similar ones bundled vertically in the tail.

Club chargers can be used on SLA batteries, but be careful which charging mode is used. Do not commence the LiFePO4 charging cycle.

The battery plugs are not AGC standard; the batteries are connected in parallel. The selector C1 and C2 on front panel are the main supply.

The white rotary selector mark is worn, so check your selection.

Individual battery voltages can be read on the LX8000 Nav pages

An early digital LXNav vario is connected to Gen1 LX8000 D which has reduced memory capacity.

<https://gliding.lxnav.com/news/generations/>

Otherwise 57mm ASI and ALT instruments.

The Filser ATR600 VHF radio has faded frequency characters which are difficult to read. There is a Becker Mode C Transponder.

There are two red ballast weights fitted forward of the rudder pedals, but these are currently removed.

Oxygen is fitted and two parachutes are included (these need re-packing).

The canopy is even larger than on DX, so take extra care when opening, closing and handling the canopy.

Gavin recommends that a retaining strap or carabiner be fitted to the centre canopy rod for boarding and deboarding. This would have to be detached for flight.

The canopy rod fouls the front seat back, so take extra care with this when seat in rear position.

The canopy also has side windows fitted both sides for doing photography.

It is possible that rudder cable movement can be restricted each side of the back seat feet rest – be aware of this.

The DX and QQ trailers are not inter-changeable without refitting the nose cone.



The Auckland Club's new Duo Discus on the grid today (Thursday) at the Canterbury Gliding Club, Springfield. They seem to have had a good flight, though it was not posted on the OLC.



A bunch of happy pilots photographed at the Canterbury Gliding Club recently.

November 2023 – O Nino, where art thou?

NZ Met Service

Following on from a September and October which ran quite true to form for our climate drivers (westerly barrages, strong high-pressure anomalies in the Tasman Sea and low-pressure anomalies in the Southern Ocean), you can be forgiven for asking what happened to our strengthening El Nino in November, where pressure patterns across New Zealand didn't respond to type.

Areas of high pressure were often slow-moving across the Southern Ocean during November with our classic westerly signal only showing up for a brief interlude mid-month. Instead, troughs digging southward from the tropics to the northeast of NZ were a recurring theme, and we have seen much more frequent showery southerly to southeasterly airflows across the country than normal.

This has driven another very wet month for the storm-battered regions of Tairāwhiti and Hawke's

Bay; Gisborne Airport saw its 3rd wettest November on record. Wetter than normal conditions have also been observed from the Bay of Plenty to the Wairarapa, and in exposed pockets around Gisborne and southern Canterbury. These areas also saw the coolest temperatures compared to normal last month. Conversely, areas we might typically expect to be rather wet in November such as West Coast South Island have basked in much sunnier, warmer and drier conditions than normal. The majority of the South Island had a drier than normal November.

Climate Drivers – MJO will mix up the weather maps once more in December

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Whilst El Nino remains an important player for NZ, the Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO), a

climate driver tracked across the equator, looks set to help shake up the weather maps early in December, much like it did in November. A pulse of the MJO will move from the Maritime Continent (Southeast Asia) into the Western Pacific during the first half of the month. This will lead to more low pressure across the Australasian/NZ regions, with the belt of higher pressure likely displaced further southwards across South Island, similar to November, at least initially.

El Niño is expected to peak in January 2024, continuing through into the autumn months. NZ typically sees the strongest effects of El Niño during late summer/early autumn.

December 2023 Outlook – An unsettled start, but dreaming of a bright Christmas

As noted above, the MJO looks likely to help drive a rather unsettled opening to December, although the South Island might tap into drier weather under that southern ridge more often than not. A couple separate Tasman Sea low pressure systems from the weekend of the 2nd/3rd into the following week look likely to bring rainfall right

across the country, but especially across North Island. If the second of these makes a connection with an increasingly active tropics to the north, we may well see some notably heavy falls for northern and northeastern portions of North Island too, but this remains far from certain at this early stage. Keeping a close eye on tropical developments to our north will be important through the first half of December.

Heading beyond mid-month, higher than normal pressures are gradually favoured to return across the Tasman Sea, and to the north of New Zealand, with a more westerly pattern redeveloping across the South Island. This pattern is much more typical of El Niño, as the MJO pulse departs eastward. This will be welcome news for those of us across central and northern NZ who are hoping for some more prolonged sunshine as the summer holidays get started and hay-making season ramps up. These synoptic patterns even offer some early hope of a dry Christmas Day BBQ in these regions!

Rainfall should become more frequent again for western and southern South Island though. With a predominantly westerly flow, eastern sections of South Island may well be in for some very hot early summer days alongside long dry runs too.

Seasonal Climate Outlook for December 2023 - February 2024

Copied from the NIWA's seasonal climate outlook

Outlook Summary

El Niño continued during November and has around a 100% chance of persisting through summer and an 85% chance of persisting through autumn. Although it will have an important influence on Aotearoa New Zealand's climate, unusual ocean heat in the western equatorial Pacific and on a global scale has contributed to circulation patterns that are not typically associated with a traditional El Niño.

Summer air pressure is forecast to be above normal north of New Zealand and below normal to the south of the country. This is expected to cause more northwesterly quarter winds than normal across the country for the season as a whole. However, the effect of a non-traditional El Niño will likely encourage increased variability in circulation patterns and air flows as compared to historical El Niño summers.

Summer rainfall is most likely to be near normal in the north of the South Island, about equally likely to be near normal or above normal in the west of the South Island, and about equally likely to be

near normal or below normal across the remainder of the country.

Areas of heavy rain are possible in the North Island during the first week of December.

Despite the non-traditional El Niño impacts, an increased awareness around the risk for dry spells is recommended across several regions, as detailed below. This may contribute to water restrictions, particularly in areas that may not have had them in recent years.

Strong lows will occasionally impact the western and lower South Island, delivering heavy rainfall and a risk for flooding. Such activity is possible in mid-to-late December.

Temperatures are most likely to be above average in the east of both islands and the north of the North Island. Temperatures are about equally likely to be near average or above average in all other regions. Spells of hot, humid conditions look likely during December.

Seasonal wind strength is forecast to be above

normal across most of the country.

Coastal sea surface temperatures (SSTs) ranged from 0.42°C to 0.62°C above average during November. Localised marine heatwaves may form in the months ahead.

Soil moisture and river flows are about equally likely to be near normal or above normal in the west of the South Island and near normal or

below normal in all other regions.

As of late November, fire danger was low across the country. Variable fire danger conditions are expected in December. Property owners are encouraged to keep on top of grass growth, as grass may dry out and become a wildfire fuel source. More info: www.checkitsalright.nz

Improved Decision Making

Adam Woolley
Courtesy Wings & Wheels



Understanding and harnessing the mental aspects of soaring the sky can lead to improved decision-making, heightened focus, and enhanced overall well-being for all pilots.

Soaring such as ours, which includes hang gliding, paragliding, and aerobatics, requires not only physical skill but also a robust mental approach to extract the best performance out of the day, competition, and general day-to-day flying. Psychology within our sport, plays a crucial role in both the pilot's performance and overall

safety. Understanding and harnessing the mental aspects of soaring the sky can lead to improved decision-making, heightened focus, and enhanced overall well-being for all pilots.

Risk Perception and Management

One fundamental aspect of gliding sports psychology is risk perception and management. Pilots must develop a keen sense of assessing potential dangers while in the air. This involves recognising environmental factors, understanding the limitations of equipment, and gauging

personal skill levels. An adept glider pilot cultivates a balanced mindset, acknowledging risks without succumbing to fear, which can impede performance. This mental equilibrium allows pilots to make informed decisions and respond calmly to unexpected challenges.

Focus and Concentration

Focus and concentration are paramount in all sports, gliding is no different. Pilots must maintain a high level of attention over extended periods, often amidst unpredictable weather conditions. Developing mental resilience is key to staying focused, despite external distractions or internal fatigue. Techniques such as mindfulness meditation or visualisation exercises can help pilots sharpen their concentration and maintain a clear mental state during flights. Personally, I like to visualise my day ahead, and have it all planned out so that when issues arise, I already have a plan B, C or even D!

Decision Making

Decision-making can happen in split-second scenarios too, to get the most out of a situation or avoid a serious event. Pilots face rapid changes in weather patterns and must adapt swiftly. Sports psychologists emphasise the importance of developing decision-making processes that blend intuition with rational thinking. This combination helps pilots trust their instincts, while also considering logical factors, fostering a balance that enhances overall decision quality. I compete a lot, which is why most of my articles are focused this way, when it comes to winning a day or a competition, it's not the hand-flying abilities of a pilot, but the general overall decision they make.

Confidence

Confidence is a psychological cornerstone for glider pilots. The belief in one's abilities positively influences performance and risk management. Confidence isn't just about skill level, but also about knowing one's limitations. An overconfident pilot may take unnecessary risks, while an underconfident one might miss opportunities for advancement. Striking the right balance involves acknowledging achievements while remaining humble and continuously seeking improvement. If you're wondering how to find the balance, speak to a local coach or reach out to one of your admired pilots, most of the time you'll realise

everyone is willing to help!

Fear Management

Fear management is another critical aspect of gliding sports psychology. Fear is a natural response to perceived threats, but excessive fear can paralyse decision-making. Pilots learn to recognise and manage fear through training and experience. Building a healthy relationship with fear involves acknowledging it, understanding its origins, and employing strategies to mitigate its impact on performance.

Communication

Communication skills play a vital role in the safety and enjoyment of gliding sports. Pilots often fly in proximity to others, requiring effective communication to navigate shared airspace. Additionally, clear communication between pilots and their passengers enhances the overall experience.

Goal Setting and Motivation

Goal-setting and motivation are integral components of a glider pilot's psychology. Establishing both short-term and long-term goals provides a sense of direction and purpose. Motivation, fuelled by the desire to achieve these goals, propels pilots through challenges and setbacks. Having the right psychology can assist us by setting realistic yet ambitious goals, promoting sustained motivation, and a sense of accomplishment.

The psychology within our sport is a multifaceted aspect that significantly influences a pilot's performance, safety, and overall experience. By addressing elements such as risk perception, focus, decision-making, confidence, fear management, communication skills, and goal-setting, glider pilots can develop a robust mental framework that will enhance their results and satisfaction with our great sport!

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.

Wings across the wilderness

A video submitted by Gerard



<https://youtu.be/A1m2XpQGJ3k?si=w7tZnfJdfbp3pX7y>

New Airfield Driveway

Gerard Robertson

Nigel Caigou provides this update:

Fulton Hogan will commence work next Wednesday and finish by the end of the day on Friday. Please advise everyone and ask them to keep off the driveway until it's completed. **Cars should drive down the edge of the runway**

adjacent the driveway. I suggest no trucks should enter the gliding club facility during this time of construction work. Fulton Hogan would like to use our water to fill up their water cart; to use for keeping the dust down - I don't anticipate large quantities of water consumed but will get an estimate.

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 varies. 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.
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