

AGC Weekly News

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

From the CFI



Easter saw three good days of flying for those who were keen. Roy and I did a hanger landing via Mercer airfield on Saturday. We got a bit over exuberant in what looked like good conditions but couldn't get over 2500' at Pokeno so opted for an aerotow back.

Mercer is a good option for a dual XC out landing. It does offer plenty of challenges that Kevin found out on Monday. You also get to do a small XC aero tow for the retrieve.

Important check on AK. During the ABCDE check of AK after it had been DI'd, one of the weight shims was found floating free in the ballast location. This had obviously come off the end of the retaining bolt when the ballast was removed.

Please do a physical check that all the shims have come away when removing the ballast and do the same physical check when doing the DI. Having something like this floating around the rudder pedals is probably not going to end well.

The weather is looking quite good for the weekend with higher than average cloud base on Saturday and West coast convergence on Sunday. Make the most of the good conditions while they are on offer.

Anton Lawrence
CFI Auckland Gliding Club
021 280 188

GNZ audit

Gerard Robertson

Iggy Wood of the Piako club will be performing an audit of the club this Saturday, on behalf of David Moody (the ROO, Regional Operations Officer).

Iggy not only has considerable aviation experience but is also very personable and good company. Audits are good learning opportunities, so please cooperate openly & fully with Iggy if you happen to meet him and are asked any questions.

Winch Roster

Grahame Player

April

Sat 6 - Keith A
Sun 7 - Lance
Sun 14 - Grahame
Sun 21 - Hugh
Sun 28 - Grahame

May

Sun 5 - Anton
Sun 12 - Lance
Sat 18 - Keith A
Sun 19 - Grahame
Sun 26 - Paul C

The new Isuzu: This vehicle is now ready for operations. The radio still has to be fitted but the tow out bar has been fitted to the roof. Currently the keys are on the shelf on the ledge to the left hand side of the roller door. When starting, make sure that the key is turned to the "glow plug" position and wait for the light to go out before starting the engine. Whoever is first, be careful when backing out of the workshop as there is not much clearance with the tow out bar.

Have fun.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TgsuD06INpY>

Hazards associated with flight in the vicinity of thunderstorms

Garret Willat

Courtesy Wings & Wheels



Photo by Alex Lubin

Explains hazards associated with flight in the vicinity of thunderstorms.

Makes a competent “go/no-go” decision based on available weather information.

That’s out of the PTS everyone should have covered during their check ride. I could cover those hazards here; however, I am sure almost everyone reading this knows the answer. If not check out the FAA publication, you can start on chapter 19 if you want to dive straight into thunderstorms: [Click Here](#)

Even though we know those hazards, there are many times, they are ignored. Why? Because the lift is good until it’s not. Then it’s bad. Unfortunately, when you realize that it’s bad, it’s too late, and it’s really bad. There is no way to rewind time a little when you had many options, including safely landing. If you wait too long, it could quickly become unsafe to land. It might also be unsafe to be in the air.

Safety Finish

In the US we have a safety finish available when a thunderstorm is above the airport. This is about being able to get a finish and then get away from

the airport to a safe area. This rule came because of a competitor going through the finish line in IFR conditions. The whole idea is to get a finish during the safety finish, stay safe, not maximize every last point. And also to not attempt to land at the airport because the conditions are unsafe. There was a great video going around on YouTube with someone landing at the airport after a safety finish is called.

Going around

This gets home doesn’t just apply to contests it applies to flying at home. Most of us have done it, stayed out a little too late with a nearby storm. The problem is you get to a point where you cannot undo the last few minutes. One day in our Stemme, we were playing around in great lift and decided that we should head back before the storm got any closer. Of course, the prudent option would have been landing an hour before. As we entered the pattern, it was clear that landing in the direction of the runway was out of the question. Thankfully the engine started, and we ran away very quickly. Had the engine not started we would have landed on our crosswind runway.

Knowing the Risks

In 2002 Tonopah NV at the 15-meter nationals I was one of 14 that attempted the task. Fifty-four other pilots abandoned the task and headed home to land. Some pilots went around the large thunderstorm, while others went between the rain shafts. I decided to follow another glider and hope the lightning went after him and not me. Honestly, I was so caught up in the race and what others were doing I continued a task I should not have.

When KM had an encounter with lightning, it was not under the most obvious cell. Check out his writeup in Soaring Magazine May 2002

These days are a risk, the lift might be good, but you are running a higher risk of something bad

happening. However, when everyone is doing it, you need to understand the risks that are associated with this style of flying. Then when nothing bad happens the first time or the second. You start to get complacent with the fact that it can all go wrong really fast.

Fly safe, fly tomorrow

Garret Willat holds a flight instructor rating with over 8000 hours in sailplanes. His parents have owned Sky Sailing Inc. since 1979. He started instructing the day after his 18th birthday. Since then, Garret has represented the US Junior team in 2003 and 2005. He graduated from Embry-Riddle with a bachelor's degree in Professional Aeronautics. Garret represented the US Open Class team in 2008 and 2010 and the Club Class team in 2014. Garret has won 3 US National Championships.

Outlook from the NZ Met Service

Climate Drivers

El Nino is nearly at its end, with equatorial sea surface temperatures likely to return to neutral conditions in the next two months. However, as atmospheric markers generally lag oceanic indicators, New Zealand is still likely to see periods of enhanced westerly flows through much of autumn. Models are split evenly between keeping a neutral El Nino state or developing a weak La Nina over the coming months, and any effects are unlikely to be seen until the summer.

The next pulse of Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO) is expected from the middle of April, though early indications are downplaying its intensity in favour of maintaining an active westerly flow across the country. Regardless, there remains a slightly increased risk of tropical influence from mid-month, particularly across the upper North Island.

April 2024 Outlook – Changeable conditions on the horizon

Cooler conditions prevail during the first week of April as a weakening front brings a burst of heavy rain to parts of western South Island, while the

remainder of New Zealand remains largely dry with gradually warming afternoon temperatures but chilly mornings. A more active weather pattern emerges next week, with a hybrid system approaching from both the Tasman Sea and Southern Ocean. This is likely to be the wettest week this month across many regions, with some heavy rain and potential for downpours. This could also be the warmest period of April across the North Island if a large-scale northerly wind stalls over the country.

The strong low pressure anomaly stalls southeast of New Zealand by mid-month, with a heightened risk of south-to-southeasterly winds delivering much colder conditions across the board. Frosts may become commonplace about inland areas during this time, and the odd hard frost cannot be ruled out about the South Island high country. Rainfall should trend close to normal under passing showers, though western South Island is at-risk of seeing below-normal precipitation.

The final week of April sees very little in the way of rainfall or temperature anomalies, with a likely mix of weakening fronts spreading across the country alongside passing highs.

Member's Ads

H36 Dimona ZK-GPH for sale or syndication. Julian Elder is interested in either creating a syndicate or selling his Dimona GPH. It recently has had significant restorative work carried out. For any technical stuff contact Ian Williams (021980194 ian@agcon.co.nz or sales information contact Julian 0276924114 julian@elder.net.nz

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