

WARM AIR West Coast Edition 2024

Aviation Sports Club Gliding Newsletter

THIS WEEKEND:

www.ascgliding.org [ASC Gliding | Facebook](#)

Bank Acct 38-9014-0625483-000

Saturday 8 June	Instructing: Towing: Duty Pilot	L Page R Burns D McGowan
Sunday 9 June	Instructing: Towing: Duty Pilot	P Thorpe P Eichler K Bhashyam

MEMBERS NEWS

In this edition of Warm Air

Club News

Weekend Reports

Roster

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

Club News

Well, due to the impressive previous weekend of West Coast ridge soaring we better send out a newsletter with stories and pictures.

A big thank you to Rex, Izzy, Ben, Steve for pictures, and to Marley and Alex sending us their stories and pictures to share (see below).

For those on Facebook you may have seen the additional pictures posted. I am sure that participating members are still buzzing and cannot wait for another Southwest Howler to get out there again.

The team also want a say a big thank you to Ray for towing and also OO ing and monitoring. Also, to the members who helped prepare pilots, gliders and launch and then help them back into the warmth of the hangar. And of course, the master West Coaster Steve Wallace who conducted multiple sorties with members, Marley, Ben, Cassian.



Weekend Reports

Marley Kuys gets his taste of Salt air for the first time.

I had looked at the weather forecast the days leading up to the weekend, and it looked promising for a coast day. I messaged Steve and he said Sunday looked to be the better of the two days. Saturday morning it looked (mostly) clear out to sea, with a strong enough westerly. Shortly after I arrived at Whenuapai, Steve had decided that the conditions were good enough to go. Soon enough we were ready to launch and, on the runway, after a very low tow that gave me a particularly high heart rate we were on our way to Muriwai. When



we released from the tow at Muriwai there were showers south of us, so we held there until it passed. When it was clear we headed south towards Piha.

When we flew over Piha I spotted my house, my friend's houses, and all the other places I had been to on the ground. It was a wonderful feeling flying over all of it. Before we had launched we coordinated with Ben Gambaro who left Whenuapai and planned to meet him, my dad, sister, and another friend at the Mercer Bay lookout. Flying alongside the cliffs towards the lookout, Steve demonstrated his skills as a fighter jet pilot doing the most incredible steep turns, where I identified my family and Ben who were waving and taking pictures (the only brave souls in that windy weather).



While we were doing this we were waiting for some rain to pass so we could make Manukau harbour crossing. When it looked clear ahead we said goodbye to Ben and flew over Karekare to Whatipu where Steve climbed us up to make the crossing. Once we had joined onto the ridge on the other side, Steve handed me the controls and I had my first go at ridge soaring. It felt amazing blasting along the ridge at 90 knots without losing any height. Compared to the winter thermals I have gotten used to recently it almost felt like cheating. As we got closer to Port Waikato Steve took control and climbed us up to make the crossing, at this point, the clouds had parted it was all clear out to sea and the sun was shining. After making the crossing we followed the spectacular, and rugged ridges all the way to Raglan. We made it to Raglan and then turned around, where I had another go at flying on the way back to Port Waikato. After crossing, Steve flew along and above the coastline cliffs and ridges from the crossing to Karioitahi, and it was an incredible view. After this, we made the Manukau crossing and flew back to Piha, where Steve climbed us up to 2500 ft. We flew over to Bethells, where we started our final glide back to Whenuapai. We landed after 3 hours 44 minutes, one of the longest flights I've been on. This flight was one of the best things I've ever done, as well as the most fun, the rush you get is unreal. Thank you Steve for the incredible flight, and Ray for towing us.



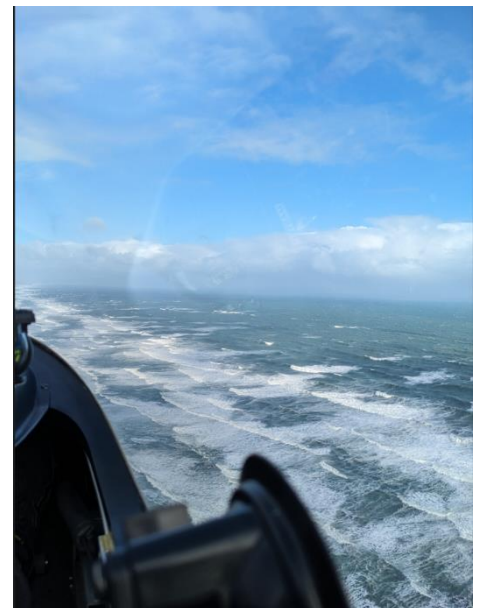
Alex takes the PW5 Coast'n

The possibility of a coast run

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.

These were the words I ended on after my epic coast run with Andrew in 2022. 'Excited anxiousness' sums up nicely how I felt about doing this on my own. It's how I felt getting into my big boy nappies on Sunday to fly the coast solo in VF.

About a year ago I was prepared to take MP down the coast to have one last adventure before heading off to France. Unfortunately the stars (the wind) did not align and we had to call it off. Even in Toulouse, I remember going on [windy.com](https://www.windy.com) and looking at the west coast out of habit. Eventually I got a grip and stopped doing this. However, the habit has come back and on Tuesday I noticed a potentially excellent coast day on Sunday. I immediately booked my place for a coast run in a single-seater. Assuming Izzy would take MP I would fly VF.



On Saturday I did 3 practice toitoi landings in VF in preparation should I land out. With this successfully achieved and having had a good local flight in the PW5 the week before I felt good about taking VF to the coast.

D-DAY

With the wind blowing 30kts gusting 40kts on the coast I knew that it was going to be an interesting ride in the little PW5.

The tow out to Muriwai was, shall we say, quite *dynamic*. Thankfully the turbulence settled down by around 1700ft. It was also very *long*. I'm sure Rex and Ray in the towplane were wondering if they were going to reach Australia as I was quite hesitant to pull the yellow handle too early.

Once established on the coast I found that I could effortlessly maintain height. I trucked up and down the Waitakeres waiting for Izzy and then we proceeded to fly in close formation down to Whatipu.



We were waiting for a shower to pass before continuing south. Once we thought it had cleared, we decided to "go for it" and immediately got lashed with rain. We scurried back north before giving it another shot. Waiting for showers to pass was going to be a common theme of the day's adventures.

Eventually we were joined by Craig and the 3 of us went racing down south together. Zooming along the coast with your friends while taking in the breathtaking views was just incredible. I commented on the radio several times *dude this is sick!*



Even at 80kts in the PW5 (max rough air speed) you had to have a pretty pronounced crab angle to prevent drifting behind the ridge. 80kts in the PW5 is very loud. At one point I headed out to sea and slowed right the way down and am pretty sure I was moving backwards. I was still getting a lift way out from the coast thanks to the pressure wave.

I spy with my little eye something beginning with shower

There were lots of showers. We spent lots of time waiting for them to pass. Some of them were quite long and dark. One had to keep a good lookout to sea to plan ahead to avoid them though it was a bit difficult to distinguish them from afar as the view could get quite murky. Unfortunately a big shower stopped me about 10km away from Raglan so I did not get to complete the 300km task. Conscious of the fact that we were using up daylight hours I decided to head back north.

Crossings

The Manukau harbour crossing was a piece of cake. Even going North to South I lost only about 300ft.

Crossing the Waikato river mouth North to South was far more *interesting*. Anyone who's flown the PW5 knows its into-wind penetration isn't great. You can imagine how good it would handle

20kts+ of headwind component (not very well). I initially flew the crossing at 56kts and then realised it was more *productive* to fly at a bit over 60kts. The crossing felt very long. I started my glide quite a ways out at sea because the drift was strong and getting downwind of the ridge was a big no no. I started my crossing at about 2100ft and arrived at about 1000ft. Could finally breathe a sigh of relief once I made it back onto the cliffs.



Task not achieved but who cares!

Although the showers stopped us from achieving our 300km task we still had an absolute ball. We learned a thing or two about dodging showers. I for one am glad I took on the challenge to do the coast run in VF.

It was so much fun flying with Craig, Steve and Izzy. It made getting home to Whenuapai quite easy as I just followed the 3 gliders in front of me (thanks guys!).



A big thank you to the amazing ground crew who braved wind and rain to make the day possible with special thanks to Shiv and Kazik who made sure wings were dry and straps were tight before takeoff.

Most memorable moment

I think the coolest part was flying in close formation with Izzy along the Waitaks as we started our journey southbound. Sick. Epic. *Magnifique*.





One NZ 20:26 11%

< Back Kario (High Side) ★

Live Chart Table

15 minutes average Hourly average

WIND (KNOTS)	GUST (KNOTS)	DIRECTION	TEMPERATURE (°C)	TIME
43.7	55.6	↗ SW	10.6	20:00
42.7	69.7	↗ SW	11.5	19:45
45.9	61.6	↗ SW	11.4	19:30
41.0	52.9	↗ SW	12.2	19:15
49.7	65.3	↗ SW	10.4	19:00
37.3	51.8	↗ SW	12.5	18:45
38.9	52.4	↗ SW	11.6	18:30
46.4	70.2	↗ WSW	10.1	18:15
37.8	61.6	↗ SW	9.9	18:00
42.7	59.9	↗ SW	11.9	17:45
40.5	53.5	↗ WSW	13.2	17:30

Of course, last Wednesday was a real stormy time in Auckland.

Checkout the wind gusts at 1815hrs. Not flying in that.

Until Next Time, Keep Warm and make the most of that Winter Soaring

Duty Roster For Apr,May,Jun

Month	Date	Duty Pilot	Instructor	Tow Pilot
June	8	D MCGOWAN	L PAGE	R BURNS
	9	K BHASHYAM	P THORPE	P EICHLER
	15	I O'KEEFE	S WALLACE	R BURNS
	16	T O'ROURKE	R BURNS	D BELCHER
	22	T PRENTICE	I WOODFIELD	R HEYNIKE
	23	C BEST	L PAGE	G CABRE
Matariki	28	S CHAND	S WALLACE	G CABRE
	29	S FOREMAN	R BURNS	R CARSWELL
	30	B GAMBARO	I WOODFIELD	D BELCHER

