

AGC Weekly News

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

From the CFI



While we had a couple of flights at Drury yesterday, the forecast for the next couple of days is not looking good. The wind is predicted to be from the south, meaning launching from the northern end of the field, which is still quite soft. On that basis, there won't be any flying this weekend.

However, an extended period of dry weather is coming, so the following weekend maybe OK. It's now a good time to remind all pilots that if flying under independent operations, i.e. a non-

club day or with no duty instructor on site, the CFI must be notified before flights commence.

Please check the Club Flying Rules in the members section of the club website for more detail.

Anton Lawrence
CFI Auckland Gliding Club
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Club Annual General Meeting

Editor

The Club AGM will be held at Drury on Saturday 21st September at 10am.

The following committee members are retiring this year:

Gerard Robertson	President
James Butterworth	Vice President
Keith Macy	Treasurer

The Treasurer's role has, since the departure of the hard-working Keith Macy from the role, been shared between James Butterworth, Simone Falkenberg and Roy Innes.

We are fortunate that Keith continues to manage the website and various other IT issues

Nominations are therefore called for the positions of of President, Vice President and Treasurer.

The arrangement in place for the very important Treasurer's role, since Keith vacated it, has

reduced the individual workload and depending on the volunteer, may be continued as a shared role, if necessary.

Up for re-election is Kevin Johnson in the position of Secretary.

In the meantime, Gerard has become a member of the GNZ Executice Committee. We have not had a representative on the GNZ Exec for a long time, our last member there being Tony Timmermans.

We, as club members, owe all those who volunteer to manage our club a vote of appreciation for all the work they put in towards these many, usually thankless, tasks.

On the membership front, we say good-bye to Craig Chapman, Dusty Miller, Ruben Roig, James Bassett (towpilot) and Michael Smith, who have resigned from the club.

XC in gliders should be safe; if it is not, you are doing it wrong.



Photo by Maciej Gebacz

What's the worst that will happen flying XC?

Answer: We safely land out

Going cross-country can be intimidating, scary, and intense. But it should be safe; if not, you are doing it wrong. Of course, you must have enough experience before attempting it. I am not talking to my newly soloed students here, but those who are competent at thermalling, finding lift, and spot landing.

Be Comfortable, Not Returning

If you are unwilling to land out, you are not ready. I should phrase this as 'you need to be willing to land somewhere other than home.' For us here, when we go south, we only go from airport to airport. There are a few fields when we go north, but we typically just go to another airport.

If I am willing to land at another airport, I will take a student cross-country. If the schedule does not allow that type of adventure, I don't go. I want the flight to be low-stress. I admire those people who

will take a cross-country flight with a date scheduled that evening.

When I was doing night classes in college, I used to try and practice and fly cross country during the day in my Discus 2ax. But I found it very difficult. I knew that if I landed out, I would be late for class. I would not take unnecessary risks. It would often be an easy glide out towards the other airport because the sky looked better, but risking it not being better and getting stuck. I would start to second-guess myself and have difficulty making decisions.

If you are correctly planning, the odds are reasonable that you will make it back.

I flew the 18-meter nationals one year without a trailer. Not by choice but because the trailer had a slow process of self-destruction on the drive across the country. You can read the old newsletter here:

<https://wingsandwheels.com/blog/post/towing-your-cobra-trailer>

I flew the contest, going from airport to airport for the most part. On the last day, I landed as my

crew was retrieving the trailer from the auto repair station.

Planning ahead

Does flying cross country potentially lead to risks? Yes. Should it? No. Many pilots take unnecessary risks while flying cross country, either knowingly or unknowingly. We had a private owner out here who unknowingly took too much risk, resulting in a successful landout in an unfriendly area. Meanwhile, there was a good airport available a few minutes earlier.

In the article on go-no-go decisions, my favorite comment is from Gary Boggs: "It's better to be on

the ground, wishing you were in the air, than it is to be in the air, wishing you were on the ground."



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.

From the NZ Met Service

Climate Drivers - ENSO remains neutral, short-term drivers run the show

El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) remains neutral, and should remain this way through the rest of winter and into the first part of spring, with the most influential climate drivers originating closer to home.

The Southern Annular Mode (SAM), a measure of how far north or south strong westerlies lie in the Southern Ocean, trends slightly positive for the first half of August as high pressure shifts northeast across New Zealand, with below average rainfall most likely to occur from central North Island southwards towards eastern South Island. The Tasman Sea Index (TSI) is also a good indicator – this is currently slightly negative, which denotes lower pressure and increased rainfall across parts of the upper North Island, but there are hints this also turns positive next week. Some uncertainty remains within the weather models as to how strongly and quickly these indicators shift back to negative territory, and there is a risk that western regions trend slightly wetter during the first two weeks of August.

The back half of August is likely to see both SAM and TSI remain in a more negative regime as high pressure moves eastwards, paving the way for an influx in westerly weather makers to spread across New Zealand. In the longer-term, there remains a heightened chance of a La Niña developing later this spring, with effects most likely to be felt during the summer months.

August 2024 Outlook – A quieter start, but winter may finish with a bang

A Tasman low brings a burst of rain across the upper North Island over the coming days, while the remainder of the country remains notably drier as strong high pressure builds northwards. This low moves away later this weekend, allowing the ridge to spread elsewhere and bring a spell of dry weather most places. Another low pressure system makes its presence known by the middle of next week across southern South Island, though temperatures may remain too warm for another low-level snow event in the prevailing northwesterly flow. Soils are currently near saturation across most regions, but expect to see soil moisture content decrease from central North Island down to eastern South Island over the coming week.

The second week of August sees the ridge weaken and shift over the North Island, while a more active northwesterly pattern emerges over the South Island. A quick-moving front or two is likely to spread across the South Island with near-average rainfall picked, and these may progress further north depending on how quickly the ridge weakens. Temperatures are expected to remain a bit warmer than average, particularly across eastern and southern South Island.

A broad area of low pressure spreads across New Zealand during the final two weeks of August, bringing with it an increased chance for weather makers to spread over the country. While models are currently picking near-average precipitation country-wide, there is a risk that western and southern regions see increased amounts in a windier westerly pattern. This includes an increased possibility for late winter cold snaps and mobile westerly snow makers as long as New

Zealand remains under a cooler Southern Ocean influence.

Some videos from Gerard

Skyfire continuation - Greg and John return from last flight of the day



<https://youtu.be/q0XVI0NTXTI?si=lbH-yysMJKBjWe0I>

Canterbury Gliding Club's latest newsletter



<https://canterburyglidingclub.nz/2024/08/04/gliding-weekend-report-may-17-july-27/>

This edition of the newsletter was compiled by Peter Wooley
