

AGC Summer Instructor Program – Ross Gaddes (Club Captain)

Many in the club will already know about our Summer Instructor Programme. However, with many new members in the last few years, I thought an article explaining how this works could be of interest.

The SI program started as long ago as 2013. During the regular GNZ AGM's in Wellington a few of us from the Auckland Club were interested to hear of a Wellington club initiative that hosted several young overseas instructors to Paraparaumu (the original WGC site) and depending on who we talked to it seemed to be a resounding success.

The initial idea was to take pressure off the instructor panel during peak season, many of whom wish to compete or just fly their own aircraft. In the past many instructors were dedicated to the instructor duties as a priority, but this has changed over the years and now many own their own aircraft and want to enter competitions and achieve their own goals.

In short, we decided to invite a couple of young Hungarian instructors, one of whom had a tow rating, to our club for the 2013-14 season. This went hugely well, in my opinion. It is fair to say that regular partying and a slightly messy clubrooms did annoy some of the members, but in general I am sure the pros outweighed the cons. This has set the pattern for most of our summer seasons.

We have learned some lessons, but we have made long lasting friends of almost all of our visitors, some who even returned the following season. The pattern was to use contacts and friends of friends to advertise our vacancies. The preference has always been to use younger instructors from Europe. The reasoning behind this is to create a youthful energy in our clubhouse and our club.

Another preference has been to choose keen XC pilots that seem hungry to experience our southern hemisphere skies. We did stray from the plan when we accepted applications, one of whom was a more experienced instructor. This still seemed to work very well when alongside another younger invitee. Each year there has been a slightly different ambience about our club due to the different personalities of our friends but in all cases, there have been positive results. Some years the weather was very average and of course the Covid periods made it impossible to work. However, I know that the benefits are huge, and we all intend for the programme to remain for the foreseeable future.

Loosely the plan is -

- The SI can live at the clubhouse for the period he/she helps us.
- We offer off peak use of the glider fleet for the SI.
- We offer full membership and the associated privileges of 'A' scheme flying
- We supply a vehicle but not fuel for the period (unless on club business).
- They need to hold hold appropriate NZ ratings and licences (we will assist).
- They should help us for a minimum of 5 days per week. Helping during Public Holidays and Weekends is an option. Most times they have helped way more than that.
- They need to abide by club rules as does any member.

- Fun is compulsory

2024-25 Season

This season we had a senior German instructor, and a younger French instructor organised to assist us. Unfortunately, the German instructor encountered some personal issues at late notice and therefore was unable to help us. This put a lot of pressure on Aurelien Doriat, and I cannot speak highly enough of this young 27-year-old, instructor from France. His professionalism and skills are outstanding and his affability and friendliness un-questionable.

By chance we had also two young visitors (Jean from France and Lauren from Canada) who were very keen to learn about NZ and especially soaring in NZ. Along with several NZ based members, many younger as well, who are at the early learning stages, Aurelien (nickname Aileron 😊) has been of immense help. But even more than that he, Jean and Lauren have made our club a fun place over the last few months. Like many of our invitees he will always be welcome back and I honestly think he was very sad to leave us just a week or so ago,

I hope we get to see him back again in the very near future, even if only passing through. Of course, Lauren and Jean are also now genuine AGC members, and they too are now part of our culture. Lauren has soloed in XY and in the PW5 and Jean (who had some solo flight) has learned our Kiwi language and has been flying LW. Both also got to do some great XC flying with Aurelien in our Duo's.

In fact, the summer in Auckland has been as good as we can expect and without digging through statistics it feels better than most.

This operation needs many to assist but at the top of the list must be Wayne, Dion and Anton. These members have gone over and above – especially Wayne who found tow pilots for the full seven days most times which is a staggering achievement.

I thank them all, and any I may have missed, for making our club a place that I am truly proud of.



Jean, Lauren and Aurelien – (great pic from Simone)

Epic Flight – It Was Worth It For The Photo !

Autumn can be a good season for what I call “Good Honest Thermals” – not necessarily strong but good enough and consistent all through the full circles of turn in a thermal.

Sunday 16th March, 2024 was probably going to be my last throw of the dice for a late season cross-country flight. I decided on a 200 Km FAI triangle from Drury that would take me over known good lift areas, whilst at the same time taking into account the likely sea breezes and airspace restrictions. The forecast predicted a lot of blue around the course and I’d actually flagged the day away – but that better-than-expected cloud in the sky beckoned me and I changed plans to go gliding.

I climbed away relatively easily from a 1,500ft tow up to about 3,000ft but soon found myself back down at 1300ft wondering whether I would end up landing back at Drury. I could see it was going to be a testing day to get around the course. A couple of thermals towards the Bombay Hills and a 10Km glide beyond saw me down to 1,400ft before I found a 2 Kt climb to 4,000ft. 30Km further on and 10Km NW of Huntly I hit a dead patch and had already done my pre-landing checks for a largish paddock when I found a thermal that allowed me to slowly, but steadily climb away.

At times like this I praise a good vario and a digital altimeter. If the thermal is any good once

you've gained the first 100ft (which is the hardest) it then often gets easier as long as you don't fall out of the bottom of the thermal as it overtakes you. What started as a 2 Kt thermal grew into 6 Kt at altitude.

I arrived at the SW turn point at 3,100ft and maintained between 3,000ft and 4,000ft heading east across to Te Hoe. On the way I took the accompanying photograph.

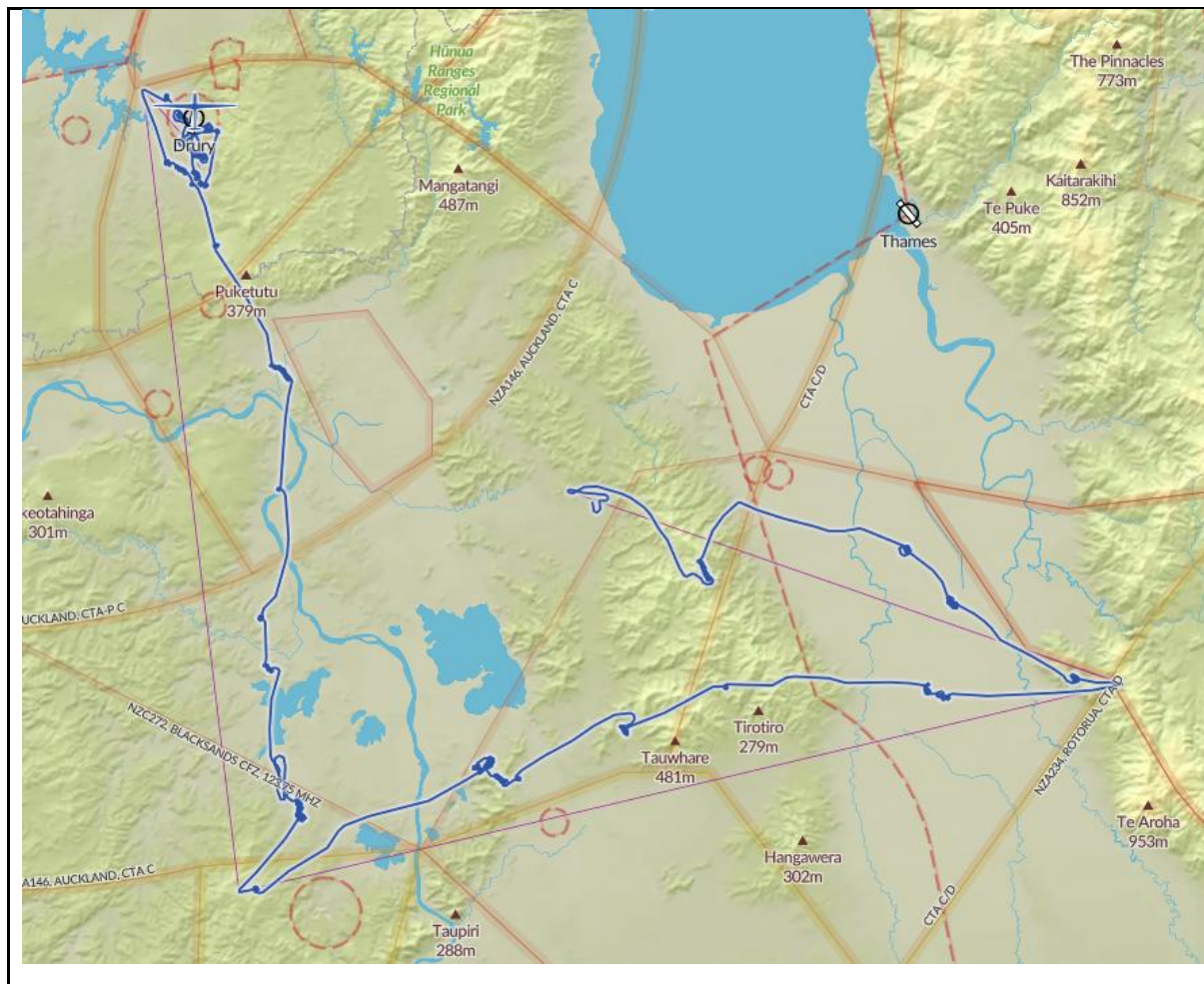


Cloud reflection on Lake Waikare

Onward across Te Hoe, stopping over the swamp to top up to just below 4,500ft and then to the SE turn point at 3,000ft. At this stage it looked like there might just be enough energy in the sky to get back to Drury, but as I came back across the swamp I could only get to 4,000ft and the cloud base ahead was dropping and thinning out. It looked like the NW headwind was going to be my downfall.

At 2,000ft over the Hapuakohe Range (by Kaihere), I made a tactical decision to turn 90 degrees off track to the south to find some much needed lift. It worked and I climbed up to 3,000ft – but then had nowhere else to go. I used the height to go another 10Km closer to Drury, where there

were flatter paddocks. This time I didn't find a "last-minute" saving thermal and "The Ground Found Me" after a classic circuit into an ideal paddock 40Km from home.



It was disappointed not getting home but, as always, I was glad to have the opportunity to give it my best shot.

A huge thanks to Keith Macy for coming to retrieve me late in the day.

Murray Wardell

For Sale PW5 ZK-GAT



Ready to fly. Approx 660 hours flying with 311 starts.

A great example of this aircraft – no major damage history. Suspension rubbers replaced last annuals. Annuals until Dec 2025.

Best option in NZ for the next owner to set some 13.5m records.

Two Price Options:

Option 1: \$12,000 Glider, covered trailer, basic instruments (ASI, Altimeter, Mechanical Vario, Radio (Becker), Compass)

Option 2: (Preferred): \$25,000 The Works (Everything you need to fly in airspace, competitions, records)

Option 1 plus; Trig Transponder, ADSB In Out, S100 Vario, Flarm, Oudie IGC, easy one-man-rig trailer fittings, parachute,

For negotiation separately: Oxygen system (2 new tanks and EDS Mt High regulator). Ready but not previously installed.

Ph **Murray** 0275 875 438

For Sale: Drury Hangars x 2

(Available NOW, adjacent hangar spaces, access via southern door access in hangar # 1).



Buying both hangar spaces gives exclusive access to one end of the hangar (i.e. no-one has to move your glider and you don't have to move anyone else's glider).

Hangar # 1 is the one pictured behind the PW-5 canopy.

Ph **Murray** 0275 875 438

Special thanks to Ross and Murray for the content in this newsletter.

More is always welcome - even if you have ideas for content send them through

Newsletter Editor

We are still looking for someone to take on the publishing of the **newsletter**, so if you are interested (or wish to volunteer someone) please let me know at secretary@GlidingAuckland.co.nz

Kevin Johnson

Very **Temporary** Editor in Chief 😊