



OGC Captains Log ~ Full Moon 12th May 2025

End of Season:

As the official Omarama flying season draws to an end some great flying has been enjoyed.



John Smith took this picture of Mt Cook flying his LS3 **TP** in wave on 11th April



Chris Streat took this picture in wave over the Dingle in the club Discus 2b **ZS** on 27th April

Reflections on Gliding by Justin Wills:

I recently had the pleasure of interviewing renowned glider pilot Justin Wills. He was sitting at his home in Omarama with his wife Gillian. Justin has had some extraordinary flights this season and I wanted to find out more about some of them. What followed was a delightful two hours where Justin shared some of his thoughts about gliding, and his aspirations for the future of our beautiful sport.

In addition to his high performance gliding, Justin is well known by his vintage gliding friends for his ownership of one of the three original Rhönbussard gliders left flying in the world. He inherited this glider from his older brother Christopher Wills who founded the Vintage Glider Club in 1973. Like Chris, Justin feels passionately that these historic gliders should be actively flying – preferably cross country! I was given a very brief history of how gliding started in Germany and after searching on Google I realise it was just the tip of the iceberg.

In the 1920s a group of gliding enthusiasts started flying wood and fabric gliders from the Wasserkuppe in the Rhön district. A local furniture maker named Alexander Schleicher was kept busy repairing these gliders and this soon became his main business. Over the years he employed the services of several glider designers: Gerhart Waibel designed the ASW gliders. (Alexander Schleicher Waibel). Rudolf Kaiser designed the ASK gliders. (Alexander Schleicher Kaiser). Hans Jacobs designed the Rhönbussard and later engineer Eugen Hanle from Stuttgart introduced fiberglass into the design mix. His skills were honed by building wind turbine blades, and he formed the company Glasflugel.



Justin's Rhönbussard featured on the front page of The English Vintage Glider Club 50 year issue.

1) 1200kms to Taupo:

With Leo Davies in the front seat and Justin in the back, Duo Discus Romeo Whiskey flew 1200km. They first flew south to Fraser Dam near Alexandra and then headed North in wave - Justin was quite pleased to pioneer a new route across Cook Strait. They flew out to sea heading due north, well west of the usual flight path to the North Island. They crabbed off the end of a beautiful wave, ending up over 100kms from the nearest coastline. At 26,000' they turned down wind in relatively low sink, crossing the west coast of the North Island just south of Wanganui. In the lee of the Ruahinies wave was marked by a 'tremendous' lenticular. They climbed from 10,000' to 21,000' and flew on, reaching Taupo at 12,000' and continued north. Having greatly underestimated the day Justin thinks they could have flown further north to the tip of the Coromandel, but having arranged to land at Taupo, and with 1200kms in behind them, they headed back and were greeted at the Taupo Gliding Club by Trevor Terry and Suzanne.

3.



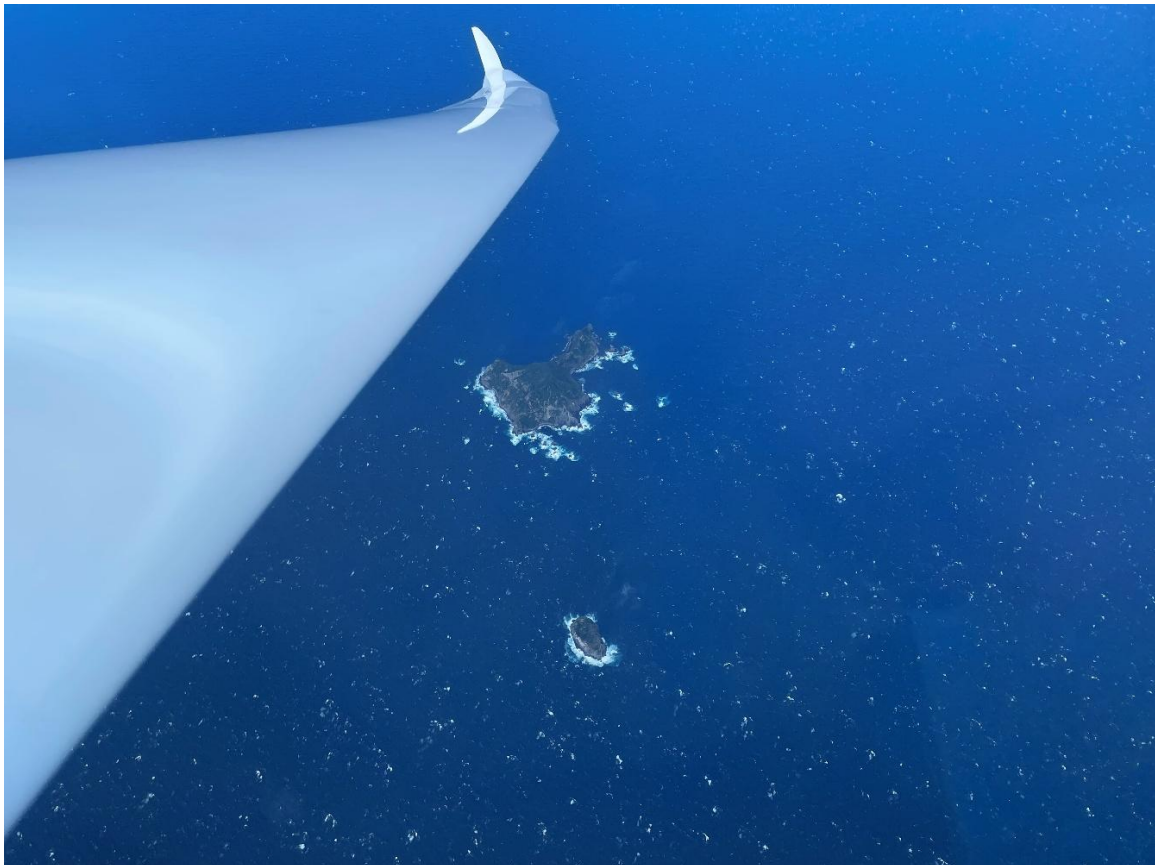
Flying in wave on the lea side of the Ruahines



1200kms and Solander Island

2) Solander Island:

The OGC recently had a weekend of flying in Fiordland. They based themselves in Manapouri and enjoyed some stunning flying in light wave. With Bob McCormack from Temora, Australia in the front seat and Justin in the back, Romeo Whiskey headed 45kms off the south coast of the South Island to Solander Island. They arrived at over 16,000' and took a picture. I asked Justin why, and he replied "because it was there!" Solander Island was named after a Swedish naturalist, Daniel Solander, Captain Cook's botanist.



Solander Island 45kms off the south coast of the South Island

4.

3) Landout, venison stew, snow and a helicopter rescue:

I asked Justin, (78) if he is considering doing less gliding. “**NO!** I am always looking to learn more!” came the reply. “I have been a little introspective about my flying recently. 4 of my last 6 flights have ended in excitement!” Three landouts and a cockpit fire in Hadleigh Bognuda’s Arcus M. The cause? Shorted battery wires under the back seat which nearly burnt through a fuel line. “A very quick decent with smoke filling the cockpit! Hadleigh did a superb job of getting us home where the canopy was opened and fire extinguishers used”.

Landing out at the Upper Hawkduns proved to be as dramatic. Justin was flying his Antares 18, with the goal to fly 1,500 kms to Omaka. There was a building southerly system and just north of Rangitata a request for clearance was declined by Christchurch air traffic control due to busy traffic. Justin decided to turn back to Omarama. However, the weather was deteriorating fast over the Hawkduns. Thinking he might be able to sneak in to Alexandra airport Justin he soon found himself in 14knot sink with only one landing possibility - the Upper Hawkduns or ‘Piano’ strip. He landed safely, uphill, with a difficult crosswind with weather and visibility fast closing in having covered 1200 kms. Realising a retrieve would not be feasible, he prepared himself for a night in the cockpit. After a while, and much to his relief, four stag hunters arrived in a Polaris. They drove him to a hut 3kms away where he was treated to venison stew and a warm night in a bunk in front of a fire. One of the hunters was CEO of Garmin NZ, so communication was enabled. It was decided that Milan and Gillian would drive over for a retrieve the next morning. It snowed overnight and Justins glider looked like an ice block! While derigging the glider, Justin lost his footing on a grader berm and fell on his back. A loud ‘CRACK’ left him immobile on the cold ground while a rescue helicopter was arranged. 55 minutes later the chopper arrived with two crew. Justin cannot speak highly enough about the NZ culture of helping others competently. After a 25 minute flight Justin was unloaded onto the rooftop of Dunedin hospital and whisked to the Emergency Department. Gillian flew to the hospital with Justin while Millan completed derigging and heroically driving out in serious mud, slush and snow. Justin is now sporting a back and neck brace and is recovering well. His visit to the northern hemisphere has been delayed this year but X-Rays are proving positive and he hopes to be travelling within a few weeks.



Ice age gliding ~ Justins Antares 18m on the Upper Hawkduns strip the next morning!

5.



Justin was rescued by four stag hunters and spent the night in a mountain hut beside a warm fire.



Milan towing through mud, slush and snow ~ nearly drowning his camera!

Aspirations for the future of gliding:

The interview ended with Justin reflecting on the future of gliding as a sport.



“Gliding is a very new sport. It is about developing a relationship with the air. Air seems to have no real substance or mass and therefore we find it hard to relate to. But in reality, air has mass, energy and forces of unfathomable scale. We are still learning how to exploit these forces. We all need adventure, contact with others and an interest. Gliding serves these needs perfectly. Gliders keep getting better and our frontiers keep expanding. Gliding has an exciting future!”

Easter Youth Glide Camp 2025:

The words below are taken directly from our weekly email currently written by Griz. (There is a link at the end of the Captains Log if you wish to subscribe to weekly emails.)

“Last Easter long weekend had only one flyable day embedded in it. A good day, however, with 22 winch launches. Sondre resuscitated his instructing currency and Sophie Gifkins consolidated her recent solo with two more good (solo) circuits. Hagen Brueggemann trumped her with SIX solo circuits following a daily check flight. I think he also won the biggest grin competition of the day!”



Smile Hagen!



It's always fun relaxing beside the launch point caravan.

FAI Gold Distance in the Paddock Weapon - 16th Feb 2025 ~ By: Felix Harper

Congratulations Felix for completing 300kms in a PW5 ~ outstanding effort!

Link to our Facebook post with the whole story: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1ASNesJsx/>

An Email from Amy:

Hi Rod,

Here's some photos from the inaugural Otago University Gliding Club Weekend! We had an awesome time, everyone has signed up as full members woo! We're very grateful to all the crew including Tuulianna who had her first go at instructing, a photo attached!!

Cheers,

Amy



Tuulianna instructing at the Otago University Gliding Club inaugural weekend in Omarama.

Link to our Facebook post with more pics: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/16Uz1mynLE/>

ANZAC Weekend Meetings:

Over ANZAC weekend I counted four meetings held in the terminal building.

Saturday morning the OGC executive met to tend to business and plan for the evening meeting.

Saturday evening the whole club met with two big items discussed.

1/ Change of club subscriptions. They will increase with a reduced rate for volunteers.

2/ Purchase of **OMA** as our own club towplane.

Statements were made and questions asked. Ultimately the final decisions will be made by our Executive.

Sunday morning a meeting regarding the ownership structure for **OMA** was held.

And after that a meeting with representatives from the Waitaki District Council, Omarama Soaring Centre, Omarama Gliding Club and Omarama Airfield Limited was held. Some good progress was made discussing a wider vision for the future. Details of a possible business structure where commercial operators, club pilots and visiting pilots can all enjoy flying in Omarama.

Brian Sharpes words: "I hope that the OGC will find a peaceful path into the future, and I very much hope that next weekend will mark the beginning of that journey ~ too much amazing talent in the room for that not to happen providing everyone listens to everyone else."

8.



A message to Brian Sharpe from everyone at the OGC

We miss you! Please get well soon because the place isn't the same without you!

♥ Love everyone

Happy landings
Rod Stuart
Club Captain

Links:

Email: flying@omarama.com

Check out our website: <https://www.omarama.com/>

Check out our Facebook Page and 'follow': <https://www.facebook.com/Omarama.gliding>

Check out our Airfield Calendar: <https://www.omarama.com/general-8> Here you will find flying weeks, course dates and competition dates.

Check out the OGC Planner: [Click here to view the OGC planner](#) See when club gliders are available.
You can book on our website or simply text Brian Sharpe on 0272481780.

Join our club WhatsApp group: Omarama Gliding Club ~ All current members can add others to this group.
Text your first name to Rod 0274344822 ~ ask and I will join you. Please keep your posts and pics on topic.

Get our weekly email newsletter: <https://www.pilots.omaramaairfield.nz/Pilots/OmaramaMailing>

Download the Omarama App: Search for Omarama App in Google Play or Apple App Store



You don't have to be mad to glide ~ but it helps!



Hot gossip! ~ Milan is learning to Paraglide.