



## OGC Captain's Log ~ Full Moon 8<sup>th</sup> September 2025



Eliska goes through her preflight checks with Phil Plane during the recent Otago University Gliding Club weekend.

### **The official Omarama flying season is so close you can smell it!**

In this Captains Log our new club manager Charlie Irvin introduces herself. Amy Smith gives us a rundown on the recent invasion of Otago University students at Omarama. And I do my best to summarise the recent important and exciting updates from Omarama Airfield Ltd. Enjoy the read!

## Hello Omarama!

For those of you who may not know me I thought I would take a moment to introduce myself to the club and give some background on my aviation journey as this season's operations manager, a role I am very excited to be stepping into. Last season I was lucky enough to have spent three months with my trusty DG-100 learning how to soar our beautiful southern alps, and during that time I fell head over heels in love with flying here and felt like I could contribute to the lovely local gliding community- who all welcomed me with open arms.

I must admit, it was a massive change to what I was used to, and flying at the club challenged me in so many ways- it was a huge learning experience for an early XCP pilot like me. I found out how long one could get stuck on Mt Horrible- making it look like you were trying to colour the thing in with your track, I met some nice farmers on the Maitland strip on a fortunate out landing, and I did my best to avoid getting too up-close-and-personal with the cliffs and rock faces. But no matter what, I came back to the club each day smiling from ear to ear and eager to tell my tall tales at the wave bar (or the pub) to all the local pilots wanting to do the same.

My home gliding base of Matamata, at Piako Gliding Club, has been my primary soaring ground for the past four and a half years. In that time, I've reached 230 plus hours of flying, 300 plus hours of hand sanding my lovely glider with my syndicate partners and recently gained my C Cat instructor rating as the cherry on top. I left Omarama deeply inspired to further my soaring journey more and have dreamed of returning ever since, vying for any opportunity to make that happen. So, when I was offered this position, I thought my dreams had come true! Quite a big change from smooth flat paddocks (with cell reception) to rocky mountains and potential helicopter retrieves.

I am lucky enough that my professional life has been mainly working in management roles over the past four years, I stepped into my first role as manager for a local retail business in my hometown of Raglan at 19 years old, and I have been helping my dad manage his food truck business on the side during this time. I'm hoping pairing these skills with my deep passion for our sport can help assist the club into having a successful season with so much more to come. I would also like to make an acknowledgement to Brian, who welcomed me to the club from the day I arrived and always made the effort to support whatever he could every day I saw him, his dedication was always so visible. It would be an honour to step into his shoes and continue the hard work for safe and happy flying days.

When you see me around, come and have a chat! I land in Omarama on the 29th of September and will be staying in a cabin on the eastern end of the runway. I know there are many faces I have yet to meet and many I will get to know more during my time- I'm a bit of a yapper so don't say you haven't been warned!

Thank you all for having me,  
Charlie.





Welcome to our new club manager ~ Charlie Irvin

### **University Pilots Invade Omarama: By Amy Smith**

The Otago University Gliding Club brought along 7 new victims to Omarama in mid-August.

On Saturday we were met by the new Pawnee (several Uni students were dismayed to find out that the colour scheme does not mean it is sponsored by McDonalds – potential business opportunity for OAL???) and an excited Gavin Wills, who heroically towed us for most of the day. He wanted to fly from dawn till dusk and had more energy than all the Uni students combined! Thank you, Gavin, for flying a staggering 18 tows in excellent conditions!

A bit of wave also made an appearance and gave each student the opportunity to soar – most flying for up to an hour with our dedicated instructors Terry Jones, Malcolm Wright and Phil Plane. Malcolm took to attempting to beat personal bests in the classic Omarama Saddle and back run, showing off the mid-winter snow to several students (and only making one sick!) Every student had massive smiles on their faces afterwards thanks to the instructing team.

On Sunday, we also managed to show off the YSDCT's Winch and did 22 launches! A major thanks you to Bradan Foster, Ted McFadgen, Taylor Barry and Karen Morgan for making a fantastic launch point team. Ted, Bradan and Taylor joined us from the preexisting Omarama Youth contingent and showed the Uni students what's what all weekend long.

Everyone was super quiet on the car ride home, so I took that as a sign of the fantastic weekend that it was! Thanks so much to all the many volunteers that made it happen. We're excited for the Uni club's next visit on September 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>. The OUGC appreciate everyone's grace whilst we fine tune each trip.



4.



The Uni Gliding Club's first group photo that's not outside of a KFC



Malcolm laughing at Lukas' misguided excitement

5.



Gavin recruiting new tow pilots in 'Big Mac'



Uni students or gas strut replacements???





Ondra prepares for take-off. Pit vipers (rowing glasses for the age challenged) are the new bucket hat

#### **Killermont Club Rooms visited by Rod:**

Check out this video posted on our OGC Facebook page ~ I managed to get inside!

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/1391241035298443> **Warning!** ~ There is a lot of bird shit in this video!

#### **OGC AGM:**

Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2025 at 7pm. Labour weekend can turn on some early thermals and good flying!

#### **Airfield Camping Ground Opening Date:**

Warren Dickinson, president of OSC, has informed me they will be opening the camping ground on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> Sept. You can pay a fee to keep your caravan on sight all season. He tells me the booking app has been upgraded.

#### **Operational Updates for Omarama Airfield Ltd (OAL):**

On 31<sup>st</sup> August OAL sent out a general letter outlining some big changes to operations at Omarama airfield.

Below is my summary for those that want an overview of these changes.

- ~ The much-loved airfield café is reopening in late October.
- ~ OAL is buying tow planes OMA and CNC. They intend operating 7 days a week for 7 months from 1<sup>st</sup> Oct to 1<sup>st</sup> May.
- ~ There will be posters at the airfield and on their website with a QR code to sign up and create user accounts.
- ~ Tow rates will be the same as last season, \$19 per minute including GST.
- ~ The daily 10:00 am weather briefing will continue and all those intending to fly gliders each day are expected to attend.
- ~ The Omarama Gliding Club (OGC) has been contracted to conduct a daily operational and safety meeting at 9:30am.
- ~ The OGC will also provide a CFI, flight following, access to club facilities and emergency response coordination.
- ~ All visiting and local pilots must follow the Gliding NZ (GNZ) Manual of Approved Procedures (MOAP) and the requirements of the local host gliding club (OGC).
- ~ All pilots are required to be under supervision of a CFI or nominated person, either their own club or the OGC CFI.
- ~ OAL has land parcels on the airfield available for sale. More info at: <http://realestate.co.nz/42751018/>
- ~ Any questions or feedback can be directed to: [directors@omaramairfield.co.nz](mailto:directors@omaramairfield.co.nz)
- ~ OAL structure and governance: OAL is limited liability company owned in equal shares by Waitaki District Council and Omarama Soaring Centre. It is Governed by four directors, two from each shareholder.

If anyone is keen to read the full letter, it was posted at the end of the latest GNZ newsletter.

Here is a link to that newsletter: <https://kor.qwilr.com/GNZ-September-2025-x7J4mqwRRA6M>



Omarama Airfield has an updated website. You can check it out at: <http://www.omaramaairfield.co.nz>  
Here is a link to a webcam looking to the west from the Benmores: <https://public.aopa.nz/omarama.jpg>

#### **South Island Regionals:**

We already have 11 competitors entered in the South Island regionals. The dates are 15<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> Nov 2025.  
Here is a link to the GNZ events page for this comp: <https://gliding.net.nz/events/south-island-regionals-nov-2025>  
Why not come along! We encourage free fliers to line up after the grid and join in for a fun flying week in Omarama.  
Team Athena (Charlie, Tuulianna and Amy) is competing in Oscar Rabbit! Felix will be competing in the "Paddock Weapon" PW5. Griz tells me UO and OD are available for the Regionals, and he is happy to arrange an experienced pilot to fly a task with you. Please email him on [gavinwr@hotmail.com](mailto:gavinwr@hotmail.com) if you are keen.

#### **Charlies Angels:**

Charlie assures me that they will be operating the winch most flyable days for several months during the season. This will be good news for any students wanting to do training circuits. Andy Parish will be our CFI this season and we have both visiting and local instructors available throughout the season.

#### **Brian Sharpes Memorial in Hawkes Bay:**

On 6<sup>th</sup> September I will be having a Guinness and remembering how much Brian did for our club. RIP good man.

Happy landings from your Captain  
Rod Stuart  
[rod.tropicool@gmail.com](mailto:rod.tropicool@gmail.com)

#### **Links:**

**Email:** [flying@omarama.com](mailto: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.  
A new booking system is currently being developed and will be implemented before the season starts.

**Join our club WhatsApp group:** Omarama Gliding Club ~ All current members can add others to this group.  
Text your 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

