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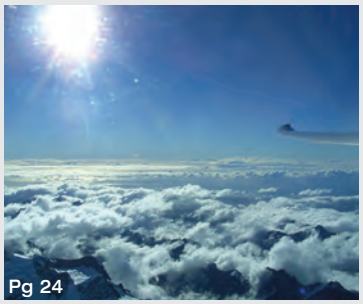
**february/march 2013**








## FEATURES



## REGULARS

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ISSN 1178-4784

# from the editor

**february/march 2013**

I seem to remember that this time last year, everyone was complaining about the lack of anything resembling a summer. This summer feels completely different. As I write, we are coming to the end of a long stable period of anticyclonic, hot, dry weather. There's a front due through in a day or so and then more of the same is expected. I love it, but then I'm not a farmer waiting for that last rain to fill the crop before harvest and we haven't had water restrictions in Christchurch this year, so it's been easy to keep the garden in good nick. There's been plenty of hay made out in the countryside and there seems to be a bumper crop of summer fruit in the shops. The cherries I've been buying are huge. There are a lot of happy glider pilots, although the stable weather is starting to make thermals hard to find.

Memory is short though. In putting this magazine together and sorting through photos from the Nationals and the Youth Soaring Development camp, I see there are photos from both events that show snow on the Benmores, across from the Omarama airfield. I had forgotten how cold it got during those weeks. We've actually had a real mix of weather over the last couple of months. There was so much rain that it wasn't possible to swim in the Ahuriri river, at Omarama, as it was in flood. Don't forget that there have been huge floods in Queensland, and the north of NZ got clobbered with some of the left-overs of those systems.

Weather forecasters have a thankless job. The hit rate these days is pretty good. According to some quick Google research, the consensus is that weather reports have around an 87% success rate for the short term (three to five day) forecast. It is long range forecasting that gets really complicated and therefore more inaccurate. Many of us (and by that I mean glider pilots) often mutter that we can do better than the RASP, MetVUW or 'official' forecast. The thing is that, yes, often we can. I love that one of the side effects, if you will, of learning to fly gliders, is learning to read the weather. We become so attuned to what the atmosphere around us is doing, that we know intuitively what the weather is going to do, often for days ahead.

Are you even aware that you can do this? I bet, right now, you can tell me what direction the wind is from and a rough estimate of its strength. A glance out the window would be enough for you to say if the upper wind is different from what's happening on the ground, and what that means in your location. You can see the amount of cloud cover and say what you expect the wind and the sky will be like by the end of the day. How hot/cold is it going to get? Is the weather you're experiencing going to stay similar for a few days or will it be completely different tomorrow? Most glider pilots I know can tell me this, at least. There you are, you're forecasting. The weather report just confirms what you already know.

Weather forecasting is an exact science, dealing with vast amounts of inexact data. There are so many variables involved in a forecast, from air pressure systems to humidity, sea temperature, land temperature, land form and so much more, that it is amazing that the forecasters can predict anything. My son toyed with the idea of studying meteorology for a while but decided that these days, forecasting involves far too much computer work. He's an out and about sort of person, so this wasn't the career for him. I was disappointed. I'd really hoped to learn more myself, through him.

In the meantime though, I've learnt to read the tephigrams that our forecasters use at competitions. Many thanks to both David Hirst - whose articles on how to do this appeared in issues 3 and 4, and my University lecturers in Environmental Physics. If there is enough interest, we may reprint David's articles. You can teach yourself more. There is an excellent text book on meteorology that you can buy through university book shops or online book stores – Oxford University Press: *The Weather and Climate of Australia and New Zealand* by Andrew Sturman and Nigel Tapper. I've read it cover to cover. And, of course, there's Google.

In the meantime, I'm just sorry that gliding has destroyed the innocent pastime of seeing animals in the clouds, because once


A GoPro on the wing of Taranaki's Pawnee gives this spectacular view of a glider releasing over the mountain.

Photo Glyn Jackson

## next issue

World, Club and Standard Class World Champs.

NZ Contests.

In praise of local flying.

Tasman Trophy.

Deadline for Club News, articles and pictures is 11 March and 22 March for advertising.

you've started seeing lift sources instead, you can never go back to fluffy elephants. Enjoy watching the sky the new way.

Stay safe

Jill McCaw


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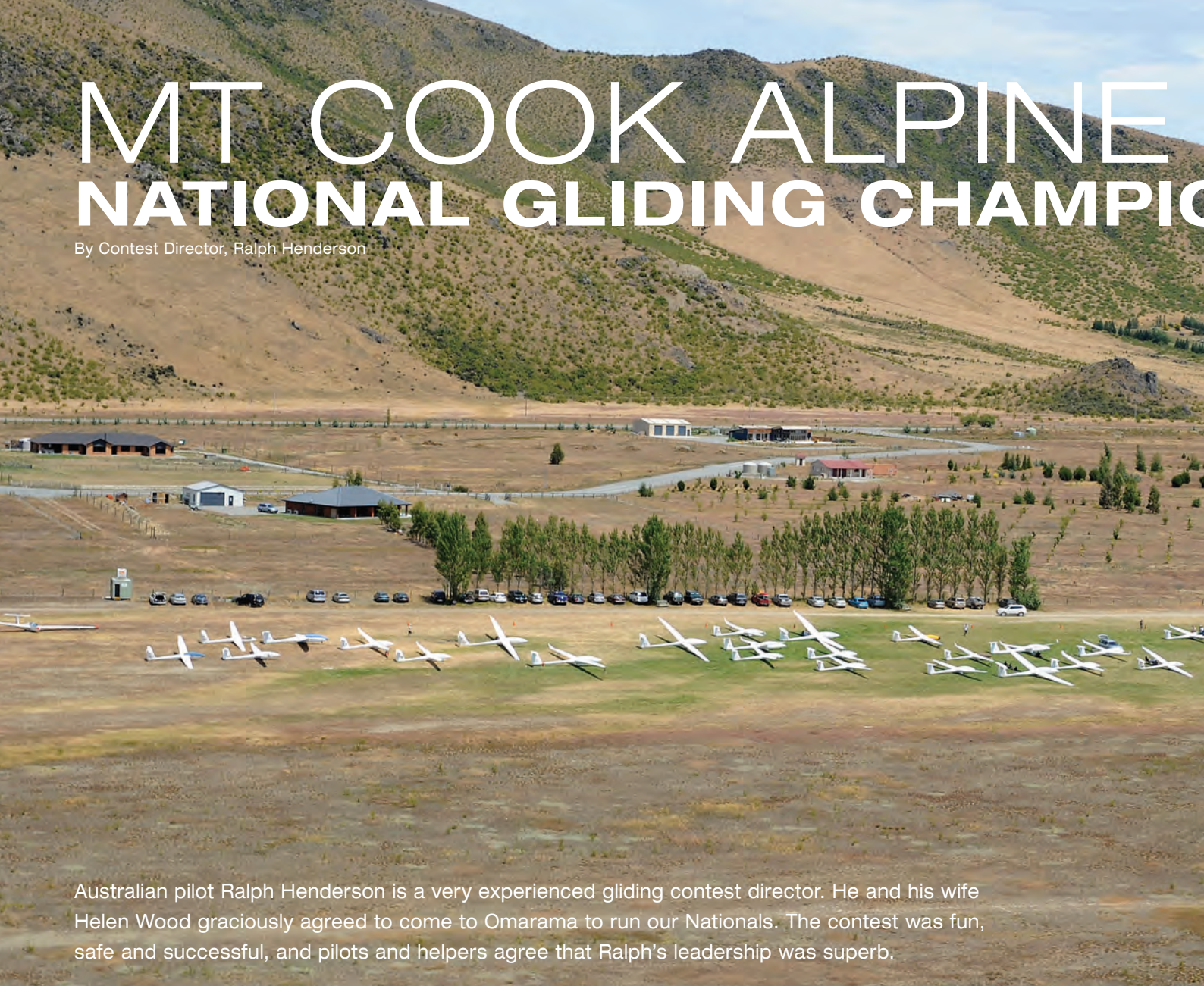
# MT COOK ALPINE
# NATIONAL GLIDING CHAMPIO

By Contest Director, Ralph Henderson



Australian pilot Ralph Henderson is a very experienced gliding contest director. He and his wife Helen Wood graciously agreed to come to Omarama to run our Nationals. The contest was fun, safe and successful, and pilots and helpers agree that Ralph's leadership was superb.

1 January 2013, Omarama. We had a contest director, a contest team of about ten people, five tugs with tow pilots, 30 gliders entered with pilots and co-pilots, and we were all ready for the practice day of this summer's Multi-Class nationals. And it was raining!

Lemmy gave his usual daily weather briefing, which gave no hope of flying. The safety officer, Gavin Wills, gave the initial safety briefing and I gave the required first day briefing. Some had flown a contest with me as director before (Grae, Bill, Chris, Dave and Graham) and apparently some were a little unsure what they were getting with a 'foreign' contest director.

It would be Thursday 3 January before we got flying, by which time everyone had had enough of sitting around.

By Saturday 12 January, we had flown seven competition days out of a possible eleven. The weather had been highly variable, with an initial sprinkling of snow providing great photos for the website and Facebook page. We were to lose other days due to rain, strong winds and hot stability.

There was a good representation from the North Island and that is where most of the trophies went. Grae Harrison took the trophies for both 18m and Open class, and the Richardson Trophy for the highest speed. Vaughan Ruddick took out the 15m trophy, the trophy for the most meritorious flight, and the prize for the highest placed pilot from the other island. It was left to George Wills to take out the only other class winner trophy for Standard class. G Dale and Mark Aldridge won the Continental Airlines Trophy for the winner of the longest speed task, 500.1 km.

In a worrying sign for the future, the trophies for the highest placed young pilot and highest placed pilot in their first nationals were not awarded, as there were no pilots who qualified. The trophy for highest placed pilot over 60 had any number of contenders, but as the trophy was missing, by general consensus of the pilots, no award was made.

The organising team was highly experienced and competent and a joy to work with. A special thanks to all of them:
Contest Organiser, Max Stevens; Safety Officer, Gavin Wills; Task setter, Jerry O'Neill; Weather, Lemmy Tanner; Scorer Lex McPhail; Tugmaster, Ash Hurndell; Airspace, Trevor Mollard; Radio, Sue Wild, Paula Ruddick, Noeline Verheyen; Grid Marshall, Dave McKenzie;

# SALMON
# ONSHIPS 2013


Photo John McCaw


Photo John McCaw


Photo John McCaw

A: Ralph Henderson. R: Helen Wood and Dave McKenzie
B: Alex McCaw and Oliver Winkler.


Photo John McCaw

Contest treasurer, Karen Morgan; Social organiser, Helen Wood; Tow pilots, Darren Smith, Annie Laylee, Lemmy Tanner, Don McCaw, Chris Garton, Brad Newfield, Peter Chadwick; Rope runners, Alex McCaw, Robert McCaw, Jill McCaw, John McCaw, Abbey Delore, Sonya Walker, Dave Tillman, Paul Jackson, Matt Aldridge, Brett Hunter and many others whose names I can't recall.

Thank you to the Sponsors: Mt Cook Alpine Salmon, Glide Omarama, Ostler Wines, TMS Consulting, JSR Soaring and Wine Pourings, and thank you to Alan and Catriona Holgate for letting us use their Chalet.

The pilots flew safely and well in some challenging conditions. There were some very fast days and some long hard days at the office. Two days out of seven everyone got home, including Mark Wilson in his Libelle, and on two other days there was only one land out. There were a dozen or so land outs in total, all without incident.

I have an old philosophy that a happy contest is a safe contest and I believe this contest was both.

Thank you for the experience of running a New Zealand nationals. Helen and I both thoroughly enjoyed our time at Omarama.

**Overall Results**

**Open class**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Grae Harrison | Ventus 2cxt | 6361 |
| 2 | Theo Newfield / Graham Parker | ASH 25e | 6343 |
| 3 | Doug Hamilton / Karen Morgan | ASH 25 | 6315 |

**18m**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Grae Harrison | Ventus 2cxt | 6355 |
| 2 | Nigel Davy / Nigel McPhee | Duo Discus (w) | 6327 |
| 3 | G Dale / Mark Aldridge | Duo Discus X | 5789 |

**15m**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Vaughan Ruddick | LS 6A | 6578 |
| 2 | Dane Dickinson | LS 6c | 6194 |
| 3 | Alan Belworthy | Ventus 2ct | 4732 |

**Standard**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | George Wills | Discus 2c | 6277 |
| 2 | Max Stevens | Discus B (w) | 6004 |
| 3 | Tony van Dyk | LS 8 | 5784 |

# MT COOK ALPINE SALMON NATIONALS 2013

By Grae Harrison

Wellington Gliding Club member Grae Harrison has been flying in competitions for a long time. He started competition flying at 17 years old in his Skylark 4. He has won Nationals in Standard, 15m, 18m and Open classes and regularly crosses the strait to compete in Omarama. This year he won the 18m and Open Class, flying his Ventus 2cxt CH. Grae reports on the contest from his point of view.

Photo John McCaw

One of the reasons I still enjoy turning up for a gliding competition is that you are tasked to areas you wouldn't normally fly to on a regular club day; and on some days you wouldn't even bother taking the glider out of the hangar. Yet, you complete the task, along with all your fellow competitors, sometimes at high average speeds. Sometimes it's a struggle, but you learn a heck of a lot and have a great time doing it. Competition flying sharpens your skills and tests your abilities and judgment, compared with your regular weekend cross country flight over familiar terrain.

The weather for the 2013 Nationals at Omarama was certainly indifferent - dominated by a strong westerly flow, with heavy rain in the headwaters and clear skies east of the main divide on many of the days. This proved to be challenging for the task setters, to provide optimal tasks to maximize the playground. But Jerry and his team did a fantastic job of setting reasonable tasks of up to 500km, with very high completion rates. There were few landouts or land backs during the Nationals.

## DAY ONE

I was fairly relaxed by Day 1 of the contest and was pleased the previous day had been cancelled due to weather, as I had picked up a bug of some sort and was trying to shake it off. The task was 330km, Thompsons Track – Danseys Pass – Two Thumb ski field, when I got low with Chris Richards (XL) at the Danseys Pass Hotel. We got up, after probably 15 minutes or more, but I could not get high enough to safely cross the high plateau of the Mary Range. Instead, I went east of the Mary Range to Kurow and in to the Haka, which looked great but wasn't delivering the expected good climbs. Pushing along the Hunter Hills to the east of the valley, getting lower and lower, I turned on the fuel and ignition, picked a good in-to-wind paddock in case the engine did not start, when I literally blundered in to a smooth seven knot climb that quickly took me to 8,000ft. Great, I'm back in the game I thought. I was pleased to finish 3rd and not too many points behind Nigel Davey & Nigel McPhee in the Duo Discus but questioned how I could have done the Mary Range transition better. I soon realised I was too impatient. Theo & Graham, in the unhandicapped Open Class where 18m class are also scored, had a great start and were well ahead on points. Later, my trace showed I was 1000ft above ground when I picked up the 7knot save - very lucky.

## DAY TWO

Was a tricky thermal day. Cromwell – Macaulay, AAT task, with a 20km circle around Cromwell and 30km around Macaulay. Cromwell was straight forward but just as well there was a 30km circle around the top turn, as it was all blue and difficult to get on to the mountain tops for a final glide home. Luckily, many of us were able to nick the circle over the flat areas but we were barely 6,000ft and 85kms from home. Fortunately, a weak convergence had set up along the east side of Lake Pukaki. Just as well it was there, as most of the field would have landed out if it weren't. The Ventus SN10 computer works really well for AATs and tells you when to turn in the circles and make it back within the prescribed time for the task. I made it back within 3 seconds of the 3 hour set task. It ended up a good day.

## DAY THREE

I'll remember as encountering some of the worst turbulence for many years. After completing the southern turnpoints, the last turn point was Bush Stream, well up the Two Thumb Range, at the north east end of the McKenzie Basin. There was a reasonable line of convergence cloud running from the Benmores to Burkes Pass, which almost all competitors used, except for four of us

who decided to ridge soar up the Ben Ohaus in search of wave off the back, or up the Dobson. My plan though, was to use the convergence, which was much more on track. But when I saw Theo flying the big ASH25 ZZ heading to the Ben Ohaus, I knew I had to go with him, because if he found wave he would clearly beat the field by 20-30kph. Crossing Lake Ohau with ZZ just in front to my right, I watched in amazement as the 26m wings deflected downwards as they hit rotor and negative G, then bent upwards. The ASH looked more like an albatross flapping its wings for a moment. Seconds later, I received a pasting, which continued all the way up the Ben Ohaus.

*When conditions change like this in the mountains to more than uncomfortable, I always go to a heightened state of alertness. My main concern is not the aircraft breaking up or anything like that, but maintaining adequate separation from terrain, with multiple escape routes and no slower or faster than 80 knots, for good control ability. Limit 360 degree turns as much as you can, stay wings level, pull up in the lift but keep the speed on 80 knots during the gusts, and keep focused. Above all, stay positive.*

After a while, it was becoming too risky to continue up the Dobson and I bailed right over the lee of the Ben Ohaus, abeam Glentanner, and glided to the Two Thumbs, which were working well in smooth ridge lift. None of the four that went up the Dobson found wave, but we had some stories to tell around the bar that night. A huge deviation for no result. I should have stuck with my gut instinct and chosen the convergence route.

## DAY FOUR

By now I realised how well the two Nigels were flying in the Duo. They had a useful handicap advantage (8 minutes per 100) but they were flying extremely well in any case. Today was a 500 km task. Great, I thought, I'll get them on this one. It was a great day until I mucked up the final glide by not climbing high enough in the last climb and needing a climb at Grays Hill, 50 km from home. The cloud petered out as soon as ZZ and I got to it, so we both had to duck around the back way behind the Benmores, ridge soaring all the low hills towards Otematata and finishing in the opposite direction, from the east. Instead of being beaten by the two Nigels, it was another Duo, flown by G. Dale and Mark Aldridge this time. They had found wave and beaten us all, by over 20kph. Darn, I knew where they got the wave, as I had a cursory look myself, but was too impatient to search around and make it work.

## DAY FIVE

Was a late start, due to the clearance of a front. Bendigo – Grampian – Two Thumbs 350km. The task setters probably meant for this to be on the ridges, but the whole flight was in wave. The wave was stacked up over the Dunstans, so that even flying at VNE it was difficult to stay below 9,500 feet, the upper limit in the Cromwell valley. Pilots flew with the wheel down or air brakes open for this section. I won the unhandicapped Open Class this day, at an average speed of 175kph, but it wasn't enough in 18m, as the two Nigels, in that b#&*@y Duo, took it out on handicap at 189 kph.

## DAY SIX

442km, Thomsons Track – Branches (in the Shotover) - Graf Spee. Weak thermals to the east, with ridge and wave out west. What a struggle getting from Thomsons to Branches, around the North end of the Pisa, to avoid lower airspace levels further south. Several of us were low at Glendhu Bay, along the shore of Lake Wanaka, climbing to a little over 6,000 ft at best. Too low to flop over to the Shotover from Treble Cone ski field and only just enough height to cross the saddle when approaching Branches from the Motatapu. With standard class arriving, I knew I was having a bad day and in the end decided to give it a go and hope to find a thermal in the Shotover. If all else failed, there's an excellent airstrip at the turnpoint, where I could light up the engine.

Crossing the saddle from the east at 5,000 ft, I spotted a possible convergence thermal 5 km away to the west. Figured there was enough height over the low hills to nail it and if not, get back to Branches. The climb was a very welcome 6.5 knots to 8500 ft. It's always nice to be high in the Shotover. On exiting Branches, I came across several others who had started ahead of me, so I didn't feel so bad. Again, I met up with ZZ and we headed north together. Down below, I saw many low gliders only just staying up on ridges. One was that b*&^$dy Duo. Good, I thought, got 'em now. Trickling north, I found weak wave over Minaret Station to 10,500 ft and continued to the Hunter ridge and on to the Ben Ohaus, ridge soaring up the valley, before finding wave at the head of the Dobson. Then I heard Nigel Davey on the radio, sounding really perky. Bugger, he'd got out of the Shotover and sounded as though he was in wave, so I had to get a move on. The wave slowed down at 12,500 ft and it was time to move on before the Duos overtook me. From this height, it was an easy 130 km final glide to Graf Spree and home, via Two Thumbs at 80 knots.

## DAY SEVEN

The last day, with wind again. There was silence amongst the pilots when the 450km task was announced. Tarras – Matakanui (east of the Dunstans near Omakau) then Mt Arrowsmith, way up in the Rangitata, for all classes. You could do this on ridges, but nowhere near as fast as in wave. What was going to develop at launch time, we wondered? To add to the drama, the Contest Director announced that the start gate would close one hour after opening time for each class, instead of the normal 3 hours. The idea was to get the pilots on track and home earlier for the final night do, and for Lex the scorer to confirm the final results. At 103 points behind the two Nigels and 330 points behind Theo and Graham in Open Class, I knew I had to do something different today. I said to my wife Dellys that it was no point coming second, so I'd be taking a few calculated risk opportunities today and if it didn't work, then so be it.

Shortly after release, I climbed in 8 knots, straight in to wave, then went exploring the lee of Magic Mountain, which was working well. Marking the wave on the GPS, I maneuvered towards the start circle and descended to 9,000 ft, before accelerating in the sink and exiting the start circle at the required 8,000 ft, heading straight to the GPS marked wave 15km upwind. Reaching the upwind edge of the rotor/cu formed cloud at 6600 ft, I immediately burst in to rough rising air, which turned smooth by 7500 ft and up to 12 knot climbs at times. Not wanting to climb too high, as Tarras was in the 9500 ft sector, the stick was shoved forward and we barrelled along at about 130 knots, crossing St Bathans on track to Tarras at around 9000 ft, still in wave. Short of Tarras, the expected sink from an up-wind wave kept the vario pegged downwards, but I kept the speed up, as the next turnpoint downwind was looking spectacular, with a wave cloud in the lee of the Dunstans.



L: Scorer, Lex McPhail. R: Contest Director, Ralph Henderson,

The wave cloud behind the Dunstans was not as strong as expected, but as I was within the sector for this turnpoint, I decided not to waste any more time, but continue along the wave west of Falls Dam. Cruise climbing at high speed all the way to the Clay Cliffs where the wave was really going strong, I climbed to 15,500 ft and continued cruise climbing up the Ben Ohau wave to 17,000 ft. Staying on track as much as possible and using the height and energy to descend below 13,500 ft for the Mt Arrowsmith section, I was able to follow the upwind 'lumps' of clouds over 8/8ths cover towards Mt Arrowsmith.

Terry Delore once told me that when he flew his record breaking long distance flight of 2500km, he flew these 'lumps' when arriving in the Wairarapa (lower North Island). The North Island was under 8/8ths, but the photos he produced indicated it was safe to soar, as long as there were breaks in the cloud to the east, which you inevitably get in westerly conditions.

The lumps worked perfectly and maintaining 100 knots at 13,000 ft was straight forward. Around Mt Arrowsmith and back, to a nice wave sitting 15 km upwind, at 9,000ft over Cloudy Peak. Not a very strong climb, but it was a matter of being patient and climbing to just under 13,500 ft to push further upwind, back in to the Mackenzie. Another climb up the head of the Godley and a final push west to the lee of the Murchison River, where there was no obvious cloud marking wave, but I could feel it working by flying 1km downwind and parallel to the ridge. Now I could see the Ben Ohau wave to the south. If I could just maintain between 9000 ft to 12,000 ft, I could dive forward and under the cloud, and zoom down the west side of Lake Pukaki for home. That's what happened, at an average speed of 181 kph.

Omarama can be equally frustrating, as well as exhilarating, often on the same flight. I have certainly had my fair share of frustrating days, and I'm sure there will be many more to come. But that's when you learn a heck of a lot about the weather and local conditions, as well as about yourself. The more you do it, the more obvious it becomes. If you haven't experienced it, then book a course with Glide Omarama, or bring a two seater with someone who has flown extensively at Omarama. You'll always want to go back for more. I sure do.

Jenny Wilkinson did something different at the Nationals and took the chance to fly with a master. She flew P2 with Dave Speight in his ASH25. Here are a few words from Jenny about the contest.

**Highlight**

Going somewhere new. Flying Open class tasks with David Speight in his ASH was a great way to go further afield and learn how the air works in places you haven't been to before. Experiencing the Taylor Range convergence and getting into the Shotover, from the Mototapu valley, were new to me.

**Lowlight**

Turbulence: the air was rough on a couple of sou'west days. I even felt airsick in the Dobson one day. I haven't done that for years!

**RESPECT!**

To Ralph, who as Australian CD, introduced the 3km finish circle and cancelled low-level competition finishes for the contest. It was a brave move on his part and it did attract some criticism. The finish proved to work well, even if it was not as spectator friendly and I will be very interested to see if it is endorsed by the pilots for the next competition.

To Jerry, whose superb task setting allowed the pilots to make the most kilometres for each day. When it looked very flat ahead on task, a convergence would appear and I think he planned it that way.

**Chuckle moments**

Observing Dave's competitive spirit. Whenever he noticed a glider was ahead, the stick would go forward to pass, regardless of the strategic plan he had underway.

Thanks to all the organisers for a happy and exceptionally well run contest.

Jenny


Jenny Wilkinson and David Speight

Photo John McCaw

Vaughan Ruddick is a Wellington pilot, who regularly flies at Omarama over the summer. He is another long term competition pilot, who this year won the 15m class.

After a good build up at home, with some good early flights and some tweaking of my glider Z1, I was really looking forward to the Nationals in Omarama this year. Dane was coming back from Belgium to fly DC's LS 6 so it was to be all on.....

**The Weather/ Conditions:**

The weather during the comp was not the standard summer time Omarama weather. There was a lot of moisture to the west; and with west to southwest winds, it was not ideal for the making of thermal conditions. However, we were treated to an amazing lightning show one night and then awoke to a good dusting of snow down to 2000ft above the field.

This meant that most of the tasks were to the south east /north east of Omarama. However, we did make it into the Shotover one day... just.

We had a bit of everything really, ridge / thermal / wave / convergence.

**Tasks:**

Were generally set with the first turn point in the south, then to the east and then up to the north, before returning back to Omarama. In general, the tasks were well set racing tasks, with some great speeds being achieved. This is great advertising for what a great place we fly in.

**My Flying:**

One of my goals this year was to fly more consistently. In past Nationals, I had made a few mistakes that had cost me the competition, so I really wanted to work on that. Also, the ridge running / convergence type of flying really suits my flying style.

Dane and I also had a little bet on: "The 15m day winning speed had to be 10kph faster than the 18m/open class boys."

**Highlights for me :**

The flying - Omarama never lets you down. Task speeds, Ding dong battle with Dane, the yearly catch up with all our friends and all the associated pranks / fun times.


Photo John McCaw

Superb crew Paula Ruddick
Photo John McCaw

**Not so good things:**

The finish circle - this has to go. There is nothing like a good smoker for the pilot and people on the ground at the end of a flight.

**Thanks:**

As always, thanks to my wonderful wife Paula for all her help and support. Leah's training continues...

Pissie, for the endless bouncing of ideas and help that you put up with.

Ralph and Helen, for all their outstanding efforts in running a great competition, bar the finish circle, being Aussie's we will forgive you...

All the volunteers that help out - thanks to Lex (the Coruba scoring machine), Tow-pilots, rope/wing runners, radio operators... thank you all.

# A FRESH SET OF EYES ON THE NATIONALS

By Ralph Henderson

The Nationals should be GNZ's flagship event of the year. Consequently, how they are organised and promoted should be of interest to all GNZ members, as well as racing pilots.

Having come into the Nationals organisation from the outside, I have some suggestions about how the event could be run differently. I do not wish them to be seen as 'Australia does things better' but rather a fresh set of eyes looking at what you do. In simple terms, I think there are some out-dated practices which can be done away with, there are new technologies of which better use could be made, and there are new procedures being used overseas which could be adopted.

These suggestions are based on my experience of running two Australian Multi-Class Nationals with over 50 competitors, the Queensland State Championships and countless Queensland Easter competitions which have around 40 competitors. Over recent years, members of our club have attended worlds, pre-worlds, women's worlds and junior worlds, and the experience they have bought back, plus our experience of preparing and coaching pilots and team members for the various world comps, is reflected in these ideas.

I accept that not everyone will agree with my suggestions.

## What could be let go

### Classes

The contest should be run as a two class competition: those aircraft with handicaps less than 1.05 (basically 15m and standard together), called racing; and 18m and open together, called open. Racing gliders can opt up to open class but not vice versa. Score the open class as both a handicap class and unhandicapped. Racing class is handicapped only.

To maintain the long history of the FAI class based trophies, award the trophies as follows:

- The standard trophy goes to the highest place standard class glider i.e. 15m unflapped.
- The 15m trophy goes to the highest placed 15m class glider i.e. 15m and flaps.
- The 18m trophy goes to the highest placed 18m glider.
- The open class trophy goes to the winner of the open class unhandicapped.

This leaves out the Duos and other 20m two-seaters. Given how many of them there are in New Zealand and that they are now a world championship class, perhaps it is time to have a new trophy for them.

### Gridding

There is no need for allocated grid positions, other than to ensure fairness between pilots, by having different pilots on the front each day. Therefore, rotate the first line only, in each of the two classes. Put a cone out at the start of each class and leave the rest to the pilots. It's a waste of time to have a grid marshal and produce a grid sheet every day.

### Starting

It is no longer necessary to call start times. It clutters the airwaves and requires someone to sit in the office and record them. The scoring program can work out the start time.

### Trophies

The following trophies should be 'retired'

**Hookings Trophy** Most meritorious flight over a non-triangle task *Trophy missing*

**Messervy Trophy** Most meritorious flight over a triangle task *Trophy missing*


Photo John McCaw


Photo John McCaw

**Veterans Trophy** The highest placed pilot in any class aged over 50 (or is it 60 or 65?) years *Trophy missing*

**NZ Open Class Motor Gliding Trophy** *Trophy missing*

**Masterton Trophy** Highest placed club owned glider *Trophy missing*

## 'New' technology, of which better use could be made

### Flarms and SPOTs

Make Flarms and SPOTs compulsory! Full stop, end of discussion!

The technology has been around for many years and should be used. Flarms are not perfect and they alone will not make gliding safe, but they provide a significant safety improvement at relatively low cost. They have a place in the North Island, as well as at Omarama and I can't see why Auckland, Piako and Wellington clubs haven't adopted them fully.

Making SPOTs compulsory would cut out a lot of the radio calls which pilots find annoying, and leads to pilots turning off their radios.

### Scoring

Use an automated scoring program. Pilots should be responsible for delivering their flight trace to the scorer by uploading it to a web site where it can be scored automatically within minutes, just like the OLC. With the capability to upload a trace from anywhere there is internet access, pilots can then upload their traces from the hangar on a laptop, or before returning from a retrieve. All of which enables faster scoring, which everyone wants.

It has become common in Australia for scoring to be done remotely. At the recent Joeyglide at Lake Keepit, the scorer was in Adelaide. The process should be fully automated, and contact between pilot and scorer is only required if something isn't right, usually pilot error. This can be easily resolved by email or a quick mobile phone call.

All results should be on Soaring Spot, where the entire world can find them. Had the results of this competition been on Soaring Spot, any pilot in the world checking the World Championships in Argentina or the Australian Nationals would have known that the NZ Nationals were also on.

### Internet access

It should be a requirement of the organisers to provide free Wi-Fi internet access to everyone at the contest site. In today's world of laptops, IPads, IPhones etc. it is a necessity. It makes it easier for pilots to upload their traces and enables crews and families to remain connected.

### Web presence

A Facebook page should be set up for the competition before it starts. This can then be used to keep everyone up to date with what is happening.

Getting gliding in the media has proven to be very difficult over many years. The web now provides a way to get around this. GNZ should review the whole web presence of gliding competitions in New Zealand, including Soaring Spot, blogs, Facebook and the GNZ website, and find a way to provide a single point of access to simple, user friendly information on all competitions in New Zealand.


Photo John McCaw

## ‘New’ procedures that could be used

**Finish ring**

The main advantage of the finish ring is that it separates, by time and location, finishing the competition flight, and flying a circuit and landing. A pilot sets the finish point in the GPS and flies towards it. 3 km out, the glider crosses the finish line, the pilot then has 3 km and a number of minutes to set up for finals and land. There are no dramatic or near ground manoeuvres. There is no rapid decision making. Finish rings are standard procedures at Australian and World Championships.

My decision to set a finish ring at the Omarama nationals was based on the following:

- It is standard procedure at other contests I had run and had been used successfully.
- The finishing and landing graphic issued as part of the local rules seemed to have too much traffic doing too many manoeuvres in too small an area.
- There was only one finish line regardless of the direction pilots were finishing from.
- There was a change in circuit procedures from what was used during ‘non-competition’ periods which other incoming traffic may or may not have been aware of.
- The finish line procedures included flying over the campground area, which is normally not permitted.

Prior to making this decision, I discussed my intentions with selected members of the contest team and the pilots, and there was general support. I understand that a finish ring had only been used once before in New Zealand, at a Club Class Nationals at Omarama. More than one said they had been wanting to make the change for years but could not get support to do so. I began to feel like I was the guinea pig!

The issue of finish ring versus finish line was discussed at the pilots meeting. Pilots were given the choice of voting for one or the other and the vote was 16 all. Some pilots would have liked to have voted for both.

The choice really comes down to beat-ups versus no beat-ups! I have observed many successful high energy, low level finishes by pilots with the skill and experience to do so. I have also observed some awfully bad attempts by both experienced and inexperienced pilots, and this is where the finish line is less safe.

Some pilots believe that the task is not complete until the beat-up is completed, and that the removal of beat-ups from the competition scene removes the sport of its spectator appeal. I contend that safety comes before ‘crowd’ appeal. At one contest, a straw poll was taken of pilots partners and it was overwhelmingly against beat-ups!

It would be useful if an objective risk assessment was done for both procedures.

In doing so, the rules that are made about the use of the finish ring need to be considered. In Australia, the rules state that no minimum finish height can be set. The Worlds require that there be a descending flight, i.e. no pull ups. The NZ rules require that a minimum and maximum height be set for crossing the finish ring. In hindsight, I don’t know if these heights are required, although extremes e.g. 10ft and 20,000ft, could always be set!

Complying with such heights requires a certain amount of attention inside the cockpit at a time when eyes should be outside. For flights in thermal conditions, typical in Australia, there is no real need for a maximum finish height. For flights in wave, the implications of setting a maximum finish height need to be adequately considered. If a maximum height is set, pilots have to descend through rough air to cross the ring. If there is no maximum, pilots could finish above 10,000 ft at VNE in the smooth wave.

When I issued my instructions after Day 2 at Omarama, I was as much concerned about the pull-ups, and pilots turning back against other incoming traffic, as I was about low-level flying. Both of these manoeuvres, pulling up after a low level finish, and proceeding deep into the finish ring and then turning back, potentially towards other incoming traffic, have long since disappeared from finishes in Australia, and are severely frowned upon, or worse, at World Comps.

The comment was made that the low traffic density at Omarama made these rules unnecessary, due to the low number of competitors and the small amount of other gliding and GA traffic. These points are valid, but procedures should be valid for both high and low levels of traffic. You cannot change the procedure just because the traffic gets busy one day.

In summary, I think the 3km finish ring worked, especially once pilots got used to it and overcame their resistance to change. Having watched most of the finishes every day, I never once became concerned about the safety of finishers who were following the required procedure after they had crossed the finish ring.

Whether or not minimum and maximum heights are required, and what they should be, is a matter for further discussion and may need to be site specific, depending on the prevalence of wave.

# HBW VISIT TO OMARAMA

## DECEMBER 2012 – JANUARY 2013

By Jason Kelly


Photo John McCaw

Omarama over the summer season is not just about contests. It is also the summer camp site of many of NZ's glider pilots. While the South Island clubs have been the regular attendees over the years, North Islanders do venture down. The Wellington contingent has been part of the scenery for years. Aucklanders usually visit for the Nationals. This year however, a new group of intrepid pilots braved the Mackenzie for the first time. Jason Kelly from Gliding Hawkes Bay & Waipukurau tells of his club's camp at Omarama.


Photo John McCaw

Photo Jason Kelly

In a wave.

While the late Peter Lyons was a regular visitor to Omarama, it has been a good few years since Gliding Hawkes Bay & Waipukurau last visited as a club. With encouragement from Graham White, four other members joined him in the trip south, to coincide with the National Championships. James Foreman took his LS3a (MF), Jason Price the club's Grob 103C Twin III SL (HB, a self launching two seater), Jason Kelly took his LS4 (NJ) and Graham had his LS8 (XS.) David Davidson completed the group and he flew with Jason Price on three days in HB.

After the long road journey south, visits to possible safe outlanding airstrips were made prior to flying, and some of these were looked at further, as the first flying day was spent in familiarisation of the local area and conditions. Graham decided not to fly due to a head cold. With thermals, ridge and wave lift to use, good local flights were had by all.

With a non-flying day the next day, further safe outlanding airstrips were visited, which also showed some of the different types of terrain that could be flown in.

The next flying day saw Tony van Dyk lead James and Jason Kelly around until James had a problem with his aileron tape and Jason a problem with his radio while all were climbing in wave with oxygen. Meanwhile, Graham in his LS8 was giving Jason Price and David Davidson advice as they flew HB.

Staying in the camp ground, the meat supplied by James was eyed with envy by other campers and devoured by hungry pilots. The van Dyk's also graciously assisted with cooking facilities when torrential rain hit the area. Water bombs on otherwise dry evenings from a number of parties were met with retaliation, with Terry Delore attracting a personal dousing, even though most of the water bombs missed their targets.

All too soon our time was up and it was time to return home. Despite the weather giving us all four seasons during our visit: summer heat, snow, rain and electrical storms; we managed some good flying. Jason Price teamed up with Graham in HB for some one-on-one tuition, while James and Jason Kelly explored the area further. The weak conditions one day saw Jason Price and David become the first pilots in New Zealand to outland HB in the South Island. With a good number of flying hours clocked up in a short period of time and the potential of the area barely scratched, all agreed it was certainly a trip worth repeating.