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# Chaotic

## Darling Downs Soaring Club Autumn Newsletter April/May 2008

### Club Snippet –

I am told that Tony Cavanna has completed 10 years as an instructor. Congratulations on an awesome contribution to gliding, teaching new people how to fly and to the club of course. One of my spies took this great photo to show how tiring it can be sitting in the backseat all day. ☺

Seriously - Well done Tony!



### CFI REPORT from Ralph

Welcome to my first report as CFI. Firstly thank you to Andrew for all his effort and hard work over his term as CFI. I hope we continue to see him as often as his work and family commitments allow.

We have had one training panel meeting since I took over. We took the opportunity to step back from the day to day operational matters to consider where we are and where we are going. We are very fortunate to be members of a truly great gliding club. Over my gliding career I have been a member of 10 different gliding clubs and have flown at a few others. There is no doubt that DDSC is the best of those clubs.

We are also fortunate to have an extremely good training panel. If you look at the skill ability and experience that we have available to us, we would not want to be anywhere else.

We also need to recognise where we are as a club today. Our level of pre-solo training has declined, and we do a relatively low number of passenger flights. We have increased numbers of private owners and we are, and always have been a very strong cross-country club, making use of our very favourable geographic and meteorological conditions.

We recently changed the name of the panel from an instructors panel to a training panel, with our coaches joining the instructors on the panel. After we changed the name I reflected on whether or not we had made the right move. What is the role of the “panel” in a contemporary club? Is it operations, instructing, coaching, mentoring or pilot training and development? In reality it is all of those and probably a few more things that I haven’t mentioned.

In the end “training” seemed as good a word as any. It does represent an important shift in one regard. The term “instructor” suggests that the panel is about the “instructors” not the “pupils”. The term “training” suggests it is about our club members, i.e. our customers. In this world if we do not take a customer-centric approach we will not be in business for very long.

Given where the club is today, and the talents we have on the panel we have the opportunity to train and develop our club members from pre-solo through to competing in a world comps, as another one of our members Allan, is about to do.

In amongst all the reflection and philosophising we have a regular operation to manage. I intend

to build on the excellent basis established by my immediate predecessors Andrew, Jeremy and Peter. I want to continue to operate on a highly delegated model and keep to the absolute minimum the things that can only be done by the CFI.

In this regard we have already agreed to formally delegate a number of responsibilities to all level 2 and 3 instructors. We will also be authorising all our level 1 instructors to be independent operators, so that on those few days when no level 2 or 3 instructor is available, club members can continue their training.

I will also be continuing a very strong emphasis on safety, incident reporting and learning from whatever incidents we have, before they become accidents. We all need to be open about times when things don't go as well as they should and come forward and share what we have learnt with other club members. In this way we can all learn.

In a similar vein, check flights should be seen as an opportunity to learn new things, to unlearn any bad habits that we have picked up, and brush up on some skills that maybe we haven't used for a while, in a safe environment.

Ralph

## **Tugmaster Reports – Thanks Pam**

Tug master's report.

This report covers the last six months, during which time we have rarely had both tugs serviceable at the same time.

MLR suffered a disintegration of a bearing in the drive gear for the left magneto at the end of October. The LAME from Aviation Specialists in Toowoomba came out to diagnose the problem.

The engine was removed for a "bulk strip". When I saw it a week later, it looked like a collection of dozens of unrelated pieces of metal spread over a table top. Hard to imagine that all those bits when assembled form a very powerful engine with everything whizzing about at thousands of RPM and very small tolerances.

Fortunately there was only minor damage to the engine, requiring some welding inside the crank case. There was some unrelated wear and tear on the camshaft, which had to be replaced,

along with parts of the drive train and the magneto drive, and the engine was overhauled, returning it to service with 1723 hours to run. Bearing in mind that it had only 276 hours to run anyway, we didn't do as badly as you might think.

The engine strip and rebuild was done by Paul Coughran at Approved Aircraft Maintenance, and the welding was done in Brisbane. There were inevitable delays over the Christmas and New Year holidays, and by the time the engine was back in the aeroplane it was late January.

Meanwhile, SWR was doing all the towing, but on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> December a shock absorber failed, and with MLR still away, we were very fortunate to be able to hire a Pawnee, VH-TOJ, belonging to the Air Training Corps at Warwick. Jenny and Jeremy drove to Warwick and fetched it back, but there were no launches that day.

We had TOJ for a few weeks, by which time MLR was back in service and I flew TOJ back to Warwick. Then SWR came back into service on 16<sup>th</sup> Feb, and we finally had both tugs serviceable again! This happy state lasted for a month.

On 20<sup>th</sup> March, we sent both tugs to Chinchilla for the Easter Comps. MLR developed a fuel leak from the gascolator. The LAME from Dalby, Glen Shaw, went out to Chinchilla with Bob Keen, and Bob flew MLR back. Thanks to Val Wilkinson, Robert Bradley, John Ashford and Bob Keen for towing at Chinchilla.

Last weekend, we sent MLR to Warwick, where both the Pawnees were out of service, thus repaying our debt of neighbourly helpfulness. MLR and Gary McMahon did nearly 5 hours of flying including the ferry there and back, while SWR was busy at DDSC.

Then there was the day the MLR got bogged...perhaps I should spare the blushes of the tuggie and say no more.

Thanks to all our tuggies, Des Baartz for greasing the wheel bearings on MLR, Lex McQueen for oil changes, and everyone for faithfully adhering to their rostered duties, and to SWR and MLR for getting us all into the air.

Pam Kurstjens

## Treasurers Report Apr/ May 08

1) There has been a small increase in the GFA fees, effective from May 1<sup>st</sup> 2008. GFA full subs are now \$205.00 a year, family \$165.00, & student \$87.50

2) GFA TIF flights have also increased from \$10.00 to \$20.00, and the student rate of \$5.00 has been discontinued. However, we can use the \$10.00 book (in caravan) until it is used up. Then the Club will have to purchase the forms at \$20.00, and the TIF fees increased by \$10.00

3. The fee for MLR/SWR for hire/retrieves has been increased to \$300.00 per tacho hour.

Cheers - Fran

### My 300K flight. - By Dave Holbrook

On Sunday the 27<sup>th</sup>, I decided on a 300 K triangle of Millmerran – Jandowae N – Maclagan and back to DDSC of course. I think the distance is about 309 K. The forecast was good with climbs expected to about 9000' and the only fly in the pigment was the NW wind.

Fran was helping Jeremy get everyone in the air and towed me to about 2600 ASL where I released into a weak 2kt climb in a 23kt NW wind. The wind did ease with height to 15 kts, but it was always noticeable. Funnily enough, I actually thought I had released quite high, in fact I can see now looking at the trace why it took me a while to get started.

Ten minutes after launching, at 11am I set off after a weak climb to 4500' towards Millmerran. There were clouds just appearing in the distance and I tried to stay downwind of potential sources until I could actually get to a cloud for certain.

After a short glide of about 7 k I took a 3kt climb from 3700' to 6800'. Now I felt a bit more comfortable. My initial thinking was that I might have to be careful on the first leg but on turning Millmerran, I was expecting it to get rapidly easier – at least stronger. I was thinking that if I was going to outland it would probably be on this leg, and I was eying up all the best looking

paddocks most of which were also good thermal triggers being dark coloured.

Having more height my next glide was more confident but I still couldn't help thinking that if clouds were appearing in the general area then flying downwind over dark paddocks ignoring the clouds was dumb. This in mind I deviated 35 degrees (where is the degree symbol on my keyboard?) to a growing cloud. No – it was a grey decaying cloud, Doh! In a hang glider that would have been game over! Now diverting to a nice white edged cloud – directly in line with my original track, I got a 3kt climb to 7400' and set off again.

I had another 13k glide to another weakish 3kt climb, trying to stay above 6000' for the time being. I was unsure what would be a good height range to be working yet and as I was also doing my 5hours and not in a hurry was not concerned with the vtask speed of around 60kph. I felt I was being very conservative but there was only just Qs starting to form and show the best routes through the sky.

The next glide of 17 k took me to within spitting distance of Millmerran and I met up with a forming cloud that was looking very promising. This was where I got into gear and found the new plastic protractor I had stuck on the dashboard was a very handy instrument. (Having discarded the half-round version have now acquired one with 90 degree angle!) I hit a strong surge under the cloud, waited – looked over my shoulder, then threw the Hornet over and pulled back into the first decent climb; 6.5 kt average to 9300'. Just as I got in, Allan called on the radio, juggling the handheld I listened as he told me Millmerran was a bit soft and take it easy! "Thanks, but I'm just going through 7000 in a 9kt average at the moment" was my reply.

Now feeling that the day was getting going, I had a 20k glide round the turnpoint before topping up briefly in 3kts then returning to the same climb to 8000' this time. It's worth noting here my errors in task setting. I used the seeyou in the club to set the task and I have turnpoints in my Winpilot that may or may not be the same. In addition, I was fixated on what was the ground feature, which is of course irrelevant (as Barry pointed out). I was heading to go round the big grain silos, and eventually twigged the water tower on the outskirts of town is the point (probably). Other members doing early XC should note the

next point; fly around the turnpoint not to it. I did get it right, but I was cutting it unnecessarily fine. I heard the Colibri mystery black box beep, so I headed back to my lovely cloud over the Condamine river.

I have found in the past tree lines and rivers to be exceptional triggers when the wind blows at an angle to them. Initially I followed the Condamine for a few K, but then realised it was not at much of an angle to the wind, and I deviated to a better looking sky further over. On the next glide I was aware of needing to get some distance done against the wind and wasn't sure what the optimal height band to work was. I was thinking that gliding down to about 5000' would be OK.



**The Bunyas as seen on way to Jandowae.**

After 24k I took the next 5kt climb I hit at about 6800' back to nearly 9500'. I was pleased with my thermalling on both of the last climbs and felt the plastic triangle was mainly responsible – it is easier than lining up the screws on the compass. After reviewing the trace in seeyou, I was pleased to see how neat my circles were and confident the centering was good most of the time.

I don't want this to be a thermal by thermal account – and I think now is the time to glide to the next mistake.

Confident that I would get up easily from 5000' I pushed on into wind with a big glide. Unfortunately I did not take into account the wind was stronger lower and the thermals were hard to stay in; I had forgot already the first few thermals where I constantly re-entered upwind. My glide of 42k took me to within sight of scraggly clouds over Dalby but I took a weak

climb just before Dalby (2.5kts) from 4600' to 6500' then pushed on a bit more warily till I could reach the good sky just NW of Dalby.

On reflection, I think given the wind I should have tried to stay above 7000' and I would have been quicker. I felt if I pushed on to over Dalby and the scraggly cloud I may have got sucked into the airfield.

Eventually I got back to 9700' with some poor cloud selection – didn't find the 5.5 kt average until I moved upwind slightly. Now with 55k to go to Jandowae N I set off determined to stay above 7000'. Looking at the trace, I did achieve this, and my glides were between 6 and 23 K.

It did seem to take forever to get round Jandowae North and again I realised I didn't actually know where I was going! "Oh it must be the road junction" – me looking at the map. On turning I radioed to anyone listening (and then turned it off – too noisy) that I had turned Jandowae N. On looking toward the Bunyas and Maclagan I could see lovely clouds and knew it would be an easy run. I think glide was showing just past Jandowae after the next 6 kt climb.

The main aim on the rest of the flight was to ensure I was up for five hrs after release. I wasn't sure when I released so I was working to keep the task speed to 60. It would have been great to glide straight round the rest of the task to DDSC. But I feared that the day may die and I wouldn't find it easy to extend to 5hrs, whereas if I stayed around the Bunyas for a while ... At some point I realised I had looked at my watch after release and it said 10 to 11, so I knew I could land just after 10 to 4. Eventually I still ended up approaching DDSC too early and had to then hang back for ten more minutes.

I landed uneventfully and was reasonably comfortable still in the cockpit – though shortly after landing got a headache that lasted about 10 hours. It was similar to a 'caffeine' withdrawal headache but I wonder if it was because I spent a lot of time above 7000'? I drank about 4.5 litres of water, so I wasn't de-hydrated.

Other observations after looking at the trace are; I certainly deviated a lot (329k flown) and should have flown faster on the second leg glides. I did not fly above 70 kts much, probably 80 would have been better.

Finally, here is a picture of the Bunyas as I went past on the way back...



### **WAY HIGH Looking down on the Bunyas**

Thanks due to Jeremy & Fran for tugging, John Hook for being duty pilot and Barry Daniels for being the Observer.

Dave Holbrook.

### **Five Minutes with Pam Kurstjen**

#### **What Brought you to flying?**

As a child, I always wanted to fly. I don't really know why, but we did live under the circuit of an airfield for several years. Also, I had the family history of an uncle who flew in the war, and died as a commercial pilot in the Star Tiger that was lost in the Bermuda Triangle in 1948. Not an auspicious start, you might think. But remember, when I was a teenager, man landed on the Moon, and Concorde made its maiden flight. What really made the difference was that I read an article about gliding in a Country Life magazine. I'd never heard of gliding before. The article said even housewives were learning to glide, so I thought a schoolgirl could too. I went to the Long Mynd, a hill site on the Welsh border, where they offered courses at half price for students, and stayed three weeks. I went solo on the K8, after learning on the K13 on winch and bungee launches. It was the most exciting thing I'd ever done (I rode horses cross-country at the time. My parents thought gliding was too dangerous?). That was in 1971, and I still find gliding challenging and fun.

**How long in Club-**We joined DDSC when we emigrated in 2001.

**How many Hours-**Around 4,000 gliding, and 3,800 power.

**What is it that caught your attention most about gliding?** The excitement and challenge. The scenery, from the Welsh borders to the Alps, from rolling English countryside to the flat plains of Africa and Australia. The feeling of incredible privilege, being able to fly, and to see the world from the air. In the UK, we had the wartime heritage of hundreds of airfields we could use, just as here we benefit from Tocumwal, Temora, Narromine and others.

**Favourite Moment** -There comes a moment in every long or challenging flight, when you KNOW it is going to work out. You may be 200km from home on a 750 or 1000km, and there is that moment when you are on schedule, with good weather ahead, and you know you will make it to the finish line.

#### **Best Achievement So far or Highlight**

My first 1000km flight, in an ASW17 at Waikerie in 1989. It took 10 hours, and required a struggle at the beginning, a good run for several hours, and finished with a very careful glide for an hour at best glide angle, into the setting sun. I hardly dared breathe!

**Goals Next Season** -Nothing specific. 1000km from DDSC?

#### **What are you reading at the moment?**

Just read "Snow Falling on Cedars" by David Guterson. I can recommend it.

**Favourite Food** - Curry

**Favourite Red Wine** - Merlot

#### **Favourite Ship - What are you flying?**

I love open class. On a good day, at high wing loading, there is nothing to beat it under cloud streets, and following energy lines. When the weather falls apart you can cross big gaps and really use that glide angle. The Nimbus 4T has served me well for several years, with many records and several 1000 kms, but it is a lumbering great beast on the ground.

#### **Most enjoyable aspect of gliding**

Freedom. Our playground is as far as the eye can see. Long may it stay that way. In Europe, it is already disappearing, with airspace and transponder issues.

## **Dream Ship**

I'm already flying it. I might consider an 18m glider, when I can decide which one is best. I'm waiting to see the 18m Antares prove itself. It is a superbly well designed glider, and the crashworthiness of the cockpit is second to none.

**Thanks Pam for participating** – next time we

put Chad is under the microscope

## **AGM and Trophy Time Again**

The Rex Teakle trophy is awarded to the person who is deemed by anonymous club member vote to be the most popular, worthy and contributing member over the last 12 months. Each member is entitled to one vote and votes should be sent to Tony Cavanna by telephone, email or letter prior to the AGM. Nominations will close on 30th August 2008. If you can please provide a reason for your nomination (the best comments are used when presenting the award).

Trophy winners to date have been:

2000 Murray Knight  
2001 Shane McCaffrey  
2002 Bob Keen and Ralph Henderson (joint winners)  
2003 Allan Latemore  
2004 Bob Keen  
2005 Tony Cavanna  
2006 Jenny Thompson  
2007 John Hook

The trophy is a magnificent silver eagle. A picture can be found at <http://www.ddsc.org.au/AGM/Rex%20Teakle%20Trophy.asp>

Regards, Tony Cavanna (club secretary)  
3359 4485  
0419 918 962  
[tonycavanna@ozemail.com.au](mailto:tonycavanna@ozemail.com.au)

## **AGM**

Dear Member,

Our Annual General Meeting is on the 6th September 2008 at McCaffrey Field. The cost of the AGM dinner is yet to be decided but is expected to be no more than \$25 per head.

Committee position nomination forms, nomination forms for the Rex Teakle award and other relevant documents are available from the club notice board and from the club's website at <http://www.ddsc.org.au/AGM/default.asp>. All committee positions (except CFI) are up for election so don't be shy this is your chance to make a bigger contribution. A summary of the areas of responsibility of various committee positions can be found in the clubs' strategic plan which can be found via the following menu options on the website: Members -> Online Documents.

The AGM isn't just dry club business which doesn't normally take very long, it's also a social event where we also present club awards.

All club documents are available from the secretary so please ask if you can't obtain a document you require from the website.

Please contact me if you are coming to the AGM so that I can give the caterers an estimate of numbers expected and if you have any dietary requirements let me know.

Tony Cavanna, Club Secretary.

## **Upcoming Comps –**

The highlight of Queensland's competition season has to be the Queensland State Gliding Championships held this year at Warwick which is followed by the Club Class Nationals at Kingaroy. All the usual classes from club to open, club is the only un ballasted class with the rest ballasted. Previous years of comps from this site have been great, last comp was 7 days of flying. Lots of tie down areas, bitumen taxiways, plenty of on site camping. All the info and registration can be found at:

[www.statecomps08.warwickgliding.org.au](http://www.statecomps08.warwickgliding.org.au)

This year there is a prize for the club class winner worth over \$400.00 so bring those club gliders!

We also would like to repeat the previous record of having the most 18 metre gliders attend ( 15 last time ) so bring those big wings!

## **WINTER COACHING FROM RALPH**

Just in case you missed the email

Last year we ran a coaching program over the winter months for pilots who were planning to compete in the Club Class Nationals at Kingaroy.

The program was written up in a recent edition of Soaring Australia if you want to refer back to what we did.

The program was something new and different, but seemed to produce positive results. The question then became, well what do we do this year?

Especially given that DDSC is always out to be a leader in such programs and trying to improve, do things better, and stay ahead of the pack.

After a chat at the weekend we think we should do something again this year, but of course something better and different.

We have recently come up with the concept of the **4-Stage Pilot Training and Development Lifecycle**, see attached power point slides.

So the plan for this year is to form a DDSC comps squad for those pilots who are at stage 4, i.e. planning to compete in state comps or national comps in the 2008-09 summer.

There are many things intending competitors can do between now and summer to improve their chances of success.

Remember the 7 Ps

Proper prior preparation prevents p.... poor performance.

We need to review what we did last year, see what areas we need more coaching on, cover any areas we missed, but generally do different things to last year.

The program will be open to DDSC members who were part of last year's program and those who weren't.

Coaching sessions will be in Brisbane on a week night, potentially one a month from June until September.

The format and logistics are open for discussion on the first night, which is planned for Monday 2 June at Richard's office at Toowong.

If you are interested or would like further information please contact me

Ralph

## A Day out at Irvingdale International Helipad

During a recent X Country jaunt with my friend Bob Flood in the Grob on the way home we encountered weak tight thermals surrounded by voracious sink! Lose the 2-4knots up and fall into 6-8-10knots down!

The areas of search for thermal interest such as a square dam and a feedlot were used successfully (but slow climbs) but just not going to get us home and we were so close! We headed to a tree line and searched in vain and then we spotted Irvingdale Helipad. Sufficient height was in hand and several surrounding paddocks available as alternatives we headed that way.



Irvingdale Helipad does look extremely short from the air and it proved to be reasonably longer than first thought as landed at the (B) end rolled through to the (A) end.

We arrived and scouted the area. Runway!!!.... It is NOT a runway, there did not appear to be any fixed wing touchdown telltale signs! It is a Helipad and built that way, it is not bitumen - it is a concrete block painted black! (some areas where tape had lifted showed the concrete below the surface coating) Seemingly it must have piers and whatever underneath to avoid the Downs clay soil movement such that it is billiard table smooth. This comes at a price and something that should be noted, the transition from grass to runway (helipad) can be level or it can be as much as a 100mm sharp edged step (not good for a mainwheel or a tailwheel!!), [luckily we landed on the black]

The ratio of the width of the Helipad makes the length look short from the air, certainly the length is approx 300metres equal to 1/3 length of McCaffrey International. The available grass after the pad to the fence is certainly 500metres, the pad is surrounded by a shallow spoon drain approx 40metres from the edge that is invisible on approach and this spoon drain has the dreaded Downs cracks that are wide and deep and should be avoided, about equal to the roughest area of McCaffrey International.

A landing short of the pad would certainly be a rough one with the spoon drain followed by the possibility of a 100mm concrete step! There is alternative areas within the boundary that look better at the South of the "strip" but it certainly is not a "airfield" and should not be considered better than a conventional paddock landing, a full scout was avoided due to the prevalence of prickles and my sandals magnetic qualities.

Departure from Irvingdale was uneventful as we took (good) advice and reduced the cockpit load by making me walk to the road thus allowing a wing runner (reduce the risk and allow a float off of the Grob), placing the tug on the blacktop and the Grob beyond the spoon drain aligned with a level edge to the pad, wind light at 90 cross both tug and glider appeared airborne and climbing well before 2/3 of blacktop used.

Reducing the cockpit load came at little penalty as the retrieve car took off for the 18km drive after Bob had landed back at DDSC and beat me walking the 2km out to the roadway (either I'm a slow walker or Fran Ning has a lead foot in my car!).

So after hearing outlanding stories round the campfire about Irvingdale with Alan Latemore I can now say I've been there and done that, maybe I will land there again, but only on ideal conditions for landing and aero tow retrieve (if that good perhaps I could climb away and would not be there!), a trailer retrieve would be a real pain with a push the glider for a few kays plus a carry over the security gates/perimeter fence.

Thanks Keith

## June Roster

	Instructors	Tug Pilots	Duty Pilots
Sun 1st	Russell Bennett	Lex McQueen	Anton Grisin
Sat 7th	Denis Lambert Chad Nowak	Pam Kurstjens	Leonid Motin
Sun 8th	Charlie Downes John Moller	Gerrit Kurstjens	Libby Matuszczak
Sat 14th	Tony Cavanna	Charlie Downes	Richard Armstrong
Sun 15th	Jeremy Thompson Barry Daniel	<b>VOLUNTEER REQUIRED</b>	Paul Bart
Sat 21st	Peter Bell Fran Ning	Gary McMahon	Roly Sundell
Sun 22nd	Richard Hoskings	Mark Robertson	Greg & Michaela Valler
Sat 28th	Andrew Huggins Pearce Mitchell	Fran Ning	John Hook
Sun 29th	Russell Bennett	Jeremy Thompson	Rob Murphy



END