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August 1986 — \$2.50

ISSUE NO. 51 (9th Year)



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SPECIAL ISSUE
COLLECTOR'S EDITION

FEATURES:

12 CHELAN NATIONALS-CHAPTER 2

In true contest form, meet organizer CJ Sturtevant provides a day-by-day description of another successful Nationals in Lake Chelan. Humor, pilots and gliders, cute phrases, triangle tasks, actual accounts, results... it's all here. Photos provided by pro-photographer, Howard Handy.

18 DOWNUNDER NEW ZEALAND

He's Back! Roving reporter Gib Eggen—our former German correspondent—returns with an overview of that "other" downunder

22 SITE GUIDE TO THE ALPS

In his typically entertaining style, our longtime correspondent Noel Whittall and son Robert take us on a desirable tour of the gorgeous Alps of Austria and Bavaria (southern Germany). You'll want to keep this as a directory of the right places for your own European trip.

26 UP IN THE U.K.

British Hang Gliding Association chairman Noel Whittall reviews the state-of-the-art of towing in jolly old England, where advances have perhaps gone beyond those in America. Read about variations on the equipment used.

28 AUSTRALIAN PREVIEW

Much more than the host country for the sixth running of the prestigious

country. Accented by quality photos from New Zealand's own Graeme Henderson, Eggen tells about the sites, the people, the weather, and more. New Zealand's proximity to Australia makes it a second stop for those headed to the World Meet in Australia. Sidebar by *Airborne* editor, Bill Degen.

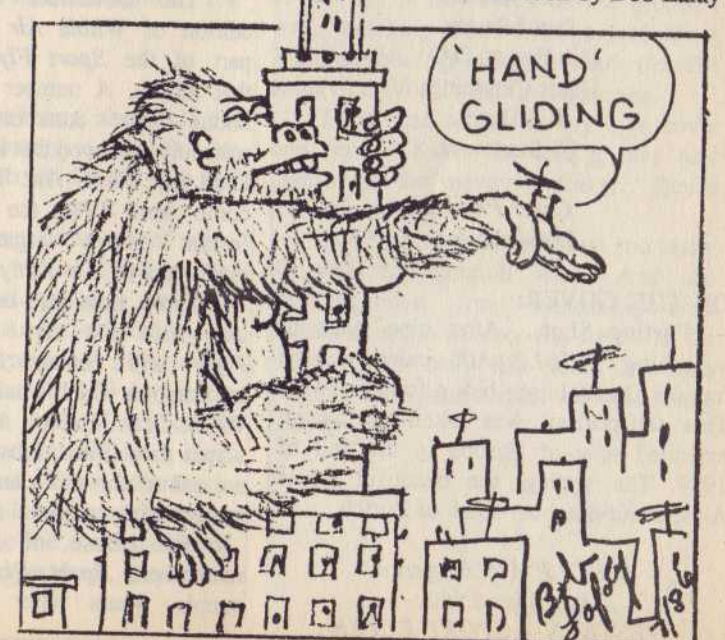
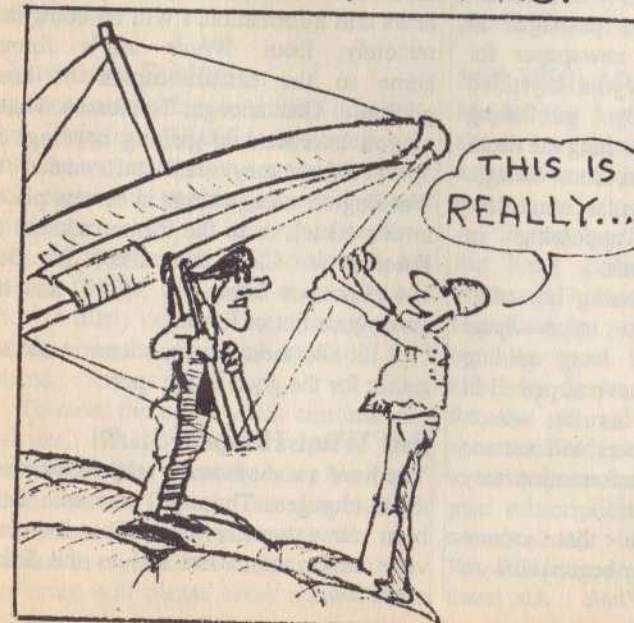
World Meet in late 1987, Australia is home of some of the world's finest pilots, of early innovator Bill Moyes, and of advances in tow-launched cross country flying. It's a whole different world "downunder." Account and photos by Denis Cummings, with help from his son, Iain.

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Cartoon by Bob Lafay

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ON THE COVER:

Parting Shot... After nine years of publishing *WHOLE AIR* independently, founder Dan Johnson bids a fond farewell. This self-portrait was taken during an extended tour of Europe in the fall of 1984. The setting: the beautiful Swiss Alps, about one hour south of Zurich.

WHOLE AIR magazine
is affiliated with:
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Publisher's Column



The Good. The Bad.

To employ an abused phrase... I have good news and bad news.

The bad news is that the issue of *Whole Air* that you are now reading is the last magazine-format issue that you will ever see. (Hence the "Collector's Edition" moniker on the front cover.)

The good news is, this is *not* the end of America's *only other* hang gliding communications vehicle.

These revelations demand some further explanation, so here we go.

This August 1986 issue of *Whole Air* is definitely the last you'll receive. But from the September issue (due out in just a couple of weeks) onward, subscribers will begin receiving *Sport Flyer* newspaper. Some of you will recognize this publication. Others may not, or may have forgotten.

The December 1985 "newsletter" edition of *Whole Air* was packaged as part of the *Sport Flyer* newspaper for that month. A number of you, mystified about our summer-only publishing schedule, believed that issue rang the death knell for *Whole Air*. Then, sure enough, come April 1986, the regular magazine-format issues began appearing in mailboxes on a monthly basis.

From now on—beginning immediately with the very next issue—*Sport Flyer* will contain that hang gliding information which would have appeared in *Whole Air*. Except that as the season wanes to a finish, subscribers *will not* see an end to the news and information they receive in the mail.

For those of you that cannot remember, *Sport Flyer* began life a couple years after *Whole Air*, as

Ultralight Flyer. For four full years it covered the rapidly expanding scene of ultralight activity. It had a good run, but when the Great Ultralight Collapse dried up that industry, the Sclair family who owns Northwest Flyer, converted the publication to one that serves the entire gamut of sport aviation. It has worked very well, and today thrives in an arena where once six major magazines battled it out for supremacy. All but one of the others are long gone.

Sport Flyer reaches a much larger audience than any hang gliding magazine in the world. Coverage extends from sky diving to hot air balloons to sailplanes to air racing and many others, including ultralights of course. Hang gliding has also received steady coverage, although because *Whole Air* emanated from the same offices, the hang gliding coverage was held down. This is now going to change.

The Best From *Whole Air*

Some regular items from *Whole Air* will carry over to *Sport Flyer*. My amazingly popular column, "Product Lines" will continue to run in *Sport Flyer*. We'll see to it that the stream of Pilot Reports on new hang gliders continues to flow. Hang gliding news will be faster than ever—even faster than *Whole Air* in the last two years—because *Sport Flyer* is a genuine newspaper, and it moves very rapidly.

Not last or least, I will continue to be involved in the assembly of hang gliding news and information. I will be doing this remotely from *Whole Air's* former home in the eastern capital of hang gliding... Chattanooga, Tennessee. Those of you interested in gaining coverage in *Sport Flyer* may send information to Washington state (address in several places in this issue), or to the former address of *Whole Air*. Can't remember? It's Box 144, Lookout Mtn., TN 37350, and it's never gone out of service.

In all, these changes can work together for the good of the sport.

But What Happened...?

You have a right to know why we've made these changes. Those of you who have been our extremely loyal subscribers are very important to me and to the Sclair operation.

The fact is, hang gliding is a mature industry. Gone are the days when every builder released two new models a year. Gone are the days of schools where one day on a sand dune was all you got. Gone are the days of two dozen glider manufacturers, and prices under \$500. Some say good riddance, and they've got a point or two.

Gone also are the days of 50-60 deaths per year. Gone are long strings of people scared silly by "instructors" who knew no more than their students after a single day of "instruction." And gone are the days of full luff dives (remember them?).

In today's modern hang gliding scene, we have held fatalities to under ten in good years. We have schools whose level of teaching truly earns the adjective "professional." And today's remaining glider manufacturers concern themselves with the design of gliders that may survive a *tumble*, a far cry from the "good old days," don't you agree?

But these quantum leap improvements come with a price. In the USA, we now have a mere four manufacturers: Wills Wing, Delta Wing, Pacific Windcraft, and Seedwings. They sell gliders priced to nearly \$3,000, and are understandably therefore, selling a great many less units a year. We have only a handful of harness manufacturers, instrument manufacturers, and parts suppliers.

Please understand, I don't say this is bad. Nor is it insufficient. It's merely a small number.

A Numbers Business

Magazine publishing is a big numbers game. Printing 5-6,000 magazines per issue is so small-time, many printers won't even bid on the job. And those printers who will bid cannot offer low prices. By approximation, it cost nearly as much to "build" the pages as it does to print this many copies. That creates quite a strain on the financial end of the business.

To meet the costs which continue to accelerate, *Whole Air* has required the advertising dollars of nearly every business in the sport. This is an impossible requirement. Every business will not advertise in every issue any more than every issue will please every reader. The

trouble is not that *Whole Air* couldn't gain the ad dollars of every business, but rather that it *had to...* there is simply too few businesses.

Unfortunately, it doesn't end with the businesses.

Whole Air also required a very high percentage of all enthusiasts as subscribers. We have maintained about half of all USHGA members. We have well over half of all Canadian pilots, and we have a good number of foreign subscribers. Plus our sales to the nation's newsstands have been satisfying, when one considers the incredibly specialized nature of hang gliding.

It's just not enough.

We put a great deal of money into trying to reach the large European community of hang glider pilots—nearly five times as many as in America! This proved impossibly difficult. One must look at the great physical distance (mailing costs were greater than printing costs!), and the language barriers (translations were expensive and took too long), and very high cost to solicit advertisers (priced a 15 minute daytime call to Italy lately?). However, these were predictable costs; we could and did plan for them.

The job began to get impossible when a new German magazine came out, followed by new company "newsletters" from the world's two largest manufacturers... at virtually the exact moment when *Whole Air* should have been getting a crack at all those pilots. The plan fizzled.

Still With Me?

Maybe you just don't care about all the above. I wouldn't blame you. But I felt the explanation was deserved for all who *did* care.

It may be the end of an era of sorts. But hang gliding will still have two voices. A balance of power is not only important in politics, it's mandatory in our little sport. I hope you'll support the effort by *Sport Flyer*. It will be costly for that journal as well. The Sclair's operation and yours truly will work hard to earn your support. Your comments, your subscription dollars, your ad dollars are *absolutely vital* to the continuation of *Whole Air* in newspaper form. Please be there!

A Few Statistics

For those who care—this being a "Collector's Edition" and all...

Whole Air mailed the first issue in May of 1978. It was an all newsprint, all black and white, all advertising "extravaganza" of 24 pages. It was mailed to every pilot Starr Tays and I could find, in those days some 8,000. And every shop got 30 copies. All for free. For two years!

The response was so overwhelming (3,200 reader cards from the first mailing alone!) that we felt we had to keep it going. This was *never* the plan in the beginning.

Whole Air has produced 51 issues, totalling 2,278 pages, encompassing some 1.3 million words on our favorite subject. Over 400,000 copies have been sent to over 50 countries. Our biggest issues (7 of them in 1982 and 1983) contained 60 pages, 12 of which were in full color. And incidentally, for those that thought we've been "a little thin" these last two years, every one till this issue has contained 44 pages.

Oh, there's more, but those are the highlights, I guess. Thanks for indulging me.

One Last Indulgence

I hope you can all stomach that ugly critter on the cover. Someone told me the expression was pleasant, so I figured you'd cope with it. You see, in 51 issues, I only appeared on one of my covers. That was May/June 1982, and you'd have to know it to see me. A tiny speck on the ground I was, watching Tom Phillips and Doug Barnette (photographer) fly trikes over the Knoxville World's Fair in Tennessee.

I just had to get on my own cover one time. Thanks for letting me. And thanks for the memories folks... they're some great ones.

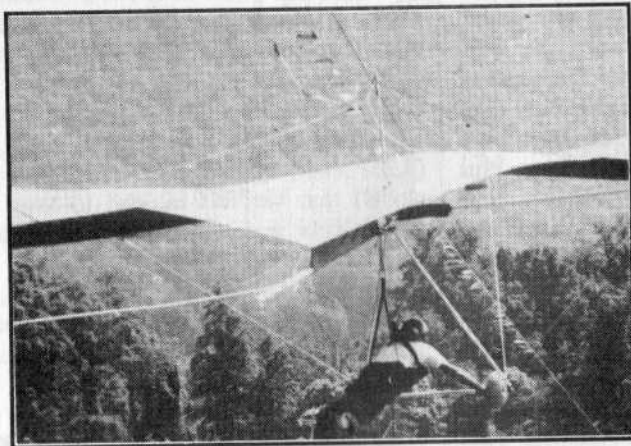
I've had a lot of help from too many of you to mention here. And the encouragement from hundreds, even thousands more of you. So, here's to the many, many truly fine folks I've met through this dandy sport we call hang gliding.

So Long,

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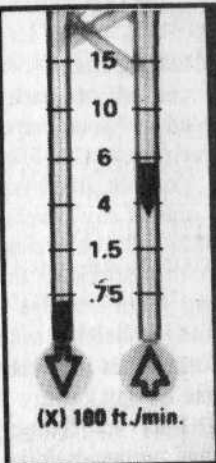


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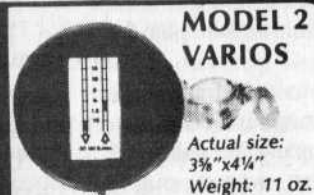
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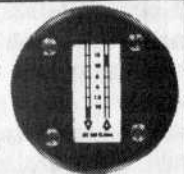
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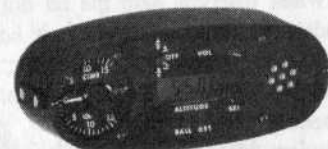
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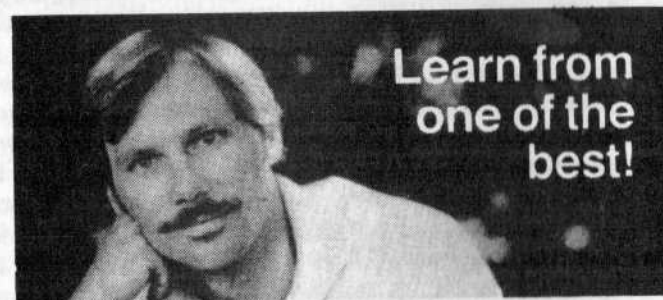


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The editorial thrusts were strong and vital—both publications devoted to a clear, understandable, yet entertaining editorial forum. The publications achieved resounding success in their fields, building longstanding and loyal readerships from different, though complimentary groups of people.

In September, 1986 the circulations of these two outstanding publications will be

merged and WHOLE AIR subscribers will receive THE SPORT FLYER for the remainder of their subscription terms.

THE SPORT FLYER will carry forward the fine editorial

package established during the nine year tenure of WHOLE AIR, with the continuing efforts of its respected founder, Dan Johnson. THE SPORT FLYER's commitment will remain in place, to provide the most well-rounded mix of news and stories on all areas of sport flying, including ballooning, hang gliding, parachuting, soaring, ultralight flying, aerobatics, kitplanes, water flying, air racing and warbirds. WHOLE AIR's inclusion will provide enormous depth to the hang gliding portion of the formula.

In September—to better serve all interests—the coming together of these two fine publications will enhance America's only complete journal of sport flying.

It's an important move concerning the aviation journalism we publish.

We hope you will appreciate the significant changes it brings.

Robyn Sclair

Publisher
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GREETINGS ... from Robyn Sclair

Here it is. Welcome to page 9 of the last of a long string of very good magazines, the final independently published issue of WHOLE AIR. I have been looking at it since 1981, when my family first became involved in one small, but important area of sport aviation. That was the year we began the ULTRALIGHT FLYER, at the beginning of what was to become a boom-and-bust industry, and a definitive step for the family ship of state, whose entire fortune is built around publishing. Unlike some of our competitors, we made it through in fine shape.

Somewhere we got hold of a copy of something called WHOLE AIR. That issue had a nice aerial shot of a city, I think, below the wing of the photographer's glider, and a story about Steve Grossruck and Withold Kasper—developers of the Kasperwing—inside. It was immensely interesting to us, transplants that we were from the world of Cessnas and Pipers. (Our other publication is called the WESTERN FLYER, covering general aviation in the western half of the U.S.) I've been looking at WHOLE AIR off and on ever since.

Now it's 1986, and we've been working with Dan for the past two years. It's time to inform you, dear reader, that you are not going to get exactly what you paid for, but that what you will get will be even better.

This is, of course, the page on

which I am supposed to introduce myself (Robyn Sclair, Publisher of THE SPORT FLYER NEWSmagazine), say hello ("Hi"), and discuss why the integration of WHOLE AIR and THE SPORT FLYER is actually the greatest thing since sliced bread, or peanut butter, or however that very American colloquialism goes. The only thing enabling me to do so is my conviction that it is true. You will get no less the hang gliding information, and a lot of other interesting reading, too.

Digressing back to the ULTRALIGHT FLYER for a moment, it was mid-year 1984 when we knew we had to concoct a different version of the paper, because the ultralight industry had drastically declined. We decided not to follow the paths of some of our competitors, who generally went to covering kitplanes exclusively, or in combination with ultralights. We wondered at the other sport and recreational vehicles that existed for our's, and our reader's flying pleasures, and we decided to simply cover them all. It was not so simple; it was a gigantic leap into a lot of new markets.

This philosophy allowed us to create a unique publication. THE SPORT FLYER lets you have a good look—not just a passing glimpse—into any type of flying you might ever consider trying. We felt it would promote growth of all the flying sports, and the businesses that go with them... by encouraging pilots of one type of ship to cross over, to try

something else.

This philosophy also gives advertisers the most qualified group of potential consumers. The person who calls from having seen an ad in THE SPORT FLYER is likely to be experienced at flying already.

So. Is this actually the finest form of making bread? Actually, this is painful. I would be less than truthful if I did not admit my utter respect for Dan, and his hard work that has built WHOLE AIR, the magazine he has published these many years. My feeling is genuine and optimistic that the integration of WHOLE AIR and THE SPORT FLYER is a good move, and a productive one. But, I am jarred by having taken a close look at the current hang gliding market, and have seen the factors which make this the best move.

WHOLE AIR and THE SPORT FLYER are two publications possessing tremendous merit. We believe in them, Dan and I, as only good publishers can and should. We further believe in their joining, that it will be a combination to make something larger than the simple sum of the two. We hope you will agree, that you will read and look with care and thought at the resulting publication you'll soon get in the mail. I look forward to knowing what you think, so please feel free to write with all your comments.

Welcome to THE SPORT FLYER, and enjoy. Anybody for a peanut butter sandwich? ***

G R O U S E !

Results for the 1986 Grouse Mountain Invitational Hang Gliding Contest

AEROBATIC COMPETITION RESULTS

Rank	Name	Glider	Points	Prize
1	Mitch MacAleer	Wills HP	---	\$500
2	Chuck Dugan	UP Europa Lola	---	\$300
3	John Heiney	Delta Wing Mystic	---	\$200
4	Dan Skadal	Wills HP	---	---
5	"Tip" Rogers	Wills HP	---	---

WOMEN'S PYLON COMPETITION

Rank	Name	Glider	Points	Prize
1	Cindy Drozda	Wills Sport	3,012	\$350
2	Connie Lee Bowen	LaMouette Profil	2,952	\$250
3	Karen Schenk	UP Comet 2	2,401	\$150
4	Kate Dunn	Moyes GTR	1,799	---

MEN'S PYLON COMPETITION

Rank	Name	Glider	Points	Prize
1	Rob Kells	Wills Sport	2,412	\$1,200
2	Jeff Huey	Airwave Magic IV	2,410	\$1,000
3	Jim Bamford	Airwave Magic	2,400	\$750
4	Mike Meier	Wills Sport	2,399	\$575
5	Dale Moore	Sensor 510VG	2,394	\$425
6	Howard Osterlund	LaMouette Hermes	2,393	\$325
7	Danny Scott	Moyes GTR	2,391	\$250
8	Russell Duncan	Moyes GTR	2,388	\$200
9	Rick Rawlings	Wills HP	2,387	\$100
tie	Jim Lee	Wills HP	2,387	\$100
tie	Eiichie Tanaka	Moyes GTR	2,387	\$100

MOST SPORTSMANLIKE PILOT

The Chris Bulger Award

Awarded to Mark Dunn of Lookout Mtn, Tennessee

Special thanks to Deborah Walker and Valerie Lang of Grouse Mtn Resorts, Ltd., for this information.

GLIDERS

Notice: An exceptional offering of gliders is announced... including such desirable equipment as Wills Attack Ducks, Seahawks; Delta Wing Streaks, and other late model units. For prices and details, write: Dan Johnson at Box 144, Lookout Mtn, TN 37350



Boris Popov

Northern Sun, Inc.

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Chapter Two...

1986 U.S. NATIONALS

When the Bearly With It Flying Team, a sub-faction of Cloud-base Country Club, puts on a National competition, don't expect it to be anything ordinary! Last year, our first attempt, was the year of the Iron Man tasks—the first Nats to be run in cross-country format. Dozens of pilots amazed themselves with flights of 100 miles, and many more went home with new "personal bests" to be proud of.

We must have done OK last year, because this year, for the first time in history, the Nats was completely filled a month before the contest. Over 90 pilots sent in their deposits, putting us well over our limit of 85. Since several early registrants had last-minute changes in plans, we did not have to turn down anyone who had followed the entry procedure. We ended up with 85 pilots, exactly what we'd planned for.

If you're familiar with the Butte, 85 pilots doesn't sound like an unmanageable number. There's easily room to set up 120 gliders on top, and on a good day

everyone's up and gone before the gaggles can get too hazardous. When it comes to launching, though, 85 pilots definitely get in each other's way. To solve the launch problems—and there were definite problems!—Meet Director Harold Locke introduced a new first in hang gliding competition: The Grand Prix Start. More about that later.

When we meet organizers arrived in Chelan on Friday afternoon, it was like coming to a huge family reunion. About half of last year's Nats competitors were back for more of that great Chelan X/C, and the town was full of glider-topped trucks and excited pilots. Those who remembered Chelan as being baking hot during the day and comfortably warm in the evenings were shivering in the 60 degree afternoon temps, and casting a concerned eye toward the sky. Clouds—almost overcast—in Chelan?? and a blown-out day on Friday?? The weather was letting everyone know early that this was not going to be your typical Chelan X/C event.

Saturday, Day 1, started out ordinarily enough. Harold held the pilots' meeting on the bleachers in the schoolyard, going over the meet rules in detail while Safety Director Scott Rutledge went up to launch to check out conditions and Head Launch Timer/airplane pilot Mike Newton analyzed the weather data. The conclusion was an early launch was necessary. Harold quickly answered any questions, clarified any confusions, drew numbers for vehicle passes, and sent the pilots on up.

Because of the extreme fire danger on the Butte, the road to the top was closed. Our special use permit allowed us to issue 5 vehicle passes for each day of the meet. Hang glider pilots are probably the most creative snivelers you'll ever meet. At least 30 pilots gave me absolutely compelling reasons why their vehicle should be allowed up on top every day. Tip Rogers, who has only one leg, did convince us that he should have a permanent pass. We finally solved the controversy by putting everyone's pilot number in the cookie jar (someone had eaten all the cookies) and pulling for the remaining four each day. Those with the passes became instantly popular—at least until their vehicles

Rawlings the winner... again. Or is he? See "Product Lines," inside the back cover.

were filled up! Everyone else loaded gliders and gear onto the now-famous Dan Uchytal Diver Rig, and hopped on the cattle truck for the dusty ride to the top.

On that first day, those with the vehicle passes zipped up to launch and set up in what they deemed to be prime spots, while the others plodded along in the big trucks, arriving about a half-hour later. Harold quickly went over the weather details, suggested that everyone try to launch early before the wind picked up, announced that the launch window would open at noon and the task was—Wilbur! With just a little over an hour until the window opened, everyone rush off to find a spot and get set, put on glider numbers, study maps. For many, this would be their first attempt at a 60 mile flight.

The Butte soon showed it was up to its usual tricks. Just 15 minutes before the launch window opened a huge dust devil whirled through "dust devil alley", ripping hats off heads, skying out someone's glider numbers ("If they make it to goal, I'll give you the task," Harold joked!), and then snatching and smashing Rick Rawlings's new HP, damaging a couple of other gliders in the process. Not an auspicious beginning for the #1 ranked pilot! Luckily the rules allowed for glider changes; Rick set up his old HP, other pilots made repairs, and eventually everyone was on their way.

Launch that first day was, for many, frustrating. Harold had suggested getting off early, but with 85 gliders crowded as close to the edge as possible, it was impossible for those who'd set up in back to get up to the launch. The lemming rush began at about 12:30; with 4 launches working, almost everyone was off before 2:00. A few who'd gotten themselves stuck in back had a long wait for a decent cycle, and many of the late launchers went down before they got to the flats.

But 37 pilots made it to Wilbur! Rick Rawlings was the first to arrive, flying the 60 miles in 2 hours 52 minutes, the best time of the day. Gerry Uchytal had the next best time, 2 hours 57 minutes, with Mark Bourbonnais less than a half minute behind him. Mike Daily, with the 8th best time for the day, took first place in Sporting Class, and Bob Corbo, 10th overall, was second in the Sporting Class. The goal timers were busy that Saturday, with gaggles of gliders crossing the goal every couple of minutes.



A pensive Randy Haney prepares for the beginning of the '86 Nationals, as Airwave distributor Ken Brown checks and re-checks gear.

There were 37 happy boys in Wilbur that afternoon!

Others, however, weren't celebrating. McNeil Canyon, the green field by the bridge, the Butte itself, all were littered with downed gliders. Jon Dawkins, a Chelan regular, got flushed right after launch. After watching the sludge pit disappear behind a hill and watching his vario read "slap yo mama!" he reports seeing a "marvy" patch of sage brush and a neon sign saying "Welcome to Paradise". He put it down right next to a dead coyote, adding the "Dead Coyote Field" to the list of possible but less than desirable landing spots on the Butte.

Saturday evening Harold received an anonymous protest, objecting to the crowded conditions on launch, and pointing out that those with vehicle passes had an unfair opportunity to get set up near launch, thus avoiding being stuck in back. The objections were at least partly valid, and the meet organizers spent a long evening working out a plan that would give everyone an equal shot at an early launch. The \$25 which

accompanied the protest provided the contestants with cold pop on launch the next morning.

At the pilots' meeting on Sunday morning Harold announced several additions to the rules. Private vehicles could not go up before the Uchytal Special left for the top. No one could set up a glider—not even a control bar—until after the task was announced. There would be a marked-off area for set-up, and all gliders had to be behind the line until the launch window opened, thus assuring that no one set up in "dust devil alley." Each launch area would be marked off, and no one could bring a glider inside the launch area unless clipped in and ready to go.

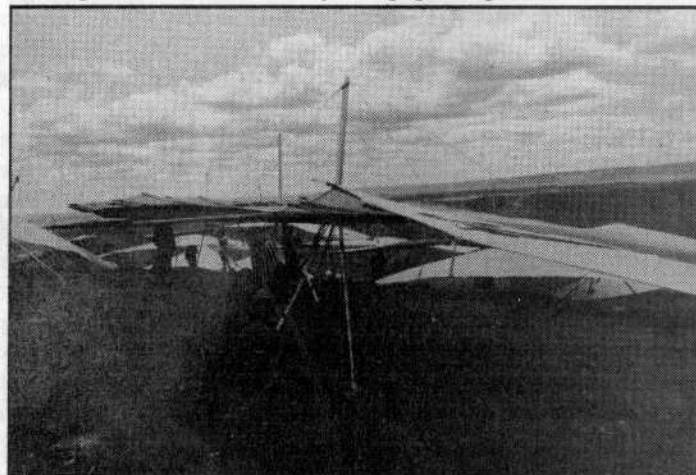
Thus Sunday began with a little parade of vehicles—2 big trucks, 5 little ones, 1 fire wagon—up to the top of the Butte. All the gliders were unloaded, and pilots found a comfortable spot within the set-up area. Pilots being the independent souls they are, a few tried to assemble control bars before the task announcement. But Safety Director Scott Rutledge, armed with his long staff with wind streamers and obvious in his blazing

red "BoogieBaggie" shorts, patrolled the area and supervised the disassembly of any early starts. Harold called a short pilots' meeting to clarify the new procedure, went over the weather, announced that the task was Davenport, then shouted, "Gentlemen, assemble your gliders!" and the rush was on.

Since it was over an hour until the launch window opened, everyone had plenty of time to set up and check gear before they could move any nearer to launch. It's a good thing everyone was

friendly—gliders were crowded so close together it was next to impossible to walk between them. Those in back, though, had clear passageways to the launch area once the window was opened.

The opening of the launch window was the most spectator-popular event of the day. To many pilots it was critically important, for various reasons, that they get off the hill early, or at least be in a position to leave when they wanted to go. Harold, therefore, would shout, "The launch window is open!"—and run for cover, because at least half the competitors would grab their gliders and race for a position close to launch. We called it the Crab Run—all you could see were feet and sails scuttling toward the edge of the hill. Luckily hang glider pilots have a well-



The only sit-down pilot at the meet was Arizona USHGA director Bob Thompson; waiting as did the others for the "lemming rush."

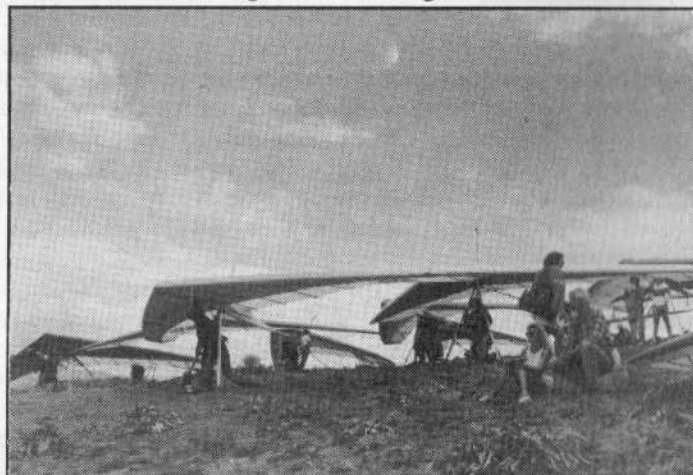
developed appreciation for the ridiculous, and since this method seemed to ease the pressure on some, why not be silly for a few minutes?! Thus the Crab Run became an established routine for this Nats.

Even though Sunday's task was a long one—it's 90 miles to Davenport—most pilots waited until after 1:00 to launch, hoping to catch stronger conditions later in the day. Rick Rawlings once again was the first to arrive at the goal and had the best time of the day, 4 hours 2 minutes. Bruce Case had the second fastest time, 4 hours 14 minutes, and Steve Luna was 3rd with 4 hours 19 minutes. At the end of the second day of competition 23 pilots had completed the 90 mile task. Rick Rawlings was still in 1st place and Gerry Uchtyl held on to his 2nd place slot. Randy Haney was 3rd, Bruce Case was 4th. Mike Daily retained his 1st place in the Sporting Class, but dropped to 17th overall; none of the Sporting Class competitors made it to goal.

Monday was cool and breezy. Down jackets felt good on launch, and no one was working on their suntan for very long. Harold announced the task as Coulee City, 38 miles away, and the rush to set up was on. The 1st pilot was off the hill by 12:15 and by 2:00 everyone was in the air. Willi Muller was the first to arrive at Coulee City that afternoon, but Mark Bennett had the best time, smoking out there in 1 hour 40 minutes. Dennis Pagen had the 2nd best time, 1 hour 42 minutes, and Gerry Uchtyl was 3rd with 1 hour 45 minutes. Mike Pesavento had the best Sporting Class time, 2 hours 6 minutes. Rick Rawlings remained in 1st place, Gerry Uchtyl in 2nd, Bruce Case in 3rd. Mark Bennett moved up to 4th, and Greg DeWolf was 5th. In Sporting Class Mike Daily was 1st, Bob Corbo 2nd, and Mike

Pesavento 3rd.

Tuesday morning was overcast, with the weather report talking about snow at 6,000 feet and possible hail and thunder showers. We all went up top, but Harold suggested not setting up gliders right away, since he wasn't sure if he would call a task without some improvement in weather conditions. A show of hands indicated that most pilots thought the day would probably be a "crap shoot", and sending Fuzzface Snuffs out on the RC sailplane determined that it was "bearly soarable." A windseeker, however, headed for cloudbase, and when Harold announced the task: "Free fly, or load your glider back on the truck," quite a number of pilots followed the toy glider up to the cloud. By mid-afternoon it was raining, and our head goal timer Paul Clock did



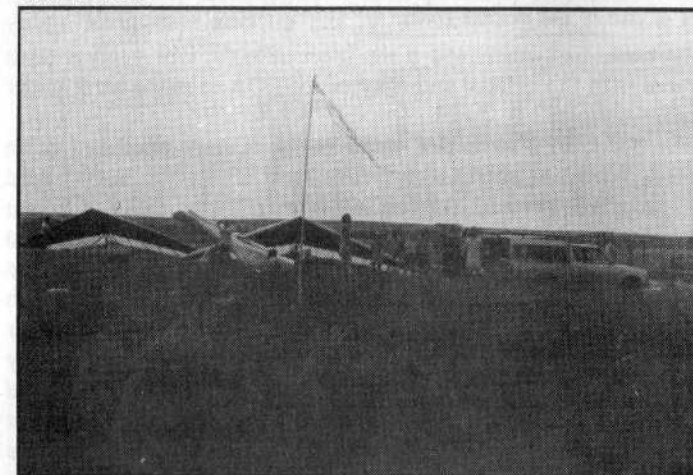
some impressive involuntary aerobatics coming into the Junkyard LZ. After the long task on Monday, many appreciated not being forced to fly in potentially white-knuckle conditions.

Wednesday was a scheduled rest/PR day. Aaron Swebston had organized an aerobatics demonstration over the city park, Kenny and Rod Brown had brought their simulator, a variety of T-shirts were displayed, and the post office had set up a station with a special hang gliding stamp cancellation. Even with the cool, cloudy weather, quite a few pilots and tourists were milling around the park by 9:30, waiting for the upside-down crew to appear over the Butte. Steve Alford was first off, trailing streamers from his wingtips and flying an American flag from his kingpost. Steve's maneuvers were well done, but the kids were most impressed by his dropping dozens of streamer-tailed candies over the park. Once Steve was down on the ground there was a mad scramble to retrieve the goodies! Dan S. and Rob Kells followed, using smoke to highlight their maneuvers. Mitch McAleer demonstrated his superior aerobatics skill, looping his way through the sky, leaving circles of smoke behind him. As he came in to land he tossed out Fuzzface Snuffs, who made a perfect bearachute drop in the LZ. The kids who raced to capture the prize were disappointed to find that the bear was not up for grabs! Aaron Swebston finished off the show with a top-quality series of loops, the final one close over the heads of the spectators, much to their delight. The aerobatics show, the simulator, the pilots who wandered around and answered questions, all added up to a day of positive publicity for our sport.

The Chelan JayCees had once again provided us with fire

protection equipment free of charge in exchange for our purchasing tickets to their chicken barbecue. Unfortunately the JayCees barbecuing equipment could not produce enough food for 150 people, and many grew tired of waiting in the rain for their dinner. Even water balloon fights and hackey lose their appeal when it's cold and wet. A number of people turned in their tickets and went somewhere else for supper.

The rain had its good points, however. Thursday's weather looked—finally!—like July in Chelan. Shorts and sunglasses were back in style, and with not much wind predicted, the task was to Coulee City and back to the Chelan Airport, a total of about 78 miles. The noontime Crab Run occurred on schedule, and the lemming rush began just minutes later. Only 5 pilots made goal, but several others reported quite interesting flights. Jeff Hershkowitz reported, "I developed dizziness and windchill phenomenon soon after launch. After being sucked into a cloud and spinning downwind for several miles, my companions and I landed in a grassy area with friendly natives, who served us cocktails and invited us swimming. We catnapped on the ride home, which the locals happily provided, so we are unsure of the exact location of our LZ." Jeff estimates his flight to have been about 102 miles, which would give him the longest flight of the meet. His photos indicate that he did indeed land among friendly natives, but the pictures were of no assistance in locating his landing area. As a result, he only received credit for a 1-mile flight, since a launch timer could vouch for his having flown at least that far.



A typical goal gathering saw pilots accumulate—the speediest first—till surprising percentages of the field arrived. Here we see Davenport airport on the first Sunday. Twenty three achieved the 90 mile goal. Then the long ride back to Chelan began.

Dennis Pagen also had an exciting flight on Thursday. He launched early, "...to avoid the gaggles. As I augered up through the ruffraff I set my onboard glideslope computer for Coulee City. After factoring in the wind speed and my glider's advertised 15 to 1 glide ratio, the computer spit out: 22,000 feet. That's how much I needed for a straight glide to Cool City. When I reached cloudbase I pulled the VG tight, tucked in my elbows and climbed through the clouds as the rest of the field wallowed below. I could barely breathe as I passed through 21,000 and climbed to victory. At 22 grand I headed straight for the turnpoint. By then I couldn't distinguish terrain features, but my computer would take care of that. After gliding for an hour and a half a buzzer sounded warning me to descend and take a turnpoint photo. Imagine my surprise when I spiralled down and saw the

distinct outline of Jameson Lake below me. Then it struck me: I forgot to factor in the rotation of the earth! I was nowhere near the turnpoint, so all I could do was thermal back up and forge ahead. Much to my chagrin the farmers for miles around chose that time to irrigate their fields. As I passed over all that moist ground I began to wax philosophical. I was bound to land short of goal, but in the cosmic scheme of things, who cares?!" Dennis did indeed land short—about 14 miles short of Coulee City—but with a flight like that, he's not complaining!

Meanwhile, back at the Chelan Airport, we were beginning to give up hope that anyone would ever show up. Finally, shortly after 6:00, we could distinguish 5 tiny specks on the horizon. Rick Rawlings streaked across at 6:27, with Randy Adams only 20 seconds after him. Mark Bennett, Randy Haney, and Mark Newland were all across by 6:43, and that was it for goal timing that day. Mark Bennett had the fastest time, 5 hours 28 minutes. Rick Rawlings was 2nd with 5 hours 44 minutes. Randy Adams' 3rd place time of 5 hours 46 minutes moved him from 34th place up to 16th in the World Class. Rick Rawlings remained in 1st place, Mark Bennett was in 2nd, Randy Haney 3rd, Mark Newland 4th, Bruce Case 5th and Gerry Uchtyl 6th. The Sporting Class standings did not change.

Friday looked to be another perfect Chelan day, so Harold decided to send the gang out on a 49-mile triangle, from Waterville to Mansfield and back to the Chelan Airport. This was the first time a triangle task had been flown in the Nats, and 55 pilots completed the course. Mike Daily was the first to arrive at

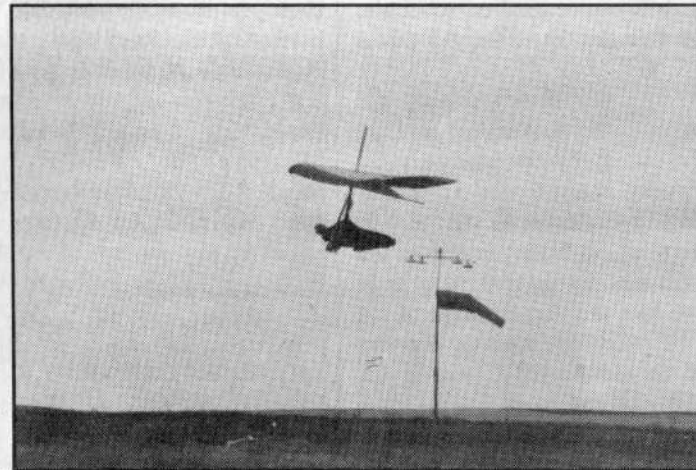


the goal, but Bob England had the best time, 2 hours 24 minutes. Randy Haney was next fastest, with 2 hours 28 minutes. Rick Rawlings, with 2 hours 46 minutes, was still in 1st place, Mark Bennett was 2nd, Randy Haney 3rd, Mark Newland 4th, Bruce Case 5th. Gerry Uchtyl did not complete the task, and dropped to 15th. Mike Daily continued way out in front in the Sporting class, and 20th overall. Mike Pesavento moved into 2nd place in Sporting Class, and Bob Corbo was in 3rd.

Since Friday's triangle went so well, and because Saturday's weather looked even better, Harold called a longer triangle for that day's task: to Brewster, Sims Corner and back to the Chelan Airport, a total of 88 miles. Pilots began launching around 1:00, and within an hour only 2 were left on the hill. Unfortunately, all but 9 of them were on the ground before completing half the

course, and only 6 managed to cross the goal. Mike King's experience seemed to be typical: "I immediately got up to 9200' MSL right over the football field, and went to max. glide, then to min. sink, then to ...uh... "search mode," then to PANIC as I approached the face of Wells Dam." Mike reports swooping under the huge crackling power lines, ridge soaring the dam face, getting up enough to hop along sailboard masts and apple wind machines, and finally planting it between road/wires/trees/fence/etc., etc., etc. Dennis Pagen found himself in more unusual circumstances, but the end result was the same: "I was getting low over Bridgeport Point when I spied a monstrous dust devil. I flew into it full tilt and started turning right, against the counterclockwise flow.

Because my left wing was moving faster in the hustling dust, it eroded more, causing a continuous left roll until I was upside down. Since the ground was obscured I thought I was till right side up. I cored the sink in the middle of that dust devil until I saw what looked like blue sky above me. With only 200' to spare I came to my senses and realized I was upside down over the river sinking fast. I did a split S to right myself and barely glided to shore." It was a glum lot of pilots drifting back



Not low, just late. An Aussie arrives at one of the distant goals

into town that afternoon. Even the thought of a cool swim on a hot day couldn't compensate for the frustration of being on the ground on what should have been a good long day. Over at the airport the timers waited, watching all the usual finishers come driving in, wondering if anyone was left out there to cross the goal. Shortly before 6 several gliders appeared above the rim, and at 6:04 Howard Osterlund came across the line. Jim Lee had the fastest time, 4 hours 52 minutes, moving him up to 4th place. Mark Newland's 4 hours 53 minutes completion put him in 1st place, with Rick Rawlings dropping to 2nd, Randy Haney in 3rd, and Mark Bennett in 5th. Mike Daily's completion gave him a 1,200 point lead in Sporting class, and 11th place overall. Kevin Bye and Josef Bostik also completed the task.

There was much discussion among pilots and meet officials as to whether this day should have been considered equal in value to the other competition days. However, since no provisions had been made in the rules for de-valuing a day, and since no one had raised any questions when only 5 pilots completed the Coulee City and return task, Harold decided to let the results stand.

Sunday was another typical Chelan "dehydration special". The final task: a 63-mile triangle: Withrow to Sims Corner to the Chelan Airport. Getting high meant getting out of the heat; pilots were doubly grateful for their 10,000' or more altitude gains this day! Making goal also carried extra incentive: there's shade and sprinklers at the airport, no such amenities out on the Flats. Fifty-four pilots made that goal, and were able to wash dusty gliders and sweaty bodies while waiting for the final results to be computed. Howard Osterlund was first across the goal line at 3:57, and Tip Rogers was last in at 6:14. Bob England had the fastest time, 2 hours 37 minutes. Rick Rawlings beat Mark Newland's time by less than a minute,

Rick just under 3 hours and Mark just over. That wasn't enough to move Rick ahead, so the final results were Mark Newland in 1st place, Rick Rawlings 2nd, and Randy Haney 3rd. Rick Rawlings also received a trophy as National Champion, the pilot who accumulated the most CPS points during the year between the '85 and the '86 Nats.

In Sporting Class Mike Daily was 1st, Mike Pesavento 2nd, and Doug Johnson 3rd. Bob Corbo's turnpoint photo indicated that he had not rounded the pylon, so he was scored as not having finished. Other pilots' photos, however, seem to show that he did make it. Sporting class results, thus, are not final at this time.

As for the Leisure Class, it was a tie between John Woiwode and Mike King. Both had formally requested that their World Class status be changed to Leisure Class, and then set out to prove that they were worthy of the prize. They were awarded Erik Fair's \$50 of domestic beer, and went off to console themselves.

It was a pleasure to have USHGA Pres Russ Locke and Exec Director Cindy Brickner in Chelan for the last 4 days of the meet. They officiated at our sunset awards ceremony, handing out trophies and prizes, and ducking with great agility

the water balloons aimed at the meet officials. Obviously it takes more than the official authority of USHGA to make hang glider pilots behave!

Thus, in a torrent of water balloons, ends another Chelan Nats. Was it as good as last year's meet? Probably, but it's hard to compare. We had different weather, different tasks, different personalities involved. Some pilots were disappointed that no 100 mile task was called, others were delighted to have flown the triangles. A few declared the Grand Prix start and the crab Run "pseudo bogus to the max", and some expressed a desire that their barbecued chicken at least be heated through, but nobody grumbled very loudly, not where I could hear them. What I *did* hear was lots of positive comments about the site and meet format, from folks who've flown at Chelan before and from those who were here for the first time. There were numerous requests that we do it again next year, a good indication of success. All the smiles and the hugs and the warm feeling of being part of an ever-growing family made the energy expended more than worthwhile.

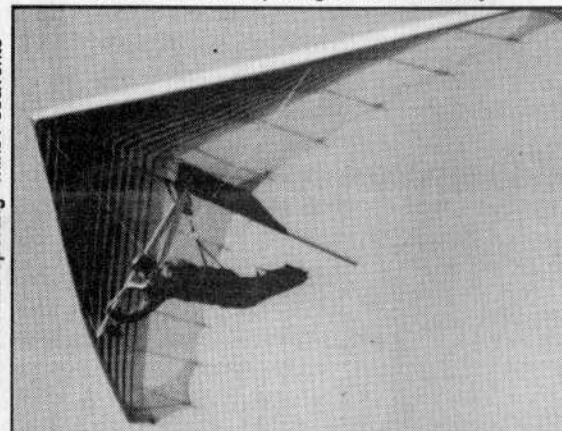
Those of us who put it all together this year feel strongly that it's time for someone else to give it a try. We've introduced some new concepts into our Nationals competitions, probably just because of Chelan's unique characteristics as a flying site. Other sites in other areas of the country certainly have equal potential for interesting and exciting competitions, and Chelan could use a rest. Hosting a Nationals does wonderful things for your local flying community, and creates plenty of positive publicity for your hometown sites and pilots. All it takes is a handful of energetic and dedicated people, generous offerings to the weather gods, and a townful of friendly locals. If that sounds like your group and your site, go for it!

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GETTING DOWN IN NEW ZEALAND

Wandering Wing Tips
1986 New Zealand National Championships.

*It's been some time since readers have been able to enjoy the writing of **WHOLE AIR's** one-time German correspondent, Dr. Gib Eggen. Several reasons explain his absence.*

*Eggen fulfilled his obligation as a psychiatrist for the U.S. Army in 1985, and embarked on a long-time goal: a world tour of many exotic countries. He planned to investigate hang gliding in many of his ports of call, and **WHOLE AIR** eagerly accepted his offer to send in "field reports" on what he found.*

These reports did arrive, named, "Wandering Wing



Text by Gib Eggen, D.O.

Sidebar by Bill Degen

Photos by Graeme Henderson

Tips." But a packed publishing schedule bumped his pieces off the table of contents pages, with regrets from the publisher.

Here, however, Eggen presents what seems one of the best stories to coordinate with our report on Australia. With pleasure then, welcome back Dr. Gib, as he tells you about the hang gliding scene in that other downunder country, New Zealand.

Weather conditions and more

I stepped off the bus at Arrowtown into good weather with kites in the sky all over the valley. A brief stint of hitch hiking brought me to the airstrip/landing field next to Graeme Henderson's flight simulator—a licensee of the system used at Crystal Air Sports in Tennessee. Here Graeme and others were having a nice afternoon siesta after flying on the day before competition. It was the 1986 New Zealand Nationals.

Queenstown is the south island's most popular resort town located on a lake in a mountainous area of outrageous natural beauty. The site for the '86 Championships was only a few miles away and towered above the Simulator nestled at its base. South-facing Coronet Peak rises 1,646 meters above sea level, and has a vertical drop of 800 meters from a spacious parking lot set up area. It's situated in the middle of the roaring 40's wind stream, very close to the 45th parallel. This is also in the foothills on the lee side of the New Zealand southern alps, making for wonderful turbulence when northwest wind systems come through. In the days of the contest, just getting up and out of the surrounding valley below Coronet and into the plains beyond proved to be fairly difficult. Most of the tasks flown required flying down the Kawarau River Valley into a dangerous gorge at the end—ideally you would get enough altitude to cross a hairpin turn in the river, and then climb over "Mount Difficulty" on the other side, to reach more hospitable plains and the city of Cromwell. From there, task courses went northeast to Tarrag, and further to the Ahuriri River and Omarama, a sailplane port and site of yearly cross country competitions. Triangular courses around Cromwell, Tauas and Luggate were also called.

The two weeks before the '86 New Zealand nationals had produced good cross country weather, with flights such as Stu Cameron's 57 and 68 milers. Unfortunately, the 12 days of the competition produced



Geoff Christophers, another native Kiwi who worked in the sail loft at UP once upon a time, and currently breeds Angora goats.

Chris Hoskins is an SAT diver (deep underwater diver, staying down for several weeks at a time), another Kiwi who's currently finishing an experimental airplane, the Long EZE.

Stu Cameron is a Kiwi river guide in the south island with two year's flying experience, who recently started flying again one week before the competition, after

formations. Hang glider pilots have gotten into the wave with kites near Coconet Peak, but this is a rarity and usually in dangerous wind conditions. Using wave for distance is not going to be a reliable cross country source for the time being.

The north island does have potential for long flights, but 55 miles is the record so far. The south island is better suited to distance flying and should have the first 100 mile flight. There's good thermal lift and potential in the southern alps themselves, but there's no way in, or out, except by air—real "tiger country," as they say here.

Flying over 100 miles may be easiest starting at a mountain call Mid Dome, south of Lake Wakatipu near Five Rivers. It has a 360 degree launch capability, with mountain chains running from southwest to northwest, up the length of the south island. Long flights will be possible with a southwest wind flow, in the spring with strong thermals and less chance of sea breezes moving inland to stop convection. Meteorological knowledge is critical, as the weather here changes even faster than it does in the European Alps; for example, there's no place on the south island that's more than 80 miles from the sea, making sea breezes a considerable influence.

Prior to Graeme Henderson's 75 mile flight in 1985, there was a mental "50 mile barrier" here in New Zealand, but his flight and the '86 New Zealand Nationals have done a lot to dispel that. Graeme and international pilots like Jes Flynn find that flying in New Zealand is pretty technical, and to do 100 miles will require careful planning, checking out local valleys and terrain, wind conditions,

weather possibilities and traps for the unwary. But the challenge is on, and it was nice and somewhat nostalgic to walk in on the cross country fever developing here now like it did in the U.S. and Europe years ago. One hundred miles is not the next barrier, but the next goal; and I expect to see that reached by this time in '87.

Builder Bob

When was the last time you read an article on a hang gliding sailmaker? ...Ahem... Have you ever read an article on a hang gliding sailmaker? Well, I think it's about time I wrote one on one of these guys, the unsung

a one year lay-off. Stu got the hard-luck story trophy of the meet, as he was easily in second place, but his camera didn't properly advance on two of four days, losing him 55 miles and dropping him from second to 14th place.

Graeme Henderson, meet organizer, had the New Zealand distance record of 75 miles, done in the '85 Omarama XC champs, that lasted 'til Jes Flynn broke it with a 77 mile flight during a Nationals practice day. Graeme's been planning XC routes for greater flights since then, something the other New Zealand pilots are starting to emulate.

Alistare Mackay, meet director, a New Zealand farmer who also did the scoring with the use of his computer.

XC in NZ

A world sailplane distance record (distance to a goal - 780 miles) is held in New Zealand, due to very long wave

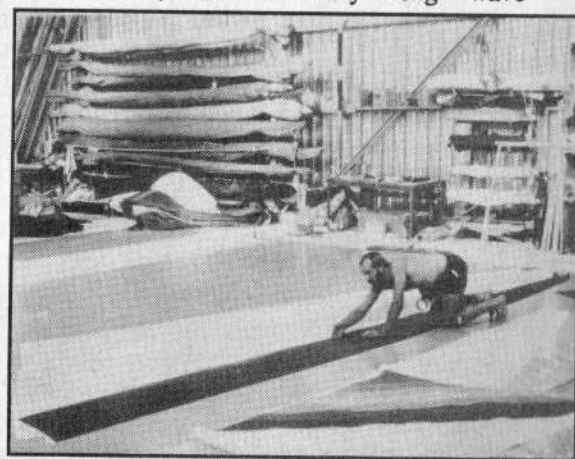
only four soaring days, with much rain and high wind northwesterly systems in between. Typically, weather systems seem to cycle every two weeks through New Zealand. True to form, while many pilots were nursing hangovers on Saturday after the closing party, Bill Degen flew a northwest front for 50 miles, landing near Roxburgh.

The main weather systems of New Zealand travel from west to east, with the flying season September to April. The best cross country months are January and February. Weather is very unpredictable with a 60% forecasting success rate (flipping a coin is 50-50!). One reason forecasting is so difficult here is that there are no weather stations in the surrounding ocean to give New Zealand information - they're going mainly by satellite pictures and information from ships at sea.

Flyer names of New Zealand

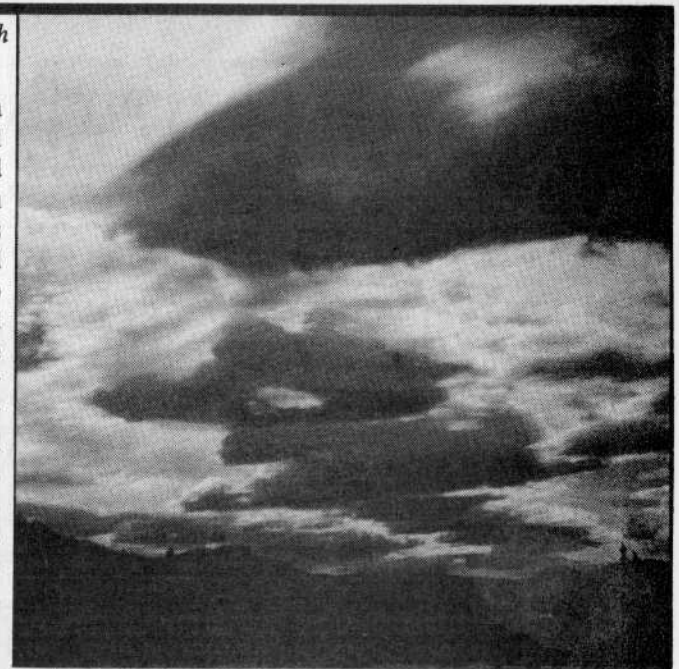
Jes Flynn, winner of the New Zealand Nationals, is a British pilot who has been in the British league for the past three years. He represented the British national team in the Bleriot Cup in '83, in Spain; in the Kössen Masters of Austria in '84; and Hungary in '85. He was also second in the recent Australian Nationals and ninth in the Mt. Buffalo XC Classic. When he's not flying he repairs powered aircraft.

Pete Ryan is a Kiwi native, an engineer from the north island who spent five weeks flying in the Coronet Peak area before the Nationals, which certainly seemed to pay off.



Bob Schutte, sailmaking (Eggen photo)

Wave formation above the Coronet Peak launch



heroes of hang gliding. Why unsung heroes? Sail shape and construction are more important than any other factors in glider performance, and this is where the sailmaker's skill comes into play. You can't really just walk in to a factory and start sewing sails, either—it takes about 6 months of practice just to get the feel of it before you can really produce without supervision.

I first met Bob Schutte at the '86 New Zealand Nationals, and later spent some time with him at his factory and home in Kumeu, New Zealand, near Auckland. His house sits conveniently on launch at Muriwhai, an ocean soaring location somewhat like Fort Funston in San Francisco. Bob's story actually encompasses quite a chunk of hang gliding's developmental history, and is one of continuous evolution of pilot, sailmaking, and glider design skills.

Schutte was initially a supervisor and metal fabricator for a factory in Buffalo, New York. He started hang gliding in 1976, and was so taken by it that he left the family business for California in 1977 with his TR-7, which he traded in for a 4WD Jeep with a camper on the back to live at Torrey Pines with Eric Raymond and some others. He initially made ends meet by working 7 pm to 12 midnight at a bakery, so he could fly all day. He began working for UP as a frame man in January '78, but his interest in sails had already begun and he switched to the sail loft after two months. He left UP in December '78 to come to New Zealand, where he joined Tommy Namias in the sail loft at Flight

Sails. He left them after a brief stay and built a sail loft for Rick Poynter and Pacific Kites. Soon thereafter, Bob met Hans Gyax from Switzerland when Gyax was on a trip through New Zealand, and he left to spend about nine months with Hans near Basel, Switzerland for research, development, and sailmaking for rigid wings and the Vampyre. Bob was also an accomplished pilot by now, and entered the 1980 Kössen World Open and placed second with his Fledge 2B behind Mike de Glanville, and was third overall at the 1980 Lake Como Lariano Triangle.

Bob returned to New Zealand in January '81 and bought Pacific Kites from Poynter with Graeme Head, Marty Waller, and Tommy Namias (with whom he had worked at UP). They started production straightaway on Vampyres.

Bob was working with J.C. Brown, as Pacific Kites had invited Brown to work on his new rigid wing concepts, when Marty and Tommy decided to put most of their effort into microlight sales. Bob left the sail loft at that time and continued his own R & D on kites, making harnesses, land yacht sails, and custom hang glider sails on demand.

When Pacific Kites liquidated in December '82, Bob bought some of their equipment and started Schutte Sails in

May '83. He started by building 140 Vampyres, and developed the Tempest, a 75% double surface, wide nose angle flex wing. Late in '83 he produced his next design, the Mig, a 75% floating bottom surface, curve tipped flex wing. His latest design, the Kea, appeared in late '85 and is similar to the Hermes with an enclosed keel pocket. It's well built with a nice finish and, of course, a very clean sail.

World Meet Opportunity Information, please...

If the chance to visit near the '87 World Meet does arise, contact Bill Degen, the editor of the Association's magazine: *Airborne* at 64 Samuel Street, Christchurch 2, New Zealand. He can be reached by telephone at 388-929.

Insights from *Airborne* editor, Bill Degen

The number of pilots in New Zealand number 463 at the end of the last financial year. This count is made by those enthusiasts who are members of the New Zealand Hang Gliding Association, and very few pilots who are active are not members, perhaps 30 flyers.

Hang gliding has been declining slightly over the last few years when the NZHGA counted about 600 members. The population of New Zealand, by the way, is just over 3 million*.

Most activity is centered around Schutte Sails in Auckland. Schutte Sails manufactures the Lancer 4, a trainer/intermediate model and the Kea, their high performance entry. In addition they build the Foil with sails made under license, plus the company distributes the

Magic line from Airwave. Schutte Sails also manufactures harnesses and they import and distribute accessories.

In Christchurch, Kevin Murdoch is the Moyes agent and he also imports and distributes accessories. Several training schools are active in New Zealand, mostly affiliated with Schutte Sails.

Graeme Henderson runs the Flight Simulator at Queenstown. This is an under-license operation from the Simulator® company in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

For comparison, 463 pilots per 3,155,000 total population of New Zealand equals 14.7 hang glider pilots per 100,000 general population. In the USA, an estimated 7,000 pilots represents 3.0 hang glider pilots per 100,000 general population. The density of hang glider pilots to general population is therefore demonstrably higher in New Zealand, though it is much smaller than world leader, Switzerland, where 63.6 pilots per 100,000 are active.

AUSTRIAN ALPS



Austrian Alps Airtime

Did you ever see "The Sound of Music?" It is a tacky story padded out with some impossibly syrupy songs, but it is filmed among some rather spectacular flying sites in Austria. Hang glider flying has now become so popular in that country that it would sometimes be rather difficult to make a period film among the mountains without dacron wings flitting across the skyline at frequent intervals.

Recently I launched a modest flying expedition to Austria and Southern Germany this year, and am pleased to report that the sport is thriving among the Alps. The Austrians in particular are encouraging it as a source of summer income in ski resorts. There is even serious talk of it becoming a requirement of the state for many municipalities to designate official landing fields for us! As it is, visiting fliers are generally made very welcome even if their grasp of the language is as sketchy as

mine.

The sites we flew from were all classic mountains. Launch usually guaranteed at least three thousand feet of ground clearance in a very short time, and all the take-offs were "easy", being either good ramps or smooth grassy slopes. Typically you pay for the ride up in a cablecar, plus a further three or four dollars for use of the landing field: if

TEGELBERG Near Fussen in Southern Germany

Site of the 1983 World Championships. North facing, works well in the afternoons. Two good ramps, but the set-up area is on the small side. Gets too busy to be fun at weekends, but great during the week. One of the biggest advantages of this site is that you can stay at Fritz

and gazing down on the upturned faces of the visitors who are looking up at the gliders.

SCHMITTENHOHE Overlooking Zell am See in Austria

Much more by luck than judgement we arrived here on the day the lift started to work again after the spring service break. The Schmittenhohe is at one end of the celebrated ridge run along the Ziller valley, known as the "Pinzgauer

Walter'sBerghof Hotel in the nearby village of Schwangau. Fritz is a hang glider pilot himself, and actually reduces his prices when you pull up with gliders on the car. He will even do special rates if you bring a sleeping bag, arrange XC pick-ups, and gives you the weather info.

The sad and slightly mad King Ludwig of Bavaria built his dream palace at the foot of the Tegelberg, and I will never tire of soaring above its turrets

Spatziergang". Frankly the cablecar is not the most convenient in the world if you do not have a breakdown glider, but the staff are very helpful. Marching out through the cafe at the top with glider on shoulder is the trickiest part of the operation!

The summit of the Schmittenhohe is rather a disappointment too: there are so many ski-lifts and tows up there as well a large hotel, that when there is no snow about,

the top of this otherwise beautiful mountain looks like a semi-industrial wasteland. However, take a look out from the mountain, and the view is something else! Glistening peaks spread in every direction, with the snowfield of the Kitzsteinhorn glacier dominating the middle distance.

The launch is in any direction, from grassy slopes. If there is any instability in the air, thermal soaring is simple—the biggest problem being to decide in which direction to travel. There are so many shoulders in the mountain chains here that convergence thermals can make life very simple. However, no two days are alike in the mountains, and after one day of superb soaring with three thousand foot height gains

virtually on demand, the next day yielded only sled runs without so much as a sniff of lift.

If you do decide to fly the Schmittenhohe, keep well clear of the small airfield at Zell am See. At the time of writing an official hang-glider field had not been negotiated—the rule was to try and land in any meadow where the grass had been cut, and be prepared to pay the farmer a small fee if it was demanded. We never found this to be the case. One advantage of the airport was that it is the base for a large number of sailplanes, and they act as excellent thermal markers. The local hang glider pilots sit it out on top of the mountain until they see the sailplanes gaining height, and only then do they launch.

My son Robert made his

first real XC flight from here, covering a dozen or so miles on his "Clubman" intermediate glider. He had been flying for less than a year, so you can imagine how wide the grin was when he came back to base.

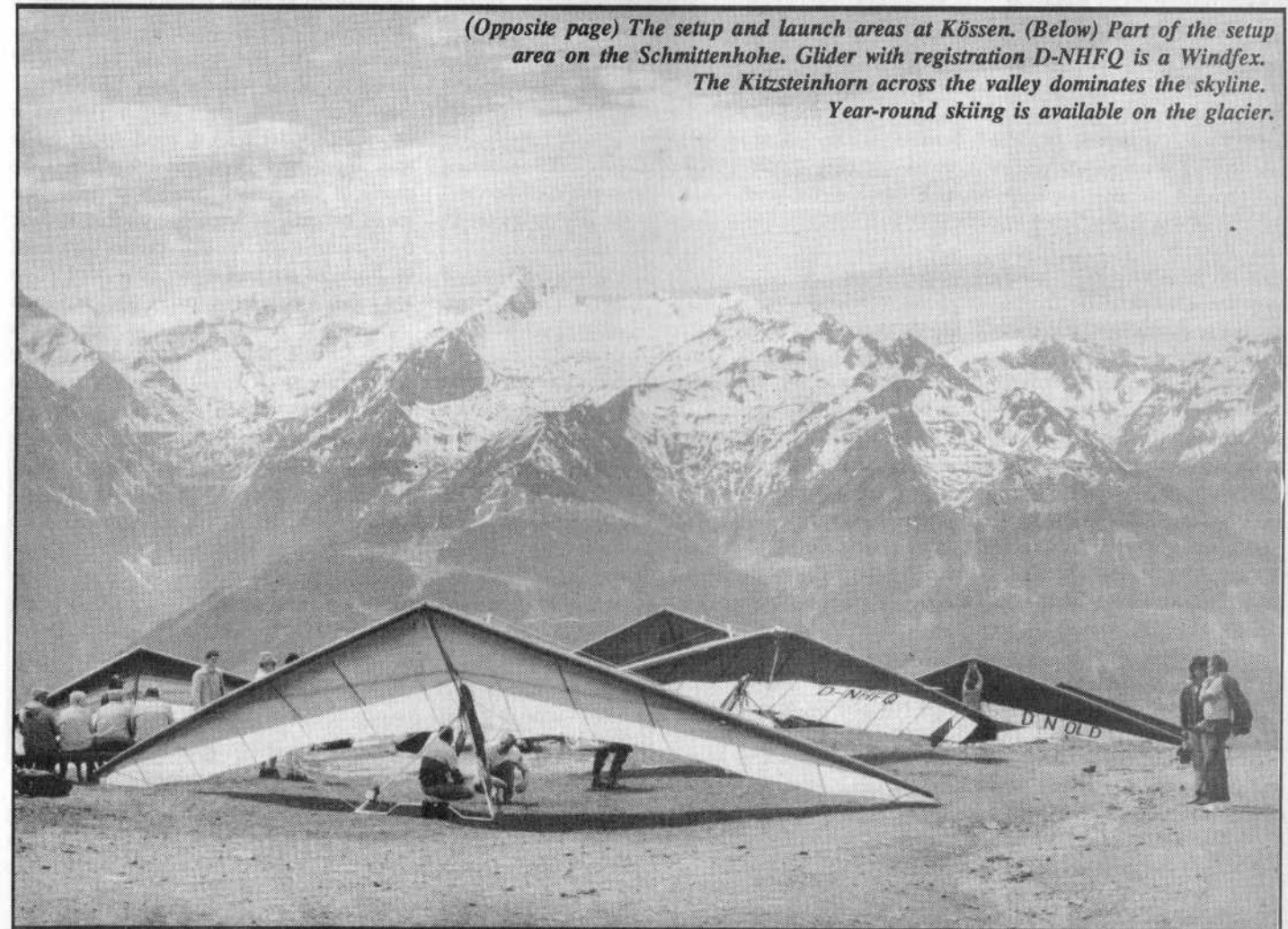
ZELL am ZILLER

This site is at the other end of the Ziller Valley, and was the only one up to which we were able to drive. Access is via the "Zillertaler Hohenstrasse", a winding road up the side of the mountains above Mayhofen. The actual take-off area was typically English, being smooth grassy slopes, but there the similarities ended as the elevation is about 4,000 feet above the valley. Robert launched first, and battled his way up through some rough thermals until he was well and truly specked-out another

4,000 ft. above the top. My flying pal, Tim, and I decided that there was no great hurry, and watched for a while as all the notable pilots present took off and disappeared towards the clouds. We graybeards knew that the thermals would be good until late into the afternoon, so what was the rush? The result was that we delayed long enough to allow the valley inversion to rise to launch level, and enjoyed the privilege of launching into it. We had little more than sled rides, while Robert was joyfully radioing down a commentary on his latest height gain to 5,500 ft. up the side of clouds!

The Zell am Ziller site is very popular, and we flew with pilots from Austria, Germany, Italy, Venezuela and the USA, the latter being represented by

(Opposite page) The setup and launch areas at Kössen. (Below) Part of the setup area on the Schmittenhohe. Glider with registration D-NHFQ is a Windfex. The Kitzsteinhorn across the valley dominates the skyline. Year-round skiing is available on the glacier.



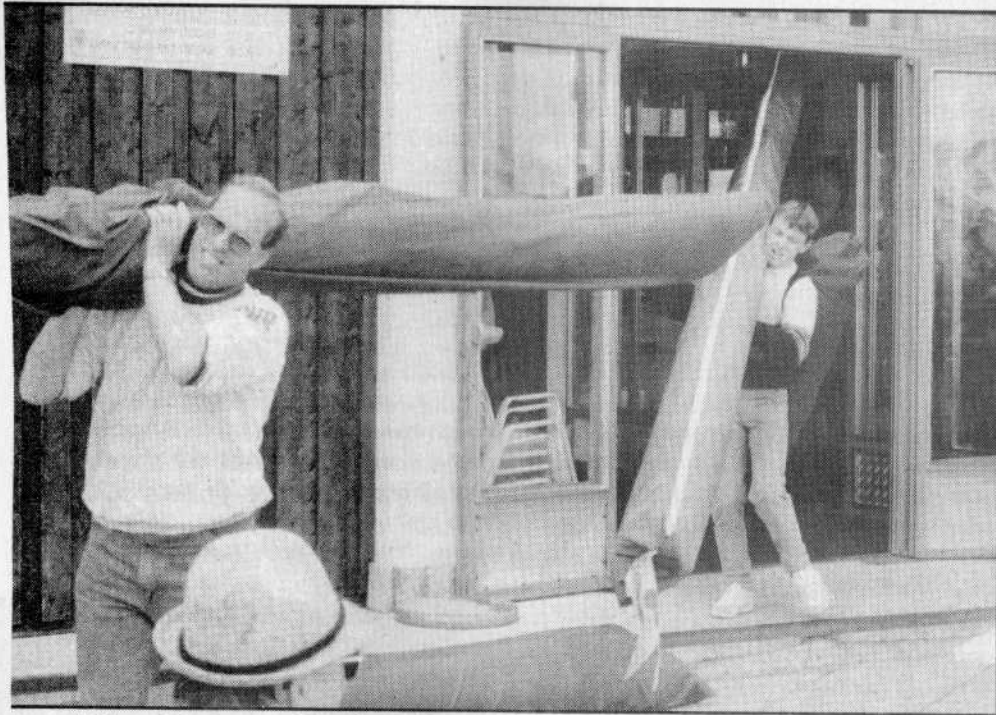
Eric Raymond who had just completed a filming assignment at the site with John Pendry.

If you do not go cross country, there are two landing fields complete with windsocks, in the valley below. My landing experience was enriched by a lady who drove a yellow station wagon *very slowly indeed* across my approach path. It was some time before she realized that everyone present was trying to give her an urgent message rather than merely exhibiting a spontaneous outburst of international goodwill.

KÖSSEN

The Unterberghorn

Our last Austrian site was here at the scene of the 1985 World Meet. Not the most spectacular site, but a name familiar to hang glider pilots worldwide, through the efforts



of Sepp Himberger, kingpin of the sport in Austria. The chairlift is very reasonably priced, and local accommodation is equally reasonable, but of a very high standard. Kossen is a town where hang gliding people are really welcomed, and the flying atmosphere is quite relaxed. Not as popular for free-distance flying as for triangles and out-and-return, the activity in the landing field is full of little tricks to play on the unwary, and sometimes the trade in control frame uprights is quite brisk.

To the left of takeoff is a deep tree-filled canyon with some rocky outcrops which look as if they would be good thermal generators. Not so. The sink in there is amazing, and the area is justly known as the "Bermuda Triangle". Avoid.

THE RAUSCHBERG

Back over the border in Germany, the Rauschberg at Ruhpolding is a handsome mountain. A cabin-type cablecar takes you up 3,300 ft. quite rapidly, and the top of the mountain offers launch ramps to both North and South. Getting the gliders on and off is a bit of a hassle, but the effort is worth it.

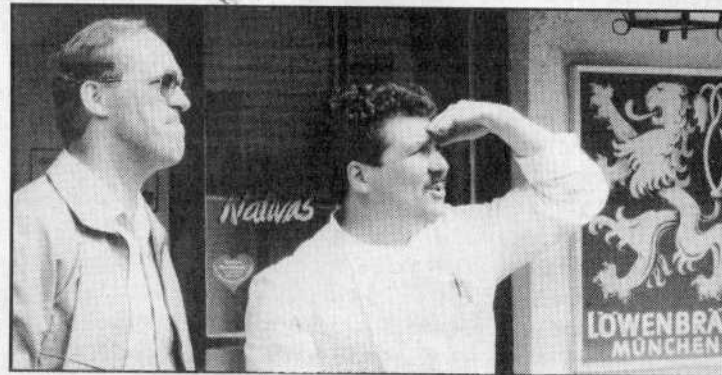
The designated landing field is the easiest you could wish for, and has the great advantage of being alongside the "Fischerwirt" hotel and bar. We found little difficulty in adjusting to the custom of sipping a cool beer during pauses in packing the gliders up.



There are other sites near Ruhpolding, but unfortunately the chairlifts were closed when we visited. Non-fliers enjoyed the area because of its nearness to the historic town of Salzburg, home of Mozart and a fine relic of the days of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

The Gliders

Just about every model of glider is represented at these international sites—a far greater variety than we ever see in England. The one everyone was talking favorably about was the new "Saphir 17" (see June 1986, pg. 16). This is a bowsprit model with a good speed range and apparently excellent handling. Like many of the current designs it employs a lot of battens, which come packed in their own tailor-made wallet. Production must be high, as we saw many new Saphirs on the hills. I didn't get to fly one, but from observation it appeared that the claims made for the handling were justified. The only problems I could see were rather a high weight, and a tendency to drop a



wing during the landing flare.

The trend towards ever increasing weight is quite a headache. My own Typhoon is absolutely on the outer limits for carrying as far as I am concerned, and

the Magics are about the same. The Glidezilla and its Italian clone, the Polaris GZ both look pretty hefty. I don't know how to build an affordable glider with high performance and low weight, but I do hope that someone brighter than me comes up with the answer soon! Talking of trends, there seems to be less interest in the "Fledge" type of glider these days. Only a year ago there were quite a few out among the mountains, but this year I saw only one.

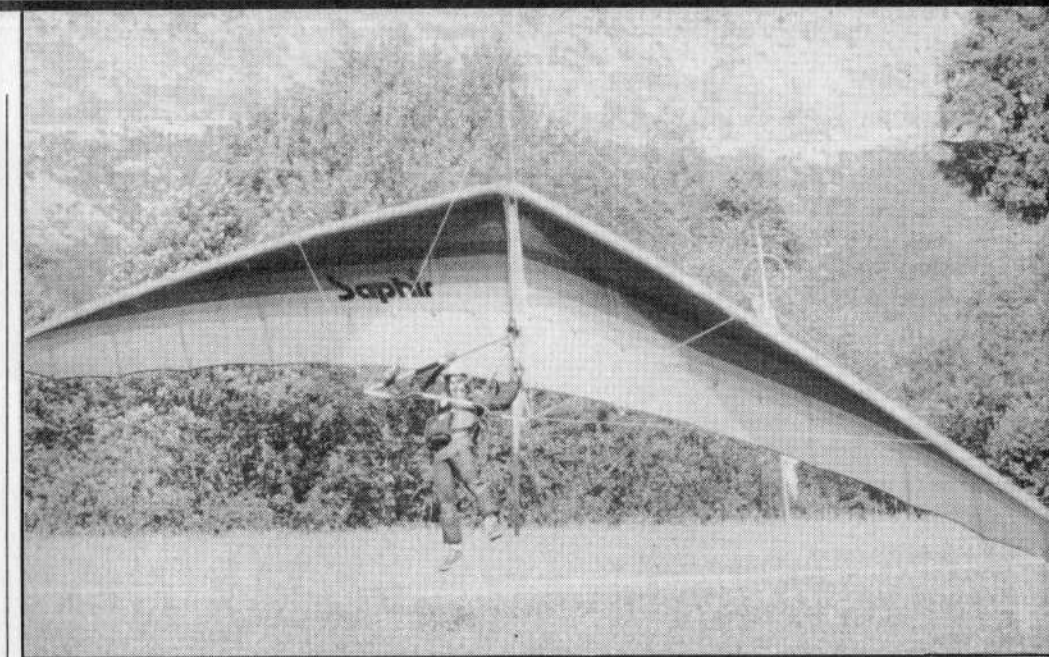
There were quite a lot of English gliders present; naturally the Magics and Typhoons figured prominently, while the French LaMouette Hermes and Profil models were well represented. Moyes models abounded, as did the locally built gliders from Josef Guggenmos' nearby factory. The original Atlas continues to be about the most popular intermediate design, with its near relative, the Polaris Delta, following closely.

The Germans specialize in lightweight gliders which breakdown to very short lengths. Some of these are capable of quite respectable performance, although not in the top bracket. The "Windfex" range is the most popular, but there are several others. They take an awful lot of work to assemble—a task I would not like even to contemplate on the average windswept British hill, but they certainly score when it comes to travelling to launch in cablecars. I have a theory that the effort spent in putting these gliders together affects the pilots after they launch, because on the few occasions when I was nearly trodden upon in thermals it was by a Windfex flier (never the same one). Relax gentlemen—I'm not entirely serious!!

The Equipment

There has been a quiet revolution in harnesses, and now the soft pods derived from the original Keller design have taken over from the cocoon for most serious fliers. I love mine. It is the first truly comfortable harness I have used since I started many years ago.

Beginners in Germany and Austria normally use knee-hangers, and as a result seem to wave their legs about an awful lot when doing their final turns before landing. I don't know why the stirrup system isn't more popular—I am sure that it allows a more free take-off run and

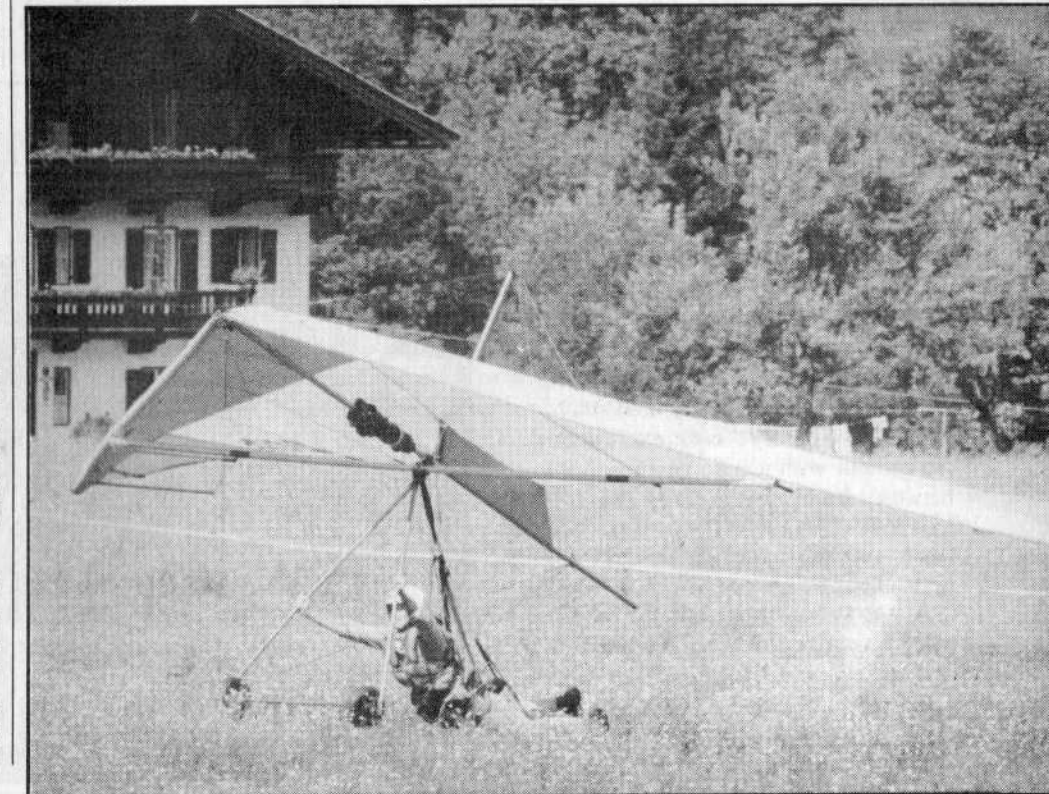


a wider range of landing flare. Mind you, the latter is not too important any more because of the great use of wheels on the control bar. Wheel-and-belly landings are quite common now, which must have reduced the scrap aluminum on the market considerably.

So there you have a personal and totally biased view of a couple of weeks spent in the European mountains. Why not come and form your own view next year?

—NOEL WHITTALL
May, 1986

(Far left) The trickiest part of flying the Schmittenhohe is extracting your glider from the cafeteria. (Left, top) Robert Whittall's smile says, "I've just done my first X-C!" (Left, bottom) Outside his Berghof Hotel, ever-helpful Fritz Walter gives an early morning weather assessment to Tim Taft before setting out to fly the nearby Tegelberg. (Above) A Saphir pilot makes a heroic effort to level his wings. (Below) Wheels landings are increasingly common in Europe, saving many downtubes.





What does towing have to do with competition? And what do either of them have to do with hand picked, "air minded" potatoes? To find out, you'll just have to read the prose of British Hang Gliding Association Chairman, Noel Whittall. There will not be a test.

More competitions for British fliers

There is no doubt that the pace-setter in the hang gliding competition scene in Britain at present, is the Airwave company. The manufacturers of the internationally popular "Magic" range of gliders are to sponsor a major competition for club pilots which will be known as the "Airwave Challenge 1986". The idea is to raise the standard of competitive flying within the British clubs, presumably working on the basis that a healthy competition scene leads to a healthy market!

British pilots are fairly sharply divided in their attitude to competition flying. At one extreme we have the fiercely competitive National League, from which our international competitors are recruited, while at the other there are hundreds or purely recreational fliers who are content with a little gentle soaring. In between there are the cross country and interclub leagues. The cross country league will accumulate about 200 entrants in the course of the season; in this the competitors in the various categories (open distance, out-and-return, and triangle) simply send evidence of their claimed flights to the co-ordinator, so there is rarely any wingtip-to-wingtip experience. The interclub league has only

succeeded in attracting the interest of about a dozen clubs, but in the few meets which have been run, the competition has sometimes been extremely keen.

The Airwave Challenge should raise the level of interclub league interest, because participation will be the only way into the prestigious Airwave events themselves, according to the draft



regulations.

The National League is making a radical change this year, in announcing that one of its contest rounds is to be flown over foreign soil. The whole circus will move to the French Alps for a few days of competition among the high mountains—something we British are rather short of in our island. The practice should get our team pilots into good form for the European Championships in Hungary next June.

It is now common knowledge that hang gliding has been granted Olympic status. I believe this will create a very interesting prospect. I will guess that we will find ourselves having to agree on specific Olympic gliders and Olympic tasks, and to grapple with inevitable politics before too long. As cockpit gliding and parachuting are in as well, recognition has finally arrived for a good range of aerial sports.

Towing Scene

Towing is developing fast now, and will make the running of competitions a practical proposition in almost any country. On a recent weekend, the BHGA invited representatives from the major towing groups in England to demonstrate their systems on an airfield in Lincolnshire. The gods smiled mightily: the winds were light and the sun appeared for most of the time. The weekend was a success, in contrast to similar events a few years ago which involved some serious accidents.



The "center of mass" towing attachment systems work well, and have reduced the hazards considerably. However, one pilot had made a rigging error on his glider which resulted in severe oscillation while under tow. This eventually developed into a lockout situation followed by a link break from which he was lucky to escape safely. In some respects this incident was not a bad thing, as some extravagant claims were being made about how impossible it was for the current attachment systems to allow a lockout. Maybe the people who made those claims will think again now.

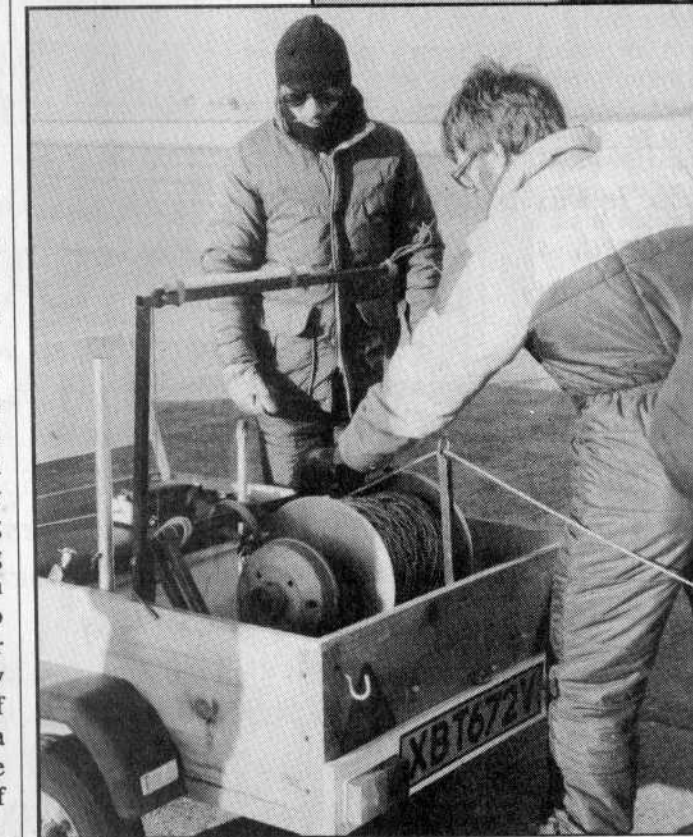
Probably the greatest interest was shown in the system demonstrated by that ebullient pair, Johnny Carr and Michel Carnet. Their's is a fixed winch which uses one of the driven wheels of an automobile to spin the drum. The system worked well, but in common with all the fixed-winch arrangements, it needs really well-rehearsed radio communication procedures. Misunderstandings in this department were responsible for a few aborted launches. Johnny and Michel are marketing this system very aggressively, and once it has gained approval from the BHGA, its low price and availability should ensure that it gains a reasonable share of the market.

Most of the British systems employ the pay-out, or towed, winch system, and improvements are being made to these all the time. If you have access to a reasonable airfield they are ideal, as they are simple to build and maintain. A big advantage results from the pilot being close to the winchman when the launch starts (60-70 yards at most), it is easy to communicate without radio or any other elaborate form of signalling. Probably they are not the most efficient way of obtaining the ultimate height gain on a line, but at this stage of development, the convenience, cheapness, and ease of operation are more important.

Most people were impressed with Ian Curren's very small prototype pay-out winch. It was only about half the size of most of the others, and incorporated one or two neat design features: notably, a simple but effective method of laying the cable neatly onto the drum when re-winding, and a beautifully straightforward line tension indicator.

In Britain we are allowed to tow to 2,000 ft. without having to notify the authorities, and the general opinion is that such a ceiling is acceptable. It is still possible to go higher than that, provided that the necessary procedure is followed, in writing, at least two weeks before the event.

A couple of months ago, John Pendry featured in a step-towing attempt which was shown on a popular prime-time television show. He achieved more than 5,000 feet, and attracted a lot of good publicity for the sport.



Mike McMillan's "Koch" winch was used for this flight. The same show had earlier demonstrated how simple towing was by hoisting a sack of potatoes aloft under a flexwing. They landed safely, but I suspect that they were specially hand-picked, air-minded potatoes.

As a result of all this interest, most clubs are investing in winches, or are encouraging groups within them to build their own. My guess is that there will be at least thirty operating before 1986 is out.

—Noel Whittall



(Opposite, top) The center of mass tow system is the most popular. (Bottom) The elaborate, double drum 'Koch' winch from Germany is operated by Mike McMillan. (This page, top) Simplicity in an auto-driven winch. (Above & left) Ian Curver's compact prototype pay-out winch; simple but effective. Whittall photos.

AUSTRALIA



The sixth running of the prestigious World Meet will be held for the first time in Australia. In this southern hemisphere country, summer and winter are reversed, so the meet will not take place till their summer season, in other words, late in 1987—actually early 1988.

Even though the date still seems distant, competition pilots are now thinking about the flying conditions and other details that could be important to a good American showing. Some pilots have made the long trip to fly in downunder contests already. For most of us, though, the Australian hang gliding scene is known only through the regular visits by an entourage of Aussie pilots.

What follows is a comprehensive piece about Australia, the land and the hang gliding community. **WHOLE AIR** welcomes a new author, Denis Cummings. Enjoy!

Host Nation for the 1987 World Meet

...THE SUNBURNT COUNTRY

Article
and
Photos
by Denis
Cummings

Of mountains and men

To understand Australia—you need to know the geography and the population distribution of this island continent.

Australia is basically an island with 80-90 percent desert, about 3,500 kilometers (2,174 miles) from east to west, and 2,500 kilometers (1,553 miles) from north to south. The only non-arid areas are around the seaboard edges the east of the continent. The northern quarter of the country is in the "tropics"

(i.e., north of the Tropic of Capricorn), although the majority of this area is arid or desert. Running from north to south down the eastern seaboard is the only mountain range of any significance, the Great Dividing Range. It reaches a majestic height of 7,200 feet ASL at its highest point which is near the southern end. Many sections, however, reach 5-6,000 feet along its length.

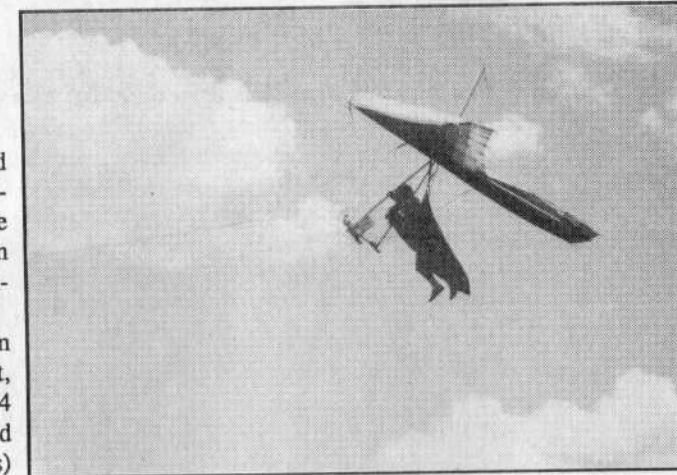
To the east—or seaward—of this range, and to the south of the Tropic of Capricorn, lives the majority of the population of about 15 million. Most reside in the capital cities of Brisbane, Sydney, and Melbourne, with the bulk of what remains concentrated in the coaster and near-coastal towns and cities.

To the west of the range, the towns and cities are much smaller and more widely spaced, as the country becomes drier and flatter. Two hundred miles west of the range, mostly dry arid grasslands or low scrub are found, leading into desert country.

The western seaboard is sparsely populated, except for the southern edge around the capital, Perth. The desert is not far from this mountainless western shore.

Where the flyboys soar

The hang gliding population is evenly spread throughout the general population, with the majority of pilots living in the coastal capitals, or along the eastern seaboard. Fortunately, many coastal cliffs and hills service the coastal ridge-soaring pilots. Usually, it would be possible to find a suitable coastal site within a half hour drive of any major town or city. All are generally accessible—being mostly public



(Above) The new towing, compared to the old, where "The Australian Birdman" (opposite page) performs at Moree Showground in 1968. (Below) 10,000 feet over the flatlands near Parkes during the 1986 Flatlands X-C Challenge

contest, a real test of ridge-racing skills. It also hosts the occasional "free style" or aerobatic contest, as well as catering to as many as 80 pilots in the air at any time on a good weekend. A most spectacular scene, with or without the hang gliders, it is well worth a visit by any travellers passing through Sydney.

Between the coast and the Great Dividing Range, lush farmlands are found along the coastal river systems, and one can see areas of sub-tropical forests near the coastal fringe or thin hardwood forests further inland. The spurs and ranges leading to this mountain barrier offer many excellent hang gliding sites, although the generally higher humidity (relative to the areas west of the Great Divide) usually means that thermal depth—or

cloudbase—is often low. A good day would yield 4-5,000 foot cloudbases, while the odd excellent day would allow thermalling to 8,000 feet or more. Although many excellent hills are available in this near-coastal strip, very few are consistently flown, probably due to the proximity and regularity of the many excellent and easily-accessed coastal ridges.

Aged range

The Great Dividing range is a very old range (geologically), which has been reduced by weathering and aging to far less than its original height. It is forested for most of its length, moreso on the easter seaboard side. Being so old and weathered, it is not generally as steep as pilots might wish, with suitable sites being few and generally difficult to reach.

West of the Divide, however, are a few excellent spurs and ranges with easier access. The added attraction to



lands, reserves, beaches. Australia has no private beaches.

The coastal soaring ridges are varied with many being over 500 feet. The most popular, by far, is Stanwell Park near Sydney, New South Wales. This is probably because of its proximity to Sydney (the largest population center—about 4 million), and because of the excellent sandstone vertical escarpment which climbs to between 500 and 1,000 feet above the ocean. It runs nearly unbroken for some 40 kilometers (25 miles). It is the site of the annual Hargraves International

the west is a much drier, less humid, environment which results in a higher thermal depth/cloud-base, and stronger thermals. The most popular site is Mt. Buffalo, in the north of Victoria. Its



The author launches from the granite rock face of Mt. Buffalo.

launch is 3,300 feet above the valley floor. It is the site for the January 1988 World Meet. Each year, around Christmas, the Mt. Buffalo Cross Country Classic is held. This contest attracts many of the world's best pilots who have a fine time attempting to outdo the Aussies on their "home turf."

The launch site is on a sheer granite cliff, below a nineteenth century ski chalet. The area is within a National Park—a really pleasant place to spend some time. Usually thermals rise to 7,000 feet, occasionally to 11,000 feet.

Go west and rise
Travelling further west of the

Divide, the country becomes flatter and more dry. Launchable hills become quite rare and are usually inaccessible. Most of the farms are large and clear, with wheat and wool being the major products. The exceptions are the irrigation areas along the larger inland rivers which produce wine, fruit, and dairy products.

It is in these "wheat belt" areas that the latest developments in hang gliding have been given their trials. When tow launching became accepted here about three years ago, it was felt that the best flying conditions would be in the drier and hotter environment to the west. Logically, this same area is used by the sailplane pilots who complete 750 and 1,000 kilometer triangles.

After a season or two of summer towing just in friendly groups—and experiencing the ease and freedom of flatland flying—it was felt that the next orderly step was to have a contest using tow launching. All that was needed was a 1.5 square kilometer area, and the cars, ropes, pilots, and other trappings of towing. Such a site was located at Parkes in central N.S.W.

With two years of the Flatlands Cross Country Challenge now history, three world records, some seven national records, the second longest unofficial hang gliding flight in the world (see

note *), and a lot of tired but happy pilots... it's hard to see why anyone would bother going back to the hills. Look out for the large "International Flatlands" after the 1988 World Meet.

Thermals in these areas usually go to 8-10,000 feet, on occasion to 14,000 feet, with ground level at about 800 feet ASL.

* Cummings refers to Mark Newland's 198.8 mile flight last December (see May 1986, pg. 12). The flight was second to Tudor's landmark 221.5 miles in 1983, but now Haney's 202, and apparently several over 200 for Tudor this year, have bested Newland's impressive 1985 flight. Newland also won the 1986 U.S. Nationals in Chelan, Washington.

At about 200 kilometers west of the Divide, the arid grasslands and low scrub start



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Denis Cummings has been hang gliding for nine years, having "converted" from surfing and snow skiing. He now plays with trikes, his B-10 Mitchell Wing ultralight, and sailplanes in addition to hang gliders. In 1983, he helped develop tow launching, the Skyting method, in Australia, and was a regular contributor to Donnell Hewett's newsletter. He has also written for Skysailor.

He is an instructor for both hang gliding and ultralights, and is on the executive committee of HGFA as FAI coordinator. He organizes the annual "Flatlands Cross Country Challenge" mentioned above.

A regular pilot, Cummings holds two World Records: distance over a triangular course—81 km; and speed over a 25 km course—15.6 kph (both at Parkes, site of the Flatlands Challenge). He also lays claim to four Australian records: distance—176 km; gain of height—3,906 m (both at Alice Springs); and the above triangle records.

Having a keen weather eye, he is gearing up to do the weather reporting and forecasting for the 1987 World Meet.

to appear. This soon turns to desert or low salt plains towards the center and west of the continent. Not much life can be found in this huge expanse of hot, dry country, until one reaches the western coastline. It is in the center of this desert that many of the world's sailplane records have been set. With tow launching of hang gliders, one expedition to Australia's central township—Alice Springs—has been mounted to attempt world records in hang gliders. The results: one world mark and seven national ones, all from tow launches. It's interesting to note that average thermal strengths were between 1,000 and 1,300 fpm, and cloudbase was found at 16,500 feet (about 14,500 AGL). The thermals were big and smooth once centered, but were surrounded by 4-600 fpm sink, which required fast flying between thermals. The local sailplane pilots reported occasional flights to 20,000 feet, with shear wave above the thermal layer allowing ever higher flight.

The Aussie pilot community

So much for the flying!

Australia counts about 1,800 hang glider pilots, who are members of their State Associations. These associations are in turn members of the Hang Gliding Federation of Australia. Each member pilot receives monthly editions of *Skysailor* magazine, which keeps them in touch with developments in the sport, contests, pub nights, and more.

Two major manufacturers dominate the scene—Moyes and Enterprise Wings—plus some smaller scale builders of beginning gliders. Until recently, when the Australian dollar was devalued, quite a few foreign-built gliders were being imported, particularly the Airwave Magic. The regular summer visits of overseas pilots (during their winters) usually sees the latest of gliders, equipment, and instruments being digested by the locals.

Any article about Australian hang gliding would not be complete without mentioning the contribution made by Australia's father of hang gliding and Australia's top pilot: Bill and Steve Moyes respectively.

Bill took hang gliding from the water-ski kite days through the "Birdman of the

Showground" era... into the foot-launched, free-soaring days and up to the present cross-country soaring state. He did this through his designs and his flying skills. On the way, he just happened to pass on a few clues to his son, Steve, who developed the skills into an art.

Steve is regarded as probably the most consistent pilot on the world contest scene, having won the 1983 World Meet, and being Runner Up in the 1985 edition. He has



Iain Cummings (son) takes a self-portrait above Porepunka Hill. Mt. Buffalo is visible in the distance below his right hand.

also won many national and international contests over the last ten years. Many pilots consider Steve Moyes perhaps the finest hang glider pilot in the world today.

With all his skill and international experience, Steve still has a tough time in contests in this country. With pilots like the Duncan brothers—Rick, Shane, and Russell (whose father, Kevin, flew those early kites with Bill Moyes)—Ian Jarman, Steve Blinkensop, Alan Daniels, and youngsters Steve Gilmour and Danny Scott... many often feel that Steve likes to escape overseas to get away from the competition.

More information

For those pilots coming to Oz over the next couple of years, plenty of activity can be found, both coastal and inland. Details may be obtained from the Hang Gliding Federation of Australia, Suite 508, Sports House, 157-161 Gloucester Street, Sydney, N.S.W., 2000 Australia.

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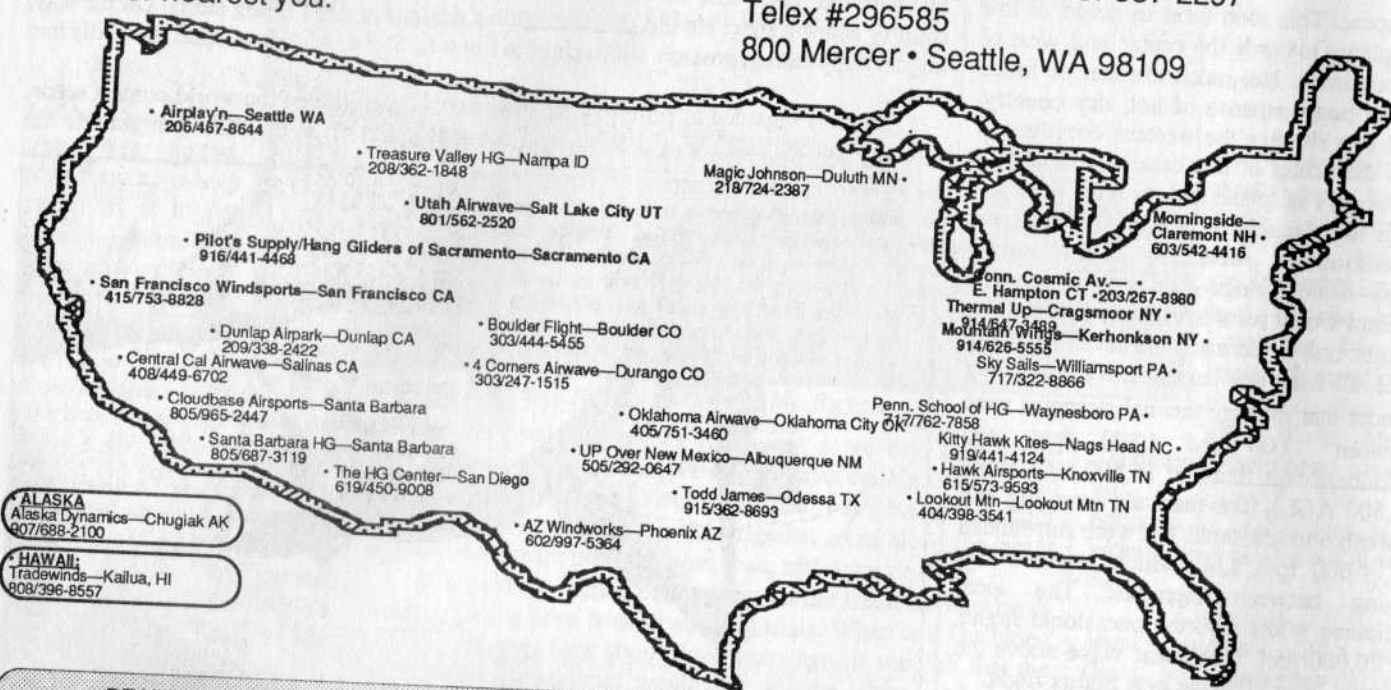


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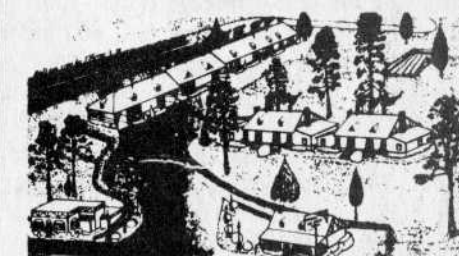
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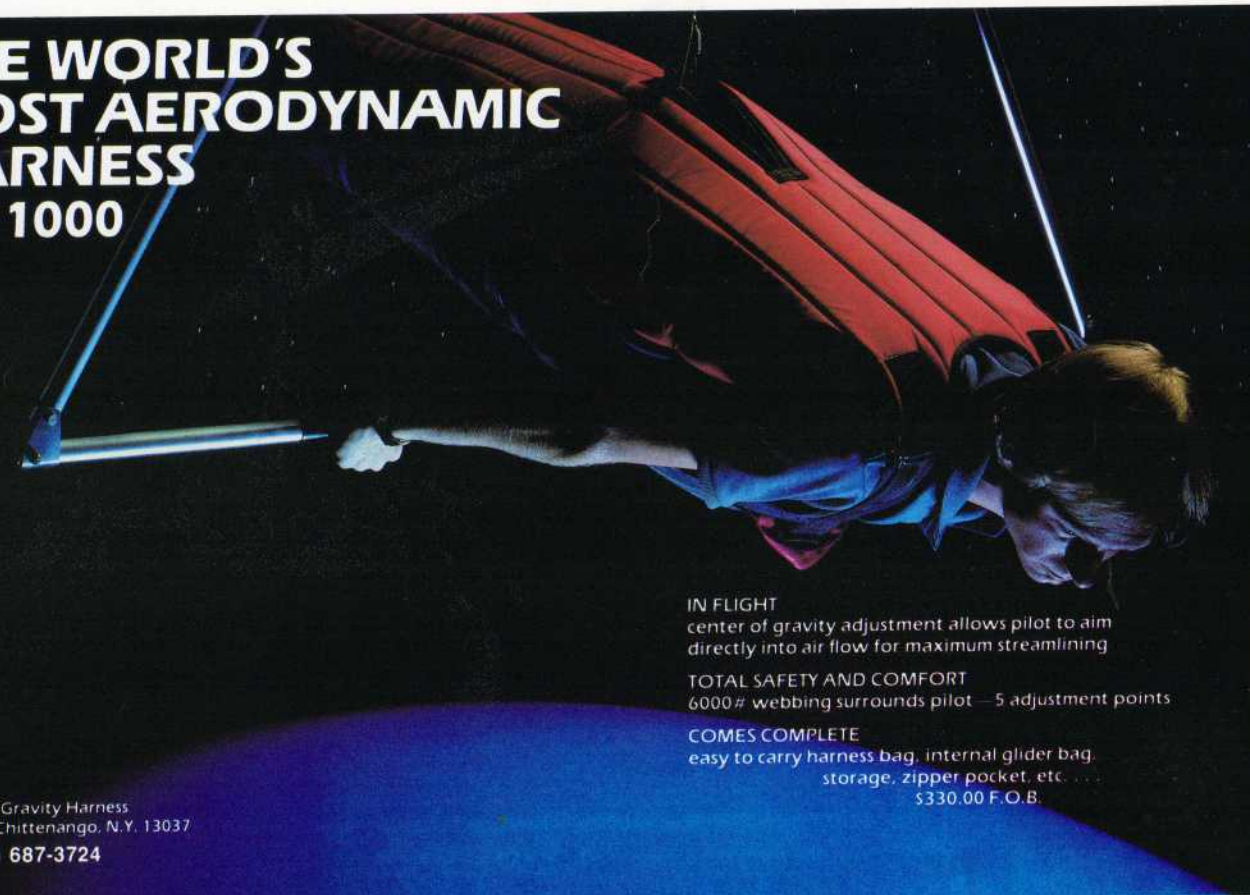
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TACOMA, WA — Glitches 'n Gremlins... What's this all about, you ask? Some interesting new problems have arisen in the competition circuit. Aaarrggghhh! I can hear your groans... the 90%+ of you who—surveys show—don't participate in competition. Well, hang on to your hat, you just might find a thing or two of interest here. Firstly, the **86 Nats Results**. Actually, you'll find all you need to know about this year's Nats in CJ's novel about the event starting on page 12 of this issue. But... it says there that **Rick Rawlings** is our National Champion again. True, he didn't win the meet. **Mark Newland** did. But the Nats results alone is not how we determine our National Champion. It goes by accumulated competition points. And that would make Rawlings the champ' even though he came in second in the U.S. Nats. The "National Champion" title is determined by the pilot who earns the most CPS points in the period since the last Nationals. Which is Rawlings. Except Rawlings may still not be the guy. Howzat? Well, 3 USHGA Board of Directors' meetings ago, the association's directors voted not to count foreign meets in the computations leading to the CPS champion. Unfortunately, this change did not make it into the subsequently published Competition Rulebook. Anyway, since this rule was altered, it turns out that **Jim Lee** (4th at the Nats) accumulated more points since last year's Nats than did Rick Rawlings. Now, before ya all go gettin' bent outta shape over all this, listen here. Lee is one mild mannered guy, and he's not making a big fuss. He's done swell in point competitions, and deserves the title, given that the rules are what they are. But he ain't gripin'. God and everyone else knows Rick Rawlings is just about the hottest pilot in the USA, if not the whole dang world. What to do? Rules are rules, and gotta be played by... except Rawlings has already received the trophy and all the accolades that go along with it. Geeeee! It's a question USHGA prez **Russ Locke** is already losing sleep over, as will his cohorts on the Board. Guess we'll hafta wait till the next Board meeting (October 11-13 in Chattanooga) to find out. Well, the tale isn't yet over. Oh, the one about the Nats is, but we've another. **Rick Masters** was kind enough to send along one of his well-written letters recently. To quote his letter, "**Larry Tudor** has astounded everyone with a string of spectacular performances. On June 21, he reached the McLeod Ranch in the Big Smokey Valley north of Tonopah, 186 miles (Great Circle Distance) from Horseshoe. Two days later he flew his HP 170 on an official world record goal attempt to Austin Airport, falling short but accumulating **211.89 miles** (GCD) for an official open distance claim. Then on July 6 he flew even closer with **214 miles**. These represent the three longest flights from the Owens this year." Masters continues with more amazing flight reports, "On June 11, **Geoff Lyons** of Wales declared Gabbs Airport as goal for an official world record attempt. I witnessed his launch and landing. It presently stands as the only successful goal attempt with 168 miles. On June 25, **Steve Moyes** made an incredible out-and-return of 187 miles, flying from Horseshoe to Benton and back." Rick continued on with a table showing no less than 15 flights over 150 miles in the Owens this year, including one of his own for 178 miles. But, as George Worthington wanted us to remember, the finest accomplishments are those that can gain

official recognition. The effort and expense it takes to gain a full-on world record is considerable. Spell that with greenbacks and sore backs, boys! Rick Masters notes a couple problem areas. Wrong Rub No. 1 regards **John Pendry's** 186.81 mile flight of 1983, on the same day Tudor got the now-famous 221.5 flight. Masters reminds us that **WHOLE AIR** reported Pendry got that title as he had all the right components of a world record (Sporting License, barograph, and witnesses). However, says Masters, "In reality, Pendry had no witness at all for his landing. He spent the night in his harness and his team did not find him until the next morning. In addition, both Open Distance claims of Pendry and [Judy] Leden were filed through the British Hang Gliding Association and the Royal Aero Club, despite the fact that the F.A.I. Sporting Code specifically states that claims must be filed through the aero club of the nation in which the claim was made. Tudor was denied the Official World Open Distance record of 221.5 miles on the grounds that he did not have a barograph and therefore did not meet the requirements of the Sporting Code." He explains that while a barograph proves some things, it cannot substitute for witnesses to determine the point of touchdown. Masters feels the F.A.I. accepted Pendry's claim without adequate proof, the very essence of the Sporting Code. He also cites the now infamous case of **Brook Knapp**, who earned another mark in the record book with a tandem endurance flight. Of course, this is only a National Record, but no category even existed for such a record, and anyway, she was not the pilot in command. You've probably read the other details—the glider was a registered aircraft, ad naseum—but the deal resulted in some sharp feelings over the NAA's awarding of a record "too easily" and "incorrectly." But, yes folks, there's still more. Rick also addressed the difficulty some have experienced in getting someone to file records officially. This has been handled by USHGA records chairman **Bob Thompson**. He does so on his own time, and is very knowledgeable. Unfortunately, like any individual, Bob may not always be available by phone (he may be out settin' his own records). This may not have happened often, but since rapid action is important, those who could not contact Bob felt great frustration. Solutions are available. New USHGA exec Cindy Brickner has a lot of similar experience for the SSA and can help. Record filings can go through the USHGA office, and anyone wishing to do so can certainly contact her daily during regular office hours. And now, finally, the best news of this column. Cross country whizz **Larry Tudor** has done it! Yep, he beat his own, and everybody else's records. He performed an amazing flight with a barograph, had witnesses, and expects no trouble filing with the FAI... for, get this (!), a **215 mile flight**. Yessir, Tudor launched his HP 170 from Horseshoe Meadows on July 23rd and flew 215 miles, landing between the Austin airport and Austin, Nevada, short of a highway intersection which was his declared goal. His flight kept him up 9.5 hours, at altitudes of 17,000 feet. It's downright inspirational, and we're glad to report it first in **WHOLE AIR**. Got news or opinions? You can still contact Dan Johnson at P. O. Box 144, Lookout Mtn., TN 37350. Yep, the once and always address of the old **WHOLE AIR** will remain available. This column will next appear in **SPORT FLYER**. Stay tuned! **T-H-A-N-K-S!**

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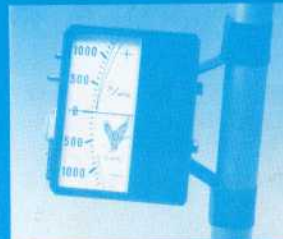


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