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Skysailor Editorial Contributions

The contact points for HGFA members submitting to SkySailor are the HGFA Editor/Graphic Designer and the HGFA Office. These contact points are detailed below.

SkySailor Editorial Contributions

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Apco Thrusts flying over blooming flower fields in Southern Israel
Photo: Beny Peretz

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Next Submissions Deadline: 1 October 2015 for Nov/Dec SkySailor

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SkySailor – September/October 2015

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2230 Katoomba Road, Richmond NSW 2220 & Belmont Airport Pacific Highway, Pelecan.
The first thing you notice about Iceland when you fly into Keflavik (Reykjavik) airport, is the total absence of trees. There are none... anywhere, as far as you can see.

The second thing you notice about Iceland in summer is the total lack of night. Located just on the Arctic circle, in late June daylight in Iceland lasts all day, and all the next day, and the next day... This can really play havoc with your body clock. Circadian rhythm takes a back seat when you suddenly realise that all the things you couldn't normally do when evening came, are now possible. Sleep? Who needs sleep when there are all these things to see and do, and so much daylight to do it in!

Then there's the wind. When it blows here, it really blows. Be careful when you open the car doors in the wind! Luckily there's a lot of light wind days as well.

The weather forecast didn't look good for our first day: 50 to 60kt winds, showers and temperatures down to 5ºC. Iceland is touted as 'one of the world's best destinations for cycle touring'. Really?

“So what makes for a bad place?” I asked as we passed the first of many cyclists we’d encounter during our stay, most struggling to make any headway in the atrocious conditions. The quietness and warmth of our rental car with its seat warmers, never felt so good. I’m sure there’s a certain beauty to cycle touring. I just couldn’t see it...

Day 2 and the weather improved slightly, so we ventured inland for a very pleasant one-hour hike up to the hot springs of Reykjadalur, nestled in the hills above Therangerdi. Hot springs seem more common in Iceland than pubs are in Australia – almost every town has some. There’s something almost magical about lying quietly in huge pools of natural hot water, under the wide arctic sky, as the steam swirls and dances across the surface in the wind.

The weather for the next week looked better, so we headed for the NW fjordlands and their famous seabird rookeries.

Driving around Iceland can be a strain, not so much on your wallet, but on your neck and your camera clicking finger. Constantly bombarded with a never-ending stream of stunning photo opportunities: Beaches of all colours, rolling red and black hills, sheer cliffs towering above fjords of blue/green water and jagged snow-covered peaks interspersed with ice fields and glaciers.

Amongst this, the contrast of the lowlands with their lush green fields and immaculately presented vivid white farm buildings with bright red or blue roofs. You just can’t help taking photos, lots of photos, in Iceland.

The lack of trees makes Iceland a ‘chick’s fly’ paraglider pilot’s dream. No matter where you look, there’s a launch site begging to be pioneered. All we had to do for our first Iceland flight was to wait for the wind to back off, and it did, just enough to pull out my 15m speedwing for a fun session of high wind ‘fjord’ soaring. If you’re going to Iceland to fly, definitely take a speed wing. Given the probability of wind, having an extra wing to cover you on the ‘strong’ days will make your trip so much more rewarding. The smoothest wind always comes off the sea, and given the huge length of the Icelandic coastline, all you have to do is to drive around the island until you find a hill that faces into the wind. A lot of the rocky slopes are covered with permanent snow, or an amazing carpet of soft moss, making launching your glider relatively stress free.

At Örlygshafnarvegur, in the far south-west of the country, the 800ft cliffs tower over the wild Arctic Ocean and are home to huge seabird rookeries. Millions of birds of all shapes and sizes nest on small shelves or in little hollows, or on nests seemingly stuck like glue to the absolute vertical cliffs. The sky teems with birdlife, effortlessly wheeling, soaring and diving. Yet, we had come to see just one bird, the absolutely adorable puffin. This podgy little icon of the arctic, with its multi-coloured beak nests on, or just below, the grassy cliff top. For some reason, the puffins here are unafraid, and
happily shuffle to within a metre of camera. Unlike the other birds soaring effortlessly, the puffins madly flap their tiny wings as they struggle home to their cliff top nests from the ocean far below, beaks loaded with tiny fish for their young, you get the feeling that their creator definitely gave them a choice: fly effortlessly or look cute — they certainly chose the latter.

It was now close to midnight and as the sun scribed its low path across the northern horizon, and as the biting icy NW blew relentlessly, we left the birds and their stunning home and headed NE in search of more humanly flyable conditions.

“This has got to be flyable,” we said to each other. We were gazing up at the top of a 200m high, two kilometre long ridge which sat at the end of a 10km long fjord. Most of the tourists here had come to see one of the most spectacular waterfalls imaginable. Millions of litres of frigid water poured over the cliff edge, thundering seawards over what looked like a massive multi-layered wedding cake. We were looking at the scene in a whole different light. The swirling katabatic close to the waterfall would make launching here an impossibility. The far end of the ridge looked pretty launchable, so after a pleasant hike under a now brilliant blue cloudless arctic sky, we arrived on a soft moss covered slope high above the fjord. Conditions were perfect for a really enjoyable flight in smooth ridge lift interspersed by light thermals coming from the beach below. The thermals were not topping out high enough to commit to heading XC over the snow-covered plateau, so I opted instead for a play above the thundering waterfall. We were looking at the scene in a whole different light. The swirling katabatic close to the waterfall would make launching here an impossibility. The far end of the ridge looked pretty launchable, so after a pleasant hike under a now brilliant blue cloudless arctic sky, we arrived on a soft moss covered slope high above the fjord. Conditions were perfect for a really enjoyable flight in smooth ridge lift interspersed by light thermals coming from the beach below. The thermals were not topping out high enough to commit to heading XC over the snow-covered plateau, so I opted instead for a play above the thundering waterfall.

In stark contrast with Australia, there’s not much wildlife in Iceland. The main concerns while driving are reindeer and sheep. There are a lot of sheep in Iceland and they love grazing next to, and lying on, the roads in the afternoons. Rather than huge flocks, there’s usually only two or three together and most are considerate enough to jump off the side of the road with a quick toot of horn. I believe the national maximum speed limit of 90km/h exists to protect the sheep. Reindeer on the other hand usually hang out in herds and don’t have the same road sense. They’re also quite well camouflaged, especially if you meet them in thick fog late in the evening.

While not exclusively so, the majority of tourist viewpoints in Iceland have something to do with geology. Molten earth, subterranean boiling water or mud, plate tectonics, volcanoes — everywhere you look, you see the signs of bits of the earth being squashed together, torn apart, pushed up, squeezed out, cooked and boiled. One of the most unusual is on the south coast near Gunnahver, here, anomalous looking rocky gully about 15m wide, eight metres deep and 200m long marks the place where the European and the American tectonic plates are slowly and inextricably being separating at the rate of about 1cm per year. This is the only place on dry land where you can see the two plates right next to each other. Another geological draw card are the numerous dormant volcanoes and ‘cinder cones’ that dot the landscape.

The almost textbook dormant small volcano rising 30m above the flat surrounding plain looked perfect for an afternoon flight. Like most hills in Iceland, the rocky slope was relatively easy to climb, and like many as well, the tops had areas of smooth thick moss. No matter what hill / mountain you climb in Iceland, the view from the top is always going to be worth the climb. Stunning vistas of either rounded and rolling, and other places sharp and angular, snow-covered mountains stretching to the horizon under an amazingly clear Arctic sky. This hill was no exception with the lowlands in front dotted with small lakes and streams reflecting the afternoon sun. Truly magical.

During Hike’n’Fly expeditions, I try to absorb as much of the vista as possible during the climb to the top (along with assessing the prevailing conditions). My motto of "if it’s on, get off" means there’s little time spent at the peak. Conditions can change last minute, so it pays to have a plan B or even C in mind.

Iceland
Land of Fire & Ice

Join Phil Hystek on a paragliding adventure like no other.
Experience the wild and untamed beauty of the land of “fire and ice” and the midnight sun. “Hike’n Fly” volcanos, soar fjords or XC over lava fields. Relax in hot springs and soak up the beauty of this mystical land.
25 June to 11 July 2016 – Numbers strictly limited.
For details please contact Phil: <info@pgqld.com.au>
Land of Fire & Ice

Iceland

The nearby hot baths of Jakobsviti at Myvatn are a must visit in this area and despite the hefty admission fee, we had to stop by and check them out. Floating quietly in one of the recently constructed large open-air naturally heated baths, as the sun carves its low trajectory through the evening arctic sky, is quite a salubrious experience.

Heading further south-east, the environmental devastation is quite mirrored. From horizon to horizon, the land is completely devoid of any living thing. Black and grey volcanic ash and lava from past eruptions completely cover the landscape. This place is so much like the moon that most astronauts who actually walked on the moon came to this area first for training prior to their space journey.

One of the reasons for our visit to Iceland was to compete in the National Paragliding Championships. The five-day camp was to be based from the flying site of Mt Burfell, a rock and scree covered 669m tall volcano sitting in the middle of a 30km wide alluvial plain in the south of the island. The view from the top of Burfell is spectacular with the skyline of Mount Heila, one of the world’s most active volcanoes.

The drive to the top of Burfell was certainly a test for our little Suzuki. The slopes of the mountain are mostly covered with sparse ground vegetation due to the high sulphur concentration in the air and in the hot underground water. The wind speed and the quality of the launch area before you start the climb. If you’re not absolutely sure that the wind and the hill are suitable for launching and flying a normal size wing, then having a smaller wing that can handle both more wind, and a smaller, rougher and more challenging launch, will at least give you the ability to fly down. Few things more frustrating than carrying your glider all the way up only to find the wind just too strong to fly. “If only I’d brought my speedwing...”

The drive to the top of Burfell was certainly a test for our little Suzuki. The slopes of the mountain are mostly covered with sparse ground vegetation due to the high sulphur concentration in the air and in the hot underground water.

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One of the key areas when my flying started to improve was when I became more competent in ground handling. Since most of my flying is done on the coast, it is paramount to have good ground handling skills. It is quite an art to set up flat and pick up a glider by yourself in strong wind and launch. Once achieved, this allowed me to focus on other areas of my flying rather than dwell on picking up the darn glider!

After about 75 hours flying time and 40 hours of talking time, I decided to complete my intermediate qualification even though one can do this after 25 hours. Looking back at my skill level and knowledge at 25 hours, it was a good decision to wait.

In concluding, I thoroughly recommend to any new pilot, whether a hang gliding or paragliding pilot, to spend as much time as you can with experienced pilots. Don’t ever consider to fly if you’re not comfortable, but watch and listen to them anyway and fire off as many questions as you dare.

In 2012, after an adventurous nine-day hang gliding course at ‘Dynamic Flight’ in Trawalla, Victoria, little did I know my life was about to undergo major change. After my very first flight at Spion Kop (Moggs Creek) life changed for me: No longer was I waiting for good weather to go fishing, mow lawns or paint the house – the wind and flying have become my obsession.

As a novice, now called a Supervised Hang Glider Pilot, it was knowledge and experience I needed to further my progress. Having joined the Geelong Hang Gliding and Paragliding club the ‘Dynasoars’, both knowledge and experience were coming my way – some good and some not so good.

I was fortunate to team up with some very experienced and talented hang glider pilots. One of these, who loves to fly long and high, is Peter Hanagh, another pilot, John Bremer, loves the low stuff. Both are very skilled and have spent generous hours sharing their knowledge with me.

We are very fortunate in Geelong as there are many sites to fly, each being quite different and requiring different skills and techniques. Initially, prior to flying any of these sites, I spent many hours watching and listening to Peter and John. We went over key geographical and meteorological characteristics important to flying, as well as wind strength, direction, turbulence, rotor causes, landing zones and so forth.

Some of the key observations I learned included watching birds fly the sites, how and why they flap their wings in different situations, what the grass and trees are doing below and behind launch, what the wind lines indicate on the water. When it came to studying the wind, I spent heaps of time looking at forecasts and have a number of apps on my phone to constantly watch along with the old windsock in the tree.

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3rd to 10th October

Entry Fee: $270
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Non club members: add $30 site fee.
➔ $5000+ in prizes and cash to be won
➔ Download and view tracklog and GoPro footage on a large projection screen each day.
➔ Separate tasks each day for kingpost gliders (Sports Class).
➔ Registration now open
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Enquiries: Dave Staver – 0409 435 953
Venue: Moriarty Hall, Canungra, QLD
Dates:
XC Clinic – 30 September to 2 October 2015.
Cost $150. Book now.
Canungra Classic AA – 3 to 10 October 2015.
Friday 2nd – Registration and free dinner.
Sunday 4th – Debrief for XC Clinic participants.
Monday 5th – Quiz night and free dinner.
Wednesday 7th – Red Faces night – $500 first prize – and free dinner.
Thursday 8th – Debrief for XC Clinic participants.
Friday 9th – Outpost dinner night.
Saturday 10th – Presentation and free dinner.

Photo: Mike Zupanc

My Transition From Novice To Intermediate


by Jamie Allen
It was just a normal morning when we arranged to go flying with Stewart, also based here at Maryborough, Qld. The weather was good, clear and warm, but as we took off and followed the Mary River out towards River Heads, we saw in the distance some light fog over the water. Flying South along the Sandy Straits, both Fraser Island and the mainland were completely clear of fog. It was just settled between them, offering a glimpse of the water beneath.

As we continued our journey, the fog was disappearing quickly, but it gave us a chance to take some great photos. It was very calm, just ideal for a flight at this time of year...

A perfect flying day in the best place (in Australia) to fly a trike.

Winter in Yallingup, WA

Yallingup turned on some top flying conditions for the day with 10 hang gliders enjoying the fine and warm winter Saturday on the south-western coast of Western Australia.

Pilots present on Saturday, 4 July, included Clayton (Sting 154), Jason (C2), Kim (F2 390), Luke (Falcon 390), Mike (Malibu 188), Paul (Fun 160), Ron (Malibu 160), Sam (Sting 154), Scott (Malibu 188) and Shelley (XT 145).

Full marks to Luke for his first soaring flight at Yallingup on the day, with a top landing as well! Conditions allowed many pilots to soar the back ridge to well over 1000ft. Not a bad height gain from the 100ft take-off at Yallingup!

It appears that Jason decided to try out the cross-country potential from Yallingup with a run over the back to Dunsborough and a landing on the beach. We await his report.

Shelley Heinrich prepares to launch with Jason Kath assisting

Jason prepares to launch

Jason shows a very low pass in front of launch at Yallingup

Shelley out over Yallingup bay just after her launch

Jason Kath getting airborne

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Some Flying Tales
I first flew in Interlaken in 2008 as a novice pilot with only 10 hours of airborne, mostly ridge soaring and top to bottom fly-downs. Knowing almost nothing about flying and nothing at all about the flying conditions in the area, I decided to pay for a guided tour with Chillout Paragliding. I can highly recommend them.

Our first high flight was from Kamel, a site located halfway up a mountain named Schynige Platte. Our flight plan was to take off, fly straight across the airfield located at the base of the mountain and then make our way to the landing field in the middle of Interlaken — about a four kilometre flight. Yes, you can land right in the middle of town, five minutes walk to your accommodation!

When I told our guide that I had only 10 hours of airborne, he gave me a rather dubious look, but was polite enough to say nothing more. I was the last to take off and as I headed out over the airport I found that there was a model sailplane competition in progress — 30m in front of me a model sailplane found a nice steady climb. I turned to avoid it but in so doing missed the chance to get the lift. Worried that I wouldn’t make the town landing field, I fortuitously bumped into a couple of thermals on the way and bounced around in them for a while before landing in town a bit over an hour later. After packing up, I wandered over to chat to our guide. His eyes went wide as he exclaimed, “You made it!”

In truth, I was more surprised than he was, but I was hooked — this was where I wanted to fly!

On that same tour I met British couple Ian and Christine from Manchester. We now meet up in Interlaken every year.

Another of my experiences at Kamel is also worthy of note. I was flying with a Chillout tour group and a group from the UK, guided by a British instructor. It was an overcast day with some light thermals around. The object at Kamel is to look for thermals wrapping backwards off the ridge line just in front of launch, while gradually making your way left to the large rock outcrop at the end of the ridge line, where you will get thermodynamic lift.

I went off first and immediately bumped into some light lift. I decided to give it a try. I looked back to see if it was clear to turn, only to find there were a dozen gliders coming up fast, so I flew straight and headed towards the rock outcrop at the end of the ridge line, which ended up saving me from an early bomb-out as I watched the remainder of the group bomb out one by one as they tried to use the light lift off launch. Both tour guides got clumps all the way to the top of Schynige Platte, but try as I may, I could not get up to join them and had to content myself with bounding around in the light lift at the rock outcrop.

An hour or so later, I noticed that the guides had left the mountain and were heading off towards town. This in itself was nothing to be concerned about, until I noticed that there were no tandem pilots in the air nor setting up on Amisbühl launch, on the opposite side of town. A quick scan of the area revealed an empty sky. Only the three of us in the air in the entire area and two of us were heading for the landing field! The 40- or so tandem pilots who make a living in Interlaken are a fair guide as to how safe it is to fly (more on this in a moment), but they will fly in conditions which I would not dare attempt myself, so if they are not in the air, it means you should be very worried. I was and immediately headed off to land.

After leaving the mountain, I expected to easily make it to the town landing field, but, to my utter bewilderment I began to climb and kept on climbing. There were no dark clouds around, just a light-gray overcast. What the hell was going on? I pulled big ears and just flew down without having to do a thing. All I started to descend — just, but every now and then I would start to climb, even with ears pulled. The descents outnumbered the ascents, so I began to relax and enjoy this incredible experience. To cut a long story short, one of the magic (and quite frequent) experiences you will have at Interlaken is to fly on a day when there is no wind in the mountains and the cold air washes down the valleys and bounces into theprevailing thermals. I had a wonderful short flight down from the ridge line just in front of launch, which ended up saving me from an early bomb-out as I watched the remainder of the group bomb out one by one as they tried to use the light lift off launch. Both tour guides got clumps all the way to the top of Schynige Platte, but try as I may, I could not get up to join them and had to content myself with bounding around in the light lift at the rock outcrop.

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Interlaken, Switzerland

Flying from Rigi Kulm

turned towards it and... zero penetration. I then turned 90° to the left to head for the vacant block of land over the road from the B&B. Again, zero penetration. What now? I was going to have to get down either in the driveway of the B&B or in the very small backyard of the road from the B&B. Again, zero penetration. What could I do? I was going to have to get down in the driveway.

There was one more possibility: I couldn’t make the landing field, but maybe I could still reach the vacant block across the road. At the start of the driveway into the B&B there is a huge pine tree. I tucked my gaze onto the top of the tree to get a parallax view of the background to see if I had any penetration. I figured that the wind had the less wind there would be, due to ground effect. Sure enough, high enough by inch I could see more and more of the background came into view from behind the top of the tree. Faster and faster now, I was going to make it! I cleared the large tree and actually had to do a few wiggles to avoid overshooting the block I was aiming for. Dare I admit, this was my second valley wind incident. The message is now burnt into my brain: Do your descent upwind of the landing field and never fly past the landing field on approach.

Before moving on, I should mention Interlaken’s huge tandem pilot community. They are a great source of local knowledge, but you have to remember that they will fly in conditions unsafe for lower airtime pilots. I recall watching them come in on a day on which the wind was so strong that, to avoid being dragged, each of them had to have a ground crew grab them as they touched down. That same day a visiting pilot took to the air, only to end up being heli-copterized to hospital after dropping out of the sky in the turbulent lee air behind some trees on the edge of the landing field.

If I have left you with the impression that every day is a good day to fly, then you are misunderstanding our flying. Thermalling to begin with, until I did a few thermalling clinics with Brian Webb in Bright. These clinics get me out of the learning hump. I’ve done several guided tours in Switzerland, during which I have been fortunate enough to have flown around 30 sites. The more notable ones are Grindelwald, Niederhorn, Wetterhorn, Zweisimmen, Pilatus, Rigi Kulm, Fronalpstock, Engelberg and Emmetten. My flying pal, Ian from Manchester, and I know the area quite well now, so we make our own way around to all the sites. If you are a low airtime pilot or have no experience with alpine flying, I advise you to do a tour with Chillout, in Interlaken, then go to both Emmetten and Engelberg and pay to fly with the schools there. You’ll have a stress-free holiday and some of the best flying experiences imaginable.

Food and Other Needs

Coop and Migros are Switzerland’s Coles and Woolies, except that Swiss supermarkets have much better quality at lower prices. Let me give you some examples (note the Swiss franc has soared and the Aussie dollar has tumbled – they used to be at near parity, but now one Aussie dollar buys only 70 francs – there are 100 rappen to the franc). A 200g block of Camembert or brie costs 2 francs; the distant bottles of Coke Zero and Pepsi Max we pay A$3.50 for are 1 franc each; bags of pre-washed salads of various types are 2 to 3 francs; a loaf of best-quality bread is about 3-5 francs, while a budget loaf is under 1 franc; and, chocolate block prices start at under 1 franc. Coop has a huge selection of Swiss, Italian and French wines. Migros does not sell alcohol. Interlaken has its own brewery, Rüegsauher. Their beer is not bad at all. Non-food grocery items and general merchandise are generally priced lower than in Australia. Shoes and clothes are the only items that are more expensive than in Australia. Some stores do not trade on Sundays, but you will always find something open.

Among the many savings available in telecommunications, a couple of years ago I bought a prepaid Samsung smartphone from M-Electronics (Migros’ electronics store) for 75 francs. The price included a 15 franc pre-paid credit. New credits can be bought at any Migros supermarket for as little as 25 francs and credits are valid for six months, including data traffic similar to that with a European SIM card.

Accommodation

I stay at Arnold’s B&B, a lovely guesthouse located just over the road from the LZ. If Arnold’s is booked out, I suggest Villa Sonnenhof, next door. The villa has single, fully-serviced rooms, or, if you are with a group, you can all stay in a multi-bed room. The villa is also home to Chillout Paragliding – very handy if you are doing a tour with them – their website is in German but the guides speak English. Many other accommodation options are listed at [www.interlaken.ch], Airbnb and [interhome.com] are also worth a look. The latter is owned by Migros. If you intend to stay in Grindelwald, I recommend the guesthouses at Männlichen, just a minute’s walk from both the take-off point and the Grindelwald gondola.

Travel Tips

If you are travelling from Zürich to Interlaken, I recommend you go via Lucerne rather than Bern. When the train gets to Lucerne jump out and ride into Bächmannen (they have a store right next to the tracks, and a larger one downstairs in the shopping centre) and grab a custard-filled Berkshire and a couple of chocolate or vanilla macaroons. Wow – the best I’ve ever come across! On the train to Interlaken, sit on the right hand side for the best views of the lakes and villages, including absolutely stunning Lungen. On the way home, take the same route and make a brief stop at Brünig-Habsburg. There is a large pre-owned goods store at the train station selling, ornaments, furniture, memorabilia and antiques. It’s a great place to do some last-minute shopping for gifts. You’ll drool over the antiques. The train comes through every half hour. Finally, when you get to Zürich airport, head to the upper level airside and get an icecream at the Lindt shop. Again, wow!

Insurance

Before writing this travelogue I had written a ‘Letter to the Editor’ about the subject of travel insurance. My concern was that the two companies providing paragliding cover (QBE and CoveCove – there may be others) both have in their policies a general exclusion for public liability arising out of your own ship, possession or use (including as a passenger) of... any aircraft.

When I first began to travel, I purchased insurance from a paraglider pilot who worked in the travel industry. She had written advice from QBE that this exclusion did NOT apply to paragliders. In subsequent years, this person left the travel industry, so I purchased my insurance online. I was once told, erroneously, by the front office staff of one insurer that the exclusion DID apply to paragliders and I had to write to the company to obtain confirmation that it did NOT. This year, I’m going to investigate purchasing the public liability cover offered to visiting pilots by the Swiss Hang Gliding Association ([www.shv-flug.de]). Of course, you’ll still need medical insurance, requiring a paraglider-friendly insurance policy. I suggest you arrange it through Natalie’s Travel (see ad below).

More Than Flying

In flying is only a small part of having a great holiday in Interlaken. You can try just about anything: ropes courses, segway tours, mountain biking, freewheeling downhill on scooters, canoeing, rafting, canyoning, mountain climbing, via ferrata, abseiling, tobogganing, quad bike tours, bart racing, tennis, bowls, golf and so on – [www.interlaken.ch] provides links to everything. I’ve been on hiking of late. There are miles and miles of prepared trails throughout Switzerland. Bing or Google map link to zoom to the places named here and get a better perspective.

Travel Insurance

PG/HG & Gliding

More information on most topics on my website [www.swissparaglider.com], including a Google map link to zoom to the places named here and get a better perspective.
Paragliding and hang gliding require pilots to not only be aware of the conditions they fly in and be familiar with the equipment they use, but also to be aware of the factors that impact pilot performance. To better understand what affects pilot performance, we need to understand what increases the likelihood of error and violations, since those can ultimately result in equipment damage, injury or death.

**Figure 1:** Elements of a theory of human error based on work by James Reason

Paragliding and hang gliding are inherently associated with risks of injuries and accidents. Psychologists have studied error for about a century, and over the times a cause of erroneous behaviour has changed dramatically. Initially, it was believed that erroneous people made mistakes and as such were solely responsible for their failures. Today, researchers believe that error results from the interplay of several factors. Here I introduce a model of human error applied to paragliding and hang gliding. The goal is to help pilots gain insight into what factors may affect their behaviour and outcomes. Understanding these factors can help avoid falling into some typical traps that lead to accidents, therefore helping us to fly more safely.

**Figure 2** (left) provides an overview of one model of human error that will be discussed in detail (terms used are defined in the text that follows).

**Components Of A Human Error Model**

- **Latent Conditions**
  - Indirect
  - Contextual
  - Design of equipment changes: new release handle can create an additional task for the pilot (compared to old harness)

- **Errors**
  - Unfamiliar
  - Unprepared
  - Arrive at new site late
  - Few enough sprints

- **Violations**
  - Peer behaviour
  - Inconsistency
  - Rushing to catch up with peers

**Active Failure**

- An adverse event, in conjunction with latent conditions, can lead to hazards. Active failures occur in the current situation and they include slips, lapses, mistakes and violations. The difference between the first three and the last is that the last is not intended, is more predictable and the lines look similar (latent condition). For example, after hearing that none of my friends repacks their reserve annually (violation producing condition), I may decide to intentionally violate the common best practice of an annual reserve repack. However, as a safety-aware pilot, I understand that these situations may tempt me to fly without a radio or not repack my reserve, but I can decide not to commit these violations of best practices.

- **Error Producing Conditions**
  - Error producing conditions make it more likely that an error will occur. Among the error-producing conditions in paragliding and hang gliding are:
    - Unfamiliarity with the equipment, terrain, or conditions;
    - Time pressures;
    - Misconception of risk;
    - Inexperience and sleep deprivation.

- **Violation Producing Conditions**
  - Violation producing conditions make violations (for example deviations from the pre-flight checklist) more likely. For example, I may pull the outer A-line instead of my stabilo line when attempting to deal with a cravat, or I may for example fly close to terrain in the hope of finding some ridge lift, but since I did not think about the dominant wind direction, I may end up in a rotor.

**Defences**

- Defences are put in place to protect or reduce the likelihood of negative outcomes as a result of your errors or violations. Two types of defences exist: hard defences and soft defences.

- **Hazards**
  - Hazards are frequent and often pilots may not be aware of them since there is no negative outcome.

- **Defences**
  - Defences can lead to hazards. Active failures occur in the current situation and they include slips, lapses, mistakes and violations. The difference between the first three and the last is that the last is not intended, is more predictable and the lines look similar (latent condition). For example, after hearing that none of my friends repacks their reserve annually (violation producing condition), I may decide to intentionally violate the common best practice of an annual reserve repack (an active failure in the form of a violation) and copy my friends behaviour.

**Defences**

- **Errors**
  - Errors are errors of execution; that is, although I have the correct intention, I execute the action incorrectly.

- **Violations**
  - Violations can lead to hazards. Active failures occur in the current situation and they include slips, lapses, mistakes and violations. The difference between the first three and the last is that the last is not intended, is more predictable and the lines look similar (latent condition). For example, after hearing that none of my friends repacks their reserve annually (violation producing condition), I may decide to intentionally violate the common best practice of an annual reserve repack (an active failure in the form of a violation) and copy my friends behaviour.

- **Hazards**
  - Hazards are hazards that contribute to success or failure of your flight are in many cases unforeseen, unknown and uncontrollable. Where Does This Leave Us?

- **Notes:**
  - This article applies to both sports, but is written primarily from the perspective of a paraglider pilot.
  - The term violation is used broadly, it includes deviations from recommendations, safe operating practices or procedures, standards, or well-established rules of thought.

**Human Factors**

**Air** (the environment) - Man (I’m safe) - Ship (the aircraft) - I’m SAFE

**Illness?**

- Do I have an illness or any symptoms of an illness or disorder?

**Medication and other drugs?**

- Have I been taking or mixing prescription, over-the-counter or recreational drugs?

**Stress?**

- Am I worried about financial matters, health problems or family matters?

**Alcohol?**

- Have I been consuming alcohol within the previous eight hours?
- Is my blood alcohol level less than 0.08?
- Would my average alcohol consumption be greater than ‘very low’ risk?

**Eating and Drinking?**

- Am I adequately nourished and hydrated?
Unusual Attitudes

Whilst at this year's AirVenture held at Oshkosh in late July, I had the good fortune to meet up with Larry Mednick, Amy, Wes and the rest of the Revo crew at their stand in the Ultralight Park.

by Kev MacNally

Larry (President of Evolution Aircraft Inc. [Evolution trikes.com]) took time out of his very busy schedule to discuss various aspects of trike flying, but mainly in regards to safety. This was an area of some concern for both of us, particularly in the light of recent accidents that have occurred here in Australia.

Various trike accidents, some of which were fatal, have involved a spiral dive or descent, sometimes described as a corkscrew or stall/spin, prior to the impact. Without wishing to comment on the causal factors of these accidents, it appears that this particular unusual attitude – nose down and one wing down – played a part and the pilots failed to recover from it.

This situation appears to be endemic and not peculiar to Australia. Larry has been aware of this for some time and over the last couple of years, has been trying to educate the trike flying community about safe flying techniques and recovery procedures for unusual attitudes through various media channels, including his book 'Flying Trikes' and several well documented videos.

Entry And Recovery

There are a number of ways to enter a spiral dive or descent, either intentionally or inadvertently. When we are talking about here, is any situation where we have both the nose and one wing low, where the low wing may or may not be stalled. The method of entry is less important than the method of recovery. Recovery requires the angle of attack of the wing to be reduced and the wing to be levelled.

In practice, this is extremely simple: in a left hand spiral situation, the right wing will be higher than the left. Therefore the right hand on the control bar will be higher than the left to recover, simply pull the high (right) hand towards the centre of the chest. This accomplishes both of the necessary actions, i.e. it reduces the angle of attack, un-stalling the wing if stalled, and at the same time, levels the wing.

It is vital that the pilot should pull on the high hand rather than attempt to push with the low hand. Using the low hand to recover will be more difficult, possibly unachievable with some (high performance) wings, and this incorrect action would tend to increase the angle of attack and make a bad situation considerably worse.

In conclusion, I would like to thank Larry Mednick for spending time to discuss this subject with me and offering his advice as well as give permission to use his material.

Further, I would recommend the following video material to all trike flyers:

- Exit a spiral dive in a trike [http://youtube.com/watch?v=3cUl8HlcPKA].
- ‘Trike School with Larry Mednick’, for sale at [trikevideos.com].
- Further, I would recommend the following video material to all trike flyers:
- 'Trike School with Larry Mednick', for sale at [trikevideos.com].

Any such material should be viewed in conjunction with your relevant Aviation Organisation’s rules and regulations. Unfortunately, Larry’s book ‘Flying Trikes’ is now out of print and no longer available.
On 18 July, Theo Warden flew 206.2km with an average speed of 36.8km/h after launching his Mentor 4 from Milk Hill (295m) in Wiltshire, about halfway between London and Bristol. By UK standards, this is already an amazing flight. What makes it even more special is the fact that Theo is only 16 years old. Reason enough to ask him how he did this.

by Till Gottbrath

Congratulations on your flight, Theo. Please give us a brief summary.

It was an awesome day, a bit rough and tricky for the first 80km and with a couple of low saves. I experienced lovely glides and some really nice climbs. High level cloud came in and reduced the sun’s strength, making it a bit slow for the last 50km.

I started my final glide from 4000ft at 186km, thinking I wasn’t going to make the 200km mark, but then I got to 198km with 800ft agl left. So I put my arms behind the risers and prayed to the paragliding gods – who answered my prayers with a buoyant glide.

I landed in a nice couple’s paddock. They wandered out and we had a lovely chat for 15 minutes before they left for dinner. Then another couple, Chris and George, came out as I finished packing up and invited me into their home for a drink whilst I waited for my retrieve. We had an interesting conversation before John and Laurie arrived and I headed for home. This was by far one of the best days flying I have ever had.

At which point did you think about completing the 200km?

Since I was introduced to the concept of cross-country flying, I’ve been interested in getting as high and as far as possible. This motivated me to stay in the air and remain patient. Earlier this season, I achieved my goal for this year of flying 100km and jokingly said to my dad, “Let’s go for 200km!” Still, it wasn’t until I got past the 150km mark that I thought I had a chance to make 200km.

You were born in 1999 and started flying in 2013. What’s the secret to flying distances at such young age and after such a short time?

Cross-country flying involves a lot of luck, but I try to take best advantage of what luck there is. When not flying, I spend a lot of time studying the weather forecasts and creating different routes on xplanner. The main things I examine on RASP are the thermal updraft velocity, height of critical updraft, thermal height, percentage of sun on the ground and wind at different levels. Usually I create a route where it’s forecast to be best, following convergence lines if there are any, and avoiding airspace.

I’ve had lots of encouragement from people on the hill, other members of my local club and the Nova Pilots Team, but most of all from my dad. He’s contributed a lot to my flying career – whether it’s advice, general support or the opportunity to travel around with him to different parts of the UK to fly.

I read a lot about paragliding too. One of my favourites has to be ‘Fifty Ways to Fly Better’ by Bruce Goldsmith. The visual representations in his book help me a lot – for example, simplified diagrams of thermal structures and wind flow around obstacles convey ideas that would take many more words!

Last but not least, I have a wing that is appropriate for the amount of experience I have. The Mentor 4 is perfect for the flying I’m doing. I love the way it feels – so solid on glide, giving me time to relax, enjoy and think.

Often young pilots are tempted to fly a higher category wing after their first successes. What about you?

I feel the Mentor 4 has just the right balance between safety and performance. As a recreational pilot I have no interest in exchanging safety for performance at
September | October 2015

SAILOR

200km in the UK
conditions on the day. I've done my research and preparation, I know my
more experience flying with better pilots than myself.

on the hill, have some nice conversations and gain
I enjoy the challenge of longer flights, but my target
age – nothing has come up so far.

What are your next targets?

Is this the longest ever flight by such
pilots I've met have said this, and if they're still learning,
something more to learn. Some of the most experienced
important things to remember is that there's always
Search out the company of more experienced pilots,
young pilots to improve?

Air Hog: XT Belly Bag
The Belly Bag has been designed to fit under the belly of the Airborne XT series of trikes. It is a slim pack design
is intended for soft items like a small tent, sleeping
bag, clothes and personal items. Remember to add the
weight of the bag and its contents when calculating
your all up weight (AUW). Check your aircraft manual
for weight limits.

Bag with Stone Guard weighs 1.5kg and the maximum load
allowable is 12kg, therefore a combined weight of 13.5kg
is possible.

Daily inspection, unfasten the clip and Velcro flap on
the left rear strut of the swing arm. This will allow you
to access the drain cock as per normal. After taking a
fuel sample position the PVC cup over the drain cock,
re-attach Velcro flap around rear strut, secure with
clip and pull tight.

WARNING: WM
Microlight Panniers
and Belly Bags

RAA recently sent out a safety email together with a link (AQL07/2015WS) to all their weightshift microlight members,
regarding the use of panniers and fitment of such external storage devices on weightshift aircraft.

The link to this document can be found on the RAA website - www.raa.asn.au/
safety/airworthiness/ under 'General airworthiness alerts'.

Users of these external storage devices should adhere strictly to the
manufacturer's instructions regarding weight limits and distribution of the
contents, and ensure that the Aircraft MTOW is never exceeded.

Air Hog XT Belly Bags have been in production since 2003 and come with a
weight limit sewn on the bag, near the zip, together with very clear and concise instructions on their use (see below).

Note: Other makes may differ in material and strength
Note: Do not attempt to fly your trike if the AUW
exceeds that recommended by the manufacturer. The Belly
Bag with Stone Guard weighs 1.5kg and the maximum load
allowable is 12kg, therefore a combined weight of 13.5kg
is possible.

Once fitted, the Belly Bag will obscure the fuel
tank drain cock. To take a fuel sample during your
daily inspection: unfasten the clip and Velcro flap on
the left rear strut of the swing arm. This will allow you
to access the drain cock as per normal. After taking a
fuel sample position the PVC cup over the drain cock,
re-attach Velcro flap around rear strut, secure with
clip and pull tight.

For Flying School aircraft or
to conduct maintenance on an aircraft
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Obtain the
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Maintenance Endorsement

Courses run by: Kev MacNally
- HGFA WM Technical Officer
Email: kmacnally@bigpond.com
or check the HGFA on-line forums
for details of the next available courses.

Courses conducted in all States
subject to available venues.

External Panniers
My Aircraft is a P&M Quik 912s and in my Aircraft Manual it states the following:

Warning
Only use genuine streamline panniers part TQE-212.
Other panniers can cause overheating.

P&M make a specific streamline pannier to minimise the effects of restricted airflow to the cooling system (the radiator).

Therefore, always check with the manufacturer of your particular aircraft before buying and using after-market panniers, as they may cause overheating. They may also have weight restrictions in the material used and the design of the bag. They are also likely to be subject to UV degradation.

Anything that you add to your aircraft must be weighed and taken into account for the AUW of your aircraft.

Wings
Never store anything inside your wing, items stored in the wing have the potential to affect or change the wing profile and affect or restrict the operation of the floating cross-tube.

Additionally, adding extra weight into the wing can adversely affect the stability and increase the handling forces. This is potentially extremely dangerous and may cause an accident.

Safe flying.
Kev MacNally, HGFA WM Technical Officer

September | October 2015

SAILOR

200km in the UK
conditions on the day. I've done my research and preparation, I know my
more experience flying with better pilots than myself.

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Safe flying.
Kev MacNally, HGFA WM Technical Officer
Preparing to land on Dalby Airport
Photo: Rafael Cintra
How physically demanding is Powered Paragliding? by Andrew Polidano, Chief Flight Instructor, BSc Exc, Sport Management

During a recent degree in Exercise Science I attempted to develop a standardised test for potential paramotor pilots. I was fortunate to have had lecturers who allowed me to choose my assignments and focus on issues relevant to teaching paragliding and paramotoring.

My goal was to reduce drop out rates and enhance enjoyment when answering the question: ‘Am I strong or a bad experience; wanted to get back into paramotoring after an injury during a paramotor launch and had injuries sustained, you can improve relatively quickly if you have the right guidance and training.

1. Disciplinary powers of the Operations Manager (OM)

The HGFA justice system prescribed in section five of the HGFA constitution mirrors that of the democracy in which we live. There is a separation of powers between the determination of policy and regulations by CASA and HGFA; the making of them by the OM and the determination of guilt and penalties by a Disciplinary Tribunal (DT).

When the OM is of the opinion that any breach of rules and regulations has occurred he/she has very limited powers. He/She has the power to suspend certifications, but not have the power to suspend certificates for a period of up to three months with the consent of the offending member.

1.4. CoM responsibilities

Two years ago, the CoM created the position of Administrative Manager and recommended to the members that a number of constitutional duties currently delegated to the Administrative Manager be borne by the CoM. This process is time consuming and relies on the administrative work load of those CoM members who do participate. This has the effect of increasing the administrative management of the HGFA by the CoM where some members are willing to participate.

The CoM recommends that you vote in favour for this inclusion in the constitution.

2. HGFA employees not to be on the Committee of Management (CoM)

The CoM is responsible for managing HGFA employees. From a governance perspective, if an HGFA employee is on the CoM there is a conflict of interest between issues concerning that employee are considered by the committee. Similarly to the democracy in which we live where members of the police force and public servants are prohibited from holding a seat in parliament, the CoM is recommending to the members that no HGFA employee should hold a CoM position. The CoM recommends that you vote in favour for this principle of good governance.

3. Inactive CoM members

There have always been periods in the history of the management of the HGFA by the CoM where some members who are elected to the CoM do not actively participate. This has had the effect of increasing the work load of those CoM members who do participate, narrowing the decision base sometimes to the point that there is not a question to conduct business at CoM meetings.

The CoM recommends that this period be reduced to three months. The CoM recommends that this period be reduced to three months. Please vote in favour of this change.

4. CoM membership

Two years ago, the CoM created the position of Administrative Manager and recommended to the members that a number of constitutional duties currently delegated to the Administrative Manager be borne by the CoM. In compliance with the NSWD Department of Fair Trading ‘Model Rules for Associations’, the CoM recommends that the responsibility for all constitutional duties currently delegated to the Administrative Manager be borne by the CoM. Please vote in favour of this change.

The voting form and Special Resolutions documentation are included with this issue of SkySailor. The HGFA CoM requests the members participate in these important reforms to the HGFA. Ensure your name and membership number is recorded on the outside of the voting form for membership verification purposes, seal it and post it. Then give yourself a pat on the back and go flying with a warm glow in your heart from participating in the administration of the sport you love.
Competition News

NZHGPA Paragliding Open Round 2 – Nelson 2016

The Tasman Hang Gliding and Paragliding Club (THGPC) is delighted to announce it will be hosting Round 2 of the New Zealand PG Nationals in Nelson from 26 February to 5 March 2016. This is the second of two FAI Cat2 competitions for the NZ 2016 season.

Whilst it is acknowledged that the main purpose of the PG Open has the serious task of running a FAI Cat2 competition to find the NZ champion, it is worth noting that Nelson is renowned for its high mountain launches providing many opportunities for pilots to achieve an open distance personal best. In previous Nelson Nationals and Tim Percival's renowned St Arnaud XC camp, scores of pilots have left Nelson with a big smile on their faces having bagged a PB.

During the 2014 Nelson Nationals over a dozen pilots gained PBs. Antje Daehler broke the Women's NZ open distance record and five pilots flew on to a NZ declared goal record. The Tasman region has seen more milestone flights per percentage of pilots' flights than any other region, with Mt Murchison ranked as the No 1 site in the country.

With such great flying potential, the Nelson THGPC will be promoting and encouraging pilots of all abilities to fly as far as they can and is offering a special Nelson prize to the best achieved personal best – the PB trophy.

The camp HQ will be based out of the Tahuna Beach Kiwi Holiday Park and the manager has offered for pilots booking for eight nights or more to receive the last night's accommodation for free (use promotion code 'PG Open' when booking).

The Park offers a range of accommodation to suit all budgets, from tenting, cabins, house share for up to nine pilots to motel units. To book visit [http://tahunabeachholidaypark.co.nz/]. With the camp location backing onto beautiful Tahuna beach, don't forget to bring all your toys to kite surf, mountain bike and, of course, your bags.

For more information on pilot requirements and to book your place in the Nelson PG Open competition visit [www.pgopen.org.nz/]. Book by 30 December 2015 and receive the earlybird discount and free T-shirt.

Nelson pilots look forward to sharing the sky with you – let's fly high and go far!

Hamish Baker

Product News

The Soaring Kiwi And The Sauerkraut

An offbeat travel tale about a hang gliding Kiwi who makes the mistake of marrying a grumpy German and moving to Munich, the city of big beer and Lederhosen. A big life style change for the Kiwi known to most of the world as either a small brown furry fruit, a brand of shoe polish or a motorcycle helmet, but is in fact a small brown, nocturnal bird found only in New Zealand which can't fly. Perfect prerequisites for our Soaring Kiwi, on his quest to become the world's worst hang gliding champion.

From the pinnacle of the dedicated dot.com entrepreneur with a cunning business plan, to the toodle tough of the unemployed with an efficient German employer, to the climax in every teenage petrol head's wet dream of piloting a big black car really, really fast, legally, to the pit of despair while being overtaken by a Mini, the thrill of the first proper sentence in German, only to realise said sentence could have been uttered by any good international man of mystery, and from the relief of freedom from pain, to the tortures of Germany's modern medieval medical establishment, the Soaring Kiwi and the Sauerkraut is a germane journey through the highs and lows of adjusting to life in a new country with bad coffee.

It is available as an ebook on Kobo, on the iBooks Store and as both ebook and paperback on [Amazon.com]. More at [www.soaringkiwisauerkraut.com].

Notice of HGFA AGM 2015

Date: Saturday, 17 October 2015
Time: 10am start
Location: 4c/60 Keilor Park Drive, Keilor East, VIC 3033

<office@hgfa.asn.au>
On 11 August, German Nova Junior pilot Robert Schaller flew a 209.2km FAI-triangle on his EN-A certified paraglider.

by Till Gottbrath

The 25-year-old student launched his EN-A Prion 3 from Grente (South Tyrol), set his turnpoints near Mt Grasglockner, west of Wilder Freiger (southern end of Stubai valley) and in the Badia valley (South Tyrol).

He landed after a flight of eight hours and 43 minutes, near St Martin in the Badia valley, after achieving his goal with an average speed of 24km/h.

With this flight, Robert proved decisively that it’s possible to complete long XC flights on EN-A certified wings, which offer pilots a high level of passive safety. Robert comments, “With this flight I don’t want to say ‘fly more A-wings’, not at all. Just fly a glider you can feel safe on and enjoy yourself with. For a 200km 1st triangle the classification of your wing doesn’t actually matter.”

The track of Robert’s flight can be found at [www.xcontest.org/world/en/flights/detail:RobertSchaller/11.8.2015/07:59].
Paragliding harnesses have gone through an incredible development process over the last 30 years or so. From a few pieces of webbing with (sometimes) a piece of plywood to sit on, to an almost aircraft-like cockpit with incorporated rescue system and body armour. In fact, depending on what you want to use your harness for, you can nowadays get one from either end of the scale or anything in between.

by Jiri Stipek

Harness Review: Woody Valley Wani

The immediate feeling in the air is one of comfort and safety. It is not deceiving. The back protection airbag is 100% inflated before you even leave the ground. The (in principle) simple design involves a spring, six separate chambers and a few valves and guarantees the best possible protection, well exceeding the stringent DVG requirements.

The storage space is cavernous and can easily accommodate your wing, helmet and, with a bit of tender loving care, boots as well. All this only after you master the packing method that is very different from what you may be used to. I have to admit, I had to resort to the humbling task of reading the (well written and presented) instruction manual and after a few trials I’m almost there. Still, I believe there should be some auxiliary straps to hold the content in while you are closing the zipper – for those of us with only two hands that is. Besides the main storage bag there are two additional small side pockets to accommodate other bits and pieces you sometimes carry with you.

In flight mode, Wani has two well accessible side pockets (one with a zipper) for those essentials you may wish to use in the air, like spare radio batteries, snacks, etc. At the back is a spacious storage for your personal belongings and water bag. A neat opening is provided for the water hose and the storage container is, again, totally separated from the airbag, eliminating the possibility of losing its function due to a zipper left accidentally open.

Speedbar line is routed through large friction-reducing pulleys and a clever slack-removing device. The attention to details is amazing. While you won’t find any bells, there are actually two whistles incorporated in the buckles easily accessible in both the ‘harness’ and ‘rucksack’ mode as well.

The parachute is mounted unobtrusively under-seat and the extractor is well designed, allowing for a fast and comfortable extraction while minimising the possibility of accidental deployment. Installation of your reserve is simple and for the slower-on-the-uptake owners there is a comprehensive schematic drawing on the inside of one of the closing flaps. There are also large clear windows for easy checking of the locking pins as you would expect on a top quality product.

I have been using Wani for about two months now and, being as fussy as I am, I still can’t see anything I would wish to improve besides the absence of the above-mentioned packing straps. This may be only my personal opinion and somebody else may find this presents no problem at all. For the worst scenario, I may add straps myself, should I become desperate.

In summary, Wani is a harness you’ll fall in love with at first sight (or flight) and you are not likely to look any further no matter if you are a beginner or an experienced pilot. The price is just under $1,900 – a fair sum for a quality product of this kind. In Australia Wani is available from WA Paragliding Academy together with other Woody Valley products that you may find of interest – like Wani Light or other, different style harnesses. More information on WAPARA [fly@waparagliding.com].

While depending on personal taste and needs, there have always been some solutions around that were plainly either good or quite obviously bad. At this stage it seems like the designs of versatile open harnesses are gradually converging on obviously bad. At this stage it seems like the designs around that were plainly either good or quite obviously bad. At this stage it seems like the designs...
Fresh Breeze ‘XCitor’  
Downunder

Fresh Breeze is a German company in the business of developing new and exciting aircraft that fly under ram-air wings. In late 2005, the Fresh Breeze XCitor (XC) achieved DULV certification in Germany and hit the market soon after. DULV certification required the XC to meet stringent standards, including noise emissions and safety. Over time, it has been tried, proven and further improved.

by Robin Lowe

A
fter flying powered parachutes (PPC) here in Australia since 2008, I was looking for a change, primarily because I couldn’t load up my aircraft with everything I wanted and take a passenger as well. It was time to check out what else was available on the market.

As a paramedic, I’m acutely aware of what can happen when things go horribly wrong, so safety rates high on my list of priorities. I’m also aware that life can change in a heartbeat, that good health isn’t forever, so it’s vital to seize the moment and not put things off, as you may lose your opportunity.

Given that I was looking to purchase a new ‘Travelling Defying Machine’ (TDM) and am now into my 40s, I managed to convince myself and my wife that I had worked hard and earned my right to go for gold.

In addition to flying safely and being able to achieve a heavier payload, my new TDM needed to tick a few more boxes. The following made the ‘must have’ list:

- Factory built, certified aircraft
- Ability to stay in the air longer
- Economical fuel injected, four-stroke engine with a TBO of greater than 300 hours
- Fly faster
- More agile
- Lighter steering input
- Quicker
- Side by side seating
- Study construction with frontal protection, in case I have a crack at taking out a fence!
- Instrumentation
- Ground steering
- Suspension
- Modern
- STOL capability (able to fly from a paddock)
- Ability to store in my garage (no hangar fees)
- Ready to transportable (take it on road trips)
- It must look good!

The search was on to find the ‘all in one package’ that had it all. No aircrafts were off limits; except possibly the new Boeing Dreamliner – wouldn’t fit in the garage anyway. Come to think of it, the new joint Strike Fighter also failed to make the short list. Can’t remember why…

I was beginning to think that I had outgrown powered parachutes. Perhaps I should look at a trike or gyrocopter?

After many months of investigating on the internet, I found myself continually coming back to this one particular PPC known as the ‘XCitor’. Apparently if you were to fly one, you would become overwhelmed with excitement! Okay, that sounded good. Subsequently, someone advised me, whilst laughing, that the name has been applied to another product which has little to do with aviation. I was quick to make it clear that I only had an interest in the aircraft version.

I applied the checklist and started ticking boxes. The Dreamliner and Strike Fighter were well behind at this point, but there were a couple of boxes that hadn’t been ticked. It wasn’t a four-stroke and it didn’t have side by side seating.

I wanted a four-stroke engine because I was seeking more social when flying with a passenger. It was more familiar to me, yet I suspected that a nervous passenger would feel more secure in the rear seat of the XCitor than they would in a side by side PPC. In reality, I don’t fly with passengers all the time anyway and I’ve discovered that the view from the fore aft seating arrangement is unmatched. No need to look in order to see what’s happening below on the opposite side to where you’re seated, just look down! Side by side seating would have also meant extra drag and I wanted speed to go places and get home when the wind picked up.

It wasn’t long before any perceived shortfalls became positives.

The XC came standard with a ballistics parachute. That’s good, because I’d been led to believe I would die if I flew anywhere but a rectangular box wing. My research pointed to the XCitors custom made wing as being extremely safe and reliable.

I could option the XCitor with Tundra tyres if I wanted and the aircraft itself can be towed directly behind a car as a trailer. To save on insurance I could insure my
As a trailer and I didn't need to pay extra money for the cost of a trailer to move it about. My last trailer had cost me $6,500. I could use this saving to help fund the Gravity Defier!

As you have no doubt worked out by now, I had found my Gravity Defying Dream Machine. After clicking a few boxes on my computer screen and punching in my credit card details, my XCitor would be delivered to my front door in no time, right?

Wrong. I had to make application to have the XCitor placed on the Australian aircraft register. It needed to be classified under Australian rules to decide which category of aircraft it fell under and how it should be registered. Was it a Powered Paraglider (PPG) or a Powered Parachute (PPC)? I needed to have the German documentation converted to English. I found myself having to check out every chemical compound in the ballistic parachute to ensure that it didn't contain plastic explosive, didn't breach Australian dangerous goods law and that all chemicals were on the Australian register.

Anyway, over a year later my XCitor arrived just in time for the Australian International Air Show at Avalon. I had to make application to have the XCitor placed on the Australian aircraft register. It needed to be classified under Australian rules to decide which category of aircraft it fell under and how it should be registered. Was it a Powered Paraglider (PPG) or a Powered Parachute (PPC)? I needed to have the German documentation converted to English. I found myself having to check out every chemical compound in the ballistic parachute to ensure that it didn't contain plastic explosive, didn't breach Australian dangerous goods law and that all chemicals were on the Australian register.

Anyway, over a year later my XCitor arrived just in time for the Australian International Air Show at Avalon. On arrival at the air show I was advised there was a social function on the Saturday night and I should attend, but I already had plans that couldn't be changed. Come Sunday morning and I felt bad, a bit embarrassed and jubilant all at the same time, as I was told that awards had been handed out during the Saturday night function, which I had wagged, and my XCitor had taken out 'Best Lightweight Aircraft'. I really hadn't expected that one! I hadn't been aware that my XCitor was even in contention or had been judged.

Several months later I got sick of sitting in my XCitor making 'brrrooooom' noises whilst parked in the shed. My XCitor is finally assigned a 95-32 registration and I can go flying. I'm a bit apprehensive prior to take off, but I've done my homework and the first flight goes like clockwork and yes, they were right, flying the XCitor was... Exciting! Skills obtained flying my previous PPC stood me in good stead to fly the XCitor. The wing was easy to launch, fast, agile and stable in flight. The XCitor flew like the aircraft I hoped it would and I'm still smiling!

The Fresh Breeze, XCitor has subsequently taken out the award for 'Best Powered Parachute' at Natfly 2014, which is Recreational Aviation Australia's largest event. The XCitor is a type-certified aircraft, which means it can be used for flight training. HGFA will shortly be able to provide training and issue pilot certificates for XCitor aircraft. Fly safe, get XCited!

For further information and sales enquiries regarding the Fresh Breeze, XCitor, please contact the Australian Promoter or visit their website: LoweFlight, ph: Robin 0417 237285 [www.loweflight.com].
June 2015

Sunshine Incident

Date/time of incident: 5 June 2015, 12:33 AEST

Location/State: Sunshine, VIC

 Accident type: Recreational flying incident

 Accident flight phase: In flight

 Pilot gender: Male

 Aircraft type/make: WM/Alpine V (1998)

 Airframe hours: 20

 Engine type: Rotax 582

 Harness type/make: Airborne

 Site type/altitude: Unknown

 Site name: Sunshine, VIC

 Landing type: Cross-country

 Conditions: Nil wind, 27ºC, calm

 Damage: Wing bent on impact with ground and needs replacing

 Injury: No

 Details: From wrong on Wongan Hills to roadside airfield, WA. Aircraft started to splutter at 1000ft AGL around 12:15. Pilot descended for a forced landing on the road to Lake Ninan in a SW direction. Aircraft successfully touched down using soft landing technique. At front of the aircraft lowered, the front wheel pressure broke through the soft surface (not fitted with Tandem Tyres) and caused the aircraft to turn and roll onto its side at about 20º. Wing damaged beyond repair.

 Bungee On Ground Tow Launch

 Date/time of incident: 7 June 2015, 14:30

 Location/State: Boort, VIC

 Accident type: Recreational flying accident

 Accident flight phase: Take-off

 Pilot nationality: Australian

 Aircraft type/make: N/A

 Airframe hours: 30

 Site name: Open (2015)

 Site type/rating: Coastal/intermediate

 Conditions: Nil wind, 27ºC, calm

 Damage: No

 Injury: No

 Details: I was crossing the Sunshine car park, about 50m high when I started the crossing. I fell into the steep slope below the tree and rolled into the beach. My wing then caught in an overhanging bush. I had a helmet camera and posted the clip on vines [https://vimeo.com/13605222].

 Midnight – Untitled Report

 Date/time of incident: 6 June 2015, 20:25 AWST

 Location/State: Lake Ninan, 20km west of Wongan Hills, WA

 Accident type: Recreational flying accident

 Accident flight phase to flight

 Pilot nationality: Australian

 Pilot gender: Male

 Aircraft type/make: WM/WM Maintenance, Passenger, Xcountry, VNF

 Total pilot hours: 350.4

 Hours last 90 days: 8.1

 Hours on aircraft: 350.4 hours

 Pilot new to site: No

 Site type/altitude: Unknown

 Site name: Lake Ninan Outlanding

 Landing type: Cross-country

 Conditions: Nil wind, 23ºC, calm

 Damage: Wing bent on impact with ground and needs replacing

 Injury: No

 Details: From wrong on Wongan Hills to roadside airfield, WA. Aircraft started to splutter at 1000ft AGL around 12:15. Pilot descended for a forced landing on the road to Lake Ninan in a SW direction. Aircraft successfully touched down using soft landing technique. At front of the aircraft lowered, the front wheel pressure broke through the soft surface (not fitted with Tandem Tyres) and caused the aircraft to turn and roll onto its side at about 20º. Wing damaged beyond repair.

 Lake St Clair Incident 1

 Date/time of incident: 7 June 2015, 13:00

 Location/State: Lake St Clair, nr Singleton, NSW

 Accident type: Recreational flying incident

 Accident flight phase: Landing

 Pilot nationality: Australian

 Pilot gender: Male

 Aircraft type/make: PG/Air Design Easy, M (2014)

 Airframe hours: 20

 Site name: Boart Paddock

 Launch/landing type: Ground tow flat paddock

 Conditions: Crosswind, 25º, 10kt, calm

 Damage: Yes

 Injury: No

 Details: I was hooked in, radio locked on and ready for my third tow for the day. There was a crosswind of 45º and 30º to my right. I gave the call to the driver that I picked up my glider and that I picked it down around six or seven times as the wind changed direction. When I thought the wind was straight, I picked up the glider, gave the commands required and made the call to ‘Go Now’. Within five steps I realised the wind had gotten under my right wing and I would not be able to recover. I immediately gave the command ‘Stop Stop Stop’. The tension on the rope pulled me into the ground banked to the left. The tow driver told me shortly after that he had stopped immediately after I gave the command. I came to a stop within a couple of metres after giving the command. This resulted in a snapped heel and an uprooted bent to a 90º degree angle. I sustained only a sore left shoulder and right forearm. Lesson learned.

 Lake St Clair Incident 2

 Date/time of incident: 7 June 2015, 13:00

 Location/State: Lake St Clair, nr Singleton, NSW

 Accident type: Recreational flying incident

 Accident flight phase: Flight

 Pilot nationality: Australian

 Pilot gender: Male

 Aircraft type/make: PG/Air Design Easy, M (2014)

 Airframe hours: 20

 Site name: Boart Paddock

 Launch/landing type: Ground tow flat paddock

 Conditions: Crosswind, 25º, 10kt, calm

 Damage: Yes

 Injury: No

 Details: I was hooked in, radio locked on and ready for my third tow for the day. There was a crosswind of 45º and 30º to my right. I gave the call to the driver that I picked up my glider and that I picked it down around six or seven times as the wind changed direction. When I thought the wind was straight, I picked up the glider, gave the commands required and made the call to ‘Go Now’. Within five steps I realised the wind had gotten under my right wing and I would not be able to recover. I immediately gave the command ‘Stop Stop Stop’. The tension on the rope pulled me into the ground banked to the left. The tow driver told me shortly after that he had stopped immediately after I gave the command. I came to a stop within a couple of metres after giving the command. This resulted in a snapped heel and an uprooted bent to a 90º degree angle. I sustained only a sore left shoulder and right forearm. Lesson learned.

 Heavy Beach Landing

 Date/time of incident: 8 June 2015, 16:30

 Location/State: Bonny Hill, NSW

 Accident type: Recreational flying accident

 Accident flight phase: Landing

 Pilot nationality: Australian

 Pilot gender: Male

 Aircraft type/make: PG/Airborne X Classic (1998)

 Airframe hours: 200

 Site name: New South Wales

 Launch/landing type: Beach

 Conditions: Beach wind, 20kt, 20ºC, steady

 Damage: Small hole, easily repaired

 Injury: No

 Details: Three pilots (including one with tandem passenger) had taken off slightly before me. Two had made good forward progress, the third had top topped with big ears. Although the wind strength had diminished, I still thought it wasn’t too strong. When I landed I noticed I wasn’t penetrating and actually moving backwards. I tried both full speedbar and big ears, but these were not effective in moving forward. I realised that I was in trouble and tried to maintain stability as I moved up the back of the hill. Fortunately there was only a small amount of turbulence at one stage and I got descent gradually enough to land gently approximately 50m behind the crest of the hill. While in the air, I noticed for a further pilot had also launched and was blown to the top of the hill to land near a barbed wire fence which damaged his wing. In hindsight, my decision to launch would be wrong and I should have helped the fifth pilot keep control of his wing in the strong winds.

 Lake St Clair Incident 2

 Date/time of incident: 7 June 2015, unknown

 Location/State: Lake St Clair, nr Singleton, NSW

 Accident type: Recreational flying incident

 Accident flight phase: Flight

 Pilot nationality: Australian

 Pilot gender: Male

 Aircraft type/make: PG/Airborne X Classic (1998)

 Airframe hours: 200

 Site name: New South Wales

 Launch/landing type: Beach

 Conditions: Beach wind, 20kt, 20ºC, steady

 Damage: Small hole, easily repaired

 Injury: No

 Details: I was hooked in, radio locked on and ready for my third tow for the day. There was a crosswind of 45º and 30º to my right. I gave the call to the driver that I picked up my glider and that I picked it down around six or seven times as the wind changed direction. When I thought the wind was straight, I picked up the glider, gave the commands required and made the call to ‘Go Now’. Within five steps I realised the wind had gotten under my right wing and I would not be able to recover. I immediately gave the command ‘Stop Stop Stop’. The tension on the rope pulled me into the ground banked to the left. The tow driver told me shortly after that he had stopped immediately after I gave the command. I came to a stop within a couple of metres after giving the command. This resulted in a snapped heel and an uprooted bent to a 90º degree angle. I sustained only a sore left shoulder and right forearm. Lesson learned.

 Accident & Incident Reports
**Mid Air Paraglider Collision 1**

**Date/time of incident:** 28 June 2015, 15:00

**Location/State:** Indian Head, Laurieton, NSW

**Aircraft type/make:** HG/Moyes

**Pilot new to site:** Yes

**Site name:** Knowsley

**Launch/landing type:** Tow/– nominated LZ

**Conditions:** Headwind, 9-12 kt, 2°C, steady

**Damage:** Unknown

**Injury:** No

**Details:**

A mid air collision occurred between two paragliders at around 3pm. One pilot was towed up to a height of around 500ft. The second pilot, who had just launched and was flying alone, witnessed the event and attempted to avoid it. Both pilots landed without injury.

**Mid Air Paraglider Collision 2**

**Date/time of incident:** 1 July 2015, 14:00

**Location/State:** Indian Head, Laurieton, NSW

**Aircraft type/make:** HG/Moyes

**Pilot new to site:** No

**Site name:** Indian Head

**Launch/landing type:** Tow/– nominated LZ

**Conditions:** Headwind, 9-12 kt, 2°C, steady

**Damage:** No

**Injury:** No

**Details:**

A mid air collision occurred between two paragliders at around 3pm. One pilot was towed up to a height of around 500ft. The second pilot, who had just launched and was flying alone, witnessed the event and attempted to avoid it. Both pilots landed without injury.

---

**Indian Indian Head Crash Landing On Rocks**

**Date/time of incident:** 1 July 2015, 15:00

**Location/State:** Indian Head, Laurieton, NSW

**Aircraft type/make:** HG/Moyes

**Pilot new to site:** Yes

**Site name:** Indian Head

**Launch/landing type:** Tow/– nominated LZ

**Conditions:** Headwind, 9-12 kt, 2°C, steady

**Damage:** No

**Injury:** No

**Details:**

A mid air collision occurred between two paragliders at around 3pm. One pilot was towed up to a height of around 500ft. The second pilot, who had just launched and was flying alone, witnessed the event and attempted to avoid it. Both pilots landed without injury.

---

**Accident Flight phase:** Landing

**Pilot nationality:** Australian

**Pilot qualifications:** Supervised PG

**Pilot experience:** >90 hours

**Aircraft type/make:** HG/Moyes

**Location, state:** East of York, WA

**Launch type:** Astroturf, gentle slope, Landing type: Nominated LZ

**Conditions:** Temperature: 28°C

**Damage:** No

**Injury:** Possible \& some leg fracture

**Details:**

Student on day 5 of training course. First day was spent practicing launch and inflations and then spent in light winds. Days 2-4 spent doing reverse inflations in fresh winds. Day 5 was light. Forward inflations. Student was having a bit of trouble with launching so spent an hour doing forward inflations and short runs at the bottom of the training slope above the landing field. Once the student had the fundamentals of launching and direction control sorted, we moved up the slope to a higher section for the final section of the training. Student did excellent flight from the top. Good inflation and launch, good directional control and no issue on this flight. The student didn’t control the direction of the wing during inflation and went off to the left. The student got the glide back on line and continued on a good flight, but when he got to the LZ he got vertical in the harness and hit the wing. Ended up sliding in the grass and the hedgerow of his bike with an agressive side grip dug into the soft ground and twisted his ankle back causing possible fracture.
September
Pilotage & SIV Course
4 to 6 September

Landed pilots & SIV course run by Sydney PG for newer, less experienced pilots. Note: no experienced pilots who want to learn about controlling their wing, with emphasis on collapse prevention. SIV training teaches pilots awareness of the dynamics of their wing and how to react to incidences in a safe environment. Participation increase pilot confidence. Contact: Sydney PG, 0412 352 352 for more information.

HGFA Pilots' Week
1 to 9 September

Conferences, seminars, professional development, facilities to host meetings, awards, and you can fly. Many events this week. For more information visit: [www.hgfa.asn.au] – ‘Forms’ which will allow all to view and access the HGFA national and state administration documents. A great opportunity to meet other pilots, get advice on flying and training, and learn more about competitive flying.

Australasian Air Derby
1 to 9 September

The AAD is a national event and requires a $250 entry fee ($200 for students) which includes a 4 day PPG stay, a Safari and a two day competition. The AAD is a great event that will provide great opportunities to meet experienced pilots and learn to fly. For more information visit: [www.aad2016.com.au].

South African National PPG Championships
14 to 20 September

The South African National PPG Championship event is being held in the Western Cape region of South Africa. The event will feature a variety of competitions, including speed, accuracy, and accuracy and distance. Pilots from all over the globe will be in attendance to compete. For more information visit: [www.paragliding.co.za].

Australia Brazilian Paragliding Cup
1 to 9 September

The Australia Brazilian Paragliding Cup is a competition that is held in Australia every year. The event is open to all pilots and features various competitions, including speed, distance, and accuracy. The event is a great opportunity to compete against some of the best pilots in the world. For more information visit: [www.braziliancup.com.au].

Aussie Flatside XC Tour
28 November to 10 December


Aussie Flatside XC Tour
28 November to 10 December


HGFA Pilots' Week
1 to 9 September

Conferences, seminars, professional development, facilities to host meetings, awards, and you can fly. Many events this week. For more information visit: [www.hgfa.asn.au] – ‘Forms’ which will allow all to view and access the HGFA national and state administration documents. A great opportunity to meet other pilots, get advice on flying and training, and learn more about competitive flying.

Australasian Air Derby
1 to 9 September

The AAD is a national event and requires a $250 entry fee ($200 for students) which includes a 4 day PPG stay, a Safari and a two day competition. The AAD is a great event that will provide great opportunities to meet experienced pilots and learn to fly. For more information visit: [www.aad2016.com.au].

South African National PPG Championships
14 to 20 September

The South African National PPG Championship event is being held in the Western Cape region of South Africa. The event will feature a variety of competitions, including speed, accuracy, and accuracy and distance. Pilots from all over the globe will be in attendance to compete. For more information visit: [www.paragliding.co.za].

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Aussie Flatside XC Tour
28 November to 10 December


Aussie Flatside XC Tour
28 November to 10 December

New South Wales

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Hang gliding & Paragliding School

CFA: Lisa Bradley PG & HG

Contact:
<info@canungraskysports.com.au>
Capricorn Sky Sports
Hang gliding & Paragliding School
CFA: Lisa Bradley PG & HG

Contact:
<lisa@extremeair.co.nz>
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As new, flown by an experienced pilot for 15 hours only. If, like me, you still want to fly a glider that’s easy to take off, land and tow, but has good performance, penetration and glide capability, this is the glider for you. Red/white/blue colours, $4,200 ono. Contact: Murray & 0417 072 608 (Brisbane).

Wills Wing Falcon 3 tandem, excellent/brand new condition (<6 mths old) – $4500 ono; Airborne Climax C4, excellent condition – $3000 ono; Airborne Fun 190, excellent condition – $1500 ono; Airborne Sting 2,118, excellent condition, $2500 ono. All prices are negotiable. Pickup is preferred, location Byron Bay, NSW. Contact: Harry Docking & 0431 456198 or Koa Wilmott & 0427 608848.

Paragliders & Equipment

**Advance Impress 3.** Very good condition, $750. Contact: <stephen@dungog.net>.

**Gradient Golden 3**
EN-B, 85 to 100kg weight range, perfect beginner/intermediate glider, less than three years old, 80 hrs, great condition, incl. concertina bag and backpack, $1300 ono. Contact: Gary & 0437 047 434 (txt/ph) SE QLD.

General Classifieds

**The HG & PG Handbook**
For Australian Pilots

**Concertina Bag**
PARA SUPPLY/Cocoon3 concertina bag, PARA SUPPLY/Cocoon3 concertina bag, PARA SUPPLY/Cocoon3 concertina bag, PARA SUPPLY/Cocoon3 concertina bag, PARA SUPPLY/Cocoon3 concertina bag. [www.parasupply.com]

**Press To Talk System**
PARA SUPPLY/PTT yrs, PARA SUPPLY/PTT yrs, PARA SUPPLY/PTT yrs, PARA SUPPLY/PTT yrs, PARA SUPPLY/PTT yrs, PARA SUPPLY/PTT yrs. [www.parasupply.com]

Kangook.com
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Photo: Kev MacNally

**Visiting Pilot Pre-paid (Blue) Membership – Policy Change**
The HGFA Committee of Management passed a motion at the 4/2/2014 meeting that effects a change in policy regarding ‘Prepaid Visiting Pilot Membership’ applications. Motion Passed: That the HGFA remove Pre-Paid Visiting Membership Applications – commencing immediately. Visiting Pilot Membership Applications are available as follows:

1. VPM Online Member Services available: up to the [www.hgfa.asn.au] and select
   - [www.hgfa.asn.au] and select

2. Hard Copy > Forms are available from [hgfa.asn.au] website under ‘Forms’ and complete the following:
   - MEM-02 HGFA Visiting Pilot Membership Application
   - Include a scanned copy of current credentials

HGFA Office Manager

5W UHF 2 way radio for airports in Australia

Airwaves HGFA Newsletter

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Classifieds are free of charge to HGFA members up to a maximum of 40 words. One classified per person per issue will be accepted. Classifieds are to be delivered to the HGFA office for membership verification/payment by email <office@hgfa.asn.au>, fax: 03 9336 1277 or post: 4c/60 Keilor Park Drive, Keilor East VIC 3033. The deadline is the 1st of the month, one month prior to publication date. Submitted classifieds will run for one issue. For consecutive publications, re-submission of the classified must be made, no advance bookings. When submitting a classified, remember to include your contact details (for prospective buyers), your HGFA membership number (for verification) and the State under which you would like the classified placed. (Note that the above does not apply to commercial operators. Instructors may place multiple classified entries, but will be charged at usual advertising rates.)

Advertising Guidelines
All aircraft should be suitable for the intended use; this includes the skill level required for the specific aircraft being reflective of the pilot’s actual rating and experience. All members must adhere to the maintenance requirements as contained in Section 9 of the Operations Manual and as provided by manufacturers. Secondhand equipment should always be inspected by an independent person, an instructor whenever possible. Advice should be sought as to the condition, airworthiness and suitability of the aircraft. It should include examination of maintenance logs for the aircraft. It is unethical and a legally wrongful practice for individuals to provide aircraft which are unsuitable for the skill level of the pilot, or aircraft that are unworthy in any way.

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