



24th - 28th March 2016

Jonathan Shorer

Nationals at Easter? What? This year MFNZ trialled the National Championships at Clareville over the Easter weekend. The vast majority of contestants at previous Nats had clearly stated that they preferred not to have the event over Christmas and that the weather in the Wairarapa would be more stable and better for flying in March. So, always the optimist, MFNZ Council decided to mount the association's premier event at this time. Almost 100 competitors registered, so things looked promising.

Day one. It looked like the gamble had back-fired when the rain set in and the wind started blowing. Several disciplines looked for shelter in the Clareville hall or at the HQ at the A & P Association Clareville domain. One SIG even decided to have their AGM early while the heavy drizzle persisted. You guessed it – while they were meeting, the weather cleared and the afternoon events went ahead in the overcast, but fine conditions. IMAC got underway, as did Free Flight and control line. Soaring also made a start once the weather cleared, but the cloud ceiling was a little lower than they would have preferred. Most SIGs completed their programmes with only a couple of delays caused by the weather.

Day two dawned wet and windy again and morning events, such as RC Scale, were wondering if they would get off the ground at all. Frazer Briggs kindly ended IMAC a little early, so that one and a half rounds of scale could take place. Other disciplines also managed to get some flying in, even if schedules were adjusted slightly to make this happen, but a sunny afternoon enabled some contests to carry on until 6pm.

By day three the sun emerged sheepishly from behind the Wairarapa hills and things started to pick up pace. This was certainly true of pylon which made the most of smaller than usual fields to get a lot of rounds in. Free flight was also hard at it and one of the highlights of the Nationals – “Aggy”, did not disappoint. A smaller field than usual, just 13. But a good crowd were entertained for 30 minutes of mayhem, carnage and heaps of running. One competitor who seemed to spend more time exercising his orange-soled trainers than others was Jarrod Briggs who took out Aggregate for the first time, and he was closely followed by Suetonia Palmer in second place.

Soaring seemed to enjoy their new field which is almost directly behind the main buildings at Clareville camp ground. Because the field is more accessible than the old site past Greytown, many people turned out to see soaring in action. The Radian competition, with a field of 19 was one of the largest competitions at the Nats this year. There was some excitement in this event because of the sheer number of identical aircraft in the same place at the same time, but Watts Up Hobbies were on hand to do a lively trade in spare parts and sent a spectator home with a new Radian kit. The Nats hosted a Rotorcross



competition as an official event for the first time and proved that an 80 metre triangle of land is quite enough space for some exciting racing.

Sunday was summer! Out came the sun block, shorts and sun glasses as Vintage continued at RC3 and Pattern aerobatics took to the skies at RC1. The competition in this precision discipline was palpable as talking was prohibited behind the pilots box and judges. Perhaps the closest contested event at the Nats this year, most flew the latest Allures with electric motors and large batteries. A very quiet class now, despite the size of the models. A long tiring day, but hey, who is complaining with weather like this! The final day proved to be more relaxed as it is the traditional “rain day” but only one Free Flight event had had to be carried over. Soaring ran the F3K event on the Oval and also did some filming work with Chris Jackson and Scott Spooner as part of a video compilation of the Nats that is being produced by Peter Hewson.

The Prizegiving dinner took place in the Vintage Car Club rooms and we were treated to an excellent meal followed by the award of the SIG Champions and overall Champions Trophies. Many of the competitors chose not to attend this function as the call back to work and family took precedence. We have some ideas for further improving this aspect of the Nats and will be discussing them later in the year. So, records were broken, all programs were completed and a great time was had by all whom attended. We’ve proved that the weather can be great for flying in the Wairarapa in late March, but even with the Easter break, time off can be an issue for some people.

A special thankyou to the office staff, Des Richards, Peter Hancox and Yen, and Phil Eldridge. To Avetek, Watts Up and JR Airsail for donating raffle prizes and to Wairarapa MAC for field preparation.

Provisionally, we will be back to Waharoa next year, 3-7 January. See you there!





Final Results

1 FAI Combined

1	Paul Squires	831
2	Paul Lagan	787
3	Robert Wallace	767

2 Classic A2 Glider

1	Allan Knox	595
2	Rex Anderson	502
3	Dalziel Richard	362

3 Coupe d'Hiver

1	Paul Lagan	360
2	Graham Lovejoy	347
3	Paul Squires	314

4 Open Glider

1	Robert Wallace	392
2	Dalziel Richard	279
3	Rex Anderson	249

5 Hand launched Glider

1	Allan Knox	137
2	Andrew Robinson	136
3	Robert Wallace	126

6 P30

1	Paul Squires	318
2	Graham Lovejoy	267
3	Paul Lagan	54

8 Aggregate

1	Jarrod Briggs	620
2	Suetonia Palmer	574
3	Rex Anderson	513

9 Open Rubber

1	Bryce Gibson	540
2	Paul Squires	530
3	W H McGarvey	473

10 Tip Launch Glider

1	Paul Lagan	354
2	Allan Baker	187
3	Robert Wallace	145

11 Kiwi Power

1	Rex Bain	671
2	Rex Anderson	563
3	Scott Bernard	545

12 Indoor HLG

1	Robert Wallace	44
2	Graham Lovejoy	42
3	Des Richards	21

13 Hangar Rat

1	Keith Trillo	227
2	Richard Bould	185
3	Stephen Wade	166

14 A1 Glider

1	Robert Wallace	600
2	Bryce Gibson	429
3	Rex Anderson	320

15 Catapult Launch Glider

1	Paul Lagan	360
2	Graham Lovejoy	352
3	Des Richards	302

16 Open Power

1	Rex Bain	472
2	Rex Anderson	434
3	Dalziel Richard	351

18 Kennedy Precision

1	Phil Corfield	256
2	Scott Bernard	239
3	Daniel Munro	169

19 Vintage FF Catapult Glider

1	Des Richards	288
2	John Selby	207
3	John Butcher	191

22 Nos FF Power Duration

1	Rex Bain	540
2	Scott Bernard	469
3	Rex Anderson	139

23 Vintage FF Glider Duration

1	Rex Anderson	331
2	Stephen Wade	195
3	Stewart Cox	186

24 Small Nos Vintage Power Duration

1	Scott Bernard	353
2	Rex Bain	334
3	John Butcher	164

25 Nos Rubber Duration Vintage

1	W H McGarvey	540
2	Scott Bernard	525
3	Paul Squires	525

26 Nos FF Glider Duration

1	Stewart Cox	398
2	Scott Bernard	322
3	Rex Anderson	295

27 Vintage FF Precision

1	Scott Bernard	270
2	Charles Warren	246
3	John Selby	176

29 Vintage RC Precision

1	Don Mossop	799
2	Allan Knox	797
3	David Crook	793

30 Vintage RC IC Duration

1	Scott Bernard	1227
2	John Butcher	1080
3	David Thornley	780

32 Classical Precision

1	Graham R Main	573
2	Don Mossop	563
3	Scott Bernard	480

33 Vintage RC E Duration

1	Don Mossop	924
2	Scott Bernard	915
3	John Butcher	902

34 Vintage RC 1-2A Texaco

1	John Butcher	2290
2	Scott Bernard	2277
3	Allan Baker	1494

35 Vintage RC 1-2E Texaco

1	Keith Trillo	3188
2	Scott Bernard	2805
3	Rex Anderson	2715

36 Vintage RC A Texaco

1	Allan Knox	3169
2	John Butcher	3121
3	Charles Warren	2615

37 Vintage RC E Texaco

1	David Crook	1860
2	Allan Knox	1832
3	John Butcher	1658

38 Vintage RC Open Texaco

1	Scott Bernard	1760
2	Allan Knox	923
3	John Butcher	915

39 Vintage RC E Rubber Texaco

1	Keith Trillo	2563
2	John Butcher	2471
3	Doug Baunton	1446

40 Classical RC E Duration

1	Scott Bernard	764
2	John Warner	729
3	Don Mossop	600

42 Slow Combat

1	Bryce Gibson	WWWW
2	Robert Wallace	WLWL
2	David Thornley	WWLL

45 Percentage Speed

1	Carl Lickfold	97	278.42 km/hr
2	Andrew Robinson	90	316.34 km/hr
3	Brendan Robinson	85	300.75 km/hr

46 Sportsman-Classical Aerobatics

1	Daniel Munro	678
2	Phil Corfield	606
3	David Thornley	548

47 FAI F2B Aerobatics

1	Loren Nell	2276
2	Daniel Munro	1794
3	Robert Wallace	1592

53 Premier Duration (Class C)

1	Joe Wurts	5000
2	Kevin Botherway	4996
3	John Shaw	4986

54 FAI F3J

1	John Shaw	4000
2	Joe Wurts	3996
3	Len Drabble	3982

55 ALES 200 (Class N)

1	Peter Williams	3965
2	Joe Wurts	3916
3	Scott Benjamin	3684

56 ALES Radian (Class P)

1	Joe Wurts	2996
2	John Shaw	2989
3	Kevin Botherway	2987

57 FAI F5J

1	Joe Wurts	3983
2	Kevin Botherway	3751
3	Len Drabble	3681

Final Results

58 FAIF3B

1	Joe Wurts	5915
2	Len Drabble	5275
3	Kevin Botherway	5134

59 FAIF3K

1	Joe Wurts	6000
2	Peter Williams	5998
3	Kevin Botherway	5915

60 FAIF4A Power Scale

1	Stan Mauger	1297
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61 Outdoor Rubber Scale

1	Stan Mauger	1150
2	Gwyn Avenell	1115

62 Kit Scale

1	Richard Bould	128
2	Stan Mauger	101
3	Suetonia Palmer	81

64 Indoor Open Rubber Scale

1	Graham Lovejoy	991
2	Stan Mauger	925
3	Richard Bould	726

65 Peanut Scale

1	Keith Trillo	45
2	Stephen Wade	41
3	Graham Lovejoy	30

66 Indoor Kit Scale

1	Graham Lovejoy	94
2	Richard Bould	89
3	Keith Trillo	81

68 Sportsman Pylon

1	Stephen Collins	397
2	Jarrold Briggs	415
3	Andrew Palmer	440

69 Quickee 500 Sport

1	Ross Craighead	417
2	Stephen Collins	420
3	Jarrold Briggs	421

70 Quickee 500 Expert

1	Frazer Briggs (NZ Record)	297
2	John Danks	306
3	Ross Craighead	315

72 F3D

1	Tom Wetherill	418
2	John Danks	438

74 Basic IMAC

1	Stephen Collins	6000
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75 Sportsman IMAC

1	John Danks	4878
2	Mike Briggs	4718
3	Kerry Nichols	4707

78 Unlimited IMAC

1	Frazer Briggs	5000
2	Jarrold Briggs	4195
3	Andrew Palmer	3317

80 Advanced Aerobatics

1	John Danks	3000
2	Stiver A.	2697
3	Gwyn Avenell	2687

81 F3A

1	Ross Craighead	3000
2	Frazer Briggs	2943
3	Andrew Palmer	2908

82 Novice Scale

1	David Thornley	2856
2	Phil Corfield	913

83 Intermediate Scale

1	Andrew Palmer	5015
2	Jarrold Briggs	4656
3	Mike Briggs	4097

84 Classic Scale

1	Brian Borland	6691
2	Gwyn Avenell	5725
3	Frazer Briggs	4892

Champion Modeller

1	Bernard Scott	124
2	John Butcher	110
3	RexAnderson	101

Champion modeller Junior

1	Jarrold Briggs	44
2	Josh Warner	13
3	Daniel Warner	12

Champ of Champs

1	Allan Knox	50
2	RexAnderson	48
3	Keith Trillo	47

Champ of Champs Junior

1	Jarrold Briggs	44
2	Josh Warner	13
3	Daniel Warner	12

Champion Club

1	Hamilton MAC	437
2	Wellington MAC	346
3	Model Flying Hawkes Bay	207

SIG CHAMPIONS

Free Flight Champ

Rob Wallace	51
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Vintage Champ

Bernard Scott	109
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Control Line Champ

Rob Wallace	18
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Soaring Champ

Joe Wurts	68
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FF/CL Scale Champ

Ricky Bould	24
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Pylon Champ

Ross Craighead/S. Collins	16
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Aerobatics Champ

Frazer Briggs	10
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Scale Champ

Brian Borland/Andrew Palmer	8
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Champion Modeller is calculated from the total number of points accrued in all events entered.

Champion of Champions is calculated from the best three scores in events in each SIG grouping.

SIG Champion is calculated from the total number of points accrued in a single SIG group.

Champion Club is calculated from the total number of points accrued by all competitors who have nominated that club as the recipient of their points.





Recording Officer Report



A shot of the room with Kev (Rowdy) competition Manager delivering a thank you speech.



Frazer Briggs receiving the RC Aerobatic Cup



Bernard Scott and the Champion Club Trophy - Go Hamilton MAC



Bernard Scott receiving his Champion Modeller Award

This year's Nationals are now over and for me a time to reflect. I managed to fly 4 of the 5 events I entered and enjoy the company of many old and new friends.

The support at HQ was excellent. I believe we made a smooth efficient group with Jonathan, Peter and Phil providing all manner of help and Gill ensuring we stayed "fit to function", her Prize Giving award was well deserved. I wish to thank Phil Eldridge, our IT guru, for his rapid response to issues and a level of support to me that was way above what one could expect. THANK YOU PHIL.

Rex Bain has called these the "Happy Nat's" and I fully support this description, it sums them up well. Rather than a list of everyone's placings, most of which are on Facebook and the net, I are covering only the main awards.

Free Flight was hard fought with Rex Anderson just piping Richard Dalziel for top spot. This was Richard's first flights since his return to the hobby following a few years away.

Control Line was taken out by a new competitor from Gore, Daniel Munro, with Loren Neil as Runner Up. A fantastic effort Daniel – well done that man.

Vintage Champ was John Butcher with Bernard Scott as Runner Up. John flew 13 events and Bernard 18. I don't know how they find the energy for to complete so many entries.

Soaring Champ went to Joe Wurts with Kevin Botherway (Rowdy) the Runner Up. Both flew 7 events over the 5 days.

Scale Free Flight and Control Line went to Stan Mauger with Graham Lovejoy and Gwyn Avenell as joint Runners Up. I was honoured to judge 3 of the classes and thoroughly enjoyed doing so. Thanks to you all.

RC Scale saw Brian Borland triumph with Gwyn Avenell taking the Runner Up position.

RC Pylon had Andrew Palmer victorious with Stephen Collins close behind.

RC Scale IMAC saw a win to Stephen Collins with Frazer Briggs hot on his heels.

RC Aerobatics – Pattern had Ross Craighead in the lead with John Danks chasing hard for Runner Up.

Hamilton took Champion Club with Wellington MAC in the number 2 slot. The top six clubs all had over 100 points, with Model Flying Hawkes Bay, Tuakau MAC, Auckland MAC and Feilding Model Flying Circle Filling the next 4 spots.

Champion Modeller was a contest between Bernard Scott and John Butcher with Bernard being the victor.

The Champ of Champs award went to Allan Knox, with Rex Anderson as Runner Up.

I think Allan said this was either his first Nationals in 36 years or the first time he had flown Chucky in 36 years. Sorry Allan, my memory aint what it was, but a great effort and well deserved win.

I now need to regroup and look forward to the 2017 event, which is probably going to be back in the north at Matamata – Piako from January 3 till 8. See you all there.



A perfect day for pylon on Saturday, March 23rd. With overcast skies and very little wind we were underway with the first heat of Quickie 500 Sport around 10 am. It was evident right from the start that everyone was pushing the boundaries with plenty of cuts in the initial rounds, things settled down from there on with steady conservative racing along with the knowledge that any more cuts will show in the final scores. Experience showed in the end with Ross Craighead, along with Noeline's calling, taking the win followed by Stephen Collins and Jarrod Briggs. Only 0.36 seconds separating these two.

Q500 Expert had four entries with some good close racing. Times in this class were also down from recent events but the competitive spirit was still there. The exception to the rule was Frazer Briggs who took top honours while also breaking a NZ record by over 2 seconds, well done Bogen. John Danks second followed by Ross & Noeline Craighead.

Sportsman was run in conjunction with F3D with three entries. Some of the competitors used their Q500 Sport models for Sportsman by only changing the fuel (No nitro FAI fuel for this class), with a slight mixture change they were doing faster race times with this fuel proving you don't need nitro to go fast. Stephen Collins took the win followed by Jarrod Briggs and Andrew Palmer.

F3D with only two entries was really a test run for us, with Tom Wetherill traveling all the way from Melbourne Australia for this one event shows commitment. We had some good close racing there with Tom taking it away.

A very good Nats for us with no incidents all day, the sun came through by early afternoon and jackets were off. A great team of helpers turned up, too many to name but you know who you are, many thanks indeed. Looking around during the day saw lots of people there for a look, they all were enjoying themselves, hopefully we will get some extra interest from this over the coming months.



Above: Frazer & Jarrod Briggs after their record breaking Q500 Expert race

Below: The smiling faces say it all. Some of the competitors and helpers after the racing.





Newbie at the Nationals

A wise man once said "If it wasn't for the last minute, nothing would ever get done".

Entries for the M.F.N.Z. Nationals in Carterton closed on Sunday, 13th March so frantically, in the evening of the before mentioned day, Bruce McKay and I put in our entries for a couple of events that we would be able to take our "Radians" to and compete. The Class – N event, A.L.E.S. 200, a 30 second motor run with a 10 minute duration flight to follow. "Spot landing" points available on coming down and scored by the "Normalized" (not raw score) system. The other event was the one that our club members would be more familiar with being the Class – P all foam, 2 metre, electric glider that we run every month at the field.

I had been toying with entering into the F3K (discus launch glider) but seeing (at the time of writing this extract, Monday 21st, March, 4 days before nationals start) the glider that Wayne Bilham had kindly given me was still sitting on my work bench with a broken tail plane, I could not see myself doing this event in 7 days time. Then again, this could be another one of those "last minute" moments and we have organized a fix session for tonight. After spending a couple of hours around at Wayne's (a man who I am very grateful to for both giving me this opportunity and for the things that he has helped me fix when I have broken them) we finally had the tail riser in place. All that has to be done now is to take it for a test flight and do the final last bits of trimming tomorrow night seeing it is now 9:30pm and way too late and dark to be doing things like that.

Good Friday, the day before Bruce McKay and I head off to Carterton to compete in our first national event and I finally get around to going down to Victoria Park, Feilding this morning and throwing the D.L.G. in the air. The test flights went fairly well but I feel there is still a little fine tuning to be done. "I need to have a little up trim dialled in to obtain level flight. Does that mean I have to put the nose of the tail up or down? If I need to get the plane to pitch up to fly straight that means it is being forced down. If it is being forced down that means that the nose of the tail is up so I have to bring it down. Is that right I'll leave it until Sunday out at the field. Hopefully Wayne is there to give me guidance. If not I suppose I'll just have to work it out myself on Sunday afternoon, 12 hours before I need it). Thank GOD for the "last minute".

5:45am Easter Saturday and Bruce has turned up at my place. We promptly throw my Radian and flying box in the back of the Nissan, LaFesta and we're off. BRING ON THE 68TH, M.F.N.Z. NATIONALS.

First stop; the rose bowl bakery in Feilding please. Time for a good old hearty sausage roll for breakfast and something for lunch as well. "Do you think it will be open at this time of the morning"? Bruce asks. "Of course it will, they're usually open at like 4.30 in the morning"...CLOSED. Oh well, I didn't get to 68kg by eating sausage rolls at 6 o'clock in the morning, I guess I'll have to wait.

As we start to go through the Manawatu Gorge there is a slight hint of moisture on the windscreen and Bruce gives the wipers a quick swipe to remove it. A minute or so later and he's doing it again, this isn't a good look. By the time we get through the Gorge into Woodville the wipers are quite comfortable on their "intermittent" setting. With a fair amount of moisture on the road and mist coming off the tires I am thinking this could be a very quick round trip drive to central Wairarapa. With confidence I say "Don't worry, you can almost guarantee that it will be like this all the way to Mount Bruce but by the time we're over the other side it will be all gone". The "almost" part of that comment is what was going to save me from total embarrassment in about half an hour. We get to the other side of Mount Bruce and it is still very grey and not looking that great for a soaring contest.

7:45 and we arrive at the Clairville showground, just North of Carterton. After initially going through the wrong gate and almost entering into the local dog trial event, we finally get it right and make our way up the ramp to H.Q. After checking in and filling out the appropriate paperwork, Bruce and I are off to the flying site, literally just over the rail tracks from the show grounds. The instructions were, turn right over the track and just keep driving down the track, when you think you have gone too far, just keep driving. Follow the red arrows. We head on our way and after about 3 km of track we get to a field with a porta loo in one corner but no one else in it, this must be it.

A.L.E.S. 200. Class-N

We both look at the sky and think that there is no way that we are going to be flying in this and if we do it will be a straight up and down flight. The cloud looks as though it is less than 200 meters AGL so that in itself is the first problem and there is definitely the feel of moisture in the air but within 20 minutes the field is full of contestants and everyone starts getting their multitude of gliders from the back of their cars. Bruce and I are there looking at our 1 model each thinking to ourselves "we are way out of our league". With Joe Wurtz, John Shaw and Kevin Botherway (The world gold medal team) on both sides of us we reside ourselves to just having a laugh and getting to know our fellow flyers.

By 9 am (in conditions that you would not really think were flyable) we had started our first contest, Class – N, A.L.E.S. 200. A 30



second motor run or 200 meters followed by a 10 minute flight with "spot" landing points. We broke into 3 groups of 4 and proceeded to complete 3 rounds. Everyone got to fly against everyone else, one minute Bruce and I were flying together like any given Sunday out at the field and next we were flying with the current world champion. By lunchtime all 3 rounds had been flown and no casualties had been recorded. All in all it was an enjoyable day with Bruce and I being able to easily get to (or pretty close to) the 10 minute target and more than happy (even though we had no idea of how we had done) with how we had flown in the conditions that we had and considering the people we were flying against.

A.L.E.S. Radian, Class - P

After a quick bite of lunch and we were into the afternoons competition which was a combined Class – P (A.L.E.S. Radian) and F5J event. With the skies slowly clearing but definitely still more cloud than blue sky about 25 radian flyers were all paired up and told that we had 30 minutes to complete our first flight. Bruce and I paired up and set about doing the best we could. We both made target for our first 2 flights but we also both did horribly on our 3rd and final flight with only just making to the half way point of our 7 minute target. Oh well. Good experience and good to see what happens in F5J flying.

All up, last down.

The last flight for the day (this is where things get interesting, for me anyway) is to be a "all up, last down", 15 second motor run (about 100 meters) with a maximum of 10 minute flight. 100 metres? Going to be straight up and down I think. Both Bruce and I, along with 20 other planes, managed to climb out to really good height. With all these planes in the air it was a real test of concentration to keep your eyes on your plane and to make sure that you did not end up flying someone else's glider. I thought I would try and stick it out with the big boys (bad idea) and see how high I could get. So I got to the point where the nose of my Radian went down and being at that angle it made it very hard to see, I lost sight of my model. In the words of Homer Simpson.....DOH! After a couple of minutes with comments like "someone's lost their plane", someone's in a death spiral", "plane going down behind the trees", Bruce came up to me and said that everyone else had sights on their models, it was time to



put my transmitter down and stop trying to "fly a cloud" and lets go for a walk, "sigh". Transmitter down and tail between my legs we set off across the field.....and the next one.....to the far side of the following one. By this time it was only me (Bruce had stayed at the last fence) with my thoughts...."it

might have come down ok"....."it's going to be OK", "sigh" From a distance I spot some foam and by the time I get over there I realize...."it's not ok". Tail boom snapped, spar ripped out of wing, nose cone off and fuse in 2 other pieces, LiPo crumpled (but not shorted, thankfully), ESC smashed, canopy smashed.....I'm going to stop now, bad memories. This incident definitely was not the way I wanted to end the day.

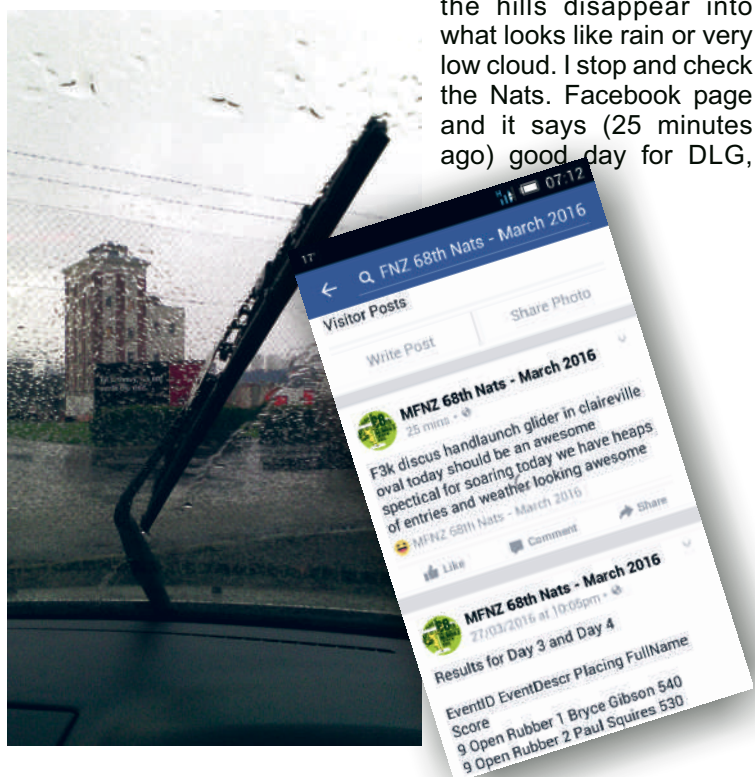
Apart from my mishap, we both had a fantastic time. We loaded everything back into the Lafesta and we were on our way back home around 4:30pm and back in Feilding just after 6pm. We unloaded my things and Bruce made his way home. I brought everything inside and put all my broken pieces on the kitchen table to see if in some small way there was going to be anyway that I could get my radian back together for tomorrows club Radian day.....Your kidding yourself Scottie, wheelie bin here it comes.

Another last minute

Sunday morning out at the club airfield and Wayne and I are working though the final tweak that is needed from my test flying on Good Friday. So, the front of the tail needs to be lifted a little. I had said to Wayne that I had some sand paper thinking that we could use it to sand down the tail riser to do the trimming, wrong? Wayne told me to tear off a small piece of sandpaper, unscrew the tail plane slightly and put the piece of sandpaper under the leading edge of it....real #8 wire stuff. We gave it a few test throws but then found that it had a horrible tendency to pull to the left on launch. The servo horn had come loose in the rudder so now I am going to have to glue it back in place before any more trimming can be done. The call went out to the dozen flyers at the Aeroneers field, "does anyone have some C.A.?"... nobody. So I will have to wait until I get home, by that time Wayne will be a Harrisville pushing sprint cars around the track so I will be on my own. 2:15pm Sunday afternoon, the afternoon before I need to use the plane, also just before Ayleen and I are to go out to a BBQ for the night and I finally get around to throwing it in the air. It's pretty good, good enough for me to go back down to the nationals tomorrow and give it a go anyway.

F3K (Discuss launch glider)

Easter Monday and back up at the crack of dawn. Flying solo this time so I throw my gear in the car. Back past the Rose Bowl for a sausage roll, still closed so I carry on. Groundhog day, by the time I get through the Gorge it is looking very grey and as I look south the hills disappear into what looks like rain or very low cloud. I stop and check the Nats. Facebook page and it says (25 minutes ago) good day for DLG,



weathers brilliant, should be awesome. ?? Get to the brewery and the wipers a fixed in the first stage and I am thinking to myself, no they said it was good down there just keep going. At Eketahuna I could see a glimmer of hope on the southern horizon and thought to myself could this be one of those 9 out of 10 moments when you get over mount Bruce and everything clears up,. Quarter of an hour later, just south of Mount Bruce and there's not a cloud in the sky, amazing, you actually would not believe it was the same day.

The contest is due to start at 8:30am and I pull in the gate at 8:25am (too busy taking photos, LOL) another one of those "last minute moments". I make my way over to the bowl and start getting my model ready. Again, just like Saturday, I am surrounded by world class flyers with their 6 models each but I am just here to have some fun and network. Not really having much of an idea on what I was doing I had to take lead from others but everyone was more than willing to help. The contest was set from 8:30am – 2:30pm with 10 tasks due to be run. With the forecast for it to blow up in the afternoon, it was suggested that it might get called by lunchtime but that will be decided as we go on. Lunchtime came and went and after a quick 15 minute break we were into the afternoon session with 3 more tasks to go. The wind definitely got up and my lite model with no ballast started to find it very hard to get any penetration but I still did the best I could. Because of not wanting to go over time, the contest got called at 2:15pm with still 1 task left to do. Again, I had another very enjoyable event while learning a huge amount because of the willingness of others (even world champs) to pass on knowledge, tips, things to be aware of and to look for.

Finishing on a high.

It was said that I should stick around for the S.I.G. Prize giving which was going to be at David James' caravan about 4:30pm; it was now 2:30pm. "I've got a 2 hour drive home so I don't think I will", "I think you should" was the reply from a couple of people. I ended up driving out the gate an heading towards home but only a couple of hundred metres down the road I thought no, I will stick around. About 10 minutes later I got a call from David James asking where I was as they wanted to get the presentations started. I'm glad I stuck around now seeing it was only 3pm. Over to the caravan I wondered and admired the array of trophies on the make shift table, Joes glider box. They went through a couple of classes that had been run on the first day (Thursday) and then it came to the Saturday events that Bruce and I had been involved in. "A.L.E.S. 200, Class – P, third place, Scott Benjamin". "WHAT!?, are you serious" was my reaction. Considering the company Bruce and I had flown with on that day I was blown away. This made the final moments of Saturday (me writing off my Radian) seem like a distant memory. After saying thanks to everyone for their support and guidance, holding my 3rd place cert and trophy and with the biggest smile on my face, I got back in the car and started my trip home. WOW.

This was the best time ever and I would highly recommend it to anyone, no matter what level you're at. It's somewhere you can go to talk and listen to a huge amount of knowledge that these guys are more than willing to share with whoever asks. I went there with the expectation of these events being very strict, stressful and highly strung. Expectations bring disappointment and I am glad to say, I was disappointed. This group of world class flyers are the most down to earth people you will ever meet which in itself made the 2 days I spent with them so enjoyable.

Thank you for a great time fellow flyers, I will be back with my new "chilly bin" next year to do it all again, but better
– Scott B.







