



Hello

Welcome to the April edition of Airwaves the bi-monthly e-newsletter of the Hang Gliding Federation of Australia.

In this edition:

- Incoming HGFA President Paul Green introduces himself
- Airwaves chats to paraglider Andrew Menzies about his passion for flying
- We ask members how we should spend the Dick Smith donation
- Take to the skies this Easter: Fly Manilla hosts the Paragliding State of Origin

New Presidents Update

After 12 months at the helm we say farewell to outgoing President Matt Smith and welcome Paul Green as the new President of the HGFA:

My business background is in Financial Services. I held senior management roles in funds management, distribution and banking for many years before starting my own financial advice practice servicing clients across South East Queensland. I'm a hang gliding pilot of modest capability and whilst there is great passion for sports aviation in my household I must be honest in observing that it is not evenly distributed between myself or my wife of 33 years, Sue, or our daughters Mikhaila and Chloe!

I've had a lifetime involvement in sports as a competitor, coach and administrator - most notably in Rugby Union primarily in Sydney and Brisbane and I've coached somewhere approaching 700 games across all forms of the sport. I'm also a long-time member of Coolum SES and have been a volunteer in many other community, business and sporting organisations over the years. I became involved in the administration of sports aviation via my local club the Sunshine Coast Hang Gliding Club which is now called Sunshine Coast Sports Aviators.

I see nothing but opportunity and growth potential for our sport and its various forms in Australia. I have watched and been involved in other sports as they have transitioned over the last 30 or so years from amateur and recreational pastimes to fully professional enterprises and I ask why can't ours?

I look forward to discussing our potential; what it might look like and what forms it might take, in future editions of Airwaves and SkySailor. I also look forward to meeting and hearing from as many members as possible over the coming weeks and months.

Paul Green
HGFA President

Member Story: The thrill of flying is about more than just being airborne



When Andrew Menzies awoke in a dark painful place back in 2009 he had no idea what was happening; someone told him he'd been in a car crash ... then he passed out. When he woke again, it was the start of a long journey to recovery and the discovery of a passion for free flying that today is as much about being part of the tribe as the thrill of flying solo in the clouds.

"I was stuck in a wheelchair after some tourist forgot what side of the road we drive on, but when I found out that anyone, really, anyone, can fly like a bird I had to have a go."

That discovery was in part thanks to a lawyer with a passion for paragliding who struck a deal with Andrew. She would take care of the legal side, all he had to do was recover and learn to fly. Easy right?

Fast forward a few years, over a hundred hours of physio, months in a wheelchair followed by a long stint on crutches, and Andrew is now a fully paid up member of the paragliding fraternity.

Living in northern NSW he's been able to access the top flying sites in NSW and Queensland. He's flown solo from Montecollum, Lennox Head, Possum Shoot, Rainbow Beach and Teewah as well as Manilla. It's a far cry from his early tandem flights with Andrew Polidano at Poliglide and a measure of his thirst for adventure.

"When Andrew Polidano gave me control of his tandem paraglider I wanted to pull over and let him off so I could go fly, but I had to do the training and get my own gear, so I did."

With much of the challenge of recovery and getting airborne behind him, Andrew's love of flying has evolved. But being part of the community of pilots and sharing the joy flight brings to friends, like his mate Haz, keeps Andrew coming back to the hillsides.

"We were at Lennox and I didn't feel like flying so I videoed him [Haz] because like most pilots he has hours of helmet cam and very little of him flying by, so this was my birthday present to him."

Or like his mate Al, who'd never flown but turned up one day unexpectedly as he was heading off to a hill and Andrew set him up with his first tandem flight.

"That brightened his day, and his life. Empowered him, he loves that one day he just went flying because he could."

But despite being an occasional bystander to someone else's adventure there are still flying challenges Andrew wants to tackle.

"I've never got a kilometre high, or flown cross country. I'm not satisfied yet with my flying history. Almost, but not quite."

And a local hill on a neighbour's property caught his imagination when he was power paragliding nearby, prompting him to do a site assessment and approach the owner for permission to fly. It was granted after he handed over a bunch of photos of the place he'd taken 25 year earlier that gave the owner a rare pictorial history.

Like his long journey to recovery it's a challenge he knows he will tackle one day because he can, and because he knows that when the world looks up at him it too will know briefly that anything is possible.

"When I'm floating around with my bright yellow and orange Arcus 6 people wave and toot car horns telling me I make the world slightly better, partly because they know I'm just some guy and if they wanted to they could do that too."

"So do it. Just do it. Fly!"

Spending the Dick Smith dollars: We ask members how we should spend this generous donation



The HGFA is also the recipient of a generous donation of \$10,000 from Dick Smith. As well as being a successful Australian entrepreneur and businessman Dick is also a keen aviator. Because we are an association that is all about our members we are inviting your input on how to spend the money.

So let us know how you think we should spend the money by answering a one question survey [here](#). We will consolidate the results, make a decision, and feedback the outcome.

Fly Manilla: Paragliding State of Origin 14-16 April 2017

Many people headed to Manilla in NSW at Easter for three days of competition XC flying at one of the best paragliding and hang gliding locations in the world. Once again Manilla welcomed pilots from near and far to take part in this XC team competition

organised by local paragliding pilot Godfrey Wenness, a former paragliding world record holder.

The Paragliding State of Origin started back in 1996 as NSW versus Queensland but has expanded to include ACT, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and the World Barbarians - for visiting international pilots. NSW and Queensland have shared the winnings evenly over the years, though in 2016 the World Team won for the first time.

It's an event that brings more pilots together in one place to compete than any other in the world, with over 200 pilots attending in 2017. It promotes camaraderie and the improvement of skills in all participants as well as giving senior pilots the chance to give something back to the sport by coaching others.

A unique bonus factor scoring system gives everyone a chance to win. Novice pilots get 3 points per kilometre, intermediate pilots get 2 points per kilometre, and the rest get 1 point per kilometre. Pilots are grouped into state teams and then also smaller sub teams for coaching, and each sub team has a senior pilot to assist the novices, another unique feature of this event.

With an emphasis on novice and intermediate pilots it was a great opportunity to take part in Open Distance XC competition at the best XC flying event in Australia. Pilots needed at least three hours of XC flying experience to qualify. Pilots also needed UHF radio.

The event HQ was held at Mount Borah, Manilla with onsite camping, a bar, a presentation night dinner, and live music featuring Kristy Coote, a 2016 finalist in the Australian Independent Music Awards.

Until next time, safe, fun flying

- Paul Green, President, HGFA.



2016 © Hang Gliding Federation of Australia
 If you no longer want to receive emails from us, you can [unsubscribe](#).
[Please click here to view online](#)