



Soaring at the Nats 2024

With a great forecast for the week ahead. Many guys started making their way down to Carterton before the New Year as the first day for F3J was on the 1st of January 2024! We had a nice field sorted for the week with a large circle mowed which made it a great pits and setup area.

It was a huge welcome to Andrew and Ellsie Meyer from Australia who have enjoyed coming to our NZ Nats before because of the huge number of events we manage to jam into a week.



Our Soaring nats field for the week.

F3J (Winch launch thermal competition)

We had 11 entries with awesome weather but not easy thermaling most of the day. Early on thermals were topped out, you hit a ceiling, couldn't climb any higher and required continual relocating for the lift zones. Most pilots made their 10-minute flights during the day and precision landings were in order. The final results were: 1st Joe Wurts, 2nd Kevin Botherway, 3rd Peter Williams.



Andrew Meyer (Australia) with Andrew Hiscock calling on landing.

F3B (3 task winch competition)

It was awesome to setup for the premium competition of soaring. Joe laid out the course and we decided to run a three up in distance draw for the day which meant we needed extra people to help run the course. This was cool because we had a few spectators to help, many thanks to Barry Kerr and Helen Gray. We had 10 entries and great weather. These planes being a little heavier and designed for all three tasks certainly are a different animal for thermal flying and landing. They felt like we were flying bricks which approach at speed for spot landings. The best thermal flight was Andrew Meyer 10:00 minutes and 100 landing, best speed run was Joe Wurts 15.52, and most laps during distance was Peter Williams with 28 laps! It was certainly busy with three up in distance. We got 2 full rounds completed and the winners were: 1st Joe Wurts, 2nd Richard Thompson, 3rd Peter Williams.



Richard Thompson launching his own F3B model.

F5J (electric launch thermal/precision soaring)

This was the start of a split competition to ensure we got a result in this class. We scheduled over two days in case we had a weather event. Half the competition was on Wednesday and the 2nd half on Thursday. With 14 entries we had 3 groups of pilots drawn at random off Glider score. Many guys made their 10:00 minute flights but there were a few who managed to land early. Scores were close near the top so height and landing decided the leader. The thermals were strong enabling some planes to get high. It was fortunate we had a notam in place (big thanks to David Griffin). The split scheduling of this comp was visionary as Thursday had high winds and we were blown out. Wednesday's three rounds completed the competition with: 1st Joe Wurts, 2nd Kevin Botherway, 3rd Andrew Meyer.

F5K (electric hand launch 1.5m NZ rules)

We changed to this event after lunch. Some thought had gone into this one, running it on its own for a change (usually we have mixed with F3K which made it very busy). The 10 registered pilots were split into two groups. It was super fun with high speed, 6 odd second launches and then thermaling out to achieve the task. An altis (altitude meter) in the model recorded your launch height and timers had the stopwatch on for each of the flights during the task. It was very enjoyable to have the dedicated time to fly just this class on its own with some great thermal action and some long flights achieved. We did a total of 4 rounds. A little longer competition time would have been even better as everyone really enjoyed this one, particularly: 1st Joe Wurts
2nd Peter Glassey 3rd Kevin Botherway



Soaring meeting after the days flying.

ALES Radian (radian event to NZ rules)

As usual, our highest registrations for an event with 20 in the mix and 15 turning up to fly. We ran three rounds in unreal air. Most pilots achieved at least one 7.00-minute flight and a few did three in the three rounds. The lift did shut down in the last slot meaning it was down to precision landing (or arrival) and exact times. Lots of fun and a good results with one of the pylon guys (Les King) taking our third place trophy home! Our other worthy mentions were: 2nd Peter France, 1st Joe Wurts.

Radian Fun fly in the oval

The Radian Fun-fly was contested by 8 fliers, the wind was unhelpful but the usual hilarity did ensue. We had three tasks to complete: a 7 minute flight complete with Le man's start and precise landing, 2 minute precision landing and a pylon race. Richard Thompson was the overall winner. A great event as usual and many spectators.

eRES (new class built up models 2M – rudder, elevator, spoiler)

This is a new event to New Zealand and the SIG has produced rules after collating all the various ones from around the world. The basics are a 5-minute flight with a maximum 100m launch height and precision landing. We had flown this once at soar champs and introduced it into NDC. We had 13 competitors with a total of 14 registered who managed 6 full rounds. The morning started quite calm with some reasonable wind in the forecast which meant ballast was utilized, for those that had it, towards the end of the comp. Finding a nice corridor was the order of the day and the occasional thermal gave some reasonable height. Care was required to not

take it too far back, as returning to the landing spot from downwind quite often instigated a land out. It was very enjoyable and the 5-minute flight meant we got through a few rounds with placings: 1st Kevin Botherway, 2nd Joe Wurts, 3rd Peter Glassey. That was the end of flying for the day as the wind started to get uncomfortable so a decision was made to abort the scheduled F5J 2nd half.

F3K (hand launch glider)

Another great day in paradise but with rain in the forecast. It was the usual Nationals thing where everyone was a bit washed out after 5 odd days of soaring and sun. We had 10 competitors and planned to go until 2.00pm. We managed 7 rounds and had various tasks scheduled. There was quite a bit of thermal action, some great heights achieved, with lots of downwind flying. Ballast was required and selecting the right option here was hard as the wind ranged from light to quite strong during the event. The top pilots were: 1st Joe Wurts, 2nd Kevin Botherway, 3rd Andrew Meyer.



Gaggles of DLG's in the sky

Overall results for soaring Champion 2024 – 1st Joe Wurts, 2nd Kevin Botherway, 3rd Andrew Meyer.

Thanks to all who attended Nationals, for helping with all the setup on the field, and especially the team that helped prepare for our Banquet prize-giving. A special thanks to John Shaw and Joe Wurts for super help (I am sure I won the water fight in the pool!) We flew and recorded scores for every event, the weather was great! A successful 76th Nats for soaring!



Soaring trophies for Nationals 2024!

Soaring rocks!!!!!!!!!!

Rowdy