



The Wylie-Coyotes setting up and getting ready to fly to Kalani

Photo: Curtis Jones

A CLASSIC YEAR AT THE CLASSIC

Richard Breyley

2009 WAS ANOTHER CLASSIC YEAR AT THE WYLIE CLASSIC.

The 2009 WA State Hang Gliding Championship (The Wylie Classic) was run by the Goldfields Hang Gliding Club.

The competition got off to a slow start on practice day with most teams training their tow drivers. Only one team (Airborne Assaults) had a driver with any

previous experience. A lot of the day was spent training drivers, untangling ropes and repairing tow gauges, leaving no time for cross-country flights. (Bugger!)

Unusual for this time of the year, the weather was characterised by weak lift and low thermal heights. The task



Shelley Heinrich taking off for another cross-country flight

Photo: Curtis Jones

committee responded accordingly, calling a 60km task to Cadoux via Ejanding. Scurge, a known performer in light conditions, took the honours, but more notably a number of novice pilots got their first cross-country flights. Many thanks go to Mika for stepping in and towing for the day when the Dusties driver did not show. Mika managed this even with a baby seat and screaming baby in the back. A good incentive for the pilots to get away on the first tow because we did not know when towing would stop.

Days 2 and 3 brought up more of the light conditions with 54 and 65km tasks to Goomalling and then Merridin. The good thing was that the Dusties managed to find a driver. Uli, a German backpacker was passing through town. He's a novice hang glider pilot from Germany and was quite happy to spend a week drinking and driving for us around the wheat belt of WA.

Shelley Heinrich showed up a number of the so-called 'advanced' topless pilots with a personal best flight of 22km on Day 2. Shooting to the lead of the Novice/Floater Class.

Wednesday was blown out, but the day was saved by Muzza who put on another one of his famous spit-BBQs. Mouse from the roadhouse donated salads and bread and we had two kegs of beer and a keg of cider from the Beaten Track Brewery in Kalgoorlie. A late night was had tasting the local drop from Kalgoorlie and talking about the previous day's flying.

Day 4 and we were on. The task committee calls a 92km task to Kalanie via Korda. Four pilots in goal, but the most memorable flight was by Toby who flew 65km in a Fun 190. This flight by Toby brought the Goldfields Dust Devils team back into contention. Grant Bond also had a personal best 52km flight in his Sonic. The Kalanie Bowling Club only serves dinner once a week and we lucked out. A great meal was had with the atmosphere of country hospitality.

A 100km flight, dinner at the local bowling club and a few roadies for the trip back – priceless.

Day 5 and we were off to Calingari via Goomalling. This 105km task proved to be a challenge. Muzza came the closest, landing about 15km from goal, with Ruckus and Scurge close behind – and another PB, this time by Angelo.

For those who are interested, Murray Wood won by a mere 13 points from Mark Stokoe and the Goldfields Dust

Devils were the victorious team, narrowly defeating the Wylie-Coyotes. Grant Bond won the Intermediate Class and Toby the Novice Class.

While we did not have the cross-country weather we usually expect from the Wylie Classic, we still flew five out of a possible seven days. In these challenging conditions it's very satisfying having to work for every kilometre.

We are all looking forward to the 2010 comps which promise to be just as much fun and will be run by the Western Soarers Club.

Thanks to Mark Stokoe, the competition director, and Phillip Knight, the scorer, as well as the many people who helped organise the competition.

A special thanks goes out to our sponsors. These competitions would not happen without them: Airborne, Moyes, Hang Gliding Association of Western Australia and the Goldfields Image Works. We look forward to your continued support. See you all in 2010.



Winners are Grinners, the 2009 WA State champion, Murray Wood

Photo: Andrew Talmage

Letters to the Editor

