

Millennium Cup - Round 6. Berkeley - 27 October, 2002.

Seventeen pilots, more than half of them HSL members, entered the penultimate round of the Millennium Cup at IMAC's Berkeley field. Conditions were rather windy, and became even windier as the day progressed, as a result of which the event was shortened to five rounds.



Some of the pilots waiting on the flight line.

In rounds one and two many good flights were made, but they became rarer as the day went on. The difficulty of the conditions was well illustrated by a flight made by Klaus Weiss late in the day. Klaus suffered a low pop off and, by the time he had recovered into level flight, was well downwind in the narrow space between the clubhouse and car park on one side, and the active control line circle on the other. In the strong and turbulent wind he demonstrated great skill to get his Spirit safely on the ground without hitting any of the numerous obstacles in the area, only to have it blown over and damaged just when it appeared to be safe. This flight only netted a score of 20 points, dropping his totals and placing, substantially.

Matt Greenfield, who has been performing well and was one of those still with a chance of winning the series, had the misfortune of losing his model in strong lift while practicing on the previous afternoon. Not one to be deterred by a little bad luck he proceeded directly to the local hobby shop and, next morning, was ready to compete with a new model built from an ARTF electric glider kit. Conditions at Berkeley were hardly ideal for test flying a new model, and Matt experienced some launch problems early in the day. But he persisted and ended the day with one of the best flights of round five. Unfortunately he finished well down, and is now out of contention for the Cup.



Just one of the casualties of the day. Max Stones SoarMax – looking a bit 2nd hand.

It is a pity Mark Demol has only been able to compete in three of the six rounds held so far, as he would have been a strong contender. He finished in second place, flying his Spirit, repeating his performance of a few weeks earlier at Maddens Plains.

Jack Murphy flew consistently, making a couple of good flights, and no bad ones, which was exactly what was needed in the prevailing conditions, and put him in first place, just four seconds ahead of Mark. After having some problems with the rudder control on his First, he flew a Spirit for most of the day.



Peter Sikora about to launch, with the fire encroaching.



Lyle Broadbelts Spirit on launch. Lyles first comp.

The results were:



1st Jack Murphy 1575 Spirit



**2nd Mark Demol (Jnr) 1571
Spirit**



3rd Peter Sikora 1457

PS1

With one round to go Ian Roach, Matthew Brand, and John Kinlay can still win the Millennium Cup, and are so close together that their final order in the Cup will probably be the same as the order they finish in round seven, the Shoalhaven Shield.

Late in the morning a fire suddenly broke out in grass in an adjacent field. As it started simultaneously in two different places, and as some young boys were seen leaving the area in a big hurry, it is safe to assume it was deliberately lit. Fanned by the strong wind it spread rapidly. I estimate that at times the fire front was advancing at around three metres per second, a frightening sight.

In the end the Southern Freeway proved to be an effective fire break and, with its help, the Fire Brigade had the fire well under control by late afternoon. This was a relatively small fire compared with some that were, and for that matter still are, burning in other parts of the State, but extinguishing it was, nevertheless, no easy task. Seeing such a thing at close range certainly made me appreciate, even more than I previously had, what a difficult and dangerous job our fire fighters have.

As far as I know there was no damage to property, but the Freeway was closed for several hours because of the smoke, inconveniencing thousands of travellers. In the past couple of years several people have died fighting bush and grass fires. I cannot understand why any one would deliberately start one.

We would love to see a big turnout at Shoalhaven round. It should be a good contest, so come along if you can.

Ian Roach.