



CAPE GLIDING CLUB

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*** PRESS RELEASE ***

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Mr. Martin Grünert, a raspberry farmer from Stellenbosch, and Deputy Chief Flying Instructor of the Cape Gliding Club today took overall line honours in the International Gliding Commission's¹ prestigious 100 Year Anniversary Southern Hemisphere Challenge with a flight of 991km from Worcester. The competition, hotly contested by pilots from Australia, Brazil, Finland, Germany, Netherlands, Czech Republic, New Zealand, South Africa, UK and Argentina was run in the Southern Hemisphere over two weeks ending 13th February. Flushed with success, Mr. Grünert remarked, "It is a pity we did not get the weather to really show what the Cape is capable of – flights in excess of 1250km are possible for open class gliders, and we anticipate completing an FAI 1000km triangle soon".

At one stage of the competition, the Australians were leading in most classes, but gradually the Cape pilots were able to outpace them, resulting in 3 of the top 4 overall places going to Cape pilots:

- Martin Grünert (DG500M 22m – 1st),
- Alan O'Regan (LS8 – 2nd) and
- Reinhold Lawrenz (DG500M 22m – 4th).

Pilots from the Cape Gliding Club at Worcester, who won 4 out of 6 possible individual class medals, were celebrating their almost clean sweep last night:

- Martin Grünert (Open Class – DG500M 22m - 991km),
- Peter Farrell (15m Class – Ventus 1 - 820km),
- Alan O'Regan (Standard Class – LS8 - 958km) and
- Sven Olivier (Club Class – Astir CS - 544km).

The World Class was not contested as it requires specialist equipment not readily available in South Africa. Australian Rudolf Hertzog of the Murray Valley Soaring Club won the 18m class (Ventus 17.6 – 828km) flying from Corowa, Australia.

In the worldwide Online Contest, the Cape Gliding Club consolidated its leading position, with over 90,000km logged since October 15th, outpacing over 300 international clubs taking part (www2.onlinecontest.org). Three pilots from the Cape Gliding Club are currently placed in the top 15 in the world: Alan O'Regan (7th), Reinhold Lawrenz (8th) and Martin Grünert (12th) with more fantastic flights along the Langeberge this weekend.

Asked whether there was a significant change in the weather this year, Olivier remarked, "The weather is not really different this year – it just our combined attitude and approach which have changed – we are achieving twice the distance as a club this year compared to last year".

As for the reasons for this amazing improvement, O'Regan replied "The principle reason is that we have a fantastic team. From the pilots who share information and train each other, to our instructors, tug pilots and support team, this is really an endeavour that the whole club feels proud of".

More significantly, the club is anticipating an influx of overseas visitors next summer to take advantage of the unique conditions that have now been demonstrated in the Cape, "And that should be good for the Worcester economy " remarked Nicky Oberhoffer, Chief Flying Instructor at the Cape Gliding Club's Worcester base.

For further information or pictures, please contact Peter Wooley (021 487 2451 / 072 699 6947), Andre Leeb-du Toit (021 782 2362 /082 742 4743) and www.cgc.org.za

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¹ The International Gliding Commission (www.fai.org/gliding/) is the organization which governs the sport of gliding internationally and is an affiliate body of the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (www.fai.org). In 2005 the FAI is celebrating its 100 year anniversary of governing the world's airports with a series of competitions and events. The FAI is a non-governmental and non-profit making international organisation with the basic aim of furthering aeronautical and astronautical activities worldwide. Ever growing, FAI is now an organisation of some 100 member countries, in South Africa the gliding affiliate is the Soaring Society of South Africa (www.sssa.org.za).