

THE NATIONALS



ARRIVE EARLY, CHECK YOUR GEAR,
WORRY ABOUT THE POOR
WEATHER AND FORMULATE A PLAN.

OPPORTUNITIES

Gliding is a skill. Flying without an engine heightens the risk but Chad shrugs the danger off by rationalizing that when a plane with an engine dies in flight the chance of survival is slim. Chad prefers a glider because he understands that a glider has limits. We just are in awe that he flies at all.

And so here we are at the National Gliding Championships. This is where Chad can pitch his skill against the best pilots in Australia - most twice his age, and triple or quadruple his flying time.

Chad has rented a training glider from his club for the event. Most of the contestants own their gliders.

That means Chad has to triple check his glider because it is more likely to be abused by trainee glider pilots from his club. Chad even completely rebuilt this glider himself so that there would be less problems. It took him 2 weeks.

You have to marvel at his determination. No-one in the Nowak family has had anything to do with flying - even remotely. Chad has taught himself to

fly and has both a glider pilot's licence and a glider instructor's licence.

Chad is one of the youngest pilots flying in this event this year. He is very respected by his peers and has even been asked to fly in New Zealand. His aim, at this event, is to be in the top 10.

The task will not be easy. With only a basic glider and with the most basic of instruments Chad is up against older pilots with expensive cutting edge designed gliders and the latest in computer technology. We shall see.



FIRST TEST FLIGHT



AIRBORNE



CAMPING AT LAKE KEEPIT

PHOTOS



DESPITE THE FORECAST FOR RAIN LATER IN THE DAY, CHAD TOOK HIS GLIDER UP FOR A FLY TO TEST HIS INSTRUMENTS. THE FLIGHT LASTED FOR 2 HOURS. HE SEND TEST SMS'S TO CHECK IF COMMUNICATION WITH HIS "GROUND CREW" WAS GETTING THROUGH. BY 4PM THE SKY BEGAN TO CLOSE IN SO HE LANDED EARLY. UNFORTUNATELY TWO OF HIS INSTRUMENTS WERE PLAYING UP - ONE OF THEM CRITICAL. HE SPENT THE EVENING TRYING TO WORK OUT