



Nicky Moss, top woman at Bright



Steve Ham, second placed at overall



The GB team at Bright

Australian Open

Bright, 14th - 21st February

Eight days in the snowy mountains (without snow). 90 Pilots arrived during a very mediocre Australian summer interspersed with a few fantastic days.

Day 1 from Mystic at 800m amsl. The task was a 54.9km elapsed-time race around four turnpoints in the local area. The headwind after turnpoints 1 and 3 saw many pilots on the deck. It was a straightforward race until the third turnpoint where a headwind and failing conditions put some of the leaders on the ground. Steve Ham (Gin Boomerang III) led the field till this point but was overtaken by Andrew Horchner (Gin Boomerang, Australia), winner of the British Open at Piedrahita last year, who climbed effectively in the lee-side of the Goldmine ridge leaving the others to grovel towards goal below ridge height in the lee. Although first home, Andrew's elapsed time was longer than that of Enda Murphy (Advance Omega 6, Australia), fourth into goal but the task winner. Top Brit was Steve Ham, third in goal but sixth in the points.

Similar conditions on Day 2 saw a similar task: 41.5km race to goal via four turnpoints. Most pilots were down around the first turnpoint due to strong and increasing headwinds and bumpy lee-side conditions. The task was finally stopped due to the dangerous conditions on course. Task winner was local pilot Brian Webb (Gradient Avax, Australia) with 26.6km, and Paul Russell (Nova Radon) was best Brit.

Task 3 saw the winds drop, allowing a 74km elapsed-time race around two turnpoints, flying up towards Ovens and then along the Happy Valley to race down the Kiewa Valley to goal at Mount Beauty. With climbs to 2,500m, two routes were taken towards the first turnpoint. The majority flew along the ridge from Mt Porpunka, though a few brave souls routed along Mt Buffalo including Brit Mark Graham (UP Summit 2), who had perhaps the fastest time to the first turnpoint. Many pilots were claimed by the first section along the Happy Valley, with many routes taken to the north, south and middle of the valley. Those reaching the end were able to climb in strong and widespread convergence and glide into the Kiewa Valley. Mark Graham was first to the turnpoint but an unexpected strong headwind in the Kiewa put him and the remainder of the field on the ground at the 57km mark. Fred Gungl (Gin Boomerang III, Australia) won the day, flying 1km beyond turnpoint

2; second (and first Serial pilot) was Mark Graham, 400m shorter but 25 minutes earlier.

Task 4 was 73km around two turnpoints. A thick inversion and a strong headwind to start caused half of the pilots to land within the 5km start cylinder, dramatically reducing the task's value. Those able to make the transition to Mt Buffalo were rewarded by high climbs to upper-level winds more favourable to the task direction. Most of the task leaders reaching the first turnpoint beyond Myrtleford Hill were flushed down the lee side, including best Brit of the day Steve Ham. Only three pilots managed to return towards goal, and after almost five hours flying Fred Gungl landed some 6km from goal to win.

Task 5 was 39.8km downwind from Mount Emu (1,360m). A move from Mystic in the morning meant a late afternoon start with good but weakening conditions. A single file launch favoured the early starters, with good climbs to 2,700m. 62 of the 78 who managed to launch reached goal. Task winner was Pete Bowyer, with Steve Ham third in goal and best Brit. Britain's pilot Nicky Moss reached to ensure her overall first place in the women's championship. Full results are at www.brightadulthoodeducation.org.au/BAE/BrightPGCom p/Results

1	Fred Gungl	Australia	Gin Boomerang III
2	Steve Ham	GB	Gin Boomerang III
3	Enda Murphy	Australia	Advance Omega 6 proto
4	Rhett Rockman	Australia	UP Targa
5	Karel Vrbensky	Czech Republic	Mac Magus
6	Oliver Blonske	Germany	UP Targa
16	Ian Banks	GB	Ozone Octane
24	Mark Graham	GB	UP Summit 2
29	Matthew Church	GB	Edel Excel
32	Paul Russell	GB	Nova Radon
45	Nicky Moss	GB	Gradient Aspen (top woman)
51	John Stevenson	GB	Ozone Vulcan
88	Julia Thompson	GB	Swing Arcus

REPORT BY STEVE HAM

Dominican Republic Pre-PWC

January 19th - 24th

The six-day competition, the first major event to be held on this Caribbean island, took place in and around the Neiba Valley - a flat, arid plain in the west

of the country between the Sierra de Neiba and the Sierra Bahoruco mountain ranges.

Five tasks were flown. The first was at La Job, 1,650m up in the Sierra Bahoruco. A lower than expected cloudbase saw the pilots flying out on a course line close to the plain, only to get decked between at between 15 and 25km by a strong sea breeze. However Swiss pilot Florian Wicki (UP Targa) made it all the way to the goal at 39.4km.

The next four tasks took place at Galvan in the Sierra de Neiba (take-off: 1,030m). A 60.2km course taking in three turnpoints saw six pilots in goal including Nick Roberts (Advance Omega 5, 6th place). The day was won by Switzerland's Andres Feuz (UP Targa). Task 3, a little shorter at 53km via two turnpoints, saw 18 pilots in goal led by Daniel Vallejo (Windtech Silex, Colombia). After a fine start, cloud spread out prevented anyone reaching the 62km goal on Task 4 but Colombian pilot Jorge David Cifuentes finished closest at 52.4km aboard a Gin Boomerang 3. Overnight rain prevented the trucks from accessing the launch on Day 5 and a rest day was declared.

The final task was 38km via two turnpoints, finishing with a difficult crosswind leg to a goal on the far side of the plain. Only three pilots managed to latch onto a decent climb over the plain, among them Pete Taylor who finished on a high note in third place aboard his Gradient Aspen. Nobody quite made goal, the closest being German pilot Karen Hermann on a UP Trango at 34km.

Thanks to the tremendous efforts of Meet Director Julian Molina and the local pilots, the volunteers from the Peace Corps, the Dominican Army which generously provided trucks and drivers for the event, and the assistance of Xavier Murillo and Christian Quest from the PWC, the competition was a great success and should help to establish the island on the winter competition circuit.

1	Andreas Birenstihl	Switzerland	Advance Proto
2	Jorge David Cifuentes	Colombia	Gin Boomerang 3
3	Michael Witschi	Switzerland	Advance Proto
4	Florian Wicki	Switzerland	UP Targa
5	Andres Feuz	Switzerland	UP Targa
6	Charles Cazaux	France	UP Targa
8	Karen Hermann	Germany	UP Trango
18	Pete Taylor	GB	Gradient Aspen
19	Nick Roberts	GB	Advance Omega 5

REPORT BY NICK ROBERTS