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Cavalon Autogyro
Bush Pilot Champs at Omaka
NZ International Airshow

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Bush Pilot Champs at Omaka



Willy Sage takes off in just over 50 metres in one of Sounds Air's Caravans. The word "WOW" was heard all over the airfield!

THE inaugural Healthy Bastards Bush Pilot Champs was held at Omaka on February 2nd, and judging from reports of those who attended, it was a huge success. The event saw 55 aircraft entered in the S.T.O.L. and Precision Landing competitions, with aircraft and pilots from as far afield as Ardmore and Rangiora.

The weather played its part to perfection, with a gusty north westerly breeze picking up in the afternoon, making things challenging for the pilots, and entertaining for the many spectators.

The success of the day was due to many factors, however many spectators commented that there was very little downtime compared to many airshows, and there was no time to get bored! The

range of aircraft and pilot experience levels also added to the interest factor. Pilot experience ranged from 65 hours to 39,000! All flew very well, with no incidents of any kind on the day. Aircraft types ranged from the normal Piper Cubs/Pacers, Maules, Cessna 180/185 to a Walter powered Fletcher (courtesy of Aerowork) and Cessna Caravan (courtesy of SoundsAir). The event will definitely be repeated next year, and promises to be bigger and better!

2013 results, and information on next year's event can be viewed at www.marlboroughaeroclub.co.nz/index.php/stol.

The Healthy Bastards Bush Pilot Champs is run by the Marlborough Aero Club and main sponsor Dr. Dave of Bulls

WINNERS of the 4 events (each took away prize money of \$500 cash) were:

S.T.O.L. - Microlight Category:

Jerry Chisum in CH701 Zenair ZK-ZKX (built and owned by Jock Struthers of Blenheim).

T/O 17.6m; Land 32.8m

S.T.O.L. - Light Touring Category:

Nigel Griffith in PA18A-160 ZK-BOY.

T/O 32.0m; Land 29.3m

S.T.O.L. - Heavy Touring Category:

Trevor Collins in H250 Helio Courier ZK-TCE.

T/O 34.7m; Land 27.8m

Precision Landing:

Grant Wisnewski in his immaculate 108-3 Stinson ZK-NCC. Distance of 2m.

Flying Doctor Service. Dave got in behind the event in a clever effort to promote his mens health campaign to New Zealand pilots. At the presentation evening after the competitions, Dave commented that this is his first big sponsorship event, and its success will ensure continuation of the partnership with the Aero Club, and the promotion of his Healthy Bastards message.

New aircraft and Strip Flying Training Programme at Marlborough Aero Club

The Bush Pilot competition was designed by the Marlborough Aero Club to promote their new flight training programme, which has a strong focus on strip flying, and hands on piloting skills.



Andrew Whelan gets away in his turbine powered Fletcher.



Commentators: Ray Patchett, Dr Dave Baldwin, Craig Anderson, Willy Sage.



With this programme in mind, the club has also recently imported two immaculate 'new' Cessna 172s.

Both feature the obligatory manual flaps (with 40 degrees), leading edge STOL kits, and amazing forward visibility over the nose.

ZK-OMK originated from San Francisco, and is a 1956 'straight tail' 172 converted in the mid 1980s to Tail Dragger configuration. She has only 3000 hours on the airframe and sports a recently overhauled O-300 engine that has been 'ported and flowed' putting out 165hp. Tyres have also been given the once over with 8.50s now fitted.

ZK-OMR is a 1963 'E' model (the last model produced with manual flaps) with only 2500 hours total time and is in as new condition. I am told the previous U.S. owner (based in Arizona) used to polish the inside of the rear fuselage! A factory new O-360 engine was retrofitted several years ago giving awesome take-off and climb performance.

All Cessna SIDS were completed during the New Zealand C of A inspections with no issues.

Both aircraft performed with impressive results at the Healthy Bastards Bush Pilot Champs, and are now online with the Marlborough Aero Club. Already they are proving very popular. The club intends to "put the fun back into flying" by encouraging students to learn from ab-initio in a tail dragger, and once experienced enough and appropriately trained, to take the club aircraft into local airstrips and enjoy the back country of NZ that is normally only accessible by private owners.

Roll on 2014! And if you are looking to enter next year - be in quick... It is shaping up to be a cracker!



Marlborough Aero Club's two 'new' Cessna 172s. The tail dragger is flown by Ray Patchett while Craig Anderson formates nice and close in the 'E' model for Gavin's camera.



Precision landing winner Grant Wisnewski flying his Stinson. He touched down 2.0m after the judging line.

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