PILOT BRIEFING NOTES

2026

Grand Prix

Matamata Soaring Centre

Introduction

Welcome to the 2026 Matamata Soaring Centre Grand Prix. We hope you have an enjoyable and safe event.

Volunteers: (people to be nice to)

- Contest Director: Dave Dennison..... 021 037 9167
- Safety Officer: Steven Care..... 027 349 1180
- Task Setting: Bob Gray..... 021 949 145
- Weather: Tim Bromhead..... 021 217 9049
- Tug Master: Ray Burns..... 021 277 0115
- Grid Marshal: David Cleverley..... 027 441 4407
- Radio: Norm Duke..... 021 828 754
- Catering: Marion Moody 021 388 668
- Finance: Dave Dennison..... 021 037 9167

Contest Rules

1. Contest Director is the CFI for all gliding operations from the airfield.

2. Practice Day Saturday 7 March weather and practice task briefing at 10am.

3. A **Contest and Safety Briefing** will be held on Day 1, Sunday 8 March at 9.30am, which is **compulsory for all competitors**. Read these notes first.

4. Daily briefing is at 10:00am. Compulsory for all competition pilots, recommended for all other pilots if you want to have permission to launch.

5. Contest director may request gliders to be gridded before briefing. See Appendix 1: gridding.

6. If there are 13 or more gliders registered by the practice day, competitors will compete in two classes, Class A and Class B, determined by handicap. Class A will normally be at the front of the grid and launched first, unless briefed otherwise during the contest.

Before flying on the first day:

7. All pilots shall complete an entry form which will include their cell phone number, email, and confirmation that their glider is insured and airworthy, and is fitted with operational and up to date Flarm, ELB/ELT, current VNC, a GNSS Flight Recorder, a compliant packed parachute for each pilot and, where needed, that they shall operate their transponders/ADSB on mode C or mode S (squawk 1300).

8. Load the waypoint file and airspace files by downloading from:

   https://www.soaringspot.com/en_gb/gnz-grand-prix-2026-matamata-2026/downloads

   See Appendix 6 for the table of airspace types to allow pilots to programme the appearance of airspace in their own devices.

   The daily task sheets will detail the schedule and details of designated airspaces that are available and/or prohibited to contest pilots, and this will be covered at briefing.

Before flying every day:

9. Park your vehicle with trailer attached and ready to go at the rear of the campground backed towards the trees. Make sure your car has enough fuel. Leave car keys on the hooks under the blackboard below your glider registration.

Common flight rules:

10. The maximum aerotow, or self-launch, release altitude is 2200 ft QNH (approx. 2000 ft above ground). Pilots of gliders with engines may elect a maximum release altitude of 1500 ft QNH (approx. 1300 ft above ground). This option must be selected at the beginning of the contest and may not be changed during the event. The starting countdown will not wait for gliders taking the low tow option to reach the start area and/or start height.

11. There is a Mandatory Broadcast Zone (MBZ) for 3 nm radius around Matamata Airfield, normally SFC to 4500ft, reduced to SFC to 1500ft between 1100 and 1800 hrs on contest days. Freq 122.25 MHz.

12. Radio calls to Matamata Traffic are required on 122.25 MHz when entering the MBZ, for circuit and landing calls, and every 15 minutes when operating within the MBZ.

13. All pilots are required to have a tracking system (e.g. cell phone app, ADSB, etc) that can transmit position to https://gliding.net.nz/tracking at no more than one-minute intervals.

    Instructions to set up cell phone tracking are found at http://gliding.co.nz/how-to-set-up-cell-tracking/

    Note that if a glider's tracking systems fails during flight, they are required to do 'ops normal' radio calls on 133.55 MHz, with contest leg position, at least every hour or upon request by contest radio operator.

14. Other aircraft outside of the MBZ will likely use Common Frequency Zone (CFZ) frequencies. While it is not mandatory to be on the CFZ frequency continuously, it is good airmanship to periodically monitor the appropriate frequency, particularly in high traffic pinch points, like the Waihi gap (Harbour CFZ) and within 10 nm of airfields within the CFZ. Note that radio calls around unattended airfields should be made on the CFZ frequency (e.g., Tokoroa 123.25 MHz, Thames 124.5 MHz).

15. Pilots shall remain on glider chat frequency 133.55 MHz, except when in MBZs or when monitoring CFZs or ATC.

16. Cloud flying and unauthorised aerobatics are prohibited. Any manoeuvres hazardous to others shall be avoided and may be penalized and competitors shall avoid dropping water ballast in any manner likely to affect other competing sailplanes.

Grand Prix Rules:

Start:

17. The maximum <u>ground</u> speed at which the Start Line may be crossed is 80 knots.

18. The maximum start altitude is 3500 ft amsl unless changed by the Contest Director (CD) and published on the day's task sheet.

19. The *starter* shall announce by radio the Start Time which shall be not less than 10 minutes after the last glider on that class has launched.

20. Once the Start Time has been announced, the *starter* shall no longer delay the Start if pilots fail to stay airborne or to reach the start altitude. They may however cancel the Start if it is dangerous to continue launching or the weather deteriorates so that the task may not reasonably be attempted or if more than half of the pilots fail to stay airborne before the Start.

21. If there is a significant error in the starting procedure before any start, the CD may cancel the start and set a new start time.

22. The Start Area is a half circular area with of 2.5km radius located "behind" the Start Line opposite to the first Turn Point. During the last 5 minutes before the Start Time, circling or turning (by more than 90°) to the right in the Start Area will incur a time penalty. The start area is illustrated in Appendix 2.

23. Pilots in other classes to start are not allowed in the Start Area during the 5 minutes leading up to the start of each class.

24. Extended Start Line is the start line extended on both sides to the infinite. The pilots must be behind the Extended Start Line no later than one minute before the Start Time is opened.

25. Start times will be announced by radio on 133.55 MHz at least 10 minutes before the start. Time to start will be announced at regular intervals in the 10 minutes prior to the start. The last 10 seconds will be counted down.

26. Once the Start Line is open the pilots must start by crossing the Start Line below the Start Altitude and within the Start Speed limit.

27. A pilot starting before the Start Time shall be penalised.

28. A pilot manoeuvring in the start area within one minute prior to the start in such a way as to fly in the opposite direction of starting gliders or parallel to the start line, shall be disqualified for the day (dangerous manoeuvre creating risk of conflict with the other gliders).

29. A pilot landing back to the airfield after having started may be relaunched and does not need to stay behind start line for one minute and may start immediately but must cross the start line below the start altitude and within the speed limit. In this case no time penalty shall apply for not being behind the start line for one minute before Start Tine.

Grand Prix Task and Scoring:

30. The minimum task distance for each glider shall be set each day according to the glider's handicap. Each pilot must ensure that they fly far enough into the Observation Zones for each turn point to achieve their minimum task distance.

31. A day shall be counted as a contest day if a launch opportunity has been given to each competitor and at least one competitor has completed the task.

32. Pilots will be scored according to the order they first cross the Finish Line after completing the task.

33. Penalty time may be added to the finish time for minor infractions of the rules. See tabulated Penalty Schedule in Appendix 3.

34. Non finishers will be ranked after finishers in the order of task distance achieved divided by minimum task distance for that glider.

35. The daily score for each glider is equal to the number of gliders launched in their class who finished below them in the rank order. One bonus point is awarded each day to the winner of the class.

Returning to the airfield:

36. Glider pilots on final glide shall give radio call on the MBZ frequency **122.25 MHz** at 10 nm and again at 3 nm with position and circuit intentions. Call again on 122.25 MHz when joining the circuit.

37. Competition finishes are a 6 km circle around the airfield waypoint. Minimum finish altitude is 1000 ft MSL. Plan your circuit intentions well before you reach the finish.

38. Gliders shall avoid overflying the clubhouse and campground area below 1,000 ft QNH except in an emergency.

39. Gliders are to land as far to the side of the runway as possible, but well clear of any gliders already landed. Gliders are to avoid the possibility of taxiing across the path of other aircraft landing behind them.

40. Gliders are to be moved off the runway immediately on completion of the landing roll.

41. Pilots shall enter their own flight traces to the Competition Scoring website as soon as possible after returning to Matamata. Within one hour of landing, you must upload your flight data log to Gliding Contest Manager (https://gliding.net.nz/events/grand-prix-matamata-tbc-mar-2026). Upload can also be done from an outlanding site if an internet data connection is available.

Landing out

42. Txt message or call the retrieve phone No with your landout coordinates or address to arrange retrieve. Coordinates must be in Degs Mins.Decimal mins. format e.g. S37°44.250 E175°44.417

43. We value the continued goodwill of the landowners who become hosts to you and your glider. If you land out, first contact the landowner, and thank him/her for the use their land. If you do any damage, assure them that you will see it is paid for or repaired and be considerate. Get the landowner's contact details and complete a landout form. There is a box on end of the bar to leave completed Landout Forms.

44. You may need to wait until sufficient competitors have returned to the airfield to form retrieve crews.

Meals

- Please see Marion before 1pm to order your dinner for each day, plus breakfast and lunch for the following day.
- Ensure you have your name marked to confirm that you received each meal.
- If you missed ordering but want to eat, check with the "kitchen volunteers" to see if there is any extra available.

- All people using the meal service are expected to help with setting out, clearing away and/or washing dishes.

Charges

Contest Fee	
Entry Fee	$300
Early Bird (before Jan 31)	$250
Day Entry	$75
Tow Charges	
Aerotow 2200 ft	$90/tow
Aerotow 1500 ft (Gliders with engines may select this option for the whole contest)	$60/tow
Aero-retrieve	$500 / hour (only if tow pilot and contest director agree)
Meals* *(*may vary during the event)*	
Breakfast	$15
Lunch	$10
Dinner	$25 ($35 last evening)
Accommodation	
Bunkhouse	$22 to $25 per person per night (min charge 2 persons D1, D2, D3, D4)
Camp/Caravan site	$15 unpowered, $18 powered

- Everyone staying at the airfield, including tents and caravans, must fill in a registration form on arrival.
- You must see the contest administrator (Dave Dennison) to reconcile accounts prior to leaving the airfield. Please pay by bank transfer to

  MATAMATA SOARING CENTRE INC

  02-0360-0046053-000

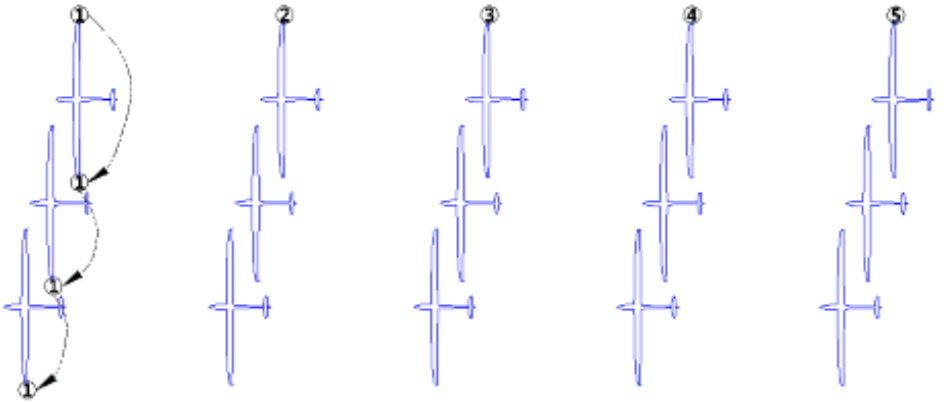
  (ref: GrandPrix) prior to 21 March 2026,

  or by EFTPOS at the airfield to ***Matamata Soaring Centre***.
- Please pay any bar charges and non-contest tows to ***Piako Gliding Club*** on the day the expense occurs. Non-contest flying charges should be paid before the duty pilot closes daily accounts and goes home, not after dinner.
- There is one EFTPOS machine shared by Matamata Soaring Centre and Piako Gliding Club. Please select Matamata Soaring Centre for all competition charges (in table above) and Piako Gliding Club for bar or non-competition tows. EFTPOS account should be cheque or saving account and not VISA or Mastercard. Put EFTPOS dockets for bar charges on the spike on the bar.

Appendix 1: On the Ground & Gridding

- For the first contest day, each glider will be assigned a grid line number, which will remain the same for the duration of the contest. The first glider to arrive in each grid line will line up so that their outer wing, nearest the centreline of the runway, is over the number marker position. The pilot will then shift the grid number to the inner wing. Each subsequent glider will line up just in front of the earlier arrival with wings overlapped and shift the grid number marker to his inner wing.

Grid Layout Diagram



- Within each Class, the grid line numbers will advance on each subsequent contest day by placing the front grid numbers from the previous day at the rear of the Class.
- Motor gliders shall launch in grid order as established above.
- Vehicles required to be on the active runway shall operate their flashing lights, and only remain on the active runway for the minimum time required to complete the task.
- Gliders and vehicles retrieving gliders shall vacate the runway as soon as possible to ensure that the active runway is not obstructed for other aircraft.
- Any vehicle in the likely take-off or landing path of an aircraft must stop until the aircraft has taken off or landed safely. Car movements should be around the boundaries of the runway and not across it.
- Park all cars on the down-wind side of the launch point. All cars and trailers must be parked as far to the edge of the runway as possible and only one car in depth.
- All dogs must be on a leash, and any litter removed.

Appendix 2 – Grand Prix Start Area

Appendix 3: Grand Prix Penalties

Infraction	Penalty
Late submission of Flight Record	1 min
Time spent on wrong start of the Extended Start Area during the final 1 minute before the Start	Time x 5
Start before the Start Time	Time difference x 10
Start above maximum start altitude	1 second per foot above maximum start altitude
Start speed above maximum start speed	10 seconds per knot above maximum start speed
Missing the start line by less than 500m	5 minutes
Missing the start line by more than 500m	No start
Manoeuvring in the minute prior to start to fly in the opposite direction of starting gliders or parallel to the start line	Day disqualification
Missing turn point observation zone by up to 500m	5 minutes
Missing turn point observation zone by more than 500m	Land out at closest point to missed turn point
Failing to achieve minimum task distance by up to 2.5 km	5 minutes
Failing to achieve minimum task distance by more than 2.5 km	Land out at task distance achieved
Crossing finish line up to 100 ft below minimum finish height	5 seconds per foot below minimum finish start altitude
Crossing finish line more than 100 ft below minimum finish height	Land out at minimum task distance
Cirding in wrong direction in the start area within 5 mins before Start Time	30sec / right turn or right circle
Class B glider present in the Start Area within 5 minutes of Class A start.	5 minutes
Minor airspace infringement, 1rst offense & < 2 min duration	Time of infringement x 5
Airspace infringement, 2nd offense or > 2 min duration	Land out at Task Distance 1km

Appendix 4: Other Airfield Users

Matamata is a very busy light aviation airfield with a variety of light aircraft traffic, flight training, parachute operations, gyrocopters and model aircraft flying.

Skydiving

- There are two main parachute landing areas (PLA's) as follows:
  - Kaimai PLA. (Runway 04/22)
  - Clubroom PLA. (In front of the Skydiving Club and designated by marker cones).
- The PLA is not available for aircraft when it is defined by marker cones. Do not drive vehicles, tow gliders or taxi aircraft in the PLA when it is defined.
- The pilot in the jump aircraft shall maintain a continuous listening watch on the MBZ frequency unless in communication with ATC.
- Prior to take off the pilot will broadcast on 122.25 the intended PLA (Kaimai or Clubrooms) and drop details.
- The pilot then broadcasts his intentions on 122.25 at 3 minutes and again at 10 seconds prior to drop.
- Parachute drop calls will be repeated on 133.55 by Matamata Glider Base radio.
- The PDZ shall be deemed to be in progress from the 3-minute call prior to drop until parachutists have landed.
- No aircraft shall operate in the specified drop sector after the 3-minute call. Gliders or other aircraft unable to comply with this shall switch to 122.25 and communicate with the parachute jump plane to ensure there will not be a conflict between aircraft and parachutists.

Model Aircraft

- Model aircraft may operate from the inactive runway. Models can fly up to 1100' QNH.
- Crosses are displayed at the threshold while model aircraft operations are in progress.
- Model operators maintain a visual watch for traffic. In addition, they normally maintain a listening watch on the MBZ frequency.
- Announce your intentions on the radio if you find it necessary to land or fly near the modellers' area or fly through the area, even if they do not reply to your calls.
- Avoid landing on the area of close-cropped grass model airstrip if using Runway 04/22.

Appendix 5: SAFETY BRIEFING NOTES

Steven Care, Contest Safety Officer

GRAND PRIX FORMAT

The Grand Prix format does have some risk elements that other contests do not have. Because the starts are at one time (and sometimes finishes close) there is a greater risk of mid-air collisions.

LOOKOUT, SCANNING AND COLLISION AVOIDANCE

We have been very fortunate in NZ in that we have had very few glider mid-air collisions and no fatalities from them. This does not mean that we are immune, or that we should not highlight this as

a major risk. There have been a lot of near misses and unfortunately from overseas experience, midair collisions are usually fatal.

Flarm is a valuable tool for collision avoidance, but you must be aware that it has limitations. Don't rely on it solely. It can give a warning that you think is the glider you can see, but the real threat might be a completely different glider that you haven't yet spotted.

In cruise mode (including ridge running) you should be scanning in 20-degree segments and making sure you are constantly looking for hazards. Often pilots can be easily distracted by contest or goal tactics or GPS equipment. This is the time workload is at its least, so seems the appropriate time, but it's easy to get caught out. In this mode you should try to avoid deliberately flying into another glider's blind spot i.e., directly behind and above another glider, or in front and below. This is a **double-blind** situation, where the lower glider can pull up into the other glider or the higher glider diving without knowing a glider is there.

Another danger area is when in a thermal. We often get very close, but critical times are entering and exiting. It's important to **be predictable when you are flying close** to other gliders. Match your speed to the biggest and heaviest glider in the thermal. Joining a thermal, always approach outside of the gaggle and be aware that even in a moderate performance glider, you will pull up a long way. Often pilots in a thermal will tend to focus on their thermal flying (particularly newer pilots), but attention really does have to also be directed towards lookout.

Another time to really lookout is in and around the circuit. If you are landing straight in, be aware that someone could come in over top of you. If you are in the circuit, others could be coming straight in. Look out both left and right when on your base leg. It's important to maintain a listening watch on the radio. Clue could have been a radio call made 3 minutes earlier.

NUTRITION AND DEHYDRATION

Both are insidious in their nature. If you get to the point of feeling thirsty, it is too late; you are already dehydrated. The effect is subtle and does affect your decision-making ability enormously. We know now that it has been the cause of many gliding accidents. Most people have bladder type drinking systems such as Camel Back and I highly recommend them. If you drink, you also must be able to pee. There also all sorts of systems for this and gliding has now progressed a bit further than the plastic bag. Keeping blood sugar levels at a constant level is important for decision making as well. Sweets are not ideal, but snack type food and fruit are good. Fortunately, the GP tasks are not as large as in standard competitions, but keeping alert all the time is just as important.

FLIGHT FOLLOWING

It is natural to want to follow someone else when everyone is starting together. Don't let someone else lead you into doing something might be unsafe. Being aggressive or conservative at the right time can win the day. Your competitors often get it wrong, so you will just end up making the same mistake.

LOW ENERGY FINISHES

The goal should not be to the finish circle, but to land at the airfield. Be aware that your GPS task will be to the finish circle, but you still need to add in some altitude to get back to the airfield and fit in with the circuit. Matamata airfield is a public airfield, so you need to be aware that there are other aircraft using it. Do not cut your final glide margins too close and if it is not working, have a plan B well before things start to get critical. There are large onion paddocks north and south of the airfield

and large goat farm paddocks to the south. Find and know where suitable paddocks are before you get caught.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

If we do not hear from any glider for 2 hrs, or if your tracker stops and we have not heard from you or cannot contact you, we will initiate Search and Rescue proceedings. Make ops normal calls if requested and be on expected frequencies. RCCNZ 24 hr emergency number is 0508 472 269.

CLOUD FLYING

Cloud flying is not permitted.

CONTROLLED AIRSPACE

There are penalties including disqualification for contest pilots entering controlled airspace. Please have the right airspace resources/reference/knowledge to ensure you do not bust airspace.

OTHER TRAFFIC

Remember that Matamata Airfield is a public airfield, used by aircraft other than gliders. You are expected to fit in with standard airfield etiquette. If you are unable to comply, make sure that you use your radio to clearly announce that you are doing something non-standard.

RUNWAY 04/22

If closed there should be 2 white crosses showing at each end. Regardless, the grass on this runway can be long, so there is a high risk of an unintentional ground loop if you land on it.

THREAT AND ERROR MANAGEMENT

We are human and therefore can make mistakes. All flights have threats. It's your job to identify, manage and mitigate those threats, including the human factors ones.

PADDOCK LANDINGS

Most accidents in the North Island seem to be around paddock landings. They relate to late decision making, poor decisions or flying into areas where there are limited landing options. Remember the basics. Always know where the wind is coming from, make sure the area you are landing in is big enough and make sure there are no obstacles. Acronym is WSSSS:- wind, size, slope, surface and surroundings. At this time of year many crops are high, and this can reduce available options. Use good judgement and be selective. Set up a good final approach at the **right angle** with **good speed control**.

ACCIDENTS

Report to Contest Director and Safety Officer immediately, who will report it to the ROO and who will in turn report it to the NOO. The pilot is required to notify CAA as soon as practicable. This need only be a quick telephone call, to the 24 hr number 0508 ACCIDENT (0508 222 433). They may say that it is the wrong phone number to ring, but it is the one that is on the CAA web site and their literature.

INCIDENTS

If you have an incident, please report it immediately. Your identity should be kept confidential from the rest of the contest pilots. The question for those that read it will be how can we stop the same incident from happening to someone else. Nobody wants to own up that they have made a mistake (self- pride). You must accept that we can all make mistakes, and they are our most valuable tool towards a better safety culture. I admire openness and honesty more than I would make judgement. If you see someone else have an incident, then you should report it to the Contest Director, who will deal with it in confidence. You might not win friends, but you might save someone's life.

EMERGENCIES

Dial 111 and ask for service required. Remain calm and speak slowly.

The Matamata Airfield address is 6393 State Highway 27, Waharoa

AM I SAFE (before you get into the glider)

Attitude

Medication

Illness

Stress

Alcohol

Fatigue

Eating (including hydration)

Appendix 6: Airspace Types

NZ Airspace type	Open Air Format
CTA C	C
CTA D	D
LFZ	Omitted
PLA	E
R	R
VRP	Omitted
VHZ	Q
CFZ	B
CTR	CTR

NZ Airspace type	Open Air Format
D	Q
GAA	W
MBZ	A
MOA	P
QNH	Omitted
T	W
OCA	Omitted
GAA Temporary	F
R Temporary	O

Appendix 7: AIRSPACE MAP