

# 35th Armidale Sailplane Expo. is over!

## Report | Hutton Oddy

The 35th Armidale Sailplane Expo took place over the Australia Day long weekend (Saturday January 24 to Monday January 26).

This year there were 35 entrants in Open Thermal and 11 in F5J (of which 34 and 8 flew respectively).

The event was organised with 4 heats of 9 in Open Thermal followed by 1 heat of F5J.

Over the weekend we flew 14 rounds of F5J and 13 and 3/4 rounds of Open Thermal.

Weather conditions ranged from comparatively easy on Saturday (Easterly winds 15km/hr, max temp 25deg C) to more difficult on Sunday (Westerly winds 15-25km/hr, max temp 28deg C with build up of storms in the afternoon generating areas of huge fast moving lift and bigger areas of sink). Monday the winds were Easterly (~25km/hr, max temp 26deg C, with storms building). A storm filled in over the field at 11:00 cutting round 14 of Open Thermal Short (3 out of 4 heats flown).

Competitors this year came from Victoria, NSW, Queensland and Texas (USA). Open Thermal models included Xplorers, Maxas, Pike Perfection and Perfect, Supra, Aspires and a few home built. F5J flyers chose predominantly electric fuselage versions of the above F3J type models except for the sole junior, Daniel Lewis who flew a 1.8m built up wing model.

The events were orchestrated by Kevin Smeaton, who ran a tight ship. We flew 6 rounds of thermal and F5J on both Saturday and Sunday and were on track to complete another 3 rounds of each on Monday until the weather interrupted.

Open Thermal was flown with no dropped heats, i.e. all flights counted, so consistency was crucial. Thomas Cooke from the USA flying an Xplorer 3 won from Karl Knack (Xplorer 2) and Carl Strautins (Pike Perfection and Perfect). The event was decided on ability to find the lift under challenging conditions on the Sunday. Many found it hard to complete a 10min flight under the conditions, and were surprised by the difficulty of scoring landing points after a low flight time.

F5J had the usual 1 dropped round after 5 rounds (although that hardly helped after 14 rounds). Dave Pratley was the clear winner (Xplorer) from Colin Woodward (Pike Perfect) and Paul Gibson (Egida). Again the difficult conditions on Sunday sorted out the places, with many flyers not making allowance for the marked difference in air from the previous day, launching too low and not achieving maximum flight time. It was great to have Daniel Lewis the sole junior in the entire Expo fly in F5J. The enthusiastic support he received from all competitors was good to see.

**Report by Brian Ford in RCGroups MRSSA thread:**

<http://www.rcgroups.com/forums/showpost.php?p=30605754&postcount=40>

**Video of the entire event in 1:1440 time by Brian Ford**

<http://www.rcgroups.com/forums/showpost.php?p=30616515&postcount=46>

**Photos :**

<http://home.exetel.com.au/mrssa/index.php/gallery/armidale-2015>

**See you in Armidale next year (23-25 January, 2016).**