

## BA-Aus Come And Get It Trophy (CAGIG) 13 Feb 2011

**Was I excited? Oh yes!** and... apprehensive. Every flight brings new challenges and new learning curves – so here we go again.

Originally a friend and I had planned to make the flight to Tyrone, Tumbarumba, NSW to collect the trophy and then head onto Temora, but with his work commitments we had to delay the first date and before we could plan our next date, Michael from Lethbridge (YLED) had beaten me to it.

So the planning began again... and we set another date for collection. Unfortunately again my friend cancelled. Right, it was obvious I was meant to do this on my own (otherwise it would never happen)... It was time to be *courageous!*

To collect the trophy, the inbound leg was a total of 305nm. I had to fly this on my own via uncharted territory, contend with 2 ARFOR's and negotiate 4 runways.



I had planned a trip to the Grampians to catch up with a client for work, and since all my other plans had fallen through, this seemed like the perfect opportunity to collect the trophy (it was a small diversion after all). My new plan was to fly to the Grampians (YGMP) on Sunday to catch up with the client for 3 days of work, head to YLED on Thursday to collect the trophy then back home to Murray Bridge (YMBD). As the dates got closer and I continued to plan and weather watch, it became obvious the weather for Thursday in both SA and Victoria wasn't looking promising so I had to rethink how to do things. I decided I would

still fly to the Grampians on Sunday, then early on the Monday morning I could fly out to YLED, collect the trophy and be back in YGMP before my client arrived from Melbourne.



Well as we all know, the best laid schemes of mice and men can, and often do, go awry.

So I rang Michael to let him know my change of intention. "Sorry Diana. I am away with work and was planning to be here for the Thursday for you, can't be here Mon – Wed".

Oh gosh, my plans were dashed and I wasn't going to get the trophy after all this effort and planning. Thinking quickly I said, "How about Sunday?"

"Yes, I will be around the airfield all day Sunday", he said.

"Great, I'll see you then" I replied. And so the replanning began again.

Sunday morning I arrived at the airfield at 8am. I instruct on Sundays so I wanted to have the Jabiru checked, refuelled and packed before my student arrived. The student arrived at 10, lesson conducted and was gone by noon. Now I had to start moving.

Out of uniform and into civvies, I jumped into the plane and taxied to the hold point. Departure time from YMBD 02:00 UTC. Let the journey begin!

I had already decided my first stop would be Edenhope (YEDE) to refuel. I had strong headwinds to contend with and YEDE was the best choice of available airfields along my planned route; not too busy, easy to get in and out of and right on track.



## RA-Aus Come And Get It Trophy (CAGIG) 13 Feb 2011

I arrived at YEDE at 04:00 UTC. After refuelling, a quick toilet stop and a phone call to Michael, 23 minutes later I was in the air and on my way again. Next destination was YLED via Hamilton. When I made the call to Michael on the ground, he informed me he had to leave the airfield by 5pm. I told him I was flying as fast as I could and would be there as soon as possible.



I saw the trophy slipping away again... I would never make it by 5pm EST. OK... I need to rethink my flight plan. Originally I figured going via Hamilton was the safest option. Having experienced an engine failure it was not something I wanted to experience again and I wanted to make sure I had glide options and suitable landing areas available IF I needed them.

After reviewing my flight plan I drew a path direct from YEDE to YLED and to my great relief, YVVA (Victoria Valley) was right in the middle of the Grampians near the Serra Range, so should anything happen, I did have an option. This also shortened my flight time so it was a good choice and the weather was favourable for getting some good height above the ranges.

When I reached YVVA I realised I was a lot more relaxed than I thought I would be. I had already resigned myself to the fact that I may miss out on the trophy, but I was enjoying this experience regardless. It was a big effort and I was doing it alone. It was a challenge I would be proud of, whether I got the trophy or not. I had already decided that if I arrived too late I would stay in town and fly out to the Grampians the



following morning.

Finally runway 11 of YLED was on the nose. Victory was in sight. I had reached my intended destination.

I landed and taxied up to the aeroclub. Completing my paperwork, I clambered out of the Jabiru and wandered up to say hello to the locals who were enjoying a drink or two on the deck.

“Hey, Michael has gone – you missed the trophy. What a shame, it will have to stay here!” Oh well, what could I say? We all had a good laugh and then another Michael introduced himself and invited me inside the aeroclub. We walked inside and over to a table and he handed me the trophy. I was ecstatic! I had done it and it didn't seem real. The trophy was so heavy - if I wasn't already over MTOW I would be now. (The trophy in my possession is the second one as the original trophy is full and going to the home of RA-Aus. The new trophy is an exact copy of the original and a fantastic effort by the person who made it. It's a credit to their skills.)

I grabbed a bottle of cold water, got the Jabiru refuelled by Garry the owner of the airfield, and headed off to my next destination.

The day was not over yet. There was plenty of light and time on the clock and I had a tailwind for this leg. I knew it would be a little easier than the 2 inbound legs.

I flew via Ararat, Stawell and Dadswell Bridge then around Mt Stapylton and in to the Asses Ears (YGMP) for my last landing of the day. Finally 08:30 UTC and I had landed. YAY... I had reached my intended destination and claimed the trophy. Total of 5.6 flight time... it had been a LONG day.



Monday evening I celebrated the trophy with my client... a few celebratory drinks and a relaxed BBQ meal with

## RA-Aus Come And Get It Trophy (CAGIT) 13 Feb 2011

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Mt Difficult and the Grampians as our back drop. What an awesome way to celebrate.

Leg 2 of the outbound journey was on Wed when I left YGMP for my return to YMBD. I had planned to leave later in the afternoon as it was only a 2 hour flight home, however the weather was coming in and I didn't really want to encounter the predicted thunderstorms so I decided to leave early instead. So by 22:16 UTC I was in the air and heading home. I encountered showers near Horsham and then again near Bordertown so I diverted around them.



On approaching abeam Coonalpyn the weather had cleared somewhat and the sun was shining. It was a lovely welcome home. I finally arrived at YMBD 00:30 UTC a total of 605nm 7.9hrs flight time.

For anyone who is, or has been, thinking about claiming the CAGIT – go for it. It is another great reason to go for a fly and a fabulous piece of RA-Aus history to collect along the way!



**Location: Murray Bridge, SA**

S35° 04.0' E139° 13.6'

13-16 February 2011

**Pilot: Diana Jemson**

Aircraft: Jabiru LSA-55/3J

**Inbound flight:** 13 Feb 2011 departed Murray Bridge, refuelled at Edenhope. Next stop Lethbridge Airpark to collect the trophy.

**Outbound flight:** Leg 1: 13 Feb 2011 departed Lethbridge for Asses Ears Wilderness Lodge at the Grampians (YGMP). Leg 2: 16 Feb 2011 departed YGMP for Murray Bridge.

**Total distance:** 605 nm, flight time 7.9 hours, fuel used 100 litres, average ground speed 90 knots.

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