



# ANZAC Jets at Tokoroa

Contributed by Steve Engle

THE ANNUAL 'ANZAC' jet meeting was held at the Tokoroa airfield over the 3 day Waitangi weekend (although some of the really keen guys were there flying from Thursday). Tokoroa airfield is a full size 850m sealed runway with grass runoff at both ends and is perfect for RC jets. We had performed a flying demo at the Tauranga Airshow the weekend before and had spread the word about our Tokoroa event so there was a great turn out by an appreciative public. Lots of "How high, how much, how fast" questions, and some great exposure for our hobby.

We call it the ANZAC meeting as we have several Australian pilots and families come over each year for the event which continues to grow in popularity. This year there were 7 Aussie pilots and 38 Kiwis (from places as far as Whangarei to Christchurch) registered.

An arrangement between Air NZ and the NZ Model Aeronautical Association made for a smooth process in regards to overseas pilots travelling with models. They were greeted by Air NZ check-in personnel already knowing who they were and what they were carrying. As a comparison, one of the visitors is a Captain for Virgin Australia. Even with his senior position within the airline he had a hard time getting them to accept his model for transport. So a big thanks to NZMAA and Air NZ for streamlining this process for us.

There were 60+ aircraft featuring a variety of models including Cougars/Panthers, 1/4 scale Hawk, Aermacchi, Vampire, Sport Boomerang type models, including Pete McGregor's black & white spotted plane which he has nicknamed 'Friesian' (like the cow). There were also 2 Ducted fan machines, a few EDFs, 2 turbine heli's including a huge 24kg Mil24 scale model, and a turbo-prop powered Fletcher FU24. Turbines at the meeting were mostly of the JetCat brand, but there were a few Wrens, Artes, Simjets and several old home-built kits.

Jason Starkey from Aus flew his BVM Kingat with a JetCat160 motor (about 35lbs thrust) a total of 22 flights! This worked out to 5 hours actual engine running time & nearly 100 litres of JetA1 burnt by Jason. I think those Aussies must owe us some Carbon Tax Credits!

Jason and the other Aussies kept commenting that they could not fly this much in Australia. As a comparison, they might drive six hours to an event, join the flightline queue for 45 minutes, and then



45 pilots and as many aircraft registered for the event.



The L-39 Albatros is always a favourite.



22 flights, 5 hours engine time, 100 litres of Jet A1.



50 lbs of thrust complete with thrust vectoring nozzle.



FU24 Fletcher smoke could equally be top dressing.



Mil24 complete with pilots and weaponry.



It looks big because it is, and it weighs 24kg!

have six planes in the air at once all flying racetrack circuits – boring :-). Contrast that to our NZ event where we had a maximum of three planes in the air at once and more often just one or two flying at a time.

There were two 'incidents' during the weekend. A 'Reaction54' model had its turbine seize – this is a very rare occurrence with modern turbines. Unfortunately he was in the worst possible place at the time it failed and he had to do a hasty downwind landing. He hit the ground very hard and the aircraft turned itself into a pile of kindling. At least it was easier to transport back home to Australia!

Stewart Hellyer's F16 decided it had had enough flying for a lifetime and the fuselage blew apart which of course was catastrophic. The spectators watched the solemn procession (similar to a funeral march) as the bits were bought back to the pits in a tarpaulin. Very sad – however Stu saw the upside to this and advises that he can now upgrade to a new model!

The reliability of modern turbines saw only a couple of fire extinguisher bursts being used when a start was abnormal – back in the old pioneering days a fire extinguisher going off was a regular occurrence during each start! We get spoiled these days with modern FADEC electronics controlling the turbines.

Rene Redmond from Galtech Models flew his model Wren turboprop Fletcher with Lew Woods advising him on technique to fly it in a scale manner (Lew has 10000+hrs on full-size Ag machines). The Fletcher has a smoke system which was really effective and gave the impression that he was doing top-dressing runs down the runway - Very impressive. In fact it was so impressive that the pilots voted that it was the best flight of the weekend.

Dave Hodges had his CompARF Eurosport with 50lbs of thrust (complete with thrust vectoring). He put on some good demos for the crowd and it was very weird to see a jet doing tumbles, pirouettes and high alpha stuff. Dave and Steve Nichols were kept busy over the weekend sorting out Turbine rating flight tests for some of the pilots.

A big thanks to Mike Sutton from HOT RC Hamilton for sponsoring the event. Many thanks also to the Hotrod club and local Air Training Cadets. They put on a bbq all weekend including tea/coffee and cold drinks. And the Hotrod club has proper toilet facilities. We had the use of Hank Meerkerk's full-size hangar for overnight storage of our models, and Bruce Simpson let us use his workshop facilities for a few emergency repairs. So a big thanks to them and also the SWMAC for their hospitality. It was great to see lots of volunteers helping with the clean-up and special thanks to Dave Hodges who spent 6 hours on his ride-on mower getting the site ready.

Three of us had the luxury of being able to stay Sunday night as well so we did some flying on Monday morning before heading home. As there was no one else around on Monday to witness it, my awful landing that took out my noseleg doesn't count! On that subject, there were a few undercarriage problems during the weekend, and a couple of dead-stick flameouts, but overall it was a very successful weekend. Some of the Aussies are booking their flights for the 2013 event already!

Photos of the event are on <http://sengle.smugmug.com> and <http://www.evokestudio.co.nz/aircraftevents.htm>

The next Jet event at Tokoroa is scheduled for 7th and 8th April. See our website [www.nzjma.com](http://www.nzjma.com) for details and come along for a look.

(Images by Sean Dick and Steve Engle.)

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## KiwiFlyer Event Guide

March 31st

**75th Anniversary Air Force Airshow**  
At RNZAF Base Ohakea (rain day Sunday 1st April). \$10/person, \$30/car/family. Gates open 8am. Ground displays from 9am. All the Air Force aircraft plus F-18A Hornets, C-17, warbirds, civilian aircraft, and much more. More information on [www.airforce.mil.nz](http://www.airforce.mil.nz)

March 31st

**Tokoroa Aero Club Annual Fly-in**  
From 10am onwards at Tokoroa. All aircraft welcome. Light refreshments available. Hangars open for viewing. Planes, Gyros, Microlights, Models and Helicopters. No landing fees. Sealed and grass runways.

April 6th-8th

**Warbirds Over Wanaka**  
Major biennial NZ airshow during Easter at Wanaka. Expect the usual outstanding turnout of aircraft, stalls, wine & food, children's facilities and entertainment. Phone 0800 224 224 or visit [www.warbirdsoverwanaka.com](http://www.warbirdsoverwanaka.com)

April 15th

**Turangi Aero Club**  
Monthly fly-in, 3rd Sunday of every month. BBQ lunch. Tony: 027 453 3740.

April 28th

**Commerating ANZAC WWI Airshow**  
At Masterton, midday to 5pm. Airshow from 2.30 to 5pm. Phone 021 311 606.

June 1st-4th

**NZAWA Rally**  
Queen's Birthday Weekend at Masterton. Competitions. WWI theme. E: [contactus@nzawa.org.nz](mailto:contactus@nzawa.org.nz)

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