

From West to East of Australia with Faeta NG

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The new home for Atec 321 Faeta NG is at Jingalup, Western Australia. I have a farm (currently leased out) which has an airstrip YJIP and hangar and house that I can still use. It is the base for my flying school "Willflyhire". I have had such a busy year in 2021 that I decided to have a trip to the eastern states for a holiday.

A friend Anatole decided to get a lift with me. We fueled up and left on the 1st Feb at about 8:30 AM. I have flown the Faeta for at least 40 hours before departure. The weather conditions had been in the high 30's recently with strong winds near the ground, so I have spent much of my time flying above 8000 feet, to find cooler and smoother air. The forecast was for strong winds on our trip, so more flight at height seemed the best way forward.

I have over 4000 hours in ultralight aircraft and of one of the things I really like about the Faeta, is it's ability to get to height fast, while still making good time across the ground is great. It doesn't require a slow climb airspeed to get to height quickly. Climbing at 100 knots still give very good climb rate, I love it!

Our first leg was going to be 440 NM to Caiguna, however, my friends morning coffee dictated that we had to have a stop. I chose Mount Short, a small public airstrip almost directly on route. As expected once we got below about 4500 feet the turbulence began, and as we got closer to landing the mechanical turbulence from the wind got even greater. Landing was uneventful with the strong headwind and large flaps our groundspeed at landing was nice and low.

Off again for Caiguna. Generally I used AvPlan to find the best height for economical flight to the destination. This was 7500 feet or 9500 feet on this part of the trip as we were travelling east using hemispherical cruising levels. We were above scattered cloud on this part of the trip and it was very pretty. We had passed over farmland that was very familiar to me, however, I always enjoy seeing how it looks at a different time of year. I have three other Rotax 912 powered aircraft and usually cruise with at least 5200 rpm. I adopted this in the faeta and had fuel flows of about 15 litres per hour or less which is significantly less than with my other planes and I was travelling approximately 30 knots faster. I was very happy. Landing at Caiguna the wind of ~15 knots was all crosswind, however, with a nice wide runway, still no problem. We had a bite to eat and a drink and fueled up confirming our total of 4 hours flying and 60 litres making 15 per hour.

The trip to Nullarbor included much more sightseeing. We flew along parts of the coast and cliffs down to 500 feet above ground level.

The wind was coming off the ocean, so it was fairly smooth on the ocean side of the cliffs. The cliffs near the WA/SA border are several hundred feet high. The wind passing up these cliffs produces a wave that can be ridden and also strong turbulence on the inland side of the cliffs.

At Nullarbor we were able to land and push the Faeta to be refueled from the premium unleaded bowser with the cars.

We overnighted at Coorabie, a farm stay. Lovely friendly environment with dinner and breakfast.

Day Two the wind was already up when we left. Another sightseeing day with me wanting to see the damage to the transcontinental railway. I went direct to Lyons and then followed the railway to Kingoonya, then Glendambo where the Stuart Highway was flooded. It was rough again down low, so we climbed and headed for Port Augusta. Filled up with fuel and said goodbye to my friend, who was heading to Melbourne.

Climbing out of Port Augusta you have the spectacular scenery of Spencers Gulf and the Flinders Ranges coming into view. Very special.

I headed for Menindee for the night. The Lakes seemed pretty full.

Cobar was next stop, and was surprised by the size of the runway compared to Menindee. The wind had got even stronger 18 gusting 28. I fuelled up and waited to see what the weather would do. My destination for the day was either Armidale or Coffs Harbour. As I flew towards Armidale it became clear from weather reports that Coffs Harbour was a no go due low cloud and that even making Armidale might be difficult. There has been significant rain in NSW making for a green expanse below. Armidale airport is up on the Great Dividing Range at 3556 feet. I had to see if there was room between the cloud base and the ranges for me to safely proceed. I arrived at Armidale after a leisurely two and a half days flying having travelled greater than 1800 NM.

The following photos are in order from west to east. The location from my phone on the top left corner.

Coastline near Eucla



Coastline east of Caiguna



Coorabie



North East of Nullarbor



Kingoonya



Glendambo



Coondambo



Wirraminna



New South Wales



New South Wales



Menindee Lakes



Menindee Lakes



Sandy Creek



Hermidale



New South Wales



Mount Harris



12:45

4G

GS 133kts	FIA ML 123.9	UTC 01:45Z
ETA 03:18:48Z	DTG 205.6n	Cancel DCT YARM

The map displays a flight path from the top towards the 'Bealbah' airfield. A green aircraft icon is positioned at the end of the path. A vertical green bar highlights the path. A yellow circle is centered on the 'Bealbah' airfield. The map includes labels for 'Merri Merri Crsek', 'Bourbah', 'North Woodside', 'Earlside', 'Wemahung', and 'Haddon'. A 'Cancel' button is visible on the map.

-31.311
148.018
DD.DDD

YCBA	YARM 03:18:48Z ETA	YCFS
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Bourbah



Emerald Hill



Dowe National Park



Armidale

