

From the Pits.

The Newsletter of the Weston Model Flying Club

www.weston-model-flying-club.org

October 2003

Editorial

You may have noticed that the newsletters this year have been longer and, many people have commented, much more interesting! This is due to a number of club members contributing some very good articles, for which I'm extremely grateful. However, there is always room for more input, and it would be especially nice to hear from some of our new members on their thoughts and experiences of the club. You don't always need to write a full article, even a few lines will do. So if you have anything to say, please get in touch. Contact details are on the last page.



Club Meetings

Following the announcement in the last issue that we were going to try the Ashcombe Pub, it has been decided by the members present at the September meeting that we should stay there for future meetings, at least until next summer. If you've not found it yet, see the map on the back page.

Please also note that, since the first Thursday in January 2004 falls on New Years Day, the January meeting will be on Jan 8th NOT Jan 1st

AGM

The AGM will be on **Thursday 6th November at the Ashcombe Pub**. Please try to attend. As well as choosing the new committee, the club's future intentions with regard to the field will be discussed. A buffet will be provided, and a raffle will be held with some good prizes.

There will also be a review of the club safety rules.

Flying Site Improvements

At long last the planning permission for the container has been received, a suitable one has been bought and installed, and the club mower is now stored in it. Keys are kept by members of the committee and a few other regular fliers. So now there is no excuse for not cutting the grass! Once again, special thanks must go to **Mick Brumby** who has made the effort numerous times this summer.



Over the winter the container will be painted green and some bushes planted around it to comply with the landscaping requirements of the planning permission.

Casualties



Terry Davis arrived at the field in August with this GeeBee racer model. The real thing was a 1930's American racer with a fearsome reputation for instability, which isn't too surprising just from looking at it. Even Terry seemed rather reluctant to fly this at first, but it finally took to the air and flew well, although apparently feeling rather strange in a turn. On landing however the GeeBee's vices showed up. It really needs to be landed fast and there just isn't the room at the Wick field, added to which the CG was later found to be an inch too far back. The inevitable tip-stall left it with a damaged cowl and Terry swearing he'd never fly it again! But he did...



Pat Teakle's Astro-Hog ended up in the ditch after the engine cut. Fortunately it stayed afloat and Pat is seen here recovering it at full stretch with only Steve preventing him from following the model in. The second photo shows that neither model nor pilot suffered any damage!

BMFA

The Western Area of the BMFA, which represents about 35 clubs in this area including ours, is still looking for volunteers to help on the committee. The existing Secretary and Treasurer are both standing down at the AGM, and if no replacements can be found our area will not have a voice in the BMFA. Speak to me if you are interested, or come along to the Western Area AGM at the BAWA in Filton, Bristol on Dec 7.

BMFA Bulletins

The BMFA produces a monthly bulletin on its activities and other items of interest to members. Only one copy is sent to each club, which I receive as club secretary. To be honest most are of limited interest to us as they are mainly concerned with council business and non-RC matters (e.g. free flight, control-line etc.) but I thought I would mention it here so that you all know what goes on. If anyone wants to see the bulletins, they are available on the BMFA Web site, or you are welcome to borrow them from me.

One recent article did catch my eye recently however, and is reproduced here.

INSURANCE CLAIMS PROCEDURE

Would all members and clubs please note that should an injured party (the third party) claim against a member who has caused them damage (the first party), then a claim has to be actually made! The accident notification form that we request completed by the first party, is **NOT** a claim form. It is simply a notification to the insurers of a **POSSIBLE** claim.

This procedure applies to all claims including a member to member claim. The fact that the third party may be a **BMFA** member is irrelevant as it is the first party's insurance cover which is being invoked.

Should the third party's damaged property be independently insured, e.g. a car, then we advise that the third party contacts their own Insurers to settle the claim on their behalf in exactly the same way if they had a road accident and they held the other party responsible.

Remember, the fact that the first party has submitted an accident report does not mean that a cheque is going to miraculously appear in the post for the third party. Insurance, no matter which type, simply does not work that way. The insurers will always want to satisfy themselves that the first party is indeed responsible for the accident so it is up to the third party to demonstrate why they hold the first party culpable and to state what they are claiming for, preferably in writing.

It is imperative that you get it right, particularly member to member claims, which will assist in the expedience of claims!

Tips

Still on the subject of the BMFA, the latest handbook contains some useful advice about the increased risk from interference from the growing range of microwave links around, such as the one thought to be operating from the sewage works at Wick. Although these signals are much higher frequency than ours, and highly directional, if you are unlucky enough to fly through a beam it could be picked up directly by the receiver without going through the aerial. The simple solution is just to wrap the receiver in kitchen foil.

The Rebirth of the Mirus.

In the late eighties when the Club used to fly on the airfield in Weston and was known as Westland and Weston District Model Flying Club, the usual models flown by members were of the vintage variety - Quaker Flash, Junior 60's, Eros etc and for the more adventuresome a Super Sixty. It was the days when Pat did not have a grey beard, Trevor was even slimmer and I had hair!!

There were many diesel powered aircraft, quite a few 4 strokes and rarely anything bigger than a 40. But one model stuck in my memory and it was flown with great skill by **John Williams**, it was a **Mirus**. It had a swept back high wing and although only powered by a 25, it used to leave everything else standing. Mind you with the majority of models being vintage that was not difficult. I believe that John's



Mirus was destroyed not by him but by **Graham Bunkum** who borrowed it for a limbo competition. He easily got below the tape but forgot the pole that was supporting the tape!!

The model was designed by **Ken Stokes** in 1981 and was quite a radical design for those days. The fuselage is of 1/4" and 3/16" balsa with just a couple of formers from 1/8" ply. The wings are of veneered foam which in the 80's were not as common as they are now. The wingspan is 36" - in those days they had inches and not centimetres!

Over the years I had often thought I would like to try a Mirus but the kits were no longer in production and plans were nowhere to be found. Then one day when browsing through the e-bay web site I spotted a kit for auction. Fortunately there was not a lot of interest shown in it and I managed to buy it for a very reasonable sum.

Those of you who have built from a plan or kit would find it very easy to put together although there are one or two points that differ from current construction techniques. For example the foam wings are not joined by a fibre glass bandage but are epoxied together then reinforced with 1/64" and 1/32" ply top and bottom. The wings are not secured with dowel and nylon bolts but with 3 ordinary wood screws. I decided to build it with as little deviation from the original plan as possible and the only alteration that I made was to use an engine mount and not the beech bearers shown on the drawing. The fuselage is narrow but you can just get in standard size servos and receiver. Initially I used a Leo 25 which I had although the plan said any 19 to 25 motor would be suitable. The servos and battery are as far back as possible but I still had to add a small amount of lead at the tail. The overall weight came out as dead on 3 lbs.

The model was finished in Solarfilm on the fuselage and Oracote on the wings. I have never used Oracote before but I picked it up when I passed the model shop in Salisbury and as it was the only fluorescent high visibility film they had. So I gave it a go and it's easy to use, but not cheap!

Flying - Came the first attempt to fly it. A hand launch by Pat (Did I mention it has no undercarriage?) A vicious turn to the left and despite hard right on the ailerons it landed heavily loosening the fin. Back to the workshop – re-fixed the fin, gave more throw on the controls and 2 degrees of right thrust.

Second attempt, and problems with the engine and despite changing all the plumbing it still would not run consistently well.

Third attempt - after changing the engine for an OS 25 it pulled away from the hand launch and rapidly climbed away with hardly any input to the controls. Great I thought but in fact after a 15 minute flight it was obvious that some down thrust was needed. Back to the workshop!!

Fourth flight - everything was running well and I had changed the 9 x 6 prop to a 9 x 5 to give a few more revs. A gentle launch and it was away at a great rate of knots. It flew as though on rails and although it covered the sky at a good speed it was manageable even for an old guy like me.

At long last the Mirus had flown again and I had fulfilled my ambition of nearly 20 years to fly it - was the wait worth it? You bet!!

Gerry Crossman.

PS - For anyone interested in constructing a Mirus I have the plan and you would be welcome to borrow it to get a copy. Pat has the templates for the wings and would make you a set for about £15. It's a cheap and quickly constructed model that should give you plenty of thrills in the air - give it a go, you won't regret it.

Up a Gum Tree



The nearby hedges and trees have claimed a few victims this summer. In particular the large tree to the East has caught a couple of people out recently, and I've been there myself in the past...

So, if you do find your model parked higher up than normal, what can you do to recover it? Well, we have stashed a couple of long wooden poles behind the notice-board which can reach the lower branches, or about mid-way up if you lash two together with a bit of rope. Beyond that however, it really needs someone with a head for heights to climb up. A useful trick is to take the gate to the field (near the water works) off its hinges and use it as a ladder to get up the trunk of the tree.

However, the most useful advice remains: Don't go there in the first place... Be aware that distances can be very deceptive and give the tree a wide berth when on landing approach.

Now, about people landing in the hedge...



Air Combat

Many of you will have read the bit in the last newsletter about my ME109 and the forthcoming Air Combat at a field near Yeovil; well the day finally arrived. My pits man/launcher (brother Mark) and I arrived at the flying site to find safety nets up and pilots testing and trimming their planes; it was a warm and sunny day with virtually no wind, perfect for a bit of aerial combat. We were met by the organiser **Dave Cowley**, introduced to the other pilots and given the rules and programme for the day's competition.

For the members I have not bored on the following Sunday afternoons, let me tell you a bit of what it's all about. A group of pilots turn up at a field with twelfth semi-scale 'warbirds' (fighter planes built between 1935 and 1945) fitted with an appropriate size engine (between a 15 & 25 depending on wing area). These can be kits, plans or scratch built using any construction method you like. Mine was a kit from Mainly Models and is predominately blue foam and brown paper, a quick build, very strong, light, bump resistant and easy to glue back together with 5 minute epoxy.

The pilots are divided into groups of six or seven; the planes have a 12 metre by 10-15mm paper streamer attached and are lined up on the starting line ready for a Le Mans start. There are a series of whistles before the start to allow the teams to get ready, the readiness whistle is blown and everyone has to be behind the readiness line, there is a deadly calm, all the planes dead on their starting boxes, and the group of fliers wait for the start whistle. That's it, the whistle blown, and the dash to the planes; radios on, engines started and up into the air with a mighty heave, the fun begins, seven minutes of full bore chase and be chased.



The seven minutes have literally flown by and it's time to score the round. Points are awarded for streamer cutting, flight time and returning with your own streamer intact. There are heavy minus points for crossing the safety line and on the judge's discretion minus points for non-engagement, (non-engagement did not seem a problem, two minutes in the air and you're a combat ace!) There were four rounds throughout the day giving plenty of time to patch up your model, and I needed it; at one stage the plane was literally in three pieces, but what else is five minute epoxy for. At the end of the four rounds the points were added up and the final was flown.

I did not make the final and finished eighth, not bad I thought for a first timer.

The awards followed, I was presented with the certificate for completing a tour of duty along with the others. The top three were awarded prizes donated by the Hobby Hanger Model Shop, these included hats etc. and the top prize was an OS15 class motor worth about £100.

A good fun day over; if any of you are budding combat fliers why not have a look at the ACES INTERNATIONAL web site www.welcome.to/aces

I think this would be good fun as a team event, so if any of you are interested maybe we could get together and take on the other squadrons next year.

Mike Pope

The Kamco Kadet

Once upon a time... about 26 years ago in fact, when I first took up RC model flying seriously, I used to fly with the Bristol Club which flew from Whitchurch Airfield alongside AMARC. At that time the dominant trainer was the Kamco Kadet. I had one, and so did most other beginners and a few experienced flyers as well.



Kamco was a local firm started by **Tony Ells** and others in 1973. Our own **Pat Teakle** spent several years working for them in the mid-70s. Other products included the Kavalier low-wing sport plane and the Kossak biplane.

The Kadet has excellent flying characteristics, largely due to its semi-symmetrical wing, as opposed to the flat-bottom section used on most other trainers. With the deep fuselage and good dihedral it's very stable yet quite responsive. Even with rudder-only control it can easily be flown inverted. The built-up wing common to most kits of the time gave a very light model which also contributed to the flying qualities.

My Kadet not only survived my learning to fly at the time, but also the next 20 years in the spare room and attic until I got bitten by the flying bug again 4 years ago and it flew again. This time powered by an Irvine 25 it was fine in the air but was decidedly marginal lifting off the grass at Wick, frequently requiring a hand-launch. Several times I nearly scrapped it to make room for something newer, but it seemed such a waste that I ended up keeping it and grew to like it as a change from higher powered sports models.

However, there was still this nagging thought that a more powerful engine would be nice, especially when carrying my camera aloft for aerial photography. Then one day the Irvine just stopped dead and an inspection showed it had ingested some metal bits from somewhere, scored the cylinder liner and was scrap. So taking the opportunity, I bought an ASP36 from Just Engines. Advances in technology these days meant that this engine was the same weight & size as the Irvine25 but with what seemed like twice the power. It even fitted in the same mounting holes.

The extra power transformed the Kadet. Lifting off grass was easy, and the climb was almost vertical. I'd only had 4 flights and was just getting to know it when... well let's just say that it's best to have just one transmitter at a time on the channel you're flying on...

The fuselage is remarkably strong and was largely intact despite the full power vertical dive, but the damage to the wing and tail, combined with 26 years of fuel seeping under the covering meant that the model was a write-off. The carburettor was broken off, but I thought I could get another one, shame to waste the engine. So I dug out the original plans which I still had, bought a set of foam wings from Pat, and started work on a replacement.



When it was nearly finished, I had a closer look at the engine and discovered a crack in the crankcase which meant it was scrap too. So from an engine without a plane I now had a plane without an engine. Back to Just Engines for another ASP36. So my old Kadet now has a new fuselage, new wing, new tail and new engine. Still got the same wheels though... This time I've gone for an aileron wing, but I will probably do a built-up one for rudder-only at a later date as an alternative.

The Kadet had the same place in the seventies as perhaps the Ready 2 does today as the ubiquitous club trainer. Could we be seeing a Kadet revival? It really is an ideal introduction to building a model. The fuselage is just sheet balsa and you can either do a built-up wing or get a foam one from Pat. **Bernard Sutton** has built one from my plans and there is at least one other being built. If you want one as well, you're welcome to borrow the plans.



Mind the cars



One of the drawbacks of a relatively small site like ours at Wick is the proximity of the car park to the flying field. While it's very convenient to just walk a few yards from car to pits, it brings some obvious hazards.

When the wind is from the North or South, i.e. straight down the field, it can be very difficult to avoid flying over the cars. So what can you do? See if you know which of these suggestions are correct:

1. Leave your car's tailgate open so that if your engine cuts on take-off you can fly straight into the car.
2. Learn & practice cross-wind take-offs and landings.
3. Fly over the cars in knife-edge so you have more chance of passing between them
4. Change the take-off direction or even move some of the cars.



If in doubt, consult a safety officer or experienced club member. Just remember, it may never happen, but if it does the consequences could be disastrous for all of us, so: **KEEP CLEAR OF THE CARS!!!** And in particular, please avoid the blue Rover 200...

Scenes from the field



Paul Lathall flies his 'zagi'-like bungee-launched flying-wing glider at the August club meeting. Made out of cortex (the stuff that house 'For Sale' boards are made of!) and tape. Only lasts a few seconds in the air each time (longest flight so far is 1 minute!), but is good fun for a while.

My Gladiator waits its turn in the summer sunshine



All lined up and ready – A collection of **Pat Teakle**'s past and present planes await their turn as well.

Got to start them young - **Robin Thompson** gives a budding pilot some advice.



New member **Ivan Sterment** receives the prestigious "Rhubarb Stick" award at his first attempt...

Fun Fly League

The August fun-fly event, organised by **Roger Moore** and myself, involved trying to hit a set of polystyrene sticks planted across the field. Not surprisingly, this is not easy to do, the main problem being getting the depth perception wrong and flying between the sticks.



Roger won it, being the only person to hit all 4 sticks. I thought I'd better even up the organisers' score by coming last...

The September event began as a novel 'bomb-drop' contest. **Mike Pope** had built a servo-operated box which released a 'bomb' (actually a soft toy) from the club trainer, the idea being to get the closest to a target in the middle of the field. Unfortunately, after only 2 attempts, the box was damaged in a heavy landing, and we reverted to a dead-stick landing competition instead. This is not exactly easy either; the picture below shows the 3rd place distance being measured, so you can imagine where most of the other 9 competitors ended up! Nevertheless, **Pat Teakle** won this one, getting within 11' of the target.



So, the League is over for this year. Only four events were actually held out of the six originally planned. Following the original idea of taking the best 3 scores and assigning 10 points for a win, 9 for second etc. gave the following results:

1 st	Pat Teakle	27 points
2 nd	Roger Moore	25
3 rd =	Paul Lathall	23
	Ian Armstrong	23
5 th	Mike Pope	19

Congratulations to Pat and thanks to the 16 people who entered at least one event. See you next year for another one!

Tips

At least two crashes in the last year are suspected to be due to the crystal having vibrated out of the receiver. It's a good idea to put a bit of tape around the receiver to stop the crystal coming out in this way.

Caption Competition

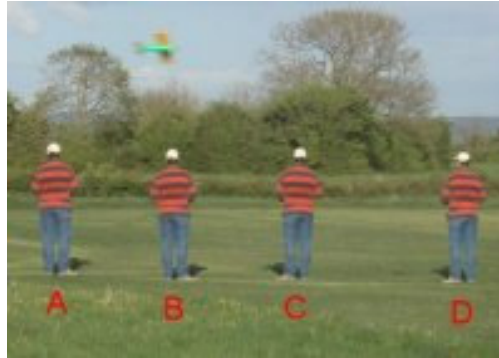


“Thank you for the award, but I’m not sure the trophy will fit on the mantelpiece.”

Steve O’Brien doing... well, your guess is as good as mine actually...

If you have any better ideas, let’s hear from you.

Competition Answers



The answer to last issue’s competition was **A**. For those interested, this is how it was done: Two photos were used. The images were loaded into the PaintShopPro image editing program, and the outline of Kevin was cut out using the Edge Following tool, altered and pasted back in. So **A** is in the original photo, **B** is a straight copy, **C** is a mirrored copy, and **D** is a mirrored copy from the second photo.

Safety

A recent article on an Internet forum described an incident where a large engine which was being hand-started began running backward and kicked the plane backwards, nearly catching the hand of the person holding it.

Fortunately no harm was done this time, but it is worth remembering that model engines can start running backwards so be prepared. Always start your engine on minimum throttle, and keep your hands as far away from the prop as possible.

Tips

When trying to remove dents in a film-covered surface, just heating often doesn’t work, because the film is stuck to the depressed wood. Use a bit of Fablon or similar strong sticky material to pull at the film bit by bit and lift it away from the wood over the surrounding area as well as the dent. Then you can use an iron or heat gun to shrink the entire film area before you press it back down, which will then look smooth. Thanks to **Mike Barnett** for this one.

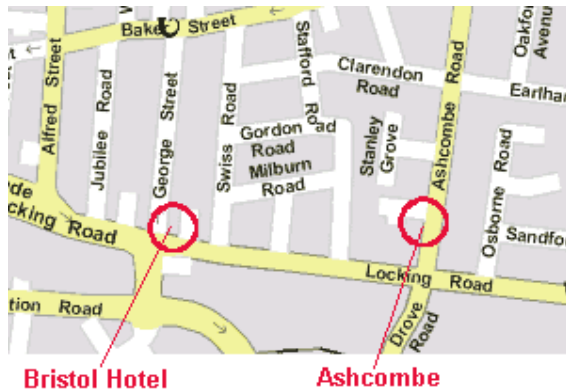
Events

Forthcoming events this year:

Thursday 6 th Nov 2003 8pm	Club meeting & AGM at the Ashcombe
Thursday 4 th Dec 2003 8pm	Club meeting at the Ashcombe
Sunday 7 th Dec 2003 2pm	BMFA Western Area AGM at the BAWA Southmead Rd Filton
Thursday 8 th Jan 2004 ** 8pm	Club meeting at the Ashcombe

** Note the January 2004 meeting is on the second Thursday of the month to avoid New Years Day.

Club Meeting Venue



Email

If you currently get this newsletter by post and you would prefer to get it by email, let me know at the address below. Email recipients get their copy earlier and in full colour!

All club meetings from now on will be at the **Ashcombe** pub in Ashcombe Road WSM.

How to contact the Editor

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Thanks to **Steve O'Brien** & **John Hopkin** for printing and distribution.

The Newsletter is issued (with luck!) 4 times a year, at the end of January, April, July and October. Any contributions should be sent to the editor by the middle of that month.