

From the Pits

The Newsletter of the Weston Model Flying Club

July 2009

www.wmfclub.co.uk



Editorial

It's been rather a long time since the last newsletter, but hopefully this will get us back on track for more regular ones from now on.

Our main feature in this issue is the report on Club 2000 Pylon racing back in April. There's also another article on safety, please read it, especially the bit about insurance.

Club Meetings

From the September meeting onwards we're back at the Congresbury Memorial Hall again. This will hopefully allow some indoor flying in the hall next to the meeting room. If you've not been there before, directions are on the last page.

Field Improvements

The new clubhouse is finally in place and in use. Not only is this of great use on normal flying days, but it also means that from now on the summer meetings at the field can always take place whatever the weather. Special thanks are due to **Ron Bebe** who masterminded and arranged the project. The clubhouse was of course bought with a grant from the Lottery.

Family Day

This year's Family Day / barbeque was held on July 18th. We were very fortunate with the weather, the Saturday being just about the only dry day that fortnight. **Ross Floyd** kindly brought along his hovercraft and gave rides to a number of people. In fact he reckoned on having done several miles around the field by the end!



Music was provided once again by **Rob Dickson** and his band, with catering by **Ivan Sterment**. Thanks to all who organised it and those who and turned up to support it. There are some more photos and videos on the web site.

Safety Reminders

Just a few thoughts about safety. We don't really have many safety issues these days, but it's important not to become complacent.

Basic safety principles

Some of these are club rules, some are just common sense, but all are worth remembering:

1. Always use restraints when starting your model, and always have it facing out of the pits. Recently the propeller and spinner came off a plane as it was being started and flew right across the ditch behind the pits. If the model had been facing outwards, the prop would have flown right through the pit area.
2. Don't taxi in front of someone on the field (e.g. in the pilot box), because they can't always see your plane if they are watching their own. And don't taxi into or out of the pits for obvious reasons!
3. Mobile phones! It's a club rule but many people are still using mobiles in the pits.
4. Flying too far away can cause disorientation; a few models have been lost recently due to this.
5. Don't forget the sun (what sun?). Well, when it's there don't fly in front of it. This may sound obvious, but a couple of people have done so recently and lost sight of their models.
6. Don't fly behind the flight line. See the field layout on the next page for details.

Insurance implications

We mostly take our BMFA insurance for granted, as most of us have rarely if ever had to call on it. But it's important to remember some basic facts:

1. The BMFA insurance is third-part liability, i.e. it protects us against being sued for any damage or injury we may cause in the course of our flying activities.
2. Like any insurance company, they will not pay out if their terms and conditions are not adhered to.

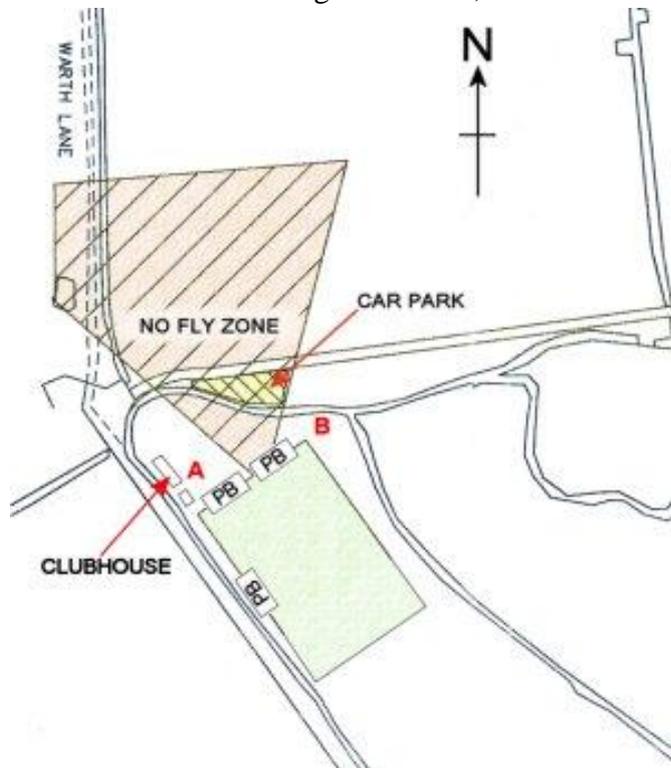
Hence if there is an incident, and you are found to have not complied with all the relevant rules or guidelines, then there is a possibility that the insurance will not pay out. This means that you will be sued, and the club will also be sued (i.e. your actions will affect everybody).

3. A few years ago a silencer came off a plane and hit a car despite the plane being flown safely well inside the field boundary. Hence even the best and most careful pilots can have accidents due to equipment failure.
4. Damage to property like this can be serious enough, but if injury is caused the consequences can be enormous. The BMFA liability goes up to £5M as this is the level of compensation for serious injuries. Imagine being faced with such a claim and then finding that the insurance will not pay out because you didn't comply with some club safety rule.

Having said all that, don't let it put you off flying; it's as safe as you make it!

Field Layout

The flying arrangements at the field have been overhauled in the last year, with the addition of pilot boxes and the take-off cone. As you can see from the diagram there are 3 pilot box positions (marked PB on the diagram, and two pit locations, A and B. The pilot boxes are marked with green stakes, and should be small enough so that the pilots stand in



a group well within earshot of one-another. The cone marks the take-off point, and should be about 20 meters away from the pilot box..

Finally there is a “flight line” which is an imaginary line through the current pilot box, parallel to the wind direction, and all flying takes place in front of this line. It has behind it the pits and cars, and this area is known as dead air space.

The first person at the field should decide which pits and pilot box to use depending on the wind direction, using the definition of the flight line given above. If the wind changes during the day, the position should be reviewed and changed if necessary.

So for example, if the wind is from the North or South, the pits would be at A and the pilots would stand on the West side of the field. With the wind West / East the pits would be at B.

FPV – First Person Viewing

This is a new form of RC made possible by recent technology developments, where the plane contains a video camera and real-time link to the ground, and the pilot flies the plane by watching a view from the plane on a screen or goggles. At least one of our club members has successfully tried it.

However, if you are tempted, please see the guidelines set out by the BMFA on this subject. They can be found on the BMFA website and a copy was circulated by email recently. The document makes it very clear that persons engaging in this activity are only insured if the guidelines are followed exactly. Please see the section on the previous page on the consequences of not being insured. We would not in any way wish to discourage the use of FPV, but it must be done as the BMFA specifies or not at all.

Club 2000 Pylon Racing – Report from April meeting

Pylon racing is a competition consisting of radio controlled model aircraft flying around a triangular course for ten laps. A number of timed heats are flown, usually four aircraft at a time. The flyers with the lowest aggregate heat times go forward into semi finals and finals. If any pilot cuts inside a pylon one tenth of his heat time is added to that time, two cuts in one heat and that time is disallowed. The aim is to fly as fast as possible without cutting inside any pylons. Each pilot has beside him a caller whose job it is to tell the pilot when the flag man on the furthest pylon has dropped his flag, indicating that the aircraft has reached the required distance up to the number one pylon. Flag men on each pylon will also indicate if any flyer has cut inside.

Pylon events are generally well organised and a good time is had by all competitors. **Club 2000** is intended as an introduction class. The models are cheap to build and use standard motors.

Race meetings take place monthly throughout the summer, either at Northampton or Peterborough. The national championships take place annually.



Team Weston arrive & unload

Journey to Northampton took just over 2 hours. We arrived in good time at 9.15 with racing scheduled to start at 10am. As it happened we didn't get started until 10.45 – there is always a lot to talk about at the first meeting of the year as new racers are unveiled. The new experimental electric class prompted a lot of conversation –as it turned out their performance seemed to be very similar to their IC counterparts.



Our racers assembled in the car park ready for pre race checks.

There are rules governing plane design. In summary;

1.The fuselage cross section at bulkhead and wing trailing edge shall be a minimum of 2 1/4" X 2 1/4". Wing fairings, fillets or motor cowlings are not allowed.

2.The wing shall have a minimum span of 35" and shall be a constant cord. The minimum wing thickness shall be 7/8" for the 35" span. The minimum wing area shall be 300 sq.

inches.

3.The only allowable motors will be Magnum 25 R/C, Thunder Tiger Pro 25 R/C, Leo25 R/C, SC 25 R/C, ASP 25 Mk 3 R/C, Irvine 25 R/C, GMS 25 R/C and OS 25 FX.. Standard mufflers & no tuning.

4. Minimum weight, excluding fuel shall be 2 1/4 pounds.

5. The only allowable propeller is a Radio Active Manufacturing 9x6



Support vehicle arrives with trailer containing pylons, safety cages, flags, stop watches etc

The trailer has been refurbished for this year. You can see the fuel holder and pump mounting on the side of the trailer. Everyone has to use the same fuel for racing.

Other teams prepare in the car park



There are two basic plane designs – v tail (orange in photo) which fly better in knife edge but are harder to set up and fly smoothly – and standard tail (blue) which Mike and I fly. ARTF kits are available too. They come with either balsa or fibreglass fuselages. Fibreglass is quicker to build and more durable - but harder to repair!



The pits area and control point are in position

The course layout is a long triangle and is set with the wind blowing from the No1 pylon towards the base pylons when possible.

Course size is 120 ft between base pylons and 380 ft from the base pylons to the No.1 pylon. The start is 60ft from the base pylons. The four launching positions are marked at 15ft intervals along the start line centre to the course. Four time keepers

position themselves along the base line between No. 2 and 3 pylons. Four flag marshals sit at the No1 pylon to signify to the pilot when he has reached the pylon or if he has come inside the pylon. The pylon flag marshals use a "cut board" to signify a cut at the pylons. The course is flown in an anti clockwise direction.

Mike surveys the competition

As a newcomer you start in group 3. When you attain an aggregate time of less than 360 seconds you are elevated to group 2. You are then no longer eligible for group 3 championship points or the group 3 final. When you attain an aggregate time of less than 330 seconds you become a group 1 flyer and are only eligible for group 1 championship points and the overall semis and final.



As novices Mike and I are in group 3.

Pits area fills up ready for the start of racing

Time to fill up with the standard fuel and tune up engines to peak rpm.

General consensus is that a well run in Irvine 25 is the best engine – though they now fetch premium prices on Ebay as they are no longer in production. The OS25 FX, recently added to the approved list is second favourite – though they do seem to run better ‘out of the box’.



Looking down the course from the red start point to the first turn

You can see the blue flag on top of pylon 1 - centre of picture just above the tree line. It gets pretty busy at turn 1 since all four planes typically arrive at once on the first lap!

The secret is to fly smoothly, at constant height and in as tight a circuit as possible. Any sharp change of direction bleeds off the speed very quickly.

Mike ready to take a turn on pylon 2

Pylon cuts are marked up and then announced – so pilots know if they are flying too tight and can then adjust during the race. Two cuts and you are disqualified from that race.

Racers do hit the pylons – it makes you duck I can tell you!



One minute warning

- The starter;
- asks you to hold up your plane to identify it to the flag men at Pylon 1
 - checks there are no clashes in radio frequencies
 - asks you to switch on and check controls
 - gives a one minute warning
 - calls/pilots then start engines
 - starter drops his flag and away you go!

Protective head wear is mandatory.

Graham Clark, event organiser, gets away to a good start

The blue tag attached to his trousers enables the flag men at pylons 2&3 to identify any cuts and attribute to the correct pilot.

How did we get on? My best time 102 seconds. Mike's 105 seconds. We both put in enough times on the board to qualify for the Group 3 Final.

For comparison purposes – on average the top Group 1 flyers will do the 10 laps in under 80 seconds. And the best time at last years Nationals was 75.35!



HAVE A GO – IT'S A CRACKING DAY OUT!

Pete Richards

Web Site

The web site Gallery page has had a slight update recently, and it's now easier to add photos and even videos, the latter being either local or links to youtube. If you have any photos or videos you would like to put there please let me know.

Fun Fly

Well the summer is nearly here and this Sunday saw the start of the fun fly events (9th May) so I thought I would start with something simple, The two minute Flight.

Points awarded for the closest time under two minutes timed from take off to the time the wheels touch the patch. No score if you are over two minutes or you do not land on the patch.

With nine pilots competing only four had a usable time, the results are as follows-

1 st	Steve Kitteridge	1m 50secs
2 nd	Dave Tremellin	1m 30s
3 rd	Pete Richards	1m 33s
4 th	Neville Brownlee	8s

No Score

Will Richards	2m 03
Mike Ling	2m 08
Gerry Crossman	2m 25
Robin Muir	2m 04
Mike Pope	2m 04

Nailsea Photographic Club Visit

The club recently played host to a visit by Nailsea Photographic club who had asked to come along and take some photos. As you might expect there was some serious camera kit present, and they take it seriously! Fortunately the weather was kind with a sunny day, although the strong wind restricted flying somewhat.

There are 10 CDs circulating with all the pictures taken and I am gradually putting a selection on the website.



Seen at the Field

Pete Richards hasn't had a lot of luck with this Eurofighter; firstly lacking in engine power, then suffering from too-small wheels on the launching dolly, and finally breaking its engine off (twice!) when hand-launched.



Wot Trainer – A Cautionary Tale

I received this by email from Barrie Taylor, about the article in the April 2007 newsletter. Reprinted with permission.

I am a member of the Stockport Model Flying Club, and have just read your newsletter on the web, and have read about the demise of the Wots Wot biplane, with the questionable aileron hinges, and thought you may be interested in our experiences. Last year two of our members purchased Wot Trainers, the first one on its maiden flight, lost an aileron, when he rolled it, he then could not save it from the black bin liner. The second one, again on its maiden flight, lost its elevator, and this too crashed. We then heard that a member from a neighbouring club, The Phoenix, had lost his elevator, and one aileron, both at once, on the first flight, and crashed. In every case the hinges had pulled out, due to them not being pinned. In all cases, they said that one would expect them to be pinned when one is paying this much for a trainer. Of course the Wots Wot is a kit, and the original builder should have pinned them. I just thought you may be interested, in case any of your members may be tempted to buy a Wot trainer.

Fleet Air Arm Museum Autumn Model Show

I received an email through the web site from the Fleet Air Arm Museum in Yeovilton which I thought may be of interest. Below is an extract from the email, and you can read more at their web site <http://www.fleetairarm.com/en-GB/events.aspx>

Oct 17th Autumn Model Show 2009

Every year, the Fleet Air Arm Museum has run successful model shows in February and October. Historically both shows have had similar exhibitors - mainly plastic plus an impressive flying display by the BMFA.

Commencing with our Autumn Show (Oct 17th 2009) we plan to increase the amount of radio controlled exhibitors and traders so that the Autumn Show will be biased towards radio controlled exhibitors and traders and the February Show will continue to be biased toward plastic.

Weather permitting, the British Model Flying Association will, once again demonstrate their skills, flying a range of their spectacular radio controlled aircraft.

Spot the model!

More to the point, was it your model? If so you shouldn't have left it behind!

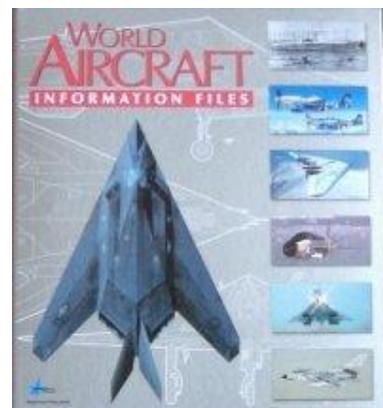
Seriously though, don't just leave any rubbish at the site, including crashed models. Please take all litter home with you.



World Aviation Information Files

We now have 8 volumes of these files, kindly donated to the club by the widow of Ian Davies who belonged to the club a number of years ago. They will be placed in the clubhouse the next opportunity I get, and will be available to borrow.

I don't think they are a complete set, and they're not indexed (a job for a rainy day for someone!) but there is a large amount of reading material for anyone interested in aircraft.



Hawker Hart

I described in the last issue my first venture into electric flying in the form of a 1/10 scale Hawker Hart. At that time it had reached the stage of a bare airframe. Well it's now finished, although not yet flown as I write.



Covering was done in traditional form with tissue, nylon and dope, finished with a silver car paint spray. The nose area, which was aluminium panels on the full size, was covered in "Aluclad", a thin adhesive-backed aluminium foil. Rigging is from nylon fishing line. The main advantage over my larger biplanes is that this one will go in the car without disassembling it!

'Spektrum Tip'.

As a confirmed Spektrum user and approaching senility, since changing to 2.4 I have been a little wary of misplacing the Spektrum BIND PLUG. Having recently read an article in the November edition of 'Marine Modelling International' by their contributor Chris Jackson I have discovered that my worries were groundless.

It seems there is nothing mysterious about the bind plug after all, he says that a spare bind plug can be easily made up from an old servo plug. Just remove the centre wire (red) complete with its brass socket and solder the two outer wires together. And that's it!

Roy Shaw.

Casualties

Mike Stinchcombe's Magnum reduced to a boot-full of bits after a high-speed "arrival" (well there's not really any other kind of "arrival" with a Magnum...)



Mike Barnett's "Dual Ace" twin was a refreshingly different model, and Mike had a dozen or so good flights before it also bit the dust, thought to be due to an engine failure, which is notoriously hard to cope with in a twin.



The History of RC

How long has RC been around? The answer is probably longer than you think. The earliest recorded evidence was found in these rock paintings discovered in ancient caves deep beneath Milton Keynes. From the length of the aerial archaeologists have determined that they had probably not yet mastered 2.4GHz, not really surprising given that they had yet to discover fire or invent the wheel either.



The ancient Egyptians were heavily into slope soaring. The boy king Tutankhamun was given a glider for his birthday, but faced a major problem: the Nile delta was flat and there were no slopes. So he ordered one built, cleverly shaped with four sides so he was always able to fly whatever the wind direction. The idea caught on and several were built.



The next evidence is from Roman times, at the mighty circular Colosseum in Rome, once thought to have been intended for chariot racing but now known to have been built for the 21BC world control-line championships. Here the stadium regularly echoed to the sounds of tuned pipes and to Julius Caesar's famous and oft-repeated cry of "Friends, Romans, Countrymen, lend me your glow-start, 'cos I forgot to put mine on charge last night".



Incidentally, anyone who has been to the Colosseum recently will have noticed that it is oval. Historians explain that, just as the Leaning Tower of Pisa was originally built vertical and has leant over with time, so the Colosseum was originally built circular but has gone out-of-round with age.

On to the middle ages, and this section of the famous Bayeux Tapestry shows the villagers pointing excitedly skywards at King Harold's immaculate scale model of the Handley-Page Harrow bomber. Unfortunately, seconds after this picture was sewn, Harold lost control, leading to the incident which every schoolboy knows about from his history lessons: In 1066, King Harold was hit in the eye by a Harrow.



RC seems to have then entered a hiatus until revived by the Victorians. Queen Victoria herself was "not amused" when Albert crashed his Ready Trainer into the ornamental fountain at the palace, and the great West Country engineer Isambard Kingdom Brunel took up model flying when he retired. Unfortunately, having spent his life building huge structures out of cast iron, steel plate and rivets, he was unable to contemplate using anything else. His version of the Extrawot, built from left-overs from the SS Great Britain, weighed 1.5 tons and couldn't be lifted off the kitchen table, let alone down to the flying field.



Events

Forthcoming events this year and next:

Date	Event
Thursday 6 th Aug 2009 8pm	Club meeting at the field
Thursday 3 rd Sep 2009 8pm	Club meeting at the Memorial Hall
Thursday 1 st Oct 2009 8pm	Club meeting at the Memorial Hall
Thursday 5 th Nov 2009 8pm	AGM at the Memorial Hall

Club Meeting Venue



All club meetings apart from those in the summer months are normally at the **Memorial Hall**, High Street, Congresbury. If you're coming from Weston, turn right at the traffic lights, park in the pub car park immediately on your left, and the hall is just a few yards further along High St.

The summer meetings (June, July & August) are at the field at Wick St Lawrence.

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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.