

Newsletter



November 2008

Editor Nick Neve.

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Our first winter meeting will take place in the Jean Simon Room in Colwall Village Hall on Thursday 6th November at 8 pm. Doors open at 7:30 pm. There will be demonstrations of the new 'second generation' 2.4 GHz indoor models featuring the Eflight Blade mCX and the fixed wing 'Vapour', both 'bind-and-fly' models (not sure what that means? come and find out). There will also be a discussion of mounting servos in wings; details of the 2008/09 'Chairman's Challenge' will be announced; the four-event winter competition series on the hills will be described and there will also be an opportunity to discuss any MSA related topics that members present may wish to raise prior to the AGM in December. Don't miss this interesting and action-packed evening.

Red Arrows and the London Olympics: the Government's response. We're glad to tell you there is absolutely no truth - and never has been - in the idea that the Government has banned the Red Arrows from the London 2012 Olympic Games. The Prime Minister was delighted to see the role the Red Arrows played in the celebrations on the Mall after the Beijing Games, and they have always played a significant part in great festivals of celebration in Britain in recent years. Indeed, the Red Arrows played a memorable role when they flew over Trafalgar Square in 2005 to mark London winning the Games. Decisions on the nature of the Olympic opening ceremony are a matter for the 2012 organising committee, and with four years to go, they have not made their decisions yet. However, the Prime Minister has made clear he would be delighted to see the Red Arrows perform in the celebrations in 2012.

How High Can You Fly? BMFA policy is provide all of our members with the best advice available so that they may avoid both safety and legal problems whilst involved with model flying. The recent increase in the popularity of Aero-towing has given rise to many questions as to what is legal and what isn't and the office is now regularly receiving phone calls and e-mails from those involved asking for clarification. The following sections give you the exact legal situation as set out by the Civil Aviation Authority in the Air Navigation Order (ANO) as it applies to any model flying activity. Note that 'un-powered models' are those that carry no propulsive power unit, i.e. pure gliders. It does not mean 'powered gliders that have the motor switched off'.

1. All models Under 7 kg, both powered and un-powered: these are not limited in any way other than having to comply with articles 73 and 74 of the ANO which are the endangering articles that we should all be familiar with.
2. All models Between 7 kg and 20 kg, both powered and un-powered.
 - a) Outside Controlled Airspace: it is **ILLEGAL** to fly any such model above 400 ft above the point of launch (ANO 98). Exceptions: the **ONLY** exception to this law (and it is a law, not a rule or recommendation) is if an event is being flown and the event organisers have applied to the CAA for an exemption to fly to greater heights. Such exemptions are reasonably easy to obtain but they will not be issued for general flying, only for very date and location specific events that can be publicised by a NOTAM.
 - b) Inside Controlled Airspace: it is **ILLEGAL** to fly any such model without the specific permission of the appropriate Air Traffic Controller. The height that may be flown to on a site is a matter of negotiation between the flyers and the ATC but it will normally be 400 ft unless you can persuade them otherwise. Such agreements can be active over days or weeks and it's not unusual for them to be set on an annual basis.
3. All powered models over 20 kg: these are regulated by CAA Exemption certificates which carry the limitations of flight on the document. Almost invariably they follow the laws set out for models between 7 and 20 kg. Breaking the conditions on the Exemption Certificate effectively invalidates the document and the model is then subject to the full force of the whole of the ANO, which is what it was exempting you from in the first place.

4. All un-powered models over 20 kg: this is the only grey area as pure gliders over 20 kg are classed along with full-size gliders and have much more freedom to operate than pure gliders from 7 to 20 kg. This may change in the future.

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Drawing Software. Called Google SketchUp 6 (Free), this program will construct a 3D rotatable drawing to scale of almost anything. Simply explained, it allows the user to draw a 2D form - say, a rectangle - and then, using the unique and powerful Push/Pull tool, to draw the image up into a full three-dimensional form which you can then orbit, zoom, pan, move and modify. Once in 3D form, flat faces in the image can be further expanded or contracted and new surfaces added, thus providing 'building blocks' to plan almost anything! An interesting application for the likes of us, however, is the ability to import plans as a 2D image and then draw from that AND change the scale. This is achieved by scanning your plan into any graphics program, cropping it to a neat size and saving it as a .jpeg image. Now in Sketchup, import the scanned image where it will appear as a 2D image. To scale up the image, use the dimension tool to measure two key dimensions of the plan showing a length and width as appearing within Sketchup. By using the scale tool, you can then adjust those dimensions to match those appearing on your original plan so that your image is now to the exact scale of the plan. From there you can repeat the use of the scale tool to scale the plan up or down to any new dimensions you may desire. Having done that, it is necessary to overdraw the plan using the drawing tools within Sketchup, draw the lines to one side and remove the original imported plan. Using the various tools, the image you are left with can then be converted to a 3D rotateable image which you can view and measure from any angle. You can find out much more about this software at <http://sketchup.google.com/> where you will also find a series of tutorials. Go to the 'downloads' section of the Google site to obtain the free software, where you will also find details of the commercial versions of the program. Be sure to check the system requirements as the program requires quite a powerful PC and fairly high-spec 3D graphics card.

ALTITUDE RECORD CLAIM. By Steve Hannon. The flight was made on Sunday August 27th 2008 following a club thermal soaring competition using a 10 year old unmodified John Stevens Eliminator 134 built by myself comprising a built up fuselage, completely sheeted wing centre section and 'D' box sheeted open frame wing tips. The fuselage was painted using car refinish acrylic paint and the wings and tailplane covered in red and white Solarfilm. The wingspan of the model is 134 inches with an all up weight of 64.5 ounces and a wing loading of 8.3 ounces per square foot. Fitted into the canopy of the model was a Picolario variometer manufactured by Renschler and supplied by Firebird in the UK. On the day of the flight conditions at Fish Meadow were clear blue sky with intermittent cloud and a 1 - 5 MPH wind from a variable direction. Before launching the variometer was switched on and my altitude with the model on the ground was confirmed at zero metres. I launched the model using a power winch with 150 metres of line to the turnaround pulley at approximately 15:30 pm and started to look for lift. The variometer confirmed my launch height at 110 metres. A thermal was contacted near the bridge over the river and by 15:45 the variometer confirmed the model's altitude at 315 metres. Both Nick Neve and Mike Grantham who had witnessed the launch and flight so far encouraged me to find more lift. At approximately 15:55 the variometer confirmed the model's height at 260 metres and another thermal was contacted, this one much stronger than the first.

As I circled the model in the strong lift I was fortunate that I had a large white cloud to silhouette the model against making visibility easier. At approximately 16:15 the altimeter confirmed the height of the model at 690 metres. I called to Nick Neve and Mike Grantham to witness the altitude reported back my radio from the variometer in the model and a further two times they witnessed an altitude of 690 metres. The model was becoming difficult to see so I stated that I would try to leave the thermal lift by deploying the spoilers and try to lose height. After 5 minutes with the spoilers deployed the variometer confirmed the height of the model at 600 metres so I had lost only 90 metres so I decided to fly the model inverted to escape the lift. After ten minutes inverted flying the variometer confirmed the model's height at 310 meters and indeed I had escaped the strong thermal. At approximately 16:45 the model was finally landed back in Fish Meadow around 20 metres from the launch point. With both Nick Neve and Mike Grantham as witnesses the model was not touched and the variometer was interrogated for an altitude reading. On three occasions the variometer stated a height of zero metres. Steve has submitted a claim for a national record which is currently being processed by the BMFA.

Agenda.

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the 2007 AGM
3. Matters arising from those minutes
4. Reports of officers
 - a. Chairman
 - b. Secretary
 - c. Competition Secretary - to include Annual awards:
 1. The Thermal trophies
 2. The Slope trophies
 3. The MSA Championship
 - d. Treasurer
 1. Acceptance of the accounts for year ending 31st October 2008
 2. The setting of subscriptions for 2009

Break for coffee and cakes to include the annual draw.

5. Election of officers
 - a. Chairman
 - b. Secretary
 - c. Competition Secretary
 - d. Treasurer
 - e. General member
 - f. Junior member
6.
 - a. Appointment of a child welfare officer
 - b. Appointment of an Auditor
7. The use of Fish Meadow by other aeromodelling organisations.
8. Any other business
 - a. The 2009 competition programme
 1. Open events
 2. Club events
 - b. Other club activities - Indoor flying
 - c. Any other general topics raised by members
9. Date and place of the 2009 AGM.

MAGAZINE SECTION



This charming photograph, obviously taken somewhere in Africa, illustrates the problems that sometimes confront air passengers there when wishing to board on warm days in some of the more remote areas.

Ancient wisdom. The budget should be balanced, the treasury should be refilled, public debt should be reduced, the arrogance of officialdom should be tempered and controlled, and the assistance to foreign lands should be curtailed lest Rome become bankrupt. People must again learn to work, instead of living on public assistance.' -- Cicero , 55 BC.

Why is Indoor Duration a load o' knickers?

Well, just look at the models: they are flimsy; they are see-through; they need good elastic to keep them up; they come down at the end of the day. That's why. [thank you Malcolm for raising the whole tone of this family newsletter].

And finally.... as this is the last newsletter of 2008 may I thank all contributors, wish you all a happy Christmas, invite you to come to the AGM and remember to fly safely at all times.

Nick Neve.