

PETERBOROUGH MODEL FLYING CLUB



MAGAZINE

September

2016



FIELD DAYS*



WITH EIGHT PAGE FLYING ACES SUPPLEMENT

*Produced both as a paper copy and as an e-mail attachment for
PMFC members, and subsequently on our website
www.peterboroughmfc.org*

* or "Rod's Retrieves" (Volume I)



It was hardly difficult to fill our pages for this edition (you will see that I have made up he usual 24 page magazine and then added the Flying Aces account as a supplement to avoid confusing myself with page numbers,) because there has simply been so much going on. I am very aware, however, that I am reflecting only a part of the activities in which our seventy members are being involved. While I am very grateful to those who have contributed to this edition, I feel that a wider scope of content would better reflect our club. Please feel free to send in photos, notes, ideas, in fact anything that may be of interest, as a good magazine should, as I have said before, be “a club talking to itself.”

We are being forced, particularly in the Free Flight world, to accept some changes imposed upon us by by organisations beyond our control, and if our wonderful pursuit is to survive, we must, to some degree, “rise to the level of events.” Of course, we can!

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COMMITTEE for 2016:

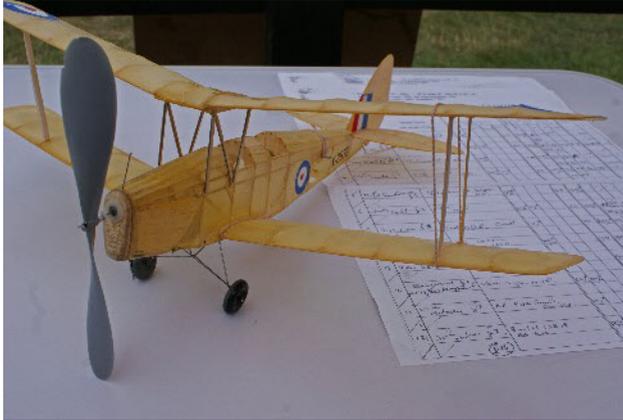
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- R/C Sec Dave Shipton
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Dave Rumball
- Webmaster Tony Beckett

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND PRIZEGIVING: PEAKIRK VILLAGE HALL, FRIDAY 25th November, from 7pm.

Cover: As an antidote to the plethora of free flight material in this issue, here are the heroes of the Peakirk Challenge: Back row: Brian Lever, Bryan Lea, Julio Isidro, Mick Taylor, Dave Clark. Front row: Roger Silcock, Steve Turner, Brian Waterland.

PAGE THREE MODELS

This should not have happened! WELL! I MEAN! How could it? Just look at it...



...and yet this is the Masefield Trophy winner for 2016. By the end of the event, pins hold on the noseblock, a rubber band keeps the port wings together, and the motor is visible through the fuselage side. Yet it won, scoring three 50sec maxes (almost) without leaving the field on a windy day. Why? Perhaps because Andy Sephton knows what he is doing. (But surely, it's time to build a new one, by now?)

Peter Gibbons, on the other hand, has been at work on a new E36. With neat hatches for access, and electrics generously provided by IDM, this job is currently undergoing trimming.



Neat, tidy, undamaged, well organised. (But what will it look like after the cut and thrust of battle?) Winning models are often the most battle-scarred.

Swords into ploughshares

OUR PLAYGROUNDS:

No. 1: Sculthorpe



Visit Norfolk on Google Earth, and set the page so that the whole of the county fills the screen: even at an altitude of 150km the distinctive shape of a huge airfield becomes apparent: a geometrical man made shape imposed upon the variegated pastoral landscape. (Just north west of Fakenham if you need help.) At around twice the area of Barkston, this place is huge. Begun in 1942 as a satellite of West Raynham it was just one of the many heavy bomber sites that were so expensively constructed across Eastern England. It shortly became a prominent Mosquito base. Then 214 Squadron moved in with Boeing Fortresses, to be joined by a USAAF Bomber group from Snetterton. At the time of the Berlin Airlift the USAAF had taken over completely, developing the site to hold Tornado squadrons from Virginia until Sculthorpe held 10,000 personnel making it the biggest USAF base in Europe and had the longest heated airstrip in the world. It was also, for a while, the biggest Atomic base in Europe. Intelligence gathering and surveillance flights appear to have taken place, but are, quite rightly, shrouded in some secrecy. At least one book has been written on this subject with particular reference to Sculthorpe.

After 1963 the base reverted to the Air Ministry used as an auxiliary field for cargo, bomber and fighter aircraft, finally becoming largely inactive once the (first?) Cold War mercifully ended. The village of Wicken Green, to the north east, is a development of the original living quarters.

Arrive today for a model flying event, such as the excellently organised East Anglian Gala, and there will be a presence at the gate, but thanks to the work done by the FFTC, no formalities are necessary. It is quite possible to become lost or disorientated on such a large, apparently barren area, but just keep driving and its shape will become apparent. Models are unlikely to outfly this field: it is said currently to be one of only two places in England where FAI and Open models can be given their head. Today, the beasts of the field are held back by discreet electric fences, and the grass, unlike Luffenham in early Summer, is commendably short.

JMA, using, *inter alia*, info from Eastern Daily Press and military.wikia

BRUMFLY: a vision of the future?

Flying from a line (at North Luffenham,) launching in rounds (in order to allow the CD to change launch line or max in accordance with weather conditions and keep models on the field), excellent prizes and some much appreciated delicacies in the buffet...if this is how contests will be in future, we can surely adapt. (Food may not always be on the cards, of course.)

Oh, and a payload of extra weight (10 grammes) provided by the organisers



PG's Co2, same venue, following week.

From our correspondent:



Quite a decent day weatherwise, a great turnout by the PMFC team. Difficult to find models in the long waist high grass even on a compass line. The event was run in rounds.

P30:

Rubber, 10 grammes motor plus 10 grammes ballast . Flown, unusually, to four flights rather than the normal three.

1st: Mick Page:

" I won P30 Payload as it was called ...being the only flyer to record four maxes. Peter Adams came second in the same comp: Is 1st and 2nd another first for PMFC?"

E36 electric, also 4 x 120.

3rd Mark Benns... flying his Super Pearl, he dropped just one flight. The model looks and flies very well.

HLG/Cat:

1st Mark Benns: but no one else flew in this class due to the long and difficult job of finding small models in this overgrown jungle.

After the event a super buffet was provided by Stuart Darmon with a huge selection of food and even drinks on ice including low strength beer. It was one of the best run comps I (PG) have been to. Stuart and Chris did a truly super job. Prizegiving at 6.30 with Belgian beer instead of wine, which was a nice change.

BUT: why the low attendance? It was Fathers' day, and it is difficult to fly at N. Luffenham at this time of year, but the whole show was superb, and is worthy of our greater support next year.

Many thanks to Rod Briggins, Ian Middlemiss and Dave Rumball for assistance and timekeeping, and again to Rod for repairing and replacing the electric motor in my E30 which had been damaged at the Nats. We are lucky to have him in the club.

.....PG.

SCALE AT BRUMFLY



(M Page photolab)

Bryan Lea with two models, both from Comet and available on Outerzone.

the yellow/orange one is the now familiar Curtiss Robin, the blue one is a WACO Coastguard. Both are 25" span. The Robin flies really well, has visited the tops of trees at both Old Warden and Ferry. The WACO needs more trimming.

The Selby Trophy was a flying only event for all scale models, ie, electric and rubber. Gareth came 5th with his Lancaster, the winner was Ivan Taylor using his rubber powered Mustang. I had a couple of "trimming flights" where my Citabria just dived into the waist high grass so I decided to up the rubber from 6 strands of 3/16th to 10 strands. I wound the motor up just as Rod Brigginsaw came up to chat to BVW who was steadying my stooge. I detached the fully wound motor and attached it to the propshaft/noseblock and carefully inserted it into the model whereupon there was an almighty bang and the sound of rubber thrashing about in the rear fuselage. Oh, bother! I pulled the rear peg out and managed to fish the motor out of the fuselage. On inspection I saw that it had not broken so somehow it had come off the hook. The fuselage covering was split in several places but the structure was more or less still intact. I re-inserted the motor and wound again, this time without any mishaps.

While all this had been happening, just about everyone else had been putting in their flights so I can't really say what happened other than Gareth put in an early scoring flight with his Lancaster and for some time was the only one with a score on the board. Anyway, I walked out to where Bill Dennis was judging, indicated that I was ready to launch and let the model go. No one was more surprised than me when it set off in a dead straight line slowly gaining height and at what appeared to be scale speed. It continued for quite some distance and eventually made a wide climbing turn to the right until the turns ran out. I'll draw a veil over what happened next, sufficient to say that Andrew Hewitt said, "The glide needs work!" I turned and thanked him for the comment but in doing so took my eyes off the line of the model. You would think that a 36" wingspan all yellow model would be easy to find, wouldn't you? I was searching much further than it had actually flown, of course.

When I got back to base everyone had finished and Bill was totting up the scores. He asked me if I wanted to take my other flights but by then I had had enough. Bill gathered all of us together and announced the results: 1st Ivan Taylor, 2nd Bryan Lea...you could have knocked me down with your best sheet of quarter grain balsa!

LUFFENHAM, 5th Area.

LONGRASS RETRIEVAL: techniques to be learned.

At this time of year, North Luffenham grass as on the previous weekend, is long: waist height in places. And it can conceal holes and traps in the surface. Trackers or a spotter are essential, accurate dethermalising saves extra walking, and the use of Pee Gee's walkie talkies proved to be a major asset. (See page 10.)

Consequently the key feature of this event was retrieval, especially of Terry Bailey's Coupe, (right) which put in some promising flights, including one very emphatic max. But it required teamwork, not to mention Peter Gibbons' excellent eyesight, to keep him in business. Downfield Luffenham contains unexpected traps, ditches hidden by long grass, rusty barbed wire (in predictable places, thankfully)...awareness of which makes the task more interesting, but highlights the need for planning and communication.



Teamwork is the key: nobody, under these conditions, should launch a comp flight or pursue a model out of sight without other club members being aware, helping confirm the line of march, or spotting from a position downwind. When PMFC fly together, there are always willing helpers.

Perhaps perversely, this need for club co-operation seems to add rather than detract, from the day's experience.



CO2 Peter Gibbons, **FIRST** (on the field)
Coupe: PMFC positions 1) Terry Bailey
2) Peter Adams. 3) Martin McHugb.

Club Contest Round three,

.....Tuesday 28th Flaming June

The contest started at four. The rain began at precisely four, continued until seven, when it relented for about a minute (see below) before continuing until nightfall.

Determined to put in some time, and to show up the umbrella gang standing nearby for the bunch of wimps they really were, Chris Sanders put in three worthy efforts with his Cloud Tramp, wiping rain from the wings before each attempt. The one point gained puts him equal to Dave Clark, who remained inactive, cowering under his umbrella.

Not much happening, then, until suddenly a shout of "There's no d/t!" alerted us to Rod Briggins' E20 coiling its way forcefully into the leaden sky. Apparently a small band had broken at a crucial moment: and E20's, especially well made ones like this one, have astonishing performance.

Instantly, your athletic young CD sprinted into action, dashing across the park, clearing the railway line in a single bound, and arriving at the water's edge in time to see the colourless, mylar covered craft touch down on the surface of the lake after a flight of just over two minutes. And there it rested, among the ducks, apparently motionless. It should be mentioned, before I get to the best bit, that this places Rob as worthy leader of the E20 class, as his prospective opponent, Mick Page, made pitiful excuses and withdrew.

It must have taken about an hour for the tiny model to drift its way across the lake, with the nearby ducks ignoring this newcomer with disdain. During this time, under the kind of rainfall which was slight enough to be ignored until one discovered that it was surreptitiously soaking everyone and everything, the principals in this minor drama had made their way around to the far shore. Out there, serenely floating still, were the two upraised wingtips of Rod's E20.

There were convenient fishing stations for waterside access, but would the model dock in one of these? Oh, no. In among the reeds it nestled, beyond human reach.

To try to keep it moving, Peter Gibbons crept, like Pharaoh's daughter among the bulrushes, and performed the ancient Druidic rite of The Threshing of the Waters (take a bough, Peter) and while this was going on, Martin Skinner swung a highly sophisticated twig-on-a-string and ultimately landed the brute. It resembled little more than a mass of weed and mouldering detritus by now, but Rob was suitably grateful for its return...he had spent much of the previous Winter building it, and felt sure that it would now live to fly again.

The flying surfaces with carbon outlines under very thin Mylar appeared hardly to be affected by their prolonged immersion.

All passion spent, the sodden heroes made their way to their cars and home...apart from the CD who remained resolutely at his post in case anyone were to arrive at seven for the second round of the Bernie Nichols Trophy. And, yes, it happened. A knock on the window of the car, the voice of Martin Skinner, "There's a clear patch coming, can I enter the BNT?"

Thus it was that Martin filled the unforgiving minute with thirty seconds worth of distance flown...then a second flight with an increasingly sodden KK Playboy as the rain resumed, and Round Three of the club contest ended not with a bang but a whimper.

With no more times to be dropped, there is all to play for in the remaining three events.

The “Last of the Summer Wine” cast enact their latest episode “Saving Rod’s Model.”



How many PM-FC members does it take to spot one Mylar duck?



And guess what? Duly cleansed of rotting vegetation, the motor resumed its run! (And the model was subsequently run and flown without any further work!)

“Lost sheep to Bo Peep...Over.”

How good’s yo’ memory folks?

*“Breaker One, Breaker One,
I may be crazy but I ain’t dumb.”*

Bo Duke must have sold a whole bunch of CB radios in the eighties, (and I seem to remember Daisy sold as many pairs of shorts.)



Yeeee Haaaaa!



These days, it has become much easier to keep in contact, and PM-FC is leading the way in the use of on-field communications. Our committee had authorised the purchase of several pairs of these W/T’s, they were promptly put into action, and their usefulness has been immediate.

From now on, nobody needs to go out of sight of club colleagues without being in communication. As well as greatly assisting the process of retrieval, this is a safety precaution. There have already been examples of free fliers disappearing for hours, with nobody being aware of their whereabouts. We are getting older, and accidents or simply exhaustion can take their toll. The determination is to keep on searching “just one more field, it can’t be far away now;” we have all done it. There has been at least one fatality in recent years involving a flyer whose body was only found the day after, in a field near Barkston Heath. So, when flying, collect a handset from either Pee Gee or myself, and keep in contact.

And while searching amid the alien corn, nobody should be casting their life into the Hazzard.*

**Sort that lot out, Liz!*

Sixth Area: Clutch-
ing a a half-eaten carrot,
Pee Gee emerges from
the undergrowth to re-
port...



“ Seven of PMFC attended this event: the grass had not been cut as of Sunday so it was very very difficult to retrieve. BUT:

In P30, 1st Peter Adams, 6.00 + 3.18

2nd Terry Bailey 6.00.

Dave Bent and myself did not complete our three flights, while Mick Page and Martin McHugh did not fly due to the length of the grass. Once again the tracker proved invaluable finding P.A.’s model twice during a long hardworking day. He flew the model with which he won the Nats and it was, again, superb.

I managed to get two short flights with my new E36 showing promise but it is not ready for comp flying yet. Many thanks to Ian Middlemiss for all his help on this project. I have almost finished a second E36 model and Ian is putting the electrics together for me., So hopefully I should have two E36 models ready for action shortly. “

Club contest, round 4 Friday 29th July

In all respects, this was a very genuine free flight contest, with all the drama of close competition, banter, treetop rescues, fine trimming, and even a fly-off. All contained within a small field surrounded by lakes and trees, and within a period of just three hours, and flying to a 45 second max. And the grass was below ankle height: a great relief to the heroes of Luffenham.

In fact, for those who took part in more than one event, such as our Chairman Dave Clark, who flew in every class, it was a very busy time.

The glider event, as usual best supported, was won by the use of both radio d/t and a roach pole (RDT being fitted easily to a glider.)* Dave Rumball had several retrieval adventures, landing once in a tree and once in the cafe area, but all was well. Cloud Tramp revealed the excellence of John Brown’s models, one of which was to spend a couple of hours lost, until the combined efforts of several fellow PMFC members came to his assistance. He was a worthy winner of the class, and to be watched in future.

HLG/Catapult Glider produced a close finish between Peter and Ian, while P20 came down to a three way fly-off in a period of almost flat calm and neutral air in which Peter Adams won (yawn) with a substantial motor run and goodish glide.

* *vide infra*, p. 23

Round 4 Results: (see website for spreadsheet of all cumulative scores so far)

Cloud Tramp

- 1) J. Brown 106
- 2) C Sanders 67
- 3) D Clark 55

P20

- 1) P Adams Max + 67
- 2) M Page +57
- 3) D Clark +46

HLG/Cat

- 1) Ian Middlemiss 75
- 2) P Gibbons 73
- 3) D Clark 64

36" Glider

- 1) J Ashmole 132
- 2) D Clark 95
- 3) C Sanders 93
- 4) D Rumball 87
- 5) P Gibbons 74
- 6) M Skinner 68

THE BERNIE NICHOLS TROPHY

Run over three rounds after 7pm, this precision event for rubber models flown, Bowden-style, to a 35 second target time was led after the first round by David Leeding. It barely



took place at the washout second round (see p. 8) but finished in increasing drizzle after round four of the regular club contest. A trimming session on Barkston had not helped Dave's confidence, and a broken motor, followed later by dampness affecting his KK Ace, sent Dave plummeting from hero to zero on the day, but aggregate scores were to leave him in second place overall. A mixture of cabin jobs, Cloud Tramps and P20's took part, but the outstanding model of the evening was Chris Sanders' 1932 Orion, and it was very sad to leave it roosting out of reach of any roach pole at the top of one of Ferry Meadows' largest trees. He took the cruel vicissitudes of sport remarkably well. Mick Page, hurrying back from assisting in another retrieve (of John Brown's remarkable Cloud Tramp) arrived just in time to put in the closest time of the day (one second off the target time) and this, added to his second place in round one, resulted in a well deserved victory, and the forthcoming award of the Bernie Nichols trophy at the AGM.

BNT results overall:

First: M Page,
second equal, D Leeding, D Clark
fourth equal, T. Johnson, M Skinner, P Adams,
seventh equal, C Sanders, B Whitehead.



(from P 12) John Brown's storming Cloud Tramp: two maxes, lost for a couple of hours in the undergrowth, subsequently found to fly again.



Also at Ferry, Martin Skinner's "Supersonic Sue," a 1950's Air Trials Northrop X-4. Martin came 4th in the BNT (but not with this model) and is developing a taste for relaxed contest flying.

Chris Sanders impressed us all with this 1932 Orion, but sadly had to leave it at the top of a tree in the dampness of the evening. Also flew in glider and Cloud Tramp.



THE EAST ANGLIA GALA



SCULTHORPE, 30/31 July

Peter Gibbons reports...

Once again a splendid, well run event, over two days, a runway two miles long: the largest unobstructed flying site in the UK. Short grass, fairly decent weather, a good turnout from the PMFC Free Flight team...what could possibly go wrong?

Sat 30th, P30 Rubber. After two flights each, Dave Bent, Peter Adams and myself (PG) sat pretty with 4 minutes each in the bag, with one comp flight to go. First, P .A. dropped his last flight, then D.B and P.G. both failed to get the required two minutes.

Peter, however had done enough to get 3rd. Dave was 6th and myself 7th, out of 14.

Sadly, Mick Page, a relatively new recruit to P30, had a super first flight with a "Spencer Willis Sweet Pea" and a cloud bursting fly away, but was heard muttering "It's gone at least 20 miles. Will things get better?"

HLG/Cat (combined):

Peter Gibbons 3rd, with 4.27, behind Ivan Clark and Graham Percival, of Granth*m.

EAST ANGLIAN BOWDEN

David Leeding reports:

With leaflets having been distributed during the Free Flight Nationals in May and last minute appeals by Brian Waterland we managed to attract seven entries, a record for recent times.

Proceedings were scheduled to begin at 11:00 with competitors assembling at Control. The take off area was determined to avoid landing in either of two groups of corralled cows each with their own bull as chaperone (sic) and also a solar panel farm.

The wind was quite strong from the north which was to prove tricky for some competitors. Two rounds were flown with all competitors able to fly in both. Gary Black was the only competitor to achieve a scoring flight in Round One, all other were DNQ. John Hook overcooked his time by 10 seconds, the wind taking his model way downwind.

Round Two followed immediately with two competitors achieving a qualifying score, and unusually Brian Waterland failing to score in either round! It is worth mentioning that John Hook's Madcap at 30" span being perhaps the smallest and lightest model competing got off the ground very smartly during both launches with a steady climb out proving that small can do it!

1) Andrew Green Diamond Demon DC 1.0 92 Pts.

2) Gary Black KK Bandit Mills 1.3 89

3) John Hook 30" Madcap Kalper 0.3 84

Thanks to BVW for drumming up support, and my timekeeper Reg Kinsey from GDMAS who drove over from Birmingham with his 95 years young mother to help out.

“Sun 31st, and our heroes are back at Sculthorpe:

Co2 Duration: With just one hour to go before the end of the contest, my model (it’s PG, again) was second on the scoreboard. But with a frantic rally at the end, Steve Philpott and Trevor Grey pushed me down to 4th place.

On the positive side, the new walkie talkies are a great asset and four of us could talk to each other clearly with a range of well over a mile.



A special mention is due to Michael Marshall and his team for running Once again this excellent event. Thanks, Michael, on behalf of PMFC Such a good event.

For members who have never attended this event, it is well worth the effort. The field is bigger than Barkston Heath, and a warm, friendly welcome from the Norfolk boys is ensured.”

.....

The Timperley Gala, Sunday 14/8, North Luffenham.

Hooray, they have cut the grass at last! This event took place on one of those idyllic days when you feel sorry for anyone who does not appreciate free flight! Perfect weather, good surroundings, some little luck in the wind direction...even the flyoffs (not involving PMFC members) lasted between 15 and 20 minutes yet landed on the field.

Peter Gibbons organised an ad hoc P30 contest, which was won by Mick Page, using a P20! I am writing this very small, as he is very reticent about this achievement, and will not want us to make a fuss about it.



Peter’s new Senator sports sponsorship from Rolo

- 1) Mick Page 5.43
- 2) Peter Adams 5.34
- 3) Martin McHugh 3.39
- 4) Dave Rumball 2.33
- 5) Tony Johnson 1.55

In the real world, Mark Benns won HLG, and Terry Bailey worked hard in Mini Vintage and Open Rubber, adding to their points total in our “F/F Championship” (see website.) On behalf of the flyers, John Carter gave a brief speech of appreciation for the organisers, warmly applauded.

THE VERY FIRST MODEL AIRCRAFT COMPETITION (1907)

contributed by BVW, who was probably there..



Club members are familiar with current model flying competitions but I recently came upon a fascinating book entitled “My Fifty Years in Flying” by Harry Harper. This describes the very first model aeroplane competition ever held in Britain, and probably the world. Harry Harper was an aviation journalist and he was on the scene so early that his work predated the Wright brothers 1903 flights! In the following article I have freely used quotations taken directly from that book.

As a result of his work Harper was inundated with inventors all trying to convince him that they had solved the problems of powered flight. So, in 1907, he went to his boss, Lord Northcliffe, proprietor of the Daily Mail, and suggested that the paper sponsor a competition for model aircraft to be organised by the Aero Club of Great Britain. Worried that there would be too many entries of dubious quality, they decided to vet the entries and only those deemed likely to work would be allowed to proceed to the competition proper, to be held at Alexandra Palace, London.

So, what form did the competition take? Maximum flight duration? Maximum height achieved? No. It was “longest distance covered in a straight line.” Which is probably one of the hardest things to make a free flight model do!

One hundred and thirty entries were received and these were whittled down to 30 which the organisers thought would have a chance of flying and would therefore go forward to the flying trials. A static exhibition of the models was held at the Agricultural Hall in London and some 3000 people attended.

The arrangement of the lifting surfaces were many and varied and included “a small but well built little monoplane with a big dihedral angle,” a “double biplane (?) With a tractor airscrew,” “a multiplane model and a “bird like flapping wing machine with springs functioning like the wings of a bird.” Major Baden-Powell entered some helicopter and wing flapping models. The power sources were rubber, steam, clockwork and (picture above) rocket!

Amazingly between 6000 and 7000 people paid a shilling each to attend the flying trials and watch each entrant come up to a chalk line to launch their models.

Harry Harper takes up the story:

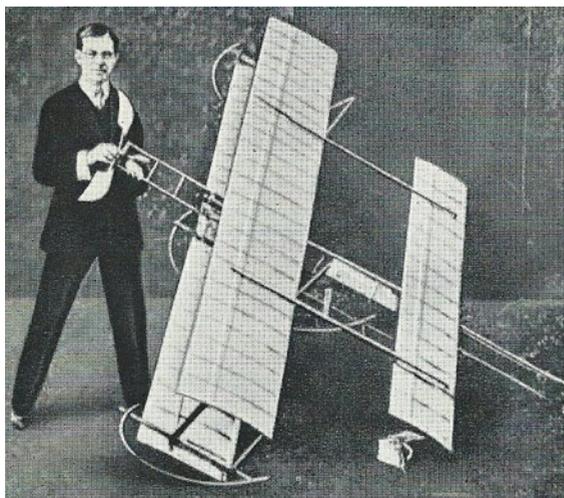
“Mr. Clarke was first up but his rubber powered biplane model, with control surfaces fore and aft, achieved a flight of only 40ft. Next came Mr. Howard with his clockwork powered model which flew well for some 75ft (but on a subsequent flight his model was destroyed.) Mr. Piffard and his “elastic driven” box kite failed to fly more than a few yards and was withdrawn with a broken airscrew. Mr. Balston’s twin screw machine damaged a prop on launch and only flew 12ft. The Thomas rocket powered machine made a spectacular upward leap followed by a pell mell dive and that was that. (Shades of things to come with so many Jetex flights.)

Mr Montague Kay’s little petrol engine could not be made to develop enough engine power to get his multi-plane off the ground. His model, after taxiing here and there, suddenly swerved among a throng of spectators, scattering them in all directions after which it plunged down a slope, overturned and sustained damage which put it out of action.

When it came to young A.V.Roe’s turn we felt we need to look no further than this to find the winner. In his first test the biplane flew about 60ft moving through air quite steadily and without any inclination to swerve or dive, and alighting safely on its skid undercarriage. In a second test the model flew 100ft again alighting smoothly after which the judges had no hesitation in awarding Mr. Roe the premier award of £75, a second prize of £50 going to Mr. Howard for his little monoplane model.

This first historic Daily Mail competition not only concentrated public attention on the work of those whose models were the fore runners of man carrying aircraft yet to come, but also started A V Roe on his memorable air career. It was with the £75 prize, and in a stable put at his disposal by his brother, that he began building his first full scale power driven machines including the famous Avro Triplane.”

I think that anyone who has flown in the current Bowden event can relate to the 1907 competition and understand the pressures and feelings of those taking part!



A. V. Roe with winning model

I should perhaps add that the rival Daily Express was not as impressed with the event as the Daily Mail. The Express report stated; *“The competition was described as a series of practical tests of model flying machines. In actual fact the tests were not practical in character, nor were machines models in conduct. The Great Hall at Alexander Palace is surrounded by coloured plaster casts of all Sovereigns from the Norman Conquest downwards, and it is safe to say that, never since their installation there, have they had such an exciting time as they had yesterday when the flying machines were being tested.*

Spread out before the Royal gaze were machines that looked like wagon-tops, hayrick-covers, skate fish, go carts, a tomato with tendril attachment and aluminium birds one of which had real feathered wings. When the hayrick machine fell after a two-feet flight, a Frenchman cried "Pouf! C'est fini!" And Henry the First laughed for the first time since 1120."

In the same book Harry Harper also recounts the following story told him by A V Roe about his early experiments:

"Roe was busy making paper gliders in the house where he was living at the time, and quite near which their happened to be a home for mental patients. One day, while the doctor at this institution was going on his rounds he was surprised when one of his patients pointed to Roe's house and said, "I am afraid, Doctor, there's another one like us over there."

"You are making a mistake," replied the doctor, "that's a private house."

"Oh, no I'm not," insisted the patient, "I've been watching that house, Doctor. There's a man in it who opens a top window and throws lots of bits of paper out. Then he runs down into the garden and picks them all up. And then he just throws them all out again. There must be something wrong with him, mustn't there?"

The pioneer is so often misunderstood, don't you find?

BVW.

David Parker continues his look back to halcyon days with...
Part Two : Colonel Bowden.



Col. Bowden was, I think, one of the age's gentlemen, always smartly attired and "correct." (But I doubt "politically" as we would say today.) He seemed to uphold those rather nice traditions. A military man of course, who served in the RFC during the First World War but then returned to the army, in which he made his career.

Recently someone who knew him remarked to me that he wondered what the “Col.” would have made of things today and the decline in the use of airfields. Probably he thought Bowden would have said, “We can’t have this,” and had a word in the ear of some brass and all would have been resolved! Bowden in fact put up some jolly good times with his models setting and breaking records of the day and was able to secure the use of places like Faireys “Great West Aerodrome” (now part of Heathrow) at weekends for these occasions. How different and pleasant the world must have been then. Mind you he did have the occasional fly away which most have been an expensive occasion. But there is one occasion when he searched unsuccessfully for his Blue Dragon from an autogyro piloted by Reginald Brie. Bowden, it appears, also took over the controls. The Blue Dragon was subsequently found and returned by a farm hand beyond Staines. Another example of the ability to “get things done” was him recalling that Dunlop had made him a special pair of rubber tyred wheels with aluminium hubs and the Dunlop name in gold on the walls of the tyres!

Bowden’s models were almost all invariably rather hefty in comparison with Pelly Fry’s, but of course were for a different purpose. Like Pelly Fry he kept up with his aeromodelling during his war service using an attache case to carry his tools.



I can’t help thinking that producing an eight foot span model on war service must have called for an ability to organise things. As I said earlier there were no engines designed for model aircraft then (other than home built.) The petrol engines used were of some noticeable capacity: 15 to 30 c.c. was not at all unusual until 1934 when the 9c.c. Brown Junior appeared. Its weight had been reduced considerably and the accompanying coil also much lighter than known versions. An Atom Minor sold by Mr. Jones of New Oxford Street went for the sum of £10.10s. In today’s money that could be in the region of £600. Today I believe a petrol engine could be had for less than £200? The benefits of modern technology? But big models were the norm then mainly because the power units, petrol engines being largish and a bit weighty, needed batteries and coils, etc., so required a large wing area to carry them. However, Bowden explains that his models had to be tailored to fit in his car of the day,

- a "low sports Aston Martin" which had very limited seating capacity. Consequently the fuselage had to be short necessitating an extra large tailplane and fin for the required longitudinal and directional stability. The pattern seems to have been adopted by other aeromodellers of the period, as witness pictures of other petrol engine craft. The configuration promoted stable flight with a reasonable degree of insensitivity to gusts.

Bowden obviously devoted a lot of time and energy and I am fairly sure money to his aeromodelling. He seemed also to have the knack for being able to fly more or less when he liked. Poole harbour was used for his float plane record breaking R.o.W. Flight of 30.4 seconds which remained for nearly ten years although the war did intervene. Clearly then, he was keen on experimentation and development of model aircraft.

The consequences of flying large model aircraft were not lost on people in those days either. Bowden recalls that they were aware of the potential crash damage caused by large models to persons and property so he designed his models to fly with "great stability so that they landed flat" or on their wheels. He also spent time setting up the petrol engine to run with regularity. He did employ a timer as well when the engine needed to be controlled. Bowden did have a professional approach and probably left little to chance when flying models - particularly if it was a record attempt of course.

There were many other notable persons emerging from the aeromodelling fraternity but in this article and that in our last issue I have simply selected two who leave an impression with me. This was, of course, largely from notes and writings of people who were there and my own interpretation of events. I am sure there are many who have a far greater knowledge of early pioneers and I bow to them.

However, those days must have been remarkable even to a minor participant and certainly I would have liked to have been there. Today we take a lot simply for granted. Technology has no surprises now and everything is possible. How people of those times would have wondered - as indeed I do at the little helicopter I have, purchased for less than £15, which will fly around the sitting room controlled comfortably from the armchair. It is not long ago that I watched club members in the '70's flying largely home built helicopters and they reckoned they had done well if they had flown to a height of a metre or two and landed without mishap. But no gyros then. And an ability in the machine shop was a distinct advantage.

I always think that it is a nice tribute to those people that quite a number of us today fly some of their designs and often try to keep as close to the original concept as practicable although radio assist is often found to be a pretty good idea to widen the opportunity of flying on smaller sites. Personally I find it still pretty good fun; but yes the sight of a pure free flight model cruising around on a balmy evening is still something to behold.

I do not fear for the future of aeromodelling in its true sense because it will continue as long as people want it to and after that, well, who will care? Neither do I feel that we should be concerned if the number of aeromodellers declines. Why in fact does it matter? On the other hand it may be that the fewer that turn out the easier it will be to use sites for flying. As was the case in days of yore. Not long ago we learned that Barkston would not be available for the 2016 August Nationals. Now that is after all a bit of a jamboree, and pretty conspicuous locally. Some of course welcome that concept, saying it is a good advert for model flying, more bums on seats and all that. Why I wonder is that such a good thing?

You see we have a society today that is safety obsessed in its widest sense and from which emerge ambulance chasing lawyers. Were I the CO of a RAF station I am not sure I would really want to let out my airfield to an event such as the August Nationals when really there is no reason why I should. As the CO, I would be responsible for the consequences, potentially, of doing so and could end up having to defend myself if there were complaints about litter, noise disturbance, traffic from those in the vicinity of the event, or worse, an injury. Much easier to say, "No."

There are still good times to be had, though - the Free Flight Nationals - area gala days here and there - and not forgetting our own Flying Aces at the Meadows. Probably as close as you might get to the old days of aeromodelling.

David Parker.



Strange Adventure:



Surrounded closely by the cottages of an attractive village green (and with the full co-operation of the villagers) the control line wing of PMFC raised well over £650 for charity in the “Peakirk Mini Good-year Challenge.”

Organised by the indefatigable Brian Lever, to commemorate the one thousandth anniversary of Peakirk Church, seven flyers took part, putting in a total of 1003 laps. A highly creditable event, on the part of all who assisted and flew.

What would St. Pega and her brother Guthlac have made of this?

(Full account by Brian Lever and photos on our website, and list of participants on p.2.)



Taster and Vintage StuntMick Taylor

Taster Stunt has continued as a successful format for C/L Stunt novices this year, especially since it was featured in a double page spread in the April 2016 Aeromodeller and adopted by SAM 35 and CLAPA. The first event of the year at Old Warden Mayfly on 15th May consequently attracted a record entry of eleven, three in Basic Level and eight Intermediate Level. This was followed by good support at the PANDAS Pontefract meeting in June and the Old Warden Scale Weekend 23rd July. Three further events are planned for this year at Pontefract 10/11th September, Old Warden Festival of Flight Saturday 24th September and the Peterborough Mini Goodyear Nationals at Crowland, 9th October.

Vintage Stunt:

Only two Vintage Stunt events run so far this year. Old Warden Mayfly for the Hewitt Shield with six entries and the CLAPA Championships on 25/26 June at Lutterworth for the Tom Hughes Trophy with eight entries, Both were won by Mick Taylor with the four stroke Ringmaster. It is interesting that this model has attracted two other Ringmasters to join the fray, although not four stroke powered, maybe that is the winning difference! Unfortunately a third Vintage event at Nuneaton on 7th August was abandoned due to extremely high wind, while the Vintage Stunt at the stand-alone Aerobatics Nationals proposed for Basildon, Essex in the absence of Barkston this year has attracted insufficient entries to run.

Just a reminder that the Vintage and Taster Stunt rules, schedules, scoresheets and “How to Fly” guide are all on www.sam35.org

.....MT.

CORRESPONDENCE: (Rod’s retrieves, Part Two:)

Hello, John,

I would like to thank you for the help in finding my new model at Luffenham. (Timperley Gala.) Especially useful were the new personal radios which saved me from an extra one mile round trip when you informed me that you had found the model two fields away. Also useful was the update that informed everybody of the deep ditch hidden under the only gap in the hedge. The radios are fast becoming one of those items that seem impossible to be without.

.....Rod Briginshaw.

Editor’s note: There is one amusing downside to (quite correctly) having all our radios on the same channel: those back at PMFC base can hear all that we say while searching downwind, however foolish it may appear. Consequently, when we returned, Martin McHugh in particular was still mildly hysterical about what he had heard, and *refused to say what it was!*

SCREENSHOT:



Borne on the Wind: What else was there to do in West Texas, mid-1950's? Young Roy Orbison with...looks like a c/l job to me. Could he do big "O's" with it?

* (from P 11) The astute reader (that's you of course) may wonder why, if I used RDT, did I also need a roach pole. Well, um... I was so determined to "get the max" that I allowed the Corsair to fly over the cafe area at Ferry with myself in wheezy pursuit. From about 150 yards back, I aimed to drop the model in the courtyard adjacent to the toilet block, which seemed a convenient location. I missed by a few yards and she hung up on a nearby tree. A quick dash to the car for the roach pole, and the model was easily flicked down to earth. As someone wisely said afterwards, "*A roach pole pays for itself on the first occasion of use.*"

Your editor is now the Free Flight Secretary of SAM 35, and has a number of new initiatives in hand for next year. Rather than use pages of the PMFC magazine for this, may I refer you to an item in "SAM Speaks" September 2016 called "The Shape of Things to Come." (And subsequent articles.)

NEXT ISSUE: report from the AGM, The final two rounds of the club Free Flight competition, the PMFC - run Mini Goodyear Nationals, and...your contribution?

In case anyone thought I was running dry on the quotes front, try finding John Keats, W. S. Gilbert, Rudyard Kipling, W.S. Churchill, T S Eliot, not to mention Daisy Duke.



Diary

N.B. Please refer to the Club Calendar on the website for more detailed, and more up to date information.

Indoor at Bushfield:

Sun 23/10
 Sat 26/11 all 10.00 to 13.00
 Sat 7/1
 Sat 28/1
 Sun 19/2
 Sat 25/3

Impington Sun 30 Oct: BL speaks on SAM 35

Special F/F Events at O.W. On 24/25 September

Rubber Bowden 24/9 **Rules on SAM 35 Website.**
For the many C/L events at O.W. See SAM Website.

Club Control Line:

NATIONAL MINI GOODYEAR CHAMPIONSHIPS

RUN BY PMFC: 9th October, at Crowland. Lap counters and helpers needed: please contact Brian Lever

Indoor evenings at Peakirk, 7pm to 9pm:

All Fridays, October 7, 14, 21 (committee), 28.
 November 4, 11, 18, 25 (AGM)
 December 2, 9, 16, 23.

And in 2017:

January 6, 13, 20, 27
 February 3, 10, 17, 24
 March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31.

AGM: Friday

*25th November,
Peakirk Village
Hall, 7pm.*

Final round of
Club Free
Flight
championship:
Friday 16/9 at
Ferry, 4pm.
Current scores
on website



A programme of events to follow...but have your RPT Rubber jobs ready! Any offers for talks, presentations, demos, etc.???



“Cracking flying, Grommitt.”

PMFC FLYING ACES

4th September

A grand day out...despite the conditions



An uninspiring weather forecast which reduced slightly the number of visitors to our marquee event, added to a tetchy wind which swirled over the upwind trees with malicious intent, did not succeed in preventing the **21st edition of Flying Aces** from being another success. Some flew, some watched and chatted, and some picked up the pieces and faced an evening or two of repairs, but a lot of folk had a good time, meeting friends, buying supplies and making new contacts. Flying Aces is more than a competition, it is always an event in its own right, not to be missed.



Above: Team Hibbert were busy all day, winning Table Top precision, but lost out in scramble with damage to their “Cloud Trampish.”



Right: One of the flights of the day, mentioned by BL at prizegiving, was by Roger Simmons, from whose vaporous environs, Jetex and Rapier models flew exhaustively, throughout a difficult day. Flying Aces sees as large a collection of jet and Ducted Fan jobs as you are likely to see anywhere.



S2

The Sephton BE2C, best WW1 model: Andy took home two bottles of wine for first places, but also a soon to be repaired two-part wing from his Nationals winning glider.

Fortunately, small models usually bounce. Of those who braved the turbulence to consign their creations to the air, only a few were able to maintain their carefully trimmed flightpaths. If Douglas Adams' mantra "Flying is learning how to throw yourself at the ground and miss," is true, not a lot of missing took place.

In Masfield Scale, also known as Open Scale, Ken Bates' Cessna and Peter Fardell's low wing Auster Agricola put in competitive times. (I saw the Agricola fly smooth, safe turns, and deemed it the flight of the day, although nobody can see all that happens at such busy event.) Finding myself at one stage temporarily short of bobbins, I was hailed by a gentleman from Lancashire to time his Masfield flight. It didn't take long, seven seconds to be exact, but that was the story of the day, and at least the Veron Moth had a full complement of wing struts - and even rigging. (*Vide* p. 3.) It suffered no apparent damage, but clearly did not want to be put to any further test.

Tony Rushby (Cleemac) needed two flights with his Piper Family Cruiser to defeat such luminaries as Strachan and Sephton in CO2/Electric Scale, while Mike Stuart took Kit Scale from Chris Strachan and Derek Knight, with two flights and highest static score.

The Jetex/Rapier contest entertained us all day (you can't miss it, much fizzing, smoke and general running about) and Roger Simmonds (MIG 15) took the Authentic Scale category with another of the Flights of the Day. In Profile Scale, all ten entries put in flights, R.S scooping the pool in what was arguably the most hotly contested event on the field. The Ducted Fan event went the way of Ian Lever's excellent KK MIG 15, converted to D/F and using a Doculam duct.

Among the less esoteric events, the P20 award went to a Long John (Andy Sephton) which prevailed over a bunch of Sweet Peas and, interestingly, Tony Rushby's KK Playboy. Cloud Tramp went to Naomi Day who also became Junior Ace, and gained a large box of chocolates for her efforts. Our Chris Sanders was beaten into third place, but lives to fight on in the forthcoming club contest.

That our new event for the year, P30 tailless, drew only two entries is of no great concern, such were the conditions. The class will still be given an opportunity to grow. Chris Blanch achieved a "Klean Sweep" with a best flight of the three, of 14 seconds.

the Frog Senior class became a "Redwing" benefit, Chris Strachan beating Tony Rushby to the wine. (Frog Senior is a class that we are likely to hear more about in the future, as it will be adopted by SAM 35.) Graham Percival, of Granth**m* won HLG: he has been flying this class since before yours truly became an aeromodeller, so must know a few things about it by now.

There was a Duration Rubber Ratio event, in which the span of the model is factored into the total score: a sixteen inch own design job by Chris Blanch (again) flew superbly to take first place against eight other entries. Table Top Precision was difficult in the circumstances, in fact to get any kind of flight was an achievement, regardless of the complication of aiming for target times. Ian Hibbert's Achilles prevailed. Enough has been said about Tony Beckett's win in Electric Precision: if only he would do it with a *proper* model!



Russ Lister does not always have the best of luck: after this launch the model would not detach from the line, and, diving in, hit the innocent Chris Blanch in the back of his legs. However, that accounted only for the port wing: there was enough energy in the starboard wing and fuselage to pivot the glider in front of Chris, who then fell onto it! We promise you, Russ, that we are not laughing. Really!

The ever popular 36" Hi-Start Glider contest had eleven entries but only two maxes were recorded such were the conditions. A Frog Diana did the job for Ian Lever, while Andy Sephton's model cleared the biggest tree on the boundary still going upwards while under d/t. But it was Ian's that survived to fly again. John Brown's Cirrosonic came second, Andy having done enough to come third.

Sufficient flyers (seven) were dragged into the Rubber Scramble to make a good contest of the event. Twenty minutes can be quite a long time in these conditions, although retrievers are permitted (must stand beside the launcher at every launch, so no running off downwind while winding is taking place.) The ideal model is one which weathercocks into wind. This is a good event for testing the efficiency of winding techniques and general model handling skills. Toby Collis did all his own retrieving with a "Buzzard" but was closely followed by John Brown and Dave Banks.

Facts:

Entries: 111

Flew: 64

Extra awards:

Best Unorthodox,
 ...Graham Gostick
 (electric canard: "Why have one motor when you can have four")

Best WW1 Model,
 ...Andy Sephton,
 BE2C

Best Scale Glider,
Derek Knight,
 DFS 230

Young Flying Ace,
Naomi Day

Flying Swarm,
 ..Andy Sephton.



Above: from this angle you can't see the extensive Sellotape recovering of the wings, but John Brown proved that repaired models fly better. Came second, with consistent flying.



Alan Chamberlain built this "Felix" during a fortnight's holiday, deserved better conditions in which to fly it: a very promising design that contains space for a large motor. No undercarriage. Should go like a scalded cat. Tell us more, Alan?



The great and the good delay launching while Miss Nancy Waterland is briefed on current trends in Cloud Tramp launch technique.



Flying Aces prizegiving, compered by our Brian Lever, (who added a brief memorial to the much-missed Bernie) is a social event in its own right...they even bring chairs to ensure a good view. Roger Simmons receives his deserts from Chairman Dave Clark.

Very special thanks to Fay Rumball for giving up her day to sell raffle tickets.. thanks, Fay!

Right: most of the organisers also had sagging undercarriages by the end of the day.

