

Wirral Radio Control Flying Society

Newsletter No2 2024



Photo:- Gray Hawke's cracking little kit built Spacewalker

I aim to get down to the field on a regular basis so don't be shy of the camera if you see it pointing in your direction. In addition if you have anything interesting you would like to contribute then please forward to our wrcfscommittee@outlook.com email mark 'Newsletter' and it will find its way to me for inclusion in a future issue.

Committee News

Following our AGM back on 6th December (see notes below) there are a couple of key points for 2024 as follows.

It was agreed that membership for 2024 would be set at £45 for senior members which would be discounted by £5 if renewal was made prior to 31st Jan 2024. This is to aid admin and act as an incentive for early payment so don't moan if you are late and miss the opportunity. After 31st Jan club fees will be the full £45. Payments can be made by bacs or direct to Andy but any questions relating to renewal then please contact the committee at wrcfscommitte@outlook.com asap.

Membership to WRCFS BMFA and CAA renewals must be in place before you fly after 31st Dec, this is a legal requirement for your own safety and a requirement of our insurance and licence. Please make sure your membership renewals are in place as we might well ask for proof. NB CAA Operator Codes need to be displayed or readily accessible to be viewed on all your models. Again this is a legal requirement so don't forget.

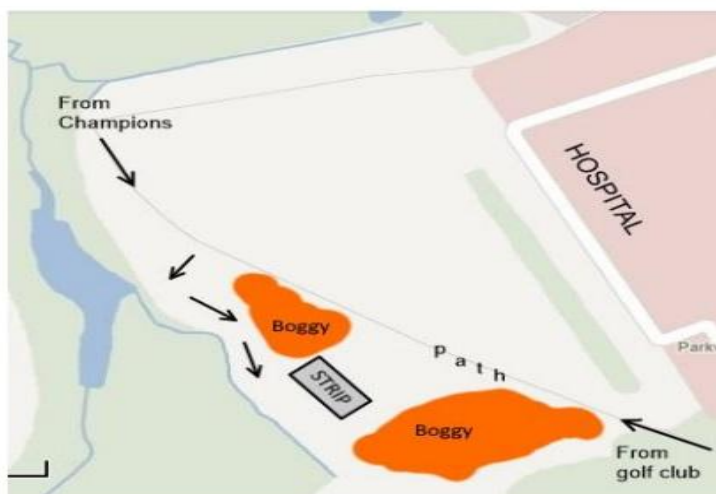
Club Meetings

The first meeting on Thursday 25th Jan at the Lever Club was a success in as much as we got a good turn out of members. Whilst the weather has limited flying activity it was great to have the opportunity for some social interaction and general chat. The committee clarified the bank issues which are now all resolved and simply clarified that we now have online banking facility and a brief chat about plans for the year ahead of which we will discuss in more detail at the next meeting. Gray Hawke had brought along a very nice little kit built Spacewalker and gave a brief chat.

Please what out on watts app for confirmation of future club meetings

At the Field

Be aware that the field at this time of year is subject to soggy, boggy ground so please be sensible and use common sense when unsure as to the ground stability.



Clearly at this time of year we need to be conscious of weather conditions and monitor the park regarding driving onto site and stick to the guidelines when the site gets waterlogged.

Editors Column

Well the weather continues to be lousy throughout January and into Feb as I write this next edition and whilst we may not have any flying news at least the bmfa kept us entertained during December and early January with a request to participate in a consultancy review regarding CAA review of UAS CAP 2610 regulations. For those that participated then well done for not falling asleep going through the tedious, beaucocratic, jargon. For those that didn't then here are the heavily edited highlights.

AA Consultation: Review of UK Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Regulations CAP2610

Oh wow; here is a nightmare of its own making. However, let's not get confused by all the hype and hearsay surrounding this one and keep to the facts and direct implications. I am not going to go through everything in detail but just a basic update around this issue.

CAP2610 is the process or management of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) within the UK, ultimately managed by the CAA (Civil Air Authority) and is and will be when revised UK Law. So, we need to ensure that we all stay legal and understand the impacts as best as we can. Fortunately for us the BMFA and indeed the LMA (Large Model Association) have already done a vast amount of work on this on our behalf and have outline a series of responses to the CAA Consultation document that needed to be returned by 10th Jan 2024. This document can be found on the BMFA website for those that wish for some bedtime reading.

This consultation process is supposed to provide greater clarity for users and policing of all UAS users and tries to do this by proposals to: -

1. Simplify Regulations
2. Increase Education and Understanding
3. Improve Product Safety and Security
4. Manage Safe and Secure Airspace – this is key to model flying which could include Geo-Awareness and / or Geo-Fencing although both BMFA and LMA believe this to be unlikely due to commercial and technical implications.
5. Remote ID Policy (RID) a proposal for both network and remote ID using either mobile phone network technology or short-range radio (Bluetooth). Ultimately there will be a cost and likely to be born by the user, ie us.

The BMFA/LMA have made a consultation available to all its members with a request to respond and to be honest there will be many whom will undertake the task, having read the document I came quite quickly to the opinion that to answer fully I would need to invest so much time in fully understanding all the jargon and complexities that the BMFA response seemed logical and has been compiled by those with the appropriate knowledge and unless I felt a distinct issue I am generally happy to accept their proposals as a suitable response. In truth we have only till Jan 10th 2024, so for those that are reading this for the first time then of course we are already too late.

What is the immediate impact – Nothing in the short term as the review process will take some time and there will no doubt be further discussions and review between BMFA/LMA and CAA. Within the proposals is a further period consultation as BMFA and LMA push for exemptions for model aircraft to operate within their own distinct group. None of this is likely to come into effect prior to 1st Jan 2026 at the earliest with BMFA/LMA pushing for an indefinite extension to the period.

So where are we, basically in the middle of a consultation period, again. CAA will introduce a legal framework that will include model aircraft, but the details and specifics are still being thrashed out and we can expect to see more of these consultation documents and requests for input over the next few years. On the plus side this is what we pay the BMFA for to work on these issues on our behalf so we can continue to enjoy model flying in all its guises.

Club Comps & Fly-Ins

Firstly, it was proposed that we should have a D Day Fly-In. The format is yet to be defined completely but obviously some association to scale models and particularly those associated to WW2 era would seem most appropriate. The date proposed is for Saturday 8th June with a deferral to the 9th if the weather proves unsuitable. Several members have already taken time off work on 6th June so expect a few down at the field to commemorate on the actual date,

We have also proposed a club fun day for 30th March which is the Easter Bank Holiday weekend so we will have to see how this works out for everyone as not a date I can personally make but shows we have some plans afoot.

All events at the field are of course subject to weather so keep a look on Whats App close to the dates for any updates.

Club Cups

The traditional club cup comps fell apart last year for many reasons not least the weather and has generally over recent years felt in need of some revision as numbers of participants have declined so at the recent committee meeting it was proposed that we formally close down the current club cup flying events and simply move forward with a lower key casual format of fly in pop up days as an alternative. If demand comes forward then of course we can review but for the moment we felt it probably the best course of action. If those with the current trophies can make themselves known to the committee we can make some decisions about the trophies themselves.

In addition, of course we have the John McConnel Cup (aka the good egg cup). It has been proposed that we make no changes and maintain the member vote at the next AGM in the usual manner.

The jet age! – by Paul Devlin

I'm sure like me, most of us are of an age that were brought up watching TV programmes such as Thunderbirds, Captain Scarlet, Fireball XL5 etc, are you all reminiscing! The attraction to me was always the models. Filmed in a certain way to captivate our imagination; yes we could all see the strings holding them up, and the scenery being dragged behind the model to give the illusion of speed, but we squinted and pretended they were real, and they were always fast jets.

Move forward in time and here we are living out our childhood dreams with radio control Models; something 50 years ago was only for the very affluent, and a model Jet was unheard of. So fancy flying Thunderbird 1, or sitting next to the Angels flying from cloud base in an Angels Interceptor jet? Well now you can for a fraction of the price that these models cost a few years back, and without the strings! So what are the basic options to fly a model jet?

1/ Turbine models.

To see one of these fly is quite an experience, At Arrowe Park a turbine was last flown in 2022. The sound is incredible, and you need nerves of steel, and a quick eye, because the nature of a jet is speed. As a younger man, I recall visiting AP in the 1990's to watch jets being flown, it was quite a showstopper! In most cases you need a decent financial investment and you need an understanding of fuel etc, and be half decent on the sticks (Minimum B Cert), so it's not for everyone.

2/ EDF (Electric Ducted Fan) models

Some of these models have a very high level of detail, commercial, warbird and sport, there is a good choice, but they fly on large Lipo battery packs, usually 6 cells, and due to the high current drain flight times are relatively short, however, they offer to the likes of me a way of experiencing a jet plane in a relatively cost effective way. Short flight times are not a worry to me as my concentration tends to lapse at the 3 minute mark. A problem with these models is they generally have small wheels and struggle rotating without a decent turn of speed, take off too early and it's the inevitable tip stall onto the foam wing which breaks! Dry short grass strip is best, so it's a well kept strip that makes things easy (let's not go there!)_but they will handle wind reasonable well once in the air.

These are my observations, and I'm sure others will have their own opinions, but once you fly them, You find yourself usually bitten by the excitement of the noise (even EDF can sound quite realistic) and speed.

3/ Small 3 cell and 4 cell models

Over the last 3 or 4 years, we have seen a growth with much cheaper, smaller EDF models from the far east. These models offer high levels of detail and you can now fly with the Red Arrows with a realistic BAE Hawk for under £150. They fly on cheap 3 cell 1500mah lipo packs giving flight times up to 10 minutes and can be hand launched and belly landed so alleviating the extra pressure of landings and takeoff. Easy to transport as they fit in a backpack and if any bumps do happen, the foam will repair, and spares are available and cheap.



Having dabbled a number of times over the years with EDF, some successful, some not so successful! I decided to try my hand at one of the model available from Arrow Hobbies (coincidentally!). I punted for the Red Arrows BAE Hawk, at the time the Red Arrows documentary was on TV which influenced my decision. It arrived well boxed, with just the wing (couple of self tappers) and the tail to glue in. 50mm 11-blade fan, 4500KV brushless motor and all servos pre installed, it's a 30 minute job to get the wings on, and install your own receiver. Mine came with a 3 position switchable gyro, UK models (at the time) didn't have this, but the Chinese ones did. After some trial flight's, I removed this as it wasn't needed, and just complicated the initialisation when plugging in your battery of choice, 3 cell lipo. 1500mah was recommended, but I had 2200mah packs so used these.

Maiden flight's. I always say "flights", the absolute first flight of any model to me is usually very short just to make sure it flies, (and quite often in Paul Limeys hands!) then I start trimming etc. It's always a nervy thing, the model will never again look as good if something amiss happens!, and a hand launch, even with a small light model, is still tricky if your left arm is as useless as mine. A nice quiet 5mph wind morning, couple of charged batteries and off we go. You tube is full of very successful hand launches so maybe my heavier packs didn't help, but I found the launches marginal. Full throttle with a level throw from right hand (there is a reasonable hand grip under the model) and then what seems to be an age to get your right hand on the elevator and aileron stick, away we go. Be warned at full chat it gets small very quick! I added the under belly white arrow markings just to make the top and bottom look a bit different, this did help by the way. Its fully aerobatic being able to perform all the Red's manoeuvres, even if some were not intentional! A decent turn of speed, and closer in looks quite nice. I changed the stock tail livery from the 50 yrs celebration which is now a couple of years out of date to the current one, using some scrap covering. The canopy is painted, but if you are as anal as me, there is a guy on facebook that makes clear canopies with some level of cockpit detail and a pilot.

Fast forward a flying season and the model makes a good break from flying larger models or IC, and it fits into that small dark corner of your boot, but the only niggle for me was the hand launches. I have a bungee launcher, and decided to give this a go one nice bright sunny evening at AP. With some club members giving moral support (well actually finding the whole thing very amusing) I tried it, and it was a great success sawing into the sky with ease.



I then went a step further, changed the Pre installed 30a esc to a 40a, and bought some 4 cell 1500mah packs. I now have very easy hand launches, longer flight times and a vertical performance. Not every flight needs to be fast, this model will fly slowly (no flaps or rudder) so can be kept well within the boundaries of Arrow Park!

Paul Devlin

Childhood Memories of Free-Flight at Epsom Downs

Gray Hawke

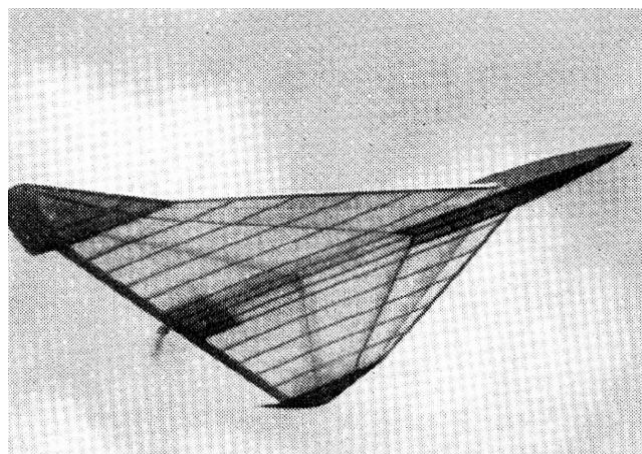
My father was a difficult man – unpredictable, often angry, occasionally violent, but also charismatic and charming when he wanted to be – think of a Donald Trump without any money. I have some painful memories of life with him, but I'm thankful for his passion for aeromodelling, which he passed on to me. We lived in Crystal Palace, South London and our nearest flying site was Epsom Downs – the huge area bounded by the racecourse where the Derby is run. It was a 40 minute drive in whatever old jalopy he happened to have paid 50 quid for after the last one gave up.

He'd fly single channel "Galloping Ghost" radio models and was a lousy pilot (though I didn't realise this at the time), so watching his efforts was generally quite exciting. I wasn't allowed near the radio equipment, so it was free flight for me. ARTF, foamies, laser cutting, iron-on covering and CA glue were all decades away. Sticks, tissue, balsa cement and dope were the order of the day and my engines were small diesels (Mills .75cc and 1.3cc, ED Bee, DC Dart) plus the ubiquitous Cox .049 glow motor.

Here are some of the models I remember building and flying:



Veron Cardinal. From a kit. Fantastic design – simple to build and a superb flyer. I finished mine in a nice pale blue and black scheme with yellow trim lines and it looked lovely. Flew away on its first flight as it caught a thermal and circled off over the Grandstand in the direction of Kingston upon Thames.



Delta 1. Designed by a 15-year old! No wing ribs – just strip balsa over 2 main spars to give the airfoil. I built 2 of these. One was all red and flew beautifully – very slow and stable – the other was yellow and black and I don't remember it flying at all. Was possibly destroyed by our cat, which had a taste for balsa wood and enjoyed ripping up doped tissue.



Saracen. An all sheet pusher offered as a free plan with Aeromodeller magazine (on orange paper, I recall). Very fast and exciting to fly. Virtually impossible to trim, so you never knew who it was going to attack on a crowded flying field. Mine was painted all black with RAF markings.



Veron Deacon. The bigger (54") version of the Cardinal. Mine was 2-tone green. Flew nicely but managed to hit the only solid post in the huge expanse of the Downs and I never got round to repairing it.



Windbag. A hilarious airship-like design with a measly 9" wingspan. Dragged aloft by a Cox .049 glow motor, it would then wobble down in a thoroughly unconvincing glide. Good fun, and I remember it landing in someone's lap while they were having a picnic.



Vampie. Another all sheet pusher. My brother and I each made one. His was beautiful and flew like a dream. Mine was horrible and flew like a bunch of keys. Enough said.



Soarer Baby. Nice towline glider from a KeilKraft kit. Mine was classic black fuselage and white wings. Graceful and reliable as I remember.

It's good to know that many of the vintage designs are still available, often as updated, laser cut electric versions. Sarik Hobbies and Belair Kits are good sources.

Support our local Model Shops

Whilst Internet is great we are very much in a use it or lose it scenario with our local model shops so go on, give them a chance even if it's just a tube of glue before it's too late.

Steve Webb Models – 80 Church Street, Frodsham. Tel 01928 735 225

Kit Stop – 20 Oxton Road, Birkenhead . Tel 0151 647 9067

The Wirral Model Shop – 62 Victoria Parade, New Brighton. Tel 0151 639 0045

If you would like to submit something for inclusion then just send articles photos or even just notes and I can kick into shape to our committee email at wrcfsccommittee@outlook.com

Lindsay