



A BMFA Affiliated Club

BFRCMS NEWSLETTER

(The 'Flyer' September 2009)

Dear Members,

Welcome to the latest edition of the BFRCMS 'Flyer'. I need to apologise for the lateness of this issue which I had intended to put out a number of months ago. My only feeble excuse is that work has seriously got in the way. Issues at work have meant that I had to take on a new role for about 4 months back in June and I've struggled with time for most things ever since.

In this issue I'll give you an update on the 'mob' of mini-kangaroos that have appeared at the club, John Smith's trials and tribulations with a Cobra, the 'BFRCMS Jet Boys on Tour, Soggy Electrics and any other trivia I can muster while assembling this month's ramblings. We also have the first two instalments of an article entitled "A View From The Hedge" by a most unlikely contributor which I hope will become a regular feature of the Flyer.

Sad News

Dear members,

As you are all probably now aware Peter Davis sadly passed away recently after a short illness.

In the time Peter has been a member of the club he made many friends and was always willing to help out when asked. He gave his services as a committee member and was always willing to give his opinion on any issues that arose. Peter was also there to offer help when there was any work to be carried out at the field and club hut.

I am sure that you will all be sad at his loss and will join with me to offer his wife Doreen, our sincere condolences.

You may be aware that one of our long standing members John Norris is has been in hospital due to a serious illness and is still unwell.

Can I take this opportunity to send John the best wishes of all the club members and hope we will see John down at the field in the near future.

Paul Cusworth (chairman)



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Field over-run by Mini-Roos

I looked on 'Google' (internet search engine for those of you without a computer) for the collective name of a group of Kangaroos. I got three answers; a troop, a mob, or a court (from the expression Kangaroo court). Well, lately you may have seen a number of members (now up to 6) with small twin finned deltas called Mini-Kangaroos.

Now I can't say that they are as organised as a troop, often they behave like a mob and absolutely they will hold court over any aspect of flying and most of our members are seen as fair game for ridicule and abuse. They are of course Jason, Tank Dave, Barry, Andy the mechanic and Phil Leech. I have also joined the team but of course this is purely in the interest of modelling journalism and I'll have no suggestion that I'm just out to beat them at their own game.

The story behind all this is Jason's challenge to see who could make the fastest and cheapest model that could rival the gas turbine boys. Fortunately there was a free plan available in RCM&E some time ago that was fast out of the box. This was essentially a ply elongated box with a balsa sheet delta wing and a couple of fins. Originally this was intended for a .25 sized motor.

Now I've done some building in my time and I followed the traditional method of getting a copy of the plan, understanding it, making up a parts list, buy the wood and start building as soon as everything arrived. Clearly this is not the modern way of doing things. I'm obviously stuck in the dark ages and getting old fast. The modern way appears to be very different; Andy, Tank and Jason decided to have one or more building parties where resemblances of the plan were constructed, mostly by Jason, using logic derived from a few drinks and the suck it and see approach. Phil traced around someone else's model on a piece of wallpaper and a mini-kangaroo shaped model appeared soon after. Clearly the concept of making it up as you go along was the order of the day. I made the big mistake of asking about whether the side and down-thrust angles on the plan were about right and was rapidly ridiculed as being too technical. "What side-thrust on the plan?" was the response! "Ah.... that'll be why it's pulling so violently to the left on take-off then....better stick some washers behind the engine mount!"



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To their credit all the models have now flown very well with a few minor tweaks. There has been the odd mishap along the way, but in the main they have survived the summer and make for an exciting model to fly.

Did we ever achieve the original goal? Given that all the models have been significantly over-powered we may have got close to the slower jets. In reality I think we forgot about the challenge and had too much fun just trying to fly them all together without taking each other out! The highlight was our takeover of the flight line at lunchtime on Jet Day just to make a point to the jet boys.

On a personal note, I think that the real achievement was by the less experienced pilots in the bunch. The mini-kangaroos are not the easiest to launch, fly or land and these pilots seem to have gained a new found confidence in their flying ability.



The Mini-Kangaroo mob!

John Tackles a Cobra and wins!

John Smith has been telling me about his trials and tribulations with a new model he has built, The TOP GUN Cobra. John takes up the story...

I bought this from Andy at Lancaster as I had a spare 46 engine. On opening the box all seemed to be fine, nice colours; red white and blue. The kit is fully built up using balsa and ply with a fairly standard construction. It has a narrow but strong under carriage, the wheels are a little bit small for grass but it has coped OK so far.

The cowl is made of fibre glass and only just fits. I am not sure how it would manage a bigger engine! The recommend range is 46 to 61, I used an OS 46FX, a longer engine would be a tight fit. The canopy is the usual type but was not marked out very well. Fortunately I spotted this early so was very careful when cutting it out as the guide line didn't go where it should have. The film covering has been applied quite well but the trim started to lift before the first flight so I had to have a drop of cyno to keep it in place.

The two wing halves went together OK so it was straight onto the fuselage. I fitted the tail feathers the instructions looked a bit funny to begin with but I soon worked it out. The tail wheel wire has to be bent 90 degrees to go through the rudder. Unfortunately you have to butcher the rear of the fuz to insert the tail



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wheel, and then fit the rudder with the hinges. A more simple way would be to have a hard wood plate at the rear and screw the mount to that.

Despite the engine mount locations being pre-drilled, the captive nuts are not pre-fitted, so it's a good job I have small hands. You see one finger missing does help! After getting the engine mount in place I attached the engine and offered up the cowl. Something was obviously wrong here! It's not even close! I decided to measure the datum line and it was miles out. Explaining the problem to Andy at Lancaster saw a new kit being ordered. When it arrived we compared the engine mounting on each of the fuselages. The captive nuts were already fitted in the new kit and in a far lower location than the first kit. All the appropriate bits were swapped and I could start again. The cowl even fitted properly this time!

Fitting the servos also proved to be a challenge. The pre-cut servo mounts were not big enough for Futaba servos and fell out when I tried to alter them, the supplied control horn screws just bent, the control rods were too small for the supplied clevises and the tail wheel wire snapped when I tried to straighten it. Other than that the only thing that I had to do was balance it, as it was miles out!

The Cobra made it into the air last Sunday while you were all at the jet do, surprise surprise there was no problem it just required 3 clicks of down trim and all was well. I had 5 flights with it and I am getting to like it. The model fly's very easy and has no vices, so I have now fitted the cowl and put in a little left side thrust to help combat a slight move to the right on climb. You should be able to view it soon and see all the build problems. I expected something to go wrong but all was well thank goodness, see you at the field



What's happening in Committee then?

There are still two empty places on the committee. If anyone is interested in joining the committee, they should contact any existing committee member.

Sadly I have to report that Chris Hiller has stood down from the committee. Chris has been working in the North West on a long term contract with BT that has now come to an end and will be returning to his home town. We wish him well in his next job and hope that he continues model flying.



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Event Calendar

Details of the up and coming events are as follows:-

- **7th October - first indoor meeting at the Tennis Club – Talk by DS on the Panther Project, plus Bring and Natter**
- **4th November - second indoor meeting – this will just be a social meeting due to the proximity of Bonfire Night event.**
- **7th November- Bonfire night at the Field.**
- **2nd December - 2009 AGM.**
- **16th December - Hot-Pot supper and quiz night at the Tennis Club.**

For the last 2 years the bonfire night has been the highlight of the year and very well attended by the membership and their friends and family. This year we are sticking to the same format of a Jacobs Join (ie. Bring what you like to eat and share! I'm still gobsmacked by the generosity of those who contributed last year!) . The club will fund some fireworks and any contributions to this fund will be gladly accepted.

I would urge members attending the club celebrations, not to bring boxes of small fireworks as these can be difficult to manage from a logistics and safety perspective. If members would like to contribute to the display by bringing something along on the night, then I would urge you to purchase one large firework that can be added to the main display. Please arrive early to allow time for this to be setup correctly and safely. For the safety of all concerned, only nominated marshals will be allowed on the live side of the safety barrier so please don't expect to be lighting your own fireworks!).

The display will start at 7.30 sharp!

Field and Facilities

In the last edition I highlighted the issue of rubbish being left at the club hut. Well I'm glad to say that people seem to have got the message over the summer and are taking stuff home and generally keeping things to an acceptable level. Many thanks to those who have made the effort to keep the place clean.



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Aero-show trophy (report from Dave Swarbrick)

Sunday the 20th September was the day that we decided to run our first club members only event for some years. In the past we had run the Aero-show trophy event for several years and everybody had always enjoyed it. The event is open to all models and pilots and the rules are very simple:

- The pilot can enter any scale or non-scale model and perform a routine, as the full size aircraft would do at an air show.
- If you fly a scale model then you must fly as the full size prototype would do with scale speed and manoeuvres.
- If you fly a non scale model you can decide which full size aeroplane you are going to choose.

We originally decided to have two rounds, but in the end we decided to have one round and a fly off between the top 3 scores. Eight pilots decided to have a go at the 5 minute flight, 3 scale models and 5 non scale models were entered.

Chris Vernon flew first with his Su 29 a very nice clean set off aerobatics followed and Chris showed off his model well, some of the flick manoeuvres were a bit slow but otherwise a good flight.

Bertie flew his 'Comper Swift' in a very scale like manner with a good scale speed and training aircraft type manoeuvres, he told the judges what each manoeuvre was going to be and executed it well.

Paul Jennings flew his low wing trainer as a Spitfire and did a creditable flight although some of the rolls were a bit to axial for a Spit. But otherwise it was a good flight.

Jason Reid flew his Super Swooper as a Mustang and although the speed was a bit high the rolls and accuracy of the flight was very good. The amount of manoeuvres he got in a five-minute flight and keeping them scale like showed good piloting skills.

Glen Block was next with a fairly new model of a CAP 232. Glen had not flown it very much and he did a good job, but it was obvious to the judges that he needed more stick time on this aeroplane.

Young Zak was next flying his dad's Swooper and this time it was an Extra 230. Zak took off and did some excellent aerobatic flying with a good range of manoeuvres. Avalanches stall turns, multiple rolls, which were dead axial, and finally the wing wag to tell the judges he was finished.

Dave and Ryan Redman flew a really nice Spacewalker 2. Unfortunately engine problems made it difficult to show off the model well, although the speed was right, they were unable to fly a schedule that would show off the model to its full potential.



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The last flyer of the session was John Anderson and with his high wing trainer decided that it was a crop duster!!! Now Johns flying style really does not resemble a crop duster but by god did he dust that crop. If it had been a real crop of barley or wheat it would have been as flat as a flook, he came across at about mach two and zero feet, he almost blew off Phil's sun glasses, he continued in a 45deg. climb out and executed an axial roll. Needless to say John gave us all a good laugh.

So in the end 3 pilots were chosen for the fly off Bertie, Jason and Zak.

Jason went first and did another good flight but only managed about the same points as the first flight.

Zak did another excellent flight and did a bit better this time.

Bertie was having slight engine trouble and after a good start the engine stopped on him and the flight was over.

Ultimately, after all the points had been added up, young Zak beat off his dad and the others to get a fine win in his first competition. Well done to all the pilots we all had a good time and fortunately no one crashed a model.

And now for something completely different!

Many thanks to our contributing reporter for giving us an insight on the field life of our modellers from a slightly different viewpoint.....

A VIEW FROM THE HEDGE (By Will Sparrow)

Mid June: What a nice day. I had, of course, been up for hours; after all, I'm right in the middle of the nesting season and all those mouths need feeding. Enough about me let me tell you about what has been going on with the models and the strange people who fly them. John Prothero turned up with a very nice little EDF Hawk (the very word sends a shiver down the backs of us little birds) which took off easily from its own wheels and whizzed around in great style. The wheels did not retract but I was very impressed nevertheless. I overheard John say that said Hawk had a nasty tip stall tendency which he then demonstrated on the landing approach! This was a great shame and from my twig I had a good view of the little plastic men hanging upside down in their straps staring blankly through the shattered canopy. On telling this tale to my hen the same night, as she settled down to brood the chicks, she observed what a great effect it would be if a model jet, before crashing, could have its little plastic men bang out. I told her not to be so fanciful but secretly found myself agreeing with her. Jet Day perhaps?

John Higgins was flying his Katana which, hedgerow chat has it, gives cause for the lights to dim in Wrea Green when the batteries are put on charge. Still, it was pretty to watch and the pilot could not be sick because there wasn't one. Shame! A friend of mine, Jim Sparrow, (no relation) tried similar manoeuvres from a great height a month or so back; he has never been the same bird since! He spent a week in Hedge Hospital with a severely twisted wing and four missing tail feathers.

The buzzards were having a bit of a competition way up high with John Norris's glider. They tell me that they can't quite fathom how these things manage to get up to their level so quickly. It is a known fact, down the hedgerow, that buzzards are as thick as planks and are not on the same intellectual plane as we sparrows. If they were up to it we'd explain all about electric motors and things but as it is we'd be wasting our breath. Still they do fly well...



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Andy Aitkin and Graham Ailsby were dabbling with their petrol planes. It was nice to see them out enjoying themselves. Andy seemed to be really enjoying himself, flicking his engine with increasing intensity and with the zeal only a true modeller can show. Other members present were heard to mutter something about pfaff-to-fun ratio, whatever that is.

It was nice to see Bob Harris back on the strip (I remember him from last year when I was but a fledgling). Gerry Shakespeare was there too with the sort of model that was familiar to my great, great, great grandpa sparrow. Flying was limited when Gerry discovered that his rubber bands had perished.

Well, enough of this staring through the foliage at the antics of modellers. I really must get on with grub hunting if I wish to avoid being hen-pecked (literally, in my case!). I'll be back if there's anything happening that takes my fancy. There is an excellent view from the hedge... and you never know when I might be watching.

Late June/Early July: *A nice day. I have been more than a little busy of late since we are on with our second brood. Already my hen is dropping hints about yet another brood after this one. What is it with these females? I've put my foot down. I told her that I'd had enough of nesting for one year and that if she laid any more eggs I was going to peck holes in them and stamp on them: the hen is now not speaking to me and there is a very frosty atmosphere in this part of the hedge.*

Given my lack of time I have not had much chance to see what the modellers have been up to on the strip. I did, however, see part of jet day. Dave Johnson's airliner looked beautiful in the sky and he did display it to good effect. The landing too was excellent but gravity and the slope of the runway conspired to spoil his day and the graceful machine ran out of runway before it ran out of speed. The nose sustained some damage but not anything that could not easily be repaired. Big Dave (why do they call him that?) taxied his Panther and one could tell that this splendid machine wanted to fly... just as I did last year when I was about to fledge. It looked to me as if the Panther could easily take off from the strip but might find landing on it and stopping more of a challenge. I hope I'm about if Dave does decide to demonstrate the machine to all of us in the hedge.

I missed the test flight of John Higgins' new CAP 21 but fellow aerophile, Jim Sparrow, (no relation) told me that all went well and the CAP flew majestically and looked very much like the real thing. By all accounts John was going to take some lead off the firewall and experiment with a different size of prop before the next series of test flights.

We all had a fright the other day when the farmer arrived with a large contraption attached to the back of his tractor. The rumour spread like wild fire down hedge row that he was going to cut the hedge and thus deprive us little birds of our nesting cover. Thankfully the rumour was ill-founded and the contraption was not a hedge cutter but a hay cutting attachment. In no time at all he had the grass laid flat. A little later, when the coast was once again clear, Jim and I, with a few friends (but not the hen, who is still not speaking to me), had a look for Chris Vernon's missing silencer. Unfortunately, the search proved fruitless but there were some good grubs to be had in the long grass!

*Wednesday evening flying seems to be proving popular with the good weather bringing the members out in droves. I was enjoying the view, my day's work done and feeling replete from a surfeit of caterpillars when wham! I was nearly knocked off my twig by a model doing a low-level swoop through the hedge. I did not catch the name of the perpetrator but the model landed with a piece of twig - **my** twig - wrapped around its wing. I'm still all of a wobble. Who would have thought that the view from the hedge could be so full of hazard?*

WS



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Charger Warning!

I've been informed by our president of a safety issue with the Bantam BC6 Dual Power Charger. This charger can be powered from either a suitable 12v power source or directly from the mains. The 12v source leads are permanently attached to the device and cannot be removed when using the mains facility.



Recently, Harold Dowbekin, just as he was about to charge one of his lithium polymer batteries with the charger attached to the mains, noticed a burning smell. It turned out that the unused 12v power cables were now powered and the terminals were touching a piece of carbon tube which was now glowing.

So, if you have one of these chargers, or any similar dual power setup, please make sure that the 12v power leads are either safely isolated or are not energised by the mains supply connection.

Contributing to the Flyer

As ever, if you have any ideas for what you would like to see in the flyer then drop me an email, a text or a letter (haven't seen one of those in a while!) and I'll see what I can do. All ideas will be considered.

That's all for now folks. Happy Landings!

Mark Conlin