

# HALE HALL MODEL CLUB NEWSLETTER



## JUNE 2021



Welcome to the June Newsletter. Well we didn't quite manage to come out of lockdown but the weather in June has been much better for flying. We even managed to have our first club meet for about 18 months; Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June saw members gather together for our Summer Solstice Evening.

## Mirror Mirror

Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> June saw our esteemed site co-ordinator, Andrew O'Neill, and a motley crew of club members turn up at the field to install a traffic safety mirror opposite the exit from the flying site. After much discussion and deliberation the location was decided, a hole dug and a couple of bags of dry mix saw the post installed. Achieving the optimum angle for the mirror was tricky, mainly due to the slight curve in the road and having to keep the post back from the verge.

So the final position was a compromise but it should definitely aid safety in exiting the site. However it is to be considered as an aid only to improve visibility when joining the road. Due to the curved nature of the mirror, objects may appear to be further away than they really are, so be very careful when using the mirror's image as, for example, bikes may appear to be quite small. Hopefully it will be a useful aid to exiting the site safely but don't rely on it too much and still use extreme care when joining the road.

## New Members

We have two new members who joined the club recently. Welcome to Jacques Brown and Jason Davis, both refugees from the now defunct Chingle Club. We look forward to seeing you down at the field.

## Safety

It is always worth revisiting the subject of safety occasionally, we all tend to pick up bad habits over time. Dave Ringland has unearthed a couple of safety related articles from previous Newsletters.

### General Safety Dos and Don'ts

#### In the Pits

**Don't** run engines at full power. Once you have got your engine running at low revs carry or push your model to the taxi way before selecting full power for mixture adjustments. If you've ever seen the trajectory of a propeller shed at full power you will understand why it's not a good idea to run at maximum power in the vicinity of your club colleagues. If you haven't, ask someone who has!

**On the Taxiway**

**Do** point your model away from the pits area whilst adjusting your engine settings.

**Do** perform control, engine and buddy box connections checks before asking to enter the runway.

**On the Runway**

**Don't** faff about. Treat the runway like a full size one and minimise the time you block its use to other flyers. You never know when 'dead stick' is going to be called.

**Do** get your model to the takeoff point as expeditiously as possible, without rushing. Start your takeoff run abeam the pilots' box in use so that, if it heads for the side of the runway, there is no danger of colliding with fellow flyers.

**Do** stand together in the pilots' box. This not only minimises the chances of interference but also enhances communication between the flyers.

**After Take-Off**

**Do** let other flyers know what you intend doing, particularly if you have departed from the normal circuit.

**Do** dump your model into the ground if it looks as though it's going to endanger people or property. This assumes you still have some measure of control over it!

**Do** make sure that, if you have a failsafe device, it is set to reduce the throttle to the idle position on signal loss/interference. Most receivers are set to 'hold last position' as the factory default, according to the BMFA Handbook.

**After Landing**

**Do** remove your model from the runway as expeditiously as possible (See previous Don't faff about on the runway).

**Do** call 'Clear' when you have removed yourself and your model from the runway.

**All the Time**

The most important Do

**Do** enjoy yourself – it's a hobby after all.

**The Operation of Electric Propeller Driven Aircraft**

As the operator/remote pilot of an electric aircraft you have, no doubt, read the relevant sections of the BMFA Handbook and, indeed, the Electroflight paragraph in the Club Rules and Regulations and understand the 3 points below:

1. The instant you start to plug in the flight battery, the model you are holding may transform itself from a dead airframe into one with its motor running at full revs and all controls moving.
2. Since plugging the flight battery in is nearly always a two handed job you must give serious thought to how your model will be restrained BEFORE it does something you don't expect.

3. When plugging in the flight battery, positive restraint, either by a helper holding the model or by some other method, and staying completely clear of the propeller, must always be part of your regular routine

Reviewing those points:

Yes, I know there is built-in circuitry in modern ESCs that is designed to prevent the inadvertent starting of the motor (the excuse heard most often when an operator is challenged on his start-up procedure), but are you seriously willing to entrust your fingers, or other body parts, to something produced at minimum cost in the Far East? Really??

How many of you actually use some form of restraint when plugging in the flight battery – and stay behind the propeller when doing it?? There hasn't been a great deal of evidence of that being done very often at Hale Hall recently.

Having plugged in your flight battery there then comes the act of transporting the model to the runway. At all times it **must be assumed** that the motor could inadvertently start, so the way in which you hold your model during this period is as important as the initial battery connection activity.

Just ask yourself "If this was a glow/petrol powered model with the propeller running, would I carry it like this?" If the answer's 'No' then don't carry an electric model like that either. It's not Rocket Science – it's self-preservation and common sense!!

Is this sensible, do you think?



Or this?



Or this?



All of these carrying positions have been seen at Hale Hall

At last! How about carrying your model like this?

And some food for thought, as the BMFA A Certificate is as much about safe operation, as well as the ability to competently fly the model, if you carried the model to the strip by any of the first 3 methods you would not get to the flying part of the test – you would have failed already.



## Dave Womersley

Some good news has reached me that Dave Womersley has visited the flying site on a few occasions ,assisted by Ron Ingram, and has flown one of his gliders. To help Dave get around Ron has obtained an electric wheelchair and upgraded it to be suitable for the terrain around the flying site. For the time being it is going to be stored in the club hut, please make sure that it can be easily accessed. I hear that Dave is still learning the handling characteristics of the chair; maybe some L plates are required!! Welcome back Dave.

## Aerobatic Antics

As I have recently taken on the Newsletter, I make no excuses for going back in time for some subject matter. So we go back to early 2018 when I noticed that the BMFA had started to run more events at the new BMFA flying site at Buckminster near Grantham. One that appealed to me was an 'Introduction to Aerobatic day' where you get the chance to receive some one to one tuition with a top UK aerobatic pilot. Not wanting to be 'Billy No Mates' I persuaded Andrew O'Neill to come with me (nothing to do with the fact that he had a van to transport our models!) The events takes place every Wednesday in the summer, a date was booked for July. £12 for the day, including lunch, which seemed a bargain to me. The journey down to Buckminster would take more than 3 hrs so we decided to go down the day before and stay overnight, luckily we found a good deal at a Travelodge on the A1 just a few minutes away from Buckminster.

### Day 1 Tuesday.

To make the most of the trip we decided to go down early on Tuesday and go to Buckminster to check out the flying site and have a few flights to get our eye in. After an uneventful journey, including the obligatory stop for coffee and cake, we arrived at Buckminster after lunch. First impressions were very good, an impressive admin building, large barn / hanger with kitchen and toilet facilities, coffee and tea are available with an honesty box.



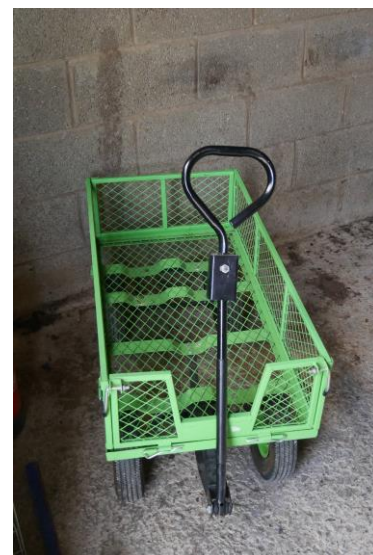




Outside there is a large car park, a covered area in the pits and model preparation benches. The BMFA have certainly done a good job developing the site. A slight downside is you have to pay to fly, so £8 each was duly handed over, not bad I suppose if it supports the development of the site facilities.



We had luckily chosen to go during the long hot and dry period that happened that summer, so the weather was beautiful. We arrived to warm sunshine and a light breeze. With some excitement we went to investigate the flying site and we were not disappointed! The site is excellent, large open aspect with massive well-tended runway and pits, they even supply trolleys to transport your models to the pits! So we loaded up and ventured out to the patch.



I had taken along my Sebart Wind 50 and foamy Wots Wot, Andy his ME 109. Unfortunately he had destroyed his Black Horse Reactor just a few days before we left so he had no aerobatic steed to play with. There were a few other people already flying, it was all very relaxed and we both managed several flights and became accustomed to the site. We were allowed to leave the models in the hanger, which would be locked overnight, so we would be up and ready to go quickly in the morning.

After a very pleasant afternoon flying we left Buckminster and checked into the hotel, later we found a local pub for a drink and some food. A great end to an excellent day.

**Day 2 – Aerobatic training.**

The flying day was time tabled to start at 10:00, so we had a leisurely start to the day with some breakfast at the onsite Starbucks. So with full stomachs we travelled the short journey to Buckminster. The weather was fine and sunny with a gentle breeze, so all looked good for the day.

The day was hosted by Ashley Hoyland ( Mr GBRCAA ) with the tuition provided by John Morton ( UK Clubman champion) and Kevin Caton (a UK aerobatics champion)

Most of the participants had been before so they went straight to the flying field with John to start their tuition. As newbies Andy and I were taken to one of the lecture rooms for an introduction presentation from Ashley and Kevin. This was partly a plug for the Great Britain Radio Controlled Aerobatic Association (GBRCAA) and partly a question and answer session. It was an interesting session, especially being able to ask Ashley and Kevin questions about model, radio setup and some flying hints and tips. Lunchtime arrived quickly and it was over to the hanger for a very acceptable buffet lunch of sandwiches, crisps and cake.

After lunch we all ventured out to the flying site to start the flying session. There were about a dozen attendees with a variety of models; the vast majority were using Sebart 50 size designs like my Wind 50. I will admit I was slightly anxious about my flying ability, but being familiar with the site and watching some of the other pilots helped boost my confidence. The aim of the day was to develop our skills by flying the Clubman aerobatic schedule. This is a set of simple manoeuvres; the difficult part is linking them together accurately. Some of the flyers were regulars and they were practising the complete schedule. My sights were set much lower; my aim was to just improve on some of the basic manoeuvres. The runway had been set up with lines indicating the 120 deg competition 'box' to help with orientation. The normal marker flags defining the extremes and centre of the manoeuvre box were also provided.

As Andy had broken his aerobatic plane he decided not to do any aerobatic training and was relegated to my pit man and photographer! The time for my turn came and I was alone in the pilot's box with a UK Aerobatic champion (Kevin Caton) next to me, no pressure then! Luckily Kevin is a very patient instructor and after a few circuits I relaxed a little and managed to concentrate on the job in hand. Kevin's approach to practice is meticulous; I wasn't allowed to try any aerobatics until I had mastered the positioning / turn around manoeuvres. The theory being that if you get those right the manoeuvres will be easy. So we started by flying a smooth and level path at the correct height, applying rudder to account for a slight crosswind and achieve a constant distance from the centre line. The first thing I learnt was how difficult it was, and the second how large the manoeuvre box is. You have to use it all! There was a constant 'keep going', 'higher' or 'not yet' from Kevin! Eventually I was flying fairly level and vertical to Kevin's standards. At this point my battery low warning went off so it was back for a landing, a complete flight without even a loop or a roll! An hour or so later it was my turn again, this time loops. Over and over again until I was able to do repeatable, round loops at the correct height and positioned in the centre of the box. Kevin provided useful guidance on the use of throttle, elevator and rudder to compensate for the slightly crosswind breeze. Another flight ended and I definitely felt that I had made some improvements and not embarrassed myself!





Me pointing out to Kevin where I will probably crash!

Note the tapes indicating the 'box' and the huge runway.





During the afternoon we had some demo flights, John performing the Clubman schedule and Kevin the P schedule flown by the top F3A pilots. Both were amazing, great precision with huge manoeuvres covering a vast amount of sky. Kevin also provided a general brief to all the pilots on common mistakes he had observed during the day. The main one was flying too low and not using the entire box. He also showed us his latest model, an OXAI Citrin, which looked the business.

Flying continued until about 16:30 with all pilots having 3 or 4 flights. After a few photos with our hosts it was back in the van for the trip home.



Me , Kevin Caton, Ashley Hoyland, John Morton and Andrew O'Neill

So was it worth it? Definitely yes. The whole day was conducted in a very relaxed way and I gained an insight into competition aerobatics as well as improving my flying (slightly!). It was great value (prices have since gone up slightly) with a good lunch and tuition from top aerobatic pilots. Buckminster is a great asset, which continues to be improved, just a shame it is so far away.

I am not sure if the Aerobatic days are still running as they don't seem to be advertised on the BMFA website at the moment. If they do start again why not give it a go, you may learn something!

## Summer Solstice Evening

Well we finally managed to hold a club social event! Here are a few words from roving reporter Jack:

A number of members who have been fully vaccinated against football braved the less than ideal wind conditions to gather for the midsummer meeting. We also had a visit from Jeff Perkins, a former member who came to see how things were going. The barbecue was appreciated by a few members who all managed to cook their burgers without any flaming mishaps. The wind was around 10-12mph, it was not always aligned with the strip so not ideal for some models although all



models that flew went home intact. Rob Gee had brought along his glow powered twin but it hadn't been flown for a while and the carb barrels had stuck so he wasn't able to fly it. As the wind didn't seem to be dying down and the evening sun was in an awkward position, we called it a night at around 21:30, but it was good to have an actual event even though it was fairly low key.







## Useful link

Roger Milne sent me a link to a website that has some useful modelling bits and pieces. E.g. copper tubing. <https://southweststeam.com>

## What's on

### Shows

Show organisers are slowly publishing their plans for 2021, many are rescheduling events to later in the year, please make sure that you check that they are still happening before you set off!

The Shuttleworth Collection has a number of events planned for this year. The events will be run as a 'Drive In'. You are allocated a parking slot which has space for you to picnic and watch the display. Unfortunately there will be no access to the hangars; hopefully this will change for events later in the year.

- Sunday 4 July – Military Air Show Drive-in Display
- Saturday 17 July – Flying for Fun Evening Drive-in Display
- **Saturday 24 July – Sunday 25 July – Modelair scale weekend**
- Sunday 1 August – Family Air Show (Need for Speed)
- Saturday 14 August – Flying Circus
- Saturday 4 & Sunday 5 September – Vintage Weekend
- **Saturday 18 September – Sunday 19 September – Modelair festival of flight**
- Saturday 2 & Sunday 3 October – Race Weekend



- **August 7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>** LMA Elvington Show
- **September 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>** Weston Park Model Airshow.
- **September 18<sup>th</sup>** Blackpool & Fylde Radio Controlled Model Society Flightfest at the Weeton field.

## Parting shot

So that is the end of another newsletter, I hope you found it interesting. Thanks to all contributors.

For future newsletters I would like to include as many of your projects and especially first flights as possible. So please document the occasion with a few photos or contact me and I will try to come down with my camera. I do have some ideas for future articles, but the success of the newsletter will only continue if you, the members, provide me with some copy. Anything aircraft related will be more than welcome, days out, trips, build logs, full size or something for the Curiosity Corner.

Don't be shy; if you don't fancy writing a full article, just send me a few notes and I will do the rest.

If you have any suggestions on subjects to be included in the Newsletter, drop me a line.

In these days of data protection we need to ask members if they have any objection to be included, either by name or photograph, in the Newsletter. If you do not wish to be in the Newsletter please let me know.

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