

Severn Valley Microlight Club

AIRSCREW

August 2003

Ninth World Microlight Championships Long Marston – 23rd – 31st August 2003

This is the big microlight event of the year and at a venue well known to all Club members. It will be the largest international gathering of microlights in Britain this year. You have no excuse not to attend and support our own Robbie Keene who is responsible for setting the tasks and to support the British Team – which includes the National Champion, Richard Rawes, another of our Club members. The opening ceremony starts at 2pm on Saturday 23rd and includes a display by the Red Arrows at 4.30pm. Following the opening ceremony the PPG's will fly a practice task. The trade fair will be open from 10am to 4pm on 23rd and from 10am to 5.30pm on 24th and 25th.

If you intend flying in on the opening day you must be on the ground by 2pm at the latest. The radio frequency 130.675 has been allocated to Long Marston Airfield for the purposes of the World Microlight Championships with a maximum cover of 10nm and 3000ft. This allocation will last from 23rd to 31st August inclusive. The party on Saturday 30 August will probably be much wilder and the whole event will close at 10:30 pm with a Grand Firework Display by the current British Fireworks to Music Champions. It should be a great end to a great week! The landing fee will be £5 per person (the same as the entry fee if you're driving in) which will give you access to the whole show and free camping.

This month's meeting

The situation regarding speakers for our meetings is desperate to say the least. Consequently we will meet at the Farmers' Club as usual and, for those who wish to watch, flying videos will be shown. If you know of someone who would be willing to give us a talk then please contact any committee member as soon as possible.

Newnham Fly-in by Bob Hinds

Wed July 9th presented us with almost perfect weather for the Fly In to Bob Hinds' field. Around 14 aircraft took advantage of the weather and flew to Newnham. Roger Davies flew in from Bicester, and was the first to arrive, and after an anxious wait, wondering if anyone else was going to

arrive, the sky was suddenly filled with visiting aircraft.



Newnham Fly-in

As an added interest, pilots were invited to land as close as they could to the centre line in a 6yd box, with a prize offered for the nearest to the line. It looked as if our chairman Andrew John was the nearest, landing just past the centre line, until Steve

Slade arrived, cut his engine in circuit, slide slipped in, and hit the line dead centre - an impressive display of airmanship. Robbie Keene was third. Many others managed to land in the box. Well done everyone! There was a good mix of weight shift and three axis machines.

Thanks to all for turning up and contributing to a pleasant evening. Thanks also to Phyllis for keeping us supplied with food and drink
Club Members pick up awards at PFA Rally

Two of our members went to the PFA Rally at Kemble last month and came away having won a Trophy and a Commendation. Both were MiniMax owners.



Jim Taylor with the Albert Codling Trophy for the best part-built project

Jim Taylor had his fuselage on display in the Homebuilders' tent while Dave Steade had gone there with the intention of putting his aircraft up for sale – which he has now achieved Congratulations to them both.



Dave Steade awarded a Commendation for his immaculate MiniMax

Bredon Gallops Fly-in

A total of ten aircraft flew in to the side of Bredon Hill (*not literally, I'm glad to say - Ed*) and landed on the gallops. Unfortunately nobody seems to have taken any photos of the event.

The day I flew to Stoke and back to Plaistows by Phil Hanman

An invite given to me by Rob to take part in a national competition at Plaistows over the weekend of July 4 to 6, took me about a milli second to say "yes". Friday afternoon came and I arrived at the field. Sleeping bag, toothbrush, socks and pants and a really good feeling about our forthcoming adventure. At about 4-30pm Rob said "OK Phil, kit up and we will be off. By the way, as we are going that way I thought we could call in on Medway microlights. I need to change a batten and a couple of cables. Won't take an hour or so". Fine by me," where is it Rob?" I enquired, ready to mark it on my chart. "Go east, east ,east and some more east and there it is at the end of the Thames estuary just before Sheerness". "Not far then", came my reply with a big smile. "Lets go!" We did and arrived overhead about 3 hours later. We flew up the Thames over Tilbury and on to Stoke. "Can you see the field yet?" asked Rob. "No" came the answer from me, "Look along the railway track to where the overhead power lines run alongside and the mud banks of the river are close in. That green strip between the two with the bend to the left half way up is the strip." "No way" came my reply. Downwind join over the mudflats, finals along side the power cables and sure enough land round the bend in the strip. What can you say, "Nice to be here".

We were greeted by Chris the owner of Medway who very quickly effected the repairs to Rob's plane. With a quick look round a very well set up plant and machine shop and the new planes about to be launched - colours, pod designs all of which looked great. Kitted up, checks done, goodbyes said, we were off back to Plaistows. A great evening flight over Tilbury on to Romford, Enfield, Potters Bar and Plaistow - just over an hour landing just after 9-00pm. The sights on the way included The

Dome, Canary Wharf, one of the bridges over the Thames and lots more. Flying kit off, up the pub for a few beers and a meal - great way to finish the day. Rob had sorted out somewhere to stay, in a bed too! A very big thank you to Chris Saysell.

Saturday up very early (7-00am) and down to the field for a BBQ breakfast. The briefings came next and then the first task, all of which was very new and soon over-filled my brain space. So when Rob asked me to organise the fuel for the plane I said "Sure thing!". Job done, I made my way back to the briefing area where Rob had completed his calculations and predictions for fuel needed, speed over the ground etc. etc. Very intense for the first time. Rob gave me my part of the proceedings, two sets of aerial pictures. "What will happen is I will fly along a given track and you have to spot the land marks in the pictures." That's OK," I think. You're right, it's not so easy, since you may be flying one way and the picture has been taken from the other direction, but when you get one you are away - sort of!



Plaistow - ready for the first task

The first task consisted of 2 sets of pictures. One set gave the turn points, the other just gave additional points for the task. As we found the turn points we were directed to the land-out strip. So if we missed a turn point we got lost. Just in case this happened we were given an envelope in which was the name of the land-out field so all was well. Distance to travel on this task 70 miles. When we landed were greeted by a very good spread of food and drink. When all had arrived and results had been handed in and everybody fed and watered, we were briefed on the required detail for the return trip to

Plaistow finishing with spot landings. More food and drink till late and home to bed What a great day!

Sunday came very quickly with a BBQ breakfast, briefings, pictures, fuel, ground speeds and weather, new task to fly and times to do it all in. Overall the tasks were very taxing but great fun. Very easy to see why these events are well supported and just how much hard work goes into the organising of such an event.

My thanks to Rob for taking me along (I would love to do it again some time!). I have managed to keep as much of the event details as I could during the very busy weekend, so if any one would like to see the tasks as they were presented they will be available at the next club meeting. The total weekend flying time added up to 12 hours 30 minutes "Numb bum but great fun!"

Quote of the Month

The airplane is just a bunch of sticks and wires and cloth, a tool for learning about the sky and about what kind of person I am, when I fly. An airplane stands for freedom, for joy, for the power to understand, and to demonstrate that understanding. Those things aren't destructable.— *Richard Bach, 'Nothing by Chance,' 1963.*

Such a lovely day. By Ed Wells

Well how stupid was this !!! Ed Wells / Pete Smith – Mainair Blade GBZDC

Sunday 13th July – Blade out - an early trip to Shobdon before the heat started popping. Well that was the idea anyway. We took off at 9am and the heat was already bumping us about but by 2500 feet it settled a bit (if a little hazy) and we set off in the general direction of Much Marcle whilst powering up the GPS. Finally got a GPS signal locked and tracked on the arrow for Shobdon with a handsome 73mph ground speed reported ("Blowing a bit up here Pete!"). Pete was P1 whilst I cooled my feet in the back paying not much attention to anything at all.

Abeam Hereford P2 advised P1 – "Start the radio. At this speed we'll be there any minute". Radio on – display indicated Over – now that's funny Over doesn't have a frequency and I know I didn't put one in. "Switch it off and back on again Pete..."

Still reading Over – "what's that v?"

“Ok” says P2 – “Switch off, pull the big battery connection out and switch on again and it should use the Icom battery”, that worked OK. Panic over. We found the Shobdon Frequency and reception was very bad, viz wasn’t any better. Sort of understood 09 RH and much “saying again” didn’t yield any more useful information.

Should see Shobdon soon we thought, nothing hazily familiar around here though. “Just follow the arrow”. Trundle trundle trundle – uhh! “Pete what’s that magnetic heading say” – looks to be swinging around the 090 mark to me”. “What! That’s totally **ing wrong, where the hell are we?”

At this point I noticed the GPS battery was playing up and we had lost the signal. We had been following a redundant direction arrow for ages whilst fiddling with a radio problem and had not a bloody clue where we actually were. No familiar landmarks appearing in the haze. “Ok let’s head for that big town and see if we can place where we are” – as it got closer we noticed a race course – and some dishes off in the distance – a bit like Madley. Yes you guessed it - Hereford – again!

We laughed at our ability to fly a huge blind circle without the aid of any intelligence, GPS or map. So back on track to Shobdon again. Sod’s law - spare batteries for GPS in my shorts. Undo side of flying suit inducing a huge billow and shift in my own centre of gravity. Eventually got batteries changed and hooked into Shobdon. Bump bump bump (what a lovely day!) – all over the thermal show but down safely for a cup of tea (some Grecian 2000) and a bacon sandwich and flight de-brief. It had taken us 1:05 which is amazing given an on track ground speed of over 70 – still, Pete does need the hours...!

De-brief Conclusion – what a pair of idiots!

- Half Million map – no good to man nor beast when viz is bad
- No radio or GPS check prior to take off – sort it out as you go approach
- Unexpected wind speed had thrown us - so the assumed magnetic heading was no good.
- Viz was hazy so not much in the way of visual reference points.

- Should have got a magnetic heading from the GPS whilst it was working OK.
- Should have checked the radio then wouldn’t have been down in the pod so long that we veered off course.
- Should have had batteries where I could get them - not in my inside pocket. Which incidentally was also where my much needed sunglasses were – it must have been the heat!

Flew back with a headwind component – ground speed 35 still couldn’t see but did clock the magnetic in case GPS went again. Recognised that bumpy and thermal conditions with reduced viz are a real pain - compass was swinging at least 30 degrees either side of the supposed magnetic heading. Eventually spotted May Hill through the gloom – nearly home. Actually it was exactly 1:05 after take off – spooky!

I’d like to think someone would learn from that experience but I doubt it. We knew all the stuff we should have done and ignored it because - it was such a lovely day!

And those are the ones that’ll get you!

Fly-ins

27th August John Hancock’s field (Details will be circulated by e-mail or contact Brian Finch for a copy by fax or post.)

10th September Chris Ball’s field at Hawling

Dates for your Diary

6th – 7th September PFA Roadshow, Gloucestershire Airport free entry by air or road. Demonstration flights

20th September “Dragfield” at Redlands. Fly to local sites providing you wear a dress!

Grass Sledging

Would any members or their families be interested in trying this novel sport on the side of the Malverns? The cost is approximately £5 per person for an afternoon during the week or at the weekend for a group of eight people maximum. The venue is near Castlemorton Common. Contact Barbara or Bill and if enough people are interested they will set it up

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