

Severn Valley Microlight Club

AIRSCREW

December 2004

A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

This month's meeting – Wednesday 15th December

Although we are not having a party as in the past two years you are all welcome to bring wives, partners, girlfriends etc. We are going to be entertained by Ed Wells and Pete Smith whose subject is "Stretching the Legs – Blois 2004" with video and pictures. Refreshments comprising hot sausage rolls, mince pies, tea and coffee will be available during the evening. Ed's last trip to France ended in a forced landing near a farm and a re-build of his engine before he could attempt the return journey. This time.....well, wait and see!

Photo Competition

For a few years now we have not had a photo competition in the Club. Now you are being given the opportunity to show off your handiwork at this month's Club meeting. The only requirement is that the photo should be aviation related. There will be no separate categories and you will be the judges! Look out those David Bailey's now!

Microlight Contributes to space travel?

Seen on the internet "On 24th March the test of the 12-foot ((3.7 meters) long X-43A began with the vehicle being toted skyward from NASA's Dryden Flight Research Centre

on Edwards Air Force Base, California by a B-52 carrier aircraft. The experimental craft - taking on the look of a winged surfboard -- was attached to a modified Pegasus XL booster." (A 477 on steroids?! - Ed)

Unfortunately for Pegasus owners no such luck. The item referred to a tiny unmanned NASA "scramjet" which soared above the Pacific Ocean on Wednesday 16th November at nearly 10 times the speed of sound, or almost 7,000 mph, in a record-breaking demonstration of a radical new engine technology.

The 12-foot-long X-43A supersonic combustion ramjet flew at about Mach 9.6 or slightly higher. The aircraft flew under its own power for about 10 seconds after separating from a booster rocket at 111,000 feet then glided to a splash landing about 800 miles offshore.

Charts

On 23rd of this month the latest half-mil chart for Scotland will be published.

Quote of the Month

"Once you have learned to fly your plane, it is far less fatiguing to fly than it is to drive a car. You don't have to watch every second for cats, dogs, children, lights, road signs,

ladies with baby carriages and citizens who drive out in the middle of the block against the lights. . . . Nobody who has not been up in the sky on a glorious morning can possibly imagine the way a pilot feels in free heaven.”— *William T. Piper, president of Piper Aircraft Corporation.*

Telford Show Report

Well, it's but a distant memory for another year Telford has been and gone. There were plenty of things on show with all the major players being represented.



Plenty to see

There were some new developments on hand. The Savanna with a three cylinder Suzuki car engine fitted was one. With the cowlings off it did look rather a tight fit. It will be interesting to follow this development and see if it catches on. We all think that our car engines are reliable so how will this one fair in the aviation environment? *(See picture opposite)*

Club members attending on Sunday may have seen our own Adrian Lloyd walking around the show about a foot off the ground and grinning from ear to ear. The reason? He has purchased a new aircraft which will replace his faithful Kitfox in due course. He and a friend have invested in an Api Pioneer aircraft with retractable undercarriage. I am assured that “invest” is more correct than “bought” in the circumstances. *(When Adrian comes to replace his existing car the replacement will probably be even older than the one he is replacing! – Ed)*



Adrian's new aeroplane

Adrian's kit was actually at the back of the stand at the show and was being dropped off at a secret location in Herefordshire that very night! According to Adrian he was not best pleased on occasions when flying his Kitfox to find that the head wind reduced his groundspeed to the low 30's. Having had a trial flight in the Pioneer he was “blown away” with the performance and jumped in on the introductory offer just in time to secure the last aircraft on offer!



Savanna's Suzuki engine

We all read about Richard Meredith-Hardy's flight over Everest and once again his modified aircraft, complete with realistic pilot, was on display. He also gave talks on both days but these were not well publicised in advance – particularly if you did not log on to the E-group. A number of us missed them.



Everest conquered!

As a sideline it was noticeable that model helicopters were catching the imagination of many visitors. Certainly towards the end of the afternoon it appeared that they could not unpack the kits fast enough from the large boxes to keep up with demand! (*The Editor has to admit that he was sorely tempted to buy one as it seemed the only affordable way to indulge his enthusiasm for this type of air transport.*)

The Wessex Light Aircraft Co had their latest aircraft, the Hawk, on show. Looks said that it was an Xair derivative but with a longer undercarriage it was obviously much easier to enter than the original Xair.



The Hawk

There we have it - another show, another year. What will there be next year to arouse our interest and to minimise the effect of compulsory passenger insurance and the introduction of transponders in 2008? However, it's not all doom and gloom we

have single seat de-regulation and Popham to look forward to and another season of flying.

A seasonal Poem

Tw'as the night before Christmas, and out on the ramp,
 Not an airplane was stirring, not even a Champ.
 The aircraft were fastened to tie downs with care
 In hopes that come morning, they all would be there.

The fuel trucks were nestled, all snug in their spots,
 While peak gusts from three two zero reached 39 knots.
 I sank behind the fuel desk, now finally caught up,
 And settled down comfortably upon my butt.

When over the radio, there arose such a clatter,
 I turned up the scanner to see what was the matter.
 A voice clearly heard over static and snow,
 Asked for clearance to land at the airport below.

He barked out his transmission so lively and quick,
 I could have sworn that the call sign he used was "St.Nick".
 Away to the window I flew like a flash,
 Sure that it was only Horizon's late Dash.

Then he called his position, and there could be no denial,
 "This is St. Nicholas One and I'm turning on final."
 When what to my wondering eyes should appear,
 A Rutan sleigh, and eight Rotax Reindeer.

Cleared for the ILS down the glide slope he came,
 As he passed all fixes, he called them by name:
 "Now Ringo! Now Tolga! Now Trini and Bacun!

On Comet! On Cupid! "What pills was he
takin'?"

Those last couple of fixes left the controllers
confused,
They called down to the office to give me
the news.
The message they left was both urgent and
dour:
"When Santa lands, could he please call the
tower?"

He landed like silk, with the sled runners
sparking,
Then I heard "Exit at Charlie," and "Taxi to
parking."
He slowed to a taxi and exited Three-Two,
As he came down the taxiway the sleigh
bells' jingle grew.

He stepped out of the sleigh, but before he
could talk,
I had run out to him with my best set of
chocks.
He was dressed all in fur, which was
covered with frost
And his beard was all blackened from Rotax
Reindeer exhaust.

His breath smelled like peppermint, gone
slightly stale
And he puffed on a pipe, but he didn't
inhale.
His cheeks were rosy and jiggled like jelly,
His boots were as black as a crop dusters
belly.

He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old
fool,
And he kindly informed me that he needed
some fuel.
A wink of his eye and a twist of his toes,
led me to know he was desperate to powder
his nose.

I spoke not a word, but went straight to my
work,
And I filled up the sleigh, but I spilled like a
jerk.
He came out of the restroom with a sigh of
relief,
And then picked up a phone for a flight
service brief.

And I thought as he silently scribed in his
log,
That with Rudolph, he could land in eighth-
mile fog.
Next, he completed his preflight, from the
front to the rear,
Then he put on his headset, and I heard him
yell "Clear!"

And laying a finger on his push-to-talk,
He called up the tower for his clearance and
squawk.
"After departure fly heading three two zero,"
the tower called forth,
"And watch for a Luscombe inbound from
the North."

Then I heard him exclaim, 'ere he climbed in
the night,
"Merry Christmas to all, I have traffic in
sight..."

For Sale

Twelve Spark Plugs – NGK B8ES – brand
new - £1.50 each. Phone Barbara 01684
833484 or e-mail Bill.

Fly-ins

Weather permitting it is hoped to have a fly-
in, or maybe two, between 27th December
2004 and 3rd January 2005. Members on e-
mail will be notified as soon as dates are
known. Members not on e-mail should
check with JH by phone on 01452 700314.

Dates for your Diary

19th January 2005 – Club Annual General
Meeting at the Farmers' Club, Gloucester.

Acknowledgement

The photo of the Everest trike courtesy of
Andrew John

Bill Austin (Editor)
01684 833484
bill@austin65.freeserve.co.uk