

Severn Valley Microlight Club



AIRCREW

January 2005

A Happy New Year and Safe Flying

This month's meeting Wednesday 19th January

This month is the Annual General Meeting. Once again the opportunity for you, the members, to voice your thoughts and opinions about the Club and what you would like to see happen. Could you spare a little of your time to help out as a Committee member or offer to take on the arrangement of one of the monthly meetings? The AGM will commence at 8.30pm. It's your Club please make an effort to attend and contribute

The Agenda for the meeting will be:-

1. Apologies for absence
2. Chairman's Report
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Adoption of Treasurer's Report and recommendations
5. Election of Officers and Committee
6. The Poser Award for 2005
7. The Spitfire Award for 2005
8. Any other business

Quote of the Month

"We are all pirates at heart. There is not one of us who hasn't had a little larceny in his soul. And which one of us wouldn't soar if God had thought there was merit in the idea? So, when we see one of those great widespread pirates soaring across the grain

of sea winds we thrill, and we long, and, if we are honest, we curse that we must be men every day. Why not one day a bird! There's an idea, now, one day out of seven a pirate in the sky. What puny power a man can attain by comparison. Compare a 747 with a bird and blush!"

— Roger Caras, 'Birds and Flight,' 1971.

Photographic Competition

The two winners of the photographic competition held at the Christmas meeting were Andrew John and John Davis. The lack of entries was probably due to the very late notice of the competition. However, this is now remedied in that you should now start preparing for the meeting in December by resolving to take as many photos as possible in 2005 and selecting the best for the competition. Please remember, too, that the Editor would be very pleased to receive photos at any time during the year for inclusion in the newsletter. Dave Steade did in fact bring a photo to the meeting but as he had not taken it himself it was ruled ineligible for the competition.

Low flying by John Davis

I'm sure like most of you, due to the poor weather this year, I have not spent much time flying at a few thousand feet being

pushed along by the engine and propeller of my flexwing.

Now it worked out this year that our family holiday coincided with our son Harry's birthday. So we looked for something fun and a bit unusual to do whereupon we found a local farm that took you for hovercraft rides and allowed you to hire a single-seater.

So, first of all, the farmer took our 3 children around his course and over a small lake.



Great fun!

It all looked great fun. It's most impressive how these craft can race across the ground and then straight across an expanse of water, without slowing down at all, while producing quite a dramatic plume of spray from around the skirt of the hovercraft.

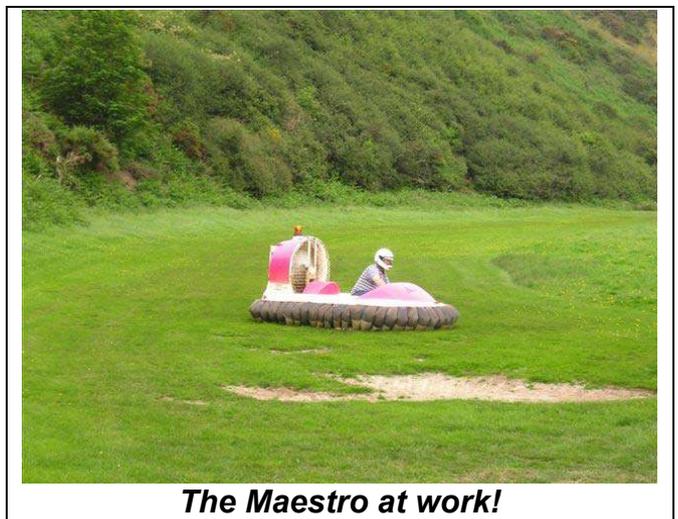
So, I've been watching the farmer drive/pilot this thing around and it is plain you drift it sideways round each corner much like rally driving. So now it is my turn in the single-seater. First I receive my instructions, namely, if you find yourself going too fast into a corner and sliding towards the trees, do not suddenly close the throttle, or the skirt will deflate, the solid sides of the hovercraft will dig in and, in the worst case, the craft tips over. More likely, though, you break the sides off the craft doing lots of expensive damage. So don't back off !

The other big thing to know is that moving your bodyweight around has a major effect on steering this thing. You must lean into corners to the point of lifting yourself out of the seat and leaning right across the machine.

So away I go. First thing I find is it needs about 85% or 90% power just to lift it off the ground and get it moving. Gently at first, it gets faster and faster. Right, first corner wow! this thing doesn't turn – “Lean over!!!” I'm backing off! NO!.... more power. I scrape round the corner.

Lets sum up:- its noisy, its expensive, it doesn't go where I want it to.....I christened it, Sue!

Anyway, after another three or four laps I can reasonably control this thing and did manage to cross the small lake twice. However, on my first attempt, I bailed out of crossing the lake as I was not approaching it straight, and I could have hit the small trees on either side of the lake.



The Maestro at work!

However, although I was starting to master it I had to stop to let my wife Sue have a go.

This turned out most satisfactory as she went skidding off the course and into the reeds and bushes and needed rescuing by the farmer.



Before the rescue!

Sue then struggled around another two laps and then retired saying "What a stupid thing that is!"

Male ego nicely flattered, this had been a good morning.

(Sounds as good as "scud running" but not as dangerous! – Ed)

Safety

Safetycom is now official and available for use at any airfield not having an allocated radio frequency. The conditions for its use are set out in AIC103/2004 (Yellow 153). I have taken the liberty of including the full version of the circular on the back page so that we are all fully informed of the conditions attached to the use of this new frequency. Note that it is not a general air-to-air chat frequency and that the CAA will be monitoring its use over a twelve month period.

This is indeed a big step forward both in terms of radio and safety. Use it properly and responsibly whenever possible to promote the safety of yourself and other fellow flyers.

Internet

The weather has been very much in the news in the past few weeks. Searching one

site the other day showed up a site which gives an indication of wind strengths in relatively small areas and the information is free! Point your mouse at www.weatherweb.net to find out more.

Fly-ins

Don't despair there were no formally arranged fly-ins over the Christmas period. Those who did fly reported varying conditions. Apparently some days which appeared flyable from the ground produced uncomfortable flying above 1000 feet while others were just plain unsuitable. In the Editor's part of the world the lack of aerial activity was noticeable!

Dates for your Diary

12th – 18th April – Sun 'n Fun, Lakelad, Florida

30th April – 1st May – Round Scotland Microlight Rally. Contact Kenny Donaldson 01259 769305 or www.scottishaeroclub.org for details.

28th – 29th May – Round Wales Air Race/Rally - www.WingsOverWales.co.uk

24th -26th June (Provisional) Spamfield, Isle of Wight www.wightparty.org

1st -3rd July Flying for Fun (PFA Rally) Kemble

25th – 31st July Oshkosh, Wisconsin, www.airventure.org

Editor's note

Title photograph this month is Phil Hanman and passenger with his Pegasus Q at the Defford fly-in last year.

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UNITED KINGDOM AERONAUTICAL INFORMATION CIRCULAR

Web site: www.ais.org.uk

AIC 103/2004 (Yellow 153)

COMMON FREQUENCY FOR USE AT UK AERODROMES WITHOUT A NOTIFIED FREQUENCY

1 At aerodromes having no notified VHF frequency, a common frequency is available to assist pilots to avoid potential collisions between arriving and departing aircraft. Pilots may use the frequency to broadcast their intentions for safety purposes, and there should be no response, except when the pilot of another aircraft transmits his intentions.

1.1 The frequency assigned is 135.475 MHz and is known as 'SAFETYCOM'. Pilots must be aware that SAFETYCOM is not a UK equivalent of the UNICOM system used in the United States, and does not work in the same way. Procedures for its use are outlined below and references given for the source documents.

2 RTF Phraseology

2.1 SAFETYCOM is only to be used to transmit information regarding the pilot's intentions for safety purposes. Procedures for its use are published in the UK Aeronautical Information Publication, Section GEN 3.4.3.

Phraseology is to comply with the requirements of CAP 413 (Radiotelephony Manual) Chapter 4, Section 6.

2.2 Pilots operating at aerodromes without a notified frequency are recommended to use SAFETYCOM, but its use is not mandatory. However, if pilots do elect to use it, they must make all the calls listed in CAP 413 as 'essential'. Calls not listed as 'essential' may be made at the pilot's discretion.

2.3 Exceptionally, where the pilot of an aircraft in the air or on the ground has information critical to the safety of an aircraft in a condition of distress or urgency, SAFETYCOM may be used to transmit that information.

3 Restrictions on use of SAFETYCOM

3.1. As a shared frequency used in many different locations, SAFETYCOM is expected to be a busy frequency with a significant probability of breakthrough to users at other locations. It is important that RTF is concise and unambiguous, and must include the name of the aerodrome. SAFETYCOM is not to be used as a 'chat frequency' or for the conduct of formation flights, unless landing at or taking off from an aerodrome where no other frequency is notified.

3.2 To reduce the probability of breakthrough it is also important that transmissions are only made within the height and range limits for the frequency. Transmissions must only be made up to a maximum range of 10 nm from the aerodrome or location of intended landing, and below 2000 ft above the elevation of that aerodrome or landing site.

3.3 SAFETYCOM will be monitored by the CAA and a review of its usage, involving consultation with users of the frequency, will be undertaken approximately 12 months after its introduction. The continued provision of the frequency will depend upon the outcome of the review and evidence of abuse may result in its withdrawal.

3.4 Pilots must not assume that all other pilots in the vicinity are monitoring the same frequency. Use of SAFETYCOM is optional and there may be non-RTF aircraft in the area. In the vicinity of a microlight or gliding site, pilots may be monitoring one of the sporting use frequencies. It is therefore important that, as at all other times, pilots maintain a good look out when using SAFETYCOM.

3.5 There is no Air Traffic Service associated with SAFETYCOM and pilots must not assume that they are receiving a service. Where an aerodrome lies within controlled airspace, pilots using SAFETYCOM must ensure that they contact the responsible Air Traffic Service Unit on the appropriate frequency and obtain clearance prior to entering controlled airspace.

3.6 Transmitting on SAFETYCOM does not confer any right of way and pilots must comply with the Rules of the Air, in particular the rules for avoiding aerial collisions.

3.7 SAFETYCOM is not to be used for Special Events; frequencies for such events should continue to be requested through existing channels.

Note: Special Events are defined in CAP 403 (Flying Displays and Special Events: A Guide to Safety and Administrative Arrangements) Chapter 1, Page 2 and constitute any flying activity during which aircraft may not necessarily comply with the Rules of the Air and normal Air Traffic Control rules and which require consideration of one or more of the following:

- (i) The issue of special procedures;
- (ii) the level of an Air Traffic Service to be provided;
- (iii) the establishment of Restriction of Flying Regulations.