



March 2009

**This Month's Meeting - Wednesday
18th March**

This month's meeting will be a talk by Bruce Drake and friends on their trip to Corsica last year. We will be starting at 8.00pm.

Quote of the Month

"We tend to shy away from words like 'dangerous,' because we will not embark on anything unless it is truly thought out. But there is always an area of uncertainty . . . but we prefer to call it 'high risk' rather than 'dangerous.'"—
Squadron Leader Vic C. Lockwood RAF,

Help For Heroes

Thanks to Steve Slade for his talk last month on his fund raising flight last year. It was a practical demonstration of the enormous amount of planning which goes into what appears to be a fairly straight forward flight and the numerous problems to be solved. The total amount raised was £5085 - a magnificent effort for a worthy cause!

Club Subscriptions

A reminder that you should, by now, have returned your Application Form to the Treasurer with your subscription for 2009. If you have not done so this will be the last newsletter that you will receive! Contact the Editor for another form if you need one.

Rattus Norvegicus.

It's February 15th 2009. Worst spell of cold weather for many many years. The global economic situation is dragging me down and a lack of a flying fix since 11 October needs to be sorted out today - whilst the temperature is tolerable and the wind is flyable. 9am ring Pete - 'What are you doing? - Looks good to me'. We arrange to meet at Over at 14:00hrs and see if the Blade will run.

14:10 - I'm there, no Pete - chat for a while with the hangar dwellers and admire Robbie's Orange kiddie train happily compacting the spines of the small party people and the taxi way for the back hangars.

14:30 - Better get it out! Pete arrives at the same time - we both get it out. Checks are done well for once as it has been so long. After that long I'm not expecting the battery to have much hope of getting the 462 running and I'd taken the precaution of bringing a fully charged car battery and jump leads.

14:45 - No point getting ready until we know its going to go. It didn't - the cold engine, thick oil and not enough life to keep turning. No problem - jump leads on, up it fires and seems to be running well. Pete sits in whilst I run off to get

kitted up. Hell fire and damnation!– a small creature had somehow got into our vermin proof lock up. My winter flying kit was eaten by a sharp toothed rodent and when I looked into the helmets it looked like they were full of mouse poo! As it turned out they were not full of mouse poo but the Comunica headsets had the ear cups shredded into poo sized portions. Worse Mr Norvegicus had stripped one of the headset connecting



wires.

15:00 – Back to Pete to break the news that we had some problems to sort out. He stopped the engine and we started to assess the damage. Headsets first – working but not nice, chewed wires, when bent, put some noise into the ear pieces. We taped the problem area up to restrict movement and they were working again. We dropped the eaten red kit on the floor and started banging the lining hysterically in the hope of squishing Mr Norvegicus. But by this time the thought of flying in my holey gear was starting to conjure visions of wriggling rodents moving on finals towards my balls of tangy cheese! Aghhh! Enough, already I had put my old summer weight Ozee on and we were ready to go.

15:30 – All kitted up and in the machine. CLEAR PROP! Crank crank, fire, splutter stop – bugger, bugger, bugger and blast! Out gets Pete to hand swing the thing – this time it started first time and we tore off with just enough time for Broad

Meadow and back. It all ran perfectly I'm glad to say and it appears we do still remember how to land. But cold, oh so very cold - but very enjoyable. Lesson learnt, people; don't leave kit around especially with mints in your pocket. A rather expensive mistake – any of you SVFC 3 axis types got any flexi kit for sale?

*Ed Wells, Pete Smith and beware.... **He's out there somewhere!***

(Editor's note:- Ed has now got some replacement kit)

Important news from Comunica

The following is passed on for information of Comunica users.

"I have decided that after 10 years working with Comunica systems that it is time for a change and will be pursuing my other work as a Graphic/Web designer on a full time basis in 2009. For this reason, as of the 31st of December 2008 I will no longer be trading as Comunica-Aviation.

The Comunica brand will continue under the supervision of Ralph Chesters at Comunica Industries Ltd. All enquiries regarding purchasing new equipment, accessories or repairs to non-warranty systems should now be directed towards him using the contact details provided below."

(e): ralph@comunicator.co.uk

(t): +44 (0) 1962 840084

<http://www.comunica-aviation.co.uk/>

New Air Traffic Services

An article in the November 2008 edition of Airscrew set out the revised services available in Open Airspace (ATSOCAS). **These become operational on 12th March.**

Members probably also read about this in an article by Nick Heard in an earlier edition of LOOP. There is also an article in the March edition of Microlight Flying, page 9. In simple terms the services have been re-named and additional

responsibilities placed on Controllers. Equally great emphasis is placed on the pilot being responsible for safety and collision avoidance - so no change there. Refer to CAP774 for the full details.

Safety

The article by Ed Wells and Pete Smith says it all. If a rat or mouse can get access to a metal locker how much easier is it for them to access a covered microlight in a barn? Maybe the mints in the pocket were an extra incentive for the invader but past experience shows that they do not especially need food as an encouragement to have a "taster session" amongst your possessions including your trike unit and wing. Garlic rubbed on fabric parts may help to deter them but it is not a thoroughly proved theory!

Dates for your diary

18th -19th April - Fly-in and informal competition, Clench Common. Camping available. Contact 01672 515535 or e-mail <dcslater69@hotmail.co.uk

21st 26th April - Sun 'n Fun, Lakeland, Florida

2nd - 3rd May - Microlight Trade Fair and Fly-in, Popham

12th - 14th June - Spamfield, Sandown, Isle of Wight.

20th - 21st June - Kemble Air Day

27th July - 2nd August - Oshcosh.

Acknowledgements

Ed Wells and Pete Smith for the rat article and Ed Wells for the Comunica information

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Editor's Endpiece

Perhaps the following photos sum up what we see in the flying year

