

Severn Valley Microlight Club

Airscrew

September 2009

This Month's Meeting - Wednesday 16th September

**This month we start our
Autumn/Winter sessions at the
Farmers' Club in Sandhurst Road,
Gloucester.**

Our first meeting will be a talk by Rob Keene covering his flight to Italy and participation in the World Air Games. We will be starting at 8.00pm which will allow plenty of time for socialising after the talk.

Quote of the Month

"The length of debate about a flight manoeuvre is always inversely proportional to the complexity of manoeuvre. Thus, if the flight manoeuvre is simple enough, debate approaches infinity." — Robert Livingston

World Microlight Championships

Keith Negal reported on the BMAA website as follows:-

"Back from 4 weeks at the World Paramotor Championships and then the World Microlight Championships. At the latter, held at Jihlava, Rob Grimwood and Andy Aiken won the dual flexwing gold in their QuikR with Simon Baker and Anita Holmes taking bronze in the Quik. In the solo fixed wing class David Hadley took the silver in the Sluka 508. Rees Keene won the bronze in his Chaser 508 in the solo flexwing class, a class in which his

father has already won a number of medals. The British Team took the team bronze medal. It was a very successful competition, well run by the Czech organisers. By the way, you may also recall that Rob Grimwood and Rees Keene had already won the World Air Games gold and silver medals respectively in Turin."

Congratulations to Rees!

(Editor's note:- Rees has agreed to tell us about the World Microlight Championships at our November meeting)

Fly-in Reports

8th July - Gloucestershire Airport by John Hamer

Sixteen aircraft and their pilots and passengers took the opportunity of flying into Gloucestershire airport on the evening of Wednesday 8th July at the invitation of the Head of Operations at the airport - Darren Lewington. There we were shown around the tower and all the functions of the air traffic controllers job were explained.

Following the visit, Darren commented "I was very impressed with the airmanship the club demonstrated and I do hope that we'll see more of you, more often. Please extend my thanks to the members, who

left close on £100 in my MS Trust bucket, which was gratefully received by my former Fire Fighter this morning."



Darren has also agreed in the winter to give us a lecture on Air Traffic procedure tailored to our local environment. His talk is currently scheduled for the October meeting.

15th July - Club Treasure Hunt and BBQ organised by Rob Keene

This annual event took place at Over Farm and the task this year each competitor had to identify photos around a duck shaped course drawn on a map provided by Rob. Twelve aircraft took part and the winners by a country mile were Myron Burack & Steve Sykes flying their Skyranger G-CCJT. Not only did they spot more photos than any one of the other crews - but they also added to their points by landing in the box at the end.

Myron and Steve's final total points added up to 600. Rees Keene came second with 500 points and Andrew John and John Hamer came third with 400 points. Well done to everyone who took part.

The event was rounded off with a barbeque for all competitors and those who had come by road. Our thanks to Rob for organising the event and providing the barbeque.

13th August - Hawling by John Hamer
Eighteen aircraft attended the fly in at Hawling "international" on Thursday 13th August on what turned out to be a lovely windless summer's evening. The original plan was to have the fly in as usual on the Wednesday, but JH had looked in his crystal ball and saw that the weather gods were also planning to have a meet over the Cotswolds the same evening, so by mutual agreement with them, the SVMC gathering was delayed by 24 hours.



The weather gods duly had their event on the Wednesday evening with the usual downpour, while the following evening the SVMC enjoyed perfect flying weather. So in this case our thanks go to the weather gods for their cooperation, as well as to Sue & John Davis who allowed their establishment to be invaded and who provided refreshment and fodder to over 40 people that attended.

19th August - Staunton by John Hamer
Wednesday 19th August turned out to be a fine evening, though there was a fairly brisk southerly wind which limited the numbers of aircraft attending a fly in at John Aplin's strip at Staunton. Nevertheless six aircraft - all different types for a change - flew in while others came by road. Around 30 people enjoyed Ruth & John Aplin's hospitality at a strip that the SVMC had not visited before. We look forward to another visit.

Visit to RAF Benson - by Dick Osler

RAF Benson (Oxon) had a Families Day on 27 August 2009. Benson is the home of the Merlin and Puma helicopter squadrons, and they have seen a great deal of service in war theatres recently. My son-in-law is currently serving at RAF Benson on a Merlin squadron, so I thought I would fly into the base in the Eurostar.

From past experience, I remembered seeing at least 30 plus GA aircraft arriving during the morning of the Families Day, so that is what prompted me to fly a microlight aircraft there. There was a time constraint, because the afternoon is dedicated to a flying display.

Of course there was masses of paperwork to get through, including a 10 page document which made me feel as if I was applying for a job in a secure establishment, not just flying to an airbase! Once all of the paperwork was completed, which included photocopies of my aircraft insurance, my medical certificate, an assurance that the aircraft had a valid Permit To Fly and the number of my PPL, I was given the go ahead.

I planned two routes. The prime route was via Burford VRP with a request for a Zone Transit from Brize Norton. I planned to exit the route on a heading for Abingdon. If the Zone Transit was not available, the secondary route was down to Wolvercote (NW of Oxford) which was an ideal turning point just outside the Brize Zone down to Benson.

The day dawned, and I reached Defford just before 0800. The southerly wind was starting to get up already (Defford has an EW runway orientation), and there was some low cloud about, but I was prepared to give it a try. If things got too bad, I could always abandon the trip along the route.

A quick phone call to Benson to discover the met conditions there, and off I went.

Climbing out of Defford, there was quite a bit of cloud around at between 300-500 ft. I got over this, but there was an unbroken ceiling at 2000ft. The ATIS broadcast from Staverton was not very reassuring. I seemed to be getting squeezed by the two cloudbase levels around Little Rissington and I was down to 700 ft. Ready to abandon the trip, I noticed a brighter patch to the North and on heading in that direction found a higher ceiling with plenty of gaps to descend if necessary. I resumed my original heading and settled on my secondary route via Wolvercote.

I called up Benson Zone when at Wolvercote, and they gave me an airfield cloudbase broken at 1200 feet. On entering the Benson MATZ, I was at 1000 feet and was asked to change to their TWR frequency. On receiving their QFE and runway in use, I saw other traffic landing, so that gave me the clue that I needed for my approach.

On landing, yet another frequency change to Ground, and then I was marshalled onto the PAN. Engine off and heartbeat starts to recover! I was there. The flying time was about 50 minutes.

I hoped for something exotic to be parked next to me, ideally a Typhoon. What did I get? The Cri-Cri, which was flown there from Henstridge!

After the flying display, I managed to get a departure slot- time of 1720. I subsequently discovered that so had 30 other aircraft, so I started up and joined the queue. I had helped the guy with the Cri-Cri to get his engines started, and seeing the piece of cord that he fed into the two cylinders individually, reminded me of my early Shadow days, and made me thankful for the push button on the Eurostar!

Working my way along to the head of the queue for take-off, my GPS went down. I left the queue and parked, while I

frantically tried to bring the GPS back on-line, but it kept stating poor GPS coverage. Out with the chart. Hell, which way was northwest? I returned to the queue, and whilst I was still fiddling with the GPS, I was at the front of the queue, and given permission to take off. Heading down the runway with a 20 knot headwind, the Eurostar was airborne within what seemed 50 metres.



Leaving the Benson Zone and the three frequency changes behind me, I headed for a smudge on the horizon towards the northwest which hopefully would be Oxford. The GPS then came back on line. No real dramas on the return trip, except that it was really rough.



On arrival at Defford, there was 12-14 knots crosswind (a southerly with Defford runway configuration east-west). The handbook lists a crosswind limitation for the Eurostar as 11 mph. This could be interesting! It was extremely turbulent all the way down to the ground, and I constantly had to pick up one wing or the other. Crabbing into wind until the last possible moment, I rounded out and

subsequently cut the throttle and put a boot full of right rudder to bring the nose down the runway. What a greaser and phew!

On reflection, a very busy day with a lot of different challenges that were hopefully met with the correct judgement. I know I learned a lot, but I would now love one of those elusive flights that we sometimes get during a late summers evening, without any turbulence and just the capacity in which to bumble around the sky looking at the view!

Jon Ingram would like your help

Wycliffe College Cub Scout Pack are running their first ever 'Air Activities' day on the 26th September from the barn at Over Farm from 1000 to 1500. Could you spare some time to show them you aircraft and possibly give them a flight? Contact Jon at jon@trilliumd.co.uk or on 01452 883344.

Dates for your diary

28th -29th November – SPLASH at the NEC. The annual exhibition of the BMAA and the BHPA. The BMAA AGM will take place in the Tote Suite at 12.00 on Saturday 28th November.

Acknowledgements

John Hamer for his write-ups of the fly-ins and Bruce Morgan for the photos. Dick Osler for his article and photos. BMAA website for Keith Negal's report.



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