

THE ROYAL AERO CLUB

OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

The Coordinating Body of British Airsport Organisations

Patron: Her Majesty The Queen

President: His Royal Highness The Duke of York, KG, KCVO, ADC



NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2008

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

If we are to believe the doomsayers of the media and government, we are in for difficult times. I do wonder sometimes if, as a nation, we talk ourselves into problems. Sure, a 0.5% drop in GDP may signal a turn but surely such a small drop does not constitute a calamity. It is all about confidence, and this needs to be restored along with sanity in the international financial system.

Why do I mention this? Because it is an inevitable background to what we are able and likely to do in the air sports world in the next year or two. Aircraft owners are likely to be more cautious about expenditure; events may be more difficult to put on. What adds to the sense of caution however, and adds potential increased cost to our activities, is the plethora of new regulation coming from the EU. Since I last wrote, EASA has published proposals for EU pilot licensing and requirements for training organisations, and is about to publish proposals for operations. And with more to follow. Whilst the documents would easily win a prize for size I am not sure they would win many prizes for appropriateness as applied to air sports. Through the RAeC's associated bodies, GA Alliance and Europe Air Sports, we continue to make our position known to those in positions of authority, and with some success. In particular, at the EU level, the professional adviser now working for EAS has gained important access to decision makers in Brussels. The RAeC must continue to support this vitally important work through the funding that EAS needs.

On the sporting front at international level, the FAI's plans for the World Air Games in Turin in 2009 are progressing. Whilst some have had justifiable doubts about the viability of such ventures, I believe that unless air sports gain a wider audience and participation through such events the future will be increasingly difficult.



Jonathan Mason and David Hempleman-Adams preparing for take-off at the start of the Gordon Bennett Cup in October

We all take calculated risks in every aspect of our lives, and not least in sporting aviation. In times of economic difficulty (again if the doomsayers are right!) it is often the time to take some calculated risks. No pain no gain.

Fly safely and be optimistic!

David Roberts
Chairman



Pete McDermott's Sopwith Snipe, on a bombing run, winning the F4G open event at the Scale Model World Championships

BRITISH PILOTS AT INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS

Model Flying success

The British team at the European Free-Flight Championships at Pazardzhik, Bulgaria in early September faced 30 other nations flying in the glider, rubber-powered and engine-assisted glider classes. Alan Jack, Stafford Screen and Peter Watson took the team Silver medal flying F1C engine-assisted gliders in temperatures that reached the nineties.

Glider flyers Mike Cook, Chris Edge and Peter Williams took fifth team place, and with Peter Martin, Russell Peers and Ray Jones flying rubber-powered Wakefields, Britain won the coveted Jack North Trophy for the top team overall. The trophy had been presented to the FAI by the BMFA ten years ago in memory of Jack North, one of only two people to represent the country in all three outdoor free-flight classes.

Stafford Screen also took the individual Silver medal at the World Cup contest preceding the European Championships.

Nigel Bathe won Silver in the S4A Boost Glider duration class at the World Spacemodelling Championships in Spain. After three rounds there was a tie, with four fliers on maximum points; after a fly-off, Nigel took second place behind a Romanian flier.

At the F1D Indoor World Championships in Serbia, the British team of Bob Bailey, Mark Benns and Derek Richards flew their fragile 22 inch span rubber-powered models to secure the team Silver medal. In the preceding Open International contest, Mark Benns won the 35 cm wingspan class, with Bob Bailey taking second place.

The British model fliers also saw success at the World Championships for Scale Model Aircraft in Poland. Pete McDermott took the Gold medal in the F4G open event, with a model Sopwith Snipe. The British team also won the Bronze team medal in the F4C class, with Pete McDermott in individual 4th place.

At the European F3C Championships in France, the British team of Steve Roberts, Mark Christy and Dave Fisher were also on the podium for the first time since 2001, taking the Bronze medal.

Skydiving

The UK are World Champions in 4-way women's Formation Skydiving - Team Bodyflight Storm (Hannah Betts, Claire 'Sparky' Scott, Kate Stephens and Sarah Smith) won Gold at the World

Parachuting Championships in Formation Skydiving and Artistic Skydiving in France, in August.

At the same event, Team Volairkix won Bronze in Freefly.

A British team also became European Skydiving League Champion in 4-way Formation Skydiving at the ESL Finals held in Holland in September. As the winning nation, Great Britain will have the opportunity to host the ESL finals in 2009.

Helicopters

The British team won the Bronze medal at the World Helicopter Championships in Germany. Top British scorers were Caroline Gough-Cooper and Imogen Asker, who took 9th place overall.

Balloons

David Hempleman-Adams and Jonathan Mason became the first British crew to win the historic Gordon Bennett Cup for gas balloons. Starting from Albuquerque in New Mexico, they flew 1,768 km in just over 3 days, landing near Milwaukee in Wisconsin. The British victory earns the UK the right to host the 2010 event.

Many congratulations to all our successful pilots and teams.

NEW BRITISH WORLD RECORDS

Congratulations to Attila Balogh, who has broken four speed records on flights between Budapest, Coventry and Frankfurt, flying a Cirrus SR22 at speeds between 229 and 278 km/h.

Also to Geoffrey Boot, Chairman and Records Officer of the RRRRA, who has broken a record himself, flying at a record speed of 295 km/h between Douglas on the Isle of Man and Sandgate in Kent, in his Siai Marchetti SF-260.

Mark Jackson and Eve Jackson (who are not related) have set two new Microlight records in a weightshift microlight. They climbed to a record 7,395 metres above Kilimanjaro in Tanzania and also set a record of 25 min 45 sec for the climb to 6,000 metres.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND BURSARIES

Royal Aero Club Trust Bursaries

Applications for 2009 bursaries must be made by 31 March 2009. For further details, see <http://www.royalaeroclubtrust.org/>

Air League Scholarships

The Air League Educational Trust is offering opportunities to young men and women permanently resident in the UK, to apply for scholarships to fly light aeroplanes, gliders, and balloons, or for engineering placements. It is anticipated that some 100 awards will be made available in 2009. The competition for flying scholarships in light aeroplanes opened on 1 November 2008 and all other competitions open on 1 December 2008. The closing date is 27 February except for the light aeroplane scholarships, for which the closing date is 30 January. There are also bursaries for advanced training, to assist licensed pilots gain additional flying qualifications or to renew a rating.

Visit www.airleague.co.uk to download an application form and conditions for all competitions and to join The Air League online, or to request information, email: scholarships@airleague.co.uk

SAFETY

CAA General Aviation Safety Awards

The CAA is inviting nominations for its 2008 General Aviation Safety Awards, presented in recognition of good airmanship or practical skills and abilities when faced with potentially serious incidents directly related to flying. Anyone involved in UK general aviation may be nominated - pilots, instructors, engineers, aircraft operators and air traffic control staff. Nominees should be over 16 years of age and may be either individuals or organisations. Nominations must be received by 19 January 2009. See www.caa.co.uk/ga_award for further details.

CAA Safety Evenings

The winter series of CAA safety evenings is under way and the next session is on 17 November at Enstone, with a further thirteen venues scheduled all around the country. The CAA say 'all pilots and others associated with General Aviation operations in the area are strongly encouraged to attend one of them. Although the emphasis may be slanted towards the host organisation, the content is relevant to all forms of general aviation.' See <http://www.caa.co.uk/default.aspx?catid=224&pagetype=69> for a full list of dates and venues.

GETMET

The latest edition of the pilot weather guide GETMET is now available. It can be requested or downloaded free of charge from <http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/aviation/services/getmet.html>. The new 2009 edition includes information for the Met Office on-line weather briefings, fax &

telephone services, weather reports and en route information to help with flight planning. GETMET also includes important information on the forthcoming TAF changes due in November.

GASIL

The latest edition of GASIL (the CAA's General Aviation Safety newsletter) can be downloaded from the CAA web site at http://www.caa.co.uk/docs/33/srg_gasil3of2008.pdf. This is the last issue in this format, and in future it will be published monthly, starting in November.

FAI NEWS

The FAI General Conference

Several members of the RAeC attended the FAI General Conference in various capacities.

Congratulations to ***Derek Piggott***, who also attended to receive the Lilienthal Gliding Medal.

Congratulations also to

Paul Beard, 2007 winner of the Antonov Aeromodelling Diploma;

David Hempleman-Adams, 2007 winner of a Montgolfier Ballooning Diploma for the best performance in Gas Ballooning.

World Air Games 2009

Preparations are progressing for the next World Air Games, to be held in Turin next June. Invitations are being issued for up to three pilots to represent each country in each participating air sport. See <http://www.worldairgames.org/2009> for more information.

Young Artists Contest

The Rules and the Interpretation of the Theme "Create a Poster for the World Air Games" for the 2009 FAI Young Artists Contest are at <http://www.fai.org/education/contests/artists/>. UK entries should be sent to the Royal Aero Club, at the address at the end of this Newsletter, by 28 February 2009.

NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN REGULATORY ISSUES

EASA NPA 17 – Pilot Licensing Proposals

In June the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) published the proposals for pan-EU pilot licences. These proposals are extensive and are currently subject to public consultation – see

http://easa.europa.eu/ws_prod/r/r_npa.php near the top of the list of NPAs.

The Royal Aero Club will be holding a short 3 hour briefing and seminar on the subject of these proposals, at the LAA headquarters at Turweston Aerodrome, Northamptonshire, on Saturday morning 22nd November 2008, starting at 09.00. The briefing will enable attendees to understand some of the key elements of the proposals and to be in a better position to respond to the consultation, which closes on 15th December 2008.

The proposals affect all pilots of aircraft within the scope of EASA, but the briefing will be focused on the impact on pilots flying non-commercially with aeroplanes up to 2 mt MTOM, light helicopters, gliders and balloons. Microlight and hang glider/paraglider pilots are not affected by these proposals; their aircraft are outside the scope of EASA, though microlight pilots may want to know about the proposals as EASA is planning to review Annex II of the Basic Regulation next year.

If you would like to attend this briefing, please send an email to secretary@royalaeroclub.org by 18th November, giving your name and contact email.

Places are limited to 70 so bookings will be taken on a first come first served basis. There will be a small charge of £10.00 per head, payable on entrance (cash only please – no credit card facilities) towards the cost of room hire and this will also cover coffee/tea during the morning.

Liaison with politicians

The Royal Aero Club and Europe Air Sports are working both in the UK and in Europe to engage more effectively with politicians. The aim is to extend the way that we can lobby on behalf of air sports to reduce the effect of restrictive and inappropriate legislation. In the UK we are receiving advice and assistance from the Department of Culture Media and Sport, the Central Council of Physical Recreation and the Sports Councils, whilst in Europe an expert lobbyist has been appointed to improve the links with and access to MEPs and other individuals or organisations.

The Royal Aero Club Chairman and others made presentations recently to a hearing of the EPP political grouping (European People's Party (Christian Democrats) and European Democrats) of the European Parliament, at which several MEPs and Commission officials were present. The Director

General of Civil Aviation in France advocated strongly that the EASA developments affecting air sports were not wanted by the member states and he reacted sympathetically to a suggestion to be involved in a meeting with his opposite numbers in UK and Germany, with a view to forming a political axis capable of challenging the EASA proposals.

A briefing meeting also took place with the Air Attaché at the UK Permanent Representative Office at the EU, and Sir John Allison (President of Europe Air Sports) and David Roberts are arranging to meet the head of Civil Aviation within the Directorate-General for Energy and Transport at the European Commission.

G-INFO upgrade

The CAA has upgraded the G-INFO database to include extensive information about the registration and airworthiness of all CAA-registered aircraft. Some RAeC members have complained that the information includes names and addresses of the owners, which they consider to be a breach of data protection principles. Enquiries are being made with the CAA and the Information Commissioner to try to get the personal information removed from the public site.

GENERAL INFORMATION

SPLASH

The 2008 The Sport & Leisure Aviation Show will take place at the NEC near Birmingham on 29 – 30 November. There will be the usual displays of paragliders, hang-gliders and microlights, as well as the British Gliding Association's simulator. The CAA will run an Airspace & Safety Initiative and there will be a full programme of general interest talks. See www.theflyingshow.co.uk for full details.

Blériot Centenary

Plans are under way to celebrate the centenary next year of Louis Blériot's Channel crossing. Events will be coordinated with the Aéro Club de France, which is also planning some cross-Channel celebratory flights from Calais to Dover. Dover District Council is planning a weekend of celebrations on 25-26 July. More details at <http://www.dover2009.com/>.

Newsletter edited by Diana King. Please send items for future Newsletters to Royal Aero Club, Radford Barn, Radford Semele, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV31 1UT or to secretary@royalaeroclub.org.

For further information on any items contained in this Newsletter, please contact Diana King at the RAeC Office address or on 01926 332713.