Meadow Flyer
Newsletter of The Oxford M.F.C.

Autumn 2025

The Cloud Tramp Mass Launch [Photo by Bob Lee]

In This Issue

Editorial

As it happens, I've recently been afflicted with a disinclination to build new models; many of the airframes that I currently fly are, for want of a better term, on their last legs and for some reason it's been very, very difficult to build replacements; OK, I have other interests which keep getting in the way (motorcycles, computer games, etc.) but even so, making progress has been difficult…

Then Steve Edwards suggested building something small and quick so that it could be done in a few weeks, and once it was started, I was to keep at it no matter what. So I picked a V20 (everyone seems to have one or be building one) and had at it.

This Wasp III took about 5 weeks from start to finish, and about a week of that doesn't count because I was on holiday. It has the usual wing warp and power set-up, weighs about 30 grams and apart from a bit of tail weight being required, flew more-or-less off the board. All I need to do now is to get myself down to the meadow at Oh-dark-Thirty before the end of September to get in some times for the V20 postal.

And the important thing is that it seems to have cured me of the building malaise!

I'd like to thank Simon Burch, Roger Matthews, Andrew Longhurst, Alan Smith, Chris Brainwood, Simon Richardson, Charlie Jeffreys, Pete Fardell, Bob Lee, Ian Melville, Gary Law and David Lovegrove for providing content and services for the newsletter.

Chairman's Chat – Simon Burch

As the summer of 2025 draws to a close, we can look back on some exceptional weather with plenty of good flying days. Although we had to cancel our August RC event, the Cloud Tramp Mass Launch went ahead on the same day, together with the free-flight fun-fly event, and some useful RC training took place too.

I was pleased to see that my Cloud Tramp wasn't the first one to land after the Mass Launch, although this 'achievement' was, unfortunately, largely the result of an unfortunate mid-air collision just after the launch. Notwithstanding the odd mishap, it was a most successful event and, once again, my thanks go to those who were involved in the organisation - and, of course the attendees.

As far as my summer aeromodelling activities are concerned, my current building project - a West Wings Puss Moth intended for winter indoor flying - has been put on the backburner over the last couple of months.

Instead, I've been working on restoring a gifted (via Alan Trinder) ARTF RC model from the early 2000s to flying condition.

Initially, no-one at the club was able to identify it but, after enquiring on the RCME Forum, we found out that it was a 'Fledgling' RC trainer. A good-looking model, it turned out that it needed more work than I initially thought.

However, it's now flying well and in the hands of a junior member who is hoping to take an 'A' (Fixed-wing Power) test in the very near future. So, for me, it's now back to the Puss Moth - and our attempts to identify a winter indoor flying venue in which to fly it.

As autumn approaches, we're looking to arrange an interesting program of talks and events at Begbroke Village Hall, so please do try to join us if you can.

Please note also that the Autumn Duration Competition has been delayed until 18th October -I would encourage RC flyers to check out the competition rules for this event and have a go at taking part. It's surprisingly easy to get involved; for example, a small catapult glider is cheap, easy to build, easy to fly... but it's a challenge to make it fly really well. Take a look at Andy Crisp's Oxcat plan on the club website - it has to be one of the easiest and most accessible ways into competition flying. Oxcat – 12″ span Catapult Glider » Oxford Model Flying Club

The Keil Kraft Gemini Project Part II – Roger Matthews

Last time the construction of the Gemini (built from an Outerzone plan) was well under way, but changes from original rubber power model had to be shelved due to an elementary error (mine) of placing the undercarriage fixing in the direct line of the expected rubber motor… Oops!

Electric was then chosen as preferred power source. Next came the decision to continue with a free flight model or to go RC. The choice of free flight model alas failed in its bid, when I became custodian of MicroAces electronics power train, receiver and servos. Thus, the model is now rudder and elevator controlled, with a micro brushless motor up front.

A couple of Keil Kraft wheels found in the office drawers came in handy to complete the undercarriage. She comes out near where I estimated the balance point should be, and after some taxiing trials (indoors in a school hall) showed that she is close to a trial flight. Unfortunately, some hastily glued parts showed stress and have required re-seating. Also, the twin rudder setup needs to be rejigged owing to the hinges being too stiff! This will be corrected soon.

As for the finish, well, I tried to stick to the original KK markings but my tissue work needs improving! Also, I've still got one more logo item to attempt.

Next the stages will be initial trimming and flights. I'll let you know how it goes.

Cloud Tramp Mass launch & Fun Fly – Chris Brainwood

(All pictures by Chris Brainwood)

The Cloud Trampers line up for launch – from left to right we have Bill Dennis, Chris Brainwood, Simon Burch, Alan Trinder, Gary Law, Andrew Longhurst and Simon Milan [Bob Lee photo]

This year was the 30th Charles Hampson Grant Memorial International Mass Launch Of Cloud Tramps. Eight OMFC members took part in a mass launch at 10am 2nd August 2025

The Cloud Tramp was designed by American Charles H Grant as a basic stick rubber model for beginners and first appeared Model Airplane News, August 1954. They can be built very quickly and easily and are available as a free plan to download from OuterZone or even as a kit from the Vintage Model Company

For more information on Cloud Tramps visit the Endlesslift website

There was also a Free Flight Fun-fly with several members taking advantage and flying a variety of models for Gliders to I/C Vintage and scale models; here are a few photographs from the day:

Chris Brianwood's Dastardly Ebenezer, Keil Kraft Elf and Cloud Tramp

Alan Trinder winds his Cloud Tramp

Andrew Longhurst preps his Cloud Tramp. Notice how the model box doubles as a maths exercise book.

Bill Dennis' KK Piper Super Cruiser

Gary Law launches his wasp V20

Simon Milan launches his Sparrow High-Performance Sportster V20

Safety Matters – Simon Burch

Thus far, most of my safety points in Meadow Flyer have been related to RC flying. For this issue, by way of a change, I'm going to turn my attention to free flight.

Generally, it's true to say that free flight models tend to be lower powered, lighter in weight, and relatively slow flying compared with RC or even CL. Thus, although the flyer has little or no control over the model once it is released, a free flight model is less likely to cause any serious damage to people, animals, or property. However, this is not necessarily the case - even a small model could easily injure someone if it hits them in the face.

Indeed, at recent free flight events, I have watched wayward free flight models fly towards the pits area, circling at low-level around people, chairs, equipment and models before finally colliding with someone or something. Usually, such a 'chuck-and-duck' routine causes great amusement as people dodge the incoming model, but it's hardly ideal.

A little more care over the selection of the launch point would be appropriate, taking into account the wind and the model's most likely flight path.

Perhaps more hazardous is the hi-start glider mis-launch - a not-infrequent occurrence. A 30+" span glider is quite a substantial model, and it would hurt if it hit somebody at high speed. This might easily happen if a model were to veer off course during a hi-start launch, increasing speed under the tension of the elastic and the force of gravity as it follows an inevitable 'arc of doom'.

Hi-starts should be carefully positioned such that a wayward model does not end up crashing into, for example, the pits area - where it could cause pain or damage to anyone or anything in its path.

Glider Incident at the Patch in May.

In the previous issue of MF, I highlighted an incident that involved an RC model glider crashing uncomfortably close to the pits area at the Patch. As promised, here is the flier's account of the accident (in italics):

Model: *Osprey Sailplane International 100" Two channel RC*
Date: *31/05/25*
Location: *Port Meadow*
Incident time: *12.00*
Launch: *Bungee 100m south of Patch*
Wind direction: *SW 10mph ; gusts 25mph; wind increasing*
Weather: *Clear sky some high cloud; turbulent and gusty air*

General comment

Mixing an RC fixed-wing power training session at the 'Patch' with bungee-launch pure glider flying always presents a problem; however, I established a procedure which has worked well in the past. After consulting with the RC power instructors, I set up my bungee some 100m to the south of the Patch with the intention of operating to the southwest of the Patch, keeping clear of the RC power flyers and the circuit. I had done this on previous occasions and had experienced no difficulties. This time, however, it would be different.

On the first three launches in a stiff-ish south westerly breeze, I encountered some lift to the southwest of the Patch, upwind of the RC power fliers. I found some difficulty in turning into

wind and gusts resulted in rough-looking flight. Flights were to the SW and S of the patch with landings to S and SE, about 50m to 100m from the patch. I couldn't land close to me due to the gusty conditions but was largely in control of the landing.

On launch number 4 I found lift due west of the patch. As the model climbed in lift, I had increasing difficulty in seeing the plane clearly; orientation, and therefore control, became difficult. I purposely lost height and landed the model to south of the Patch.

Discussion after the event with the RC power fliers revealed that I had in fact strayed over the RC pits area, and that they had considered 'having a word' at the time but chose to keep a closer eye on my model instead.

On flight number 5, I flew the model towards the same area west of the Patch hoping, but failing, to find lift again. I turned downwind to prepare for a landing, which took the model directly towards the Patch but encountered sink and found myself unable to maintain height. Those operating RC power models and watching from the Patch report that the model was stalling and losing height rapidly as it approached them. It eventually crashed 10m southwest of the pits area.

In Conclusion
This was clearly a potentially dangerous incident which should not have happened. On reflection, the primary mistake I made was to focus upon finding lift, to the exclusion of other factors - including safety. This led to three further mistakes:

***Firstly**. Flying directly upwind (west) from the Patch area. If I lost height or encountered sink, landing uncomfortably close to the Patch would be my only option.*

***Secondly**. As the model descended in sink, I tried to maintain height by raising the nose. This would explain the stalls reported by witnesses, and the final stall which led to the crash.*

***Thirdly**. I was probably flying too far away from my launch position to guarantee that I could see the model and orientate properly. I had already experienced difficulties with seeing the model and should have flown closer to my position.*

Lessons.
Clearly, there were lessons for the individual concerned, most of which he has identified ie: focussing upon one aspect of the flight to the detriment of others; flying in an inappropriate position; poor flying technique; and difficulty in seeing the model due to its distance.

I would add that, given the difficulties he had encountered on his first flights, he was flying in wind and turbulence conditions that were probably beyond his ability to handle. Being 'largely in control of the landing' (ie not in full control) was a warning sign that should have been heeded, and he would have been wise to have stopped flying at that point. However, it is also important to note that the flyer was not the only link in this unfortunate chain of events. There were also lessons for the club in terms of supervision, site layout, and site rules. Presently, the committee is looking at some minor changes in rules and procedures aimed at helping to prevent similar incidents from occurring in future.

Diesel Evening – Chris Brainwood

There was a nice, calm evening at the patch on Thursday 12th June so some of us took the opportunity to have a nice evening flying diesels. Here are some pictures that should hopefully capture the flavour of the event:

Mick Linacre's Keil Kraft Snipe (Left) and Pete

Dave Monk launches his Madcap

Alan Trinder about to get oily hands with his KK Slicker and KK Southerner Mite

Glen Tennant tunes the Mills .75 in his Ganymede

Glen launches his Ganymede

Chris Brainwood's Tomboy

Glen Tennants's new electric Titchy Stick

Chris Brainwood's KK Cessna 170

The Dizzy Diamond V20 – Andrew Longhurst

This odd looking 18ins model with a pylon cockpit is a great flyer and was the top model in the first OMFC under 20ins postal round this year. I arranged for the original plan to be put on Outerzone together with a full-size build drawing created on CAD by Richard Fryer. The story of its “discovery” is as follows.

In the late 80’s I had to travel up North, from time to time, for my employers. It so happened that Brian Faulkner had contacted me about his little-known designs published in the Cheadle and District MAC newsletter during the war. Accordingly, I invited myself round to his place whilst on a business trip the purpose of which I have forgotten, or more probably never existed.

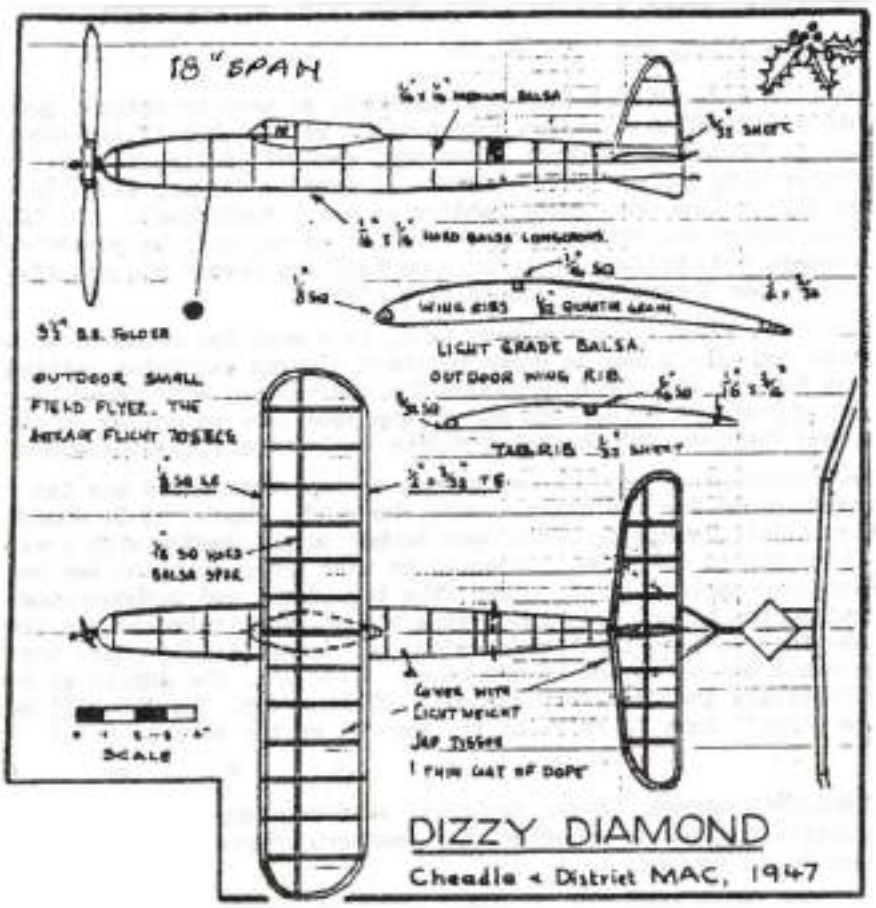
Anyway, sitting in his front room with a cup of tea and slice of Parkin *[See https://www.nancybirtwhistle.co.uk/blogs/recipes/yorkshire-parkin - Ed]* he produced a pile of wartime issues and showed me all his contributions which he had bookmarked. Among the many were drawings for the Blackpool Rock Mk 1 and Mk III, the Dizzy Diamond and the Chad 20 and 30. At the time I incorporated them in my SAM 35 Speaks column and they proved to be popular builds. Sadly, A few years later Brian passed away when his loaded wheely bin pulled him over on the steeply sloping street where he lived, resulting in multiple injuries.

Anyway, for its age the Dizzy Diamond is long, in fact, longer than its span which is very unusual for this period. I built my example five years ago from the plan reproduced below. It’s

a great little build as the fuselage is not of diamond section all the way but squashes up at the rear to form the sternpost. Rather like a Trout's tail before you pop it in the pan with plenty of butter and tarragon.

The way I suggest going about this is to build two sides as usual but only put in the struts as far back as the rear motor anchorage. Next assemble the square section fuselage but leave the rear part of the longerons waving in the breeze. Having decided which is the top longeron, bring together the two side longerons at the back and glue the ends. Then glue on the stern post making sure it's vertical. Lastly attach the upper and lower longerons to it and pop in all the rest of the struts. I say "pop in" but some interesting angles result as the diamond gets narrower.

You have also got to plant on the cabin wing mount which I carried out after covering the fuselage. As usual for me, the prop was the super little 8ins Igra cut down to 7.5ins. Looking at the finished model, it didn't seem to have much in the way of decalage, so I stuck in a 1/8 block to prop up the stab TE. The CG was slightly further back than I wanted at 60%.



Out on the meadow I put 300 turns on the 10g 6x3/32 SuperSport motor and chanced a launch without even so much as a test glide. Shock! Horror!

It flew away turning rather tightly to the right but was fine…and I hadn't bothered to set the DT. It probably won't glide, I thought. But it did, and it was in lift.

Mother earth reclaimed it after a minute or so and I gratefully retrieved it. Next flight I gave it .5mm shim of down and left thrust and it flew up well but was still turning too tightly on the glide, so on the next flight I took the shim out and replaced it with 3/8ins of 1/16 sq. on the left of the fin TE.

Perfect on 500 turns. Next flight on 1000 it went into a half loop but rolled out safely and went miles up. Glide again very reasonable.

Dead easy, this trimming lark!

Mini Bedstead – Alan Smith

The "mini-bedstead" is a test bed for developing a vectored thrust twin EDF VTOL aircraft. It allows me to work on the software settings and mechanical setup in a relatively crash proof framework. If you want to know how it all works, Simon B has asked me to give a short talk about it at the Begbroke club night on the 17th September.

OMFC Scale Competitions and Fly-in 2025 – Chris Brainwood

Mike Stuart launches his Keil Kraft Beech Bonanza, model originally intended for indoor use and is very attractive in the air, was entered in Scale Rubber Duration [Photo: Andy B]

2025 may well be remembered as the summer of heatwaves and by the time the club's annual Free Flight Scale Fly-in came along we were well into our third. The day before temperatures had reached a sweltering 32C in the afternoon so the early morning starts to our competitions seemed like a good idea, even so we decided to start an extra hour early at 8:30 so we could finish at 12pm and be off the meadow before the higher heat of the afternoon.

The plan seemed to work well with competitors arriving early to take advantage of the cool calm air to get their flights in. The normal 10:30 curfew on IC engines was also relaxed so those of the oily hand brigade could make the most of the conditions as well. CD Gary Law also had plenty of water on hand, a Gazebo for shade with chairs to sit on and was able to ferry people back to the car park at the end of the day which all made it much more pleasant.

Despite the predicted heat the meeting was fairly well attended with some fun flyers with both scale and sport models and some spectators which was great to see

Flying Only

The Flying Only Class saw the largest entry with 11 models. The rules allow up to 2 models per entry, so Mike Staurt, Pete Fardell and Chris Brainwood all took advantage of the extra flying time and had a couple of entries. Bill Dennis was the CD who judged the class, with the help of Trish Dennis, in the smooth and relaxed style we are coming expect from an OMFC event

Ivan Taylor's enlarged KK Chipmunk and Auster Arrow, F16 and Gloster meteor [Photo: Chris Brainwood]

Mike Stuart's rubber-powered Consolidated Fleetster [Photo: Andy B]

The class is judged on flying realism with marks awarded for different aspects of the flight, from the climb, cruise and landing approach. The best-scoring flight is then used to determine the winner with 4 flights permitted. No attempts are allowed, so once you let go of your model it counts as a flight

The flying conditions were often quite tricky as the morning warmed up with some quite bumpy air to contend with. Finding a calm patch definitely made all the difference, not so easy to do those with IC engines as once you have started your diesel you generally just go with it.

Chris Brainwood launches his DH 60 Moth, built from the Aeromodeller plan [Photo: Andy B]

Mike Smith's DH Tiger Moth is based on an old Mercury kit [Photo: Andy B]

Both Mike Smith and Chris Brainwood fielded De Havilland biplanes with very similar results. Both were IC powered, and both had flights where they turned quite tightly and both found out how hard the meadow is after three heatwaves.

Mike's Tiger Moth unfortunately had a hard arrival under power and broke the rear fuselage off at the tail leaving him with a model I would have put straight back in the car. However, undeterred, Mike got out the Cyano and set about sticking it all back together. Much to his credit and skill it flew again several times, flying well enough for a reasonable score in the conditions. Fairing only slightly better and just 25 points ahead was Chris Brainwood's DH 60 Moth. On Chris's first flight the fuel level was misjudged, and it ran out just after launch, the

resultant stall and dive broke off the fin and despite also hitting the Cyano bottle it never really got its usual trim back after that, with a nice climb but a bit of a spiral dive on the glide.

Mike did much better with his rubber powered Aeronca Defender to gain 9th place. Charlie Jeffreys had his Rumpler flying nicely and looking very much the part as it flew in lovely large circuits over the meadow. Charlie has clearly finessed the trimming from last year and was rewarded with 8th place just behind the equal 7th of Pete Fardell's Stinson Sentinel and David King's BAT Monoplane. David's Bat Monoplane looked very impressive in the air, very slow flying with its broad chord wings.

Mike Stuart's Bristol Superfreighter looked and sounded superb but on the early flights the model was down on power no doubt due to it having been last flown at the Indoor Nationals. With the power increased it was climbing much better, but the more turbulent air meant it bounced about a bit more than was scale and it was unable to repeat its winning success of last year.

Mike Stuart's Bristol Superfreighter [Photo: Pete Fardell]

Pete Fardell's Bleriot XI [Photo: Pete Fardell]

One model that always seems to confound the conditions and produce a high scoring flight is Pete Fardell's 1909 Bleriot XI. This rubber powered model oozes the character and charm of an Edwardian aircraft and even has a model of Louis Bleriot himself flying it. The Bleriot also flies indoors using the same rubber motor, which is extraordinary as indoor models flown outside often need more power to fly in the more turbulent air outdoors, as Mike's Bristol proved. Pete's Bleriot managed 5th place just five points behind Andy Blackburn's 4th place Miles Magister.

Andy's Magister is built from the Aerographics design and was looking very smooth in the air, it was also entered in the Rubber Duration Class proving you don't need a car full of models to enter the Scale comps. 2nd and 3rd were also separated by just 5 points. Mike Stuart's Consolidated Fleetster looked very convincing as it circled above our heads but lost out to the now well sorted Cessna 170 of Chris Brainwood.

Out in front though by an impressive 25 points was Ivan Taylor's Gloster Meteor. The model is twin EDF and like most of Ivan's models is his own design. The flight was truly impressive and captured on video by Charlie Jeffreys (checkout Ivan's meteor on YouTube) - it looked to all intents and purposes like a real Meteor over the meadow and the flight won him the class and the John Blagg Trophy

Name	Model	Power	Best Flight	
Ivan Taylor	Gloster Meteor	electric	880	1
Chris Brainwood	Cessna 170	I/C	855	2
Mike Stuart	Consolidated Fleetster	rubber	850	3
Andy Blackburn	Miles Magister	rubber	785	4
Pete Fardell	Bleriot XI	rubber	780	5
Mike Stuart	Bristol Superfreighter	electric	775	6
Pete Fardell	Stinson Sentinel	rubber	730	=7
David King	BAT Monoplane	rubber	730	=7
Charlie Jeffreys	Rumpler Taube	I/C	700	8
Mike Smith	Aeronca Defender	rubber	685	9
Chris Brainwood	DH 60 Moth	I/C	655	10
Mike Smith	DH 82 Tiger Moth	I/C	630	11

Hi-Start Scale Glider

Bill Dennis launches his Schweizer TG-2 [Photo: Chris Brainwood]

The Scale Glider class is the total of three flights using the provided bungee hi-start. The class attracted 6 entries, but all the flyers found the conditions a challenge. The Peterborough rules bungee saw a lot of activity throughout the morning but only half the entrants managed a qualifying flight. Aside from the bumpy thermal air the models had to fly in, the ground was baked hard after successive heat waves and proved very unforgiving if the model turned on the line and headed down at speed. A recent mowing of the grass made things worse with little in the way of cushioning. Pete Fardell and Mike Stuart both suffered damaged models and retired, Mike losing the front end and therefore nose weight from his Schweizer.

Pete Fardell and Colin Sharman also failed to get a time on the board and Chris Brainwood managed just one qualifier with his Slingsby Eagle before another poor launch and dive to the

side saw the wing dowels finally give up and retired as well. David King fared better with two qualifying flights in the tricky conditions with his Zlin 24 to gain 2nd place, while the only entrant with 3 flights on the board was Bill Dennis with his Schweizer TG-2. A total of 38 sec gave Bill the class win.

Name	Model	Flight 1	Flight 2	flight 3	Total	
Bill Dennis	Schweizer TG-2	14	12	12	38	1
David King	Zlin 24	13	13	-	26	2
Chris Brainwood	Slingsby Eagle	10	-	-	10	3
Colin Sharman	Slingsby Prefect	-	-	-		
Mike Stuart	Schweizer SG2-22	-	-	-		
Pete Fardell	DH Sparrow	-	-	-		

Scale Rubber Duration

Dave King launches his BAT Monoplane, piloted by a miniature Dave King complete with hat on back to front [Photo: Andy B]

Ivan Taylor's enlarged Keil Kraft DH Chipmunk didn't want to circle to the right [Photo: Andy B]

This year saw a new class, the Scale Rubber Duration. The class is based on the Flying Aces Club rules which allow monoplanes up to 36 ins span and multi wing models up to 30 ins. A set of bonuses are then added to the score to determine the winner. Due to the conditions on the day with the wind direction heading for the river, a max of 60s was set by the CD

Six models entered all looking for that 60 sec max. Mike Stuart initially entered his lovely little Beech Bonanza and managed a first flight of 18 sec however the next resulted in a broken tail so a second model, a Nieuport was entered to take its place. This model fared somewhat worse and re-kitted itself on its first flight leaving Mike with the only available option to repair the tail on his Bonanza. That paid off and the resultant flights saw him just 10 points behind the 4th place of David King with his BAT Monoplane. David's BAT is a new model and is scaled up from the smaller kit version. It works very well at this size with a lovely slow flying speed and even scored a max on its last flight.

Pete Fardell's Stinson Sentinel was going well too and though it didn't manage a max it was consistent and with the bonuses added gained a well-earned 3rd place just 1 point ahead of David's BAT

Out in front though were Andy Blackburn's Miles Magister and Ivan Taylor's Auster. Both managed 3 maxes but the winner was decided on the bonus system with Andy coming out on top with his smaller Miles Magister.

Andy Blackburn's Aerographics Miles Magister circles overhead. Model is vastly overweight (all that paint!) but is quite reliable. [Photo: Andy B]

Ivan Taylor's Auster Arrow climbs away. Model has a remarkable performance and looks just like a Coupe D'Hiver model with a scale outline and a fixed propeller [Photo: Andy B]

The performance of Ivan's Auster was remarkable though with all flights over 90 sec the final being 5 minutes. This did cause a bit of problem as the DT wasn't set and the model drifted off downwind still in lift and heading over the Thames.

Ivan and his timer Colin Sharman watched it down with binoculars into the land beyond the river and hoped to retrieve it later as it was fitted with a tracker bug. Bill and Trish aided by Alan Trinder and Colin set off after the meeting in search of the model using the tracker to pinpoint its location. They got within 3 meters of the indicated location but could not find it suspecting it is somewhere above them in the trees

Despite the fly-away the class looked like fun and went down well with the competitors so why not give it a go, particularly if you've only flown duration models before. It could be a great and fun way into scale models.

Name	Model	Bonus	Flight 1	Flight 2	Flight 3	Total	
Andy Blackburn	Miles Magister	45	60 max	60 max	60 max	225	1
Ivan Taylor	Auster	20	60 max	60 max	60 max	200	2
Pete Fardell	Stinson Sentinel	45	44	33	33	155	3
David King	BAT Monoplane	20	39	35	60 max	154	4
Mike Stuart	Beech Bonanza	75	18	37	14	144	5
Mike Smith	Aeronca Defender	30	-	-	-		

FROG Senior

The FROG Senior Class attracted 3 entries with Andy Blackburn the clear winner with a couple of flights over 40 sec ahead of David King. Gary Law managed just one competition around his CD duties which took up the bulk of his time.

Name	Model	Flight 1	Flight 2	Flight 3	Total	
Andy Blackburn	Linnet	43	37	45	125	1
David King	Redwing	25	32	38	95	2
Gary Law	Linnet	11	25	——	36	3

Fun-fly

Paul Nottley winds his 30" Chipmunk built from a Dumas kit [Photo: Chris Brainwood]

There were also several modellers who took advantage of the chance to visit and fun fly on Port Meadow with a variety of models from Paul Nottley's lovely Mustang and Chipmunk to Simon Milan's scale and duration models.

Charlie Jeffreys found time not just to compete in the scale class with his Rumpler Taube but also flew his Froglet (Free AM Plan) and Ace Of Diamonds. The Ace of Diamonds is quite a sight with its diamond shape cruising above the meadow. It flies particularly well and has a lovely glide, perhaps too lovely as on one flight in flew into some very strong lift much to Charlie's horror - The model was last seen still climbing, clearly enjoying its freedom and disappearing as a speck over the distant hills on the horizon.

Paul Nottley launches his P-51D, built from a John Bell plan [Photo: Andy B]

Pete Fardell's Catron & Fisk Sport Triplane [Photo: Chris Brainwood]

Model fly-aways are never good but Charlie did have a name and number on the model in case somebody did find it and left the meadow with just that to console him. Charlie's luck was clearly in though as just a few hours later he got a call from the local sailing club saying a lad had found his model in the Farmoor reservoir. Charlie was happily reunited with his model, albeit soggier and more covered in pond weed than when he last saw it. He was very lucky someone spotted it, as club member Charlie Newman says fly-aways in the Farmoor direction are often never seen again. His theory was that the sink over the cold water usually ends in a watery grave, exactly as happened to the Ace of Diamonds.

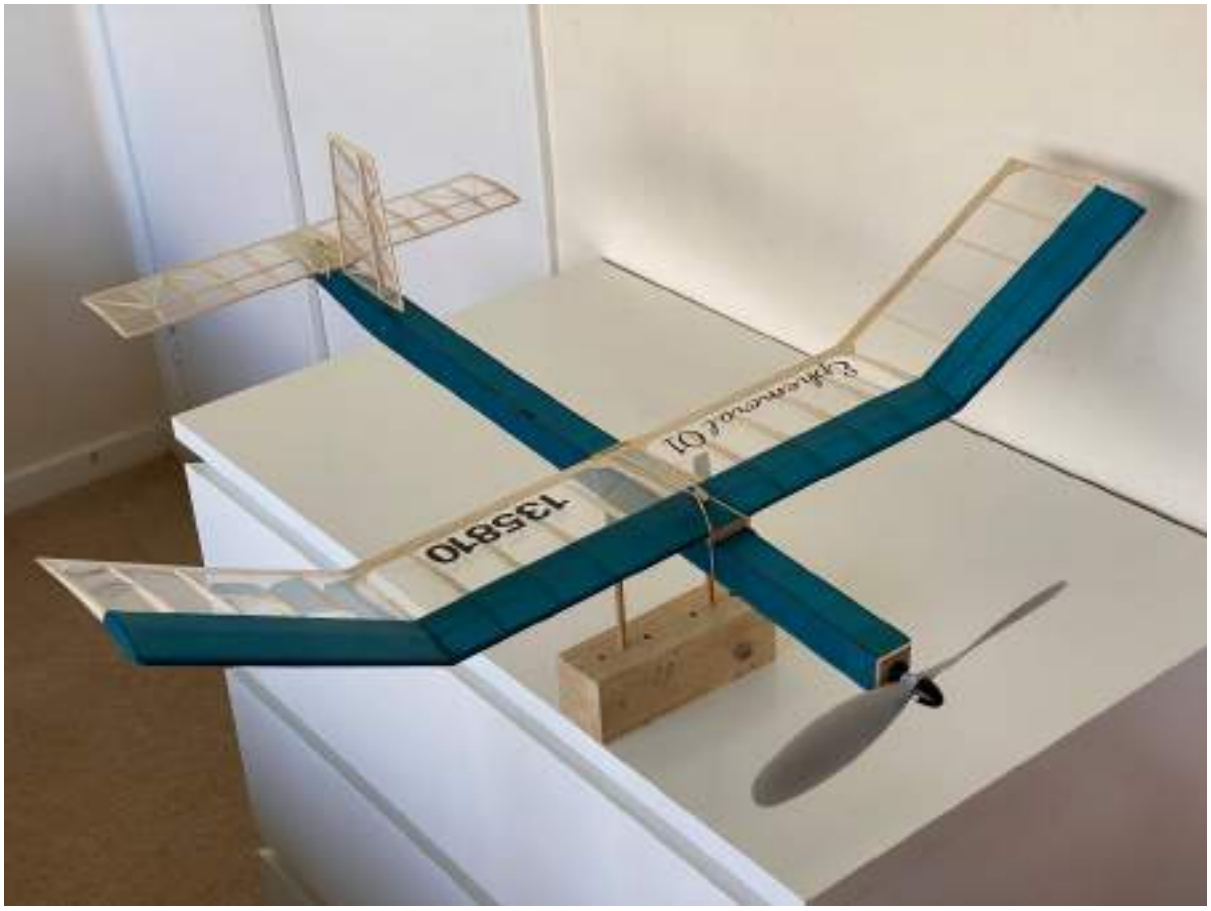
Charlie Jeffreys' Ace of Diamonds, Rumpler Taube and Froglet [Photo: Chris Brainwood]

Charlie Jeffreys collects his (now soggy) Ace of Diamonds from Farmoor Sailing club [Photo: C Jeffreys]

Gary Law did a great job running the competitions aided by chief timer Alan Trinder and general helper Chris Brainwood, while Bill Dennis ran the Flying Only competition aided by Trish Dennis. The operation worked well and by 12:30 pm the competitions had ended with a prize giving to finish things off. Most of us were off the meadow by 1:30pm and heading for the cool of car air-con after of course a trip to the ice cream van.

A P30 Story - Simon Richardson

[Many thanks to Andrew Longhurst for sub-editing Simon's original – Ed]



Background to the Ephemeral P30s

On the morning of 21st June, a falling rock crushed my right hand when I was rock climbing in the Alps. The Italians did an amazing job putting it back together with seven titanium pins and an external fixator.

Back home, Aberdeen Royal Infirmary took charge, and I became infamous as the guy with the horrific hand injury and was warned that I'm looking at a 12-month recovery. The metalwork finally came out in early August so after seven weeks of inactivity, I needed something to aim for. My wife was going to be away, so I set myself the target of competing at the P30 event at the Nationals just two weeks away.

I had two P30s ready to go but Ephemeral03, potentially my finest model, was untested. I set my alarm for 5am for four mornings in a row so I could trim it at Montrose. I had only been model flying once this year and I was severely out of practice and not helped by only having one and a half functioning hands!

On the fourth session, the model was starting to fly well but it DT'd on top of an extensive 4m-high thicket of impenetrable gorse. I nearly panicked, but I visited a hardware shop in Montrose and bought goggles, leather gloves and a saw. I then crawled on my hands and knees sawing a tunnel through the thicket dragging the model box behind me. I then cut the offending gorse bush at half height and gently lowered it so I could pluck the model off the top. It was £25 well spent!

The mylar on the underside of the wing was badly punctured, but everything else was okay. I repaired the wing by doping tissue over the mylar, and amazingly the following evening Ephemeral03 flew even better than before. And rather conveniently the repair brought it up to weight.

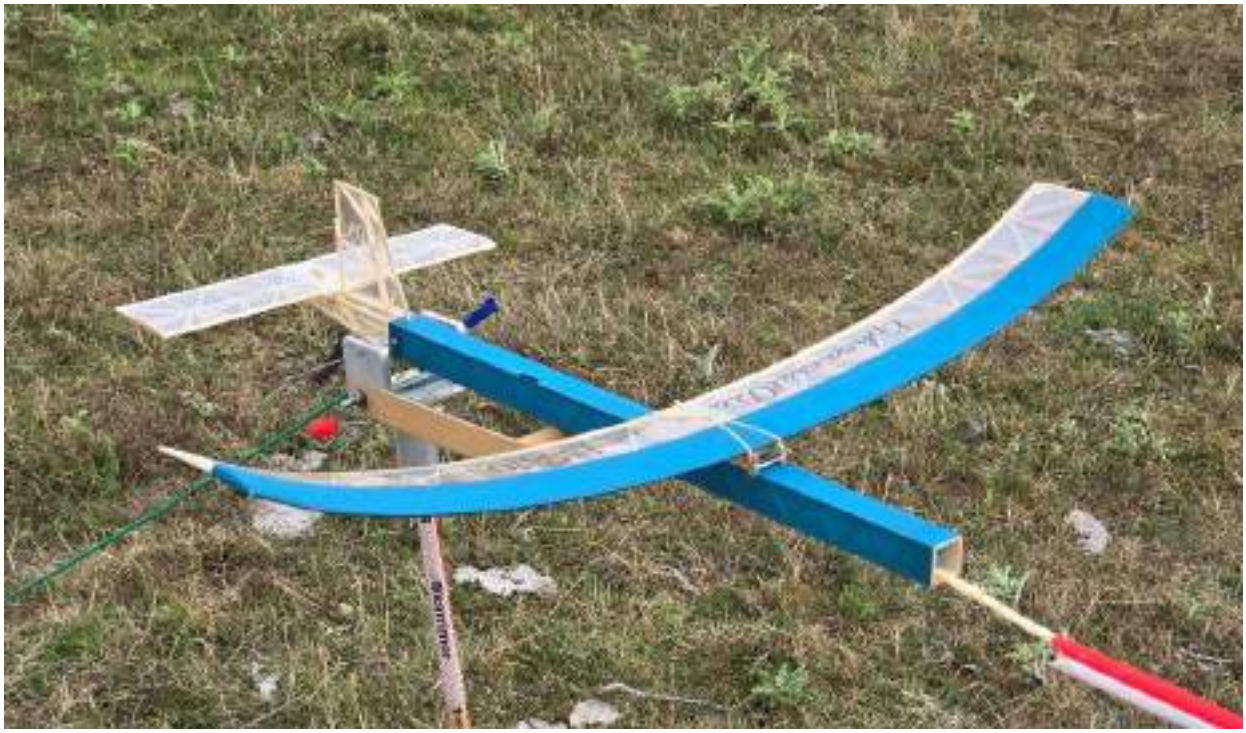
The Ephemeral Model Series:
The objective was to build a model to the P30 minimum weight of 40g. My first P30s were heavy, and it was only when they started to come in under 50g that I got half decent flights.

But my 40g model also has to satisfy the following criteria:

1. The model must be waterproof (the ground is usually wet in Scotland)
2. RDT-equipped to allow flying in small fields
3. GPS-equipped so it's possible to find in long grass typically encountered in competitions
4. Gizmo Geezer prop unit which is on the heavy side, but it works very effectively
5. A reliable DT method. I've lost a P30 in a thermal before and I need a guaranteed way to bring it down. This is essential in competitions to avoid lost time searching for the model.

The electronics for RDT and GPS plus battery come to 7g so to achieve the 40g target I need to build down to 33g. It took four models and two years to figure out how to do this. The solution is to be very methodical and chase every 0.1g.

Ephemeral01 and 01a are slimmed down versions of John Godden's outstanding JGP30 design. This has a 4.5-inch chord giving a wing area of 135 sq in. After trying various DT methods I settled on the detachable wing method where the model comes down with the wing acting as a whirligig with the fuselage hanging on a fishing swivel. This is highly effective, but it puts considerable stress on the wing.



However, Ephemeral01a and my JGP30 have both very slowly gone out of trim due to subtle movement at the dihedral joints. So I decided to remove dihedral joints completely by building

an elliptical dihedral wing. This proved to be very successful from an engineering point of view and is the stiffest P30 wing I've built.

The resulting Ephemeral02 is very elegant and much photographed however it does not glide particularly well. I think it's because I chose quite a thick airfoil section to provide sufficient depth for the I-beam spar, but Andrew advises that 4ins chord P30's never glide as well as those with 4.5ins chord although they should climb higher.

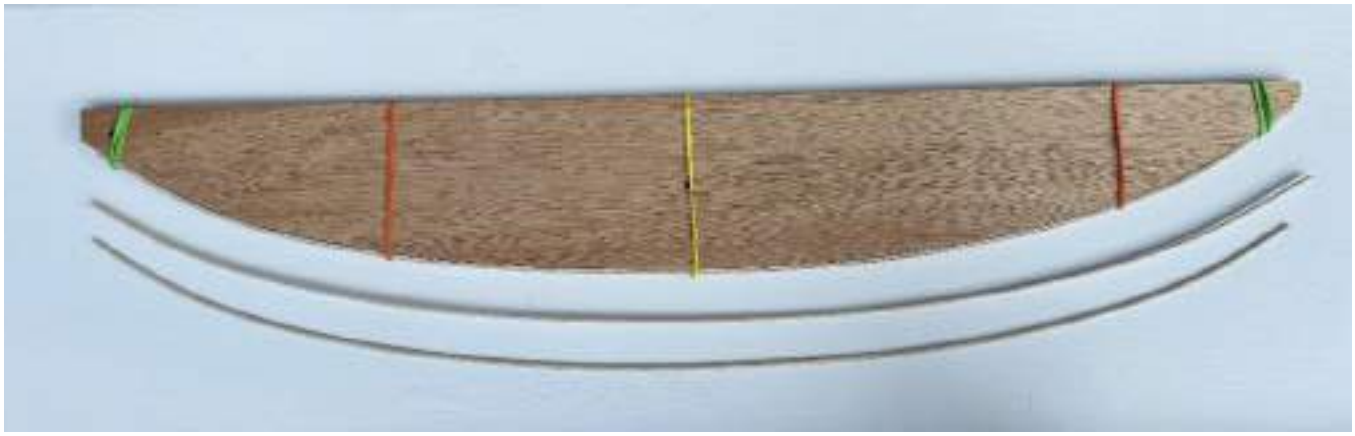
Ephemeral02 was designed to be a windy weather model and has a planform similar to Bob White's Mini Twin Fin. This has a high aspect ratio wing with a small wing area of 105 sq in.

Ephemeral03 is similar to 02 except the wing has conventional polyhedral with a very thin highly cambered section. I built the wing very carefully using an under cambered jig and it's probably the finest wing I've ever made. But it's not strong enough for the whirlygig DT. Ephemeral03 came in at 39g, but after the gorse bush incident the weight came to just above 40g.

The Ephemeral series all use square section built up fuselages. I find these considerably lighter than rolled tubes and easier to build a low pylon required to house the electronics. Warren girder construction makes the fuselages very stiff. I use 2mm longerons cut on a table saw.

Building the Elliptical Wing:

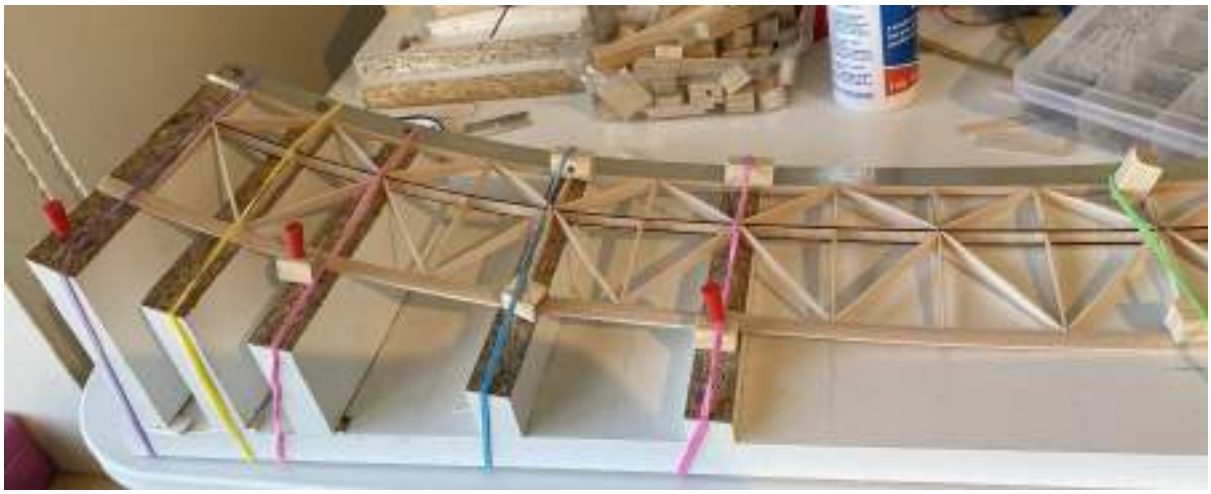
The wing is built on a jig made from 150 mm wide Contiboard. There are supports at every key rib location bevelled to the correct dihedral angle for that point on the span. To ensure accuracy the supports are cut in pairs on a mitre saw. They are held in place by screws through the base of the jig and can be shimmed to build in the appropriate warps. There is a 2mm aluminium strip on the jig keep the leading edge straight.



The trailing edge and leading edge are both laminated on 32in- long templates cut from 10 mm ply shaped to the dihedral curve. The trailing edge former is bevelled slightly to accommodate

the under camber. A jigsaw and rotary sander were used to create these formers. The leading edge is a laminate of four strips of 1/8×1/32 and the trailing edge is two laminations of 1/32×3/8. I use Titebond Original as it sands well.

The main spar is an I-beam made of 0.8 mm carbon rods top and bottom. The wing is then assembled with 1/32 ribs. The structure is quite floppy at this stage but inserting the 1/32 vertical webs one piece at a time between the carbon spars stiffens it remarkably. I then put in the 1/32 diagonal ribs, and the wing is covered in mylar with tissue over the front top and bottom to act as a D-box. The uncovered weight is 8g, covered weight is 10g.



The Nationals:
The Nats were held at RAF Sculthorpe over the August bank holiday weekend. The weather on Saturday and Sunday was excellent – generally light winds and warm.

I flew down with my models from Aberdeen to Heathrow on Wednesday and spent Thursday making up rubber motors before some final test flights on The Meadow on my way to Sculthorpe. It was great to catch up with Andrew, Jim and Richard.

On Saturday, I entered the **Open Rubber** event with Ephemeral01. I was delighted to make the fly off with 3×3-minute maxes. On Sunday I continued trimming and verified that Ephemeral03 was flying the best.

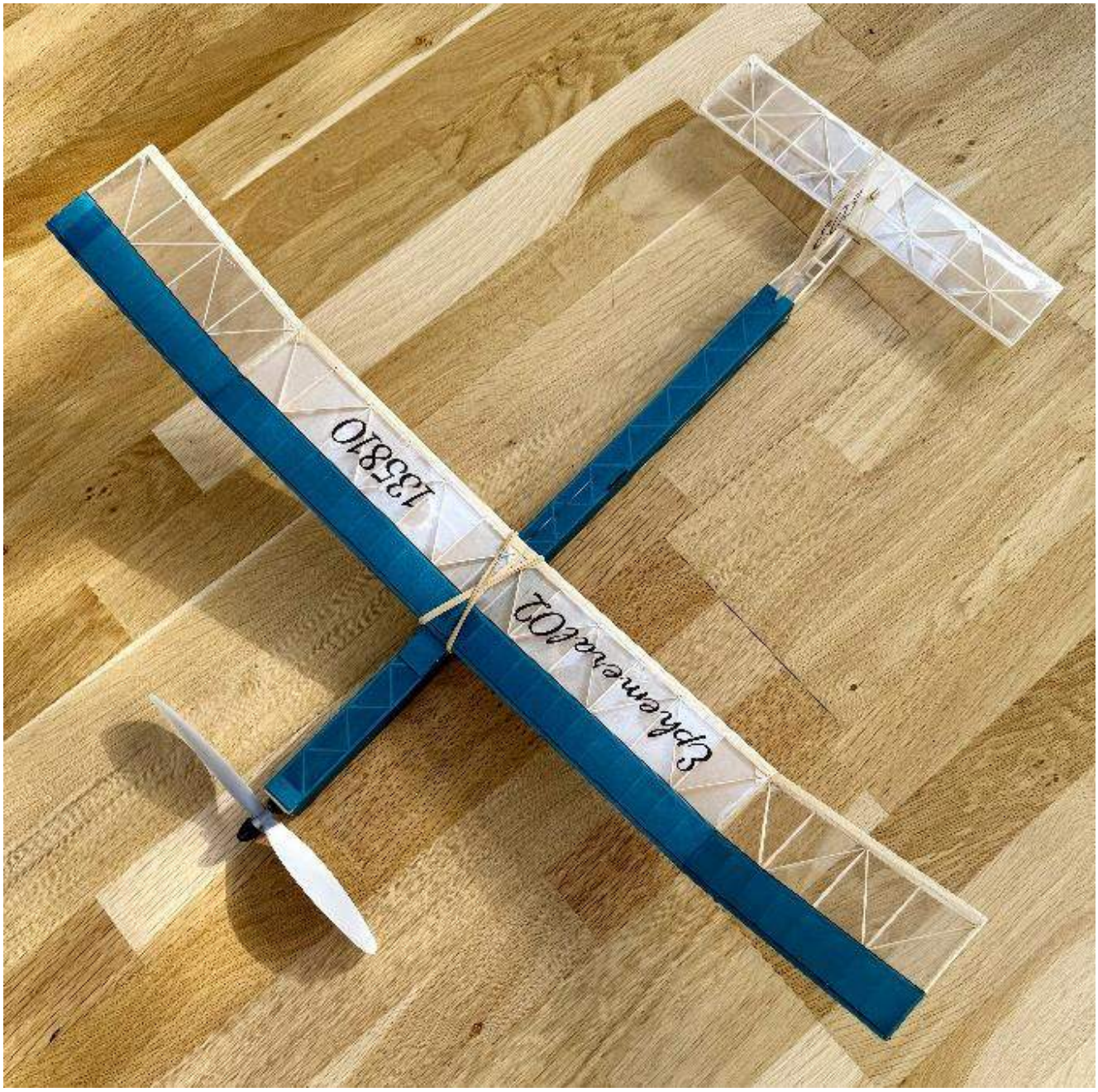
The weather on Monday was a different story **for the P30 event**. It was warm and sunny, but there was a 12-mph wind gusting 25 mph times. The wind made for long retrieves, but the high level of thermal activity was the dominating factor - put the model into a strong thermal and it may never come down. Conversely, a launch into the corresponding sink between the thermals would mean no max, no matter how good the model.

I decided to use Ephemeral03 as its smaller wing area means it is easier to launch in strong winds. I used extra thick rubber bands to keep the wing in place giving an airframe weight of 40.5g.

Mike Woodhouse offered to time me, and he was very patient as I waited and waited for the right moments to launch. Fortunately, I avoided the sink and notched up 3x2 minute maxes. I thought I had lost the model on my first flight when it was rapidly sucked up to 120m altitude, but fortunately the tip-up stab brought it down.

Everybody else dropped flights so I was spared the excitement of a fly off. My model was typically travelling over a kilometre, so I was mentally and physically tired at the end of the day. But it had been immensely satisfying. I'd flown for nine days in the last fortnight. Being able to focus for a full two weeks made a huge difference. It was rather telling that Neil Allen, our brand-new F1C world champion was still flying and testing his engines well after the event was finished.

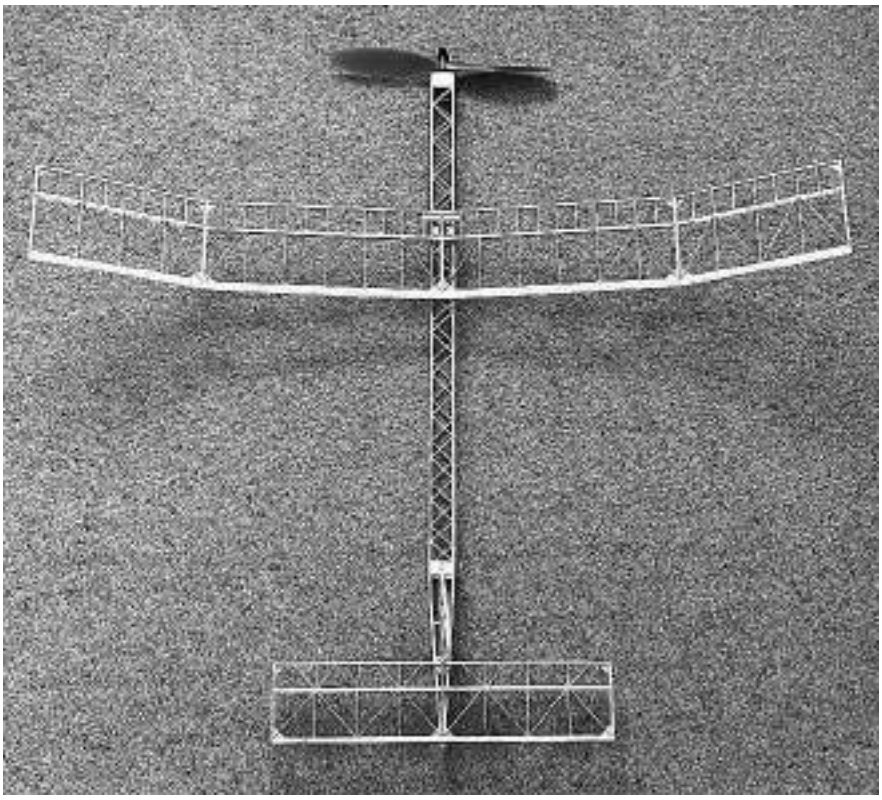
What's next?



There's more to go with the Ephemeral series. My models are strong enough to withstand the rigour of competition, but only just. A few extra gussets here and there will make them more robust.

Ephemeral03 Weights:

Stab	1.7
Wing	11.3
Fuselage	8.0
Electronics	5.5
Rear peg	0.3
Prop	10.3
Battery	1.5
Rubber Bands	1.4
Crocket hook	0.5
Total	40.5 g



Ephemeral04 will have an elliptical wing with a wider chord and a more pronounced under camber than before. Will this be my perfect P30? Probably not, and the development will undoubtably continue…

I was back at the hospital today, having a review with my physiotherapist. She was astonished at my progress over the last two weeks. I don't think aeromodelling will ever be prescribed by the NHS but it has certainly helped me on my way!

Club And Other Local events, 2025

Club Meetings at Begbroke

Club Nights are held at Begbroke Village Hall, Begbroke Lane, Kidlington, OX5 1RN, 7.30 p.m. - 10p.m. Club business (if any) commences at 8 p.m., unless otherwise stated.

Wednesday 17 September 2025	**Club Night:- Talk** - "Weird Projects" – Modelling the unorthodox, by club member Alan Smith
Wednesday 15 October 2025	**Club Night:- Talk** - "Slope Soaring" by Simon Burch
Wednesday 19 November 2025	**AGM**
Wednesday 17 Dec 2025	**Fish 'N' chip supper plus quiz**

Competitions on Port Meadow for 2025

Definitions:

The "Peterborough" bungee = 7.5m of 1/8" rubber and 22.5m of line.
TOTF = Total of Three Flights + Fly-off if required

Rules for all classes at https://oxfordmfc.bmfa.club/event-rules/

Saturday 27 Sept 2025 **BMFA Scale Competition**, Port Meadow
Fun-fly for all free-flight models
BMFA Flying Only (IC/CO2/Electric/rubber) to new BMFA rules
OMFC Hi-Start Scale Glider – Peterborough bungee, total of three flights, no static judging.
OMFC Scale Rubber Duration - max span 36" monoplanes, 30" multi-wing, no static judging, 90s Max, best of three flights + bonuses. Flyoff if necessary.

Saturday 18th October 2025 Autumn Duration Competition (Includes Southern Coupe League), Port Meadow
Fun-fly for all free-flight models
Vintage/Classic A1 Glider – 90 s Max, TOTF. Bungee is 12m 3/16" rubber plus 38m towline
Vintage/Classic Glider – 60 inch span limit, 90 s Max, TOTF. Towline or bungee.
Coupe d'Hiver – TOTF, 90 s Max.
Catapult glider – 60 s Max, Total of 5 flights
OMFC Scale Rubber Duration – max span 36" monoplanes, 30" multi-wing, no static judging, 90 s Max, **best** of three flights + bonuses counts. Flyoff if necessary.
E20 – TOTF, 20s motor run, 60 s Max

Postal Events

V20 – SAM 35 rules, 2 rounds April 1st – June 30th and July 1st – Sept 30th. For rules see:- https://sam35.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Rubber-Vintage-V20-rules.pdf

Coupe/P30 postal – September 1st to October 31st. Total of three flights, 90 second Max, entrants submit three times to Max + unlimited fly-off time, all flights must be on the same day. Send your times to webmaster@oxfordmfc.bmfa.uk . For rules see:- https://oxfordmfc.bmfa.club/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/P30-and-Coupe-Postal-rules-v1.2.pdf

Indoor Flying

RC and Free Flight Indoor flying resumes this autumn, once a month on Tuesday evenings. Note that we have a new venue - Cheney School, Assembly Hall (OX3 7QH).

Dates for the diary: 23 September, 28 October, 25 November, all from 8:00pm to 10:00pm.

We plan to charge only £5 per flyer.

OFMAC

2025-2026 Season Dates

Indoor Model Flying

Funfly for all. Freeflight, Rubber, CO2, Electric

Venue:
Abbey Sports Centre
Green Furlong
Berinsfield
Oxfordshire
OX10 7NR

Dates:
Sundays Times 09:00 to 15:00
5th October 2025
2nd November 2025
7th December 2025
4th January 2026
1st February 2026
1st March 2026
12th April 2026*
10th May 2026*
*Note: 2nd Sunday

Contact:
Ian Melville
07545158177
ofmac@redkite.aero

Contributions to the Newsletter

Please let me have your contributions by the end of **the first week in Decembe**r for inclusion in the Christmas 2025 newsletter. Anything aeromodelling-related would be of interest.

Send contributions to: Andy Blackburn at *newsletter@oxfordmfc.bmfa.uk*. As mentioned earlier, an email and some pictures is best; M$ Word documents are more work.

Tailpiece

What happened to Ivan's enlarged Keil Kraft Auster Arrow that went AWOL in the Scale Day, I hear you asking? Well, Alan Trinder and Gary Law returned 10 days later after a spell of windy weather to find half of the wing lying on the ground under the tree and the model easily visible, having dropped several feet from its original position high in the canopy. The rest of the model was coaxed down with a loop on the end of Alan's extended carbon fishing pole. Ivan was very pleased to get his model back, only a single wheel remained elusive.

Thanks to Chris Brainwood for the update and Gary law for the photo.