

# Newsletter

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From what some of you have been telling me, I went away at the right time because the weather in UK had not been too kind. Nevertheless, since returning from the Danube cruise, the winds have all died down and I've had some good flying.

I was also treated to the spectacle of another of Peter Angus's amazing models - another seaplane model, the Lohner L. I nicked this picture off Pete's web site. I really should always take my camera when visiting the Blackpool field! There aren't many clubs in this country who can routinely enjoy watching such a diverse model collection as those owned and built within this club.



Brian was flying down there with his own design electric models - his flying is just immaculate - disciplined and all the things that mine is not. John Higgins was there flying his Ripmax Spitfire - smooth fast and so realistic. It was a good afternoon's flying and I got 6 flights in with my Spacewalker.

## The Quadcopter Strikes Again

Did you see that quadcopter which was being used to get video of Angela Merkel during one of her election speeches. The pilot apparently started to fly erratically and was ordered to land. He brought it down right in front of the table against which Merkel was standing. He was escorted away by the police. I saw this on the BBC World News whilst we were away. When I got back, I had a look on the web to find that there have now been a few more incidents. One involved a wedding photographer who managed to crash a quadcopter into the faces of the bride & groom. Another clip showed a Quad flown chasing a police car - this was in France. The police car in fact stopped so this idiot then flew it fast, back down the street, and landed on top of a building. All jolly good fun or is it just irresponsible stupidity. I believe it is the latter. I believe that these things in the wrong hands are a potential and very real threat to our hobby.

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## A VIEW FROM THE HEDGE. (By Will Sparrow)



“Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,  
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;  
Conspiring with him how to load and bless  
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run...”

The immortal words of John Keats-Sparrow, passed from beak to beak down endless generations of us hedge folk. Yes, autumn is upon us once again - and with it the onset of gales and rain! But, be of good cheer, autumn always (?) provides many really nice flying days for us to enjoy, and thermals do not totally hibernate with the coming of September.

The dying of the days can induce melancholy in the hedge – especially amongst our newer sparrows. The hedge elders, in their great wisdom, always try to come up with ideas to lift the spirits of our members and, at the same time, maybe promote a sense of greater community; if such an idea can also improve the flying skills of us sparrows then so much the better- after all, being able to avoid being eaten by the deft use of a newly-learned manoeuvre must be a good thing!. After much beak-scratching, deliberating and consulting with the wise old owl (who perches at the far end of the hedge), it has been decided to hold an aerobatic competition. The competition is open to sparrows of all abilities – a handicap system similar to that used in something called “golf” (whatever that is) is to be used so that even the least-skilled fliers amongst us stand a fair chance of doing well.

The idea has been received enthusiastically, and this enthusiasm has been infectious as the news spread from twig to twig. Although the competition is not to be held until the start of next year, several birds have been out practising – one Brian Sparrow seems to do little else. Our schedule would present no difficulties to you model fliers, with your fixed wings and propellers, but it is a good deal more difficult for us birds – just imagine trying to keep your beak above the horizon in the inverted part of a slow roll whilst

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simultaneously moderating your flapping rate and correcting for the wind with precise tail movements. Not easy, I can tell you!

During our conversations with the wise old owl, he praised the elders' idea of getting folk involved in communal activity and volunteering to do things. He cited the findings of researchers at Exeter University (which I believe to be some kind of big school, way to the south) who found that volunteers and participators were a fifth less likely to die within the next four to seven years than average. They also had lower levels of depression and higher levels of wellbeing and life satisfaction. Honestly, I don't know where this old feller gets it all from – he says that he does a lot of thinking and spends much time “browsing the internet”. It's all beyond me!

Just at the moment there are no modellers on the field and the wind is having the day off, so, if you will excuse me, I'm off to practise my loops and rolls.

WS



*One of the models  
which keep buzzing  
over the hedge*



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# The Scorpion Lives Again

By Dave Swarbrick

Keeping a fairly large fleet of models ready and able to fly at the national shows is a daunting task, whether they are I/C powered models or Jets. Undercarriages, servos, and general wear and tear of transporting these large models about is no mean feat.

Some of the shows use metal runways others use grass, each has its own problems, runways are very unforgiving, and the grass is not like our field. Cosford has a particularly rough grass landing area but the big wheels and suspension take the problems reasonably well.

Metal runways take their toll on models with tip tanks and all glass finishes; you would be surprised how quickly you can get through the tyres and wingtip or tail plane half if it rubs along the runway.

I have been going to, and flying at the shows for many years, Woodvale was my favourite show, I managed 39 years out of the 40 that it ran, I missed one in the mid-80s.

We have now a good band of show flyers with Jason, Mark, and me, plus our helpers Tank Dave, Zak and Young Jake. More recently Peter, our resident photographer, has joined us. Between us we take 5 or 6 jets and team up with other pilots for the show flights.

Cosford and Elvington are the two main LMA shows and to me must be some of the best flying you will see anywhere in the world.

The final week leading up to a show all the models are checked over with batteries, linkages, undercarriages all checked through and thoroughly tested.

This, however, does not mean nothing will go wrong, (Murphy's or Sods Law always steps in.)

At Cosford this year we were planning to fly the Panther with the Sabre as a duo slot, both engines started up perfectly and both models took off fine, but early on in the flight Jason, who was flying the Sabre had engine power problems. Even though the engine was not giving any power, and because the airfield is so big, Jason landed into wind all be it at a considerable distance, with very little damage.

He had had the foresight to retract the U/C into the up position and the only damage was to one of the main doors.



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The problem was traced back to a blocked fuel filter, the Panther suffered the same problem on the Sunday but only at take off, so the problem was quickly sorted and we flew again later. At the Elvington show both the Panther and the Sabre went perfectly and we had several flights over the weekend, we also flew the Boomerangs and Mark, his Viper Jet.

The Super Scorpion is a one of those models that is a real treat to fly, it is fast, stable and predictable. I had not flown it for several months but everything checked out OK. The engine started spot on and Jason flew with me with the Boomerang.



*The Scorpion just starting it's take off roll.*

Two thirds into the flight I could feel that the engine was not throttling up properly and decided to land. I got the U/C down and the engine stopped downwind on the final turn, I managed to get the model back into wind but the speed had decayed so much it was stalling into the ground on the far side of the runway. Peter has some pix of the final few seconds as it went in right hand wing down.

The damage when a 40+ pound model hits the ground it usually quite terminal, but the main part of the damage was confined to the front section of the fuselage, (which is removable) the nose leg and one main U/C leg. The nose leg formers were smashed and the front section was split and broken, no fuel leakage had occurred so everything was dry.



*Damaged formers*



The model was packed into the trailer with bits of foam and made secure so as not to do any more damage, to the front section of the fuselage.

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# The Scorpion Lives Again

The U/C was removed and after making a few small parts on the lathe this was up and working again with no problem.

The damaged formers were taken out and put back together with cyano, this enabled me to use these as templates and make some new ones, some of the plywood used in these all glass models leaves a lot to be desired so some good substantial birch ply was used for the new formers. Only two were needed and these were one at the front to carry the nose leg bearers and one at the back glued to the existing one to make the rear of U/C bearer carrier. The bearers were made from laminated 6mm birch ply and industrial epoxy.



*The new Birch ply formers cut out from the templates.*



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# The Scorpion Lives Again

The cracks and broken glass fuselage sides were taped back together and then medium Cyano run into the cracks. When all this was dry polyester resin and woven glass cloth was used to form patches on the inside of the fuselage. (It's a good job Jason and Tank Dave have small hands.) The morning after all this the fuselage was good as new and would probably make a good cricket bat. Total weight gain with the work done is only 4oz. and that can be readjusted by removal of some nose weight.



The front end of the fuselage was rubbed down and filled using Plastic Padding type elastic, this is a product I have used for years and is perfect for glass fuselage filling, it is not brittle but sands and feathers in really well. The fuselage was then sprayed with high build primer

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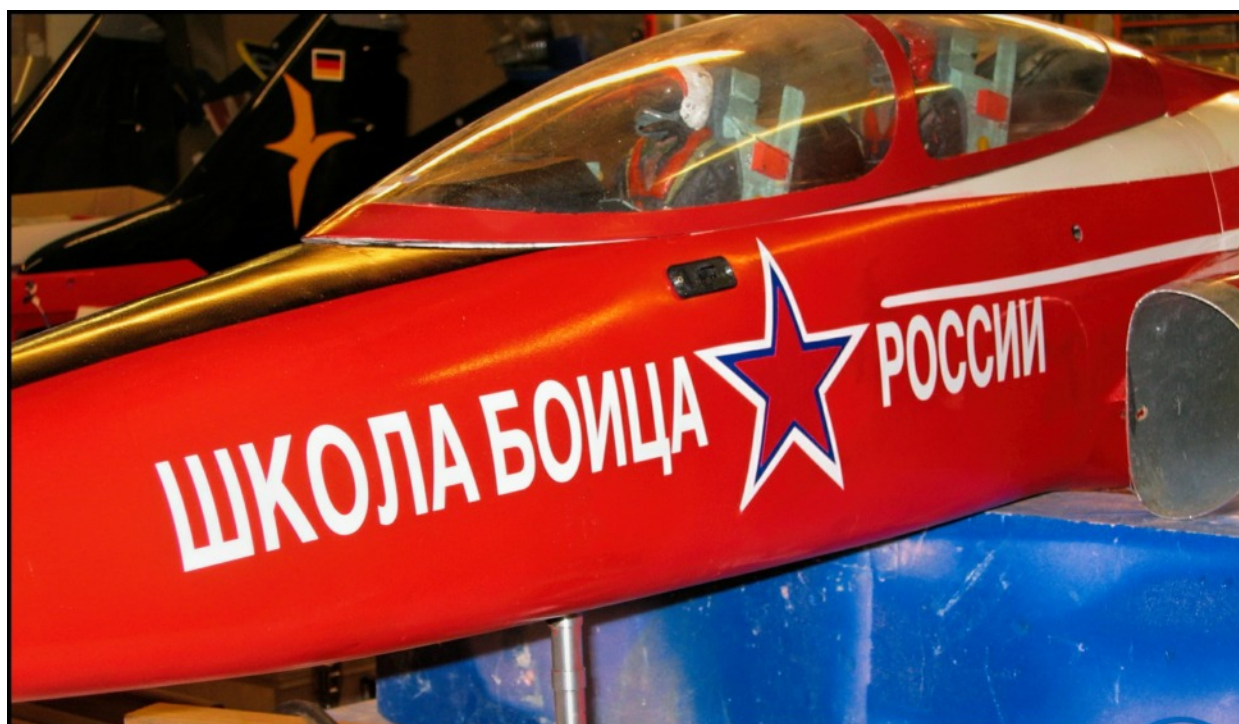
# The Scorpion Lives Again

and allowed to fully harden. Most of this is then sanded off again to leave a very smooth but patchy finish.

I was intending to change the colour scheme slightly, so I started to look on the web at Russian Fighter School schemes and also Star City types where it is possible to have a flight in a Mig 29 up to the edge of space. The Scorpion is not a scale jet but many people think that it is, or at least should be. The new scheme was decided on and spraying was started.

The first coat was a very fine coat of etch primer this makes the paint stick like hell to the glass. Then I used a very light coat of standard grey primer to get an even colour on the fuselage, the final colour is VW red as this was the closest I could get to the original.

Russian stars were made up from thin industrial vinyl and some graphics made for me by a friend in the vinyl cutting trade. All the radio and air operation valves were reinstalled and also some new A123 batteries for the radio, as the ones that were in the model were quite old, but never the less were working fine. The end result is quite good and was well worth the effort, the alternative being a lay out of several thousand pounds, so no matter how bad it looks after the crash most of the time you can save the model with a bit of work and time.

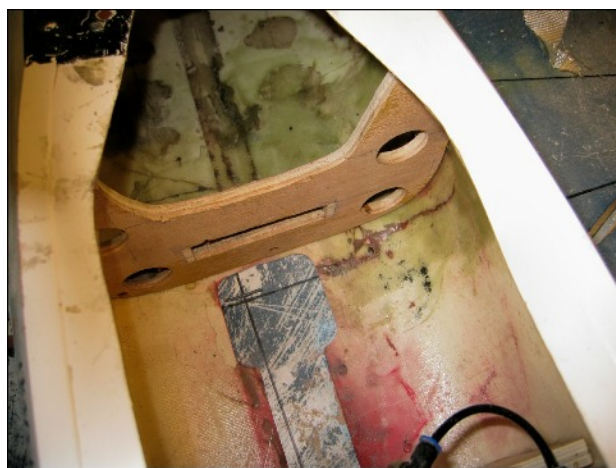
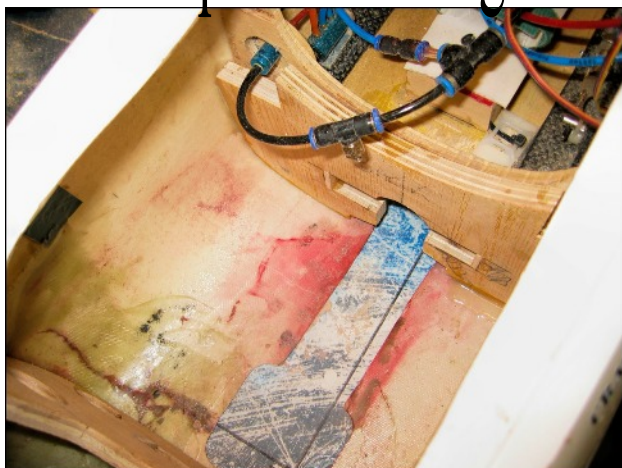




# The Scorpion Lives Again

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*Photos supplied by Dave*



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# Aero-show and Scale Event

The wind blew but the sun was shining and at about 10.am the pilots started to arrive. It has been quite a few years since we organised a club scale event, but as we now have a number of members with scale models we thought it was time to try again running it along with the long established Aero-show event.

A start was made at around 11.am with 15 pilots entering the Aero-show event, this is where the models do not need to be scale, the pilot decides what scale model he wants to simulate and then flies in a manner that depicts that type of full size aircraft.

John Higgins was first up with his S-Bach, to say first up is a little misleading as the model took off and went straight into a half loop followed by some strange gyrations, things were obviously not going to plan and John managed to land with no damage to the model. It was later diagnosed as a faulty elevator servo connection.

Next to go was John Anderson with his M.E 109 this also ended in a slight disaster with the model almost getting airborne but ending up upside down on the runway. Things were not going well we had lost two batsmen for 0 runs.

Everything started to get better from then on, with a steady stream of pilots flying well in the quite gusty conditions.

My fellow judge Derek Havis, (who is planning to come back to the club after several years playing with gliders on some distant hill,) and I were very impressed with the quality of the manoeuvres the pilots were displaying in the less than ideal conditions. No further mishaps occurred and the round ended with everyone finally getting a flight score. Derek and I decided that the best way to do the scoring was judge each flight as a whole and give marks for style and content. I think it surprised Derek that after three or four manoeuvres, the pilots were running out of ideas of what to do next, this is where the callers came in handy as they could advise what manoeuvres they had not done. The range of pilots was also good to see, we had the old stalwarts down to the youngest member of the club young Jake Reid who put on an excellent show with his trainer disguised as a Cessna 150.





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The outcome of all this was that with a very close score from all the pilots, Jason managed to fight off the others and snatch victory with his Stearman Bi-plane.

The scale event was run on the same lines as we had no fixed schedule, the problem is trying to judge a warbird with an aerobatic Bi-Plane is not easy.

We had 9 entrants in the Scale class and all flew very well, unfortunately John Anderson after mending his 109 for the aero-show and flying it successfully managed to drop a wing on take-off and damaged it again, so he could not continue.

With 5 minute slots from take-off to the end of the schedule things moved on a pace and



*Jim Sheldon's MX2 with which he won the Aerobatic Trophy*

in

the end Jim Sheldon put in an excellent flight with his MX2 and was declared the winner of the scale event.

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So there you have it a good event with a lot of fun and laughs and the pilots showing great resolve in adverse conditions, if you missed it you missed a real treat.

*Jim Sheldon  
can always  
be relied  
upon to  
strike a  
pose!!*

## The Judges



*Jason's Stearman which he flew brilliantly to win the Aero Show Trophy*



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*It was a nasty blustery wind. It even affected a large model like John's Corby Starlet - nevertheless, when he got it away from mother earth, he gave a dead smooth performance.*







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## PLEASE DON'T BITE ME!

By John Higgins

When we used to fly glow-powered models, all of us were well drilled in safety when starting our engines. Many will remember the time-honoured procedures – have the model restrained, shout “clear prop”, check that no one was in the firing line, always adjust the engine from behind the prop etc. However, now that the majority – and it **is** the majority – of members fly electric models, these age-old principles will not necessarily keep you safe from that exciting ride in the ambulance to A&E!

Once the Lipo is connected to the speed controller the model is potentially “live”, and if that prop starts to turn whilst your little pinkies are in the way you will (in the words of Corporal Jones) not like it! Electric motors bite much harder than glow motors. Please, connect your Lipo from behind the prop. I have seen people sitting down, prop in their lap, connecting their battery. Fingers are not the only bits of anatomy worth hanging on to.

Contrary to myth, motors will not burst into life of their own accord. To come to life the radio needs to be turned on, the throttle has to be in the low position and it has then to be advanced to start the motor. If the Lipo is connected, with the radio turned on (or powered up from a bec system) and the throttle is already in the open position, all that will happen is the esc will enter programming mode and you will hear lots of bleeps, the meaning of which you will have long forgotten: the motor will not run. If, on the other hand, you have connected the Lipo, as you should, with the throttle in the low position and you, or someone else, inadvertently moves the throttle stick, or your Tx blows over in the wind...

Ideally, you should only connect the Lipo after you have carried, or wheeled, your model out to the take-off position. I say “ideally” because this is a little impractical – fliers like to do their pre-flight checks in the pits, whilst the model is still restrained (you do restrain your model, don't you?). Anything that is impractical will not be done, human nature being what it is. A practical solution is needed, so let's see what **can** be done.

Isolation switches are becoming available and some people fit easily-accessible fuses. While fuses might be okay on small models, they could prove more than a little challenging on 100 amp, 50 volt set-ups! My solution to the “live motor” problem is to enable an arming switch on my Tx. There are several ways of achieving this. If your Tx



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# Please Don't Bite Me

has a two-way switch that can be used as a “kill” switch, then use that as a safe/live switch. When in the “safe” position all the controls work but the motor is dead. Another way, if your Tx has assignable rate switching, is to set a switch to give zero throttle on one rate. Yet another way is to copy all your flight settings into a new “flight condition” (if your system has this facility), selected by a switch, and zero the throttle in the new condition. A fourth method is to use a “free mix”, on a switch, and mix throttle (as master) to throttle (as slave) with the slave set in a negative sense. When activated, all throttle inputs are cancelled out at all positions of the throttle stick. Isn't technology wonderful?

With the safe/live switch in the “safe” position you can connect up your Lipos in the secure knowledge that the motor will not start no matter what you do with the throttle stick. You can check all your controls before taking your model to the take-off position. At this point, you arm the motor and take off. After landing you throw the switch to “safe” – a quick tweak of the throttle stick will confirm that all is safe before you retrieve the model. Of course nothing is foolproof and you do have to get into the habit of operating the switch – I have a reminder notice with my Tx. Perhaps the mantra “Please don't bite me” (repeated every time the model is approached) could act as an aide-memoire?

John Higgins



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# In Conclusion

First of all, I humbly apologise to you all for my totally cocked up information I put out in the last newsletter. Dave Swarbrick explained it all to you at the social evening. I was so glad that I went to the competition this weekend - got loads of pictures which I will be uploading to the Club website.

What really impressed me at this competition, was that, in spite of far from ideal conditions, that you happily brought along some very nice (and valuable) models and flew them. Some of you sustained damage but happily all were repairable.

I'm looking forward to the talk on soldering this Wednesday. This will also be covering the black art of silver soldering.

The indoor flying continues - Phil last night flew his 650 span Shockie and I at last put my Shockie in the air. They fly like stink but boy, do they teach you throttle control. They will roll in the blink of an eye and are about the most aerobatic flying machines known to man.

Thanks to Dave Swarbrick, John Higgins and Will Sparrow for your contributions to this newsletter. See you Wednesday.

