



Dave Chinery's new (but vintage) Knight Errant control-liner (thanks to Dave Chinery for the photo)

Editorial

Bit of a busy month for me with quite a bit of indoor flying, I have failed to take any pictures and have been too busy to write very much (although some of you may see this as a blessing), and we haven't really had much input from the membership so this is a short(ish) newsletter. Please do take your camera/smartphone with you the next time you do to the patch, though...

Flying After a Lay-Off – Andy Blackburn

Many people (me included) will be just about coming out of winter hibernation and will be thinking about a nice bit of flying at the patch on a Saturday or Sunday morning, so we thought it might be a good idea to publish a bit of a checklist for those of us (me included) who are apt to just chuck everything in the back of the car and hope for the best; in no particular order:

- Flight batteries – sounds obvious, but if you’ve left too much or too little charge in your flight batteries over the winter, you might have problems getting them to take or hold a charge; ideally, they should have been stored at about 3.85-3.9 volts/cell. Might not be a bad idea to monitor them carefully on the first charge of the year, and use a battery checker just before committing aviation.
- Receiver battery – same goes here, really, without so much of a risk of fire when charging unless you’re using a LiPo, in which case I can only assume that you like living on the edge. NiMh batteries can suddenly fail to take a charge after storage, Eneloops seem to be much better, in fact I’ve never had one fail yet. Use a battery checker (make sure you know what voltage the packs are meant to be)!
- Glow plug batteries – if you’re using a single-cell 1.2 volt igniter, these need to be in good condition and charged to the absolute max, otherwise there’s just not enough voltage to make the plug glow because it’s expecting between 1.5 and 2 volts. If your engine won’t start or is difficult to start, this is the prime suspect. 2 volt cells are much, much better, if a little less cool.
- Transmitter batteries – (there’s a theme here...). Please make sure that your transmitter is fully charged, because we don’t want an Incident.
- Model(s) – if the model has been stored in an un-heated garage over the winter, please check for black wire corrosion and replace the switch harness if there is any doubt at all; they don’t cost much, and it might save the model. Give it/them the usual pre-flight once-over and fix anything that looks the least bit dodgy (loose hinges, lifting film, etc...).
- Make sure your prop is still in good condition and preferably balanced.
- Before flight, actually check everything to do with the model and make sure it is all in good order.
- Check the failsafe closes the throttle (off for electric, idle for I.C.).
- Range Check – follow your Tx manufacturer’s instructions.
- Carry out the BMFA “SMART” and “SWEET” checks before take-off. Look in your handbook or online, if you’ve forgotten what these are. Look on pages 37 and 39.
- Remind yourself where the no-fly boundaries are (see WLMAC Field Plan). NB the Yellow areas are only to be used for take offs, landings and low passes if the wind direction requires this (they can also be used for practicing taking off and landing). At no time should they be used for general flying.
- If you use 35Mhz, make sure you fully extend your aerial before flight.
- Pilot – yes, you! 😊 (and me). It’s entirely natural to be a bit twitchy on the first flight of the year, and muscle memory will not be as strong as it was at the end of 2016; many people will find that they put in the occasional incorrect control movement, situational awareness

probably won't be what it was and the first few landings can be, shall we say "sporting". In order to get back into the groove, you might try the following:

- R/C Simulator – a few minutes on a sim can work wonders for muscle memory, and also for your confidence if you've not flown for a while.
- Get a buddy – if you're in any doubt, get an experienced flyer to stand next to you and talk you through any tricky bits, if required. Most people will be glad to help.
- Try this; on the first flight, take-off and spend some time getting everything trimmed so that it flies hands-off. Then do a couple of square circuits with nice corners. Then climb to about two or three times circuit height, roll it inverted and do another two or three inverted square circuits; you'll have to concentrate, and remember to push more in the turns. This isn't easy on the first flight of the year, but after you've done it you should find that everything else is suddenly easier.
- When landing, watch the fuselage - there's a common tendency for people to watch the gap between the wheels and the runway if they're slightly stressed, which means that you take your eyes off the fuselage, which means that you no longer know where the model is pointing, so you don't know what it's doing next. This makes landing difficult. Try repeating "fuselage, fuselage, fuselage..." to yourself as soon as you're getting near the runway threshold; just watch the fuselage, keep it level and when it starts to sink pull back some more elevator to try and keep it at the same height, and it'll land itself.
- Finally, for the first flight of the year, make sure that some part of the ground is always in your field of view if at all possible, so that you have a trusted reference for where your head is pointing and therefore where the model is.

Work Party 13th May – Chairman Mat

An important date for your diaries – our first work-party of the year is going to take place on Saturday 13th May, starting about 9.30am. Nothing particularly heavy-duty and we will stop for lunch about 12.30. We just need to do a few chores and there is something for everyone, please make the effort to turn up and help as many hands make light work. The main tasks we will be tackling are as follows;

- Some more painting to finish off the clubhouse (brushes etc will be provided).
- Tidy the clubhouse.
- Weed spraying (footpaths).
- Pot hole and rabbit hole filling. Please bring a shovel or spade if you can.

Saturday training will follow on and will start at the later time of 1 – 1:30pm

WLMAC Meetings



Thursday 13th April was Drone Racing; after a close-run contest, the winner was Mike Faul with Dave Chinery as the runner-up (photo by Chairman Mat)

Parish Notices

As most people will be aware, the gate padlock has changed. Since it would be extremely unwise for me to repeat the code here, if you didn't get Chairman Mat's email, please give him a ring or send an email.

Events

Date	Event	Location	Description
Thursday, 11 May	Club meeting	Battle of Britain Club	Chuck Glider competition
Saturday, 10 June	BMFA Scale Training	Flying Field	BMFA Scale flying training day - anyone can turn up and fly
Sunday, 11 June	BMFA Scale heat	Flying Field	Heat for BMFA scale flying competition. Flying approx 10:30 onwards
Wednesday, 14 June	Field meeting	Harefield	BBQ and Electric Flying
Sunday, 2 July	Family Fun Day	Harefield	Our Annual Scale Event; there'll be a work party to get the field ready on Saturday 1 July, please come along to help if you can.

Sunday, 9 July	Reserve date only for scale event in case of bad weather	Harefield	Reserve date Family Fun Day
Wednesday, 12 July	Field meeting	Harefield	BBQ and Electric Flying
Wednesday, 9 August	Field meeting	Harefield	BBQ and Electric Flying
Wednesday, 13 September	Field meeting	Harefield	BBQ and Electric Flying