



# NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2010

Editor: Michael Sullivan

## ARTIFICIAL GRASS FOR HAREFIELD?

DECEMBER AGM TO DEBATE "ASTRO TURF" IDEA

A plan to lay a 300 square metre patch of artificial grass on our flying site for bump and hole-free take-offs and landings is to be debated and put to a vote at the Annual General Meeting on December 9th.

The club committee is putting the proposal on the AGM agenda so that club members can hear the details and decide for themselves if the project should go ahead or not. If the plan is approved and adopted, the £8,000 cost of it would be gradually recouped over six years by increased joining fees and a £15 addition to membership subscriptions from 2012.

The strip would be roughly equal to the floor area of the Battle of Britain Club hall where we have our meetings. Its eight metre width would give room for diagonal take offs and landings to cope with a range of wind directions. The idea to lay the artificial grass – trade name "Astro Turf" – came up as members voiced increasing concern about the rabbit holes that have plagued the field throughout the past year. Much effort and expense has been directed at filling them in before each day's flying and experimenting with field treatments aimed at deterring the rabbits. Training Manager Mat Dawson, who was asked to conduct a feasibility study on Astro Turf, will report to the AGM on his findings and explain what would be involved in its installation.



Above: This is Astro Turf— a layer of man made fibres, 12 mm thick, mounted on an extremely tough backing. It comes in rolls and is professionally laid on a bed of sand on levelled ground. Rainwater drains straight through it. Harefield's natural grass would butt up to its edges. Come to the AGM to hear all about it, express your views and cast your vote for or against its use.

**IT WILL BE YOUR DECISION!**

### WLMAC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

At 8-0 p.m at the Battle of Britain Club on THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9th, 2010

The WLMAC membership fee for 2011 is £55

£27 for junior and social members.

BMFA membership is £ 29

£15 for juniors (under 18)

£29 family membership (living at same address)

Cheques made out to the West London Model Aeroplane Club or EXACT AMOUNT, please, if you wish to pay in cash.

**Drinks and nibbles on the house.**

**BE THERE, AND TAKE PART IN SHAPING OUR 2011!**



**WINTRY SOLUTION.** In zero wind,, with dense fog still sitting on the field in the middle of the day, David Whiteley gets in his model flying fix by launching off his ultra-light foamy, electric Tiger Moth, designed for indoor flying.

### PROP VICTIM SAMPLES MINOR INJURIES UNIT.

On the very day that the November issue of Newsletter publicised the “Minor Injuries Unit” at nearby Mount Vernon Hospital Leon Taylor gashed his hand on a whirring propeller and promptly sought the unit’s services. Leon made light of the incident, writing “Having read about the unit in the Newsletter that morning I thought that a practical test of the unit’s efficiency would be in order so selflessly I put my left hand into a spinning propeller to produce the necessary injury. I am pleased to say that the unit dealt with me in less than half an hour.” A badly-gashed hand or finger swiftly brings on the effects of shock and is vulnerable to infection. That’s all good reason enough not to fly alone at our remotely-sited field. RC flyers fit into one of two categories—those who have cut a hand on a propeller and those who haven’t done it .....yet.



### BUILDING FOR THE BONFIRE

Two WLMAC members have burned their Seagull Mew Gull models and a third has hung up his at home unflown after this sleek scale ARTF model of the 1930s racer revealed its mean nature in the air. Even the editor of RCM&E crashed his magazine review model when a stall test at insufficient height sent it plunging to destruction (see above and his account in the December edition). But this is not really a fault in the kit or its design. The Seagull kit is a reproduction of a real aeroplane, but a real aeroplane that was and is itself a tricky beast to fly. This is a case of an accurate scale model displaying the flight behaviour of the full size version. Model Spitfires and Mustangs always fly well. The Mew Gull model’s stall speed is high and a successful landing demands skill and nerve. It loses rudder authority early in the proceedings and the position of its spatted wheels on the wing makes a nose-over on grass difficult to avoid. Sorry, Seagull, but this scale ARTF is just a bit too scale!



Details of the minor injuries unit and a map showing how to get there from the flying site are now posted on the inside surface of the club house door, easily seen when the door is open during a flying session.



Several members thought that the well-attended November meeting, billed as Peter Emanuel's "Christmas Bazaar", included a bit of a bring and buy and general model show-off session and perhaps that's how it should be advertised for next November. ABOVE LEFT: "That's the front end!" Brian Hourican (right) explains new member Kayo Contractor's newly-purchased Rising Star trainer to him. The model has since flown and Kayo, a novice flyer, is under Mat Dawson's tutelage. (Newsletter is trying to encourage Brian to build a Hawker Hurricane so that the editor may indulge himself with the headline "Hourican's Hurricane.") ABOVE RIGHT: Mat Dawson turned up with this elegant electric DH Mosquito, from Cloud Models, nicely put together from a kit given to him as a present some years ago and recently re-discovered, still in its box, lurking under his work bench. Fuselage and cowlings are ABS. Wings are built up and sheeted.



LEFT: Field Manager Des Wheatley spent several hours with our cylinder mower, cutting the grass down to a velvety finish in October, just before winter descended on Harefield. The rabbits had ceased their digging and there are hopes that the mixture of chilli powder and detergent applied to the refilled holes is doing something to discourage them. There are few to be seen about now and we anxiously await the spring to see if they return, or have decided to dig elsewhere.

Right: Looking like the kind of Ebay rubbish that tempts gullible newcomers to RC modelling, this is the "paper aeroplane" that was taken to 90,000 feet under a helium balloon and then released to return to earth in Spain, taking pictures of the earth's curvature from a camera mounted in the nose as it did so. Despite its rudimentary construction (the builders apparently didn't know about ARTFs) the three foot span model's photographic journey, engineered by a three man team of British amateur space enthusiasts, was nonetheless pretty impressive. Tracked by its own telemetry signals, it was recovered after landing twenty five miles away from its launch near Madrid.

