

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

Summer 2008

CONGRATULATIONS

The **British Microlight Team** came home from the European Championships at Leszno, Poland, with



Gold medals for Paul Dewhurst and David Hadley (pictured) in the dual 3-axis class and for Richard Rawes in the solo flexwing class.

Robert Grimwood and Christopher Saysell also took Gold and Rob and Tim Keene took the Bronze medal in the dual flexwing class. The UK Team placed third overall.

Kathleen Rigg won the Bronze Medal at the Women's World Hang Gliding Championship, held in Italy in July.

Steve Wood, an Individual Member of the Royal Aero Club, has now broken a total of 78 world speed records in his Glastar, with another 13 records pending ratification. In recognition of his achievements and also his work with Flying Scholarships for the Disabled, the Air League has awarded Steve the Scott-Farnie Medal.



Steve Wood flying N600FY - Photograph by Bob Terry

The **British F2A Speed Team** of Peter Halman, Paul Eisner and Ken Morrissey, has once again taken the Team Gold Medal at the F2 Control Line World Championships in France. Their combined speed was 881.8 kph. This is the 12th

consecutive year of World & European Championships that the speed team has taken the gold medal, an unprecedented achievement by any team in any category of model flying anywhere in the world.

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

At the Council meeting in July I suggested that we should take a hard look at what the role of the Royal Aero Club should be in the future. We know what it does successfully at the moment, in various forms, but are we missing something which can add value to our member associations and individual air sports people in the future? Council agreed to establish a small strategic task group to consider this matter. I am pleased that Ben Ellis, our Vice-Chairman, has agreed to lead the group. One aspect all were agreed upon was that the group should invite an appropriate person from outside the Council, and maybe from outside air sports, to bring an external dimension to the thinking and discussion.

This 'summer' has not been great for many of our airborne activities in the UK but I suppose we shrug our shoulders and look forward to a better year next year. Many leading pilots in the various air sports have been competing abroad in World or European championships, and hopefully in better weather, to demonstrate their skills and winning ways.

In early July we celebrated the many magnificent achievements of air sports people at the annual Royal Aero Club Awards. It was a great occasion, well attended, and apart from congratulating all those who received awards, the highlight was the speech by Sir John Allison, who presented the awards and spent time talking with each of the recipients, which I know was appreciated by all present.

His speech is reproduced in this newsletter. I think it is well worth reading because it gets the heart of what we are about – enjoying the challenges of flight in whatever form, accepting but managing ourselves the inherent risks, but also defending the

freedoms which we believe are ours of right and not a so-called privilege granted by the authorities.

I'll let John's words speak for themselves.

Fly safely and enjoy the freedoms that are ours to defend and cherish.

David Roberts, RAeC Chairman

ANNUAL AWARDS CEREMONY

The Annual Awards for 2007 were presented at the RAF Club on Wednesday 2 July. Sir John Allison, President of Europe Air Sports and a RAeC Vice President, presented the awards and gave the following address:

"I have found the experience of presenting these awards both humbling and uplifting.

"I feel humbled because I am, I suppose, typical of the sort of worthy who gets invited to present awards. That is to say I feel very unworthy when anything I have done is laid alongside the achievements of those whose hands I have just shaken.

"And I feel uplifted because of the accounts of skill, courage, determination and service to others that we have just heard. This bucks current trends in society. The wealth and the technologies available to citizens of the developed world have brought opportunities. Aviation itself is only just over 100 years old (well, the heavier than air variety anyway). Before then, human beings had no opportunity to take to the skies. Now, great freedoms have opened up. Yet, paradoxically, it seems that society is becoming over-developed in its desire to regulate every form of human activity in minute detail and in its obsession with keeping us safe – whether we like it or not!

"Aviation is inherently dangerous and it is right that its commercial forms should be most carefully conducted to protect the innocent user. But aviation is, or should be, also a quintessential expression of freedom, and of the spirit of adventure that has enabled the human race to develop and progress. That aspect is, I believe, one of the main things that attracts the more adventurous and individualistic souls in society to take up an air sport. Yet sporting and recreational flying is at risk of becoming blighted by over-regulation. Politicians and civil servants want to keep us in a box where we will be safe, certainly, but also where they can control us.

"Those who have received awards today for their achievements in the air are, as I said in my opening remarks, bucking that trend. They are beacons for us all of the triumph of individualism over the limited, uniformly grey and tightly controlled world that legislation such as Health and Safety is imposing upon us.

"I do not, of course, glory in the fact that what we do entails risk. The bad side of that could not be more poignantly illustrated for us today than by the tragic death of Tamsin Causer in her brave pursuit of her sport of sky diving. We should make our activities as safe as we can, but it should be up to us.

"But the fact that air sport in all its forms is difficult and potentially dangerous is a reason that it is so character revealing and so character building. I used to fly fighter aircraft in the RAF. I thought that made demands on one's character and that I was part of a special elite. Then I tried the sport of competition aerobatics and found that my handling skills were no better than the civilian pilots against whom I was competing, all of whom had far fewer hours than I did. Then I gained insight into competition gliding, by crewing for one of my sons and by flying with him and others in the occasional competition. I found that the level of skill, airmanship, determination, fitness, mental agility, tactical appreciation and management of risk was at least comparable with the qualities required of a military pilot. I have not tried other air sports, but have little doubt that I would be equally seized of their substance.

"I would like to comment further on the issue of risk management and the place of sport in society. It is often said – and I think that we would all agree – that sport provides a socially acceptable outlet for the aggression that is an inherent feature of the human character. It is also said that sport mimics real life and that makes it particularly interesting because it requires the player to make decisions, as in real life. Most sports have an element of risk management, again as in real life. Here I would draw a distinction between tactical risk and actual personal risk. For example, in deciding whether to take on a difficult long pot or to play for safety, a snooker player is considering only tactical risk; at most, only the outcome of the frame is at stake. But if, for instance, a competition glider pilot commits to a very marginal final glide rather than going for the safety of one more climb, and maintains that commitment all the way to the finish line (or not!) he or she is not merely making a tactical judgement. His/her personal safety is also on the line. It seems to me that sports, such as air sports, that have this element of personal commitment provide a higher test of character.

"Some of today's awards are not, or not only, for achievements in the air, but for long and dedicated service to a sport or discipline, or to helping others. That bucks another adverse trend in society, which is the culture that places individual "rights" first and foremost in the minds of citizens, and leaves no particular place for any concept of duty or service. Society as a whole, as well as the discipline or activity they have chosen to serve, is the better for

the efforts of the award winners, and it is good to see the aviation community recognise them today.

“Further, it seems to me that awards under the National Honours system are sometimes made in part on account of celebrity status. I know where I think the real nobility of the individual, and the real substance of a sound society, is to be found. It is in people like our award winners.

“Those reasons – respect for courage, skill and determination in the air, and admiration for long, selfless and dedicated service to a cause - are why I feel proud to have presented these awards tonight. I salute every recipient.”

We are grateful to the many volunteers who helped to make the evening a success and also to Breitling UK who sponsored the programmes for the event and H R Jennings, insurance brokers, who sponsored the award winners’ attendance. All the official photographs of the ceremony are at http://www.photography365.com/private_gallery.php, event ID raecawards2008, password awards.

EUROPE

EASA

Several new consultations are under way, including:

NPA 2008-17 on flight crew licensing. Setting out EASA’s proposals for commercial and private licenses, including the successor to the NPPL, and medical standards for all pilots, this has significant implications for all private pilots. There will be briefing workshops in Europe and the UK to assist members to respond either individually or through their clubs and associations.

NPA 2008-15 on environmental protection – with potentially major impacts on recreational aviation.

NPA 2008-07 on design and initial airworthiness – which has particular importance for the lighter end of recreational and sporting aircraft, including microlights.

Our European delegates are working on these consultation documents and will be publishing advice on how to help with the responses where appropriate.

UK REGULATION AND TECHNICAL ISSUES

ATSOCAS

CAP774, the official CAA publication describing the new Air Traffic Services outside Controlled Airspace (ATSOCAS), has now been published and can be downloaded from <http://www.caa.co.uk/docs/33/CAP774.pdf>. The suite of services described form the UK Flight

Information Services (FIS), which will be introduced on 12 March 2009. The CAA has also produced an interactive CD to help pilots learn about and use the new ATSOCAS services. Licensed private pilots will receive their own copy by post, but you can access the full content now at <http://www.airspacesafety.com>. You can also request the CD from jonathan.nicholson@caa.co.uk.

Medical Exemption for CAA Licence Holders

The CAA has issued an exemption to the ANO affecting CAA issued licences that entitle the holder to fly microlights, simple single engine aeroplanes or self launching motor gliders. The exemption allows those licence holders to demonstrate medical fitness through a GP endorsed self declaration. Licensed pilots of these aircraft now have choice regarding how they demonstrate medical fitness. The CAA exemption is available at http://www.caa.co.uk/docs/33/ORS4_689.pdf

LARS Update

NATS has issued an updated leaflet giving details of the recently extended London Lower Airspace Service (LARS). This is a radar-based air traffic information and alerting service for GA pilots flying in the busy airspace below or around the London TMA. It has now been extended to cover airspace north of London. You can access the leaflet at <http://www.gliding.co.uk/documents/larsflyer.pdf>

GPS Reporting Site Launched

Pilots experiencing problems with GPS devices can now report the issue and share experience with other pilots at a new CAA-sponsored website - <http://nano.aero>. Pilots can use the site to report a range of issues including loss of guidance; position errors; database errors; satellite outages; and human factors occurrences. As well as posting reports, pilots can add comments or provide additional information on existing reports. Pilots can post anonymously if they wish.

SAFETY MATTERS

Military Civil Air Safety Day

The second Military Civil Air Safety Day (MCASD) of 2008 will take place at RNAS Culdrose on Friday 19th September. The aim is to promote closer ties between General Aviation pilots and MoD aviation, focusing on shared use of the lower airspace. Presentations include local airspace issues, Airprox reporting, Distress & Diversion and matters of interest to General Aviation. Places are limited and early registration is advisable. Registration forms can be obtained from the CAA website at <http://www.caa.co.uk/> (search MCASD).

Clued Up

Clued Up is a new annual magazine from the CAA aimed at improving safety awareness among pilots. It contains safety information, advice, facts and figures and much more and copies will be sent, by post, to all licensed pilots. You can view an online copy at <http://www.flyer.co.uk/cluedup/>

EVENTS AND SHOWS

2008 Sport and Leisure Aviation Show

The 2008 Sport and Leisure Aviation Show, organised by the British Microlight Aircraft Association and the British Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association, will be held on 29 - 30 November at the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham. Further details are at the show website www.theflyingshow.co.uk

UK Sailplane Grand Prix

This event will be held at Lasham, near Basingstoke, from 1- 7 September. The event is open to the public on Saturday 6th September, when, as well as the racing, there will be a full programme of aerobatics and flying and static displays. Grand prix racing incorporates a regatta start over the airfield, screens charting the progress of the competitors and a fast low-level finish. Further details are at www.gp2008.co.uk.

MISCELLANEOUS

Royal Aero Club Aviators Certificates

The 1910 – 1950 Certificates are now available online for the first time at family history website www.Ancestry.co.uk. The collection contains over 28,000 records and 13,000 photographs of the early aviators and is searchable by name, date of birth, location and rank or profession as well as the plane they qualified on, where and when.

Royal Air Force Museum

The RAF Museum has announced that they have launched "Navigator", the museum's Collections Online. This creates access to over 26,000 items from the collection, with 7000 illustrations. More details at <http://navigator.rafmuseum.org>

Royal Aero Club Trust Bursaries

The Royal Aero Club Trust has opened its Flying for Youth bursary scheme for 2009. Each bursary, of up to £500, is available to anyone between 16 and

21 years of age wishing to progress their interest in either air sports or aviation. The closing date for applications is 31 March 2009. Full details are available from the RAeC Trust web site at <http://www.royalaeroclubtrust.org/bursaries.html>.

Royal Aero Club gazettes

A collection of RAeC gazettes is for sale, spanning Jan 1950 to Nov 1958 with the exception of Oct. 1954 and including the special Golden Jubilee number of 1951. They are on offer for an indicated price of £75. Contact Brian Edgeley for details, at edgeley@hebre.plus.com or 01980-862622.

Airsports.tv

The first Internet TV channel for air sports has gone live offering broadcast-quality programming from the world of air sports, including air racing, aerobatics, gliding, hang gliding and other sports. Airsports.tv is free to view, with state of the art video streaming and on-demand films. The site will soon offer live broadcasting of major World Championship events, beginning this year. <http://www.airsports.tv>

Formula Air Racing (FARA)

FARA has created a new racing class - Formula Grand Prix for aerobatic aircraft. 10 members have signed up to the new class and a training weekend will be held at the end of September.

This will not preclude classic Formula 1 but is intended to make formula air racing more generally practised under the RAeC and FAI umbrella.

Bingolotto

Following the first series of Bingolotto, the RAeC received a grant of over £1,000, which will be used to support our international delegates in their work on behalf of all members. Series 2 will start in the autumn. More information at www.bingolotto.tv

Young Navigators Challenge

The Royal Institute of Navigation (RIN) has announced an essay/project competition for 11-18 year olds. Details of the competition, which offers some interesting prizes is at <http://www.rin.org.uk/news-events/competitions/young-navigators-challenge>

Live British TV advertisement

BPA skydivers made TV history with the first ever live British TV advertisement in May, spelling out H-O-N-D-A in freefall formation as part of the pre-launch campaign for the new Honda Accord car.