The Electronic News letter of the Chichester and District Model Aero Club

Clear Dope





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Firstly sorry about the delay in publishing Clear Dope this month. The talk on Thursday the eighth will be by Fraser Dibden on his use of batteries.

Next month March 14th will be the club auction



AIRPROXInsight

DIRECTOR UKAB'S MONTHLY UPDATE

December 2023



No, not quite what you might be thinking, but Unknown Flying Objects, or to put it another way, known knowns or unknown unknowns?

Performance of the second seco

To illustrate this point, which I referred to in my February 2023 Insight, I've chosen Airprox 2023116 this month which involved a model jet aircraft and a Hawk. The model was being operated from a site where activity is authorised up to 1500ft, and is published in the UK AIP. The Hawk pilot was one of a formation of aircraft on a low-level transit as part of their task.

The model aircraft site did have a NOTAM warning of UAS swarm activity, and the

Hawk pilot called the phone number provided, only to be informed that the swarm activity wasn't taking place and to refer to a different NOTAM regarding general site activity – this second NOTAM had expired. Subsequently, the Hawk formation routed past the model aircraft site at an altitude of around 1300ft while the model jet was flying at around 1000ft. Fortunately, the approaching formation was spotted by an observer at the site and the model jet operator took avoiding action by rapidly descending the model; the Hawk pilots never saw it.

Here at the UKAB we don't often receive reports of Airprox involving models, so this was welcome because it identified a number of important points. First, the second model aircraft NOTAM was, essentially, a repeat of the information already published in the UK AIP and so, in accordance with the <u>UK</u>. <u>NOTAM Guidance Material</u> paragraph 1.6(n) (which states that a NOTAM will not be issued for general reminders on already published information), the NOTAM was not renewed on expiry.

Many of us involved in aviation are frustrated by the proliferation of NOTAMs that add little in terms of useful information, so it is absolutely right that the UK NOTAM Office doesn't add to this by issuing NOTAMs describing the same information that is already published elsewhere. However (and it is a big however), not everything that is published in the UK AIP is reproduced on the military and CAA VFR charts. To do so would introduce a level of clutter that would make the charts unusable, but that does leave us in a position where we might not be aware that something is published in the UK AIP because there is nothing on the VFR chart to indicate that a site is present; this is the case for model aircraft sites that operate above 400ft agl.

Secondly, during the investigation into

this particular Airprox, it was discovered that there are a number of model aircraft sites (23 in fact) where model aircraft up to a mass of 25kg can operate above 400ft agl. While these are published in the UK AIP, none are marked on VFR charts and there is no mention of the size of model aircraft that can be encountered. In addition, and more worryingly, there are also other sites where the Large Model Association (LMA) can operate model aircraft with a mass up to 150kg (yes, 150kg!) – not all of these are Aircraft Syn the UK AIP and again, none are

marked on the military or CAA VFR charts. I'm sure you'll agree that encountering a 150kg object in-flight presents a potential risk that would be useful to know about. The British Model Flying Association (BMFA) is well aware of this and has requested NOTAMs to be issued to alert other air users of these sites. However, and as I have already mentioned above, because this information is already published in the UK AIP (well, some of it at least) then the request for a NOTAM is often refused (in accordance with the UK NOTAM Guidance Material). Dec

So, what's the answer? Well, the Board felt that it's unreasonable to expect all pilots to know the entire contents of the

UK AIP and so made recommendations to the LMA to publish – in the UK AIP – all their sites where models weighing up to 150kg can operate above 400ft agl, and to Defence to consider marking these sites on military VFR charts and on radar overlays for controllers. Although the Airprox involved a model jet and a military aircraft, it could easily have involved a crewed aircraft from any other sector. It might be worth checking whether these model aircraft sites pop up on your electronic planning aid and/or the software that you use for in-flight navigation.

UKAB MONTHLY ROUND-UP

This month the Board evaluated 24 Airprox, including ten UA/Other events, eight of which were reported by the piloted aircraft and two by the drone/model aircraft operator. Of the 16 full evaluations, four were classified as risk-bearing – one as category A and three as category B. The Board made five Safety Recommendations this month; three were related to the Airprox of the month as already described above. The other two were related to **Airprox 2023124**, where a glider from Challock and a DA42 joining the Instrument

Dec



2023 Airprox - Cumulative Distribution



Approach Proce 2022 rAirprox que unulative Distribution of 2023 but,

close to each other – this was the third such encounter that the Board has seen in as many years, so it recommended that Lydd and Challock establish a Letter of Agreement and that Lydd considers marking Challock on their Instrument Approach Charts.

Finally, I have included the usual graphic that shows reporting levels over the year. At the time of writing, there were still a couple

given the weather we all experienced in early December, I don't anticipate many more Airprox reports before the end of the year. I hope 2024 brings you better weather and happy landings.



Airprox 2023116

2.0

Jan

Number of Airprox

Number of Airprox

0.4

1.0

lan

Number of Airprox



Jeff's new Frsky X18 transmitter

I had a Futaba SG14, but I have followed the Frsky products for years. They were early adopters of telemetry, and at budget lower cost.

Then I saw TV drone racing in a multi storey car park, and was impressed they all used cheap Frsky gear because it had the best rf link.

And last year, many of us saw the YouTube video when the popular radios were compared for range - Radiomaster and Frsky excelled.

I have been on the lookout for a Frsky transmitter for years, the early attempts were clunky, and it was only when they developed their own Ethos operating system and I saw George's X20 that I became keen. Built like a Jeti but without the price tag.

A couple of months back, I picked up Ray's X18, which he and George rated so highly, and what with its great feel and £250 price tag, I ordered one.

Programming is very different, and the ability to update firmware using your PC is the first hurdle, but it all works well. Very well. File management skills are essential, however.

Programming models was easy for the first 4 channels, then you are left to setup flaps and gear using mixers - no wizards here! YouTube to the rescue. And George.

But it has so many well-designed features that I didn't know I needed, and the touch colour screen is so nice to use, more like a phone, that it is worth the effort. It even charges the big lipo from your phone charger. I have ten models programmed and tested, and have just set up buddy box to a Spektrum transmitter.

I bought the module which makes it work with Spektrum and Futaba S-FHSS receivers, and many other protocols, (not FASST) so this made the transition a lot cheaper.

Frsky receivers are low cost but high spec. Tandem receivers have both 2.4 and 900Mhz for ultimate link. Some have integrated stability gyro, others have a vario sensor for sailplanes.

Even my lowly X18 has 24 channels, fast processor, hi res colour screen, and identical features and programming to the top model.

Ray described it as the best value tech he has bought, and I agree.

Niel Macaulay writes:

As some of you may know, I recently had a major crash with my beloved Flair Puppeteer. I wondered whether it would be of interest to members, to witness the rebuild, but also the thought processes that I went through and some of the skills required to get the model back to flying condition. A few very kind souls urged me to write this article.

Background

Now I have to confess that this is not the first time that I have had to do a major rebuild on this model. Some of you may have seen my various posts on Facebook back in Feb 2022, when again I had a bad crash that caused extensive damage whereby the rear of the fuselage was completely broken across the rear of the cockpit area, tail broken off and structural damage to the main spars in the wings. I won't elaborate on that rebuild as many of the repairs we will discuss in detail on the latest build. Suffice to say with patience, a lot of wood

and glue, the plane was reinstated to flight status. The pictures below give some idea of the rebuild.

Picture 1 showing the separate fuselage pieces.

Picture 2 showing the marriage of the rear fuselage to the cockpit area.

Picture 3 shows the broken main spar in the lower wing

V shows return to flight status!

My pilot, Biggles spent quite some time in Rehab but emerged ready for the next sortie! I won't say any more about this rebuild as many of the problems encountered then in Feb 22 had to be overcome again in the latest rebuild and hopefully I'll be able to show you what I did.









Crash of Jan 2024

Post analysis of the crash determined that I had failed to really look at my control surfaces before take off. How often have we waggled the sticks, thought Yeah they're working and off we go before really looking at the control surfaces. In this case the ailerons were reversed so that on take off when the plane started to roll to port and I countered it, I just made it worse and the plane nose dived onto its back. The reversed aileron was caused by the transmitter losing some of the memory settings for this plane. I use a JR 35MHz system that utilises a button cell to remember all the settings for each model. If the transmitter is not used for a while and the main battery goes flat, the button cell attempts to maintain the settings but eventually it too goes flat. When this happens, the transmitter on switch on, tells you that memory is lost and all the settings have to be reinstated once that main battery is fully charged. Well before Xmas, that's what happened. I reset all the memory settings (you did keep a record of all your settings, didn't you! Lesson 1). For the record, I did! So memory settings reinstated and checked against the aircraft. However between that check and the day of the flight, the aileron setting was different, why I don't know, hence the reverse.

So Lesson 2, when checking flying surfaces before flight, not only check they work but in the correct direction! On a separate occasion and not this plane, we had a similar experience on a test flight, fortunately without the dire consequences. When checking control surfaces that had a mix between Port and Starb'd alleron, the check looked at one alleron and yes it was in the correct direction, however the mix was reversed and both ailerons were travelling in the same direction. This was not noticed by the 3 people watching the preflight checks! So check both surfaces and not just the one!

Rise of the Phoenix

With the remains spread across the floor and workbench, I began to really have a look at the damage. Could it be fixed? What did I need to do? I could take the easy option and bin, replacing my favourite aircraft with a new kit at current Ebay prices of over £300 or build another one from scratch. With all my aircraft built from a kit, I always draw round all the components during build, so that if necessary, I could always rebuild from scratch.

I decided that this 'project' needed to be broken down into various sub projects to determine if a rebuild really was not only feasible but worth it. Any failure to repair some of these sub assemblies could render the whole project worthless. This is how I broke it down:

- 1. Aluminium Cowling. Completely flattened. Can it be repaired or new one purchased? Cost of new £32+ if they are available given Flair has been out of production for quite a few years now.
- Engine. Can it be fixed? It had suffered a broken needle, sheared off at the needle valve assembly. New Carb if 2. available or can needle be extracted and replaced?
- 3. Engine Exhaust. Can it be fixed? The thread on the engine head looked stripped. If so then a costly repair or new engine?
- 4. Engine Bearer Framework. One bearer broken. Engine alignment and thrust lines could be an issue.
- 5. Fuselage Front end. Can it be rebuilt? I have the plans, so new parts could be manufactured. (See later note)
- 6. Fuselage Wing Support structure. Can it be repaired? Metal Wing Supports seem ok. Hard wood support cross members cracked but broken from the fuselage.
- 7. Lower Wing. Minimal damage but some cabane strut secure points broken.
- 8. Upper Wing. Starb'd end broken rear spar adjacent to aileron position and some ribs require repair or replacing.

Expensive Elements First

Cowling

I decided to have a go at the Aluminium cowling first. After all, it is the most obvious part of the plane and without that, it just wouldn't look right. A replacement could be available from Inwood Models care of Ebay at £32+and p&p but why pay if I can fix it? Its a shame that I didn't take a photo of the cowling in its damaged state to show how bad it was. Suffice to say that the top was squashed almost flat against the firewall and what was a originally a doughnut ring became a very distorted oval

shape curled over the inner aperture.

Working from the inside of the cowling and with the cowling resting on the wooden workbench. I used a small hammer gently

tapping at the inner surfaces to push the cowling back into a semi doughnut shape. As an aside, in the full size world, aircraft restoration uses a special rotary press that has two wheels that pinch the metal between them and by rolling and rotating the metal between the pinched wheels, compound curves can be manufactured. However in my modelling case I would have to resort to using basic hand tools to try and achieve the same effect. I manufactured a wooden former of the correct curve for the cowling so that I could fit the former inside the cowling and by judicious tapping with the hammer on the outside, reinstate

the doughnut shape.

Picture 6 showing the use of a former to reshape the cowling



Picture 7 shows the partly repaired cowling.

There were still many dents and creases that needed to be eased out by by continually moving the orientation of the wooden former inside the cowling and tapping on the outside, the original shape was nearly achieved.

Engine

The Pup was fitted with an OS48 FS Surpass engine, one that unfortunately is long out of production and spare parts as rare as the proverbial rocking horse poo. Two issues required addressing: namely the exhaust port on the cylinder head and the needle valve.

As luck would have it, the exhaust port suffered only the most outer thread of the port being stripped off when the exhaust manifold had been ripped out in the crash. I cleaned out the small wisps of aluminium and extremely carefully lined up the exhaust manifold and screwed it into the exhaust port ensuring that the manifold did not cross thread as that would spell disaster. By screwing the manifold fully home, the thread was mainly re-established but on every occasion of removing the exhaust manifold in future would require extreme care to ensure correct alignment and no cross thread.

The needle had sheared off at the top of the needle valve assembly so this would require disassembly of the carburettor to enable work on the needle valve assembly.

Picture 7 shows the disassembled carburettor with the needle valve assembly at the top of the picture. The needle is sheared off inside the valve assembly.

My initial thought was to cut a slot in the broken needle to enable me to unscrew the needle from the assembly. Unfortunately this did not work as the screwdriver could not get enough purchase on the broken part to initiate the unscrewing to take place.

Picture 8 showing the attempted slot in the needle.

More drastic measures were now required. I determined that the only alternative was to drill a hole in the needle and use an 'easy out' to unscrew the needle. To the uninitiated, an 'easy out' is like a tap but with a reverse thread on it so as the 'easy out' is screwed in, in a anticlockwise direction, it burrows into the hole and naturally unscrews the offending part. However another problem presented itself in how to hold the needle assembly without causing damage to the assembly itself. Using a modelling lathe, the chuck would be able to grasp the assembly but in its normal configuration, the chuck jaws were too long to hold the assembly without damage to the end of the assembly itself. However by reversing the jaws the assembly could be held as the reversed jaws were not as long and so enable a drill to centre exactly on the needle. With the needle assembly now securely held, the needle was drilled and the 'easy out' employed to remove the broken needle.

Picture 9 shows the broken needle being unscrewed from the valve assembly. Success! With the broken needle now extracted from the valve assembly and a new needle fitted, the carburettor was rebuilt and the engine bench tested and all worked perfectly again. My grateful thanks go to John Bransgrove who very kindly donated an old broken OS48 Surpass which had a needle! So 3 sub projects completed, it was now down to woodwork. **Wood Work Fuselage First**



I decided that the next step would be to tackle the rest of the fuselage as the firewall, engine bearers and wing supports presented the biggest problem.

Picture 10 shows the extensive damage to the fuselage now all the broken bits have been removed. A quick fix would be the wing support bearers which would require some extra support on the fuselage sides to seat the support bearers.

Picture 11 shows the extra supports on the fuselage sides. **Picture 12** shows the supports in place









Fortunately the lower frame which supports the rear of the engine bearer box didn't sustain much damage so the box could be rebuilt and placed into the fuselage giving the correct orientation for the thrust lines, lining up between the rear frame and the broken aperture in the firewall at the front.

As I mentioned earlier, in building from kits, it is now my habit to trace around all the major components so that new parts could be manufactured if required.

Picture 13 shows my sheet of tracing paper with all the Puppeteer components drawn out. The engine bearer box are components 17, 19, 20 and 21 on the sheet and the firewall 13 & 14.

New engine bearers had to be manufactured and thankfully with the circular saw attachment fitted to my lathe, the new bearers were made to the correct dimensions. So the new engine bearer box was constructed. The box components are manufactured such that no two components are the same and when fitted together give the correct angle offset of down and right thrust lines. **Picture 14** shows the engine bearer box and new bearers.

With the box and bearers completed, the alignment of the box within the fuselage was relatively straight forward as the rear of the box was fitted to the rear support and the front lined up in the remains of the lower firewall thus reinstating the correct thrust lines. All that remained now was to make a new firewall. The shape was copied from my outline drawing and a new firewall cut from 5mm ply.

Picture 15 showing installation of engine bearer box and new firewall.

With the new firewall in place, the engine bearer triangular supports could be fitted in place and with the wing support bearers repaired, the fuselage was nearing completion.

Picture 16 shows all the frames refitted and the wing support bearers glued in place.

All that remained now was to complete the skin of the upper fuselage. I found that Screwfix sell a lightweight filler that is really useful for modelling. Under their No Nonsense brand, a 1 Ltr tub lasts for ages and costs £9 and in my opinion cheaper and better than more expensive modelling fillers. I have found over time that like most fillers, it will dry slightly becoming powdery but this is easily overcome by mixing some diluted PVA glue in with the filler. The filler is easily sanded down.



Wing Repairs

The wings were broken in a number of places. The biggest problem was not the woodwork required, but the fact that as much of the covering needed to be salvaged as Solartex is no manufactured and although alternatives such as Oracover and Diacov are available, expense and colour matching would be an issue.

I have found that judicious use of an ordinary hairdryer can loosen solartex so that it can be peeled back to expose the broken areas and then resealed using an iron on adhesive. I still have a pot of Balsaloc, made by Solarfilm but again no longer available although I have found an alternative called Balsa Bond but not yet tried it myself. My pot of Balsaloc has seen better days and needed some work to make it useable although the end results were not entirely satisfactory.

Picture 18 shows the broken rib and rear spar.

The upper wing had a broken rib and rear spar adjacent to the right aileron. The spar was cut out between the two adjacent ribs, a new piece scarfed into place and then reinforced with a further piece of spar material. The rib was then fixed with a new piece inserted into the broken space and and again reinforced with more liteply.

Picture 19 shows the broken end of the upper right wing.

The remaining broken area was at the tip of the upper wing so the liteply frame was reinserted and doubled up with more liteply. The leading edge and the ribs at the front needed to be reinforced and re-glued in place.

That is the woodwork complete. All that remained was to re-glue the wing cabane support fixing points where 3 of them had broken away from the ribs. That complete it was then on to redoing all the coverings.

It was here that a decision had to be made as my available stock of covering would not enable me to completely recover the wings or fuselage. So reuse of the covering was necessary and indeed essential. My only reservation was where repairs to the major tears at the painted roundels would work given that patches needed to adhere to the torn sides but also whether they would stick to the painted surfaces and then could I repaint the patches to match existing paintwork? Fortunately I still had a small supply of the original paint, so I could touch up the paint work if the patches were successful. Using the Balsaloc, a liberal application was made to all the areas and the coverings were reapplied. There were quite a few patches that had to be used as the heat shrink coverings would not fully close together especially where long tears had taken place. But as it transpired, it was not a drama and the patches worked quite well. The roundels were repainted and from a distance, the patches were not that noticeable.

Final Thoughts

I did not have enough covering to reinstate the colour scheme for the fuselage. So I decided to scout the internet to see if there was an alternative. Isn't the internet marvellous! How did we ever work before? A quick search produced a whole raft of different colour schemes for the Sopwith Pup and the one I went for was No 3 Naval Air Squadron. It had the standard olive and linen wings and rear fuselage but the front end was red. It so happened that I still had some red solartex. So the front end was duly covered. With the engine bench tested and reinstalled, servos and Rx fitted, all that remained was to put it all together and check the C of G and a range check of the radio. All was good.





Conclusions

In all, the rebuild probably took between 40-50 hours of work. Was it worth it? Most definitely YES! Would I do it again? Lets hope it doesn't come to that. The whole process has given me great satisfaction and certain things gave me most pleasure; the extraction of the broken needle thus saving the engine, the manufacture of the firewall and engine bearer box and finally the resurrection of a very crumpled and mangled aluminium cowling.

There have to be some lessons learnt, taking time before takeoff to ensure everything is working as it should. I admit to having been complacent here. For those kit builders, do take tracings of major components, it has saved me grief on a number of occasions. Computer radios are great but they do go wrong. Save all your individual plane settings so that they can easily be reinstalled.

I hope you have found this article interesting and I welcome any comments you may have. Remember **The Phoenix has** arisen



lan Carby's mind has been meandering

Possibly nothing to do with radio control, but who knows.

Money is regular topic for a good mind meander, so here we go.

For once you have won a free 'happy couple' raffle, and the prize is big, but you must work for it.

All you and your partner have to do is take a \pm 10 note from the prize pile, make a note of its serial number and place it in your stack. Every note you can record in a year you can keep, so how much could you win?

Well, it doesn't take long to realise there is a catch. The notes aren't new, so the numbers are all random. If you go flat out, after about 16 hours you and your partner will fall asleep, and time really is money for this one. Oh yes, for every serial number mis-recorded you forfeit two notes.

Pacing is obviously the secret, and it takes me about 10 seconds to write down a \pm 10 note serial number accurately so let us see how much can be won.

You decide to go for 12-hour shifts, plenty of sleep, time for food and a bit to spare for comfort breaks, so let's do the sums.

60 seconds in a minute, 60 minutes in an hour, 24 hours in a day.

86,400 seconds in a day, this year is a leap year (so there's a few extra quid) gives 31,622,400 seconds. Divide by 10 for recording each serial number, but multiply by 10 for each note, that's a grand total of £31,622,400. Not bad.

The organisers want to cut their losses, so at the end of the year they make an offer,

You pick a note from your stash, they'll pick a number from your list and if they match, they will multiply your winnings by IO. No match and you loose everything.

Well, that's a really bad deal as the chance of winning is 31,622,400 to 1 so you decline.

As an aside the odds of winning the lottery are even worse at 45,057,474 to l.

Not to give up and to help with the publicity, the organisers want to make one more deal.

They present you with 4 boxes. Inside each is one of 4 tokens. Lose all, lose half, win an extra half, win double. You get to choose a box, and each of the remaining will be opened in turn, yours being the last and what's inside is what you get.

Well you started off with nothing as the raffle was free, there is a 3 to 1 chance of winning something, and a 1 in 4 chance to double your winnings. Sounds like a good deal so you go for it.

You choose your box and grip it tightly.

The first of the remaining boxes is opened,

Win an extra half token inside.

The second box,

Loose half.

Only one box left and the one you are hanging on to.

You are now given the choice of changing your box knowing there's only two tokens left, win double or lose all, so what do you do?

Well, when you started there was a l in 4 chance of choosing the win double, but now it's l in 2, which is twice as good so of course you change.

Your box is opened to reveal.....

Well, it's just a story, you can make up the ending, but what was the point of all this.

The amount of money you counted in a year was £31,622,400 or roughly 31.6 Mega pounds.

That's pretty close to the 35 Mega cycles transmitted by the old radio control transmitters in just one second.

Our current radios transmit 2,400,000,000 cycles per second or Hz, and manage to count most of them. For you to count that high would have taken the best part of 100 years

(68.57142857142 years plus a few for all the non-leap years.)

So, the next time you Velcro a 2.4CHz receiver into a plane, just think of the little piece of jiggery pokery magic that's going on inside.

And for the aside.

I mentioned that the odds of winning the lottery were 45,057,474 to I. There are two ways of working this out. I never was very good at statistics but if I remember correctly, to choose 6 numbers out of 59, the first choice has a 6/59 chance, the second is 5/58 and so on. That's a total of (6x5x4x3x2xI)/(59x58x57x56x55x54), which gives a 720 chance in 32,441,381,280 or I in 45,057,474.

The second way of finding out the odds is somewhat easier. Just look it up on the Lottery web site.

If you buy a second ticket, then your odds are halved. That's an improvement of just over 22.5 million. (22,528,737 in fact).

A bargain.

Until next time.

Electronic newsletter of the Chichester and District Model Aero Club

Flying alone on Thorney is now not allowed on the grounds of safety Please Try to leave Porthole as tidy as possible, making sure no fuel is left on site & lock the gate.

30 metres from "uninvolved" persons"

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From 1 Jan 21 BMFA Article 16 is law: know the separation minima! 15 metres when taking off & landing, subject to mitigations

When driving around Thorney be aware of young children on bikes and 20mph speed limit

The Commander at Baker Barracks Thorney and the MOD have decreed that there shall be NO drone flying whatsoever When flying at Thorney please keep an eye out for traffic(all kinds walkers, horses, bikes, runners, and low flying aircraft) coming from behind the flyers and inform them accordingly

The club Facebook page is now in its fifth year. It has over one hundred members. It contains many contemporary site reports, and has a wealth of photos in its archives. Administered by Nick Gates. David Hayward & Ken Knox Here is the link:-

https://www.facebook.com/groups/Chichesteraeromodellers/