

GLADYS

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The Sheffield Society of Aeromodellers

Gladys International 21c

The Newsletter of The Sheffield Society of Aeromodellers

Production Editor

Roger Lombard [roger.lombard@btinternet.com]

Yeardsley Hall Farm, Furness Vale,

High Peak, Derbyshire SK23 7PS, tel 01663 742680

The Editorial Team:

Steve Bentley - ace reporter and photographer

BentleySteveUK@aol.com

Terry Gregory - committee liaison, events and progress chaser

terry.gregory@tesco.net

Jeremy Storr - proof reader

Colin Troise - distribution

colintroise@tesco.net

Tel:-0114 2307584

Our webmaster for the SSAclub's website

<http://www.ssaclub.org.uk/index.asp>

Robert Thresh ellipsedesignuk@yahoo.co.uk

Contents

Not For The Squeamish	Jeremy Storr	page 4
Why Soar?	Derek Illsley	page 7
Get a LiFe	Richard Whiting	page 8
News from the Slope	Roger Lombard	page 10
News from the Electric fields	Roger Lombard	page 12
News from the indoor hall		page 13
MB339	Mark Stokes	page 15
Sheila's Wings	Richard Whiting	page 18
Heard at the hangar doors	Steve Bentley	page 20
Flying over the trenches on a Sunday morning		page 22
West side story	Roger Lombard	page 24
Pictures tell a story, still to come	Steve Bentley	page 26
Parting Shots	Various	page 27

Cover picture: Concert in Concentration by Roger Lombard

Rear cover: At the electric field—Get Well soon Brian

Editorial

I'm writing this editorial in the hope that seeing Gladys back in print (or on your computer screen) will move you to be inspired and create some words of wisdom for inclusion. Perhaps the first thing to do is to voice, on behalf of all the members, a considerable "thank you" to Mike Bowles for the hard work he put in as Editor. Be quite clear, too, that he continues to make a great contribution by helping me get this published.

Unlike very many (most?) of the club members I'm a relative "newbie", having come back to model flying after a break of about 35 years. What that means is that most of you know more than me, but equally I came back into the game at a fascinating time - electrics have really taken off. When I came back brushless motors were rare and expensive and some people regarded NiMH as a new fangled substitute for NiCad. Now brushless motors are selling in volumes and at prices that have brought a new dimension to electric flying and the simultaneous development of LiPo batteries has contributed to increased performance, increased duration and lower cost - often all three simultaneously!

I might as well add that I spend too much time in front of my computer surfing the net and what that means is that I enjoy hunting bargains and source my stuff from all over the world. I may not be helping the local model shop but since I don't have one anyway I don't know what else to do. Not to say that I'm immune from enjoying a browse round Steve Webb Models who, at only about 50 miles away is my "local", or venturing into Leeds Model Shop when I'm working in that area.

So what of Gladys and the future? Well the old rule applies - you get out of anything what you put into it. If you want to read about particular areas of interest let me know. If you fancy giving yourself a try in print then please do. It doesn't matter if you're not that fancy a hand in putting your thoughts into the written word. That's one of the things the Editor is there to help with. Photographs too. Our intrepid field reporter Steve pass-me-the-cyano Bentley will be out there at the working end of his Canon capturing the action, but he can't be everywhere at once.

I think we'll try a couple or three regular features. News from the slope, news from the electric field and news from indoors. These are going to be somewhat seasonal but let's give it a try. What this means folks is that I'm looking for a lot of input particularly from the indoor crowd because I just don't get there and a fair bit of input from the other two as well.

I'm also conscious that we have that group of mystery men who continue to explore the frontiers of model aviation with either rubber power or magnetic control. Let's hear from them!

I'd also like to try and get a build log or two going and try and incorporate a kit review into each issue.

Not For The Squeamish

Jeremy Storr

A Tale of Horror and Suspense (and, sadly, true) by the Master of Haunted Hill.

At 2.45 on a March afternoon you arrive at the flying field with your favourite model, a Multiplex Gemini biplane powered by a hefty little brushless motor with a nine inch prop. The field is deserted and the sky is all yours.

At the take-off point you crouch to connect up. Then it happens; something slips or nudges the transmitter, a sudden buzz as the motor bursts into life and the knife sharp APC prop bites into your hand. Blood sprays, covering the model, while you stare, shocked, at a gaping wound three inches long and so deep you glimpse white bone. Clutching the wound to stem the pumping blood you try to clamp the edges together while holding your stricken hand above your head.

In the panic you are unable, or forget, to disconnect the battery and switch off the transmitter. You must get help quickly but you cannot attend the model or use your mobile phone. You hurry to find someone who can help, but there is no-one in sight. By the time you find help your model is no longer in view, but still connected up.

Soon a couple of inquisitive children appear and find the model sitting there with no-one around. One of them picks it up while the other examines the transmitter...

It could happen so easily, but luckily when it happened to our colleague John Holmes he was not alone. By chance I had

arrived at almost the same time as John and was about to launch, when the mishap and injury described occurred behind me.

John did not panic. Remaining astonishingly cool he asked me to disconnect the motor and switch off the transmitter. But in my haste to collect the equipment and get John to my car I must admit to forgetting to switch off my own model, collecting a superficial cut on my wrist as a reward. Thank goodness for a thick coat sleeve.

During the journey to the Accident & Emergency department at Northern General John remained calm, clutching his hand and still holding it aloft, in spite of cramp. Half an hour later, the wound inspected and temporarily dressed, John was told to wait for X-rays followed by referral to a plastic surgeon.

Fortunately the huge cut, from thumb to wrist had missed any tendons. Thank goodness it had gone along, and not across, the hand.

In case you think this was the end of John's ordeal, not a bit of it. He spent over TWO DAYS waiting for surgery, much of it without food and drink.

During the laborious process of cleaning up every surface of John's biplane I made several heartfelt resolutions. Never again would I connect a flight pack from in front of the model or with the prop in line with any part of my anatomy. Never again would I connect up without putting the switched on transmitter on the ground, in view and clear of any threat of being knocked. Whenever pos-

sible I will avoid flying alone and I will always take a mobile phone and enough money to park in a hospital car park.

The BBC news recently showed a man whose severed finger had been regrown with the help of a miraculous powder. Skulking in the background was a small guilty looking model Mustang, although I suspect something bigger was responsible. Until that powder is available in model shops I will make sure I know where the ice cubes are kept in our freezer, just in case.

Editors note. Accidents, of course, are characterised by the fact that they always happen to other people, right? Not very long at all after hearing John's story from the horse's mouth and admiring (?) his scar I sat in my garden at home. My mission - to put a maiden flight on my new, 220W motored, Pitts Special in the field I'm lucky enough to have over my

garden wall: In front of me, on the table sat my gleaming new Pitts. All I had to do was my final pre-flight checks - control movements and so on. I fly mode 2 and as I reached for the left stick to check rudder I misjudged the distance and - you've guessed it - knocked the throttle partially open.

You'll also be able to guess in which direction the idiot had left the plane facing when it set off at chest height (I was sitting down, remember). Fortunately my instinctive raising of my right arm resulted in the plane's sharp prop attacking my forearm at a very shallow angle so although the cut was probably half an inch or more deep it was just a flap of flesh that it lifted and although my wife was out I was able to hop over the wall to my neighbour who has a well stocked cupboard of dressings. Not as serious as John's but HOW STUPID!

So I join Jeremy in his resolutions!





The commonest UK bird of prey, it is quite large with broad, rounded wings, and a short neck and tail. When gliding and soaring it will often hold its wings in a shallow 'V'. It is variable in colour from all dark brown to birds with pale heads and breasts, all have dark wingtips and an unbanded tail.

I was recently discussing with Ivan our motivation for slope soaring. Many of our feelings about the pastime were identical and there is little that I can add to his article in the December 2000 issue of the newsletter (The Magic of the Hill). We must all have our particular memories of outstanding soaring events and I give below three which it is hoped will appeal to you. They all involve buzzards and make one wonder just how intelligent these superb soaring experts are.

My friend Bill Martindale and I were flying every day average soarers of about eight feet span. A family of four or five buzzards were enjoying the slope lift and I noticed that the hard black line of a sheet of thundercloud was rapidly approaching. I drew Bill's attention to the approaching cold front and mentioned that our accompanying fliers had departed. Bill continued to fly but I landed just as the first blast of cold air struck. My friend had left it too late however and, although the model had been put into a steep dive, it was nevertheless sucked up tail first into the cloud. Ten seconds or so later we saw it reappear well downwind and off we went across the rolling moorland. No way could we keep

up with the model and it was soon lost in the murk. A mile or thereabouts downwind was a solitary copse and within the copse was a pond, obviously a disused hide for duck-shooting. As I neared the copse I noticed that our buzzard friends were circling over it and I could hear their mewing calls. Incredibly they were circling over the pond where the undamaged aeroplane rested in a reed bed. When they saw me going into the copse they flew off and both Bill and I were completely flabbergasted and wondered at the intelligence of these birds.

The second incident was on the same slope and a good south-westerly was bang on the face. Bill and I were sitting down enjoying the scenery when we heard the sound of a squabble above us. A carrion crow was giving the solitary buzzard a hard time and we decided to take a hand in the fracas. Bill, capable of a rolling circle on a good day, was flying a fully aerobatic machine of about a couple of metres span and was soon well above the jinking birds. A vertical dive followed by a half loop brought him up underneath the crow which dodged out of the way. While the crow was regaining some semblance of dignity and was well separated from the buzzard I came down at it in a more sedate manner. As it side-slipped away Bill came in fast on a stern attack and executed a classic Himmelman turn. The crow decided that enough was enough and flew off, cawing



The 'mewing' of the buzzard is unmistakable as it soars in the sky, calling frequently

in frustration and annoyance. Back to the serious business of cloud-hopping and I joined the buzzard as it circled, mewing contentedly, in thermal lift. Bill went back to flying at a much lower height and doing Chandelles, stall turns and Cuban Eights as was his wont

The third episode was much different. It was on the third of March a couple of years ago, this date being my wife's birthday. It was one of those superb early March days which occur perhaps once in several years. Wall to wall sunshine, hardly any wind, just a very gentle north-westerly drift and visibility which stretched forever. Now I am very lucky in that from the top of the garden the fields slope gently down to the M6, about a quarter of mile away. Beyond that are the head-waters of Morecambe bay and then, in the background, the serrated outline of the Coniston Fells. On that day two years ago the view was idyllic. Clear blue sky, a deeper blue in the waters of Morecambe Bay, the buildings of Grange gleaming white and the south facing slopes of the Coniston, snow-clad and reflecting the sunlight in a gleaming blaze. Overhead a buzzard was mewing as it climbed in gentle lift from air warmed by the black asphalt of the M6. Out came the electric glider, up to the top of the garden, half-power and a gentle heave and the thirty year old eight footer was away. A slow climb to about a couple of hundred feet, power off and the rising wall of air from the M6



A Buzzard's wingspan may vary between 48 inches to 60 inches

wafted the glider up to where the buzzard circled. Complete contentment for the best part of an hour as the continuous stream of warm air kept both bird and model easily and well aloft. The buzzard then decided that it was time for a snack, went into cross-country mode with wings swept back, and rapidly disappeared. A cup of tea seemed indicated and the model was slowly brought down. At a height of a couple of hundred feet or so, as I was thinking about the best landing approach, four buzzards were suddenly above the glider and already circling. A quick glance at the tranny, ten volts and the BEC was from a 2500 mAh Lipo. So, what the heck, and up and away again for another hour's flying. Now, just after midday, the sun was warm on my back, the lift was superb, villagers were watching the spectacle but the tranny was running down and it was time to call it a day.

So, the question is answered, "Why Soar?" We have our gas turbines, our big petrol models and their advocates talk of them with bated breath. On a good soaring day there's a million horsepower blowing on the hill and it is all free. As William Wordsworth might have put it (with apologies, Bill).

"I motored with the motley throng that hoots and honks o'er vale and hill, when dimly through the exhaust cloud I thought I saw a range of hills. I gazed and gazed but little thought what joy to me that sight had brought. Now oft when on my couch I lie in vacant or in pensive mood, they flash upon that inward eye which is the bliss of solitude and then my heart with gladness fills and flies away to those soaring hills."

This interesting article is reproduced with the kind permission of Derek Illsley and Leek and Moorlands Model Gliding Association from their latest newsletter: "Watch out for Buzzards over Callow!"

Get a LiFe

Richard Whiting

Insights from our Northern Correspondent. Greetings to all my friends in the SSA.

A lot seems to have happened up here in Dumfries since the last edition of *Gladys*, and despite the summer weather trying its best to outdo even last year's wind and rain epic, I've managed to get a reasonable amount of flying in, and we now have a small but growing little group of 4-5 electric flyers who fly informally together regularly at various local sites.

The past year has seen a veritable flood of new electric models on the market, and the general quality of both foam and traditional balsa/ply models on offer has been quite amazing. And at prices that are equally amazing! But while drooling over pictures and reviews of all the new models arriving on the scene, my excitement has been tempered by one factor which has imposed a severe restriction on what I could buy and fly.

You see, as my garage (incorporating my lovely hobby room) forms an integral part of my bungalow, I have never overcome my concerns about the safety of LiPo Battery technology, and until recently had stayed resolutely with NiCad and

NiMh battery packs. This luddite tendency was reinforced by the fact that of my four expensive chargers, only one could charge LiPos, and even that did not incorporate a balancer. Furthermore, as I scan my battery shelf, it is apparent that I have a small fortune tied up in NiXX technology.

Up to now this has not mattered too much. Indeed many of my models were designed to utilise the weight of the battery to balance the model correctly. But many of the gorgeous new models flowing out of the far east have been designed from the outset on the assumption that the power would come from a lightweight, high-capacity battery pack - i.e. LiPo! And all of a sudden my heavy old batteries have begun to place a severe restriction on the new models I can fly with them.

So for some time I have been taking a keen interest in new battery technology coming out of Boston USA - specifically the A123 LiFePO4 batteries that have been taking the power-tool industry by storm, and are now powering electric bicycles, lawn-mowers and even cars.

There has already been a big take-up of



this technology amongst model flyers in the USA, and both BRC Hobbies and Puffin have been marketing A123 branded packs and single cells over here for some time.

This technology offers some tremendous benefits ... Like LiPos they have high capacity and low weight. They have a flat discharge cycle, maintaining voltage as the capacity drains. The capacity-drain while sitting on the shelf in storage is negligible too.

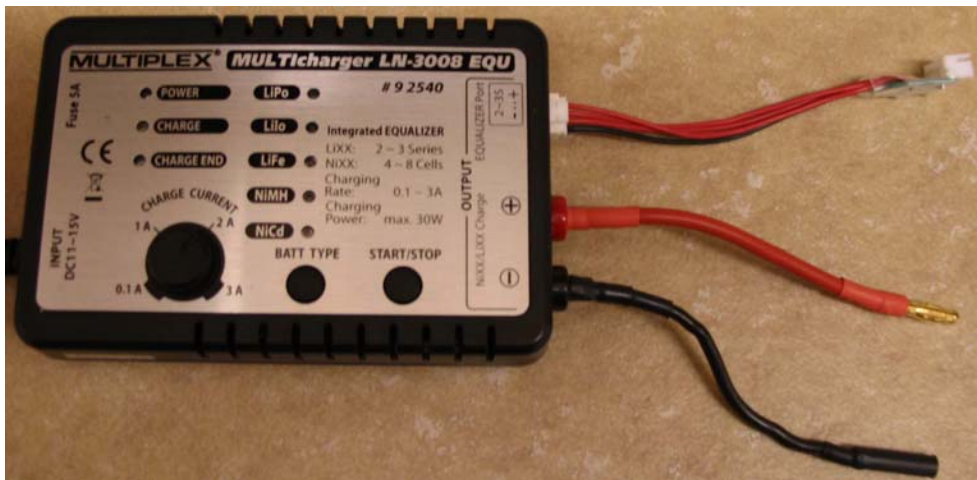
But there are also real benefits OVER LiPos ... They are much safer, and do not have to be constantly monitored like LiPos. They can be charged much quicker - in 15-20 minutes! The voltage extremes are much less critical, so they are less susceptible to inadvertent over-charge/over-discharge problems. They are not sensitive to heat or cold like LiPos and can be stored in cold temperatures which would kill a LiPo. What's more the nominal cell voltage is 3.3V, so a 3S LiFe delivers 9.9V+ - virtually the same as an 8-cell NiMh, and can use the same BEC cut-

off voltage criteria. This means they can be interchanged with NiXX in a model without reprogramming the ESC. (Some claim the nominal voltage is 3.2V per cell, but a fully charged 3S LiFePO4 registers a voltage of approx. 10.3V so nominal voltage is not very relevant).

However up to now there was one significant downside. A123 cells, though light, are physically large. So large in fact that I did not have a single model - including my big Overlander Tucano, which could accommodate a 3S pack.

But suddenly that has changed. HiModel now produce 2000mAh 3S 20/30C "square" section LiFePO4 packs, very similar in size and shape to similar capacity 3S LiPos and virtually the same price. (approx. £29.95). They include a balancing lead, and are exactly the same weight (201g) and virtually the same size as an 8-cell GP1300 NiMh, which opens up a huge range of models that can fly with them. (There are 2S and 4S versions too if you have a need for them).

After buying one initially, I was so im-





Was there ever a less slope-friendly summer than 2008? True there have been days when a westerly wind favoured us and sunshine brought the thermals out to play but all too often it's either been a non-starter or we've had to settle for the less predictable lift on the East and South slopes and for the landing challenges that the south slope in particular offers.

No scale day this year so there has been no occasion to summon a large crowd but it's testimony to the enthusiasm of our membership that it's rare to go up there on even a marginal afternoon without finding a fellow stalwart either leaning into the wind or taking temporary shelter in the vehicle as yet another of 2008's speciality showers marches its way towards us through the Hope valley. Some days indeed, particularly during the week, we seem to have invented our own equivalent of "Last of the summer wine".

As ever we have an eclectic mix of aircraft ranging from home built through

kits and various ARTF to some stunning large scale stuff impressing with graceful flights against what must be one of the best views from a slope anywhere in the country.

I had thought it might be the year of the Minimoa, with Mark Farrand building the 3.4m Krick kit, Mark Stokes with a 3.4m

S2G version and your editor resurrecting his balsa bashing skills after a gap of about 37 years with a 2.4m prototype for Replikit. I started out simply thinking I was doing a 200% scale version of the old KK flying scale kit which I'd convert to R/C but then Replikit had a burst of enthusiasm and designed a "new from the ground up" kit of which I've been charged with building the prototype. I'm hoping by the time the next Gladys comes along I'll be able to give you complete details and a successful flight report but in the meantime I have to say progress has been slow (although not as slow as Mark Stokes's) so Mark Farrand has been the only one to make it and I hear tell even his has had some time in the hangar after An Interesting Landing Experience On The South Slope.

Steve Bentley continues his vigorous and energetic experiments to determine the hardness of the ground over the entire area of Callow Bank. He has so far run out of Cularises, Discuses and Middle

Phases together with a particularly sad experience with his lovingly built S2G ASH 26. Rumour has it the latest tool for continuing the hardness tests will be a Phase 6. Lest anyone think I'm being unkind let it be said that I have carried out some similar tests myself, a particularly memorable one being with my brand new Chinese ASW28 about 50 yards into its maiden flight. A test that left me with a pair of good wings but not much else. I was also present when Mr Gregory did some ground hardness testing with the blue (well mostly blue) peril over on the east slope. There was a definite sinking feeling as we all realised that he'd had an in flight wing failure. It has, however, spurred him to not only rebuild the two ton terror but also give it a new coat of paint.

I see from the SSAC committee minutes that although the Chairman hasn't had a scale day this year he's still up for helping those interested with attaining their

"A" or "B" certificates. I'm sure if enough people contact him with expressions of interest he'll organise a day.



(Continued from page 9)

pressed that I immediately bought two more. And so far I have flown them in my TwinStar, MiniMag, Gemini and Kyo-sho Spree, and they'll also fly my Ripmax Mustang and my Seagull Extra 300 (when I have assembled it).

Although stocks of the HiModel LiFePO4 packs (usually referred to as "Lifeys") are in short supply at present (apparently something to do with the Olympic Games!), they are sold in the UK by BRC Hobbies, AllElectricRC.co.uk and RCMDirect.com. But you DO need a special charger for them - you cannot

use a LiPo setting because the charge voltage requirement and cut-off are different. However, Multiplex do a suitable 3A charger for £30 which incorporates a balancer facility and it can charge/balance NiXX and LiPos too, so it does not require a huge outlay to get started.

I've included photos of the 3S Pack and the Multiplex Multi-Charger LN-3008, and I'm delighted to be enjoying the benefits of LiPo batteries (plus some useful extra benefits), without the well-documented risks associated with LiPos. And I'm starting to drool over all those lovely new models again ...

News from the Electric fields

Roger Lombard

Since the last Gladys the club has been awarded a licence to fly at the Sportsman field. While this formalisation of the arrangement must be good in general, and has, I'm told, helped with one or two people who were being unhelpful we nevertheless need to remain ever vigilant on the safety front, given that some members of the public are either bent upon using their legitimate right to walk the right of way which unfortunately crosses our flying area, or, alternatively they are singularly unimaginative or unhelpful. Aside from the earlier story of John

Holmes accident there was also sad news in that Brian Johnson's Multiplex Magister had an electrical short which resulted in an on-board fire prior to take-off resulting in the total destruction of the plane except for undercarriage and motor. Paradoxically it appears that the motor itself may have been the cause all the magnets had moved together, creating one big pole—causing a surge/short first taking out the speed controller and then the batteries.

Has anyone else experienced a similar problem with an AXI motor?



Editor's "Speedo" enjoying the Cornish sea air

News from the free-flight section

There is no news—let's hope we hear something for the next issue

News from the indoor hall



Jonathan Shorer
a short time after this picture
was taken we said "Goodbye" to
Jon as he left for pastures new
in New Zealand—we wish him all
the best for the future with a
touch of envy—the flying
weather down under is said to
be terrific.

Sheffield S.A. Indoor 2008 – 2009

University Sports Hall 09-00 to 11-00 hours

14th September

12th October

19th October

26th October

02nd November

09th November

16th November

23rd November

30th November

07th December

14th December

21st December

04th January

11th January

15th February

22nd February

01st March

08th March

22nd March

29th March

05th April

19th April





My interest in PSS models goes back to before I joined the Club but I never made it to any of the PSS meetings the Club used to hold, and I haven't seen too many flying even since. My choice of model was also based on wanting to feel comfortable flying off both the south slope and Higgor Tor - I've had a couple of landings in the bottom off the south slope which had left me with hefty repairs .

I spotted the MB339 model in a stock clearance sale from Southcoast sailplanes. It looked more scale than others then available and was made from EPP like my Zagi which had a high bouncability factor. Some £50 lighter I was the owner of a nice box of foam parts. My interest was further whetted after seeing that the Canterbury Sailplanes models looked more scale-like than others then available and was made from EPP to boot. The kit was said to be suitable as a trainer. Hmmm! thought I - we'll see.

The kit, from New Zealand, had well-written instructions in English with a few helpful diagrams. It was pretty complete down to a couple of colours of finishing tape, the webbing tape, connectors and even a bottle of Gorilla glue. I had read much about Gorilla glue but not used it before. A form of wood glue that can be used on many surfaces and its special feature is that it expands into foam when exposed to moisture, very handy both for this model and others! I just needed to add the radio gear and servos.

The fuselage consists of a front and rear section of EPP and an EPP canopy. The wing is two sections of EPP with balsa ailerons. Correx elevators and a fixed correx rudder sit at the rear while the wing tip "fuel tanks" and engine air intakes are also EPP.

Wing construction was easy - just glue the two halves together - while bracing is from a glass fibre rod spar at the top and bottom joined by aluminium tubing

crimped to hold them together, the Gorilla glue doing a very good job on a light-weight joint here.

The radio gear is all built into the one piece model with a single servo working the hard balsa ailerons through torque rods. These are positive and avoid the need for wing servos which are more exposed and liable to damage. The RX battery is up front and a switch at the side of the model has a charging jack built in. I used a Chinese synthesised receiver on 35Mhz, so I can see its flashing LED, for changing frequencies.

In the interests of a smoother finish than a typical EPP model I tried the light-weight filler technique on the front of the model and over the wings. Simple enough, pop down to your favourite DIY shop and pick up the ready mixed filler that feels light enough to be empty. Poly-

filla makes it and Wickes has an own brand. A plastic card is used to spread this over the EPP and when dry sand it down. Polyfilla recommend wearing a face mast so I did this outside.

After that it was back to the instructions, using 3M 77 spray-on glue over the filler to grip the packing tape. This is then shrunk the same as a normal plastic covering, with an iron, making a far nicer finish than I expected. I chose not to use the supplied sticky plastic topcote as I wanted a camouflage finish so used Solartex for its paint-holding ability and strength, ready for the south slope! A further coat of 3M77 holds this in place and further careful use of the iron saw it all stuck down.

I originally chose an Argentine paint finish but balked at making the markings for it, so used the supplied New Zealand



markings instead. Underneath I used a grey spray car paint for ease. The top surfaces are hand painted acrylic which does show unfortunately. Only a small bit of nose weight was needed, the balance point being the spar at the wing root, easy enough to find and remember.

How does it fly? Nicely! It reminds me very much of a power model. With its shorter wings it rolls very quickly but it is rather light weight so is a little tricky to loop, tending to roll off the top unless I get it right. With it not having a rudder to stall turn, a favourite trick of mine is to roll it inverted at the top of a climb and half loop out so it flies back across

the slope the correct way up. I have put it into a thermal and had it quite high - unusual for me! Landings are real slow, steady affairs in keeping with its trainer credentials but it will keep an experienced modeller interested (at least, it does me!)

It flies well in a blow but its light weight means it has little inertia so my next plan is to stick some Velcro to the correx protecting the aileron servo so I can add ballast.



Sheila's Wings

I know several club members have the Multiplex Gemini, and what an excellent model it is.

I can't say I totally approve of Elapor for spinner and wheels and decided to substitute proprietary branded items instead, but what a pity that Multiplex did not include an Elapor pilot figure!

So when I was putting the finishing touches to mine, I decided to go into town to see if I could find a suitable candidate to occupy the cockpit. I have always felt that model-shop pilots were unduly expensive, and some are unduly heavy, so I decided to look around the cheapo shops for a plastic Action Man or something similar.

Visits to a couple of "Pound" shops drew a surprising blank, so I headed for Pound-Stretcher in an effort to hunt down my pilot figure. They had Action characters, but they were either too big, or looked more like refugees from the Munsters. And then suddenly I saw this cute little dancing girl doll, with long hair and a mini-skirt! She was a perfect size for the cockpit, and when she flashed her pretty blue eyes at me I was hooked!

Richard Whiting



As soon as I got home with my new "babe" pilot, I planted her in the cockpit, and moved her left arm up so she could wave at me on fly-pasts.

But somehow the all-blue Gemini decals suddenly seemed a bit masculine for her, and as I have never felt inclined to daub my models with free advertising for the manufacturer, I reached for the Overlander Vinyl InkJet Decal Sheets and set about designing some suitable decals for her on the PC.

Of course the supplied Gemini wing-top and tail decals were far too good to discard, so I set about designing new decals for the fuselage side slashes. The original side decals included the "Gemini" name, so this also gave me the chance to think up something new. We've all seen the TV adverts for "Sheila's Wheels", so I decided to call it "Sheila's Wings", and



GWS and PSS

I'm rightly known to be a fan of GWS aircraft kits (much less so their electronics) but one of my frustrations was that in this country it was generally only possible to buy the kit complete with a (normally unsuitable) coat of paint and a 350 type brushed motor, whereas in the US you could buy the kit in what GWS call "slope glider" form which meant it came unpainted and without motor and gearbox - at a significant saving in cost. Three things have happened over the last couple of years. Firstly Perkins, the wholesale (and sole) importer, started to bring in slope glider kits, secondly, consequent on the relocation of their factory from Taiwan to China, GWS released a bunch of new models, both prop and EDF, which were generally larger in size and were a quantum leap forward in quality of design and manufacture. Finally and perhaps most important in the context of PSS GWS started to produce some of the models in what they call EPO (expanded polyolefin) foam, instead of EPS (expanded polystyrene). EPO is identical in appearance and performance to

Roger Lombard

Multiplex Elapor which is generally recognised as being much tougher than EPS and capable of accurate moulding - which is where the even tougher EPP falls down.

So if you're looking for a low cost bit of fun consider a GWS kit for a PSS. They need ballasting for best results and a bit of reinforcing here and there but they're kind on the credit card! There's a wide range of unpainted planes in EPS typically retailing from £17.99 upwards but there are three EPO kits: AT-6 (Harvard), FW 190 and P-40 Warhawk all listed at £32.99 and all around 40" wingspan.

And it flies! No noise, no expensive batteries, motors or fans - what could be better?



(Continued from page 18)

by fading the Gemini Blue into bright pink and back to blue again I ended up with a design I'm sure my little "Sheila" pilot would approve of.

Then I remembered that a couple of years ago I had impulse-bought (but never used) a sheet of bright pink Fablon, thinking it might be useful as a sort of day-glo for the underside of a model to assist orientation, (which it does very

well by-the-way). So I applied this in strips to the underside of the wings and tailplane, instead of the standard supplied chequer pattern.

Well it certainly looks different! And it gave a whole new meaning to the term "maiden flight"! What's more, there is the added benefit that if I ever crash the model, I can always blame the woman driver! (In-flight photos in this article are Copyright © 2008 Iain Hale)

Heard at the hangar doors

These are actual transmission exchanges.

Tower: 'Delta 351, you have traffic at 10 o'clock, 6 miles!'

Delta 351: 'Give us another hint! We have digital watches!'

Tower: 'TWA 2341, for noise abatement turn right 45 Degrees.'

TWA 2341: 'Center, we are at 35,000 feet. How much noise can we make up here?'

Tower: 'Sir, have you ever heard the noise a 747 makes when it hits a 727?'

From an unknown aircraft waiting in a very long takeoff queue: 'I'm f...ing bored!'

Ground Traffic Control: 'Last aircraft transmitting, identify yourself immediately!'

Unknown aircraft: 'I said I was f...ing bored, not f...ing stupid!'

O'Hare Approach Control to a 747: 'United 329 heavy, your traffic is a Fokker, one o'clock, three miles, Eastbound.'

United 329: 'Approach, I've always wanted to say this..I've got the little Fokker in sight.'

A student became lost during a solo cross-country flight. While attempting to locate the aircraft on radar, ATC asked, 'What was your last known position?'

Student: 'When I was number one for takeoff.'

Thanks to Steve Bentley

A DC-10 had come in a little hot and thus had an exceedingly long roll out after touching down.

San Jose Tower Noted: 'American 751, make a hard right turn at the end of the runway, if you are able. If you are not able, take the Guadeloupe exit off Highway 101, make a right at the lights and return to the airport.'

A Pan Am 727 flight, waiting for start clearance in Munich, overheard the following:

Lufthansa (in German): 'Ground, what is our start clearance time?'

Ground (in English): 'If you want an answer you must speak in English.'

Lufthansa (in English): 'I am a German, flying a German airplane, in Germany. Why must I speak English?'

Unknown voice from another plane (in a beautiful British accent): 'Because you lost the bloody war!'

Tower: 'Eastern 702, cleared for takeoff, contact Departure on frequency 124.7.'

Eastern 702: 'Tower, Eastern 702 switching to Departure. By the way, after we lifted off we saw some kind of dead animal on the far end of the runway.'

Tower: 'Continental 635, cleared for takeoff behind Eastern 702, contact Departure on frequency 124.7. Did you copy that report from Eastern 702?'

BR Continental 635: 'Continental 635, cleared for takeoff, roger; and yes, we copied Eastern.... we've already notified our caterers.'

One day the pilot of a Cherokee 180 was told by the tower to hold short of the active runway while a DC-8 landed. The DC-8 landed, rolled out, turned around, and taxied back past the Cherokee. Some quick-witted comedian in the DC-8 crew got on the radio and said, 'What a cute little plane. Did you make it all by yourself?'

The Cherokee pilot, not about to let the insult go by, came back with a real zinger: 'I made it out of DC-8 parts. Another landing like yours and I'll have enough parts for another one.'

The German air controllers at Frankfurt Airport are renowned as a short-tempered lot. They not only expect one to know one's gate parking location, but how to get there without any assistance from them. So it was with some amusement that we (a Pan Am 747) listened to the following exchange between Frankfurt ground control and a British Airways 747, call sign Speedbird 206.

Speedbird 206: 'Frankfurt, Speedbird 206! clear of active runway.'

Ground: 'Speedbird 206. Taxi to gate Alpha One-Seven.'

The BA 747 pulled onto the main taxiway and slowed to a stop.

Ground: 'Speedbird, do you not know where you are going?'

Speedbird 206: 'Stand by, Ground, I'm looking up our gate location now.!'

Ground (with quite arrogant impatience): 'Speedbird 206, have you not been to Frankfurt before?'

Speedbird 206 (coolly): 'Yes, twice in 1944, but it was dark, -- And I didn't land.'

While taxiing at London's Gatwick Airport, the crew of a US Air flight departing for Ft.Lauderdale made a wrong turn and came nose to nose with a United 727. An irate female ground controller lashed out at the US Air crew, screaming:

'US Air 2771, where the hell are you going? I told you to turn right onto Charlie taxiway! You turned right on Delta! Stop right there. I know it's difficult for you to tell the difference between C and D, but get it right!'

Continuing her rage to the embarrassed crew, she was now shouting hysterically:

'God! Now you've screwed everything up! It'll take forever to sort this out! You stay right there and don't move till I tell you to! You can expect progressive taxi instructions in about half an hour, and I want you to go exactly where I tell you, when I tell you, and how I tell you! You got that, US Air 2771?'

'Yes, ma'am,' the humbled crew responded.

Naturally, the ground control communications frequency fell terribly silent after the verbal bashing of US Air 2771.. Nobody wanted to chance engaging the irate ground controller in her current state of mind. Tension in every cockpit out around Gatwick was definitely running high. Just then an unknown pilot broke the silence and keyed his microphone, asking:

'Wasn't I married to you once?'

Flying over the trenches on a Sunday morning

While I'm not a regular or active attendee at the indoor sessions my eye was caught the other day by a small range of products that a US manufacturer calls their Whim series of WWI bipes (OK so one is interwar before someone chases me up!).

Check out the story here <http://www.rcgroups.com/forums/showthread.php?t=917119>

And some blurb from their website - I'm sure they won't mind me advertising their product:

Novice and expert builders alike will appreciate the low cost, scale outlines and flying characteristics of the Park Scale Models® Whim Series™ line of micro/indoor aircraft. Simplified construction, low parts count and interlocking/self aligning design ensures building success even for the novice builder.

The Whim Series™ kits are engineered to build fast! You can have your plane built and ready to fly in as little as 10-12 hours. This means you get to spend less time building and more time flying. Plus, the "No Plans" construction means you can build virtually any time and any place you have a small flat, stable work surface! So you can build any time a "Whim" strikes you!

New pilots will appreciate the slow and stable flying characteristics. Durable all balsa construction and low weight help to minimize possible damage from flying mishaps. Should any damage occur, most repairs can be made in the field with some CA glue.

Experienced pilots will love doing up close low-n-slow fly-by's, shooting touch-n-go's and exploring the flight envelope with mild aerobatics like loops, spins and stall turns.

The hallmark of all Park Scale Models® designs has always been low total air-frame cost and this extends to the Whim Series™ line of kits as well. Costs are kept low by utilizing low cost, conventional micro RC gear along with an innovative electronics tray that allows you to move the receiver and speed controller to any of the Whim Series™ airframes in a matter of minutes.

Features:

- *Low Cost*
- *Excellent flying characteristics*
- *Scale Outlines*
- *Simplified construction*
- *Innovative electronics tray allows the receiver and ESC to be quickly moved to any airframe in the Whim Series*

The range includes the SE5A, Fokker DVII and Hawker Hind. Think sub 4 oz and think of a US price for the lasercut kit of \$26 - 28 so £15, OK plus shipping but how much can they charge for a 4 ounce kit? They take credit cards and the all-important PayPal.

The "bad" news is that the instructions and build threads are all only available by download from the internet which won't bother many of you but won't delight everyone.

Check them out at...

<http://www.parkscalemodels.com/shop/category.aspx?catid=21>

Build thread for example here <http://www.rcgroups.com/forums/showthread.php?t=908213>

And you can download a video of the Hind in action here <http://www.parkscalemodels.com/shop/item.aspx?itemid=33>

Surely a few of you can get a squadron or jasta together for some WWI aerial action this winter. Please write me a feature when you do!

For build detail have a look at:

<http://www.rcgroups.com/forums/showthread.php?t=308441>

"Editors note - since writing the above I've been in touch with ParkScale Models who tell me their products are handled in the UK by <http://www.micronradiocontrol.co.uk/> - telephone 01653 696008. "Andy Rutter from Micron tells me they've just received their first shipment of models in the Whim range"



West side story

Thanks to the convenient location of the Pennines anyone living in the Peak District area is lucky enough to enjoy outstanding facilities for indulging their slope soaring passions. Callow is over on the east side and it seems to me that the majority of our members have to head west when they set out for the slopes.

Not so your Editor who actually lives "over the hills and far away" as you face up the Hope Valley. Not only that but dare I whisper it there are other slope aficionados in that direction too. I've no personal experience of the High Peak MAC who fly near Buxton - although I know we have at least one member in our midst - but go further west still, pretty much right to the west side of the Pennines in fact and you're out of Derbyshire and into the Staffordshire Moorlands area. Here be dragons and not just the fire breathing sort.

Leek and Moorlands Model Gliding Association can be found working our westerlies about half an hour before they reach us! We're using second hand air! Time for confession - I'm a member of LMMGA too and Saturday August 30th found me at their scale fly-in. As informal as our own there are two noticeable differences. With 137 members they can field a bigger glider turn out than us, and they're also allowed to use electric power on the slope so on a day when the lift was a bit iffy one or two were still able to get some serious altitude.

It was a typical late August 2008 day - apart from the lack of chill it could have been November as we peered out into a

Roger Lombard

slightly murky atmosphere and the wind was an inconsistent 5-15mph. LMMGA have five slopes in a relatively small area which can cater for any wind from W to E through the southerly quadrants. For the Northerly quadrants a single (public, not club) venue, Bosley Cloud, serves their needs. Not very user friendly - it's a walk to the top! With the South Easterly provided for the day we were flying Elkstone. An awesome slope with OK landing facilities and a great view (when you can see it) the only drawback is that the contour of the slope face means that a small change in direction to the south can result in the wind shearing past rather than up the slope.



Because I'm a new member there I haven't got a handle on many names yet but I came away with a new model on my shopping list having watched my fellow newsletter editor, Ivan Bradbury, flying his $\frac{1}{6}$ th scale Krick Grunau Baby - I've got to have one! Looks like a winter build project!

Talking to Ivan who, like many of our own members, happily traces his early soaring experiences back to the days of Galloping Ghosts etc., I discovered he's familiar with Callow.

Apparently many years ago slopers from all over the area converged on a particular venue for an event to discover it was highly unsuitable, not only because of the terrain but also because of an irate unconsulted farmer. "Don't worry, lads," was the cry from one of the assembled and disgruntled throng, "follow us and we'll take you to our slope". Ivan then told me how a huge convoy of cars trekked across the Peak District and ended up atCallow bank - so clearly one of our number came to the rescue!

We agreed that it was past time that we formally arranged a return match or two so hopefully we'll be able to include in our 2009 calendar an invitation fly-in at Callow and a day out at one of the LMMGA fly-ins.

Check out the LMMGA website here

<http://www.lmmga.co.uk/about.html>



Mike Burns (?) put a maiden flight on his ASW28 - and gives himself his first flight for a few years. All ended with smiles all round! Note the scorching August day!!



Below Ivan (left) carries out his pre-flight checks



And another safely away!:

Pictures tell a story, still to come

Some picture of Steve Bentley's S2G ASH 26. A story for a future issue.



Wide angle to show the full ship



Assembled cockpit close up,
CG'd up ready for the maiden

Parting Shots



John Penton's 'J E Johnsons spitfire'
at Sandhays



"Sedbergh" towed up at
Sandhays, beautifully



Wouldn't you love to see this at Callow?



"Get well soon, Brian"
We hope it won't be long before you are looking this good again.