

2015 Northern League – Skelmersdale 14/6/15.

Well it's that time of year again. The 1st event on the calendar took place on Sunday 14th June at Skelmersdales' White Moss club site and ran alongside the clubs annual members only Tom Lamb Memorial Scale Competition.

Given the weather that we have been getting so far this year the conditions on the day were about as good as we could expect; cloudy but with a manageable breeze of around 8 – 10 mph and only a short interruption (10 minutes or so) for a brief shower around mid day.

We had a decent turn out of 14 initial entries, 2 of whom decided against flying on the day for various reasons so 12 actually took part.

For those unfamiliar with these events pilots choose a set of manoeuvres suitable for their model from a list of options on their entry sheet. This sheet is then handed to the judges prior to take off. These options are then flown in the order chosen and listed by the pilot.

2 rounds were to be flown, each consisting of 10 manoeuvres if we include the take off and landing.

Our two judges on the day were Gary Protheroe from the Liverpool Club and Neil Sherborne from the host club. A brief word on the subject of the judges by way of an apology. I forgot to thank them for their efforts on the day, a terrible omission on my part but thanks gents for your assistance which was very much appreciated.

No one chooses to fly 1st in these events and so the flying order was decided by the very scientific 'names out of the hat' method.



Given the 'iffy' forecast it was nice to see the pits filling up early.

Barry Sherborne from the host club came out of the hat 1st and can have no complaints as it was brother Neil who drew him out! He was again flying his ARTF Kange Rearwin Speedster. The model spans 96" and is 'adequately' powered by a Moki 210 glow motor. On acquiring the model Barry decided to recover it and in doing so managed to rework a few areas saving a couple of pounds in the process so it now weighs in at a very respectable 15lbs. Barry has now owned the model for several years and is very comfortable and familiar with it's characteristics. This shows in its flight performance as it seems to fly most manoeuvres at walking pace. It's always nice to get the 1st flight under your belt and Barry must have felt pretty good after his with what turned out to be the 2nd highest score of the 1st round. This was backed up by an improved 2nd round score to secure his a well deserved 2nd place overall.



Barry's' Speedster during it's 1st round flight.

Second out of the hat was Colin Martin from last years winning Wirral Club. Colin also decided to stick with the model that served him so well during last years events. His Sukhoi 26 is well known and respected by those attending these events and he again flew it as well as ever resulting in a flight which scored the 3rd highest in the 1st round helping his club to a solid start in this year's event. An 'overshot' 2nd round landing lost Colin a few points [along with the U/C!] otherwise his final score [and position] would have probably been even higher.



Collins' well known and respected Sukhoi SU26.

3rd out of the blocks was Andy Bowman flying for the host club. Andy chose to fly his 1/4 scale World Models Clipped Wing Cub. This model spans 84" and is very nicely powered by an O.S. 120 F/S single. After acquiring the model Andy stripped [the model not himself!] and recovered it using Sig coverall and painted it in Solarlac colours adding lots of surface detail, rib tapes etc. not present on the original model. The model is several years old now but still looks pristine; I can only assume that Mrs. Bowman is kept busy with the Johnsons Pledge between events! Anyhow a good solid 1st round flight from Andy kept him in the hunt. An improved 2nd round score resulted in Andy placing 3rd at the end of the day.



Andy about to 'launch' the Cub.

Pilot number four was Keith Fear from Skelmersdale with his Skybolt. Sadly Keith is having some 'issues' with the engine in this model and they continued to plague him on the day. A dead stick and heavy landing damaging the model before I had a chance to 'snap' it. Hopefully the damage is not too bad but for this event Keith unfortunately had to scratch as it was beyond a field repair on the day; in fact Keith has subsequently confirmed that the Skybolt has been 'retired' to the bin! Its replacement, a ¼ scale Pitts Special has already been acquired; now that's enthusiasm!

Pilot number five was Ian Bottel from Wirral. Some of you may remember Ian from last years events when he was flying his 94" Blackhorse Ryan STA? Well this year he has come over all Piper with a very nice ¼ scale World Models Super Cub. Ian tells me that the model weighs in at 14lbs. and has a Saito 150 F/S fitted which gives it more than adequate power for pretty much anything he chooses to do with it. Well new model or old Ian always puts in solid flights for his team and today was no exception. A dead stick landing short of the landing area hurt his second round score otherwise he would I'm sure have finished even higher up the list.



Nice ¼ scale Super Cub from Ian Bottel. Flies as good as it looks.

Number 6 out of the hat was host clubs ace IMAC pilot Andy Rigby. Andy had brought along his 'little' fun fly 118" Extra 300! Andy tells us the model is a traditional built up kit from Carden Aircraft. The model weighs in at 39lbs. With those numbers it needs a decent power plant to fly it and my goodness it has. A 3W 150cc petrol engine gives it better than 1 to 1 power to weight performance [my 1st motorbike was 125cc!]. The model was flown around with amazing precision and smoothness setting the standard for the other competitors to chase.



Andy focused on the job with a semi hidden Peter calling the manoeuvres for him.



And the Extra in flight.

Lindsay Todd from the Wirral club was next to fly with his 72" span Kyosho Spitfire powered by a DLE 20cc petrol engine. The model weighs in at 11lbs and so has a very sprightly performance indeed. This is Lindsay's 1st year flying in this event so let's hope he enjoyed it enough to come back for more; he certainly seemed to! The model flew very well and handled the conditions with ease as you would expect, scoring good points in the 1st round. Lindsay's 2nd round scores showed a marked improvement as he settled and became familiar with the flying site and the requirements of this type of event.



Lindsay's Spitfire on a 'beat up' of the White Moss site.



And the man himself along with our intrepid [and slightly frozen] judges Neil & Gary.

Not satisfied with one Spitfire we had two on the day; the second one being flown by fellow 'Wirralonian' Mark McKee. Marks version was slightly larger at 78" span. This version powered by an O.S. 33cc. petrol engine and weighing around 14lbs. was another ARTF from prolific manufacturer Blackhorse Models. Marks day was not unlike Lindsay's with a solid 1st round being followed up by a much improved 2nd round score after he settled into the location and event.



Marks Blackhorse Spitfire turning tight.

Our next flyer was Brian Wood from the Bickershawe club. This is Bickershawes first year in the event and they will be hosting us at their field in August. Brian was their only member to make it to this event but hopefully as the season gets into swing more will join in. Brian flew his well known and superbly finished Laser 240V powered 80" Brian Taylor Corsair. The model handled the conditions well and looked and sounded superb. Consistent flying by Brian resulted in 2 flight scores within 1 point of each other.



Brians scratch built 80" span Corsair in the pitts. Admire the detail & weathering.



Brian about to 'launch' the Corsair.



And in it's element.

I know that we are now in a modern heavily ARTF biased hobby but for me there is and always will be something a bit special about a superb scratch built and superbly detailed/weathered scale model such as this that refuels my own enthusiasm to get the building board out again. I hope that this is a contagious feeling that others catch!

Following Brian came one of Skelmersdales finest, Howard Parker. Having himself been bitten by the building bug Howard is well on with a ¼ scale Stampe that he started last year. It probably would have been ready now but the change of power plant from petrol to glow has somewhat delayed it's completion so Howard was again flying last years well known 1/5th scale 90 f/s powered ARTF clipped wing Piper Cub. Howard put in two steady flights to again score good points in both rounds.



Well known Skelmersdale member Howard Parker about to start his 1st round flight.

Following Howard was another Skelmersdale man, Ian Cooper. Club chairman Ian was flying his ARTF Saito 180 f/s powered Glassair. The motor provided 'adequate' power and hauled the 1.8 meter span model around with ease. This is a really sleek looking light touring aircraft that I overheard receiving many admiring comments from visiting pilots who had not seen the type before. Ian has had this model for a couple of years now and it showed with some very confident and smooth flying earning him very respectable points from his two rounds, the scores of which were within 2 points of each other.



The man – Ian concentrating on the job in hand with club mate Barry calling.



And machine – His 180 Saito powered Graupner Glasair. A very pretty subject.



The Glasair about to settle on for a nice 3 pointer.

Well with Ian safely down that left one competitor to fly. Skelmersdale fun fly competition organiser and all round good egg Fred Corless flying his scratch built 48" span RV3 light aircraft. Fred has powered this model with an AXI 4120/14 electric motor fed from a 3300mah 4 cell LiPo. The model looked a picture and flew very well indeed although I did hear Fred say he thought it was a little fast, probably down to the slightly high wing loading that sometimes plagues smaller span models. After a very decent 1st round flight Fred decided that he was not too happy with the way the model was behaving and so terminated the second flight early, hence the lower score.



Fred's scratch built electric powered RV3 on its take off run.



And looking as pretty as a picture on a steady fly past.

So 4 pm'ish rolled around and the final flight had been completed so it was time to unshackle the by then frozen judges get the scores sorted out.

The results below show that the flying was very close across the whole list of entries with in many cases one or two points making the difference to their final positions.

Name	R1	R2	Total	Position	Club Points	Individual Points
Andy Rigby	94	95	189	1st	10 [Skelm]	10
Barry Sherborne	88	92	180	2 nd	8 [Skelm]	8
Andy Bowman	84	88	172	3 rd	7 [Skelm]	7
Colin Martin	86	84	170	4 th	6 [Wirral]	6
Ian Bottell	81	88	169	5 th	5 [Wirral]	5
Lindsay Todd	79	88	167	6 th	4 [Wirral]	4

Brian Wood	82	83	165	7 th	3 [Bick]	3
Ian Cooper	81	83	164	8 th	0 [Skelm]	2
Howard Parker	77	79	156	9 th	0 [Skelm]	1
Mark McKee	68	84	152	10 th	0 [Wirral]	0
Fred Corless	61	33	94	11 th	0 [Skelm]	0
Keith Fear	24	0	24	12 th	0 [Skelm]	0

Don't forget chaps that this year by request we are running not only the inter club team event but also an individual element alongside it and so I have included both the club and individual points above. Please note that in the individual event everyone down to 9th place scores points towards their own season totals but that as per last year only the top 3 finishers from each club get points for their club total all others scoring zero. Hope that makes sense?

That means that after the 1st round the individual positions are as per the table above. The club positions however are now as follows;

Position	Club	Points
1 st	Skelmersdale	25
2 nd	Wirral	15
3 rd	Bickershawe	3
4 th =	Delyn	0
4 th =	Liverpool	0

Separate from the inter club competition the host club Skelmersdale were of course also running their annual members only Tom Lamb Memorial Scale event which counts for points towards their annual club championship contested over several events throughout the year. On that basis Andy R. Barry and Andy B. have each got themselves off to a pretty good start.

So that's the 1st event done and dusted with due acknowledgement to the [lack of] quality of my photographs! It's me not the camera honest! All that remains is to thank the host club Skelmersdale for preparing and allowing us to use their field, the judges Neil and Garry for shivering through 23 flights and of course the competitors themselves for taking the trouble to turn up and make the event a success.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Sunday 5th July where weather permitting the Wirral club will be hosting us at their Arrowe Park field. If you have never been before you are missing a treat. The welcome is warm and the tea, coffee and burgers hot; supplied by the Wirral ladies who are a delight [and also hot!!]. They combine our little inter club competition with their annual Alf Withrup memorial event so expect plenty of home participation and support to be there.

'Due to circumstances beyond their control' as the saying goes several of our Delyn and Liverpool club mates were unable to make this first competition date. Let's hope that they are able to join us and get their season off to a belated start next time.

Cheers for now.

Alan Glover.

