

Oh for those days again!



The photo from the '50's shows a young R. Heap holding a Frog Aero-Scout that was the chuck glider of choice at the time! They were only 6 pence (pre-decimal old money) and came in a paper packet. Everything slotted together and there was a pellet of lead for balance that wouldn't be allowed now! They always flew quite well especially with the wings reversed and could be repaired with Sellotape after the dog had helped with the chase!

The plywood 'D' box experiments continue! Ready for 2010, I'd designed a parallel chord A1 wing as thin as I could get away with! By adding a second tapering ply layer inside the lower 'D' box, I did without a lower spar. The extra ply tapered from the full 'D' box width at

the root, to normal spar size at the dihedral break. The section depth was now down to 7.8mm with my usual 125mm chord. Ply cap-strips were again used and notched into the t.e. In addition, from a suggestion by Alan Gibbs, the tailplane was just a large L.E. with 'W' ribs. This proved to be fairly strong, fairly light and very easy to handle, ...but I did break one later! First trimming flights were made at the 4th Area and I used it in the fly-off and throughout the year.

The Caprice and Nord have done quite well this year, but I needed to improve the d/t and autorudder start mechanism. I was fed up with failures where the start pin would stick, or come out too soon. The Caprice could have done much better at the London Gala in the fly off had the timer not been running while on tow! Taking note of Chris Strachan's Caprice, I have now made up a small plates with three tubes and two bent wires that I find to be extremely easy to set up and works well when I leave enough slack for the tow ring to drop off the hook!

...**BMFA Nats**, ...The first four F1H maxes were quite a challenge. I then crashed and broke the new A1 fuselage and made the last max. with another wooden model. My fly off against Gary Madelin and Andy Crisp was disappointing. Andy outflew me in a short-lived bump and Gary outflew us both. ...A carbon Stamov, a ping hook balsa/spruce model and my ply/balsa planes. What a mixture!

...**Oxford** ...A good day for me, winning F1H in a 3-way fly off. Only a 1:30 max. in rounds, but still tricky! A shower at the start of the last round proved Brian's tent wasn't waterproof but that Dave's sandwich floated well in the puddle on his chair! ...**Grantham** ...A two minute flight would leave the field and Chris Parry left the field every flight! A bit of a worry when he didn't make it back for the presentations, but the model was hiding in crops. After a few waves of my short aerial, I had the model located and back with it's owner. ...**Anglian Gala** ...I went up on the Sunday and initially wondered why! The wind was very strong, but as it started to drop a little at mid-day and others were flying, I started with the Caprice and later, the Nord. Making the fly-offs with both in one piece was a surprise and winning M/V and coming second to Chris Strachan's Caprice was a good end to the day. Both Chris and I flew out of the field, so radio retrieval still rules, OK! ...**6th Area** ...I had a straight-up-and-off into a monster of a thermal with the A1. After three minutes, we knew that the d/t had failed. I listened to it for about 25 minutes when the signal suddenly faded away! Had it landed? Armed with GPS, a map, and a car aerial, off I went. As I came out of Oasby, I heard a quiet 'peep' in just one spot. It was a fluke as I was only half way there! I finally tracked it down about four miles off the field in a field of wheat, just short of the A52. In best Biggles tradition I dropped by the Houblon for a pint on the way back! Stuart and Kris had also lost a rubber

job in the same direction and on the way home I went through the same back lanes and picked up their signal further along the A52. A quick phone call and they picked it up later. ...And 'my' field had been reduced to stubble during the afternoon! ...Sam, my grandson, was with me at the **Timperly**. He spent all day setting records for cycling round the peritrack and we had a long retrieve to pick up the Caprice out in the fields! ...Sam was also with me at Charlie Newman's delayed **Oxford** comp. It was breezy and not well attended, however, the competitors were keen! 90 seconds in lift got very near to leaving Port Meadow. Turbulence dragged my Nord down to earth, dashing it hard into the bank of the ditch. The wing, tailplane and the fuselage were in bits! But repairs at home would be possible. Sam spent the day charging about with some chuckies. ...The **8th Area** and the repaired Nord was right on trim and made a reasonable fly off. The A1 felt good too, but I had trouble with circle tow again. J.C. landed one on a hanger roof, but it was retrieved after a lucky shot with my bow and arrow. Since then, I've had a chat with Martin Dilly about his retrieval technique and found he uses plain weighted shafts, without any flights. His arrows being nose heavy can drag the line back to earth better than light ones. So, I have made up some plain shafts with lead weights for the inevitable 'next time'..!

...The **Midland Gala** and the end of my flying season and of the Biggles League for 2010. See... www.bigglesleague.hightsociety.org/results.html for details. John Cooper had already retained the trophy but won the glider competition anyway! The F1J-1/2A comp. was very close. Four had a mathematical chance of winning power, but realistically it was between Simon Dixon and Pete Watson. Both made it to the fly off, but Pete won over Simon, landing on the golf course on the other side of the valley. This made them both equal on points! Counting back, it was Peter's 6 point second place at the Nationals that settled the F1J-1/A trophy in his favour. He took some of it home, declining to take the whole propeller!

...After my long retrieve at the 6th Area, I wondered if my simple 1/4 wave wire roof mounted aerial could be improved. Maybe extra height would be useful. The length in inches for a 1/4 wave aerial is approx. 2800 divided by the frequency in MHz. So, at 173mhz, mine is just over 16" tall. At 143mhz it's 19.5". Assuming that extra height over what I had would be better, I added brass tubes and bits of wire to find that at 33" I had lost all signal! Thankfully, by 49" it was receiving well again. However, ...to pack this monster, I'd need a bigger car and eye protection! My solution was to buy a Maplin 10 element collapsible aerial and join it to the magnetic base with brass tube soldered on. So, now I can have a long one whenever I like! Hopefully, I'll never need it again, ...but it'll be for hire! In a quick test round my village it seems to work well, but a 'proper' test, somewhere in wide-open Lincolnshire maybe(?), will find out more! For those wanting their own aerial without borrowing one, Maplin sell a 'mobile antenna' suitable for taxi drivers that should be about right at 'our' radio frequencies. ...Still on radio stuff, I had a beacon aerial break away from the business end. This was repaired by cutting into the beacon to reach the p.c.b. and soldering on a new wire. It transmits at least as well as before and I hope it's durable! I guessed that a guitar 'B' string would be right, but a thinner 'E' would have been OK too!

...And finally, our frequency list...(in MHz) ...Brian 142.000, Trevor 143.180, Mike 146.350, Chris/James/Noel 146.450 & 146.500, Geoff 149.570, Chris 150.180, David 150.500, Neil 173.190 to 173.220, John 173.790 to 173.820, Andy 173.880 to 173.910, Roger 173.910 to 173.940. ...I have pre-programmed my Maycom receiver memory for all of the above frequencies. ...Unfortunately, covering the Biotrack range is seven entries at .005mhz intervals, but it only needed doing once! It was much easier doing this at home when it's and almost impossible on the field! Hopefully, this bit of forward planning could be useful in 2011, who knows? I hope you can do the same for your flying buddies?

Looking ahead to 2011, I have nothing new prepared. But, I have been sorting out a lot of bits and pieces for Sam to develop some flying skills.

Roger Heap