

Welcome to Newsletter 16

2007 has been another successful year for the CFA.

Only a couple of competitions could not be finished due to severe weather conditions. Mostly we have flown in good conditions with believe it or not the Sun causing the most problems for flyers.

The Nationals were well supported and profitable for the BMFA which means that our Team Travel Fund will eventually receive a boost.

The newly reorganised Vintage Combat League reached a fitting conclusion at the September Scratchwood event(see report in this issue)

To all active Vintage Combat Flyers

Over the past two seasons we have “doubled up” at some comps.

This has involved running Vintage and one other class(Club or F2E)

This has had only limited success so the committee now seeks the opinions of the flyers on the way forward.

The decision has already been taken to stop flying Club(this includes the Nationals)

If we do run “doubled up” comps next season Vintage will be flown to a finish before any of the second class is started.

Do you want “doubled up” comps? If so should we pair Vintage with (a) Oliver (b) F2E or (c) Plain Bearing 1/2A

Which class would you fly in?

If you have flown a Vintage comp this year and are interested please complete and return the form at the end of this newsletter.

Scampton August 5th 2007

The date for this comp had been brought forward a week and, although this had been notified a couple of months earlier it did catch one well known competitor out. You will notice his name by its absence from the following report, I won't mention it again.

We had another good turnout, 14 for Vintage and a half a dozen for F2E, Obviously the weather helped, the sky was a beautiful clear blue which was unusual. Everyone at first thought that someone had dyed the rainclouds a different colour then we remembered, that was the colour the sky should be. Dared we hope for it? A whole day without rain?

No new names flying this time although we did have one newcomer who took the time and trouble to come and watch, Joe Roper from Barnsley and his wife sat through most of the proceedings and Joe reckons he'll have a go. A plan is in the post.

Round 1

Mike Waller had made the long trip with his pal Martyn Vale and Mike was drawn in the first bout against Steve Malone, Unlucky, Mike flew really well with his many patched and repaired Ironmonger but Steve takes some beating. Steve was using an original (30 odd year old "Device" with a very good PAW in it and came out on top with 3 cuts to Mikes 2. A good start. Mick Lewis flew Graham Chilvers next, Mick's number two motor, howling round served him well and he came out on top 2-0. The next bout saw Chop (Simon Timperley) have a little luck for a change, he was drawn against Dave Wiseman and was flying an Anduril if memory serves, anyway, the bout was over after about 30 seconds as Dave's tank had split. They all count Chop. Stuart Vickers flew Roger Fisher next in a very good bout, one cut all but ground time defeated Stuart and his exceptionally fast Squig. Plenty of cuts in the next bout with Steve Tromans getting beaten by a single cut by Richard Herbert., Steve's streamer had to be replaced and he lost time on that, which was unfortunate. Chris Fisher flew against Harry Walker next, this must rate as one of the most energetic bouts as both pilots were running round the pilots circle frantically, both had one cut but Chris had less ground time. Last bout was Alec Herring and myself, I hadn't flown for a while and was getting into it nicely, as was Alec however we both spent a bit of time on the ground after a bit of a nudge and I came out in front by a point.

Losers

Alec went straight back up again against Graham and won this time, Graham struggling for a decent setting. Harry flew Steve Tromans next and won by one point. Harry is improving all the time, builds nice light straight models and has got his gear sorted. Well done H. The next bout was a stonker, Mike Waller against Stuart, fast and furious an absolute pleasure to watch. Stuart won 3-1 on cuts but it was a pretty close fight.

Eliminator

Harry against Dave Wiseman, the Mancunian candidates, (well almost) Harry's pitman made the silly mistake of launching the model with the streamer string wrapped round his leg, so the model did a backflip and landed, then the same pitman broke the streamer and had to replace it with a new one. (Look, nobody's perfect and it was getting very windy.....sorry H) Dave won. Richard Herbert had a bit of bad luck in his bout against Mick Lewis, Mick's lines became entangled around Richards handle clips when the shrouding moved, DQ. for Richard. Chris had a nightmare bout against Steve Malone next. The wind had gone from brisk to strong by the time the youngster flew and he just couldn't get his Richard Evans designed (do you know who it is yet?) Warlock to fly a full circuit without coming in on the lines. Steve won by staying in the air.

Quarter Finals

Chop vs Steve Malone, Chop with a Dominator (Joe recognised it) and Steve with a Device, Steve won 2-1. I flew against Stuart next and we were having a good bout when I lost my pushrod after a small nudge. I was using a Device too, good model I reckon. Better with a pushrod of course. Alec flew Roger next, this was another good bout, very fast in the brisk breeze, two cuts apiece but Roger won on airtime. Mick Lewis against Dave was the last bout in this round, Dave won 3 cuts to two, I didn't see it but I heard a shout when Dave got Mick's knot.....

Semis

Into the semis, Roger Vs Steve Malone, Steve got a cut but unfortunately a mid air damaged his Yeti quite badly. Roger also got a cut and less ground time and won. The next bout, Stuart Against Dave Wiseman was drawn and had to be reflown , unfortunately in the refly Stuarts very quick engine would not restart and Dave won.

¾ flyoff

Steve and Stuart flipped a coin for this as they had both damaged models and Stuart won giving him 3rd.

Final.

Dave struggled from the off with his engine, first it wouldn't start, then it wouldn't hold its setting, then it cut out, in the end he gave up and handed Roger the Victory.

There we have it, Roger first, Dave 2nd and Stuart 3rd. a good days flying I reckon.

Comments. What have we learnedWell, I've done a scientific study and apparently if you come from a place beginning with the letter N, (Norfolk, Nuneaton etc) then for some unknown reason this stops you getting to your bout on time. No one knows why, it's a mystery, like the missing pound. Another astonishing fact is that the distance between the centre circle and the spot where the Hunters Combat team lay out their gear is directly proportional to 50% of the size of the airfield, You watch at the Nats and tell me I'm wrong. Oh and it didn't rain all day, must be a record. Joking apart a very enjoyable good natured day.

F2E

We had 6 Entrants for this and I haven't got the scores so I'll busk it from memory.. Mick Tiernan was flying those trick Russian F2E models with his own design tail on them, must work because he won. Harry walker has a good engine and flew well to come 2nd Other flyers were Dave Wiseman going well, Martyn Vale, now I felt a bit sorry for Martyn he drove a long way , waited patiently for us to get to the last 4 in Vintage before we started the F2E, he also unselfishly did an awful lot of scoring for us and after all that didn't manage a bout win in F2E from memory. Richard Herbert finally broke his red foamie and the other competitor was me and I demonstrated how to turn up unprepared and fail to get your poxy engine to run. properly. Ah well There is always next time...

Old Warden 9th Sept 2007

The weather for this event was even better than at the Nats as there was almost no wind.

It was a nice surprise to see Jimmy Pinkerton and Willie Wallace down from Scotland to do battle with the Sassenachs. With a total of fifteen in Vintage and six in F2E it was obviously going to be vital to keep things moving swiftly.

Organisation was in the hands of Mike and Steve Waller, Dave Coe and Mick Lewis (not flying due to a lingering chest infection) and a few others.

It was clear from the start that scoring was going to be a problem as the all-weather streamers being used were shredding quite badly. These were fine when first made up but now it seemed storing them had a detrimental effect. The search for better material is on going.

In the first bout Richard Evan's Orchrist was down on speed and manoeuvrability against Bob Payne's Squig. None the less he still managed to win by two cuts to one with ground time being equal.

The bout between Mick Tiernan and Stuart Vickers was a torrid affair. Mick spent three minutes on the ground and Stuart a minute less. Stuart also had a cut and went through to the second round.

Shock of the first round was Roger Fisher losing to Graham Chilvers. The score was three cuts each but with one less ground point Graham was declared the winner.

After a great bout (two cuts all and no ground time) Chris Fisher and Dave Wiseman needed a re-fly to decide who would go into round two. Chris had no luck at all this time and spent far too much time on the ground leaving Dave a clear winner.

Simon Timperley also spent too little time in the air to trouble Richard Herbert while Steve Tromans was "efficient" (his word not mine) in defeating Brian Waters by two cuts to one.

Willie Wallace had a good win over Tim Hobbins. One cut all and one less ground point saw Willie through.

Jimmy Pinkerton was eliminated when he lost to both Bob Payne and Chris Fisher whereas Roger Fisher and Tim Hobbins both redeemed themselves by defeating Brian Waters and Simon Timperley respectively.

The best bouts in the second round were between Bob Payne and Stuart Vickers(3 cuts to 2 in Bob's favour)and Richard Evans against Tim Hobbins(3 cuts to 1 in Richard's favour)

In the quarter final Roger Fisher had the narrowest of wins against the improving Willie Wallace.Two cuts all with Willie losing just a single ground point.

Likewise Dave Wiseman defeated Bob Payne(who had been going well all day) by a solitary ground point both pilots getting three cuts.

Richard Herbert however had a much more convincing win against Steve Tromans.The final score being 4 cuts to 2 with neither pilot having any ground time. Richard Evans showed his experience(age?)by having a clear 10 point win over young Chris Fisher to take his place in the semi-finals.

The first semi came to a rather abrupt end when with Richard Evans leading against Roger Fisher by 2 cuts an almighty mid-air wrecked every single part of Richard's Supermonger.Roger was soon back up and flew out the bout for his win.

The second semi was also somewhat of a non-event. Richard Herbert and Dave Wiseman had 1 cut each but Dave spent a minute and a half on the ground with the obvious outcome.

With nothing at stake Dave Wiseman conceded third place to Richard Evans and we all looked forward to the all SECA final with some anticipation.

As it turned out this was a very one-sided duel with Roger taking the whole streamer early on leaving himself at Richard's mercy. The official score said 3 cuts to Richard but Roger decided to just fly level and let Richard nibble away at his streamer.

The prizes(wine)were then presented and we all set off for home having had another top day flying Vintage.

Scratchwood 30th Sept 2007

Perfect flying weather greeted the eleven competitors who arrived at Scratchwood for the final Vintage comp of the season.

Roger Fisher had already secured enough points to guarantee victory in the league so interest centred on the battle for the other two podium positions. Both

Richards(Herbert and Evans)had a chance of the runner-up spot.

First bout of the day was between Roger Fisher and Richard Evans and a close encounter was expected.

Richard charged in far too quickly and removed Roger's streamer without even the knot remaining to put himself at Roger's mercy. Sadly for him Roger simply repeated Richard's mistake making a re-fly inevitable. Richard won the second attempt by two cuts to one without the flying ever becoming more than "ordinary"

In contrast the next bout between Chris Fisher and Tim Hobbins was a much better spectacle. After some exciting combat Tim ran out the winner by three cuts to two.

Mike Loughlin,making a welcome return to Vintage,showed that he wasn't at all rusty by taking four neat cuts from Simon Timperley's streamer. Simon did manage to get Mike's knot to make the final score a respectable four cuts to two.

Richard Herbert made it look so easy in defeating Graham Chilvers by three cuts to one after which Bob Payne(using a 19 he picked up for £20!)squeezed past Mick Tiernan who seemed more focused on keeping his only flyable model in one piece. Mick Lewis who had a bye in the first round was then drawn against Graham Chilvers.After removing all of Graham's streamer Mick was able to try out his new defensive tactic of flying level rather than trying to stay behind a much slower model. The tactic was spot on this time and Mick went into the draw for round two. It's not often that Roger Fisher and Mick Tiernan find themselves in the losers round but this time they were there and drawn together!

An excellent bout saw Roger go behind before levelling and eventually taking the bout by three cuts to two.

Simon Timperley fought his way past Chris Fisher who had motor problems and spent over a minute on the ground.

The first quarterfinal saw Mick Lewis through against Roger Fisher without a cut being taken. This was the first mid-air of the day and sadly resulted in the total destruction of Roger's Anduril.Enough said!

In contrast the next bout was a truly splendid affair. Mike Loughlin's Yeti being much quicker than Richard Evan's Supermonger.However it appeared that Richard's model was just a little tighter turning and he used that to advantage to take the bout by three cuts to two.

Tim Hobbins and Richard Herbert both flew very quick,very tight Supermongers in their battle for a semi-final place.

The first cut went Tim's way but after a lot of top of the circle flying the score stood at two cuts all and it was "game on"

In the blink of an eye there was a coming together and a massive line tangle. The two models came to earth spinning wildly with one of the motors(Richard's)still going. It was obvious why Tim's motor had stopped as Richard's model lay,almost in two pieces,on the grass.

To add insult to injury Tim had taken the decisive third cut in the demolition process. Simon Timperley and Bob Payne squared up to contest the remaining quarterfinal. A good bout but Bob was a little of the pace(why not lash out £30 next time Bob?)

At the final whistle cuts stood at two all but Bob went out due to losing a couple of ground points. Simon was through to his first semi-final thanks to flying consistently all day.

The first semi-final saw Tim Hobbins using a Device(Steve Malone's design) against Mick Lewis with his trusty Yeti.After some initial exchanges Tim managed to remove all of Mick's streamer at the string and so had to go on the defensive. Tim tactics of not letting Mick get into his stride by flying erratically and then landing for a rest every so often seemed to be working as Mick did not get the decisive cut until very near the end of the bout.

The second semi-final saw Richard Evans manage just a single cut against Simon Timperley who for his own part just couldn't get behind Richard for long enough to close in on the streamer.

Tim conceded third place to Simon whose flying really has improved immensely this year leaving just the final to be flown.

The bout was fast and furious with lots of bits of streamer flying all over the place. First cut went to Mick but it was taken with the lines and dragged the model in causing it to crash. Following this Richard lived up to his nickname of "Tricky" by getting Mick to plant his model much to everyone's amusement. Soon battle resumed

and the scorers had their work cut out. At the final whistle Richard said “I think you had four” to which Mick replied “I think I had four”

When the scores were checked it was three cuts all and Richard was the winner on ground time.

What had happened to the elusive fourth cut? Well suffice to say that there was a six inch length of streamer around Mick’s prop driver!

The prize giving for the day’s event then followed as did the presentation of the Frank Smart Trophy to the league winner Roger Fisher. The second and third place trophies were presented to Richard Evans and Richard Herbert and everyone was thanked for their help in making flying Vintage Combat the joy that it is. If you don’t believe me come and join us and find out for yourself next year.

The following article (written before Mike decided to restart flying Vintage) contains his own views. They do not necessarily represent the views of the Editor

How to win at combat by Mike Loughlin

Although I have competed in all classes of combat, this article is mainly aimed at the diesel classes, for there are others more knowledgeable than I when it comes to F2D. In any event, equipment, pit crew, tactics and dare I say it, luck, play a much bigger part in F2D than the other classes.

To win at combat requires three things, four if you count luck.

1. The right equipment
2. Skill
3. Tactics

Lots of people have two out of three and often don’t really understand why they don’t win, either, at all, or more often. Others have one or none out of the three and are not sure how to go about acquiring these combat essentials. Hopefully, I can help.

Equipment

Everybody has their own ideas about models and engines and some choices are down to personal preference, but this is what has worked for me.

The Vintage model. Most designs have something going for them. Some are stronger than others, some are easier to build, and some perform better. In my opinion the Yeti or the Chaos are the best available design for vintage. The drawback of Warlord type designs is that although they are strong, pleasant to fly and very ‘flickable’, they tend to slow down too much in consecutive maneuvers. An experienced opponent will exploit this to their advantage; two consecutive loops and they’re behind you unless you have a huge speed advantage. Much information is already available about building techniques so I won’t go into that here, but I will cover some less well known points.

Everybody knows that the lighter the model the better, but in vintage there are other factors at work that are not obvious. This is mainly to do with the engine. The PAW 19 is a crude brute of a thing that is inclined to shake the model to pieces; much airspeed is lost this way. When I was flying, I always had some of the fastest models and although I used the best Dave Harrison 19’s a lot of the airspeed was due to the model. How so? It’s to do with mass centralization. All of my models were heavy and stiff in the middle to anchor the motor, thus the power is translated into airspeed rather than vibration.

The wing section was 1 ¼ in the centre, reducing to 1'' at the tips. The leading edge was solid in the middle and then progressively hollowed out towards the tips. The engine bearers had a huge gusset. I was never able to build a vintage model that weighed less than 16ozs.

When it comes to the **Oliver Tiger** class things are a little different, because you haven't got anything like the power. Here, lightness is all. Choice of model is really down to how good your motor is; the biggest model it'll pull, basically.

As for **F2E**, go and buy some of the excellent ready-built models that are available and it's job done.

Engines. There are no secrets here. Make friends with those that have a proven track record of preparing engines, do what they say, and never quibble about the price. The more engines you have, the more chance you have of getting one that is just that bit special. Mix your own fuel (shop-bought fuel is useless for competition). Balance your props and throw away those that are even a little bit bent.

So, you've built some fantastic models, got a great engine, so now you need....

Skill. Let us assume for a moment that you are a relative newcomer to combat. All of the big names seem to have an unbelievable level of flying ability, you want to be able to fly like them, but they won't tell you how they do it. This is usually because they don't know; they have been flying for so long that it has become instinctive, they are not consciously aware of any technique, they just 'do' it. Here are some tips to enable you to fly like that.

1. Do not think in terms of 'up' or 'down' or 'the right way up' or 'inverted'. What you need to do is think 'clockwise' or 'anticlockwise'. Thus: wherever you are in the sky the 'up' action at the handle will make the model go clockwise and the 'down' action, anticlockwise. If you can master this way of looking at it, your flying will quickly become instinctive and you will be able to apply the correct control input without thinking about it, even in the most stressful situations.
2. Practice flying without looking at the model. In the bout your aim will be to follow your opponent all over the sky, this is the very essence of combat flying. To be able to achieve this happy state, you will spend most of the time looking at his (or her) model rather than your own. Therefore you will need to feel comfortable flying your model largely by feel, with quick glimpses in your peripheral vision to be sure of your position relative to your opponents. It helps if you can imagine an opponent in front of you; follow him whilst looking at the spot in the sky you imagine him to be in.
3. Practice flying low and learn to 'wiggle'. This is an invaluable defensive maneuver, but only use it when you need it or it will either telegraph your intentions or kill your airspeed, or both.
4. Always be aware which way the wind is blowing, particularly if you get into a line tangle.
5. Practice
6. Practice
7. You get the idea...

Tactics. N.B. much of the following does not relate to club class. Ok, you've got the models, got the engine, practiced all over the winter and consider yourself pretty handy, but the results don't come, why?

No successful combat flyer still competing will discuss tactics; I don't compete anymore, so listen up.

To win a combat bout you need to get more cuts than your opponent, right? Up to a point, but most bouts are lost because of a single-minded pursuit of more cuts.

Without a doubt, most bouts are lost because of two things; either you broke the model or you took all of the streamer in one go. I would go as far as to say that the top three flyers *never* lose except for one or both of these circumstances. So, when you step into the circle, your absolute priority is not cuts, it is: don't break the model, don't take it all off.

Consider this: if you're four cuts to nil down but your model is good and your opponent still has a streamer, you can still win. If you're two-nil up and break it, you're likely to lose, if you take it all off in the first minute; you are bound to lose unless you are very lucky or much, much better than your opponent.

With this in mind, your objective should be to control the bout and the best way to do this is to follow your opponent, not with the objective of cuts (ok, take them if they come), but to control the bout. Follow at a distance, not so far that they can turn inside you, but far enough so you don't have to follow every wiggle.

It is very demoralizing being followed all over the sky, usually your opponent will start to get desperate to get you off his tail, often hitting the deck in the process, and hey-presto you're leading without taking a cut!

Combat is all about pressure and control, if you can control the bout and keep your opponent under pressure, he will start to make mistakes and the bout will come to you without any heroic cut-taking antics on your behalf. Richard Herbert is the master of this style. Yet there are other competitors who are extremely skilful and dazzling to watch, often taking five or six cuts in a bout, but notice how things often go wrong for them before they get to the final. When you enter the circle you should be thinking about winning the competition not just the bout.

Try to win the bout economically; as long as you win, the score is irrelevant. It is better to win one cut to nil with your model undamaged than win six cuts to nil and have a broken model. This enables you to fine tune the model and motor as the competition progresses. It is quite possible to win a major competition without breaking anything; I have won at the nationals with the same model I started with on more than one occasion.

Let's now imagine that we're half-way through the bout and things are pretty much under control, you've done most of the following, your model is going well and in one bit, but unfortunately your opponent has got a couple of lucky cuts and you are behind. (I should mention at this point that you should always have one pit man standing with the scorers so that they can tell you what the scoring position is.)

Now you need cuts, how best to get them?

By now you should have a pretty good idea of the strengths and weaknesses of your model relative to your opponents, use the strengths to close-up for a cut, BUT, and this is important; try to do it when the models are moving away from the ground. As you close in for the kill your opponent is bound to try to sell you a dummy with a wiggle or two, if you're going towards the ground and he dummies you, there's a good chance you'll hit the deck, if you're going away from the ground you'll just lose the advantage.

Do not allow yourself to be physically dominated in the centre circle. If your opponent is standing in front of you, it is very difficult to get a cut because of the obvious difference in line length. Don't push your opponent around, but equally don't let them do it to you. For a demonstration of centre circle dominance watch Mike Willance; if you stepped in front of him every time he stepped in front of you, you'd both be in Grantham by the end of the bout!

Due to reasons of space, the forgoing is a brief look at what is a complex sport. I hope that you have found it helpful. If you have any combat related questions or comments feel free to email me: loughlin@nildram.co.uk

A PLEA from the North

A friend of mine has recently recovered from a serious medical condition and returning to FREE FLIGHT is on the lookout for cheap and cheerful small diesels either by donation or by paying sensible prices, up to 1.5cc considered even glows. He has a group of young lads involved in this project and this is to help them. Any person able to help contact me - John Davidson - jdmadmac@btinternet.com
THANKS

The Art of Scoring

Have you ever written up a report on a combat comp?

Well anyone who has will know just how much they have relied on accurately filled in score sheets in order to do this.

I'm not having a go at anyone in particular as I know scoring is a necessary evil but I am suggesting that with just a little more attention to detail score sheets could be perfect!
Some just had a name and either win or lose circled!
So please spare a thought for the reporter!
PS. The score sheets for the Scratchwood comp were superb. Thank you all.

.....

I would take part in the following class if organised after
Vintage finished

- (a) Oliver (b) F2E (c) Plain Bearing 1/2A

Please circle ONE only.

Signand return to
M Lewis,40 Upthorpe,DURSLEY,Glos, GL11 5HR