



The Ripmax Wot-Trainer, which will shortly be taking basic training duties from Arising Star.

JULY AT WARREN FARM

QPR UPDATE

Recent visitors to warren farm have been concerned at the presence of contractors carrying out survey works. Many areas have been excavated by a JCB, and non-intrusive geosurvey (as used on Time team) has been carried out.

We have been assured by Jonathan Kirby of LBE that these are preliminary surveys only, and that they will conclude very soon.

We were also informed by people organising a football tournament that “QPR will be taking over the field from Monday 1st July”. We are assured by Mr, Kirby that there is no truth in this. The transfer to QPR may be delayed by the recent news that a local residents group is seeking legal action to stop the development, and we will therefore be granted a further extension to our existing licence. At the moment, this extension is expected to run until 31st August.

FIELD AVAILABILITY

It is our understanding that the Sunday afternoon tournament will continue until the end of July, so Sunday flying may be restricted to mornings only.

No other fixtures have been booked, so we expect very few restrictions to field availability on weekdays and Saturdays.

FIELD CONDITION

The field is currently in good condition, having been mown in the last 10 days, however there are a couple of hazards to be aware of.

Firstly, the excavations have been badly refilled, so please ensure that you do not run into the raised mounds.

Also, the geosurvey technicians marked out the field with garden canes. They should all have been removed, but some may have been missed. They are very difficult to spot, so please check that the take off and landing area is clear of obstructions before flying commences for the day.

TRAINING

Soon after WFRF began flying at warren farm, it became apparent that a dedicated training model, with buddy box, was required. Bob Howard has since then always had such a model in his fleet.

The first model was an Irvine "Bobcat". The original OS 40 FP was troublesome, and was eventually replaced by a OS 46LA.

After about 6 years of loyal service, the Bobcat was retired, and replaced by a Seagull Models "Arising Star", which proved to be even better. The larger wingspan and flat-bottom aerofoil wing enabled the model to fly at lower speeds, the only drawback being that the model was less forgiving in windy conditions.

Recently, the Arising Star has had to be retired, for two reasons.

Firstly, the plastic covering on the flying surfaces had become so brittle that much of the wing resembled a patchwork quilt, with BMFA badges and sticky tape hiding a multitude of repairs. Such a shame, as the airframe structure is sound. Maybe it will be re-covered in the future, with something a little more durable.

Secondly, the steerable nose-leg was becoming troublesome. The grass maintenance has, of late, been less regular than normal, as the LBE contractors wind down for the handover to QPR, and the longer grass is not ideal for a tricycle undercarriage.

The new trainer needed to be suitable for operation on either long or short grass. For this reason, a Ripmax "Wot-Trainer" has been selected. At the moment it has been completed in the tail-dragger configuration, but it can be converted to the optional tricycle undercarriage if and when a well-mown grass runway can be assured.

The model is still undergoing trials. To date, the only major issues have been another outbreak of dead-stick landings (a change of glowplug & silencer seem to have cured this) and a very flat glide, which could be a problem if the flying area is reduced when QPR take over the field. A larger, finer pitch propeller may be the answer, as it will act as a speed-brake with the engine idling.

It is also planned to add "High-Viz" panels to the upper surface of the wing, as visibility is not that good. Experiments with the "Discovery" electric trainer have shown that day-glow areas show up well in the air.

The Wot-Trainer should be available for training within the next few weeks.

AND FINALLY

The recent spate of dead-stick landings caused by engine/fuel problems with both the Arising Star and the Wot-Trainer pale into insignificance when compared with an incident at the North Weald Wings & Wheels Show this weekend.

The star of the show was expected to be an 87% scale Pitts Python aerobatic biplane. The commentary by Dave Bishop suggested that the Saturday display by this model had been curtailed by an engine problem.

On Sunday, the model carried out a perfect take off, and turned downwind for a fly-past. As the pilot rolled the model, the 650cc petrol engine stopped dead!

The resulting landing in the long grass damaged the undercarriage, so no further flights for this impressive model for now.

Ah well. It just goes to show, it can happen to the best of 'em.

Paul Perkins
Licensee

Fred Dunckley
Vice Chairman

Bob Howard
Chairman/Secretary