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Association

# Bristol Strutter

Newsletter of the PFA Bristol Strut

**April 2006**

## NEXT MEETING— FLYING ABROAD

For many, April represents the beginning of the summer flying season, and some of us will already be thinking of a weekend away on the continent, or a visit to relatives in the Channel Islands. France is no more distant than many places in the UK which we often fly to, but being a different country means a bit more paperwork and forward planning is necessary. This tends to put people off going, but if you follow the procedures and get the right maps the rewards can be great. This month, we have invited a member of Special Branch to come along and explain the simple procedures we need to follow prior to venturing beyond the South coast, and also the reasons that those procedures exist. For a bit of home-



work prior to the meeting, why not look up our 'Flying Abroad' page on the Bristol website? There is info about flight planning and forms to download, including the GA report which needs to be faxed to Special Branch and Customs before you leave.

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## LAST MONTH— A 'DIY' EVENING

Unfortunately, the planned speaker from Ultimate High was unable to make it to the meeting, so we held another famous 'Do it Yourself' evening.

Graham had recently purchased the excellent CBT course on Meteorology from Oxford Aviation, and we took the opportunity to review some of it's finer points, with a selection of questions thrown in afterwards to make sure we were concentrating! This really is an excellent production, and even our more experienced pilots agreed that it would have made their ground-school easier if it had been available many years ago!

## FIRST SOLO!

Yes, we got the news today, Andy has achieved the ultimate and flown for the first time with an empty right seat!

All those of us who fly remember our first solo flight with affection, because it is that achievement above all others that proves you are finally a pilot, and your destiny is entirely in your own hands with no instructor to take over when it all goes pear-shaped!

Andy Ferrington, you will remember, first flew with Bristol Strut as a Young Eagle some years ago, and hasn't looked back since. He was awarded 15 hours training by the Air League scholarship, and signed up with Aeros Flying Club at Filton. Read his report in this month's Strutter!

## Frequency Digits

A note in the Christmas GASIL referred to the new convention for passing frequencies over the R/T which will become active on the first of May. (Mayday?). Until now only mandatory for frequencies allocated at 8.33MHz spacing, from May it will be required to read back every frequency with all six digits, ie, 'one two two decimal seven two five' instead of simply 122.72 as currently abbreviated. There are exceptions allowed, however, if the frequency ends with two zeros, like 123.400 or 121.5. Just thought I'd remind you.

## Where to go in April

Landing vouchers valid during April in:

*PILOT magazine* - Bodmin, Brimpton, Enstone, Gigha Island, Sheffield and Wolverhampton.

*FLYER magazine* - Huddersfield, Kilkenny, Panshanger, Sherburn and (still) Pajala in Lapland.

*TODAYS PILOT magazine* - Bagby, Bembridge, Great Oakley and Sywell (Northampton).

## Fly-ins (always check before going)

9th - Jodel Fly-in at Popham - 01256 397733  
 16th - Wessex Strut fly-in Henstridge - 01963 364231  
 21-23rd - Fly! London Air Show at Earls Court.  
 29-30th - Microlight Trade Fair - Popham  
 30th - Abingdon Air & Country Fayre  
 30th - Spread your Wings at Shobdon

## Manuel reaches Portugal!

The latest report as we go to press is that Manuel has successfully crossed the Atlantic via the Azores, and landed at Lisbon on Thursday evening. His epic world tour has been plagued with weather problems - the main reason he didn't break the circumnavigation record - but there are several minor records which he will achieve.

From Lisbon, Manuel will return to Gloucester across Portugal, Spain and France, and is expected to arrive home on Saturday.

Bristol Strut congratulates Manuel for his stunning achievements so far, and wish him and G-GDRV a successful completion of a job well done.

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**Good judgement comes from  
 experience, and experience  
 comes from...**

**Poor judgement**

## Members news

Well done to Geoff Roe for getting his article printed in this month's PF. We all enjoyed reading about the many problems he overcame, and the triumph of finally making it to Home Base in Wiltshire. Geoff sent us his article as well, but Brian got there first.

Instead, in this month's Strutter we have a report from Stuart about his visit to Canada, and some of the incredible scenery he discovered during two hours of mountain flying.

## Looking ahead...

### 11th May strut meeting - Paragliding

Thanks to Graham for arranging this opportunity to meet Fiona Macaskill, record holder of both British and World awards for Paragliding.

## The PFA

We've received notification about a couple of ventures which the Association has entered into:

### *Now Spread your Wings*

Aimed at newly qualified pilots who are still hiring their aircraft from the flight school, it is a scheme which hopes to introduce them to 'our kind of flying': affordable flying, within a group of like-minded pilots possibly from farmstrips, in planes built by themselves.

### *Fly a Teacher*

This scheme has been created by the Education Strut and works on the theory that if you inspire a teacher by showing them the delights of 'real flying', then they will go on to inspire their pupils.

Both these ventures are featured on the PFA's website [www.pfa.org.uk](http://www.pfa.org.uk) with excellent notices and leaflets—why not visit the site and download them? You can then be ready to spread the word about the PFA when you meet a fellow pilot at the next fly-in, or take the education leaflet to your local school and introduce a teacher or child to 'real flying'.

Can the Bristol Strut host a 'Spread your Wings' day? Shobdon Strut are organising one in April; maybe we'll see how they get on and consider hosting one later in the year?

## First Solo Flight - Filton, EGTG, 21-03-06 11.00 zulu Aero's PA-28 G-BPMR

The forecast for the day wasn't looking good, overcast, cloud base at 2000ft, visibility/RVR 8000, winds at 80deg constant 12kts, maximum 18kts. I was on hour 12 of my 15 hour Air league scholarship with Lindsey Devey at Aero's. We flew another 50min circuit session on runway 09 in Mike Romeo, and this was to be our last lesson before she leaves for her new job. My circuits had improved massively, I was now very confident and Lindsey was doing none of the work. This is only the second time using runway 09, so I was just becoming confident with the circuit. Dad was on the ground watching from flight ops along with camera and CB radio. Both dad and myself were caught by surprise when Lindsey throws in a simulated engine failure immediately after one of the take offs (EFAT)... managed to choose a nice rugby pitch to be able to glide into before climbing away.

The circuit had been busy on the previous lesson, right hand circuits with 2 other Cherokees, a Cessna Citation flying left hand circuits with one engine out. So orbits were quite common, throw in the odd Sea King and the usual police helicopter and it gets very intense! At one stage we had an Oxford PA-34 (twin) on long finals 4nm out over the channel, we were configured late downwind and couldn't turn in as we were number two... so we made it a flapless approach, a nightmare with all the sink over the M5 and fields, add on the 12kt headwind and we were coming in on a fair amount of power!

We got several practices at glide approaches... Late down-wind before she cuts the throttle and I glide into land, scary stuff, we didn't make a few so got in a few go-around's (full power and abandon the landing); at one stage there was another PA-28 on touch and go so ATC directed us to overtake and turn x-wind early. By the end of the session the weather was really closing in, visibility dropping, runway lights on, showers, not good... in-fact, after we were safely back on the ground the other Cherokee was offered ATC vectored ILS for approach. That was saying something!

So, next lesson, back in the circuit, hoping for solo but maybe not in these conditions. We flew 7 circuits each landing getting better and better... then the 7<sup>th</sup>...touch down, ready for full power for the touch and go... but Lindsey stops me... *"I have control... (brakes!). Tower, Fast Track 47 would like to make this to land, and request taxi back to apron 2 for an engine running crew change."*

I'm sat there, totally confused... *"crew change?" eh?* Then it clicked... wow... here we go.

Luckily Dad had worked out what was going on... kind of obvious when he see's her get out!

We taxi back rapidly still on runway 09 with another on finals, she's briefing me as we taxi, leaves her map on the seat (?) and wishes me luck as I'm briefed on what to do if she falls into the prop. The last words before she closes the door behind her are *"Good luck Andy, I will be in the tower, take your time on the checks, ask for backtrack at delta and I'll be back to pick up the pieces in 10 minutes..."*

.....#\*\$!~&%.....!!!!

It suddenly dawns on you when the engine is running, doors closed, and the right hand seat is empty!!!! (But it does make a great kneeboard and checklist holder!)

I run through my after-start checks, taking my time, whilst composing myself and hoping Dad is watching.

*"Filton tower fast-track 47 apron 2 request taxi"*.

*"FT47 taxi holding point delta, runway in use 09, right hand circuits, QFE 1009, wind 080/12kts"*.

Brakes released and off we go. Cautious not to taxi too fast, as I often do!

I reach Delta (the holding point before the runway), and turn into wind for my power checks. The wind was really picking up; it was physically throwing my control column around as it caught the control surfaces. Brakes on and in with 2000RPM to check the engine, mag's, suction, carb heat, T's + P's etc...

Pre-Take off checks, and up to the holding point... deep breath...

*"FT47 at delta, ready for departure and requests back track"*

*"FT47 enter runway 09 line up and wait, back track approved"*. Let's get moving.

Taxi back to over the "Hill" in the runway, backtrack means we get more runway on the take off, not because we need it but it gives us (me!) more options if my engine fails after Take off.

ATC clear me as I turn, multi tasking big time as I line up whilst running my ATPL checks (Anti-collision light, Transponder squawk 7000 set to standby, pitot heat, and landing light) and whilst reading back my clearance....

*"FT47 cleared immediate Take off, runway 09, right hand circuits, maintain VFR, winds 080/12kts"*

Full power and rolling... yeee' ha!

Full power set, left aileron into wind, engine T's and P's within limits and airspeed rising through 40kts... 60kts rotate... Climb out 75kts, 300ft trim, left wing down for x-wind compensation. Climb-out straight ahead to 1000ft. I drifted slightly into wind, but the air was surprisingly stable, wow, I was flying solo! The adrenaline was pumping and I was so excited, all the fear and worry had completely vanished, much to my surprise, and instead I was filled with an incredible sense of confidence.

Anyway no time to think... circuit to fly. I allowed another 200ft until I turned X-wind, as I knew the head wind was strong, level with the MOD's Abbey Wood, and above those rugby pitches we pretended to land in! Clear to right, 15deg angle of bank, still climbing at 75kts. I reach my circuit altitude of 1500ft in the turn, so have to multi-task leveling out, accelerating and turning downwind at once. 1500ft, 2200 RPM, IAS building 95kts, increase bank to 30deg (good fun) until rolling out parallel with runway 27. Straight and level. My x-wind correction was spo on, and the circuit was looking good; I was happy that I had the A/C set up stable so time for RT call:

*"FT47 is downwind for touch and go... sorry... that's to Land, FT47"... 'Doh!'*

*"FT47 report final, number one"*

Well, I was still in the habit of flying 8 touch and goes in a row!!!

Tower didn't mind, so it was quite amusing really! Down wind checks... brakes off, gear down and locked, mixture rich, fuel fullest tank, contents sufficient, pump on, primer locked, carb heat check, suction within limits, T's and P's in the green, door and window locked, harness tight and secure... passengers... oh no wait... none, that's right!

By this time with the tail wind I was level with the threshold, time to configure for landing. Carb heat to hot, throttle back 1700RPM, hold the pitch, decelerate to 75kts, IAS in green arc... 2stages of flap and trim for a decent at 75kts. Circuit all clear ahead, no one of finals, runway behind me at 50degs... turning base... 15deg right descending turn, height looking good. I think I was bang on 900ft on turning finals. Perfect...

*"FT47 is finals to Land"*

*"FT47, cleared to land, runway 09, wind 080/18kts" ...18 Kts... yowsa!!!*

Constantly working at the pitch and power to nail 75kts, anticipating the "sink" over the fields, quick glance at the PAPIs (just out of interest!)... 2 red 2 white... spot on! (PAPI's = runway approach lights).

I didn't take final drag flap until 0.9nm on the DME, then nailed 65kts final approach... sinking... more power, and more... 65kts, over the threshold... sink... power... IAS safe... height good... and flare... power to idle... flare... hold off... back pressure... and touch down! And bang on the centre line for once! Brakes... *"FT47 vacate at Charlie, congratulations!"*

Quickly remember that Charlie is half way down the runway so ease off on the brakes. Clean up the flap whilst quickly taxiing... still on the runway. I finally see Charlie and turn off, glancing back to see the landing light of someone on short finals!

I park up for my post-landing checks, taking my time, before taxing back to apron two with a huge grin on my face. Lindsey walks out to meet me as I shut down; she was impressed and had been watching from the towers video feed on runway 09!

Both grinning we head back to flight ops, to meet Dad and Paul for coffee and Mum's cake!

*Andy*

