



Scottish Airsports Club

Latest News

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Forthcoming Events

Friday 17th August - Aerotow Club meeting

7pm at Andy's place - 8 Rosslyn Terrace, Glasgow opposite Donald's house. Phone 0141 339 2693 or 07866 606025 for more details. Microlight members welcome.

September - Hang Gliding Competition

We are considering holding a hang gliding competition in September. More details to follow.

February 5th - 12th 2005 - Annual Lanzarote Hanggliding trip

Get your £50 deposit cheque off to Andy a.s.a.p!

912 Tug in operation

Our new 912 tug is now fully operational and performing to all our expectations. Climb rates are about double what they were for the XL, giving around 800-900 fpm for solo gliders and 400-500 fpm for the dual glider. This makes towing the dual Discovery glider a much safer and more feasible option.

So what's it like to tow behind the 912? Thankfully it's very similar to towing behind the XL, except for the following:

- The tug requires a little more airspeed to take off, so you have to get your body well forward so as not to pop out of the trolley too early. However thanks to the rearward hangpoint, once the tug's in the air the 912 flies at a similar speed to the XL. Tim and Al have now proved that it's easily slow enough to comfortably tow a single or dual Discovery skyfoater.
- Coudbase always seems lower. It's not – it just seems that way because you get there so much faster!

I've also had a couple of flights in the 912 myself, and I can confirm it's a lovely smooth machine to fly. The XL's engine and gearbox is currently getting a complete stripdown and rebuild from Marcus, and after hearing about the state they were in, it's nice to know we've got a beautifully running 4-stroke 912 engine to rely on now.

Come on down and have a tow - you know you want to!

Advanced Microlight Tuition

One of the perks of working for Prudential is that they currently have a scheme whereby you can claim up to £250 for a training course of your choice. I therefore decided to make use of this for some further microlight tuition. I've had a licence since 1997 with a two year gap when I wasn't flying, so it's a long time since I've had any lessons. I was therefore

confident that some refresher training would be very useful, particularly since it wouldn't cost me anything. I phoned up Marcus at Perth Microlight School, who promised to clean out my budget of £250 with a half day of Advanced Safety Training, so the date was fixed for Monday 19th July.

The day arrived with remarkably good weather, although there was a healthy 15 knot breeze. Still, nothing Marcus's gleaming new Quantum 912 couldn't handle so off we went with a tank full of petrol. We finally arrived back three hours later with at least a third of a tank remaining, having made landings at Bonnybank, Thornhill and Strathallan on the way. All my objectives had been achieved:

- 1) Learn stuff
- 2) Have fun
- 3) Do it for free

So what did I learn? Here are just some of the things I picked up.

- 1) Leuchars ATC are selectively deaf and very pessimistic. They will hear your radio call saying you're heading for Bonnybank, but they will not hear your call signing off. Their pessimistic nature will mean that they therefore assume that you've crashed and burned at Bonnybank and get the police involved looking for signs of an accident, requiring a humble phone call back to Leuchars at the end of the flight. Still, if we had crashed and burned, it's nice to know someone would have been on the scene quickly to clear up the wreckage and ashes.
- 2) In July, all fields have crops in them, and since many of the crops are green even the ones that have grass in them look like they've got crops in them. During our many practice engine failures I struggled to find suitable landing fields, until I discovered that the fields that don't have crops in them have cows in them. Of course, you then have to miss the cows!
- 3) T in the park puts Balado Bridge out of action for microlight landings for well over a week while they clear up the mess.
- 4) There was no-one in the bath as we flew over Allan Huntly's house. We were able to tell this because of Marcus's exceptional eyesight and high-powered binoculars, rather than any transgression of the 500 foot rule.

I also learnt some less interesting but very useful tips in a strong, gusty crosswind breeze for take off (lower your into-wind wing and make sure you track straight down the runway) and landing (use a powered approach) techniques, and got a lot of valuable practice on emergency landings. Marcus also talked me through "The Turnback", or what to do when your engine stops as you're climbing out after take off, just after you've run out of options to land ahead. The technique is fairly simple in theory – immediately do a 180 turn and land back down wind. The two points to concentrate on are:

- 1) Make the turn IMMEDIATELY
- 2) Try not to lose too much height in the turn

Marcus told me that this move has saved his bacon on at least two occasions, so it's well worth trying!

All in all a very useful and enjoyable experience. I also found out that Marcus has just bought himself a Scandal XKR hang glider, so with my new Club Coach badge and qualification, I might be able to give Marcus a few tips on aerotowing!

Atos Glider Mini-review

A few thoughts on my new (to me) Atos glider.

- 1) It's heavy
- 2) It's fragile
- 3) It's expensive - £4250 for a good second hand one with tail.
- 4) It is a dream to aerotow behind the 912. If a wing lifts, the spoiler will automatically lift and bring it back down, making it very stable in roll. There's absolutely no yawing, and pitch pressures are very light. If you get too high, it is much easier than a flexwing to get back down and you can easily stuff the bar with just one hand while retaining roll control. It makes the whole tow much easier and less stressful.
- 5) If you like a good workout while flying (and some people do), you won't like the Atos with its ultra light control forces.
- 6) Landing's easy thanks to the flaps. Just whack them on full to reduce your glide angle and slow down the stall speed.
- 7) It's got higher performance than the hottest of flexwing hotships.
- 8) The tail makes it no more likely to spin than a topless flexwing with the VB on.
- 9) It takes about the same length of time to rig as a topless flexwing with loads of battens
- 10) I love it!



Icarus Makes First Flight

Sue Ellcome says:

On Saturday 17th July, Hugh Cullen's beautiful homebuilt Icarus C42 made a successful first flight at Thornhill Airfield, ending weeks of frustration for Hugh whilst waiting for clearance to test fly from the PFA and trying to find a test pilot.

Flown by air test pilot Dai Heather-Hayes and watched by family and friends, Hugh said, "it flew beautifully and is very comfortable and quiet". The Icarus C42 is a Group A aircraft, and has a Rotax 912S. It is a Swiss design, and amazingly only took Hugh three months to assemble the whole aircraft, the wings having been built by Icarus in Germany.

Congratulations Hugh, we are all going to miss you taxiing up and down the runway, and just remember not to fly too close to the sun!

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