

**BMFA**  
**FREE FLIGHT TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING 15<sup>th</sup> July 2014**

				Action
<b>Present</b>	Mike Woodhouse	MW	Phil Ball	PB
	Chris Strachan	CS	Trevor Grey	TG
	John Carter	JC	John Jacomb	JJ
	Stuart Darmon	SD		
<b>Apologies</b>	Ian Kaynes	IK		
<b>Minutes of 11.06.14</b>	Minutes accepted			
<b>Matters Arising</b>	No matters arising			
<b>Contest Calendar</b>	<u><b>2014 Calendar</b></u>			
	Latest version will be V1e. Contact for Space will be changed to Trevor Seabrook. Reserve date for trials will be moved to Salisbury as Sculthorpe will not be available			
				TG
	<u><b>Barkston</b></u>			
	Nothing new to report			
	<u><b>Luffenham</b></u>			
	Continues to be used by Midland Area in the absence of Barkston. Bryan Spooner looking after farmer liaison.			
	<u><b>Salisbury Plain</b></u>			
	TG reported that the booking procedure is working well. An email from Martin Dilly seeking some clarification of the new arrangements has been received and TG's proposed response was approved by the meeting and will be issued. TG attended the recent meeting at Westdown on 4 <sup>th</sup> July. Talking to Air Ops it has become apparent that the airstrip can be used to launch from and can be flown over but no vehicles can go thereon and no equipment, markers, cones etc. can be left unattended on the strip.			
				TG
	<u><b>2015 Calendar</b></u>			
	TG submitted a first draft of a 2015 calendar to enable early release of dates to those needing to book flying sites. Some modifications were agreed and he will produce and circulate a second draft.			
				TG
<b>SAM 35</b>	PB reported that he has spoken to Ian lever who had no problems.. He will also speak to David Finch to see how C/L went.			
				PB
<b>Nationals</b>	<u><b>2014</b></u>			
	Information is still coming in that will determine final financial results but it looks as if we will end with a positive balance in the order of £500 once payments to the RAF Benevolent fund and Roy Wright have been finalised. SAM have sent a cheque for £120 to David Phipps covering entry fees and PB will talk to him again to check the number of man days of flying by SAM entrants. He will also check the BMFA man days of flying and pass the total to David Phipps for licence fee calculation.			
				PB
	<u><b>2015</b></u>			
	It was agreed that discussion of changes and improvements for 2015 should be deferred to a later meeting. However it was suggested that in future we might well go to an additional page on the entry for on which all additional events are listed and full pre-entry is required.			
				CS

**Officer's  
Reports**

**Treasurer**

Entries are generally down this year due to flying site and weather problems.

Nothing else to report

**Council Delegate**

Nothing to report

**PRO**

Nothing to report

**Results Officer**

Discussion of any revision to the Plugge rules carried forward to the next meeting..

CS

**Safety Officer**

Bowden spectator issues were discussed following a report that an injury claim has been submitted involving a collision with a spectator. Ideas to be developed included

- A public address system/ Tannoy on the Bowden flight line
- Crowd barriers
- A safety officer to be present and agreed “clear for take-off”
- Positioning of spectators with respect to flight path
- Discussion of options with David Leading well before next year’s event

PB

**Rules Officer**

TG reported that a problem has arisen following the 5<sup>th</sup> area Meeting. Bernard Aslett flew one flight at Merryfield following which his opinion was that further flying there was inadvisable. He then drove to Salisbury Plain where he submitted his flight card to the CD and asked to be permitted to make two further flights there. The CD (who happened to be TG) was uncertain of the legality as the issue of using two sites to complete one event is not covered in the rule book. He agreed to record the flights which were duly completed and to take subsequent advice. The Committee discussed the options resulting in two mutually exclusive proposals for immediate action and agreement to introduce a rule change to ban such an approach in future.

The proposals and votes were

**A** To accept only the single flight score from Merryfield

Proposed PB

Seconded TG

Votes In Favour 3 Against 4

**B** To accept all three flight scores

Proposed JC

Seconded SD

Votes In Favour 4 Against 3

PB to discuss with the Competition Secretary and include in results accordingly.

PB

**International  
Teams**

**F1A,B,C**

All arrangements in place

**F1E team**

All arrangements in place

**Space team**

Nothing to report

**Team  
Selection**

**2014**

First trials went well with 7 rounds completed in good weather. However some difficulties arose with the parallel non-FAI events overloading the CD at times and diverting his attention from the main event. It was agreed that in future any additional events should be run by their own dedicated CD.

<b>Stonehenge Cup and Equinox Cup Space Modelling</b>	Nothing to report	
	JJ asked if it would be allowable for FAIR to run their team trials at the events run by SERFS. In discussion it became apparent that the SERFS calendar is based on events at number of sites which are only confirmed within a week or less depending on crop conditions etc. and therefore do not meet the rules for prior publication of dates and venues. An alternative suggested was that FAIR should use some of the trimming weekends on Salisbury Plain (provided they have fewer than 10 entries) which would meet the prior notice requirement. JJ to discuss with TG	JJ TG
<b>Rules</b>	TG reported one new rule change proposal (from SD) for the removal of the upper limit of 8X for binoculars. This will be added to the rule change process.	TG
	JC stated that he will prepare and submit some proposals for revised trials procedures.	JC
<b>Flying fields and The Way Forward</b>	<p>A discussion paper was circulated before the meeting - see below as <b>Appendix A</b></p> <p>At this first pass the following points were made</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do we have enough people involved to deal with the complexities of multiple category sites?</li> <li>• We have to acknowledge that we have problem and define what it is. It was suggested as “The location and suitability of sites given the performance of our models and flyers”.</li> <li>• We have to reduce the performance of everything</li> <li>• It is more difficult for the average modeller to make the fly off and/or win as performance is reduced. So would low performance reduce our numbers?</li> <li>• You have to stay above critical mass – sat 6 to 10 entrants per event</li> <li>• More combined events?</li> </ul> <p>It was agreed that following this initial discussion we should proceed with further email debate within the Committee</p> <p><b><u>A restricted performance event on a new site</u></b></p> <p>SD reported that on further investigation Husbards Bosworth may not be easily available as they have a new CFI and the Secretary is concerned about people turning up in good weather and wanting to fly. PB stated that Luffenham could be available and the Golf Club would be happy to make their bar available for refreshments etc. after the event at £3 per head</p> <p>PB and SD to discuss</p>	
		PB SD
<b>BMFA and FFTC websites AOB</b>	<p><b><u>Transfer to BMFA Website</u></b></p> <p>TG reported that Andy Symons is working on the transfer.</p> <p>Martin Dilly had emailed suggesting two people who might merit submission for awards. The meeting did not agree with his selection. CS to reply suggesting that as a fellow he should feel free to submit them himself.</p> <p>Citation for ANO</p> <p>PB to obtain material and pass to CS</p>	TG
		CS
<b>Next</b>	<b><u>Dates</u></b>	

**meetings**      Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> Sept  
                    Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> November  
                    Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December

FFTC 16/07/14

### **Critical dates for FFTC**

**BMFA News Copy dates**    October 2014 Issue– copy date 3<sup>rd</sup> September  
  December 2014 Issue– copy date 25<sup>th</sup> November  
**Full Council**                    6<sup>th</sup> September Agenda deadline 11<sup>th</sup> August  
**Technical Council**            18th October Agenda deadline 22<sup>nd</sup> September  
**FFTC meetings**                10<sup>th</sup> September  
  5<sup>th</sup> November  
  3<sup>rd</sup> December

## **Appendix 1**

# **The Way Forward**

a discussion document

(For FFTC distribution only)

## **Introduction**

**This season –2014 – has seen a number of long standing free flight contest problems reach a crisis point. In reality these problems have always been with us and we have managed them as best able, often at very short notice. We must be aware that such quick fixes lead at best to controversy, at worst to long term discontent and instability. If we are to regain stability for contest free flight then we need to examine the problems carefully and provide long-term solutions, even if some of these are at first sight unpalatable.**

## **The Problems**

1. The number of usable contest flying sites has reduced over the years.
2. Restrictions on those sites that we still have are increasing.
3. A lot of model performance (but not all) has increased to the point of regularly out-flying the sites.
4. The Average age of competitors is now 60-65; the majority are no longer capable of extended retrieves.

Though most will agree with 1. some will wish to debate 2. and 4. and actively disagree with 3. Nonetheless all are fact and we need to acknowledge them fully and act upon them.

Increasing the number of usable contest sites is an obvious solution. However, though this is an ideal which we should work towards, it is a very long-term job and to some extent out of the immediate remit of the FFTC, Therefore for the moment (and this document) this solution will not be discussed further.

Restrictions on sites can be coped with if the appropriate mechanisms are put in place to provide viable alternative procedures/rules when required. These viable alternatives will create stability given that they still give meaningful contests that are in line with the basic requirements of ‘duration’ free flight.

We may not have yet reached the stage of being required to always stay on any particular site but we should expect that this is coming ever closer. For all practical purposes we should regard this being in effect now. It has often been said that we have never lost a site through retrieval from cropped fields, even so it has to be admitted that we have no evidence either for or against this. Moreover the sheer practicalities of retrieval through 'Rape' and other 'heavy crops', coupled with the stated age of nearly all competitors, overwhelmingly suggest that we should 'stay out' except in extremis.

Model performance needs to be tailored to suit the sites we have available (not those that we would like to have available) and without destroying the pleasure of flying a high performance model.

Noise nuisance is something we have so far chosen to sweep under the carpet. In the current world we now have to acknowledge it. This means reducing it.

Safety is another consideration that we rarely acknowledge but is becoming (or will become) an important factor. I.C and Electric motor sizes are likely to need reducing as are 'toxic' fuels and 'high currents'.

## Possible Solutions

### ***i. Different ways to run Free Flight contests - general***

Most (but not all) of our contests are run to an established procedure of start at 9.00 am, fly at any time of the day to a maximum fixed at the start and finish at 6.00 pm or 2 hours before Sunset followed by unlimited fly-offs as needed and in a one hour period. There are a number of alternatives that we might consider in order to address the problems that we face.

- a) Running in rounds. *Allows for variation of maximums during the day*
- b) Fly from a line. *Allows CD to control launch site*
- c) Fixed time slots (mini rounds). *Limits time for thermal picking and errors* *stress causes*
- d) Categorisation of sites and contests to allow restricted running. *Allows flexibility when needed to a defined format*
- e) Dawn and evening contests. *Avoids the times of most thermal activity.*
- f) Short maximums all day based on weather forecast. *Limits off site excursions but can easily be caught out*
- g) Land on field, including fly-offs. *Limits off site excursions*
- h) Land on field, fly-offs only.
- j) Maximum times for fly-offs. *Limits off site excursions*
- k) DT fly-offs. *Limits off site excursions*
- l) No reserve models. *More caution handicaps performance*
- m) Multiple models may be entered in the same class but no reserves and only the flyers best score to count in the results. *Allows a full day of flying even when time is plentiful and flights are short*
- n) Reduced maximum but more flights. *Keeps the event significant*

Only a small number of these have a chance of making a real difference to our problems and might be acceptable to a proportion of our flyers. a) plus b) could control round flight distances but still leave the

problem of fly-offs. However the increased load on CDs would be a problem at all events and the variation of maximums to suit conditions would render area centralised events meaningless. An intermediate solution is f) plus g) which has worked well at both events at Port Meadow this year when combined with selection of suitable classes and a fairly small number of competitors. It was also notable at these events that line lengths were reduced for gliders and the (BMFA permitted) power runs for E 36 were reduced. Again of course this would render area centralised events meaningless. d) however, has not been tried before and is discussed further with a specific solution for fly-offs.

**ii. Categorisation of sites and contests**

Sites that are capable of supporting fully flown contests for Centralised Contests – including Team Selection and Internationals – in most conditions would be given a ‘Class One’ category and contests run on them would be as currently specified in the rule book. Presently we only have 2(3) such sites:

Salisbury Plain  
 Sculthorpe  
 (Barkston Heath)

The majority of other sites are smaller and/or have retrieval problems so would be categorised as ‘Class Two’ and the remainder – very small – would be categorised as ‘Class Three’.

In poor weather (high wind) or where there are temporary restrictions Class One sites would be downgraded to Class 2 for the day in question.

For Area Centralised contests all sites, even where the sites are nominally categorised Class One, would be categorised Class Two (Class Three sites are only used for ‘club run’ contests where the structure of the contest is decided by local organisers, without the need to comply fully with BMFA procedures).

**iii. Reduced Maxes**

When contests are run on Class Two sites (or Class 1 categorised on the day as Class Two) then contests would be run to reduced maxes: 3 minutes reduced to 2:30; 2:30 reduced to 2:15; 2:00 reduced to 1:45. Where Reduced maxes are used (and for all Area Centralised contests) ‘restricted’ motor runs, tow line lengths, rubber weights, and/or added ballast would be used for fly-offs.

The reasoning is to still provide an unlimited contest when conditions are suitable, but, when they are not a still viable contest can be held which does not out-fly the field on a regular basis. In addition a structured fly-off procedure is provided which will reduce the possibility of landing out of the field without resorting to unsatisfactory ‘ad-hoc’ procedures. Bear in mind that the majority of contest flying takes place at Area Centralised sites. Most of these are small and better suited to reduced maxes, smaller flight numbers and restricted fly-offs.

**iv. Restricted Runs, Lines, Weights, Ballast for fly-offs**

*The ideal would be to reduce Runs, Tow-Lines and Rubber Weights, however reduced Rubber Weights would give practical problems and so ‘ballast’ would be a better alternative. Additionally some (a very few) classes would not need any restriction.*

*Proposed restrictions for fly-offs:*

<u>Class</u>	<u>Run/Line/Rub Weight</u>	<u>Restricted</u>
BMFA Glider	75m	50m
BMFA Glider	50m	30m
F1A Glider	50m	30m

F1H Glider	50m	30m
Classic Glider	75m	50m
Vintage Glider	100m	75m
Mini Vintage Glider	100m	75m
Tailless Glider	100m	75m
BMFA Power	5 secs	3 secs
BMFA Power	7 secs	4 secs
BMFA Power	9 secs	6 secs
F1C Power	5 secs	3 secs
F1J Power	5 secs	3 secs
1/2A Power	8 secs	5 secs
SLOP	10 secs	6 secs
SLOP	12 secs	8 secs
Classic Power	12 secs	8 secs
Vintage Power	18 secs	12 secs
Mini Vintage Power	20 secs	14 secs
Tailless Power	30 secs	20 secs
BMFA Electric	15 secs	10 secs
F1Q Electric	4 Joules	3 Joules
E36 Electric	5 Secs	5 Secs
E30 Electric	60 Secs	30 Secs
BMFA Rubber	-----	25 grams Ballast
F1B Rubber	-----	25 grams Ballast
F1G Rubber	-----	10 grams Ballast
P30 Rubber	-----	10 grams Ballast
Vintage Rubber	-----	40 grams Ballast
Classic Rubber	-----	30 grams Ballast
Mini Vintage Rubber	-----	20 grams Ballast
Tailless Rubber	-----	30 grams Ballast
C02 Duration	-----	15 grams Ballast
HLG/CLG	-----	No restriction

All of the above restrictions would mostly ensure fly-off times that keep models on the field and keep retrievals at a reasonable level. Please note that the above figures are only 'ballpark' and could/need further discussion. If over the seasons 'development' proves flights exceed field boundaries more than occasionally then the restrictions could be increased.

A possible downside with all these restrictions is that some additional work would be required on the rule book. However this 'can' be coped with, and, once done only needs updating as and when required. If adopted suggested implementation date would be 2016.

