

2016 WESSEX AEROMODELLERS LEAGUE Low-Cost 600RES Competition

Scores after the final round at Wimborne MAC on Sunday 18 September 2016

The final round of the 2016 season was held in superb thermal gliding conditions at Cashmoor, the Wimborne MAC flying site. After the pilots' briefing the event got under way with eleven pilots taking part. The event consisted of five rounds with pilots flying against each other once in the Round Robin format.

All pilots elected to have some test flights and when Round 1 got under way expectations were high. The landing patch at Cashmoor is enormous and only one pilot landed out all day and then by only a matter of a few feet. Andrew Fellows and Jeff fellows started as they meant to continue with convincing wins. However, Bob Corfield easily outflew James Parry, Mike Sims and Chris Hague only to miss the landing patch by a small margin and score a resounding zero! Apparently, Bob's newly fitted and untried spoiler was very efficient, hence the landing falling short of the runway. Bob did not make the same mistake twice!

Flight times in Round 1 were around five minutes but this was soon to change as in Round 2 there were no less than four flights exceeding the maximum of 15 minutes. Jeff Fellows and Peter Rose both flew to the maximum 15 minutes to share the points, although Peter's flight was of 15 minutes and 2 seconds duration, just enough. Later in the round Ian Pratt and Chris Hague also shared the points with maximum flights. Dave Ashenden experienced a model malfunction and decided to call it a day and returned home to fix the problem in his workshop. In instances such as this scores from any preceding rounds are deleted in order to achieve a level playing field for the remaining pilots

And so to Round 3 which produced some close contests with Chris Hague beating Darren Bumpass and Malcolm McKendrick by only ten seconds. Jeff Fellows needed to fly for over 13 minutes to beat Ian Pratt. The contest between Peter Rose and Bob Corfield resulted in a narrow win for the latter.

Round 4 saw the second win for Darren Bumpass, narrowly beating Mike Sims by 12 seconds. Peter Rose and Ian Pratt also just managed to win their slots by only a few seconds. This round produced a contest between the only three unbeaten pilots so far - Chris Hague, Andrew Fellows and Jeff Fellows. There was lift around and all three pilots contacted it, however Chris failed to stay in the lift and landed after seven minutes, and as the lift turned to sink Jeff landed two minutes later leaving Andrew to win by half a minute. This round was to provide the scores to decide the end result, not only of the day, but of the season-long series. More of that later.

The contest was not over yet as Round 5 was still to be flown and by now pilots thought that they knew where to find the lift. But the wind direction had changed! With one exception flight times were shorter but still resulted in wins for Ian Pratt, Chris Hague and Andrew Fellows. Finding lift, Darren Bumpass flew for over 10 minutes, but still failed to score any points as both Bob Corfield and Jeff Fellows stayed aloft for over 15 minutes to share the points. There were six flights of over six minutes throughout the contest, all from a 25 second launch and a restricted power train, illustrating just how much models have developed since I first ran electric thermal contests back in 1999. Back then we started with brushed motors and a two minute (yes, a two minute!) motor run time. I have run electric thermal gliding contests every year since, to a low cost formula and have witnessed improvements each year. Progress indeed! I look forward to the 2017 season!

A fly-off for third place between Ian Pratt and Chris Hague was eventually won by the latter pilot. This meant that Chris finished in third place just half a point behind second place Jeff Fellows. Before the day's contest started the overall winner of the series would either be Andrew Fellows or Chris Hague with a win on the day securing the series. Congratulations go to Andrew for winning not only today but winning the series by three points from Chris. Although on equal points, on count back Jeff Fellows finished overall in third place with four second places.

Ian Pratt, with models of his own unique construction incorporating lots of small carbon fibre rods, finished in fourth place. Peter Rose, a prolific model builder in only his second season entering this competition, finished only one point behind Ian. Malcolm McKendrick, who seemed to prefer to fly in a different part of the sky to the rest of us, finished with 77 points. Sharing the same number of points was Bob Corfield. This was Bob's first season and flying a standard Apollo he achieved some excellent results. No doubt someone to watch out for next season! Roly Nix was another pilot to experiment with different model designs and improved with each subsequent round to finish with 70 points. Mike Simms, also improved with each round and, being relatively new to the competition, is looking forward to even better results next year. Of the remaining pilots, Glenn Woodford, Darren Bumpass, Rick Churchill, Dave Ashenden and James Parry, their scores would have been higher had they been able to contest more rounds of the competition. (Pretty obvious, really!) I plan to provide an extra date next season so that the competition becomes the best of 4 out of 6 possible contests.

Thus ended what was generally acknowledged as an excellent season-long competition with a superb day's flying in ideal thermal gliding conditions at a great flying site.

The Cashmoor results are as follows:

1st Andrew Fellows 9 wins; 2nd Jeff Fellows 7 wins; 3rd Chris Hague 6.5 wins;
 4th Ian Pratt 6.5 wins; 5th Peter Rose 4.5 wins; 6th Malcolm McKendrick 4 wins;
 7th Bob Corfield 2.5 wins; 8th Mike Sims 2 wins; =8th Darren Bumpass 2 wins;
 10th James Parry 1 win. Retired after 2 rounds; Dave Ashenden.

600RES Class		Round	1	2	3	4	5	Total
1	Andrew Fellows		25	25	23	24	25	99
2	Chris Hague		23	23	25	25	23	96
3	Jeff Fellows		24	24	24	23	24	96
4	Ian Pratt		22	21	18	-	22	83
5	Peter Rose		19	18	22	20	21	82
6	Malcolm McKendrick		21	22	14	2	20	77
7	Bob Corfield		20	17	19	19	19	77
8	Roly Nix		15	16	17	22	-	70
9	Mike Sims		13	15	16	2	17.5	61.5
10	Glenn Woodford		18	20	20	-	-	58
11	Darren Bumpass		16	19	-	-	17.5	52.5
12	Rick Churchill		17	14	21	-	-	52
13	Dave Ashenden		14	-	13	21	2	50
14	James Parry		-	-	15	-	16	31

Remember it is the best 4 scores, in **bold**, to count.



Andrew Fellows's 2016 Wessex Aeromodellers League winner.



A happy band of pilots.

Our thanks go to Wimborne MAC for the use of their excellent flying field at Cashmoor. Thanks also to all who shared the timekeeping duties throughout the event. After a successful season we now look forward to the 2017 season. Watch this space at www.wessexaml.co.uk for all the latest information.

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Chris Hague