



HELIFLYING Heli-Pad

by John Heaton

LOTS OF NEWS and views this month. Firstly, the resounding success of the big helicopter fly-ins, the Bretons and Woburn and the cancellation of the 'Nationals' helicopter contest. I will dwell on the Bretons 'do' and the repercussions of the Nationals and, due to 'going to press' requirements, report on the Woburn Abbey rally next month.

On with the good bits first. I feel that the Bretons was the best helicopter event yet, stacks of interest, plenty of spectators, good natured but keenly flown competitions and plenty of 'off the peg' fun flying. I'm sure the advent of 35MHz. has helped these do's enormously, not necessarily in having more models airborne at the same time but enabling more competitors to ready their models in preparation.

My own day started well as I flew in a full size *Enstrom* to the venue and, for the first time, flew a helicopter route right across central London. It was the sight of a lifetime flying down the Thames at a few hundred feet, seeing all the sights, Big Ben, Tower Bridge, Buckingham Palace, the Post Office Tower all looking close enough to touch. When I arrived I was pleased to see Dave Nieman had brought along a full size *Hughes 300* and we did some formation flying whilst we took a few passengers for Mid-day 'jollies.'

It was quite amusing really because last year Dave rather upstaged me by turning up in a brand new jet powered *Hughes 500* which made the *Enstrom* look a bit doggy and then did rather better in the competitions than I, whilst this year the *Enstrom* looked quite sleek compared to the little *Hughes 300* and I also reversed the competition results!

The competitions were, scale flying event, concours, model judged best by fellow competitors and various novelty events. I will list the full results at the end of the article, meanwhile will say a few words about the competition result which pleased me most,

namely the success of John Barrow of the Boscombe Down club who won the Hirobo Trophy. I have known John for some time now and will in fact ask him for a complete run down on his modelling career for a future issue. He had with him a beautiful Hirobo *Gazelle*, complete with full cockpit detail and bulkheads which he flew throughout the day. What pleased me is that John is not in the trade in any way but was able to win first place in this competition. It does seem that most of the prominent flyers are in the trade, but I do everything to encourage the ordinary flyer to enter competitions, as I know there are a lot of people out there with a lot of ability and with a little polish could be very competitive. I think it is worth bearing in mind that even in the very early stages, as long as you can hold a model in the hover, even if you are unable to do circuits, many of the competitions are open to you. Do not run away with the idea that you should not enter comps. because you cannot do some of the manoeuvres, just do neatly the ones you can and ignore the rest, you may not win, but probably would not come last, either. It is for this reason that this year I have used the elderly *Graupner 212*, muffled down, revved down, etc. to make it as unadvanced as possible and yet I have still won many competitions against more advanced machines. Moral — have a go at learning simple precise manoeuvres and, above all, orientation, and the model helicopter world is at your feet. Before I leave the Breton report I would like to thank everyone concerned for a splendid venue, excellent organisation and facilities and of course the weather did no harm. Please don't think that if I missed anyone's name out it is because I am biased or like name dropping, it's just the way things are in my mind when I get home to write the report.

Now on a more unpleasant note. As I have previously mentioned the helicopter Nationals were cancelled, the reasons I am

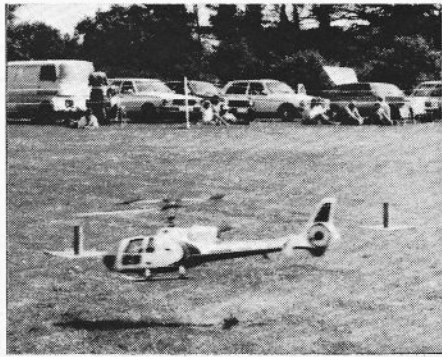
led to believe, was because there were only six entries. Now I do not knock anybody who organises for I well know what a thankless task it is, but, in my view, to cancel an event in the Nationals after it had been advertised as taking place is disgusting. If there had been no entries, fair enough, but half a dozen is a competition. I would very much like clarification but I am led to believe that every Nationals competition has to be profit making before the gates open, 'quote' in case it pours with rain. Well, this, in my view, is just 'not on' and I believe the high entry cost was one of the reasons for the poor entry. £8 entry fee, £9 to join the SMAE and about £6 to camp. These days people do not have lots of spare money and the days of charges like these have got to end. If a spokesman for the SMAE would like to comment I may well apologise.

One should not forget the large numbers of spectators who pay to see the best model flyers in the country. Because I am involved in helicopters the cancellation has become perhaps an over-exaggerated hobbyhorse of mine but I feel that one should not forget the public interest. This was very apparent to me when I did a demonstration on the Monday, I was aware that the crowd interest was more intense than for any other event that day.

Having attended quite a few events this year it is interesting to me to imagine what would have happened had the Nationals run. Only imagination of course but I reckon Len Mount would have clinched it. I do not personally like his style of model but since last year he has really managed to combine his aerobic manoeuvres with some very good close-in work. From what I've seen I think it would have been a close battle for second

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Gazelle by Jeff Bell of Paignton, second in Morley event, goes for the skittles. Left: *Freelance 222* by Trevor Moon of Bretons MFC at the Heli Fly-in used a freelance fuselage, Hirobo mechanics, Webra 61 retracts, on-board starter and is finished in Candy Acrylics.



place between Dave Nieman and myself. I think Dave's *808* may be more suitable for the Nationals schedule which is for pattern manoeuvres, but I think I probably get more practice these days. It seems that Ken Ford and Pat Dubock are specialising in judging rather than flying this year and to them go my thanks for it is not an easy task yet a vital one for the running of competitions. Vago I feel has the ability to do well but I think he prefers to zoom around the sky with his high revving *Star Ranger* rather than getting down to precise competition type flying. That Vago can handle a helicopter is undisputed as I have witnessed some nice close in flying on what, let's face it, looks like a twitchy helicopter, on the other hand the *Star Ranger* loops effortlessly. Other fliers I have noticed are Geoff Bell and Steve Parish from the South West. Nigel from Ripmax has been in action lately doing some nice autorotations with a *Heliboy*. Warren Bailey has been conspicuous by his absence this year but does fly a *Morley* very well.

I would like to thank all the people involved with both flying and organising the helicopter movement, anyone I have not mentioned personally are not omitted purposely but are not memory recalled for this article.

Credit to Len for his complete mastery of inverted flying to within a few inches of the ground. I'm sure many people have seen his efforts at various displays throughout the country, the fact that it looks very easy is tribute to the hundreds of hours spent per-

fecting his act.

Very finally this month I have just completed my first year in business and would like to express thanks for all the help I have received from within the trade. A big thank-

you to all the customers, obviously, and let's hope we are at the bottom of the recession as the politicians would have us believe and look forward to the future as our hobby expands and breaks new ground.

BRETONS HELICOPTER FLY-IN RESULTS

Scale Flying

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. John Heaton | 212 |
| 2. Dave Nieman | <i>Jet Ranger</i> |
| 3. Steve Hubbard | <i>Gazelle</i> |

Static Concourse

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| 1. Len Mount | 222 |
| 2. John Barrow | <i>Gazelle</i> |
| 3. Dave Nieman | <i>Tow Cobra</i> |

Competitors' Best Modeller

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1. John Heaton | 212 |
| 2. Len Mount | <i>Heliboy</i> |
| 3. John Barrow | <i>Gazelle</i> |

Pirouettes

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Alan Parris | <i>Lama</i> |
| 2. Dave Nieman | <i>Falcon</i> |
| 3. Mike Harris and
J. Heaton | <i>Baronette</i>
212 |

Zig Zag

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Warren Rally | <i>Morley</i> |
| 2. Vago Nordigan | <i>Star Ranger</i> |
| 3. Alan Parris | <i>Lama</i> |

Skittles

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1. Len Mount | <i>SX80</i> |
| 2. Dave Nieman | <i>Falcon</i> |
| 3. John Heaton | 212 |