

## **Want to Start in Competition Flying? Then why not try Fun Fly?**

The British Fun Fly Association (BFFA) is a BMFA Radio Control Power Specialist Body and I thought I would just summarise what Fun Fly is all about, including what our aims are to promote Fun Fly Nationally.

Fun Fly evolved all over the country in the 1960's and first became an event at the Power Nationals in 1985 run by Robin Jones and his team from the mid-west area. Robin's team retired in 2007 and our team, mainly made up of members of the Caterham & District Model Flying Club took over the running of the Nationals event in 2008 and have been running it ever since.

Fun fly competition at club level can be pretty much anything as long as it's simple and fun using 'normal' club sport models. Obviously at National level some of the models become a lot more specialised, but basically, it's designed so that anyone can have a go and enter into competition flying with minimal expense.

As a club we run a full year of competitions, a lot of them being fun fly, with events like Limbo, Touch & Go, Carrier Deck Landing, Blackjack, Triple Thrash or Water Carrying to slightly sillier ones like Left is Right, Doughnut Dropping and even sillier ones like Mastermind Just a Minute!

This large range of events is designed to be appealing to everyone, whatever their skill at fun fly and brings a whole different dimension to club flying. It brings the club together and everyone really looks forward to a fun fly day, with most of these events being just as much fun to watch as to take part in.

They also serve to improve pilot skill and confidence as well as giving flyers a sense of purpose and we have a healthy competitive spirit in the club with awards at the end of the year. No one feels put off entering as we keep the competitions low key, informal and fun. We especially find that juniors are encouraged by entering, with most of them now showing us how to do it!

Obviously at the Nationals event, the fun fly is a lot more structured but without losing that sense of fun, with a set of rules that we have refined and updated over a number of years in conjunction with the competitors.

There are now three classes at the Nationals and our other BFFA Fun Fly competition days at Buckminster or other venues. Class 1 is for the more accomplished pilot and the models are pretty much unlimited. This class

attracts many own designs, which is definitely something we like to encourage. With five very different events over the weekend in all classes, a model has to be very flexible and good at all five to do well, so the design of the model at the top level is very important.

Competitions include Climb & Glide, Limbo, Touch & Go and Triple Thrash and a mystery round, drawn at the beginning of the event from Deadstick Aerobatics, Touch & Go Pylon Race, Balloon Bursting and Roop.

Class 3 is a real entry level class, aimed at the club flyer wanting to enter competition flying. The models are restricted on motor or battery size, with no mixing of controls etc allowed. This is to keep the models to similar performance and keep it affordable for everyone. Class 3 was even won with a foam Wot 4 a few years ago!

Events are similar to class 1 except Spins & Spot replace Triple Thrash and the mystery round is a choice of Deadstick Aerobatics, Balloon Bursting, Water Carrying and Donut Dropping.

New for this year is a 'Foamy' sub class within Class 3, which is aimed at standard, out of the box Foamy models such as the Wot 4 or Riot. This enables an even easier way into National Fun Fly competition flying, with the highest placed Foamy model in Class 3 receiving a trophy.

Also new for this year is the middle Class 2, which bridges the gap between the entry level class 3 and the expert level Class 1. Mixing is allowed in Class 2, but the power is limited to 4 cell batteries and single motors.

At any fun fly competition, you are more than welcome to enter up to two classes that you are eligible for.

The National BFFA Fun Fly competitions have a bit of everything. From average club flyers starting out in competition, who are gaining experience and confidence while having a very entertaining and enjoyable weekend to the top flyers showing extreme skill, which is incredibly exciting to watch.

We have a competitor that started in fun fly when he was a boy and holds records in the discipline. He also flies many other disciplines at top level, but keeps coming back to the fun fly as he says there is nothing quite like the adrenaline, excitement and intensity of 2 minutes going under the Limbo. The satisfaction of a good score without cutting the tape is certainly a great feeling.

So, to summarise, Fun Fly is for everyone. With the help of the BMFA we want to become a focal point to help bring the benefits and enjoyment of fun fly to more clubs. Many clubs are already doing some sort of fun fly event and we'd like to help them with ideas for new competitions or improve what they are already doing.

Many individuals are put off entering any sort of competition as they think it is far too serious and intense for them. We want to show through fun fly that this doesn't have to be the case and by entering a club level fun fly competition everyone can enjoy a good competitive event in a very informal, relaxed and fun atmosphere.

We also want to introduce other clubs to fun fly and explain the benefits of such events. Fun fly is accessible to all average club flyers as it is affordable and needs very little in the way of specialist equipment to run the events.

We also want to encourage more inter club fun fly events. These are great fun and add so much to the social side of any club. We already run some inter club events in the SE area and they are quickly gaining in popularity. From that we would like to encourage and help areas into running area fun fly competitions and thus hopefully encouraging even more competitors into a National event or even the BMFA Power Nationals.

Many juniors seem to be attracted to fun fly and we'd like to do more to encourage and help them, as they are the future of the sport after all. We want to be a point of contact for all fun flyers, through our website and facebook, where rules, results, articles, photos, calendars, shared knowledge etc can be found.

As you can probably tell, myself and our team are passionate about fun fly, mainly due to the enjoyment and satisfaction that it has given to us over the years and we just want to give as many individuals and clubs as possible the opportunity to take part and enjoy it too.

We want to show that competition flying can be very rewarding, exciting and above all FUN.

If you want to learn more, please get in touch with me at [jamesrrg@hotmail.com](mailto:jamesrrg@hotmail.com) or see our British Fun Fly Association website at **[funfly.bmfa.org](http://funfly.bmfa.org)**

Happy Fun Flying,

James Gordon

