

2023 Nostalgic Speed Nationals at BMFA Buckminster

On the 12th and 13th of August the Nostalgic Speed Nationals event was held at BMFA Buckminster. The weather was rather windy all weekend with average wind speeds around 15mph and regular gusts up to about 30mph so the conditions were challenging, particularly for some of the smaller, lower-powered models. Fortunately the weekend was largely dry with only one short spell of rain which did not disrupt proceedings for too long.

Nostalgic Speed encompasses two BMFA speed disciplines:

Weatherman speed which is for a single model design, Cyril Shaw's Weatherman as published by Ian Allen (Model Aviation ~1949) with minor constructional modifications required for safety reasons but with modern engines allowed. The original used a Mills 1.3 and there is still a class which only allows this engine and clones. Seven classes are flown ranging from 1cc to 10cc and these are timed over a distance of a quarter or half a mile from a standing start. Both diesel and glow motors are allowed, depending on the class. Whipping is permitted for the first lap to assist take off.

Vintage speed for which eligible models are any control line model which was kitted, or its plan published, before 31st December 1958, with engines restricted to those available at the time but with some modifications allowed. These are timed over the same distances but in this case not from a standing start apart from one proto class. Again there are multiple classes for engine sizes up to 10cc and most launch from a detachable dolly which is jettisoned at take off. Timing starts two laps following a signal from the pilot and whipping is not allowed.

Both Weatherman and Vintage speed must use two-blade commercially available propellers but fuel is unrestricted apart from compliance with BMFA safety regulations which prohibit some dangerous chemicals. Overall winners in Weatherman and Vintage speed are determined by handicap as a percentage of the current records.

Every Weatherman flight appeared to be successfully completed and many competitive times were recorded albeit slightly slower than previous years, probably due to the cold, damp and blustery conditions. The 1.5cc Class 2 was very close with Peter Fox, Mike Edgerton and Jan Huning fighting for the honours with the latter two finishing within 0.1% of each other! Peter Fox was the clear winner in the 2.5cc Class 3 and Dave Finch topped Class 6 for engines up to 6.5cc.

Vintage speed was expected to be a very tense affair. The circle had been swept to ensure that there was no surface debris to disturb the models and the recently installed pit crew safety screen was in place, more of that later. The Transitrace electronic time recording system was supported by a minimum of two stop watches to record each flight time.

David Farmer's campaign had an unfortunate start; his McCoy 60 class model accelerated, left the dolly prematurely and performed the classic slack lines climb and torque roll, fortunately the lines wrapped around the spinner, and stalled the engine. The model was only slightly damaged but, given the potential speed of the model, was probably beyond a "that'll be alright" field repair. David wisely withdrew.

It was a well kept secret that John Alcock would be making an attempt upon David Farmer's 49 class record. John's McCoy 49 powered Dizzy Boy was the only entry flown

on monoline, all others were using two lines. The line specifications are such that the two should be comparable for drag therefore allowing a level playing field.

During the start-up procedure for John's first attempt, pitman Peter Jephcott's finger was badly cut on the propeller and required attention. John's following attempt was mired in confusion and controversy; the signal to begin timing was not given or received. The Transitrace recorded all of the flown lap times and the data indicated that a record could have been achieved depending on which laps were selected.

On Sunday morning the Alcock team tried again. The start-up and launch was followed by a very controlled take off. For whatever reason Dave Finch had not retired behind the safety barrier and had just rolled away laying on the tarmac. Upon it's release the dolly flew at approximately 100mph within inches of parting his hair. It was very lucky that there were not more serious consequences which cannot be said for the Transitrace sensor which was hit and damaged by the dolly despite being purposely protected by a deflection ramp. Fortunately it continued to work faultlessly and recorded the flight data.

John's flight was a demonstration of precise mono-line flying and to his, and all the spectators' delight, he broke the record. Very well done John! John and his McCoy 49 Dizzy Boy had achieved 139.59 MPH to win the gold medal for 2023.

David Farmer's elegant 49 performed extremely well, with small improvements each flight and got within a couple of mph of his existing record, which, considering the conditions, was a fantastic achievement and won the silver medal.

For many attending, the highlight of the vintage speed event was Peter Fox flying one of Ian Russell's models, the Speed King. Peter had refurbished the model and it looked truly authentic, its McCoy 49 growled around and Peter recorded a flight that earned the bronze medal. Our thoughts were with Ian who was unable to attend due to serious illness.

RESULTS - NOSTALGIC SPEED - NATIONALS 2023

Vintage Speed

Position	Name	Class	Best speed (mph)	Handicap	Medal
1	J Allcock	6	139.59*	103.8%	G
2	D Farmer	6	130.47	97.1	S
3	P Fox/ I Russell	6	91.56	68.1	B

* New British Record

Weatherman speed

Position	Name	Class	Best speed (mph)	Handicap	Medal
1	P Fox	III	118.22	98.0	G
2	D Finch	VI	106.37	92.3	S
3	M Edgerton	II	84.03	90.2	B
4	J Huning	II	83.96	90.1	
5	D Finch	I	63.44	89.9	
6	P Fox	II	82.70	88.7	
7	D Catlow	I	45.48	64.4	
8	B Greenaway	I	38.34	54.3	
9	D Catlow	0	41.38	48.5	

Mike Edgerton - CD

Tony Goodger - CLTC

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