

## POPHAM 2018

Nothing really surprising this year, apart from the amazingly good weather for a May Bank Holiday weekend ! So much so that the South side parking area quickly filled to overflowing on Saturday morning. Among the Exhibitors, again there was nothing really new apart from the **Chimera Dragon** GBT1170 G-DGBT, and even that had made a public debut at Aeros Friedrichshafen, albeit without a full display of the UK Marks.



Former Army Air Corps rotary pilot and Instructor Barry Jones is the lead instigator of a return to early gyro Direct Control principles and using a pod developed from a Quik and retaining the weightshift microlight style control bar is obviously aimed at attracting customers from this area of aviation. Although also offering a product potentially costing less than the top-end UK autogyro products, £45K is still not exactly cheap. Power is provided by a 80hp BMW Boxer and the rotors are initially spun by an electric motor. A purpose-built Factory has been established at Tatenhill with separate bays for construction. Some 30 Hrs test-flying has been achieved by the time of Popham. Obviously new-build examples and type certification are the current priority, but there is an obvious market - some way downstream - to offer conversion to existing Quik owners, but this and their earlier Bulldog project (shown at Aeros in 2015) are very much on the back-burner at the moment.

Elsewhere **P&M** are offering upgrades to their established Quantum & Quasar weightshifts and rebranded **QuantumLeap & QuasarShift** names were in evidence. The main modifications are provided by P&M at Manton and first-glance changes to the former are the more aerodynamic A-frame and kingpost and the higher pod screen, all contributing to increased trim range and pilot/passenger protection, plus more subtle changes to the flying cable attachment points. The “development” aircraft was Quantum 15-912 G-CDIL with Colin Russell at Perranporth. G-BZRP & G-CCWO have also been upgraded and were in evidence at Popham. To date, only Quasar IITC G-MYJU has received the Shift treatment and the instantly visible differences are more subtle, although also featuring a raised pod screen. Of their more recent products, the highly professionally finished/no expense spared PulsR G-SFCM made an appearance and in the visiting park G-CHFU & G-CIGG declared their branding as QuikGTR Explorers.





With **TLAC** the B Conditions-regd Scout G-A2-001 this year was shown with both tail and nose-wheel u/c, although obviously not proposed for flying in that configuration, but merely as factory choices. These options reflect those originally available with the earlier kit-built Escapade from which the Scout is derived. As well as the Sherwood Ranger demonstrator G-TIAC, Andrew Pitcher's D-Motor-powered G-CIWD was an event visitor.



Having now also brought the C42 into the TLAC nest, it is now offered with improved seating comfort and locally-based G-UUUU was moved into their display area as representative of the type. Evoking memories of the much earlier microlight days of 3-axis designs was locally-owned MBA Tiger Cub 440 G-MMGF with the nearby **Volair** stand.



**Airplay Aviation** from Sutton Meadows continued to promote their Minifox G-CKIZ from Eurofly as well as their Snake weightshift range. As UK agents also for GRIF SRL, they featured their 3DC sailwings with trikes powered by a 230cc/33hp Cisco Bullmax (s/n 1708BM0182 and with an orange leading-edge to the wing) and Cisco 175cc/27hp C-Max (green leading-edge to the wing). Also in their display area was a third trike under a more distinctive Avian Fly hang-glider style sailwing (exposed rear centre pole). Sadly, for the purist registration-oriented enthusiast all of these operate under SSDR conditions, together with CAA ANO Exemption E4653 (Issue 4 08.03.18), allowing powered, wheeled aircraft to be flown solo without a formal licence or registration.





The aircraft needs to weigh sub-70kg with full fuel (75kg with a parachute), stall at less than 20knots and carry adequate third party insurance. However, it can still be registered as a microlight if a licence is already held (eg G-MADC a Snake/Grif 3DC albeit not at Popham).



Last year, Deepak Mahajan/ **Flyabout Aviation** exhibited an unmarked Pipistrel AT912B Alpha Tr (c/n 858AT912B) On 20.12.17 AAN No: 29503 was raised by Pipistrel D.O.O. Ajdovscina quoting G-RTEN as the identity for a National Permit to Fly application. These UK marks have not yet been issued and, in the marquee this year, the same airframe was on show, this time wearing radio callsign F-JBWO, although reportedly flying under French Département Bas-Rhin marks as 67CAH. Virus SW121 PH-VIR was also a repeat external exhibit as per last year.



Roger Cornwell/**Ascent Industries** continue their agency support for the EuroFOX and Breezer Breezer imports and the more recent of each was represented by G-CKAB (branded as the EuroFOX 120) & G-CKVX respectively.





**JK Aviation/Jiri Krajca** once again exhibited the delightfully diminutive Spacek SD-1 Minisport with G-CJLU & G-SSDI supported by visiting G-CIZA.



As ever, the based Gyrocopter Experience team hosted the Eastern end of the exhibition line with countless examples of the Autogyro GmbH and Magni designs, with an amazing number sporting phonetically relevant registrations: G-IROJ, G-IROX, G-MGNI, G-YRON, G-YROP, G-YROU to name a few. AutoGyro MTOsport G-PAFF was also noted to have acquired the name *Big Nellie* in memory of the late, great Ken Wallis's publically unforgettable *Little Nellie*. Filling a gap in the records, Cavalon Pro G-CKVZ was duly inspected and the c/n is V00339. Following are some representative examples of the visitors.







