

More Stick Time

Dark, Cold, Wet, Windy...

There is an alternative...

Flying indoors - large sports halls. Whilst we can make-up stick time on a simulator, the sims are just not multi-dimensional and cannot give the genuine feel of actually flying.

Flying indoors is impervious to all weather and light conditions, plus allows all the senses required to give real fun and experience.

The latest innovations in quad copters are completely stable. They are cheap, robust, and a joy to fly but more importantly, excellent learning tools. They are sensitive to throttle control, rudder is essential and will give unbelievable help in all aspects of flying. It doesn't matter if you only fly fixed wing or helicopters as the principles required to fly well, applies to both disciplines.

Nose-in on this stable platform will help you to learn very quickly or help overcome the confusion that this often creates. Besides all the advantages to such a cheap little gadget, they are a blast.

At Caterham and District Model Flying Club the whole point is to fly aeroplanes and have fun with like minded people and friends. Flying model aircraft indoors is a fantastic way to go. It adds considerable discipline to large format flying and whilst some skill may well be required to do really well, it will add immensely to the larger format.

There is a huge range available of micro aircraft to fly. From palm held sub-micro Spitfires to Super Cubs with lights, floats and flaps. In addition, 3D flying with all manner of shockies are also available.

3D, is not to everyone's taste but this is a discipline that can, with a small amount of effort be mastered indoors. It may not be the discipline that interests most but the basics of this form of sport, can help large scale flying in so many areas that it is often a shame to be overlooked.

Pattern flying and all forms of aerobatics would benefit from some 3D experience, that could be gained from this. Knife-edge, slow rolls, stall turns, spins, inverted, and the list goes on, can all be finely honed by some experience of indoor 3D.

Conventional aircraft like the Micro Mustangs and Cubs are great too. A sheer pleasure of joy to behold when you fly these little beauties around. Practice landings, taking off, wing overs and the stick time can be immense.

A handful of batteries and you'll easily clock up a 100 minutes of that precious stick time.

Depending on the models you like to fly, it can be a little daunting at first, as you may well feel that the walls are rather close in. Overcoming hi-speed stalls, tends to be a little hurdle but you very quickly overcome the potential hazards and in a fairly short time the walls, ceiling and floor seem to drift further away.

There are a few venues round. Swanley has a large sports hall and indoor flying takes place there every other week. Also Sevenoaks has a venue too. I currently fly at Chessington, sadly this is invitation only but certainly I can take the odd guest along from time to time.

If there is sufficient interest, maybe we should try and organise our own venue. To cover the costs of the halls it tends to be £6.00p - £8.00p per person/session, depending on cost of halls. The venues tend to run from 2½ - 3hrs.

I'd be glad to help anyone who wishes to explore this further or give more information.

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