

The Club of the Year Award The Robin Gowler FSMAE Memorial Award

Introduction

Robin Gowler was an avid aeromodeller from his teens, and throughout his life he was involved in the running of the Ramsey Model Aircraft Club in Cambridgeshire and held numerous roles in the SMAE from the late 1970's until 2018.

He was a member of the Radio Control Power Technical Committee at the time the Achievement Scheme was instigated, and worked closely with John Long, Fellow, on establishing the criteria for the first A and B certificates. He subsequently acted as coordinator of the scheme for many years.

As a Scale modeller, Robin served for many years on the Scale Technical Committee, twice as Scale Team Manager, and many times as an international FAI Scale judge and Jury member.

Robin was elected to the Fellowship of the SMAE in 1989.

Robin held elected positions on the BMFA Council for many years as Honorary Treasurer, Vice Chairman and then Chairman (from 2001 to 2013).

He also Chaired the Royal Aero Club's Medals and Awards Committee from 2010 to 2018.

Following Robin's passing at the end of 2023, his family has kindly donated a trophy in his memory. Due to his continuing involvement at a club level, the family agreed that this would be used for the new Club of the Year Award.

Robin's widow Poppy has kindly agreed to present the award for the first time. Poppy herself had a long association with the Society for which she was awarded an Honorary Membership. Anyone who attend the Power Nationals will almost certainly have heard, at some time or another "seat belts WILL be worn".

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This is awarded by Areas Council to recognise the hard work of clubs and reward excellence in recruitment, community engagement and increasing the visibility of the sport of model aircraft flying in their locality, regardless of discipline. The award uses a percentage scoring algorithm to ensure objectivity.

Impington Village College Model Aeroplane Club

With a score of 84% Impington Village College MAC submitted an excellent nomination that was well prepared and demonstrated that the club is welcoming to new members, has a structured flight training program and has a focus on safety.

The club are also very active in the community, attending non-model flying events to showcase model aircraft and drone flying and they also engage with local youth groups and have a healthy youth membership.

In short Impington Village College MAC are a well managed, active and welcoming model flying club and social club. A credit to themselves and the BMFA and very worthy winners of the inaugural Robin Gowler FSMAE Memorial Award for the BMFA Club of the Year.

Leatherhead Model Flying Club Runner up

With a score of 81% Leatherhead Model Flying Club also submitted an excellent nomination and are another very well managed club, very active in attracting new blood to our sport and who regularly engage in outreach activities with education establishments and youth groups. They are friendly and very visible both online and in the local community. Another credit to the BMFA.

West London Model Aircraft Club Third Place

A commendable score of 73% demonstrates the club are another active and welcoming club fully engaged with the local community and visible both online and in the real world. They have an excellent induction process for new members and have many testimonials to how friendly and helpful they are. With excellent facilities the club hosts a number of member events every year and also fully supports the sporting side of model aircraft and drone flying. The club is very worthy of recognition.