

FROM THE BRITISH FLYING GROUNDS.

Royal Aero Club Eastchurch Flying Grounds.

ONLY one flight was made last week, Sub-Lieut. Rainey taking up the Bristol tractor, with 80 h.p. Gnome, in a very high wind on Tuesday. Further flying was stopped by the rain.

Brooklands Aerodrome.

For the week preceding Christmas, at the Bristol School four pupils—Mr. Finney, Lieut. Bridson, Mr. Macdonnell and Mr. Don, R.N., passed their *brevet* tests in good style. With the new year, one of Mr. Merriam's most promising pupils, who took his ticket in brilliant style, Mr. F. B. Halford, will act as instructor under Mr. Merriam.



Lieut. McDonald, who took his *brevet* excellently at the Bristol School, Brooklands.

On the Friday Mr. Gordon Bell left Eastchurch for Brooklands on a 50 h.p. Short biplane, but ran into a fog after Sutton, and it took him half an hour to get thence to Epsom, the fog being so thick that he came down near the Grand Stand and stayed for a couple of hours. For an hour and a half he tried to find Brooklands where the noise of his engine was plainly heard, but in the end he stopped at Epsom for the night. In his endeavours to locate the aerodrome, Mr. Gordon Bell varied his altitude from a height of 4,000 ft. to one of 40 ft., and the absence of a compass from his machine did not improve matters.

Mr. Gordon Bell flew in from Epsom, and left his machine at Brooklands. Mr. Barnwell was flying well on the new Vickers gun-carrying machine, as were Mr. Merriam on the Bristol biplane, Mr. Dukinfield Jones and several other pilots on the Flanders biplane, Mr. Pixton on the Sopwith biplane, and Mr. Raynham on the 80 h.p. Avro biplane.

On Sunday, the 21st December, the weather conditions were perfect for flying, and eight different machines made a number of interesting flights. Mr. Barnwell was early astir on the Vickers gun-carrying biplane. Mr. J. Alcock was flying extremely well on the Maurice Farman biplane fitted with the new 100 h.p. Sunbeam engine, and also took up the winner of the free passenger flight ballot—Dr. Violet Turner, of the Royal Free Hospital, Gray's Inn Road, London. Mr. Raynham gave some pretty exhibition flights on the Avro biplane. Mr. Dukinfield Jones made a number of flights on the Flanders biplane, as did Mr. Pixton on the Sopwith biplane. Herr Roempler was up a number of times on the D.F.W. biplane, with and without passengers. Mr. Merriam gave some fine exhibition flights on the Bristol biplane, and the Martinsyde monoplane was flying even better than ever.

With the principal schools shut for the Christmas week there has naturally been comparatively little flying done, but Herr Roempler was out several times on the D.F.W. biplane, Mr. Raynham on the Avro biplane, Mr. Dukinfield Jones on the Flanders biplane, and Mr. Alcock on the Maurice Farman biplane, the latter machine flying extremely well and steadily with its 100 h.p. Sunbeam engine in a 33 miles per hour wind, and reaching under favourable conditions a speed of about 90 miles an hour. Mr. Raynham took the 80 h.p.

Avro biplane over to Farnborough where it was officially timed to accomplish the excellent speed of 80.9 miles an hour when carrying passenger and fuel, with a slow speed of 39 miles an hour.

On Sunday only three machines were flying, the Sopwith biplane (Mr. Pixton), the Flanders biplane (Mr. Dukinfield Jones), and the Maurice Farman biplane, with its 100 h.p. Sunbeam engine (Mr. Alcock), on which the winner of the ballot for the free passenger flight, Miss de Carteret, of 33, Birkenhead Avenue, Kingston-on-Thames, had an enjoyable trip in the clear and frosty atmosphere.

Bristol School.—Dec. 15th, 7.45 a.m., Merriam testing, taking Lieut. Bridson as passenger, and found very bumpy.

Dec. 16th, too windy all day for flying. On Dec. 17th, the Wednesday preceding Xmas week, blowing hard all morning. Afternoon, about 4 p.m., became calm. Merriam then for test, afterwards Mr. Macdonell then took certificate in a most skilful way. Merriam afterwards gave a trip to Lieut. Watkins (new pupil).

Next day, at 8 a.m., Merriam testing, taking Lieut. Watkins as passenger. Afterwards up behind Mr. Don on straights and circuits. Mr. Racine Jacques making circuits and half right-hand turns.

Merriam up early testing, afterwards up giving tuition to Lieuts. Watkins and Sanders on straights and circuits, also up behind Mr. Don on figures of eight, &c. (twice). Lieut. Robertson doing fine figures of eight, and v.p. landings, and also Mr. Finney.

After breakfast, Merriam testing, Lieut. Sanders being passenger. Mr. Finney then took his R.Ae.C. certificate very steadily, and making perfect landings to observers.

Lieut. Robertson flying high and figures of eight. Merriam took this pupil up to show him how to make a spiral descent. Afterwards instructor up behind Lieuts. Watkins (2) and Sanders (2), Mr. Don (2), giving all these pupils very long turns. Afternoon too windy.

On the Saturday, Merriam, at 7.45 a.m., testing, with Lieut. Watkins as passenger, afterwards behind this pupil on straights and circuits, later behind Lieut. Bromet (from Salisbury School) on figures of 8 and landings, also behind Lieut. Sanders on straights. Lieut. Bridson then away for his ticket, taking half in fine style. After breakfast Merriam first out, afterwards behind Lieut. Bromet



Mr. H. R. Johnson, who has just passed his *brevet* tests in excellent style at the W. H. Ewen School, Hendon, on a 35 h.p. Caudron biplane,

on figures of 8. Lieut. Bridson then finished his other half of ticket very well indeed, making perfect landing. Merriam afterwards up behind Mr. Don on figures of 8, this pupil having control throughout, including landings. Mr. Don then went for his *brevet*, taking same in first-class style. Merriam afterwards up behind Lieut. Robertson on figures of 8 and landing a *vol plané*. Too windy afterwards for school work.