

16 Year Old Schoolboy Enters the Record Books at Gloucestershire Airport

26th January 2012

A Cheltenham Schoolboy celebrated his 16th birthday today, 26 January 2012, with a helicopter flight from Gloucestershire Airport – with a difference!

Ollie Chadwick made two unaccompanied 'solo' flights, one in a jet turbine helicopter and one in a piston engine helicopter – believed to be a 'record'.

16 is the youngest permitted age for a solo flight and, although a handful of other young pilots have made a first helicopter solo flight at age 16 (and in one case at 14, in Canada), it is believed that this is the youngest first solo in a 'jet turbine' helicopter, immediately followed by a second solo flight in a piston helicopter, at such an early age.

Ollie, a GCSE fifth former at Cheltenham College, was originally given a trial helicopter lesson on his 12th birthday and has continued training at the local airport ever since, but the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) will only allow solo flights from age 16.

The weather was bright, but cold with a brisk south-westerly wind, when he made the two short solo flights. Speaking afterwards, a beaming Ollie said, *"It was a great feeling to be solely responsible for the helicopters. I was mesmerised by helicopters from an early age, so the opportunity of learning to fly has been fantastic. These are both super helicopters and really rewarding to fly. And everyone at Gloucestershire Airport and my School has been very supportive."*

Head of Operations at Gloucestershire Airport, Darren Lewington, said: *"We're delighted that Ollie has been able to make these solo flights on his 16th birthday. Completing a First Solo flight is a big achievement for any student pilot, but doing it twice, and at such a young age, is a massive achievement. I have no doubt that Ollie has a very bright future ahead of him."*

We see many young pilots at the airport training for their private and commercial licenses, and we feel very privileged to be a service provider and part of the support network for those at the start of their aviation careers."



Ollie Chadwick with the Enstrom helicopter that he completed his First Solo flight in today.

Notes:

Ollie Chadwick

- DoB - 26.01.96, in Bath, England
- Home – Kilcott, nr Tetbury, Gloucestershire
- School - Boarder at Cheltenham College, currently preparing for GCSEs
- Other interests – Racing – currently competing in the Ginetta Junior Championship, which supports the British Touring Cars
- Career Ambitions – Motorsport or Aviation
- Ollie is dyslexic

Helicopters Flown

- Enstrom 480B (G-ZZMM) 5-seater, powered by a Rolls Royce Jet engine
- Hughes 300C (G-BOXT) 3-seater, powered by a Lycoming piston engine

Instructor

- Ray Jones, Gloucestershire Helicopters – highly qualified, multi-rated instructor and CAA examiner, with thousands of hours training experience (m. 07968 951 069)

Gloucestershire Airport

- Provides training at every level in fixed wing and rotary as well as top class commercial, business and maintenance facilities. More than 60 helicopters are based at Gloucestershire Airport.

Video Record

- Both flights were fully recorded with video and stills by Bob Humberstone-Garley of Humberstone-Garley Ltd (01993 200 749)

www.humbertstone-garley.co.uk

Please contact for more information

(NB – For reference the Guinness World Records no longer record 'age related' records)