

BMFA/BDF News – Article Requirements / Advice

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Requirements per article:

Article title: Max 3-8 words only.

Short and sweet. Nothing more than an article name, preferably relevant.

Article subtitle: Max 60 words.

Something that quickly summarises the general gist of the article.

Article content: Max 2,000 words, Microsoft Word document.

Ideal content is 500-700 words small article, 1,200 – 1,500 medium, 2,000 max. Anything bigger than 2,000 will likely require cutting into multiple articles and therefore needs pre-approval from the editor. Articles can be emailed direct to editor@bmfanews.org

Article images: Typically, 2 per 500 words as a guide.

Images must be sent as original Jpeg, PNG, PDF file, **NOT** attached to the Word document. Other than historic images, i.e. vintage / black and white. All images must be of good clear quality and must have permission to use, i.e. **NOT** taken from Google or any other source that has a copyright claim. Images are best sent via <https://wettransfer.com> as this is free.

Links to external sites other than WeTransfer, such as Dropbox, Google Drive are often problematic, as often permissions are not set properly for me to access.

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General article guidance:

Firstly, and foremostly, think about the reader and put yourself in their position where they likely know absolutely ZERO about your subject. Most readers are RC flyers, but not all, so there is a high likelihood that the reader is NOT from the discipline you are writing about, so avoid overly technical in favour of 'Keep it Simple'.

Next, make everything a learning and growing opportunity for the reader. By this, I mean take every chance to engage the reader to encourage them to try something new or give them advice they can use to better themselves. The BMFA is often criticised as being 'elitist', as many of the BMFA News articles are too specific on a discipline and talk about themselves as the only thing that exists in the world, but also makes it seem like only those involved could ever have done it. Always think; 'What is beneficial to the reader from this article'.

99% of the BMFA membership does not compete, is only interested in their own flying, or flying with their small group of friends etc. So, if you write something that is too specific to you, your flying, or your discipline, it is of zero interest to them.

Focus on these core things:

Tips, tricks and hints – Let's give ALL members access to the combined fountain of knowledge that we all have. Let's share what we do that works, doesn't work, saves us time money and hassle.

People – Who was there, but more importantly make it more personal. Rather than Joe Bloggs was there, flew their X aircraft and placed 3rd, how about, Joe was there with their X aircraft that took 6 months to build from scratch/kit etc, it's Joe's favourite aircraft because... and they have done this to it... so that it is better at....

Highlights – Joe won the competition with a result of X is OK but make it more interesting by linking information about them, the model, making it information that others can benefit from. How did they set the aircraft up to make it best etc?

Aircraft – Most people, even those from other disciplines are going to be interested in the aircraft, so share details. If an aircraft is unusual, why? If an aircraft is popular, why? What makes these aircraft stand out? Should others buy them? Are they good starters, intermediate, expert level etc? If they're expert level, where should someone go first?

Photos, photos, photos....

Images are the shop window dressing to your article. Poor photos will not make people want to read it.

Good quality is important, but content more so. Try and get flying shots with other elements for reference, such as the ground in shot or another aircraft nearby, or the pilot in view. Avoid too many static shots of aircraft on the ground (unless you are trying to showcase detail close) and avoid too many shots of tiny aircraft on blue skies.

Detailed close shots. If you are talking about how an aircraft is set up, take shots of that happening, or the tools used, or the process. Make images relevant to the article.

Remember – Images need to be printed in the magazine and in many cases not much bigger than a business card. If the image is a technical graph, will the detail show? If it is an aircraft, is it recognisable? Same for people, can their faces be seen?

NOTE: Images of a poor resolution, poor detail, too dark etc, won't be used, so it is important to pay attention to images.

Advice per article type:

Event articles (competitions, funflys, national events):

- 1) Ignore any event/competition results for the most part, we can say who was there and who won, but charts of scores, winners tables etc is of no interest to anyone that wasn't involved, this is the elitest element mentioned above. Instead, these results and tables should feature on the disciplines website or shared via Paul Tallet on the BMFA's social channels as current activity. (Remember, these articles often go out months after an event, so it is no longer current news...). Links to websites where results are listed can be shared.
- 2) Avoid step-by-step diaries of the event's day/s, i.e at 10am Joe Bloggs did X, at 11am they did Y, at 12pm they did Z. This is very boring to read. Instead focus on the human side of things; How many people attended? How much fun was being had? Did anyone do anything amusing on the day, dress in fancy dress (pictures, always pictures)? How far did people travel, was it worth it, would they come again?
- 3) Instead, share advice on why people should compete! What makes taking part in the competition fun, how to take part, what should new people do etc. So many disciplines are desperate for new blood, so promote how to get involved and the benefits of doing so, focus on making it look appealing.
- 4) Tips, tricks and advice. Share what things the winners did that made them successful etc, how did they set up their aircraft, what extra steps did they take? What aircraft did they use, why was it a good choice?

Club reports:

Firstly, only those in the club are likely to be interested in what happened, so instead, make it more about how other clubs could do similar things. Why did the club host or hold an event? What benefit was it to the club/members? How easy was it to do? How much did it cost? What support was available?

Aircraft articles:

We need more content on aircraft and reviews of aircraft general members may like to buy.

Importantly, these need to be less 'look at my lovely model, aren't I lucky' and more 'if you want to have a lovely model like this, here are the things to consider'. Talk about what equipment was used and why, so what motor, esc, engine, servos etc? Avoid brand bashing it will be edited out....