



Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 86

June 2016

Welcome to the News.

"If you, like me, are one of those people ..." says your editor doing his best Dennis Norden impressions, then you'll have known for months that June really kicks off the flying season. This particular month we have reviews of both the 3rd Annual Little and Large Meet held at Pidley, and also the very favourite event of mine of the year, Bedale Balloon meet which is turning into the third largest hopper gathering of the year.

Therefore, whilst the industry is relatively quiet at the moment, here is a chance to catch up on what is happening "out in the field", and a chance to see how ballooning is actually doing at club level, getting a feeling for how pilots are currently and what's occurring.

Second hand activity in the marketplace still seems buoyant and demand still evidently outstrips what is available, with the holy grail of Hopper bottom ends seemingly the Lindstrand mark 2 which can never satisfy the need of the used marketplace. Recently a pristine 2003 example with only Six hour's utilisation sold for £3400, which proves the point, as your editor's May 2005 factory fresh example cost £2150 cash back in the day, and has seriously more hours' usage on it. When you consider the equivalent comparable item is the best part of £6000 new you realise what a sound investment it was. The same can be said of Envelopes that are bought new and looked after. I recently watched the annual C of A of a lindstrand 31A that had done 110 hours and the inspector quoted that in his opinion it was the nicest hopper he had ever seen. I still think if you can afford to buy new the value you have in your own Envelope, (not forgetting you can have your own design), will prove to be a long-term prudent decision. My 2009 Ultramagic H31B in lightweight material was a steal at £6000 cash, and I firmly believe that in Cameron's O-31 Lightweight, the residuals will hold firm. This belief is upheld by two facts. Firstly, they are still selling at a great price (with two new recent sales), and as Cameron prepare to make a new demo model in house colours, G-CIJJ the first example already has a serious offer on it before its placed

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on the used market for sale. As stated last month, the really interesting conundrum is where will Lindstrand Technologies place their new product in terms of pricing and what will an updated Lindstrand Hopper bottom end bring to the marketplace? And Yes, I have asked the factory for a chance to try one as soon as is practically possible for a flight test review.

1, Ed-Speak – So Nice to be back out there.

I know I am prone to go on a bit over things in general but it was so nice to be attending an event again, getting out under canvass, catching up with friends and being at an annual event you enjoy even if I didn't actually choose to fly at it (for various reasons). I'm also delighted that Dave Such took the opportunity to purchase G-CBLO the Lindstrand 42A from Rob Clements. As I said to Dave, it represents a No brainer as whatever hours he cares to put on the 42 will hardly reflect in its resale value when he completes his project to built his lightweight 42, as there simply aren't enough of these available on the second hand market and expect him probably to sell in a couple of year's time for what he paid for it.



photo credit to Christoff Dayaert

The only criticism of the older Lindstrand envelopes was their weight which should now be sorted by Lindstrand Technologies with the lightweight materials.



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The Sale last month of G-SIPP the Lindstrand 35A has now been completed and the new owner is Ann Rich from the Hadfield Area of Manchester. I'm told the balloon is actually for her daughter.

2, Essential Extras – Empty Again !!!

3, The Features Section

The Third Annual Little and large balloon Meet-by Steve Roake

Three years ago Dave Such decided to take on the running of an Annual Balloon meet based around solo flying for up to 60,000 cubic feet balloons. The Little and Large Balloon Meet was initiated at Tim Wilkinson's Sackville Airfield and then transferred to Lakeside Lodge Golf course and complex for year two. Coming back for the third event, having been here less than a month ago for the BBML inflation day, the venue is blessed with a great host in David Hopkins who is a balloonist himself. There is something really special as you drive along this massive approach towards the venue passing one of three golf courses that spread around the central complex. Accommodation here is varied, with some lovely well appointed rooms and whilst I was spoilt with my previous visit, this time being under canvass was in no way roughing it as the complex has great facilities that were made available for all to use. Setting up camp base in an area adjacent to the main clubhouse, you instantaneously feel as part of the countryside in a relaxed comfortable environment and for me personally I have always hankered camping so was delighted to be back under canvass.

The way Dave runs the event is spot on. Its relaxed with a simple declaration to sign to say that your kit is up to date and current, but surrounded by good people, he can also fly himself without fear of not being in control. Dave Hopkins generously gave really cut price fuel at 25p per litre and John Tyrrell provided accurate weather forecasts during the event with particular emphasis on the QNH readings (just for me! - many thanks). The popularity of the event meant that the 25 places were snapped up way in advance of the dates and in the end some 27 teams were invited to attend including some fresh converts to hopping, which is good to see and should be encouraged.

First briefing was Friday night and with the campsite growing nicely we decided that the weather didn't suit us for flying and so a group of eight of us moved to the local pub for some fine cuisine. Homemade Steak and Ale pie has always got my name written all over it. This seemed a very good plan B, for when we couldn't fly. Upon returning to the launch field we found out that some had in fact chosen to fly with about five partakers.

With an early 6am briefing Saturday am planned, and having



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been fuelled by some very nice local beers I decided that I wouldn't be too late to bed in order to be bright and with it for the "god knows how early dawn chorus" prior to briefing.

As with every time I go camping, I didn't need to rely on my alarm clock naturally waking before it went off and sneaking that all important brew in before we got the met off John. Based on the information given, I decided not to fly, however two participants decided that the conditions were okay for them and so I went to watch them depart from the chosen fairway. It is always interesting when you have decided a course of action to study others who have chosen differently. With what I would say was excessively low Cloudbase, they quickly disappeared into the mirk. Apparently both had very enjoyable flights. Others who were undecided at the briefing decided to remain on the ground and await the next briefing to see if conditions improved.

I say this each time and it proves to be true, but events are primarily 80% socializing and catching up with friends and about 20% doing the actual stuff you are there for and Pidley proved to be exactly the same. Taking opportunity to obtain some additional fuel was for me plenty of reason to visit on its own, but I also got to spend some quality time with friends and catching up with Simon Askey, (who is a flipping star), find out what's next from Cameron Balloons. He was once again in procession of the latest experimental hopper fan that Cameron's are evaluating. The interest this time around centered on a cavatating propeller at higher revs with some interest in switching engine supplier to see if this assists in smoother operation. I personally would like to see the product slightly higher off the ground with greater grass clearance.

The next briefing was Saturday evening and having heard what the met forecast was I had once again decided not to fly and so went along to the adjacent fairway to watch those who had chosen to fly. The assembled 12 balloons took to the air gracefully and the lead balloon Andy Austin fed back the information that at 400ft the wind was 8.7knots with lower at 800ft. My own personal reasoning in not flying wasn't based on the wind speeds but rather my observations of lack of landing spots downwind and my lack of local knowledge of the area with regard to what appeared to be little cut crop and the inability to get shelter behind featured terrain. Sometimes it is just as much fun to watch others fly and enjoy the spectacle from another perspective. Did having watched others fly, wish I was in their place, the answer wasn't different to my original choice and I never doubted my decision. Another social evening ensued with a relatively early night to be up and ready for Sunday morning which had predicted fog. In the end with a met forecast of again low cloudbase I stayed in bed.



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So did the lack of flying dissipate my level of enjoyment of the meet? In a nutshell no. This was the third running of a great meet and I've enjoyed all three immensely. I look forward to next year's event.

The 10th Bedale Balloon Festival by Steve Roake.

The Bedale balloon festival celebrated ten years of being held this year. This has evolved into arguably the best event of the UK calendar, and this years offering was right up there with the best of them. Deciding to travel four and a half hours to an event is never done lightly and in the UK Friday travel has to be done early or not at all. The journey isn't easy for many of the crews with people coming from Scotland, Mid Wales, and the far South.

This invitation only event has proven more popular each time it is held and so going into the event, "on paper" 35 teams were due to attend. I say that, because some six teams failed to appear when they had indicated that they would attend. They would say, that the cross London event took precedence however this view takes no account of the expense forked out in advance by the hosts based on those verbal agreements to appear. These actions have consequences and I'm told steps will be taken for next year, ensuring that anyone who commits to coming and doesn't will never be invited again in the future. You cannot plan costs when you are mucked around and I think that the extra expense incurred by the hosts should be passed on directly to those who let them down.

Back to what actually happened, and a great weekend ensued with what is becoming a hopper festival with no less than seven examples in attendance. The essence of this laid back no frills event is that all groups get together for a good old fashioned all included meet and the Friday night meal starts the event in the right manner. We had already concluded that it wasn't flyable and as an added bonus the hosts (Richard Bowater, Nicki and Mark Stelling), had provided a free barrel of Black sheep beer behind the bar to celebrate the 10th year anniversary.

With the knowledge that the Saturday morning briefing was showing non favorable flying conditions I stood the crew down and we indulged in a few drinks in the knowledge that camping on site with the full facilities, there was no need to show restraint. In the end we didn't get up for Saturday am briefing and the real content of the event started as people got balloons C of A'd during the day with both Geoff Lescott and Pete Donkin conducting them.

From the hopper point of view, it is good to see recent converts to them enjoying their recent purchases at an event. The first



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hopper out of the bag and looking in great condition was the ex Roman Mohr Lindstrand 31A G-CDXF. This lovely colour schemed balloon now is in the hands of Robert Worsman who had come down from the Aberdeen area of Scotland.



G-CDXF Lindstrand 31A –photo credit Bob Garnett.

This tidy 2006 vintage Lindstrand has still under 40 hours on it and appeared both to myself and the inspector Pete Donkin to be in very good health.

Another recently changed ownership hopper, G-CBLN the ex Benadryl Cameron Z-31 was attending from York in the hands of James Lawson.

Keen to surround himself with some hopper experienced pilots, James got some coaching on the inflation from Martin Axtell who had popped over to the event and was happy to pass on



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his knowledge. David McCutcheon whilst attending his first event in 20 years is also a hopper exponent and we hope his time with us will convince him to attend the OMM which is in Derbyshire in October (details later in the Newsletter).

Martin Freeston was getting some quality time in his newly purchased Cameron Bottom end, this time under the immaculate G-BZIH Budweiser Lindstrand 31A that he has access to.



Another Bob Garnett photo, this time G-BZIH Lindstrand 31A.



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Again another lightly used example dating from 2000 this one had under 35 hours in the logbook. Lovely colours and still exuding that “as good as new” condition it was good to see it flying again. Joining them in the Air was Glenn Everett from Kent in G-OINN the Holiday Inns hopper, Geoff Lescott in his beautiful Sky 25 G-CFPS (which again dates from pre 2008 and has less than 25 hours’ total time on it).



Bob Garnett once again on hand to catch G-CDUJ depart.

The Saturday evening briefing was due to be at 18-30 but as we all saw, the weather was decidedly flyable from 17-30, and so as conditions permitted we all flew earlier than expected. The winds had quite a variation in them and on the surface a leisurely 3- 4 knots in a westerly direction, whilst if you ventured up as high as 2000ft a flow almost 180 degrees the other way gave a lot of teams the ability to “box” the launch field. For myself I had this year left the hopper at home and took the opportunity to fly my UM M-120 and fly various crew members. The upper winds got as high as 11 knots and yet after 65 mins even ended up a mere 3-4 km from the



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launch site in the next village. The best thing about this flight being the short retrieve back to the site where a very sociable pre planned barbeque was now in full swing. Hosted by Rob and Niccola, all teams had to do was provide their own meat which we purchased from an award winning butcher within Bedale town. Nothing better after a grand flight than a few social beers and a decent piece of steak whilst chatting about the iconic countryside. Whilst in the bar we heard that the forecast for the morning was favourable but according to Mark Stelling earlier would be better because the winds were due to pick up from 8 o'clock onwards so with this in mind I decided bed was a good idea at a sensible time.

Sunday morning woke bright and clear before 5am and with briefing due around 5-30 I picked my spot and started assembling the kit. The met forecast had concluded pretty much as we thought the previous night. Surface winds were negligible and the direction of the prevailing winds was just to the right of North and with a drone filming the action we departed just behind Jan Frazer in her Lindstrand 3 hopper G-CDUJ with the chariot bottom end. Once again the surface flow was in a different direction from the prevailing winds and we flew off towards Catterick. During the flight there was amazing variation of direction. Practising landings, the predominant direction was between 355 and 005 degrees but at 2000 feet I actually at one stage was travelling 066 degrees at a steady 8 knots. It was just one of those beautiful crisp early morning flights that remind you why you do this great sport. Unintentionally I ended up with the longest flight landing close to the croft motor racing circuit. With bags of fuel on board and a lack of cut fields on my track, it seemed Pointless curtailing the fun and with little option but to fly on we proceeded until finally we spied a suitable place just tucked behind a set of woods where it was possible just to tickle it in. A great farmer then complained that he had missed our landing and would have liked to have witnessed the spectacle.

To all of you eagle eyed folks who have realised that I haven't talked about all seven hopper who took part, the one remaining attendee who so far hasn't been mentioned was Andrew Davison in his Ultramagic H-42 G-CIGA. The only reason for the omission was because the only place I saw Andrew and the Lovely Melanie was in the bar. Returning to the launch site for a slow pack away we awaited the closing delighted to have won "the longest flight award", Joking that the reason we won



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was in fact because I'm "so crap at landing". So the tenth annual Bedale event concluded with fun for all except poor Mark Stelling whose car had expired that morning and was awaiting a relay home from the AA. With many thanks to Richard, Niccola and Mark we will return again next year for more Yorkshire Fun.

Geoff Lescott shares his views on Bedale 2016

Having had a great First Bedale last year when I flew G-CHIM "White Lines", produced whipped cream filled meringues for the Friday Supper and squeezed in trips on two preservation rail lines, I booked early for the 2016 event. Radiotherapy during April/May/June left me physically exhausted and I thought I would have to miss the excitement but, feeling good the previous week had me changing my mind – a good decision as it turned out.

My Clacton Crew Bill & Corinne were on hand to help with the two inspections that I needed to do on the Saturday (Jacs O'Connell's G-CEMU and my G-TIBF MasterCard) and so at 6 in the evening I was "encouraged" to get G-CFPS "Bree" out for a flight as it looked very gentle and the observation of box conditions settled the decision to fly. Easy, I thought, land back at the field like a pro. Missed just to the left on the first circuit, let's get some right from somewhere which I found at 1200' at the transition level between opposing airstreams which put me in a good position when climbing slightly higher to end up behind the playing field. Tried a cold descent during which a) my harness strap ends started to lift upward and b) apparently caused some comments about envelope shape from ground observers! To be fair it did spin nicely but the mouth stayed wide open so was not of great concern to me. It would have worked if I only had had the patience to wait another few minutes before my descent.... Not wanting to end up on the clubhouse roof I levelled out and carried on over the farm (nice cows, not at all bothered by my comforting noises over them) and touched down in the long, empty pasture field beyond the wood line, where I walked it to the gate to the North next to the road. All of 40 minutes, but sweet nevertheless.

"Bree" is a 1997 Sky 25/16 with just 26 flying hours in the logbook and has flown in Europe and Thailand. The two flags on the crownline? Maritime signallers will know them as Code "G" and Code "L", but they have a supplementary use as the "Request a Pilot" pennant and the other one is the "I have an Infectious Disease on Board" or Quarantine pennant. So now you know!

The Bedale Meet, so competently run by Richard and Nicola Bowater, is such a friendly affair that it comes highly recommended by this crew and we all hope to be back next year.

Geoff Lescott



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Picture credit to Bob Garnett



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4, Homebuilding – Brian Mead, Linchpin of Homebuilding UK.

To anyone who is active in the UK in terms of Homebuilding, the name Brian Mead will automatically be known as the unassuming Motorsport Design Engineer who produces programs on his computers utilising Cad or Catia programming to turn project ideas into workable solutions that enable you to see a three dimensional render of the proposed balloon. Once you are happy with the shape and size, the software will then produce a set of templates in order for the panels to be cut. This process is a major stumbling block to many potentially enthusiastic home builders, but with a background of designing amongst other things bladder fuel bags for formula one cars, Brian thrives on such challenges. Offering his services via the very successful “Annex 2 Balloons Group” page on Facebook, Brian has enabled many builders the opportunity to initiate and perfect their unique designs and as the UK Civil Register will show, the number of allocations starting with the BM designation in their design criteria is growing constantly. Being close to Tim Wilkinson also helps and the two are fierce advocates of the “have a go” method of building balloons. The knowledge that these two guys have between them cannot be under estimated.



A recent example of Brian's design work above is a lovely 42,000 cubic foot, 16 gore balloon in process for Dave Such. That old adage of “if it looks right – it probably is”, is so true in this



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case. To my knowledge alone, there are at least seven balloons attributable to Brian's skills and I can only see the figure increasing as more people take the plunge and have a go.

Whilst Brian would be the last person to highlight his contribution to everyone's work, let's take a moment to thank him for opening up another way to go when deciding your future ballooning requirements.

Greg Winker sets a world record with a difference – by Greg Winker

Anyone who knows Greg Winker will know about his passion for homebuilding balloons. From his famous Tetrahedron through to the latest design, Greg's attention to detail is astonishing and so when I received his latest exploit tale, I already knew the ingredients that would surface. Here in his own words is Greg's Latest achievements.

I've been a big fan of world record attempts ever since I was a kid growing up in South Dakota. I would read everything I could find and would be fascinated with the planning, effort - and money - that went into these special flights. In the past few years, I've seen some seriously expensive attempts - some successful, some not - and it got me thinking; record attempts don't need to be expensive. At least that's what I was hoping.

The key part to keeping costs down was to find an existing record that didn't require lots of expensive fabric, travel or logistics. I settled on the AX-3 duration record, which was currently about 7 hours 30 minutes. That certainly seemed doable. For fun, I figure I'd give the distance record a try as well.

In addition to setting a record or two, my goal for this project was to do it on a shoestring. Demonstrate that record flights don't need to be expensive. I would build my own envelope, using as many leftover parts I could from other building projects.

This would be my 10th home built balloon so, fortunately, I had managed to build up quite a supply of leftover parts. Building a double walled balloon seemed to be the way to go, what with the improved fuel economy. I had almost everything I would need! In total, I only spent about \$525 building these two envelopes. To complete the balloon, I would reuse my miniature rozier basket that I had made on 2005 and pull the burner off my Lindstrand hopper.

The best odds of setting a record is to have the luxury of waiting for the exact right weather, no matter how long it takes to arrive. In



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the U.S. a sanction period lasts for 90 days. The idea would be go to a part of the country where the weather you need should show up. Then just wait for the perfect day. South Dakota, where I grew up, seemed promising and it had the bonus of giving me a free place to stay - at my parent's house. Plus, there is a local balloon club who have experience supporting world record attempts just about every year. So far, so good.

The balloon design and construction was straightforward and went without a hitch. I spent around 120 hours building the two envelopes. I flew the inner shell several times to get used to how a balloon this size flies and make sure it performs as expected. I also flew it in double wall configuration to figure out how we would inflate the balloon and get a basic idea of fuel economy.

We were on-site in Sioux Falls by the middle of November and were assembled, tested and ready to fly about a month later. From here, it was just a matter of waiting for the appropriate weather conditions. Unfortunately, we had an El Niño winter and the long range forecast was for warmer than average temperatures. During that first month, no suitable weather showed up. Likewise, there was nothing in the mid-range forecast that was promising either.

Fortunately, in early January my weather guy saw the global weather patterns were starting to change. A marginal quality Arctic high pressure system was beginning to form and likely headed our way. With about ten days of warning, we made final preparations. As our weather approached, the forecast for the low temperatures moved around anywhere from -5F to -15F. The high temps were in the range of 20F-30F. Marginal conditions for what we were looking for. But worst case, we could make a test flight with the full system to get a better idea of fuel economy. Plus, it would give my Sioux Falls team a chance to see the balloon and practice rigging and inflation. And with the cold temperatures, see if anything fails.

When the target day arrived, it was a few degrees cooler than forecast; a promising sign. The team met at a park in Sioux Falls at 5:00 AM (three hours before sunrise) for a very chilly, dark set up and inflation. It took a bit longer than normal to assemble the system than we had originally planned. But it did go together and we were able to launch about one hour before sunrise, just a bit behind my original schedule.

As I rose into the sky, dawn was on the horizon making for a lovely sunrise. I worked to stabilize the balloon, settle in and prepare for the long day ahead.

As it turned out, the weather at launch was quite good. Clear, -17F and light winds. The balloon performed without issue and as the tanks emptied, I lowered them to the ground for the crew to pick up.

With light winds and lots of roads, the chase was able to stay close at hand and we talked regularly by radio. I had



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anticipated a pretty boring flight, but it turned out to be a peaceful and beautiful experience. Even though the temperatures stayed below 0F until the end of the day, I was never cold. Plenty of layers, hand warmers in my gloves and boots and sunny skies kept me comfortable.

By late afternoon we had determined I would have enough fuel to take me to sunset, which would break the existing record of 7 hours 27 minutes by about two hours. We assessed the risks of continuing on into the night to extend the record. But it didn't seem like the best plan. With that decided, we arranged to land as close to sunset as possible. I brought the balloon in for a landing right on a road. We had an easy recovery with several cars full of curious onlookers joining us at the landing site. The stopwatch recorded a duration of 9:26:49 which added almost two hours to the existing record. It's pretty amazing such a small balloon (600 m^3) can fly for so long.

All in all, a pretty uneventfully flight. And when you are going after records, that's exactly what you want.

We also wanted to make a distance flight, but the weather never gave us what we felt we needed. So the plan is to return to South Dakota at some point and give it another try.

So, how much does a low budget record flight cost? Here is the breakout:

\$525 Parts to build the balloon

\$800 Cost of the flight

\$1200 sanction and recording fees

\$2500 Total

Greg Winker

Amazing story and congratulations –Ed!

5, Interesting Photos.

At the recent Igulada Balloon Festival , Ultramgic Balloons were celebrating producing 2000 balloons. The Highlight of the event was the revealing of a new balloon celebrating Joseph and Carlos LLada's African exploits many years ago at a Nightglow. However as you can see from the image below, this unique event also had a special connotation from our point of view. Nestled either



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side of the balloon are the first two Ultramagic Hoppers in EC-IPP the H-31 on the left and EC-JVH which is the only H-25 built so far. I believe the two balloons are still factory owned.



Photo Credit to Ultramagic Balloons Ltd.

6, New Allocations This Month

A couple of New Hoppers were registered within this last calendar month. Both are Brand New Cameron O-31's (still proving popular) I will post photographs as and when I receive them but for your information here are the latest two.

G-ERAS Cameron O-31 (c/n 11980), registered to Andrew Laing of Banchory near Aberdeen on 23rd May.

G-CJIX Cameron O-31 (c/n 12011), registered to David Head of Newbury on 27th June.

I also understand there are a couple of new Ultramagic hoppers sold recently, details when I have them.



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7. Gallery Pages –

Your editor's choice of new and interesting hoppers and duo's active in the world of ballooning.



Cameron O-31 G-ERAS registered in May. Thanks for the photo.



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G-OJNB Lindstrand 21A has recently come onto the used marketplace and whilst briefly purchased by Martin Axtell, apparently it is available for sale again now.



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8, Manufacturer / Event News

Lindstrand Technologies – are prepared to talk Hoppers.

As you all know, there have been sightings of the Prototype Lindstrand Hopper, and I reported the news that we all knew. With a lot of hype and rumours I asked for a view from the people who are in the know, Lindstrand Technologies themselves. I am delighted to say that Lee Hooper was more than happy to discuss why now Per has chosen to get back into hoppers. Obviously there are things that for industrial reasons must remain secret but this is what he was prepared to say.

Per Lindstrand first developed the concept of the modern day cloudhopper in the early 80's with Colin Prescott. It has always been an area of Ballooning that is very close to his heart. It was therefore of no surprise that when he announced the return to ballooning the subject of the Cloudhopper was discussed very early in the project.

The team at Lindstrand feel that Hoppers have got too big and heavy, the original was a 14,000cubic foot after all.

Granted your average pilot has increased in girth over the years, but the hopper has still become a big and heavy beast. The original concept was a compact balloon that you could put in the back of any car, inflate yourself and hitch back to the car!

Our new approach to hoppers is extremely lightweight but retaining a level of comfort that means you can still move after an hours flying. We are working on a number of innovative new features that we think could be incredibly exciting for the hopping community.

Like all these things, there is an R&D process and we want to be happy with the direction our Hopper is developing. For example, much has been read into the envelope, but we have already completely redesigned this from the first prototype, and the Mark 2 will begin production soon.

We expect to have more news towards the Autumn after our Summer experiments. We anticipate offering our new Hopper in the following sizes.

17,000 cubic foot
21,000 cubic foot
and 31,000 cubic foot sizes.



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As with all our projects we welcome feedback and input, as its you guys Who fly them. As we have more News, we will keep you in the loop, and once the prototype is ready for flight testing, Your editor will be invited to try it out with a full report after the experience.

Lee Hooper.

So there you have it, bit of a scoop on sizes and an opportunity to let them know your wish list of things you want on the next generation LBL Hopper. Many thanks from me for the open and frank update - Ed.

9,Event News

Dates have now been released for the 2017 **Icicle Refrozen Balloon Meet**. The event to be run again at the Donnington Grove Hotel and Country Club in Newbury Berkshire over the weekend of 7th and 8th of January. Ran last year by the 3/4/40 club, expect more details in due course.

The 2016 31st Annual **One Man Meet** has now been confirmed as the weekend of 7th to 9th October again at Tissington Hall near Ashbourne in Derbyshire. All interested parties should contact John Tyrell or Wendy Rousell to let them know your desire to participate. Email:

wendy.rousell@btinternet.com

And Finally

Facebook membership continues to rise with the current level of 846 increasing by loads in the last month. Let's keep the trend going and aim for another 154 to hit the 1000 mark.

Steve Roake

All articles for inclusion in future issues will be gratefully received by your editor. Please forward them to steve.roake33@gmail.com and feedback good bad or indifferent is always welcome.

Views aired by contributors may not be those of the Editor.

Safe and happy hopping! Steve Roake.

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