



Hello Everybody.

Welcome to the 2nd monthly magazine for the cloudhopper.org forum. Flush with the success of the first issue, we are ploughing straight into issue 2 with some very nice feedback from those of you who took time to send some in.

Content

In this edition we have for you this month details on:

1. Ed Speak- This is where your editor outlines his thoughts and apologizes for the things we got wrong in issue one.
2. Essential Extras - this month we look into the need for Sparkers and where to get a suitable one for hopping.
3. The features section.
 - Graham Bell tells us about Dingbat Junior
 - Amherst - A report from the Experimental Lighter than Air Gathering by Curtis Pack
4. Updates that are now on the website.
5. Manufacturer News/ Event Details.
6. The pick from the latest batch of sightings on the gallery pages at the website.
7. For sale section.
8. Hints of what is still to come in the next issue (which may be late due to Metz).

Ed Speak- By Steve Roake

There I was basking in the praise that some of you have heaped on us for cranking out the first copy of this new Magazine when through the theoretical email news box dropped a line from Sara Lyth whose Cameron Duo chariot featured in edition one. Apologies to both Andy Booth who doesn't fly with Sarah, and to Andy Austin who does, we clearly got that wrong. Also the editorial was incorrect. Sarah flies with a 60L tank and a 40L one as could be clearly seen in the jpeg and not as described 2x60's. She also pointed out that the area actually flown by her is Naseby in Northants and by way of an update told me that now 19 plus flights have taken place.

As I always say on the yahogroup list, this magazine will live and die by your input or lack of it. Some of you voiced concerns as to how we will fill monthly issues. The simple answer is this, should there be no content then the issue will be small, if nothing is received then nothing will be put out. Your contributions are vital to the ongoing success of the mailing list, website and the magazine.

Essential Extra's -This month "Sparkers"

Flying a hopper or duo chariot is definitely alternative to flying a regular balloon, primarily because we have no ability to navigate our position around the burner block. Naturally, we all practice Pilot light failure occasionally, however in our style of flying the need to do so is much more mission-critical due to the technique needed in order to relight the burners should the piezo fail on us. A simple gun style sparker simply doesn't have the range to get to the critical area and so we also can't easily reach around to the area concerned, hence the need for a dedicated piece of tooling.

Following some debate, the following Olympian GM-12 was recommended to me and therefore I give you the link to where you can get it from.

<http://www.cabelas.com>

Look under the section fire starters /lighters priced at \$19-99 each.

Needless to say, this may not be the cheapest place to get them from, but it gives you the idea with clearly shown, the nice long extended reach. My pair took about Ten days to arrive from USA to the UK.





Features This month

Dingbat Junior - by Graham Bell

Last May I contacted both Lindstrand and Cameron about building a small special shape that I could fly over my Duo Chariot, Single Chariot or a Basket. The design was to be along the lines of a goofy face. Having been given the basic idea, Lindstrand came up with a couple of designs, one of which after a couple of modifications resulted in Dingbat Jr being ordered. The other decision to be made was what size was the envelope to be based on.

It was between a 56 or a 60. As I planned to use it over the Single Chariot at times, the 56 won. In hindsight I should have gone for the 60, as this year I decided to sell the Single Chariot (its still for sale) to gain the extra lift and endurance.



In September Dingbat Jr was duly shipped to Colorado. I managed a test inflation in late September but I was not able to fly until the Special Shapes Rodeo in Albuquerque. After a pilot light problem was sorted out, Dingbat Jr finally took to the air over the Single Chariot for a short 20 minute flight. Since then he has been seen in rallies in Chandler AZ, with both the basket and Duo Chariot, Gallup NM, Bluff UT and Roswell NM all with the Duo.

This summer he is due to fly in Riverton WY, Colorado Springs and Faribault MN but these flights will be made solo due to altitude, temperature and weight considerations. There is a possibility that Dingbat Jr might venture overseas to Saga, Japan, in November.

Well, what are differences and challenges to flying Dingbat Jr over the Duo Chariot.

The main problems arise from the bill of the baseball cap, as the bill is to the side, on starting hot inflation, the bill rotates the balloon 90 degrees so that I end up with twisted flying wires, a smaller mouth to try and inflate through and the scoop at right angles to the wind. Once the balloon is upright then the wires do align with the balloon so



now rig the quick release to the side of the burner frame so that when the balloon is standing the wires are not twisted around the uprights.

To overcome this problem I am looking to moving the scoop so that I can rig the balloon with bill facing down or removing the scoop completely.

Whilst flying, it's easy to tell if you in a quickish climb or descent as the balloon spins and at over about 400fpm it becomes uncomfortable. This can also cause problems landing, as one has to land going backwards, if you set it up too early, then balloon will spin itself round so you land sideways or even worse, facing forward.

I have managed a couple of flights of about 90 minutes using an inflation tank, but with only 80 Ltrs tank, one is always keeping a careful eye on the fuel gauge. About an hour is a more normal flight time.



Experimental Lighter Than Air Gathering - Amherst Mass. June 3,4,5, 2005

A look at the experimental side of ballooning.

By Curtis B. Pack

My family and I arrived after a 16 hour drive from the hills of West Virginia and were rewarded with a balloon encampment upon the lawn of the Pioneer Valley Co housing Community. We had missed the weather briefing but noticed the wind was swaying the trees. Most pilots decided not to fly but with host Dan Nachbars help a sheltered area was found where Brian Boland launched the First Experimental Lighter Than Air Gathering at Amherst, MA in to the history books with a hot launch described as "perky" by one of the ground crew. Fortunately the weather cooperated in a more reasonable fashion as the next two days gave way to two morning and one evening flights in near perfect conditions. The Nachbars had the valley prepped for the balloon event so the local and not so local neighbors were friendly and receptive to their experimental ballooning invasion.



The 5 a.m. pilots meeting came early with the launching of the sacrificial PIBAL and planning of the mornings flights. Flights originated from a local school ground with spacious boundaries and no obstacles giving lazy takeoffs in the light winds. Several balloons took the opportunity, before flying, to tether their crew and the locals, spreading good energy among the public and local crew.

After the a.m. flights in light winds, a trip back to the community yielded a full breakfast, cooked and served in the communities activities building. This resulted

in the crew and pilots alike having wide smiles from both the afterglow of the flight and the fullness of a good meal. During mid-day Saturday, information exchange was the theme, with group and one-on-one, informal discussions on balloon building from the simple to the exotic. William Appleby presented a poster presentation on the flammability of the fabric type used in the Hindenburg giving supporting evidence that the fabric flame theory is unlikely.



Several LTA model blimps motored about. Steve Bosquettes indoor airship with no less than three motors was able to glide about the high ceilings of the activities room in control by the experienced and at times out of control by learning novice pilots. An outdoor blimp was flown by Lee Duckett with amazing dexterity in 11:00 am light winds and thermal activity with a simple control system and very nice performance.

During the daily flights, the major obstacle (or opportunity) in the flight path was the Connecticut River, allowing more than a few to splash and dash. Some had a bit more splash than others and reports are that David Tanzer, flying a hopper, is an expert at rescuing water logged, radios.

Speaking of the hopper clan, four hoppers and five pilots were active all weekend. Clayton Thomas, the eldest of the hopper pilots, was moved to describe his flight as "29 minutes of bliss" after going aloft in Eva Tashjian-Browns' hopper.

Eva's hopper was a new Cameron setup which made other pilots lust after her system. David Tanzers' hopper was a middle aged version and Roland Escher was flying an early (capewell) type system with Phil Mcnutts "Ran out of Pink" envelope(25,000) providing a significant performance improvement over his previous 14,000 cubic foot envelope. At least several systems of hoppers were transported in cars

trunks and back seats with one entire system compactly packed in a small car top carrier including envelope, hoses, burner, tank and harness. Noah Forden presented a unique hopper design proposal using CAD drawings for a harness suspension with landing skids for high wind use and protection.

Most of the experimental systems, were in small trailers with minimal crew needed. The locals were indispensable in the chase over the flat terrain and at least one (Evan) knew a few back roads to get us to our destination more efficiently. Several pilots were using GPS to monitor winds aloft and plot projected ground tracks. Early crops were up so this required some care by the pilots in their selection landing choices.



Several publications had representatives present including Northeastern Flyer, Ballooning, and Balloon Life and the websites-Balloon-makers and Cloudhoppers were represented with many online members meeting face to face for the first time. .

Even the shape world was represented at the meet. Wanda the Fish and Dork, a new flying face shape, represented the experimental shape contingent with Brian Boland giving tethers in Wanda and Dork, built by Jim of Maine, sporting an ear ring and a rats tail. An oldie but goodie, Topper, flown by Bob Sommers, was flying and looking quite photogenic.

In the "you just had to be there" category was a unique take off style demonstrated by Roland and Zack. Some hoppers have a unique rotating suspension system, which allows the pilot to rotate in flight. Using this, Zack (on the ground) pre rotated Roland (in the Hopper) resulting in a spinning take off which was a neat sight to see as Roland ascended in to the sky spinning with arms and legs out stretched. A non-ballooning event was the introduction to Moxie, the official soft drink of the State of Maine. It is either vile, medicine like, carbonated liquid or the elixer of the gods, depending on your individual taste buds. The Maine boys love the stuff!



Paul Stumpf was there providing advice for some of the newer pilots (like me- thanks Paul) and several balloons were flying with pilots like Bill Armstrong and others who have long been on the experimental scene.

Dan Nachbar hosted a wonderful get together for homebuilding /experimental lighter than air.

Next year expect to see LTA airships, more hoppers, new conventional systems along with old friends. Many new ideas and experienced tricks of the trade were exchanged over the weekend and as an outgrowth, many friendships were forged. I did not get to talk with everyone there this year and look forward to meeting the rest of the gang next year. Remember if you are planning on attending next year you must pre-register with Dan Nachbar to assist in the planning of the event (relax you have almost a whole year) .

Was it big - no. Was it fancy - no. Was it FUN - YES!!!!



<http://www.xltaweb.com> for more details.

Useful Links (UK only)-Thunderstorm radar

As part of our ongoing dedication to making your life easier for flying, we try to find useful sites with regard to balloon stuff. One such site came up the other day and may be useful when doing pre flight prep work. Check it out!

http://www.isleofwightweather.co.uk/live_storm_data.htm

Website Updates

Following the launch of Last months newsletter, this has now been added to the downloads page on the website. Also featuring is a new section with Balloon visuals. The first to be posted is G-CDIW the Graham Bell hopper from last month. The great story from Derek Maltby on his hopping antics now resides in the Reports section.

We hinted that we would put technical manuals on the website for ease of downloading. The thunder and Colt one as discussed at length on the forum is still yet to be posted, basically because nobody has posted a copy of it to me. Please rectify this matter with an email to Steve.roake@ntlworld.com.

Many thanks.

Manufacturer News / Event Details

Not much to report from the Manufacturers this month. Lindstrand Balloons have corrected a flame pattern problem with their current Cloudhopper having listened to customers concerns. The answer is a revised arrangement on the jet sizes on the burner block with some old jet positions now blanked off and larger jet sizes further round the ring.



Hopper Sightings

Amongst the crop of new sightings this month are a couple of Notables. Firstly, to my knowledge the first ever hopper to be delivered to Eire has been delivered. Lindstrand 31A for Smart Telecom c/n 1035 EI-DJZ is brand new, SE-ZBZ is coming home to the UK taking up it's former Registration of G-BKDS. Mark Redman's Cameron Z-31 is seen under his new Andre Van Wyk basket.



EI-DJZ



SE-ZBZ



G-RIME



G-BSDV



G-CCHP



G-DUMP



OO-BRV



PH-ENR

DIARY DATES

Sept 24th -Savernake- Wiltshire (UK)

The BBAC has arranged for a 40th Anniversary Meet to be held on Saturday 24th September 2005, to be called the **Harvest Moon Meet**. It is a one-day-only event, to be organised by the Dante Balloon Group, the team that brings you the Icicle Meet. It will be held at the Icicle venue, Warren Farm, Savernake.

All BBAC members are welcome, and the aim is to make it an Icicle-style meet, with no sponsors or commercial pressures to fly, some light-hearted competition with a few prizes (run under Tasker rules of course!), and whatever the weather the promise of a good social gathering. Entries will be by advance booking only, with an entry fee of £15.

Booking details and forms, briefing times, and more details will be available in a couple of weeks, but in the meantime please get the date in your diary, and book your crew to come along. We shall be informing some of the local hotels, and we hope to bring you details of any deals they are offering.

It is intended to provide a social event at lunchtime on the flying field, based around a Hog Roast or something similar, with a pay bar. A marquee will be available in case of bad weather, and no doubt there will be a speech or two. It's hoped that lots of historic balloons will be brought along, and they will be welcome to tether any time through the day, subject to safety measures.

More information will be available soon, and details of a dedicated website will be circulated. We hope there will be links from the BBAC and Zebedee sites.

Dick Plume, Pete Bish, Celia and Roger Kunert Dante Balloon Group

We have been specifically invited to bring hoppers to this event by co-ordinator Rob Cross.

One Man Meet -Wales October 15/16th WALES

Phil Dunnington has confirmed this years meet will be the weekend of Oct 15/16th. The planned location of Llanfarrant Court Hotel has regrettably been cancelled as there is no availability. Phil is sorting out a new site and will advise the location ASAP and we will advise.

For Sale- from Mark Redman

If anyone is interested - my old T&C bottom-end has just appeared on the Zebedeelist.

<http://www.zebedeelist.co.uk/list/item.php?id=8cbdd1aaea15731e0c5d594067ae63e3>

It's good kit, but I part-exchanged it for a dual-tank Skyhopper and the new owner (dealer) is selling it straight-away.

In Next months Newsletter

First of all, this could be later on than planned due to the mass exit of Brit's to the Bi-Annual Festival of Metz. But scheduled to be included next month are these tasty bits

- Andre Van Wyks thoughts on his Hopping Developments.
- My new hopper bottom end choice and how I chose the final selection.
- A feature On Skychariots, views, reviews and personal thoughts from skychariot exponent Keith Sproul.

Till next timeFly safe

Steve Roake Editor

All articles for inclusion in future issues, please forward to the editor at Information@cloudhoppers.org and all feedback good, bad or indifferent will be welcome. In future we might even run a letters/email section.