



Issue Number 33

July 2009

Dear readers,

This month we have for you a "Special Edition" focusing on the XLTA 5 that happened towards the end of May at Amherst Massachusetts. The Pilgrimage to the USA for your editor is something that I have wanted to do since its inception. However, there is a sub plot here too. I blame equally Dan Nachbar and Graham Bell, who brought back the pin badge from XLTA 4 with the message "If you want number five, you've got to come and get it yourself"! So armed with that dare, I had to go, and let me tell you now, it was awesome and well worth the effort.

However, before we go too far, remember we will be in Metz this month and whilst I hope you all enjoy it, Sarah Elston reminded me just how good it was 24 months ago when we had our "Mass Flyout", by sending in this jpeg which she calls "Just Hanging Around". It is just a brilliant shot with six hoppers to the fore (even if I am Hidden-Ed!), which should we get a chance to replicate this time around, will be fantastic to see you all there again dangling in the light breezes.

Many thanks for the quick reminder Sarah and thanks for sending in the jpeg. Without any further delay, here is your July edition of the newsletter. "Bon Appetite" as they say in France!



*Just hanging Around-Metz 2007 -jpeg by Sarah Elston*

## **Contents**

In this 33rd edition I have for your reading the following choice subjects;

- 1, **Ed Speak**-XLTA "Getting There "was mad!
- 2, **Essential Extra's** - The Lindstrand Map Case-Part 2(**New Product**)!
- 3, **The Features Section**-featuring the following submissions:
  - - An XLTA overview by your editor.
  - Followed by Greg Winker's experiences.
  - A corking "Oldie" Roland Escher G-BIFC Colt 14A
  - Jon Radowski brings a bit of history. A one man Airship!
  - Greg Winker on Flying the Tetrahedron
  - My favourites and why -by Greg Winker.
  - Tim Ward's diary of his Solo Meet experiences.
4. **Updates for the Newsletter/Website/ Forum talk**
5. **Homebuilt Section** -
6. **Gallery Pages**- Another mixed choice of hoppers, selected by your editor.
7. **Manufacturer News / Events / Updates**
  - OMM News- the venue and the dates are known.
- 8, **For Sale /Wanted Section**
  - G-BVRL LBL 21A Envelope is for sale
  - G-BSDV Colt 31A Envelope is up for grabs.
- 9, **Last and not least.**

**1, Ed Speak by Steve Roake** - The Journey to XLTA was Mad!

I know that arriving at XLTA involves tales of mammoth driving by folks from all over America. Stories involving driving trips of 20 hours plus are commonplace, and whilst the British contingent mostly flew to the event, even we had barmy trips involving some curious routes. For example, Crispin Williams and wife Sarah who live near to Bristol were travelling with Continental Airlines from their local airport at Bristol Avon. Their route was fairly straight forward to America with a non-stop service to Newark direct.

However in order to get to the nearest airport to the event (Hartford Massachusetts), they found for the earliest arrival to their destination it was best if they routed through Cleveland Ohio from Newark. For my part, my route was more direct with Delta Airlines from London Heathrow, but involved a stop at JFK airport before getting a Delta Express connection to Hartford after three hours stop over. The flight to Hartford was scheduled for 1hr30mins but what I wasn't aware of was that "included" the 1hr and 5mins from pushback to takeoff! The distance to destination was a mere 104 miles and whilst we didn't fly above 12,000 feet, it seemed weird to take only 24mins on an hour and a half schedule. Luckily for all of us, our good friend Graham Bell was at Hartford to chauffeur and taxi us to the event and Hotel accommodation respectively (having driven to the event via another festival from Fort Collins Ohio). Once ensconced in our accommodation we simply needed to get up early enough for our "commute" to the action each day! Delta airlines even managed to get 54 passengers for the 50seater Bombardier CRJ 200 feeder jet and witnessing the bartering for passengers to take the next flight was interesting. If I hadn't been collected by Graham Bell, The final acceptable offer of 650 Delta Dollars against future travel, a meal and guaranteed seats on the next plane some two hours later would have been tempting particularly with XLTA Seattle and XLTA 6 in mind.

Steve Roake

## **2, Essential Extra's- Lindstrand Type 2 Map Case-Part Two**

Following on from last month's Essential Extras theme of the Lindstrand Map Case and it's "failings", I am delighted to tell you that Lindstrand Balloons Ltd have been in discussion with their Swiss dealer Richard Sargeant and have designed and made a new

version. Not only that, Chris Dobson, Richard and myself have been selected to trial the new product prior to it going on sale.

First thing to say on the subject is well done on the speed of redesign and listening to the faults that the previous one served up. The new map case is as you would expect true to the innovation Lindstrand are renowned for and has the signature use of striking colours whilst correcting the issues that were previously discussed as "limiting" its effectiveness. I will be flight testing mine at the Metz festival and for anyone interested in seeing it in the flesh, please catch me out there and we can arrange for you to get an "advanced peek" at the product.



*Old verses new! The scale of available space to read maps is immediately apparent with the new map case-jpeg Steve Roake*

### Salient points.

- Volume of available viewing space now caters for four sections of a folded Ordnance Survey map, with transparency on both sides you now have eight areas of legible map without need to refold in flight.
- Zip fastener is easy to use when accessing map with large tab.
- Velcro points at each end of the case for Marker pen storage
- Karabiner mounting on longer lead (although I would prefer a Wichard snap lock fastener myself).
- Ability to half the available useful area with Velcro tabs.
- Substantially enlarge visual area in transparent windows.





Bearing in mind most hopper pilots like to buy once and then stick with what they have, I believe that this map case addresses the issues that we have been discussing at length. So When released for general consumption , subject to the price being agreeable, I recommend you treat yourselves to the New Enhanced Lindstrand Map Case . You know where you heard it first! Many thanks to the Lindstrand team for quick reaction and for listening.

Steve Roake

### **3, The Features Section- XLTA 5 a "Special Review"**

#### **An Overview by Steve Roake**

New England is a beautiful state, with vast expanses of arable land, the odd mountain range and around Amherst a wide meandering river. As you can see from the first of Noah Fordens Photos (unless otherwise stated), great flying territory.



*Hopper country -XLTA 5 was flown around terrain like this*

For five years now, Dan Nachbar and his family and friends have hosted the XLTA Event inviting the great and good of the hopper and homebuilding world to his home for a weekend of fun. Most folks arrived on Friday afternoon for an Intro/ Get together at the central eating house where Dan lives. This vast building acts for the weekend as a centralised meeting point, dormitory for some and forum for lectures or presentations. Most travelled to the event by truck or car and the early birds had the pick of the vast building for where to set up their sleeping bags indoors or join the brave ones outside under a giant awning. Others towed giant motor homes to the event and set them up in the adjacent road within walking distance. Eva Tashjan-Brown flew up to the event in her Cessna 182 (but I didn't find out if the hopper flew up too)! Over a sociable meal we all bonded and put some names to faces until then only known via e-mails and web blogs.

Saturday morning arrived and with it very flyable weather. The crews decamped to Northampton Airfield in convoy for some free flying. Whilst our driver and balloon provider Graham Bell was worn out after some serious mileage, fear not, as the session wasn't lost as "we, the Team" completed two annual C of A's on both of Grahams balloons (the Kubicek BB-20 duo Chariot G-DNGA and his hopper G-DNGR Colt 31A). The bottom end of the Colt hopper was being used for the event by Greg Winker with his Tetrahedron hopper envelope which Graham had brought with him so that Greg could jet in to the event and still partake some flying. So Greg flew, and I marvelled at all the great home built projects whilst snapping away with my new camera. There were plenty of creative sights on display and a couple of rare British registered craft in the shape of Jon Radowski's Thunder & Colt As 42 Airship (G- BKZL) and Roland Ersher's beautiful Colt 14A G-BIFC which was simply a gem.





*Greg Winker departs in his Tetrahedron-jpeg by Steve Roake*

An extended flying session ensued with some partakers actually heading back towards Dan's place in Amherst getting quite close. Weather for the slot was a very nice 7knot wind with little cloud and most took the opportunity of an inversion to "Box the airfield" before heading for splash and dash territory over the vast nearby river. All agreed that the flight was great fun, with about two thirds of the expected participants flying the slot. Back to the Headquarters we all demolished a tremendous breakfast courtesy of the fine folks who turn up year after year to cook for all the guests (for which we thank). The "senior members" from our visiting party, decided to return to our hotel for some Rest and recuperation whilst I decided to hang out with the folks who showed off ongoing projects and talked turkey until the evening briefing arrived . With fair weather predicted for later that evening we shot off to the local launch site for the evening's flights.



*Noah Forden photographs the local launch site used for both Saturday evening and here on Sunday Morning (note the mist)!*

The early departures ensured some flying was possible but most folks took time to engage in viewing Jon Radowski's Airship which had unfortunately been grounded by a loose exhaust pipe which had a cracked weld from the morning's exploits. However the spirit of camaraderie amongst flyers soon initiated the removal of the offending part to be welded and cleaned up overnight for flying again the following morning.

As the flyers ascended, the Brits decided to give Crispin a commercial check flight by Graham in the Kubicek Duo chariot. For Sarah and me the retrieve process was easy with the balloon

literally travelling 3miles for easy access retrieval next to the main road. A large proportion of those who flew this slot also landed around the vines that grew adjacent to the river. Once again we returned to the house, refuelling in a massive localised storm and then entering the sociable environment of the eating house for food and a presentation by Greg Winker of a TV documentary he was involved in on rocket powered hopping. The presentation was well received and finished a great day well.

Sunday morning arrived with another flyable slot. From the local take off site it was my turn to fly with Graham in the duo chariot. The takeoff was very easy with a draw wind along the site but the upper prevailing winds went a completely different direction. The route was over arable land once again with the river prominent. The view from above showed pockets of early morning mist lying in the valley. We "cruised" along mid pack for approximately 45mins until we spotted a beautiful stubble field where we descended and made a perfect landing with great access for the retrieve team who were with us instantly. We then returned to the centre for another hearty breakfast. All of us came away from the event stimulated by what we had seen. In such a short period of time we had gelled with our American friends and whilst we were buoyed by the experiences, I for one was sad to leave after such a short period of time, but faces had been put to names and friendships established with some great people. A thousand thanks to Dan Nachbar and his wife (our hosts), and the team of selfless helpers behind the scenes who made our visit great. Would I go again? If I can arrange it I am aiming to return so watch this space!

Steve Roake

## **Greg Winker- How XLTA5 was for me!**

So here I am at Seattle International Airport. It's nearly midnight and I'm getting ready to board an overnight flight to Boston. In just two days, I'll be making the return trip. Travelling 5,000 miles to attend a weekend balloon meet seems excessive – even to a confirmed balloonatic like me. But then this is XLTA. I did this a couple of years ago, so I know it's definitely worth the effort. This is my favourite meet of the year.

XLTA is Oshkosh for balloonists - an annual pilgrimage for homebuilders and experimental flyers. We're a tight knit group and this weekend is always a reunion of old friends – with plenty of opportunities to make new friends. Dan Nachbar and his wife are the perfect hosts and they provide us with the perfect venue, camping on site, group meals and terrific launch sites. And, of course, the natural beauty of central Massachusetts makes for good flying and excellent memories.

Arriving in Boston, I pick up the rental car and make the leisurely two hour drive to central Massachusetts. Folks are beginning to arrive and the weather forecast for the weekend is promising. After having exchanged e-mails with our editor for years, I finally get to meet Steve R. in person. It would be impossible to find a nicer guy. This was worth the trip all by itself.

The weather was more than promising. Those that came to fly could take in as many as four flights between Friday evening and Sunday morning. The weather cooperated for all flying slots. With a variety of launch sites, we were covered no matter what the winds had in store for us. I only flew twice, as I wanted to spend time socializing and checking out everyone's equipment.

Graham Bell was gracious enough to let me borrow his hopper bottom end and I flew *Diamonds are Forever*, my homebuilt tetra-hopper. Graham stayed busy flying with Steve Roake and Crispin Williams in his duo-chariot.

Highlight of flight #1, I'm floating along at 1,500 feet. All of a sudden, I hear behind me a very clear voice saying "Pardon me, do you have any Grey Poupon?" I swing the chair around and there is Rick Jones, about 50 feet away from me in his Cameron Skyhopper *Footloose*. Somehow he managed to sneak up on me while I was looking the other way. We chatted for a while, and then floated off in separate directions.

Highlight of flight #2, Jon Radowski and I had a close encounter over the Connecticut River. Jon was busy splashing and dashing his hot air blimp

and I came down for a look. As we passed each other, we got within about five feet.

For most people - myself included - the highlight of the weekend is always talking shop. Sharing ideas, plans, parts and tips for new building projects. With group meals and a large room to relax, there was lots of time to catch up on things.

As is usual, Sunday came way too early and after a leisurely breakfast, we said our goodbyes and got on the road. Plans are already underway for XLTA 6. I've spoken with my micro-jet engine expert and he is ready to debut a jet powered cloudhopper at next year's meet.

Greg Winker

### **Roland Ersher's Record breaking Colt 14A G-BIFC**

This time it was me who instigated Roland bringing this rare gem to the XLTA meet. I had seen an old jpeg from a few years ago and knew that Roland had ownership of this record breaking balloon at his home in Washington (DC). In conversation with Roland, I suggested that if I was coming to XLTA and he was too, then he should bring the Colt 14A G-BIFC. This balloon is a bit of a record breaker having previously been owned by Coy Foster who we believe first flew it at Albuquerque in 1980. When I spoke to Roland He told me that the balloon was damaged from its last outing when flown in Albuquerque where the parachute was damaged quite badly having flown hot at altitude with a rip stop Nylon chute in a Hyperlast envelope. Imagine my delight when this emerged from the bag!



Roland Ersher unfurls a piece of history, G-BIFC a true classic.





*G-BIFC in all its glory! A pretty classic Hopper-jpeg by Steve Roake*

What Roland has got here is truly a classic piece of history and I have personally promised to "shoot him" if he doesn't get the parachute fixed. The extent of the problem was seen when we inflated the balloon. The great thing about this coincidentally is that Crispin Williams has agreed to help Roland track down the appropriate material for a replacement parachute to be made so that the envelope is back to its original best.





*Damaged Parachute on G-BIFC Colt 14A-jpeg Steve Roake*

It later transpired that that during the last flight in the balloon when the parachute was damaged, Roland was put off flying the balloon thinking that it was now dangerous. I suggested that on the day that we inflated G-BIFC, being as the winds were light and variable we should take the opportunity for Roland to get back into the seat and with some guidance he agreed to a gentle hop across the Northampton Airfield site whilst secured by a rope to a crewperson. Overcoming the obvious nerves and stress related to the previous event, Roland was buoyed and thrilled to be back flying this great hopper again. Dealing with the harness and Capewell Fasteners, the rewards were well worth the efforts.



*Clearly having fun in the Sun -Roland Ersher at XL TA in his Colt 14A G-BIFC. Thanks for bringing her for us to enjoy-jpeg Steve Roake*

### **Jon Radowski with his "One Man" Airship**

Before anyone complains, Jon Radowski of the "Nailed" hopper fame turned up with something a bit different to the XLTA and kept the spirit of One-man flying alive by showing us his Thunder

and Colt AS 42 Airship .Yes I know strictly speaking it is a bit off subject but please give me some latitude as this is a great story. When the trailer opened I had no idea what would emerge.



Then this bottom end emerged into the sunlight and most folks moved closer for a better view. This was Saturday evening and having seen Jon fly the Airship in the morning, I was keen for a better understanding of the craft." Lady Luck" wasn't on Jon's side that evening, with some damage apparent when he did his run up checks. The exhaust had broken around a welded bracket that would preclude flying that slot, but all wasn't lost as it was suggested that if it was removed a generous local farmer would clean it up and weld the offending part for the morning. This job was achieved to a high standard and Jon did fly the next slot. Whilst we generally stick to the subject matter, the spirit of one man flying was definitely upheld by Jon who flew around the

Various hoppers in a spirited fashion.



*The Colt Airship G-BKZL of Jon Radowski caught mid flight over the river by Noah Forden.*

### **Flying the Tetrahedron - Greg Winker**

Greg Winker has supplied us with eight great instalments in his series on building the Tetrahedron hopper(for which we thank him for all the efforts), and in this the last instalment, in his own words he describes the final element on how it feels to have finished the project and some sentiments on what it is like to fly .

If you've been getting this newsletter for a few years, then you'll remember a couple of years ago I wrote a multi-part article on building my new

cloudhopper. Even though I said it would be an eight part series, I only sent Steve seven parts. Here – at long last – is the final episode.

## **Building a Cloudhopper** by Greg Winker

### **Part 8 – Flying a Tetrahedron.....Finally!**

With construction complete, a successful test inflation and certification in hand, there is only one final task before we are ready to go floating. We must give our new creation a name. This part is hard; I'm really bad at naming balloons. My wife will back me up on this. Over the years we have ended up with names like *The Paper Balloon*, *Zaphod Beeblebrox*, *Sanity*, *The Bride of Sanity* and *This is Nick Saum's Balloon*. Dreadful names to be sure. But I'll take some credit; at least they're better than *Serendipity*, *Cloud Dancer* or *Misty Morning*. Rather than end up with another goofy name for the tetra-hopper, I did what any name-challenged pilot would do. I turned to my crew for some help.

Remember in Part 7 I mentioned the serial number I assigned to this balloon was 007. So I wanted a name that was James Bond related. After a lively discussion of the various movies, plots and characters, a winner emerged.....

#### ***Diamonds are Forever***

Probably not the best Bond movie, but the name seems appropriate for a tetrahedron shaped balloon (but not as fun as the runner up - *Pussy Galore*). We popped some bubbly, had a toast and saw that nothing else remained in our way for the first flight.

For those of you who have never built a balloon, it may come as a surprise that the first flight is very much a “come to Jesus” moment. Throughout the entire process you have made sound design decisions, tested your materials for integrity and carefully constructed the balloon. Even so, there is still some amount of hesitation that it's really going to work. And the not-so-causal thought crosses your mind – is this something I should trust my life to? So the first flight is very much a test flight.

That said, the engineering of a natural shape balloon is pretty evolved. The commercial manufacturers have produced over 20,000 balloons (I'm guessing) and have confronted and overcome most of the design deficiencies. As homebuilders, we usually just follow in the footsteps of the manufacturers. Engineering a tetrahedron, on the other hand, is more like



“this ought to work, let’s give it a go.” As a result, I found the comfort level on the first flight was going to be much lower than I was used to with natural shape balloons. I was quite nervous.



*Maiden flight of “Diamonds are Forever” at Albany, Oregon. August 2007.  
Photo by Cory Miller*

At the end of the day, I survived, the balloon stayed in one piece and now I’m just as comfortable flying this balloon as I am any other balloon. Is there anything unique about flying a tetra-hopper vs. a regular hopper? At first glance I was thinking a tetrahedron pretty much flies the same as a normal shape balloon -

- You put heat in it and it goes up.
- You start taking pictures and enjoying the view and you come down.

But as I started thinking about it, I realized there were a few differences. It does all sorts of things you don’t expect out of a natural shape balloon.

The first thing you notice is spinning. As you ascend, and particularly as you descend, the tetrahedron rotates. Sometimes it's fast, sometimes slow, and most of the time not at all. That's understandable, standard shape balloons do this too. But tetrahedrons must have more irregularities, because the spinning is more pronounced. What's unusual is that you can rotate while in level flight. On one flight where I had been floating along just fine, the balloon began a slow 720° spin. It was slow enough and lasted long enough I was starting to think there was a leak in the balloon. But just as suddenly as it started, it stopped; and there was no more spinning the rest of the flight. Other times you can be spinning clockwise (for example), you'll stop and then start spinning counter clockwise. I'm baffled why it does that.



*Flying at Leon, Mexico. December 2007. Photo by AP Press*

Another interesting feature is the reaction when heat reaches the top of the balloon. As it rolls out into the tips, it is very common for the balloon to bounce up and down. Kind of like the feeling you get when a commercial jet goes through mild turbulence. Sometimes it's right after burning, other times it just seems to happen out of the blue. And as the heat curls down the sides of the envelope, you can experience flapping fabric. Weird. I've also noted a pendulum effect without ever touching the ground and burn holes have appeared in the middle of flights for no apparent reason.



So to summarize, it's fair to say the tetrahedron is possessed by an evil spirit. I'm learning to deal with it.

When it comes to packing away, this balloon is every bit a special shape. Milking the air out takes forever – I've started adding deflation patches in the tips to help speed things up.

Is this balloon everything I was hoping for? Yeah, it really is. I was going for something different and that's the feedback I'm getting. First and foremost, I made a tetrahedron because I wanted a new building challenge. Trying new things helps keep the ballooning experience fresh and fun.



*Floating along at XLTA – Amherst, USA. May 2009. Photo by Jon Radowski*

From a construction standpoint, how did I do?

.

Cutting was a snap. Sewing the rectangle together was exceptionally fast and easy. No curved seams, no fabric creep. At this point I was even starting to get confident that things were going well. The second half of the project brought me back to reality. It was a lot more work than a standard shape balloon. At times it was downright frustrating. The throat required a lot of time and a lot of thought to get right. Measuring twice before cutting once got it right the first time. The para-slit took a lot more effort than I had anticipated. Only now, almost two years later, do I feel like it is finally working the way I had originally hoped it would. It still seems to be undersized, but at least it is sealing properly.

From a time standpoint, how well did I budget?

	Budget	Actual
Cut panels (hrs)	20	20.0
Basic Fabrication	18	24.0
Form tetrahedron	4	5.5
Install throat	5	6.5
Attach load bearing tapes		6.0
Attach centering tapes	3	
Install top	5	7.0
Install turning vents	10	9.0
	5	0.0
Total	70	78.0

That's a lot closer than I would have expected. But that isn't the whole story. There were a few items that took up some time that never got into the budget in the first place.

- Coming up with the original design
- Redesign to get it to work
- Reworking the para-slit
- Procurement of materials
- Documentation – writing these reports
- FAA paperwork

From a cost standpoint, how well did I do? The final cost came in at \$2,070 including the tank rider for a bottom end.

Would I make another tetra-hopper?

You know it! But I have a whole list of other new and different projects that I'm ready to tackle. I accomplished what I set out to do with this one; now it's time to onto the next thing.

What would I do differently next time?

My design called for a 6½' diameter throat. By the time it was completed, it was up to 7'. During the first inflation, I immediately noticed how small seven feet really is. So next time, I'd make the throat a bit larger – probably 8 feet. And I would be perfectly comfortable adding more Nomex. Now I understand why cloudhoppers have so many patches at the throat. I've already managed to burn a few holes myself.

Is this a good first homebuilding project?

I don't think so. There are some tricky bits to consider in designing and building a special shape envelope. I recommend that your first project should be straightforward. That means a standard natural shape, simple colour scheme and relatively small volume. Your first building project should be mostly about seeing if you like building. Don't complicate it by trying to make a lot of engineering decisions on a one-off design. There's always time for that with future projects.

Why build? Did I meet my objectives?

I choose to build because I enjoy the process. It brings together a lot of my interests – design, fabrication and flying. Sometimes I'll end up with something unique, other times something practical. The important thing for me to remember is that I do this because I enjoy doing it, not to save some money. But saving money is a nice bonus isn't it.

For more information on homebuilding, my friend Bob LeDoux – and editor of the Homebuilders Newsletter, has the entire series available on CD. You can find the CD for sale here: <http://www.proaxis.com/~bobledoux/> it's the best \$20 you'll spend this week.

From what I can tell, this is the 11th tetrahedron shaped balloon in existence. Keith Sproul has documented all of them here: [www.skychariot.com/tetrahedron](http://www.skychariot.com/tetrahedron) I'm sure there are other tet's out there, but they have not come to our attention yet.

What's next?

Once you have figured out your purpose in life is to build balloons, you find there is always “one more” balloon that needs to be built. I've already come up with the idea, and this one is going to be one-of-a-kind! Stay tuned.....

Greg Winker

Undoubtedly Greg has been a superstar with his input this month, with the series of articles on building the Tetrahedron flipping awesome. Seeing it in the flesh I have to say the detail and finish is at least comparable if not superior to any other new balloon I have seen, with great attention to detail, so from me personally Many thanks for all your submissions-Ed!

## **Tim Ward's Diary of events from the Solo Meet 2009**

### **Team Pegasus at the Black Horse - Hopper Meet 2009.**

1<sup>st</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> May 2009.

#### **Friday.**

Team Pegasus is due to meet up on Friday afternoon, John coming up from Brighton, Tom via the train from Huddersfield and myself and Bryce driving down from Nottingham.

By coincidence we arrived at approximately the same time. After a quick chat with the landlady of The Black Horse, Camp Pegasus was pitched at the bottom of the field.

That afternoon, C of A's were carried out on both of John balloons by Chris Dunkley. Thanks Chris.

Friday evening was too windy to fly so we had a meal in the pub.

#### **Saturday.**

Saturday morning was not suitable for flying with legs dangling. Only one balloon flew (basket) from a local sports field at Cuddington.

Later on the latest Lindstrand Hopper was inflated alongside G-DICK, an old Thunder&Colt 77.

Saturday evening looked more stable.



Brighton and Hove Albion were playing a crucial relegation battle and John being a very loyal supporter decided to travel all the way back home to support his local side. Now there's dedication for you – Respect!

During Saturday afternoon Mark Stelling offered to give Tom an instructor flight and should crew be available, John had kindly offered to let me fly his hopper. It would mean that we would have to have a double retrieve.

We made a request for a driver during the briefing and Tim Wilkinson (from Sackville lodge) kindly offered to retrieve with my son Bryce (Thanks Tim and Bryce). Tim had recently checked out, so congratulations to Tim.

To make it easier for Tim and Bryce in the retrieve, I decided that rather than go after the original hare balloon (Paul Dickenson in his Ultra Magic Hopper) I would go after Mark and Tom in the V90. After a delightful 30 minute flight towards Chesham, Mark and Tom found a perfect field to land and I followed not too far away.

**BRIGHTON WON!** – Survival for another year.

**EVERYBODY HAPPY** (unless you supported Northampton – they got relegated)

The remainder of Saturday Evening was spent in The Black Horse with good company, sampling the food and the beer. However I dare not ask for a pint of wife beater in our local!

### **Sunday.**

Sunday morning was unstable so a lie-in and a leisurely breakfast which for my son Bryce was a hectic task, cooking breakfast for 4 people on a camping stove. Michelin star breakfast... unfortunately with the consistency of rubber! (Bryce's words not mine; I think he did a fine job!)

The briefing on Sunday evening showed unfavourable conditions again, John looked at me and said "Fancy a curry?" - "yes" came my reply and as luck would have it, Dick and Gabriela Sargeant had exactly the same thoughts. It was Gabriela's birthday and a local friend of theirs knew of a superb Indian restaurant and they invited us along with them.

We later found out that some had flown, apparently with stand up landings. However, all 7 of us had had such a good evening – great company and lovely food that it didn't matter to us. Happy Birthday Gabriela!

### **Monday**

Monday morning was flyable and a fly-in was set with the target placed in the field at The Black Horse. John flew his hopper with the other Balloons from the Thame showground, the task was won by Richard Sargeant.

John landed in a grass field behind a row of houses at Kimble. We had a bit of trouble locating him and went to the wrong pub car park! After a while we found John and soon got the kit packed away. We then went back to the Black Horse where we cooked breakfast for the last time and packed leisurely for the journey home.

There were loads of prizes at the prize giving. I can't remember all of them. Two notable ones were awarded to Steve Roake (Hare and Hounds). Richard and Gabriela Sargeant winning the weekend event. All in all, it was another fun hopper meet. Many Thanks to Tim Crowdey and The Black Horse Balloon Club who yet again organised a fantastic gathering, leaving us with yet more happy memories.

All the best,  
Tim Ward.

### **My Favourite Jpegs and why-by Greg Winker.**

In this fourth round of my favourite jpegs and why, your editor has "bullied" Seattle's Greg Winker to choose his three favourite jpegs of hoppers or duo chariots and tell us why. In His own words Greg describes his choices and how he came to his decisions.



### **Greg's first choice**

Ed Yost's first flight. October 10, 1960 – Bruning, Nebraska, USA.  
This is where it all started. After several years of development for the U.S. Navy - modern hot air ballooning begins....with a hopper.

### **Greg's second choice**

N1044R. Donna Wiederkehr flying her AX-2 inside an AX-7. 1975 -  
I'm a little bit partial to this balloon – it was my first homebuilding project. Donna later flew this balloon to 14 world records for altitude, distance and duration. The last of these records was finally broken in 2007 by Pauline Baker.





Third and final choice from *Greg*

Yours truly flying *Diamonds are Forever* at XLTA 5 - 2009. What can I say? I was having fun and Jon Radowski snapped a great picture.



Next Month I have asked David Tanzer to come up with his three favourite shots with an explanation of why he likes them.

*So now who else would like to make their unique choices of hopper or duo chariot favourites? Selections to me as ever please, care of [steve.roake@ntlworld.com](mailto:steve.roake@ntlworld.com).*

### **3, Updates to the website / Newsletter/ Forum Topics**

With everything else that is currently going on, I can only say that nothing of note occurred this month of note for this section, more next time.

### **4, Homebuilt section (inflation fans)**

One of my favourite subject matters, I came across these two at XLTA 5 so include for your appreciation



*The block of wood on this one stated weight 26lbs.*



*Great ground clearance feature on this application.*

## **5, Gallery Pages.**

This section is the Editor's choice of new jpegs, visuals and older balloons of interest or alterations. Thanks to Bennie Bos for forwarding to me the first submission which is the first Duo Chariot that Cameron balloons has done for a while. PHSJK is a Z-56 for its Dutch operator. As you can see from this beautiful visual, this balloon is going to be something special and comments from Colin Wolstenholme of Cameron Balloons reiterate their delight in completing this sale.

I have been promised jpegs on this balloon once it is completed so watch this space for more on the Z-56.





V12.300

Artwork: x2

June 2009

Designer: KG

Fabric Colours Used:



BLACK



WHITE



ROYAL



SAND



RED

Scoop / Nomex : ☒ ROYALLoad Tape Colour: ☐ White ☒ Black

This visual is for guidance purposes only. Because of the limitations of graphic representation, colour scheme and artwork will be defined by the final order document.

Another first is this prototype Hopper by kubicek balloons. Speaking to Crispin Williams (who knew nothing about the project); he has agreed to find out more on this project for us. Obviously a polyester hopper has the potential to fly hotter and whilst this balloon is a BB9 (therefore  $0.35 \times 9 = 31.5\text{k}$  C/N 682 is a first off and not indicative of future specifications.



*Seen over a basket on its test inflation OK-9682 is a BB9  
Jpeg thanks to Kubicek Balloons Ltd*

## **6, Manufacturer News / Events / Updates**

**OMM 2009-** Phil Dunnington has now confirmed the location of the 2009 OMM as being centred at the Millers at Glencott Hotel in Wookey near to Wells in Somerset. This is an upmarket hotel so do not be surprised at the tariff. The dates are also now sorted with the date confirmed as 16-18<sup>th</sup> October which is a week later than normal. Budget Hotels and bed and breakfast accommodation is also available for folks on a budget (like me-Ed!).

Please register your interest with Phil at [phil@gonewiththewind.uk.com](mailto:phil@gonewiththewind.uk.com). The fall back solution of Husbands Bosworth is being touted as a substitute.

## **Kavanagh Balloon News-**Hopper still on the cards!

Sean Kavanagh recently confirmed via Facebook that the hopper project is still on the agenda, and whilst in Europe recently dealing with issues with the EASA authorities with regards to their range of balloons, Sean reiterated that the design and templates are completed for the hopper project and it just needs the time to cut and sew the first item. He is still firmly focussed on bringing the Kavanagh Hopper to fruition but needs of the business necessitated the delays.

## **7, For Sale /Wanted section**

Martin Axtell's G-BVRL LBL 21A didn't find its way to the new owner in Lithuania as he was messed around. However, having spoken to Martin, he has indicated that having put the balloon complete up for £3200, he would be agreeable to accepting

£2500 for a quick sale. Martin can be contacted on 07742-666554 or at [mjaballooning@hotmail.com](mailto:mjaballooning@hotmail.com).

**G-BSDV Colt 31A for Sale (Price reduced again now only £1750)!**

Your editor is selling his Colt 31A Envelope, registered on 19th April 1990, she has done 76 hours 15 mins (last flown 21<sup>st</sup> March 09) and cold inflated at the solo meet. EASA C of A until August 09, she is now surplus to requirements with the new purchase.



*Ready for a new owner -who will buy G-BSDV Colt 31A?*

Turning vents are currently disconnected but lines will be supplied and can be reused. In the current climate, a price reduction to £1750 seems fair (as she will need a C of A soon), from the £1850 previously quoted. The price includes the original Colt bag and



stylish Lindstrand 31A replacement bag. Great entry to Hopping Balloon with loads of life left in her, she needs new Loving owner! Contact Steve Roake on 07721-358758 or 01276-516125 after 7pm weekdays or Email [steve.roake@ntlworld.com](mailto:steve.roake@ntlworld.com)

### **And Finally**

Membership is currently a healthy 386 members and still rising. We are getting closer to the magic 400 mark. Not far now! All articles for inclusion in future issues will be gratefully received by your editor. Please forward them to [steve.roake@ntlworld.com](mailto:steve.roake@ntlworld.com) and feedback good, bad or indifferent is always welcome. Views aired by contributors may not be those of the Editor

Anyone travelling to Metz , see you there !  
Safe and happy flying Steve Roake.

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