

Issue Number 43

August/ Sept 2010

Hello again my friends,

August has come and gone and September is whistling by, and with it- probably the best part of summer. In the UK, August is traditionally the timing of the biggest festivals and of these, Bristol Balloon Fiesta is this year's big one with up to 150 balloons present. Unfortunately the hopper input was minimal, but as I didn't take a balloon to fly there, for me the emphasis was to network with folks in the trade and get up to speed on the state of ballooning generally. Being involved in a rapidly changing world of Motor Racing, it always amazes me that change in the commercial marketplace takes so long to effect. Most definitely the future of ballooning lies in advanced materials for envelopes (either Polyester or Nylon), and the thought of these new fabrics excites me, it's just a shame when you talk to Simon Forse Lindstrands for example, when he says Yes we have new stuff coming, you have to realize that you could be taking 12 months ahead as they have to use up the current stock back ordered last year before you can use anything new and exciting.

But mark my words -change is coming and we are in for an exciting time with newer lighter materials that last longer with better coatings. The problem for all of the manufacturers is securing enough and guaranteeing supply. The exotic Mylar and Techno fabrics used by the Ultramagic Balloons for special projects will become cheap enough to be commonplace at affordable prices.

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**2. Essential Extra's** - The Pulley Pouch in pictures

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- Hopping at Bristol.
- G-BOYO a rare treat at Sackville Lodge
- My Three favourites and why by John Hilditch

**4. Updates for the Newsletter/Website/ Forum talk**

**5. Homebuilt Section** - A Special Shape to go above a Duo Chariot built by Bob Romaneschi.

**6. Gallery Pages**- Another mixed choice of hoppers, selected by your editor

**7. Manufacturer News / Events / Updates**

- OMM 2010 details now announced.
- Barolo OMM details announced.

**8. For Sale /Wanted Section**

- Another H-42 Ultramagic is for sale.

**9. Last and not least.**

**1. Ed Speak by Steve Roake** - Call me greedy...

Give someone a good time and they always want for more. Last year in its first year of ownership, I managed ten hours in my hopper. Listening recently to friend and Inspector Chris Dunkley speaking about EASA and how its killing off UK flying , he let on that in his business the amount of Private flyers are about 25% less for inspections this year compared to previous times and year on year hours flown by each balloon is now averaging a paltry 6-7 hours. The one overriding thing about Chris is that he is a good guy, highly knowledgeable and definitely with his finger on what's what in ballooning. He recognises that beaurocracy is killing our sport and when grass roots events are staged such as the very popular Sackville Lodge event, not only does he back it(when others doubt its worthiness), he even put his hands in his own pockets and gave a sizable donation to the organisers to assist in their endeavours. Top Man I say!

I digress. Having flown at the Solo Meet, you always strive for more, and so I have taken the view that in recession times and because I love to fly it so much, I would concentrate on getting more use out of my hopper this year and attempt to beat the ten hours achieved last year. This view was rewarded last time out with an hour and twenty minutes of pure exhilaration on a beautiful flight from West Sussex back towards Surrey overflying stately homes, watching other balloons splash and dash, and getting buzzed by a Spitfire and Hurricane whilst enjoying a balmy summers evening in "Blighty". This weekend was also flyable, any guesses which balloon was prepared first, and subsequently flown?

## 2. Essential Extra's- The Pulley Pouch in detail

Following last month's revelling of the pulley pouch, I received two beautifully crafted pouches from Chris Dunkley to be accessed on their merits and I have to say the larger sack for my 90A has worked brilliantly. However, with that version came a smaller brother for use with the hopper and I have to say I think the design is even better suited to hopper operations. Size is approximately 120mm by 95mm for those who are interested and the first picture below shows the pouch in the closed position.



The Hopper Pulley Pouch-jpeg by Steve Roake

The loop is for handling purposes and as you can see from the picture; this pouch is made in very hard wearing material. My one suggestion for anyone wanting to make one for themselves is to make it in a bright vivid colour (acting as a visual aid pre flight should you forget to remove it prior to inflation).

In the second jpeg you can see the pouch in the open configuration, with Velcro strip to seal the pouch around the pulley in situation within your balloon .All you need to do is put it in place when you are putting the envelope away after flight eradicating any potential for the panels to get chewed up in the pulley wheel.



The Hopper Pulley Pouch in the Open Position.  
-jpeg by Steve Roake

As the saying goes; "Prevention is better than cure". The Pulley Pouch- deemed by your editor as an essential extra. Uk pilots can order one directly from Chris Dunkley .

### 3. The Features Section

#### Fast Flying a Hopper-by Steve Roake

On those occasions when you are in the Pub talking hoppers, views always differ about the merits of flying them. One I have heard more frequently than I care to mention by pilots who have flown hoppers for more hours than I have, is that fundamentally you can free fly a hopper in most conditions you can fly a regular balloon.

Over the August Bank Holiday I had a chance to put this theory to test on a morning flight. The take off was in a mild 5-7 knot flow but sheltered (probably a good thing) and there was a definite inversion .However at 1000ft, and for most of the flight, the wind speed was in excess of 15 knots - and at times 20!

However it made for a very interesting trip starting in Hampshire and ending up in West Sussex. Now as usual I practiced a couple of approaches during the flight and with the knowledge that the inversion was still present, I knew I could enjoy the ride and with pockets of morning mist in the valleys the scene was great and the thrill of a morning hop (rare for me) just added to the immense feelings of satisfaction for being up and flying so early.

The facts of the flight were as follows. Flying time 1hour 15mins, distance flown, 12.8nm. Gas used 38litres. The icing on the cake was a 3.5knot stand up landing in a corner of a cut field in a valley. I also was pleased when descending into a valley pocket- I got the balloon pressurized prior to going through some turbulent layers around tree top height with no deformation of the shape, something that you need to think about on days like this.

Without changing my views that serene hops are lovely, the change in my flying to include a faster experience was a breath of fresh air and a moment to savour. So to all those who say you can fly a hopper in faster conditions like a regular balloon- I concur and its fun too!

Steve Roake

#### Hopping at Bristol

The annual Bristol International Balloon Fiesta is a focal point of then summer flying season here in the UK, and whilst it is a shadow of



its former self these days (over 80% of participants have featured repeatedly previously and are therefore fairly boring), some parts of the event still remind you why you love ballooning. I use the event to Network with fellow flyers and catch the activities for a change from a ground perspective. Conditions this year were challenging but there were a few good lifts and some nice nightglows and eventually a hopper appeared.

Tim Orchard had with him the Lindstrand G-BVRL a 21,000 cubic foot "capewell" fittings equipped ex Demo machine from 1994. It took ex hopper exponent Derek Maltby no persuasion to get involved and watching him get into the rig was a hoot.



Equipped with powerful water cannon -Derek Maltby goes hopping around the Bristol Fiesta Arena-jpeg by Steve Roake

Equipped with the monster of all water pistols, Derek floated around the arena launch field giving anyone within range a squirt of the water cannon. However, Clive Bailey, one of the organising committee took it upon himself to acquire a bucket and doused the pilot when least expecting it.



Amazing how much attention one solitary hopper attracts on a non flyable morning in Bristol. Another event slides by without too much to talk about.

Steve Roake

## Favourite Jpegs and why-choices by John Hilditch

In this fourteenth selection of my favourites and why, John Hilditch selects his favourite three photographs with reason why he loves them.

### G-BHUR Thunder AX3 17,500 cu ft – circa 1980

Brian Ribbans AX3 Thunder Chariot at Oaksmere, Broome, nr Eye, Suffolk either 1980 or could have been late as 1983. This was one of many famous ERBBAC meets I attended in the late 1970s/early 1980s; organized with help of Brian and the late Geoff Payne and wife Norma – invariably we camped, (I still have that orange tent!) so we just crawled out of bed in the morning (and crawled into bed the night before after a late night in the pub).



Whilst I can elaborate, that's another story, but I experienced my first lock in at one of these meets, many pints of Adams beer and we had no trouble from the Police as Geoff Payne was the local copper!



N1024P - Boyle Eire - September 1989

This was one of a selection of I believe Boland Home Built at the Irish meet - they were apparently brought over as hand luggage as had collapsible baskets - just love the shapes and looked great fun ; many years before I dreamed of owning a Cloudhopper.



G-AXMD - Omega 20 – September 1996

This is I believe the first of the two identical Nimble balloons registered G-AXMD, which whilst not a hopper in the conventional sense was one of the first advertising balloons and is here pictured at Stansted Park, West Sussex in August 1996.

For me and no doubt many other this was my first image of a hot air balloon being featured in the bread adverts on television, but since I saw it in Black & White I didn't appreciate that it was Red, White and Blue until I saw it for the first time, when I took this photograph!

I understand that all the Nimble balloons were flown by Christine Turnbull for the filmed advertisements. On a historical point, G-AYAL Nimble II an Omega 6 was the last production envelope by Omega prior to Cameron starting production.



Contributions for future editions of my three favourites and why to [steve.roake@ntlworld.com](mailto:steve.roake@ntlworld.com) please.

### **Sackville lodge-G-BOYO**

The Third annual Sackville Lodge "Grass Roots" festival took place recently at Sackville lodge airfield near Riseley in Bedfordshire.

Based at an old 2nd world war munitions base in rural England, tucked away at the end of a village with cultural links back to the 10th century, full of carefully kept houses rich in thatch and with elegant quirky cornices that epitomise all that is "Best of British" village lifestyle.

Coupled to these surroundings is a grass airfield site with the friendliest team of hosts you are ever likely to come across. The most important ingredient of all of this is the understanding that you fly if you feel like it; there is no pressure to perform and no commercialism. Home cooking and an impromptu bar also assists in an ambience that is second to none with camping and showers included. Even the gate house as you drive in has two nice touches. First is the gate has a sign on it stating failure to close it will result in a forty shilling fine. Then the house itself is lovely with innate ornamental chimneys. Sadly this year, the weather wasn't brilliant and whilst 40 balloons flew on Saturday morning in What can only be described as brisk conditions?



G-BOYO Cameron Viva 20 -jpeg by Sandy Mitchell.

John Hilditch did bring with him a very rarely seen hopper. G-BOYO is a Cameron Viva 20 which is one of only two ever built and dates from 1988. During the course of the weekend he inflated it and flew across the launch field on a tether.

Use the link below to see a video of the action.

<http://www.facebook.com/video/video.php?v=431070874826&ref=mf>

Whilst other hoppers were present, on this occasion we failed to play with them. Fear not, because the success of this event will overcome any shortfall in weather related problems and most folks still had a cracking time. Expect next year's event to be even better.

#### **4. Updates to the website / Newsletter/ Forum Topics**

Some talk this month on the forum around the size of hopper you would need to suit your flying conditions. As ever, it is best to talk to your local dealer to ensure you get an envelope that suffices your needs with lift capacity ratio important depending on the altitude you intend to fly to and your specific weight and the ambient temperature for the region you will be flying. It cannot be stressed how much this decision is the key to your future happiness, in my case when I was purchasing my replacement envelope to replace my trusty Colt 31A, I had to figure into the equation the possibility of flying in France in the afternoon in temperatures of up to 28degrees to ensure that I had enough coverage to tick all of my boxes. It would have been horrendous to go to Metz and only be able to hop in the mornings due to insufficient lift capacity at local temperatures in the evenings. There are guides that help with this calculation including one on the Cameron Balloons (UK) Ltd home page-check it out.

#### **5. Homebuilt section**

##### **Bob Romaneschi -Built "Baby Bee" a Special Shaped Duo Chariot**

I own and operate the Little Bees, Joey and Lilly. For many years we have considered adding a miniature Bee or as we call it our Baby Bee to the tandem flying Bees. We just completed the construction and flight testing of "Joelly" The Baby Bee.



Details include:

Registration number N-995LB

Capacity (volume) 56,000 cu ft

It was built by myself and my son Ryan under the name of Zing Aerosports. We currently have on loan a Thunder Colt Duo Chariot on loan from Graham Bell, and we will use it to compliment our tandem flying Little Bees and the program of Michael Glen, [www.rollingpilot.com](http://www.rollingpilot.com), the only licensed paraplegic balloon pilot in the world.





We have completed several test inflations and 3 tethered free flight but only 2 untethered free flights. The balloon is very responsive. Our Thunder Colt Duo Chariot has a Cameron Ultra Single installed and is a very nice burner. We have also tethered it using a Lindstrand Hopper bottom end. We used 1.2 oz Soarcoat silicone fabric. It weighs approx 200 lbs. I find flying the Duo Chariot very comfortable and look forward to flying it often. I hope to travel and attend many events with Joelly.

We used Rhyno 3D and ProE software to replicate our full size Bees originally made by Victoria Balloons of Brazil. We modified original 3D files drawn by Martin Kaiser who made his own, unauthorized model Bees. As a result of building the model balloons prior to our granting permission, Martin cooperated with us to supply his files allowing us to make the design process of our hopper easier.

We added some features including rotation vents and a parachute valve which his design did not incorporate. The construction was similar to the full size Bees using materials and methods and practices common to other Special Shape Balloons.



Ryan Romaneschi was instrumental in design modifications and computer modelling. We were assisted by several friends and family members who made patterns and cut fabric. Most of the construction was completed by me. The build took 8 weeks once we started making patterns. Prior to that we invested 2 months in the computer design.

All photographs are taken by Bob Romaneschi –many thanks Ed!

Bob Romaneschi

**6. Gallery Pages**-This section is the Editor's choice of new jpegs, visuals and older balloons of interest or alterations.



New LBL35A for Steve Lacey G-NLCH is C/N 1325.

The new Lindstrand 35A represents a repeat sale to Steve Lacey who was keen to endorse the service provided by Lindstrand Balloons.

"The remit I gave Lindstrand balloons was to design, build and manufacture the hopper in 9 weeks in time for me to take it to Kirschberg Austria. Not only have they done a great job I would have no problem recommending them to others". Twice now they have delivered exactly what I wanted.

-Praise Indeed Ed!

Richard Gahan reminded me recently that the Hopper G-OBAB that belongs to Barry Bowers is relatively rare. Since its registration, this is the only jpeg I've seen of it-so here it is again. Possibly a candidate for Barolo 2010?





## 7. Manufacturer News / Events / Updates

### OMM 2010

Details of this year's One Man Meet have emerged from host Phil Dunnington. Therefore here is a list of meeting points and times as supplied by Phil.

1530/15 Oct. Check-in and first briefing. Glencot Hotel, Wookey Hole.(GR532472) NO parking in hotel car park. All non-residents must park on the cricket pitch edges (access gate GR530472).

1900/15 Oct. Social gathering at Wookey Hole Inn (GR533475)

0700/16 Oct. Briefing at Glencot Hotel. Parking around cricket pitch. Subsequent briefings as appropriate.

1200/17 Oct. Prize-giving at 'Victoria' pub, Priddy (GR528508)

Any balloon of 42 size or smaller welcome. Entry fee £20 payable IN ADVANCE to: P.G. Dunnington; 1 Kensington Villas, Bristol BS8 3AJ. Each balloon must have a valid EASA CofA/ARC (or be Annex II) for free flight. Insurance to current EU standards. Please supply details to: [phil@gonewiththewind.uk.com](mailto:phil@gonewiththewind.uk.com). Please bring full/spare tanks as we have no refuelling facilities on site. Marked-up map 182 required.

The venue is to be the same as in 2009 and the area around the Mendips is lovely to fly. Make sure you don't miss out -see you all there!

### Barolo 2010 One Man Meet

Pietro Contegiacomo has been in touch with details of this year's event in Barolo Italy. Please if you are interested in attending, contact Pietro and make sure you understand the changes to the event for 2010 and the implications of these changes particularly with regard to transporting your hopper to and from the event.

Changes include:

- Hotel will be moved to Victor\*\*\*\* Hotel in Narzole (10km



west of Barolo -15 mins drive).Rooms will be comfortable and breakfast will be served before going to the launch field.

- Special rate will be charged for 2 persons three nights (twin or double) for Euros 195. This includes extras.

- This year due to budget cuts there is no vehicle from UK to Barolo for hopper transportation - you get your own balloon there! Possibly if demand is there Peter Bish may organise something - contact him with your enquiry.

Any enquiry about the event please contact Pietro directly at [pietro@balloonpromotion.com](mailto:pietro@balloonpromotion.com) or +390174 701963.

## 8. For Sale /Wanted section

Amongst the adverts spotted this month was an advert for this hopper.

Ultramagic H-42



Ultramagic H-42 (Year of Manufacture: 1996), 0 hours flown, only 2 or 3 inflations. Possibility for attaching banners to envelope. **Price: €5.500,- ex VAT.** Contact: Pieter Kooistra joure, The Netherlands Phone: +31 - (0) 513 - 417503E-mail: [kooistrapieter@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kooistrapieter@yahoo.co.uk)

Sounds like a bargain to me-Ed!

## And Finally.

Hope you appreciate this newsletter is being sent now due to the closeness of both the OMM events, see you there- enjoy the flying.

Membership is currently a healthy 425 members and despite a small dip, numbers are generally still rising. 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

Safe and happy hopping! Steve Roake.

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Issue 43-August /Sept 2010