



# Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 70

April /May /June 2014

Well Hello again People.

As always an Editors life is up and down depending upon the content you have to play with and after a lean time resulting in no newsletter for a couple of months , I'm suddenly delighted that I have loads to pass on to you all.

Not only do I have some details on the cracking new event called the little and Large Solo Meet, it also seems that the powers that be in Europe have seen some light and are reviewing their requirements for Cloudhoppers. Then there is a definite trend which is witnessing the emergence of hoppers at nearly every flyable slot, and where once they were unique and rare, now you see more pilots converting to our type Of ballooning.

On top of this, popularity in hoppers is increasing with evidence such as facebook numbers on the cloudhoppers page now exceeding 500.

Then we have exciting news which reached us whilst at the little and large meet of possible EASA changes that should please every single hopper pilot, more on this later.

## **1, Ed-Speak – Finally I fly – and have a problem!**

At the recent Little and Large Meet I finally kicked off my flying season with four decent slots flown over the weekend. Whilst it was delightful to finally get airborne again my first flight back wasn't without its own problems. To be honest, I put it down to rustiness but that would be wrong, my mind set going into the Friday evening flight was, let's go back to basics and remember how to fly first and then enjoy the flight – particularly in pre-flight

Preparation prior to lift off. To this end I took my time on the launch field, deliberately checking off in my mind the basics, (how I assembled the bottom end and making sure the envelope didn't have twisted lines). The inflation seemed to go well, and

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strapping myself into the seat all seemed routine to me. Pulling the chute it appeared to centre normally and I took off. The initial progress during departure from Sackville airfield was okay but I felt rusty and didn't clock that the balloon wasn't as packed as normal. The tell tale signs were there, but I just didn't catch on to the fact that all wasn't well and that the bottom of the balloon was uncannily soggy and not packed. Read all about the ins and outs of what happened in my interesting hop section later in the magazine. Whilst happy to find the fault I kicked myself for not spotting the foul up on the initial inflation. But the adage that you learn from every flight is so true.

**Steve Roake**

**Essential Extra's / Tech Talk- two this month**

**Olympian GM-12**



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Editor's choice – the Olympian GM-12

Having used this striker since 2005, and having lost one at the Little and large meet, I knew it was time to get another since I always carry two of them in my kit. This reminded me that back in issue 2 of the newsletter (June 2006) I recommended this as an essential extra. Time has moved on but this still remains a great striker with its extended nozzle and battery operation. The price seems to have remained fairly static with models coming from the USA with very competitive prices. Mine worked out with postage around £23 and comes with your editors recommendation. so Google search for the cheapest in your area.



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## Tim Ward's Flightdeck

Seen out in action at the Little and Large meet, Tim Ward has designed and manufactured this natty flightdeck. With a nod towards your Editors previously documented Instrument pod, Tim's take on the essential ingredients required features all the equipment you would need to use during a hopper flight.



Tim Ward's Kneeboard

Tim says of his Kneeboard –“I copied off the editor! It's made from scrap plywood, various bits and bobs from the garage and the sewing kit. As you can see it's easy to make, basically some plywood with some holes cut and drilled into it to suit. My board has GPS, gas lighter, radio and a mirror, all bar the GPS being attached with string and Velcro. It's also has quick release buckles. The map case also attaches to it”.

I love it when a simple design is replicated and used, thanks to Tim for his submission.



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## **3. The Features Section**

### **The Little and Large Meet –by Steve Roake**

This brand new event was the brainwave of Dave Such who suggested To Tim Wilkinson (owner of Sackville Airfield in Riseley Beds), that a small event for one man balloons could be successful held at the airfield involving Camping , camaraderie and easy flying . After some initial reservations Tim agreed (mainly concerns over where to land due to the crop rotations at this time of year). So with The local LRO in attendance (Adam Crouch) and with John Tyrell providing the met forecasting we all ventured to Bedfordshire on Friday afternoon to establish base camp for the weekend. No one would have believed that going into the weekend we would get four flyable slots, so the weather gods were definitely shining on us from above.

Friday evening looked flyable (5-8 knots), and with ten balloons in the air on the first slot the weekend was already a hit although I personally had a balloon issue that will be documented in the My interesting hop section later . We all departed Sackville following a track over the nearby Bedford Aerodrome landing just the other side of the business thus avoiding any issues with the landowners who were busy giving track days to enthusiastic motor drivers.

Returning to the airfield Tim and family had agreed to cook for all whom needed sustenance (very reasonably priced and plenty to go around), and was also prepared to refuel teams at a very reasonable 55pence per litre.

As proven on this initial slot , whilst there were plenty of fields sown , it was perfectly feasible to land either in the unsown edges or as became more popular over the course of the weekend on quiet local country lanes.

Saturday morning dawned calm and idyllic and we all gathered in the marquee set up by the clubhouse for briefing at 6am. Met by a lovely Inversion and again light winds 15 balloons took to the skies flying lazy boxes over the field and I had a lovely one hour flight finally landing on a quiet lane in the village of Swineshead. With my previously reported problem now solved, I am delighted to report 26 litres usage for the 60 min flight which is far more agreeable to me.



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This flight was a Hare and Hounds competition with Derry Moore being the Hare and Tony Brown winning landing after his flight a mere 12 paces from Derry's landing spot. After refuelling the crew and the balloon cylinders we relaxed for the rest of the day until the evening briefing which was due for six pm but had an auxiliary section regarding an EASA initiative concerning the possible deregulation of hoppers (see news section for more details).

Plenty of time was spent picking the brains of the resident microlight flyers that fly fascinating machines which appear to be big fun. As an engineer, its nice just to understand the attributes of how these things fly and the gentle one finger touch of a microlight is very similar to the small inputs we have when we fly.

Evening briefing came and after a good discussion over the proposals to change the regulations we all prepared to fly once again. With a surface wind of 280/310 degrees at 3-5 knots becoming more variable I took the opportunity to try out my Go Pro camera for the first time. This flight was to be a Hare and hounds with Dan Wilson being the Hare in G-LELE his LBL31A. Most people flew from the far end of Sackville Airfields runway and flew down the main strip before departing towards Thurleigh Airfield (Bedford Autodrome) once again. This time the flight was more towards the eastern threshold of the runway and fortuitously for me Dan landed just after the airport perimeter on a small side road and lady luck was on my side and with no one else around me I landed closest to the Hare winning the competition. Whilst my landing was on a side road it was about 1 kilometre north east of Thurleigh Village.

Returning to the Airfield we all had a bit of a social in the clubhouse where a lavish Dinner had been prepared for all the intrepid flyers. Being a greedy type, and knowing the morning forecast was Favourable, I kept the beers to a suitable level and retired early to bed with a view to being fresh for the morning slot.

All too soon, the morning was upon us and off to the briefing we went where we were informed that the surface winds were 290 degrees at 3-6 knots, with a suitable inversion to around 500ft. we were warned about a jet at about 800foot of 10-12 knots with lighter winds above. First balloon into the air was local flyer Andy Austin joining us in G-CIBX his new Cameron Z-31. Being part of the later departures I got a chance to see the steerage and then returned skywards once again heading in the Thurleigh Airfield direction.



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Unbelievably the track took us back towards the first flight location and amazingly the landing spot was exactly the same place as on the first flight. The nice thing about the landing spot was that by the time I arrived there were already three pilots in the same place and so ground crews were there to ensure that the balloons were deflated on the road and remained dry which ensured that a later inflation wasn't required.

Back to base for the prize giving and the awards were given. To save space I'm not going to list them here as they are in Dave Such's report which follows. Suffice to say the whole event and weekend was a blinding success and I will return next year. Thanks to all those who made this happen.

Steve Roake

## **Little (and Large) Solo Meet 2014 is a HUGE Success...**

**By Dave Such, Event Director**

The idea behind the first Little (and Large) Solo Meet was conceived while I was attending the Ultramagic UK Grass Roots Balloon Meet last September at Sackville Lodge with my Ultramagic H-42 G-OOCH that I fly with a Thunder & Colt Skychariot MKII bottom end.

I am relatively new to the one person ballooning – having previously owned Colt 42A G-SEAT flown with a small basket and Cameron H-34 G-BZBT flown with the Skychariot bottom end I now use with G-OOCH – since becoming completely hooked in 2008. Solo balloons tend to have envelopes 42,000 cubic feet or less and are usually flown over cloudhopper, skychariot, airchair or a small basket. They are incredibly responsive and can be operated usually with the pilot and just one member of crew. Due to their physical size, solo balloons can often be landed in locations too tight for their larger rivals.

Having attended Phil Dunnington's One Man Meet in 2012 which usually is held in the autumn, I thought that an early summer solo meet might be a winner with some people and having flown at Sackville Lodge on several occasions and seen what facilities are there, decided to ask Tim Wilkinson if he would consider hosting a small event specifically for solo balloons up to and including 56,000 cubic feet.



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Tim was keen to host the event but as Sackville Lodge is open to anyone who wants to fly his or her balloon – irrespective of size all year round – was not keen on having an envelope size restriction put on entry to the event. We agreed that entrants could fly any size balloon they wanted to from the meet on the condition it was flown SOLO and within the minimum landing mass specified by their balloon's manufacturer. Chris Dunkley who is an avid cloudhopper pilot suggested the brilliant event name Little (and Large) Solo Meet.

By October, I had put together an event flyer containing information about the event and that was emailed to over 60 pilots known to own or fly solo balloons as well as advertising the event through the BBAC's *Pilots Circular*, *Forum* and *Aerostat* publication as well as *Easy Balloons* website, Steve Roake's *Cloudhoppers* newsletter and Facebook page and created the events own Facebook page. Slowly the applications started to come in and by the event's closing date in mid-May had over 20 balloons registered. For me, it was never about attracting huge numbers but organising a solo meet where like-minded people could come to a private well-organised event and have fun.

The days leading up to the event were wet. In fact they were VERY WET with 36 hours of pretty much constant rainfall and by midday on the Thursday, the ground at Sackville Lodge was completely saturated. Although we were pretty confident that a high pressure would be with us by mid-Friday I had visions of the camping area at Sackville Lodge resembling the Glastonbury's Festival's infamous mud but a quick call to Tim sorted that when he agreed to clear debris from an unused concrete apron area for cars to park away from the camping area. A last minute email was sent to pilots attending including an updated map showing the hard standing for cars and a plea to *unload caravans or tents and vacate the camping field*.

I arrived on Thursday evening and water was running off the camping field onto the concrete driveway. Locating our caravan and awning as *Balloon Control and Landing Card Drop Off Point* in a corner nearest to the driveway we set up and crossed our fingers for a halt on the rainfall with sunshine and wind, lots of wind before the first briefing on Friday evening.



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I had intentionally not looked at the weather for the coming weekend as knew it was completely out of my control. My buddy John Tyrrell was providing the MET information for the event and he'd sort great weather for us I was sure! I had done everything I could think of to organise the event in advance to try and make it a success and now it was time to take a chill pill – well down a couple of glasses of hubby Mark's homebrew – and relax. Bliss.



While having breakfast in the caravan on Friday morning watching BBC News, the weather came on and the high I had hoped for was here. Light winds were forecast for the evening flight with lots of sunshine, no rain and that was set to continue until Monday. I felt a sense of jubilation and also relief that this event *might* actually prove to be flyable. To everyone's amazement, by midday just before people started to arrive the ground did not at all resemble how it had been just 12 hours previously and continued to dry out.

Over the weekend, we were blessed with perfect conditions with all four flying slots flown and 55 flights taking place over the weekend by 20 different balloons using cloudhopper, skyhopper, skychariot and basket bottom ends.



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A number of solo balloons also tethered, and we must of course not forget the wonderful sight of the model balloons inflated, tethered and free flown during the meet.



Huge thanks must also go to our sponsors for the Prize Giving Ceremony - Cameron Balloons, Easy Balloons, Lindstrand Balloons, Ultramagic Balloons, Zebedee Balloon Service and of course Derry Moore for the event trophy - whose generosity in donating the prizes is greatly appreciated.

I also want to particularly thank Tim and Angie Wilkinson for hosting the event, providing the catering and gas supply etc, Peter Gray for providing guidance and support where needed, John Tyrrell for providing MET and NOTAM information, Ian and Adam Crouch for landowner relations updates and information and last (but not least) my wonderful husband Mark Tomlin for his support and



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help that enabled me to put the event together – you're the best buddy!

I am extremely proud that to the best of my knowledge, all pilots and crews did a marvellous job with their flying and retrieves and no new sensitive areas were created. Yes the weather we had helped but it was down to the support, friendship and conduct of those people who attended the Little (and Large) Solo Meet that made this work. No matter how much planning and preparation was done throughout the months and weeks leading up to the event, individual's input and the weather conditions we experienced were always going to make or break the event and on both counts we experienced a win-win situation.

As a result, I am pleased to announce that I have decided to organise the Little (and Large) Solo Meet again in 2015 and further information will be published later this autumn.

Balloons free-flown or tethered at the Little (and Large) Solo Meet were: *Thunder AX3 Sky Chariot G-BKBD, Thunder AX3 Sky Chariot G-BKFG, Colt 56A G-BJYF, Cameron V-20 G-BOYO, Colt 21A G-BSIG, Cameron N-31 G-BVFB, LBL 31A G-BXIZ, Cameron C-60 G-BXJZ, Cameron H-34 G-BZBT, LBL 25A G-CBZJ, LBL 25A G-CDAD, Jacobs V35 Airchair G-CEWF, Cameron H-34 G-EROS, LBL 31A G-FFFT, LBL 31A G-LELE, LBL 35A G-NLCH, LBL 31A G-ONCB, Ultramagic H-42 G-OOCH, Colt 77A G-READ, Cameron Z-77 G-TIPJ and Ultramagic H-31 G-UHOP.*

Prizes and awards at the Prize Giving Ceremony were awarded to: **Adrian Brown** – *The Derry Moore Trophy for Most Recently Qualified Pilot to Fly at the Event*, **Tony Brown** – *Hare and Hounds Competition Flight Saturday am*, **Steve Roake** – *Hare and Hounds Competition Flight Saturday pm*, **Derry Moore** – *Oldest Pilot to Fly at the Event*, **Tom Hilditch** - *Youngest Pilot to Fly at the Event*, **Peter Lawman** – *Most Recent Pilot undertaking Their First 'Hopper' Free Flight in Balloon They Own* and **Oliver and Harrison Knight** - *Youngest Crew Members to Assist a Pilot in Need of Help at Event.*

Dave Such.



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## **Shane Robinson reports from Brian Boland's Experimental Balloon and Airship Meet**

Few names in ballooning have become more synonymous with home built and experimental balloons than Brian Boland. As the owner and resident of Post Mills Airport in tiny Post Mills, Vermont, his home has become the Mecca for balloonists looking to build smaller, lighter, less expensive balloons. A pilgrimage to Post Mills rewards with the Balloon Museum, housing an eclectic mix of vintage balloon equipment and paraphernalia, unique cars and motorcycles, and many other items that would cause Mike and Frank of *American Pickers* to go weak at the knees. But the true value of visiting Brian is the opportunity to hear the tales of 43 years worth of flying adventures from likely the most experienced aeronaut in the world. With well over 10,000 hours of piloting time since he made his first flight on May 17, 1971, Brian has flown all over the world, held and helped set 27 national and world records, held the Absolute World Altitude Record for airships, twice been Irish National Champion, and designed and built over 160 balloons and airships. Lesser known accomplishments include flying in a gondola from an aluminium fishing boat, a Volkswagen van, and a variety of trash cans. My personal favourite is the time he flew an upright piano into a farmer's field of standing corn, disconnected and flew on, leaving the piano in the corn with no indication of how it arrived.

In 1994, Brian created the Experimental Balloon and Airship Association (EBAA), which has no dues, no bylaws, no office filled with files or paperwork. Anyone who builds or owns an experimental lighter-than-air craft is automatically a member, whether they know it or not. Brian hosted a couple of experimental meets after its creation but the 2001 event was the last at Post Mills for many years. Unfortunately, some visitors to the airport that year disrespected the airport, the museum, and his home so he decided to cease the event. Amherst, Massachusetts hosted an experimental meet for several years and it was well received and attended. But it wasn't Post Mills. The intervening thirteen years allowed Brian to get over being treated so rudely and it was announced earlier this year that once again the EBAA Meet would return to the airport between the Green Mountains and the Connecticut River. The man with the booming voice, infectious laugh,



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and the ever present wool flat cap would once again be the host.

The dates were set for May 16, 17, and 18 but the days leading up to the weekend didn't exactly present ideal ballooning weather. Unfortunately, some pilots decided not to attend based on the forecast but it didn't prevent this from being the best attended EBAA meet yet. The long hiatus from Post Mills created the excitement necessary to bring balloonists in from across the United States and further. Jon Radowski drove from Phoenix, Carol Klein came from Alaska, and Nicole and Paolo Bonanno travelled from Mondovi, Italy.



Bad weather usually keeps balloonists firmly on the ground. But you don't rack up over 10,000 hours living in New England unless your initials are B.B and you rarely miss any opportunity to fly. And Brian sees opportunity nearly every morning and evening regardless of the conditions. He loves, and lives, to fly. So Friday morning, while most of us slept in, Brian and two others flew. Friday evening, while most of us visited, Brian flew. And Saturday morning, most of us once again slept in. And Brian flew. Conditions began to improve later Saturday morning and that afternoon brought everyone out to the airport to visit,



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show off their designs and handiwork, and exchange ideas. Wherever Paolo Bonanno was, there was always a crowd of interested admirers, excited to learn from the master engineer. Recently Paolo designed two new versions of the Cloudhopper, a Single for those of us who want to fly alone, and a Duo, for those who want to share the experience with a friend. Or a date. Like a love seat aloft. Having already purchased a Single myself, next on my wish list is a Duo so I can share it with my love, Lisa.



Paolo freely shared his knowledge and experience of designing and building the best burners the sport of ballooning has ever known and there was no shortage of eager students, absorbing every word he said.

His Single and Duo Cloudhoppers are the apex of experimental balloons and everyone was impressed with the efficiency of his beautiful burner and the thought and attention to detail that goes into his work. Alan Lawson of Missouri bought a new Single

Hopper and Saturday evening the winds finally dropped off enough for him to fly it.



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Nine or ten balloons took advantage of the improving conditions Saturday night and after waiting late for winds to subside, we were able to make nice flights across Lake Fairlee and land in the valley on either side of the Connecticut River. Few places in the US are as beautiful to fly as Vermont and New Hampshire and Brian, David Tanzer, Jeff Snyder, Paul Stumpf, and the other pilots that live and fly here are very fortunate indeed! It's not the easiest place to fly for those pilots who are used to wide open areas with plenty of landing spots; it's definitely not like the West Mesa of Albuquerque. But for pilots with some hours and experience under their belts, it's hard to beat a flight here.



Two legends of the Hopper world together, Paulo Bannano and Paul Stumpf discuss Burners .



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Which brings us to Sunday morning, one of those perfect mornings of which we all dream. It was the kind of flight you don't soon forget. Befitting the casual nature of the meet (no pilot briefings, no launch directors, no real rules whatsoever), it took quite a while for all the balloons to launch, and everyone seemed to be taking in the beauty at their own pace. Balloons lifted off slowly, hanging over the airport before drifting off to the south. Those of us in the Bonanno Hopper Gang-- Paolo and Nicole in a Duo, Carol Klein, Alan Lawson, and myself in Singles inflated near one another. We're confident the total of four represents the largest gathering of Bonanno Hoppers to date but I have no doubt many will be sold and in the future we could increase that number considerably. By the time I was aloft, some of the early balloons were a couple of miles ahead, several were yet to take off, and one hadn't begun to cold inflate. I counted 28 balloons total and it's possible one or two were far enough ahead and below my line of sight that I couldn't see everyone. We flew south, over the community of Thetford Centre, with most balloons landing in a perfect valley. My own flight was an experience I've never had before and imagine one that could only happen in Vermont-- shortly before landing, I flew past a unique contemporary home on a hillside. Being somewhat interested in architecture, I was admiring the house and the view it had when I realized there was a man standing outside taking pictures of the balloons. He was stark naked and not the least bit concerned by the fact! My eyes quickly turned back to my flight path and stayed there.

One of the things I enjoy about flying a hopper is launching and flying without a plan as to how I'll be retrieved. Several of us landed on or alongside a narrow gravel road and everyone pitched in to help pack up and load the balloons on the available chase vehicles. I hitched a ride with a pilot from Connecticut and his family and we loaded three systems into their van for the trip back to the airport. For most of us, it was the last flight of the weekend but a spectacular experience not soon to be forgotten.

Despite the first half of the weekend bringing less than perfect weather, I think everyone had a fantastic time and the 2014 version of the Experimental Balloon and Airship Meet was a



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big success! Brian Boland has already expressed his desire to host the meet again in 2015 and I urge anyone interested to try to attend. It would be nice to have more international participation and I know the esteemed editor of this newsletter, Steve Roake, wants to come. Paolo and Nicole Bonanno hope to return, Malcolm White and Pauline Baker of Ireland have expressed interest, and I'll gladly do whatever I can to help any of my overseas friends join us. For those of you in the United States, you really must mark this on your calendar. Post Mills in May is a must!

Shane Robinson

**Tim Ward free flies G-BOYO**





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G-Boyo is a Cameron V-20 (Annex two) currently flown with a Colt Mk2 bottom end, and was the smallest balloon at the meet. One of only two V-20's ever made by Cameron's so is quite rare. Tim Ward has spent a lot of time researching the balloon and has tirelessly restored the craft to its former glory and at the Little and Large meet took his first proper free flight in the craft winning an award for all his efforts in getting the balloon back into flying condition.



Both of these fantastic photos are by Sandy Mitchell.



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## **5, My interesting first Hops-** by Steve Roake

This time around the interesting hop was my own and happened at the Little and Large meet on the Friday evening. The reason I think it wasn't apparent what was going on was because I wasn't current and rustiness leads you into not quite noticing what is happening around you with as much as when you have flown consistently.

As always when I haven't flown for a while my preparation was strictly back to basics with emphasis on making sure I followed the usual well trodden path and followed my normal routine. The cold inflation went well, I followed the procedure of checking everything from the car to the balloon and once the balloon was packed had a nice steady hot inflation. Settling into the seat, adjusting the straps, popping the chute all seemed to be normal and once I had my striker, instrument pod and map case proceeded to depart noting the direction and speed of the wind. Initially as always I did an initial approach to check lower winds and upon climbing back into the flight didn't really clock how easily the balloon was initiating the descent thinking that it was just my lack of flying that was leading to some less than great flying. However later on during the flight Dave Such alerted me to the fact that the parachute wasn't sealing properly and when I was prompted I realised that there was in fact a complete gap around the edge of the chute which wasn't normal as the Um has a generous overlap. Once identified this trait became more apparent particularly when you crested the climb becoming a descent far more rapidly than expected. Controlling the final descent to the chosen landing place was also at best poor, and so I made what could only be described as a sloppy landing. Upon speaking to Dave we realised that I had a major problem and this was confirmed when upon refuelling I found I had used 40 litres in 45 minutes which is terrible.

The solution to the problem which did play on my mind came the following day when upon preparing to fly again I found a knot in the rip line which on the Ultramagic runs up the outside of the envelope then through a hole and onwards up the inside of the balloon. The knot was exactly where the transfer to inside the balloon occurred and whilst I didn't recognise the chute not returning properly when I released it upon inflation, the knot was big enough to inhibit the full return of

the parachute hence the crap fuel flow. Having rectified the problem the next flight which lasted an hour, only used 26 litres during the flight.



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Moral of the story. All the clues were there to identify the problem, but rustiness and slack awareness didn't clearly show up the problem luckily for me it led to no more pressing danger. Live and learn I say. From now on I visually check the outer hole prior to hot inflation.

Steve Roake.

So that's the format, what happened on your first ever hop or interesting flight and how it felt compared to your expectations? Submissions to me please at [steve.roake@ntlworld.com](mailto:steve.roake@ntlworld.com)

**6,Homebuilding section** -Jim Grazier details how he built his hopper

It was mid May 2013 that I decided to build a hopper. The decision was made to build a 42,000 cu ft. balloon. By the 24<sup>th</sup> of May I had purchased the blue fabric and started making the patterns. I ordered the yellow fabric a few days later. It took me about a week working a couple of hours a day after work to make the patterns.

After the patterns were finished, I started cutting the fabric. Cutting all the fabric took about 20 hours. Once all the fabric was cut and sorted the sewing began. I assembled all the gores first. When all the gores were finished, I started sewing the gores together. About half way through sewing the gores together it started getting harder to sit at the sewing machine. I was in a lot of pain and sitting didn't help. All the sewing was finished by mid October.

Between the weather and the pain it was Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup> before I could get the balloon out and tie the top into it. Adjustments were made to the centering lines and then it was time to pack it up. The building process took 88 hours. The balloon weighs 73 lbs in the bag.

While we had one of the worst winters that we had had in years, I decided to build a bottom end. Having a Thunder/ Colt C2 burner laying around I thought that it was a good starting point. After the Plans were made the 1 1/4 "aluminium tubing was ordered. All the tubing was cut and a friend of mine welded it together. The bottom end was designed to split in half for storage and transportation.



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First outing of Jim's pretty new balloon

On May 21<sup>st</sup> 2014 the F.A.A. came out and did their inspection, and a Special Airworthiness Certification was issued. On May 24<sup>th</sup> we inflated the balloon and tethered it to make sure that the top seated properly and that everything else worked properly. The next step is to get the perfect day to go for a free flight.

## **7,Three Favourite Jpegs and why –Currently Empty!**

Contributions for future editions of my three favourites and why to [steve.roake@ntlworld.com](mailto:steve.roake@ntlworld.com) please. Do it today folks and share those memories.



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## 7. Gallery Pages –

This section is the Editor's choice of new jpegs, visuals and older balloons of interest or alterations. If you know of a new or interesting hopper or Duo that hasn't featured in this section, then feel free to forward details of it with a suitable photograph to me using my normal email address.



G-CDUJ Jan Fraser seen at Bedale in her lovely Lindstrand 31A  
Photo by Sandy Mitchell.



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After a lot of prompting, I was delighted to see Nigel Bourke flying  
G-SIPP his Lindstrand 35A at Bedale in testing conditions.  
Photo by Sandy Mitchell.



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Andy Davey's selfie during a recent hopper flight in the Cameron Viva 42.



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## **Manufacturer News / Events / Updates**

### **Possible Deregulation of Hoppers**

Whilst at the Little and Large Meet at Sackville Dave Such informed us of news from the CAA with regard to possible deregulation of one man hoppers from the EASA certification. The background to this is a recent change in regulations applied to microlights where a single man craft no longer has to comply with the stringent European regulations. They are still flown under a type rating with the country of registrations C of A. Chris Dunkley who was also there, explained the way that he thought the process would pan out and the general sentiments emerging from the meeting were that with cautious optimism perhaps the future for hoppers could be bright. Obviously until the facts emerge I won't speculate on what will happen but rest assured you will know as soon as I do. With Ian Chadwick pushing the issue there are cautious grounds for optimism.

### **Chris Dobson**

Lovely to see Chris Dobson returning to flying after a short layoff. Here is a link to his most recent flight video.

<http://youtu.be/NLbCOdHR1vI>

### **And Finally.**

Membership is currently a healthy 520 members and numbers are generally 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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