



Issue No9

September / October 2006

Hello Folks,

Welcome to Issue 9 of the Cloudhoppers Newsletter and yet another packed issue with plenty to wet your appetites. With the end of the month rapidly approaching and no newsletter to send to you I will not bore you with rubbish and let the articles speak for themselves. So on with the show! Let's have a picture for starters!



With a bit of luck and fair weather, a scene similar to this will unfold over the weekend of 13th to 15th October at Ilam hall in Staffordshire, where this year's annual One Man Meet will be taking place. Expect a full report of proceedings Next newsletter.

Content

In this eighth edition we have for you details on:

- 1, Ed Speak - Plenty of "chin wag" from me particularly with regard to the saving of cloudhoppers in Europe
- 2, Essential Extra's - Nothing to report this month!
- 3, Features section-
 - Second part of How to build a hopper by Greg Winkler
 - John Tyrrell- how I got into hoppers.
 - Green Ice updates.
 - G-BKIV - a real gem of a find from America
 - David Tanzers -OMM in Vermont
- 4, Updates on the website.-possible Break through and interest in taking the website further
- 5, Homebuilt section
 - Mike Colliers New Homebuilt hopper.
 - HOFNOR-or Court Jester
 - Homebuilt Airchair from Australia.
- 5, Gallery pages- New balloons and editor's choice of jpegs sent to him
- 6, Manufacturer News / Updates /Event News.
 - Hopper fan from Switzerland
- 7, For Sale /Wanted. Stuff up for grabs

Ed Speak- By Steve Roake- The Saving of the Cloudhopper!

Let me say that firstly I didn't even know our beloved Cloudhopper was under threat from the new Ballooning administration body in Europe EASA! Having just read my copy of the BBAC's magazine Aerostat, that knowledgeable person and hopper exponent Chris Dunkley has written an article about what is happening to ballooning in Europe and having discussed it with him at length, it seems that the EASA body who have no real comprehension of ballooning and Transponders (worryingly), have

set about organizing Europe with regard to all forms of aviation and whilst "they" don't have the foggiest idea about us, it seems that a party set up to represent the interests of European manufacturers saved the day with regard to our cloudhopper. The uninformed guide committee for EASA were going to ban Cloudhopper bottom ends, in a move to make all balloons basket based. Thank goodness the parties involved stepped in to ensure that us Dangly-legged people can still express the freedom to Hang from our seats whenever we feel the need. I have a hunch that the move to ban us was based around an old German ruling that banned basketless flying and hence all previous hopping in Germany was undertaken by foreign registered balloons. So Eurocrats 0 Hoppers 1, lets hope the thing stays that way.

I would particularly like to welcome the sudden, yet positive influx of new members from the Balloon makers list on yahoo. All you guys have a great deal of content to share with those of us who are not that familiar with construction of hoppers and I hope you choose to express yourselves through the newsletter. Naturally all content for inclusion comes to me at Steve.Roake@ntlworld.com many thanks in advance! Membership as of Sept 20th stands at 229 worldwide.

Essential Extra's- After last month's immense contribution from David Tanzer (many thanks again), this month I have a complete Zero of Essential extras for you! There must be things you use that could be useful to others, please pass them on through the newsletter section dedicated to this issue.

Features this month- Hopper building by Greg Winkler

In this second installment, *Greg Winkler* continues the subject of building a hopper with another installment this time concentrating on *Why a hopper!*

Part 2 – Why a Hopper?

Hopper pilots can skip right over this part. You already know why.

For everyone else, let's begin by noting I was born into a ballooning family. My father, Jim Winker, was trained as an aeronautical engineer and spent his entire career designing, building and flying balloons. He began his career with General Mills, moving to Raven Industries as their first employee. When I was young, oftentimes I would tag along with dad when he went flying. My first recollection of ballooning was the evening of August 24, 1962. Don Piccard floated into the night sky under a cluster of gas cells and set a world altitude record for the AA-2 size category. Interestingly enough, he was in a hopper style bottom end. So I guess that makes my very first balloon memory a hopper experience. I could probably produce a photo or two of the launch if properly motivated.

I earned my private pilot certificate in 1975 at age 16 and over the years have flown hot air balloons of all sizes. In addition to hot air, I've also piloted gas, roziere and solar balloons as well as hot air blimps. Back when hoppers first started to become popular, I'd read about them in the magazines. Though they looked like fun, they were rare and I never managed to see one in person.

In 2003, John Ninomiya organized Hoppermania at the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta®. I have to admit, seeing a row of hoppers lined up on the field was pretty exciting. Watching them launch was even better. That was the moment I decided someday I would own one. As soon as I returned home, I began drawing up the plans. But somewhere along the way, I got sidetracked and never finished the project.

The next year at Fiesta, I had my first hopper experience. I was in the Lindstrand tent, admiring their hopper bottom end when they asked me if I wanted to fly it. Well, you never have to ask me twice about flying. So before you know it, I'm out on the field with Phil Thompson learning how

the burner works, how to read the fuel quantity gauge using the mirror and getting strapped in. Before the launch I told Phil to expect to see me back at the field floating past the Lindstrand tent in about a half hour. When it was my turn to launch, I took off hot, right in the middle of a couple of hundred other balloons ready to go.

My first sensation of flight was followed quickly by a surge of adrenaline; my eyes nearly bugging out of my head. I started laughing uncontrollably. It was the most amazing experience to be flying a balloon with no basket. I'm floating right here with the birds! We all know that ballooning is like no other form of aviation. It's safe to say hoppers are like no other form of ballooning. I'm instantly hooked!

Before the launch, I had noticed there was a well developed box. So I took the hopper up a couple of thousand feet, reversed direction and began targeting the Lindstrand tent. After getting lined up, I made a cold descent (600+ fpm), flaring out just above the ground and skimmed right across the field and right past Phil, who is now back at the tent. All eyes were on the hopper as I buzzed the spectators on the field. Occasionally I had to lift my feet to clear a chase truck. It was so much fun I decided I had to do it again. Once I was clear of the field, I started up for another box with the goal of landing back on the field.

Following another cold descent, I was lined up perfectly for a landing on the field. By now it was now starting to get breezy (12 mph) and I knew my first hopper landing would be a bit exciting. Fortunately there was one great big guy who thought he could stop me all by himself. So he grabs my leg, but the balloon keeps going. Before he can react, my helper gets pulled forward and lands on his face right in the middle of a big mud puddle. But he hangs on and gently sets me down. I was fine. He was slightly embarrassed.

Thus ended my first hopper experience. It rejuvenated my interest in these one man balloons. When I returned home, I went back to the drawing board. This time with more conviction.

Good Floating!

Greg Winker

Coming up next month – The Design Process

Wow Great story and fantastic first experience -Ed. looking forward to the next installment!

John Tyrrell-Hopping into Lightweight Ballooning

When I got involved with ballooning in 1997, it was with a Lindstrand 90, the balloon I learnt to fly in, now own along with Wendy and still regularly fly.

Early in the 2005 flying season we began to yearn for lighter kit; we had had a number of carry-outs, tight farm entrances and narrow country lanes with the trailer.

So the brain started thinking, a visit to the Zebedee List, a chance training flight with a new PUT in his Concept 60 with folding basket: - The idea was born “lightweight ballooning” with a 42 or 56 envelope, small basket, single burner – pilot flying solo or with just one passenger. We kicked the thoughts around, got quotes for a new balloon and even contemplated how we would transport it, but the finances were short, so we decided to wait until the New Year. Then as with all good ideas, something comes out of the blue and you’re off again.

Late on a Sunday night in early August we found an advert on the BBAC Forum, “Lindstrand 31A hopper for sale, 12hrs from new in 2000, recent C of A, excellent condition”. I suppose I should point out at this stage, I have never overly liked hoppers and even been very vocal about the fact, so here I was considering this as a perfect solution to our lightweight ballooning.

So on the Saturday of the Bristol Fiesta Weekend, we set off to meet Mark Warne in a pub at Taunton. It rained all the way, round the M42 and down the M5, which would not have been that bad, but for the holiday traffic as well. We eventually met up in a Little Chef car park and did the deal, with funny looks from the public as we looked at the burner, tank, flying wires, bottom end and then exchanged the cash. We arrived back home to Wollaston at ten o’clock after being in the car for over twelve hours, tired and wondering if we had done the right thing.

A few days later in a quiet sheltered field, on our own, we got it out of the bag and played! Two inflation's and an interesting tether later, we were both over the moon convinced this was the answer to our lightweight ballooning.

It was the end of August by the time we got the chance to free fly, in fact Bank Holiday Monday evening. We met up with another hopper-buddy for moral support. After a good inflation, strapped in tight, instruments on and I was ready to go.



We launched from a very large grass field, with the intention to stay low and play near to the ground, but one short burn and I was at 500ft and still going! This was brilliant, the heart was pounding and the experience reminded me of my first ever balloon flight. But then back to the basics of flying if it goes up quickly, it can come down quickly. It felt just like a sports racing motorbike, compared to the family salon car I was used to flying.

I was flying towards Northampton and running out of suitable landing sites. Then a peach of a grass field came up, close to the farm, easy access and it had my name all over it. Low approach just clearing the hedge, then gas off

and slowly glide into the long grass, pull the rip, short drag and then come to a stop. I was so excited I just wanted to go again, there and then.

I have already learnt a couple of things: - The first line of the Lindstrand Flight Manual states “the maximum surface wind speed for take off and landing is 10 knots.” On both my free flights I have achieved over 12 knots, but landed OK in one piece - so leave the GPS behind.



Secondly, never tether a hopper for fun - it's ten times harder than a balloon with a basket and you can do some real damage to the envelope.

So do we like lightweight ballooning by hopper? – You bet!

John Tyrrell

Green Ice balloons -An update

On the subject of *Green Ice* balloons, I have received further correspondence regarding the outstanding unaccounted examples but with differing resulting Information. One hot rumour

currently doing the rounds is that Robin Batchelor is going to be bringing his example to the One Man meet in October at Ilam Hall. Whilst I haven't had the chance to confirm this with robin directly, I believe the story to be creditable so lookout for him and it. Naturally Robin will at some stage full fill his promise to write an article for us on his Green Ice experiences but when remains a mystery?

G-BKIV Colt 21A- Find of the year perhaps?



A short while ago I received an email from Greg Winkler regarding an enquiry from a friend of his who had a cloudhopper that had been stored for some considerable amount of time and the person concerned was thinking about maybe selling the

balloon and would I know roughly its value? So always the inquisitive type I asked for more details and perhaps some jpegs if it could be inflated. From this brief cross flow of information a remarkable tale emerged.



From the following emails that were exchanged, the balloon, now turned out to be G-BKIV a Colt 21A and the lady possibly selling it was Lesley Pritchard in the USA. The 1982 balloon was complete with the bottom end and integral 10 gallon tank. Supposedly it had only flown one hour but the log book was missing, but the story continued. Greg Winkler adds. "The Owner says the balloon was purchased by a wealthy individual from Vail, Colorado. On the first flight, he burned the nomex and a bit of the gold fabric. Then he dropped it off at the owners repair

station and never picked it up. Not sure if there were flights in the UK, but if it was living there from 1982 to 1989, I would have to think there was some flying. No logbook, so it will forever be a mystery."

Coming bang up to date some twenty years further on, the find was unearthed. Greg arranged to get the hopper out of its bag for a tether and obviously with Gold material some sticking together of panels has produced a small amount of panel damage with lifting of the gold metallic away from the surface. Lesley added that apart from needing only a temp sensor and a new wire for the low fuel warning indicator it is in extraordinary condition.



Checking on the UK civil aviation site I deduced that the balloon a Colt 21A had been registered as G-BKIV then it is a Colt 21A registered originally 7/10/1982 with a c/n on the crown ring of the envelope that should say 447 ..Deregistered 21/11/89 as sold abroad.

All my UK contacts then went on to tell me is as rare as rocking horse pooh which is a good indication that the balloon hasn't done very much as these guys tend to know their stuff and if they haven't seen it ...it must be true.

The overall condition can clearly be seen to be very good from the jpeg of the balloon under inflation; I don't think I have ever seen a bottom end of this age in such good condition.



Clearly this balloon has aged well and may now be up for grabs. It may have already found a new home but should you be interested please contact Lesley directly with your offer at lesleypritchard@sbcglobal.net Sensible offers only!

David Tanzer's -Vermont One Man Meet

I've attached a couple of photos from our hopper meet which was greatly compromised due to weather. Unfortunately, hurricane Ernesto was forecast to bring poor weather our way during that weekend, so attendance was down. But Rick Jones came up from Concord, New Hampshire with his beautiful Cameron M-34. With Rick flying his hopper and me flying my Lindstrand 35A, we had one of the largest gatherings of hoppers in all of the Americas during 2006! The winds didn't die off until quite late on Friday afternoon, so I elected to crew for Rick in order to get him in the air quickly so he could enjoy a brief flight in "Footloose." He launched from my backyard, and had a

Pleasant, if short, flight, and gained some good low level maneuvering experience. We headed home for a nice barbecue dinner and refueled his tank for a Saturday morning flight. Rick is now completely proficient at operating my "Armstrong" propane pump. 10 strokes per gallon if it's not too warm. We got up a bit before sunrise on Saturday morning and found more of a breeze than we felt comfortable with. We were just about to leave my home to find a less windy launch site when my good friend and long time balloon pilot, Rick Pollack, called to let us know that the winds were calm in Vergennes, a nice small town about five miles to the south. We jumped in our trucks and headed to the high school there, which has a nice green athletic field. Lo and behold it was calm when we arrived and would serve as a good launch site because the winds were forecast out of the east (and our pibals indicated that that was indeed the case) and this launch site gave us several miles to play before reaching the shore of Lake Champlain. We both inflated and soon we were in the air heading due south! South is an excellent direction to fly in this area because

there isn't much there except for miles of beautiful farm land and the very pretty Otter Creek.



The flight was wonderful and, except for climbing to clear an occasional tree along the riverbank, I flew for almost four miles at 10 feet AGL or less! What a neat feeling in a cloudhopper that was! I saw a flock of wild turkey, a deer and then on one crossing of the creek spied an animal swimming toward the river bank. This critter looked to be about two feet long and had a pointy nose. I pondered what it was for a few moments and then smacked myself in the forehead—it's not called "Otter Creek" for nothing! I landed on a farm that I had alighted on four or five years ago, and was made to feel very welcome by the owner. Rick landed on another nearby farm and then we met up for a nice breakfast at a local restaurant.

Unfortunately the weather deteriorated after Saturday morning, and rained, or threatened rain, for much of the rest of the weekend. So we just relaxed and visited, went to the movies, and I made my favorite Sunday morning breakfast: waffles with real Vermont maple syrup, of course. Lori also cooked up a yummy storm as she is wont to do.



Lori and I plan to host hoppers again during Labor Day weekend next year, so hopefully more folks can make it!

David Tanzer

Website Updates

As you all know, this subject has been a thorn in our side with nobody either willing or technically able out there prepared to help rejuvenate the website. Content wise, there are loads of things I would like to add, it is the technical knowledge of HTML and Dreamweaver that eludes me, but help may be close to hand. I am in discussions with a friend about progressing the site with him doing the techno stuff and me the blurb as before. So in the great scheme of things, watch this space for further updates.

Homebuilt Section

As announced last month, apportion of the newsletter is going to be allocated to the Home building section of our sport. Kicking off this month we have the following on offer;

- Mike Colliers Hopper
- HOFNOR -or Court Jester
- Nigel's Home built Airchair from Australia.

Starting with Mike Colliers Hopper, I asked him to send me these jpegs because he was receiving such good feedback from the forum on his balloon, and when you look at the results you can see why people were saying such nice things about his new balloon.

The tight crisp lines of the envelope show the attention to details that has clearly been taken when sewing the gores together with a great pattern. When you look below at the jpegs, this really looks like a factory built example



Not that Mike looks like he is enjoying himself too much eh?
Lovely day for test inflation!



Again, Man and Machine in perfect harmony? Sure looks like it!

Secondly we have had submitted by Graham Bell the HOFNOR or otherwise known Court Jester bottom end .HOFNOR apparently refers to Hard ON for No Apparent Reason which I believe is an on gong joke between the owner and Graham . I guess it refers to the way you fly this thing. Graham promises to write about the

HOFNOR in subsequent issues so until that happens, I'll give you jpegs 1 and 4 only. More on this when I get it!



Thirdly and lastly for this month (and long may this amount of content continue please), I received these photos from Nigel Flynn in Australia of his home built Airchair.



Looks good from Here! (Ed)

Gallery Sighting (just one this month).



Recent addition to the Turkish register, TC-BUG is an ex Lindstrand Demo balloon and sent in from our good Friend Geert Van Wolvelaer.

Manufacturer News /Updates /Event News

Not so much to report this month .No updates from the manufacturers yet regarding their updated hoppers as talked about last month, we wait for news. However one thing that has been debated on the forum and let to me receiving an email over the subject is the general talk regarding light weight hopper fans .Therefore when I received this from Jack Klein in Switzerland, I thought I would include it for those who are interested .Obviously I have no knowledge of what Jack is offering and suggest anyone interested contacts him via his attached email address.

Hi from Switzerland,

Do you think there would be any interest in my small fans? I do not have a hopper, but use 2 of them to inflate my 73,000 ft. cu. lightweight balloon. I showed them to 2 hopper people, and they both had have them. I now have to make more for myself, and thought there may be interest in the hopper world. Lindstrand is interested in them if I want to sell to them instead to the general public. Let me know what you think. Fan weight is about 7 kilos



Jack can be contacted directly via this email address
JKlein@bluewin.ch

There is already talk about next year's SOLO Meet to be held as ever (third year) at the Black Horse Balloon Club region in Buckinghamshire. Talk is at an early stage but I believe Graham Philpot is considering Easter weekend as a preferred date.

For Sale section

We have a few bits this month, please let me know if you are successful in selling on your bits and pieces.

Brand new unused Lightweight 1 person Customcraft basket for sale. Recently purchased to fly under hopper envelope now surplus to requirements.

Trimmed in red leather with red leather pole covers.

2 open sides for tanks

Weight 20KG picture attached

Currently in West Dorset England

First £1200 secures.

Buyer to pay transport costs
Email Sue Rorstad or phone 01297 560460 ext 2



I am selling a great bottom end for a 42 which is a nearly new basket in red sued with a c2 remote single burner and 2 v30 tanks asking £1800 and my special shape beer bottle g-bire colt 56.crispy fabric with only 56hrs on it £3000.

Phone Martin Axtell

Hm; 01282 721078

Mbl; 07742666554

E-mail mjaballooning@hotmail.com

36k Envelope for Sale

This 36k envelope has 15 hours of flight time. I sewed this balloon myself from a Boland kit. Great workmanship. It makes a great solo balloon.

Excellent climb and decent rates. It is very stable. I have been in descents over 1500 fpm without any deformation. If you are looking for a good, high quality small envelope, this would make a great choice! UPS shippable.

Price \$2895.

Please contact Marc at 909-215-9208.(USA)
See below for jpeg



Next Issue

In the next edition of the newsletter, I will be hopefully looking into the following items.

- The One Man Meet- all that happened
- Albuquerque -Someone sends me some news please!
- Greg Winkler's ongoing Hopper project

Fly Safe everyone, Membership stands at 229 plus (early October 2006)

See you all soon safe flying Steve

All articles for inclusion in future issues, please forward to the editor at Information@cloudhoppers.org and all feedback good, bad or indifferent will be welcome. In future we might even run a letters/email section. Views aired by contributors may not be those of the editor.