



Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 93

February 2017

Hello once again and welcome to your February Newsletter.

Predictably February is a quieter month than January but hopping continues unabated in the Alpine Meets and some fine photos have emerged from Chateau D'oex and Tannheim amongst others.

Whilst I may not have the content of last month's bumper issue, rest assured what we have is quality.

So what do I have for you this month? Well we have the following.

- Tannheim Photographs.
- Chateau D'oex regular.
- The Solo Record Flight progress
- New Balloons / Second hand Sales updated.
- Homebuilding – Barry Newman finishes G-CJSY.
- Interesting Photos – A winter scene.
- A nice Cameron Stock O-31 For Sale.

This is the time of year that those iconic jaw dropping photographs are taken in perfect conditions and always feature as some of the best of the year. So with no apology I'm going to immerse you in them and hope you feel as pumped up about your hopping as I do when I see them.

As usual we live or die on our content and this magazine like any other is no different so please please please, send in your articles for inclusion and let's make this thing even better for those who read it. Don't think because you haven't contributed yet, you have nothing to offer, everyone has an angle and the world is awaiting to hear yours.

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1, Ed Speak- Are we happy with Stock options?

When you buy your new hopper bottom end, undoubtedly you have to decide what colours you want your personalised craft to be. You choose what colours to make the carry bag and there are limited options to personalise and put your stamp on individuality. However, in conversation with a few people, it seems that the "standard" version of a hopper bottom end isn't good enough for some and for a premium "De lux" option may be the answer. For more money you could appoint your seat unit in a number of ways. For example, you could get the metalwork chrome plated, and if it suits your needs Leather is an option for that tailored look.

In what mirrors exotic motorcycle branding, manufacturers seem open to making a more quality driven finish for a premium price and for them the great thing about producing a bespoke version is the fact that you don't have to invest in a prototype version to prove you can do it. Therefore, if you want more, don't be afraid to ask your dealer if they are prepared to manufacture for you a niche product.

It is a sign of the times that what in the past used to be a one choice option has now evolved into a customer driven desire to give you exactly what you want- all be it at a premium price, but you pay your money and you take your choice.

Steve Roake.

2, Essential Extras – Strikers

One area that seems to benefit from little exposure in the hopper world and yet can save your life is the humble striker. This often overlooked essential extra, can be the difference between a dodgy outcome to a pilot light failure and a sense of assured belief that should the fateful event ever happen you have the tools at your disposal to deal with the incident before it becomes a serious problem.

There are a number of things that amaze me even now, such as the manufacturers not supplying you with instructions how to construct your bottom end, and even though you could be new to the sport, you would be reliant on peoples good will to show you how to pre flight assemble your craft. The same can be



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said for strikers and the lack of clarity to what is required for one to be considered a good choice for use with a hopper where you tend to insert it blind when in use.

So you have a choice of two routes to take. You can either go down the gas route or take the piezo driven option. For me that choice is even more defined as I think the striker needs an abnormally long shaft to be able to get where you need it in the emergency situation when you will be reliant on it. I prefer my sparker to be multi spark generating so this means I go down the piezo battery driven path.

In my case, in one of the very first newsletters, I recommended the Olympian GM-12 and since 2004 I haven't had cause to complain about its abilities. I always have two to hand and find that the ability to attach to a lanyard and a battery life that is massive, fits my desire for a striker.



These appear to be coming less prevalent and I had to order my replacement one (the other got squashed at Bristol fiesta), from the USA at a cost of approximately £25-00 delivered.

This might appear fairly steep for a striker price but in my opinion You can't put a price on safety and the key to being prepared is to practise pilot light failure on a regular basis. I would suggest when you are on a tether is a great time to practise for that unwelcomed occasion when you will need to put your skills into practise.

I have no problem recommending the Olympian GM-12 as an essential extra.



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3, The Features Section

Alpine Flying

Winter flying always brings out the best, most vibrant photos of the year and put a hopper in the right environment and everyone is jealous. Not only do you wish you were there, you can really appreciate the perfect conditions and all that comes across in the photographs.

The first candidate for this feature was photographed at the annual event held in Tannheim, in the Tyrol Austria near the German Border.



This seldom discussed event occasionally has the most stunning of photographs taken here and in the above one, Peter Dalby is having fun in the Cameron Demo Hopper G-CJOI. Not only does the photo do justice to the snowy conditions, the photographer has managed to capture the crispness of the new fabric in the

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sunlight in that moment.



So why are all the other people having the fun?
Photograph by Rudi Kockelbergh.

Simply speaking I don't know about you, but when I look at a photo like the one above, I simply realise that I want to do more flying like this and that the idea of a hopper only alpine meet really gravitates me towards trying to do more towards making it happen. If this idea floats your boat as well then let's talk about trying to find a location where we can make it happen for us.

Tannheim is only one of at least four alpine meets that I know about which happen over the January /February months, the others being Mauntern Dorf, Filzmoos and Chateau D'oex. Now I'm sure there are others but as no one has told me about them yet, then I can't comment about them to you. However, one thing you can rely

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upon is that there will be hopper action at Chateau D'oex and this year was no different. The trouble with it is that the same people take the same hoppers year on year. 2017 was no exception with only two present that I was told about.



With thanks to Malcolm White and Rob Ethrington Parr who both sent me photos from Chateau D'oex.

G-BVCY is a regular at Chateau D'oex (it may be based there), and the Cameron H-24 normally appears mid morning as did an old LBL liveried Hopper HB-QAB (but no one got photos of it). G-BVCY, an old 1993 vintage craft is still looking okay after all these years.

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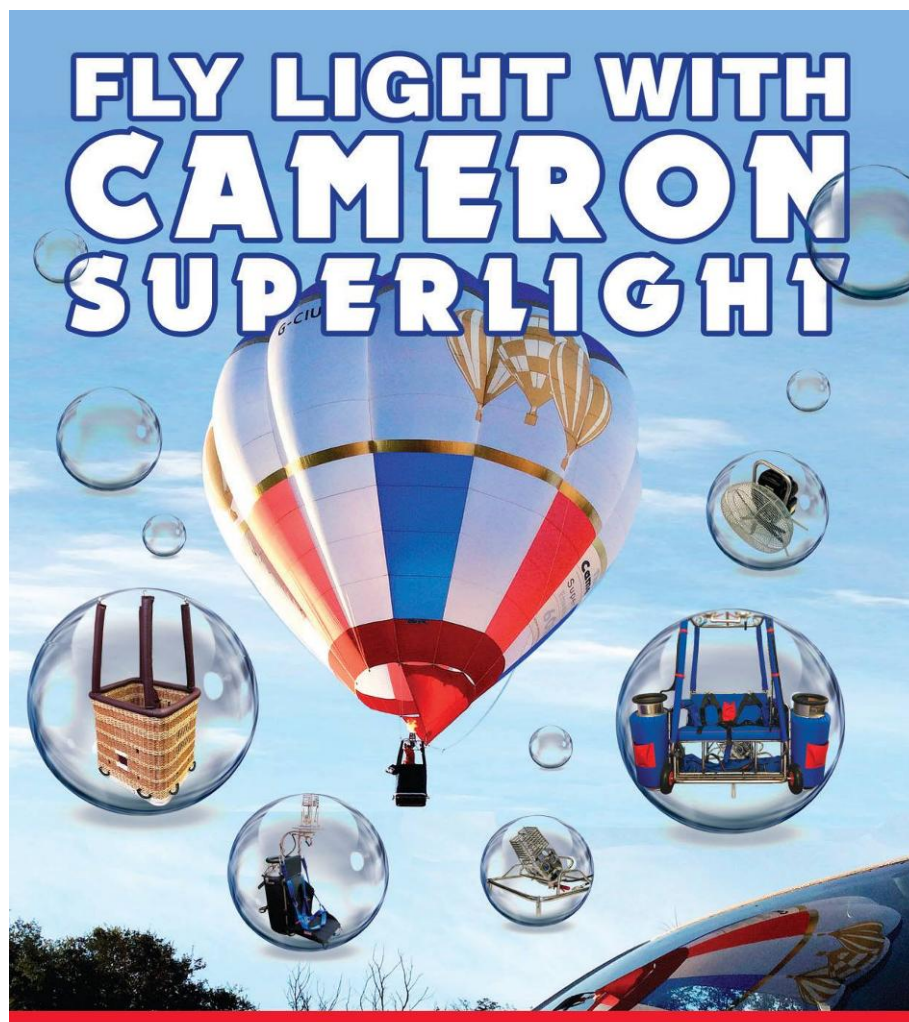


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Solo Record Flight –Progress report Number 2 by Steve Roake.

Update number two of the Cameron Balloons Sponsored Solo Record flight and I guess it was to be expected that January's interest level couldn't be maintained. That's not to say that there isn't any more interest. Far from it, in February I've had probable entries from another 4 or 5 people but until they confirm I have nothing. Coupled to this I've had two withdrawals from people with logistical issues, and yet the level remains at 40 entries. For me the goal now is to find another 10 confirmations to achieve the 50 I set out for. All I would say to any of you, particularly those of you with Annex 2 balloons, don't leave it too long before formalising your plans because you don't want to be running around last minute trying to ensure you are on board.



One of the most recent entries is Greg Winker from Seattle USA

There are still plenty of people to come so don't feel like we have finished with the entries, some are waiting to return home from contracts before registering and at least two I know are building new craft especially for the event. The sheer pace of this event amazes me with so much more still to come and July literally months away.

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5, Homebuilding Section

The big news this month is that Barry Newman has finished his BM 34 hopper envelope. G-CJSI was completed in 420 hours of sewing and weighs in at 51kilos in the bag.



Seen here on first cold inflation at Sywell on 18th Feb.

Barry was also assisted by Brian Mead who put in about 50 hours to ensure that the project kept on track and Barry acknowledges that there were times when he could have been better focussed on the project, and that there were small issues encountered along the way. One very neat feature on the balloon is the unique scoop which obviously the fabric comes from a tailoring background as it features a unique pin stripe. The other rather clever design that Barry has come up with is in the bag which features a longer collar above the bag itself that once the balloon is inside then folds down to flatten and form the sealed top surface.

Next outing for the new balloon is a run down to Chris Dunkley's Easy Balloons for an inspection and for John to give the sewing a once

Over prior to the balloons first flight . But as John said, "These Sackville guys have made more balloons than I have", so expect no problems and vast mutual praise.



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Having been uniquely present for its first cold inflation, I wish Barry many happy hours flying G-CJSY and would say the project is a great credit to him and his perseverance. If I would change one small thing personally, I would probably have used bigger velcro tabs on the parachute. The winds on this particular day weren't the best for an inflation but the craft looked lovely and a credit to its maker.

The next submission was sent in from Graham Bell who sent to me a photograph from his good friend Peter Cuneo. Peter from Albuquerque has been building a two seat chariot bottom end and it was seen recently. Clearly the project has gone along



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way down the road towards completion. It looks to me as though the end isn't a million miles away. Thanks to Graham for the photo and for introducing Peter and Barbara to cloudhoppers and telling them in order to be members they have to write a story.

5, Interesting Photos.

In a totally random way I get to choose each month various photos for inclusion in the interesting category of the newsletter. With winter definitely foremost on my mind this month the inclusion in this category has already featured elsewhere in this edition of the newsletter, but it is a uniquely framed shot this time that drew my attention.



The composition of this photo of G-CJOI by Rudi Kockelbergh is simply superb and the way the hopper is framed by the trees is the icing on the cake. You simply have to marvel at the talent of the photographer who got the composition spot on.

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6. New Allocations This Month / Changes of Ownership

Three new Cloudhopper balloons have been allocated this month with all of them coming out of the Cameron factory in Bristol. They are known for Derek Maltby, myself, and another known client (will be revealed later.)

G-CJRK is a Cameron Z-31 c/n 12062. Due in April for delivery.

G-CJWY is a Cameron O-31 c/n 12071. Will be delivered mid June.

G-CJYJ is a Cameron O-31, is due to be delivered in about a month.

Second Hand Movements

News this month that second hand stuff is still selling well if priced okay. There are bits naturally that won't sell because of unrealistic expectations on the part of the sellers who have priced too high but those that hit the sweet spot have moved on. Eventually Jan Frazer has had some joy selling her kit. G-CDUJ has now found a new home with Ron Griffin in Wales. Without hesitation Ron paid Jan's asking price which is the way it should be.

Working on the basis that the right price sells the kit, Andrew Davidson has decided to make a price reduction on his Ultramagic H-42 complete kit. In an effort to make sure the lovely 1996 envelope and basket find a decent home, Andrew has reduced the price to £4950. Any lower and he feels that he will keep it and run it through the 2017 season himself.

G-CIGA currently is only available up to The 30th of April should you be interested In buying her.

Andrew can be contacted via the following Ways.

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Home: 01530 416869.



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7. Gallery Pages –

Your Editor's choice of new and interesting hoppers and duo's active in the world of ballooning or good themed photos. After what has seemed like an age, a photo has appeared of Lindstrand Tech's UK hopper prototype G-CJHV.



N6201L as seen at the Icicle Meet



G-CJHV as seen 18/2/17 in Oswestry

These two balloons caused some great debates as to whether or not they were the same craft. N6201L was built by Lindstrand USA and originally had c/n 7 as did G-CJHV before the american aircraft changed its serial number. However to me they look different (shame the RHS photo is so distant) , but it appears to have more yellow nomex around the base of the envelope . I guess for those who like conspiracy theories it will remain unresolved until the two are seen in public together.

Hopefully the new envelope will be shortly married to a new, exciting, Lindstrand Technologies, bottom end which knowing Lindstrand products myself through Ownership will be detailed to the highest standards. It will be interesting to see If the vortex technologies in their new burners migrate down to hopper sizing. I am told by my friends at the factory that the design is coming along nicely, and expect the final product in a few months time when they have agreed and signed off the specification.

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For Sale – February Special Offer. Advertisement.

In my new capacity as a brand ambassador, I get to hear some of what is coming up from Cameron Balloons, and one thing that grabbed my attention was that they have built an O-31 for stock. Knowing how popular these beasts are currently and the fact that its available instantly rather than wait up to 16 weeks for a build slot (and with the great dollar to pound exchange rate currently), I suggested to them I could put it in here and on the cloudhoppers page for them if they improved the price a bit. So in comparison with a regular order which retails at £8268 vat inclusive but subject to registration fees and C of A charges, this little beauty is retailing for £7800 vat Inclusive (or \$9681 correct to exchange rates at time of publication). but also subject to C of A and reg. fees. All you need to do should you be interested is quote ref. FACEBOOK DEAL 01 to Cameron Balloons UK, and buy me a beer once you are sorted.



Pretty "February Special" from Cameron's

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8, Manufacturer / Event News/ Industry News

Annex 2 Balloons to MAB

Recent chats to Ian Chadwick our UK representative at Mondial Air Balloons have revealed that the process of achieving Annex 2 balloons approval by the French authorities for the festival is an arduous process and not easy. Each balloon will have to secure its own permission and not a blanket cover for all, however Ian is working tirelessly to try to ensure that the process is both smooth and possible. He has assured me recently, that when the full process is agreed and known he will pass on the process to me for inclusion in a future edition of this newsletter.

On behalf of those who will benefit from his efforts may I publically thank Ian here for all his exertions on this job.

Just a small announcement to say that the membership continues to rise towards our judge declared goal of 1000 members. As of the end of February we stand at 970 just 30 shy of the target. I have every faith that in 2017 we will achieve this milestone of a number.

And so that was February's Newsletter, hope you all enjoyed it.

All articles for inclusion in future issues will be gratefully received by your Editor. Please forward them to steve.roake33@gmail.com and feedback good, bad or indifferent is always welcome. Views aired by contributors may not be those of the Editor.

Looking forward to the season, fly safe ... Steve Roake.

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