



Cloudhopper News

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Greetings fellow One Manners.

It is always an onerous task taking over the reins of a successful event, and when that event has previously run for 29 consecutive years, I would say that the expectations are loaded particularly as there is serious pressure to be at least as good as the previous hosts.

This didn't seem to put off John Tyrell or Wendy Rousell as they launched into the 30th consecutive One Man Meet held this year at Tissington Hall near Ashbourne in Derbyshire.



Mass Launch captured by Ian Chadwick

The odds were in their favour as the world record for hoppers in the air at the same time is 29 which occurred in this region at Ilam in 2006 and some effort had been used to try and get Close to this number. The setting seemed perfect and with good weather forecast for the weekend, read the report later to see just how close John and Wendy got at beating the target at their first attempt. Also in this issue a report from XLTA by David Tanzer.

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1, Ed-Speak – The Mark 2 I-pod!

Over a Christmas break, some years ago, whilst bored stiff, I came up with the idea of building an instrument pod for the cloudhopper that once you got into the seat and clipped on the harness, literally clipped onto a D ring each side and away you flew, saving both valuable time and fuel.



Now time has moved on and no matter how successful the old original design was, I have decided to move with the times and update the old original to the Mark 2 specification. Retaining the three original instruments, the Mark 2 will utilise the same successful formula of a simple 10mm MDF base with a Rohacell core of 30mm thickness, suitably dressed in long wearing Cordura cloth. I know you are asking, so what's new about the mark 2? In the true spirit of embracing technology, I'm adding space for the inclusion of an I-pod mini so I can utilise Moving Map technology. The overall size is increased but not dramatically. With all components already owned, the cost of the new I-pod is minimal. At 385mm x 285mm in size, the



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MDF and Rohacell are being procured from my old employer for free, a metre of Cordura was £12 after postage from Peter Bish and the elastic cord is pence from any sewing shop.



It always pays to template the idea for proof of concept.

As you can see from the Template stage it still remains compact and as it progresses, I'll update you on the project. All it takes is time and attention to detail and then you are set for healthy savings in time and fuel. Hopping is about keeping things simple, and an instrument pod that simply clips on when you are ready to fly is the simplest of all things saving valuable time with tying instruments to your body or legs.

Steve Roake



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2, Essential Extra's / Tech Talk-

Nothing for this section this month.

3, The Features Section

The 30th Annual One Man Meet –Tissington Hall Derbyshire

When John Tyrell and Wendy Rousell took over the reins of the annual One Man Meet (OMM) in October 2014, they had a tough act to follow. Phil Dunnington had pretty much run it for the previous 29 years with some help from Clive Bailey and Colin Wolstenholme, and therefore expectations were quite high for the Northamptonshire based Team to produce a nice venue and an event that lived up to the previous levels.



Tissington Hall (central) and my B&B on RHS where road forks
Taken shortly after takeoff from 1500 feet by Steve Roake

When I discovered that we were going to be guests of Sir



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Richard Fitzherbert Bart's lavish estate at Tissington Hall near Ashbourne Derbyshire I just remembered the previous visit to that area in 2006 at Ilam where we had the best ever turn out and remembered the beautiful countryside punctuated with dry stone walls everywhere and fine Dales with rolling hills and arable farms everywhere. This is truly some of the most picturesque countryside you will find in the England and a stunning setting from which to fly.

Arriving to the venue on Friday 2nd October in glorious sunshine, I wasn't prepared for the 17th century Jacobean mansion house set in a lovely estate, and by sheer fluke my crew mate Iestyn had booked us a B&B roughly 300 yards from the launch field that was being run by Tennant Farmer Tony Stone and his wife Julie who just happened to be my landlord for the duration of the event. I checked out the launch field location and then adjourned to the Local Pub for some sustenance where I found Andrew Davidson with Mel his partner and crew also obtaining food prior to flying.

The briefing was scheduled for 3-15 and arriving early I took great delight in finding John and Wendy setting up in the wrong field. The one they had picked was next to the allotted one and contained a number of sheep, which was pointed out by the farmer. Once the signage was rearranged we were ready for the met forecast and obvious flying activity. My crew for this slot (with many thanks was Ian Crouch), had stepped in at the eleventh hour as my pal Iestyn had been dumped with a night shift for his sins. The weather gods had played ball and it was clearly flyable and the wind (what little there was) showed a surface forecast of 160/4knots. 2000ft wind was predicted at 170/2knots and QNH of 1023. The teams that were in attendance were then told you can fly at your discretion and so we fanned out on the field and in a leisurely manner prepared for flight. Despite my best efforts to not be first away I took off third into the air and quickly established that the moving air wasn't any more than 3 knots maximum right up to 2500feet. So Ian was going to have an easy retrieve and as it was my first foray into Derbyshire I had agreed with the crew to try to land as near as possible to a road for easy of packing away. My one hour amble around the dales took me ultimately to a lovely Mrs Gibbs who resided at Boston Grange Farm some 3.3nm from my take off point. Andy Austin flew much of the flight nearby to me, above, below, left and right of me in varying heights but ultimately landed in the field next to



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mine, and following me into my chosen landing field of choice were eventually another eight balloons to the delight of 13 year old Ben (son of the landowner), who greeted each one on the Quad bike. The whole family troop came down and said hello to us all and I hope were delighted by the booze they were showered with for their gracious welcomes. The ease at flying this flight showed up at refuelling when my 60mins had only used a meagre 25litres from my 35k envelope. It transpired some 23 had flown, all regulars,(except for G-CEJG an Ultramagic M-56 which has some great history, low hours, and now belongs to Chris Davies), along with a couple of local rides balloons from the same venue. All enjoyed their ventures, with perhaps Andrew Davidson picking the short straw and finding a farmer with some attitude who demanded £20 for his displeasure. Later that night we returned to the same pub called "The Bluebell Inn" which despite its location on a fairly busy road, was reliant on passing trade only. We added some 57 covers to the day's takings and probably pissed off the single chef working that evening but good food it was too.



Busy Saturday Morning caught by Sandy Mitchell during the mass inflation.



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A fairly early end to the evening ensured I was up for 6-15am to find My crew buddy outside the B&B in his car having travelled directly following the nightshift. Suitably boosted by the flask of tea I had made him we ventured to the launch field where the numbers had been bolstered by more arrivals including Mark Stelling from Edinburgh and Trevor Read who had borrowed G-CISJ Um H-31 from Paul Wade. Martin Axtell was also new to the event with G-DUMP a Customcraft A25. The met briefing was pretty much as expected. The skies were overcast with low cloud base and light winds. Surface winds were 160/2knots varying in direction and 2000 foot winds 110/5knots and so deemed flyable. Temperature was a brisk 7degrees and the QNH down to 1016 and once again we all chose our pitches on the launch site and prepared to fly. Initially it was possible to fly a "box" and when I took off I flew to 3000, just below the cloud base, before returning to the deck some hundred yards from where id launched from. Some general loitering followed over Tissington Hall estates with some balloons landing within the grounds.



Two rare Ultramagic's, G-CISJ and G-CEJG(31 and 56 respectively) photographed by Sandy Mitchell.



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The local rides balloon joined in the fun and it became apparent that what little wind there was in the air was going two different ways out of the Launch site. Whilst some pilots flew in the same direction as the previous night, most moved in a more westerly direction. When I say "moved", largely the wind was around 1 knot and at times it became becalmed. John Tyrell in G-FFFT decided to land his hopper exactly where he was staying and after 50 mins of chilled fun and with my crew directly below me I decided to pick the field opposite to where John had arrived. This was animal free with good access and an easy retrieve, so whilst the possibility to fly on was tempting, prudence took over and we packed up returning to our B&B for a lovely belated cooked breakfast.

Unfortunately, staying at the home of the host farmer I got to hear a story from the morning flight where one balloonist had flown low over a field with two cows with calves, that had scattered, climbed and broken a stone wall and one of the calves had got out too. Naturally, this is the kind of attention that we don't want to bring onto ourselves. Spending time listening to his story I knew we had to deal with this incident because we were planning to return the following year and the farmer didn't need the problem. So at the afternoon briefing, having discussed it with John and Wendy it was suggested that each pilot put £5 into a kitty to pay for the repairs and I'm glad to say the gesture was well received by John the farmer who revealed that having had a recent knee replacement surgery, would now be able to pay someone else to fix the wall for him as movement was still painful. So a good PR situation and grief averted. Thanks to the generosity of all we raised £130. In the "downtime" between the morning and afternoon briefings, Lestyn got some well earned shut eye, and with the others we returned to the Launch field having popped over to Belper and obtaining gas at a very reasonable price from Graham Holtam (many thanks). My two flights had used a paltry £17-50 of fuel for my 1 hour 50mins of fun.

In between the two slots some souls decided to get another flight in the bag such was the weather, you could fly all day. Returning from Belper, motoring across the dales with their dry stone walls and contouring hillsides, and then plunging through a ford on the outskirts of Tissington Hall, seeing balloons flying just set the idyllic scene that was most captivating to behold.

By this time I was getting greedy. No let up in the weather, nice accommodating farmers, fantastic flora and fauna, who



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wouldn't want to get some more in and as the 3-15 briefing arrived we had been joined by our Gas supplier and a friend with two larger balloons now joining the one man brethren. John gave us another good met forecast with surface winds of 250/ 4knots and very easy 2000ft winds of 170/3knots. The QNH was down to 1013 and a temp of 10degrees but nothing to trouble any hopper pilot in that information. Another leisurely choice of "towel location" on the launch field and once again the process of preparation (now becoming second nature) followed with launch into the air at 16-15 local time. My particular flight lasted 65mins achieving all of 6.1nm in sedate winds giving me time to enjoy my surroundings and to fly alongside the departing Virgin rides balloon. It was nice to fly in an alternative direction to previous flights and the general direction was towards Carsington Reservoir tracking over the village of Bradbourne. Once again during the flight there were layers of interesting winds with an initial track of around 110 degrees at 1500 feet, however later on into the flight this changed to an almost due northerly track as we were inspected by various other aerial craft including a microlight and what appeared to be a vintage Tiger Moth plane. Most pilots decided to land somewhere near to the western edge of the reservoir but me, Neil Ivison and Gareth Bufton all landed in empty fields north east of the village. The shards of sunlight coming through the clouds looked wonderful in the pleasant afternoon stillness. This was the longest flight of the weekend for most and returning to my B&B accommodation we eagerly refreshed before returning to the Bluebell Inn for sustenance and a Rugby World cup free evening of merriment. Darwin Peltam joined us having arrived today sharing his Airtour Balloon G-BLVA with its other owner (Simon), the previous day. Surprisingly it transpired, whilst some in the pub were happy to see us return for more food, the management weren't. It seemed they were too busy on the previous night and with this in mind, I don't think they will be getting our business next year. This was a shame as it was all of two miles from my accommodation so very accessible.

TV rugby took hold with the majority who wanted to witness England's dramatic collapse to Australia eating elsewhere, but the hearty few enjoyed a very pleasant evening's social, retiring at a very reasonable 10pm with the morning in mind.

Before you knew it Sunday Morning had arrived and with flask freshly filled we returned to the launch field which had a



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dewy feel to it. Early morning cloud base was once again lower but the visibility was supposed to be more than 8kms and the surface winds 300/2knots. Temperature of 7degrees ensured you knew Autumn had arrived and benign upper winds of the same direction but up to 6 knots at 2000ft meant that flying was inevitable for those who chose to do so. Some had ventured to a party the night before so were absent, Martin Freeston chose not to fly fearing getting the envelope wet prior to putting it away, but 23 still ventured into the air. My amble into the skies this time took me back in a similar direction to the flight of yesterday morning but on a slightly more northerly track. Once again the passengers who had paid Virgin Balloon flights for an experience were getting more for their money than they had expected. As their pilot prepared the vast commercial balloon for its flight, they were mobbed by visiting hoppers who added to the fun. My leisurely 60 mins of fun saw me track very close to yesterday's field of choice for landing in, and armed in the knowledge that the landowner was indeed friendly I chose to alight in the cut stubble one on the opposite side of the road as my retrieve has good access and it seemed the logical place to land. We were joined by Ian Chadwick who had been flying G-CEWF his Jacobs homebuilt 35A which looked lovely and clean with a unique feel to the ripstop nylon. Ian explained how much he had paid for the craft; all I can say is that it was a bargain. The other reason to land when I did was that our hosts had promised another late cooked breakfast and my crew buddy lestin was on a tight time frame having to depart for another Nightshift. Suitably refuelled, he departed, I vacated our abode and we all ventured to the Tea Rooms for the prize giving which is the fun part of this event. You always dread that you are going to be awarded one of these prestigious awards but once again I managed to elude them.

Andrew Davidson won the prestigious Wooden Tit award. In his case this was for a series of three landings where one was a difficult farmer, one where he landed on slurry and a third where he had to wait for an hour for a farmer to return.

Mark Stelling won the marvellous Cock up award for his fine first inflation of G-BZPY, the REMAX hopper. Mark had not flown a hopper for some time and when inflating the 31 pulled the parachute so hard on the inflation it collapsed on him.



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When asked about it he said "It did feel slightly different to the 105 I regularly fly".

Next award went to Darwin Peltam. He won Wendy's Wellies after landing his hopper then having to walk down the road to find somebody else's retrieve who then retrieved him as well, only to find Sue Davis, Chris and Paul Spellward having a cup of tea with Wendy and John.

And finally there was a special award for the "Golden Retrievers", Jane Austin and Sue Davis who retrieved 12 and 11 balloons each.

Post the event, it is understood that the intention is to hold the event at the same venue over the weekend of 7th – 9th October 2016. Thanks not only to John and Wendy for their efforts in holding the event, but also to Ian and Geoff who ably supported their efforts.

Steve Roake

XLTA 11 by David Tanzer

XLTA 11 took place during the weekend of 11 - 13 September at the beautiful Whelan Farms Airport in Bethlehem, Connecticut. Once again, Mick Murphy graciously hosted experimental balloon pilots from far and wide. The weather wasn't particularly conducive to balloon flying, but a good time was still had by all. This was my 11th XLTA and, on my way down from Vermont I stopped to pick up long-time balloon pilot Scott Caplan, who was also marking his 11th XLTA.

The winds didn't settle down until just before sunset on Friday evening, so only three balloons flew. Dannielle Francoeur and Leo Burman of Montreal flew their incomparably beautiful homebuilt Butterfly balloon, and they were joined by Brian Boland and Keith Sproul. Afterwards, we all gathered in the hangar for the traditional pizza dinner.

Saturday morning turned out to be beautiful, and I believe all in attendance flew that flight—perhaps 15 or 20 balloons all told. The winds were light and out of the east, so the lot of us gently tracked to the west. I launched next to my good friend Jim O'Brien, who was flying his still new hopper, which is another beautiful Paul Stumpf-built envelope over a Bonanno bottom end. Jim and I flew



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over nearby Long Meadow Pond, and then descended to the surface in order to tap the soles of our shoes on the water. We played around there for a while before finally climbing up to fly on, and both of us found nice backyards to make standup landings in about 45 minutes later. We then returned to the airport to refuel our balloons and ourselves—once again Mick had a local chef come out to make all of us delicious breakfast sandwiches.

The weather quickly deteriorated on Saturday, and it was blustery and spitting by that afternoon so there would be no ballooning for the remainder of the weekend. But as was the case last year, Mick hosted another amazing clam bake for Saturday afternoon's dinner, which included boiled lobster, steamers, fresh sweet corn, among many other yummy things.



Photo by Tom Syrotiak

This meet has to have some of the best food of any balloon event I've ever attended. Much of Saturday afternoon and evening were spent visiting with friends from near and far. I believe the "travelled farthest" award for this year goes to Dan and Jeanne Decker, who used to live at Whelan Farms but now reside in Lake City, Florida. Dan and Jeanne made the trip up with another gorgeous Paul Stumpf creation built especially for them. Unfortunately, Paul wasn't able to attend this year because he was so busy building banners for Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta-bound pilots, but he was certainly well represented at XLTA with



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so many of his beautifully crafted balloons.
Sunday morning was another bust for flying, but we did get to do a bunch more hangar flying while munching on yet another round of delicious breakfast sandwiches. I'm already looking forward to XLTA 12!

David Tanzer

4,Homebuilding-A seed is sown.

Just a couple of days ago, I spent a day in the company of Tim Wilkinson at his place Sackville Airfield / Farm, having had an invitation to spend time with him as he continues to invigorate the UK homebuilding impetus. It wouldn't be an understatement to say that Tim's infectious enthusiasm for building balloons is making waves on the UK balloon scene as he has completed 4 renovations and new builds himself this year and has just registered another four projects with the CAA recently. Not content to do his own thing, Tim graciously guilds others along the path of new build offering his knowledge and time in assisting others with their projects.



Busy scene at Sackville Balloons



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On the occasion of my visit, it was half term in the UK and Tim was instructing John Russon and family with a new 65k balloon that had been produced By Brian Mead. John, a first time builder was achieving great things when I visited and the timing of my trip coincided with the completion of the twelfth and last gore of the balloon, which to me seemed immense seeing as they only cut cloth, three days earlier. John, who had never ever sat behind a twin stitch machine up till two days earlier, was being very industrious with Tim also assisting in manufacture of the red white and black craft. Whilst I have no need for another hopper, I have always harboured an idealistic dream of flying something that I had a hand in manufacturing and all these efforts were not good for me as you are easily enticed and soon see the merits of manufacturing your own bespoke craft from scratch. Now surrounding yourself in the company of avid builders is only going to have one effect and Tim lit a fuse with me when he offered me a go on one of his three machines.



This unremarkable photo is in fact a time bomb with a lit fuse , as it represents my first ever foray into sewing in any shape or form and after only a hours messing around, I was comfortable that the results were not only reasonable and centralised, but also showed potential when taken to the next level. I have to



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say the perfectionist in me would want to successfully manufacture a flag or a windsock perhaps before diving straight into the world of creating your first balloon but John Russon seemed buoyed up by his decision to attack his first project and the results that were being achieved. However I am a man with his feet firmly on the ground and as stated last month have no need for a new hopper, since the one I own last only 40 odd hours total time on it and can travel anywhere in Europe, where as an Annex 2 offering currently suffers from limitations. So if I could find a suitable partner in a project, I might be tempted to add my stamp to its DNA, and let the other partner look after the craft on our behalf but unless this happens I can't see myself taking a solitary leap of faith.

Steve Roake

5, Favourite Photos –

Interestingly talking recently with Neil Ivison. He told me about two fascinating photos which I knew nothing about.





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OE-ZBB is only the third ever shaped hopper I've ever come across. Ex G-BPVS, this 1989 Thunder and Colt "Baren" Bear is very rare. Photo with Thanks Mel Kirby, and Neil Ivison.



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The second photo dates from 14th August 1980 when Cameron Balloons experimented with an unusual four gore design of hopper. Called a type P-20, this design didn't catch on but is a useful reminder to the origins of hopping. Thanks to Cameron Balloons for allowing this photo to be displayed.



The balloon remains registered to Cameron Balloons Ltd and had a MTOW of 182kgs. Ironically it was only declared as a non flyer in 2013. Thanks once again to Simon Askey and Neil Ivison for finding the print.



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6. Gallery Pages – New Additions

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, and then feel free to forward details of it with a suitable photograph to me using my normal email address.



First free flight of G-PICO Cameron O-31 for Joc Trehern on 17th October at Crieff caught by many but best picture by Sandy Mitchell.



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Manufacturer's News (homebuilding part 2) and Event News

Fresh from the debut at the OMM, Tim Wilkinson gives his thoughts on his own collapsible basket design. So in his own words, Tim Reflects on what has been achieved.

Update on the collapsible basket.

Time to reflect since the making of the new basket. I wanted a basket to put into the back of the car. To say I'm pleased with the result is a slight understatement. Up at the One Man Meet, where it flew twice. The concept works well. I wanted a simple basket easy to use,

So what are the pros and cons?

AGAINST

The basket is not as protective as wickerwork, that I was expecting and can accept, and I can't use it under an EASA envelope only the annex two types.

FOR

Easy to use, lightweight. This one weighs only 25kgs, and is light to carry, rigs and derigs very quickly, robust, simple to repair at home if damaged, put it in boot of car or behind driver seat, and cheap to make.

FUTURE PLANS

I personally don't like sitting in a chair. So in the spring will make a one person basket same design hopefully weight under 20kgs, to carry myself and maybe two tanks. The size I have already made is good for two people and two tanks will make another larger basket to carry three people and two tanks. It's so simple.

MAKING IT

Having made the first one, experience has shown there are easier ways to make it a more professional finished article. Still temped as an option to cut the poles in half and sleeve them as a trial, against Chris Dunkley's advice, but time will tell. As there is plenty of spare fabric when cutting out the template, will raise the bottom fold higher to give a second skin at the bottom but against that it's more weight. The bottom locating tubes will be made out of stainless steel tube. Most likely have the wires sleeved with see through plastic tube for protection and inspection. The pole covers have now got a zip. I forgot to put the tube covers on before putting on the burner too many times- that idea didn't work well.

Tim Wilkinson



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Icicle Refrozen
Saturday 2nd & Sunday 3rd January
2016

Donnington Grove Hotel & Country
Club, Newbury

The 3-4-40 Region BBAC are delighted to announce...

The successor to the long running Icicle Balloon Meet will take place on Saturday 2nd January 2016 & Sunday 3rd January 2016 at Donnington Grove Hotel & Country Club.

The 3-4-40 Region BBAC have taken on the organization of this iconic event and we are delighted to announce the new venue for flying and social events. The meet as always remains informal, un-sponsored & open to all balloonists.

Please note that accommodation, Icicle trade show and Balloon Entry Forms will shortly be available. Further updates will be circulated via the BBAC Forum & Social Media.

In the meantime we look forward to welcoming you to the event in January 2016!

Jonathan
Icicle Refrozen Balloon Meet 2016 Committee

And Finally

Facebook membership continues to rise with the current level of 724 a significant increase from last month's level. Let's hope this trend continues and we beat the 1000 mark soon. **Steve Roake**

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 Safe and happy hopping! Steve Roake.