



Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 80

September 2015

Hello again Hopper fans.

As we near the end of the natural summer flying season, it is obvious that the amount of content in the magazine dedicated to reporting flying activity will diminish but all isn't over in terms of what is happening within our sphere of flying. Next month marks the 30th One Man Meet, and as entries add up it will be interesting to see whether or not John Tyrell and Wendy Rousell can entice more flyers than we have ever achieved before. 29 is the record airborne at the same time, and encouragingly for them, this happened at ilam in Derbyshire, just down the road from this year's venue.



Tim Wilkinson's AH 31 was on show at Grass Roots balloon Meet.

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Let's hope we get some decent flying weather and a damned fine social because 80% of the One Man Meet is about the social side of flying. If you haven't got your entry in yet – hurry up and I'll see you there.

In recent weeks we also saw the annual XLTA meet in America, this year held at Whelan farms Bethlehem Connecticut. More on this later in the magazine.

1, Ed-Speak – Future Plans?

Recently as some of you may know I was constructively dismissed from my employer which after 26 years could have been a really nasty humiliating event. Thanks in part to a damned good employment lawyer and an outlook in life that life is an opportunity rather than a hindrance, I am in a good place. However, having time on your hands and a very generous offer from Tim Wilkinson, I am actually coming around to the idea that time might be right to having a go at building a Hopper.

The simple truth is that I have no need for another as I am very happy with the one I own but have always thought that flying something that you have built yourself cannot be beaten. However with a wife who naturally is keen for me to find another job, perhaps taking on a project like this on my own may not suit me despite the fact that I have time on my hands. However for me sole ownership may not be a prerequisite so I may go into partnership with a couple of friends on this plan. Let's wait and see what develops.

Steve Roake

2, Essential Extra's / Tech Talk-

Another month where this section remains empty, so come on people, it's about time you shared with the others those little things that make your hopping life easier, so send them in to me and let me tell the world.



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3, The Features Section

Grass Roots 2015

This year's Grass Roots balloon meet was held again at Sackville lodge in Riseley Bedfordshire and once again was supported by Ultramagic Balloons Uk and Easy Balloons. Rob Cross and his team had assembled some 110 plus entries and despite some pessimistic weather forecasting leading up to the event, it actually turned out okay in the end. Unbelievably there were four slots if you include Sunday pm after most had gone home, and arriving on Friday afternoon, I still thought my weekend would be sociable rather than flyable. Arriving early afternoon I was surprised how many optimists had decided to come and having set up camp for the weekend, arrived at the first briefing thinking nobody would actually fly that slot. With the forecast of 8-10 on the surface and 18knots at 500 feet most decided to stay on terra ferma, but three exceptions flew from sheltered take off points surprising most of us. With Keilder meats present, good food was readily available at really cheap prices and with beer at only £2-50 a pint, a sociable evening ensued with a prospect of morning rain so no need to rise early, a few pints were sunk by most.

Saturday am didn't happen with the predicted rain arriving as forecast, and so a leisurely breakfast and a relaxing morning seemed like the best course of action. The Sat / Sunday had also a planned vintage aircraft meet with over 60 aircraft coming but the winds and squally showers kept all but 10 hardy aviators at bay. Not all time was lost though as John Hilditch took the opportunity to cut another parachute for his Airtour 31 in Tim Wilkinson's balloon barn, whilst others got a chance to try their hands at sewing marker drops. By the afternoon, more balloonists were appearing predicting a Sunday morning slot and not expecting flyable conditions on the evening chance. By briefing time however the winds had started to ease and with a latish take off time some 18 balloons edged skywards with around 6 knots on the surface and 12-16 upstairs.

At this point of the proceedings, no hopper activity had taken place but this would change on Sunday morning. We all awoke early on Sunday morning to gin clear skies and trooped down to the briefing where the ring master Rob Cross delivered us the news that we had all been waiting for. It was green for go and so



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59 balloon teams took up station alongside the grass runway and prepared to fly. Surface winds of around 5-6 knots and between 10-12 at 1000 feet signalled fine flying weather. With most of the balloons traditional sizes, it was nice to see Kevin Tanner, Andrew Gregory and Andrew Davidson flying amongst the pack.



Sunday morning with Kevin Tanner – Photo by Richard Gahan.

Initially we all inflated for a line up photo opportunity, then headed off towards the North at a steady 10 knots. For me a very pleasant one hour flight followed with a lovely farmer upon my arrival just over the county border into Northamptonshire. It was one of those mornings that reminds you why on earth we all enjoy our



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sport so much and was a joy to share with fellow participants. Having gassed up upon my return it was near enough time for the prize giving. Those very nice sponsors Ultramagic Balloons Uk committed to sponsoring the event for another year and then most teams started packing up for their various journeys home.



Two Lindstrands together in the early hours – by Richard Gahan.

Those of us who weren't time tied, stuck around and were rewarded when Tim Wilkinson decided to tether his recently finished hopper G-CISD. Like his other 2015 builds, the quality of the job stands out and is quite inspiring. This was definitely one time when you had to be present to see for yourself and well worth hanging around for.

The essence of Grass Roots balloon meet is its simplicity and its back to basics approach to the whole weekend and the ease at which everyone decides their own agendas. Long may this successful formula continue and remain so well supported.



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Damian Buzby's interesting Solo.

It's not every day that someone takes their balloon license solo in a cloudhopper, but that is exactly what happened on the 20th September at Loddington for Damian Buzby.



Following on from taking his GFT at Sackville grass roots event, Damian needed his solo flight witnessed, and rather unusually he chose to do it in G-BLXG a Colt 21A which remarkably was only on its second flight in 21 years. Congratulations to Damian from all of us here.



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As this goes to press, its One Man Meet week and it's looking good for multiple flights which would be a great way for Wendy Rousell and John Tyrrell to start their turn with hosting. Let's hope we all have a great time at Tissington Hall near Ashbourne Derbyshire. With only days to go it's with thanks to Graham Holtam that we have a gas supply at our disposal and with over 25 teams signed up let's go have some fun.

4, Homebuilding – Tim Wilkinson does it again

Tim Wilkinson has been building again, this time completing his first ever collapsible bottom end.



Weighing in at 25 kilos this set up, in pure basket and burner terms is a paltry 15 kilos and in typical Wilkinson style Tim reckons he can do a better one next time with results learnt from the first version.



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5, Favourite Photos –



Posted on facebook during September by Mathieu Dekock, G-CBYS is a Lindstrand 21A seen at Ceroux –Mousty Belgium, but has spent most of its life in France.



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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.



Paul Wades new UM H-31 G-CISJ flew the day before the One Man Meet – photo by Trev Read. Its ex YU-AOL.



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Cameron Balloons New Nano V4 Basket in their own words

The NANO v.4 Foldable Superlight Basket. 'Our initial priorities were simply to offer the best, pilot-friendly, high-quality product, using aerospace standards and newly available materials and parts. We drew on 45 years of lighter-than-air experience, our strong aeronautical background and built the NANO v.4 Basket using our highly experienced, expert craftspeople and artisans. Once finished, we had designed, developed and built The NANO v.4 Basket a fully-tested, fully approved, safe, new, hassle-free, easy-to-use, superlight hot-air balloon basket.

Background...

Building on the success of the Cameron Balloons Voyager series which was a fold-down basket introduced in the 1990's, the Cameron Balloons design team developed the 'fold-down or pack-away' idea further to this...

The NANO v.4, is a fully-collapsible basket which exceeds EASA (European Aviation Safety Agency) manufacturers' basket guidelines. As well as that, other major benefits are the lightweight construction, forward-thinking innovative design, the use of proven dependable & superlight materials and overall ease of use.

What can I expect from my new Cameron Balloons NANO v.4 Basket? In brief...

Pilot + 2passengers ,Completely EASA compliant.

Available as standard-height or 'hi-spec' and is fully collapsible to less than 40cm. Designed to fit a standard burner frame. Super-strong Titanium upright supports. Ingenious suspension wire design.

Total basket weight about 40kg*

Continuous surround protects occupants and eliminates crew or onlooker entrapment. Super-light 'sandwich' composite floor. Modular design

Super-smooth platform. Available extra options for example to carry 40 litre cylinders externally for inflation and flight. Folds to less than 40cm

Cameron Balloons NANO v.4 in detail.

Pilot + Two Passengers.

The internal floor space is designed for a Pilot plus two



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passengers in most circumstances. It is an ideal piece of equipment for sport balloonists worldwide and is perfect for those that prefer to go 'trailer-less'

A great basket for family teams (as the weight-saving makes it easy to manage even with youngsters!) as well as for those who have restricted storage space when not ballooning - a converted dry, secure, bicycle type lock-up container could house the balloon equipment, when not in use.



Fully EASA compliant.

The whole NANO v.4 system has been fully approved and certified by EASA. Available in standard-height or hi-spec and is fully collapsible to a height of less than 40cm. Two height versions are available from Cameron Balloons; 1160mm from the base of runner to the top of the basket stub and a 'hi-spec' version 1260mm for those taller or for those who wish to have a higher-sided basket.



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Designed to fit a standard Cameron Balloons burner frame.

Cleverly using the popular Cameron Balloons Concept-60 basket top frame, the NANO v.4 basket fits any standard size Cameron Balloons, LHABL or T&C burner frame, making it easy for Pilots to use existing owned equipment if preferred.

Super-strong Titanium upright supports.

The basket upright supports are made from titanium with nylon inserts, weighing just 390gms each (Each upright support weighs a third less than an average iPad)

'The eight individual upright supports are evenly located between the top and base frames and when combined with the taut cross-bracing, they offer tremendous strength and reliability.' Explains Dave Boxall, Design Engineer Cameron Balloons

For ease, the cross-bracing is permanently attached to the four sides, the Pilot is able to release the taut straps for basket-folding, but without undoing the system completely, putting an end to hunting for buckles or ends-of-straps.



'And, if access to the basket is required while it is upright in the vehicle, this can be achieved simply by loosening a couple of straps, 'un-velcroing' a side and folding it open for access.



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It makes it easy to refuel, re-pack or store equipment in a decluttered, hassle-free, safe way.' Explains Simon Askey, Cameron Balloons.

Ingenious suspension wire design

Two ash runners protect the wire suspension system, which runs underneath the basket, the wires terminating onto eyebolts via links. It enables, should any damage occur, the wires to be re-swaged or replaced very easily and provides a clear visual and physical path for the Pilot to check this vital piece of the basket composition pre-flight.

Total basket weight is about 40kg*

The external floor dimensions are 946mm x 1124mm and has been designed to allow the option of folding into the luggage or boot area of a large 4x4 or pick-up when folded. Some balloonists have even used a vehicle tow-hitch platform, folded the basket into a PVC basket cover and stowed it vertically, externally against the back of the vehicle for travel.

*Note, by adding extra features and equipment into the basket and the basket organiser will increase its overall weight.

Continuous surround protects occupants and eliminates crew or onlooker entrapment.

Continuous 'top-to-toe' sidewall trim, without gaps, fully complies with EASA Certification Specifications. This provides occupants and crew with complete protection. The design ensures there are no little ledges or platforms for helpers to externally stand on and no possibility for occupants' body parts or belongings to fall out or protrude through any part of the wall of the basket during landing.

Continuous padded leather or suede basket-top frame trim, also ensures comfort of the pilot and passengers during all aspects of the flight.

Superlight 'sandwich' composite floor

The specially developed, sectional, composite and aluminium floor, is 4kg lighter than its plywood equivalent and incorporates a non-slip surface.

Additional option to carry 40 litre cylinders externally

This basket system includes the usual option to carry the fuel cylinders internally, strapped into the basket corners, but if you prefer Cameron Balloons have a strong, certified and proven external basket, fuel cylinder carrying-system which then provides more internal basket space.

Modular Design

This lightweight clever, modular design eliminates the need



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for traditional wicker. The lightweight aluminium sections are designed to enhance overall product strength and enclose the composite floor snugly. All parts are precision cut and include drain holes and is 4kg less overall in weight to its nearest plywood counterpart.

Change the colour scheme options

If you would like to change your NANO v.4 colour scheme, or if you need a repair, the NANO v.4's simple system makes it easy to replace existing parts with new and reassemble. After the required inspection and release-to-service paperwork, your NANO v.4 basket can be straight back into the air.

'This equipment is all about ease; ease of use, ease of storage and ease of maintenance.'

Packed ready to go

NANO v.4

Prices from £4250 * Valid at Sept 2015 *Subject to local tax and any extra options as specified by the pilot.

For more information or a demonstration of the NANO v.4 or indeed any of the other Cameron Balloons products, please contact E: sales@cameronballoons.co.uk T: +44(0)117 963 7216 and we will be delighted to assist.



And Finally

Facebook membership continues to rise with the current level of 699 increasing by 33 in the last month. **Steve Roake**



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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.

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