



Cloudbopper News

Issue Number 51

October 2011

Another Month, another Newsletter.

Ed-Speak – October is a great month for hopping, and every OMM is special for different reasons, and this one is no different. The venue, the topography of the land, nice folks ,great weather and sociability all add up to a mixture that has success written all over it.

A good familiar turnout enjoyed a great few days in North Wales where we enjoyed the hospitality of Welshpool Airport and some beautiful flying in the mountains. Yet another OMM continues the remarkable trend of successfully achieving flying slots. I have never understood what it is about OMM's that get to me but I always come away from them invigorated and buoyed up about our kind of flying and with a renewed desire to write up the experiences so whilst that remains, let's talk hoppers!

Steve Roake



Saturday Morning at Welshpool Airfield and Sarah Bettin's unusual photo captures the mixing of hoppers and Aircraft as she launches around 10-00am. .jpeg Sarah Bettin with thanks.

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Essential Extra's / Tech Talk

This month's submission comes from Neil Ivison with two must have items.

GIN Sports Flight Deck.

I have been using a GIN Sports Flight Deck for the last 4 years. Might not be everyone's thing but I thought I'd give it a mention. It is a bag for paragliding which has a couple of useful features making it ideal for use with a hopper seat. On the top is a sewn on Velcro strip which means you can Velcro your valuable instruments to it putting them where you need them. You can also purchase "mounts" designed for holding various/GPS's which, surprise surprise, velcro onto this panel.

In the front of the bag is a clear plastic fold out map holder giving easy access when needed. I usually have a printed map showing the area I am flying + the particular area from the Airmap.

The 6ltr bag is big enough to hold documents/maps/radio in flight and all of your other kit when not flying.

The bag has clips on the back which can be attached around you seatbelts or belt loops [on a Cameron base] and can be tightened to suit. Although not cheap it has saved me a lot of headaches with instrument management.

http://www.ukairsports.com/catalog/product_info.php?products_id=193

Christmas Present Idea?

Walkie Talkie Wrist Watch/PPT Radios

Whilst watching the gadget show they reviewed some wrist watch PPT radios. Looked like a possible idea for hopper use.

A quick look found several sets on the market ranging from £25 to £99 but these do vary in coverage distance

Example:

http://www.amazon.co.uk/Frostfire-MoonTalk-Walkie-Talkie-Radios/dp/B0036OA6FG/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1320591337&sr=8-1

Thanks to Neil for his ideas, now what do you think others should use?
Answers to your editor please for inclusion in your newsletter.



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The Features Section- The 27th Annual One Man Meet by Steve Roake

In 2008 I wrote incorrectly about the 28th Annual One Man Meet held at Husbands Bosworth and whilst no one can really remember how many times this event has taken place, this event continues to be the annual pilgrimage for hopper exponents, and it subsequently appears that 1984 was the first event.

I understand that credit for this year's venue goes to Pete Dalby, but following on from two successful years at Wookey in Avon, the event moved to North Wales and a picturesque valley in Powys with a base at the Mid Wales Airport of Welshpool. All the ingredients were there, a valley with mountains around it giving stunning scenery, a map pretty much devoid of sensitive areas, nice relaxed people, a good met forecast and reasonably priced accommodation to suit all tastes.

You always get expectations about the OMM as you drive to the venue and this year's had it all. Rolling hills, winding country roads with stone clad walls, plenty of arable land to land on, and a sense that some flying was definitely going to happen. Added to this for me, was the combining of the trip to coincide with collection of new balloon kit from the local manufacturer, and so I went up to the area a day earlier than the event in order to be local for the start on the Friday afternoon.

The mix of accommodation types included some who camped at the launch site on Welshpool Airfield with Caravans and Motor homes welcome and so the temporary enclave behind the hangers became the unofficial focal point for all of us. Such was the relaxed nature of the Airfield run by its very accommodating manager Bob Jones, that as I arrived on Friday afternoon, a Jetranger helicopter was hovering 30meters from the assembled "Balloon Village" as the two types of aviation integrated for their different aviation exploits. It can't be overstated how relaxed the fixed wing people were towards this invasion of around 30 teams who descended on their patch, opening up their world and club house to accommodate our needs and wishes. Clearly Phil

Dunnington had spent some time liaising with them to ensure a Seamless gelling of both sides needs which involved some



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late tweaking on Friday afternoon as a cross wind component demanded a late change of take off venue so to not obstruct the runway operations as we launched. Luckily behind the Balloon village was an accommodating field which the rotory aircraft used for ground handling and could be implemented for our use, the only compromise being some Hi tension power lines which straddled the field. With the forecast indicating it was flyable if a little spirited (south south easterly at 6-8 on the surface with 14 knots gradient). Balloon s launched after 5pm when most of the fixed wing operations had completed with a split of teams in the field to maximise their opportunity to fly. I picked an area that I thought afforded some protection downwind of the power lines and proceeded to inflate with quite a spirited wind prominent. The salient component was the element which proceeded to spinnaker the envelope and whilst ten flew with assistance from my crew and Paul Dickenson who wasn't flying, I tried in vain to inflate burning two lowest panels before binning it .To say I wasn't happy was an understatement – three OMM's in a row and I've burnt the new hopper (something I never did on the old Colt). Paul indicated I was unlucky and suggested for future knowledge, whilst not in the manual on gusty inflations its better to leave the top tabbed in until airborne since you only get a small window of opportunity to pressurize after the chute comes out.....making sense to me. Whilst we failed to go ten hardy souls flew following Allie Dunnington skywards. It later transpired both Steve Lacey and Ted Moore had also scorched their craft on the inflation, but at least I'd be able to fly the following morning. One interesting arrival at this stage was Tim Orchard who flew in from Wycombe in the club Tecnam P2006 aeroplane (one of three aerial arrivals by hopper folk over the weekend)...definitely the coolest way to arrive for a hopper meet. Those who flew reported back that indeed the wind was strong at around 14 knots whilst airborne but most got into the lee of the nearest hill and had on average a 1-3 knot landing. Saturday morning dawned Foggy and Fresh! So fresh that at 7am on the launch field alongside the runway there was ice on my shoes, with the temperature gauge in the car reading – 2 Celsius. The fogging was localised and whilst the winds were light and variable, at the briefing (held outside the clubhouse), we knew we would have to wait for the visibility to clear before we could go fly. This is one of those



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moments where having a crew mate with a motor home comes in very handy, and so we recamped to warm tea to await more favourable flying conditions. The delay would last until nearly nine thirty when we reconvened for another supplementary briefing, with the surface winds southerly at about 6 knots (but much less where we were) and indicated gradient of 10-15knots.

Ian Ashpole was flying a check flight in a larger balloon and so departed first to report back on conditions to the rest of us and gradually we all started to inflate alongside the runway with the last departure (me) lifting at 10-10am as fixed wing operations started for the day. Notable amongst the flyers was Paul Dickenson's very new nice shiny Techno S50B G-TKNO. Only on its second flight, it was good to have one of the new breed of ultralight balloons amongst the hoppers.



Mel Kirby captures G-TNKO Launching



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After departure from the airfield, the track took us up over the town of Welshpool with a steady 8-9 knots upstairs and I noticed Ted Moore and John Hilditch getting light draw winds in the base of the valley plain. Having now joined the main pack we skirted the hill around Welshpool moving on towards the north. Descending now into the next plain behind the hill the winds died down to a steady 3-4 knots nearer the surface and taking the lead from those in front of me I decided that once my retrieve was in visual view and close enough I would land as close as possible to the main A road to Oswestry.



Tony Brown flies over the great Topography -jpeg by Sarah Bettin

In the twinkling of an eye, I had the best part of an hour and was surely tempted to fly onwards but with the hour nearing 11am and the possibility of instability appearing I thought I should land and found a beautiful field with good access in Ceunant and landed with no land owner related problems.



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It seems that the folks of Powys are really relaxed about early morning visitors and soon we were packed up and off for a combined Breakfast /Lunch meal.

After a nice lunch, Les (my crew buddy) and I returned to the airfield to take in a local walk along a beautifully restored canal returning in time for the three thirty afternoon briefing. As we departed for the walk we witnessed Steve Burden arriving by aeroplane from Oxfordshire having flown in from Munich via Birmingham scheduled service and being picked up by Phil his buddy with the Bolkow 207 monoplane. Phil Dunnington being an avid aviator took no time in lining up a circuit in a type that he hadn't flown before.

The afternoon met briefing was very similar to the morning brief with southerly being the overriding component with 5-6 knots on the surface and south westerly gradient upstairs at 10-12 forecast. Whilst we would again be asked to wait until 5pm before flying after the fixed wing contingent had finished their flying for the day, we were to be treated to a rare treat as Ian Ashpole had with him the two hopper envelopes utilised in the Land Rover Discovery adverts. More on these later but suffice to say Peter Bish needed little persuasion to inflate one so that both could be photographed together. One of these hoppers actually hadn't been out of its bag and upon inflation you could see the fabric literally unstitching itself from the squashing it has taken whilst stored. The only disappointment with the event was that nobody got a really good shot of them inflated together where both were fully pressurised. This was a one off opportunity since they are both currently for sale. Once the hooray over the two envelopes had subsided we all concentrated on trying to fly. Like Friday pm the wind was not too bad but again gusty on the surface and after a protracted attempt to inflate in what definitely wasn't the best spot I ditched the idea. 21hoppers got into the air including Gareth Gray who fresh from a flight into Heathrow from Detroit had driven up especially to fly the evening slot. He managed to get airborne in G-BGHS the Cameron N-31 ex champion balloon.

Whilst we didn't manage to get airborne personally, there was an opportunity to assist with some tethering of G-BKBD the old Thunder Ax3 Sky Chariot with Peter Donkin, who was still learning the ropes and time spent as the evening quietened down was valuable learning time for him. Passing on tips is always time well spent.



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Following our activities we decided to join the masses at The Horseshoes Pub where some seriously nice food was served whilst some interesting topics across the ballooning spectrum were recanted.

Sunday morning dawned slightly later than the previous morning with a scheduled briefing at 8am. Driving to the airfield from our accommodation in Oswestry, we knew that all possibilities of flying were over as the misty rain covered the car windscreen. This was confirmed at a very short briefing where it transpired that the gradient winds were very fast for anyone who fancied a fast flight – there were no takers!

We all agreed to return at 11am for the prize giving. This was conducted in a very full canteen in the clubhouse with the following people recognised. Phil Dunnington had clearly thought out the criteria by which the various recipients would be recognised and generally all awards were well received.

Wendy Rousell was recognised for her help in sorting out the camping facilities for all.

The fearless footprint award (which is a pair of small willies) was delivered to Ian Ashpole, Mark Stelling and Ian Chadwick, who had flown G-SEDO a Cameron N -105 who were the first to fly in the misty conditions and report back on the conditions.

The next award winning a Welsh flag prize was Dan Wilson which was in the Intrepid Explorer award for the longest flight of the weekend.

Another recipient of an award was Peter Bish who received the "Digging for Darwin" prize for pulling too hard on the ripline.

In recognition of their contribution to the weekend, Bob Jones from Welshpool Airport was awarded the Pietro Contigiocomo award of the Picture for the year and a book on ballooning .

Bob told us when we return next; with a bit of forward planning he could offer the opening of the clubhouse and potentially Bacon butties!

The Main award of the Wooden Tit went to Allie Dunnington for being the first in the air Friday night and for tolerance of others.

Phil finally confirmed that the dates for 2012 are the 12th-14th October.

Steve Roake



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Discovery Hoppers

Ian Ashpole arrived at the OMM with the two commissioned Cameron Z-31 hopper envelopes bought for the advertising campaign. The first G-CESX had a total flight time of six hours in the logbook whilst the reserve envelope was zero houred. The opportunity to photograph both together was too good to resist and so with Peter Bish assisting in difficult conditions the two were inflated together.



Mel Kirby photographs G-CESX and CESY.

Both envelopes are available for purchase with G-CESY up for £5000 and G-CESX available for £4500. This represents a considerable saving over the list price and so if you are interested contact Ian directly at

ianashpole@wyevalleyaviation.co.uk



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Paul Dickenson Buys the Brand

As you all are probably aware, the fastest growing sector of our market is for collapsible basket balloons which are light, portable and easy to fly that invariably fly one person but can fly two. The market leader in this section is Ultramagic Balloons Ltd which has reignited this sector with its innovated basket design and 50,000 cu feet envelope. It is always one thing to bring to market a new product, but it's definitely another to endorse it with your own purchase.



Paul has just recently taken delivery of G-TKNO (nice registration for his own personal flying having recently sold on his solo



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balloon G-CEFB the Um H-31. Whilst Paul reports fantastic quality on the first flight, it's the lack of fuel used that really impresses. Paul reported using only 54litres over a 20km first flight that topped one hour included an extended inflation.

He also went on to say whilst the old (not really) hopper was split for its sale, with the envelope going to Hong Kong, both of the sales have inadvertently given to follow up sales that completed two new hoppers since the person who bought the envelope then proceeded to buy a dedicated bottom end for it and the guy who purchased the bottom end has also subsequently purchased from Ultramagic an envelope to complete his kit.

Clearly the UM S-50B Teckno package is a competitive package, and your editor is awaiting a test flight to report back to you about , but with Paul Dickenson endorsing the product and UK dealer Tim Revell expressing a desire to buy one himself, there is a trend emerging .

Jack Klein Fans

News from Jack Klein following a short European tour has emerged. These lightweight portable devices have been shown favour for a while now and whilst jack has upped his profile utilising ourselves for his advertising, he reports strong sales with recent purchases in these countries.

USA 6 fans this year, 3 to Switzerland, 2 to France, 6 to Japan, 2 to Sri Lanka, 1 to New Zealand and 2 to Italy.

Impressive figures I think you'd agree but Jack has been structuring a support network announcing the following dealers .

Arnaud Deramcourt is the French dealer, Richard Sargeant is the Swiss dealer, Peter Bish is the UK sales dealer, and Paulo Bonnano is the Italian link.

Jack confirms that there are opportunities for more European dealers for people who would care to contact Jack. The requirement is that you should purchase a minimum of 4 units and clearly have a means by which you can sell them. Prospective sales agents should apply by talking to jack at email at advanced@cgi.net .



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My First Hop -by Neil Ivison

At the time of my first hop I was a relative newbie to flying with only 10 hours in the logbook. I felt I wanted to build up to my first hop as I assumed a greater deal of control would be required for a hopper. My first experience came thanks to Andy Austin who let me inflate/tether a colt 17 using his hopper seat. The first thing that struck me was the odd feeling of being strapped in and the unnerving feeling of the seat rotation. I also had my first experience of a thermal as it picked me up and swung me back over the roof of his one week old Landrover ! At this point I realised I couldn't burn as the restraint rope was across the burner controls, luckily for me I cleared to the side of the car without touching it. Lesson learnt on hopper tethering! Slightly unnerved and requiring an underwear change it was probably not the best first experience!

Having not been put off and shortly after the purchase of a LBL25 envelope and new Cameron seat I was lucky enough to have a calm evening and be able to employ the vast area of Kelmarsh Hall. It was to be a little play around in with the intention to stay in the field. I decided to have a 50m rope attached to the bottom end which I left dragging on the ground in a trailrope style. The idea was for it to be a handling line so I could be pulled back easily should I get higher than I felt comfortable with or if the wind started to take me out of the field, in reality with a calm wind it provided a good source of friction and weight to make the balloon fly even slower, and also meant it wouldn't climb too quick if I got it too wrong. [Its surprising how much of a difference the rope made on a small balloon so it may be a little tip for some trying a first play in light winds?].

I was lucky enough to be able to spend 30 minutes floating around building confidence in myself/the kit and only covering about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the field.

I also managed to try out some of other the kit I had bought for flying the hopper which consist of a GIN Sports bag & Road Angel Adventurer 7000 running Memory-Map with Airspace/SA's.[a precursor to the ones Memory-Map now sell]



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With the confidence building now done a proper flight was next on the agenda. A week later I was blessed with a good evening, 3kts on the ground, 8kts at 1000ft. Taking off properly for the first time was a nervous experience, not really knowing what to expect, how it would feel being on a seat at height, it felt like I was starting all over again.

Shortly after taking off and flying out of the field it struck me for the first time that I was on my own – the first time since my PPL solo flight, it felt a bit odd to have no-one to talk to but after a while I realised this allows you to concentrate more on the flying with fewer distractions.

After about 5-10 minutes I can recall starting to relax, although I did find myself keeping one hand on the burner frame to stop it rotating swinging which was still felt unusual. Andy Austin had advised me to keep a good eye on the ripline to make sure it doesn't tangle during any seat/envelope rotation, which was probably more why I was keen to avoid seat rotation! Thanks to using the Road Angel map reading was not a problem but I did start to wonder how difficult it would be to have to fold paper maps in the air – hats off to those of you who do!

I don't recall going over 500ft but I didn't really need to. The feeling was so different to a basket. I tried a few approaches gradually getting lower to the ground to work out how it reacts pre-empting the final landing. As every balloon reacts differently with volume/shape/burner power I didn't fancy getting it wrong in a hopper first time out.

After 30 minutes of general enjoyment and freedom. I was approaching a countryside road junction which had a large triangle grassed area, tarmac on 3 sides and the crew standing in the middle of it. I made an approach from tree height using quick pull on the parachute which led to a moment's thought of "wonder what this will do" as a lot of people say don't use the chute in flight on a hopper. I actually needed to go for a second short pull to get the descent I needed which surprised me a little. I was caught by those on the ground and deflated on the grass for a safe end to a new adventure. It's fair to say I was buzzing for a few days after this flight.

Neil Ivison

So that's the format, what happened on your first ever hop and how it felt compared to your expectations? Submissions to me please at steve.roake@ntlworld.com



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Three Favourite Jpegs and why-by Sandy Mitchell

In this fourteenth selection of my favourites and why, Sandy Mitchell submits her three favourite hopper jpegs with reasons why.



In her first submission, Sandy says that this is “ – John Hillditch in Metz 2009. I like this photo because it was taken at one of my favourite balloon meets, Metz and really shows the size difference between a passenger ride balloon and a one man balloon.”

2nd Choice– Hoppers on a frosty morning. I particularly like this one as it proves that balloonists will brave a cold early morning to enjoy their sport, This picture was taken at the one man meet in Wells 2009



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3rd photo from Sandy Mitchell.

Chateau d'Oex 2007 – This picture shows JD drifting off into the snowy misty mountains of the Chateau d'Oex valley on a beautiful sunny morning.



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Many thanks to Sandy for her contribution like her you too can send me your favourite three shots and the reasons why you like them. This section lives and dies by you agreeing to support me with your shots and views on why you like them.

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

4. Updates to the Website / Newsletter/ Topics of Interest

The One Man Meet heralded a chance to talk to my friend about the new website. We are currently pursuing a new tack with a view to publishing it live in January. This represents a quite serious level of work between now and then but you know me, I'm always up for a challenge. So we will work hard to accomplish the goal.

5. Homebuilt section- Another blank month.

6. 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.





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First submission care of Air Britain Photographs and thanks to Bill Teasdale is this 1994 shot of G-BVOJ Lindstrand 31A in its former days with Flying Pictures. Taken at Ashton Court Bristol on the 5th August at the Bristol Fiesta.



Second submission is thanks to Neil Ivison and features Richard Phillips Hopping at Chatsworth this summer in his ex Sainsburys Flying Circus Lindstrand 31A.



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Lastly also from Neil Ivison, Glenn Everett is also captured hoping in his Ultramagic H-31 hopper at Chatsworth House. Many thanks for the great shots Neil!



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Manufacturer News / Events / Updates

New Bonanno Hopper

Jack Klein recently posted on the photo section of cloudhoppers@yahoo.com a series of new photos from his recent European trip which included a visit to Paulo Bonanno's workshops. I would be amazed if anyone who has been around balloons for a number of years hasn't heard of Bonanno. This genius has been involved with ballooning products for ages and is renowned for being an innovative technical designer who pushes the boundaries of engineering within ballooning with a plethora of products from the simple quick release mechanism to commissions for both Ultramagic Balloons and Cameron Balloons limited which include the power plus burner for UM and the Scirocco Burner system for Camerons. As with everything Paulo does there is an attention to detail which is second to none.





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I'm sure that the real interest will be with the burner system and with its action. Jack comments, "The handle ring is welded to the inner ring. I am asking him to make the turning ring a bit larger on the next one he builds. Hopefully Paolo will make me one with the larger diameter turning ring. The double turning rings attached to the double action blast valve burner have hundreds of ball bearings sandwiched between these two rings to make it swivel. Nice smooth action when turning. It is a squeeze blast valve, and if you squeeze it to a point, it only actuates the main coils of the burner. If you squeeze a bit harder, the whisper burners are actuated, along with the main burner. Paolo called it the "Oh Shite" system, if you ever needed to use it.

It is very stable landing backwards. The danger of damaging the cylinders is no different than landing sideways with a single cylinder. Landing with 2 cylinders, you end up lying down on top of the tanks, and it is quite comfortable. For light wind landings, you land facing however you wish. I am not sure what is correct in people's eyes, as I am new at hopper flying and landings.

I just went out to the workshop and weighed the system. The weights are:
Burner and turning ring:
28.5 lbs or 13 kilos (including travel case)
23 lbs or 10.5 kilos (without the case)

Chair with drop line, wheels and two cylinder manifold:
37 lbs. or 16.5 kilos. (including travel case)
30 lbs or 13.5 kilos (without the case)
Weights have been rounded up and down for, kilos vs. lbs, and are not exact."

Ed Note – I'm told Paolo is one of those people who designs a new product and then designs the tolling to productionise it. Thanks to Jack Klein for the information and photos and so far no idea of pricing.



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Adverts / For Sale / Wanted section

Ultramagic H-42/05



Ultramagic H-42 (Year of Manufacture: 1996), believed to be C/N 05. Zero hours flown only 2 or 3 inflations. Possibility for attaching banners to envelope.

Price: € 5.500,- ex VAT. Contact: Pieter **Kooistra** joure, The Netherlands
Phone: +31 - (0) 513 - 417503E-mail: kooistrapieter@yahoo.co.uk

G-BVUI is for sale

Lindstrand 25A. 1994. G-BVUI. 96 hrs. Lindstrand colours (no words) in red, yellow & blue. New EASA C of A on delivery. £1700 Zebedee Balloon Service - 01488 681527, 1700 British Pounds= (+ -) depending on exchange rate: \$2700.00 Photo of balloon is the first one on the Zebedee list under envelopes. web page:

<http://www.zebedeelist.co.uk/list/list.php?section=envelope>

I also have the matching Lindstrand hopper bottom end that I might be willing to part with. If anyone is interested, E-mail me at advanced@gci.net, or call me in Alaska at 907 242-5860
Jack advises that £3750 buys the complete kit.



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The Klein FAN

Smaller is better!



Tiny but surprisingly powerful
inflation fans!

9 kg empty, 10.5 kg full (fuel
+ oil)

2.5 hp Honda engine

One fan easily inflates
balloons up to 2000m³

Two fans will blow your
socks off!

Contact Advanced, Inc.

advanced@gci.net

Tel. +1 907 346-3495

www.kleinfan.com

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And Finally.

Membership is currently a healthy 429 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 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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