

THE SCOOP



**Next CLAS Meeting—Thursday, June 19 at 7:30PM
Plainville Police Department, 19 Neal Court, Plainville
Across from the Plainville Municipal Building on Rt. 372**

It appears that the May issue never made it online, so this is a special combination issue of May and June and it is packed with news. Enjoy!

**Balloonist says sky over Simpsonville is just right for flying
By Nathaniel Cary, Greenville News**

Up to 80 hot air balloons will take flight in the skies over Simpsonville this weekend during competitions in the mornings and commercial flights in the evenings, all part of this year's Freedom Weekend Aloft festival.

Spectators can watch balloons overhead in the early daylight hours as pilots compete in games that target pinpoint control of the balloons. From 6-8 p.m. Saturday, Sunday and Monday, visitors can watch the balloons launch from Heritage Park in Simpsonville or take a tethered balloon ride from the launch site.

Steve Lambert has flown balloons at FWA since 1991, along with his wife, Connie, who acts as crew chief in charge of the balloon chase vehicle. He doesn't mind the early morning hours that balloonists keep because the sky is calmest in the morning and evening. *Click [here](#) to read more...*

Mike Bollea and Mark Sand attended Freedom Weekend Aloft. We hope to hear more about the weekend in coming issues of *The Scoop*.

**Up in the Air, but Never Confused
As told to Patricia R. Olsen, New York Times**

I have a full-time job at American Airlines as a pilot, and I run a balloon ride business, Skyblue Ballooning, on the side with my husband, a pilot who works for AirTran Airways. I'm also the mother of two girls, Lauren, 5, and Danielle, 3. My friends say they don't know how I do it all. You could say I'm a master juggler.

Some people think that being a pilot is a part-time job because it seems that we work less than five days a week. But when you consider the time it takes to commute to our home base and add that to the hours we are away, it can amount to a lot more hours than it seems. *Click [here](#) to read more...*



Connecticut Lighter Than Air Society

THE SCOOP



OR

What's Up In Libby's World

From the Editor, Libby Richardson

Someone once told me if I didn't receive any submissions for the Scoop, to just make something up, so here's this month's "stuff":

- Derald Young of Dixfield, Maine—didn't hear from you. Are you in Maine, do you still live there? Have you checked on my house? I'll be there in two weeks! **UPDATE:** Low and behold, the Friday after this went to print in May, I got a call from Derald (so you out there are reading this after all—awesome!) Derald went and checked on our house and found a 50 ft. tree had fallen on our shed. On Memorial Day weekend, my family went up and cut the tree down and pulled it off the shed. Luckily our fears of major damage didn't come true, and we simply jacked the roof back up, put some supports in to hold it in place, and put some tar on the roof to seal the holes. And now we have a new friend in the "neighborhood" and a picnic to attend during the Great Falls Balloon Fest. Thanks Derald! Looking forward to meeting you in person soon.
- Did anyone check out the ad for 'The Children's Place' that featured the bright yellow hot air balloon? Haven't given anyone 1000 points yet. I'll up the ante to 2500 and a ride in *my* balloon (if and when I get one) if you tell me what's wrong with the picture! **UPDATE:** So no takers on this one. Here's the thing—there was no one in the basket of the balloon, so it was just hanging out in the sky without a pilot. Think anyone else other than us in the ballooning world would have figured it out? Doubt it! That's why it went to print like it did.
- Anyone planning any special flights or trips this summer? Didn't hear from anyone, so I guess I'll just assume no one is reading this and no one is flying. Right? Wrong? **UPDATE:** Not much going on I guess, as I haven't heard about any special trips or flights.
- Does anyone know why there were flight restrictions on April 25th within 50 miles of Bradley International Airport? I do—it's because President Bush was flying in, and then visited the Boys & Girls Club in Hartford, which is where I got within five feet of shaking his hand. It was fun.



Thanks for your contributions for this month's Scoop: Chris Mooney, Erwin Dressel, Charlie Perreault, Derald Young, Penny Christy, Lina Balcom, Mike Bollea. A special shout-out to Mark Sand and Jim O'Brien for helping to get *The Scoop* published each month.

Publishing Information

The Scoop is published on a monthly basis prior to the club's monthly meeting on the third Thursday of each month. Submissions for *The Scoop* are preferred by email to Editor Libby Richardson at libby_rich@yahoo.com. Photos, articles, and ideas are always welcome. Information may be mailed to 380 Hitchcock Road #258, Waterbury, CT 06705 or can be brought to any CLAS meeting. All materials should be to the Editor at least two weeks prior to the club meeting for inclusion.

The Connecticut Lighter Than Air Society publishes this newsletter for its members and interested parties. Portions of this newsletter may be reprinted if credit is given to the writer and to CLAS. The opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the organization or members of this organization. For more information contact Libby Richardson, CLAS, PO Box 53, Southbury, CT 06488-0053. Email: libby_rich@yahoo.com; Phone: 203-988-6577

Balloonists taken for a ride; instead of Amherst, they go down in Quabbin swamp

By Arn Alertini, Recorder Staff

A group of balloonists got a little extra ride on Sunday morning when their hot air balloon accidentally blew off course and landed the craft in the Quabbin Reservoir.

On Sunday morning, about six to eight balloons and their pilots gathered at Herlihy Field in Whately for an experimental balloon festival. Experimental balloons are balloons built by individuals rather than Federal Aviation Administration-certified manufacturers, which means they can't charge for passengers, said Randolph Riley of Collinsville, Conn., who was on the crew for one of those balloons, Topper. Since you can't operate an experimental balloon for commercial use, balloonist pilots often split the costs of a flight.

Topper, which was built in 1975 and is the oldest continually operating experimental balloon, was planning a ride down the valley to land somewhere in Amherst, he said. "The indications were that the winds were gentle and coming from the north, northwest." When Topper got into the air, the crew found that despite doing extensive research on the weather, it wasn't what they expected, Riley said. "It just seemed as we got into the air, things had changed drastically in moments between when we unpacked, put together and launched the balloon." They weren't heading south and the winds kept switching directions, Riley said. "So we decided to fly along and wait for things to calm down."

Eventually, the winds took the balloon over the Quabbin Reservoir to what looked like an open field, a perfect place for a landing. It actually turned out to be a swamp on Prescott Peninsula, but neither the balloon nor its crew were hurt in the landing, Riley said. "Everyone was OK. It was a beautiful landing."

Shortly before 8 a.m., the Massachusetts State Trooper barracks in Belchertown got a call from a hot air balloon, which had landed in the Quabbin Reservoir, said a state trooper at the barracks, who declined to give his name. The Topper and her crew weren't sure where they had landed so police searched the Quabbin with a boat and helicopter and after about 45 minutes, the helicopter found the group and led them out of the Quabbin. The spot where the balloon had landed was about seven miles from the road and surrounded by acres of woodland, the trooper said. "It was a little nerve wracking, but we didn't consider ourselves in danger during any of the flight," said Riley. "We were doing what we were supposed to do."

Topper was piloted and is owned by Robert Sommer of Waterbury, Conn. Riley has flown Topper and helped Sommer restore the balloon. Riley also has a FAA-certified balloon for which he can take paying customers. James Ellis of Harvard was on the flight. Reached at home, Ellis declined to comment.

***Please note that Bob was NOT a registered participant of the XLTA rally, contrary to what the paper states.

A response from Dan Nachbar sent to the Balloon Mailing List:

I hosted the experimental balloon rally last weekend. The newspaper story erroneously reported the stranded pilot as being part of an "experimental balloon festival". In fact Bob makes something of a point about not registering at my event. He does not attend our pilot meetings either but he does like to join the parade on its way to the launch field for flights.

The experimental rallies that I host are decidedly informal events. I point out a few choices of launch fields where I have obtained permission from the landowners and I think will be appropriate given the conditions. Pilots then decide for themselves if, when, where, and how to fly.

However, Bob's flight was not made from one of the fields I suggested. When I learned (via cellphone from yet another pilot) about the field Bob had chosen for himself (and indirectly for others who decided to follow Bob), I voiced my concerns about it being an unwise choice to anyone who asked and even several folks who didn't ask.

In addition to the issue of limited landing options given the winds, I had not obtained permission in advance for a large multi-balloon launch as I always do for every field I recommend. The town officials caring for the field Bob chose are now going to read in the paper about a "balloon festival" being held on their land. Not helpful to landowner relations.

The other pilots who followed Bob were luckier. They had very short and/or challenging flights with fairly reasonable retrieves. All of the folks who used the fields I suggested had uneventful and pleasant flights. We then all had a lovely breakfast afterwards.

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First Aid and CPR Courses

Thanks to Pam McFarland, Penny Christy, Tony Roswell, Terri Rollinson, and Erwin and Ellen Dressel for taking First Aid and CPR.

If you haven't received your reimbursement checks yet, please see Tom Murphy. Your personal checks will be deposited shortly.



Did anyone else go on Google on June 4th and notice a hot air balloon in the homepage graphic? Lina Balcom explains why:

'225 years ago on June 4th the Mongolfier brothers demonstrated their balloons in public for the first time.'
Thanks for noticing Lina!



Photo by Mike Bollea



Far horizons ... hot-air ballooning over the Namib desert, Namibia. *By Andrew van Smeerd/Lonely Planet*

Don't Shoot, I'm Only Trespassing

By Bill Smith, President of the Balloon Society of Kentucky

Reprinted from SouthEastern Michigan Balloon Association, Inc.

Nothing spoils a good balloon chase faster than hearing an angry landowner holler "Get off my property!" Well maybe getting shot at by that landowner is worse, but either one will ruin your day.

What are your rights as a trespasser? Can a landowner shoot you or assault you for coming onto his property uninvited? Can he confiscate your equipment? Is he within his right to charge the pilot a \$1,000 landing fee? What will happen if he calls the police?

Well, I posed these questions to Connie Tobbe, a Louisville, Kentucky, attorney who specializes in property law. Here's what I found out: there are two types of trespassing, criminal and negligent. Each has its' own set of legal principles. Criminal trespassers are people who enter property with intent to cause harm or damage. For example, a person who breaks into a house to steal (*continued next page...*)

Continued from the front page - "Don't Shoot...."

property or to harm the owners is a criminal trespasser. The law offers a criminal little protection from a landowner who is defending himself and his property. Since balloonists and crew members don't usually fall into this category, I won't explore it further.

The type of trespassing we frequently engage in while ballooning is called negligent trespassing. In this case, the law looks at the property violation as unintentional. For instance, if you enter a property to ask permission for the pilot to land and were not aware of the landowner's wishes, your presence would not be criminal, but negligent. Likewise, if a pilot lands on posted property and didn't see the signs from the air, he would also be considered a negligent trespasser.

So what are your rights as a negligent trespasser? First of all, the landowner cannot legally use force against you. He can order you to leave, but not use a threat of violence. If a property owner does use bodily force against you, you may use a commensurate level of force to protect yourself. So, if Farmer Jones strikes you or attempts to strike you for being on his land, you may return the blows in defense. If he starts shooting, you may return fire. But, this principle doesn't allow you to use excessive force, such as shooting Jones because he pushed you, or hitting the man because he cursed you.

Secondly, a landowner cannot detain you or a member of your party. Likewise, it is not lawful for him to confiscate your equipment or hold it for a ransom or "landing fee." Nor can he damage your equipment in retribution. He must allow you to gather your equipment and leave.

It sounds like, as a negligent trespasser, you get off Scot-free, right? Wrong! Your act of trespassing creates some responsibilities for you, too. First, you should try in good faith to meet the landowner's requests. If you are told to leave immediately, go!

Next, if the property owner wants restitution for the damage you or your balloon did to his property, you are obligated to pay a reasonable amount. Finally, since it is obvious that you are unwanted there, you are obligated to stay away. Notify the Landowner Relations Committee of the situation to keep other balloonist from making the same mistake.

The key to diffusing a volatile situation with a landowner is to avoid confrontation. When you encounter an angry individual, the first step to resolving the conflict is to listen to his complaint. You have intruded onto private property and the "injured" party feels violated. Let him air his complaint without back talk from you. Sometimes your silence will allow the frustrated owner to hear how silly he really sounds. Next, apologize. You are wrong, don't try to deny it. Apologize several more times.

Let him know you are sincerely sorry for your mistake. Most angry landowners are usually satisfied when they see that they have successfully defended their property rights as a matter of principle.

If there is damage to the property, discuss it honestly with the owner. Try to reach an agreement on what the damage is and what a fair value should be. The twenty-foot long swath of corn that the basket crushed is not an acre, and corn doesn't sell for \$200 per bushel! Once you agree on the damage with the property owner, you should be able to agree on reasonable restitution. In many cases, an on-the-spot repair will satisfy them. It is also important to protect yourself from false accusations by documenting the damage with your cell phone camera or by getting a witness to assess the extent of the damage. You need to be able to fight any outrageous claim by the property owner's lawyer, such as a request for payment for two acres of corn when you only damaged a few stalks.

In some cases, a property owner's anger is not soothed with a sincere apology or an offer of restitution. If the dispute cannot be rationally settled, don't let the situation escalate. Back off and call the police! A law enforcement officer is a negligent trespasser's best friend, because they are usually able to rein in an egregious property owner who has over-stepped his bounds.

Police frequently deal with angry or irrational people and they are trained to mediate disputes to reasonable endings. They can also help you get permission to recover your equipment and protect you from further violence.

The key to good landowner relations is prevention. Knowing the established prohibited zones (PZs) is critical to avoiding incursion onto sensitive property. Respect postings and locked gates. Always ask for permission to takeoff or land on private property. And, when asking for permission, make sure you speak with someone who has authority to grant you your request.

A homeowner's eight-year-old daughter doesn't speak for her mother or father. Also, avoid property that is the home to livestock and outdoor pets. There is no sense in aggravating the non-human animals either. And, absolutely never, ever drive off a paved road onto a yard or field without explicit permission!

Finally, good will sometimes resolves hard feelings and smooths over awkward situations. For over two centuries balloonists have been using a bottles of champagne to soothe landowners' nerves caused by uninvited guests. If the hosts to your landing do not drink alcohol, gift cards for fuel or meals are always appreciated. I even carry tee shirts, key chains and other trinkets from my corporate sponsor to buy a little good will with the children. A small gift goes a long way towards mending fences.

Remember, if all else fails, you can always holler:

"Don't shoot, I'm only trespassing!"

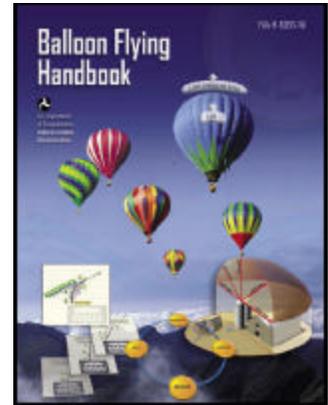


Balloon Flying Handbook

From DROPLINE: A Bimonthly publication of the Balloon Society of Kentucky, Inc.

Have you seen the new Balloon Flying Handbook, FAA-H-8083-11A. It has been posted to the www.faa.gov website, and is available for download. A link is at the end of this article. This was a 12 month project of Safety Research Corporation of America (SRCA), the prime contractor to the FAA for the rewrite of most of the FAA's training and general knowledge handbooks. This work was characterized by an incredibly cooperative and helpful group of people who gave their time and effort to produce the best reference possible for not only aspiring aeronauts, but for already certificated pilots.

As a comparison, the previous edition had a little over 100 pages. The new book has 247. The old book had about 70 graphics; the new book, over 160 graphics and illustrations in color. Not a black and white picture or line drawing in the book. It's a nice improvement.



The link to the book is: <http://www.faa.gov/library/manuals/aircraft/media/Balloon%20Flying%20Handbook.pdf>



Research May Improve Tornado Predictions

From Newswise

Three hot-air balloons dropped asphalt shingles, lumber, sticks, leaves and pine needles onto a north Alabama landfill, so scientists at The University of Alabama in Huntsville could gather data needed to improve tornado warnings.

The payloads dropped by the balloons were similar to the types of debris thrown into the air by tornadoes that touch the ground. Scientists at UAHuntsville's Earth System Science Center hope the Doppler radar data collected will be a first step toward programming National Weather Service Doppler radar to recognize tornado debris, so more timely and precise tornado warnings might be issued. *Click [here](#) to read more...*

Hot Air Balloon Videos – share the experience:

From DROPLINE: A Bimonthly publication of the Balloon Society of Kentucky, Inc.

- Crew Training www.youtube.com/watch?v=gIO6Q1Z8fWs&NR=1
- Balloon Chase www.youtube.com/watch?v=owZONPuk2k8&feature=related
- High wind Inflation www.youtube.com/watch?v=gIO6Q1Z8fWs&NR=1
- Water landing www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z9aqgKQ92CI&NR=1
- Ride balloon landing www.youtube.com/watch?v=mDfcoe8e1Pw&feature=related

Have you posted video or pictures to the internet? Share the link with me at libby_rich@yahoo.com and see it posted here in a future edition of *The Scoop!*

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Balloon Records – January 2008

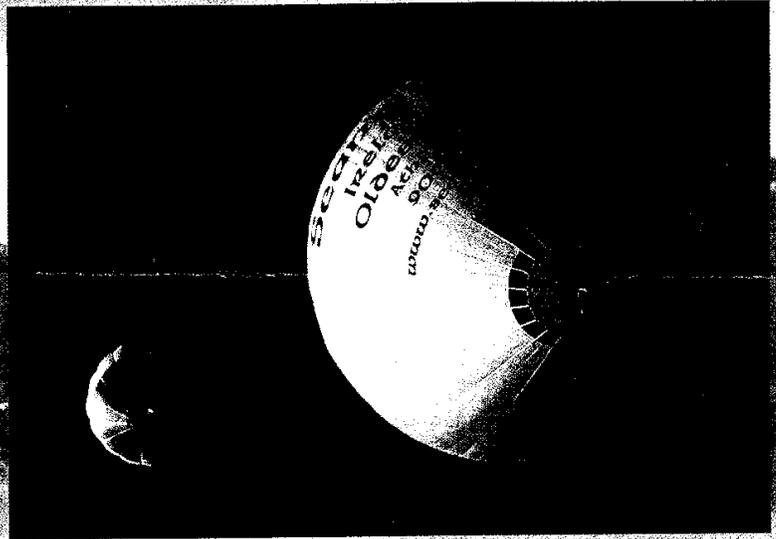
Female AX3 and AX4 Altitude Record attempts

Early in 2007, a Japanese female balloon pilot, Minako Inoue, broke Pauline's AX4 duration record of 10 hours 40 minutes, setting Pauline's count of World Records to 10.

We took 5 balloons with us to Italy, including a slightly larger balloon that would carry two people, sat side-by-side in comfortable seats. The plan was to head to Mondovi, in the Piemonte region of northern Italy, where the geography is excellent with a huge wide-open valley where weather conditions are favourable for balloon flying 300 days a year.

We arrived in Mondovi on the 9th January, just two days after the annual balloon meet in Mondovi was held. Another reason that Mondovi was chosen was that not only did Pauline's piloting tutor, Giovanni Aimo, live in the town, but so did Paolo Bonanno, probably the highest regarded hot air balloon burner designer and builder in the world. Paolo was commissioned to build us a new burner for the new record attempts as the burner was seen as being the weakest link in the previous attempts in early 2007, despite still winning the records that were attempted.

The plan was to carry out some test flights and maybe attempt a duration record if the conditions were cold

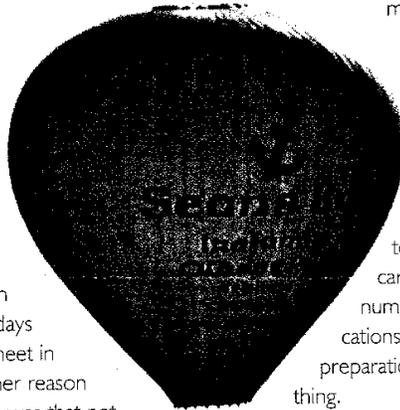


enough. Sadly, the conditions in the region were very mild,

meaning that a change in strategy had to be adopted. Despite the mild weather, three test flights were carried out and a number of modifications made in preparation for the real thing.

On the 18th January, the team travelled up to Switzerland to participate in the 30th Chateau D'Oex Balloon Festival. Similar mild conditions were experienced in Chateau D'Oex, with no fresh snow falling during the week, but excellent flying conditions were had on all but one day. The conditions were still not cold enough to attempt any sensible duration flights. With this in mind, we closely monitored the conditions in Mondovi with the hope of returning there to attempt an altitude flight in one of the balloons. There was a high pressure

forecast over the region on Thursday 24th January with little wind at any altitude, although with mild conditions on the surface (+10 deg C). It was decided to head back to Mondovi on the 23rd and make an attempt at the AX-3 altitude world record in the Colt 21A EI-DZA. With the mild conditions, the temperatures at altitude were a little high to expect to break the general record of 20,036 feet, set by Coy Foster in 1986 but the female record of 9,679 feet, set way back in 1965, the oldest hot air balloon record on the books, was achievable, as was the record in the next higher category of AX-4 of 12,545 feet, set in 1980. The freezing level on



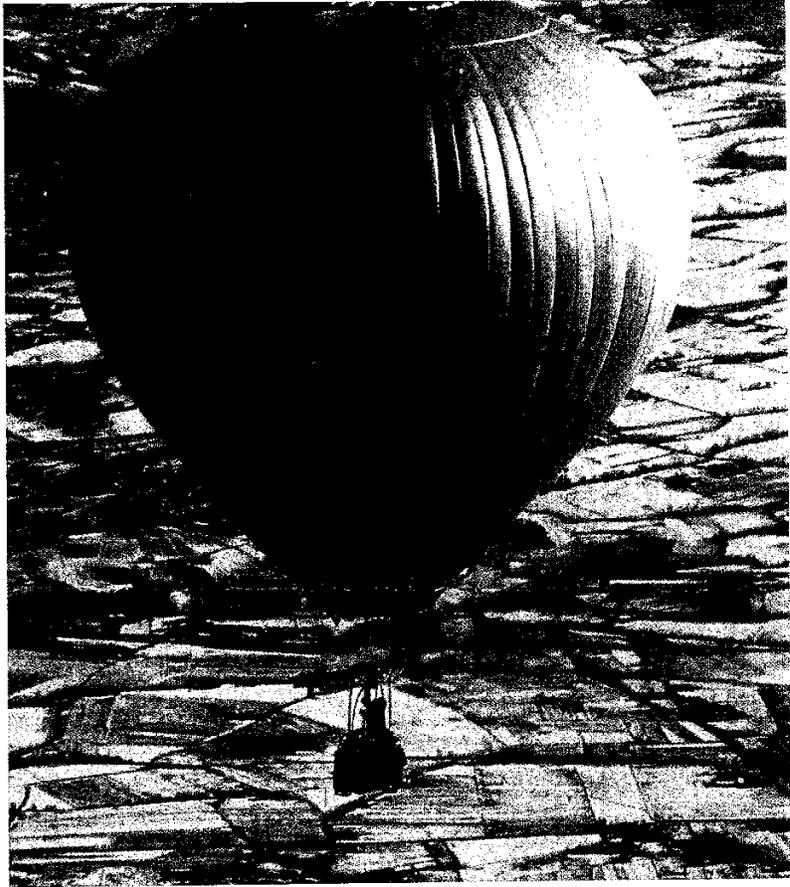
World renowned burner and builder Paolo Bonanno

the day was at around 10,000 feet, very high for January.

Due to the small size of the 21A, it was elected to have a larger balloon fly alongside, piloted by Paolo Bonanno, that could carry the transponder and VHF radios. At around noon, we travelled to the airfield at S. Albano a few miles to the north of Mondovi and nearer Cuneo airport. Calls were made to Cuneo and Turin to file flight plans and gain permission to exceed the Class G airspace ceiling of 3,500 feet. Both parties were happy to grant permission, but the airspace clearance had already been granted to the military. Several calls to the military were greeted with a firm 'NO'. It was suggested that Paolo speak directly with the Colonel and, following his lunch, he finally granted his permission for a slot after 14:00hrs when conditions were even warmer!

The two balloons were prepared and inflated. The 21A was flown with the lightweight Boland basket, Cameron mini-Mk4 burner and two 60 litre titanium tanks, one with 30% content for the landing phase. As a weight reduction measure, the support poles for the burner were plastic wiring conduit, much lighter than their regular solid nylon counterpart! A Flytec 3040, with envelope temperature sender, was attached to the balloon, although earlier tests in Paulo's workshop questioned the accuracy of this device.

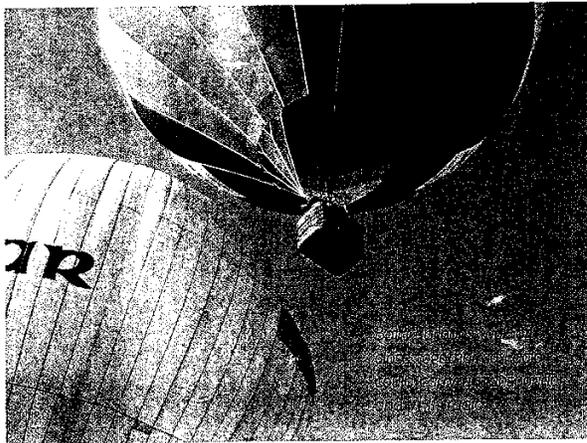
A test rig was built to test the sender



against an engineering thermocouple and the Flytec always managed to read extremely low (100 deg vs 125 deg and 150 deg vs 190 deg). At 14:30. Paolo launched with Pauline shortly behind. Frequent calls were made to Pauline to report on envelope temperature as she was climbing at 500 feet per minute in the early stages. Due to the mild conditions, the envelope temperature was higher than was comfortable, so

Pauline was requested to slow the climb. Despite a climb of 750 fpm at one stage, when Paolo ascended to within inches of Pauline's basket, her climb rate was slowed to around 200 fpm where a stable envelope temperature could be found, taking into account possible errors in the reported temperature.

Due to the slow climb, and the mild



Colt 21A 'EL-DZA' being inflated.



dropping at around 8-900 feet per minute before levelling off just above the surface. Despite the climb to over 13,000 feet, the two balloons landed 30 feet apart, less than half a mile from where they took off.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to a number of people who provided assistance for our trip to Italy - FAI-appointed observers Oscar Lombardo and Edmondo Bongioanni, burner guru Paolo Bonanno and his lovely wife, Nicole, the Aero Club D'Italia, the National Aero Club of Ireland, the Irish Aviation Authority and the rest of the ground team, namely Mary Baker, Giovanni Aimo, Paolo Oggioni and Monica, Bubba and the ATC staff at Turin and Cuneo airports. Lastly, we would like to thank Ashley

conditions, Pauline's fuel tank started to register before reaching 10,000 feet. As it was clearly not possible to attain 21,000 feet (we had been given clearance to 22,000 feet) it was decided to climb to a comfortable margin to break the AX-3 and AX-4 female altitude records and then descend.

The FAI requirements are to exceed the previous record by 3% on altitude flights (1% on distance and duration). At 13,350 feet, Pauline started her descent,



Pauline Baker and her team pose for a photo following the record breaking flight.



and Timmy Donovan of Sean's Bar in Ireland who provided sponsorship for the trip.

The team returned to Chateau D'Oex, where the rest of the week had light winds in the valley, giving us the opportunity to fly each day for fun.

The plan is now to head out to Alaska at the end of February 2008, where surface temperatures are expected to be around -25 to -30 deg C, much more suitable for record attempts. Watch this space!



The Connecticut Lighter Than Air Society is a club for anyone interested in learning about, participating in, and improving the sport of ballooning. Pilots, crew, and enthusiasts alike are welcome and ALL can contribute to the safety, enjoyment and education of the sport. Meetings are scheduled monthly on the 3rd Thursday of the month at the Plainville Police Department, 19 Neal Court, Plainville, at 7:30 PM. For more information, contact any of the officers listed in this newsletter.

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