

A History of Ballooning

In 1783 the scientist Pilatre De Rozier launched the first ever hot air balloon. Its passengers were a sheep, a duck and a rooster. They used a balloon made from paper and cloth. Underneath this they burned a combination of straw, chopped wool and dried horse manure. The straw would burn to release the heat and the wool would make lots of smoke to keep the flame low and prevent the balloon catching fire. The balloon stayed in the air for 15 minutes and then landed safely on the ground. In the same year, two French brothers, Joseph and Etienne Montgolfier launched the first manned balloon in Paris and stayed in-flight for 20 minutes.

Two years later in 1785 a French balloonist Jean Pierre Blanchard and his American co-pilot were the first to fly across the English channel in a hot air balloon. This was considered to be one of the first long distance balloon flights.

About 100 years passed before any further big developments in ballooning occurred. In 1960 Ed Yost made hot air ballooning practical. He built a balloon made of nylon and heated the air inside the balloon with a propane burner. He began the design of modern hot air balloons that we know today.





Ballooning in Ireland

On 19th January 1785, Richard Crosbie made the first successful manned balloon flight in Ireland. He was just 30 years old at the time and ascended from Ranelagh Gardens in Dublin. He landed safely near Clontarf a short time later. This was a remarkable achievement occurring just fourteen months after the first ever manned flight of the Mongolfier brothers in Paris.

Crosbie also invented what he called an Aeronautic Chariot to carry his equipment, scientific instruments and ballast which he exhibited to the public charging a moderate price in order to raise much needed funds to complete his projects.

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Offaly County Council





**51st IRISH
BALLOONING
CHAMPIONSHIPS**
TULLAMORE 2023



51st

Irish Hot Air Ballooning Championships 2023

Spotter's Guide

at

*Tullamore
Town*



OFFALY
IRELAND'S HIDDEN GEM



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Offaly County Council



www.ballooningchampionships.ie

About the Championships

51st Irish Hot Air Ballooning Championships Tullamore, Co Offaly 2023

Welcome to the Spotters Guide for the 51st Irish Hot Air Ballooning Championships. This event is the longest running National Balloon meet in the world. The first championships was held in Newcastle House, Ballymahon, Co Longford in 1971. Other venues have included Waterford, Roscommon, Meath, Cavan, Galway, Westmeath, Leitrim and Kilkenny.

Only a handful of balloons attended in the early days, but the event grew in popularity over time, as did the sport of ballooning itself. It now attracts up to 40 balloons from the USA, UK, and Europe, and is an invitation only event. The biggest event of its kind in Ireland, it's an amazing spectacle for onlookers with huge colourful balloons filling the skies.

In 2018, 2019 and 2022 the 48th - 50th Irish Championships were also held in County Offaly. Offaly is one of the pilots' favourite places in Ireland to fly. Launching from the spectacular locations and parklands, with miles of bogs and scenic countryside to float over. The friendly people of Offaly have always been very welcoming to our crews and we are all very happy to return this year. This year the championships will launch from Tullamore town srrounds. Tullamore's history with the hot air balloons is well known as the town was the scene of the worlds first ever ballooning accident in 1785. Tullamore rose like a phoenix from the ashes in the aftermath of the great fire the balloon caused that fateful day on May 10th 1785. Thankfully ballooning is a lot safer in 2023.

Flights are planned for early mornings and evenings. They depend on the weather, it must be very calm and dry to enable the balloons to fly safely.

Updates can be found on our Facebook page [@irishballooningchampionship](#) and our new website www.ballooningchampionships.ie



About Ballooning

Balloons are aircraft, regulated under the same Aviation Regulations as every other category of aircraft - planes, helicopters, gliders, etc.

Balloons are aerostats (static within the air) - once a balloon is aloft, it moves in sync with the air mass and on the breeze in which it floats.

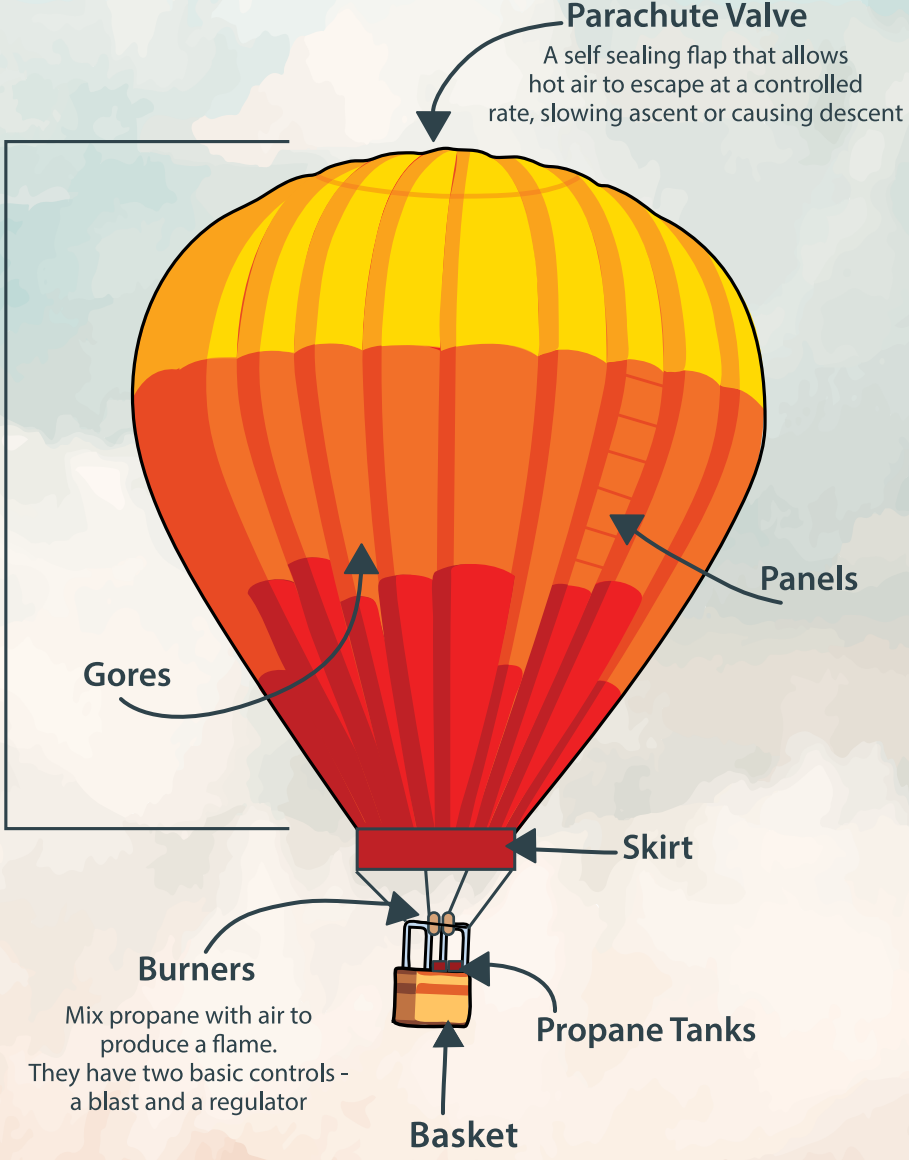
The modern hot air balloon is made up of three main parts: the envelope, the basket and the burner.

The envelope is the colourful "balloon" part and is sewn into many patterns - geometric designs and custom shapes. It is made from heat resistant, rip-stop nylon. It is coated internally with a plastic which helps contain heat. The envelope is folded, rolled and stored in a canvas-like bag, kept in a cool dry place to avoid mildew and is continuously checked for any heat damage or tears. If well maintained, a balloon envelope should last 500 or more flying hours.

The wicker basket is woven with a tight, vertical weave of cane or bamboo and is well suited to resisting entanglement in branches and hard landings. A finishing urethane coating inside and out ensures the wicker will resist becoming brittle or rotten from exposure to moisture. This maintains the wicker's ability to flex, absorbing and distributing any bumps during landings. The basket contains the propane tanks and flight instruments - usually a compass, altimeter, rate of climb indicator, fuel quantity gauge and pyrometer (envelope temperature indicator).

The heart of the balloon is the burner, usually rigged on a rigid bracket (or frame) over the pilot's head and controlled by means of a hand valve. Hot air balloons use plain old air as the lifting gas.

By heating the air inside the balloon (with blasts from the burner), the pilot makes that air less dense (lighter) than the outside air, and the balloon rises. As the internal air cools, the balloon becomes heavier and descends.





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TULLAMORE 2023

Spotter's Guide

www.ballooningchampionships.ie



*Tullamore
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G-BGHS
Pilot - Gareth Gray



G-CLGX
Pilot - Nigel Carr



EI-FDD
Pilot - Tom McCormack



G-BYMV
Pilot - Colin Jones



G-RDEN
Pilot - Robin Mercer



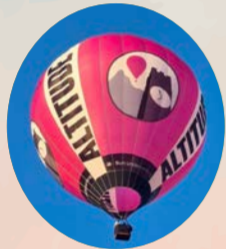
EI-GZR
Pilots - Malcolm White
& Pauline Baker



EI-ECC
Pilot - Joe Daly



G-OALT
Pilot - Brendan O'Rourke



G-OERR
Pilots - Carol Davis
& Mark O'Neill



G-BXWX
Pilot - Carol Davis



EI-CKJ
Pilot - Frank Meldon



G-BZNA
Pilot - Mark Stelling



G-ITVM
Pilot - Ian Wadey



G-BVKV
Pilot - Ian Jones



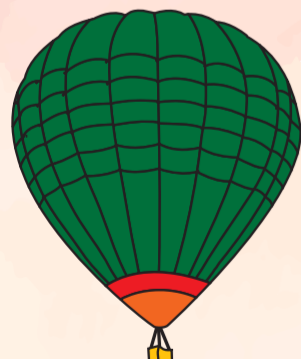
G-ELEE
Pilot - Mark Stelling



G-BREX
Pilot - Tom Gourley



G-RMAX
Pilot - Paul Wade



EI-DEW
Pilot - Joseph Leahy



G-CIJB
Pilot - Peter Dowlen



G-BLVB
Pilot - Zack Daly



G-CKVI
Pilot - Gary Davies



N14GY
Pilot - George York



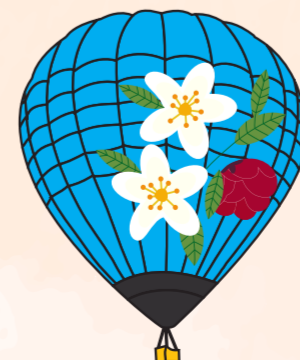
G-BRUV
Pilot - Rowland Benbrook



G-CMNR
Pilot - Hugh Savage



G-CGOH
Pilot - Ian Jones



G-CLXE
Pilot - Graeme Scaife



EI-CRB
Pilot - Johnny Kenny

