

Balloon may have sparked U.F.O. puzzle

A CHILD'S balloon may have sparked the U.F.O. mystery that was still baffling the South's boffins today.

Scientists have not identified the mystery object astronomers saw floating about 25 miles high in southern skies on Tuesday night; but one theory is that it was a child's metallic balloon reflecting the sun's rays.

"That is a possibility that occurs to me," said Mr. Ted Young, Public Relations Officer at the National Meteorological Office at Bracknell, Berkshire.

He said that could explain the way the object apparently split up and disappeared.

"If the balloon was

going through hot air and then moved into a strong band of wind it would shoot off with the wind," he said.

Mr. Young said the object was definitely not one of the Met. Office's weather balloons — a suggestion put forward by experts at the Royal Greenwich Observatory, Herstmonceux, East Sussex, home of Europe's largest telescope.

"Our balloons are only put up in that area at mid-

day and midnight, and the reported sightings weren't at those times," he said.

It may have been one of the balloons put by radar and electrical companies in the area testing new equipment, he said.

But he doubted they would send up such a device at night.

A spokesman at Herstmonceux said: "It is one of things that is unlikely to be confirmed ever and will probably remain unsolved."

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