

Why the alien doubters are still running round in circles

By Gareth Lewisham

THIS extraordinary crop circle and markings are some of the most elaborate seen in Wales.

The circle, spotted in a field at Magor, near Chepstow, in Gwent, displays scorch marks around its edges — something not seen before by experts.

But UFO expert Peter Hough last night dismissed the crop circle as an elaborate hoax timed to coincide with the first Crop Circle and UFO conference held in Wales.

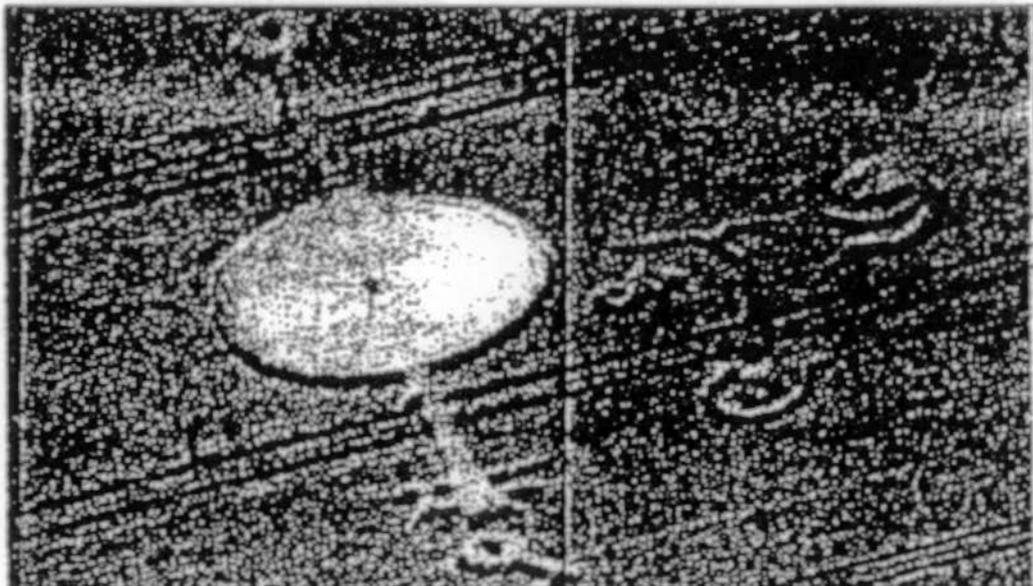
In the last month, however, there have been at least three new circles in Wales and helicopter pilot Ray Jones, who witnessed the patterns, believes there could be more.

"I've been flying around Wales for more than 20 years and I have never seen this many at one time," said Mr Jones, owner of an Abergavenny-based building firm.

The circles were seen by him in fields near Chepstow, Cardiff and on the Shropshire border.

"They are very baffling," said Mr Jones who has been interested in the phenomena since he first saw one five years ago.

But Mr Hough, author of *The Complete Book of UFOs*, believes it is an elaborate practical joke, saying the outbreak coincides with last week's conference in



SCORCHING RIDDLE: But the Magor corn circle could be another elaborate hoax Cardiff, which examined the issue of alien visitors from outer space.

"The more elaborate patterns tend to be created by people trying to imitate the real circles, which are very simple," said Mr Hough. "I have never heard of scorch marks before, but that could be an attempt to make it look like burns from a spaceship.

However, it could be for real and I would test soil samples taken from the area."

Farmer William Jones, who noticed the circles in his fields the morning after a full moon, said: "I'm a cynic so I think someone made them, but they would have to be very clever and it would take hours. Scorch marks take some explaining. We certainly didn't hear or see anything."