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WINTER 1990-91, VOL. 8 NO. 2



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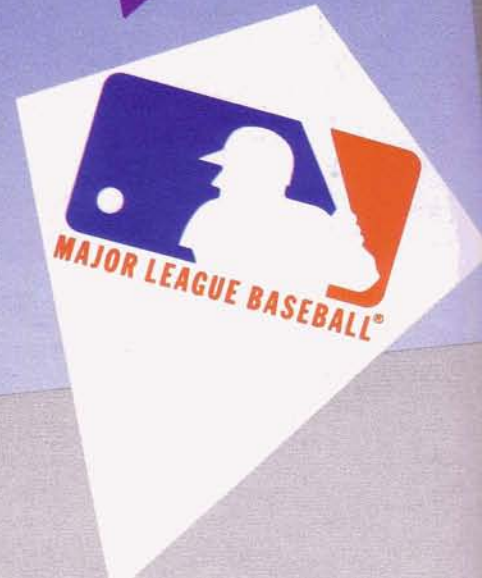
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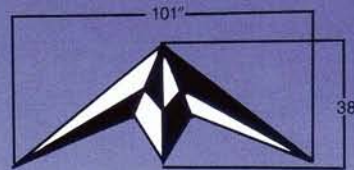
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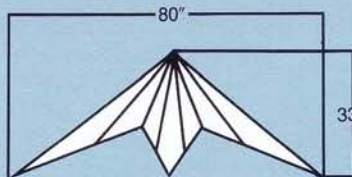
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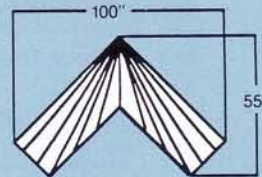
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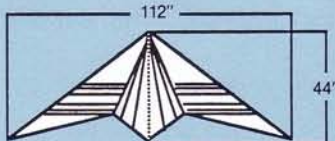


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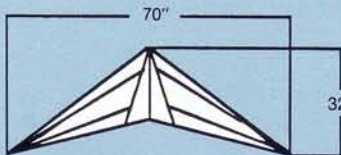
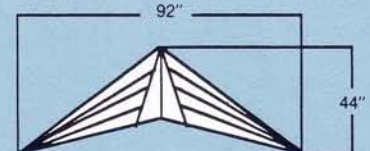
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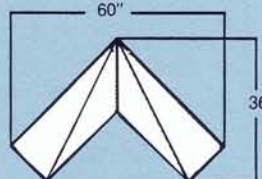
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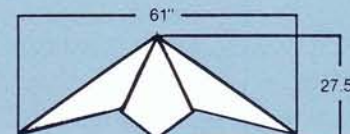
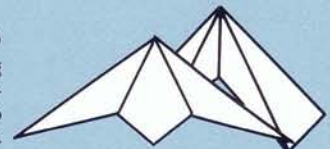
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Volume 8, Number 2, Winter 1990-91

Kitelines



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BOL N°1, by Michel Gressier of Tours, France is launched by Peter Lynn of New Zealand and Michel (a shadow behind the ball). Though a spinner, the kite has it's own lift. Photograph at Dieppe, France by Simon Freidin. (Story page 42.)

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The Fax & the Flux of Things



This is going to be one of those “what’s-happening-in-the-office” letters. (I trust our readers are interested in what’s going on behind the scenes at *Kite Lines*.)

We’ve experienced quite a few changes lately, mostly for the better. First is that we have a facsimile machine. Write this number down now for future reference: the *Kite Lines* fax number is 301-922-4262. Just as I’m writing this, the little box is going ring-beep-mumble and a sheet of paper is starting to pour out of it. We’ve had the fax only a few weeks but it’s already hard to imagine life without it. You are invited to use it!

Now that it’s easier than ever to communicate, please remember: we are always interested in anything and everything you are doing with kites. We wish we could travel the world and meet all of you (what a pleasure that would be!), but that’s impractical, so we depend on *your* communication.

Another improvement is that we have branched out into high-tech systems for publishing *Kite Lines*, using computers to store and organize more of our information and to set its type. You may notice a different typeface in this issue, signalling changes long in transition for us. The greatest benefit ultimately will be increased speed of production and relief from some of our menial toils.

Another happy change is the addition of Simon Freidin to our “regular” staff. (I say “regular” with hesitation because he is here often, but he is still traveling for *Kite Lines*, too.) Simon hails from Melbourne, Australia—you might hear his charming accent when you call our office. However, his real value will be only partly apparent to readers who’ve enjoyed his writing and photographs. He also brings to the magazine great helpfulness, humor, affection for kites—and a wide range of abilities, which will be felt indirectly in a better-than-ever *Kite Lines*.

There’s a change outside our office worth noting. It’s a new club developing in kiting, though it’s completely informal, fluid, unstructured, and almost invisible.

It is just beginning to have a name, the International Kite Circuit, and it is filled with our friends from everywhere.

I think the Circuit is the beginning of a valuable kite network. Its most important accomplishment to date has been helping to provide a pool of visitors to attend and bring success to more and larger kite festivals, complete with more and larger funding, audiences and prestige. Many of our best and brightest kites have benefited greatly from these festivals.

People in the International Circuit can be relied on to fly large and spectacular kites that build tourism, which is typically the underlying or original purpose the festivals serve. But the “incidental” benefits—the international friendship, cooperation and friendly competition that grow from these events—are more important than just tourism-promotion. It is through the Circuit that we have our finest kite festivals—our Scheveningens, our Pattayas, our Long Beaches, our Dieppes—all rich and inspiring, with ripple effects that go on for years.

I guess if I could influence the development of the International Kite Circuit, I would wish to see *more* invitations offered in general, and more invitations to “new” people in particular. There are many dedicated kites who don’t fly “showy” kites, just innovative ones. There are enthusiasts who have much to teach and give, though they never draw attention to themselves.

I would challenge committed kites everywhere to keep our standards of action (at home and abroad) as high and ever-climbing as our best kites.

All of which should be easier than ever with a world full of improvements in communication—including the fax. (Remember that number! 301-922-4262.)



Yours truly holds a small model of the Professor Waldof tetrahedral kite reviewed in this issue. The model was made by the Professor himself and sent to our review team to supplement the kite assembly instructions. The connector parts for each of the cells are the same, but they are combined differently at each corner. Our reviewers were going bananas. The kindly Professor prepared this perfectly assembled model, with full-size spars and connectors. However, the spar lengths are much shorter, so this is hardly a scale model! (We figure it would fly, after covering, only in a smooth hurricane.) The model also came decked out with paper labels (“keel,” “bottom L picture 11”) like the price tags on a Minnie Pearl hat. We think it is a wonderful object.

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Of Shirts & Shams & Stunter Speeds

Useful Survey

I recently acquired a copy of your Winter '89-'90 issue, and was taken aback by all the flack you received on the "Great Kite Lines Stunter Survey" (Summer 1989). I'm what you would call a "novice" stunt flier. Let me assure you that the survey was very helpful in my decision on the next stunter I bought. Keep up the good work.

—Richard Hubbard
Coleman, Texas

Blown Away By Bali

Almost three weeks have passed since we came back from the Bali Kite Festival. We are still in excitement.

As Simon Freidin described (Summer 1989 *Kite Lines*), at the festival, we the kitefliers were decoration on a Christmas tree—the Balinese fliers were turkey and cake.

Almost all of the festival was the competition among the Balinese teams. Even the kite family from Java, Indonesia, were just guests. We didn't mind it at all, as the Balinese kites and the festivities were so incredible and unique and exciting.

The Balinese enjoy everything concerned with kites: the entrance parade of kitefliers, gamelan bands, and occasionally the young girl dancers—the launch with about 20 fliers and flag boy dashing, flying, buzzing, falling down, fluttering, rushing to catch the falling kite.

They enjoy it all.

We especially liked the leaf-shaped *pecukan*. It requires so much skill to fly. Almost all of them fell easily, but beautifully and gracefully. I wondered if they were built in order to fall down, not to fly high.

Beautiful days. Bali is a field of dreams for kitefliers.

—Tomoshi H. Takahara
Kyoto, JAPAN

Speedy Stunters

Peter Powell and Spectra Sports both have claims to very high side-to-side speeds for their stunters. I find it extremely unlikely the designs could achieve these speeds, not to mention extremely unwise to hurtle arrowshafts across the sky at 100 mph with perhaps half a pound of mass behind them. Have they provided documentation to their claims? Perhaps Spectra Sports is the greatest offender, claiming a kite that will do 100 mph and take turns at 65 mph. There is no mention of what will

happen when you turn at above 65 mph!

All considered, I think the above mentioned companies have crossed the line of sound judgment.

—John Waters
Lincoln City, Oregon

Keep Your Shirt Off

The debate on nude kiteflying continues:

It's clothing *optional*. If you insist on wearing clothes to fly your kites, then don't try to impose your mores on those of us who like freedom. Shower in your pants and shirt if you like. In fact, this may upset you, but the rest of us kitefliers were *born naked*.

The Sauvie's Island Clothing-Optional Fun Fly (SICOFF) is family-oriented. Most naturists raise their kids to accept nudity, not as a "gutter" thing, but as a part of nature.

The SICOFF was held again in August of this year with at least 30 of us present. Guess how many were nude. Better still, drop by next year, and you can see for yourself.

—Jill Duncan
Lake Oswego,
Oregon



Illustration: George Peters

Its Not The Way You Count

As I was rummaging through back issues of *Kite Lines* I came across last year's article on Kite Capitals of the World. I was reminded of growing up in Medford, Oregon with an enterprising paperboy who, when he had built his record collection to six records, described it, with a visionary look, as a collection of 12 sides.

Later, this same fellow described his retail operation as being the one with the most square feet of space because it clearly wasn't the largest by virtue of sales volume. This is the person who stands behind the notion of "square-foot/hours" when it comes to flying kites. I am reasonably certain that considerable thought has narrowed his possibilities to this number, simply because larger numbers would be the result of incredibly bizarre inventions of standards.

—Dale Hockersmith
Seaside, Oregon

From Paris to Dakar

I have just come back from Dakar in Senegal, Africa, where I went for some work. In my luggage I put two kites, just in case, should there be some wind and free time.

At Corniche de la Madeleine I flew one of my fighter kites on the beach. The sky was a superb deep blue and the sea, almost transparent, was just a few feet away.

I let go 300 feet of line and started to enjoy myself. I cannot describe my happiness: my first trip to Africa, my first kite flight here and possibly the first time a fighter kite was flown over this part of the world. For ten minutes it was a delight.

Suddenly, a flock of birds came to visit my kite. What was on their minds? Was it curiosity, jealousy or destruction? I could not tell, but the result of this meeting was I had to *fight* the birds. In fact, they dove at my kite and tried to break it apart. I have never experienced this before and believe me it was different from flying with other fighter kites!

At one time, two birds got my kite in their beaks, fighting over which one would take it away! I managed to bring the kite back to my hands for inspection and was amazed to see the birds had damaged the kite in several places.

With some tape and plastic, the kite was repaired and ready to go. Frankly, I couldn't resist trying again.

While flying the second time, my friend, a native of Dakar, and also, by the way, president of the Senegal Kite Federation (the club was born that very day), asked to try the kite. She had never flown a fighter kite in her life.

After some words of guidance and a few hints on technique, she was in the air playing with the birds. It was a beautiful scene. Her traditional costume (called "boubou") was blowing in the wind. I told her that it was not the best outfit to wear when flying fighters, but she said that it would impress the birds more to see a lady flying a kite in a beautiful costume.

That evening, we decided to create an international kite festival in Dakar. The date is already booked for April 1991, Senegal's Independence Day. We have contacted the country's newspapers and television. Our plan is to teach many children to build kites and hope for some sponsors to build international friends

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Alexander Graham Bell would have been pleased

Although known mostly for his work on the telephone, Bell also had a consuming interest in kites. Favoring the tetrahedral cell for its strength and stability, he designed and constructed many tetras during his lifetime.

His spirit of innovation is alive today with a little boost from modern technology as embodied in the Professor Waldof Tetra.

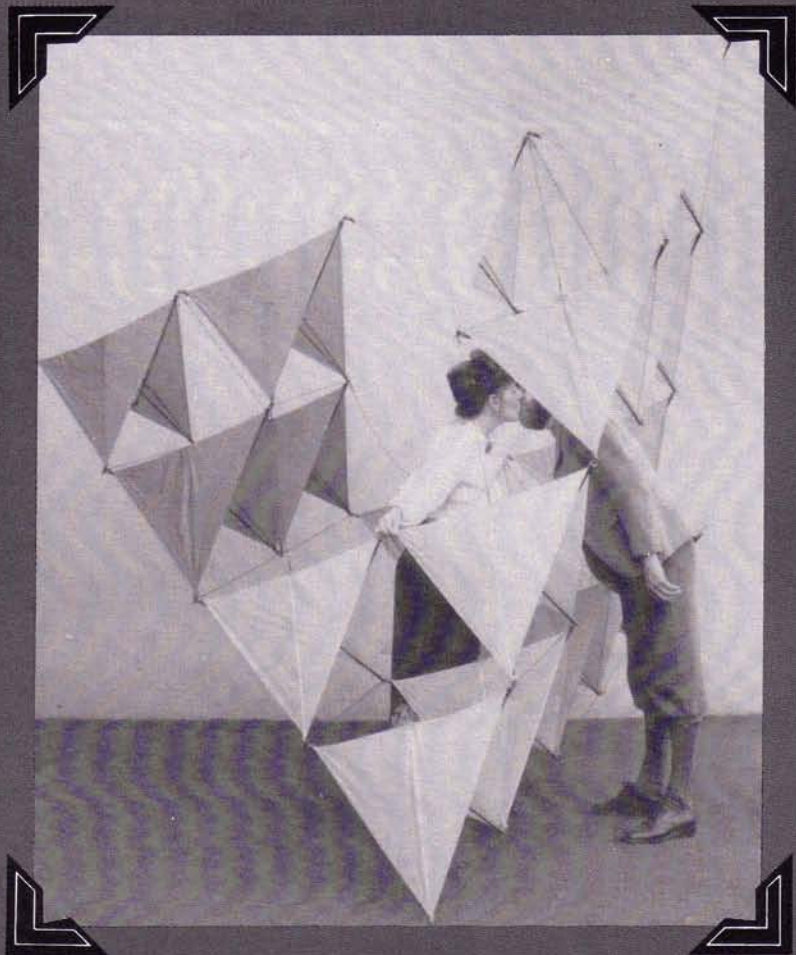
The prof and his good lady recreate Bell's famous 1903 photograph with a 16-cell giant, one of the many possible configurations thanks to the unique Waldof universal locking joint. It weighs under 5 pounds, folds down to 28 inches and can be rigged in under 20 minutes from 4 sets of 4 cells.

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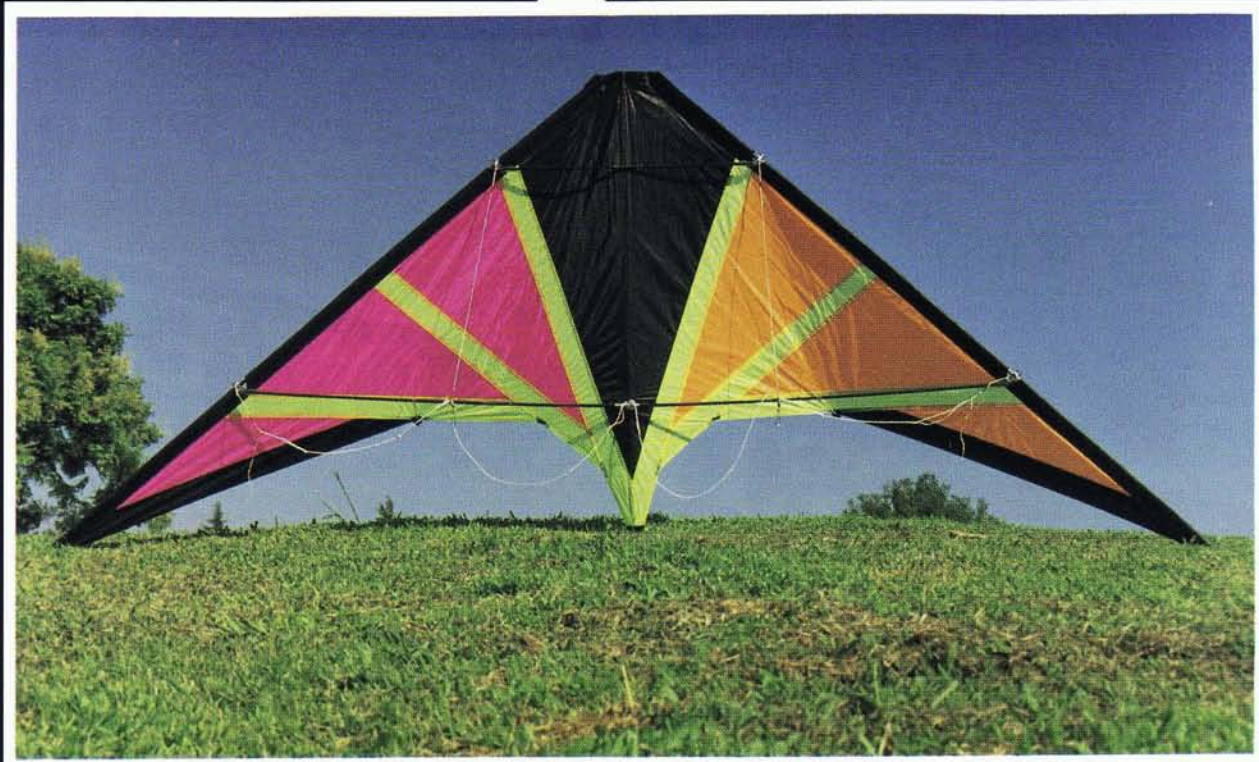
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Letters ...Continued

and teams. Should you be interested to come or sponsor, please contact the club: Mme. Arame Dieng, Présidente, Fédération Senegalaise de Cerfs-Volants, B.P. 21402 Ponty, Dakar, République de Senegal.

With best wishes, we look forward to hearing from you!
—Philippe Gallot
Paris, FRANCE

Corrections and Clarifications

Regarding our last issue (Summer 1990):

First apologies go to the team who created the parafoil on the front cover. While Scott Skinner did make the facing surface, the remainder of the kite was constructed by Ed and Bonnie Wright of Clayton, California, using templates and techniques by George Ham of San Francisco, California.

Our apologies also to Alison Stanes whose kite was pictured on page 33. Alison lives in New Zealand, not Australia. The photograph of the Singapore dragon on page 32 was printed upside down. Turn your magazine 180 degrees to view it correctly. The dates of the New Zealand International Kite Festival were February 8-11, 1990.

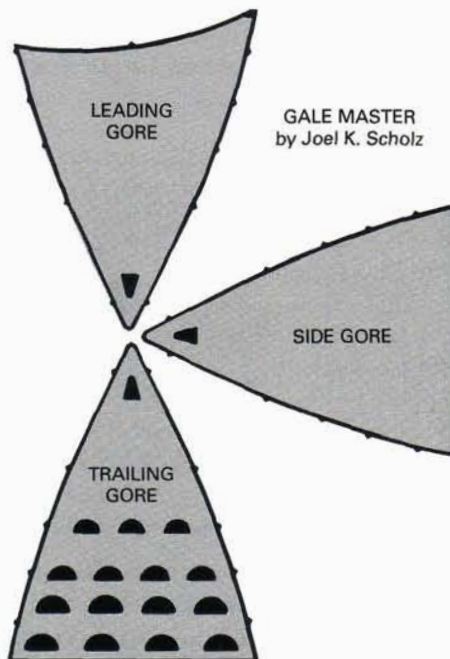
In the article on the Washington, Tyne and Wear festival, page 45, we should

have credited Adam Sutherland as the founder of the event.

Thanks are due Axel Voss for taking the photograph of the East German border guard on page 42.

On page 25 the drawings for the gores

of Joel Scholz's stuntable parachute, the Gale Master, were accidentally drawn with straight inner edges. A slight curve will allow the canopy to more readily take on a dome shape. Corrected drawings appear on this page.



Our Permanent Invitation

Your letter in *Kite Lines* can be part of the ongoing dialogue that makes a community out of kites. Tell the world your ideas, reactions, discoveries and experiences. All of us can learn from all of us.

If you have photographs or drawings to share, don't be shy. Send them, too. We will return them after using them.

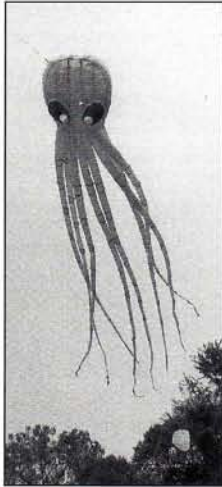
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The Big, the Small & the Puzzling

By Mel Govig, assisted by Valerie Govig and A. Pete Ianuzzi

Top down and clockwise:
Peter Lynn's Tako Tako;
the Shadow Box designed by Brooks Leffler and made by Greens of Burnley;
the new tetra by Professor Waldof;
the six-foot Cody by Buffalo Cody Kite Company;
Alita by W. B. Freeman;
and the Pocket Sled by Fancy Kites.



Peter Lynn's Tako Tako

In Japan, *tako* means kite. It also means octopus. Hence, octopus kite = Tako Tako.

Having recently reviewed the Manta Ray, I was pleasantly surprised to receive a new soft kite from Peter Lynn so soon. Peter is apparently going through his frameless phase. We hope that it lasts for more creations.

Too often, a very clever design will appear that flies marginally, at best. Like the Manta Ray, the Tako Tako is a kite that requires no apologies. It is a unique three-dimensional rendition. If it barely flew above the horizontal, on a limited wind range, I would probably still be crazy about it. But it flies well in moderate winds showing good angle and stability. The shroud lines won't tangle your knots, and you can roll the kite up and stuff it in its bag at the end of the day.

For the kiteflier who wants to dazzle the crowds, this is a showpiece of kinetic art, imbued with the character of its namesake. It has fully inflated rippling tentacles and bulging, 3-D eyes, like the Manta (but unlike the Manta, these eyes look at the flier, not at the sky).

The one slight distraction is the drogue that is attached to the longest tentacles. I suppose that it is necessary to proper flight, so I find it acceptable.

Some of Peter's construction techniques are very innovative, such as the manner in which the bridle lines are attached without the usual fins and his use of scrim to retain the shape around the air orifice.

All in all, this is another great traffic stopper, with yet again a very high "display-per-pound-of-pull" (DP³) rating.

Chic Shadow Box

The Shadow Box, designed by Brooks Leffler and manufactured by Greens of Burnley (England) is a brand new, old-fashioned kite. Start with a one-meter rhomboid box (a familiar shape to Brooks) and make the cover stretch from guy lines onto a simple cross-frame.

Now, just for novelty, convert the skyward cells from horizontal to vertical. The result is a kite that will get the attention of old and young alike.

The old timers will feel as if it is something out of their past; the younger fliers

can compare it to the new wave of three-dimensional kites.

How does it fly? For its amount of sail area, the Shadow Box is a remarkably light kite. With the rhomboidal, 120-degree front cells, it has a good balance between lift and stability. The two vertical sails at the back of the kite add to the lift and still carry effective dihedral.

On winds above 8 mph, the kite will launch easily from your hand or from an upright ground position. On lighter winds, a high launch is in order. Standing the kite upright and backing away 50 to 100 feet, a lone flier can launch it. In very light winds (5 mph or less) you can move the bridle to a single point at the kite's nose. The kite will be slightly less stable, but can be flown on winds this low.

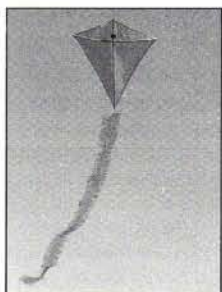
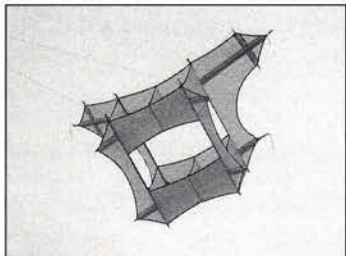
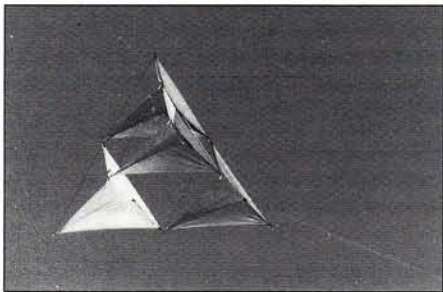
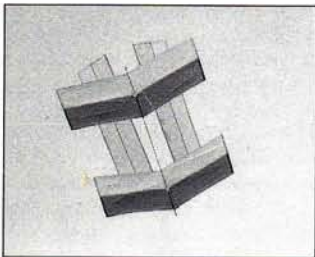
The workmanship is up to the usually high standards of Greens, with ripstop sails and fiberglass spars for durability, making the Shadow Box an all-around fine addition to a box-kite lover's bag.

Tetra From Professor Waldof

For fans of the tetrahedral kite, designed by Alexander Graham Bell, Professor Waldof has made a change to his version that will seem an improvement to some, merely a change to others. In our review of this kite in 1987, we had more than the average amount of difficulty in the initial assembly. That criticism holds for the newest model, although this time there are no special tools required.

What *is* required is unwavering attention to very detailed and somewhat tedious instructions. Assembly of the individual cells is much easier than before. However, once you have four identical cells assembled, the combination of pins, holes and O-rings required to assemble the connecting corners of the cells is different for each connection. If this makes sense, you have four identical cells connected at six points in six unique ways! Once you understand the connectors, it's easy. Coming to that understanding isn't.

This kite is a True Tetra, by a purist who doesn't compromise the equilateral triangles to improve the kite's efficiency. One never expects top performance from a True Tetra, and the Professor's instructions warn you of the kite's poor performance in less than smooth winds, as well



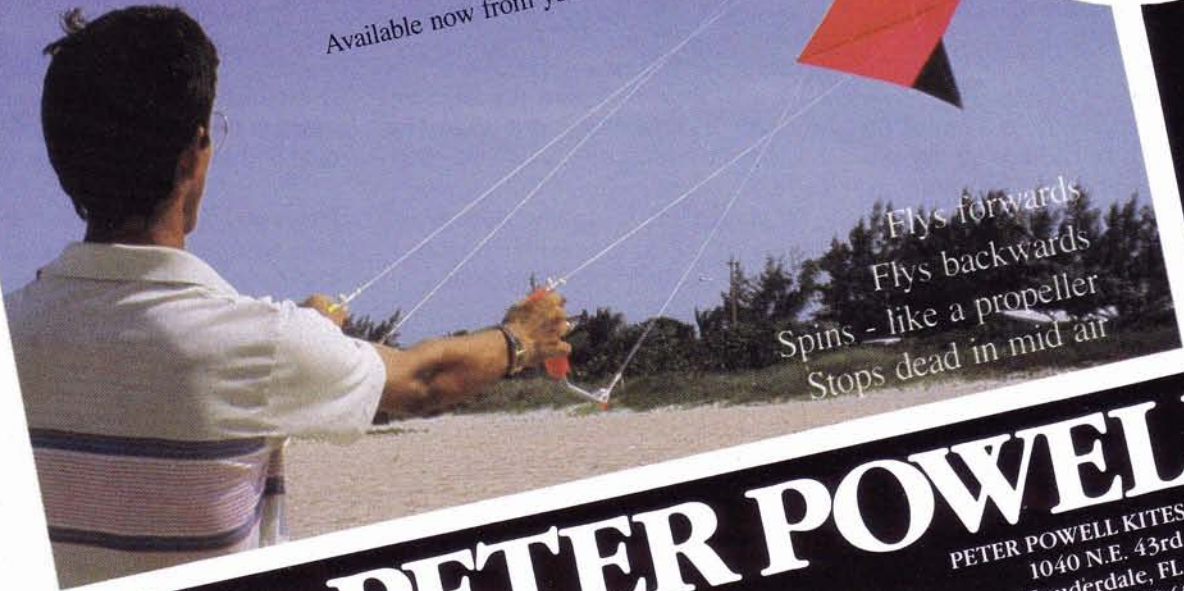
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as the susceptibility to collapse when the kite lands point-first. We confess we experienced both these traits, but we can't blame the Professor for them. True Tetra lovers would know not to bring the kite out in less than perfect winds. Besides, as Simon Freidin says (referring to the photograph, included with the kite, of the Professor and his lady simulating the classic Alexander and Mabel Bell pose), no other kite has such historic distinction as a suitable frame for a kiss!

I always enjoy the Professor's creations, but then I love crossword puzzles and bent wire puzzles too. This kite was another puzzle for me, and fun to solve.

Buffalo Billie

About this time last year, we reviewed a ten-foot Cody kite made by Dan Flintjer, Buffalo Cody Kite Co. Dan is now making a smaller, six-foot version of it. The review of last year applies as well to this downsized Cody. The kite assembles and disassembles easily with little need for instruction. The same high standards of workmanship appear throughout, with a taste for bright colors and black-edged fabric panels.

The materials are the same in this kite as in its big brother, with the result that it requires a bit more wind at the low range to fly. Dan is talking of using lighter-weight fiberglass for the longerons, which would help a little. However, even with

that warning, we were able to fly this Cody in winds at 5 mph. The bridle is set at a comfortable forward position, extending the wind range and reducing some of the pull and lift.

I believe that this smaller Cody will have a wider appeal than the large one not only because of its affordability but because it has lighter pull and easier assembly.

If you fly this Cody low, nobody else will know it isn't a person-lifter up there—and you'll get almost the same thrill.

Briefcase Kite I: Alita

We have two kites for the harried executive. Either kite will fit neatly into your briefcase and can be launched in seconds to sneak a little kiteflying into your busy schedule.

Alita ("Almost lighter than air") is a well crafted nine-inch kite from W.R. Freeman of Plymouth, Minnesota. It is cleverly packaged in a special diecut stationary-size box with its own reel and line, completely ready to fly. Made of bamboo and opalescent Mylar, the kite is nearly invisible to anyone but the flier.

In flight it is rather active, its dancing caused perhaps by the wind playing on the five-foot fringed Mylar tail. The labor to fringe the tail alone leaves us in awe.

Alita is equally at home indoors and out. It can be flown in no wind by taking a brisk walk.

If you have the patience to build one of these small kites or have had the fortune to attend one of master miniaturist Charlie Sotich's clinics, you will be hesitant to pay the price that the craftsmanship demands. On the other hand, if you have a desire for small and an inability to or lack of time to produce small, the Alita could be a good buy in tension relief.

Briefcase Kite II: Pocket Sled




There have been pocket sleds and pocket parafoils before and I think some of them are still on the market, but Jim Bratt and Nancy Keating of Fancy Kites have added a new one.

This pocket sled is a very good flier. Some of the small stickless kites shared somewhat dubious flying habits. Often they flew at low angles, required tails or drogues and collapsed at the slightest hint of a cross wind. The Pocket Sled does not share these problems. Its unflagging line tug never gave us that sudden sinking feeling from that sudden sinking flight (except one day in extreme gusts).

One problem did arise with the Pocket Sled: slippery line was used for the bridle and resulted in the knot's untying as we took it from the bag. A quick retying and the kite was ready to fly.

The kite comes with its own line and winder and is sewn from the currently popular "hot" colors of ripstop nylon—all points in its favor. ◇

DATA CHART

Name and Shape of Kite	Retail Price	Dimensions (inches)	Weight (ounces)	Major Components	Portability	Assembly Time	Durability	Wind Range	Ease of Launch	Skill Level
Peter Lynn: Tako Tako 	450	36x268	25.0	ripstop	E	2 min.	E	5-20	F	I-S
Prof. Waldof: "New" Tetra 	200	48x48	19.0	ripstop, fiberglass	G	60 min.	E	4-8	G	S
Buffalo Cody: Six-foot Cody 	375	80x44	35.5	ripstop, graphite	G	5 min.	G	6-15	G	I-S
W. B. Freeman: Alita 	18	8x10	0.1	Mylar, bamboo	E	0 min.	P	1-6	E	N-I-S
Greens Kites: Shadow Box 	80	48x56	22.0	ripstop, fiberglass	G	3 min.	G	3-10	E	I-S
Fancy Kites: Pocket Sled 	13	20x20	0.75	ripstop	VG	0 min.	VG	2-8	G	N-I-S

NOTE: Retail price (in US dollars) is "advertised" or "suggested." Wind range (in mph) covers minimum and maximum speeds deemed suitable by our evaluators. Skill levels: N—Novice, I—Intermediate, S—Skilled. Other ratings: P—Poor, F—Fair, G—Good, VG—Very Good, E—Excellent. Dimensions are in the following order: width x height. Measurements and drawings are made with the kite standing up on the floor facing the viewer.

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Exotic Titles from the East

By Valerie Govig and Simon Freidin

Four Choices From China

Chinese Artistic Kites by Ha Kuiming and Ha Yiqi (Hong Kong: The Commercial Press, Ltd., 1990), in English, softcover, 158 pages, \$16.95.

Chung-Kuo Ha Shi Feng Zheng (Chinese Kites of the Ha Family) by Ha Kuiming and Ha Yiqi (Hong Kong: Shang wu yin sha kuan, 1986), in Chinese, hardcover, 158 pages, \$16.95.

Chinese Kites (Traditional Chinese Arts and Culture Series) by Wang Hongxun (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1989), in English, softcover, 18 pages of text and 80 pages of color photographs, \$9.95.

Feng Zheng Jiyi Yu Chuangxin (Kite Artistry and Innovation) by Wang Qnian (Changsa City: Hunan Children's Publishing House, 1989) in Chinese, softcover, 68 pages of text and 8 pages of color photographs, \$7.95.

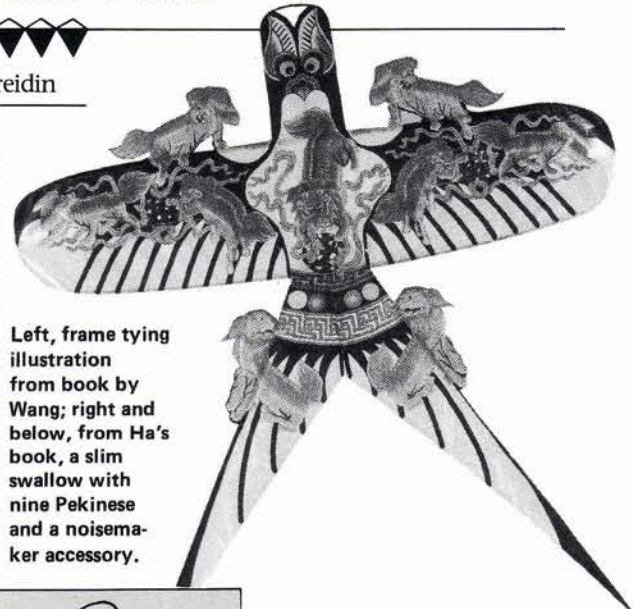
After years of isolation, China's kites are now being seen by travelers. And for those who cannot go to China, there are articles and books. Still, it can hardly be said that all the curtains have been lifted. Each of these books is just a peep.

In fact, the reader might best gather all the material available, then let it merge in the brain so that the peculiarities of one will become clear in another, or the gaps in this will be filled out by that.

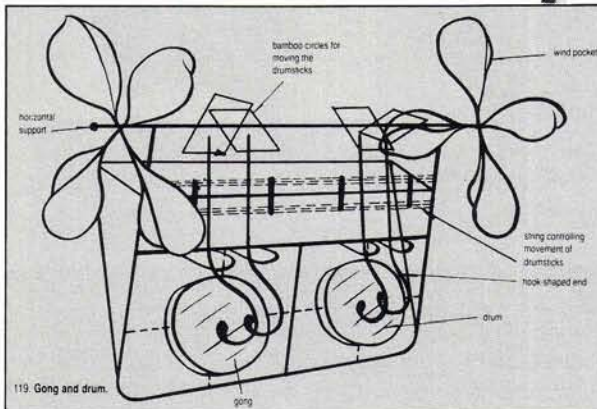
After Tal Streeter said that the Ha book was "the finest available on Chinese kites," we could hardly wait to see it. The book has much to recommend it, especially the high quality of photographs, drawings and printing. It is one of the most elegant works of book-craft ever produced on the subject of kites. The Chinese language version, in hardcover, is especially beautiful.

Alas, the English translation is of the literary sort, perhaps done by a person not familiar with kite terminology. Such strange word choices as "asterisk-framed," "wind resistance" (apparently meaning effective lift area), "hurrier" (a line climber) and "date-stone-shaped wings" leave a typical English reader in as much confusion as enlightenment.

Skye Morrison points out to me that the most serious error in the English translation is the book's title, *Chinese Artistic Kites*. The full original title, *Chinese Kites of the Ha Family*, is correct. There's no way that the works of two generations of one



Left, frame tying illustration from book by Wang; right and below, from Ha's book, a slim swallow with nine Pekinese and a noisemaker accessory.



kitemaking family from Beijing can represent the full range of kites made in China. China's great regional diversity in kitemaking is hidden. But the range and workmanship exhibited by the Ha family is superb.

If you can work your way past these barriers, there is a good deal of information in this book. The history of Chinese kites includes several stories and traditions we have not heard of before, and the background of the Ha family of Beijing is extensive, though the suppression of kites during the Cultural Revolution in the 60s, amazingly, is not mentioned.

The categories of kites as outlined by the Has—father and son—are another tangle for the Western reader. We are used to very different categories. The ones in this book are as follows: rigid-wing, flexible-wing, rigid square-frame, flexible square-frame, soft flap, multilayered, and three dimensional. I regret that I was never able to enter the mind-set that fashioned these "categories."

Of more value were the descriptions of ideal proportions and principles for integration of elements in the Beijing swallow

kite, the speciality of the Ha family. The words here are either very authoritative or very opinionated.

Despite advertising claims, the chapter "Kite-making: Methods and Procedures" will not be enough to teach you to make a Chinese kite. An experienced builder—

even one familiar with bamboo—will have to bring as much to the book as the book will bring to him or her. The sketchiness in this section leaves one wondering if the problem is the translation or the original. Perhaps the intention is only to show how the Ha kites differ from the general run of Chinese kites and it is assumed that the reader understands the fundamentals of kitemaking.

I have to think that the Ha book is only the outer, papery layers of the onion, and the sweet inner layers of understanding are still untasted. But the pictures are a delicious appetizer. Every serious student of kites should have *Chinese Artistic Kites* to savor on gray, still days.

Chinese Kites by Wang Hongxun (contributor to *Le Cerf-Volant en Chine*, reviewed in *Kite Lines*, Winter 1989-90) is another kind of book. Even the paper and ink are different. The book production is pedestrian, but you will see many kites here, actually about twice as many color images as in the Ha book (though there is no comparison when it comes to color quality).

However, the accompanying informa-

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tion is brief. There are three pages of drawings for butterfly and swallow kites. The 18 pages of text at the back of the book are quite good and do not much duplicate the Ha work. The approach is scholarly, but cautious and limited in scope, according to Skye Morrison, who reviewed *Le Cerf-Volant en Chine* and who says the French book is more inclusive than the Chinese production.

As for Wang's kite categories, he gives us these: soft-winged, hard-winged, flat, series-strung, cubic and umbrella-carrying. It seems the Chinese have disagreement about kite classifications just as we Westerners do.

The Wang book describes traditional kite festivals observed in China, and says for the Double Ninth Festival (the ninth day of the ninth moon) kites were made "as large as the size of the threshing grounds of the village." One gathers that the giant kites of Japan had ancestors in China.

One page of the text gives cursory coverage to kitemaking, another to accessories. I longed for drawings or illustrations here, because the writing about lanterns, "chasers" (line climbers), gongs and such is a real tease—so interesting, so slight.

One idea that was new (to me) was the following: "The forked pole is another accessory used in kiteflying. People use a long forked pole to prop up the kite above the rooftop in a small courtyard so they can enjoy kiteflying without going to an open field."

Kite Artistry and Innovation is the humblest and cheapest of the lot. It is strictly in Chinese, but the numerous color pictures in the front plus drawings throughout are informative. The odd sprinkling of Western and Japanese kites among the Chinese disturbs the balance of the book.

By the time you have finished with these books, or even with one of them, you may become tired of seeing kites covered with bats, peaches, fish, etc. I know, I know, "the Chinese have virtually no undecorated kites," as Tal Streeter puts it. The elaborate detail sometimes eclipses the underlying image or structure. The Chinese have carried decoration to such an extreme that their kites seem, to my eyes, overburdened, overprecious, over-symbolic. Of course it is unfair to apply Western standards to these kites, for in China, as Skye Morrison learned, the question of what kites are *for* is answered

HAWK

BLACK HAWK

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The advertisement features a stylized hawk perched on a kite. The word "HAWK" is written in a large, bold, brush-stroke font on the left. The words "BLACK HAWK" are written in a similar font along the diagonal of the kite. Below the kite is a rectangular box containing the name "RALPH OFFREDO" and his address and phone number.

by just two reasons: "To reflect nature or to tell a story." How can kites built to these norms ever be compared to Western ones? Whatever we feel about Chinese kites, one feature about these kite books impresses me: they show the kites *flying*. The "show" kite, not meant to fly, seems not to exist here. That I respect. —V.G.

Wonders of the Wau

Kites of Malaysia: Kites to make and fly by Wayne Hosking (Malaysia, Malaysian Airline Systems, 1990), softcover, 39 pages, \$7.95.

A quick glance through *Kites of Malaysia* reveals a book whose production and design values are professional and imaginative. The photographs of Malaysian kitemakers creating in their workshops are properly lit, professionally shot and ten of the more than 20 shots used are full page reproductions.

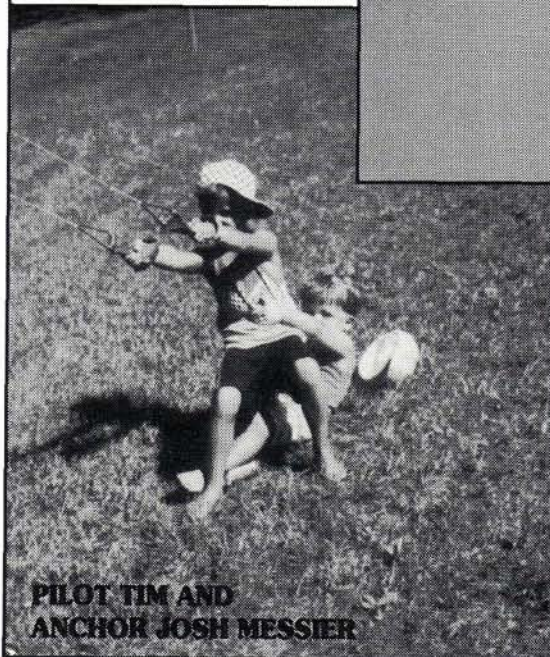
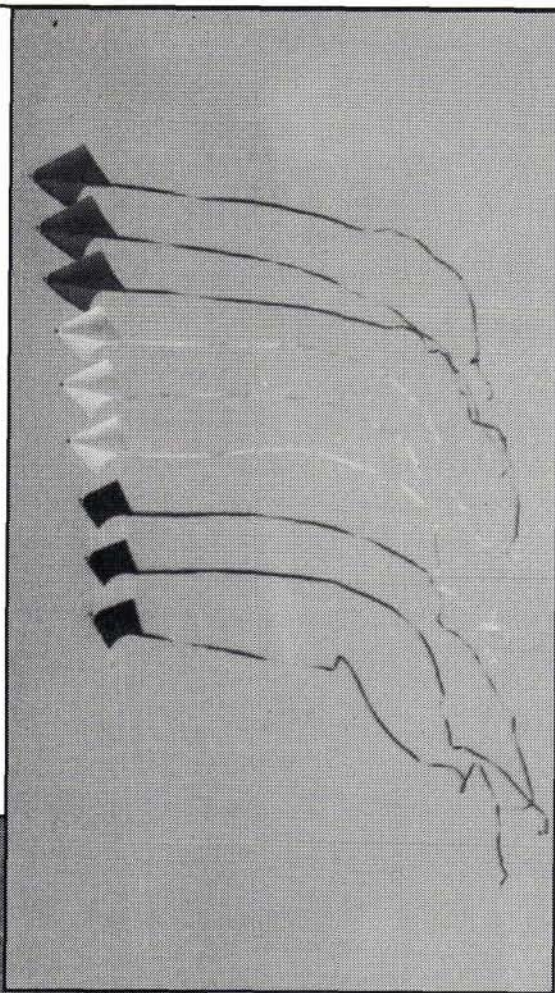
Nothing has been spared in design, layout and quality reproduction, and this book is a rare compilation of material for those fascinated by the unique *wau* (kites) of Malaysia and their makers.

Unfortunately, none of the photographs are captioned, so it is impossible to tell who the kitemakers are, or (to someone who is interested in the variations which occur between states in Malaysia), where the makers come from. I would have preferred some basic captioning describing the content of the photograph, though it is not difficult, with a little detective work, to find which aspects of the text the photographs are illustrating. From my own travels, it is apparent that many of the kites pictured are the works of

Proud Malaysian kitemaker Ramli Bin Hanifah lifts his beautifully crafted wau bulan to view in book by Wayne Hosking.



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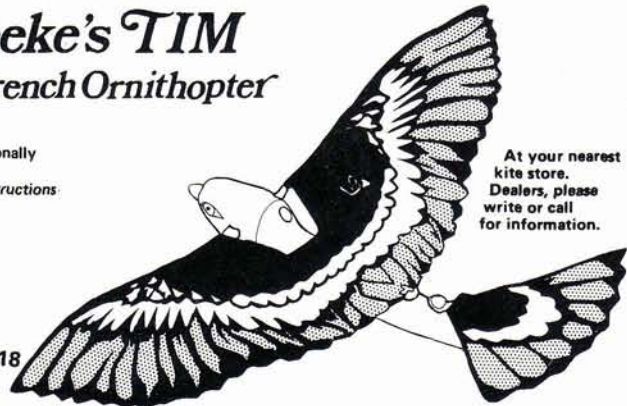
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the current state and national champions. Hosking has set out to be as informa- tive as possible. He has scoured every source he could find, and personally gath- ered facts and anecdotes on a myriad of aspects of Malaysian kites, including mythology, Malaysian history, kite history and modern kite competition. But the text is no match for the quality of the book's production. The amazing, awe- inspiring detail of the paper carving which is such a unique feature of Malaysian kites and which makes the photographs so visually strong is not apparent in the text. The imbalance between text and art is disconcerting to the reader, as one is constantly distracted from the text. The book would have bene- fited from more thorough editing.

On the plus side, the scale drawings of ten varieties of Malaysian kite design are a rare source of information. They include detail on the length and cross-section of each of the bamboo members, the posi- tioning of the tensioning and reinforcing strings, and bridle points on each of the kites. These are not beginners' step-by- step kite plans, but Hosking includes a general description of the techniques of construction.

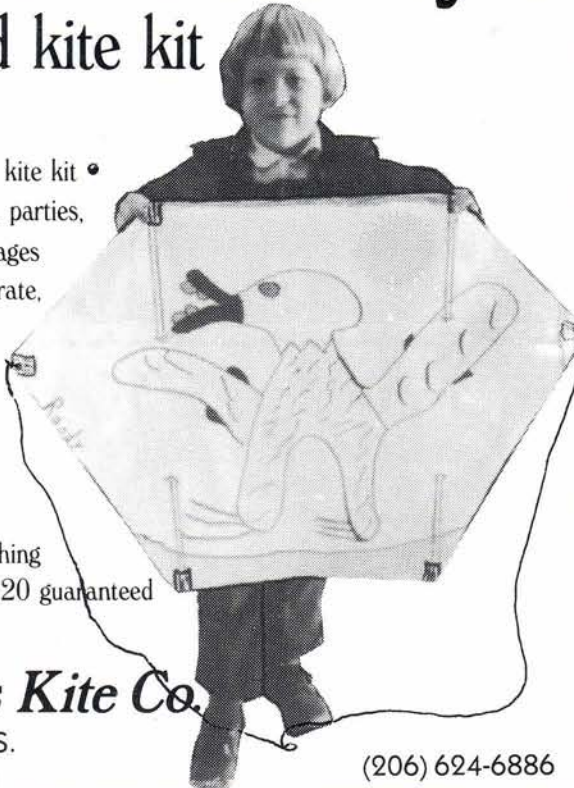
The unavailability in Western countries of the two key natural materials used, Malaysian thorny bamboo and Chinese tissue paper, requires the kitemaker to have experience in, or invest time in experimenting with, the key characteris- tics of the synthetic substitutes suggested in passing in the construction notes. Because thorny bamboo has a formidable reputation for strength and is almost exclusively used in championship produc- tion, some strength testing of spar cross- section should be done before using other varieties of bamboo.

Hosking does not provide plans for a derivative kite using modern materials, and I agree with his decision. It would not have been appropriate in a book which serves to inform us of and promote tradi- tional Malaysian techniques.

There is no doubt that this book is a unique and useful addition to kite litera- ture. It is perhaps only a small point that in parts the text reads like encyclopedia entries. The book collates a great deal and is one of our few accessible sources of knowledge of these beautiful kites. In this respect Hosking's research has benefited us all in providing a visually stimulating book on the wonders of the wau. —S.F.

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Butterfly for a Buck

By Rod Stewart

A Dainty Beast

What? No wind? This butterfly kite will leap from a daisy patch at the mere hint of a wayward waft. And, as a rainy day project, it has been scientifically proven to defuse, amuse and not confuse the young or young at heart.

In pursuit of a foolproof cloud cruiser, I have gradually evolved this design. An earlier effort of mulberry paper decorated with fabric paint has been simplified to a version quite popular for community kite workshops. Each spring, we make many armloads of such dainty beasts.



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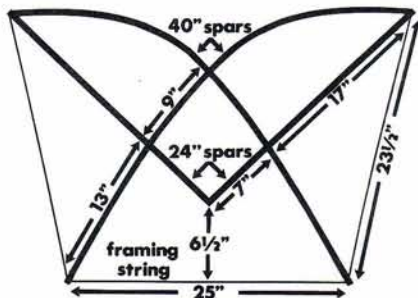
- one sheet of paper (plain or fancy) at least 24 x 36 inches
- two wooden dowels, $\frac{3}{16}$ -inch diameter, 40 inches long
- two wooden dowels, $\frac{3}{16}$ -inch diameter, 24 inches long
- materials for tails such as: plastic trash bag, crepe paper streamers, inch-wide rags, plastic strips, surveyor's tape or your favorite material
- lightweight string (10-pound-test) for framing, lashing, bridling and flying
- the usual miscellaneous supplies, like rubber cement, white glue, scissors, ruler, pencil, markers and acrylic or water-based paint

The Bones

Start by marking each 40-inch bone from one end at the 13- and 22-inch intervals. Then mark each 24-inch spar at 7 inches from one end.

Now lash the spars together with a string at their intersections.

To complete the framework, tie on the outline framing string and splash a dab of glue on all those knots (there should be eight of them).



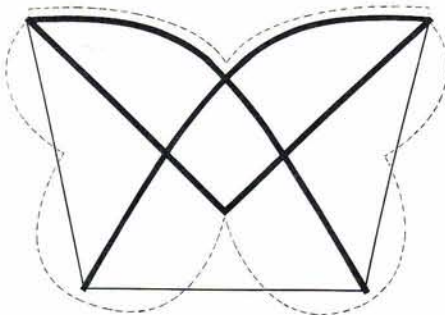
The Skin

Lay the frame over the paper and lightly draw the outline of one side (left or right) of the butterfly with a pencil. The proportions between the upper and lower wing lobes can vary according to the wilds of your imagination. My preference is not to go farther than two inches beyond the outline framing string. But that really depends upon how much wing edge you want flapping in the breeze—whatever is pleasing to your eye.

Don't forget to allow an extra one-inch margin above the leading edge spars, to be folded over and glued down.

To make sure that both sides of the butterfly are the same—symmetrical—fold the paper in half along the vertical axis and cut out the pattern with scissors along the pencil outline.

From leftover paper, cut six small strips, each 1 inch wide and 6 inches long. These will be glued onto the back of the kite later for reinforcements.



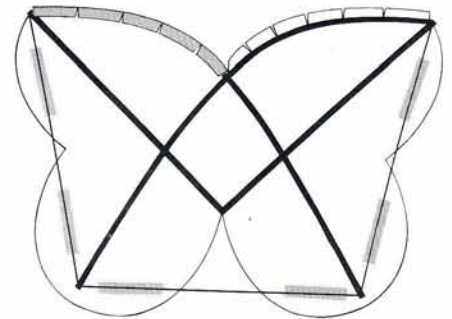
The Face

Now is the time to decorate the kite with markers or paint, because there are no bones to travel over. And even if you make a serious boo-boo on the paint job, just cut out another skin.

The Back

Replace the frame over the back of the butterfly, brush some white glue along the leading edge of the paper and fold it over the dowels.

Glue six strips of paper over the outline framing string where it touches the skin.



The Tails

While the goop is drying, fashion eight tail strips—about 3 inches wide and at least 6 feet long. Make two bunches, four strips in each bunch, and knot them at one end.

With a short length of string, tie each bunch of tails to a spar end at the two lower wingtips, right and left.

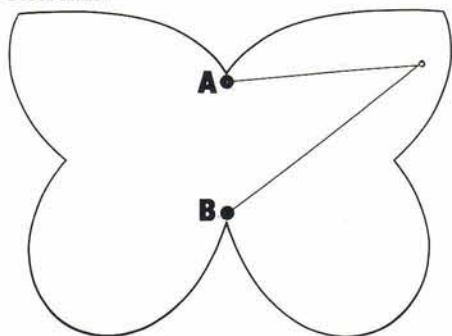


Illustrations: Kan Cress

The Bridle

Bridle the butterfly with a 36-inch length of lightweight string. Start with the top leg about 16 inches and the bottom leg about 20 inches, and make adjustments for different wind speeds.

Your charming critter should dance delighted in gentle winds from 1 to 10 mph. A rhythm of slow gentle jerks on the flying lines should keep you both airborne—in spirit if not in fact—during brief lulls.

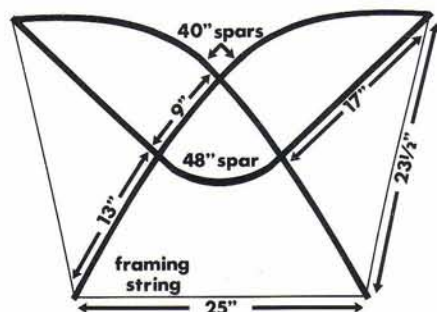


High-Tech Materials

- one sheet of Tyvek (the soft kind) at least 24 x 36 inches, for the sail
- one fiberglass rod, 1/8-inch diameter, 48 inches long
- two fiberglass rods, 1/8-inch diameter, each 40 inches long
- another sheet of Tyvek, approximately the same size, to be cut into strips for tails (or your favorite tail material)
- lightweight string (10-lb-test) for framing, lashing, bridling and flying
- the usual miscellaneous supplies, like white glue (for the Tyvek), epoxy glue (for the fiberglass), scissors, ruler, pencil, markers and acrylic or water-based paint

The Bones

Start by marking each 40-inch bone from one end at the 13- and 22-inch intervals.



Then mark the 48-inch spar at two places, 17 inches from each end.



Butterflies are easily "trained" in a 5-8 mph wind. To each kite's bridle, add a two-inch loop on the back, around point A. Lengths of line about six feet each are attached by snap swivels for easy dismantling.

Now lash the spars together with a string at their marks. Note that the 48-inch spar is bent into the shape of a U, not a V.

To complete the framework, tie on the outline framing string and splash a dab of glue (epoxy recommended) on all the knots.

The Skin

Lay the frame over the Tyvek and refer to the instructions for the skin of the paper butterfly, substituting Tyvek for paper.

The Face

Do your decorating and/or coloring now, before the bones are attached.

To intensify colors on Tyvek, use paint or markers on both sides of the material. Colors can be outlined with black to separate them and give a stained-glass look.

The Back

Replace the frame over the back of the butterfly and refer to the instructions for the back of the paper butterfly, substituting Tyvek skin and reinforcing strips for paper.

The Tails

Refer to the instructions for the tails of the paper butterfly.

The Bridle

Bridle the Tyvek butterfly the same as the paper one. If you choose to make both versions, fly them side by side and see which is the best butterfly(er). ◇

ROD STEWART, 30, has been pursuing kites semi-professionally for the past five years in Elmsdale, Nova Scotia, Canada.



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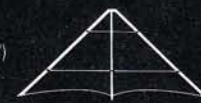
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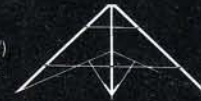
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Skill Level: Advanced
Wind Range: 1-7 mph



SPIDERWING II

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Skill Level: Intermediate
Wind Range: 3-18 mph



SPIDERWING III

Wingspan: 2 Meters (78")
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Wind Range: 5-22 mph



SPIDERWING IV

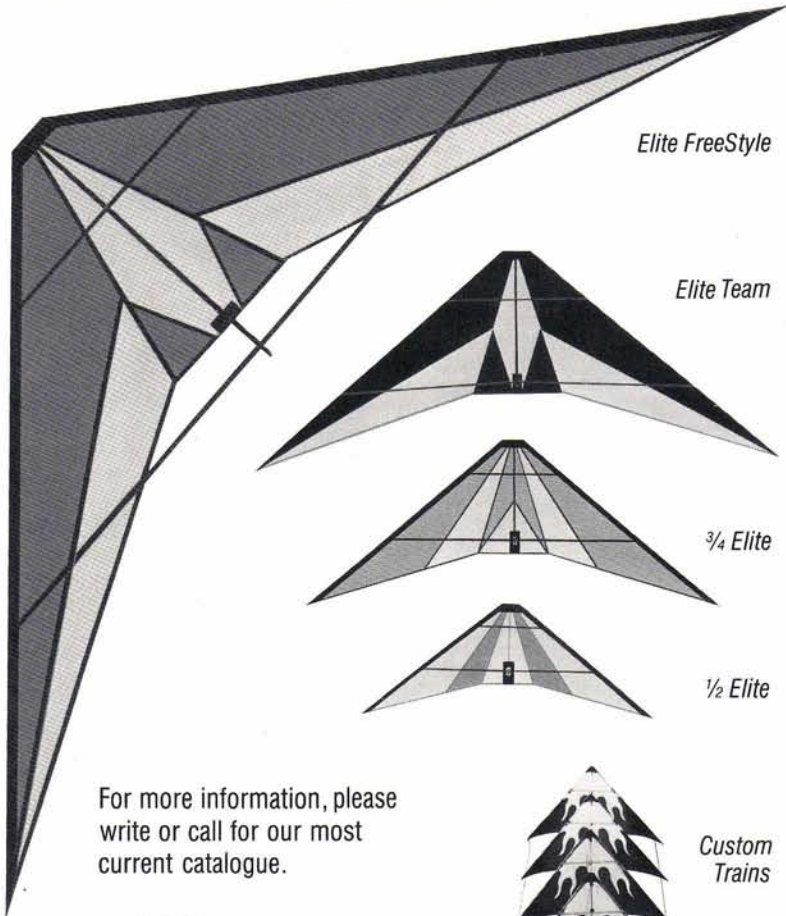
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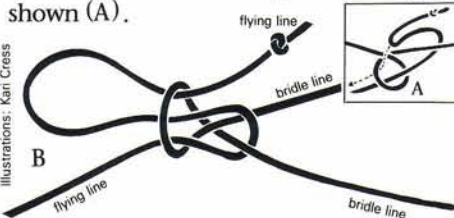
Two Knots — New Knots

1 Bridling Knot I: Totally New, Easy To Move

From A. Pete Ianuzzi, Catonsville, Maryland: Recently, while trying to attach the flying line to the two-leg bridle of one of my kites, I ended up with the knot described below. It works well, does not slip and is easy to untie and move to a new location.

A simple overhand knot should be tied in the end of the flying line. This is to easily identify it when you want to undo the knot.

First hook your finger over the bridle at the place where you want to attach the flying line, then give your hand a clockwise half twist resulting in the loop as shown (A).



Illustrations: Karl Cress

Pass about six or eight inches of the flying line through the bridle point.

Now double the flying line and pass the doubled end over the bridle leg and back through the loop. The bridle legs and end should be pulled up snug to create the knot (B).

To remove the knot, pull on the knotted end of the flying line.

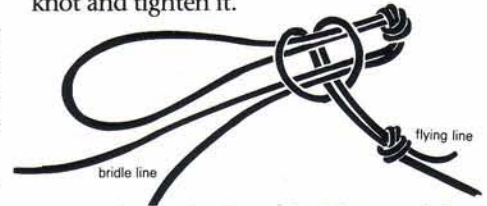
2 Bridling Knot II: Simply Delightful

From Thomas Arbster, Bethany, Oklahoma: Tie a loop in the end of the flying line.

After determining the bridle point on the bridle, make an overhand or figure-eight knot, leaving a loop of about one inch. Fold this loop back, and hold it and the legs of the bridle together, so the knot projects.

Now fold the loop at the end of the flying line back on itself to form a lark's

head. Put this over the projecting bridle knot and tighten it.



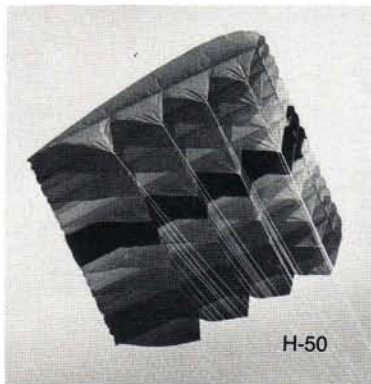
To release the knot, hold one of the bridle legs in one hand, and pull on the loop which was folded back. This causes the lark's head to release, and the line will fall off the bridle.

This is similar to, but simpler than, the Red Connection. —Editors

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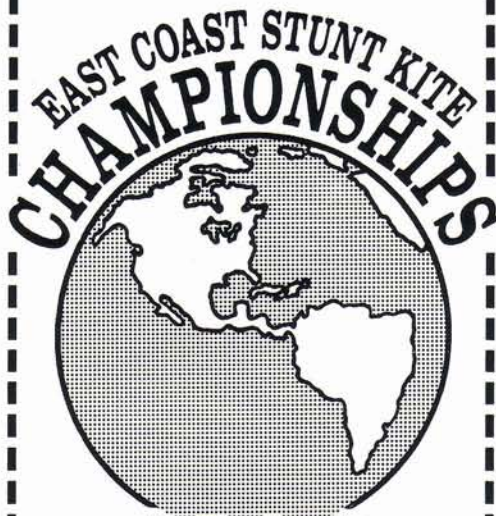
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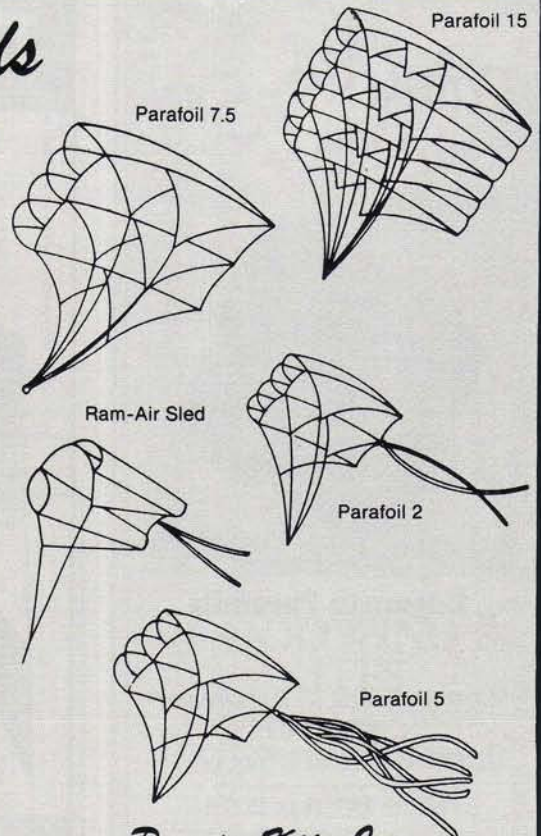
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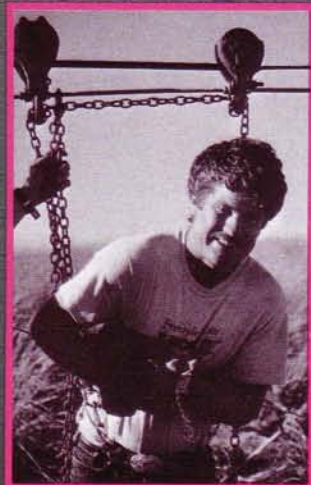
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Stunt Diary:
**CARTS,
CABLES
& KITES**
on an Oregon Beach

Frank McNew is in kite flying heaven. He's the majordomo of a group of zanies in Bandon, Oregon, whose fervor for flying puts them on skis, in kite-powered carts, or in harness for high-wire stunts over the grassy plains of Bullard's Beach State Park, just north of town.

When he isn't flying stunt kites, Frank is a logger. He cuts timber in the hills of the Oregon Coast Range east of Bandon. He also works side jobs for local building contractors, and with his wife Janet owns

*Article
& Photographs
by John Griffith*



I don't know how fast you could actually get going if you had enough wind and a long enough cable. —Frank McNew

and manages Freestyle Kites, their store and the spiritual center of the Bandon Kite Freaks.

Besides logging, Frank races motorcycles. He is extremely well coordinated and has amazingly fast reflexes. As a result, his style of kiteflying tends to run a little to the radical side of center. Like the television ad showing a stunt driver putting a car through a 360-degree spin before stopping squarely between a pair of engineers in lab coats, Frank's stunts "are not to be tried by the home audience." His high-flying antics are presented to illustrate how

can apply pressure to either or both brakes, which operate on the rear wheels only, as a way to assist the simple steering mechanism.

He steers with a pair of pedals on the front wheel fork.

This all gets pretty complicated when the cart is bounding over the sand dunes and through the tall grass, or cutting back and forth across the paved Bullard's Beach access road.

Besides braking, steering and dodging tourists' Winnebagos, Frank has to concentrate on keeping the stunt kites in

and a quick release harness, just in case the cart capsizes and he needs to get loose in a hurry. The quick release has a lanyard that, when pulled, immediately frees the kites.

Standing beside the cart, he launches the stack. Then, assuming everything holds together, he hops aboard and jounces off down Bullard's Beach. The cart has been clocked at over 25 mph.

That's not fast enough for Frank. He wants to upgrade. "As we speak, George is building a 16-foot, 9-inch Geo Sport," said Frank recently. "It's going to be big-block power," a reference to the V-8 engines put in racing cars.

The nine-foot Geo Sports are constructed with .75-ounce spinnaker sailcloth. Frank said the big new kite will use 1.9-



Frank McNew makes good time down the paved beach road in his cart pulled by a stack of stunt kites.

one man has chosen to express his interpretation of our venerable pastime. They are not offered as suggestions for readers to try for themselves.

Frank's Beach Buggy

The cart was solely Frank's invention and operating it requires all of his athletic skills. He has to steer it with his feet, apply braking power with his knees and control his travel speed with the kites—all at the same time.

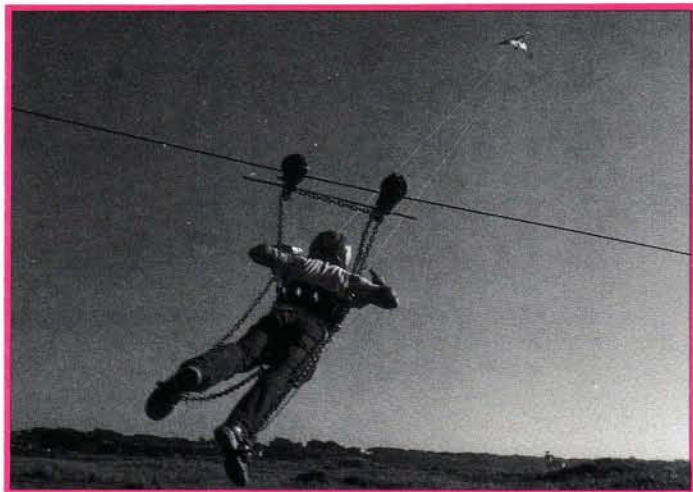
To build the three-wheeled cart, Frank combined a bunch of used motorcycle and car parts—cast-off Volkswagen half shafts, all-terrain vehicle knobby balloon tires, motorcycle shock absorbers—and added a fiberglass seat and welded, mild steel frame.

He had to design a rear axle differential so the cart can turn without tipping. The differential acts the same way as the unit in the drive axle of a car.

Frank used Volkswagen rear axle drive-shafts between his cart's rear wheels. He obviously didn't want to include the usual Volkswagen transmission-differential because of its weight and bulk, so he made a central axle carrier from a piece of heavy tubing. That allows the inner ends of both axles to turn freely.

The cart's brake handles are borrowed from a motorcycle. The handles are mounted on the center bar of the frame. Frank operates them with his knees. He

Tearing along near the horizontal in the Fright Fly, a kite-powered ride on a stretched cable.



their power curve. Balancing all the variables keeps carting beyond the athletic ability of many stunt fliers.

Frank's Kites

All of Frank's pranks rely on a stack of Geo Sport dual-line-control stunt kites for power. The nine-foot kites can be flown one at a time or stacked two or three high.

Double-decked, the Geo Sports develop 185 to 225 pounds of pull in a 20 mph wind, and all three pull about 350 pounds, according to George Edmonds, the California designer of the kites. Frank asked George to build the kites so he could pull his cart. He wanted plenty of power because he weighs 160 pounds and his cart comes in at about 100 pounds.

Frank says the tricky part of carting is getting the kites into the air. He's broken pairs of new 300-pound-test control line trying to launch all three kites at once. The critical point starts at about 15 feet off the ground and lasts until the kites start to stall above 40 feet. The idea is to get the kites across the eye of the wind and hold them at their relatively docile stall angle while stepping into the cart.

But first Frank puts on a crash helmet

ounce. "The stack is impressive," he said. "But it's also harder to launch and maintain than a single stunt kite, and it's not quite as responsive."

Beach Skiing

"Hey, I got it," Frank recently suggested to a visiting newspaper reporter intimidated by the complexity of operating the kite cart. "Maybe you'd like to try beach skiing."

He ran to his pickup truck and yanked out a pair of ragged alpine skis. "Try these on."

The tyro sand skier stepped up and Frank adjusted the rusty bindings, then they were off on a bumpy ride to the jump-off point two miles from Bandon's historic lighthouse at the mouth of the Coquille River.

Climbing over the first dune and onto the hard sand at the water's edge, Frank and his pals strapped the reporter into a Hurricane Harness (from John Weiner of Portland, Oregon) and lashed him into the ski bindings. Nodding like a cowboy in a bucking chute, the reporter-victim signaled John Michael Howard, a charter member of the Bandon Kite Freaks, to

turn loose the Geo Sports.

The ride was over before it began.

So Frank put on the skis. John Michael arranged the kites on the beach and set them aloft. They growled up into the wind and Frank was away, hopping turns on a fast schuss to the lighthouse.

The "Fright Fly"

The idea for the Fright Fly came straight from the logging woods and the mind of logger and stunt flier Bob Ashley, a McNew compadre who lives at McKenzie Bridge, Oregon.

Ashley combined a high-climber's tool belt, chain stirrups and a 200-foot piece of 7/16-inch diameter logging cable he stretches between two sand dunes.

The style of cable (loggers call it hay-wire) is typically rated at 15,460-pound breaking strain and has 19 wires in each of its 6 primary strands.

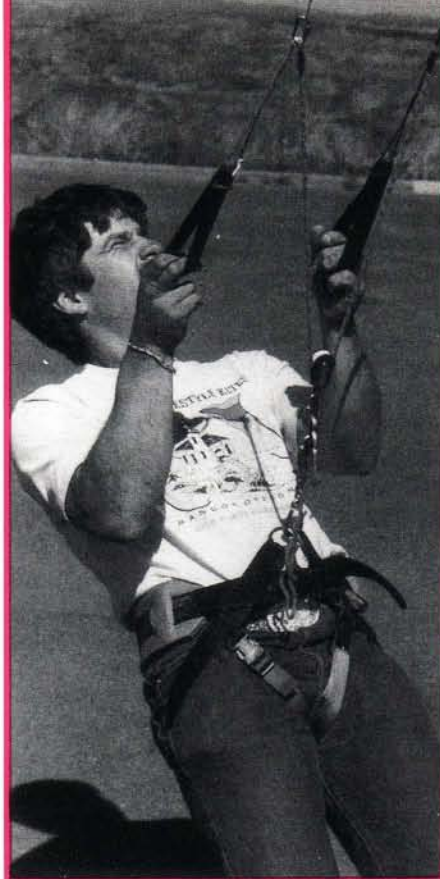
Bob and Frank anchor one end of the cable to a massive driftwood log and the other end to a pickup truck. They tighten it with the truck, chock the wheels and set the brakes and transmission.

Standing below the cable at the point it leaves the ground, the intrepid Fright Flier lashes on a climber's belt and steps into the chains. He also puts on the crash helmet. Then comes the Hurricane Harness. The harness transfers the strain of the kites to the flier's hips. It is attached to the quick release mechanism at the kite control lines. All Frank's equipment is on a par with mountain climbing gear. He doesn't skimp on safety, even though his flying style seems to beg disaster.

The climbing belt and chain stirrups are suspended under the cable by a pair of pulleys. The pulleys are separated by a metal bar.

The kites are launched at the ready signal to begin the Fright Fly. As the kites rise straight into the wind, a little slack in the cable allows the flier to be drawn towards them. If they're held at a stall, the cable swings back to its "unloaded" or straight position.

But the real speed and mobility come from travelling up and down the length of the cable. Frank and Bob try to see how



Left, Frank McNew wears his Hurricane Harness to transfer the strain of his kites to his hips. The harness is attached to a quick release mechanism that, when pulled, immediately frees the kites. Below, a rear view of the McNew cart, showing its differential and suspension.



fast they can go by using all three kites at once. They predict (or try to anyhow) when to change directions on the kites.

For example, if the kites are clear on the left and the Fright Flier is heading for the flat face of the dune on that side at about 30 mph, when should he pull his right control line?

Of course the kites will have to pass him going the other way before he ever slows down and begins to follow. The incentive for delaying direction change as long as possible comes from inertia—Frank and Bob want the longest ride they can get because the speed builds up along the way.

Besides wearing a crash helmet and quick release, Frank and Bob place stops on the cable to prevent fliers from slamming into the dunes. If they go too far and hit a stop with the pulleys, their travel is arrested and they can pull the quick release if they need to get loose in a hurry.

As much as Frank loves Bullard's Beach, he's looking around for dunes of the right shape, elevation and distance apart to set up a longer Fright Fly. "I don't know how fast you could actually get going if you had enough wind and a long enough cable," he muses.

He's hunting for a longer piece of cable and the right terrain to set up a Fright Fly in the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area between Reedsport and Florence, two towns north of Bandon. He plans to use a semislack line on the big Fright Fly. To begin with, tightening over 600 feet of cable would be mechanically difficult. But

Frank says having a slack cable would improve the fly anyway, because travelling down either side, the flier would be drawn both by gravity and the new big kite. He expects speeds up to 60 mph.

Another angle he's pursuing is setting up a Fright Fly under a bridge. "The trouble is finding a high enough bridge, getting set up and doing the fly, and getting out of there before they arrest me," he said. ◇



"What's this passing us?" It's Frank McNew, joy-riding in his cart, on the road at Bandon, Oregon.

Although the Bandon Kite Freaks get together every weekend for fun flies, they set up the Fright Fly and other special events on Memorial Day weekend, the Fourth of July and at the annual Bandon Cranberry Festival, which is usually scheduled in late September.

JOHN GRIFFITH wrote two stories about Frank McNew for The World newspaper (a Coos Bay, Oregon daily) that were picked up by Associated Press. He now works for The Oregonian newspaper of Portland.

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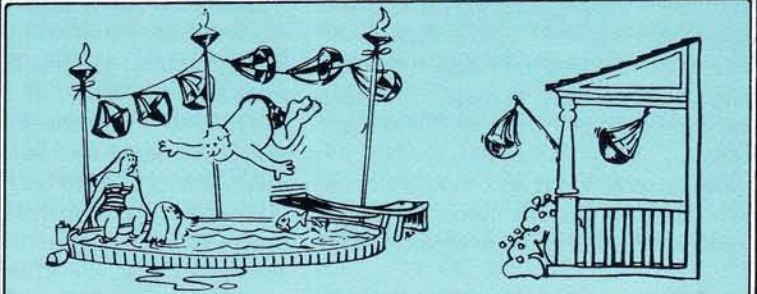
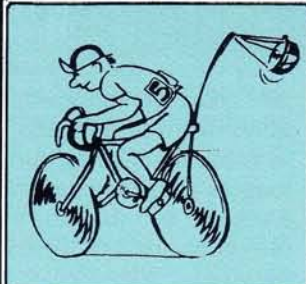
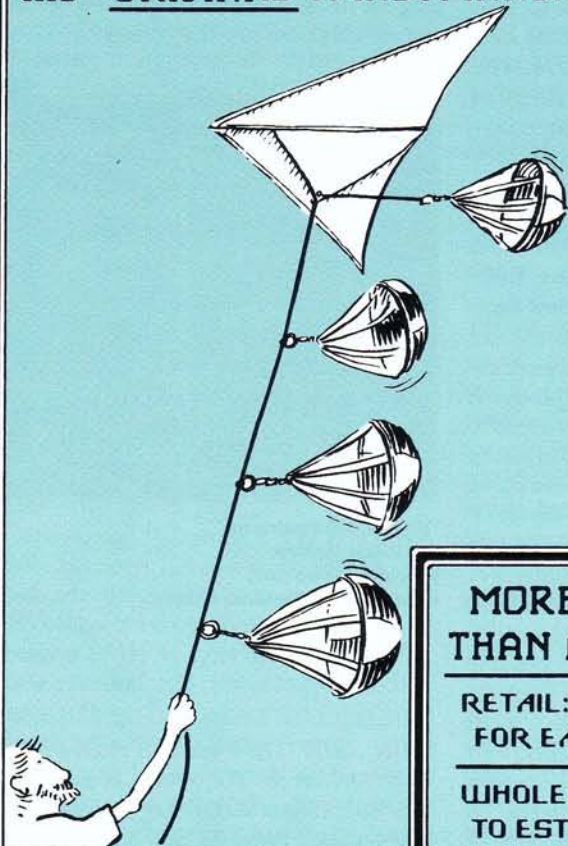


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Simon Freidin

FABULOUS. INCREDIBLE. SUPER. AMAZING. FANTASTIC. All these superlatives and more spilled over repeatedly in the speech patterns of participants returning from Europe's September events.

After the magic of New Zealand and Thailand early in the year, the word was that the conjunction of three major festivals in Europe—Bristol (England), Dieppe

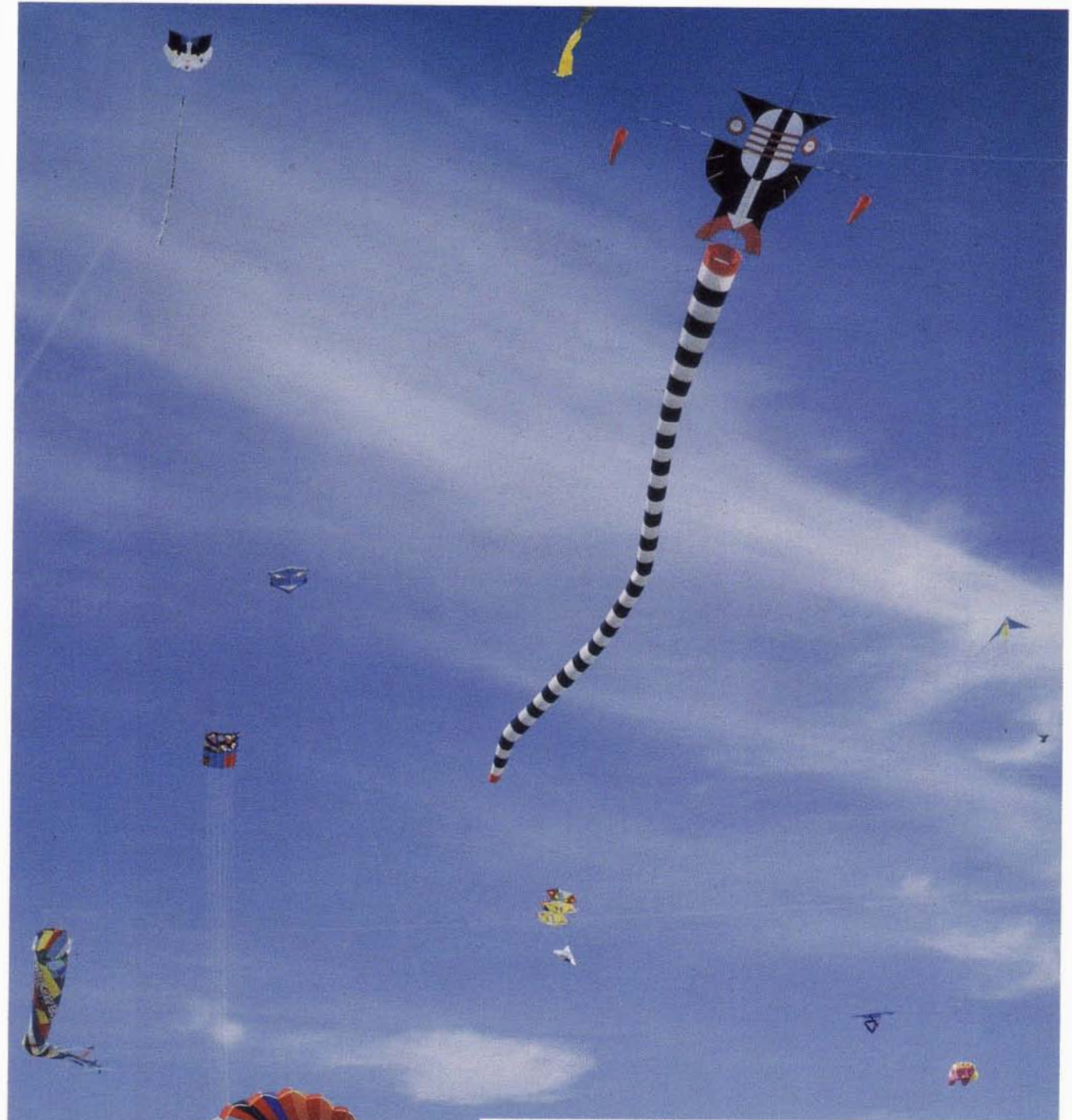
*A Spectacular
September in
Europe
© 1990*

(France) and Berlin (Germany)—would attract many of the world's top kitefliers during September. Dieppe, a biennial of increasing stature, was the linchpin, but each event had its own identity.

In fact, if you were extremely alert, you could have gone to a domestic French kite festival just before Bristol that in some ways presaged the Big Three...

ABOVE, MOON OVER DIEPPE: A GLOWING

SPHERICAL BOX KITE BY MARIE LOMBARD.



*A Spectacular
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A SUNNY MONTPELLIER

1-2/9/90 Article by Tony Sparrow
Photographs by Linda Sparrow

It was called "24 Hours of the Wind" and was announced in a French newspaper sent to me by a friend. After corresponding with Robert Lifran, Secretary of the *Cerf-Volant Club de Montpellier* (Kite Club of Montpellier), my wife Linda and I ended up as guests for a superbly organized weekend.

The site was the lovely beach resort Palavas-les-Flots, Montpellier district, on the Mediterranean coast, where a large area was barricaded off for the festival. Guests could leave their gear at the field overnight, since the club tent was watched by a security guard and the largest K-9 police dog I have ever seen.

On the beach we met Pierre Fabre, one of France's better-known makers of spectacular, oversize kites (see *Best of Show*, Kite Lines, *Summer 1990*). He and his ground crew had just arrived from Paris to give a preview of his latest *huge* creation, Cycl-Hop. An imaginary insect eight meters high by six meters wide (about 26 by 20 feet), its sleeve tail was 80 meters (262 feet) long and its tubular spars were 2½ inches (about 6.35cm) in diameter! Sponsored by a French industrial company, its purpose is to increase awareness of the need to recycle. (It is noteworthy that kitefliers in France are able to obtain sponsorship from radio and television stations and from city and regional governments that would make us Americans green with envy!)

Cycl-Hop was impressive in the sky. We did not see demonstrated but were informed that bags of "garbage on a line carrier are lifted up to the kite, and drop into and travel through its 80-meter-long 'processing' tail."

Later in the day we saw demonstrations by some of the leading stunt kite teams of France, including Stranger and Z'Abailles from Paris and Armorians from Brittany.

The highlight of the festival, however, was the night fly, which began at 9:30 and continued (officially, that is) until 1:15 Sunday morning!

No one does "sound and light" better than the French, for it was they who originally devised this art form. The concept is that music, dramatic speaking and flood-lighting are combined and synchronized to produce a stirring impression upon the



Opposite, 88 meters of Cycl-Hop by Pierre Fabre rises among a superb gathering at Palavas-les-Flots, Montpellier. Inset, a close-up of the giant Cycl-Hop. Above, a huge spinning windsock by Michel Gressier.

audience. This was one of the finest I have ever witnessed.

While a quarter moon shone brightly over the Mediterranean, eight (no less) theater arc lights, distributed around the field and staffed by skilled operators, illuminated the kites from beneath to produce a brightly lit canopy of colorful kites against a black velvet sky. Accompanying them was the sound of recorded music interspersed with dramatic commentary—and *live* recitals by a trio of viola, clarinet and drum! The total effect was nothing short of awe-inspiring.

Although we retired at 1:45 a.m., I learned that some hardy souls kept their kites up until 4 in the morning, when the wind dropped, but at 6 a.m. the kites went up again.

This day's events included the kite ballet and stunt kite championships of France, which like the rest of the festival were blessed with perfect weather.

Michel Trouillet (known for his part in

the flight of the world's longest cobra kite) stood out today. He and his helpers dropped candy for the children by use of a line climber to tip a pail, and then demonstrated "bungee-jumping" with their four-foot mannequin "Mimi Trouillasque."

I was told that the first time they performed with Mimi publicly they misjudged the length of elastic and Mimi hit the ground heavily. A member of the public telephoned the police and ambulance who arrived with lights flashing and sirens blazing. Michel, being unaware of the stir he had caused, shortened the bungee and sent Mimi up for another try! This was too much for the onlookers, who, thinking it was a real child, demanded vociferously that the police arrest him on the spot for child abuse!

In Montpellier we found the most friendly group of kitefliers one might wish to meet, and a festival that surely deserves to be more widely known.

*A Spectacular
September in
Europe
© 1990*

A STELLAR BRISTOL

7-9/9/90 Article by Tony Sparrow
Photographs by Linda Sparrow



After a fast hovercraft ferry crossing of the English Channel (22 miles in 45 minutes), we drove down to the west of England to attend the convention of the Kite Society of Great Britain and The Bristol International Kite Festival, of which Martin Lester and Andy King were

among the principal organizers.

We had a car problem en route, so missed the workshops on Friday, which by all accounts were excellent and well-attended. On Saturday we arrived early at Ashton Park, a magnificent site high on a hilltop overlooking the city and spacious enough for two main arenas plus room for the public, who turned out in the thousands to enjoy the events.

Unfortunately, the wind became fluky or nonexistent and caused the stunt contests to be postponed until Sunday. We walked around and met kilters from all over, many of them familiar names.

Peter Lynn of New Zealand brought his giant pink octopus (Tako Tako), its hollow head slowly pulsing with the breeze, while its 60-foot tentacles trailed menacingly. At one point, Peter had staked it to the ground when the wind dropped and the monster fell across the entrance road jammed with cars. The faces of the cars' occupants as they were unexpectedly enveloped in octopus were a marvel to behold. As the only available kiteflier in the immediate area, I had the job of manhandling it to the side of the road.

We soon ran into John Barker, best known as founder of the Bearly-Made-It Skydive Squad, a worldwide group devoted to parachuting teddy bears from kites. His compatriots intended to try for a new world record by dropping a teddy from 3,000 feet, but the wind wouldn't cooperate. (We of course immediately joined up and now have two parabears of our own.)

Many kilters were standouts, but strong in my mind were George Peters from

Boulder, Colorado and Steve Brockett from Cardiff, Wales. Steve's kites included one titled No Two Feathers, magnificently painted on Tyvek, and a marvelous goblin in ripstop nylon. The kites of George Peters were breathtaking in their colors and workmanship (tight as a drum everywhere) and inspiring when they were flown later.

That evening was devoted to the dinner and auction for the benefit of the festival and The Kite Society, conducted by an irrepressible Andy King, relieved occasionally by the booming Corey Jensen.

On Sunday the wind was up by midday, the sun was shining and the stunt teams were flying, including the Decorators and the Blitz from London, Flashback from Paris and the Top of the Line team from San Diego, California, doing their latest routine to "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," which was the show stopper. It was so moving that many in the crowd were close to tears.

Martin Lester gave viewers a sneak preview of his new Boeing 747 kite, so realistic in its Virgin Atlantic airlines color scheme that it looked just like the real thing seen from further away.

The Rokkaku Challenge drew 16 teams to the arena. Thousands of spectators, predominantly nonkilters, went wild with excitement at the colorful carnage of cut-away kites drifting down and littering the ground.

As we left Ashton Park, the sky was still alive with kites, and we promised it would not be long before we returned.

Europe continued page 42...



Top, the lively and lovely scene at Ashton Park, Bristol. Above, Steve Brockett's goblin kite of painted ripstop nylon. Right, one of three Flying Man kites by George Peters (this one is named Manta's Man).



The Kite Lines Bookstore

serving the kiter's reading needs by mail

IF IT'S ABOUT KITES, the Kite Lines Bookstore probably has it—the common, the rare, the foreign, the domestic, the good (and bad).

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want you to feel like you're in your local bookstore. Pick a book. Look it over. If it's wrong for you, put it back on the shelf. No problem.

Kite books often go out of print without warning—if you want any of these, we suggest you snap them up!

From JAPAN . . .



Edo Dako (Edo Kites) by Masaaki Modegi, in Japanese and English. An elegant, full-color pictorial tribute to Shingo Modegi (Masaaki's father) and master kitemaker Teizo Hashimoto. Includes brief history of Japanese kites and five types of

Edo. Beautiful printing, heavy paper. A kite book to treasure. Hardcover, 78 pp., \$59.95



Bessatsu Bijutsu Techo (Fine Arts Journal), in Japanese. The Winter 1982 issue of a quarterly art magazine. This issue is devoted entirely to kites. Contains more than

300 color photos, plus articles by well-known Japanese kite authors. Softcover (in protective plastic sleeve), 216 pp., \$19.95

Tori Dako (Bird Kites)

by Shuhei Goto, in Japanese. Includes 36 color photographs of lifelike three-dimensional bird kites (eagle, crane, hawk, others) built of bamboo and washi. Many shown flying in beautiful natural environments.



Detailed plans include full-size seagull pattern. Softcover, 72 pp., \$21.95

Ana Aki Dako, Paneru Dako (Vented Cellular Kites, Panel Kites) by Eiji Ohashi, in Japanese. Creative configurations of the used-to-be basic box (clock, sunflower, dice, flags, etc.). Single



and multi-cell variations. Color photos. Softcover, 60 pp., \$21.95



Hansen Dako (Ship Kites) by Morio Yajima, in Japanese. Includes excellent illustrations, numerous details, plus color photos of ships in flight, both single- and multi-masted. Fascinating and challenging. Softcover, 66 pp., \$21.95



Majiku Dako (Magic Kites) by Takaji Kuroda, in Japanese. Detailed plans for convertible boxes and "cubic" kites that fold, flip and fly upside down. Sleds and traditional Japanese kites, too. Color photos. Softcover, 77 pp., \$21.95



Hikoki Dako (Airplane Kites) by Koji Hasebe, in Japanese. Easy plans for sophisticated cellular kites with wings and fins. Plans include modern jets, the Concorde and a UFO. Realistic. Some color photos. Softcover, 54 pp., \$21.95

From AUSTRALIA . . .

Make Mine Fly by Helen Bushell. This new 1988 edition contains a far-ranging collection of tips, techniques, hints and advice (gathered since 1977) for beginners or experts. Includes plans for the patented Trefoil Delta with folded keel. Softcover, 90 pp., \$11.95



Kites for Krowds of Kids by Ed Baxter and Richard Davey. Contains clear plans for 11 kites plus accessories. Good advice for workshops, despite outdated references and regional (Australian) resources and materials. Nice drawings, no photos. Softcover, 24 pp., \$3.95



Kite-Folds by Beth Matthews. This much-improved second edition contains plans for 12 small kites, each made from a single sheet of paper, plus the "Skyloope." Clever designs, good construction tips, easy directions, color photos. Softcover, 26 pp., \$9.95



From BERMUDA . . .

Bermuda Kites by Frank Watlington. Authentic plans for five island kites, plus variations, using traditional methods and materials (flour and water glue). Quaint, charming, and fun! Softcover, 24 pp., \$3.95



From CHINA . . .

Feng Zheng Ji Yi Yu Chuangxin (Kite Artistry and Innovation) by Wang Qian, in Chinese. Classic Chinese kites oddly mixed with modern Western ones. Many drawings, eight pages of color photos. A possible rarity, of uncertain supply. Softcover, 80 pp., \$7.95



Chinese Kites by Wang Hongxun, in English. Contains three pages of drawings, 15 pages of history and development, and 77 pages of color photos of Chinese kites—a representative collection, usefully presented. Limited supply—while they last. Softcover, 102 pp., \$9.95



SPECIAL PURCHASES!

Nihon-no Tako (Kites of Japan), first edition (1978), by Kazuo Niisaka (deceased), in Japanese. One of the most beautiful pieces of kite literature we have ever seen:

10 x 14 in., 315 pages

(253 in color). Rare find from publisher's limited supply. Double-boxed hardcover, \$249 (no airmail shipping).



Bilder für den Himmel (Pictures for the Sky), by Paul Eubel and Ikuko Matsumoto, in German and Japanese. Revised edition of *Kunstdrachen / Geijutsu Dako (Art Kites)*, bigger and better than the first. Incredibly beautiful full-page, full-color photos of one-of-a-kind kites. Includes the work of 100 artists and more than 36 kitemakers. Softcover, 406 pages, \$54.95 (no airmail shipping).

Chinese Artistic Kites

by Ha Kuiming and Ha Yiqi (father and son). Detailed information about the classic kites of the famous Ha family of Beijing. Includes brief history of Chinese kites, evolution and structure of Ha family kites, decoration and flying techniques for over 80 kites plus accessories. Beautiful photos, many in color, fine line drawings. Tal Streeter



calls this "the finest book available on Chinese kites." Good English translation, softcover, 160 pp., \$16.95 Also in original Chinese, hardcover, 160 pp., \$16.95

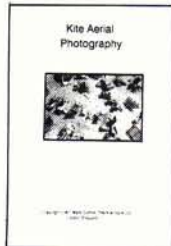
The Kite Lines Bookstore ... Continued

From ENGLAND...



Kite Cookery by Don Dunford. Revised edition of 1979. Contains plans for four simple kites (box, delta, hexagon and dual-line diamond). Includes well thought out theories, construction tips, technical material and aerodynamics

in plain English. Softcover, 47 pp., \$3.95



Kite Aerial Photography by Mark Cottrell. Self-published with computer. Everything you need to know about the subject to get started or improve your technique. Good combination of technical data and common sense. Softcover, 44 pp., \$10.95



The Kite Store Book of Kites by Mark Cottrell. Not fancy, but one of the most refreshing and honest kite books in years. Plans for ten kites plus the author's philosophy and a floppy disk of computer programs (BASIC) for kites. Softcover, 48 pp., \$13.95

From FINLAND...

Lennä, Lennä Leijani (Fly, Fly Kites) by Mårten Bondestam, in Finnish. Out of print, very few copies left. Contains many artistic and unusual designs. Moody photographs and fine drawings, including lots of details, are all in black-and-white. Softcover, 80 pp., \$18.95



From FRANCE...

Le Cerf-Volant en Chine (The Kite in China) by Dominique Baillon-Lalande, in French. Many beautiful photos (half in color) of ancient and modern Chinese kites. No plans, but some construction details. Hardcover, 88 pp., \$48.95 (no airmail shipping)

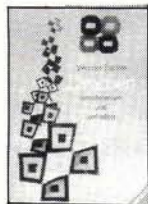


From GERMANY...

Lenkdrachen bauen und fliegen (Making and Flying Stunt Kites) by Wolfgang Schimmelpfennig, in German. Colorful and detailed plans to build eight dual-liners (four diamonds, three deltas and a foil). Softcover, 64 pp., \$13.95



GERMANY continued...



Drachen kombinieren und verketten (Kite Combinations and Trains) by Werner Backes, in German. A very complete collection, full of good ideas, instructions and minute details. Clear illustrations and numerous color photos make the book

easy to use. Softcover, 128 pp., \$16.95



Drachen aus aller Welt (Kites from Everywhere) by Werner Backes, in German. Detailed illustrations and clear photographs of a 40-kite international sampler. Plans include the Cloud Seeker, Rhombus, parafoil, multi-cell boxes, trains and aerial

photography. Softcover, 128 pp., \$16.95



Drachen einfach und schnell gebaut (Quick and Easy Kitemaking) by Werner Backes, in German. An accurate, colorful introductory volume with plans for seven basic designs and dozens of variations, plus accessories. Flying techniques

included too. Softcover, 64 pp., \$8.95

GERMANY continued...

Drachen bauen (Kite Making) by Werner Backes, in German. First published in 1984, this well-rounded volume includes 35 kite plans plus numerous tips and accessories. Excellent drawings show details. Fine photography throughout. We have limited supply of this 1987 edition. Softcover, 128 pp., \$12.95



Windspiele (Windplay) by Achim Käflein and Jens Jancke, in German. Large, colorful pictorial of kites in action on and off the field. Lots of full-page full-color shots, some historical photos, some technical details. No construction plans. Hardcover, 112 pp., \$36.95 (no airmail shipping)



From HUNGARY...

Papir Sarkány (Paper Kites) by Istvan Bodoczky, in Hungarian. How to make a wide selection of kites in paper—in all sizes. Includes standard kites plus some original designs. Fine illustrations and photos show lots of detail. Two paper kite covers included. Softcover, 80 pp., \$14.95

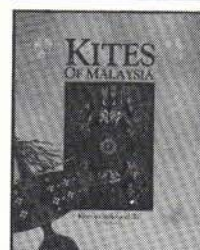


From ITALY...



Aquiloni (Kites) by Guido Accascina, in Italian. A mini encyclopedia of information: theory, plans, tips, techniques, sources, resources—and quite up-to-date. Small (4½"x6½") but thick, with 16 pages of color photos. Comes with a dozen full-color postcards in unusual die-cut box. Softcover, 256 pp., \$17.95

From MALAYSIA...



Kites of Malaysia: Kites to make and fly by Wayne Hosking, in English. The only source of detailed plans and construction techniques for the Malaysian *Wau*. Great full-page color photographs. Reasonable description of traditional methods. Softcover, 39 pp., \$7.95

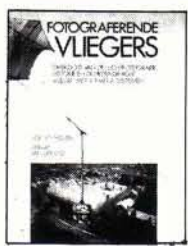
From THE NETHERLANDS...



Kleine Papierenvliegers (Small Paper Kites) by Harm van Veen, in Dutch. An expertly assembled little book. Includes detailed plans for 10 miniature fliers plus construction and flying techniques. Color photos. Softcover, 32 pp., \$5.95

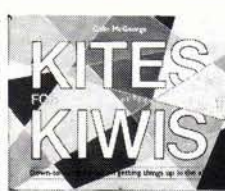
THE NETHERLANDS continued...

Fotograferende Vliegers (Picturetaking Kites) by Nop Velthuizen and Gerard van der Loo, in Dutch. Nice thorough treatment of kite aerial photography from earliest days to the present. Good advice, photos, plans, kites and technical details. Hardcover, 120 pp., \$20.95



From NEW ZEALAND...

Kites for Kiwis by Colin McGeorge. Contains plans for 10 ordinary kites, plus the "Manu Taratahi," a native design made from local vegetation. Rudimentary tips and adequate illustrations, but New Zealand text requires translating. Softcover, 46 pp., \$6.95



From SWEDEN...

Drakar (Kites) by Olle Nessel, in Swedish. Eclectic assortment of kites from a simple sled to complex creations by artist Curt Asker. Good photography, interesting historical information, few rudimentary plans. Hardcover, 64 pp., \$20.95



From the UNITED STATES . . .

The Penguin Book of Kites by David Pelham. Originally published in 1976, and still relevant and recommended for all kitefliers. Includes plans for more than 100 kites plus lots of reference information, aerodynamics and history. Color. Softcover, 228 pp., \$12.95



The Stunt Kite Book by Alison Fujino and Benjamin Ruhe. Covers background well, treats nuts-and-bolts sketchily. A clearly arranged book with plentiful black-and-white photos and drawings. Contains a useful chart of 80 manufactured stunt kites grouped by skill level. Softcover, 110 pp., \$8.95



Stunt Kites! by David Gomberg. The first book on the subject. Thorough coverage of the basics. Tips from 18 well-known pilots; lots of safety pointers and specific techniques. "Homemade" publishing with computer drawings, no photographs. Softcover, 88 pp., \$8.95



Making & Flying Kites by Wolfgang Schimmelpfennig. Fine collection of kites, plans (including *wau bulan* and *janggaam*), photos, materials and tips, but should be read carefully. It's a poor translation from the original German edition. Hardcover, 88 pp., \$9.95

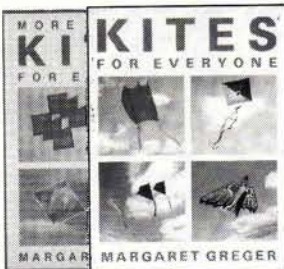


Kites: An Historical Survey by Clive Hart. Revised, second edition (1982). Invaluable reference work with many illustrations and photos. Fascinating reading and research. Extensive bibliography. No construction plans. Softcover, 210 pp., \$14.95
Hardcover, 210 pp., \$31.95

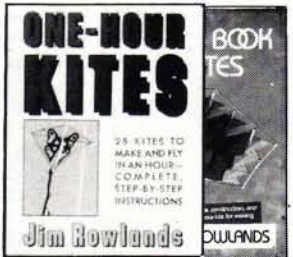


The Art of the Japanese Kite by Tal Streeter. Rare, in-depth personal profiles of Japan's master kite artists, including 130 outstanding photos (52 in color). Informative and entertaining. History and folklore. No plans, but a joy to read and read again. Softcover, 181 pp., \$24.95

Kites for Everyone by Margaret Greger. Good kite plans, variations and accessories, plus knowledgeable tips and techniques for beginner, expert or classroom. Second edition. Softcover, 136 pp., \$12.95



One-Hour Kites by Jim Rowlands. Same as British *Kites to Make and Fly*. Standard kites for beginners, plus a few new ones, but directions are skimpy. Softcover, 95 pp., \$12.95

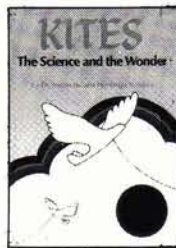


More Kites for Everyone by Margaret Greger. Some old kites, some new kites, plus tips and techniques based on years of experience. Plans for 17 kites from simple to complex. Brand new in 1990. Softcover, 59 pp., \$9.95

The Big Book of Kites by Jim Rowlands. Same as British *Making and Flying Modern Kites*. Uneven instructions and drawings for 36 kites. Softcover, 127 pp., \$12.95



Flight Patterns by Leland Toy (from a television kitemaking series, 1984). Good fundamental tips and easy plans for eight basic kites. Plans include a rotor made of foam meat trays and a Mylar fighter, plus fighting strategies. Easy to understand. 2nd edition, softcover, 36 pp., \$4.95



Kites: The Science and the Wonder by Toshio Ito and Hirotsugu Komura. Full of aerodynamics and theories. Numerous diagrams and charts. Originally published in Japanese (1979), the English translation (1983) is not very smooth. Softcover, 160 pp., \$11.95



Come Fight A Kite by Dinesh Bahadur. Out of print, this 1978 classic is the first book devoted to fighter kites. Includes history, construction and flying tips. Many photos and drawings. Softcover, 56 pp., \$4.95

Chinese Kites by David Jue. Contains brief history, tips, tools, designs, techniques and construction details for 10 simple kites using rice paper and bamboo. Includes Flying Lampshade and Double Fish. Color drawings. Hardcover, 56 pp., \$10.95



25 Kites That Fly by Leslie Hunt. Reprint of 1929 original. Contains old reliable plans plus historical data and photos. Lots of details and kites not seen much anymore. Hunt was kitemaker for Weather Bureau. Softcover, 110 pp., \$2.95



Make Your Own Kite by John W. Jordan. Plans for nine kites from unusual, but easy-to-get materials. Clear instructions and amusing reading. Now out of print and quantity is limited. Softcover, 90 pp., \$6.95



Super Kites II by Neil Thorburn. Good designs and tested, creative construction techniques for kites of plastic trash bags and wooden dowels, plus ideas for accessories and reels. Softcover, 112 pp., \$7.95



Flights of Imagination by Wayne Hosking. Plans for simple flying objects plus questions, answers and definitions for science students. Softcover, 56 pp., \$9.95

Wil Bear's Kite Book by Wayne Hosking. Simple introductory text and plans. Clear, understandable, includes full-size patterns. Good for beginning workshops. Softcover, 48 pp., \$4.95

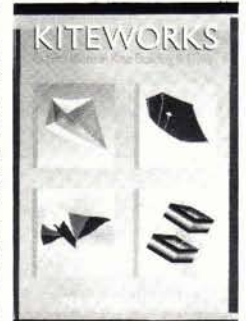


Instructions are adequate, but not foolproof. Measurements converted from metric may total incorrectly. Softcover, 96 pp., \$12.95

Fighter Kites by Philippe Gallot. With plans for 29 kites, plus tips on flying, tools, materials, games and accessories. Illustrations are large and clear. Photos are good.



Kiteworks by Maxwell Eden. Considerable collection of plans (50) from respected designers, plus tips, techniques and (un)related tales. Unclear presentation requires careful reading. Hardcover, 287 pp., \$24.95 (no airmail shipping)



REPRINTS of popular articles from Kite Lines!

New American Tradition: KITE FESTIVALS!

By Valerie Govig. Thorough guidance in festival organizing, standards, scheduling, location, budgeting, formats (competitive vs. non-competitive), judging, field events, awards. Includes "Figure Kiting" by Red Braswell. \$3 ppd.

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By Shirley B. Osborne and Mel Govig. Groups of 500 kids are no problem if you use this success formula. How to prepare for and make sled kites indoors or out; plus tips on how to get the most educational value from it. \$1 ppd.

WORLD RECORDS IN KITING: QUESTIONS ANSWERS & CHALLENGES

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The complete set of *Kite Tales* (predecessor of *Kite Lines*) on microfilm—more than 1,600 pages—all 40 issues from October 1964 to November 1976. Here are 12 years of plans, profiles, commentary, news and resource material available nowhere else. A must for researchers, collectors or libraries. Per issue, \$2.50. Full set, \$85.00, postpaid.

ARE YOU MISSING SOMETHING?



Back issues of *Kite Lines* offer a wealth of information and ideas. Many readers regard *Kite Lines* as more an educational reference source than a magazine because of the timeless and hard-to-find nature of its contents. And because new information keeps popping up in kiting we don't expect to repeat ourselves editorially. Of our 29 back issues, only six are still available in original paper copies, but all 29 are obtainable on microfiche, so the serious kiter need never miss an issue entirely. Microfiche may be read in almost any library and paper copies can be made on special copiers. Use the order form in this issue. A partial list of the contents of all back issues is given below.

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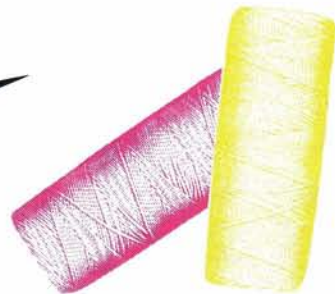
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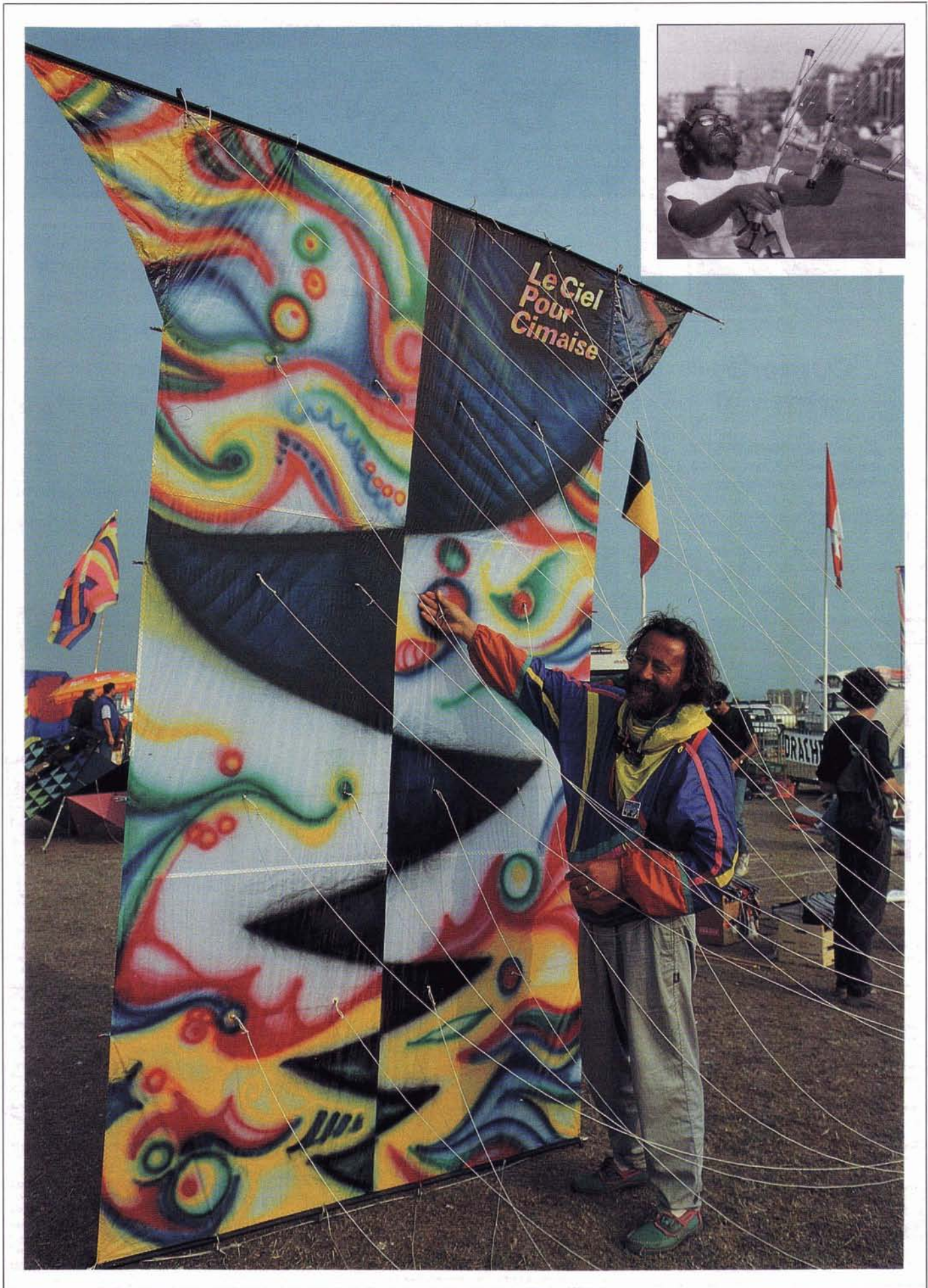
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*A Spectacular
September in
Europe
© 1990*

A SENSATIONAL DIEPPE

8-16/9/90 Article and Photographs
by Simon Freidin

It was going to be a rush trip to France—a five day visit to Dieppe to participate in the *6emes Rencontres Internationales de Cerfs-Volants de Dieppe*: the 6th (biennial) International Kite Festival of Dieppe.

I was eager to go. Over the past few years I have had a growing desire to be exposed to the innovation in design that has been occurring in Europe.

As I walked from the train station into the township of Dieppe, I noticed a wall of drab-colored two- and three-story buildings ahead of me. Above them in the ultramarine sky, in glaring contrast, was a writhing, violently bright, giant pink octopus kite. This contrast between the earthy dull tones of the city buildings and the brilliance of the skyward creations was a lingering impression of the Dieppe festival that grew stronger over the next few days.

Dieppe has the most unusual field, over a mile of grass which separates the pebbly beach and an esplanade of very European buildings. At the southern end, cliffs continue the subdued backdrop the city forms to the kite festival.

Dieppe has a gentle atmosphere which changes as the ten-day festival progresses. The early days have a casual pace, giving the kitefliers time to savor their flying. Further, there is a definite lunch hour set and all the kitefliers are expected to leave the field to partake of a hot meal. Also, one of the tents adjacent to the flying field houses a bar and brasserie, enabling the tourists and fliers to admire the sun-drenched kites with a glass of wine in their hands.

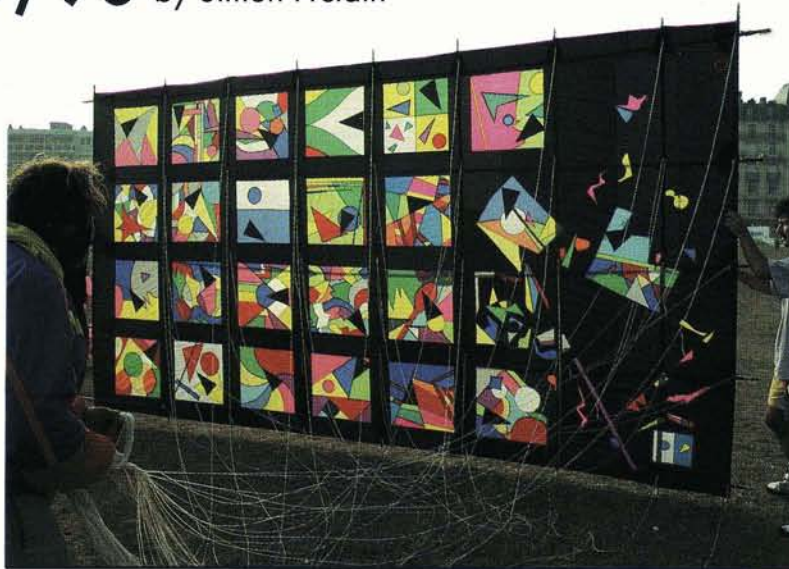
As the final weekend approaches, the pace becomes more hectic, building to a crescendo on Sunday, when there are some 600 kitefliers putting on a massive display.

The long field is roped into three: one field primarily for large display kites, one for special displays and demonstrations by the guest fliers invited to the festival, and one for general flying.

The "village" is a unique feature of this festival. From open-faced tents surrounding a large plaza, each country may display and sell its kites. This village is a focal point for the kitefliers.

The crowd of spectators also grows throughout the ten days of the festival.

Opposite, Michel Gressier stands in support of his kite at Dieppe, and (inset) flies it from his own device, created to manage many-legged bridles. Right, Michel bridles a kite made with a group of artists.



On the last Sunday, the roads surrounding Dieppe are jammed six kilometers (about four miles) out of town by carloads of visitors to the kiteflying, and the police estimate the crowd at 70,000. The event is clearly successful in attracting domestic tourism.

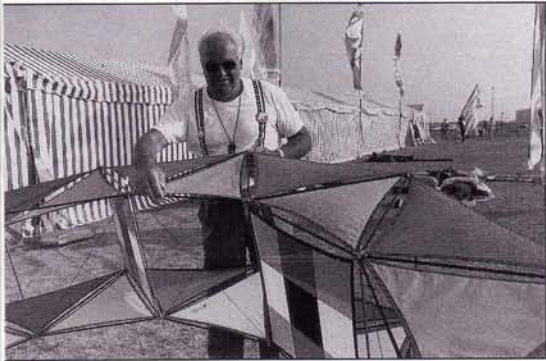
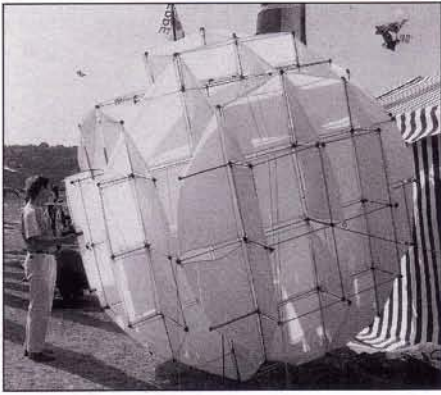
I was told to be on the lookout for the work of André Cassagnes, an institution of French kiting. His gregarious nature and showmanship make him a favorite of spectators and kitefliers alike. André, 50, has been making kites for the last 15

years. He says he makes kites "for the public applause that they bring." One of his favorite quips is, "I am not an engineer, just ingenious." All his kites use aluminum arrow shafts as spars connected by polyethylene injection moldings for structure and ripstop nylon for surface. It is the modular structure of his kites which he refers to when he calls himself ingenious.

As he explained: "Most kitemakers start off small, but as they progress, the need to create a larger kite becomes stronger. So they must relearn, start all over again. I

U.S. artist George Peters is surrounded by his brilliantly striped Flying Man kites.





had it in mind that by constructing modular kites, all that was required to expand was to add another section. Modularity allows one to adapt one's kites to the conditions." He neatly demonstrated his theory by combining the three ring kites into one, intersecting them into a single structure. "This kite was created to promote the Lisbon Olympics," he commented.

Though his fittings are not available commercially, you catch a glimpse of his generosity when an eye-catching spherical box kite is assembled using his spars and joiners. "Yours?" I asked. "No," he replied, "Marie Lombard was having trouble constructing her idea. She decided to try the 'Cassagnes' technique." This kite appeared surreal when it flew above the rooftops of Dieppe, glowing ethereally white like a full moon above the city.

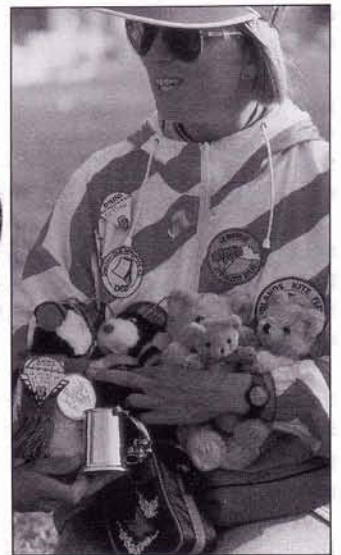
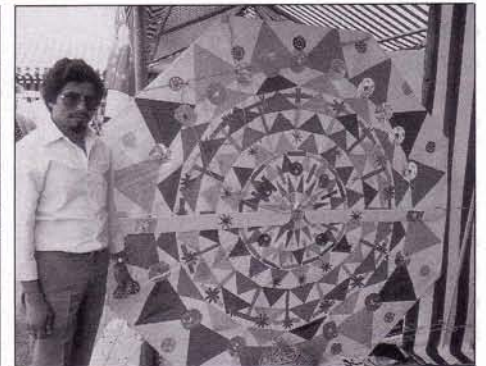
André constantly played the crowd, pointing out the more amazing sights and telling stories. Here was a kiteflier of enormous heart and I fully agreed when the other kitefliers referred to him as a "true gentleman."

Of course, French kitefliers were in abundance. Two of the best individual displays were put on by Pierre Fabre and Michel Gressier.

Pierre flew both Number 9 (see *Best of Show*, *Kite Lines*, Summer 1990) and his new kite, Cycl-Hop, a bug-eyed insect of enormous size.

Michel Gressier's enthusiasm for kiting was an exciting experience for me. He briefly described how he works with a communal artists' group, and displayed a large Edo where each panel was the work

Above: upper left, Marie Lombard's spherical cellular kite draws admirers; upper right, modular tetrahedral by André Cassagnes; lower left, Cassagnes joins his ring kites. **Below,** clockwise from top left: Ines Uribe demonstrates assembly of a traditional Colombian circle kite; a Guatemalan kite features an unusual noisemaker—a strip of paper attached across the face's center; Janneke Groen of Holland clutches parabears, the parapenguin that won the BMISS Fauna of the Year Award (see page 36) and her prize, an engraved pewter tankard with a teddy on the handle; Cat Man Flew flies from the hands of George Peters; and the French stunt team Flashback shows its stuff.



of one of the group. But it was his own pieces which were outstanding, none more so than Ball No. 1, a hot-stripe radically shortened "Spinsock" which developed its own lift and flew rotating about 20 feet above the ground. It was Michel who was responsible for the professional nightfly and fireworks which drew a huge crowd back to the field after the official Saturday night festival dinner.

It was the impending fireworks which made me miss the dinner. At dusk on

Countries officially represented at Dieppe:

ALBANIA
BELGIUM
CANADA
CHINA
COLOMBIA
ENGLAND
FRANCE
GERMANY
GUATEMALA
HUNGARY
INDIA
INDONESIA
ITALY
JAPAN
MALAYSIA
NETHERLANDS
NEW ZEALAND
SINGAPORE
TAIWAN
THAILAND
USA
USSR

Saturday, I was chatting with Peter Lynn of New Zealand outside the reception hall, when a harassed Isobel Leberton (one of the festival organizers) informed Peter that the train of three centipedes that he had left flying from one of his Tri-D box kites would be affected by the fireworks show. We headed back to the field and Peter queried Michel about whether his kite was in the way of the show. Not in the way, Michel explained, but the fireworks would shower the kites, leaving tiny holes as the flaming pyrotechnic material touched the

ripostop. We spent the next 15 minutes hauling down the train.

The show started with a bang: Michel had launched three delta kites with fireworks attached, and to accompanying music we were enthralled as red and gold incandescent slivers rained from their wingtips. Conventional fireworks were also set off, but the most spectacular display made use of a stunt kite. Each wingtip had a canister of golden rain attached, and these were ignited just prior to launch. As the stunter was guided through giant arcs, large bright trails were traced across the sky. I wanted to see more of this, it was so visually exciting.

Then all the kitefliers were invited to launch their kites. Two spotlights had been set up at the edges of the field, and for the next hour they illuminated individual kites in the night sky. It was a curious effect, the light striking a kite and bringing it to life with color for several minutes before the light was redirected and the kite was swallowed by the night. On the ground, a Playsail from George Peters (USA) was set up as a tunnel, and the delighted children were invited to run through. Deservedly, the show was rewarded with applause.

The next day, other notable French

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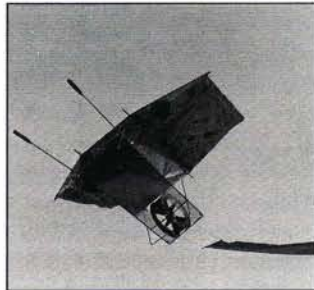
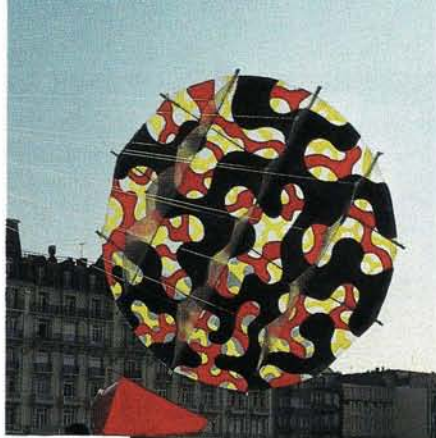
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Photo of Peter Lynn on Stunt Buggy, Dieppe 1990, by Simon Freidin

Clockwise from right: Martha Simonnets runs out from under the launch of one of the kites made by herself and Jean-Marie Simonnets; a wheelbarrow kite by the Renniers of France rolls along; visitors jam the festival "village"; and Jim Mannall of England tows his bird of bright plumage to the field.



kites were flown by Jean-Marie and Martha Simonnets, who had executed a range of flat, bowed and box kites in clear fiber-reinforced plastic, each decorated with a flowing pattern of red, yellow and black material sewn to the surface. The Simonnets used a native French reed (no one knew how to translate its name) to support these surfaces.

George Peters unfurled three new character kites which Clare Forster told me "he built because he said everybody had seen the rest of his kites!" He gave names to these Flying Man kites: Cat Man Flew, Bird Man of Paradise and Manta's Man. I helped him and Clare fly them as a group, shoulder to shoulder. His creations were to take the Grand Prize for foreign kites.

In stunt flying, there were several attractions. I was able, for the first time, to see a performance of *Team Sommet de Fil* (Top of the Line, USA). In the mornings, on the beach, Don Tabor, Ron Reich, Pam Kirk and Mike Dennis spent hours practicing, and it was apparent that it was these hours of dedicated work which have put them at the top of the team stunt events wherever they go. Shakib Gunn (Singapore) later reported that Lee Poi Long was so enchanted with their performance that he was going to start a

Malaysian team which he planned to call "Bottom of the Line," on the basis that they had to start somewhere. Top of the Line's performance was outstanding, but the organizers elected not to judge them in competition but rather to automatically award them a return trip to Dieppe for 1992. The stunt team prize, a trip to the kite festival in Weifang, China, was awarded to Team Flashback of France.

This was also my first meeting with teams from Central and South America. Ines Uribe of Colombia showed the unique strength of the surprisingly light *Yaripa* cane that kites use in building their circle kites. I queried them about the festival planned for Medellin, Colombia, earlier in the year, and I was disappointed to learn that they had been unable to attract sufficient support to bring it to fruition. Their enthusiasm was not dented, however, and they hoped to hold one in the future. The Guatemalans flew one of their paper octohedral kites briefly before a gust of turbulent wind brought it to a spectacular crash on the ground.

But there was more to see from Europe. Gil Marcus (Netherlands) brought out an eye-catching kite, which started life as a Seven Sisters but ended as something more. He had built up each section with

scraps of ripstop, sewing, cutting, and inserting more and more pieces. The finished pattern was pleasing to the eye. He explained that he was unable to get the kite to fly successfully, so he added four additional panels and patterned tails, to give the kite sufficient stability.

I took some time away from the flying field to visit the *Centre d'Action Culturelle Jean Renoir*. From here Max Gaillard masterminded the efficient organization of the festival. The Center and the city of Dieppe were the two major sponsors of the festival. But I had come for another reason. In conjunction with the kite festival, an exhibition of color photographs, taken by Remi Berli of France, was on show. Titled *Espace pour une solitude*, (Space for Solitude), the photographs were surreal images of kites flying above the desert during a trek through Algeria. The quiet and isolation evoked by the photographs was in marked contrast to the activity of the nearby field.

Shakib Gunn later talked about the enthusiasm of the city of Dieppe for the festival. Where else in the world, he asked, would the fire brigade magically appear to rescue kites from the top of city buildings? He was commenting on Bhanu Shah (of the Ahmedabad Kite Museum, India), who launched his train of Mylar diamond kites on the city side of the field. The wind shifted, driving his train towards the nearby buildings. In a second his train had snagged on a chimney, and nothing he could do would release it. Enter the local fire brigade's red truck with extension ladder, and we were soon treated to the sight of a fireman on the roof of a four-story building, carefully releasing the trapped kites. Shakib later quoted Bhanu on the French as "...very wonderful people. In some countries the firemen *ask you for payment* before they put the fire out."

Dieppe's warm and friendly nature masked another characteristic of this festival. It is a mature festival. Mature in the demands it puts on the kitefliers, mature in its outlook on their care and welfare, mature in the value the festival gives the city.

What was brought home to me is how enjoyable a civilized festival can be.

Simon's standing apology: I never get to tell everything that happens at a kite festival. If there are 600 kitefliers there are 600-plus stories. My apologies to everyone I did meet but didn't mention, and everyone I didn't meet and didn't mention and every exciting moment I did see but didn't have space to describe.

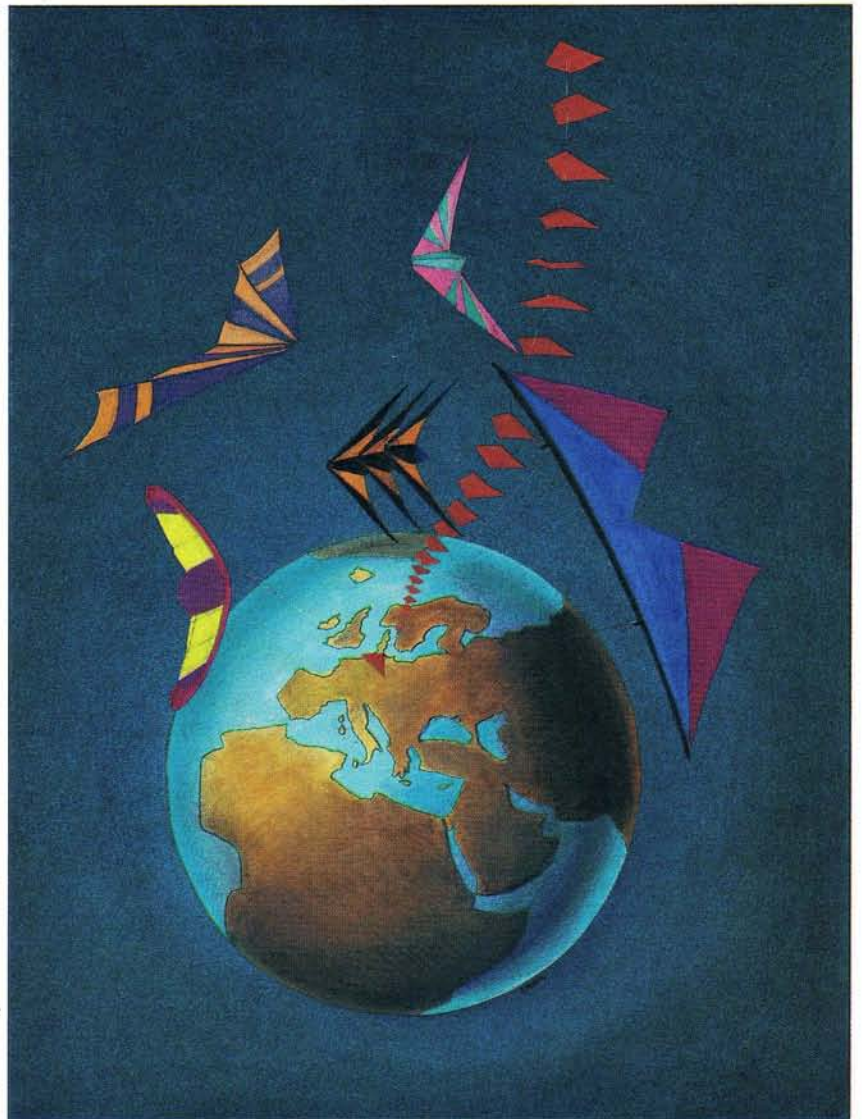
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A SURPRISING BERLIN

28-29/9/90 Article and Photographs
by Axel G. Voss

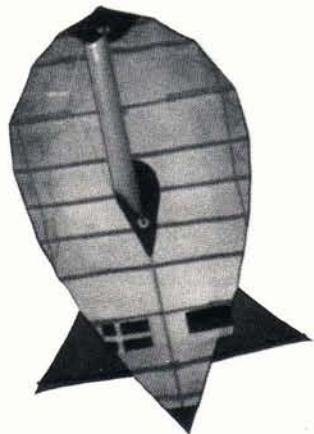


Would it be possible to attract a crowd to a kite festival at the Hoppegarten horseracing track, 20 miles east of Berlin?

That was the big risk for those involved in the 7th Annual International Kite Festival Berlin, organized by the Drachen Club Berlin, the Fesseldrachen-Club Otto Lilienthal and the kite shop Vom Winde Verweht.

The track's huge dimensions of green grass offered almost perfect conditions for the fliers, but most of the residents here were simply struggling to adapt to their recent integration into the West—seeking a second-hand car or a new TV set. And now a kite festival!—in an area where rip-stop nylon and carbon fiber spars were practically unknown. No one could know if people would be attracted to the festival.

Response was overwhelmingly high. Several tens of thousands of visitors over the weekend enthusiastically applauded the stunt competition for the Berlin Cup.



**Zeppelin kite made by
Bruno Homann,
photographed at Fanø, Denmark.**

And they could hardly believe the magnificent creations of the kilters from six countries as well as Germany.

Yet the attendance of local adult fliers was very limited. Exceptions: the handcrafted perfection of a Zeppelin kite by 80-year-old Bruno Homann, the kite "only" 60 years younger than its maker.

Another local hero was Detlev Banner. He calls himself an "aerosculptician" and builds giant inflatable sculptures, including a globe, walrus and clown. A wood carver by profession, he was inspired to create these sculptures by observing his sawdust-exhausting bellows take on funny shapes. Whenever he has a new idea, he carves a small model from plastic foam. Only then is the skin for the large sculpture sewn.

What made this kite festival particularly different from all the others I have seen in my life was the number of children at the event. The outstanding enthusiasm they showed, either by flying commercially-made plastic kites, or by trying to get incredible things made from wrapping paper and enormously oversized wooden dowels airborne, was wonderful proof of pure joy in kite flying.

Entirely different rewards were offered by the Rokkaku Design Challenge issued by a beverage manufacturer in cooperation with the art divisions of the universities of both parts of the city. Art students were supposed to reflect their impressions of the New Berlin onto posters 2.5m x 2.0m (about 8 ft x 6 1/2 ft). These were converted to rokkaku kites by members of the kite clubs of Berlin. From the 63 entries, a jury selected 11 winners. Their designs were flown during the festival.

Above, some of the 63 rokkakus made by the collaboration of art students and kite clubs in Berlin; below, a globe created by (formerly East) German Detlev Banner, whose inflatable sculptures draw big crowds.



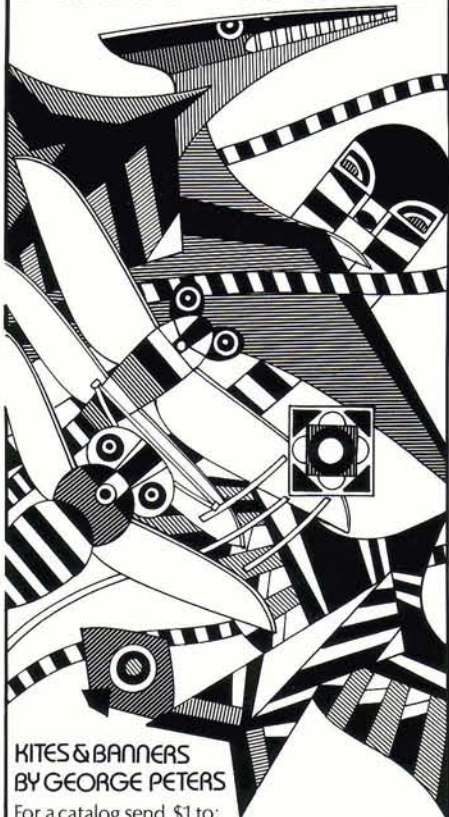
Unfortunately, there was only one entry from the (former) East Berlin. The reason was not clear. Professor Arno Link of Leipzig speculated:

"Lack of interest? Anxiety over something new? We will see how it works in the future. This time it was probably the fear that a commercial competition would obliterate artistic aspects."

This was probably only half true. Commercial sponsors normally subject entries to the condition that the works, or at least the right of publication, become the property of the sponsor.

At Berlin this was different. After the virgin flights, the winning kites were given to the kite clubs to fly at other festivals around the world. The message was this: Though the city has to struggle with its new situation—with hopes, with disappointments and disillusion—Berlin is one city, one free city, again. ◇

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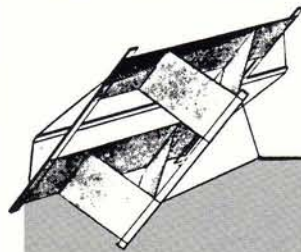
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The Great Kite Lines STUNTER SURVEY SECOND EDITION

COMPILED AND ANNOTATED BY BROOKS G. LEFFLER

Since our first survey of stunt kites (*Kite Lines*, Summer 1989), new converts to the sport have been flooding into kite shops all over the world looking for kites they can drive.

A recent survey conducted for the Kite Trade Association shows that sales of multistring kites are responsible for half of the kite dollar volume, and fully a third of this amount comes from stunters in the expensive (\$60-plus) category. While buyer resistance to the cost of a high-tech flying machine seems to be fading, it's not getting any easier to sort out which stunters are the best ones for each of us.

With burgeoning demand, the market has continued to seethe and churn, with new manufacturers and models appearing and unsuccessful ones disappearing almost monthly. Everybody wants to get in on the action.

Last year we made a first run at a comprehensive review of the entire market, using a volunteer grassroots panel of fliers with extensive stunt experience, but without connections to any manufacturer. We asked each flier to rate numerically the functionality and performance of each stunt kite or stunt kite train s/he had flown.

Predictably, we fell far short of reviewing all the stunt kites on the market, but were able to gather useful data on about a third of the 150 or so designs known to us at the time. And we promised to do it all again this year, with more kites and an improved survey technique.

We have completely redesigned the evaluation sheet, correcting most of the ambiguities of the first one, and carefully tailored our panelist questionnaire to do a better job screening out fliers with vested interest. We believe these changes have resulted in ratings which are much more meaningful.

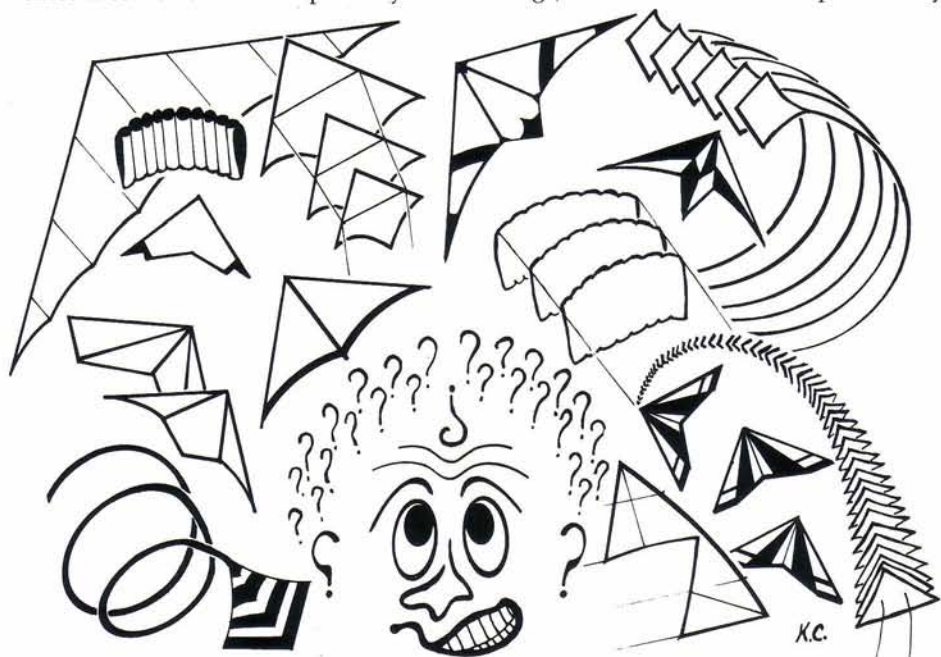
We should acknowledge up front that

the survey results are still not as hard-edged as some might like, since the ratings are based on subjective impressions. But this year it appears that the panelists all interpreted each subjective test criterion the way we hoped our instructions would convey, so the average scores more accurately represent true consensus.

Likewise, we haven't come up with a way to have each flier fly all kites. Reader George Wilcox suggested that we establish one of the most popular designs as a basis for comparison. While we are reluctant to name such a kite, it seems likely that such comparisons are taking place anyway, since most reviewers have probably flown

those earned low total scores. And while the total number of models reviewed did not increase over last year as we had hoped, no less than 27 have made it to the tables for the first time.

Each kite and train was rated in 12 areas of functionality and performance. The categories included ease of assembly, launch, and landing; speed in straight lines and turning; maneuverability and precision; durability; portability; beauty; and workmanship. Each of these being positive attributes, points were awarded on a scale of 1 (least) to 5 (most). In addition, fliers were asked to estimate wind range, and to rate the skill required to fly



(though not necessarily reviewed) the best-selling items.

Several of last year's reviewers are now marketing kites of their own, and several more dropped out for other reasons, but we have recruited another 24 experienced pilots, for a slightly larger panel of 37 (*see box*).

Altogether we received 350 reviews of 100 different designs. As before, we have eliminated from the tables all kites with fewer than two reviewers, and have ended up with 49 single kites—exactly the same number as last year—and 10 models flown in train. It is interesting to note that of the single kites rated, only nine had fewer than three reviews, and most of

the kite on the same 1 to 5 scale.

In analyzing the results, we averaged the numbers in each category for each kite, then totalled the averages for everything except wind range and skill into a Total Score. We grouped the kites broadly by size and design, and ranked them within group by descending total score, alphabetically in case of ties. The size groupings are arbitrary, but seemed to help make sense of the sea of numbers. In any case, a difference of one point or less between kites is probably insignificant.

As before, we offered the reviewers a space to comment on each kite. Most of the comments simply reiterated evaluations expressed numerically, but several

SINGLE STUNTERS

Ranked within groups by descending Total Score. Ratings are based on a scale of 1 (least) to 5 (most). See text.

Total Score	Manufacturer & Model	Fliers (#)	Ease of Asmbly	Ease of Launch	Ease of Landng	Straight Speed	Turn Speed	Maneuv/ Precision	Dura- bility	Porta- bility	Beauty	Work- marship	Value for \$	Wind Range (miles per hour)	Skill Req'd
SMALL DELTAS															
43.90	Skynasaur Sweptwing 48	3	3.7	4.0	4.0	4.7	4.0	4.0	4.3	4.0	3.7	3.8	3.7	10 to 35	3.7
41.80	Windtoys Cheetah	3	3.3	3.7	3.3	4.0	4.7	4.7	3.0	4.0	3.7	3.7	3.7	6 to 20	3.3
41.00	Vlieger Op Speedwing	2	4.5	3.0	4.0	4.0	3.5	3.5	4.0	4.0	2.5	4.0	4.0	6 to 25	3.0
38.40	Action Kites Sky Dart	3	2.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	4.0	3.3	3.7	4.0	3.3	3.0	3.3	8 to 25	2.8
37.00	Skynasaur Aerobat	6	4.2	3.8	3.7	3.0	2.8	2.8	3.3	3.8	3.0	3.3	3.3	8 to 23	2.0
SMALL FOILS															
47.40	Flexifoil Hot Shot 4	12	4.8	3.7	3.9	4.5	4.4	4.2	4.2	4.9	3.1	4.4	5.3	10 to 37	3.5
31.60	Skynasaur C-26 Skyfoil	6	4.8	2.3	2.5	1.7	2.2	1.5	3.5	5.0	2.8	3.3	2.0	10 to 20	2.2
MEDIUM DELTAS															
49.30	Top Of The Line 3/4 Spin Off	3	4.7	4.3	4.3	4.0	4.3	4.3	5.0	4.7	4.0	5.0	4.7	5 to 28	2.7
48.20	Renegade Kites Renegade	5	4.8	4.0	4.0	4.4	4.8	4.4	4.8	4.4	3.4	4.6	4.6	8 to 33	2.8
47.50	Wind Walker Wasp AC	2	4.0	5.0	4.5	4.0	4.5	4.5	4.0	4.0	4.5	4.5	4.0	4 to 20	3.0
46.20	Wind Walker Wasp	5	3.8	4.6	4.2	3.8	4.0	4.8	4.2	4.0	4.2	4.2	4.4	4 to 15	2.6
46.00	Hyperkites 3/4 Elite	3	4.7	4.0	4.0	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.0	4.7	4.0	3.7	4.0	5 to 25	2.0
44.60	Azur Spyro-Jet UL	6	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	4.2	4.2	3.8	4.2	4.7	4.3	4.0	2 to 12	4.0
44.20	Top Of The Line 3/4 Team	5	4.0	4.0	3.8	3.6	3.6	4.2	4.6	4.2	3.8	4.4	4.0	7 to 25	2.4
42.90	Azur Spyro-Jet	5	3.4	3.6	3.4	3.8	3.8	4.4	4.2	3.8	4.6	4.3	3.6	7 to 31	3.0
41.60	Mark Cottrell's Lite Lite	7	3.9	4.4	3.7	3.6	4.0	3.9	3.5	3.7	3.2	4.1	3.6	2 to 12	3.3
41.30	Action Kites Moon Dart	4	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	4.0	4.0	3.5	4.0	3.3	3.5	3.8	9 to 26	3.8
41.00	Action Kites NoName	5	3.2	3.4	3.4	4.4	4.2	3.8	3.8	4.0	3.8	3.2	3.8	7 to 22	3.2
41.00	Ram Jet Ram Jet	2	3.0	4.0	4.0	3.5	3.5	3.5	4.0	3.5	4.5	4.0	3.5	6 to 26	2.0
40.40	Go Fly A Kite 2200CC	5	4.0	3.8	3.6	3.8	3.8	3.2	3.8	3.8	3.0	3.4	4.2	8 to 20	2.6
39.50	Turning Point Hurricane	4	4.0	3.5	3.8	4.0	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.5	3.0	3.5	2.8	8 to 26	2.1
38.40	One Of Jerry's Kites Avenger	3	4.0	3.7	1.7	3.0	3.3	3.7	4.0	4.0	3.7	4.3	3.0	10 to 30	2.7
37.90	Peter Powell Skyraker	3	3.7	4.3	3.3	3.3	3.0	3.3	3.3	3.7	3.7	3.3	3.0	9 to 17	3.3
30.50	Skynasaur C-74	2	3.0	2.5	1.5	2.5	2.0	2.5	4.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.5	7 to 22	2.0
MEDIUM DIAMONDS															
36.20	Triby Poly	5	3.4	3.0	3.8	2.6	2.8	2.6	3.6	3.0	3.2	4.0	4.2	6 to 22	1.4
MEDIUM FOILS															
46.00	Flexifoil Ultraflex 6-foot Stacker	3	4.7	3.3	3.7	4.3	4.7	4.3	4.0	4.7	3.3	4.7	4.3	1 to 12	4.0
42.40	Flexifoil 6-foot Stacker	15	4.4	2.7	3.1	4.7	3.7	3.3	4.4	4.7	3.2	4.7	3.5	8 to 34	3.0
40.80	Wolkenstürmer Paraflex	4	4.0	3.3	3.5	4.5	3.5	3.3	4.3	4.8	3.3	3.3	3.0	6 to 20	2.5
36.50	Kite Innovations Sparless Stunter	2	4.0	3.5	3.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	4.0	4.5	3.0	3.5	3.0	12 to 25	2.5
LARGE DELTAS															
48.50	Kites & Fun Things Sky Burner	2	4.0	4.0	4.5	4.5	5.0	5.0	4.5	4.0	5.0	4.5	3.5	3 to 25	3.0
48.50	Top Of The Line UL Team Kite	4	3.8	4.5	4.5	3.8	3.8	5.0	4.5	4.3	5.0	5.0	4.3	1 to 11	4.0
46.70	Above It All GeoSport	4	4.3	4.4	4.3	3.8	4.5	4.3	4.3	3.5	4.3	4.5	4.5	6 to 26	3.0
46.50	Highflyers Phantom	4	3.4	4.8	4.8	4.0	4.8	4.8	3.3	4.0	4.8	4.5	3.3	1 to 19	3.8
46.00	Top Of The Line Spin Off	20	4.1	4.3	4.1	3.8	4.2	4.3	4.6	4.1	3.8	4.6	4.1	6 to 24	2.9
45.90	One Of Jerry's Kites Peregrine	7	4.0	4.1	4.1	3.9	4.1	4.6	4.4	4.0	4.0	4.6	4.1	6 to 27	2.6
45.70	Top Of The Line Hawaiian Team Kite	16	4.0	4.4	4.4	3.6	3.3	4.3	4.6	4.0	4.5	4.6	4.0	6 to 24	2.8
45.00	Action Kites Fire Dart	13	3.8	4.4	4.5	3.9	4.5	4.5	3.7	3.9	4.3	3.7	3.8	4 to 17	3.1
44.70	Top Of The Line UL Spin Off	3	4.0	4.7	4.7	3.3	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.7	3.3	2 to 11	3.0
44.50	Action Kites Super Sky Dart	2	3.5	4.5	4.5	3.5	4.0	3.5	4.0	3.5	4.0	4.5	5.0	7 to 17	2.5
42.20	Azur Spyro-Jet Freestyler	5	3.8	3.4	3.4	3.8	4.2	4.0	4.0	3.8	4.0	4.2	3.6	5 to 20	3.8
39.50	Highly Strung Vortex	2	3.0	3.0	4.0	3.5	3.5	4.0	4.0	3.0	4.0	3.5	4.0	5 to 19	3.0
36.10	Aerialogics Cyborg VIII	2	2.0	3.5	3.0	2.5	3.5	4.0	3.8	2.0	3.8	4.0	4.0	3 to 17	3.3
LARGE DIAMONDS															
43.00	Peter Powell 4-foot Poly	3	4.3	4.7	4.7	3.0	3.0	3.0	4.0	4.3	4.0	3.7	4.3	7 to 26	2.7
39.50	Peter Powell 4-foot Nylon	4	4.3	4.0	3.8	2.5	2.5	3.3	4.5	4.5	3.0	3.3	3.8	8 to 24	1.8
LARGE FOILS															
46.40	Flexifoil Pro-Team 8	4	4.8	3.5	3.5	5.0	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	3.5	4.8	3.3	5 to 31	3.8
43.80	Flexifoil Super 10	8	4.9	3.1	3.5	4.6	3.4	3.4	4.6	4.8	3.6	4.8	3.1	4 to 30	3.4
39.50	Flexifoil Ultraflex Super 10	2	5.0	2.0	2.0	5.0	2.5	3.0	4.5	4.5	3.0	4.5	3.5	2 to 14	3.5
EXTRA LARGE DELTAS															
33.60	Force 10 Kites Force 10	5	2.8	3.4	3.2	2.8	2.2	2.4	3.7	2.8	3.8	4.1	2.4	9 to 20	4.0
QUAD-LINE KITES															
40.40	Revolution Kites Revolution I	8	3.3	4.4	4.3	3.3	3.9	3.8	4.0	4.3	2.5	4.1	2.5	7 to 23	4.5

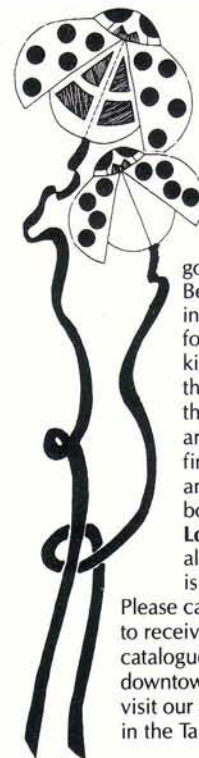


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STUNTER TRAINS

Ranked within groups by descending Total Score. Ratings are based on a scale of 1 (least) to 5 (most). See text.

Total Score	Manufacturer & Model	Fliers (#)	Avg Stack	Ease of Asmbly	Ease of Launch	Ease of Landing	Straight Speed	Turn Speed	Maneuver/ Precision	Durability	Portability	Beauty	Workmanship	Value for \$	Wind Range (miles per hour)	Skill Req'd
DELTA																
39.50	Hyperkites Starcruiser	2	6	30	30	25	30	40	30	40	40	40	40	5.0	9 to 20	35
37.90	Jet Kite Boomer	2	3	4.5	4.5	4.0	1.8	1.8	2.0	3.8	4.5	3.0	3.5	4.5	4 to 22	15
36.50	Skynasaur Progressive Train	2	3	3.5	2.5	3.5	2.0	2.5	3.0	3.5	4.5	4.0	4.0	3.5	8 to 22	25
DIAMONDS																
43.90	Coast Kites Rainbow Stunter	8	6	2.9	3.8	4.0	4.3	3.9	4.1	3.9	3.1	4.9	4.6	4.4	8 to 26	28
43.10	Peter Powell 4-foot Nylon	5	3	3.8	4.2	4.4	3.0	3.4	3.4	4.6	3.9	4.4	4.0	4.0	7 to 23	20
43.00	Tribby Nylon W/new Frame	2	10	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.0	3.0	3.5	4.5	3.0	5.0	4.5	4.5	8 to 27	20
36.50	Dynakite Flightmaster	2	9	3.5	3.0	3.5	2.5	3.0	3.0	3.5	3.5	4.0	3.5	3.5	6 to 16	25
35.70	Tribby Poly	11	15	3.1	2.9	3.4	3.0	2.9	2.8	3.3	2.4	3.8	3.6	4.5	7 to 20	25
FOILS																
44.10	Flexifoil 6-foot Stacker	7	6	4.1	3.9	4.0	4.0	3.7	3.4	4.6	4.4	4.1	4.6	3.3	6 to 21	39
43.50	Flexifoil Hot Shot 4	2	3	3.0	2.5	4.0	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.0	4.5	3.5	4.5	4.0	9 to 27	30

comments occurred with frequency:

- "Industry Standard": *Spin Off*.
- "Quiet": *Spyro-Jets, Flexifoils*.
- "Noisy": *Renegade, Hawaiian Team Kite, Peregrine*.
- "Easily oversteered" or "very sensitive": *Spyro-Jets, Lite Flite*.
- "Good in light winds": *Spyro-Jet UL, Lite Flite, Fire Dart*.
- "Good in heavy winds": *Flexifoils, Renegade*.
- "Best beginners kite": *Tribby Poly, Peter*

Powell, Boomer, 2200CC, Aerobat.

• "Best buy": *Tribby Poly, 2200CC*. Additionally, reviewers commented that the *Flexifoils* flew better with the optional Ultraflex spar; and that the *Fire Dart* needed a more foolproof, less-easily-lost design for its stand-offs.

More stunters have come on the market since this was written, and still more are sure to arrive in coming months. We hope to include them in an even more comprehensive review next year. ♦

TOP TEN SINGLE STUNTERS

1. **Top Of The Line: 3/4 Spin-Off**
2. **Kites & Fun Things: Sky Burner**
2. **Top Of The Line: UL Team Kite**
3. **Renegade Kites: Renegade**
4. **Wind Walker: Wasp AC**
5. **Flexifoil: Hot Shot 4**
6. **Above It All: Geo Sport**
7. **Highflyers: Phantom**
8. **Flexifoil: Pro-Team 8**
9. **Wind Walker: Wasp**
10. **Hyperkites: 3/4 Elite**
10. **Flexifoil: Ultraflex 6-foot Stacker**
10. **Top Of The Line: Spin-Off**

THE PANEL

Al Axton	Corey Jensen
Bryan Baxley	Lee Jinks
Bob Beck	Lee Kanstrup
Alvin Belflower	Rick Kligman
George Bloom	Thomas Kowalchuk
Dan and Lorna Buxton	Howard Lamhut
Paul Chapman	Ralph E. Larson
Bob Chelene	Don Lary
Ed Davis	Benjamin Lentz III
Duane Deardorff	Nancy Lizza
Brian Fyfe	Gary Maynard
Dave Gomberg	Bill Miller
Bill Goodwin	Todd Osenbaugh
Michael Graves	Toby Schlick
Ray Hardman	Michael Steltzer
Al Hargus III	Joan Town
Aaron Harris	Tony Wolfenden
Eitel Hespelt	Rod Yarger
Randy Hofer	

Call to Stunt Pilots

Objective, experienced stunt kite pilots are invited to join our panel of reviewers. Write to us at *Kite Lines*, P.O. Box 466, Randallstown, MD 21133-0466, USA. Or telephone us at 301-922-1212—or fax us at 301-922-4262.

KITES WITH ONLY ONE REVIEW

Above It All: Super Squirrel
 Action Kites: Fire Dart CF
 Aerialogics: Cyborg VI
 Aerohead
 Benson: Scorcher
 Catch The Wind: Spiderwing II
 Dimension 4: Manta
 Dunford: Flying Machine
 Flying Colors: Wind Machine
 Flying Things: Delta
 Gayla: Slingshot
 Greystone: Stinger
 Highly Strung: Auster, Kestrel
 Hyperkites: 1/4 Elite, Elite Team, Hyper Plus
 Jet Kite: Falcon Jet, Sprite
 Joe's Custom Sport Kites: Ambassador
 Jordan Air: Delta Wing UL
 Kite Innovations: Quadraflex
 Kites by Greg: Zipper
 OOJK: Revenger
 Peter Powell: 3-foot Poly, 4-foot Mark III, 6-foot, 8-foot Wing, Baby Blazer, Mark II, Skyblazer
 Pro Cat
 Sedgwick and Taft: Custom Spectrum
 Skymaster: 880Z, F-36, Olympic, Skyfox, Sweptwing 96
 Spectra: 8' Wing
 Top Of The Line: Spin-Off CL, Team Kite/Spin-Off Stack
 Tri-S
 Tribby: Nylon
 X-Zeta
Kites with fewer than two reviewers were excluded from the final tabulation.

SKILL REQUIRED:

Most Skill

1. Revolution Kites: Revolution I
2. Top Of The Line: UL Team Kite
3. Flexifoil: Ultraflex 6-foot Stacker
4. Azur: Spyro-Jet UL
5. Force 10 Kites: Force 10

Least Skill

1. Tribby: Poly
2. Peter Powell: 4-foot Nylon
3. Skynasaur: C-74
4. Skynasaur: Aerobat
5. Ram Jet: Ram Jet
6. Hyperkites: 3/4 Elite

Call to Manufacturers

We want your stunt kite to be reviewed in our next survey! We want to cover *all* the kites. However, it is impractical for *Kite Lines* to supply all its panelists with samples of every stunter made. Likewise, most panelists cannot readily test-fly every known model.

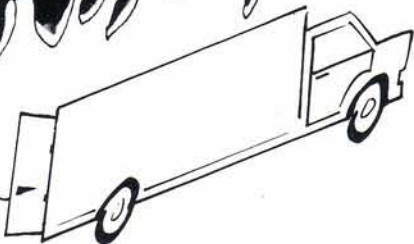
Kite Lines will do this: provide its reviewers with a list of all stunt models known to us, and encourage the reviewers to cover as many kites as possible from the list.

You as a manufacturer should do this: make sure we at *Kite Lines* know your kite and have it listed, and publicize, advertise and distribute your kite so as to improve its chances for review.

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One, Two, Three...New Records

The Ultimate Train Record

Television viewers everywhere were teased on October 19 with a minute's glimpse of a new world record for most kites flown from one line—a staggering 11,284.

The launch occurred over a three-hour period on October 18, 1990 in Kagoshima, Japan. It was master-minded by 73-year-old Sadao Harada, a man who we know had been working up to this achievement for years. *Kite Lines* reported his flight of 2,610 kites at the Mt. Aso festival in 1987. This flight, and another by Harada of 7,150 kites were not recognized by the Japan Kite Association (JKA) as official records, presumably for lack of verification.

In a recent communication, the JKA President Masaaki Modegi acknowledged Harada's October 18 flight as an official record. Because the JKA's rigorous standards for records are similar to those of

Kite Lines, we do not dispute the claim.

One usual *Kite Lines* requirement is that all the kites of a train should be approximately the same size, on the basis that it should be clear that no kite lifts another. The Harada kites, though all were of bamboo and polyethylene sheet, varied in size somewhat, as shown in the chart.

Kites from Group A were spaced evenly throughout the train; every 25th kite was a "marker." Kites from Group B and Group C filled in between. All the kites were color-coded to facilitate counting.

The crew required 142 minutes to launch the kites, flew them for 18 minutes and took 60 minutes to put the kites back in their boxes. Of the 11,315 kites flown, 31 were broken (and disqualified), yielding the final number recognized by the JKA, *Kite Lines* and, presumably, *The Guinness Book of Records*. —The Editors



Dougherty and Ianuzzi wear Ocean City medals.

Photographs: Valerie Gowig

shift, the kite rolled out of the clean airstream, tipped to the side and came down. The official time was seven minutes seven seconds.

Bill Osche's tape measure was out now. The kite was the same one Ted had flown two years previously in Ocean City for the record as the largest stunter at that time, 460 square feet (42.8 square meters). But this time Ted had added side panels to increase the area. The kite measured 19'10" (6.0 m) tall and 36'3" (11.0 m) wide, for a claimed square footage (meterage) of 718 (66.7).

DATA: NEW WORLD RECORD, MOST KITES ON ONE LINE

Group A	500 kites	30cm wide x 20cm tall	(12" x 8")	300 sq.cm. (48sq.in.)
Group B	3,000 kites	18cm wide x 12cm tall	(7" x 5")	108 sq.cm. (18sq.in.)
Group C	7,784 kites	15cm wide x 10cm tall	(6" x 4")	75 sq.cm. (12sq.in.)

LARGEST EDDY

Back up the beach I could see a mass of pink, yellow and green nylon taking on a bulbous shape. It was an attempt at the Largest Eddy by Bill Tyrrell, Doylestown, Pennsylvania, who was out of the country and had recruited a team to fly it in his place (*see following*). There were a couple of false starts. Then, at about 5:54 p.m. it lifted off with a majestic steadiness that amazed those of us who had seen its limp performance last year.

After its flight, Bill Ochse's tape was out again. The spars (Tyrrell calls them "aistruts") were 50 feet

Ocean City Does It Again

Another Sunfest in Ocean City, another group of record-setting kite efforts—but as always there was nothing predictable about the occasion.

For starters, the weather on the official day (September 22, 1990) was rainy until about 3:30 in the afternoon, so all the action was compressed into a few hours. Three attempts out of the eight possible \$2000 prizes offered by Bill Osche of the Kite Loft were being made: Largest Stunter, Largest Eddy and Most Kites in Train—Dual-Control.

At last the winds were a steady 10-15 mph, temperatures were in the mid-70's, skies slightly overcast and clearing—in short, conditions were ideal for kiteflying. And the contenders were ready.

LARGEST STUNTER

Ted Dougherty, 29, of Laurel Springs, New Jersey, carried his newly enlarged Sparless Stunter to the south part of the beach where a tractor would anchor the 800-lb-Dacron dual lines. The kite was launched at about 4:55 p.m. A crew of three men on

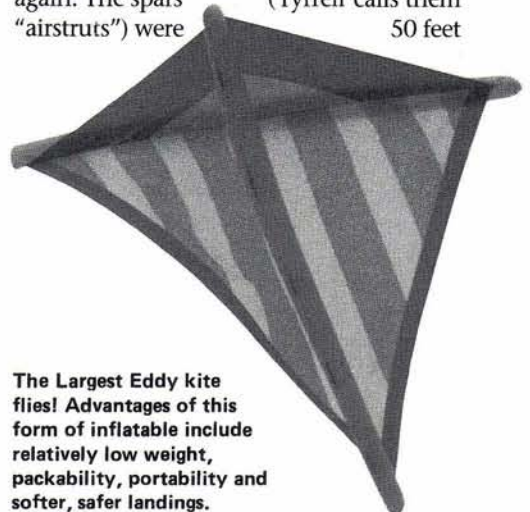


The Largest Stunter makes its moves.

each side grabbed and manipulated branch lines from left and right. Ted shouted directions and the crews responded. The required loops to left and right were made first, and easily (even though with a big kite such loops are *large*). Now it was just a matter of keeping the kite up and under control for the required minimum of five minutes.

"That's it," Bill Osche goaded through his voice gun. "Now do a figure-eight! Do a shark dive and pull it out! Earn your money!"

But the team kept the kite flying with no further maneuvers. Finally, in a wind



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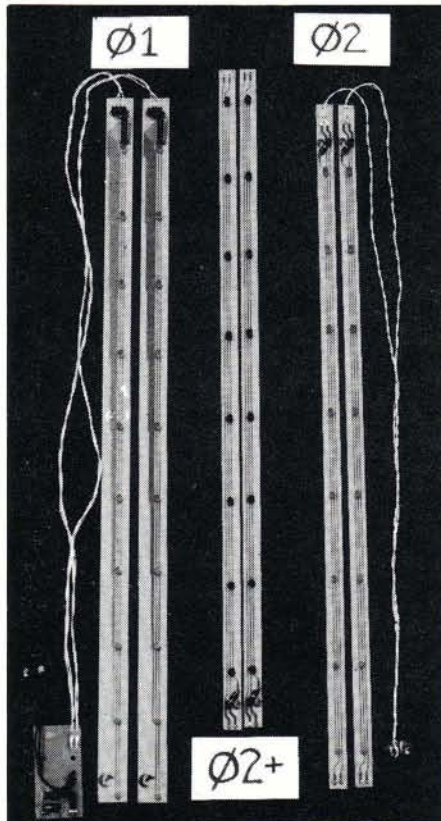
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For the Record ...Continued

long, but the sail was 49' x 49' (15m x 15m), yielding an area of 1200 square feet (111.5 square meters).

A celebratory atmosphere filled the town and literally lit up the sky that night. A beautiful assemblage of kites, some carrying lights, flashed against the black sky over the sea. Six parking lot lights from the roof of the Kite Loft illuminated the kites like jewels. A bagpipe player strolling the beach added a festive wail to the atmosphere.

AND A GOOD TRY

It wasn't quite over yet. On Sunday morning the sun was out and so were Mix McGraw and Ray Wong of San Francisco, California, veterans of Most-Kites-in-Train—Dual-Control. They laid out their 270 modified Hyperkites in a row on the beach in hopes of beating their current record of 253. After several failed starts, they gave it up. In the varying and light winds, the train wouldn't stiffen sufficiently for them to achieve control.

As Mix gathered the kites up in a rush to catch his plane, he grinned and said, "I'll be back!" My sentiments exactly.

—V.G

Pages from a Journal: The World's Largest Eddy

By Simon Freidin

I had never expected, when I hitched a ride to Sunfest '90 with Pete Ianuzzi, that I would become embroiled in an attempt to set a new classification of world record. I did, and the excitement of those few days still resonates.

Pete was making his second attempt with a Bill Tyrrell kite to try to set the record for the world's largest Eddy kite. The previous attempt had been at Sunfest '89. That attempt had failed because the kite was using experimental inflatable spars, and the air blower lacked sufficient inflation pressure. The kite had (literally) flopped.

In the intervening year, Pete had done some experiments with models of the spars and different types of blowers, and had determined an optimum pressure. He had then designed a special multistage blower to bring the spars up to pressure.

However, the blower parts, shipped by Bill, turned up only two days before. Between their arrival and our departure for Ocean City, Pete had spent all his time in his basement constructing the blower! So there hadn't been any time to test the

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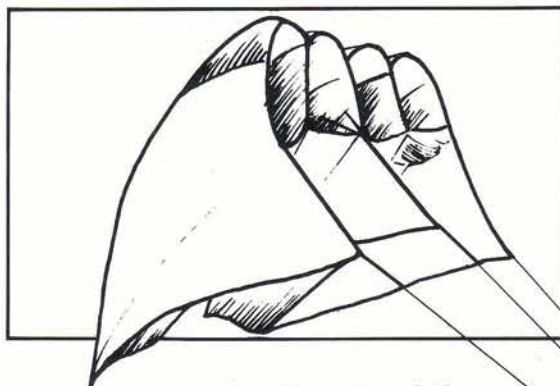


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spars, or test-fly the kite, which had been delivered from Bill's workshop directly to Ocean City.

Pete had imported Bobby Stanfield from New York to master the ground crew and kite launch, and it was a pleasure to meet with him again, as I hadn't seen him since the Mt. Aso festival in Japan in 1987. We had arrived on Thursday night to give Pete and Bobby a chance to test the kite on the Friday, prior to the record breaking attempts on Saturday. I was happy to lend a hand. Every big kite launch needs experienced helpers.

Interestingly, the Kite Loft rules were quite explicit in defining the Eddy kite. They stated that the kite must be as high as it is wide, with the spar and spine intersecting at 20% from the nose of the kite and a bow on the spar of 10% of the length of the spar. Further, the kite must fly for 5 minutes without touching the ground or the flier. Our kite dimensions were 49 feet across and high, representing around 1200 square feet of surface area. It weighed 85 lbs.

Friday's weather was superb: sunshine, mild temperatures and good winds. A few hours were spent organizing delivery of the kite to the beach, marking out a clear area with traffic cones, hooking up power for the blowers, arranging positioning of a tractor for ground mooring and laying out the kite.

Late in the afternoon, we finally had the spar and spine inflated. Pete attached and set the bridle lines and our first attempt at launching the kite began. It failed: the spine had been inflated some two hours before, had a small leak, and had gone slightly soft. So it was back to work with the blowers. On this launch the kite rose!—but the winds had dropped and it would only fly a few feet above the ground. Surprisingly, it flew entirely off the spar bridle lines which had been set a little short. We soon pulled in the nose line, then each of the remaining spine lines, until the bridling looked right. Night was soon to fall, so we deflated the spars, packed up all the gear, and left our final attempt for the next day, the official record-setting day.

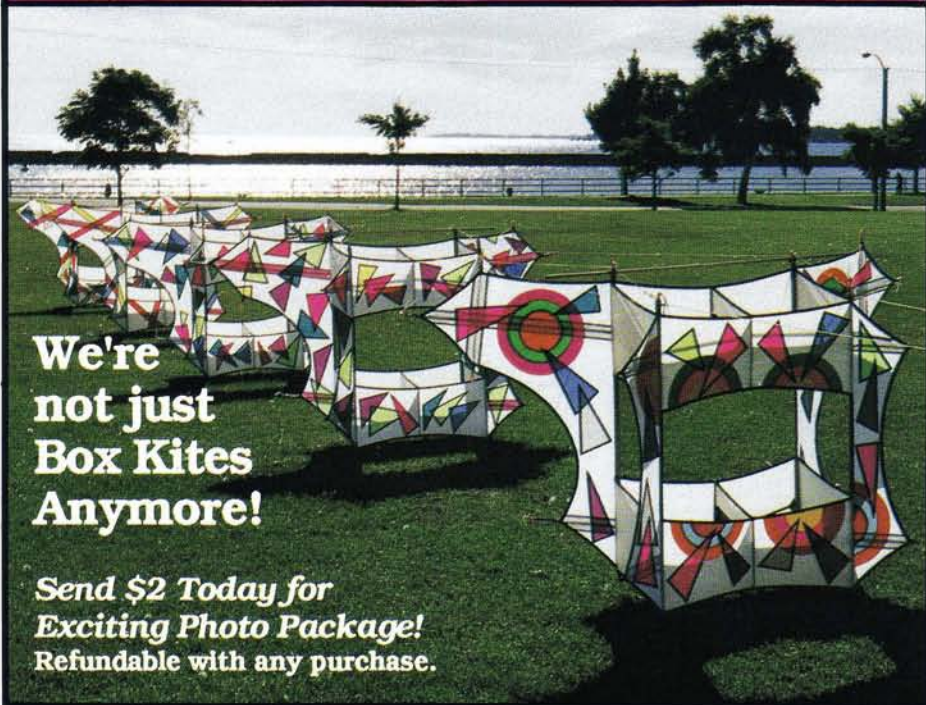
The morning brought dismal weather. Alternate drizzle and rain had set in, and it was pointless to lay out the kite, as it would collect so much sand and water that it would probably become far too heavy. We chatted about our plan of action, and watched the kites that were

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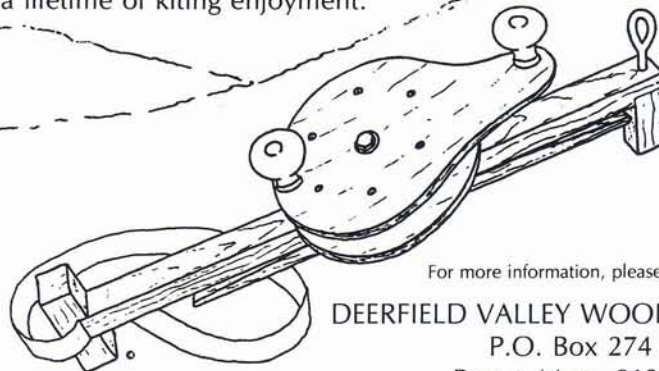
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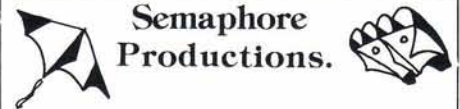
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For the Record...Continued

flying in the drizzle from the balcony of our room.

About 3:30 in the afternoon, Bobby Stanfield called me outside. The drizzle had lifted and all the kites on the beach were flying steadily. A quick discussion and we agreed to make an attempt before night fell.

Laying out the gear and preparing the kite went far more smoothly this time, and within an hour we had the kite fully inflated. Pete wanted to do some on-the-ground resetting of the bridle, but a quick look at our watches showed that we didn't have time. We should either make an attempt to launch and make any last minute adjustments after trial flight, or hold off until the next day. We made three launch attempts, but the kite veered wildly in the turbulent surface wind. On the basis of these quick tests, we decided some radical rebridling was required, so Pete shortened the right hand bridle by three feet and we relaunched. The wind picked up and lifted it from our hands. The Eddy was in the air! It was really flying!

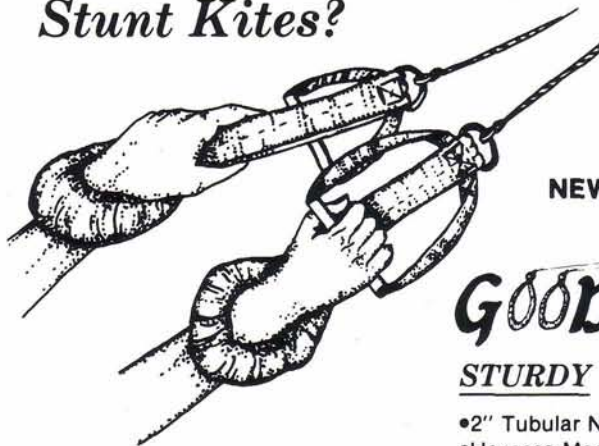
Now it was heading far out to the left and tangling with a large parafoil! The parafoil flier shifted his kite. It was veering to the right and tangling with a train of three seagull kites! It freed itself. It had cleared about a quarter of mile of beach of other kites.

The official witnesses were calling time marks. Along the Ocean City boardwalk, a crowd of at least a thousand stood stationary, watching every move. Urged on by Bill Osche on a voice gun, the crowd counted down the last ten seconds. Five, four, three, two, one! I gave a hoot of joy. We had actually done it! We left the kite flying, and it survived 14 minutes before the leak in the spine made the flying so erratic that we pulled the kite down.

Packing up was slow and tiring, but eventually we had the gear cleared. We were all physically drained as the effort and pressure we had been under lifted and was replaced by alternate elation and exhaustion. We were probably remiss in not thanking the helpers, such as Bernie Spalding, Laura Brennan, Olan Turner and others regrettably anonymous, who we thank now.

Plans are brewing for next year and other titles, but now it is good enough that we can all say that we were part of the team that has flown the largest Eddy kite in the world. ♦

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News, Rumors & Miscellany



As we go to press, two attempts by credible parties in Europe may smash the current world records.

A new Longest Cobra has just snaked across the sky in France (see our next issue for details). And a Fastest Stunt Kite will soon whiz over the dikes in Holland.

Stay tuned.

Just arrived on our desk: the new British hardcover edition of the *Guinness Book of Records 1991*.

Our ongoing dialogue with the editors has led to an additional three records being included in the category of "Kite Flying" to bring the total to eight.

The only one that is really new is really old: Altitude for a Single Kite 3801m (12,471 ft) set by H. H. Clayton and A. E. Sweetland at Milton, Massachusetts, USA on 28 February, 1891. (Hint to you would-be contenders: this last record would be ideal for a centenary attempt.)

Bane of the book: no sooner is it in print than it's out of date. The record for Greatest Number of Kites on One Line has just been broken. (See *For The Record*, this issue).



Au Fil du Vent, Cerf-Volant Club—Lacanau, France, enjoying mild winds for their first participation in One Sky, One World, 1990. At least 50 kites were flown and 400 spectators were present at the resort town of Medoc. Thousands more participated worldwide.

and is co-holder of the Australian title along with Peter Lynn's New Zealand team (who took out the U.K. title at Bristol in September).

This was the first time he had flown the kite on a natural fiber line, which has the advantage of a relatively high melting point. However, he pointed out that this heavier line noticeably slowed the kite down, limiting the team's ability to effectively defend or attack.

By the end of the battle, two of the three strands of line were cut through, leading Simon to declare that the Samurai only won by a thread.

Where in the world are you required to get a permit to fly a kite? We'd like to say nowhere, but we know of one place. You won't believe where: Hawaii.

Bill Tyrrell was flying a 14 ft by 9 ft parafoil in August at Old Airport Park (an abandoned airport taken over by the park service) in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii, when a very rough-talking policeman asked him to show his kite-flying permit. Bill had to reel in and drive away.

One Sky, One World annual fly for peace was a smashing success in 1990, its fifth year, especially in publicity. Besides tremendous local media attention, the international broadcaster CNN Headline News covered the story every half-hour on Sunday, October 14 and Monday morning too. *USA Today* also ran a story prior to the event. Flying was outstanding: 30,000 fliers in 200 locations worldwide and crowds totaling 100,000.

Soon afterwards founder Jane Ambrose met with the Governor of

There it is, right between Macon and Savannah in your atlas, folks—it's KITE, Georgia (or Kaht, as they say thereabouts) and the town's fixing to have a kite festival there in October



1991. If KAOS (Kite Association of Savannah) prevails, it will be the best thing to happen to Georgia since the Stone Mountain Endurance Contest.

Every year Rick Cole (of Charlotte, North Carolina) brings his "mystery box" of mini-kites and puts up enough to win our most-on-a-line competition," says Rick Kligman of the Summer Games Kite Festival, held in July at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. But here's the kicker: "Then he quits! He won't tell anyone how many he has in the box." His strategy has worked so far, to the chagrin of arch rival Phil Madren, of Reidsville, North Carolina, defeated by a train of 114 kites in the 1990 contest.

Would you believe that wok whisks make the absolutely best spars for some sizes of tiny kites?

It's part of the gospel of very small kites according to Charlie Sotich of Chicago, Illinois. Charlie was a star at the Ontario Science Centre, outside

Jeff Cain of Denver, Colorado totally stunned kites at the AKA convention in Seaside, Oregon in October with his accurate model (by chance exactly half scale) of Otto Lilienthal's 1895 glider. Inspired by the original museum piece, it regularly breaks apart and has to be rebuilt (Jeff always carries parts to the field). "It's historically accurate!" he says. He often uses dual lines for "semi-control." The kite breaks down only partially for storage. "It's crazy, totally crazy," he says, but evidently the flights (10 minutes tops) are worth it.



Simon's Samurai: US title holder.

We are proud to announce that the winner of the largest Rokkaku Challenge ever held in the West (with 22 teams competing) at the AKA convention in October was captained by our own International Correspondent, Simon Freidin of Australia, using one of his handcrafted rokkakus.

Also on the team: Stan Swanson, Charlie Sotich and Jeff Cain, all of the USA. Expert tactical advice was provided by Satoshi Hashimoto of Japan.

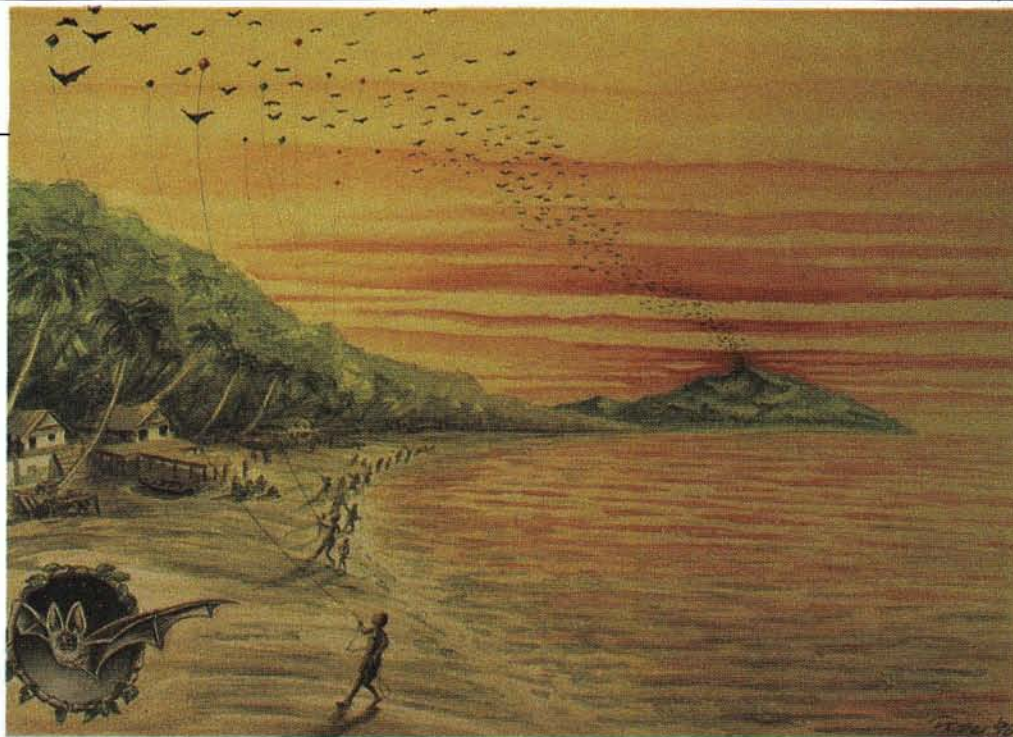
"Simon's Samurai" won two out of the three heats and drew the third with Team Blitz from London.

Simon also holds a Canadian title

Toronto, Canada at August's kite bash. Organized by Skye Morrison, the show also brought in Simon Freidin of Australia and that lively bunch, the Toronto Kite Fliers.

This group is also the nucleus for a four-part series of quality videos on kiting (emphasizing maneuverables, both single- and dual-line) now in production for TV Ontario.

The first day's filming was carried out in fog and light winds, so demonstrations of kite aerodynamics were done with miniature kites. Other highlights: an Indian fighter kite battle, a rokkaku battle, and demonstrations of stunt flying by Lee Sedgwick and Sue Taft. *Kite Lines* has assisted with scripting and will help distribute in the U.S. More later.



Bat-hunting by kite is practiced off the coast of Java in an accurate illustration by Fred Kramer.



Ever wished you had just a little more line? Perhaps you should come prepared. This photograph was taken by Dr. W. Cochrane of Tyne and Wear, England, at the Gateshead Garden Festival (near Newcastle). Another advantage of this line is that it has a breaking strain of about 500 ton, or to quote Dr. Cochrane, "it was perhaps just a little strong for the small keeled diamond!"

A letter from Gil Marcus and Bianca Severijns from Alkmaar, Holland tell us of their travels in Asia:

We came upon this purely by chance. The place is Pangandaran in middle-west Java, on the coast, where a peninsula about 4 by 5 km long (3 by 4 miles) sticks into the Indian Ocean. At the mushrooming end is a rainforest jungle. At low tide the black sand beach is 80 m (260 ft) wide.

The time is late in the afternoon, an hour before sunset. Flying out of the jungle are the "flying dogs" in the local language—or as we know them, bats. Hundreds of giant bats, over 1½ meters (about 5 ft) from wingtip to wingtip, fly out of the jungle, partly crossing the beaches and partly over the sea, to look for fruits. (*Side note:* The bats fly out at sunset, back before

sunrise, about 15 km [9.4 miles], taking 1 hour each way.)

A very interesting thing happens. Local children come down to the beach to fly fighter kites high in the sky on monofilament nylon line, hoping to catch the bats. The bats actually crash into the line that they cannot detect while flying. (*Side note:* The bat's thumb-spur on the leading edge of the wing catches on the line. Once off-balance, the bat spins and slides down the line, where it is collected. Bats apparently cannot take off from a ground position.) For the locals, bats are considered a special delicacy.

(*Side notes:* The bats are quick to assess the danger. If one day the children catch 10-15 bats, the bats change their flight to another route, higher and more roundabout, for approxi-

mately two weeks. If the danger goes away, they return, but fly at 50-100 m [160-325 ft] high, instead of their normal 20 m [65 ft].

(This technique of bat catching is only possible when the prevailing wind will not carry the kites into the coconut trees. Also fruit is available year-round but from different inland areas. So we don't know if bat catching occurs year-round.)

The whole evening has a dramatic atmosphere. The sun sets, and creates incredible colors, mainly golden orange, that reflect off the people and all that's on the beach.

We found it a unique event, not only the place, but also the fact that people really hunt with kites.

Side notes provided by Ron Spaulding, Thailand.

Look. Up in the sky. Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's the suspended objects of Roy Torsten Mattson of Minneapolis, Minnesota flying from the almost-invisible line of an almost-

transparent 4 ft by 8 ft delta-Conyne. He flies witches on broomsticks, ghosts, highway cones inside a hula hoop, the American flag, gift boxes covered with foil that sparkles in the

sky and a joy-riding mannequin, Anita Lahder, waving a gloved hand.

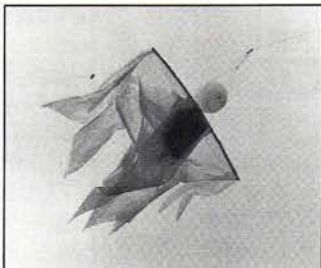
Piano Player, Sign Painter, Fudge Maker and Kiteflier Mattson reports that the weight of his creations is criti-

cal and has set a limit of 3 lb as the maximum. Any heavier and the performance of the kite is compromised.

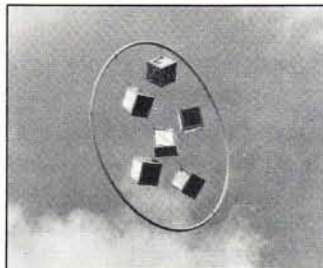
Our favorite Roy quote: "I'm 75. Lots of kiteflying to do yet." ◇



WITCH made by Roy Mattson has a cardboard box base on a bamboo pole with yellow card (simulating a broom). The head is a Halloween mask with extended nose of dowel. The hat is cardboard, the hands are child-size gloves and the covering is black garbage bag.



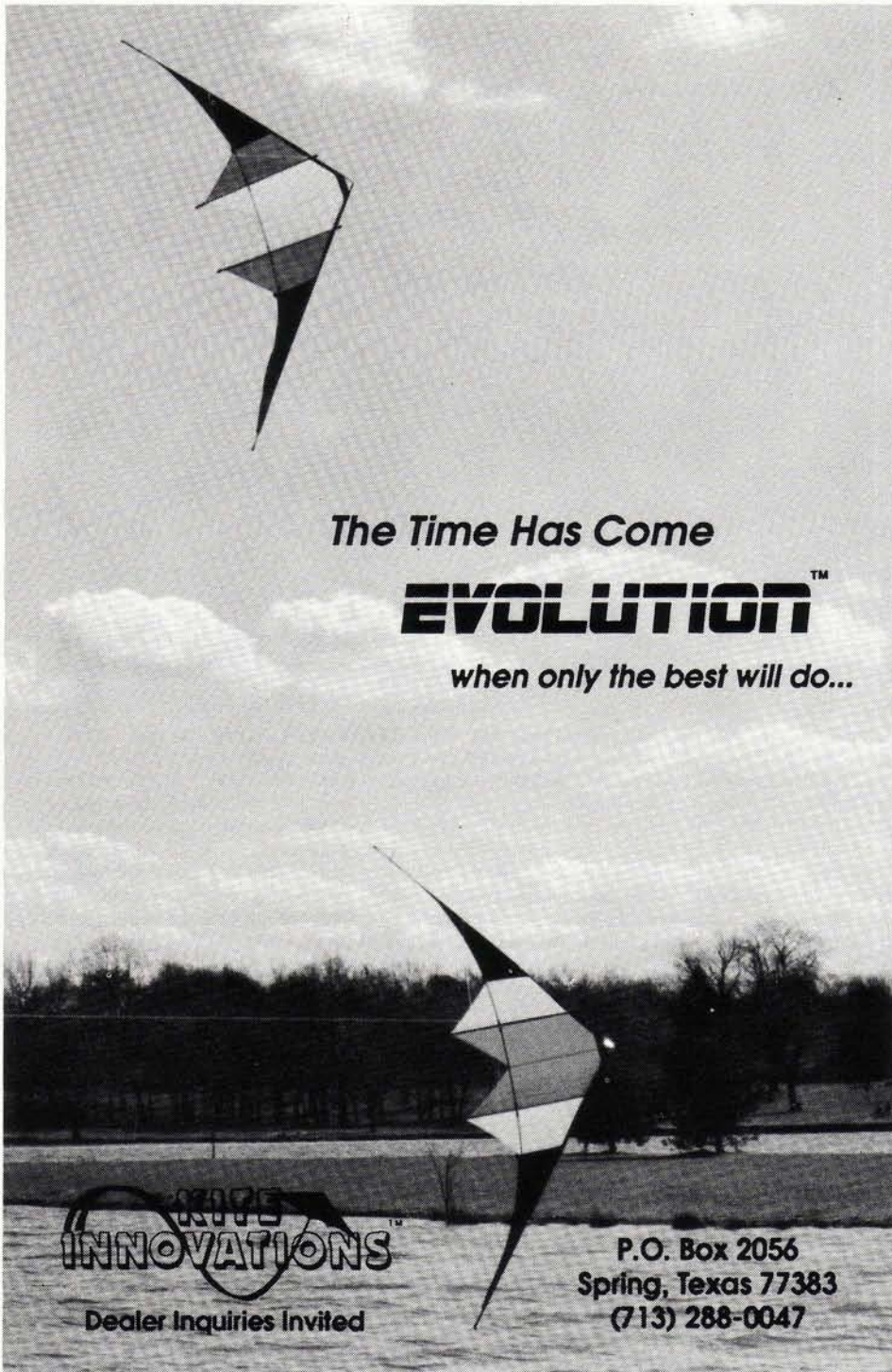
GHOST has a balloon head with felt-markered face attached to a bamboo cross piece with a cardboard box at center. Covering is white plastic bags. Everything is joined by tape. "It hangs by one suspension line only. If it turns, a face is on the other side," Roy says.



GLITTER BOXES are made of four-inch gift boxes covered with aluminum foil, shiny side out. A hula hoop hanging from the kite line contains six of the boxes suspended in an even pattern. "A clear sunrise or sunset reflects sparkles in the sky," Roy says.



ANITA LAHDER (sometimes joined by Kenny C. Farr) sits in a frame of black-painted dowels. Her head is a wig stand, wig and Halloween mask, body is cardboard and plastic foam. Her shoes are cut in half, her hands are child-size gloves and she wears kids' clothes.



The Time Has Come

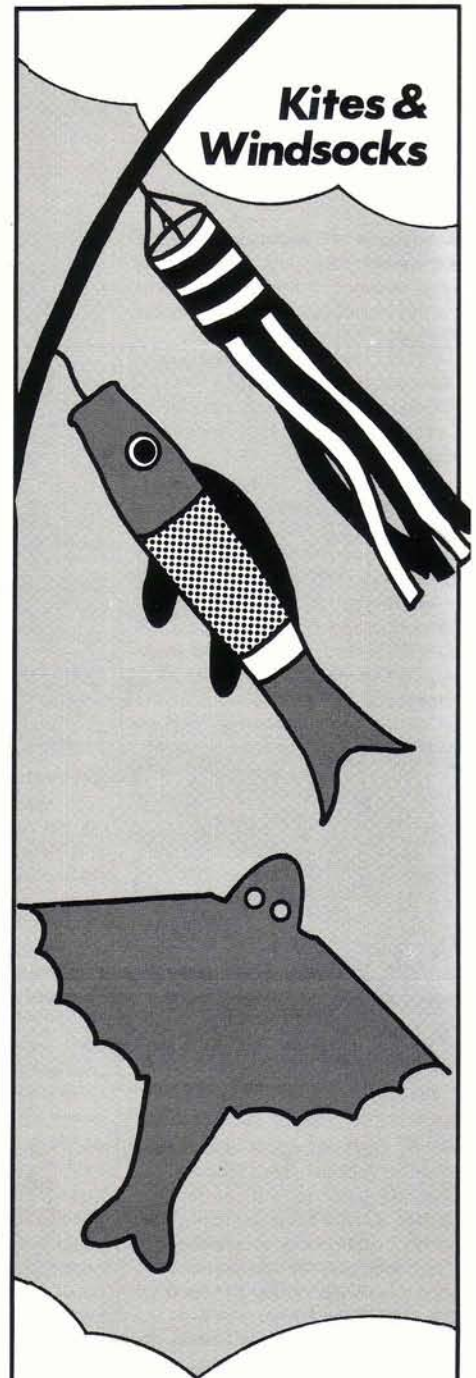
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"None of us who find his birdlike flying machines so picturesque have ever met Whitehead, except as the hopeful inventor who stares back at us from his 1900 photos.

My kites are a way to animate those scenes, to let Whitehead and his planes fly again."

—Nick D'Alto



Photograph: Toni D'Alto

For years I have been collecting old newspaper and magazine articles about aviation pioneers. My novel "flying machine" kites allow me to step back into the days when Otto Lilienthal and the Wright Brothers first flew kite-like versions of their magnificent machines.

One of the most fascinating of the early aviation pioneers was Gustave Whitehead of Bridgeport, Connecticut.

In 1899 Whitehead came to America from his native Germany and anglicized his name from the original Gustav Weisskopf. He was both an accomplished engineer and an inveterate tinkerer, who had studied—and was impressed by—the gliding progress of Otto Lilienthal. Whitehead was also a kiteflier, and a good one. In fact, one of his first jobs in this country was that of a kite designer and demonstrator for the E.I. Horsman toy company of New York City. He was known to keep 15 kites in the air at one time for his employer.

Another report tells of Whitehead's flying a live seagull as a kite by tying a cord to the bird's leg. He hoped to glimpse the

WELCOME to 1901

Article and Photographs
by Nick D'Alto

Above, a 14-foot Nick D'Alto kite model of a Gustave Whitehead "flying machine" takes to the skies over Jones Beach, New York. Below, a test flight is conducted at Newbridge Park, Long Island, with father, Nick Sr., assisting.



secrets of flight in the frightened creature's evolutions.

Whitehead's own kite design was based on the flying fish he had seen while on his way to America. He learned to control the kite by flexing its wings. Giant versions of his bat-winged creations could lift him into the air. By lashing tow ropes to the bumper of a "horseless carriage," he used the dirt roads of Bridgeport as makeshift runways for his cloth and bamboo "aeroplanes."

Though built when many kites were flown nearly full-face to the wind, Whitehead's designs used a shallow attitude, or angle of attack—more like that of a bird or a glider. Having discovered this more efficient arrangement, Whitehead devised ingenious engines, hoping to convert his man-carrying kites into powered "aeroplanes."

To his credit, contemporary news accounts reported that he made short, self-propelled flights between 1901 and 1910. Present day historians continue to debate Whitehead's flights—the dates, altitudes, lengths, power and especially

the control he did (or did not) have.

A number of Whitehead supporters claim that Bridgeport, Connecticut—not Kitty Hawk, North Carolina—is the birthplace of American aviation. Unfortunately, we cannot go back to 1901 to witness such a thing. But at the end of a kite string we can perhaps get a glimpse of those days when adventurers such as Gustav Weisskopf dreamed of such “non-sense” as flying machines.

Based on these picturesque fliers, I have constructed kites with wingspans of 3 to 20 feet—and with many unusual features.

The wings—with an aerofoil curve built into them—are carried on a boat-like body and trussed to its deck with multiple branching lines. For transport, the wings fold fan-like against the body. A collapsible mast and bowsprit help to shape and support the wings. Either wing may be warped, that is, inclined to the wind, by working cords tied to the trussing. The tail is a folding fan, and its angle is adjustable. Four laminated wooden wheels facilitate takeoff and landing.

The kite shown here has a wingspan of 14 feet and a weight of about 10 pounds. It is framed with bamboo and basswood, secured with aluminum fittings, and covered with cotton.

The kite flies best at the seashore, against a 12 mph breeze. To begin, a 100-foot line is laid out on the sand ahead of the kite. A bridle with an eight-foot leg to each wing suffices for attachment. Then,

the kite is simply pulled along on its wheels until it takes off. In a steady wind, the line angle is quite steep. Additional cords, attached to the wings and tail, can make the kite rise, fall or bank. Whitehead experimented with rudders and canard (forward elevator) surfaces, so I fitted these to some of my kites too.

Some old newspaper accounts report that after being towed in the air, Whitehead could sometimes glide down to a safe landing. Could I duplicate his performance with my kites? I tried an experiment in the calm air of nighttime.

With automobile headlights illuminating the field, I towed a 10-foot kite to an altitude of about 20 feet and let it free. It continued to fly—or glide—covering about 100 feet before landing and rolling to a stop so smoothly that “Ole Gus” would hardly have felt it.

The boat-shaped fuselage also allowed Whitehead to splash down into the water after aerial journeys over Long Island Sound. That’s an experiment for the future—and another story. ◇

Nick D’Alto is an engineer and lives on Long Island, New York. He writes, “I have built and flown many large kites. My craft are based on extensive research into early flying machines. I have also performed many calculations and experiments, applicable to many kinds of kites, on mechanical strength, construction and lifting capacity. I would enjoy corresponding with other fans of early kites and early flight.”

Above right, old photograph shows Whitehead posing with his #21, its propellers attached for powered flight attempt, Spring 1901.

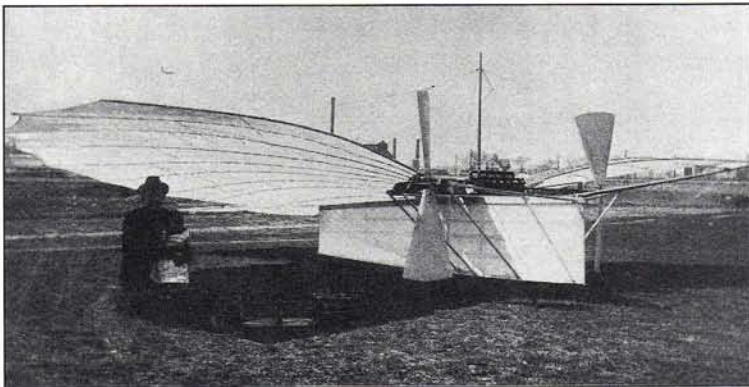
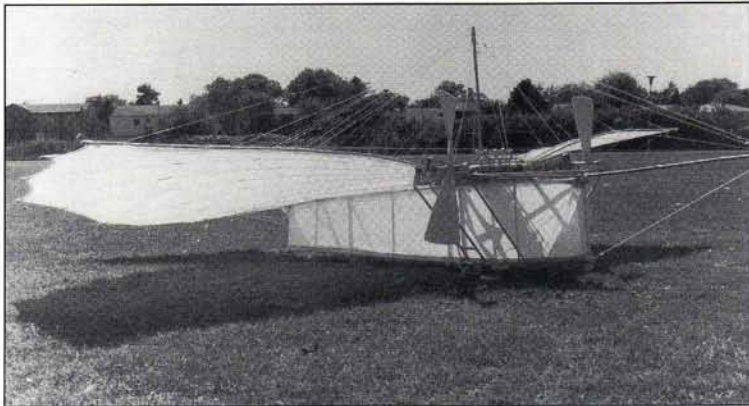


Photo courtesy Gustav Weisskopf Museum, Leutershausen, Germany

Below, a Nick D’Alto model of #21 which was recently displayed at an airshow honoring helicopter pioneer Igor Sikorsky. The kite is fitted with facsimile engines and propellers.



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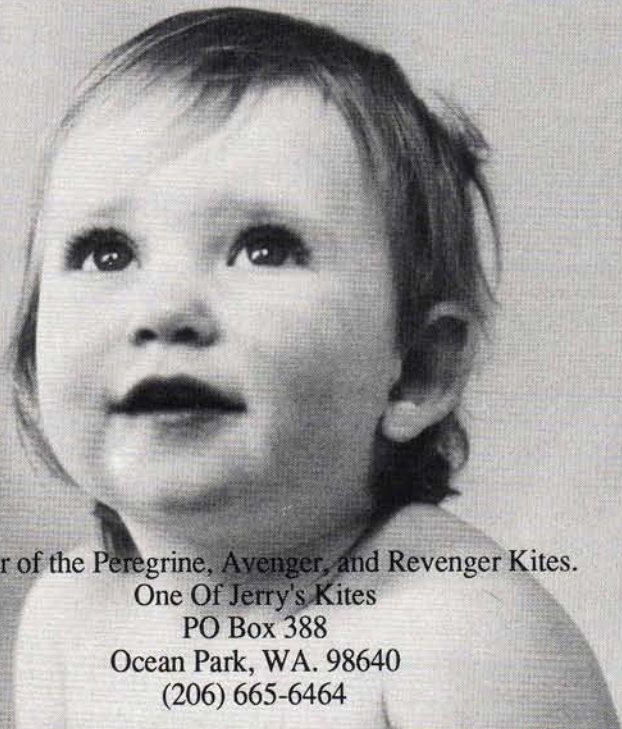
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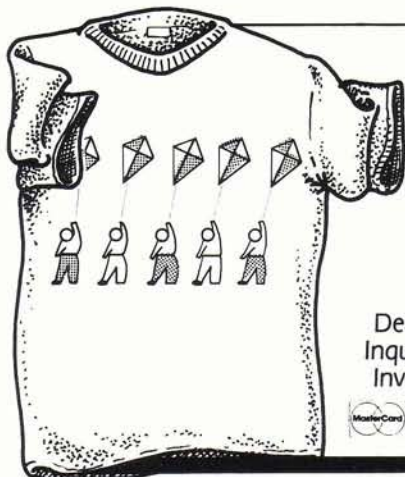
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For details contact Don McCasland at Kites of Boston, #6 Gallery East, North Market, Faneuil Hall Marketplace, Boston, MA 02109, 617-742-1455. Or contact China Educational Tours, 1110 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02124. Call toll-free (800) 225-4262.

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Empty Spaces in the Sky



Left, Henk van Meekeren sets bridle of his kite. When ashore, he would fly two or three in train. All three kites were made by his wife and survived over 15 years of hard use. Above, the S.S. Statendam in 1964 kite aerial photograph.

Henk van Meekeren

In May of 1989, the Kite Aerial Photography Association Worldwide magazine announced the death of Henk van Meekeren. Since then we have obtained further information to make this writing complete.

Henk van Meekeren was an outstanding kite aerial photographer for most of his adult life. He worked for the Holland-America Line from December 1954 until March 1972 as Senior Photographer. His first (perhaps *the* first) kite aerial photograph from a ship was taken in 1964. Thereafter, he took many more and printed thousands of them for sale to the cruise passengers. He had no guidance but the U.S. Weather Bureau's 1928 book on Marvin-Hargrave kites, so he devised his own systems.

His wife Ans sewed his first three kites for the purpose, Conyne ("French military") kites of nylon and bamboo. (Thereafter he took her "strong advice" and learned to run a sewing machine himself).

The 20-knot ship speed called for a strong 3mm-diameter nylon line. The camera was a Voigtlander Bessa 2 in 6x9cm format, bought second-hand and combined with a Kodak self-timer connected by cable release to a modified keyring parking timer. The rig was tied into a cradle on the line. Winches on the poop deck secured the lines. Van Meekeren described the procedure in a letter to *Kite Lines* in 1980:

"First we would lower the 100-foot tail into the water and very carefully ease the heavy, reinforced kite out.

"Where the tail was caught in the tremendous turmoil of water, generated by the ship's two screws, the kite was suspended over the sea and line was paid out to a point where the full wind force would catch it again after being split apart by the

bulk of the ship. The kite would then rise as a rocket and, once above the air turbulence, would be rock-steady. This was the moment when we attached the camera cradle to the line and allowed the rig to reach the desired height and distance."

Henk told of a disadvantage to taking kite aerials from a seagoing vessel: "...the tremendous layer of exhaust gases generated by enormous fans in the engine room...you have to penetrate through unstable, humid air, which will show up as unsharpness in your final prints.

"After each photograph, we had to lower the contraption, which was a nerve-racking experience, where the forces on the system would build up even more. In this stage the use of the winch was appreciated because the line could pull over 200 pounds. I also appreciated the help of Senior Assistant Photographer Bart van Hoek."

In later years, van Meekeren continued kite aerial photography experiments and shared his expertise with others, including his son Erwin. When Erwin was selected to serve as ship's physician for the Dutch explorer ship M.S. Planicus in 1984, he was able to duplicate successfully the work of his father using the same system.

When the Holland-America Line ceased to operate and the main office was moved to New York City, all the van Meekeren negatives were lost. Despite many searches, only prints remained. Henk lent them to *Kite Lines* in 1980 and we made copies of them and returned the originals and the copy negatives to the photographer.

Henk van Meekeren died on March 23, 1989 in The Hague at the age of 58. His son Erwin wrote us about his father: "Always he was trying to rebuild and improve his systems. Until his last days there were always new plans and new ideas. Many, many kites and cameras still remind us of his great passion." —V.G.

Quicksilver, Shanti and Stratton have been with us.

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Number Seventeen in a Series

Patchwork Carp Swimming Upstream was completed in the winter of 1988-89 and was first successfully flown in the summer of 1989. It is approximately 8 feet wide by 6½ feet tall with 20 bridles 100 feet long.

The kite is a composite of several Japanese kite styles. Inspired by a Buka of similar design, it is bridled like an Edo and structured like a Shirone. The flexible frame is held rigid by the bridles in flight.

As a kitemaker, I have been inspired by the simple shapes of Japanese kites. Rather than copy their motifs and construction techniques, however, I enjoy using traditional American quilt patterns as cover designs on kites of ripstop and fiberglass. This kite is an attempt to give an American treatment to a Japanese design using patchwork techniques.

The Carp flies like most Edos I have made—not with a lot of pull—in 7-15 mph winds. It is bridled higher than the Japanese and has tails to keep it from overflying.

This kite was named the Most Beautiful handcrafted kite at the 1989 Washington State International Kite Festival and placed second in both judged and spectators' choice categories at the 1989 Kitefest International in Newport, Rhode Island. It was one of two major award winners at the 1989 Nagasaki International Kite Festival in Japan.

The photograph was taken by Alison Stanes of Auckland, New Zealand, at the 1990 New Zealand International Kite Festival. The kite is now owned by Peter Malinski of Bremen, Germany.

—Scott Skinner
Monument, Colorado, USA

Scott Skinner is a frequent flier in most senses of the word. He is a former pilot, a kite traveler (thrice to Japan, twice to China, and a "regular" at Long Beach, Washington) and—most important—a kiteflier.

First introduced to kites in 1976, Scott collects kites avidly and says, "I think of myself more as a collector of kites than a maker of them." He collects on the basis of what he likes, and has tried to look for very good examples of different types of kites, or work by individual kitemakers, such as Dan Leigh, Lee Toy or George Peters.

The Skinner family flies kites too, but the kids have a shorter attention span "and probably more good sense," Scott laughs.

—V.G.

This *Kite Lines* series features a reader's kite picture on a whole page in full color in each issue. Yours could be the next one! What kind of kite photograph qualifies for this honor?

First, the kite must fly well. Supporting information must be included describing the kite's typical flight and giving its dimensions, materials and history.

Second, the kite must be beautiful. Agreed, beauty is in the sky of the beholder. This is an openly subjective criterion.

Third, the kite must show some quality of originality in either form, craftsmanship, color, decoration or use of attached elements. (No commercial kites, please!)

Fourth, the photograph (as a separate consideration from the kite in it) must be of high artistic and technical quality—sharp, well-framed, rich in color. For printing, we prefer 35mm or larger transparencies. We can also use color prints if they are 8" x 10" or larger. Tip: we favor vertical format over horizontal.

The photograph should be taken in one of two modes: as a close-up of the kite in the sky, the kite filling at least one-third of the film area; or as a background-inclusive shot, showing people, scenery, etc., behind the kite. In any case, the kite should be shown well, although not necessarily flying, as long as the supporting information establishes the kite's flyability. In fact, background features give a reference point and sometimes increased interest to a picture.

We suggest you take many pictures of the kite. Snap it in the sky, at festivals, morning, noon and night—even indoors on display. Discard any preconceptions of what a "correct" kite photograph should be. Then send us no more than *five* photographs of *one* kite at a time. To avoid risk of sending an original transparency or photograph, you may send a duplicate for review.

Ship in stiff protective packaging and enclose a self-addressed envelope with stamps or international reply coupons for return of your material—otherwise, we cannot guarantee its return.

Photographs submitted must be not previously published. After publication in *Kite Lines*, further rights revert to the photographer and kitemaker.

Kite Lines credits both kitemakers and photographers. A photographer may take pictures of a kite not his or her own, but in such case should ask the kitemaker's help in supplying information for the submission. *You* are invited to enter! You have nothing to lose but your obscurity. ◇

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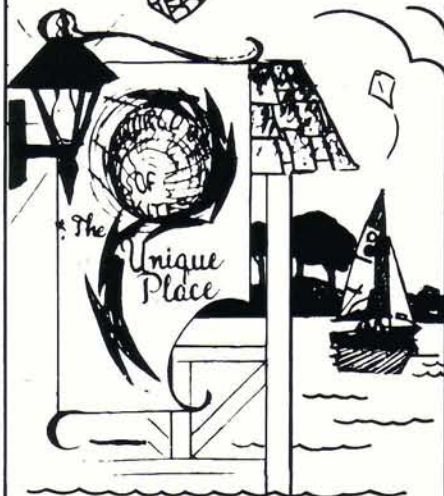
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Kite Lines is facing higher postal rates in 1991 and other increased costs. We will have to raise the price of the magazine. As a favor to you, our faithful subscriber, we are giving you this advance warning so that you may renew now while our old rates are still in effect. You'll see them on the order form bound into the center of this issue.

TOUR JAPAN: Dorothea Checkley announces a May 1991 tour of Japanese kite festivals, including the JKA International Kite Festival, Sagara and Hamamatsu. Contact: Dorothea Checkley, 678 W. Prospect, Seattle, WA 98119, USA. Phone: 206/284-5330.

AND THE WINNER IS...

Stan Barnes of Visalia, California is the winner of the second Great Kite Lines Renewal Raffle Cody Kite! He has received a new 10-foot Cody made by Dan Flintjer of the Buffalo Cody Kite Company, with a retail value of \$1000. Entries for the third raffle will be sent out to those due to renew with the next issue.

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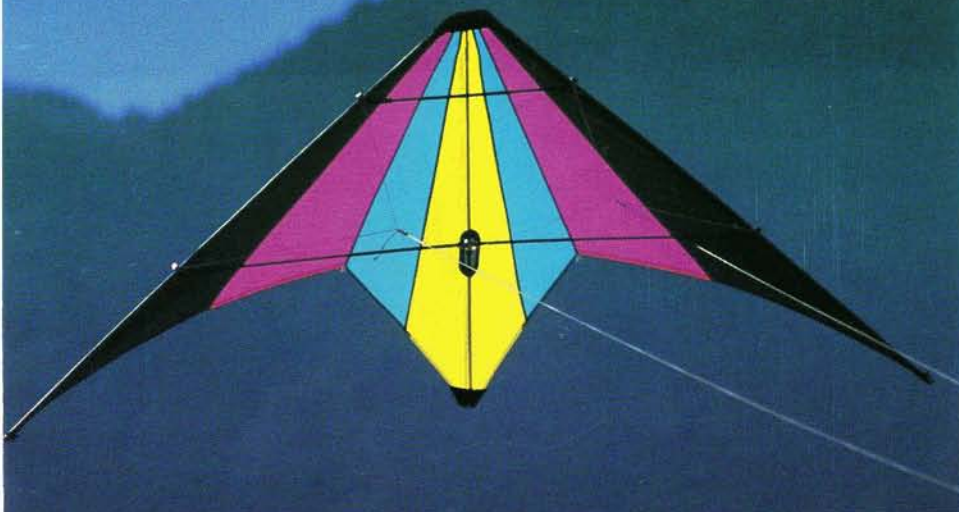
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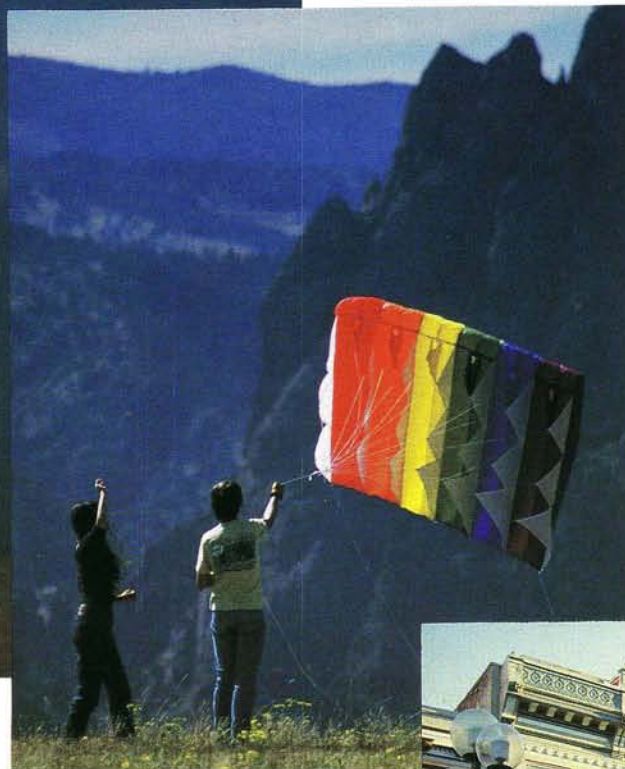
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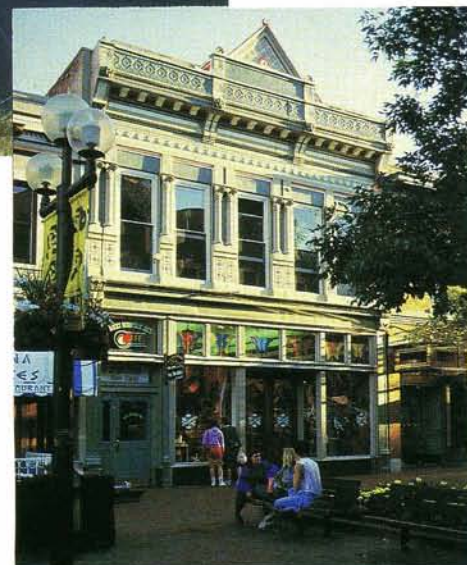
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