

QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE WORLDWIDE KITE COMMUNITY

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CALENDAR

# Kitelines™

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WINTER 1991-92, VOL. 9, NO. 1

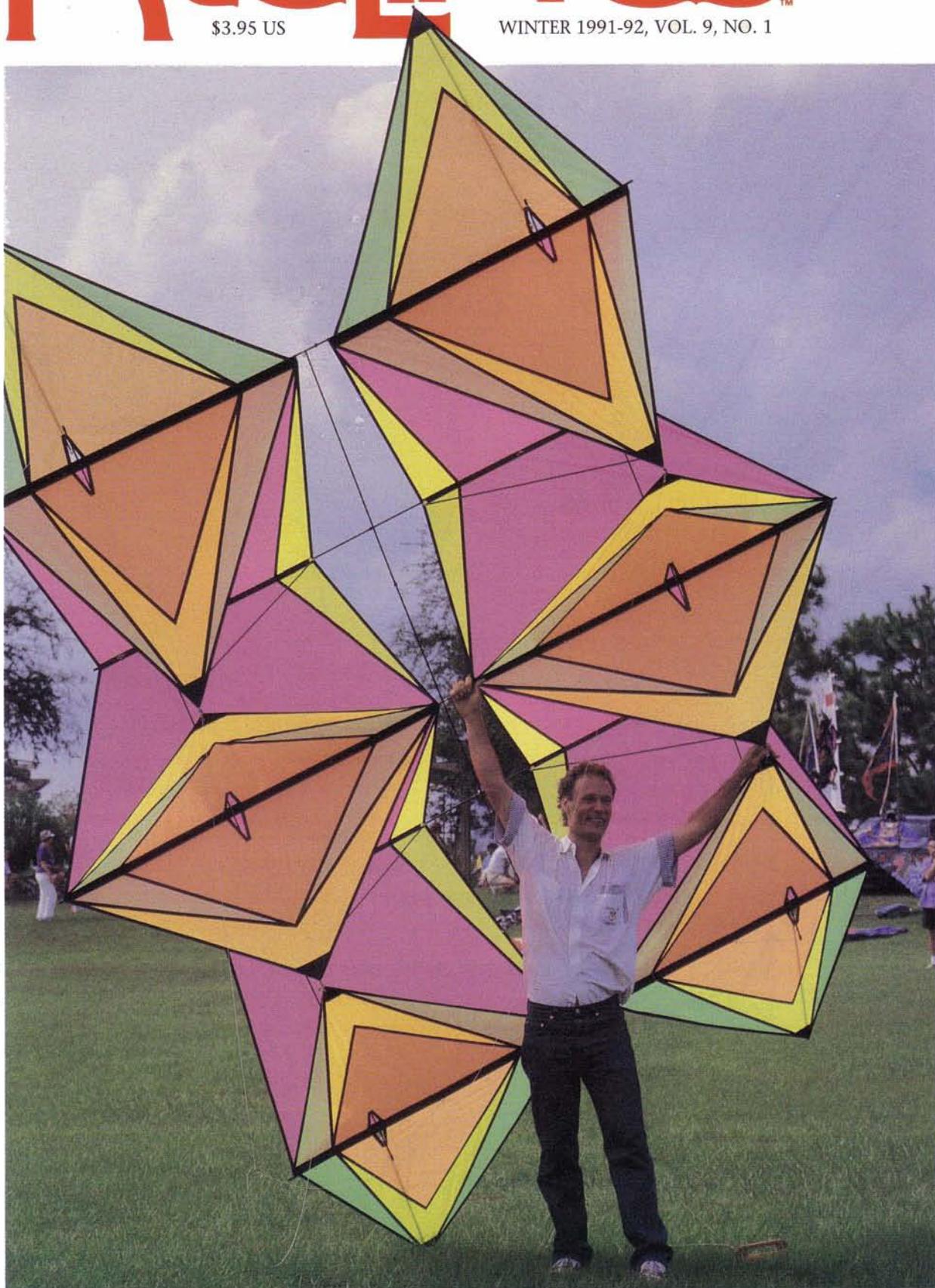
**HOW TO MAKE  
THE PAINLESS  
PARAFOIL**

**HOW TO  
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**STUNTING  
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**GUBBIO:  
A TOWN GOING  
GA-GA**

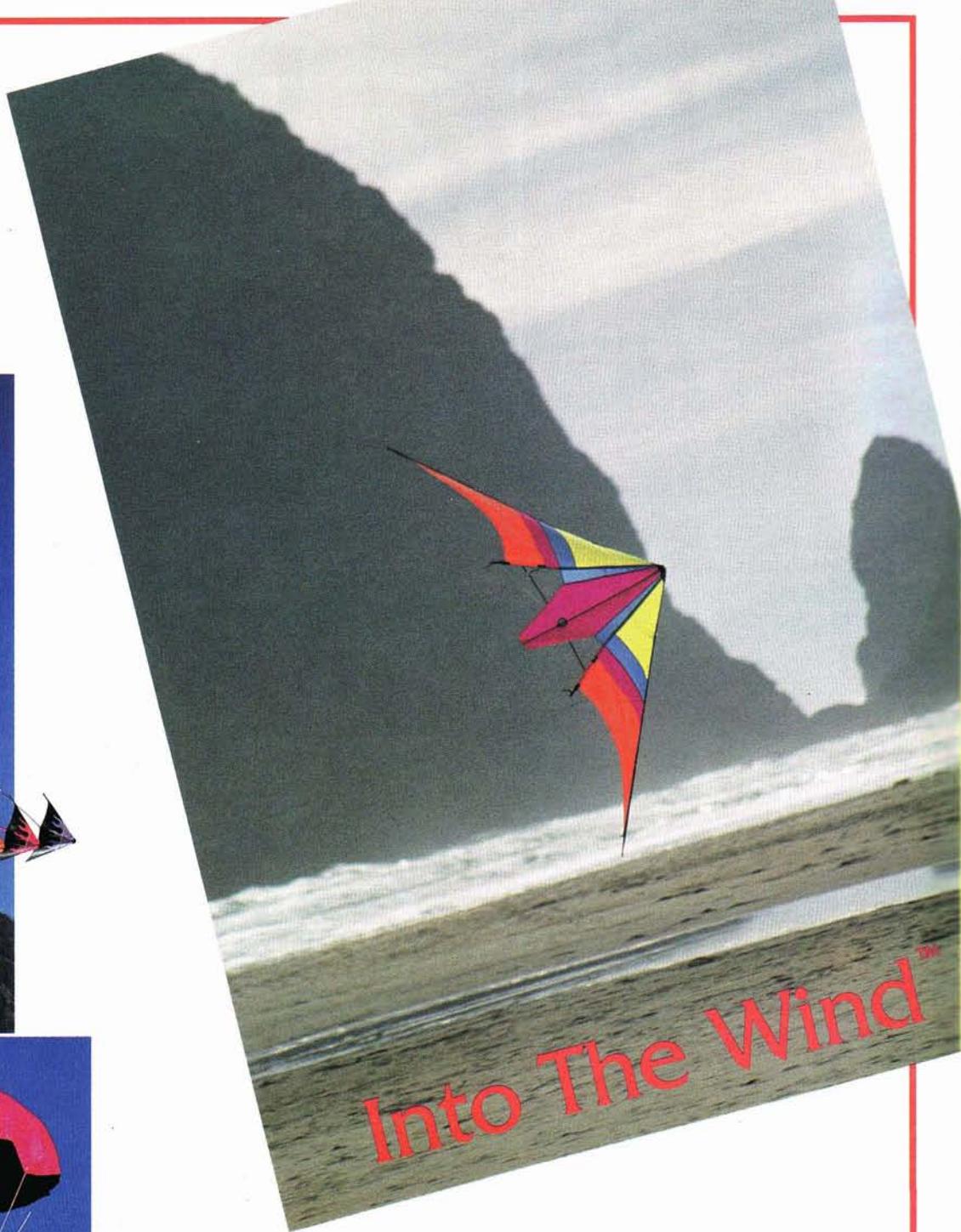
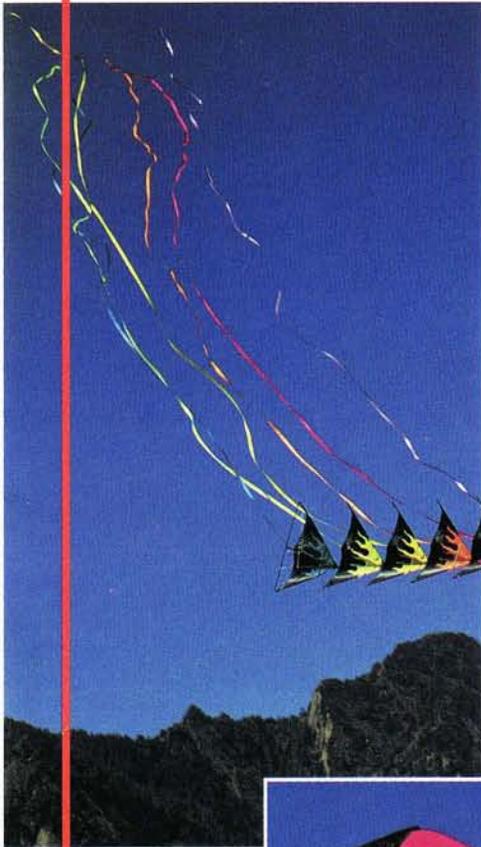
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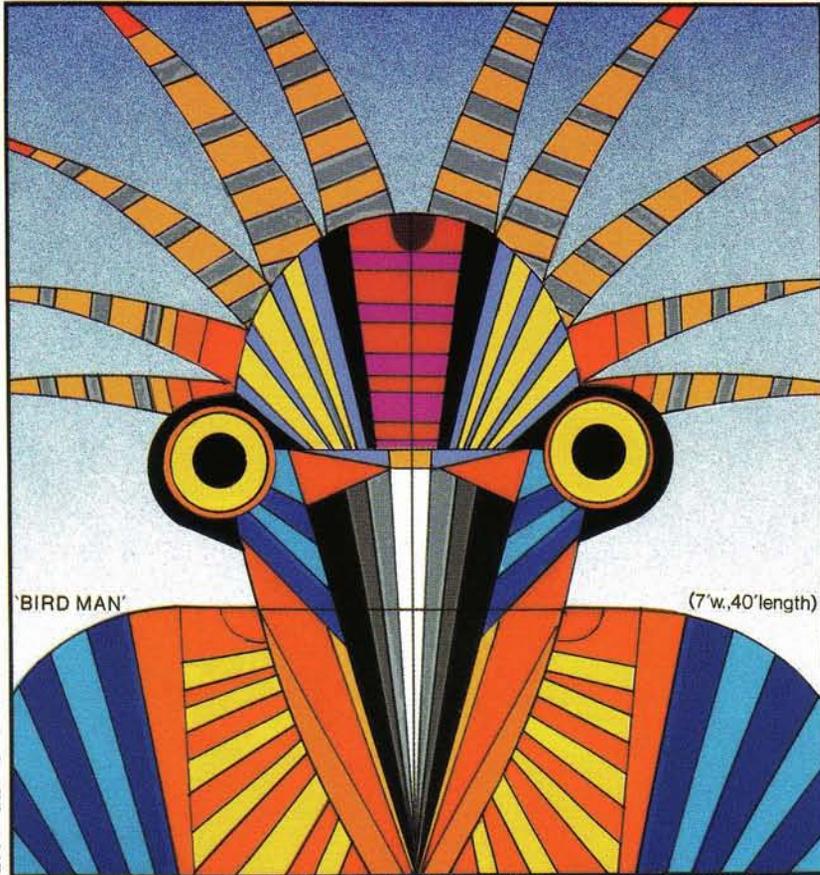
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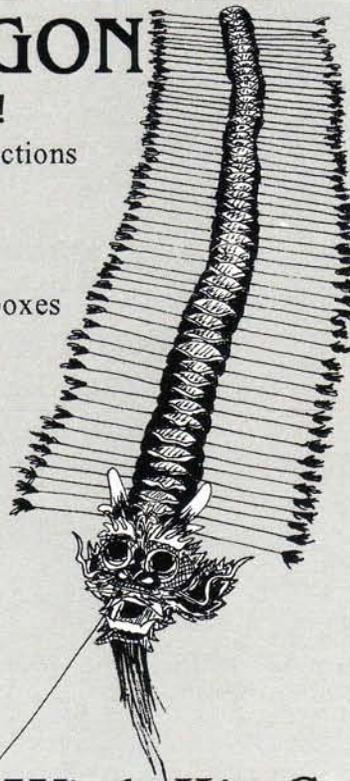
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## Kite Lines

ISSN 0192-3439

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*Mailings:* Occasionally *Kite Lines* makes its list of subscribers available to organizations offering information, products or services of interest to kites. Subscribers may be excluded from such lists by contacting *Kite Lines*.

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*Write to Kite Lines* at P.O. Box 466, Randallstown, MD 21133-0466, USA.

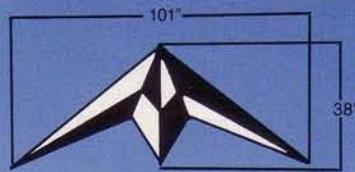
*Advertising rates and information sheet* is available upon request.

*Contributions of information, articles and photographs* are always invited. Submitted material must be accompanied by a self-addressed envelope with adequate postage. *Kite Lines* is not responsible for unsolicited material. Writers and photographers should request guidelines before submitting. Accuracy of contents is the responsibility of individual contributors. Diverse views presented in *Kite Lines* are not necessarily those of the editor, staff or advisory panelists.

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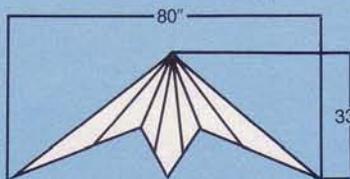
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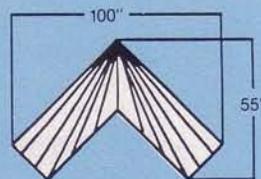
## FIRE DART

The championship caliber FIRE DART offers precision flying, excellent handling, unique graphics and a wide wind range. It is one of the most competitive stunt kites on the market.



## MOON DART

New and racy! This Dart is a fast and responsive flier in a wide range of winds. Well mannered for the beginner, yet it matches the moves of the most demanding stunt enthusiast.

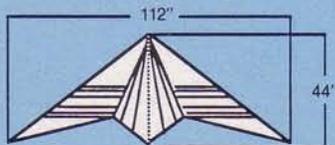


## PHOENIX 20

Why mess with perfection? This mainstay of our company has been in production for years and is still going strong. The award-winning PHOENIX 20 is a real performer in light to moderate winds. Its large size and bold graphics are a sight to behold.

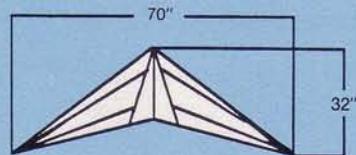
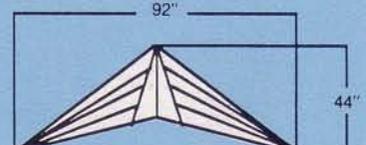
## SUPER SKY DART

This redesign of our standard SKY DART is available in two stunning patterns. Outstanding mobility and fast, sharp turns make this kite an impressive and stylish flier.



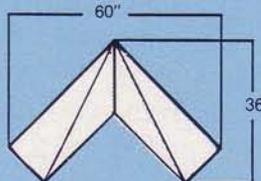
## STAR DART

This kite promises viceless flying. The STAR DART is very sensitive and responsive, but also very forgiving. The STAR DART flies the way you want it to fly.



## NO NA ME

The NO NA ME is a responsive kite, great in moderate to strong winds. It's an excellent high-performance kite for beginners or experienced fliers who want a smaller, faster, lighter-pulling delta wing.



## ACTION 8.2

The ACTION 8.2 — imitated but never duplicated. This littler brother of the PHOENIX 20 is popular for its high speed, tight turns and ease of flight. Easy assembly and small storage size make the 8.2 an ideal traveling companion.

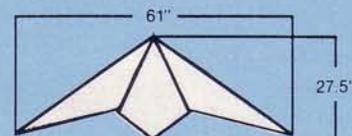
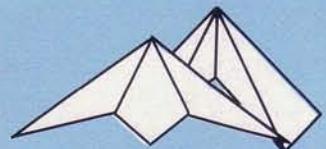


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dealer inquiries invited

# Kitelines

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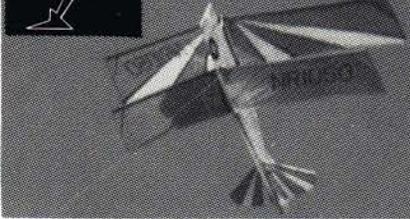
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### ◆ Cover

Bobby Stanfield of Tustin, California stands tall and proud as he holds up his Grand National Championship creation at the AKA convention in Jacksonville, Florida. Built with dayglow nylon and illuminated by strobe lights at night, the kite is brilliant even in gloomy weather. But its primary asset is weight, so little that Bobby flies by coolly twitching the line while others sweat and race. Photograph by Valerie Govig.

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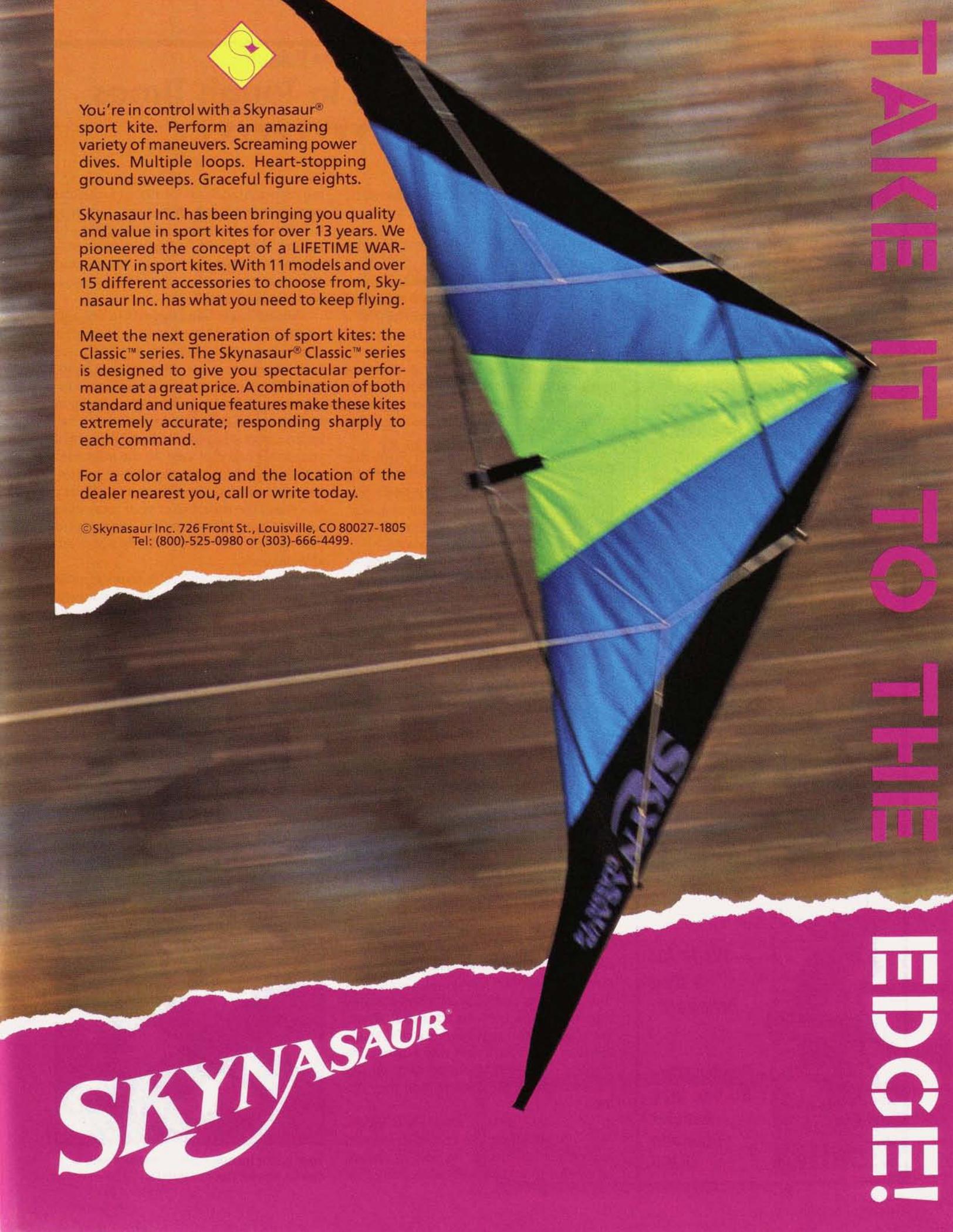
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## Letter from the Publisher

# Being Decent in Tough Times



**H**ow much has kiting been affected by the recession? Does anybody have a nice pat answer?

There seem to be lots of answers, depending on who's talking.

A retiree says not at all. As far as he's concerned, kites fly just as well regardless of the economic weather. And kites are a relatively inexpensive pastime, in his opinion, especially because he makes his own. He's lucky he isn't living in one of the locations where a kite shop has just closed. He doesn't even have to worry about getting the few supplies he sometimes wants—such as line.

Contrast that with an avid stunt flier who just lost his job. Is he out there flying all the time? No, he's cut back while job-hunting, and his mood is not the best. He's not buying kites, either, but his local kite shop is out of business anyway.

Further up the chain is the store owner. Long established shops that have weathered past recessions are dusting off their strategies for survival. But some companies that two years ago were riding the crest of the "kite boom" are now really hustling. People are just not in a hurry to buy a \$250 kite anymore—or even a \$100 kite. Two or more kite retailers in the same area now find themselves more at each other's throats than ever. Any form of competition raises their adrenalin level.

Next in line are the kite manufacturers, paring expenses instead of planning expansions.

It isn't easy for magazines these days either. We have trusted that the quality of what we do at *Kite Lines* ought to be enough that no one would be without it if they cared about kites. Lots of readers called the Summer-Fall 1991 issue our "best ever." But copies of it were sent back, before sale-time was up, by a few retailers because of ads inside that contained competition they didn't like. Can you imagine how that made us feel? The retailers claimed that the magazine was "hurting" them. Well, of course, it wasn't the magazine, but they didn't see it that way. Further, the retailers attempted to put pressure on *Kite Lines* to control the competition they disliked.

We cannot restrain trade. It is illegal. Nor will we attempt to censor or boycott any of our advertisers. We will, as always, be careful to accept only advertising that

meets our standards of taste, technical quality, truthfulness. But more than that it is not our business—nor our right—to require. If we have to sell fewer copies during this recession, we will just have to find other ways to survive, like everyone else. No use crying over it.

We do have one suggestion for our readers. Be decent to that little shop that introduced you to kites in the first place and buy there. Give your appreciation, and your business, to the fellow who showed you Kevlar and how to handle it, to the merchant who knocked his/her brains out putting on the best kite festival your town had ever seen, to the folks who repaired your kite for the cost of materials—and smiled. Don't use the display space and the expertise of your local shop for making a decision and then spend your dollars elsewhere at the lowest available discount.

Sure, this sort of thing is happening in all categories of sales across the country. And we know what results. The Mom and Pop stores take a beating when the monster warehouse discounters move in. But pretty soon the so-called "smart" customer will look around and wonder what happened to *service*, what happened to *expertise*, what happened to *selection*.

When we don't have these anymore, the entire kite community will be the poorer for it.

*Valerie*

P.S. Our telephone area code has been changed from 301 to 410. You have a few months during which both our new and old area codes will work, but note now that our telephone number is 410-922-1212 and our fax number is 410-922-4262.



Your editor having launch recently with a fighter kite by George Peters.

Mei Goring

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**Hours:** 10 a.m. - 9 p.m., open 7 days a week.

**Years in business:** 11.  
**Years profitable:** roughly 6.  
**Years carried *Kite Lines*:** 8.  
**Owner:** Patricia R. Robinson.  
**Age:** 43.  
**Favorite food:** Seafood.  
**Last book read:** "Who has time to read?"

**Last kite book read:** *Stunt Kites* by David Gomberg, "several times."

**Favorite flying spot:** Tybee Island, east of Savannah, Georgia.

**Latest promotional effort:** Discount (10%) coupons given out by kitefliers at the beach.

**Specialty of the store:** "Something for everyone of any age to have fun with."

**Most important advice ever received:** "A satisfied customer is the most valuable advertising tool you can have."

**Nicest sale ever made:** "A man from India bought a large assortment of kites to take back to fellow fliers."

**Best fringe benefit of the store:** "Constantly making new friends in the kite community and being in a tourist area where I can meet people from all over the world."

**Favorite issue of *Kite Lines*:** "Every issue has something new and interesting to read. But I love to fish so the Summer-Fall 1983 issue, on kite fishing in South Africa, sticks in my mind."

Doesn't your store carry *Kite Lines*? To learn all the benefits of doing it, write for retailers information package to: *Kite Lines*, P.O. Box 466, Randallstown, MD 21133. Or telephone us at 410/922-1212. Or fax us at 410/922-4262.



## Letters

### Starched Line

#### Compelled to Write

The excellence of the last issue of *Kite Lines* compels me to write my congratulations. I was especially impressed by the tribute to Dom Jalbert. I think it was fortunate that "Stretch" Tucker entered his life during his last days and was able to be a comfort to him. I presume you did considerable work on the story but Stretch certainly furnished a lot of details. I never knew about most of them.

—Bob Ingraham  
Silver City, New Mexico, USA

#### To-Do about Edo

I'd like to mention a common misunderstanding about Japanese kites. From my observation, the term "Edo" is generally considered by Westerners to mean a square or rectangular kite. However, Edo, the former name of Tokyo, applies to a specific and regional kite from Tokyo, so it doesn't mean square or rectangle. If a kiter from Shirone city flew a Shirone O'dako and someone said, "Hey, you got a nice Edo," I believe the flier would feel uncomfortable.

In general, Japanese use the term "kaku-dako" (or "kaku" for short) for square or rectangular kites, instead of using Edo.

I think the misunderstanding comes from the language barrier between English and Japanese. But a major mistake like using Edo for square kite should be corrected as soon as possible.

I'm a *tako-kichi* from Chiba, Japan, a member of the Japan Kite Association and active in the Pacific Northwest area. I recognize *Kite Lines* as the international kite magazine, so if you have trouble with the Japanese language or need information about Japanese kites, please let me know.

—Makoto Ohashi  
Portland, Oregon, USA

**Editors' Comments:** Yes, yes, Makoto, and thank you. Many kilters know and respect the true origin of the Edo. But language is dynamic, and heaven help the purist. We admiring Westerners have adopted the idea of the Edo kite to mean a certain proportion of rectangular kite with certain patterns of boning and bridling. But we don't use traditional bamboo and *washi*, or use the stylized "old-Tokyo" surface paintings. We violate some of the traditions while keeping others. It's high-handed of us perhaps, but as the Edo kite of

## & Purple Pins



Japan declines (see page 46), the Edo kite of the world may be taking flight. Should we—can we—stamp out the word "Edo"? Should we—can we—ban "fax" as a verb?

### Purple Pins and People

Foul! We have been wronged by a self-confessed low-life junkie ("Confessions of a Kite Pin Junkie," Spring 1991 *Kite Lines*).

Dave Gomberg's contention that the Purple People Eater kite and pin are the ugliest he has ever seen has cut us to the quick. The kite, carefully handcrafted from only the least expensive material, and the pin, painstakingly designed by our art consultant (Dave Bogie) have become our trademark.

We have been told that a kite fly would be incomplete without the coral-spotted lilac monster drifting overhead. To refer to it as ugly will surely bring the curse of the Purple People Eater, if not the kite, down upon Mr. Gomberg's head.

Let it further be known to all and Mr. Gomberg in particular that far from dampening our spirits he has inspired us to go on trading Purple People Eater pins (45 of 140 originals are still available for trade only) plus a slightly altered new printing of 100. —Greg and Sue Clark

Naches, Washington, USA

### Line (Not Wine) Tasting

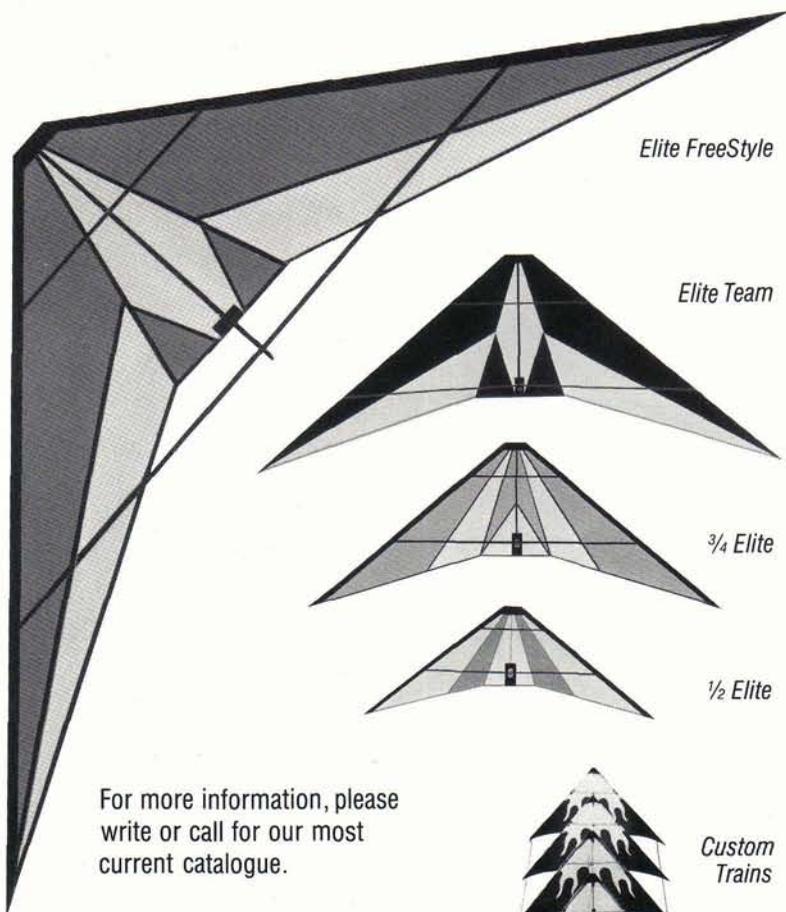
In the U.K. I don't think anything in kiting has brought such a vast amount of entertainment, excitement, action and good fun as has the UKRC (U.K. Rokkaku Challenge).

For the most part there has been very little acrimony. Some teams and individuals have become very skilled at rokkaku fighting, notably Martin Croxton and Paul Morgan.

What I would like to do is fit pedometers on the contestants to see just how far they actually run during a challenge round; I'm sure the figure would be quite amazing. At Cofton Park, Birmingham (England), the heats finished up some 500 yards away from where they started, with vast amounts of running to and fro. The antics that go on usually have everyone cracking up, with lots of gamesmanship and attempted skullduggery on the blind side of the referee, though Gill Bloom who normally referees the rounds is very wise to attempted shenanigans.

One team a couple of years back was

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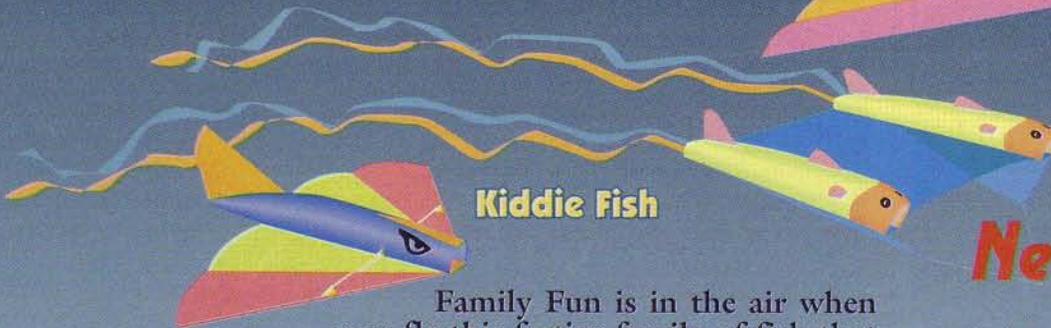
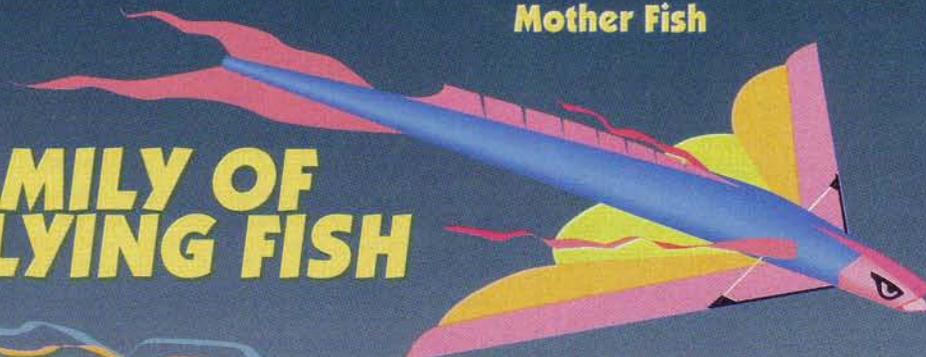
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suspected of using doctored line, i.e. starch—you know, the old stuff that shirts used to be done with. There was lots of tasting of discarded line going on, and I can say that having tasted quite a bit of kite line over the years, I could detect something not quite right through the customary grass and mud flavors. This caused quite a bit of ill feeling and that's why the Blooms decided, courtesy of The Kite Store, to supply the rokkaku line through the 1989 season. As people concerned seemed to take the hint, now every team is back to supplying their own line.

One of the rules which perhaps could be emphasized is one that I suggested: The Mix-It Rule. Should any person or team persistently hang around the fringe, i.e. not fight, then they are warned, with threat of disqualification.

Martin Lester says that no rok has been lost; wrong, one was lost at Cofton when it drifted away over a hill—not too sure if they ever recovered it.

—John Barker  
West Drayton, Middlesex, ENGLAND

### Bettering the Nishi Bat

I was greatly intrigued by your article "Bat Master" (Winter 1989-90 *Kite Lines*). Two of my colleagues made the Bat out of plastic, as directed, but neither kite could fly!

I then made the kite out of nylon but decided to make *one* single triangle keel. The Bat then flew—but not well. After a bit of thought, I modified it using Helen Bushell's Trefoil in her book *Make Mine Fly*. I made a single keel the length of the kite, 4" wide at the nose and 5½" wide aft. I dispensed with the center spine and fitted a piece of ¼"-diameter dowel the full length of the leading edge of the keel and set the tow point 7½" down from the nose. The Bat is now tamed!

It flies beautifully and behaves exactly as your article describes. In fact, my wife won't let me fly it at dusk, as she says it frightens old ladies!

I hope these comments are of interest to anybody who embarks on the project.

—Gwil Williams  
Wirral, Merseyside, ENGLAND

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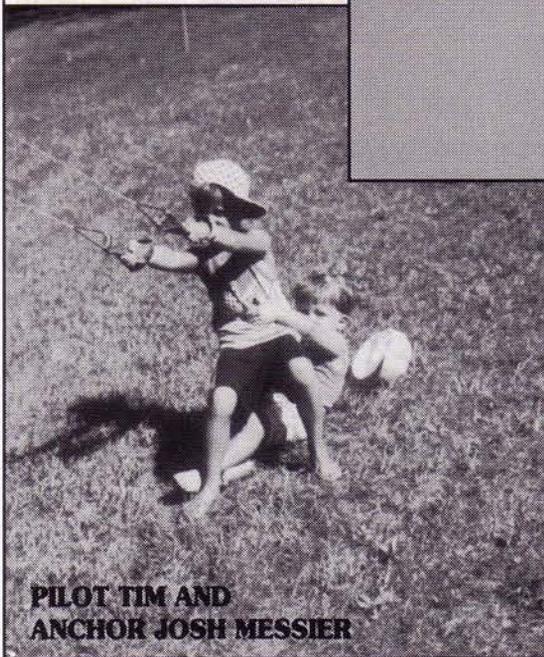
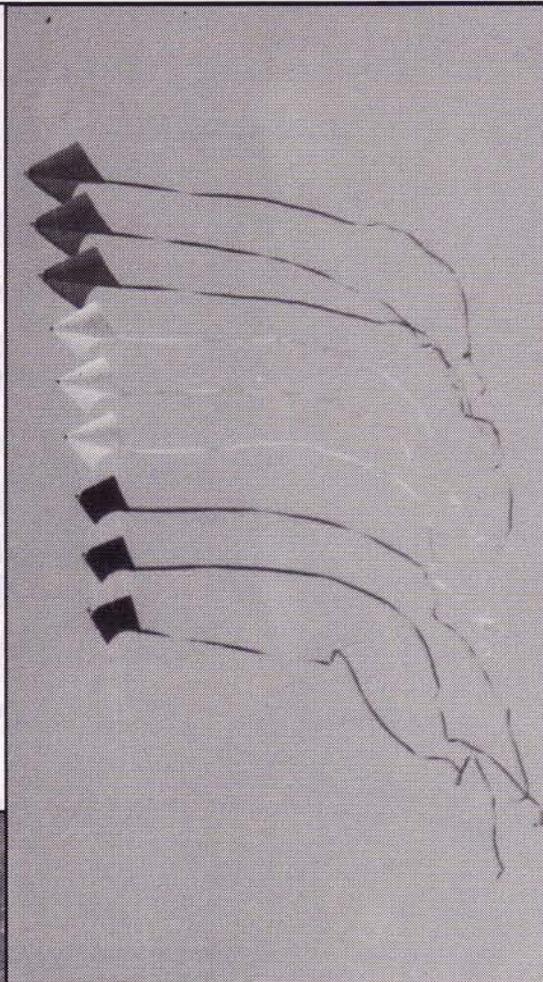
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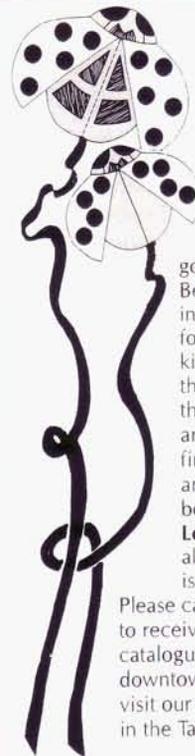
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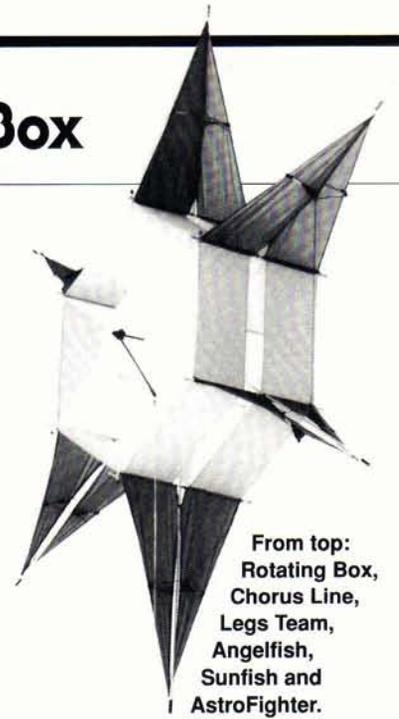
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# Fishes & Legs & A Turning Box

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



From top: Rotating Box, Chorus Line, Legs Team, Angelfish, Sunfish and AstroFighter.

## Waldof's Rotating Box

In our previous reviews of kites by Peter Waldron (Professor Waldof), something has always delighted but (usually) stymied me until I worked it out or gave up and called on the Professor for help. To keep our record clean, the Rotating Box threw us a stymie, although this one was cured with a quick fix on the field. After the fix, the kite flew and rotated.

The Rotating Box is like half a Professor Waldof Box with an axle up the center and a cantilevered bridle spar attached to the axle. The bridle spar is supposed to be a friction fit into a nylon boss at the end of the axle. It is kept from getting lost when the kite is disassembled by a cord through the boss and the center of the spar. Our sample's spar fit loosely into the nylon boss and the flying instructions did not give us any guidance. We found that, to fly, the kite's bridle spar has to be held at an angle to the kite of about 15 degrees. If it slips out of the boss, the effect is as if you are flying from the very center of the star. Obviously that doesn't work; the kite rolls along the ground or turns face down.

Our quick fix was to fit a half-inch square piece of heavy paper around the spar to make a tight fit. Eureka, it flew.

The instructions do tell you that the Rotating Box requires more wind than the regular Waldof Box. We flew in winds from 10 to 15 mph. At 10 mph, the kite flew at a low angle (less than 30 degrees) and off to the right about 30 degrees. As the wind increased, the angle to the ground increased and the angle to the right decreased. The stronger the wind, the higher and more centered it flew and the faster it rotated. The speed of rotation varied from 3 to no more than 20 RPM. In our inconsistent winds, we did not get the effect of good constant turning. But we could tell that in optimal winds, like the seaside's, it would be a wonder. It is without question unique on the market.

As always, Peter's workmanship is spectacular and introduces new and interesting connections and assembly techniques. If you have other Waldof kites, you would want this to add to your collection and study for inspiration. We couldn't recommend it for areas where the winds are never more than 10 mph, unless you are a

good runner with a long field.

We tried to make this kite tumble, the way other star box kites do, but it was less predictable in this department than other tumblers. However, we think that Peter Waldron in the exercise of his ingenuity might fly the Rotating Box in multiples, using one or a cluster of lines. Unlikely and risky it might be, but we've known Peter before to make the impossible look easy—and beautiful besides.

## Angelfish and Sunfish

Joel Scholz (of Sky Delight Kites) has been in a fish frenzy lately making kites with strikingly similar graphics and construction. But in temperament they differ as much as a tetra from a guppy.

The kites appear to be descendants of Takeshi Nishibayashi's fighter fish. The workmanship and materials in our samples were up to the usual high standards of Joel Scholz. The colors are brilliant and very pretty in the air.

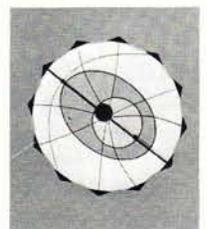
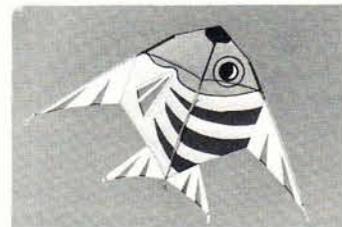
The Angelfish is a delta construction with keel and a nose angle that extends to pectoral and dorsal fins. In its first version it was quite active, perhaps too active for the average flier. Since then Joel has modified the keel to make the Angelfish fly more consistently upstream.

The kite is an excellent low wind performer, flying easily on winds of 4 to 5 mph. It flies well up to about 15 mph. Above that or in gusts, it requires a flier's attention to prevent its dashing across the sky or to the ground. It would be no disgrace to add a tail in such cases; the kite would still be pretty in the air.

The Sunfish, although obviously related to the Angelfish, is no angel! The kite has a much lower aspect ratio and no keel. Equipped with stout graphite spars throughout, it is both heavier and more rigid than the Angelfish. With a quarter-arc bow in its cross-spar, the Sunfish in flight has many of the characteristics of a rokkaku of similar area (4'x5').

It flies at a very high angle, 65 to 70 degrees, in a 10 mph wind. The bridle can be adjusted through only a short range, 1 inch at most. Warning: it pulls very hard. This kite could easily lift a 2- or 3-lb payload on winds over 10 mph.

Joel also makes the Neptune, a stunt



kite using fish graphics, but we will leave evaluating that to our stunt review panel's survey for a future issue of *Kite Lines*.

What any Fish from Joel will offer you is good craftsmanship, color that holds up in the sky, and a smile for everyone.

### More Lester Legs

Of all the kites we fly, the soft sculptures of Martin Lester attract the most comment from an amused and amazed public. When things are dull and you want to inject a little humor, nothing works better than Legs.

Martin must have decided that more is better, so now we have the Legs Team and a Chorus Line, two pair of legs for either sex—perhaps to offset any sexist overtones. (And we hear this is not the end of it, that Megalegs is coming next at a cool \$8,000!—or is this just a rumor?)

Legs Team is a real eye-catcher. Besides the side-by-side pairs of Legs, in contrasting shorts and socks, there is a soccer ball (in Europe called a football) in the air too. A realistic inflated orb (itself a neat little technical achievement) is strung from the intersection of the bridles and bobs in and out of the path of the kicking feet, truly giving the impression of a downfield charge. This would be a great kite to fly adjacent to your kid's soccer (foot) ball game!

The Chorus Line is a delightful soft

shoe team. With Offenbach's can-can or Scott Joplin's ragtime in the background it would be a sight to behold: black garters and stockings topped by scarlet bloomers tapping their way across the sky: too daring to ignore, too cute to take offense at.

How do these double Legs kites compare to Martin's single sets? We thought they performed better; specifically, they flew at a higher angle, probably because they have twice the width. I was surprised to find that I could launch them without assistance, so long as I was not trying to launch across the wind. Also we judged that the two kites flew equally well, one to the other, so you could choose your kite for visual effect rather than according to wind conditions.

As we expect from Martin, the material and workmanship are above reproach and promise many hours of flying time. Besides being easy to fly, they are easy to open and close (we can't use the words "assemble" and "disassemble"). They each roll into a bag 18" long by 6" in diameter that is large enough to accept a crammed-in kite even if you can't roll it up properly when leaving a windy field.

### Postscript: The AstroFighter

In reviewing the AstroFighter from Goodwinds Kites (Summer-Fall 1991 Kite Lines), I resolved to replace the bamboo spars used for battens with lighter weight,

more flexible ones of 1 or 2mm fiberglass. But before I got around to doing it, Kathy Goodwind sent me the new 1mm fiberglass battens now used in production models of the kite.

The effect on the kite was metamorphic. I have changed my classification of the kite from a Yankee to a Smoothie—from a high-wind fighter to an all-winds fighter.

As currently configured, the AstroFighter can be controlled in a 10 mph wind with less than an arm's length of line pulled in or let out. The kite sustains a climb, pass or dive with that much line action. At rest, it isn't!—for even though it is very responsive, its natural state is orbital.

One interesting plus: when you land the kite, it can be relaunched easily by rolling it along the ground until the nose is pointed up, then gently pulling the line. There's no bouncing it into the air or sliding it on its belly; you just cartwheel it to the upright position and fly.

The AstroFighter flies respectably in winds from 3 to 15 mph, but I plan to make another set of battens of 2mm fiberglass to speed it up in higher winds.

We debated whether to run a complete new review of a kite we had reviewed before, but after the change in the battens the kite was a different animal, inducing and deserving new ratings.

#### 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
Sky Delight Kites: Angelfish 	69.00	40x72	5.5	ripstop, graphite, wood	E	2 min.	E	4-15	E	N
Sky Delight Kites: Sunfish 	190.00	55x58	9.5	ripstop graphite	E	2 min	E	6-25	E	I
Professor Waldof: Rotating Box Kite 	225.00	15x72	19.75	ripstop, graphite, fiberglass, wood	E	15 min	E	10-30	F	S
Martin Lester: Legs Team 	400.00	96x72	26	ripstop	E	1 min	E	8-25	VG	N
Martin Lester: Chorus Line 	400.00	96x72	29	ripstop	E	1 min	E	8-25	VG	N
Goodwind's Kites: AstroFighter 	39.95	22 dia.	2.5	ripstop, fiberglass	G	0 min	E	3-20	VG	I

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: height x width x depth. Measurements and drawings are made with the kite standing on the floor facing the viewer.

# New & Big & Beautiful

By Valerie Govig

## Worthy Consolation

*Edo Dako Dai Zenshu (The Big Complete Book of Edo Kites)* by Masaaki Modegi (Tokyo: Sankaido, 1988), boxed hardcover, 159 pages, 10,000 yen (about \$90 US).

In his preface, Masaaki Modegi says that this book is meant to be a continuation of *Edo Dako* (published in 1986), a smaller volume devoted to the kites of Teizo Hashimoto (recently deceased, see page 48).

This newer book takes its place on the roster of splendid kite literature published in Japan.\* Large, lavish, colorful, *The Big Complete Book of Edo Kites* lives up to the high standards for kite books that are set and maintained in that country.

The kites depicted number approximately 140, most of them filling a page. A few are photographed in gorgeous indoor and outdoor settings. In addition, about 10 pages are occupied by interesting prints showing kite-flying in old Japan.

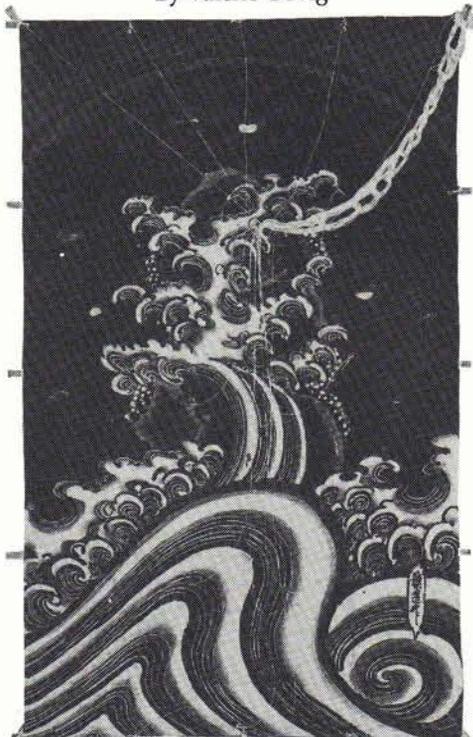
As in Modegi's first book, a few pages are translated into English. They open to foreigners a window on Japanese kites.

Eight groupings are given for the kites, as follows: *Edo Kakudako* (rectangular kites of Edo [old Tokyo]); *Edo Kodako* (undefined, but usually smaller rectangular kites); *Rokkakudako* (six-sided, or hexagonal, kites); *Edo Katakado* (undefined, but evidently figure kites); *Edo Yakkodako* (sleeved footman-character figure kites); *Etodako* (kites made for the 12-year cycles in Japan that are each celebrated with an animal [i.e., Year of the Boar]); *Sumisen* (rough-sketch kites, outlines only with no color); and *Ji Dako* (kites using Kanji, complex Japanese characters, for surface decoration). A list of kites with some information about them appears at the end of the book.

A feature of particular value is the 20-some pages near the end devoted to bridling, framing and other construction details. The drawings, with dimensions in metric, are excellent.

Handicapped by our lack of fluency in Japanese, we hesitate to complain, but certain things bother us.

There seems to be no logic to the order of the kites, the prints and the photographs. All seem to be dropped into the mixture with little regard to relationships among them. Even the list of kites at the end of the



From *Edo Dako Dai Zenshu* by Masaaki Modegi: the admired *Tsukinami* kite by Teizo Hashimoto. (See appreciation of Hashimoto by Tal Streeter on page 48).

book is not in the sequence of the kites themselves; a reader must do a lot of page flipping to find the kites belonging to the information.

The English contains minor errors, vagueness and omissions, frustrating the non-Japanese trying to learn the culture.

A reader who already has Modegi's first book would find considerable overlap in the second book. Out of *Edo Dako's* 89 color pictures, 58 are duplicated in *Edo Dako Dai Zenshu*. Even though the second book shows all the kites in a larger format and with most of the kites filling their pages, the sense of repetition might cause one to question this book as an additional purchase.

The title of this book is a bit grand and perhaps misleading, since we know from other Japanese kite books that many other Edo kites exist. Perhaps the selective taste of Modegi rules these kites to be the best and his book to be the most of the best. The Japanese are a subtle people.

The pleasures of this book remain undeniable. For example, the prints of old-time kiteflying are enchanting. The photographs are magnificent and richly printed on heavy paper. The kites are fascinating. Even the binding of the book, in a lovely matching

box, appeals to the senses. And because now that the monumental work *Nihon-no Tako* by Kazuo Niisaka is, finally and sadly, out of print, *Edo Dako Dai Zenshu* is a worthy consolation.

## Wolfgang's Latest

*Phantastische Drachenwelt: Die Festivals, Die Drachenbauer, Die Modelle (Fantastic Kiteworld: The Festivals, The Kite Builders, The Models)* by Wolfgang Schimmelpfennig (Germany: Falken-Verlag, 1991), hardcover, 128 pages + insert, 49DM (about \$30 US).

The kite community has waited a long time for this book: a genuine coffee table book with respectable content about kites. This book actually is more than that, but it fits the mold in one respect: pictures—lots of pictures—big, full-color pictures (219 color photos, 172 of them by the author).

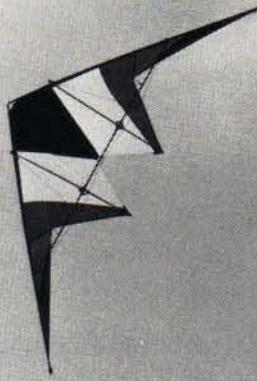
Because we at *Kite Lines* know very little German, we can only give a general review of *Phantastische Drachenwelt*, on its obvious features. We will print more if and when the hoped-for English edition comes out.

In fact, the photographs which so take the eye are not the greatest strength of the book. The layout is. Layout, or design, is something the average reader doesn't notice. It is the arrangement of the elements of text and illustration to create an effective whole—clear, organized and interesting. Not all books require equal levels of design effort, but coffee table books need the most, and there's no question that *Phantastische Drachenwelt* lives up to that kind of expectation. The printing in Germany meets parallel criteria.

A detail that impresses us is the liberal use of "silhouetting," or cutting away of the background from a subject to remove distractions. It is done here with such care that bridle lines are *restored* to extend from their kites into the surrounding white space. An Edo on page 54 with a 16-leg bridle is a stunning example. (However, on pages 30 and 32, the "lace" tail of a Peter Malinski star kite looks like a piece of appliquéd solid blue cloth because the sky background is *not* silhouetted away from the lightly joined bits of fabric.)

In its subject matter, the book wisely does not try to be a "complete" kite book, since such a thing is no longer possible in any form smaller than an encyclopedia. Instead, it focuses on the following: types of kites (six categories in the world according to Wolfgang); portraits of a dozen important

\*See large comparison chart of a dozen "best kite books of Japan" in *Kite Lines*, Winter-Spring 1987, page 26. Or send \$1.00 for a photocopy to *Kite Lines*, P.O. Box 466, Randallstown, MD 21133-0466, USA.



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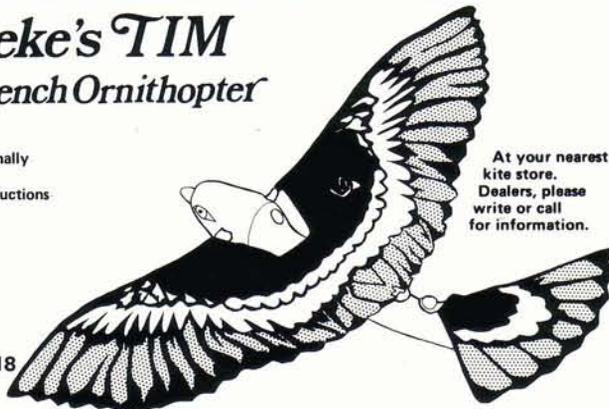


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kitemakers; descriptions of eight major kite events; and plans for four kites. Wolfgang has safeguarded his reputation by securing permission for use of the plans. But he does not seem to have been very exacting about identification of all the kites and kites. One can forgive an occasional lapse, but not to identify the cover picture is particularly ruffling. For the record, the kite on the cover is the Double Hexagon by Silvio Maccherozzi of Parma, Italy. I'll bet Wolfgang agonized over that just after it was printed.

An item rarely provided is the full-scale, traceable plans for the four kites on a separate large sheet folded and inserted loose in the back of the book. All four designs are printed on the front and back of one sheet, with the patterns overlapping in two colors. In case of confusion, the conventional scale drawings in the book proper, all in color, are technically superior.

There is likely to be debate in the kite community about what Wolfgang put in vs. what he left out. Well-traveled though the author is, his book seems to feature Europe, especially Germany, very well, while America is seen mainly in the person of Scott Skinner. Scott well deserves the attention, but what about George Peters?—and Long Beach (Washington)?—and Dieppe (France)?—and China (any of a number of people or places in China)—major missing pieces, all.

Selections raise questions, such as: Is it mixing apples and oranges to group "international" events with "traditional" events (for example, Scheveningen and Shirone) when they are so different in purposes and activities? Can a writer single out an individual as an artist when there are many having the same skills within a country (such as Malaysia)? Is it proper to categorize Masaaki Modegi, the well-traveled flier and Japan Kite Museum owner, as a "kite builder"? Is a rainbow Spinsock, Oregonian in design, representative of Fanø?

Maybe in our shrinking world there are bound to be messy effects that obscure accuracy in recognizing sources and relationships.

The difficulty of this book is simply that the author chose a subject so big and varied that there was no way to slice the pie evenly. Kiting is a complicated subject, especially from a social and cultural point of view. To make groupings of events and people is to imply similarities or differences that may not reflect real life.

But few people will fall into conundrums of philosophy over this book. The thing to do is enjoy its many delights and allow it to grace your coffee table in style. ◇

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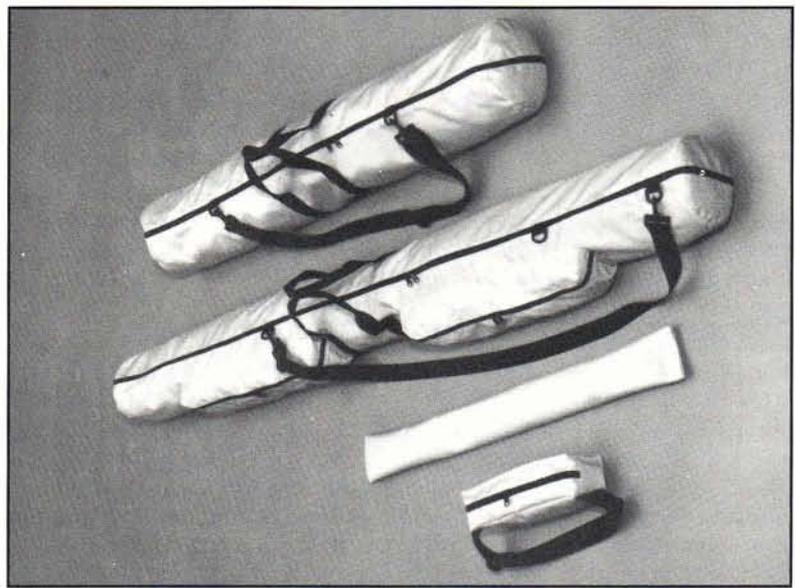
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By Hugh R. D. (Stretch) Tucker



HOW DOES IT FLY? WELL, IT LEANS FORWARD UNTIL IT JUST LOSES ITS BALANCE, AND AS IT FALLS OFF THE BRANCH, IT FLAPS A COUPLE OF TIMES UNTIL IT FILLS WITH AIR, AND THEN IT SOARS ALOFT AS QUICKLY AS YOU AND THE WIND WILL LET IT.

**A**t the Maryland Kite Society's winter kite retreat weekend in February, a late-night group was talking about parafoils. Bill Tyrrell said that many people are cautious about building a parafoil because a lot of emphasis is placed on the back curve of the rib profile. What we need is a parafoil with straight lines.

Next morning I drew up this design. It incorporates several ideas to help take the fear out of parafoils. For example:

- length of ribs is set to match the width of a roll of fabric (41 inches);
- one-piece keels avoid alignment necessary with triangular flares;
- small size—15 square feet—is not intimidating and is a workable size for experimenting with other options.

If you follow these instructions, you should not have any problems. Just realize a couple of things at the beginning:

- all seams are flat, and alignment is made on the leading edges of ribs, keels, back and face panels;
- the seams of the two outer ribs are on the *outside* of the kite;
- at no time is the sewing machine *inside* the kite—unless you read instructions as a last resort when all else fails. Then you may have to use a pair of scissors.

## Tools

- pen or pencil
- hot knife
- straightedge

- sharp knife (razor) or scissors
- sewing machine

## Materials

- 2 pieces of cardboard for templates, one about 6" x 40" for ribs and the other about 6" x 36" for keels
- 2 pieces of ripstop nylon, 61" x 41" (width of fabric), one piece for the back panel and the other for the face panel
- 2 pieces of ripstop nylon 120" x 41" for ribs and keels
- 66" x ¼" webbing or heavy ribbon to make bridle loops and trailing edge tabs
- 85 feet of 100-pound Dacron polyester line for bridles.

## Cutting

First, cut the two cardboard templates for the ribs and keels. The dimensions given (*diagram 1*) represent the finished size, so add your hem allowance. I usually add ½ inch to allow for a double-fold ¼-inch hem.

Lay out the templates on the fabric for best economy. The ribs will all run parallel, one next to the other, but the keels can be staggered (*diagram 2*). You will need 11 ribs and 6 keels.

Cut back and face panels to length (60 inches plus ½ inch each end). Be sure cuts are parallel, and at right angles to the side chosen as the leading edge.

All the above cuts can be made with a straightedge and a razor knife (no hot knife needed), because the exposed edges

will end up inside the hems.

With a hot knife, make cross-vent holes (2½" diameter) in nine *only* of the ribs. Save two ribs without holes for the outer panels.

Also with the hot knife, cut 66 inches of tape/webbing into twelve 5-inch lengths for bridle loops and three 2-inch lengths for trailing edge (tail) loops.

## Layout

On the back and face panels, draw a series of rib lines on 6 inch spacing (*diagram 3*). The outside lines (½ inch from the edge) are the hem lines. Make sure that these lines are parallel to each other and at right angles to the leading edge. These will be the stitch lines for the ribs

Turn face panel over and draw keel lines on 12-inch spacing, that is, on every other rib line.

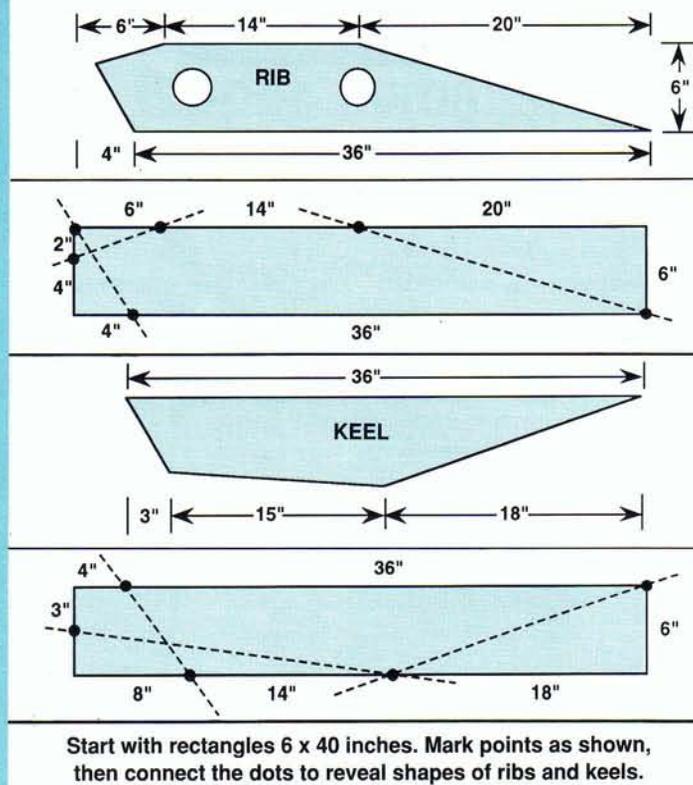
## Sewing

Take a deep breath! Let it out! Repeat several times! Now, read this part through all the way so you'll have some idea of the sequence of steps.

**1.** Fold and sew a ¼-inch double hem on (a) the leading edge and sides of the back panel, (b) the leading edge and sides of the face panel, and (c) all edges of the ribs. *Note:* Lay one outside rib on its opposite face when hemming, so that its hems will be inside the kite.

**2.** Fold and sew a ¼-inch double hem

Diagram 1. TEMPLATES



on all edges of the keels, but lay them in alternate directions, so you have three left-handed and three right-handed keels.

3. Fold and sew a 5-inch length of tape or webbing on each keel at the points marked. Sew the loops on the same side of the keel as the hems.

4. Flip the back panel so that its hems are facing up (rib lines showing). Starting with the left side, take one of the ribs *without holes* and sew the back of the rib to the edge of the panel. The hems of the rib will face *in*, toward the panel. The hem of the rib and the hem of the panel are sewn face-to-face. Be sure to use the correct ribs—left or right—on the outer edges of the panels.

Proceed across the panel, left to right, and sew the remaining ribs down the lines on 6-inch intervals. The two end ribs will have their hems facing in toward the center of the kite (*diagram 4*).

5. Lay the face panel on its back (the inner surface), with its hems *down*. Starting at the left edge, sew the keels onto the face panel on the 12-inch spaced lines. Three keels face right and three keels face left towards the center line (*diagram 4*).

6. Lay the back panel on its back, ribs uppermost. Lay the face panel on its face, keels underneath. Both leading edges will face away from you, back panel on the left.

Sew the outside rib on the right edge of the back panel to the left edge of the face panel. At this point, you may have to roll up the face panel and keels to make them fit through the throat of the machine.

Pulling each rib over from the left with the back panel, sew progressively across the face panel along the 6-inch spacing lines.

Remember to fold each keel out of the way after you have sewn a rib along its line. Ribs and keels are sewn along the same line.

After you sew the last outside rib onto the face panel, you will have an almost complete kite on the left side of the sewing machine, facing away from you.

7. All that remains now is to clean up the trailing edge. Notice the face panel has about 4-5 inches of extra fabric beyond the ribs and keels, while the back panel has about 1½ inches.

Lay the kite face down on a flat surface, leading edge away from you. Fold the keels under so they lie flat, and smooth out the kite as best you can. With a hot knife and a straight-edge, trim both back and face panels together, leaving about 1½ inches beyond the keels and ribs. In other words, trim off the excess fabric of the trailing edge of the face panel to match the trailing edge of the back panel.

You can finish the trailing edge in several ways:

a) With the trailing edge stuck together from the hot knife, just double fold over and sew a ¼-inch hem the entire width of the kite. Add tape loops in the center and corners of the trailing edge.

b) Carefully separate the two panels at the trailing edge, double fold each inward (toward inside of kite) and sew a ¼-inch hem on each panel. Then sew both hems together, adding a folded two-inch length of tape as a loop in

Diagram 2. CUTTING LAYOUTS

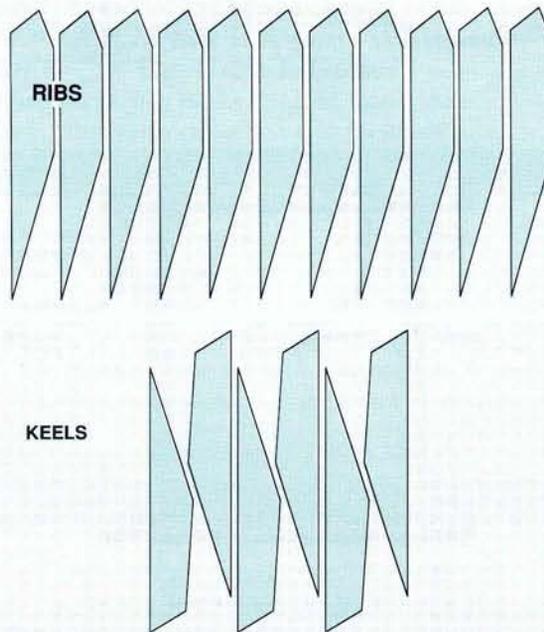
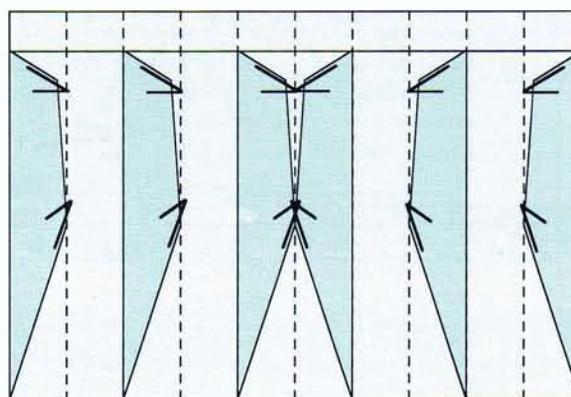


Diagram 3. SEWING LAYOUT



the center and at both corners of the trailing edge.

c) Sew separate hems as in b) above, but when you sew them together, leave the center inch or two of each cell open to allow air to vent through the trailing edge. Add tape loops in the center and corners of the trailing edge.

## Bridling

You remember that 85 feet of line? Well, cut off 12 inches and set it aside. Take the remaining 84 feet and cut it into six equal 14-foot lengths.

Take three lengths, fold them in half and tie an overhand knot, giving you a loop and six legs, as shown below.

Take two of the six legs and attach them to the front loops of the outside keels. Make both legs equal in length, measuring from the point of the keel. (There may be variations in loop length!)

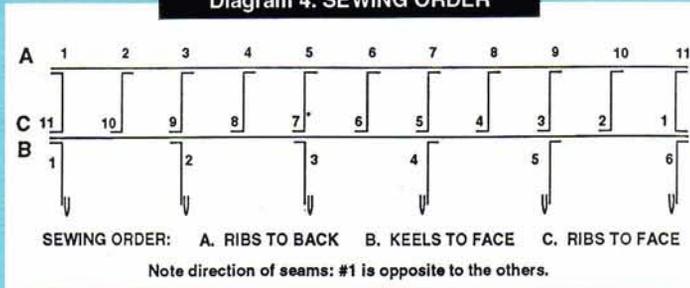
Pick another two bridle lines and tie them onto the front loops of the next two keels. These lines will be three inches shorter than the outside pair, and should be equal in length to each other.

The third pair of bridle lines is tied onto the front loops of the two center keels. These will be two inches shorter than the previous pair, and equal in length to each other.

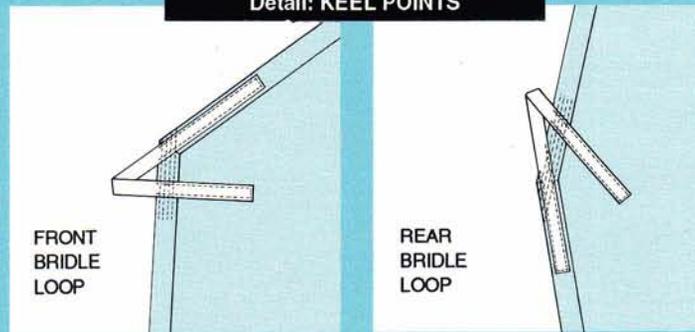
Repeat this entire process with the three remaining 14-foot lengths, tying them onto the rear loops of the keels. The measurements are the same as the front bridle lines.

What you are aiming for is a kite with a flat base, and with bridle lines which are symmetrical around the centerline.

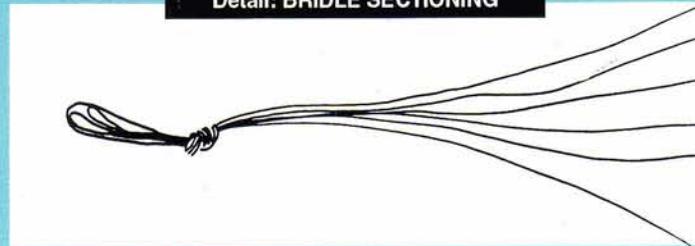
Diagram 4. SEWING ORDER



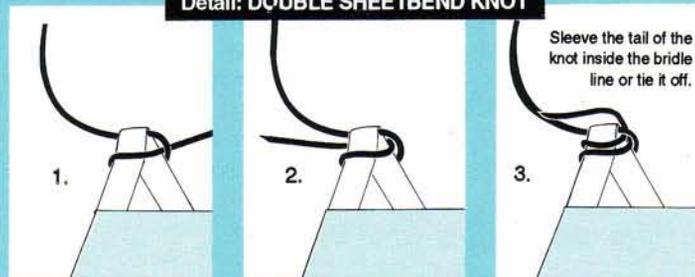
Detail: KEEL POINTS



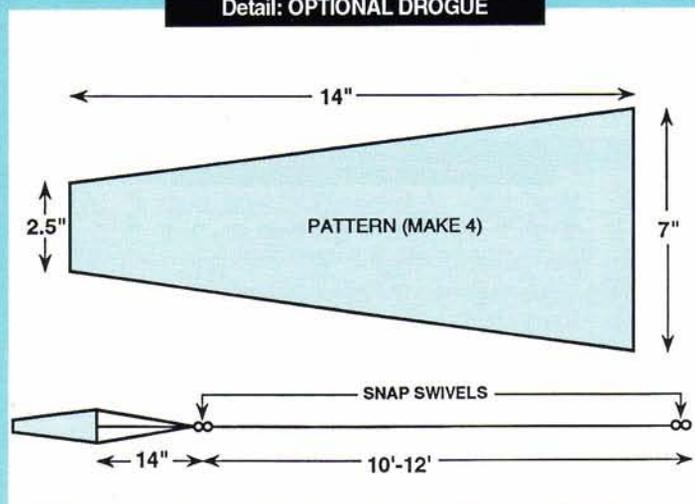
Detail: BRIDLE SECTIONING



Detail: DOUBLE SHEETBEND KNOT



Detail: OPTIONAL DROGUE



DRAWINGS NOT TO SCALE, BY THE KITE LINES STAFF

The 12 inches of line left over? Use it to join the loop of the front bridles to the loop of the rear bridles. Put a sturdy metal ring onto this length of line with a lark's head knot. This will give you a two-leg bridle with easy adjustment for varying wind conditions.

Once you have found a good median tow point, your adjustments should be about 1/4-1/2 inch from that point. Move the ring forward (toward leading edge) for light air, backward (away from leading edge) for strong winds.

Does it need a drogue? No, but if you want to put one on—go for it! Hang it 10-12 feet behind the kite.

## Watch Your Step

Let me guess—you got to Step 17, realized that the sewing machine was stuck in the middle of everything and would not come out. Well, call Doug Hagaman or George Ham or Bill Tyrrell, and if they can help, let me know because I'd like to know where you found Step 17.

In any case, whatever you choose to do with or to these plans, you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you have built a real parafoil and it was painless—well, practically painless.

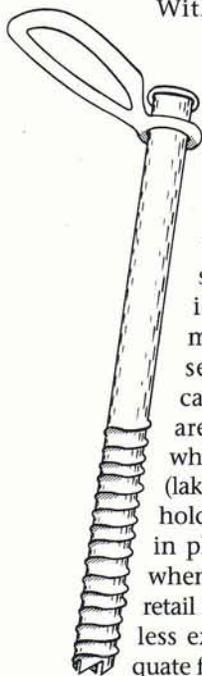
## For the Future

If you want to make a scaled-up version of this parafoil, remember that as you increase the size of the ribs you'll need *more of them*. However, variations of all kinds are worth trying. Dom Jalbert gave us the parafoil, but he didn't close the book on it. Everything we do adds to the opus. ◇

# Winter, Summer, Ripper, Hummer

## 1 Ground Tether 1: Winter Tether

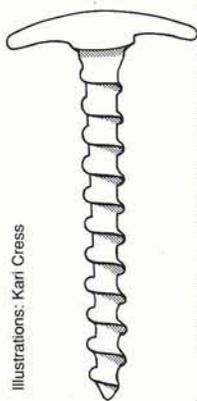
From Russell Jolly, Rowe, Massachusetts:



With the ever-increasing number of winter kite events being organized, there is a real need for a cold weather alternative to the popular "dog stake" kite anchor, which works well in soil (even sand), but not so well in ice. Back-packing and mountaineering stores sell climbing anchors called "ice screws." They are threaded metal tubes which screw easily into ice (lake, pond, marsh or river), hold strongly while they're in place and remove easily when you've finished. They retail for \$10 to \$48. I find the less expensive ones are adequate for kiteflying.

## 2 Ground Tether 2: Summer Tether

From Michael Graves via Skye Morrison, Toronto, CANADA:



A ground screw manufactured in England and sold in Canadian tire stores as the "Twizel Peg" is a really neat kite tether for hard or soft soil. It is solid orange plastic, six inches long, and looks like a giant woodscrew with a t-handle. The manufacturer claims it has 10 times the grip of a straight peg, especially in soft ground, and I do find the holding power surprising.

There is no loop on the stake, but you can glue a metal ring to the handle, drill a hole in the handle and slip a ring through it, or use your super knot-tying techniques on it. Twizel Pegs were selling for about \$4.50 US per six-pack when we bought them, but are no longer in stock at our store. (If anyone knows where to get more, please get word back to us.)

## 3 Ripper of Choice for Appliqués

From Tom Arbster, Bethany, Oklahoma:

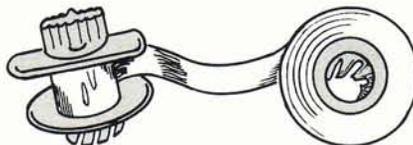


To remove the background fabric from an appliquéd design, I was using scissors, which left rough edges and sometimes punched holes in my kites. Then I discovered that a seam-ripper does the job easier and neater. Use the sharp point to make an opening in the base material (behind the appliqué) then insert the part with the little ball. Let the ball ride against the seam as you push the ripper around the appliqué. This will leave a nice even edge (1/8 or 1/4 inch wide), which can be stitched or left alone.

## 4 What Happens When the Hum is Gone?

From Elmo Weeks, Richland, Washington:

Typewriter correction tape (or lift-off tape)



used on many electric typewriters is a superior tape for kite hummers as it is thin, lightweight and unbelievably strong for its thickness. Some brands (I use General Ribbon) have no stretch at all.

It's readily available at office suppliers or wherever typewriter ribbons are sold.

Tips & Techniques is a forum for you to share your favorite hint or trick for making and flying kites.

Each published item earns your choice of (1) any book(s) from the Kite Lines Bookstore to the value of \$15 or (2) a subscription or extension for four issues of *Kite Lines*. And as a bonus you will also receive recognition from the worldwide kite community.

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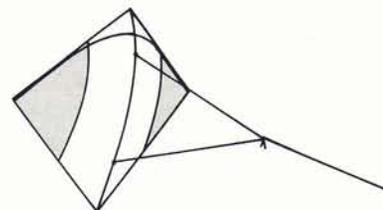
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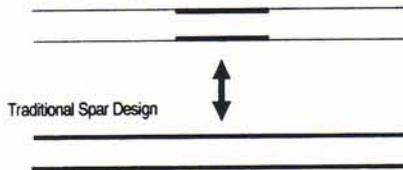


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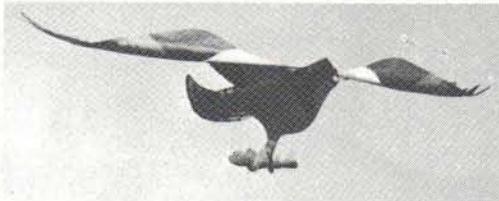
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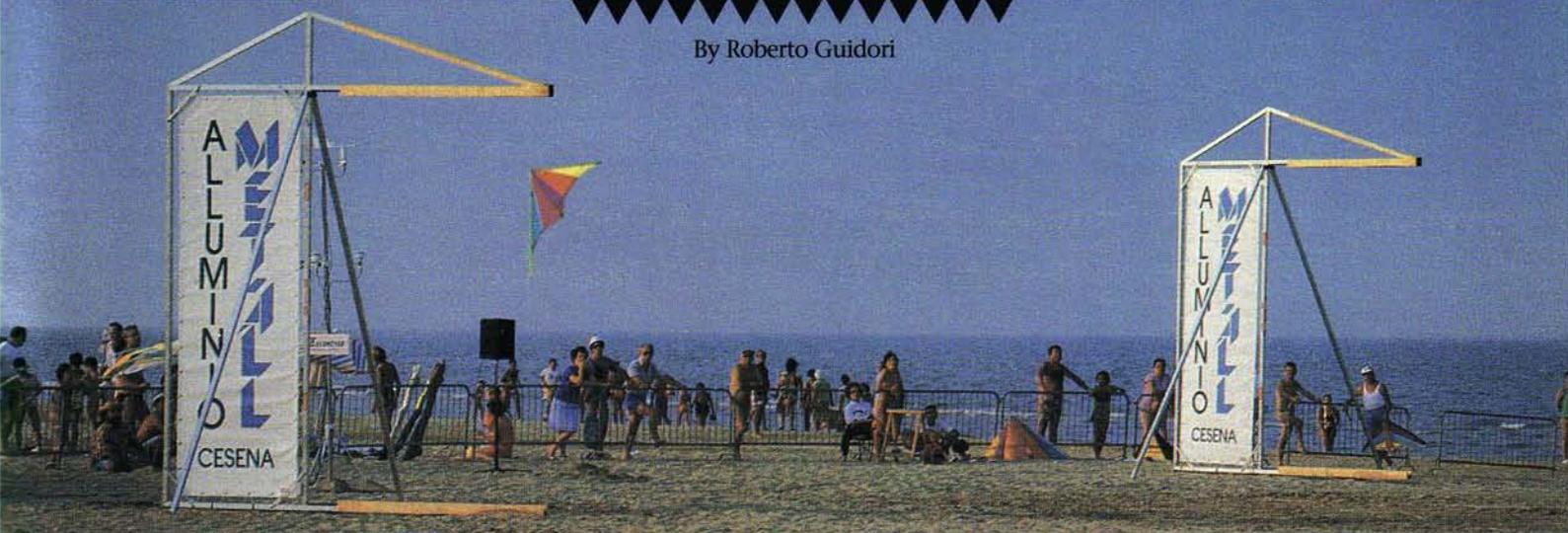
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# 12 Seconds, 10 Million Lire

By Roberto Guidori

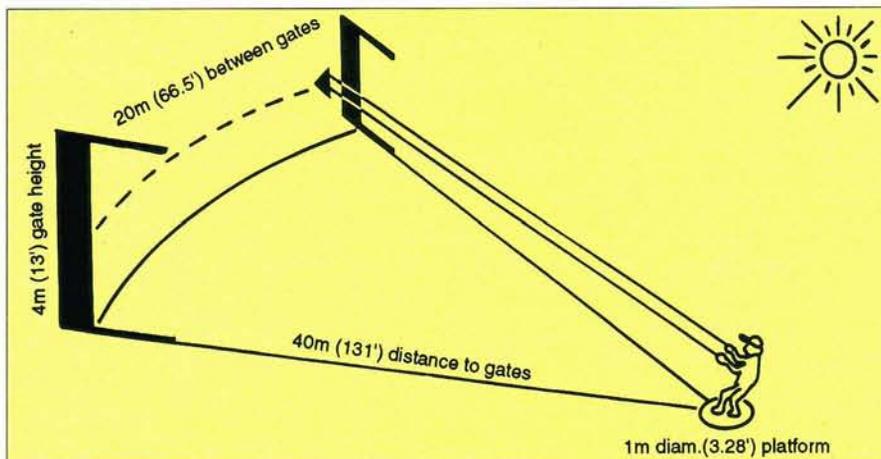


At the start of the competition there were 32 kites, a few of which were forced to withdraw due to technical problems. There were various models, from new prototypes to veterans of the sky. The competitive spirit was notable—probably due to the prize being offered (ten million Italian *lire*, about \$8,000 US).

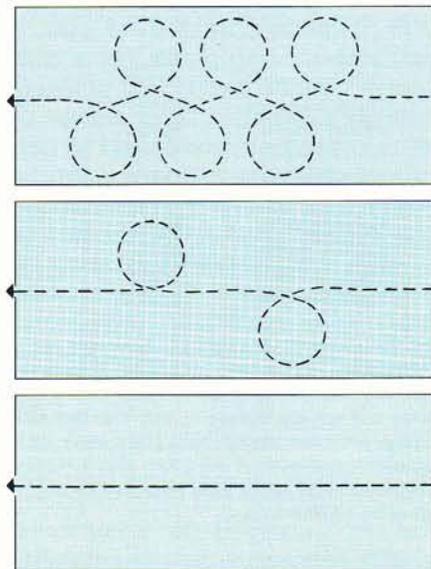
The competition site was well set up. First, it was completely fenced by railings which were covered by the sponsor's publicity banners. At one end was the platform on which each contestant had to stand while performing. At the opposite end were the two four-meter (about 13 foot) doors, or gates, and, just beyond the doors were the tables with the judges and the timekeepers, members of the National Federation of Timekeepers (*Federazione Italiana Cronometristi*). There was also equipment to measure the weather conditions of the moment (atmospheric pressure, temperature, wind speed and direction), and the apparatus was mobile so it could be moved to follow the direction of the wind.

Unfortunately, due to technical problems, it was impossible to continuously move the doors to position them directly downwind. They were very cumbersome and the small wheels with which they were equipped made it extremely difficult

The International Sprint Kite Toshiba, in Cervia, Italy, September 6-8, 1991, was exactly as I had expected it to be: Exciting, Tense and Competitive. —R.G.



Top, view of electronic gates that clock the speeding kites; above and below, schematic of gates and maneuvers.



to move them great distances. Hence, the doors were repositioned only twice a day. It was for this reason that the trials were held only during the afternoons, that time of the day when the wind blows steadily in mainly one direction. The doors then had to be moved only a few meters to be set in position.

The competition grounds were made available for five days of test flying before the

contest. This was an advantage for those who lived in or near Cervia, because they could practice flying between the famous (by then) four-meter doors. Just as many kites were damaged during those trials as during the competition itself.

Whoever had a fast kite was at a disadvantage because this increased the need for precision when entering and exiting the doors. As foreseen, the majority of kitefliers found it impossible to execute the figures in the limited space between the doors, because the distance was so small (20 meters, about 66 feet). This forced almost everyone to enter the area, take the kite up above the doors to execute the figures, and come back down to exit. While doing this, some fliers moved forward or backward and found themselves out of line with the exit door.

This transformed the "sprint" kite competition into a veritable test of the flier's

ability to maneuver in a restricted area.

Friday the 6th at 2 p.m., competitors drew lots to decide their flying order.

Right from the start we could see that the Bombus kites of Claudio Capelli (president of the Sprint Kite Organization) and the Mistral kites of Guido Accascina (Alivola Kites) were two of the favorite contenders for the title of fastest kite. In fact, six Bombus kites (one of which was an ultralight version made completely of reinforced Mylar) and 10 Mistral kites (three made of light plastic) were entered. There was only one Flexifoil (which did not compete) and three lozenges (diamonds). One of the newcomers on the field was the Smile kite (designed by me), flown by Luciano Sampaol and myself. There were a few small delta-shaped novelties like Sputnik and Sgorbius, which were the outcome of weeks of work done exclusively for this competition.

At about 2:10 p.m. on Friday, the final competition began with the wind blowing at 3–3.5 meters-per-second (about 7–8 miles-per-hour). The main judge was Pietro Livi, vice-president of the Centro Italiano Aquilonisti kite club. There was a second judge to make sure the competitors did not step off the platform.

At the end of the first trial, the Mistral of Tomasso Veronesi recorded the best time of 14.14 seconds, much to the satisfaction of Guido Accascina, the kite's designer. At about 5 p.m. the doors were repositioned to the center of the wind for the second trial of the day. By then the wind had increased to 6–6.5 m/s (about 14–16 mph).

Veronesi's time was still unbeaten halfway through the second trial. Then, when it was my turn with the Smile, I recorded a time of 12.12 seconds, of which 6.55 seconds was for the first six loops. The time was certified and I had almost finished winding up my lines when Claudio Capelli and Guido Accascina went together to protest to the judge, saying that I had not executed the loops well enough. The protest was allowed, and I was told to repeat the first of the three flights. So I did and I bettered my previous time with a score of 12.08 seconds!

During the following two days, in spite of all the attempts, no one managed to beat this time. On Saturday



The judges at Sprint Kite Toshiba study the maneuvers of the contesting kites.

and Sunday the wind never exceeded 5.5 m/s (13 mph) and, obviously, this was in my favor. I also had a great deal of fortune when the Sputnik of Giorgio Vignali crashed into the door during its second flight after having done a very good time on its first. The timekeepers (experts at their job) said that it would have done 11.90 seconds or even less.

Another close contender was Ciccio Guardigli who had his first flight annulled because he did not present himself on the field when called. (We found out later that he was at the toilet.) Ciccio had consistently scored excellent times on the first—and most difficult—part.

Some said that the misfortunes of

Giorgio and Ciccio were due to their being young (both 17) and not mature enough to control their emotions, but I can safely say that all the kitefliers had this problem, some being more able to hide it than others.

Sunday evening the first International Sprint Kite Toshiba officially ended with a ceremony in the Indie Disco (closed to the public), with most of the competitors present to see me collect the ten million *lire* prize money.

### In summary...

The competition was exciting for both kitefliers and spectators, but with a little more care and planning, it could have been even better.

Without a doubt there is a need for more instrumentation to keep the spectators and competitors informed immediately and constantly about flying times, wind speed, etc. A knowledgeable announcer at the microphone is a must.

There has to be an easier way to move the doors, to position them directly downwind from the fliers—quickly—when the wind direction changes. This is extremely important.

The rules and the judging system have to be revised. In fact, many fliers (not all of them participants) expressed disappointment about this during and after the event. Anyway, it was disappointing to see three members of the organization take

part in the competition (Fabio Falaschi, Claudio Capelli, Gerardo Ghini) and to see the vice-president of the organization (Pietro Livi) judging the event. However, I must say that Pietro proved himself to be completely honest and diplomatic, regardless of all the protests and pressure he found himself under.

With any new competition, it is difficult to get everything right the first time, and many unanticipated problems may come to light during the course of events. But I know that in the sporting world there already exist regulations and judging systems that have been used for years. Why didn't someone think of this beforehand?

Anyway, on a scale of 1-to-10, my final vote on the entire event is 6.5. I would like to be able to give it a 10 next year.

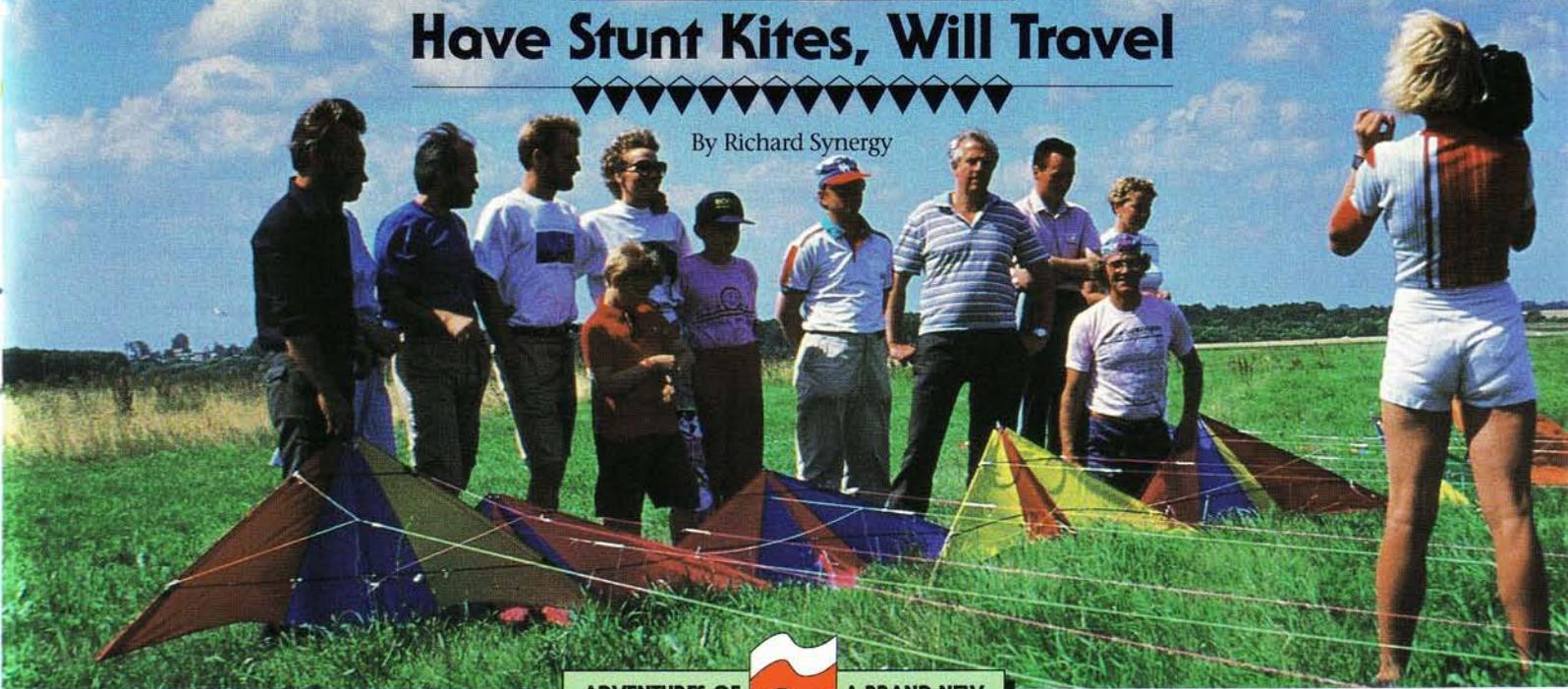
### International Sprint Kite Toshiba Some Final Scores

Ranking	Name	Kite	Time
1	Roberto Guidori	Smile	12.08
2	Guido Accascina	Storm	12.43
3	Fabio Falaschi	Mistral	13.03
4	Claudio Capelli	Bombus	13.06
5	Gianpaolo Orioli	Mistral	13.13
6	Duilio Siculiana	Bombus	13.35
7	Gerardo Ghini	Bombus	13.58
8	Luciano Sampaol	Smile	13.81
9	Gabriele Parma	Mistral	13.86
10	Paolo Dall'igna	Ciantiso	13.87

Although there were 32 kites entered, there were only 23 fliers in the competition. This is because several entrants flew more than one kite. For example, Guido Accascina entered with three kites and actually finished in 2nd, 11th and 15th place! And despite the "international" name of the event, all 23 fliers were from Italy, and most of them from Cervia. Note that the top 10 finishers listed above were separated by less than two seconds of the electronic clock.

# Have Stunt Kites, Will Travel

By Richard Synergy



**ADVENTURES OF A BRAND NEW PILOT FROM CANADA WHO TOOK 76 KILOS OF KITES AND MATERIALS TO POLAND— AND CAME BACK RICH WITH STORIES.**

## THE WONDERFUL IDEA

Andrew and Ivana Madej were newlyweds from Poland visiting Canada on their honeymoon. They were huddled under the umbrella of a hot dog stand one rainy Toronto afternoon, smelling of smoke, short on funds and praying for customers. Their honeymoon had become an adventure.

In the course of ordering a hot dog, I found myself offering them a better job. They accepted my offer and turned out to be enthusiastic workers and enjoyable companions. I invited them to join me for a day of stunt kiting at Humber Bay Park.

Saturday morning dawned cold and windy. When Andrew and Ivana arrived, I handed them kites, gave them a few brief instructions and said "give it a try." By noon they were beyond the crashing stage and were merrily guiding their kites back and forth across the sky. When we stopped for lunch, I asked,

"Are you going to buy yourself kites as soon as you get back to Poland?"

"No, we can't."

"Why not?" I asked. "You seem to like the sport."

"Oh, yes, we like it," they said, "but you see there are no kites like these in Poland."

"Well, then," I said, "I'll just have to come to Poland and help you start the sport of stunt kiting there."

"Wonderful idea," they replied.

## OVER MY HEAD

Two weeks later, Andrew's and Ivana's visas expired and they returned to Poland. I resumed the daily grind of the mail

order business and never gave another thought to kiting in foreign lands. Then the letter arrived. It read:

"Dear Richard, We have rounded up 40 students. When will you be coming to Poland to teach us stunt kiting?"

Uh-oh.

At the time, I had been stunt kiting for only six months. True, I was practicing 20 hours a week, but I had not yet flown quad-lines, stacks, doubles or dog stake. How could I possibly represent the sport with so little training? Then I saw that if I arrived in Poland in July, I would have a full six more months to improve. I called Andrew and booked the date.

Crazy as could be, I practiced three hours a day, seven days a week, from January to June. When I wasn't flying, I was sewing kites: big kites, little kites, stacks of kites. I even dyed my own rip-stop nylon with dyes sent to me by Anne Sloboda. By June 1st, I had sewn 40 kites and had learned precision figures, doubles, stacks, ballet and quadline deltas. In addition I had gained some experience at dog stake flying and power kiting. Then I had a stupid accident.

## EASY LOGIC

If one kite pulls 100 pounds, how much do six kites pull? Easy, 600 pounds! If the kiteflier weighs 160 pounds, will 600 pounds lift him off the ground? Yep! Now if 1000-lb-test line is degraded 40% by

knots, what pull will break it? Simple, 600 pounds. Okay then, what will happen if on a windy day the kiter ties a line from the back of his harness to a tree and another line from the front of his harness to his kites? The answer is obvious. First the kites will haul the kiter into the air. Then the line will break. And finally, gravity will haul the kiter back to earth.

The result was that I boarded flight 951 for Warsaw in a wheelchair.

## ARRIVING & ADJUSTING

With the help of flight attendants, I made it off the plane and into a wheelchair for my trip through the mobbed terminal and customs. We located Andrew and he and I decided to move my mountain of baggage using the wheelchair. Andrew pushed the wheelchair and carried massive bundles as I crutched along behind. As we headed toward his mini station wagon, he asked, "What is all this stuff?"

"Well, Andrew," I replied, "this little pack here contains three pairs of socks and six sets of underwear. The remaining 76 kilograms is kites and kite supplies."

"All this is kite supplies?"

"Yes, all this is kite supplies."

My first day in Poland I spent sleeping, but by the evening of the second day, I felt adjusted enough to venture out. The sun was 10 degrees above the horizon and a gentle breeze blew across the farm fields. With a few light-wind kites, I set out on crutches for a hayfield a few minutes down the road.

In an area where the field was mowed and raked clean, I set up one of my ultra-

P. Marek

lights and rolled out some 30-pound lines. Balancing on my good leg, I snapped flying lines taut and my ten-square-foot delta glided into the sky. The trailing edge hummed softly as it carved along. Out of nowhere, children began to appear: here a boy in soiled farm clothes, there a couple of girls walking hand in hand—people were coming down the road. It was like a dream. No one spoke. Everyone moved cautiously. Every head was tilted up, eyes on my kite.

Me? Well, I was totally freaked out. I looked at the crowd close about me and in my friendliest voice said, "Hello."

Thank God someone offered a "Hello" in return. Beckoning with my arm and head, I invited the youth who had spoken to come over and try the kite. He came slowly, questioningly. I held out the plastic handles for him. He got the message and took them. I crutched my way in back of him, reached around his body and grasped his forearms.

"Right," I said, as I pulled on his right arm. "Left," I called, as I tugged on his left arm. Minutes went by with me calling the turns and tugging right and left. Finally he began making corrections without my help. I let go and stood back.

"Good, good," I called, as he hacked the kite across the sky. The kite remained airborne. The crowd continued to gaze, but now they were talking among themselves. I reached for another kite. Two boys immediately stepped forward, fire in their eyes.

Stunt kiting had come to Poland.

### **WORRIED FOR NOTHING**

My first nine days in Poland were fretful. Ivana was sick in bed with the flu, and Andrew was often unavailable, having to run the family flower business. I was still on crutches, but healing rapidly.

As days slipped by, I wondered about the 40 students I had come to Poland to teach. Then Andrew announced:

"Richard, today we must go to the Catholic monastery to meet with Brother Stanley, who runs a model airplane club for school boys."

Hurray! Things were starting to happen. My enthusiasm was short-lived, however, for the boys in Brother Stanley's club did not build flying models. To make matters worse, they were only seven, eight, nine years old. I feared that I would be expected to teach stunt kiting to kids too

young to have the required concentration.

The following morning at the Łódź (pronounced Wooch) airport, my worries were laid to rest. Ten adults in their mid-30s were there to meet me. Some had won national recognition stunting radio-controlled model airplanes. Some were wizards at control-line flying. One fellow had set records with radio-controlled gliders. And all these champions had official responsibility to teach flying sports to youth. The government had provided them with a large, fully equipped workshop where day or night they could teach youngsters how to design and build models.

I made the difficult decision to direct all my effort toward teaching the 10 champions, for they were in the best position to pass their knowledge on to others. We also decided to train Brother Stanley and a young man named Christopher, who came from towns quite some distance from the airport. By including them, we would be planting three seeds, thereby increasing our chances that the sport would survive and flourish.

### **PITFALLS**

For the first couple of days, teaching "the twelve" to fly stunt kites was frustrating. On one hand, I wanted them to begin flying immediately, on the other hand, the only kites available were my own hand-dyed, meticulously sewn kites.

You can imagine my delight when, for the first three days of lessons, the wind cooperated and blew but gently. In those winds the twelve did gentle crashes, learned not to crash, and went on to begin precision figures—without tearing a single strand of ripstop nylon.

Because flying lessons were proceeding well, and the twelve were itching to learn, I felt no qualms about introducing them to the "pitfalls" of sewing. I realized the patterns I would draw might become the standards for many Polish stunt kites. How many designs, what designs, how large?

In the end I decided that each student would build three medium-sized kites: a diamond and two deltas. Then I would show them how to make a power kite and a ballet kite by scaling up the two deltas.

### **TEA & ICE CREAM**

In a country where epoxy glue, polyester line, arrow nocks and bamboo are hard to find, it would be easy to surmise that electric sewing machines might also be scarce.

However, this was not the case. As I walked into sewing class, I was delighted to see that all my students had high-quality electric sewing machines. I passed around the colorful triangles of cloth and began to teach.

We sewed. We ripped out stitches and sewed again. We suffered! We laughed! When things went horribly wrong, we stopped and went out for tea and ice cream. When things went well, we celebrated with tea and ice cream. As a matter of fact, during our five-day sewing marathon, we practically lived on tea and ice cream.

Every couple of hours we took breaks to discuss bridling, tuning, design, safety, precision flying, power kiting, ballet and competition. These discussions were very challenging for our interpreter, Agnes, as her kite vocabulary was just developing. She became very fast with the dictionary.

By the end of the five days, each student had three kite skins, each boasting vivid colors, smooth seams and sound stitching. Then we got on with framing.

### **GOOD SURPRISES**

Measuring, cutting and gluing are easy for master model makers. Nonetheless, kite frame class was not without its surprises.

The first surprise, for me, was an unusual saw that Slawek (Swavik) brought to class. It was a professional jeweler's saw with a blade having 60 teeth to the inch.

The second surprise was that in spite of careful planning we ran short of ferrules. However, before this could create a problem, Rick said he owned a small lathe and would drive home immediately to manufacture the needed parts. Good surprises like these followed us through the day.

The kite framing class was conducted on a production-line basis. Marek mixed the epoxy; Slawek sawed the carbon tubes and fiberglass rods; Wojtek (Voytek) made the vinyl fittings; and Agnes gave encouragement in Polish and English. Brother Stanley, Christopher and I knotted lines to make bridles and everyone pitched in to glue spars, ferrules and arrow nocks. Though it took only one long day to frame and bridle all the kites, the excitement that followed will last me a lifetime.

### **RUN FOR YOUR LIFE**

New Kite Saturday was an unpromising day. Rain threatened and the wind was bumpy. Nonetheless, everyone arrived at



## VIDEO IT UP

One morning near the end of my stay, Mr. Stefanski, an avid spectator, walked out on the flying field to tell us that he had hired a professional videographer to capture our antics for posterity.

Thirty minutes later, a big burly man and his quiet little wife arrived at the field. The man unpacked a large professional video camera and promptly plunked it on his wife's shoulder. We were all caught off guard; we didn't expect the videographer to be a woman.

I did the introduction, telling why I'd come to Poland and how exciting it was to fly two-string kites. The camera then focused on various styles of kites while I explained the merits of each style. Following this, Marek, Agnes, Wojtek and Brother Stanley flew a wild acrobatic routine and generally showed off. We then demonstrated the big kites.

With Andrew and Wojtek holding fast to the back of my harness, I launched a power stack that pulled so strongly all three of us slid downfield.

Then we flew John Compton's huge Flow Form on a short 10-foot line. Almost as soon as the kite was airborne it charged back and forth, scattering onlookers to the four winds. Next, it pulled the six-man anchor crew off their feet and tumbled them down in a heap. About this time I dived on the kite and squashed it flat.

Mr. Stefanski laughed until his knees buckled. The camera lady smiled with satisfaction.

Great fun! Great footage!

—R.S.

the airport in high spirits, with neighbors, friends and untested kites in tow. Some people came by bus, others, like Wojtek and his five friends, in a car smaller than a Volkswagen bug. Brother Stanley, as usual, peddled his bicycle 25 miles to fly with us.

Spectators, responding to radio announcements, came to the airport in droves. As soon as my twelve had distributed kites among their friends, things began in earnest. Twenty kites stormed out onto a flying field 3,000 meters broad, then set up their kites in a space no larger than a tennis court! Before I could warn them, the kites took off.

They swarmed into the sky like bees. Spectators ran for their lives. Dogs cringed under cars, lines tangled, kites crashed, mayhem reigned supreme.

I started to lay out a new set of lines, but quickly stopped. If I moved downfield, everyone would come and fly beside me; if I flew midst the swarm, my new lines would be in mortal danger.

I took out an old set of lines and a small highly maneuverable kite. Trying to play it safe, I did short, rapid ground passes. But it was "monkey see, monkey do," and in short order the swarm was buzzing back and forth just above the grass. In a desperate effort to protect my lines, I crashed my kite. As it hit the ground, lightning flashed and the rain came down in torrents. Equipment was abandoned; everyone ran for the cars.

The rain continued long enough for Andrew, Ivana and I to have lunch. When the rain stopped, the wind blew straight and clean, so once again we took to the kiting field.

Agnes begged to fly my delta. She launched the kite effortlessly and then more or less guided it by shrieking hysterically every time it bordered on going out of control.

I was enjoying her unusual technique when Slawek asked if I would again coach him on ballet. In 30 minutes of practice, Slawek learned to do wing-tip stands and could balance the kite on either wing for several seconds. Shortly thereafter, it began to rain again, so we called it quits for the day.

## HIDDEN TALENTS

During the weeks following New Kite Saturday, the kiting preferences of my determined twelve began to emerge.

Marek showed the greatest aptitude for

precision flying. Slawek showed special talents in ballet and in teaching younger children. Wojtek's skills lay in coaching and in flying quadlines. Brother Stanley turned out to be the kind of kiter that belongs on a team. We'd often see him shadow-flying other students. Christopher's idea of a good time was to launch a six-pack of power kites and slide all over until his trousers and tennis shoes were green with grass stains.

Andrew, Ivana, Agnes and the other students became good all-around stunt kites and enthusiastic kite ambassadors.

## LOW TECH

I can recall several occasions on which I was asked, "From what will we build kites when we've used up the materials you brought us?"

The only answer I could give was, "You'll have to build kites from local materials."

This answer would invariably make the questioner look glum. I wondered if suitable materials existed in Poland, so for three days I combed the city of Łódź for kitemaking supplies. It was not impossible. I located nylon taffeta, vinyl tubing, polyester thread, bamboo and straight grained wooden splints. I didn't locate Dacron line, but I'm sure I would have if I'd kept searching.

## TUNE-UP TIME

Because materials for kite repair were in short supply, I initially refrained from showing how to tune kites for peak performance. However, as skills improved I no longer had cause to worry.

So one day I held a workshop and tuned each kite as if for competition. Wow! What a difference! Suddenly, trailing edges roared, flying lines whistled, and kites spun faster than anyone dreamed possible. Maneuvers that had been sluggish went snap with the slightest push of the line. Kites pulled like crazy! My students were overjoyed!

Slawek captured the spirit of the mo-

ment perfectly: "When a kite is tuned properly, four hours seems like 15 minutes."

## GIFTS & GOODBYES

After five weeks of splendid flying, it was not easy to pack up our kites and go our separate ways. But Agnes had to return to school; Slawek needed to finish building his house; Marek, Wojtek, Brother Stanley and all the others had commitments they could no longer postpone. And I had to return to Canada. So on August 4th, we hauled baskets full of goodies to the public picnic area and had a grand pig-out.

Kielbasa! Potato salad! Champagne! "Na zdrowie, na zdrowie" (to your health) we chanted as we clinked glasses together. The sun sank in the sky. The fire burned to embers. One by one my twelve flying friends began bringing me gifts. Marek and Christopher gave me expensive hard-bound books of European landscapes. Slawek brought me several sailboat kits he had personally designed as a professional model maker. Others gave me pins, cloth-

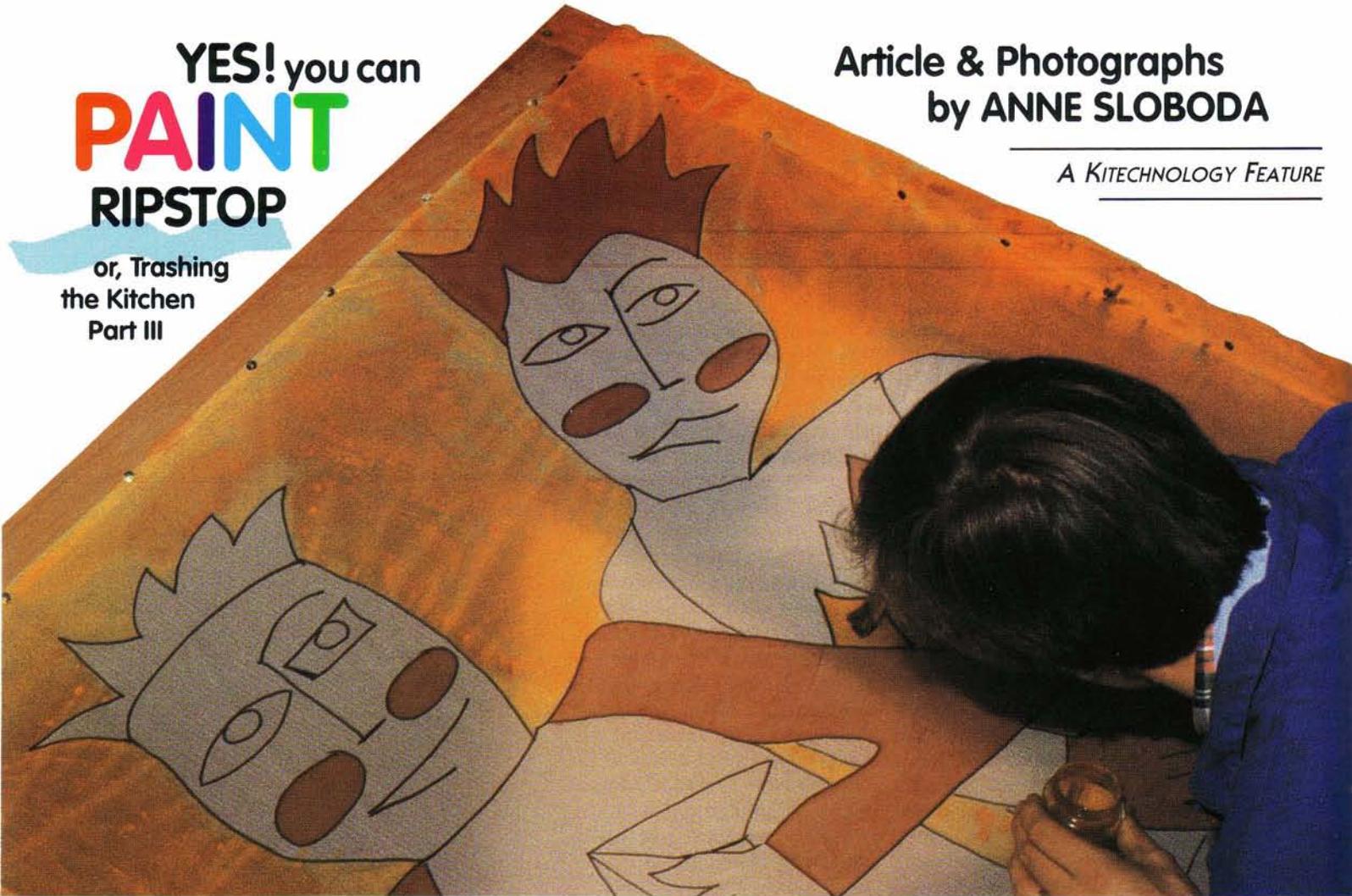
*Continued on page 47...*

# YES! you can PAINT RIPSTOP

or, Trashing  
the Kitchen  
Part III

Article & Photographs  
by ANNE SLOBODA

A KITECHNOLOGY FEATURE



At some point in their careers, most kitemakers come up with a terrific idea for a graphic design that unfortunately would be either impossible to execute using sewing techniques, or barely possible but so much work that the piece might never be finished. Many a masterpiece dies in birth for lack of a medium.

But there are alternative techniques, ones that don't involve cutting or sewing, that would suit the impossible design beautifully.

The simplest alternative is spirit-based markers. These are a well-known and reliable means of coloring ripstop nylon. Markers offer a zillion different colors and are great for fine details and small surface areas. But they are slow to apply and expensive to use on large areas. The cost of coloring in an eight-foot kite would knock you over if the fumes didn't get you first. Markers also have a permanence problem. The colors tend to fade rapidly in sunlight, especially the reds.

Paints have their own problems. They bead, smear and may not spread on the ripstop. Most paints flake off the ripstop after they have dried. Even when you find a paint without these problems, such as commercial sign paint, its opacity takes the beauty away when the kite is flying,

because it makes the colors dull and lifeless against the sky.

Textile dyes, specifically formulated for fiber use, do not have these problems. They are economical, a concentrated source of color and generally light-fast. And there are numerous techniques you can use to apply the dyes, depending on the desired result.

"Vat" dyeing (or batik or tie-dye) is great for large areas of solid color, but not precise for detail work. Silk-screening is (I admit it!) slow and cumbersome, requiring a fair bit of space and equipment, and

**... it works on ripstop,  
the fumes won't kill you and  
it doesn't squeak.**

best suited for the production of more than one kite surface. That leaves us with handpainting: economical, suited to large work, good for testing pieces prior to production work.

Handpainting is exactly what it sounds like. You plunk your brush into a liquid dye mixture and then paint the dye directly onto the fabric. Handpainting with liquid dyes (sometimes called French dyeing) is a fairly common technique

among textile workers, and it's a wonderfully low-tech way to apply color to fabric. All you need are the dyes, a few brushes, some two-by-four lumber to make a stretching frame and a big canning kettle to steam-set the dyes.

The results can be as primitive or sophisticated as the person wielding the brush desires. Chances are you've already seen some of the very fine examples possible. Practically every silk scarf sold at a craft fair in the last ten years has been handpainted.

Handpainting only works on uncoated fabric. However, some ripstops are coated on one side only. I tried Bainbridge Stabilkote 4, which appears slightly shinier on one side than the other.

This difference is rather subtle, so a better method of determining which side is coated is to brush a small patch of dye onto a corner of the fabric where it won't show in the finished image (or use a scrap piece of fabric). On the coated side the dye will go on evenly, but almost immediately will begin to "crawl" and bead up. It will not penetrate the fabric. On the uncoated side, the dye will stay put and be absorbed. It will leave a distinct, albeit uneven, patch of color. Test both sides and compare to be sure.

## THE METHOD

The following method is a new variation on an old standard. The common practice is to use dye powders in aqueous (water-based) solutions. This works well with fabrics like silk and cotton that absorb water. However, ripstop nylon is definitely not one of those.

So we have to find another solvent. Fortunately, water is not the only one that can be used. In fact,

French dyes often use an alcohol/water mixture to make the colors spread more evenly, and alcohol is one of the spirits used in spirit markers. Combine marker pens with French dyes and what do you get? Well, I haven't named it yet, but it works on ripstop, the fumes won't kill you and it doesn't squeak.

Not bad for a start . . .

### STEP 1: MIXING THE DYE SOLUTIONS

#### Equipment

- small glass jars with tight-fitting lids (e.g. baby-food jars)
- measuring spoons and cup
- stirring sticks
- eyedroppers

#### Materials

- methyl hydrate (denatured alcohol)
- acid dye powder
- vinegar

Measure the desired quantity of dye powder (see the recipe following) and place it

#### BASIC RECIPE

	METRIC	IMPERIAL
METHYL HYDRATE	50 ml.	2 fl. oz.
DYE POWDER	2 g.	1/2 tsp.
VINEGAR	5 ml.	1 tsp.

in the jar. Measure out the alcohol and add it a little at a time, stirring constantly until the dye powder is thoroughly dissolved. Then measure the vinegar and add it. Stir again. That's all, folks!

The concentrates will keep indefinitely if they are stored out of direct sunlight and tightly sealed to prevent evaporation.

Different dye colors do not dissolve at the same speed or to the same degree. I find that yellows and violets do not readily dissolve. If you consistently have undissolved dye powder settling out of solution, either add more alcohol or cut back on the amount of powder.

Yes, you can substitute a half-teaspoon of dye powder for one packet of Kool-Aid™ to vat-dye ripstop, then follow the instructions in the article on dying with Kool-Aid (*Kite Lines*, Summer-Fall 1987). Dye powder will give you brighter, stronger color. Doesn't smell as much either.

For most beginners, a simple palette of black plus three primaries (red, yellow and blue) should be sufficient. To mix other colors, use eyedroppers to measure out the primary concentrates and combine them in a clean jar.

For example, to mix a green, measure out five droppers of yellow, add one dropper of blue, and mix. To get a fair idea of what the resulting color will look like, test

it by brushing some onto a scrap of fabric and letting it dry. The final steamed color will be the same, only brighter. Keep records of your mixing proportions if you want to be able to mix the same colors again.

### STEP 2: PREPARING THE FABRIC

#### Equipment

- thumbtacks or pushpins
- lumber (2" x 4" or similar), clamped or nailed together to make a four-sided frame the same size or slightly larger than the piece you intend to paint. (Quilting or tapestry frames can also be used.)

#### Materials

- white ripstop nylon, uncoated or coated one side only

If you want to work from a preliminary drawing, lay the ripstop over the (full-scale) drawing and trace it onto the ripstop using a soft lead pencil. The pencil lines may be inked in with markers if you want them to be part of the finished design. The markers will not affect the dyes.

Now attach the ripstop (uncoated side up) to the stretching frame. Lay the frame on your work surface and the ripstop on the frame. Start by placing a thumbtack in the center of each the four sides. Then add more tacks, working from the centers toward each corner, pulling the fabric taut as you go, until the whole piece is fastened down. The fabric must be tight enough that it will not sag down and touch the underlying work surface when the dye is applied.

### STEP 3: PAINTING

#### Equipment

- soft brushes (oriental calligraphy brushes are recommended)

#### Materials

- stretched ripstop
- dye concentrates
- alcohol
- soap and water

Working with liquid dyes is rather like painting with watercolors. The color has

to be built up slowly with repeated washes of dye. There are two reasons for this.

First, although the dye concentrates are as strong as they can be (in the sense that the maximum amount of dye has been dissolved in the alcohol), a single application will not saturate the fabric with the maximum amount of dye that the ripstop can hold. And second, the dyes are transparent. Wherever there is any unevenness in the application, there will be resulting light and dark streaks. Multiple dye applications even out these streaks and produce a smoother, flatter color.

For bright, full-strength colors, about three washes are usually sufficient. If you want intentionally pale or pastel shades, dilute the dye concentrates with more alcohol and use three or four applications of the weaker concentrate. The streaking is usually quite obvious, and you should see the dye even out as each wash is applied.

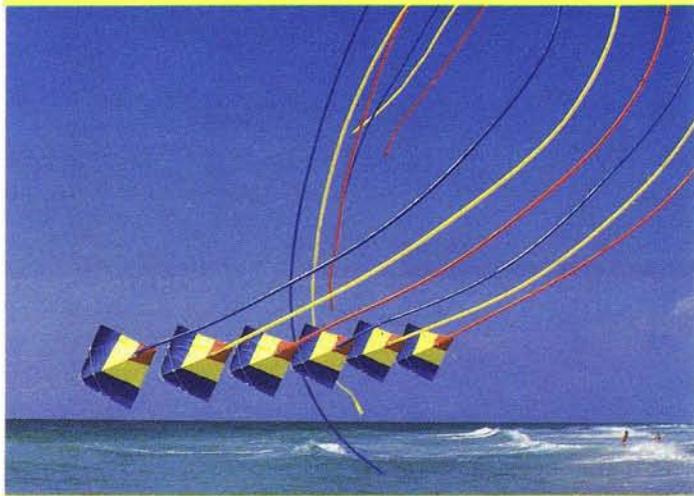
Each color has different handling and setting characteristics. Some flow much more easily and smoothly than others. Some produce even color with just one coat, others give a horrid, mottled color that only smooths out after two or three layers. Some never do even out (browns and purples). The primary colors (red, blue and yellow) and black have been quite reliable in my tests and intermix readily to produce the secondaries (purple, green and orange). The jury is still out on the tertiaries (browns, grays, etc.), but so far I'm not impressed.

To paint, simply take a big soft brush (the softer the better) and load it heavily with dye. You want the brush to be almost, but not quite, dripping wet. Brush the dye onto the fabric with broad horizontal strokes that overlap slightly. Dark lines will appear when wet dye contacts dry, so move fairly quickly and work small areas at a time so the dye can't dry while you're still working on it.

For a flat, smooth color, apply three or four coats of dye, allowing each to dry completely before applying the next. If the color is fairly even and doesn't seem to be getting any darker with subsequent coats, you can assume you've reached the saturation point and quit.

Now *don't panic* when you apply the

To become the hottest name in stunt kites  
one terrific kite after another after  
another after another after...



## TRI-COLOR DIAMONDS

STILL THE BIGGEST CROWD PLEASER  
PAINT THE SKY  
5 1/2 MILLION SOLD

## SKYCHASER

WITH HANDLES AND LINE

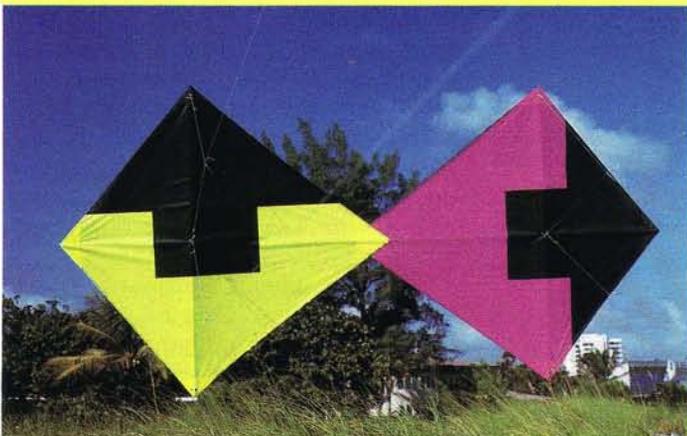
A TOP RETAILER INDEPENDENTLY TESTED ALL  
LOW COST DELTA STUNT KITES, and said

*SKYCHASER BEST ON ALL POINTS.*

BEST COLORS • BEST DESIGN • BEST MATERIALS •  
BEST PACKAGING AND MOST IMPORTANT BEST FLYER



Chances are your first Peter Powell stunt kite  
to another and another  
and another and...



## OMNI

DOUBLE DIAMOND  
QUAD LINE

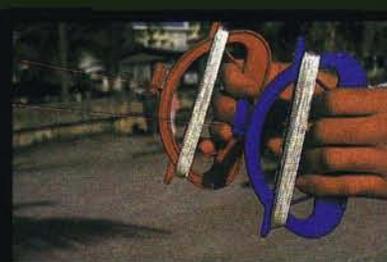
STARTLING PERFORMANCE  
IN ALL DIRECTIONS

THE NEXT GENERATION  
OF QUAD LINE KITES



HUGE STOCK OF DACRON • KEVLAR • SPECTRUM

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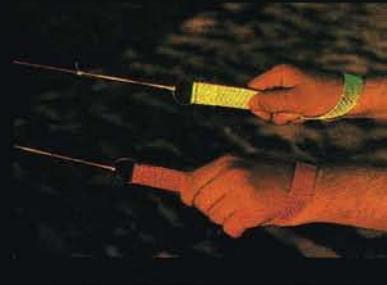


## SKYRAKER

A SUPERB FLYER

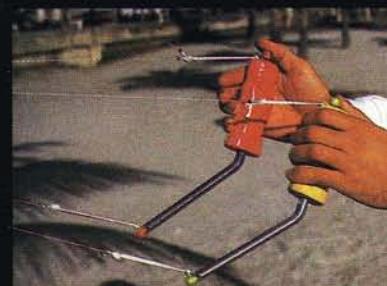
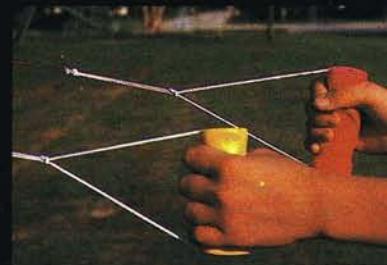
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QUALITY DELTA STUNT KITE



nt kite will lead

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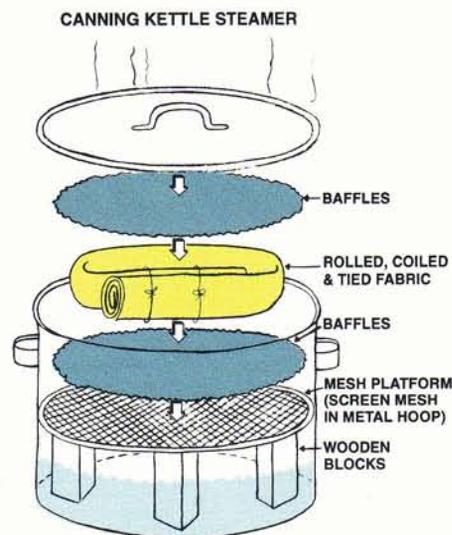


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A • EXACT LENGTHS SLEEVED ON HANDLES & WRIST STRAPS

Right, Don Brownridge beams and holds up his finished painted ripstop in a workshop for the Toronto Kite Fliers by Anne Sloboda. (Don also appears on page 30 as photographed in the earlier stages of his decorating.)



first coat. It will be blotchy, uneven and may not go where you want it to. Persevere!

You will generally find that each subsequent wash spreads more easily and evenly than the previous one and that it is necessary to get the fabric quite wet with the dye to get good coverage. Let the fabric dry completely and then put on another coat of dye. This one will actually flow a bit and begin to even out the first coat. The third coat is a snap and the fourth generally is too much of a good thing as the excess dye runs off and starts to attack neighboring colors.

You will also find that fresh dye applied next to a previously painted area will try to creep toward it, producing a blurry, fuzzy edge. This is more pronounced when the previously painted area is not quite dry and/or when the two colors being used have a common component (e.g., if a green and orange that were mixed with the same yellow concentrate were used side by side). If you want a well-defined edge to your separate areas of color, leave  $\frac{1}{8}$  to  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch of white between them and let the wicking action fill the space for you.

If you want a soft blurry effect, encourage the wicking by working wet on wet or by smearing the colors with your brush. If you want your colors to be distinct, be sure to clean your brushes well with soap and water whenever you change colors, or use different brushes for different colors.

A big psychological hurdle comes when you have finished painting and sit back to admire your work. You'll look at the rusty, dusty section and say to yourself, "This is red?" It might actually be

orange. Oranges and reds are difficult to tell apart in their dry (unset) state, as are blues, purples and blacks. The yellows will look dull. Trust me. Trying to judge the color at this stage is like trying to judge a flower by looking at the closed bud. You're just seeing a faint hint of what will emerge from the steaming. Wrap up your fabric as described below, put the water on to boil, and prepare for a pleasant surprise.

#### STEP 4: SETTING THE DYES

##### *Preparing for Steaming*

Once the fabric has been painted and is dry, it must be steamed to set the dyes. The first step in steaming is wrapping. You can use a single layer of blank newsprint, a single layer of plain cotton fabric, or a double layer of plain tissue paper as a wrapper.

Lay the painted ripstop out flat, centering it on a wrapper that is slightly wider and three or four feet longer than the fabric. Starting at one end of the wrapper, fold it on itself to make a flat roll about three inches wide, not quite round, but not quite flat either. Continue rolling the wrapper, rolling in the painted fabric as you come to it. The ripstop should never come in contact with itself in the roll, only with the material it is being wrapped in. When you come to the end of the ripstop, continue rolling the excess wrapping material around the outside until you have a tidy bundle. Coil the roll/bundle gently on itself to form a loose spiral small enough to fit inside the canning kettle without touching the sides. Tie the bun-

dle to itself in several places with plain white cotton string to keep it from unwinding. The fabric is now ready to be steamed.

##### *Steaming the Painted Ripstop*

A basic enamel canning kettle works well for steam-setting dyed nylon. (See diagram of kettle with baffles in place.) Most canning kettles come with a spacer to keep the canning jars from actually touching the bottom of the kettle. If you have one, you can use it as the platform to support the lower baffles. If not, a metal hoop covered in chicken wire or window screening is a good substitute. You could also try the bamboo steamer basket made for woks. Raise the platform above the water level by putting it up on wooden blocks, weighting them, if they want to float, with metal washers glued to the tops of the blocks.

The theory is to make a "sandwich" that allows the steam from the boiling water to rise up through the lower baffles and penetrate the bundled painted ripstop, while preventing any direct contact with droplets of water. The top baffle prevents condensation on the lid from dripping back down onto the bundle. I use blue industrial felt (about a half-inch thick) as my baffles, but a thick layer of newspaper (six to eight sheets) is a good substitute.

Put the blocks and the platform in place in the canner and put the canner on the burner. Add the water and bring it to a boil. Set the temperature to a simmer to avoid violent splashes. Using tongs or

*Continued on page 42. . .*



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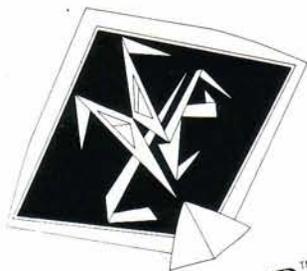
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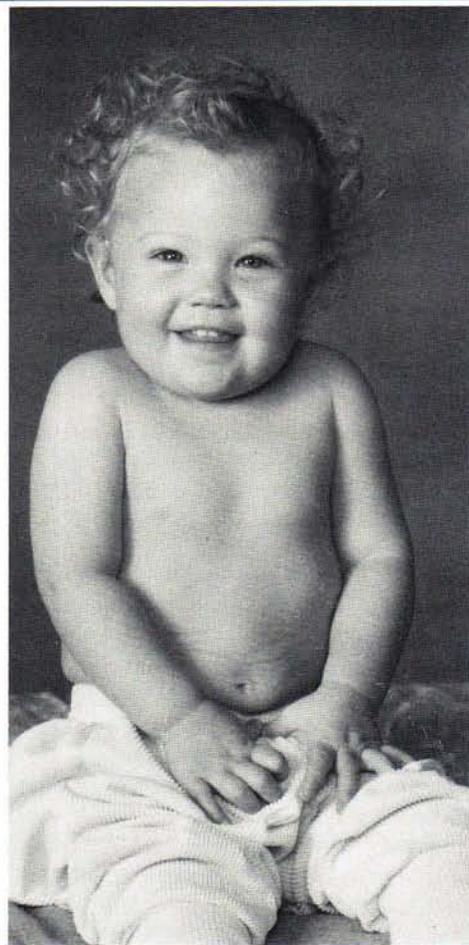


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GORGEOUS  
AND GA-GA

ARTICLE BY MARIANNE NIELSEN  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PIETRO LIVI

**T**he medieval town of Gubbio in the center of Italy has a long and proud tradition for the crazy aspects of life. If a person from Gubbio tells you that you are a little ga-ga, it is a compliment. If they find you refreshingly mad, it is a sign of deep affection and respect.

Bearing this in mind, it is no surprise that the people living today in the lovely city that looks like it is glued to the steep sides of the Apennines make some of the world's strangest and most beautiful kites.

In the kite group Gubbio Fly they honor the motto "big is beautiful"—which



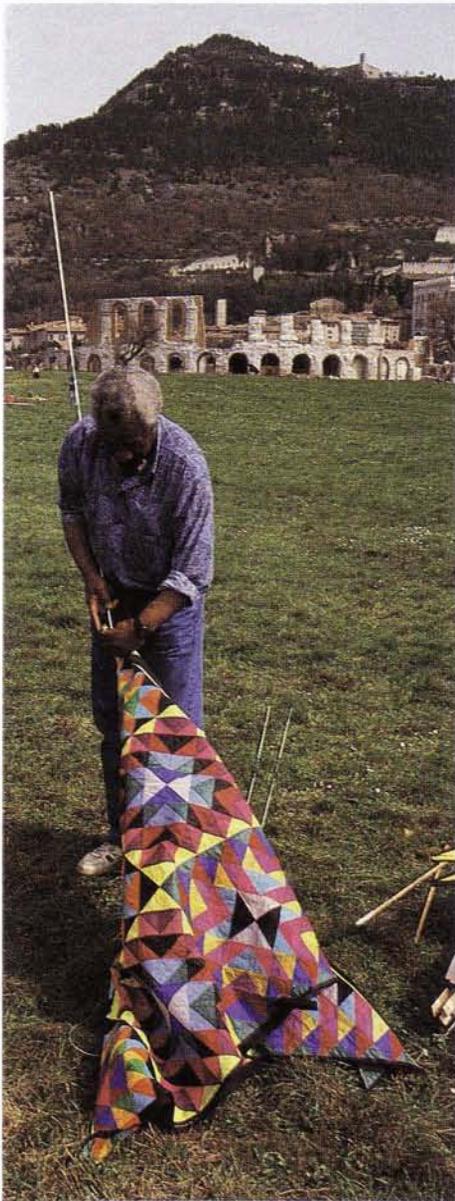
*If a person from Gubbio tells you that you are a little ga-ga, it is a compliment. If they find you refreshingly mad, it is a sign of deep affection and respect.*



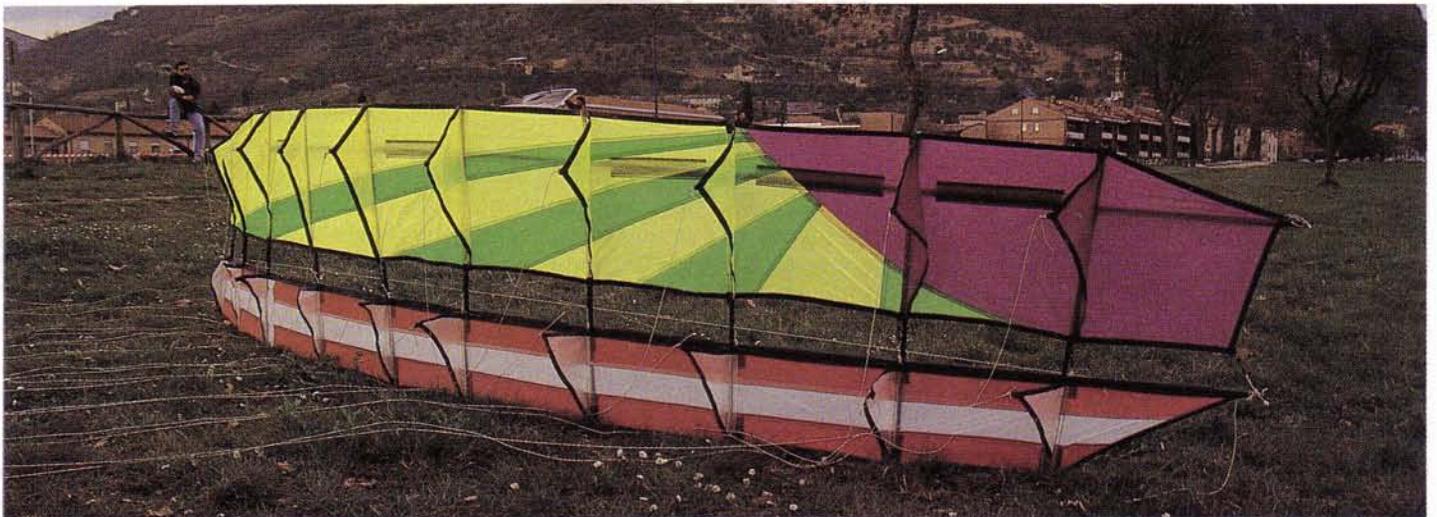
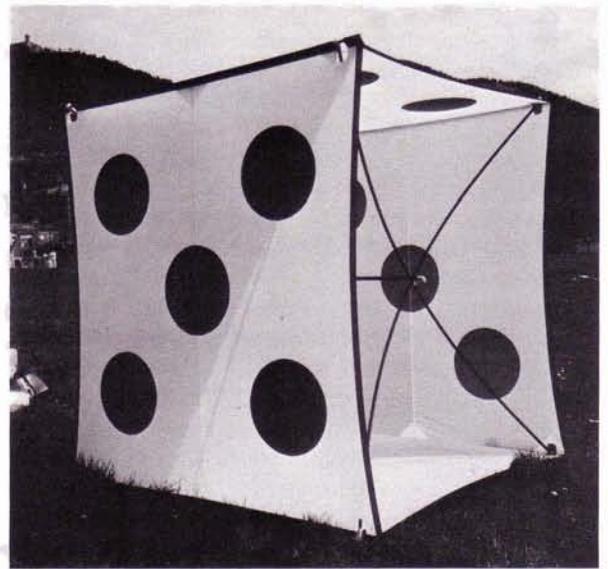
is not so uncommon. But their kites are not only enormous. Their forms are unique: exceptionally strange, asymmetric, daring, surprising and very beautiful. And they can fly.

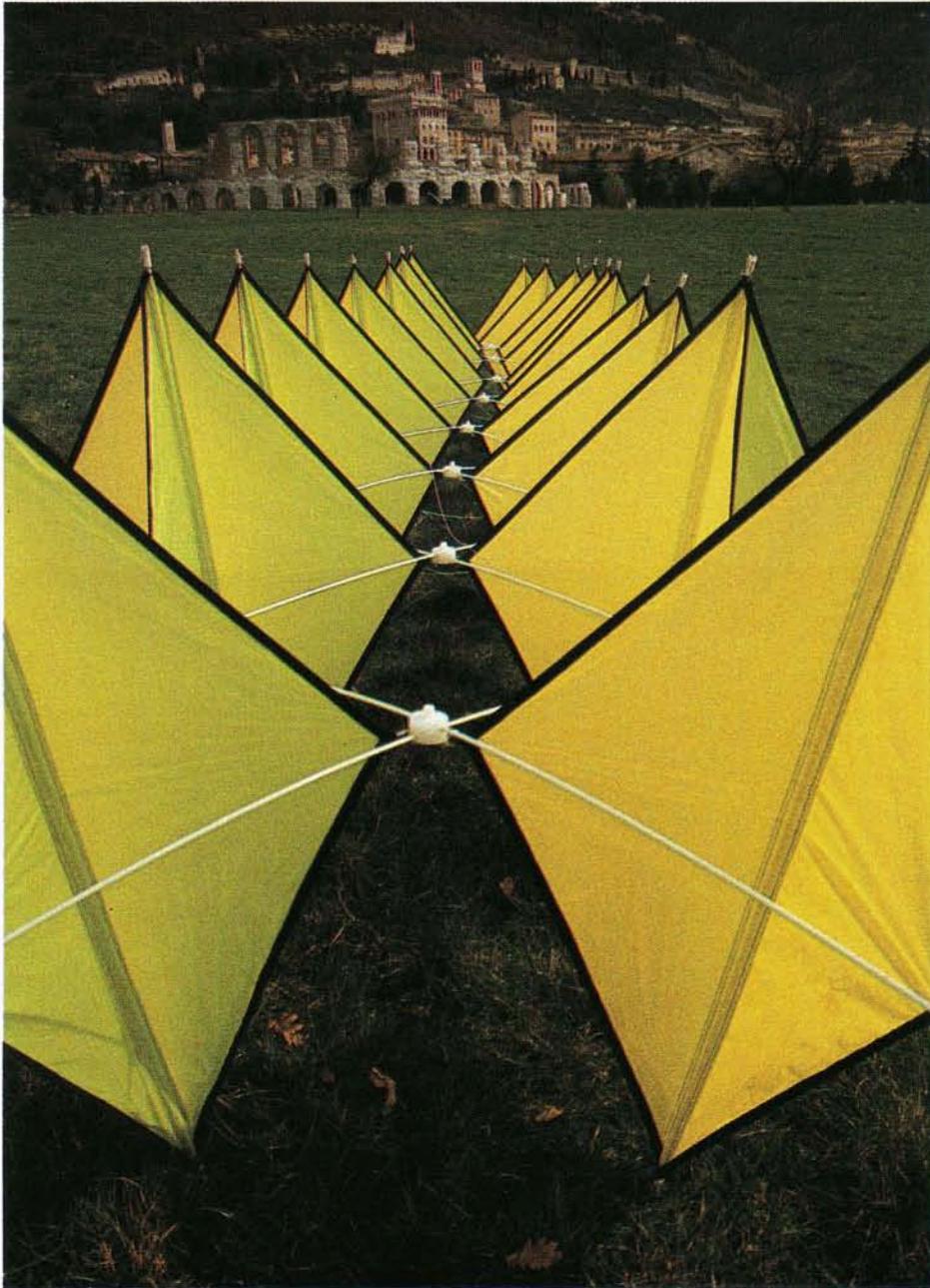
Every year, "when Spring is coming," the members of Gubbio Fly put on a kite festival called Ventomania, meaning wind-crazy. And every other year, it is a rather big festival, with participants from many countries. The next international Ventomania will be 1992.

This year the organizers invited 120 Italian kitefliers—from Cervia, Rome,



Opposite: Andrea Baffoni prepares to fly his asymmetric kite. Clockwise from top left: Jimmy Sampson, jazz musician and kiter of Rome, assembles his patchwork delta; Thorsten Schact of Copenhagen Kite Center flies his mailbox kite; Daniella Livi stunt-flies in view of the ancient Roman theater; big dice kite belongs to Thorsten Schact; Gubbio Fly kite rests on the lawn before flight.





Foligno, Milan and many other places—plus a small group from the Copenhagen Kite Center and Ekstra Bladet in Denmark. Over the years, Gubbio and Copenhagen have made strong bonds of friendship.

What also makes a visit to Gubbio something to remember for life is the gentle and kind way the Gubbio Fly members work together. In an atmosphere of doing it all for fun, grownups and kids from town make kites together in the humble and hospitable garage of Mrs. Tina Livi. Thank God she has no car, so there is plenty of room. It is astonishing to view the constructive disorder: kids roaming

**Above left and right, kites of Gubbio Fly make a splash at Ventomania.**

around; ripstop crackling in bundles on the table; sarcastic comments flowing between friends—all among tools, sticks and trophies from foreign kite festivals.

And thank God, you might add, that she has a son named Pietro, the founder of Gubbio Fly. By profession a teacher at a technical college, Pietro is also a renowned mountain climber and devotee of archeology and history.

"Daniella and I started making kites in 1983. We were working with mentally



retarded children, and kites are a good way to communicate," Pietro explains. Daniella is his wife. "We also worked in small towns in the vicinity of Gubbio, on Sundays, making kites with children and grownups. It would typically be in the afternoon, and we made Eddy kites and sleds of paper and plastic."

Two years later some other people joined the group and Gubbio Fly was born.

The group's first kite was a 12-meter-wide delta. It still flies today.

"Then we made stars, boxes . . . you name it," continues Pietro, "and in 1985 we had our first kite festival, called Ventomania."

Since then, the group has made four or five new kites every year. One person comes up with an idea and everybody works together to build it.

Although he is not yet 40 years old, Pietro Livi is very conscious of passing responsibility and initiative to someone younger. He has already found his successor as the *Presidente* of Gubbio Fly: Andrea Baffoni, a chunky 15-year-old whose brain is constantly bubbling with new pranks and kite ideas.

In the Gubbio tradition of craziness, Andrea and his friends start with designs that many sane and experienced kitefliers would consider completely unfit for flying. His devotion to the asymmetric, especially, makes visitors to Ventomania scratch their heads in amazement. How does he do it?

And the region—Umbria in central Italy—is not even optimal kiteflying country. Gorges and hills, mountains and valleys offer quite difficult turbulence and sudden shifts in weather. Of the surrounding area, 53 percent is mountain terrain, 41 percent hills and the remaining 6 percent plains.

Gubbio is one of Italy's oldest towns, populated 5,000 years ago. Today you can go by foot through narrow streets between medieval houses. In the center of



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Left, kites fly over the hills of Ventomania; below, school-children invited from Bergamo gather to learn kitemaking from teacher Thorsten Schacht.



town rises the Palazzo dei Consoli, built in 1332, with a view over the tiled roofs in all shades of terracotta. The panorama has a balmy effect on your soul. And just outside of town, you can see from the Palazzo, lie the remains of an ancient Roman theater, the home base of Gubbio's kitefliers. Often in the afternoon, the club members are out testing new creations and newcomers are always welcome.

No loud signs, graffiti or similar modern rubbish blemishes the walls of the houses. Everything looks exactly as it did hundreds of years ago—except for the plastic clothespins used to hang laundry from the windows. Romantic visitors to Gubbio expect Romeo and Juliet to jump out of one of the windows—the scenery invites daydreamers.

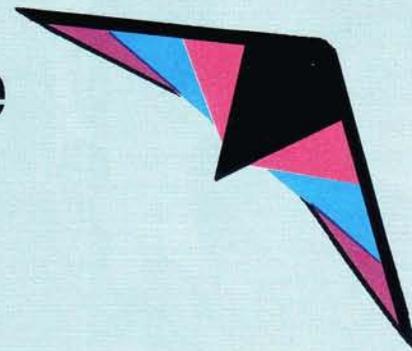
The next Ventomania will be held on March 24, 1992. For more information, contact Pietro Livi, Aquilonisti Gubbio Fly, Via San Francesco, Padule di Gubbio, Italy. You will go ga-ga over Gubbio. ◇

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## Painting Ripstop

... Continued from page 34

oven mitts to avoid scalding, put the lower baffles in the steamer, then put your bundle of material in and place the upper baffles directly on top of it. Cover the canner tightly with the lid.

Give the canner five to ten minutes to fill with steam, then begin timing for 45 minutes. Keep an eye and ear on the canner to make sure that it does not boil dry or boil over. In normal operation you will hear the water simmering and see wisps of steam escaping from under the lid.

Steaming times can be variable so do some testing of your own. Use 45 minutes as a starting point and check your fabric before washing off. Put on your oven gloves or use tongs (the fabric will be *hot!*) and remove the bundle. Place it on a work surface that will not be damaged by wet dyes, then untie and unbundle it. If the colors have evenly brightened, odds are you've achieved fixation. If the color is brighter, but uneven, you need more time. If you have wet spots anywhere, you need thicker baffles. If the color looks nice

and bright, you can wash the fabric as soon as it's cool enough to handle.

### Washing Off

Unset dye must be washed away, or it will run and ruin the design the next time it gets wet. Simply wash the ripstop in an open vessel, like a pail or a laundry tub

that is large enough to allow the fabric to move freely. I use five-gallon plastic pails because they can be emptied quickly and easily.

First wash the fabric in cold soapy water (Joy or similar dish detergent) until the water becomes strongly discolored. Discard the water and give further cold soapy washes until no more color comes off the fabric. Now switch to hot soapy water and repeat the process. Rinse out in cold water and allow the fabric to air-dry, preferably on a clothesline indoors to prevent fraying; ripstop frays really quickly when it's flapping on a line.

Flatten the material by ironing it at low temperature or by rolling it smoothly onto a cardboard tube for a few days before you begin cutting and sewing your masterpiece.

### Sources for Dyeing Supplies

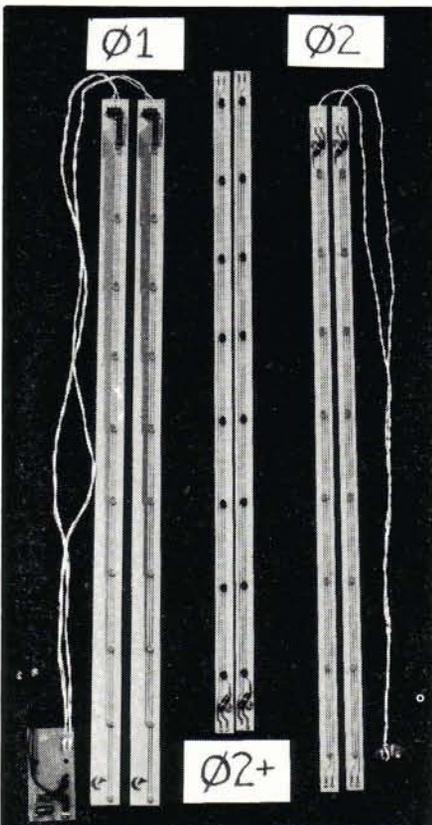
**PRO Chemical & Dye Inc.**, PO Box 14, Somerset, MA 02726. Tel: 508/676-3838, Fax: 508/676-3980. (Acid dyes: CK or WF series)

**Cerulean Blue Ltd.**, PO Box 21186, Seattle, WA 98111-3168. Tel: 206/443-7744.

**Alternatives:** Contact major dye manufacturers (such as I.C.I., Ciba-Geigy, Hoechst, Bayer, B.A.S.F. and Sandoz) to get the names of distributors who sell small quantities.

Or call your crafts council; they often have reference lists of suppliers. If not, ask them for the names of spinners, weavers or silk dyers, as silk and wool are commonly dyed with acid dyes.

*ANNE SLOBODA is a Canadian textile designer and printer. With her husband Eric Curtis she owns and operates studio Gothic Design. She specializes in printing, dyeing and painting ripstop nylon and has written two previous articles for Kite Lines: "Kool-Aid Kites" in the Summer-Fall 1987 issue and "Yes! You Can Dye Ripstop" in the Winter 1989-90 issue.*



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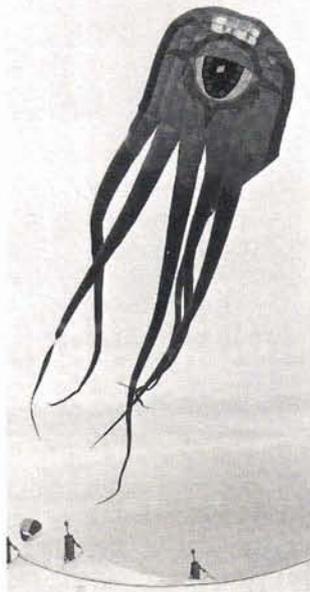
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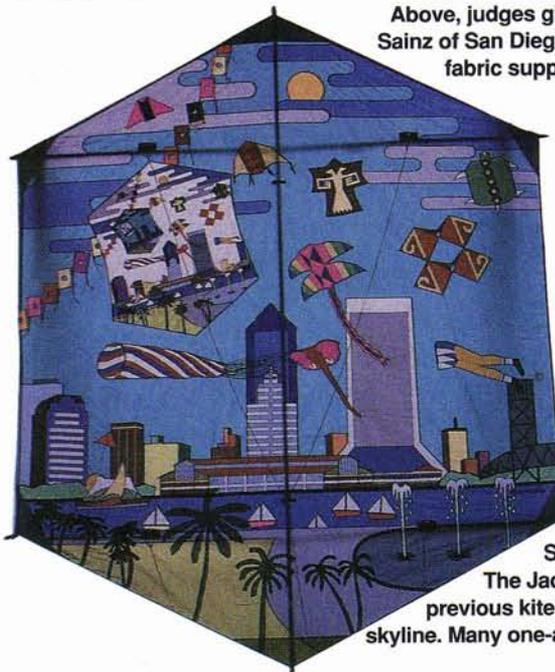
Right, fighter kite by Kyle Metcalf of Honolulu, Hawaii.



Above, Millie Millipede by Ron and Sandy Gibian of Visalia, California. Right, Cyclops by Peter Lynn of New Zealand, made to a design by Tom Casselman of Newport, Rhode Island.



Above, judges give top rokkaku score to this one by José Sainz of San Diego, California. A single, whole piece of sail fabric supported the Aztec fertility serpent appliqué.



Left, kite of a kite of a kite by Oscar and Sarah Bailey of Burnsville, North Carolina. The Jacksonville view was inspired by their previous kite (right) showing the Chicago, Illinois skyline. Many one-at-a-time stitches were required.

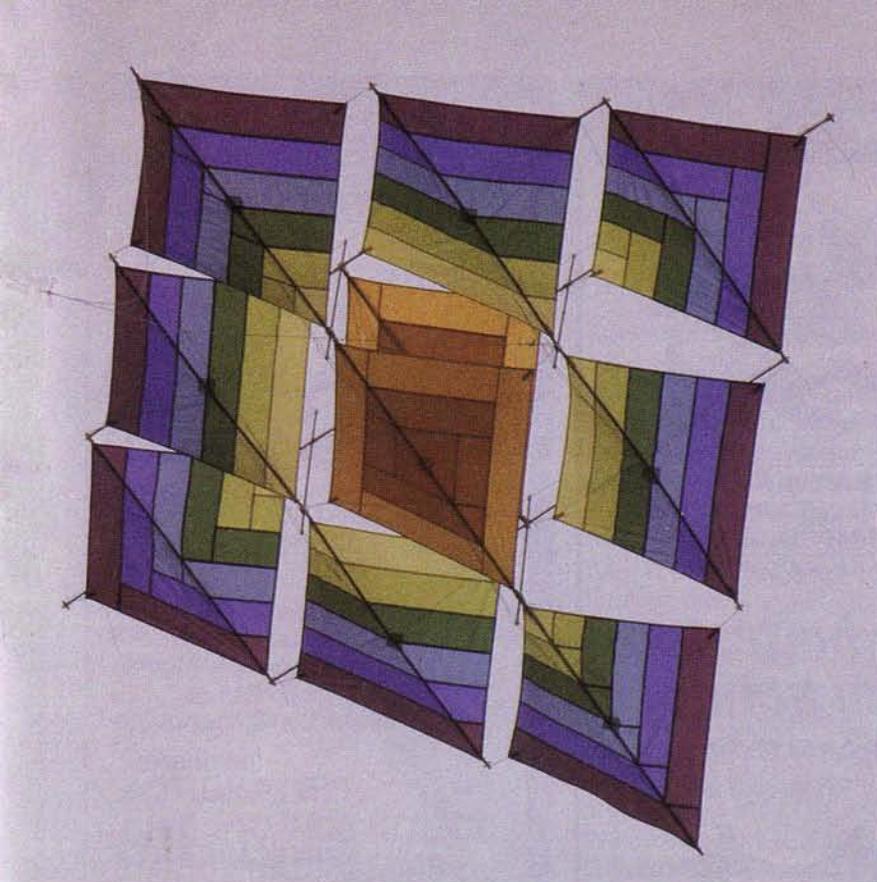
//////////////////// AN ALBUM OF RAINY MEMORIES //////////////////////////////////////

Nine out of 10 kite stories start out describing the weather. But it's not a cliché when weather is the heavy player. Jacksonville, Florida, site of this year's American Kitefliers Association meeting, has to be an extreme example. Days of rain had deluged the town just before the convention and left pools of water up to a foot deep scattered over the flying fields. Rain continued in the following days. Winds, in the few breaks available, were light and fitful in the bowl-shaped flying locations. Temperatures were in the steamy 80s.

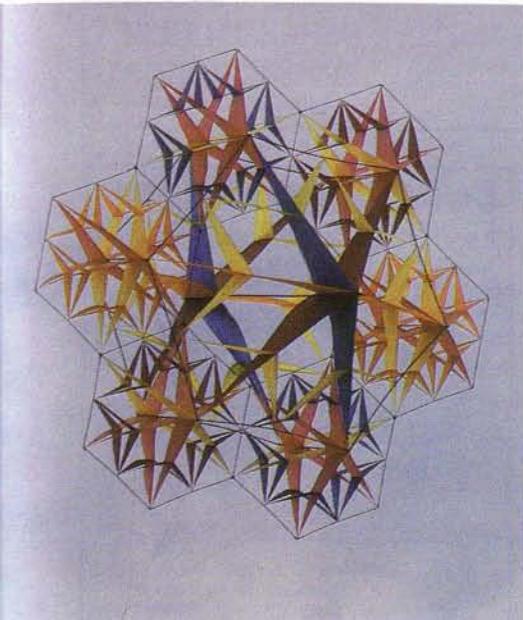
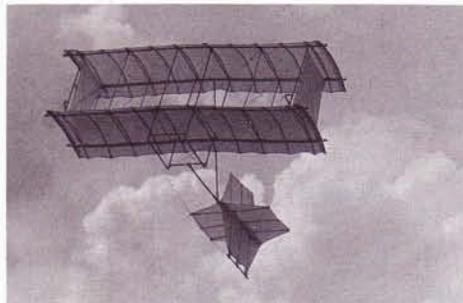
## WET & WARM

### The AKA Convention

Organizational problems caused grumbling in the 550-plus crowd (the largest AKA convention ever). But visitors pitched in at registration, judging, the auction and other posts to pull the convention through. The fliers gamely splashed and slipped as they relied on their legs instead of wind. Was anything good about this convention? Yes and double yes. The workshops



From top down: 1896 Chanute/Herring glider kite replica by Jeff Cain of Denver, Colorado; Tom Casselman showing revolving gold "pearl" in his dragon-decorated Revolution-type kite; Don Mock of Hoquiam, Washington with his native-style Sun Eagle kite; and Adrian Conn hauling up his new parafoil in zero wind.



Top, a very flattened "tetrahedral" kite by William and Jaci Rutiser of Gaithersburg, Maryland. Left, the "Nightmare," a seven-sisters variation of Maurizio Angeletti's Reflex kite, by David and Lori Melroy of Lenoir City, Tennessee. Lori is shown above at launch with baby in backpack.



TEXT & PHOTOGRAPHS BY VALERIE GOVIG

# WILD & WOOLLY

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were plentiful and high in quality, the people provided instant friendship, the hotel lobby was a gallery of kites (and an ideal wet-laundry-hanging space), the annual meeting ran to a new standard of organization and openness—and the kites were outstanding. (We regret we haven't space to show more of them here.)

Creative response to the circumstances

was notable. Art Ross of Vancouver, B.C., Canada, couldn't fly his big parafoil on the competition field, so, as AKA president Dave Gomberg put it, "Art did the right thing and flew elsewhere—and we did the right thing and gave him a trophy *anyway*."

Certainly, for most of us, knowing the convention could have been so much better made the experience disappointing. But the good aspects were more than a counterbalance: they reaffirmed that annual gatherings of the clan will always have value, no matter what.



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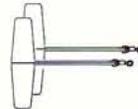
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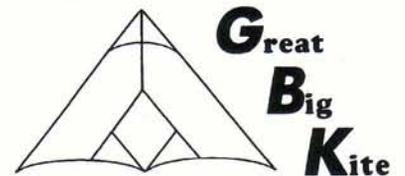
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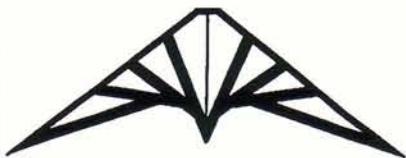
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## Stunt Diary II: Poland

...Continued from page 29

ing and Polish memorabilia.

I too had gifts to give. I presented Slawek with light carbon tubes to build a ballet kite. I gave Wojtek spars to make a quad-line kite. Andrew and Ivana received kite building materials for the kids in their neighborhood. Marek got supplies enough to outfit another 10 instructors, and Brother Stanley received kite stuff for his boys club. However, the real gifts were the smiles on our faces, and the glorious buzzing sound on the Polish breeze.

In just over a month, we'd trained 12 instructors and provided hands-on experience to more than 60 children. We'd mastered the craft of sewing kite skins and become proficient at framing kites. We'd developed a feel for tuning and become acquainted with stunt kite competition. We'd even laid the groundwork for a Polish kite association and a fledgling kite manufacturing company.

By every measure it had been a successful trip. And it had been fun! Wonderful, wonderful fun!

*Richard Synergy (yes, it's his real name) is 53 and has been both a research scientist for the University of Toronto and owner of several successful businesses. He currently runs a small consulting firm in Toronto (Canada) and does contract work in the mail order business.*

When preparing for his Poland project the author received tremendous help and generous gifts from many people. He expresses his warmest thanks to: Kurt Degener of AFC (Aligned Fiber Composites); Bill Braswell of Allied Signal; Don Todd of American Cyanamid; Roland Brand and Genevieve Gandon of Beman's; Elaine Flaherty of Brownell Line & Twine Co.; Jeff Lane of Glasforms; Bill Tyrrell of the Kitestuff Co.; John Harris and Ann McCarter of Kitty Hawk Kites; Arleen Hurdon of Paint the Sky; Michelle Haeter of Sterling Airlines; Madeira Benjamin of Toronto Dominion Bank; Debbie Bailey of United Parcel Service; and Ilene Atkins, Marlene Blazczak, Eric Brackenbury, John Compton (for lending The Beast), Michael Graves and any others he may have missed.

Kiting as we now know it is a fresh new enterprise.

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# Teizo Hashimoto



By Tal Streeter

The last kitemaker of Edo died in Tokyo on November 17, 1991 at the age of 87. The master kite artist's death marks the end of an era of continuity for the Edo kite which stretches back into antiquity.

Edo, the Tokugawa period name for Tokyo, though not the actual birthplace of the traditional Japanese kite, was most certainly its stylistic source and spiritual center. Each Japanese province developed distinctive shapes and styles of painting, but provincial kitemakers took their cue, their inspiration, their standard from the Japanese capital.

With the death of this fine gentleman, a grand tradition, the last remaining evocation of Edo's role in the Japanese kite's historical roots, takes its leave as well. Though there are future kitemakers living in Tokyo (several retirees and part-timers, excellent practitioners), there will never again be the slim thread connecting modern Japan to ancient Japan which kite master Hashimoto represented: once, long ago, in old Edo, there were hundreds of kitemakers and a sky teeming with kites—then there was one kitemaker—now, none.

This double loss of the person and the preeminent exemplar of the near-legendary tradition of kitemaking in Tokyo is great indeed, larger than for Japan alone, because Japanese kites are revered not just in their home of origin, but throughout the world.

Hashimoto, the person, was generous, unassuming, dedicated. When I first visited his simple quarters, I thought to myself that he and his wife actually seemed to be living *in a kite*. There were kite paintings stacked in thick piles and hanging, dozens, from bamboo poles crossing the entryway and on back into the house, kites every which way, helter-skelter on the floor and leaning up against the wall. Yes, a television set stood at one side, and the ever-present rice cooker, but there was no question that the focus of this extraordinary clutter was *kites*. Whenever I visited their home, they were both at work on the floor, Kiyo (Mrs.) Hashimoto wrapping bamboo bones with thin strips of paper, Teizo pulling the

many bridle strings to the precise point of attachment for the flying line. It seemed that there were very few moments of leisure time free from kites, that kitemaking never stopped. They didn't so much *think* about kites, they *made* kites. The thinking had been done so long ago that it was now sec-

up of equal parts *seki* (vitality, freshness, animation, the spark of life), *bi* (beauty), and *chikara* (power, strength).

I did not enjoy the thought of the declining numbers of kite artists when I lived in Japan. I do not enjoy it now. But I remember that my first kite mentor had a pleasant thought on this subject, a palliative for reality, a piece of Japanese kite lore which brings a faint smile to my face now in the midst of my mourning. It was passed on to him by his teacher.

He told me that when a kite-maker dies, a brightly plumaged bird is at the age when it is ready to take its first flight. At the moment of the kitemakers' passing, the bird spreads its wings and flies, to inspire the emergence of new kitemakers, to bring forth crafters with a love of *seki*, *bi* and *chikara*, inspired with the grace and the power of the brilliantly colored bird soaring high above into the clear light of the sky.

Teizo Hashimoto's death is marked by what must be a wondrously beautiful bird, flying not just over Japan, but over all the countries of the world who have come to love and revere the Japanese kite and its masters. Teizo Hashimoto, the last kitemaker of Edo, is surely an inspiration to new kitemakers to live surrounded by kites, to be imbued with their enduring spirit.

There are many of us who do not speak Teizo Hashimoto's lan-

guage, but through the expression of his kite art have come to a better understanding and appreciation of the people of Japan. We mourn his passing. Our deepest sympathies and condolences go to his fellow kitemakers, the Japanese kite community and his family. ◇



"I don't make kites that don't fly!"—Teizo Hashimoto  
Photograph from 1971 © Tal Streeter

ond nature. I guess the couple came as close to *being* a kite as anyone I have ever known.

Hashimoto the kitemaker was unquestionably one of the great Asian kite artists. He achieved complete mastery of the symbolic and pictorial language which graced Japanese kites. Was there another kite artist who painted the complex brocade sash pictures of warriors locked in superhuman combat, with such verve and skill? Or another (I believe Teizo's favorite, certainly the public's), the surging ocean wave?

In these times, the warrior legends and mythology are no longer at the center of Japanese culture, but what remains is a respect for the past and a love of art, made

Teizo Hashimoto has been the subject of several books and articles, including the following:

"The Last Kite Maker of Tokyo," Chapter 4 in *The Art of the Japanese Kite* by Tal Streeter (New York: Weatherhill, 1974).

"New Eyes on Old Ways in Japan" by Pierre Fabre, *Kite Lines*, Summer-Fall 1991, pages 42-43.

*Edo Dako* (Tokyo, 1986) and *Edo Dako Dai Zenshu* (Tokyo, 1988), both by Masaaki Modegi, lovingly prepared books with color photographs of Hashimoto kites.

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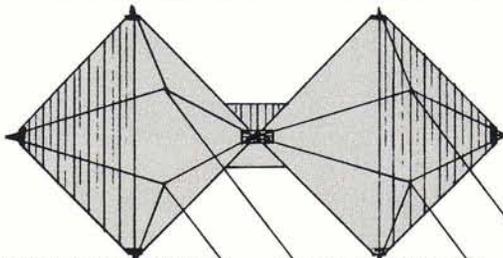
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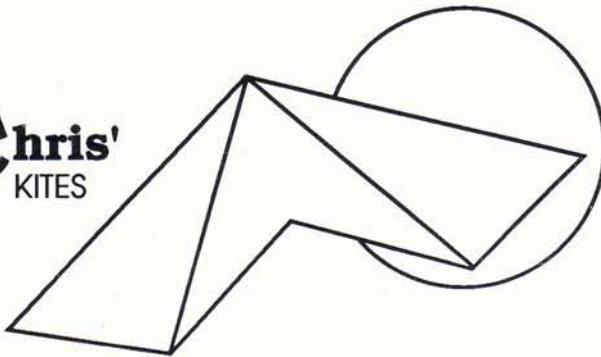
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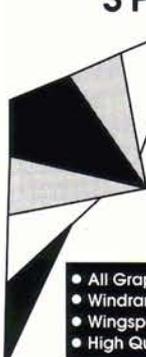
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# Horace J. (Hod) Taylor



By Valerie Govig

The death of Horace Joseph (Hod) Taylor on July 9, 1991 was not surprising, since Hod was 94. But it was saddening because, since the age of "only" 72, he had devoted so much of his life to designing, making and giving away kites and kite equipment.

Hod was among the early supporters of organized kiting in America as a member of the Briny Breezes kite club in Florida and the AKA, and was befriended by Walter (Scotty) Scott. Hod supported the worldwide kite community with his membership in, donations to and correspondence with numerous kite clubs. In 1980, he was the honorary president of England's Essex Kite Group.

One of the legends of Hod Taylor was his preference for large kites, because with limited vision in only one eye, it was only those kites that he could really see.

In 1986, the Maryland Kite Society presented Hod Taylor with its Honorary Order-of-the-Kite Award, citing Hod as "one of kiting's premier foundation workers and an example of selfless generosity for all fliers to emulate" (see Winter-Spring 1987 *Kite Lines*).

Hod was survived only by one niece (his wife Olive had died in 1984), but his funeral was attended by many friends from his residence at Sacred Heart Hospice in Austin, Minnesota, as well as several kitefliers from

the Minnesota Kite Society. The service incorporated kites, and between the funeral and reception, Robert Klein of Bloomington flew a big delta with a long black tail.

Alex Dunton, who modified the Taylor Delta-Box as the Taylor-Dunton Delta-Box (see *Kite Lines* Summer-Fall 1985), wrote:

"He was a kindly man . . . I don't know what our group here in Richmond (Virginia)

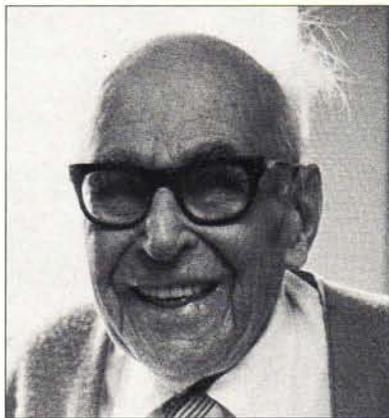
would have done without his kite. We've made *countless* sizes and versions out of many different materials."

A few lucky people have a copy of Hod's fascinating autobiography, in which he recounts his life from childhood through his time in the cavalry in World War I and his livelihoods in road grading, gravel producing and establishing the Ready Mix Concrete Company in Austin. Its

success enabled him in his later years to enjoy a full life, including travel to every state except Oregon.

The last pages of Hod's book describe his kite activities. Among other things, he made two-line stunters of Tyvek and had as many as five stunters in the air at one time.

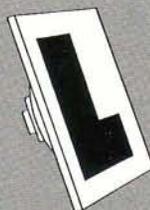
Eventually, as travel to and from Florida became wearing, he and Olive settled in Minnesota. Infirmities took them to the Sacred Heart Hospice, where Hod continued to make kites. Hod's book, brimming over with the many pleasures of an active life, is titled, "I'll Fly Kites Till the End." ◇



H.J. (Hod) Taylor, 1896-1991

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# For the Record

## The Largest Rokkaku Ever

Text & Photographs by Valerie Govig

### Those Sunfest Records and What They Really Mean

Every spring the staff of the Kite Loft (Ocean City, Maryland) holds a hush-hush meeting where they hatch the list of world records they will promote for their next big Sunfest kitemfly in September.

By rewarding record-setters with \$2,000 each and an Ocean City gold medal, they hope to bring exciting things to their fair city.

The strategy has worked, but the strategies among the *contenders* are what is getting interesting.

For the really large records (for example, Most Kites on a Line), the cost of getting to Ocean City from any long distance (Japan) with all the equipment goes far past the \$2,000. Categories like that are never in danger of being tried and the Kite Loft seems to risk nothing, except the respect of a few cynics.

For the more realistic records, however, certain contenders rise to the bait nearly every year. First they guess who else is likely to make a try in a category. Although the Kite Loft staff is sworn to keep secret the names of applicants, the rumor mill can be trusted to leak names.

The next critical element is cost. For many efforts and for most people, the cost of materials cancels out the prize.

A final element is time. Contenders have only five or six months to put their effort together. If they spend more time in hopes for "next year," by then the categories could change.

What's left for most competitors, then, is sheer hubris. They ask themselves: Do I want to win this thing enough to work like a dog for six months, spend a fortune on materials, risk the caprices of weather—and then compete with Big Bad Bill?

The final decision often rests on the answer to one question: What is Bill Tyrrell going to fly this year?

In 1991, Bill virtually eliminated the competition, just by his presence. However, since Bill and his crew by themselves are a major show for the Ocean City crowds, the Kite Loft didn't mind.

But for 1992, we have it on the authority of BBB himself, Bill is *retiring* from the ring. He will not try for any more records being rewarded by the Kite Loft. He's going on to bigger, better and easier things to do.

That's what he says, folks.  
But don't bet on it.



Left top, the Largest Rokkaku flies! Left bottom, Ochse grandchildren at play in the fields of the kite. Top: how many kites does it take to dab a spar with contact cement? Above, Bernie Spalding struggles with a bending Rokkaku on its first flight.

### Dateline: September 21, 1991, Ocean City, Maryland

The beach for Sunfest was warm and sunny and loaded with kites. But today only the stout ones were flying because the winds were—what would Beaufort say?—"moderate to fresh."

Bill Tyrrell, his daughter Lisa, Bobby Stanfield, Hugh R. D. (Stretch) Tucker and his brother Jocko, Forrest Alexander, Paul Dugard, Bernie Spalding and other volunteers had been setting up the Largest Box Kite for most of the day.

By the rules, it was the traditional square two-cell type, but it was 34 feet long and the cells, once assembled on the sand, were like large square rooms, 11½ feet square. (To reach the upper fittings for adjustment, Bobby Stanfield had to be hoisted on the shoulders of his coworkers.) Sticks of one-inch square poplar and Kevlar bracing supported 100 yards of rip-stop nylon sewn in colorful stripes.

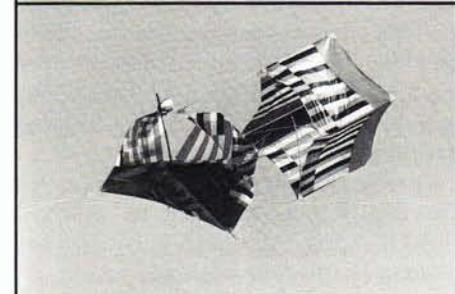
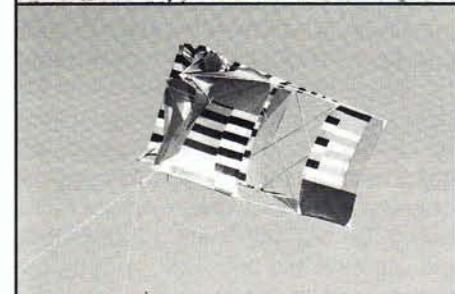
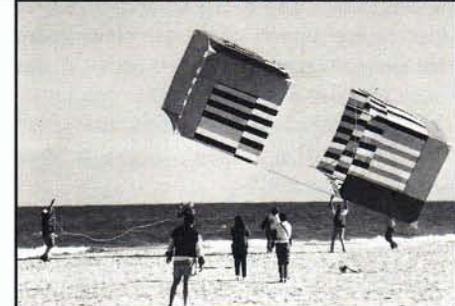
All day the crowds had been watching the slow process of assembly. Tensions—and the wind—were at their highest at about 4:30 p.m., when the crew decided not to wait any longer. The kite bounded into the sky, its skin rattle-roaring like a small propeller plane. The flight was high and steady as a rock—for about 1 minute 10 seconds.

Then the leading edge spar snapped with a firecracker-like report. In seconds other spars cracked and the kite gradually turned into a crumpled mass of fabric and sticks as it fell from the sky.

The kite had been built for Beaufort "light" but was flown in heavier winds because Tyrrell thought the rules required it to be flown on Saturday. Although Sunday was available, the crew had another plan for that day anyway.

### Dateline: September 22, 1991, Ocean City, Maryland

Another bright sunny day, but this time with lighter winds, and the crew was out early assembling the Largest Rokkaku in the world. The 50 x 50 foot monster, all



Lisa Tyrrell

## DEBATABLE DISTINCTION DEPARTMENT

Lately we've been receiving more than the usual number of wacky claims to "world records."

Our past tendency has been to say that we aren't interested in how many red kites you flew on a Tuesday in Tulsa.

BUT...some of the claims make peculiar sense. Just because they've never been done before doesn't mean they are necessarily useless. Maybe the opposite.

So we say, let's hear it for creative records! And just to make them semi-official, *Kite Lines* will publish them in the Debatable Distinction Department. To get started, here are some rather plausible claims:

### Megateams are fun, but...

... are they "world records"? After any big stunt kite event these days, it is a near-ritual to have a "megafly," where all the competitors try to coalesce into one megateam and fly in some semblance of coordination. Even with the inevitable megacrashes, these are spectacular fun.

But just in case anybody is seriously thinking of these as "world records," we at *Kite Lines* have to register our opinion that the category is still too fuzzy and unstandardized to be a real, true world record.

There are problems with any most-in-the-sky claim, single-line or multi-line.

Here's what we're up against: Ahmedabad. Yes, that fabled city of fighter kites in India. A reasoned and authoritative estimate puts 100,000 kites in the air over the rooftops there on January 14 every year. Those are single-line kites, of course. But in our opinion, the mark of a dual-line kite is its successful completion of at least two maneuvers (the standard has been a loop to the left and a loop to the right). In the case of a "team," that would mean coordinated maneuvers. Without the maneuvers, the kites are just kites, and if they want quantity honors for kites, they should probably get in line behind Ahmedabad, India.

nylon, weighed only 77 pounds for its 2,000 square feet of area because the spars were "Aistruts," tubular columns full of pressurized air. These struts had been tested successfully as the Largest Eddy Kite, made by Tyrrell and flown at last year's Sunfest. In fact, two of the struts from the Eddy were being used on the rokkaku today, but a new fabric skin and rear cross-spar had been sewn.

The rear spar turned out to be trouble. It was made of vinyl laminated to polyester scrim rather than nylon, and from the start it sprang leaks like last year's garden hose.

### Speaking of ripe for the beating...

We hear that Diana Hardy of Lincoln City, Oregon on October 8, 1991 flew her new Spiderwing II kite on dual lines 800 feet long.

The flight was well documented and is a "record," as far as we know, but is this a category that's going to engender competitive interest?

### And speaking of categories that matter...

From Rod Yarger of Yakima, Washington comes the news that on August 21, 1991, Ray Bethell of Vancouver, B.C., Canada set a world record for duration in flying *two* dual-line stunt kites simultaneously.

Ray flew custom Peregrine kites from his waist and hands on 120- and 125-foot lengths of Spectra line.

The total duration was 4 hours 19 minutes 21 seconds without any rest or grounding of the kites except for two planned landings. (This effort must have been *fun* to plan.) Ray advised the seven-witness panel in advance about the planned landings.

The wind ranged from 4.5 to 11.1 mph during the record-setting, which started at 8:30 a.m. and was part of the 10th annual Washington State International Kite Festival in Long Beach.

The crew crawled all over the strut trying every sealant available in Ocean City. Once sealed, it would need more air pressure; once pressurized, it would spring another leak—and so on, all day.

From about 2:45 to 3:45 p.m., a series of launch attempts resulted in successively worse flights, with the air too light both inside and outside the kite. The rear spar would bend back almost in a complete fold. Finally Bobby suggested holding tethers from the ground to the outer edges of the rear cross-spar to keep them from bending back. It worked! At about 4 p.m.,

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## **For the Record . . . Continued**

in 5mph breezes, the kite went up and held on for about six minutes, just over the standard five-minute requirement. It was a record!

Or was it? Bill Ochse of the Kite Loft and his staff observers didn't agree. They said the lines held at the ends of the cross-spars were not merely safety cords but were used to maintain the kite's structure. Tyrrell and Stanfield argued that the rules didn't prohibit it. Apparently feeling that he was close to, or in the middle of, a gray area, Ochse agreed to let the crew return the next weekend to try again on the same basis as for the Sunfest weekend. This concession was generous, but given Tyrrell's batting average it was more a gamble than a gift.

Bill, Lisa and Bobby went back to the workshop in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, determined to show the world. Before when sewing the rear cross-spar Bill was unable to obtain anything but the laminated vinyl. This time luck was with him. He located just the right dealer at just the right time to get exactly the same fabric he had used in the other two spars. He obtained the fabric on Tuesday, leaving only three days and nights to sew. With Bobby Stanfield and Warren Hardy working overtime, the new spar was built just in time.

Now what was the weather going to be in Ocean City? The crew arrived in town on Friday with weather foremost on their minds. They awoke to a perfect Saturday morning: sunny, warm and breezy.

Everyone trooped out to the sand, the "everyone" this time being Bill and Lisa Tyrrell, Bobby Stanfield, Jocko Tucker, Warren Hardy, Bob Nock and others. Bill Ochse's two toddler grandson's "helped" too, scampering in and out of the waving fields of nylon.

Everyone worked with calm and cool, everything seemed easy (too easy?) The blowers, designed by Pete Ianuzzi, were hooked up and pumping at about 10 a.m. and inflation was accomplished in about an hour. The flying line was hooked to the city's beach tractor and the bridles were adjusted. Lots of time went into getting the lines just right.

At 12:05 p.m., on 5mph breezes, the Largest Rokkaku rose into the air. It flew with a kind of ponderous ease, a big and billowy golden hexagon shimmering against a bright blue sky. Someone was counting down—the five-minute point was marked by cheers—but no one want-

ed to land the kite, so on it flew, casting a huge shadow just below it and drawing gawkers along the boardwalk.

At 12:35, Tyrrell decided to bring the kite down to add more air, then at 12:47 the team put it up again—but PLOPF! It collapsed with a bang. The spine had ruptured near the nose. However, its work had been well and fully done. And the promised \$2,000 check sent Bobby Stanfield to Florida for the AKA convention and sent Tyrrell home to pay his bills.

**Cost of Largest Rokkaku Kite  
successfully flown Sept. 28, 1991**

330 yards fabric	\$1,500
40 yards seatbelt webbing	80
800-lb-test Dacron leech line	50
double-sided seamtape	25
heat-sealing services	750
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,405</b>

Not included in tally: 150 hours of cutting and sewing labor, 10-15 hours of design time, travel costs and incidentals. All costs are as if from-scratch, although two spars of the rokkaku were reused from the previous Largest Eddy Kite record. Note that most prices were wholesale to Bill Tyrrell.

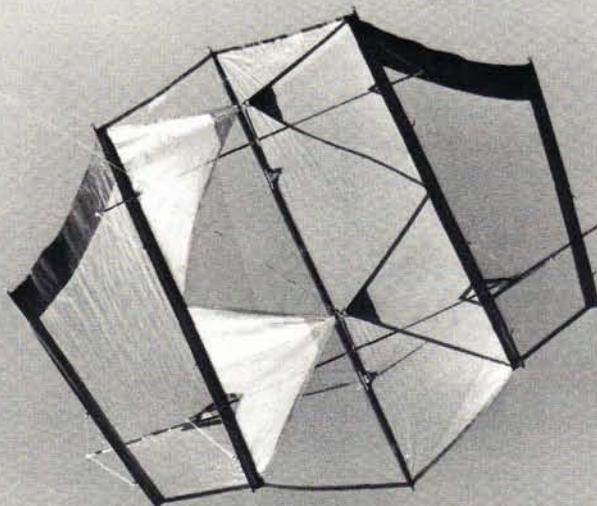
**Cost of Largest Box Kite  
failed attempt Sept. 21, 1991**

100 yards fabric	\$500
140' of wood and millwork	250
aluminum fitting and welding	125
Kevlar bracing line and fittings	120
outside labor for sewing stripes	200
webbing and reinforcements	50
double-sided tape	25
screws, washers and miscellaneous	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,290</b>

Not included in tally: 150 hours of building labor, 8 hours of design time, travel costs and incidentals. Note that most prices were wholesale to Bill Tyrrell.

The standard remark after any kite world record is, "It was worth it." This time it was not so clearly the case. A minor but interesting world record had been set, some pretty days had been spent at the beach, and Ocean City had acquired a few more bragging rights.

But will Bill Tyrrell be back? He says no, and the figures (see box) tell why. He had spent \$3,695 and marshalled two people and himself to work like demons for three weeks, all to win \$2,000, another Ocean City gold medal and a little bit of press for his latest world record. Still, Tyrrell is an unpredictable character. Would he, or would he not, do it again? ◇



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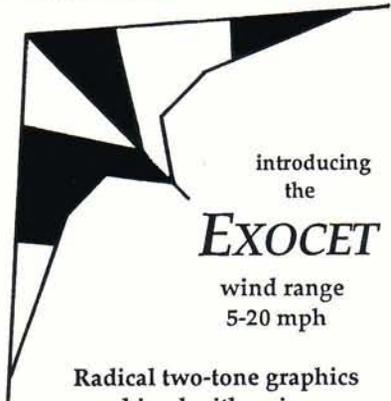
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Story in KiteLines, Winter 90/91, page 55.  
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# The Kite Lines Bookstore

*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 the bad). We carry nearly all kite titles in print, even ones that are lots of trouble to obtain.

The Bookstore is not an endorsement of any title, but we do guarantee your satisfac-

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

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

## JAPAN . . .



**Edo Dako (Edo Kites)** by Masaaki Modegi, in Japanese and English. Elegant, full-color pictorial tribute to Shingo Modegi (Masaaki's father) and recently deceased master kitemaker Teizo Hashimoto. Included are a brief history of Japanese kites and five types of Edo. Beautiful design and printing on heavy paper. Hardcover, 78 pp., \$59.95



**Bessatsu Bijutsu Techo (Fine Arts Journal)**, in Japanese. Originally the Winter 1982 issue of a quarterly art magazine. This issue, devoted entirely to kites, is now published as a book. Thick and substantial, it contains more than 300

excellent color photographs of kites and kitemaking showing great detail, plus drawings and articles by well-known Japanese kite authors. Softcover (in a protective plastic sleeve), 216 pp., \$19.95

**Ana Aki Dako, Paneru Dako (Vented Cellular Kites, Panel Kites)** by Eiji Ohashi, in Japanese. Creative new configurations of the used-to-be-basic box: circles, triangles, lantern-types, and how to multiply cells. Color photographs and excellent drawings. Softcover, 60 pp., \$21.95



**Tezuri Omoshiro Dako Nyumon (A Primer of Interesting Handmade Kites)** by Eiji Ohashi, in Japanese. Easy-to-make figure and cellular kites plus Ohashi's famous arch train. Color photos, many drawings. Tips on bamboo, painting, hummers, bridling. Soft-cover, 100 pp., \$24.95



**Hansen Dako (Ship Kites)** by Morio Yajima, in Japanese. Excellent illustrations, details and measurements (even rigging).



Color photos of ships in flight, both single- and multi-masted. Softcover, 66 pp., \$21.95

**Majiku Dako (Magic Kites)** by Takaji Kuroda, in Japanese. Innovative "cubic" kites that assemble many ways, convertible



boxes that flip in flight, fly upside down. Color photos. Softcover, 77 pp., \$21.95

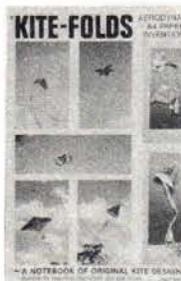
## AUSTRALIA . . .



**Make Mine Fly** by Helen Bushell. New 1988 edition has a far-ranging collection of tips, techniques, hints and advice (gathered since 1977) for beginners or experts, groups or individuals. Includes plans for the famous patented Trefoil Delta with folded keel, plus numerous paper kites. Softcover, 90 pp., \$12.95



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



**Kite-Folds** by Beth Matthews. This improved second edition contains plans for 12 small kites, each made from a single sheet of paper, plus the "Skyvelope." Most are easy to make, all are attractive and clever. Clear instructions, lovely color photos. Addendum on kites in education is excellent. Softcover, 26 pp., \$9.95

## BERMUDA . . .

**Bermuda Kites** by Frank Watlington. Plans for five island kites, plus variations and hummers, using traditional methods and materials (flour-and-water glue). Nice drawings,



a little history and lots of charm. Softcover, 24 pp., \$3.95

## BRAZIL . . .

**NEW! Arte de Fazer Pipas (The Art of Kitemaking)** by Silvio Voce, in Portuguese. Friendly history and construction of a baker's dozen easy paper kites, about half of them "modern" and the rest traditional Brazilian kites. Color photographs throughout, simple drawings. Has glossary. Softcover, 50 pages, \$4.95



## CANADA . . .

**NEW! Kite Crazy (the book)** by Carol Thomas. To accompany the Canadian video series, this wire-bound book includes plans for Kiskedece, rokkaku, dual- and quad-line deltas. Black-and-white drawings. Softcover, 176 pages, \$29.95

**NEW! Kite Crazy (the video)** by SOMA Film & Video, Canada. Meet famous kites and learn how to make and fly maneuverable kites (1-, 2- and 4-line). Beautiful photography, good instructions. VHS format, 102 minutes, \$29.95

Special book/video package \$54.95



## CANADA continued . . .



**NEW! Fishing for Angels: The Magic of Kites** by David Evans. A very colorful and attractive book for "readers ages 10 and up." Interesting and amusing kite lore and flying tips, but the three kite plans are best avoided. Softcover, 63 pp., \$14.95



**Go Fly a Kite: The Kite Builder's Manual** by John C. Boxtel. Novel plans include Ship, Windmill, Eagle. Line drawings are pleasing, but lack dimensions. Out-of-date materials and techniques. Softcover, 80 pp., \$12.95



**Chinese Artistic Kites** by Ha Kuiming and Ha Yiqi. Detailed description of the celebrated kites of the Ha family of Beijing. Covers history, evolution, structure, decoration and flying. Over 80 kites plus accessories. Luxuriously printed color. Good English translation. Softcover, 160 pp., \$16.95

## SPECIAL PURCHASES!



**NEW! Edo Dako Dai Zenshu (The Big Complete Book of Edo Kites)** by Masaaki Modegi, in Japanese (and some English). One of the most exquisite works of kite literature yet from Japan. About 140 kites lavishly photographed and cataloged. Excellent construction detail drawings. Rich printing on heavy paper, elegantly bound and boxed. Hardcover, 159 pages, \$89.95 (no airmail shipping)



**Arte en el Cielo (Art in the Sky)**, by Paul Eubel and Ikuko Matsumoto, in Spanish and English. Revised edition of *Bilder für den Himmel (Pictures for the Sky)*. Incredibly beautiful full-page, full-color photos of one-of-a-kind kites made for the traveling exhibition. Includes the work of 100 international artists collaborating with 36 Japanese kitemakers. Softcover, 406 pp., \$54.95 (no airmail shipping)

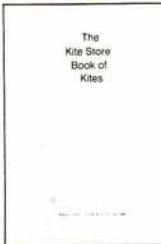
# The Kite Lines Bookstore . . . Continued

## ENGLAND . . .

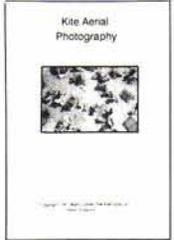
*Kite Cookery* by Don Dunford (deceased). Revised edition of 1979. A nice little book containing plans for four simple kites (box, delta, hexagon and dual-line diamond). Includes Dunford's theories and aerodynamics plus construction tips and technical material. Softcover, 47 pp., \$3.95



*The Kite Store Book of Kites* by Mark W. Cottrell. Not fancy, but a refreshingly honest kite book. Plans for ten somewhat original and fully tested kites plus the author's philosophy and a 5.25" floppy disk of computer programs (in BASIC) for kites. (A magnifying glass may help for reading the small drawings.) Softcover, 48 pp., \$13.95



*Kite Aerial Photography* by Mark W. Cottrell. Most of everything you need to know about the subject to get started or improve your technique, including kite plans. Good combination of technical data and common sense. System for comparing trade-offs in selecting the elements in your rig. Self-published with computer. Softcover, 44 pp., \$10.95



## FRANCE . . .

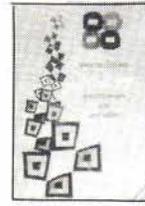


*Le Cerf-Volant en Chine (The Kite in China)* by Dominique Baillon-Lalande, in French. Beautiful photos (half in color) of Chinese kites. No plans, but some construction details. Hardcover, 88 pp., \$48.95 (no airmail shipping)

## GERMANY . . .



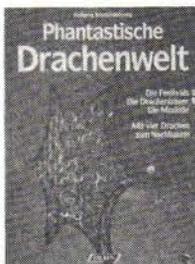
*Drachen aus aller Welt (Kites from Everywhere)* by Werner Backes, in German. Detailed illustrations and clear photographs of a 40-kite international sampler. Plans include the Cloud Seeker, rhombus, parafoil, multicell boxes, Roloplan and rokkaku. Also gives instructions on trains, reels, knots and aerial photography. Softcover, 128 pp., \$16.95



*Drachen Kombinieren und Verketten (Kite Combinations and Trains)* by Werner Backes, in German. Very complete collection of sophisticated kite combinations. Full of good ideas, instructions and minute details. Clear illustrations and many color photographs throughout. Softcover, 128 pp., \$16.95

## GERMANY continued . . .

**NEW!** *Phantastische Drachenwelt: Die Festivals, Die Drachenbauer, Die Modelle (Fantastic Kite World: The Festivals, The Kite Builders, The Models)* by Wolfgang Schemmel-pfennig, in German. Colorful, well produced, a real coffee-table kite book. Has 219 color photos, many drawings and an insert sheet with traceable plans for 4 unusual kites. Hardcover, 128 pp., \$31.95 (no airmail shipping)



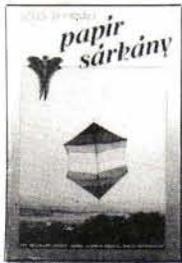
*Lenkdrachen Bauen und Fliegen (Making and Flying Stunt Kites)* by Wolfgang Schimmel-pfennig, in German. Colorful and fully detailed plans to build eight dual-liners: four diamonds, three deltas and a foil (the Para-flex). Flying tips. Softcover, 64 pp., \$13.95



*Drachen—einfach und schnell gebaut (Quick and Easy Kite Making)* by Werner Backes, in German. An accurate, colorful introductory volume with plans for seven basic designs and dozens of variations, plus winders, climbers and whirl sock. Fully detailed drawings. Flying techniques included. Softcover, 80 pp., \$8.95



## HUNGARY . . .



*Papir Sarkany (Paper Kites)* by Istvan Bodoczky, in Hungarian. How to make a wide selection of kites in paper—in all sizes. Standard kites plus some very original designs. Lovely illustrations, photos and drawings, lots of detail. Two colorful paper kite covers inserted. Softcover, 80 pp., \$14.95

## ISRAEL . . .



**NEW!** *Afifomania (Kite Mania)* by Uri Abeles, in Hebrew. An effort to bring kiting to Israel contains about 25 kite plans along with history, materials and techniques all borrowed from familiar sources. Attractive color photographs throughout including interesting scenes from Israel. Hardcover, 104 pp., \$19.95

## ITALY . . .



*Aquiloni (Kites)* by Guido Accascina, in Italian. A mini encyclopedia of information, accurate and up-to-date. Includes theory, plans, tips, techniques, sources and resources. Small but thick, with 16 pages of color photos. Comes with 12 color postcards in unusual die-cut box. Pocket-size. Softcover, 256 pp., \$17.95

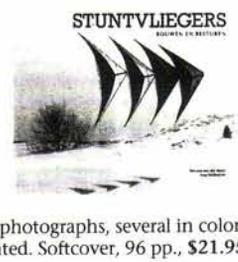
## MALAYSIA . . .

*Kites of Malaysia: Kites to make and fly* by Wayne Hosking, in English. The only source of plans and construction techniques for 10 different Malaysian *wau*. Great full-page photographs beautifully handled. Reasonable description of traditional methods. Softcover, 39 pp., \$7.95

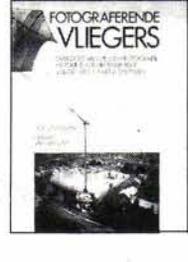


## The NETHERLANDS . . .

**NEW!** *Stuntvliegers Bouwen en Besturen (Stunt Kites to Make and Fly)* by Servaas van der Horst and Nop Velthuizen, in Dutch. Covers all aspects of the sport (dual-line, quad-line, soft kites, individual and team flying). Includes detailed plans for 10 different high-tech maneuverable kites, some with novel touches. Excellent drawings and photographs, several in color, well organized and printed. Softcover, 96 pp., \$21.95



*Fotograferende Vliegers (Picturetaking Kites)* by Nop Velthuizen and Gerard van der Loo, in Dutch. Thorough treatment of kite aerial photography from its start to the present. Exceptional photos and technical drawings. Hardcover, 120 pp., \$20.95



## NETHERLANDS continued . . .



*Kleine Papieren Vliegers (Small Paper Kites)* by Harm van Veen, in Dutch. An expertly assembled, very original little book. Includes detailed plans for 10 miniature fliers, graded in order of difficulty. All feature artful folding and perfect craftsmanship. Construction techniques and materials are described, including splitting bamboo. Shows a tiny reel and tips on line. Color photographs. Softcover, 32 pp., \$5.95

## SOUTH AFRICA . . .



*Kites: 24 Designs* by Izak C. Rust, in English. The first kite book we have seen from South Africa. Contains a variety of basic plans, illustrated with good scale drawings and color photographs, along with tips on frames, tails, sails, knots, reels and bridles. Ends with a rarity among kite books: an annotated bibliography. Softcover, 48 pp., \$8.95

## SWITZERLAND . . .



**NEW!** *Drachenreise (Kite Journey)* by Ruedi Epple-Gass, in German. Strictly black-and-white printing and nothing high-tech in this interesting book. Countries explored (some visited and others researched) include Turkey, Vietnam, Dominican Republic, and spots in the South Pacific and Latin America plus Europe. Political overtones. Flying tips. Softcover, 125 pp., \$26.95

# The Kite Lines Bookstore . . . Continued

## The UNITED STATES . . .

*The Penguin Book of Kites* by David Pelham. Called "The Bible," first published in 1976 and still recommended for all kitefliers. Plans for more than 100 kites plus lots of solid reference data, aerodynamics and history. Color. (Hard users: buy two—the binding dies.) Softcover, 228 pp., \$12.95



*The Stunt Kite Book* by Alison Fujino and Benjamin Ruhe. Covers background, personalities and introduction well; treats nuts-and-bolts somewhat sketchily. Many black-and-white photos and drawings and a useful chart of 80 brands of stunt kites listed by skill level. Softcover, 110 pp., \$8.95



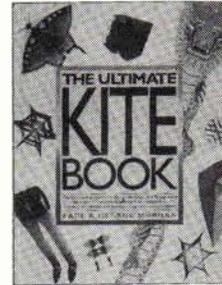
*Stunt Kites!* by David Gomberg, 3rd edition. The first book on the subject. Thorough coverage of the basics plus advanced techniques. Tips and information from 22 well-known pilots; lots of safety pointers. "Home-made" publishing with computer drawings, no photographs. Softcover, 88 pp., \$8.95



**NEW!** *Art That Flies* by Tal Streeter and Pamela Houk. An anthology of unusual kites from the Dayton (Ohio) Art Institute exhibition by artists Curt Asker (Sweden), Jackie Matisse (France) and Tal Streeter (USA). Optical illusions and environmental objects. Interviews, artists' statements and an interesting bibliography. Many handsome photos, some in color. No plans. Softcover, 139 pp., \$12.95



*The Art of the Japanese Kite* by Tal Streeter. Rare up-close and personal profiles of Japan's master kite artists sensitively interviewed in 1971-72. Includes 130 outstanding photos (\$2 in color). Rich contemporary history. No kite plans, but a true joy to read. Softcover, 181 pp., \$24.95



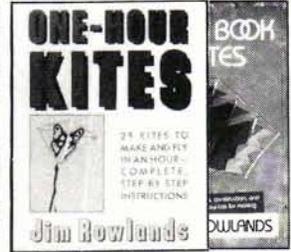
**NEW!** *The Ultimate Kite Book* by Paul and Helene Morgan. If it weren't for the exaggerated title, this would be a pretty good book. It's done with great color and splash to attract newcomers, but lacks depth and identification of kitemakers. Good on flying techniques. Contains about six plans for easy kites, including a Tumbling Star. Hardback, 122 pp., \$19.95

*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

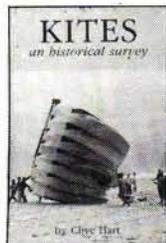


*More Kites for Everyone* by Margaret Greger. Some old kites, some new kites, plus tips and techniques based on years of experience. Plans for 17 kites from simple to complex. Softcover, 59 pp., \$9.95

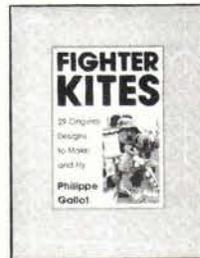
*One-Hour Kites* by Jim Rowlands. Same as *British Kites to Make and Fly*. Standard kites for beginners, plus a few new ones, but directions are skimpy. Literature and supplier lists. Softcover, 95 pp., \$12.95



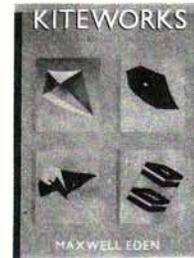
*The Big Book of Kites* by Jim Rowlands. Same as *British Making and Flying Modern Kites*. Uneven instructions and drawings for 36 kites. Includes a book list. Softcover, 127 pp., \$12.95



*Kites: An Historical Survey* by Clive Hart. Revised, second edition (1982). Invaluable reference work with many black-and-white illustrations and photos. Fascinating, readable in-depth research in early kiting. The most extensive kite bibliography in print. No plans. Hardcover, 210 pp., \$31.95  
Softcover, 210 pp., \$14.95



*Fighter Kites* by Philippe Gallot. Plans for 29 kites, plus tips on flying, tools, materials, games and accessories. Illustrations are large and clear. Photos are good. Instructions are adequate, but measurements converted from metric may total incorrectly. Softcover, 96 pp., \$12.95



**NOW IN PAPERBACK!** the revised second edition of *Kiteworks* by Maxwell Eden. An impressive collection of 50 kite plans from respected designers. Up-to-date on materials. Detailed drawings plus tips, techniques, accessories, historic chapters and (un)related stories. Big, colorful, ambitious—but unclear in some places. Softcover, 287 pp., \$14.95  
Original hardcover, 287 pp., \$24.95 (no airmail for hardcover)

*Chinese Kites* by David Jue. A little classic: brief history and legends from China preserved by a deceased Chinese American. Tips, tools, designs, techniques and construction details for 10 relatively simple Chinese kites using rice paper and bamboo. Colorful paintings. Hardcover, 56 pp., \$11.95



*25 Kites that Fly* by Leslie Hunt. Reprint of 1929 original. Contains good old plans for kites not seen much anymore (shield, yacht, elephant, etc.) using orange crate sticks and flour-and-water paste. Also historical data, photos and details. Hunt was a kitemaker for the U.S. Weather Bureau. Softcover, 110 pp., \$2.95



*Make Your Own Kite (new kites)* by John W. Jordan (deceased). Plans for nine kites from unusual but easy-to-get materials such as plastic foam and computer cards. Clear instructions, amusing reading from a genuine enthusiast ("You will never find an unhappy person at the end of a kite string.") Quantity limited. Softcover, 90 pp., \$6.95

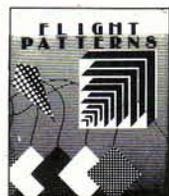


*Super Kites III* by Neil Thorburn. Contains an ample supply of good designs and tested, creative construction techniques using mostly plastic bags and wooden dowels. New plans for T-Bird-2, T-Bird-3 and Bristol boxes. New color photographs brighten this "completely handmade" book. Softcover, 123 pp., \$8.95



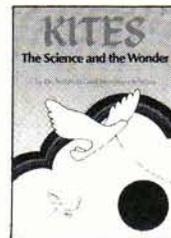
mystique." Many black-and-white photos and drawings. Very limited supply. Softcover, 56 pp., \$4.95

*Come Fight a Kite* by Dinesh Bahadur. Out of print, this 1978 classic is the first book ever written about fighter kites. Includes history, construction and flying tips, but no plans. Misdirected to children but carries the "Dinesh



tentious, free of errors, user-friendly and easy to understand. Softcover, 36 pp., \$4.95

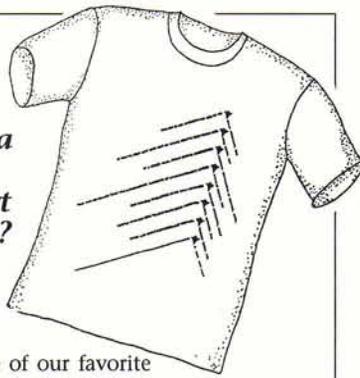
*Flight Patterns* by Leland Toy (from a television kitemaking series, 1984), 2nd edition. Solid fundamental tips and easy plans for eight kites presented in order of difficulty. Plans include a rotor made of foam meat trays and a Mylar fighter, plus fighting strategies. Unpretentious, free of errors, user-friendly and easy to understand. Softcover, 36 pp., \$4.95



*Kites: The Science and the Wonder* by Toshio Ito and Hirotsugu Komura. Full of aerodynamics, formulas and observations—the first effort since Marvin to be scientific about kites. Dia-grams for the "original" butterfly kite. First published in Japanese (1979), the English translation (1983) is not smooth. Softcover, 160 pp., \$11.95

# Great extra kite stuff from Kite Lines!

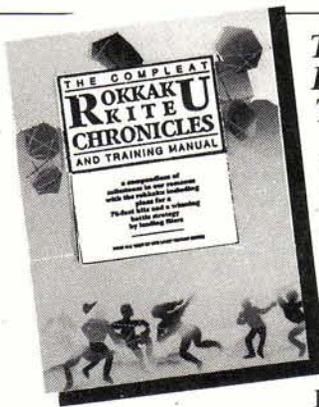
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Japan's Mt. Aso Festival, Goble Starbox, Comics Kite, Budapest, San Francisco, Poster-Calendar-Almanac and more.

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# News, Rumors & Miscellany

**C**ielo Encantado Fiesta in Silver City, New Mexico in its first year (October 11-13, 1991) was already a well-known event.

Reason: the town is home to Bob Ingraham, founder of the AKA, and he was celebrated informally as much as the kites.

Frank Kenisky IV reports that the scenery at the campus football field location was "like something out of the old west." He had come with many others from Texas to

take part in the competitions. Eva and Chris Dunlop of Dallas brought out supplies for "a frenzied impromptu kite workshop" that was a big hit with the children.

The occasion included "terrific" southwestern-style food on both weekend evenings. The night fly at a golf course was especially memorable, lit with the countless brilliant stars visible in Silver City.

**U**nusually cold days in New Zealand over the winter led to much thicker lake ice than normal—up to eight inches when our International Correspondent Simon Freidin was there. As a guest of Peter Lynn, he was introduced to the sport of ice-kiting in the mountains near Peter's home in Ashburton. He writes:

Continual thawing and refreezing created ice-rink-smooth black ice, which cracked and sang as it was struck by the sun.

Peter used his sparless Peel kite (shaped like a slice of orange peel) for traction. Its unusual airfoil shaping gives it even pull through the power window and out to the edges of the wind envelope. In addition, the kite can be stalled anywhere in the flying zone and held there till the flier needs power.

During a series of tacks, Peter discovered that ice-skate edges don't have much area to prevent your slipping sideways! However, the visual effect of the kite above the frozen lake was sheer magic.



The pull of the Peel.



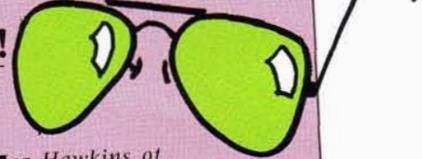
Leland Toy, honoree of the Fiesta in Silver City, New Mexico chats with Bob Ingraham.

Scenes of the 10th W.S.I.K.F., Long Beach, Washington: from left: Katsutaka Murooka's 8m (25') Yakko Flow Form with earth ball by David Chandler; Tom and Moira Caldwell with battery-run smiling/frowning kite; Margaret Greger photographed by Marlene Zilar ("Is this what happens to you after you have written six kite books?") Below, Francis Hall's lovely commemorative pretend postage stamp.



## SAFETY ALERTS!

WARNING: EYE CANCER CAN RESULT FROM KITEFLYING



**B**ill Paxton flies several times a week at Shoreline Park in Mountain View, California. He writes: On a recent routine eye examination, my doctor discovered a small bump on my right eye and called in a cornea specialist. It was indeed a small tumor. Two days later I watched while it was surgically removed. No fun! I previously had no clue that it was there and was just lucky to have caught it before it had spread.

It is now known that exposure to the sun's ultraviolet rays are cumulative and that with changes to the ionosphere, UV radiation is becoming stronger and can damage the retina, iris and cornea.

Like most kites, I was well aware of possible skin damage and was careful to apply 15+ sunblock lotion to my face, ears, hands and arms. I even wore a hat with a large brim. However, because I was never bothered by glare, I did not wear sunglasses and thus got into trouble.

Obviously, the kiteflying environment can make us very susceptible to eye damage, particularly if the wind is from the north and thus the sun will be in front of you from the east, south or west.

For your sake, please get a good pair of sunglasses with UV protection and be sure to wear them even if it's cloudy.\*

\*The August 1988 issue of *Consumer Reports* studied sunglasses and found that UV absorption that meets or exceeds standards can be found at all price levels (\$2 to \$20 or more).

**J**az Hawkins of Hermosa Beach, California, writes: The beach was "empty" last spring when my wife and I concentrated on practicing our kite ballet. I didn't see the lone runner until too late. The first thing I knew, my kite was on the sand and there was an inert body beneath it! I ran over and found I had clobbered the fellow right on the bridge of his nose. It was already swelling up and had a bluish tinge to it. The blow had been incredibly accurate, a laser-guided smart missile programmed for a schnozzle hit.

After some suitable sympathy on my part, he eventually jogged on. It was a close call. The victim was only slightly hurt. It could have been far more serious. He could have been a lawyer, for God's sake.

**T**rend starting on the West Coast: Fire departments are forcing people who deliberately or negligently cause a brush or forest fire to pay for putting them out. Careless backpackers, loggers, homeowners—or kitefliers—may be held liable for the cost of fighting a fire they caused.

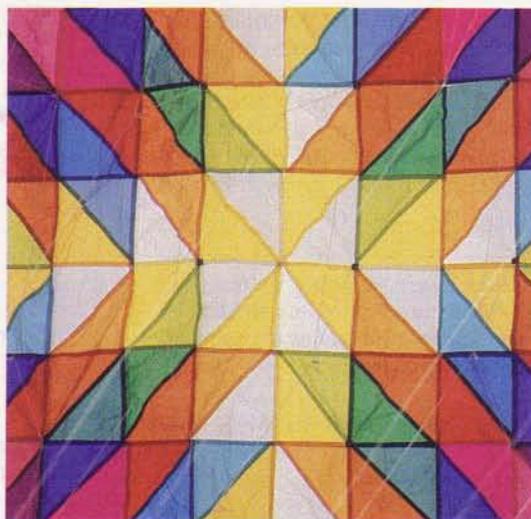
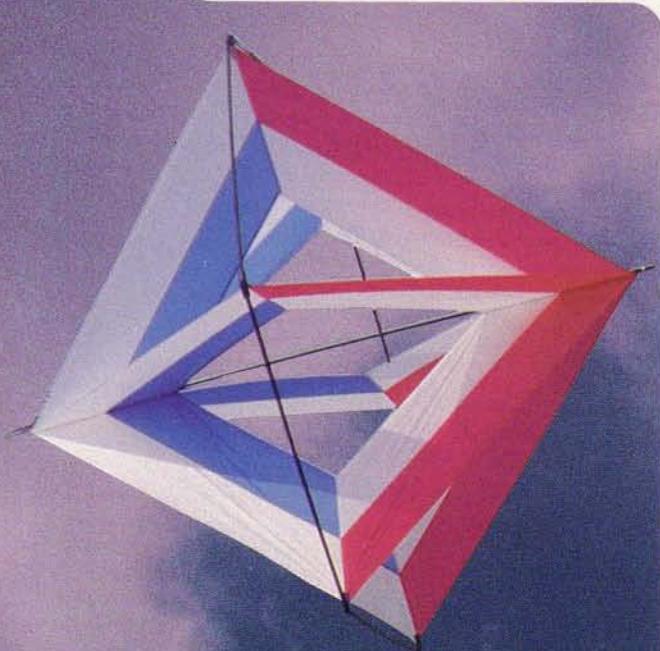
The U.S. Forest Service has been billing people for years, but only recently have state and local governments jumped in. Most bills are \$5,000, but one, upheld in court, was for \$132,700. Just an extra zap for us kites to think about when we see power lines or storm clouds.

**A** first winner has been named for the Jalbert Kite Innovation Award. It's Martin Lester of England, known for his Shark, Icarus, Space Shuttle, Legs kite and others.

The Friends of Jalbert and the Parafoil presented the "wind wave" trophy (right), made of plexiglass by Richard Cole of North Carolina, at the AKA convention in October. Martin bounded forward to accept the award from Hugh (Stretch) Tucker while the late Dom Jalbert's wife Billie, son Paul and other family members and friends beamed.



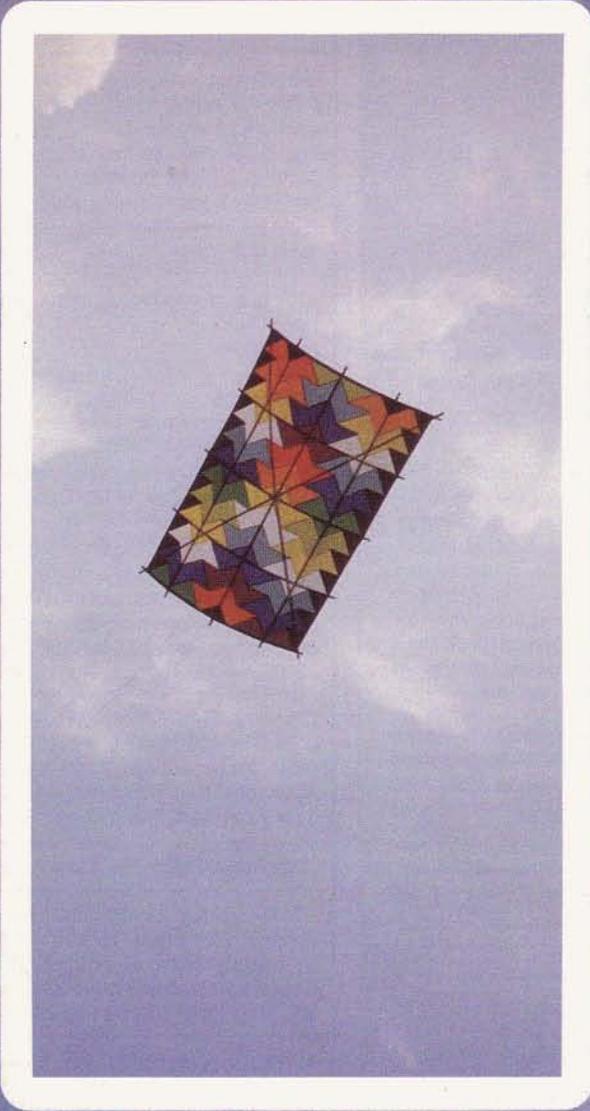
## Roberto Guidori



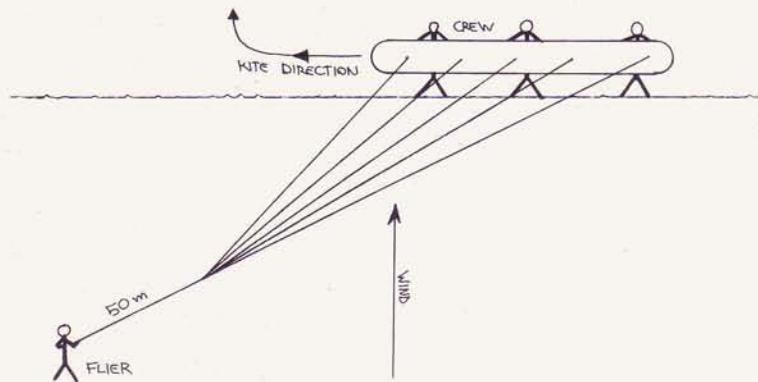
*Kitemaker:* Roberto Guidori, age 33, shop assistant, Cervia, Italy.  
*Kite experience:* 10 years.  
*Inspiration:* "M.C. Escher and similar artists; and Pelham's *Penguin Book of Kites*, my main push to start in kiting."  
*Average number of days spent making a kite:* 4.  
*Honors:* "I won 10 million lire arriving first in the Toshiba Sprint Kite event, but the greatest honor is that many people admire my kites."  
*Favorite flying spot:* "The Free Beach in Cervia."  
*Philosophy in kitemaking:* "Kites, like any other artistic creation, are there to receive admiration by the onlooker. To do this, a kitemaker must create something admirable but must not forget to communicate to the onlooker in a way that he/she can understand."

*Photographs by:* Roberto Guidori and Jayne Edwards.

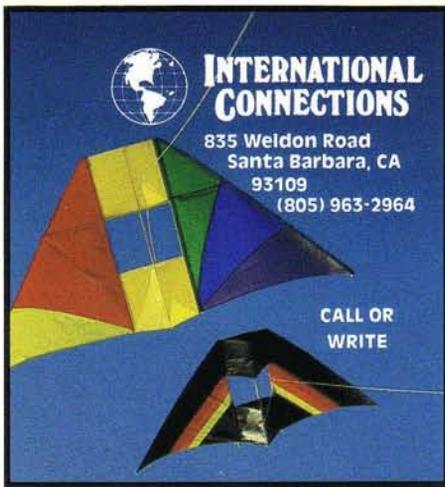
Roberto Guidori



Right: "The SLOOP is a kite made in 1986 from an idea by Claudio Capelli, extended and color-patterned by me (Roberto Guidori), then cut and sewn by me and my wife, Jayne Edwards. The SLOOP measures 10.5m x 1.2m (about 34½' x 4'). It is lightly bowed and has a set of 10 bridle legs, about 15-20m (50-65') long, attached only along the spine. The kite flies at a 50- to 60-degree angle in moderate wind. The main problem with the kite is to get it aloft, since it is impossible to stand on its trailing edge. We work it as a team, three people on the kite and one on the line, running it up from one edge of the wind toward the center. We pull the kite into the air by the nose. The last person holds it until it goes straight up and then lets go to fly."  
(See drawing.)



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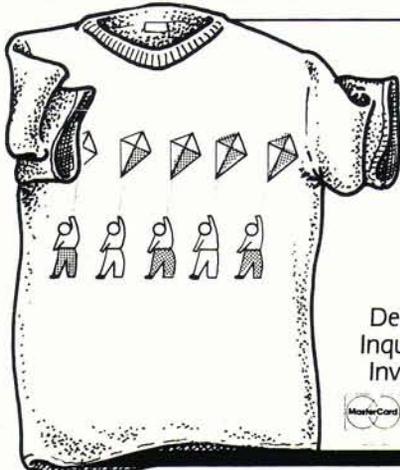
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### ANNOUNCEMENTS

TOUR JAPAN: Dorothea Checkley announces a kite tour of Japan from April 25-May 7, 1992, including several delightful new places. Contact her at 510 W. Highland Dr., Seattle, WA 98119; tel: 206-284-5350.

MEMORIAL BOOKS: *Kite Lines* offers a program to honor deceased kitefliers through donations of kite books to libraries. Send us (1) your paid order for the book(s), (2) the name and address of the library to receive the gift, and (3) the name of the person in whose memory you are making the gift. *Kite Lines* will send the book with a card naming you as the memorial contributor and the deceased kiteflier you are honoring. (Thanks to Kathy Nixie, kiteflier and librarian, Port Lavaca, Texas, for this idea.)

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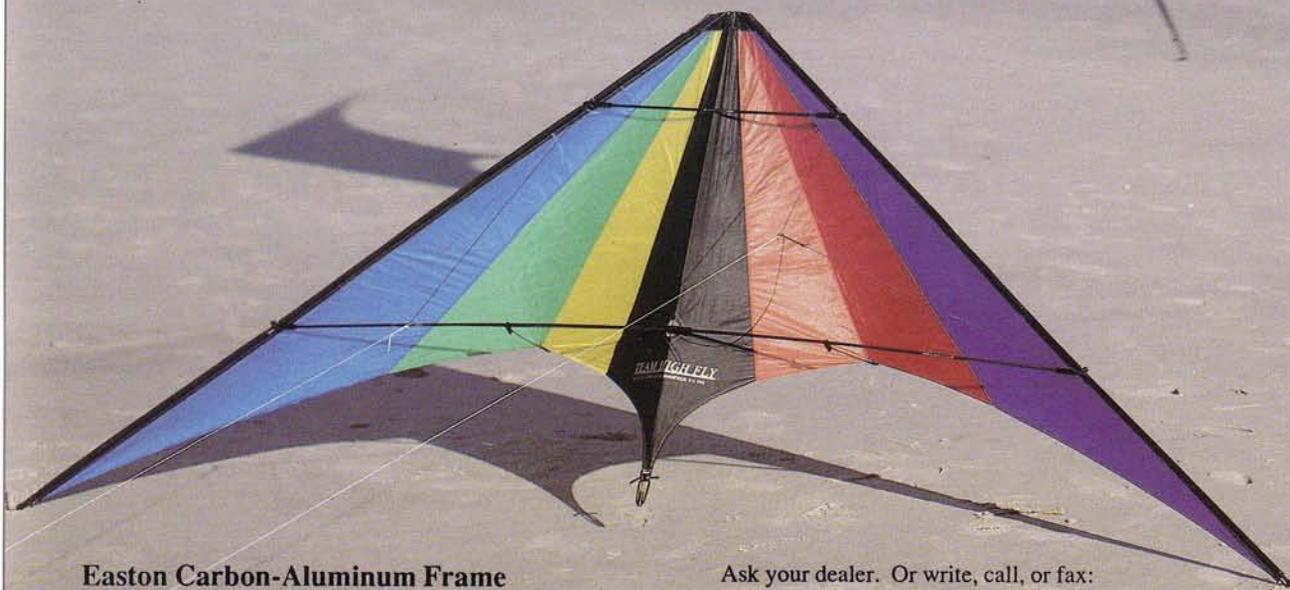
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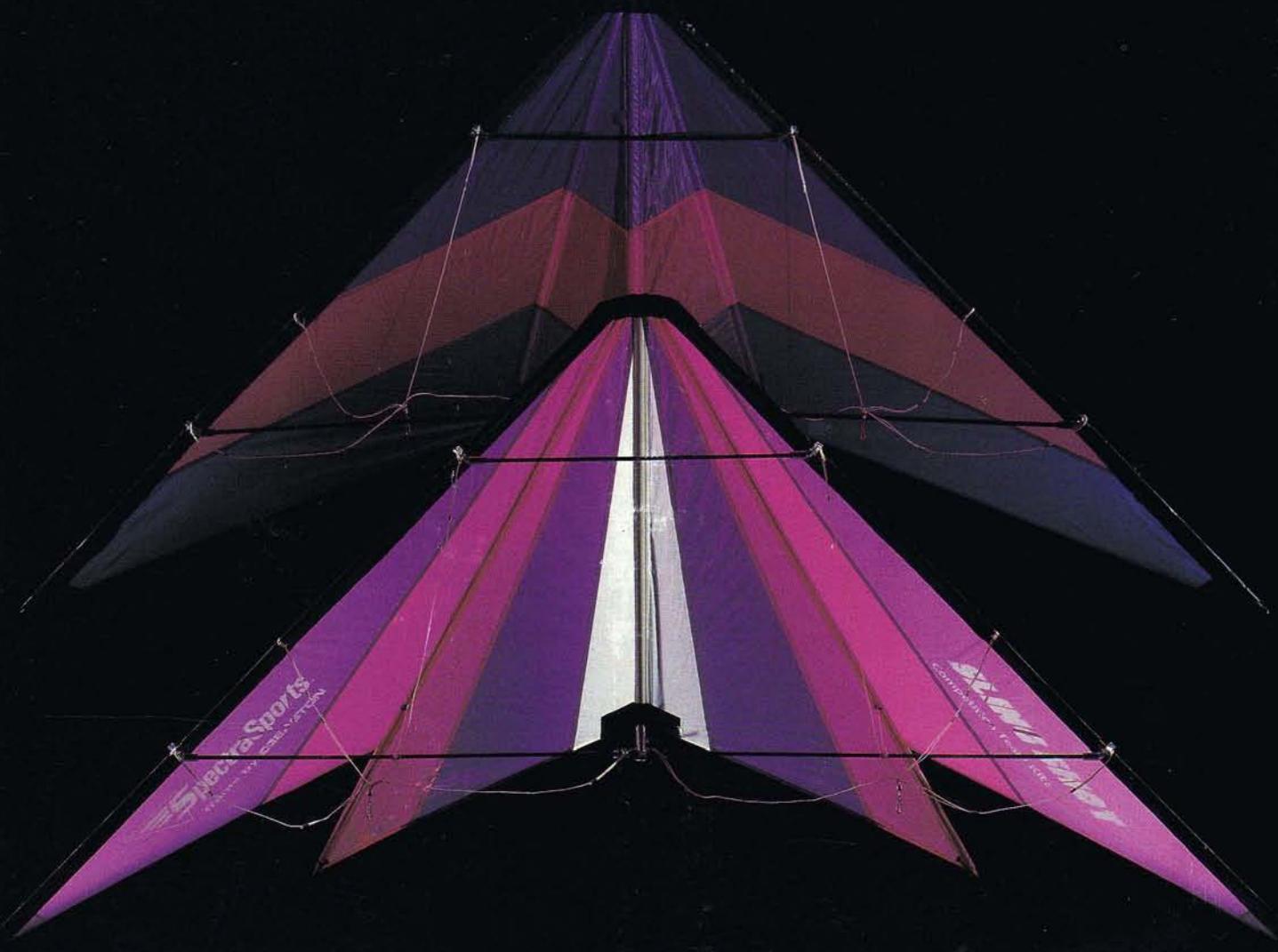
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