

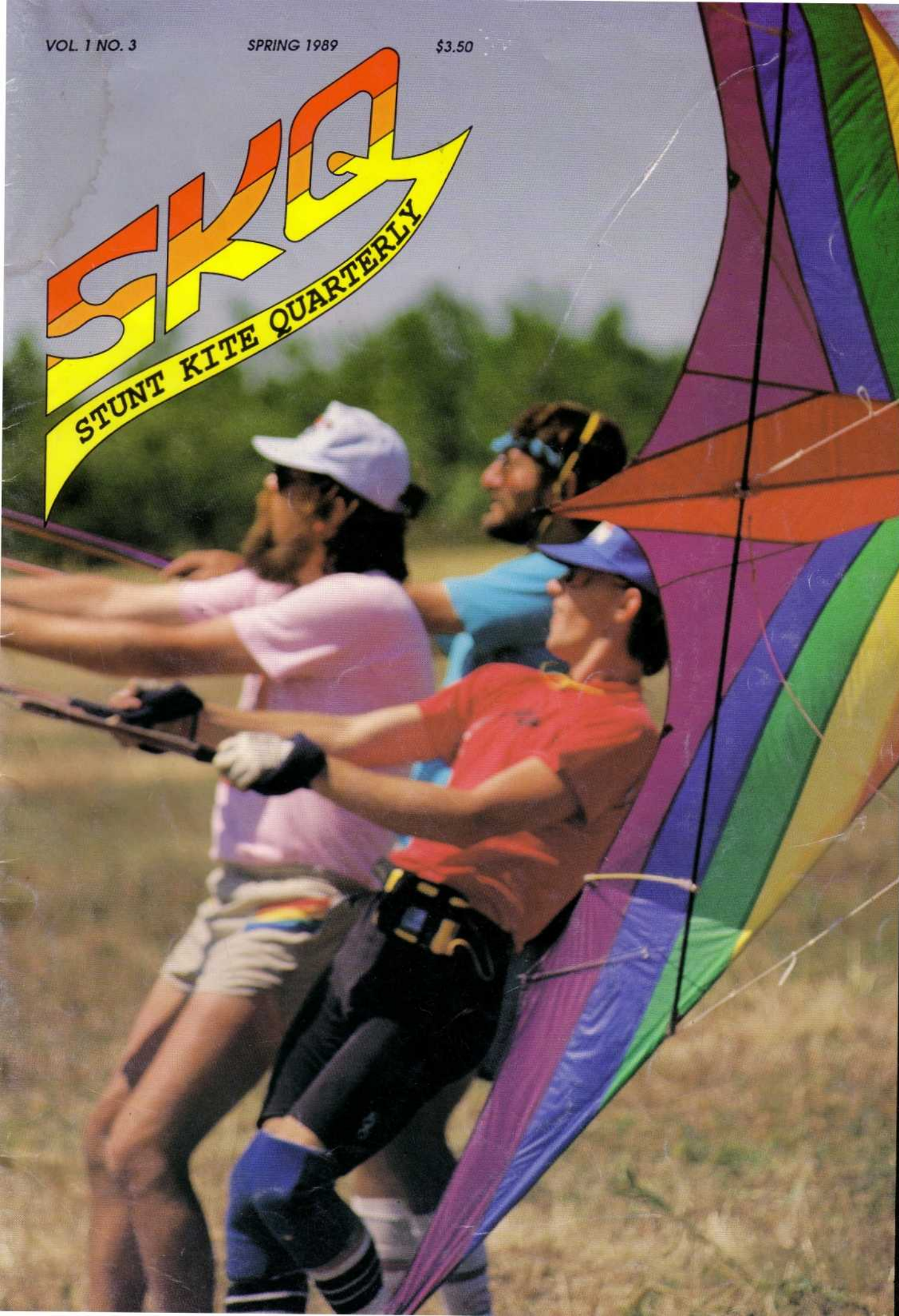
VOL. 1 NO. 3

SPRING 1989

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MAY 27-29, 1989

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SKY FESTIVALS, 30 WEST END AVENUE,
HADDONFIELD, N.J. 08033

COMING EVENTS

- 26 THE TEXAS GULF COAST CHALLENGE**
The Precision Flyer's Event... and Texas braggin' rights, to boot!
- 27 BELMONT PARK**
Cash up for grabs in the Intermediate Division.
- 28 GREAT LAKES NATIONALS**
What you need to know to get in on this hot Midwestern event.
- 29 EAST COAST STUNT KITE COMPETITION**
Pre-event information on the biggest of them all.

DEPARTMENTS

- 3 LETTERS**
- 6 STUNTER'S NEWS**
Competitions, contests, and cryptic notes from all over!
- 15 HAWAII CHALLENGE**
Competition results hot from the fields!
- 16 SHORT LINES**
More tips and quips from the Wizard.
- 18 THE SEDGWICK TAPES**
Lee Sedgwick, one of the innovative leaders in the sport, shares his secrets of flying. This issue: KITESKIING.
- 20 FIGHTER KITES**
OK, folks ... you asked for it! First up, Rick O'Shea from Jacksonville, FL!
- 24 THE BOOK OF AL**
The last of "The No Secrets Handbook" for Dual Line Stunt Kite Stunt Kites.
- 30 SKQ'S PRODUCT REVIEWS**
The largest review section of stunt kites ever published. 14 pages of new ones!
- 44 ADVERTISERS' INDEX**
- 45 EVENT CALENDAR**
- 47 KITE STORE DIRECTORY**

ON THE COVER: Gary Counts, Dan Buxton, and Eric Wolff forming the Mega-Team. Toledo, OH. Foreground kite by Lee Sedgwick/Sue Taft.

Photo by Cris Batdorff



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Letters . . .

Dear SKQ,

I recently returned from a trip from U.S. As usual my shoppings consisted of a lot of kite stuff — including SKQ Vol. 1 #1. My English is not good enough to express my enthusiasm for the magazine.

P.S. Please, an article about stunt kite lines:

- properties, theory and practice
- which line, when
- handling

P.P.S. Could you have a novice department explaining ("trivial") things like:

- velcro?
- 360?

**Simo Salanne
Finland**

Thanks for the note, Simo. We'll deal with the stunt kite line article in subsequent issues, to be sure! A 360, is a maneuver in which the flyer, by running, causes the kite to do a complete circle around him. It's kind of like an all-the-way-around ground pass. Obviously, this is a very low-wind maneuver.

Velcro is a trademark of Velcro-USA, Inc. It is basically composed of two pieces of material, the first of which incorporates very small hook-like barbs which protrude from it. The second piece of material is fronted with an extremely compact "knitting" of loops. When the two pieces are pressed together, the hooks catch the loops and the joining process is able to hold. Hope that the information helps!!

Dear SKQ,

Thanks for your effort!

I'm eager for my first issue to arrive.

I hope your articles will tell how two people flying "squirrels" can get them to lock together in midair, fly like a train, and then peel apart! I witnessed this spectacular demonstration of kite skill (man and wife flying, I understand) at Corey Jenson's "Hair of the Dog" event on the beach near Monterey on Oct. 8, 1988.

Also — how about the man flying on 4 (count 'em) lines.

Is it true that the hotel for the next AKA conference is going to have a bridle suite?

**Carl E. Wells
Pierson, IA**

Thanks, Carl! We've already started researching the mid-air locking (also known as re-fueling) ... more on that in issue #4. Quad-line flying will be covered in an upcoming Sedgwick Tape. Watch for it!

P.S. I suppose that the gal that cleans up the bridle suite is going to be the maid of honor? Or is that just some kind of line?

Dear SKQ,

I'm not the number one dual line flyer in the country (not even number two). In fact, I don't even compete at all, but ... I do fly dual line stunt kites.

Personally, I'm not too competitive by nature. More than that, I fly for my own enjoyment and don't seem to need the recognition of fellow flyers, nor the approval of a crowd, to get the most out of my flying. Not to say that one way or the other is good or bad.

After several years of flying and watching many competitions, a repeatedly asked question comes to mind. "Why aren't more ladies flying or competing in dual line?"

The answer is that a lot of us ARE flying, and more ladies are entering competition each year.

Competition requires hours of practice, if you want to do well. Simply, "because of the ways of the world," many ladies don't have the amount of "free time" to spend on their hobby that is needed. The well organized "super-woman" can fit practice in her schedule the same as her exercise class, running the kids to their activities, and all the other things required to take care of the family and home. With some help from her family, a lady can even get in more practice time. However, this is not about organiz-

ing time well, or the duties of the average woman.

As I walk around at a competition or event, I hear ladies comments about wanting to dry dual line flying, "but ..." Why don't they?? Power flying and stacks looks like it requires a lot of strength or weight or both. That's what they see at a lot of events. NOT ENTIRELY TRUE!

My collection of dual line kites includes: several different sizes of Flexifoils, Hawaiian Team Kite, Hawaiian Spin-Off Free Style, Hawaiian Ultra-Light Spin-Off, Action Kite Action Combo, Rainbows, and one of my favorites, a stack of ten Trlboys. Many times, it's not entirely the wind condition that determines what I fly. It might just be the mood I'm in, or what might be the most fun to fly. A purely feminine emotion? Not necessarily. A lot of dual line flyers feel this way.

Some thoughts about competition and choice of kites. If you decide to practice for competition, it is best to choose one kite and always practice with that kite. A wise choice of kite is a light to medium wind kite. Why? For some unknown reason most competition days end up offering light winds. Many competition organizers will tell you of many times when, the day before competition, the wind was "up." Then the day of the event, light to nearly no wind. History (of delayed competitions) and rules (the "at least XX MPH wind" rule) illustrates that there have been wind problems for event competitions.

That's not to say you shouldn't be prepared for heavy winds. You never know! Like many other competitive sports, you should be well prepared physically, mentally and well equipped for changeable conditions.

Don't forget how many categories are available at events. Precision figures not your style? Okay, put your Walkman on with your favorite music, and develop a ballet routine. Ex-

Letters Continued . . .

perience is a good teacher in this sport. So be sure to enter novice events, in your area, as soon as you make the decision to compete. I have worked the field (as Pit Boss, Judge or ground crew), and believe me there is a certain amount of "stage fright/jitters" that strikes even experienced flyers. Novice events can help you cope with that as well as show you how most events are run.

So, practice figures (most competition compulsory figures and rules are readily available from other dual line flyers), and/or carefully select a good piece of music for ballet, relax and enjoy flying in competition.

From where I stand, it appears that the competitors that place well in competitions, are the ones that go out on the field to "have a good time" and that shows! IT SHOULD BE FUN!

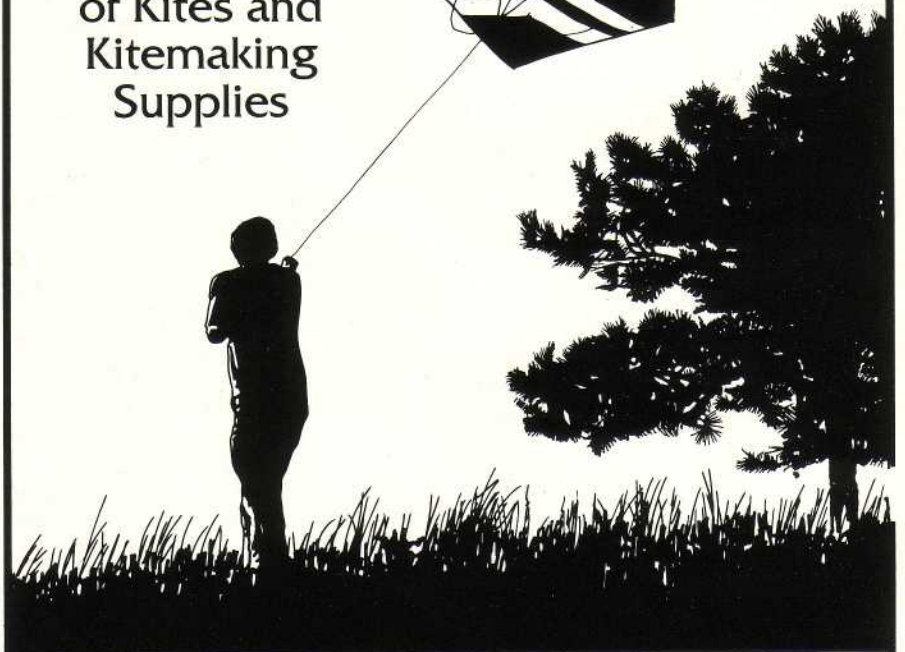
Dual line stunt flying can be quite a workout, but whether you

want to compete or not, ladies.... Get out there and try it!! The key to dual line, for us, is not trying to follow the men's style. We need to try new techniques and develop our own style. As in any kite flying, you can do it, with "the right kite for the conditions at the time"; and the type of kite you enjoy flying. There are so many

variations of stunt kites available for all types of wind conditions and all types of flyers. Big, small, one or a stack, it doesn't matter. I find it exciting, relaxing, rewarding and nearly therapeutic. Find the kite that fits you and what you want to do, and FLY!!!

**Pam Holbrook
Worthington, OH.**

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KTA HOLDS FIRST SOLO TRADE SHOW

The Kona Kai Club in San Diego was the gathering spot for better than 200 members and interested parties last January as the Kite Trade Association International held its first ever solo kite trade show. The event, which has in the past been associated with the American Kitefliers' Association national convention, split from the organization at the Washington, D.C. convention, opting to pursue the hobby as a merchandising endeavor.

Michael McFadden, who was re-elected president of the KTA at the San Diego event, was very happy with the show. "We've come so far in the past couple of years ... I'm proud to be a part of it," McFadden declared. There were nearly 60 booths sold for the event and the array of new products of interest to the stunt flying community was fantastic. (Many of the new kites seen at the KTA convention are reviewed in detail elsewhere in this magazine.)

New products included: the Revolution 1, from Revolution Kites; a quad-line kite that is capable of, among other things, backwards flight and launching, along with propeller-type turns. Sparless Stunters introduced, naturally, the Sparless Stunter, a dual-line parafoil-type kite and a second stunter built along more traditional lines. Banshee Kites introduced three models which make use of the flying wing concept. New from Peter Powell was the Skyraker, a winged design complete with standoff spars. Action Kites is now offering Sky Darts in the same attractive sail designs that have made the Super Darts so popular over the years. New from Jerry Sinotte (Avenger Kites) is the Peregrine, a wedge-keeled dual-line wing with a dual-skinned keel section. Top of the Line is now writing orders for their new 3/4-size Hawaiians and Spinoffs. Trlby has introduced through their sister company, Great American Kite Company, a newly designed diamond stunter aimed at the beginners market called the Screamer. Original Kitebag was taking orders for new kite bags that are large enough to hold a fair selection of stunters without having to collapse the leading edge spars.

The consensus opinion of the attendees was that this first venture of the KTA was a very good one. A number of the exhibitors commented that they had written some very nice orders. In addition to the numerous workshops held, there was ample time for free flying and a chance to both view and try some of the new products offered.

Next year's show is already in the works, being slated for January 17-20 at the Sheraton Bal Harbour, in Miami, Fl. For further information about either the Kite Trade Association or their annual event contact Carl Parlette, at 415-764-4908, or write the KTA at 50 First Street, Suite 310, San Francisco, CA 94105.

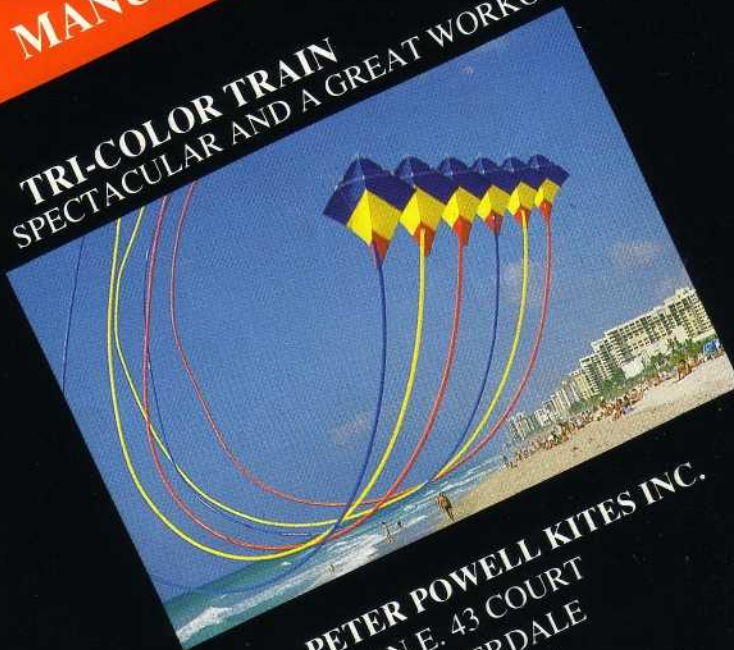


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The Stunters' News

INTERNATIONAL STUNT KITE ASSOCIATION FORMED

3 FEBRUARY 1989 — Organizers of five of the country's largest, established stunt kite competitions have announced the formation of the International Stunt Kite Association. The ISKA has organized an international circuit of competitions which will be run under a set of uniform standards. According to ISKA president, Fran Gramkowski (East Coast National Stunt Kite Competitions), the group will also establish a point ranking system to determine an International Stunt Kite Champion.

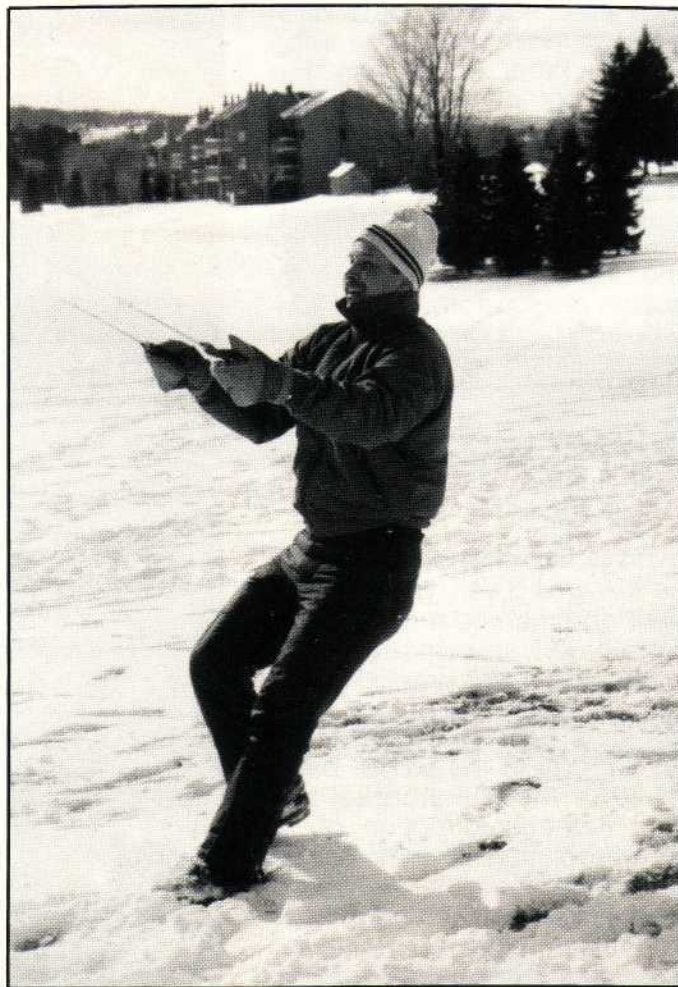
Open class flyers will be given points on a 10 to 100 basis for finishes in four of the six sanctioned events. A first place finish will net the competitor 100 points, 90 for second, and so on. Intermediate class flyers will similarly be ranked on a 5 to 50 point basis. Because of the distances and cash outlays involved to attend all events, final point tallies will be based on the best four finishes. Competitors who fail to finish in the top 10 will be awarded certificates of participation for their efforts. By the end of the flying year, all competitors should be able to figure their position in the international flying circuit as a ranking system will be in place.

Additionally, the association will work to establish the growth of the sport through sanctioned regional competitions. "We are happy to announce that our first European regional event will be held at Washington, Tyne & Wear, England, on July 15th and 16th," Gramkowski noted.

Making up the balance of the Board of Directors of the ISKA are: Terry Crumpler (Texas Gulf Coast Challenge), secretary/treasurer; Robert Loera (Hawaii Challenge), vice-president; Cherie McFadden (National West Coast Stunt Kite Championships), vice-president; and Cris Batdorff (Great Lakes National Stunt Kite Cham-

pionships), vice-president. All five events will be ISKA point-sanctioned this year. The sixth ranked event will be the AKA Nationals.

Interested parties may find out more about the ISKA by writing to: The International Stunt Kite Association, P.O. Box 515, Clute, TX 77531.



Mike Bore of the Wind Wizards team. The Wizards, sponsored by Grand Bay Kite Company of Traverse City, MI, were among a number of flyers asked to fly during the North American VASA (cross-country skiing) races held in Traverse City this last February. Hot stuff in the wintertime!

SKQ Photo by
Cris Batdorff

BELMONT PARK CHAMPIONSHIPS TO OFFER CASH IN INTERMEDIATE



For the first time in stunt kite competition, cash awards are being offered to Intermediate-division competitors. \$3000 is up for grabs at the first annual Belmont Park National Stunt Kite Championships, being held at San Diego April 22-23. Prize money will be split among the top four finishers in Intermediate Precision and Ballet in both Individual and Team categories. Additionally, \$1700 will be distributed among all Intermediate-division flyers that register and compete.

Cash awards have been offered at competitive events prior to Belmont, but were previously reserved for Open-Division flyers. "It's a way to get the Intermediate flyers more involved," said event organizer Rom Romero of ROME Enterprises. "A lot of the flyers don't think that they're good enough to fly at large events ... the entry fee scares them away ... we're trying to encourage them to get out and give it a try, at least they'll get something back."

For further information about the Belmont Park event contact: ROME Enterprises, 129 Samoa Court, San Ramon, CA 94583, or telephone: 415-866-8173.

(For more about the Belmont Nationals, see the "pre-story" on page 27.)

JOHN NESSIM

PETER POWELL
TEAM FLYER

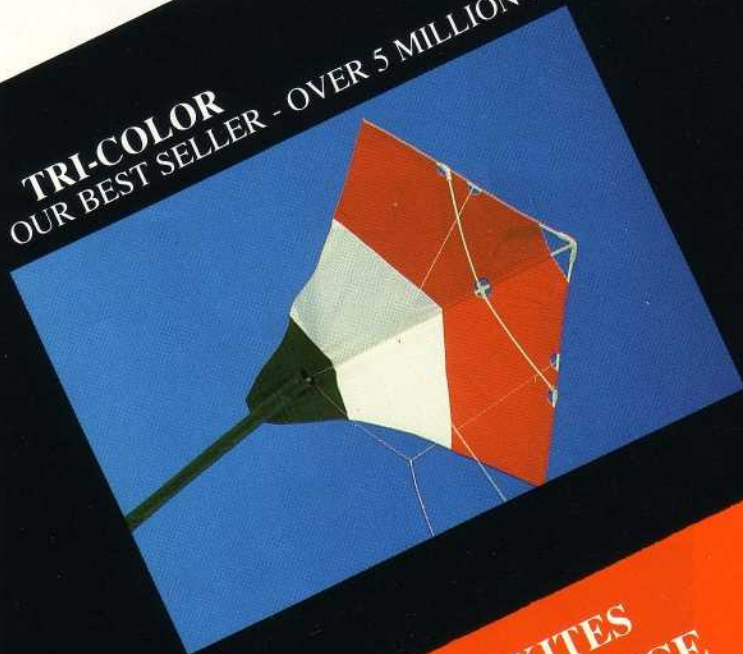
We have lost one of the clowns. John Nessim passed away at the age of 25 in Fort Lauderdale on February 23, 1989. John was fairly new to stunt kite flying but had a natural talent and was a brilliant flyer. The last time we flew together in public was in front of 150,000 people when we opened the Miami Air Show.

We will never forget him practicing on the narrow Pompano Beach. Night after night, retirees and tourists, sometimes a hundred of them, used to line the beaches and seawall just to watch John give one of his dazzling and breathtaking performances. He gave people a lot of pleasure, was extremely sociable and made friends wherever he went.

We will all miss him.

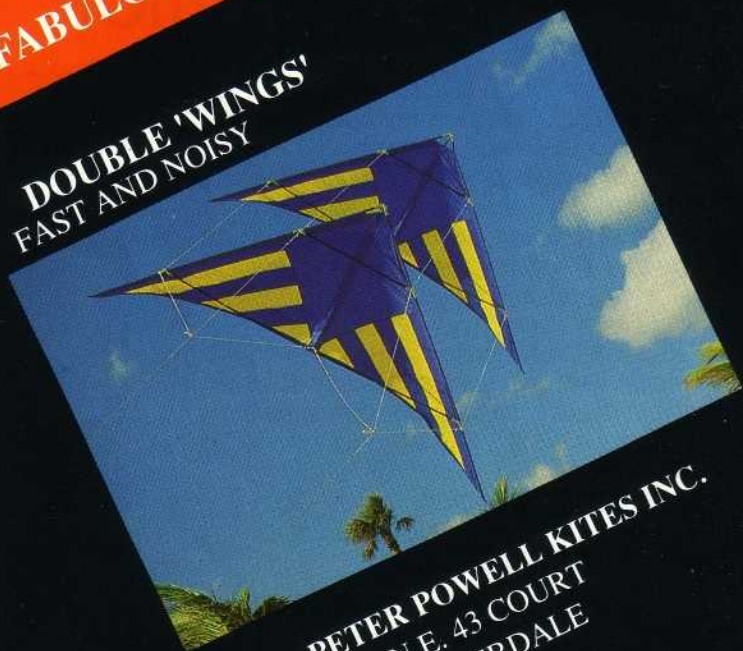
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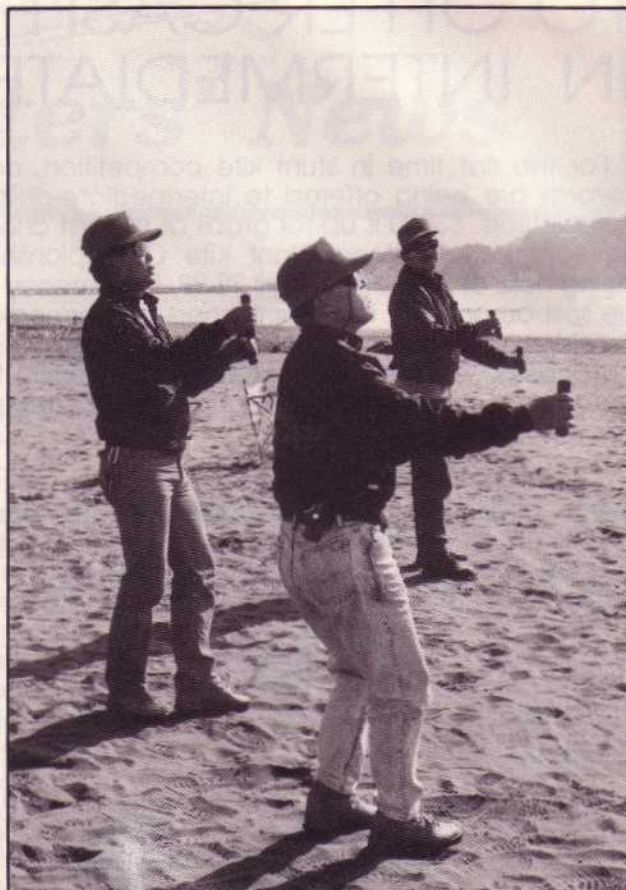
Top of the Line in Japan? Nope ... read on.

FIRST ANNUAL JAPANESE STUNT KITE WORLD COMPETITION

The First Annual Japanese Stunt Kite World Competition was held at Kugenuma Beach (near Kamakura and Yokohama), Japan, on January 22. The event was obviously pretty well attended as correspondent Masato Horikiri's photos attest.

Above (left), Top of the Line in Japan? Well, no not actually ... it's really The Samurai, who say that their dream is to attend the 3rd Annual West Coast Nationals. They fly to the music of Kitaro, a Japanese musician and composer who has a good audience in the States, as well.

SKQ photos by Masato Horikiri.



It's The Samurai!



Part of the group of participants at the Japanese Stunt Kite World's first competition.

SPYRO-JET ANNOUNCES HIGH-FLYING PROMOTION

L'Atelier du Vent, Inc., manufacturers of Spyro-Jet Kites has announced a new promotion that will send the winning pilot and a friend to the AKA Nationals in Hawaii and then on to Japan. "We're even going to bring them home, again!" said Richard Garreau of L'Atelier du Vent. Here's how the whole thing will work: points will be given for anyone placing either first, second, or third, in stated competitions while flying a product made by L'Atelier du Vent, Inc. Three points will be awarded for a first, two for a second, and one for a third place finish. Competitions counting for the point total will be: The Hawaii Challenge, Texas Gulf Coast Challenge, Great Lakes National, East Coast Championships, Black Ships, and the West Coast Nationals.

The competition is open to all classes of flyers with points being given equally for finishes in all classes. High point winner walks away with the plane tickets.

Teams are in the running as well, but must be using L'Atelier du Vent, Inc.'s products to qualify for points. Teams earning points must declare which member of the team is to receive them as the contest must be won by an individual.

All that is needed to qualify is that the flyer be an AKA member, and, in the event the winning competitor is under the age of eighteen, a parent or designated guardian must accompany the prize winner on the trip.

"We're really excited about the promotion," company spokesman Garreau commented, "it allows flyers from all divisions a chance to compete on an equal basis." The winner of the contest will be announced at the West Coast Nationals in September.

Gentlemen, start your Spiro-Jets!

Contact your local kite shop for more information or write: L'Atelier du Vent Inc., at 3585 Delisle, Montreal (Quebec), Canada, H4C 1N2.

...

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Skybond is the beginners stunt line. Its twisted Kevlar core stretches only 4% and though the continuous braided Dacron® sheath adds wind resistance, it also protects the core from UV deterioration. May be knotted with ease.

Use these stunt lines with Shanti's harnessed SKY CLAW™ handles.

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216/247-4222

Rumors

We understand that Wind Pilot, of Dana Point, CA, manufacturers of those little micro-circuited flashing lights for night-flying will be supplementing their line with two new colors ... amber and green. Look for delivery sometime this spring with prices in the \$20 per unit area.

Our intelligence officer in San Diego informs us that the Top of the Line team has been working out lately with some of the little flashing units mentioned above ... sounds like a spectacular of some sort in the offing ...

Look for a new line of lightweights to be introduced from Peter Powell Kites. Included in the new offering is, reportedly, bantam-weight versions of the 4-foot and 6-foot diamonds. Also set for introduction are light Wings, Mark II's, and Skyakers.

Rumors persist that Top of the Line Kites will produce a quad-line system. Look for a possible introduction later (much) this year or the beginning of the next.

Terry Crumpler of Windwalker Kites is reportedly negotiating a deal to have sails made for his Wasp kite. Look for these items to be available through your local kite shop by the end of this spring.

GRAND BAY KITE ANNOUNCES COMPETITION

Grand Bay Kite Company, in association with the National Cherry Festival, will run a two-day stunt competition and kite games event in Traverse City, MI, this summer over the weekend of July 8-9. The first time event will include competition in Individual Precision and Ballet in Junior, Novice, Experienced, and Open divisions. Team Precision and Ballet will be held in Experienced and Open divisions.

In the games department, look for "Cherry-zilla," a Cherry Blind Fly, and Cherry Combat events. Also included in the slate of activities is the Cherry Bullet Grand Ascension.

For more information about the event, contact: John Antaya at Grand Bay Kite Co., 121 E. Front St., Traverse City, MI 49684 (Telephone 616-929-0607); or the National Cherry Festival, P.O. Box 141, Traverse City, MI 49684.

**August
21-27
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**Competitions, Demonstrations
& World Records**

**3rd Annual Northwest Regional
Amateur Stunt Kite Competition**

NEW YORK AIR CIRCUS WINS \$25,000

The New York Air Circus, comprised of Robbi and Christine Sugarman, Bill and Sue Edison, and Stu Cohen walked away from a New York City contest \$25,000

Industry Update

Cobra Kites, U.S. distributor for Flexifoil International has announced the discontinuance of the Hyper-16 from their line. "There are no more in stock," according to Jeanne Merry of Cobra, "and we have no plans to produce others." Look for the introduction this summer of the Super 12.5 which will replace the Hyper as Flexifoil's power unit.

Nearly ready for delivery are new fluorescent colors which will be available on most models. Look for these in your local kite shops in the near future.

Bill Baker, of Peter Powell Kites, Inc., has announced that anyone winning a National competition with a Peter Powell product will receive a \$1000.00 check for their efforts. The offer extends through the 1989 flying season. Further information may be obtained by contacting: Bill Baker, Peter Powell Kites Inc., at 1040 N.E. 43 Court, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33334; or by calling: 305-565-5588.

"Skip" Parks of Banshee Kites has informed SKQ that the Chikara will be produced in a larger range of wing sizes. Soon to be available will be 2', 4', 6', and 8' models. Check the New Product review section for a full write-up on this impressive new stunter.

Dealerships advertising Top-of-the-Line products at more than 20% off manufacturer's suggested retail will be dropped from further service by TOL. Valid sales receipts indication a sale reflecting more than a 20% discount will result in the same discontinuation.

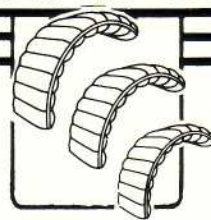
richer last fall. The contest, run by NYC radio station 92.3 K-Rock was designed to promote the station's call letters in the most unusual and imaginative way, making it highly visible. Photographs, videos, or audio tapes were used by contestants to submit projects to the station.

The NYAC took up the challenge. In conjunction with Frank Abbate of Fotovision Inc., a video with music and narration was presented.

Several 252 Suttons, assorted windsocks, and the GIANT pink pig windsock were adorned with the radio station's call letters. Three ultra-light Spin-offs were also decorated with the call letters and flown by Robbi, Stuart, and Bill.

The grand prize boosted the NYAC's cash winnings for 1988 to a record \$28,000.

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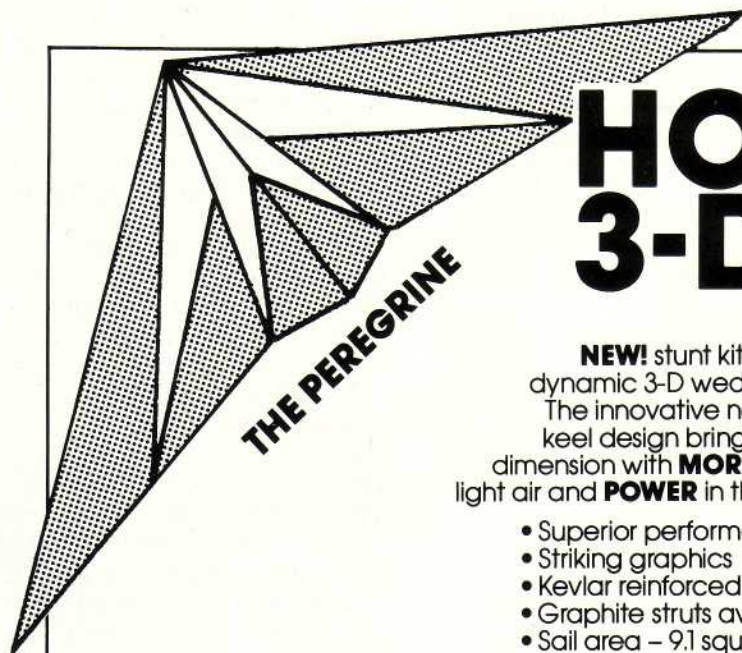
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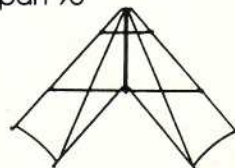
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THE VALENTINE'S DAY KITE AND SLED SKI RACES

Feb. 10, 11, & 12

By Spectrum Flight: Lee Sedgwick,
Sue Taft, Gary Counts,
and Sue Gindlesperger

Mother Nature came through for the fourth annual weekend on the ice of Presque Isle bay in Erie, Pa. We had not had a full weekend of good ice and snow conditions since January.

This has been a very mild winter along the shores of Lake Erie. Saturday's event found sunny skies and good conditions. More than enough ice on the 2 square miles of bay. Ice fishermen had arrived very early to take all the best parking and we made a last minute decision to change flying areas. Lee's new van was appropriately "Bannerized" to let everyone know where we were.

Low winds made for a hard time getting any power runs, in fact, long lines were in order to get any power at all. The poor winds didn't deter fliers from coming from as far as Toronto, New York, and Pittsburgh to try their hand (and kites) in the springlike weather.

As the hosts of the event, we helped get people started making sure that they had the proper equipment, such as a good helmet (for safety's sake).

Saturday night is reserved for the party at Mugg's pub (a local eatery) where we decorate the traditional souvenir mugs from the event. Along with talk about kites, returning of lost gear (People always seem to forget something out on the bay when they pack up!) and the pleasant surprise of viewing a very professional done video by John Compton of Toronto, Canada.

Sunday started as even a more perfect day than Saturday ... 30 degrees and a promise of more wind. After Gary Counts stocked up on his mandatory breakfast sweet rolls and coffee (Gary may be called the "Man in Motion" but you should see him without his coffee!)



"The Encampment" at Presque Isle bay.

SKQ photo by Gary Counts

The bay was more crowded than we had ever seen it. Ice fishermen, skaters, ice boaters, and just thousands of people coming out to enjoy the spring-like weather. The "ice fliers" were out in force as well. Fred "the sled" Bell, Mike "Where's Dad?" Keating and "Flyin'" Bryan Keating of Ohio were on the ice. As well as soon to be "Daddy" Dan Buxton accompanied by Brian Fyfe of Cleveland, Ohio; John and Maryann Harvey of Buffalo; Tom Dogery and Brian VanDerSlice of N.Y. rounded out most of the serious fliers.

Spectrum Flight decided that they should provide some kind of an award for this event. After last year's ice and sail contraptions we decided on the "Best Ice Device" award which was to be a custom banner that would rotate from winner to winner, year to year.

What? no ice devices, that's O.K. we changed the contest and awarded the banner for the "Endurance on the Ice" taken hands down by "Flyin' Bryan" Keating who went out on the ice powered by a single ten foot Flexifoil for hours at a time. The only time we would see Bryan was once in a

great while when he would cruise into shore, holler "Where's Dad?" then cruise out for another couple hours. Now that's hard-core flying, folks!

The Erie Valentine's Day fly is more companionship and fun than a serious effort to put on a "Big" event. Fun, friends, kites and ice, all make for a great weekend.

Conspicuous in his was the "Wizard" Al Hargus, who is the only out-of-town flier to have attended all first three flies. Al's recent move to Manistee, Mi., from Chicago, had him all tied up and unable to attend this year's event. "It wasn't the same without you, Al," but Lee adds, "But it was a heck of a lot quieter!!"

Plans are in the works for next year's ice fly. "This is the biggest event in the country in February," says Sue Taft. (Besides, it's the ONLY event in February!) Gary Counts says, "I wish that the bay would stay frozen until June, and then get to be 80 degrees in one day?"

All of us at Spectrum Flight want to thank all of you that came out and braved the cold, and hope to see you all (and everyone else) next February.

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\$15,000 in Cash and Prizes Offered at an Air Affair

\$15,000 in cash and prizes will be offered at the Second Annual 1989 National Kiteflying Festival to be held on the grounds of the PGA Sheraton Resort in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, this June 23-25. Sponsored by Peter Powell Kites and a host of other major

sponsors, "An Air Affair," as the event is being billed, is held annually for the benefit of R.O.C.K. Camp (Reach Out to Kids with Cancer). Donations of kites and/or accessories for a benefit auction are being sought for the event, and are tax deductible.

As part of "An Air Affair," a competition will be held in team and individual ballet classifications. The events will be "open classed" (any flyer may compete). There will be an individual innovative event, as well, along with stunt kite games. There will also be competitive events for single-line flyers. Prizes will include trips to kiting events around the country and the world.

Also scheduled as part of the three-day celebration is a pool party and barbeque, and live bands for entertainment. According to Sue Baker, of Peter Powell Kites, "The pool party-barbeque will be the biggest bash that this sport has ever seen!"

Master of ceremonies for An Air Affair will be Corey Jensen. Further information about An Air Affair can be had by contacting Renee Busch at 305-565-4322. A special kiteflier's package is also available from the PGA Sheraton Resort; telephone 407-627-2000.

Top of the Line Wins Reno Event

The revamped Top of the Line team of Ron Reich, Pam Kirk, Don Tabor, and Eric Streed captured first place and a check for \$1000 in the first annual Reno International Kite Fly Competition held on March 18/19. Second place and a check for \$500 in the one-event competition went to ROME Team 1 and included members Ron Romero, Keith Landes, Phil Wiltz, and Phil Bazell. The third spot and \$250 went to ROME Team 2 comprised of Gayla Ward, Robin Ward, and Robert Zat. The winning Top of the Line Team flew the new 3/4 size Spinoffs, ROME Team 1 - Spinoffs, and ROME Team 2 - Fire Darts.

According to Bob Hamilton (The Kite Pit - Reno), one of the event's organizers, the fly was extremely well attended, in spite of some rather cantankerous weather. "We had winds of 20 mph with gusts up to 40," Bob told SKQ. "It was a real kite shredder!" In addition the crowds, which were estimated at 5000+ each day of the two-day festival, had to brave tem-

peratures that rarely got above 45°.

Garnering the peoples' choice for the most beautiful kite, and a check for \$100 was Mike Sterling of Cal Skate and Sport (Portland, OR) who cruised around for most of the event with a nine-stack of his Cyborg kites. Mike commended the organizers ... "Reno was a great fly ... the organizers did an excellent job in spite of some fairly adverse conditions." Next year's fly date will be announced later this year.

Rumors

Ron Reich's custom sunset Spinoff is being produced by Top-of-the-Line in very limited quantities. The kite was pictured in SKQ, volume 1-number one, Wildwood coverage. Consult your local TOL dealer.

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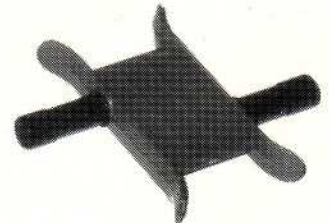
Word has reached SKQ of an upcoming world-record Flexifoil attempt to be made sometimes this summer ... probably in Europe. Anticipations are that Ray Merry of Cobra Kites/Flexifoil will be the man behind the effort.

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HAWAII CHALLENGE — RESULTS —

INDIVIDUAL PRECISION - NOVICE CLASS

1st - Locklan Gilford	141.0
2nd - Kail Jefferies	125.5
3rd - Gary Kanaya	122.5
4th - Bill Praw	119.0
5th - Don McNamee	115.0
6th - Cheri Ledesma	110.5
7th - Kelly Smith	109.0
8th - Ute Ermgassen	108.5
9th - Kaliko Ahyat	101.0
10th - Ron Thorpe	99.0

INDIVIDUAL PRECISION - EXPERIENCED

1st - Burt Hooker	155.0
2nd - Pricilla Nagao	150.0
3rd - True Tourillot	147.0
4th - Calvin Akamichi	145.5
5th - Linda Indie	145.0
6th - Nadine Koba	143.0
7th - Kelly Smith	141.0
8th - Jim Demeter	140.0
9th - Pam Markie	(tie) 136.5
- George Chun	136.5
10th - Irv Singer	133.0

INDIVIDUAL PRECISION - OPEN CLASS

1st - Malcom Moore	85.7
2nd - Ron Reich	85.2
3rd - Alan Nagao	83.9
4th - Don Tabor	83.3
5th - Eric Streed	82.5
6th - Eddie Sabo	81.3
7th - Tom Kirk	81.2
8th - Scott Augenbaugh	79.9
9th - Jason Loo	78.8
10th - Ken Peterson	77.6

INDIVIDUAL BALLET - EXPERIENCED

1st - True Tourillot	71.5
2nd - Jim Demeter	69.0
3rd - Pricilla Nagao	67.0
4th - Calvin Akamichi	61.0
5th - Pablo Ledesma	60.0
6th - Pam Markie	59.5
7th - Nancy Lizza	59.0
8th - Linda Indie	57.5
9th - Kelly Smi	55.5
10th - Mitch Onoyama	(tie) 55.0
- Mimi Demeter	55.0
- George Chun	55.0

INDIVIDUAL INNOVATIVE

1st - Jim Hadzicki	274.5
2nd - Malcom Moore	259.0
3rd - Ron Reich	253.5
4th - Mitch Onyama	249.0
5th - Scott Augenbaugh	213.0
6th - Jason Loo	202.0

TEAM INNOVATIVE

1st - High Performance	82.47
2nd - Elite Team	69.2
3rd - Revolution	66.47

The sixth annual Hawaii Challenge took place on March 10, 11, and 12 in Kapiolani Park, in Honolulu, Hawaii, which is also the site for this year's AKA Nationals. Complete event coverage, unavailable at press time, will follow in SKQ's spring-summer edition.

TEAM PRECISION - EXPERIENCED CLASS

1st - Hawaiian Delight	123.5
2nd - Typhoon Warriors	118.0
3rd - Kite Fantasy Team Hawaii	109.5
4th - Four plus one	108.5

TEAM PRECISION - OPEN CLASS

1st - Top of the Line	126.0
2nd - High Performance	118.0
3rd - Elite Team	117.0

TEAM BALLET - EXPERIENCED CLASS

1st - Hawaiian Delight	70.0
2nd - Kite Fantasy Team Hawaii	66.0
3rd - Typhoon Warriors	63.5
4th - P.B.A.	55.5
5th - Ozone Air Force	52.5

TEAM BALLET - OPEN CLASS

1st - Top of the Line	80.5
2nd - Elite Team	71.0
3rd - High Performance	70.0
4th - Kite Fantasy of Hawaii	68.0

INDIVIDUAL BALLET - OPEN CLASS

1st - Ron Reich	82.0
2nd - Malcom Moore	79.5
3rd - Don Tabor	75.5
4th - Jason Loo	74.0
5th - Alan Nagao	72.5
6th - Eric Streed	71.0
7th - Scott Augenbaugh	70.0
8th - Tom Kirk	66.5
9th - Richard Peck	63.5
10th - Brian Hirose	62.5



SHORT LINES

by
Al Hargus III

Team flying tips, and gadgets are the subject of this SHORT LINES. No gabbing, get right down to business.

(From Rod Yarger, Yakima, Wash.)

If you appreciate the frictionless control given by the "Spectra" fiber lines, but suffer burn-through from the low melting point of the line, consider this. When a team member's luff-tape covered leading edge brushes your lines, it's either going to melt through or weaken your line due to the heat generated from the friction. Try the best of both worlds, and splice 15'-20' lengths of kevlar to the end of your lines. The Kevlar won't melt, and it may save you from an embarrassing line mend during a team routine when everyone's eyes are on you. Just don't overdo the length of the Kevlar sections and splice them too close to the point where the multiple lines twist and wrap around each other during spins and multiple kite wraps.

(From Dan Wheeler of Precision Kite Co. of Rhode Island)

Make sure that your team kites match in speed. Lines should be staggered about three feet with the lead kite being the longest. Minor bridle adjustments can help correct small differences in kite speed, but be careful not to change the turning ability of the kites in the process. Try flying on 200ft. team lines, as this gives the team more space to maneuver in.

going up or back while facing right into the wind (inflated) and when ready, a sharp pull and the kite is off and flying. The spikes through the "ducks" can be made longer, if needed, for deep weeds. The only problem I have had this device is to keep my fellow fliers from stealing the "ducks."

(After I sent a reply complimenting Ron on his "ducks" he blasted back two more "Short Lines")

I found out right away that something needed to be done about the "nocks" on my Spin-off — when flying in the dirt they were taking a beating. Filled with sticks, grass, stones, and dirt from all the landings. So I made "Nock Protectors" or "Training Wheels."

Buy a piece of 1/16" wall, 1/2" I.D. vinyl tubing and cut two pieces three inches long. One inch from the end, punch a hole through both sides. Using a heavy thread or twine, lace the line through the vinyl twice and tie with a couple of square knots.

To install the "Protectors" on your kite, rig as usual and after putting on the shock cords over the nocks, slip the vinyl tubing OVER the shock cord and the nock with the 2" portion towards the fabric. The cord that goes

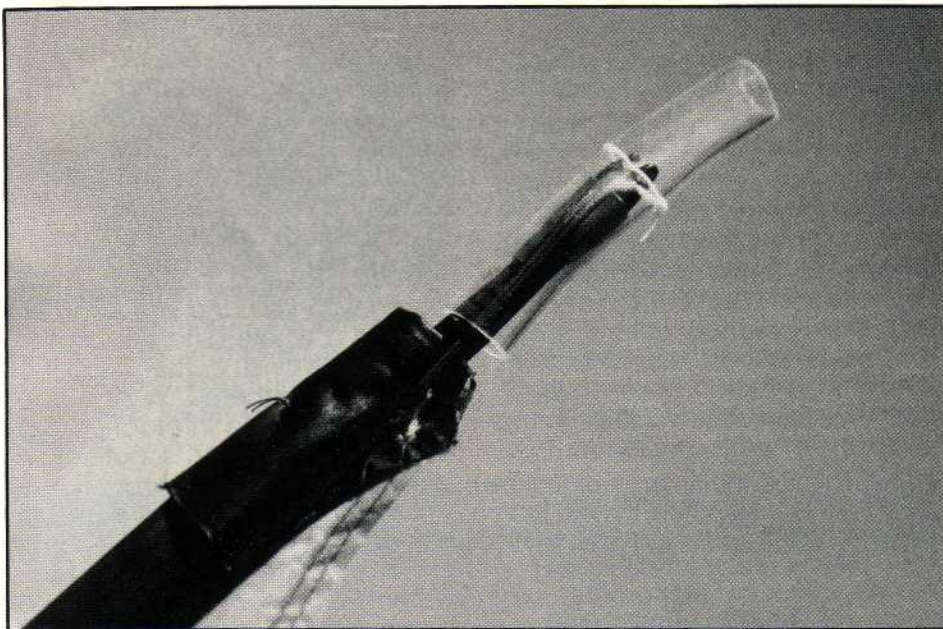
(Al's Note: Some 1989 competition events across the country may restrict team and individual line lengths. e.g. WCSKC — 100ft.)

Another suggestion to change the speed of team kites to shorten the top spreader of each of the trailing kites by 1/4" (2nd kite 1/4" shorter, 3rd kite 1/2" shorter and so forth. Shorter for slower kites.)

(From Ron Fikes, Palo Alto, Ca.)

I like flying Flexifoils, but the field where I fly has sticky weeds, so the need for a solo launching device that will hold the kite up, inflated and ready to take to the air. My system makes "Duck Soup" of this. (See photo below.) The re-assembled clothespins on the "ducks" hold the foil spar tips off the ground. Keeps the kite from





through the vinyl is seated in the nock on top of the shock cord and keeps the protector from sliding up the spar upon landing. The friction fit over the shock cord keeps the vinyl on, yet it is easy enough to remove when de-rig-

ging.

Ron also included a pic of an over the kite chair bag that he made. (See photo.) Big joke with Al's chair is that if you want to find someplace to sit, "Use Al's chair, he NEVER sits in it!"



Thanks to Ron and the rest who sent in their "Short Lines". Keep those cards and letters coming in. (Eventually I won't have to write anything for this column, at all!)

In case the rumor hasn't spread to your part of the country, your friendly "Short Lines" associate editor has moved to SKQ headquarters full time. Gonna try to make a Northwoodsman out of this Chicago stunt flier? Northern Michigan winter has definitely put a different feeling into me (and my fingers and toes!!).

Send your "ShortLines" to me % "Short Lines," Stunt Kite Quarterly, P.O. Box 468, Manistee, MI 49660.

(Hey, gang, I would really like to spice up the column with photos, so if you have a B&W photo along with your short lines, we'd love it. A negative would be very helpful in reproducing your photo well. We promise to return it, too.)

To close out this edition of "Short Lines," I'd like to use a line from Ron Fikes: Remember "Stunt Kite Fliers do it with both hands".

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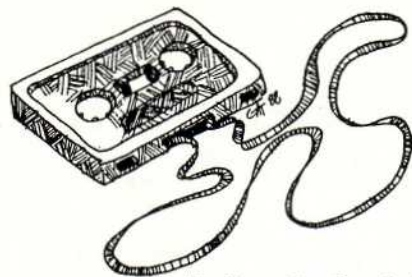
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The Sedgwick Tapes



By Lee Sedgwick
and Cris Batdorff

Lee Sedgwick is from Erie, Pa., and flies both individually and as a member of Team High Fly. He is generally credited with being the first to perfect the style termed "solo flying" (i.e., flying through a ground stake). Lee is a highly innovative flier whose credits include: ECSKC II, 1st in Individual Ballet; 1987 AKA National, 2nd Individual Ballet; and most recently, ECSKC III, 1st Innovative Free Flight; 2nd in Individual Ballet; and 1st (along with team member Sue Taft) Open Team Ballet.

KITESKIING!

WINTERTIME ... time to put away those stunts and dream of spring and March breezes ... right? For most, the season of ice and snow is that period when we pursue other hobbies, take vacations to warmer climes, or just plain vegetate until the sun gets a little higher in the sky. These chilly days, which are unknown to those who have chosen to live in more temperate zones, are sometimes a very harsh reality in the northern part of the country. But pack away the kites? NEVER!

An open field of snow can be an open invitation to the more inventive flier. Admittedly, it's not the sort of thing that everyone is going to enjoy but few that have tried it will dispute that it is a totally invigorating experience ... and it's really fairly easy to begin. Just strapping on a pair of skis, wearing the appropriate clothing, and a good stunt kite is all one needs to begin exploring this new realm of flight possibilities. Let's start with some of the basics with a look at what you need to keep warm.

Dressing for a day of kite skiing can be looked at as one would if one were preparing for any winter

sport ... prepare for the cold. Don't forget: the fact that you will be moving will contribute substantially to the amount of wind chill that you will experience. Layers of inner clothing under a nylon jacket (and pants if you have them) is a good beginning point for the first expedition. You can gauge upwards or downwards from there. Don't forget the gloves! In cold conditions, body extremities will be the first things affected and you'll need to keep those fingers warm after using them to tie knots and work clips barehanded.

Protective headgear is also recommended. Even a small kite can exert enough force to pull you along once the ground friction of the flier is reduced ... this is particularly in evidence when flying on ice, which presents almost a zero resistance factor. Padding is also a good idea. Like anyone learning something for the first time, it's wise to prepare to meet anticipated problems in advance ... plan on falling! That soft

bed of snow can conceal all manner of things beneath as well as being darned hard on top ... (which can be darned hard on the backside, as well!).

Next, you'll need a pair of skis. The best place to find these, unless you want to spend a real bundle of cash, is at the local secondhand store. Even ski shops sometimes will make deals on used equipment. About \$30 should put you on a good pair. Oh yes, you'll need a set of boots to go along with them. Local ski shops should be able to advise you here but they are available second hand, as well. Be sure to set the bindings for light release ... it beats the heck out of a twisted ankle or broken leg!

OK. So you're all dressed up and feeling like an Egyptian mummy ... no what do you do? Simple, launch the kite in the usual way, keeping in mind that you'll need a lot of room down field and ... a little traveling music, maestro! ... you're on your way!

Remember, the basic rules of powerflying apply here ... kites into the power zone will move you faster, off wind and you'll slow down.

A little practice and you should be able to maneuver, after a fashion, sideways, like a sailboat on a tacking run. Remember to keep your knees bent, this may seem an odd position a first but as your legs begin to absorb some of the terrain bumps and differences in kite pull, you'll see why the position is needed. Take a portable music source with you and kite skiing will take on a whole different aspect. Most interesting is the fact that you're not tethered in one spot any longer ... the interaction between kite and flier is noticeably increased.

If this is your first experience with kite skiing, you'll probably find out something else ... that you really weren't aware of how much pull those kites generated! For this reason, it's wise to begin with a lot less kite than you think you might need. More can always be added if needed but, keeping safety in mind, it's a lot easier to find that you can handle more speed that being stuck with too much and being out of control. And speaking of control ...

Don't expect to become a master on the first trip out. Keep it simple and slow: there's plenty of time for blazing speed later ... learn to stand up first, walk second, and run third before worrying about soaring with the eagles.

As with any other form of powerflying, check your equipment often. Breaking a line or having an equipment malfunction is nothing to fool with when both flier and kites are in motion. 200 Lb. is a must: 400 lb. for heavier pilots. While Spectra line is OK, there are some inherent problems involved with its use. Probably the biggest single drawback is that it can't readily be seen against the snow. Kevlar seems to be the line of choice for this particular brand of powerflying. 150 feet is recommended as a good starting point of length. As your lines will be subject to some adverse conditions, not the least of which is other folks running over them, make sure to inspect them often for fraying or other damage. Don't forget, as with any other form of powerflying, your margins of safety are whatever you choose to make them!

Wind conditions are often very hard to gauge in winter, as well. A good number of the Beaufort measurements are somewhat useless. Trees, for instance, do not move in the usual Beaufort condition indicated ... why? They're frozen! Be safe, lay your hands on a good wind meter and respect the readings. Winter winds, particularly over large smooth expanses such as frozen lakes can be deceptive at best. Unless you're a seasoned veteran: don't guess, be sure.



Lee Sedgwick leaning into a good run. Note the protective gear.
SKQ photo by Brian Vanderslice.

Right! So you've gotten your initial bumps and bruises out of the way and are ready to move onto bigger things. Maybe there's no open fields nearby, but there is this big frozen lake.... Can't be much difference, right? In the words of the old song: "It ain't necessarily so ..." Let it be said, rather quickly, that this is not an activity for novices. Ice is very hard stuff. It's also extremely slippery. It's also never frozen all the way down. To be blunt and truthful without being scary, a miscalculation or hasty action here can cost you your life.

The equipment needed for ice flying is basically the same: warm clothing, gloves, protective headgear, skis or some other slid-

ing device, plus some interesting additions. The warm weather practice of staking out kites before launch doesn't apply on ice so what is needed to make it work is a couple of corkscrews. Screw them into the ice and they should hold relatively well. Padding, because of the hard surfaces involved, becomes a necessity here. Protective headgear should also be with full face protection.

It is also time to re-evaluate the kites being used. Friction is almost

provided the surface being used is relatively clear of snow and other obstructions.

Control is a major factor on ice. It is very difficult to achieve quickly and involves a lot of practice. Balance should be stressed along with being aware of the limitations of both the equipment and your own body. This is an activity that is best learned slowly. A primary directive here is not to attempt ice skiing alone.

There are a couple of constant threats, here. The first is that of open water, the second is that of the thickness of the ice. Treat ice skiing as any other serious endeavor ... learn about ice conditions from someone who is knowledgeable and follow their recommendations. Experts on the ice will even go so far as to carry ice-picks with them so, in the event of a breakthrough, they will have some way to claw a way out. Safety and education before the attempt is a MUST!

A word here on equipment fatigue: cold weather flying will stress equipment beyond tolerances, in many cases. This is not to say that it should not be attempted, simply offered as advice as to what will eventually take place over periods of time. Plastic fittings will not, in most cases, tolerate temperatures below 40° F. They will become brittle and break easily upon crashing. Vinyl tubing will exhibit much the same behavior. Many of the "high performance" spars used in competitive kites will also be more subject to fatigue. Plastic and polyethylene sails will become brittle. Be sure to inspect your equipment before and after each such use.

Kite skiing can be a great form of chasing away those winter blahs. If nothing else, it helps keep the interest up until the nice weather presents itself in the spring. Properly learned, it can become the most enjoyable time of the year ... after all, the idea of gliding along across a frozen field or lake has fascinated men since old man winter has first worked his magic on the landscape. Have a good time, give it a try, but by all means, learn about it first ... FLY SAFE!

FIGHTER KITES



By Rick O'Shea
Jacksonville, FL.

Kite Riggers, manufacturer of
Eyesoars Tie-Dyed Cotton Kites.
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Have you ever been hypnotized by a feather as it fell to the ground? The feather dances on the breeze, flipping, spinning, gliding in long sweeps, sometimes floating, always precisely demonstrating the interaction of gravity and air. Now, imagine attaching a long thread to the feather, as if it were a kite. By sometimes gently tugging on it and other times letting the thread slack, you could play with the feather's motion. Depending on your skill and concentration, you could help it to flitter and fly for hours, or crash it to the ground in a split second, breaking your trance. This is what single line maneuverable kiting is all about: dancing with air and gravity, skill, concentration, keeping the trance.

Single line maneuverable kites are usually referred to as "fighter" kites. This stems from the ancient sport of kite fighting, practiced in many forms with many styles of kites in countries throughout the world. While there are variations of kite fighting that use cutting line and even razor studded kites, generally speaking kite fighting is certainly the least violent and most civilized form of fighting imaginable. Similarly, the "fighter" kite can be the gentlest and most delicately maneuverable of all kites. And a lot of the best flying done with "fighter" kites is done solo. Easygoing. But, since "fighter kite" is commonly understood by kitists, and is certainly less awkward in writing than the term "single line maneuverable kite," I'll go ahead and use the term. However, I propose that we at least consider divorcing the name of the kite from the sport that it is sometimes used for, and replace it with something less limiting. Dual

line maneuverable kites have already appropriated the term "stunt kite," which is alright since the name doesn't really convey the personality of the fighter. Other possibilities might include "dancing kites" or "aerobatic kites" (a nice generic term for all maneuverable kites). Or maybe "trance kites" ...

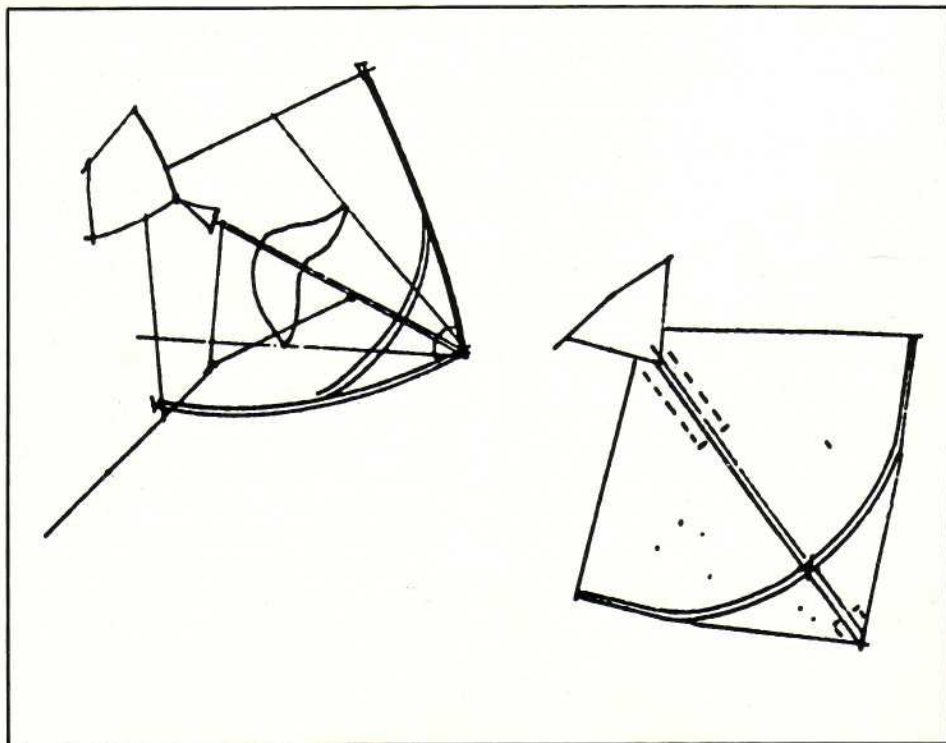
Let's compare fighter kiting to stunt kiting. There are obvious differences, including the number of flying lines and the structure of the kites. A more easily overlooked difference is the range of the kite's motion. A stunter moves in a curved plane, much like windshield wipers, always a fixed distance from the kiteflyer. A fighter, on the other hand, moves through space in three dimensions, like a butterfly. It can be launched and pulled in from your hand. Another difference, one that is subtle, but essential, is in the interaction between the kiteflyer and the kite. If stunt kiting is wrestling with the wind, then fighter kiting is dancing with the wind. The tightly controlled

maneuvering of stunt kites is done with handles, kevlar lines, and harnesses. Fighter kite flying involves a more improvisational coaxing with fingertips and cotton or linen thread. Neither art form is superior. Or less hypnotic.

Will Yolen, in his classic "The Complete Book of Kites and Kite Flying," devotes many sections to fighter kites. He writes of the Korean fighters, skillfully flown with beautiful wooden reels, often with cutting line.

A very sophisticated form of kite fighting is practiced in Thailand, using the pakpao and chula kites. In Japan, huge, magnificent Rokkaku and Edo kites are flown with ropes by large teams of people in traditional battles in many villages. Japanese kite fighting is extensively covered in Tal Streeter's "The Art of the Japanese Kite," and on a National Geographic film about Shirone, Japan, often seen on PBS or the Disney cable channel.

In America, by far the most popular fighter kite has been the Indian fighter and its variations. This kite is smooth, graceful, and fast as a hawk. Mr. Yolen correctly states that the Indian fighter, once having cast its spell, has caused many otherwise openminded kiteflyers to "simply refuse to fly anything else." I have seen this happen, and it is the Indian fighter and its variants that this article is mostly about.



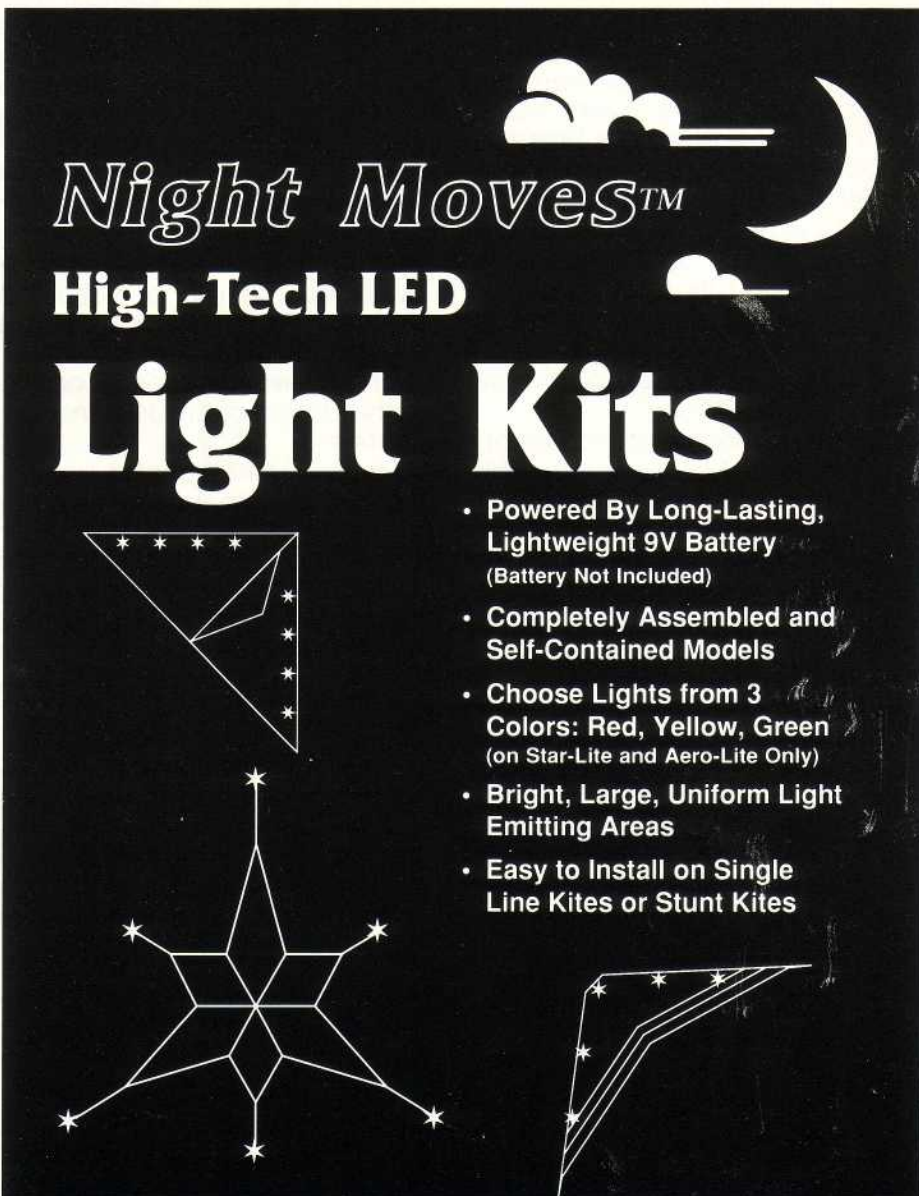
Although the wind and the kite are, in the end, the best teachers, here are the basic principles. The fighter (at least, the Indian fighter) is normally flat, but due to a flexible, sometimes tapered, bowstick, the kite will bow and form a dihedral with sufficient wind pressure. When flying, the kite will be unstable when the kite line is slack. It will rock sideways or spin. then, if tension is put on the line, the dihedral will form, stabilizing the kite and causing it to move in the direction its nose is pointed. Alternately pulling line in and letting it out is how the kite is maneuvered. Timing, touch, and concentration are the keys to good flying.

Robert Loera, winner of the single line maneuverable kite competition at this year's AKA convention in Chicago, says that this type of kiteflying is a dying art form that is apparently making a comeback. I hope he is correct in his prediction, and there are reasons to think he is. The fighter kite competition at AKA 1988 in Chicago was still somewhat relegated to the fringes, and the announcement of the winners at the awards banquet were suspiciously placed at the end, almost as an afterthought. However, there was much interest and participation in the event, trophies even, which was coordinated by Bruce Jarvie, of 5/20 Kite Group of Detroit.

Joe Vaughn, world renowned promoter and expert flyer of fighter kites, and owner (he would say "carrier of the torch") of the Grandmaster Kite Company of Mifflinville, Pennsylvania, was there, tirelessly educating us in the art of fighter kiting, always with style and gentlemanship. The Grandmaster is a hybrid fighter, mylar, fiberglass, and bamboo, a beautiful kite both in appearance and in its smooth flight, the "Porsche of kites."

Also at the convention was Karl Szilagi, fighter kite maker and flyer, an artisan who can turn scraps of tissue paper, bits of string, slivers of bamboo fishing poles, and pieces of fiberglass into a precision flying machine, the "Szilagi Fighter." Karl learned and honed his craft in Central Park, New York.

Joel Scholz delighted everyone with his new "Butterfighter," an ex-



The graphic features a dark background with a crescent moon and clouds in the upper right. The title "Night Moves™" is in a stylized font, followed by "High-Tech LED" and "Light Kits" in large, bold letters. Below the title are three kite diagrams: a triangular kite with stars, a star-shaped kite with points, and a delta kite with stars. A list of features is on the right, and a "Models Available" section is at the bottom.

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quisite ripstop and fiberglass creation that looks like a stained glass butterfly against the sun, an astonishingly good flyer, unlike other ripstop fighter's I've flown. Many potential flyers of fighter kites are probably scared off by the apparent fragility of paper or mylar kites. An expectation discussed by many was that Joel's new Butterflyfighter (and its frilly mate, the "Butterfly") will overcome these fears and help stimulate a renewed interest in single-line maneuverable kiting.

The three winners of the event, Robert Loera (Kite Fantasy), Rick Roberts (Hawaii), and Richard (ZZ) VanMechelen (Action Kites), all flew Vic's Fighters, a kite no longer available. Designed and produced by Vic Heredia, this foldable mylar fighter is an old favorite, the fighter I learned on.

Matthew Kim and friends were flying their Korean fighters, on cutting lines from nimbly handled wooden reels. Korean fighters, unlike Indian fighters, remain rigid, and can be flown in stronger winds. Too much wind causes a constant dihedral to

form in the Indian, making it stable and unmaneuverable. The difference in flight characteristics between just these two variations of single-line maneuverable kites hints at many more possibilities.

Mel Govig of Kite Lines Magazine was out of there flying fighters, and it was quite obvious that he had done it before. He discussed the use of various sail materials for these and other kites. Weight, porosity, skin friction, and strength are variables to consider in the design of any kite, including fighters.

Richard VanMechelen feels that the fighter kite bridges the gap between single line kiting and stunt kiting. Perhaps he and John Perusse, owner of Action Kites and master stunt kite designer, may eventually release the hybrid fighter we understand they have been secretly developing (on and off...) for years.

Somehow, in the rush towards technological perfection enjoyed in dual-line maneuverable kiting, the single-line maneuverable kite has been somewhat ignored. This is finally changing, and we can

expect quite a growth in the new future both in the innovative flying and in the innovative production of fighter kites. I've got a few scraps of graphite, mylar, and ripstop I've been toying with, and can only imagine the ripping speed and precision of single-line flying machines technologically possible but not yet invented.



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STUNT KITES!

Edited by David Gomberg
Copyright, 1988. 88 pages

In the midst of the technological evolution of the stunt kite business, replete with graphite spars, wing-loading, and all of the other attendant fol-de-rol, it is refreshing that someone has not forgotten he from which all things follow ... the beginning stunt kite flyer.

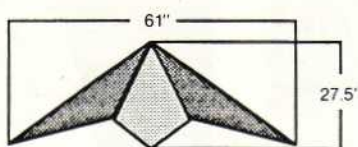
It is to that individual that David Gomberg, in his new book *STUNT KITES!* directs the majority of his well-aimed copy. From his initial discussions on the sport's sometimes hazy beginnings, Gomberg walks his readers through a discussion of wind characteristics that ranges from common sense to "Gee, I didn't know that."

In subsequent chapters, the beginning flyer will cover the vagaries of self launching various kite types, basic maneuvers, landings, off-wind control, and kite tuning. Still ahead is pertinent information on equipment, troubleshooting, and advanced maneuvers. Basic powerflying, quad-line, solo techniques, dual flight, and team flying are also covered. There's even a chapter on contests and competitions.

Gomberg's conversational style is rather like being taught stunt flying by your kindly old grandfather ... helpful but not pushy. The flyer is "talked through" nearly every point. It is made to be almost specifically non-technical. Still, everything that is needed is conveyed.

STUNT KITES! is, plainly put, easy to learn from. In addition to the various discussions of pertinent information, the text is interspersed with comments from some of stunt kite flying's more stellar luminaries. This is not to be construed as "window dressing." The comments are timely and practical.

There are few stunt kite flyers who will not learn something from this book. This is not to say that *STUNT KITES!* is the be-all-and-end-all work about stunt kite flying. As any flyer that has been around for a reasonable length of time will tell you, there's enough stuff involved with this sport to fill several books. Gomberg himself, in his introductory statement admits that "Before the ink is dry on this page, new kite designs, materials and applications will become available and then commonplace as our 'infant' sport hurries forward into maturity." If this volume, however, is to stand as the formal maiden effort, the maturity of the sport will have been made better for it.

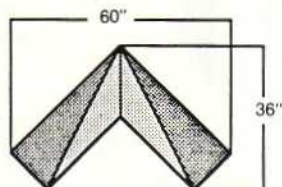
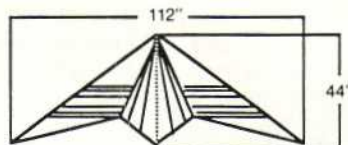


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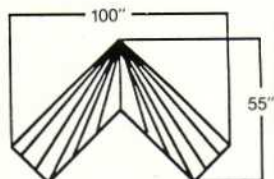
SUPER SKY DART

This redesign of our standard SKY DART is available in two stunning patterns. Outstanding mobility and fast, sharp turns make this kite an impressive member of the Action Kites family.



ACTION 8.2

The ACTION 8.2 — imitated but never duplicated. This high-performance, little 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.

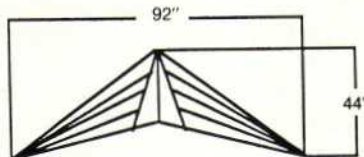


PHOENIX 20

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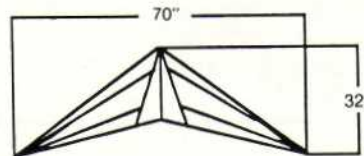


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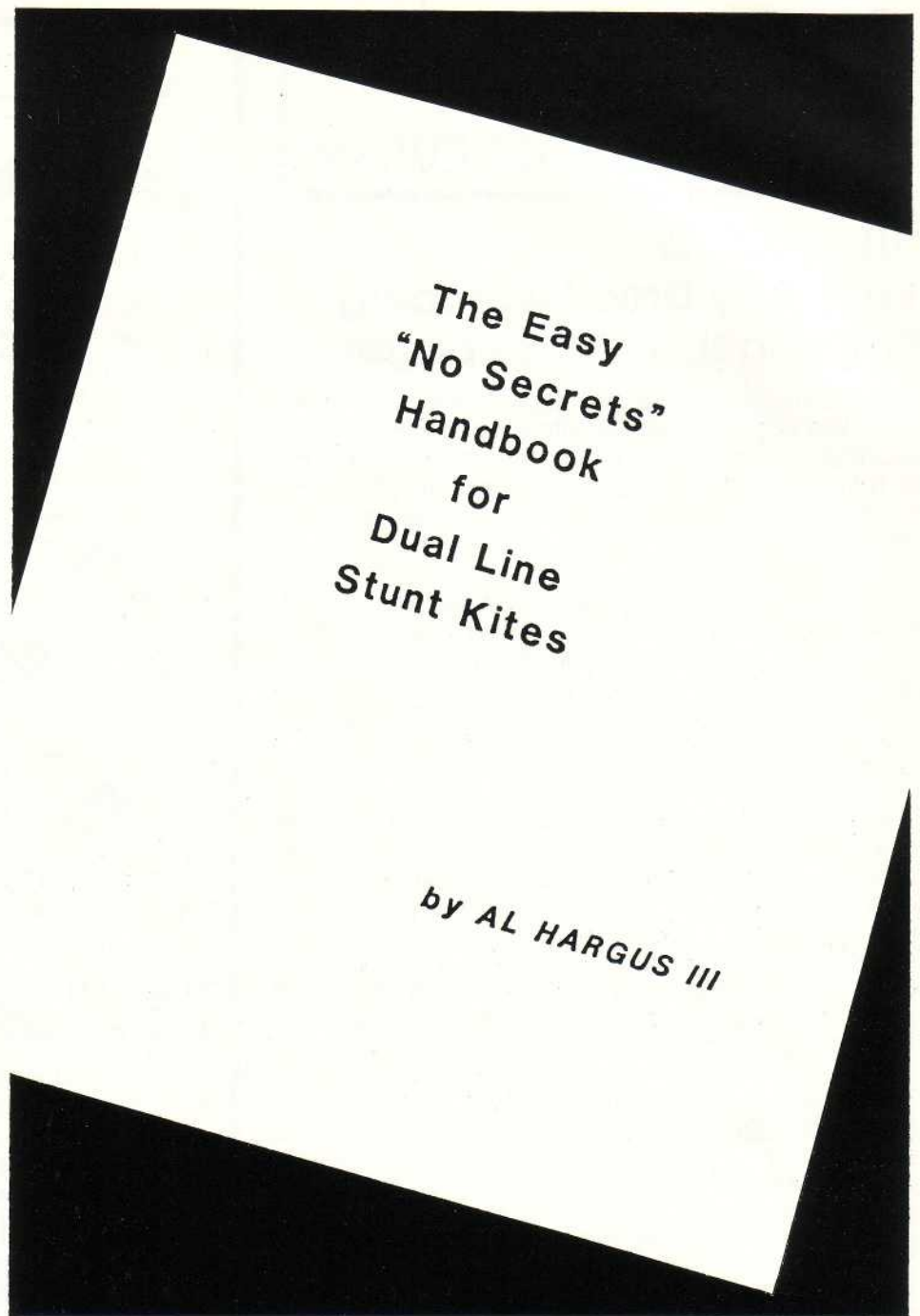
THE BOOK OF AL

By Al Hargus III

Introduction by Cris Batdorff

Al Hargus has been into flying kites for 11 of his 40 years, stunters for about eight of those. His first stunt kite was a single Trlby. He owns and flies just about every stunt kite on the market (he collects them as well ...). Present kite accumulation is over 1,000. Until recently, Al was a lithographic pressman, but has decided to make kiting a full-time job as well as a full-time hobby, and has plans to open a kite shop in Chicago. His favorite kite is the 10-foot Flexifoil and his single largest project is the building and flying of a train of 280 eddy kites. A Regional Director of the AKA and past-president of the Chicago Skyliners (of which he is a founder, as well), Al was one of the event coordinators of Windy City '88 AKA National Convention. He attended his first stunt kite competition in Dayton, Ohio, in 1985; his first National competition in 1987 at Wildwood, New Jersey; and took third place in Experienced Individual Precision at the 1987 AKA in Washington, D.C. He moved into the Open Class at the 1988 Nationals in Chicago and finished fifth of 55 contestants in Precision. He is also one of the original members of the Chicago Fire Stunt Team. Al, additionally, serves as associate editor of *Stunt Kite Quarterly*.

Some years ago, shortly after I had taken my first tentative steps into the area of dual-line stunt flying, I was approached by a significantly more advanced flier who thrust into my hand a small booklet, saying, "I think that the Dragon would like you to have this." It was entitled, *The Easy "No Secrets" Handbook for Dual Line Stunt Kites*, by Al Hargus III and dis-



The Easy "No Secrets" Handbook for Dual Line Stunt Kites

by AL HARGUS III

and simple explanations of things that were, at the time .. and are occasionally still, quite befuddling. It was good information back then, and with more and more stunters in the air today, it's better information now.

tributed by Stanton Hobby Shop of Chicago. No, I didn't study it for six months and go on to win a national title ... what I did pick up were a whole bunch of good tips

TROUBLESHOOTING

- The kite nosedives immediately after launching.
- Over control
- Bridle may be adjusted too low

- set bridle lighter (up or towards the nose)
- Kite flies left when you pull the right handle or vice-versa.
- the flying lines are reversed.
- If the kite doesn't fly straight with the handles held together:
 - Check the length of the flying lines, they may be unequal or have stretched out in repeated usage.
- The kite turns tighter in one direction than it does in the other.
- One bridle line clip is farther from the nose than the other clip. Hover the kite and determine which line is tighter, then move the clip on that

- side toward the nose (up) until the problem is corrected.
- The kite will not gain altitude.
 - The bridle clips are adjusted too low - set the bridle lighter (up).
- The kite does not respond or is sluggish to the controls.
 - The bridle is adjusted too high - set the bridle heavier (down)
 - The flying lines may have too many twists.
 - The existing wind may be too light
- The kite tends to soar directly overhead, then nosedives.
 - The bridle is adjusted too high - set the bridle heavier (down)

TROUBLESHOOTING FOR TRAINS OF KITES.

(Basic bridle settings suggested by manufacturers for trains of kites are higher than for a single kite - read manufacturer's instructions carefully.)

- The last kites in a train flair out (lag behind the rest of the kites) when doing loops.
 - The bridle setting is too high - set heavier (down)
- Several of the kites in the train tend to fly out of line, fly faster or lag behind the rest.
 - Check that all the train lines are exactly the same length.
- The flying lines or bridles break when flying a train.
 - Bridle setting is too heavy - set lighter (up)
 - Bridle lines are too light - rebridle with stronger line.
 - You may be flying too many kites for the existing wind conditions. (NOTE: Common sense is advised BEFORE you launch a large stack of kites in heavy winds. Can you handle them?)

HIGH WIND MODIFICATIONS

- In high winds (30 mph plus) the top reinforcement stretches allowing the spreader to slide down, causing a change in flight control.
 - Push the vinyls back to their original position and glue a separate piece of vinyl tubing onto the leading edge rod. (outer front side strut) just under the sliding vinyl. Use any vinyl about 5/16" x 1/4" long. Slit the vinyl so that it will snap onto the leading edge rod. Glue the vinyl (e.g. Super Glue or epoxy) so that the top horizontal spreader will not slide rearward under pressure.

- A simple way to reinforce the spars for heavy winds is to find another (smaller) spar that will fit inside the stock spar or substitute a solid fiberglass rod for the hollow one. (This will also increase the weight of the kite. Remember to remove it when the winds are lighter.)
- At a certain high wind speed (Which will vary with each make of kite) all winged type stunt kites leading edge rods (outer front side struts) will begin to bend or flap in the wind. This is an indication that you are flying in a wind that is stronger than can be handled by the kite design. No modifications can resolve this problem. You should stop flying before the kite is seriously damaged.

LIGHT WIND MODIFICATIONS

- Generally the lighter the kite the lighter the winds it will fly in. You can replace the spars on the kite with lighter spars, to increase light wind performance.
- Fly the kite on the lightest flying line you can. (Drag of the flying line is VERY critical on light wind kite performance.)
- Ultimately the ability of the flier is the critical factor in light wind stunt kite flying. An experienced flier can (generally) fly in lighter winds than can a beginner.
 - In light winds the kite must keep moving in order to fly. Backing up will help, but you will soon run out of safe flying field. *Never "lose" field unless absolutely necessary.*
 - Keep the kite moving horizontally (from side to side) this is called rowing. When you make the outside turns, always turn up. *Never lose altitude unless absolutely necessary.*
 - To gain field space in light winds, pull back on the lines or take several steps back to force the kite to climb. When you then dive the kite, move quickly forward, gaining field. If there is some wind you will be able to move down field. (Note: Be very aware of what and who is behind you when you back up in light winds.)

This installment rounds out the series of "The easy No-secrets Handbook for dual line stunt kites" by Al Hargus. If you are interested in acquiring the complete series, drop a line to SKQ.

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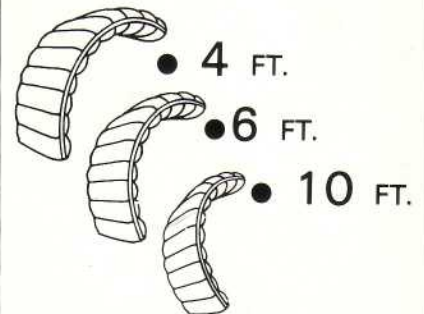
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THIRD ANNUAL TEXAS GULF COAST CHALLENGE

Galveston, Texas, will be this year's site for the Texas Gulf Coast Challenge. This popular event, now the second stop on the recently formed International Stunt Kite Association's tour, will be held April 8-9 in the R.A. Apffel Park. According to event organizer, Terry Crumpler, "Historic Galveston Island, with its 32 miles of beaches, should be the perfect backdrop for the Challenge. We're looking for temperatures near 70° and ideal wind conditions. We've nearly tripled the number of events and skill levels for this year's event ... everyone should have a shot at something!"

Competition will be held in Junior, Novice, Experienced, and Advanced classes. Individual Precision will be run in each class. The other events: Individual Ballet, Team Precision, and Team Ballet, will be held for Experienced and Advanced classes only. Innovative events will be run as open or un-



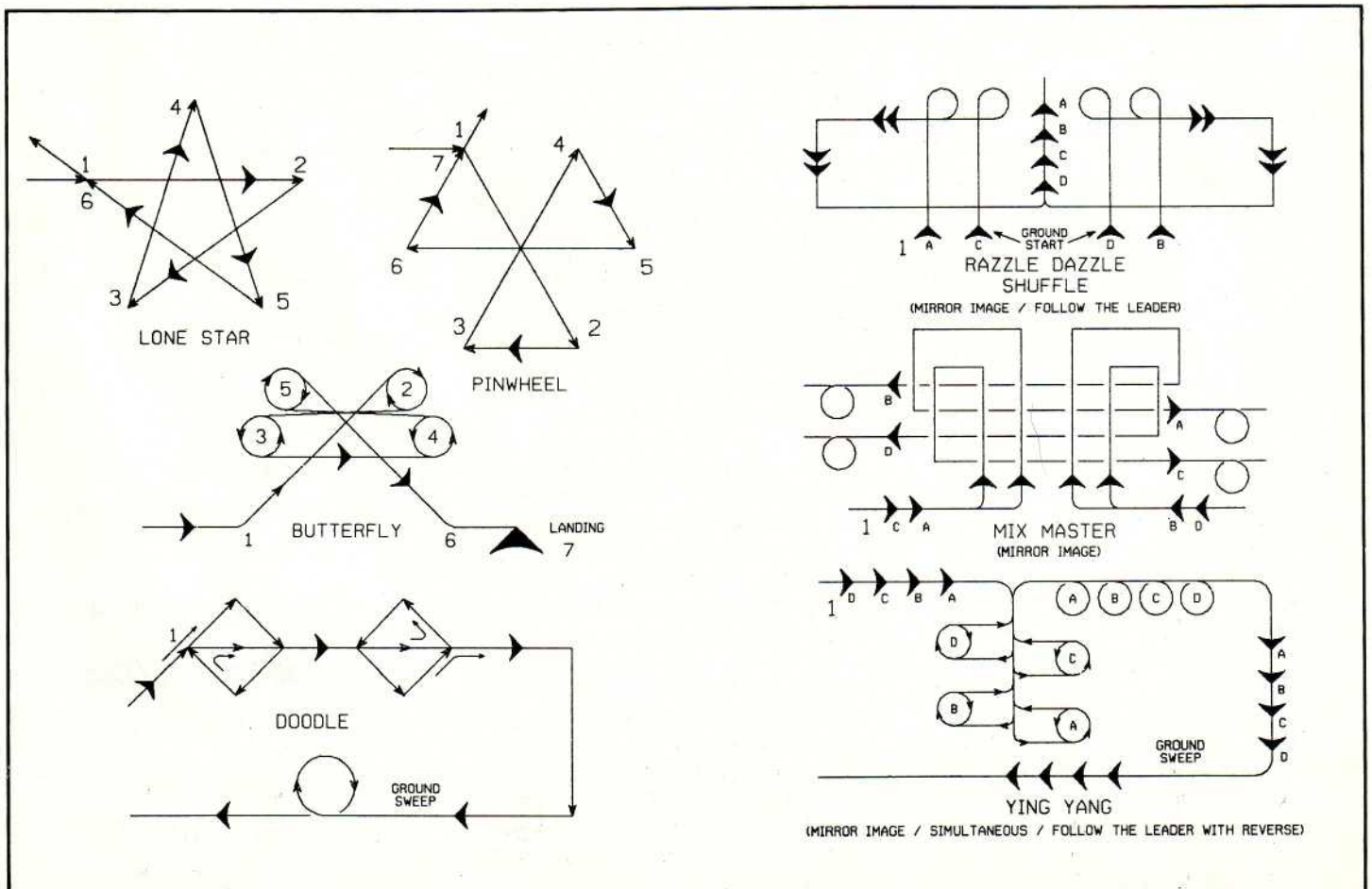
classified, i.e., open to any skill level.

Organizer Crumpler also tells us that one of the "Great Texas Barbeques of all time" will be held on Saturday night following the com-

petitions. "The barbeque, alone, should make anyone's trip worthwhile," Crumpler adds.

Figures to be flown in the Precision categories are among the more difficult that we have seen. "The Texas Challenge should be just that ... a challenge," Crumpler noted. "Whoever wins at this competition automatically gets Texas Braggin' Rights." As well they should ... check out some of them!

The Texas Gulf Coast Challenge is quickly turning into one of the country's premier events, having grown steadily for the past two years. The prospects for spectating should be excellent as well. Registration fees range from \$10.00 plus \$10.00 per event for juniors, through \$35.00 plus \$10.00 per event for Advanced Class flyers. Interested parties are asked to contact: Texas Challenge, % Surfside Flyers, P.O. Box 3105 B, Freeport, TX 77541.



BELMONT NATIONAL STUNT KITE COMPETITION

ROME Enterprises of San Ramon, California, has announced that it will host its first annual event in San Diego on April 22-23. The site chosen is Belmont Park, on Mariner's Island, site of the 1985 AKA Nationals and Convention. The event is open to Intermediate and Open Division flyers in both Team and Individual Classes. Both Precision and Ballet events will be flown.

A purse of \$3000 is at stake in the Intermediate Division only. The Belmont Park event will mark the first time that prize monies have been offered at this level of competition. Approximately \$1700 in

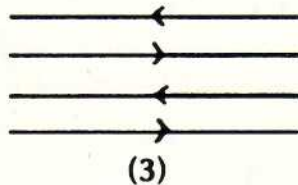
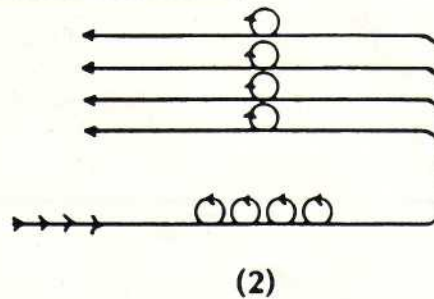
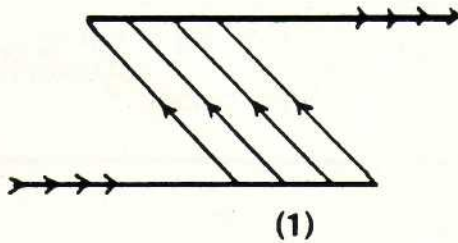
additional cash awards will be distributed among the Intermediate Class flyers that register and compete but fail to finish in the top four.

Additionally featured will be a manufacturers' product display with the most creative endeavor taking home an award of \$250.

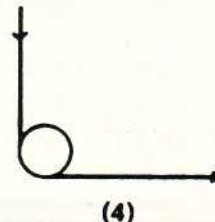
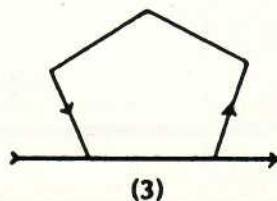
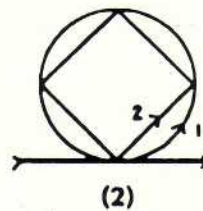
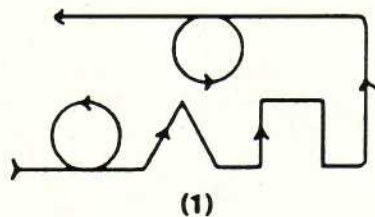
An entry fee of \$50 is being charged for the event and the field will be limited to 100 flyers. Further information about the Belmont Park Championships may be obtained by contacting: ROME Enterprises, 129 Samoa Ct., San Ramon, CA 94583, or by calling: 415-866-8173.



TEAM PRECISION COMPULSORIES FOR OPEN AND INTERMEDIATE DIVISIONS



INDIVIDUAL PRECISION COMPULSORIES FOR OPEN AND INTERMEDIATE DIVISIONS



GREAT LAKES STUNT KITE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Grand Haven State Park on the eastern shore of Lake Michigan will be the gathering place for some of the midwest and the nation's best stunt kite fliers and teams on the weekend of May 13-14. Hosted jointly by Mackinaw Kite Company, Grand Bay Kite Company, and Sandcastle. This will be the third year for the major stunt kite competition to be held in Western Michigan (formerly known as the Western Michigan Stunt Kite competitions) and the first year for the event to be sanctioned by the newly formed International Stunt Kite Association and the American Kite Fliers Association.

There will be competitions in five categories: Individual and Team precision, Individual and Team Ballet, and Individual Innovative. (Team Innovative will be a demonstration event this year). There will be four classes of competition: Junior (under 12 years old), Novice, Intermediate and Open.

Competitions will begin on Saturday, May 13 at 9 A.M., and continue through Sunday, May 14. Monday is a proposed run-over date for possible delays in the event.

A selection of compulsory maneuvers are shown. As is the usual format, there will be no compulsories in the ballet portion of the event. One surprise maneuver will be given to individual fliers from a list given out at the Headquarters on Friday, May 12. (Juniors will have no surprise maneuver.) Teams will be asked to fly three of the five figures (The three will be posted the day of the event). Free style in Precision events will be between 1-2 minutes. And Ballet performances will be between 3-5 minutes.

The event will take place at the 48-acre Grand Haven State Park. On-site camping will be on a first come, first served basis. For camp site registration and information, contact: Grand Haven State Park, (616) 842-6020.

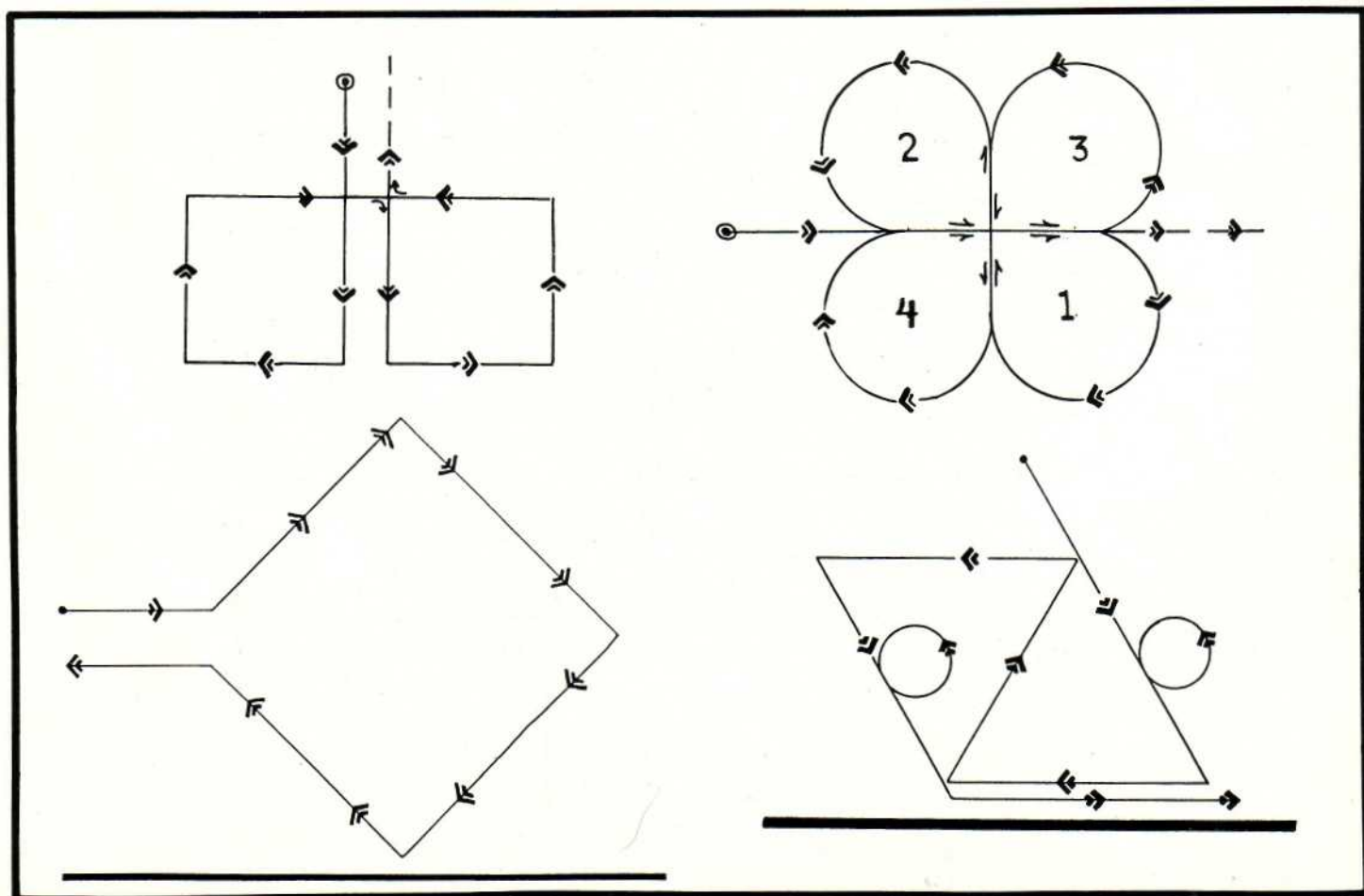
The Headquarters motel is the Bij De Zee, 1030 Harbor, Grand Haven, MI 49417, (616) 846-7431, and is directly across from the competition fields.

Other additional accommodations can be found within walking distance from the fields. The Khardomah Lodge, 1365 Lake Ave., Grand Haven, MI 49417, (616) 842-2990, is 200 yards from the shore of Lake Michigan.

For registration forms, accommodations information, and further information on the Great Lakes Stunt Kite Championships, contact local hosts; The Mackinaw Kite Company, 301 N. Harbor, Grand Haven, MI 49417, (616) 846-7501.

For competitions information, also contact: Sandcastle, (616) 723-4344, or Grand Bay Kite Company, (616) 929-0607.

A sampling of the figures to be flown at the Great Lakes Nationals is shown below.



EAST COAST STUNT KITE CHAMPIONSHIPS



The 4th annual East Coast Stunt Kite Championships will be held May 27, 28, and 29, in Wildwood, N.J. Competitions will be held in three classes: Novice, Intermediate, and Open. Open class fliers may compete in Individual Precision, Individual Ballet, Team Precision, Team Ballet, Individual Innovative, and Team Innovative (which will be experimentally judged this year). The Intermediate class competitor may compete in Individual Precision and Individual Ballet, Team Precision and Team Ballet. Novice class competitors are restricted to Individual Precision.

The ECSKC rules committee is putting finishing touches on the 1989 rules book. Changes in 1989 will be the addition of a table contents and a rearranging of information to make the book easier to use. A few of the rules changes include a new modified wind rule and a revision of the ground touch penalty system. One of the main aims is to aid in the standardization of rules on a national scale.

Maneuvers have not been selected at press time, but both the maneuvers and the new rules book will be available in early April.

Event coordinator Roger Chewning: "We are also working on 'Style Sheets' that are designed to assist not only officials and judges at Wildwood, but prospective event hosts across the country in running more efficient orderly, and uniform events."

Registrations are anticipated to be high at the East Coast event this year. Fran Gramkowski head event coordinator anticipates, "a group of about ten from England

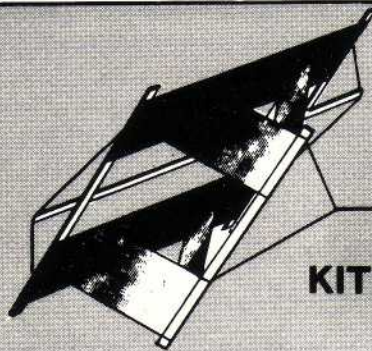
and some stunt kite fliers from Germany as well."

With the large anticipated turn out, contestants should expect to compete on Monday as well as Saturday and Sunday. (Use of Monday was avoided in '86, '87, and '88.) "This year's growth could force us to re-evaluate the event for 1990," states Roger Chewning.

Event shirts are claimed to be the most outrageous yet, and the banquet has been improved to match the Saturday night barbeque.

Local motels are filling up fast and this year we anticipate taking over a third motel. Reserve early, as it is Memorial Day weekend. If you want to be part of the action off the field, contact Quarterdeck Motels at (609) 884-2696 or the Premiere Motor Inn at (609) 723-0166.

Event registration forms are available from Fran Gramkowski, 30 West End Ave., Haddonfield, NJ 08033. For further information, contact: Fran (evenings) (609) 429-6260 or daytime, Roger Chewning (215) 736-8253.



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New Product Review

A WORD ABOUT OUR TESTING PROCEDURES ...

Each kite test is performed in three stages. In consideration of the manufacturers' suggested wind ranges, the kites are first flown at a middle-of-the-road setting: one that is within the range. They are then evaluated over two other sets of conditions, test flyability at or beyond the two extremes of high and low wind velocity. Our attempt is to establish realistic limits beyond which the kite either becomes unstable or unflyable.

In all cases, testing is done on stock kites as they come from the manufacturers. In the event that modifications are made to compensate for various conditions, they will be explained. If line is normally provided by the manufacturer as part of the retail package, it is used. In the event that line is not provided, we have followed the manufacturers' recommendations in selecting our test line.

We heard about the Accelerator near the end of January from its manufacturer, Robert Crowell. In the couple of weeks that followed, we learned that what was being sent to us for review was another regionally popular kite. Although there has been limited distribution on the Eastern seaboard, the kite is relatively unknown throughout the rest of the country.

The Accelerator is a basic, no-nonsense, small configuration stunter with some variations that make it quite interesting to fly. According to the product literature, it is "a patented design incorporating camber or an airfoil-type shape within the sail which enhances lifting capabilities." The camber is achieved by fitting the

MODEL: ACCELERATOR

FABRIC WEIGHT: .75 oz. ripstop nylon

KITE WEIGHT: 150 Grams

COLORS AVAILABLE: varied

WIND RANGE: 5-25 mph (single); 5-30 mph (double)

**CONFIGURATION: cambered delta-type,
58 inch wingspan**

MFGR's SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$40.00 (single)

MANUFACTURER: CROWELL'S SAIL LOFT

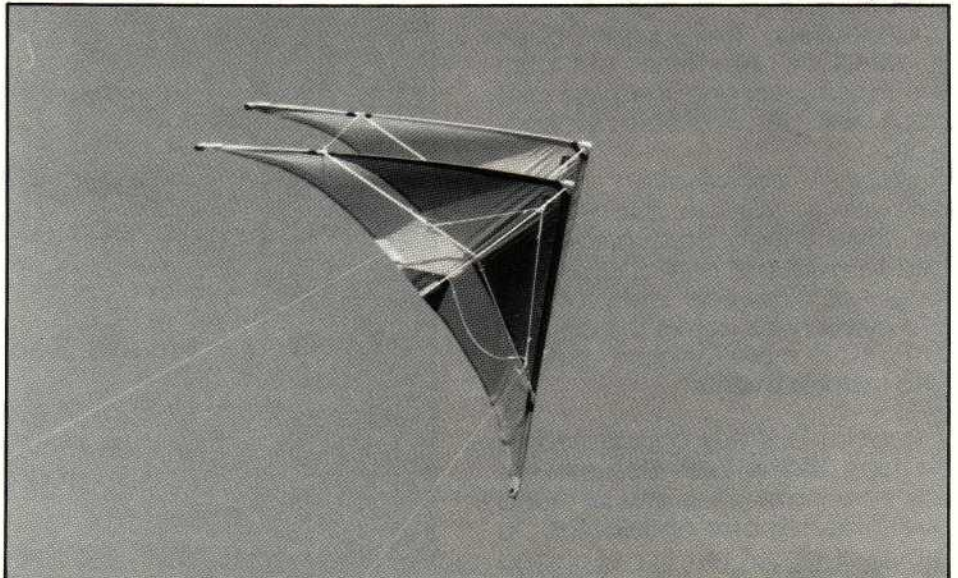
spine into a pre-formed nosepiece with the shaft on the windward side of the kite. The side spars are also set into the same nosepiece creating the dihedral angle.

The element of camber is not the only unusual feature of the kite, however. The Accelerator's structural geometry may also be adjusted. The lower spreader spars are set into a single piece of vinyl which is drilled to accommodate the spine. Once in place, the spreader may then be tensioned by sliding the vinyl up or down. This allows the flyer to control, within a reasonable set of limits, the amount of billow in the sail ... more for low wind, less for higher wind. It was in this low wind setting that we first tested our stack of two kites.

At 3.5 mph the kites flew ... not with great ease but in considera-

tion that we were well below the suggested wind range, very nicely. Take-offs were a bit on the rough side but the lower spreader adjustment proved to be a worthy device and as the wind picked up into the low range, the kites took off. Handling was tight, as is the case with most smaller sail kites. It was fun to play around with the spreaders and see what sort of performances we could achieve at different wind speeds. We found that the kite flew at nearly all configurations, although, typically, as the sail became flatter, we had to pay an increasing amount of attention to what we were doing as precise control became more critical.

Particularly impressive was the kite's ability to almost completely resist our attempts to "pull" it out of the sky. The harder we jerked



the lines in an attempt to fold it up in mid-air, the more the kite would respond by dumping the excess air around the flexing wingtips. Although this made the kite slow considerably in tight turns, we found it to be quite predictable. We managed to "ground" the kite only once in the day's flying.

As the wind speeds neared 15 mph the Accelerators began to get into high gear. Although they were not as blindingly fast as other kites of their size they did track very well. At this point, the kites' ability to dump excess air becomes a relief from the speed and a boon to the control factor. It also lessens the strain on the hands and arms which is a nice plus in the comfort department. We found that there are no real bridle adjustment points on the kites, at least in the traditional

sense. The bridles are a three line system (on each side) with an absence of the usual sliding clip arrangement. Some of the knots may be retied to lengthen or shorten various sections of the whole apparatus but this is obviously going to be a rather time-consuming affair. Happily, most of these adjustments can be dealt with by the movement of the lower spreader bar which, at least to us, seemed to serve roughly the same purpose.

There are a number of good, as well as interesting points about this new kite: the camber-enabling nosepiece, the adjustable lower spreader, and certainly neither least nor last, a very nice price (\$40.00 suggested retail). There were some items that we did wonder about, however. One of these items was a cut occurring in the lower edge of the leading

spare which is, presumably, to facilitate the changing of the leading edge spar. This might be more easily and aerodynamically accomplished by inserting the new spar through the opening in the upper portion of the leading edge. Secondly, we noticed some randomness in the stitching that probably would be absent were the Accelerator produced on a large scale.

In the final analysis, the Accelerator proved to be a very good flier, with more than its share of technological pluses. We're going to try more of these little guys in larger stacks. This is something that in consideration of price, is neither beyond the realm, nor the pocketbook, of a lot of consumers. We think that you'll see a lot more of these in the air this summer.

C.B.



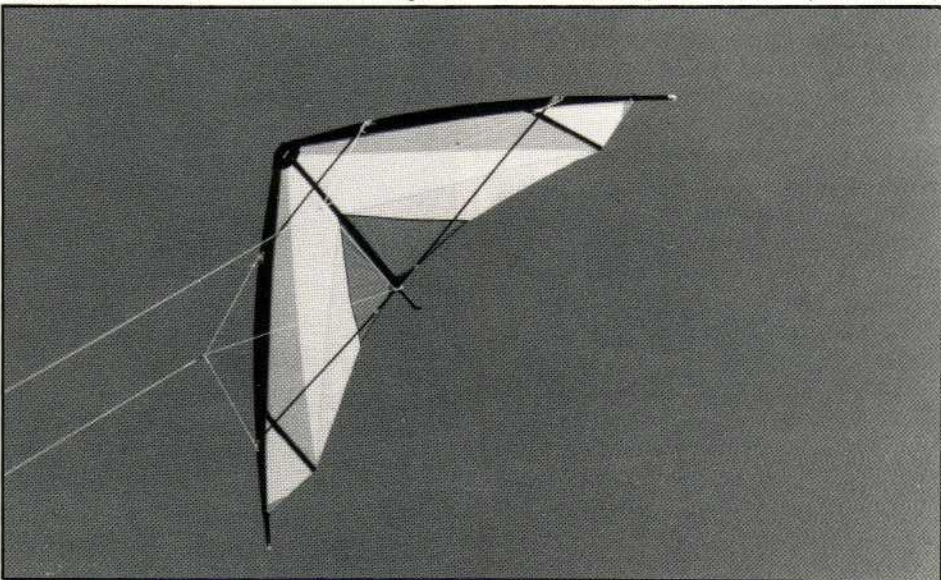
The Freestyler comes to us from the same company that gave us the Spyro-Jet and, more recently the Ultra-Leger (Ultralite) models. The Freestyler is aimed at the team market. It is noticeably larger than either of the other two models. Kite assembly is by the standard method. As you assemble the kite you will notice several features worth mentioning. The leading edge vinyl connectors are glued to the wing spar, so they cannot move around during flight (This method also necessitates getting replacements from the manufacturer should you break a wing spar. Also making for some difficulty in removing a broken spar.) The Freestyler has no arrow nocks on the wing tips, but uses a vinyl tubing and shock cord arrangement. This appears to be much more durable for hard off wind landings. The fitting has a smaller diameter tube within that fits into the main wing spar. The Freestyler also has a very heavy-

MODEL: FREESTYLER (Style Libre)
FABRIC WEIGHT: .75 oz. ripstop nylon
KITE WEIGHT: 310 grams
COLORS AVAILABLE: Varied
WIND RANGE: 3-25 mph.
CONFIGURATION: Delta-type 92 inch wingspan
LIFT SURFACE: 9.1 Sq. Ft.
MFGR's SUGGESTED RETAIL: 130.00
MANUFACTURER: L'ATELIER DU VENT INC.

duty, hard plastic nose piece. The Freestyler also has a pair of wing battens that are inserted from the top of the wing; the battens are $\frac{3}{16}$ " wooden dowell.

The first day of tests were at the top end of the suggested wind range at 15-25 mph. The flights

were made with 150' - 135# Spectra (manufacturer suggests 125'). The kite exhibited some wobble at launch, and had a tendency to oversteer in turns (this is a familiar characteristic with most high aspect ratio stunters). The Freestyler does present a



pleasing appearance in the sky. Our test model had four colors of nylon and an interesting angular chevron pattern. The wingtip panels are located at the spot where the wing battens are placed in the sail.

The kite tracked very well and only small control movement was necessary to keep to a straight flight path.

As with the original Spyro-Jet, the Freestyler does spins and turns very quickly, wing tip type turns are made with very little control movement. One has to exercise a bit of restraint in the turns as this kite can be pulled into a nosedive with excessive hand movements.

Once the kite starts to fall, it is extremely difficult to recover. This kite requires a good deal of finesse in control, as opposed to the gorilla moves that some other kites allow. A considerable amount of pull is developed in high wind conditions, which is to

be expected for a kite of this size. (9.1 sq. ft.)

Light wind tests came quite unexpectedly on a gusty day when winds varied from 5-25 mph. By adjusting the bridles to an average wind setting the Freestyler did well in the air at both extremes. Although the high-aspect ratio did multiply the over-steer problem to a greater degree in the lighter winds, there isn't much difference in speed of the kite in either high or low winds.

The Freestyler does not come equipped with standoffs, adding these may give the kite better low wind handling. The wing battens seem to damp out some of the trailing edge vibrations, but the Freestyler makes the characteristic winged roar so familiar to kites of this configuration. The only high wind deficiency we noticed was that after about an hour of flying the overly small bridle clips were starting to distort. This problem can be easily solved by the substitution

of heavier clips.

One item of note in this age of stunt kites coming out on the market at the rate of one or two new ones a week ... instructions. Some companies give a small, sometimes inaccurate single sheet with their kites. The makers of the Freestyler includes an 18 pg. book, which includes such items as pre-flight, choice of a flying field, flying tips and launch and landing techniques. They have even included a section on competitive flying and pictures of individual and team flight figures. For most advanced stunt fliers, the kites instructions are usually the first item lost. For the beginner these instructions can make the difference between success or failure in their attempts to master this or any stunt kite.

All told, the Freestyler makes for a good all around stunter. As a proposal for a team kite, it's definitely worth a long, second look!

A.H.



The Sparless Stunter is at first encounter a parafoil converted to dual line.

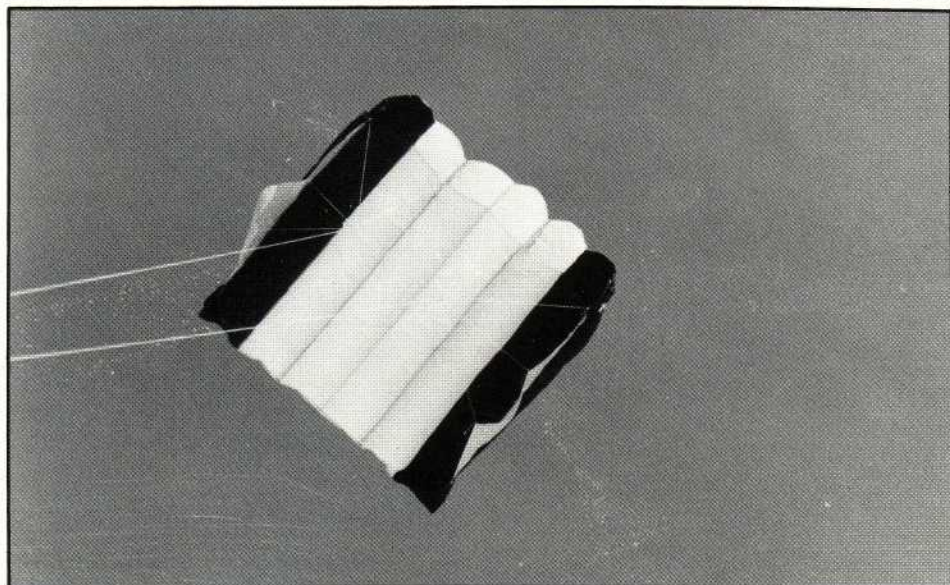
The kite comes in an 8"x14" bag so you can stash this stunter most anywhere and assembly time is the time required to pull it out of the bag and untangle the bridles. (There are twelve of them and some care must be taken when putting the kite away to avoid the tangles you can encounter at assembly time.) Portability is a very positive factor with this kite as is the case with all "soft" ram air kites, be they dual or single line.

I knew the flying characteristics of parafoils and didn't expect much to be different with this dual line variation. The excitement began when I attempted my first launch.

Being a "solo" tester on the first

day of the tests, I encountered a great deal of difficulty in self launching the Sparless Stunter. The standard, staked out line routine

doesn't work as the kite will immediately launch no matter how you leave it setting. The other occurrence is that the kite turns into



a tangled mass of nylon.

I next tried to use the somewhat shaky method suggested by some manufacturers of letting out a little line at a time. This method eventually worked but at great risk to fingers (at 20 mph winds a 10 sq. ft. parafoil exerts quite a bit of pull).

(Note: This is a very hazardous method of launch and is not recommended for this or any other stunt kite.)

Another attempt was made, using a fence and plastering the kite against it, walking back to handles and hoping that the kite came off untangled. I used my van in another attempt. (Both a fence and a van are frowned on as fixtures in stunt kite fields.) The kite came with no directions and this may or may not have been an oversight on the part of the manufacturer.

First day of tests saw winds of about 15 mph. Once the kite was launched, it flew well. The Sparless Stunter tracked well and exhibited very little over or under steer. The kite is moderately fast for one of this size, and it turned in about its own width. (Wing tip turns are an irrelevant term for a kite with no wings!) The response to controls is quick and with a steady breeze the kite flew well to the sides of the wind. One thing to remember is that if you attempt to land or crash anywhere (and most especially to the edges of the wind), you MUST have an assistant help your launch. This is a major drawback to the otherwise good advantage of a high lift to weight ratio that is present in the Sparless Stunter.

The next test day was gusty with winds from 5-25 mph. There are no wind adjustments that can be made to the bridle lines as the

lines end in loops. The Sparless Stunter did stay airborne in 5 to 8 mph, but very little maneuvering was possible. One disadvantage to the "sparless" soft kites is that they are easily affected by gusts and crosswinds. (Both of which were present on the day of the tests.) When hit with gusts or crosswinds, the kite had a tendency to collapse. If the kite didn't tangle as it fell, there was a chance to re-inflate and recover. More often than not, when the cells collapsed you ended up in the "How do I relaunch?" syndrome.

The Sparless Stunter is very portable, is quite striking in the air (our test model was fluorescent pink, green and black) and can develop a considerable amount of pull for the "power" fliers out there. All you have to do is figure out how to launch it by yourself.

A.H.



MODEL: PEREGRINE

FABRIC WEIGHT: .75 oz. ripstop nylon

**KITE WEIGHT: 415 Grams (standard spars);
335 Grams (graphite spars)**

COLORS AVAILABLE: varied

WIND RANGE: 4-25

**CONFIGURATION: delta-type with inflated wedge keel.
96 inch wingspan**

MFGR's SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$120.00 to \$190.00

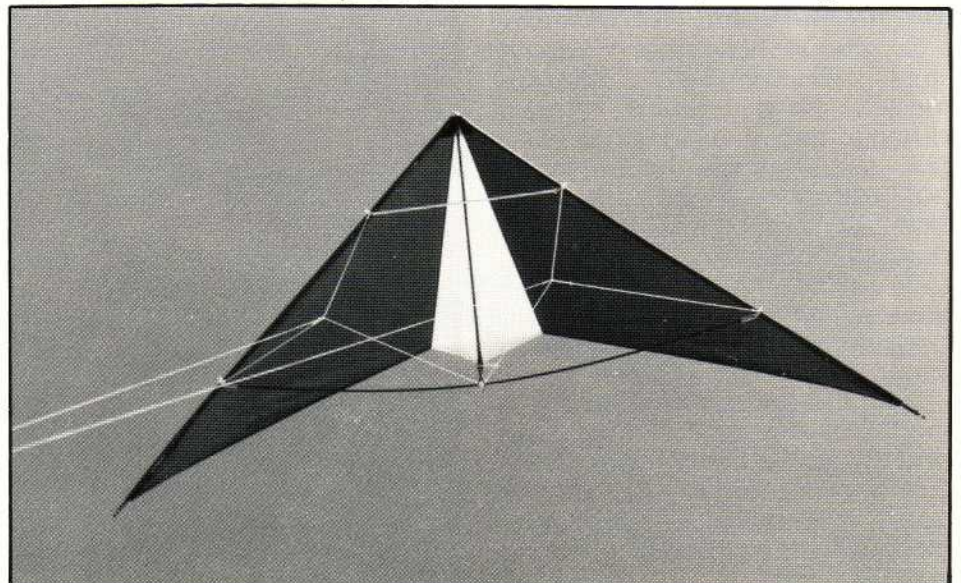
MANUFACTURER: ONE OF JERRY'S KITES

Jerry Sinotte has been making good kites for a long time. If you have ever flown one of his big deltas, you are already aware of the craftsmanship that goes into his products. Jerry also produces the Avenger which has been on the market since 1984.

The Peregrine, which was introduced at the KTA convention in January, borrows an idea from Jerry's deltas. The secret to this latest contender is the utilization of the unique double-skinned, wedge keel; which inflates from the trailing edge. This gives the kite more lift during low wind periods as well as providing more drive in the upper wind levels. The idea of a three-dimensional keel is not particularly new but, as far as we know, this is the first time that it has been used on a commercially-produced stunt kite.

Another interesting feature of the Peregrine is the nose treatment. It is sewn together in such a fashion as to create a lip around

the leading edge of the kite. It is rather as if the wing surface has been put on top of the spars instead of the spars fitting into the



actual wing. It makes for a very clean look and appears to create a small air dam under the leading edge.

The Peregrine is offered in four designs ranging from the basic through full custom. The models tested were both basic designs with the only difference being that one kite was sparred with graphite (a \$50.00 option at retail). Of the two, the graphite was our personal favorite although both performed well.

Initial tests of the kite were conducted in light winds (2.5 to 4.3 mph) and we were pleasantly surprised to find that both models handled it with relative ease ... even though the graphite did offer a crisper response. The difference in overall kite weight, undoubtedly, had much to do with it, but the flying characteristics were not as significantly varied as one might anticipate. We were impressed with the kites' maneuverability: turns were clean and both kites tracked very well. There was no problem keeping the kites on a straight line and stalling problems were minimal in spite of the fact that the sails are tightly stretched on the frames. The

wedge keel performed as advertised, lending considerable drive even in these low ranges. When we landed them, it was our choice rather than for lack of sufficient wind.

The very next day, we were blessed with breezes around 12.5 mph and, again, found that the kites flew exceptionally. The only noticeable difference was that they were faster. We also got a chance to experiment with another feature of the Peregrine. Each kite comes equipped with two identical upper spreader spars. One spar may be employed in the usual manner, cross-bracing to each leading edge or, if the flier should choose to do so, they may be connected from the leading edge vinyls to the spine (just above the lower spreader) in a "Y" pattern. (Some will remember a similar arrangement used a few years ago on the Action Star Dart.) This configuration should exert more pressure against the leading edge to help forestall premature bowing in heavy winds. We found the configuration somewhat helpful in high wind (18+ mph) situations but also discovered that it produced significant oversteer in the lower ranges.

At no point did we find the "Y" setting of the spars a necessity to flight.

A few weeks after the initial days on the field with the Peregrine we were presented with four solid days of 20-25 mph winds. It was during this period that we were able to finally to fly the Peregrine to its full potential. The kite is quite fast and the controls require a good deal of attention ... not to say that it is unstable ... not by any means, but one must be attentive. There is even a nice resonant roar for those who love sound while they fly. The kites' cornering abilities are excellent and there is just enough possibility of oversteer to keep things interesting! Even with the single spar in the upper spreader position, structural integrity was very good with minimal amounts of distortion in evidence. This one might be an excellent choice as a potential team kite.

Generally we found the Peregrine to be another one of Jerry's (Very Good) Kites. It perform like their namesake ... the Peregrines ... there is nothing tentative about them!

C.B.

MODEL: SKYFOIL C-26

FABRIC WEIGHT: .75 oz. ripstop

KITE WEIGHT: 30 grams

COLORS AVAILABLE: One pattern with five colors standard

WIND RANGE: 8-35

CONFIGURATION: Parafoil type ram air

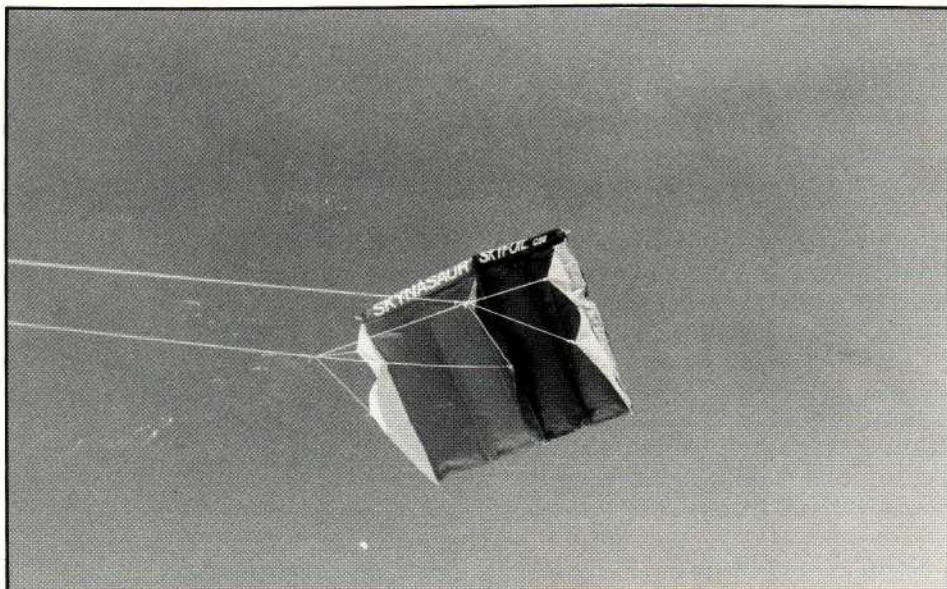
LIFT SURFACE: 3¼ Sq. Ft.

MFGR's SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$23.95

MANUFACTURER: SKYNASAU

Skynasaur has been making stunt kites since 1978. Previous models have proved to be durable heavy wind stunt kites. The disadvantage to beginners has been in the speed of the kites. Skynasaur has kept to their basic durable, heavy wind format in the C-26 Skyfoil. The Skyfoil, however, slows everything down so that the beginner can spend time thinking about which hand does what.

Even though speed is lacking in the Skyfoil, it has a lot of surprising and enjoyable advantages. Being a small air inflated kite (26"x18") it packs into a 16"x6" stuff sack along with its supplied fly lines and handles.



As with any sparless kites that are rigged for dual line, launch is best with an assistant who holds the kite for you down wind. You can also use the recommended method in the instructions of allowing the lines to spin off the round line holder handles letting line out as you desire. The C-26 is not a fast kite nor does it develop much pull so this method is sufficient. As an experienced flier I also found that this method can be quite a bit of fun as well! (The manufacturer recommends that you wear gloves when attempting this launch technique.)

Tests occurred on a very gusty day with winds ranging from 5-25 mph. The C-26 proved to be a stunt kite that loved the winds at about 10-25 mph. The hardest part of the tests was to keep the kite grounded in heavy winds when you were through flying. At 5-10 mph there was not sufficient wind or lift surface to keep the kite airborne. Skynasaur does give some instruction on changes in the bridle for low wind flying and the use of 50# kevlar lines may help, but why waste time.

The real fun of flying the C-26



The Hurricane, previously known as the HA (High Aspect), is Turning Point Kite Company's high wind kite. At first appearance, it is a visually striking product ... our test model is entirely black save for the wingtips, one of which is pink, the other bright orange. The lower spreaders are connected to the spine by a piece of heavy-duty tubular plastic which has been drilled to accommodate the ferrule on one end and the spine on the other. The spreader ferrule is secured by a cotter pin. This is the same basic configuration that is used in the lighter Windjammer model (SKQ Vol. 1, No. 2). Heavy sparring is used throughout and there are interior, removable wing

comes in the recommended winds of 10-35 mph. This kite is about as close as you can come to being indestructable. There are two 13" pieces of flexible foam stiffener in the upper edge of the air cells. These foam "sausages" hold the cells upon and keep the kite from folding up in cross winds and off wind flying.

The C-26 is not a fast turning kite, but it will run in its own length. (Note: Skynasaur uses the width of their kites as their numbering system C-26= 26", C-74= 74" wide, F-36= 36" wide.) The interesting feature of the foam stiffeners is that even very erratic or exaggerated control movements may fold up the kite but with sufficient altitude the stiffeners open the cells and the kite almost "self" recovers with just a little line tension.

Skynasaur's instructions suggest relaunch by yourself from the ground by just maneuvering the kite so that the stiffener faces you, taking a step back to launch. I was skeptical, but the Skyfoil would sometimes perform this maneuver on smooth ground by itself with no efforts from the pilot. Crash in a 20 mph winds ... wait a second and up the Skyfoil would

MODEL: HURRICANE

FABRIC WEIGHT: .75 oz. ripstop nylon

KITE WEIGHT: 410 Grams

COLORS AVAILABLE: varied

WIND RANGE: 10 to 40

CONFIGURATION: delta-type 82 inch wingspan

MFGR's SUGGESTED RETAIL: 90.00

MANUFACTURER: TURNING POINT KITES

go. As stated earlier, it was at times difficult to stop flying when you wanted to.

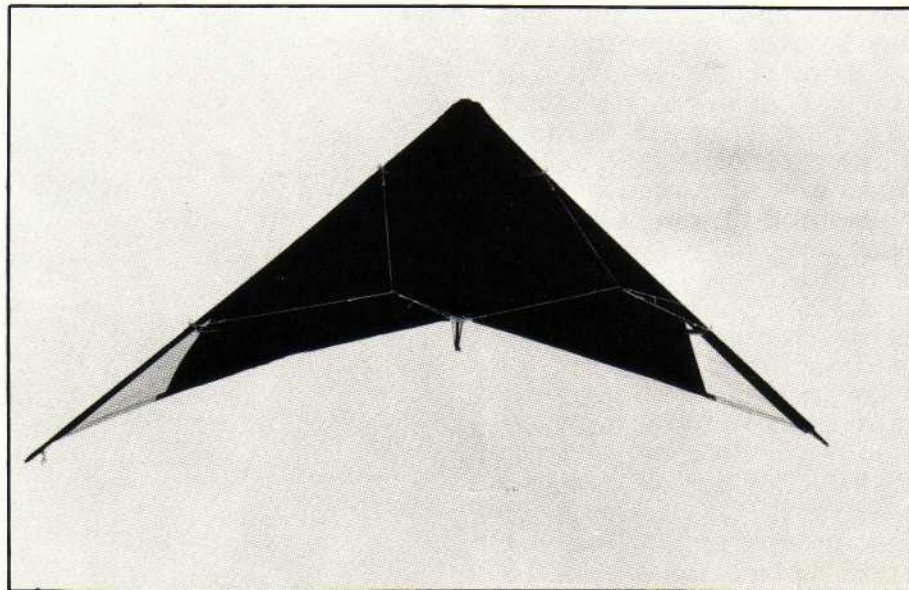
The Skyfoil does not track well across the wind. Straight flight seems to consist of very small curving moves. Overcontrol is a big problem in tracking a straight line. But, as I have said before, the C-26 was not designed for precision competitions but for fun flying.

If you want to experiment with flying two kites (Ron Reich style) or solo flying, this is the kite to try. And of special note with solo flying, you can get hit with this kite and hardly even notice it. The Foam Stiffeners act as a sort of boxing glove to soften the little force the kite exhibits.

This is a big advantage for a beginners stunt kite to have. Skynasaur does have the perfunctory safety message in the instructions but there's little chance for injuries from the C-26.

For the expert stunt kite flier that happens to feel the need for a bit of fun, or the beginner that wants an inexpensive, durable, fun stunt kite. The Skynasaur C-26 Skyfoil is a good choice.

A.H.



battens to help the kite maintain structural integrity in higher winds. All of the bunji cord connecting points are gromet-reinforced.

Heavy wall vinyls are used on all of the spar fittings. All of these items point to the fact that the Hurricane is intended as a kite to be employed in windy situations. The final confirmation of this point, at least visually, is that there is almost no billow in the sail ... it's stretched almost drumhead tight. This is not a low wind kite! In fact, when we tried to fly it in low winds (3 to 5 mph) it was nearly an impossible task. The aspect ratio is higher than most and the kite was nearly uncontrollable. But that's about what we had expected ...

But let the wind crank up to 12 to 15 mph (and a whole bunch more), and this kite really begins to come into its own. Flying the Hurricane is an exercise in concentration. It is not a forgiving kite. It must be flown nearly the entire time that it is airborne ... that is to say that one must pay careful attention to what is being done. This is the case with most high-aspect

kites. Whereas a kite with a fair amount of billow will catch air on its own, those with taut sails generally will not. They will, given a slack line, often flip and head earthward at amazing speeds. The way to avoid this is to make sure that there is no slack in the lines, either from sharp turns or from flying off-wind. This is a seeming contradiction for those that fly with a lot of arm movement. The tradeoff is that again, owing to the sail's tightness, the response time for the kite is to react is super-fast. There is no "extra" sail to billow out so response is nearly instantaneous.

Keeping that point in mind, one can then proceed to have some real fun with this kite. The Hurricane handles wind so well that we weren't able to come even close to what the upper end of what the range might be. We flew it in 15, 20, 25, 30, and 35 mph winds, with intermittent stops between and there was no appreciable difference at any of them. Nor was there any kite distortion observed. The Hurricane flew

beautifully in each case. Not to say that it was an easy experience. The Hurricane is not, in our opinion, a novice class kite. There is a significant amount of pull encountered in relation to size. The speeds developed in high winds are blinding, and there is more than a small amount of finesse required to make the kite respond properly. Still, we found it exhilarating!

Unlike other kite tests, wherein we try to "pull" them from the air with a series of rapid arm movements, tests on these "flatter" wings are more subjective. They're rather easily pulled from the air. The secret is in learning how to keep them aloft. Once that's learned, and the kites compared on even terms, the Hurricane flies right up among the leaders of the pack. If you are not a flyer that likes to become intensely involved with his kite, this might not be the kite for you ... but if you find yourself wanting to get "wrapped up" in a different sort of high wind experience: try the Hurricane.

C.B.



Having been a Peter Powell diamond stunt flier in the past, I was interested to note that most of the components that are used in the Skyraker are the same as those of past Powell kites, down to the bottom center connector that looks to be the same as that of a four foot diamond stunter. This will make for easy parts replacement.

The Skyraker's assembled in the standard manner for a winged type stunter and takes about three minutes. One important note in the directions is that the bottom center mold must be in front of the center strut. This gives the slight dihedral to the spars. Flight characteristics do change for the worse if this component is inserted improperly.

Once assembled with the stand-off spars in place, the kite has the

MODEL: SKYRAKER

FABRIC WEIGHT: 1 oz. Ripstop

KITE WEIGHT: 245 grams

COLORS AVAILABLE: Varied

CONFIGURATION: Delta-type

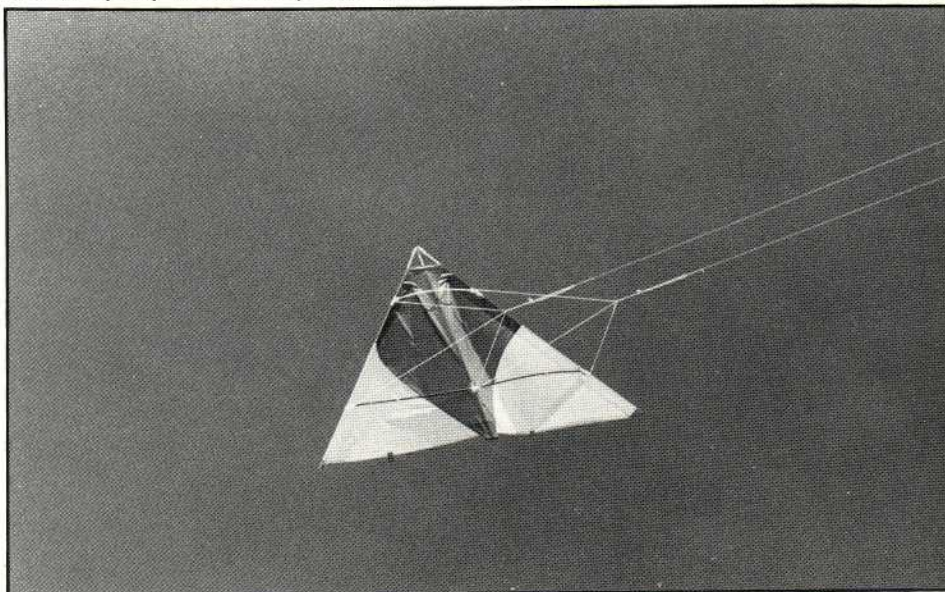
LIFT SURFACE: 8.95 Sq. Ft.

MFGR's SUGGESTED RETAIL: 65.00

MANUFACTURER: PETER POWELL KITES INC.

unusual ability of being able to stand up by itself. The pockets that

the stand-offs are inserted into extend about 1/2" under the sail,



giving the kite some grip even in sand.

It is interesting to note before the test flight that, true to Peter Powell tradition, the bridles are knotted and not adjustable. More on this later.

Initial flights were in 15-20 mph winds. I was quite surprised to find that this relatively small stunter developed quite a bit of pull. The kite was test flown on 135# Spectra and launched smoothly with no wobble whatsoever. The kite tracked very well and flew with moderate speed for a kite of this size.

The Skyraker did wingtip turns and was quite fast in response to control movements. Even excessive control movement is handled well by the kite.

We ran into some difficulties on the second day of testing. The winds were light (5 mph) with some gusts to 8 mph. I encountered two problems, both related to the bridle.

Experience showed that in the light winds the bridle setting need to be adjusted "lighter" (Towards the nose). As the bridle point is knotted at the factory, you are left to untie the knots (which had be-

come set quite tightly in the previous day's heavy winds) and either retie them higher or install a clip to facilitate future adjustments.

The Skyraker instructions state "The bridle is set to a good average setting" (Standard for all Powell kites). Remember that when you try to fly in the extreme ends of the wind (very low and very high winds), the bridle needs to be adjusted. The flier who is unwilling to retie the bridles will have to be content with the unchangeable average bridle setting in average winds.

The second problem encountered was that on first launch the kite exhibited different turning characteristics in either direction. This indicated that the bridle settings on one side or the other had changed. These points were knotted and could not have changed. I discovered that the bridle line to the top spreader on one side of the kite had moved to the top of the vinyl tube fitting. (The other side was at the bottom of the fitting.) This was merely an oversight in assembly, but could cause much confusion to an inexperienced flier. A piece of tape

(filament strapping tape seems to be the preferred Peter Powell securing material) over the bridle lines at the wing spars should solve this problem in the future.

Another interesting item to note about the Skyraker is that it didn't seem to make much noise even though it has a straight trailing edge. This may be a bad point to some fliers that like to have their kite roar back at them during flight, but it does speak well for the kite's efficient design.

The Skyraker is not designed to be a lightwind stunt kite. It was very sluggish in 5-8 mph winds. Most of this is due to the small lift surface and the high kite weight. But when you toss up the 'Raker in a good breeze it becomes an intriguing, and durable stunt kite.

As is the case with all Peter Powell stunt kites, the instruction sheet comes with a list of replacement parts and prices. Peter Powell has been selling stunt kites since 1976 so you can be assured that the company will be around to supply you with replacement parts and accessories when you turn the Skyraker over to your grandchildren! No doubt this stunt kite is durable enough to last that long.



MODEL: WASP

FABRIC WEIGHT: .75 oz. ripstop nylon

KITE WEIGHT: 390 grams

COLORS AVAILABLE: varied

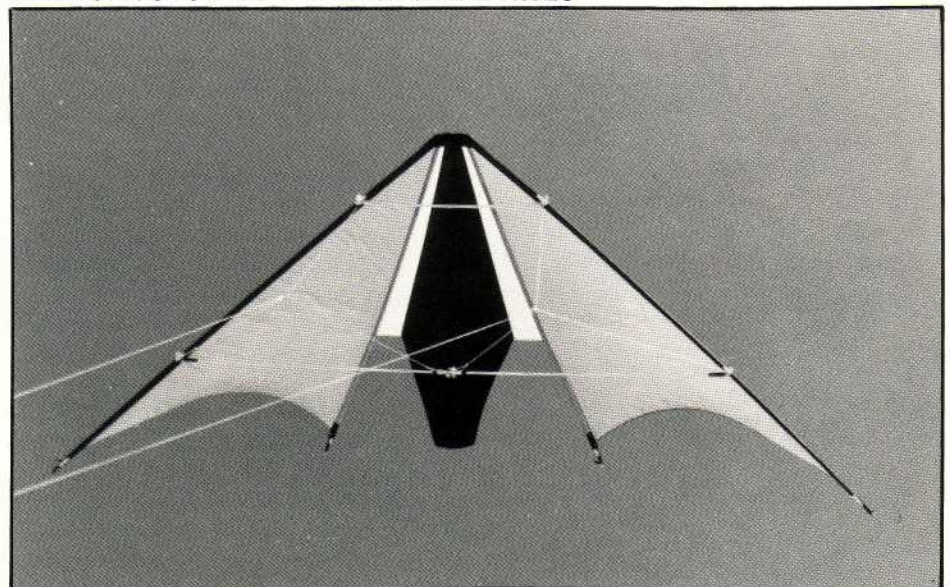
WIND RANGE: 4 to 30 mph

CONFIGURATION: delta-type with interior wing battens and cut-away trailing edge

MFGR's SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$150.00

MANUFACTURER: WIND WALKER KITES

Terry Crumpler of Wind Walker Kites in Clute, Texas, began making stunt kites in 1988. Having flown all of the major stunters available, he decided to try and create one himself that combined those aspects of each that he liked the best ... the Wasp is the end result of the effort. It is an experiment in "kite genetics" that has turned out on the whole rather well. The Wasp is a fast kite with a relatively large sail area, yet it remains very exacting in maneuvers. The cut-away section, between the wing battens and the spine gives the kite a unique appearance, while fulfilling a couple of aerodynamic intents.



In flight, the spine flexes inward at the trailing edge giving the visual impression of a wasp readying itself to sting ... hence the kite's name. This bowing also helps the kite's ability to withstand some fairly significant crashes. The cut-away in the trailing edge also opens the Wasp up in sail area. This produces a noticeable lessening of pull while sacrificing nothing in the speed department.

The sections of the trailing edge between the battens and wingtips are scalloped. This seems to help the kite's turning ability in very positive fashion ... wing-tip turns are not really a problem and, on several occasions, I was able to turn within the Wasp's wingspan. Off-wind maneuvers can be extended significantly into the down-wind area because of the kite's greatly lessened pull.

I tested two Wasps, one which had been modified additionally by the addition of stand-off spars between the lower spreader and sail. Of the two, the modified version was the favorite, particularly in lighter winds. Addressing the situation of varying wind con-

ditions, the manufacturer provides an additional set of lower spreaders to be used in higher wind conditions. A full high-wind kit consisting of the spreaders and additional heavy wing spars is available.

Also recommended is the use of different fly line for varying wind speeds: 75 lb. for 4-8 mph; 135 lb. for 9-12 mph; 200 for 12-18 mph; and at the flyer's discretion in heavier breezes.

I first flew the Wasp at the KTA San Diego convention in some very light wind situations which probably tipped the scales at no more than 4.5 mph and found it to be a consistent performer. At the low end of the suggested range, the kite generated enough pull to let you know it was there and response was very quick. Mid-range, 10-15 mph, appears to be this kite's true home. There is a noticeable absence of oversteer which, combined with a potentially tight turning radius, opens up the opportunity for some very precise figure work. There is enough billow in the sail to make the Wasp very forgiving, as well.

At the upper limits (the manufacturer suggests the substitution of the heavier spreaders at 12+ mph), particularly in the 20-25 mph range, we did notice some distortion which was, for the most part, cured by spar substitution. When we tried the reverse, that is putting them in during lower breezes, the sluggishness was noticeable and expected.

Workmanship on the Wasp is very good, the test model now has about 8 hours of air time with no adverse side-effects. It is apparent, however, that the kite is a hand-made product ... seams are not die-cut straight. Each kite carries with it a bit of its creator. Not to say that manufactured kites do not ... most do, in fact. But as this sport of stunt kite flying creates for its suppliers more and greater demands for product, individual efforts like the Wasp are destined to become fewer and further between. It's nice to see them when they come along ... particularly when they are, as the Wasps, great flyers.

C.B.



When Striker Kites did the big ground crash last fall, a lot of flyers were upset because they didn't get a chance to pick up on the company's really BIG stunter. Well, all of those folks can rest easy because one of the former Striker principals, Steve Shapson, has begun producing it under the name Force 10.

At the beginning: THIS IS A BIG KITE! If you've never had a chance to fly 28 square feet of controllable stunter before, you've got a treat in store. The Force 10 is, simply put, a regular stunter built to massive proportions. It is not built nor intended as a speed kite ... it is primarily a power exercise. Bearing that in mind, we decided to test it as a precision unit (we sometimes are given to flights of fancy like that!).

MODEL: FORCE 10

FABRIC WEIGHT: 1.5 oz. ripstop nylon

KITE WEIGHT: 1800 grams

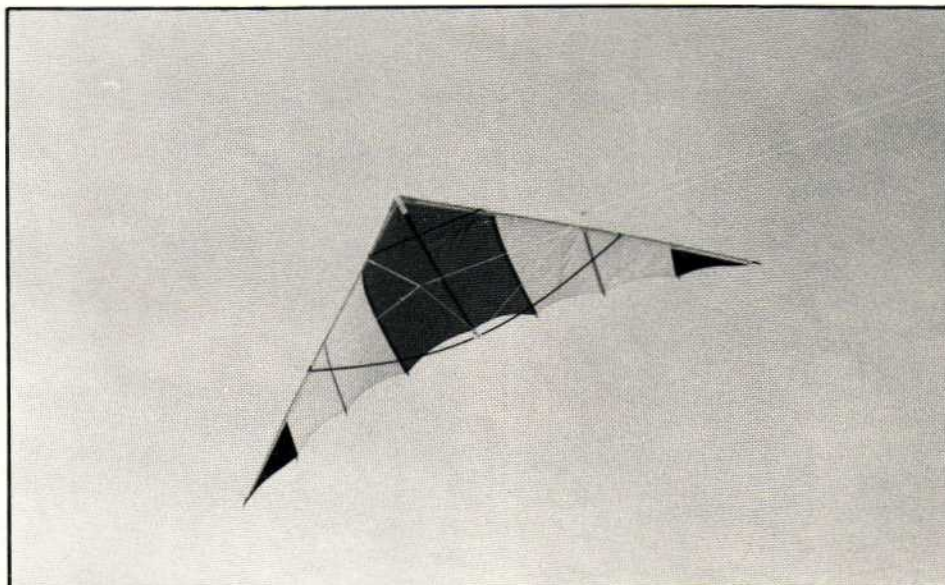
COLORS AVAILABLE: Hot pink and blue with black wingtips

WIND RANGE: 4 to 25 mph.

CONFIGURATION: Camber-induced delta with scalloped trailing edge. 15 ft. wingspan

MFGR's SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$349.

MANUFACTURER: FORCE 10 POWER SAIL STUNT KITES



Now for the shock. The kite performed very well ... from one-man unassisted ground launch, and no-wobble straight-line flight, right through wing-tip turns and gentle landings. Now, of course, when you're holding onto this behemoth, terms like wing-tip turn and structural integrity take on totally different meanings. A wing-tip turn sweeps out 30 feet of sky. And when this kite bows along the leading edge, you can measure the distance in feet, not inches. A four-man team flying these things on a horizontal crossover will need as much height as a seven story building (and that with no room for error!).

We tested the Force 10 twice in winds ranging from 7 to 13 mph, which is low to moderate for this kite, and found the pull not exces-

sive. The manufacturer recommends "using extreme caution" in winds over 25 mph. We don't doubt it! This kite could easily power someone of less than proper weight off the ground. Still, in all, it's a ball to fly. Tests were run on 140 feet of 450lb. Spectra line and, on those occasions when gusts blew in, it was needed. This is not to say that the kite became unmanageable: it didn't, but when it takes off, it really goes!

Off-wind work was fun. The Force 10 does wing stands and landings just like its smaller counterparts ... except when you let the kite down from a wing standing position to a full landing, it can take several seconds. The only problem that we encountered was pulling the spreader spars from their vinyls in

landings and tight turns. Perhaps a pin could be installed through both vinyls and spars to alleviate this problem.

The only other problem with the Force 10 is the amount of people that gather when you set it out to fly. This kite has the best "drawing power" of any that we've flown. There was a nearly constant crowd of on-lookers, some of whom were actually kite flyers!

In spite of the hefty price tag, which is really very low if you're comparing dollars to sail area, the Force 10 is something other than a mere novelty. It really flies, and does so very well. It is very well-mannered for something this large. The Force 10 will definitely be a force to be reckoned with this summer!

C.B.



To say that the kites produced by the Banshee Kite Company are unusual in today's spectrum of flying shapes is an understatement. The leading edge is rounded, the keel and interior wing battens are bent, and the wings roll over at the ends. Tension must be applied to the whole apparatus to even assemble it in a maneuver that is not unlike the same movements used to string a hunting bow. The bridle points are nearly unadjustable ... in fact, the adjustments are effected by tying knots in the bridle lines. O.K. Suppose you go through all of that. When you pick the Chikara up by the bridle clips and hold it in front of you, the kite assumes that attitude that fairly screams "this thing isn't going to fly ..." WRONG!

I first saw the Banshee Kite line at the KTA convention but they made appearances at last year's Hawaii Challenge and the Windy City AKA Nationals. The Chikara is the largest of Banshee's three kite line which also includes the S.T.O.S. (Same Thing Only Smaller), which is, naturally, a down-sized Chikara, and the Raysoar, which is similar in

MODEL: CHIKARA

FABRIC WEIGHT: .75 oz. ripstop nylon

KITE WEIGHT: 415 Grams

COLORS AVAILABLE: 14

WIND RANGE: 5-30 MPH

CONFIGURATION: cambered airfoil, 94 in. wingspan, 26 in. keel

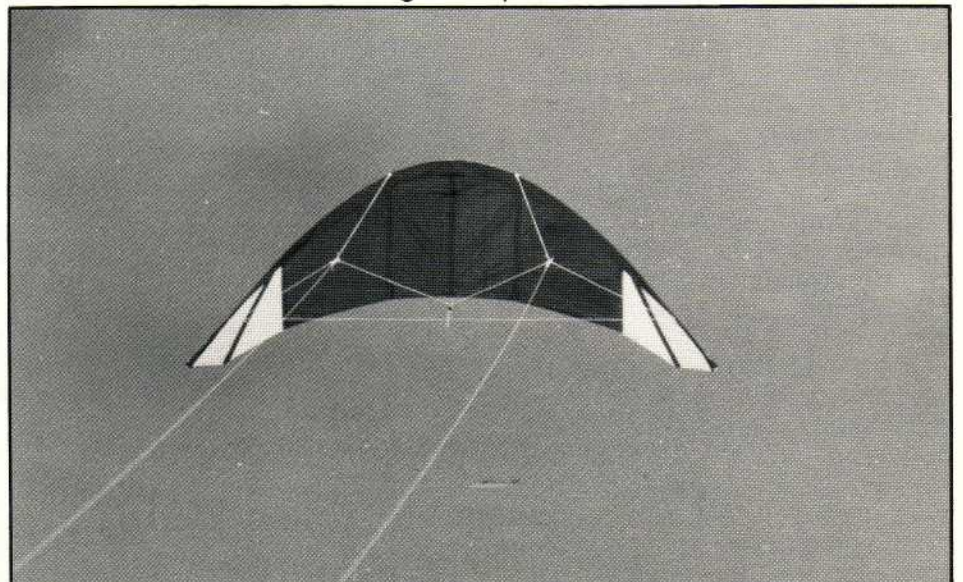
MFGR's SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$250.00

MANUFACTURER: BANSHEE KITES

design but incorporates a V-shaped leading edge. The kites appear to be very efficient shapes which, at least in the case of the Chikara, was borne out by fly-testing.

The first opportunity to fly the Chikara came on a beautifully sunny day with winds that began at 6.0 mph and rose over the course of the afternoon to 18 gust-

ing to 22+. After assembling the kite, the wing tips must be rotated inwards to create a "tunnel" effect. This creates an even air flow and, presumably helps hold down the turbulence near the tips. There is also a tensioning line that runs nearly from wingtip to wingtip. This line is responsible for maintaining the Chikara's structural integrity in periods of low wind or off-wind



situations. In flight, the characteristics are much the same as any other high-aspect kite ... that is, requiring very little arm movement. It is not difficult to pull the kite from the sky if it is even just slightly off of directly down wind.

However, one quickly finds that the kite flies extremely well with short movements ... the turning is crisp, the kite is very fast with just a small amount of oversteer. Landings are not difficult. In fact, they were done during the initial flight by a novice flyer who was present during the test. In tight turns, the Chikara, due to its rounded leading edge, assumes an orb-like appearance. There is a considerable amount of flex incorporated into the design which allows the kite to "compress" in turns, presenting a lower profile and making greater acceleration possible. The kite also tracks extremely well giving the flyer a great feeling of confidence even on very low ground passes. The amount of pull exerted seems to be normal for a kite of its size. All in all the kite flew beautifully.



The Sky Dart has been one of the mainstays of Action Kites for a goodly number of years. I've had one of these little guys in my kite bag since 1985 and it's still going strong. At an inch over five feet in wingspan, it's certainly not the largest, but in hot winds it certainly is one of the better ones. The new wrinkle here is that the sky dart is now available in the same color range as its bigger brother, the Super Dart. This, to my way of thinking, opens up a whole range of possibilities in the stacking department, with the little guy as the first kite.

The Sky Dart is one of the more responsive kites that I've flown, particularly when the wind begins to creep over the 12 mph mark. You'll have to do some looking to find another kite that can equal the turning ability of this one. And, it would seem, the more wind that

The concerns with the Chikara involve two things: assembly and durability. There are eight wing battens in the Chikara. Two, at the wingtips, are sewn in. The other six are wooden and curved. Additionally, the spine is re-curved. From a crash standpoint, these important parts, once having sustained damaged, are not easily replaced with a simple wooden dowel or other conveniently available product. Unless the replacement is carried along, your flying might well be over for the day.

During the tests, we managed to break the plastic T-fitting into which affixes the spine spar to the leading edge. Replacement was easy because we just borrowed the one from the heavy duty (substitute) spar that came with our kite. The idea of manufacturing a heavy duty leading edge spar is a good one, and useful as well. When we spoke to the manufacturer about the problem of the T-fitting, we were told that the flaw had already been foreseen and all production

models would be equipped with heavy duty replacements. It's gratifying to see such careful attention to product upgrades, particularly in such a new product.

Secondly, the fitting together of straight leading edge spars to form a curved surface necessarily involves assembly under tension. While this is a task that will become second nature to one who flies the Chikara often, it is sufficiently difficult to pose a rather frustrating exercise to the first-time flyer.

These "drawbacks" are not uncommon, it would seem, in cases like the Chikara, where a new type of design is being pioneered. The shape and characteristics of the Chikara and, indeed, the whole Banshee line, are innovative in design. Furthermore, they're fun to fly. In the final analysis, while not being a kite for the beginner, the Chikara is certainly a worthwhile addition to the kitebag of the aficionado ... the time and effort required to put this one into the air is well justified!

C.B.

MODEL: SKY DART

FABRIC WEIGHT: .75 oz. ripstop nylon

KITE WEIGHT: 205 grams

COLORS AVAILABLE: Varied

WIND RANGE: 5 to 35 mph

CONFIGURATION: Delta-type with notched trailing edge

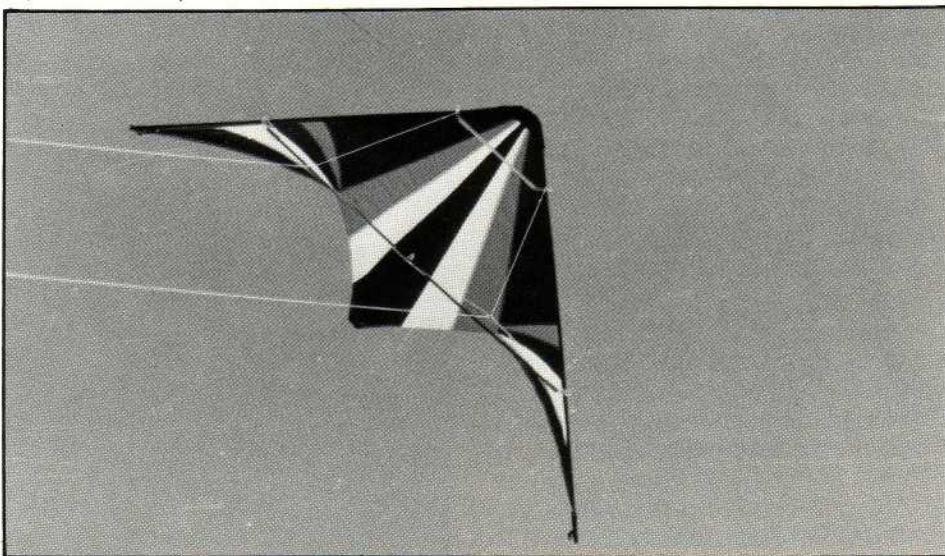
(61 inch wingspan)

MFGR's SUGGESTED RETAIL: 65.00

MANUFACTURER: ACTION KITES

gets thrown at it, the better the Sky Dart likes it. It's not, in my opinion, as quick as the NoNaMe

(also by Action), but offers tighter control. There is an absence of slur with the Sky Dart, perhaps owing



to more billow in the sail. It's within this range of 12-18 that the Sky Dart also begins to make a nice resonant roar if you happen to be one of those who likes sound in the air when you're flying.

Over 20 mph will give the flyer a chance to test his reflexes. I generally fly on fairly short lines (90 ft.) and in these higher wind situations, the Sky Dart performed admirably. Level flight was free of wobbles and square corners were easy maneuvers done by wrist movement alone. Lest one be misled, this is not to say that the kite doesn't develop a sense of pull. It does. In fact, larger winds will show that this little dart is quite capable of producing some rather weighty flying ... but not enough to contract a case of kite-flyer's elbow.

Low wind flying with the Sky Dart can be done one of a couple of

ways. Either stock, from the bag, or by adding standoff spars (this option must be performed by the flyer). I've flown the kite in low winds both with and without the "Van Stands" as they're called by the Action Kite crew. I've seen equal performances with the kite in either mode and conclude that it's strictly a matter of personal preference as to whether or not one wishes to add them. In either event, the Sky Dart will perform in as little as 5 mph. With the right combination of lines and flying skill, it could probably be flown in less.

While the Sky Dart is a hot performer, it must be pointed out that because of its size, bridle adjustments are fairly critical. A quarter of an inch on these smaller wings will make a much more noticeable difference than the same adjustment on a larger

kite. The perennial "payback" for the increased levels of performance here is that it may take more time than usual to field-tune the Sky Dart to optimum levels for the wind. The kite will fly fairly well right off the factory settings for those who don't wish to go through the rigamarole of walking back and forth down the lines when they could be flying, but in the case on the Sky Dart, the trips are well worth the effort.

Action Kites introduced the Sky Dart to the stunt flying community in 1984 and it met with near instant success, in spite of the fact that it was basically a two-color sail. The graphics changes, or rather, updating, will cause a lot of newer flyers to pick up on what some have known for years ... the Sky Dart is a nifty little performer and a real wind tamer!

C.B.



MODEL: 3/4 SPINOFF
FABRIC WEIGHT: .75 oz. ripstop nylon
KITE WEIGHT: 150 grams
COLORS AVAILABLE: Two color (varied)
CONFIGURATION: Delta-type (78 inch wingspan)
LIFT SURFACE: 5.8 sq. ft.
MFGR's SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$99.00
MANUFACTURER: TOP OF THE LINE

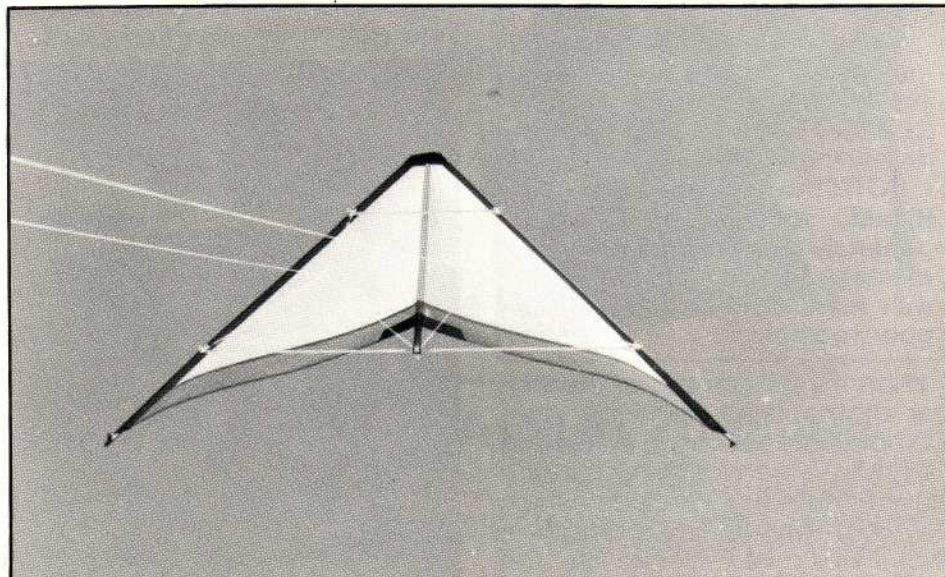
Top of the Line stunt kite company, headed by Don Tabor, pioneered the field of winged stunt kites. After their first offering in the Hawaiian Team kite they introduced the Spinoff Free style. I would be willing to risk stating that the Spinoff is the most widely known (and the most widely imitated) stunt kite in the hobby and sport today. I was even tempted to list "Spinoff type" as the description of this wing's configuration. This is a spinoff of the Spinoff. Confused? Don't be. If you are familiar with the Top of the Line Spinoff the 3/4 Spinoff is just that ... 3/4 size. (Splitting hairs and call it 78% of the full sized Spinoff.)

The kite assembles in exactly the same way as its full-sized brother, time is about two minutes. The kite is sparred with light weight epoxy tubing of the same type found in the full sized Spinoff Ultralight. The color pattern of the test kite was half pink and half yellow.

The kite can be self launched in the traditional manner (staking handles and leaning the kite against the lines). The first day of tests had winds that were 18-20

mph and very choppy. There was a small amount of slurring on takeoff, but this can be compensated for by taking a few steps backwards at launch. The 3/4 is marginally faster than the full sized Spinoff due to its smaller wingspan. Without changing the factory bridle settings the kite turned on a wingtip. As a matter of

fact, with the high winds the fast spins were difficult to pull out of at the right time to avoid those unexpected landings (crashes!) The little Spinoff survived some heavy abuse in the high winds with no damage, though with the light weight spars I would not recommend too many unplanned crashes. Spars are easily remov-



able in the standard manner, and are readily available at your local kite shop or from T.O.L. in case of breakage. The kite tends to wobble slightly in level flight unless you pay strict attention to the controls.

The kite answered the controls very quickly and no matter what kind of input delivered, I couldn't pull the kite out of the air. In the center portions of the wind, it just turned faster and tighter until it became a blur. You can flatten out the 3/4 with over control farther to the sides of the wind, but with enough altitude the kite will recover about 75% of the time.

This kite develops a fair amount of pull, but nowhere close to the

amount that can develop with the full size Spinoff. I have to think that one of the main ideas behind the development of the 3/4 size Spinoff is to allow for the same basic flying characteristics as the larger version without the arm yanking pull. This allows the smaller weight stunt flier to have a good time and still remain in the same place while flying. (An important consideration when you see all the young stunt fliers on the fields.) I have no doubt that some hardy souls will have stacks of little Spinoffs in the air before too long. I am sure that even though this is a smaller version of the big guy on the block, three or four of these kites are going to take a bit of

muscle to maneuver across the sky.

I found quite often when writing this review that I wanted to refer to different aspects of the 3/4 Spinoff in terms of "Spinoff like" or "just like a Spinoff." That is the idea, but the Top of the Line Spinoff has become more than a stunt kite. It has become a measure by which other stunt kites are referred to and compared. You've all heard the statement on the field, "How does it fly in comparison to a Spinoff?" I suppose the easiest way to describe the way the 3/4 Spinoff flies is that it is just like a Spinoff only smaller, which is exactly what it is.

A.H.

HYBRIDS ...

From time to time, we all run across special kites. They may show up at an organized kite festival, a competition, or in the hands of their builders at the local kite field on any Saturday. In most cases, these kites are restatements of existing designs already on the market in plentiful supply. Occasionally, however, something new is being presented ... a sail of extraordinary beauty, a design modification, a whole new theory. These often one-of-a-kind endeavors fall into an entirely separate category ... they are hybrids. The products of inventive minds, these hybrids are the end result of hours of patient work often performed on kitchen tables, in basements, or on work spaces in garages across the country.

In an attempt to showcase the best efforts of some of these individualists, Stunt Kite Quarterly will, from time to time, review these products.

NOTE: The kites covered in the Hybrid section are neither generally available for sale, nor are they intended to compete with manufactured kites in the open market.

I had my first glimpse of the Stinger at the West Michigan Stunt Competitions last spring in Traverse City, MI. Vince was flying it in the Novice Individual Precision (which he won). My first impression was that it was a very precise kite. The

MODEL: STINGER

FABRIC WEIGHT: .75 oz. ripstop nylon

WIND RANGE: 4 to 30 mph.

CONFIGURATION: Delta-type, curved trailing edge

MANUFACTURER: VINCE BOBROSKY; Normal, IL

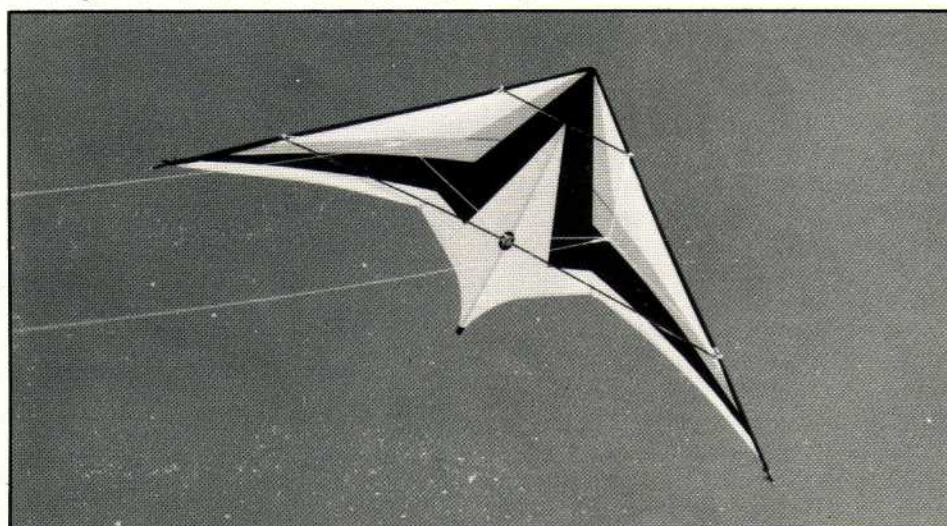
figures being flown were exceptional in their uniformity. In talking with Vince, he said that the kite was a variant that he had constructed, making several modifications along the way. Particularly striking was the layout of the sail. The kite was very pleasing graphically and flew well.

Some months later, I got a chance to see another version of the Stinger at the Windy City Nationals. This time Vince was using it to compete (5th place) in the Experienced Individual Ballet. The Stinger had undergone some sort of "weight loss" program and appeared to be much faster, sacrificing nothing to precision in the process. And the sail designs had gotten even better! Our test

kite was a blaze orange, black, and teal model.

As with most owner-built kites, the Stinger shows the occasional semi-crooked seam, but that's about it in the drawback department. Assumedly there are relatively few out there who sew arrow-straight (I fall into this category). We could suggest that the kite might be able to use a heftier stitch on the trailing edge.

It is relatively easy to see the evolution of the Stinger. There's a little Action Kite influence here, there's a little Lee Sedgwick-Sue Taft, there's a little Chicago Fire ... there's a lot of Vince Bobrosky. To top it all off, the Stinger is a joy to fly.



The kite is capable of being very quick while giving nothing away to precision. The narrower wing design helps the turning ability greatly. There is no oversteer that is not put there by the flyer's own design. Overall performance is very similar to the Wasp (Terry Crumpler design) in that nearly letter perfect turns are easily accomplished.

The Stinger is equally comfortable in an off-wind posture with the balance being stressed. One gets the opinion that it could be flown off-wind, set on its wing tip, and walked away from without incident. Down-wind turns from off-wind positions are done without problem, the kite recovering very well. Additionally, there is no evidence of slur on take-off.

One of the criteria by which I like to judge kites is performance in straight flight. The Stinger tracks better than most. There is a noticeable absence of wobble of any sort in any maneuver. Landing is as smooth. Standoff spars have been added both as a help with light wind capability and self-launching from a grounded position.

Bridling of the Stinger is of the "quick-change" variety, and is secured to the kite by loops of line attached to leading edge and spine spars. The working bridle assembly is then larks-headed to the loops. Standard heavy duty swivels and clips are used to attach the flying lines. Additionally, our test model came with a shorter, heavier upper spreader spar and two elongated standoff spars for high-wind usage ... a very nice touch.

Vince will undoubtedly continue with the evolution of the Stinger ... a change here, a modification there ... but always an improvement. We'd like to wish him well. The Stinger is a real hybrid and built by a real craftsman!
C.B.



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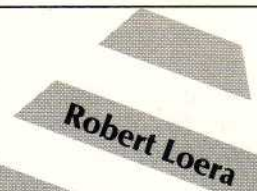


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AD INDEX

I.F.C. TOP OF THE LINE

- 1 EAST COAST STUNT KITE CHAMPIONSHIPS
- 4 FLY BY NIGHT
- 4 INTO THE WIND
- 5 PETER POWELL
- 7 PETER POWELL
- 9 WHAT'S UP
- 10 WASHINGTON STATE KITE FESTIVAL
- 11 FLEXIFOIL
- 11 ONE OF JERRY'S KITES
- 13 SPIRO-JET
- 14 CAREY WINDERS
- 17 STANTON HOBBY SHOP INC.
- 21 LIGHT KITES, TRONOLOGY, INC.
- 22 GRANDMASTER KITES
- 22 TOP SHELF
- 23 ACTION KITES
- 25 COBRA KITES
- 29 HIGH FLY KITE CO.
- 43 GREAT LAKES STUNT KITE CHAMPIONSHIPS
- 43 AERIAL PURSUITS
- 44 HAWAII CHALLENGE 1989
- 44 FORCE 10 STUNT KITE
- 46 UP IN THE AIR PRODUCTIONS
- 46 BALLOON FACTORY & KITES
- B.I.C. FIRE DART, ACTION KITES
- B.C. GO FLY A KITE




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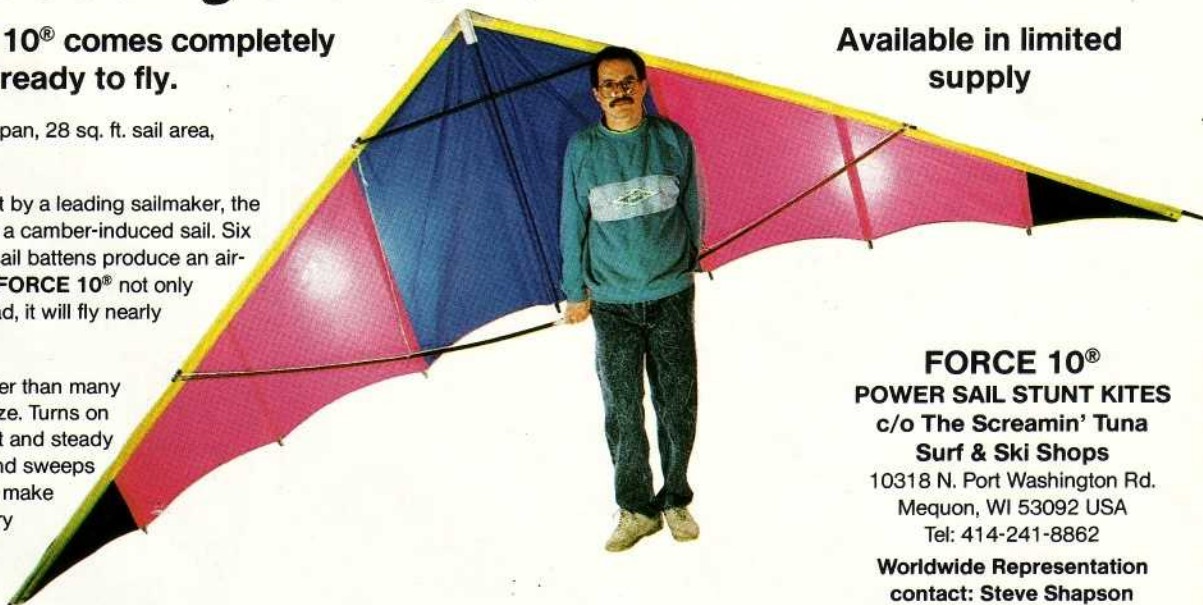
Aerodynamic: Built by a leading sailmaker, the **FORCE 10®** sports a camber-induced sail. Six laminated tapered sail battens produce an air-foil so efficient, the **FORCE 10®** not only flies directly overhead, it will fly nearly behind you.

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Calendar Of Events

(SKQ NOTE: Due to the large number of events across the country and the difficulties in listing all the information in the space available. We have decided to use the key with abbreviations to denote pertinent information. We hope that this method will be easy for you to follow as well as give you all the event information that you require.)

EVENT SANCTIONS: (ISKA) = International Stunt Kite Association (AKA) American Kite Fliers Association

COMPETITION DIVISIONS: (J) = Junior class (12 yr. old & younger) (N) = Novice class (I) = Intermediate or Experienced class (O) = Open class

COMPETITION CATEGORIES: (IP) = Individual Precision (IB) = Individual Kite Ballet (TP) = Team Precision (TB) = Team Kite Ballet (II) = Individual Innovative (TI) = Team Innovative

OTHER EVENTS: (SG) = Stunt kite games (i.e. Tail Tag, Godzilla, Limbo, etc.) (NF) = Night Fly (FK) = Singleline Fighter Kites (W) = Stunt kite workshops (SL) = Singleline kite events (D) = Demonstrations by Stunt kite teams and Individuals

REGISTRATION: (PR) = Preregistration required (Date specified is deadline for registration) (OSR) = On site registration allowed (R\$) = Registration fee required (Amount may be included)

ACCOMMODATIONS & FOOD: (AC) = Near site accommodations information available (to include accommodations telephone # if different from event contact) (B\$) = Banquet or other party food fee (extra for non-competitors) (HA) = Direct hotel accommodations telephone # (C) = On site camping or local camping information. Telephone # (If different from event telephone #)

PRIZES & AWARDS: (PR\$) = Event prize money and categories to be awarded (if applicable). (Most events will probably award trophies or merchandise for competition winners, but these will not be listed specifically.)

APRIL 8-9 TEXAS GULF COAST STUNT KITE CHALLENGE (ISKA), (AKA). Galveston, TX (See article on pg. 26). Contact: Surfside Flyers, P.O. Box 3105 B, Freeport, TX 77541, (409) 265-0868. (J), (N), (I), (O), (IP), (IB), (TP), (TB), (OSR), (R\$), (B\$).

APRIL 8-9 "WELCOME SPRING" KITE FEST Ocean Shore, WA. Contact: Ocean Shore Kites (206) 289-4103. (J), (N), (I), (O), Master Class, (IP), (IB), (SL), (OSR).

APRIL 15 (Rain 4/16) 3rd ANNUAL PHILADELPHIA KITE FEST Belmont Plateau, Fairmount Pk., Philadelphia, PA. Contact: Roger Chewning (215) 736-8253. (N), (IP), (SL), (OSR), (R\$), (D), (W), Stunt kite judging.

APRIL 22-23 BELMONT PARK NATIONAL STUNT KITE CHAMPIONSHIPS (AKA) Mariner's Point, San Diego, CA. (See article pg. 27). Contact: Rome Enterprises, 129 Samoa Court, San Ramon, CA 94583. (415) 866-8173. (I), (O), (IP), (IB), (TP), (TB), (OSR), (R\$) \$50, (PR\$) \$3000, (I)only, (HA). (800) 445-3339.

APRIL 29 (Rain 4/30) LIBERTY KITE FEST Liberty State Park (N.Y., NY & NJ Regional Stunt competitions) Contact: Dave Klein

(212) 472-2623 or Roger Chewning (215) 736-8253. (N), (IP), (SL), (OSR), (R\$), (D), (W) Stunt kite judging.

APRIL 29-30 KALAMAZOO KITE FEST Kalamazoo, MI. Contact: John Kosby, Kalamazoo County Parks, (616) 383-8778. (SG), (SL), (FK), (W), (NF), (D), (AC), (C).

MAY 6-7 1st CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL STUNT KITE COMPETITION and KITE FEST (AKA) Toronto, Canada. Contact: Colleen Dupuis, Kortright Centre, 5 Shoreham Drive, Downsview, Ontario, M3N 1S4. (416) 832-2289. (J), (N), (I), (O), (IP), (IB), (TP), (TB), (SL), (D), (W), (OSR), (R\$), (B\$), (HA).

MAY 6 (Rain 5/7) BUCKS COUNTY KITE FEST (AKA) Core Creek, Pa. Contact: Marci Miller, Buck County Pks., (215) 757-0571. (SG), (SL), (FK), (D), (AC), (C).

MAY 13 ASBURY PARK KITE FEST Asbury Park, NJ. Contact: Irv or Dee Yafee (201) 774-0511. (N), (IP), (SL), (OSR), (R\$) Benefit for MS, (D).

MAY 14 SPANGLES STUNT KITE SPECTACULAR Wichita, KS. Con-

tact: Richard Dermer (405) 372-6127. (SL), (D).

MAY 14 1st RENO KITE RACES Reno, NV. Contact: Julie Hamilton, The Kite Pit, 3502 S. Virginia, #115, Reno, NV 89509. (702) 829-7404. (SG), (SL), (W), (D).

MAY 13-14 GREAT LAKES STUNT KITE CHAMPIONSHIPS (ISKA), (AKA), Grand Haven, MI. (See article on pg. 28). Contact: Mackinaw Kite Co., 301 N. Harbor, Grand Haven, MI. 49417; (616) 846-7501. Sandcastle, 356 River St., Manistee, MI 49660; (616) 723-4344; Grand Bay Kite Co., 121 E. Front St., Traverse City, MI 49684; (616) 929-0607. (N), (I), (O), (IP), (IB), (TP), (TB), (II), (TI-Demo only), (OSR), (R\$), (B\$), (HA), (C).

MAY 27-29 4th ANNUAL EAST COAST STUNT KITE CHAMPIONSHIPS (ISKA), (AKA) Wildwood, N.J. (See article on pg. 29). Contact: Fran Gramkowski, 80 West End Ave., Haddon Field, NJ 08033; (609) 429-6260. (N), (I), (O), (IP), (IB), (TP), (TB), (II), (TI-demo only), (PR\$) May 15, 1989, (AC) Quarterdeck Motels (609) 884-2696, Premiere Motel (609) 729-0166, (B\$) \$30.00, (C) City of Wildwood (609) 522-1407 (PR\$).

JUNE 10 7th ANNUAL SUMMER GAMES (AKA) Myrtle Beach, S.C. Contact: Klig's Kites (800) 333-5944. (N), (I), (IP), (IB), (OSR), (RS) Charity, (AC).

JUNE 10 7th ANNUAL ROGALLO KITE FESTIVAL Nags Head, NC. Contact: Kitty Hawk Kites (19) 441-4124. Stunt kite flying (SL), (W), (P), (OSR).

JUNE 11 STUNT KITE SPECTACULAR McKinley Park, Milwaukee, Wis. (Rain 6/18) Contact: Kite Society of Wisconsin, (414) 277-9121. (D), (SG), (AC).

JUNE 23-25 2nd ANNUAL 1989 SHERATON NATIONAL KITE FEST Palm Beach Gardens, FL. Contact: Peter Powell Kites, 1040 N.E. 43rd Ct., Ft. Lauderdale, FL. (305) 565-5588. (One class), (IB), (TB), (II), (SG), (SL), (D), (AC), (PR) May 30, 1989, (RS), (BS), (PRS) \$15,000, Airline trips to Japan, Hawaii, Washington, and more. Proceeds to benefit R.O.C.K. (Reach Out to Cancer Kids), (HA) PGA Sheraton Resort - (407) 627-2000.

JUNE 24-25 4th ANNUAL WESTPORT FESTIVAL OF KITES Westport, WA. Contact: Pic-A-Patch Kites, 2521 Westhaven Dr., P.O. Box 1487, Westport, WA 98595. Rich or Jeri (206) 268-0877. (N), (I), (IP), (IB), (SL), (OSR).

JULY 1-2 NORTH COAST KITE GAMES, Toledo, OH. Contact: Uncle Wilbert (Steve Weber), 1951 Potomac Dr., Toledo, OH 43607, (419) 537-7036. (SG), (NF), (FK), (SL), (W), (D), (OSR), (BS), (HA), (C) Maumee Bay St. Pk. camp-out.

JULY 8-9 THE CHERRY GAMES, Grand Traverse Resort, Traverse City, MI. Contact: Grand Bay Kite Co. (616) 929-0607. (J), (N), (I), (IP), (IB), (TP), (TB), (SG), (D), (RS), (OSR), (AC), (C).

JULY 15-16 NEWPORT INTERNATIONAL KITE FEST (AKA) (formerly Black Ships) Brenton Park, Newport, RI. Contact: Kite Fest International, (401) 683-4880. (N), (I), (IP), (IB), (TP), (TB), (OSR), (RS), (PS), (D), (SL), (AC).

JULY 29 "WINGS OVER OCEAN SHORES" KITE FLY Ocean Shores, WA. Contact: Ocean Shores Kites (206) 289-4103. (J), (N), (I), (O), Masters Class (IP), (IB), (SL), (OSR).

JULY 29-30 3rd ANNUAL BERKLEY KITE FEST AND STUNT KITE COMPETITION Berkley, CA. Contact: Tom McAlister, 2314 Dwight Way #4, Berkley, CA 94704. (415) 843-7579. (N), (I), (O), (IP), (IB), (TP), (TB), (PS), (OSR).

AUGUST 5 CANDLESTICK STUNT COMPETITIONS Candlestick Park, San Francisco, CA. Contact: Rome Enterprises, (415) 866-8173. (One class) (IP), (IB), (TP), (TB), (D), (SG), (AC), (OSR), (RS).

SEPTEMBER 2-4 WEST COAST STUNT KITE CHAMPIONSHIPS (ISKA), (AKA), Marina Green, San Francisco, CA. Contact: Mike McFadden, Kitemakers of San Francisco, 5739 Christie Ave. Powell St. Plaza, Emeryville, CA 94608. (415) 652-1661. (One Class) (IB), (IP), (TP), (TB), (II), (PR), (RS), (AC), (BS), (HA), (PRS).

OCTOBER 4-8 12th ANNUAL AMERICAN KITEFLIERS ASSOCIATION CONVENTION & NATIONAL COMPETITIONS (ISKA), (AKA), Honolulu, Hawaii. Contact: Kite Fantasy, (808) 992-KITE. (I), (O), (IP), (IB), (TP), (TB), (II), (SL), (FK), (W), (D), (OSR), (RS), (AC), (BS), (HA).

OCTOBER 7-8 2nd ANNUAL OCTOBER KITE FESTIVAL Ocean Shores, WA. Contact: Ocean Shore Kites, P.O. Box 607, Ocean Shores, WA. 98569. (206) 289-4103. (J), (N), (I), (O), Masters Class, (IP), (IB), (SL), (OSR).

OCTOBER 21 2nd ANNUAL OUTER BANKS STUNT KITE COMPETITIONS Nags Head, NC. Contact: Kitty Hawks Kites, 2521 Westhaven Dr., P.O. Box 1487, Westport, WA 98595. Rich or Jeri (206) 268-0877.

(SKQ NOTE: We are interested in listing in the stunt kite calendar, ALL kinds of stunt kite events, not just large national competitions. No stunt kite gathering or games are too small. No stunt kite fly-in is unimportant. Send your event care of SKQ. Include pertinent information, especially contact telephone number and location. Because of the large number of events and types of competitions listed, we suggest that you contact the event coordinators for possible changes.)

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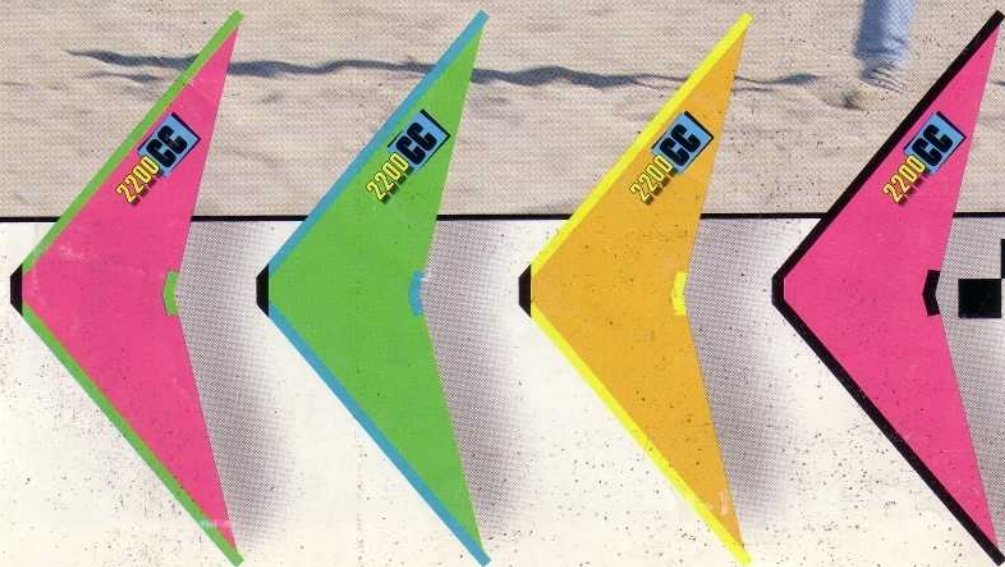





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