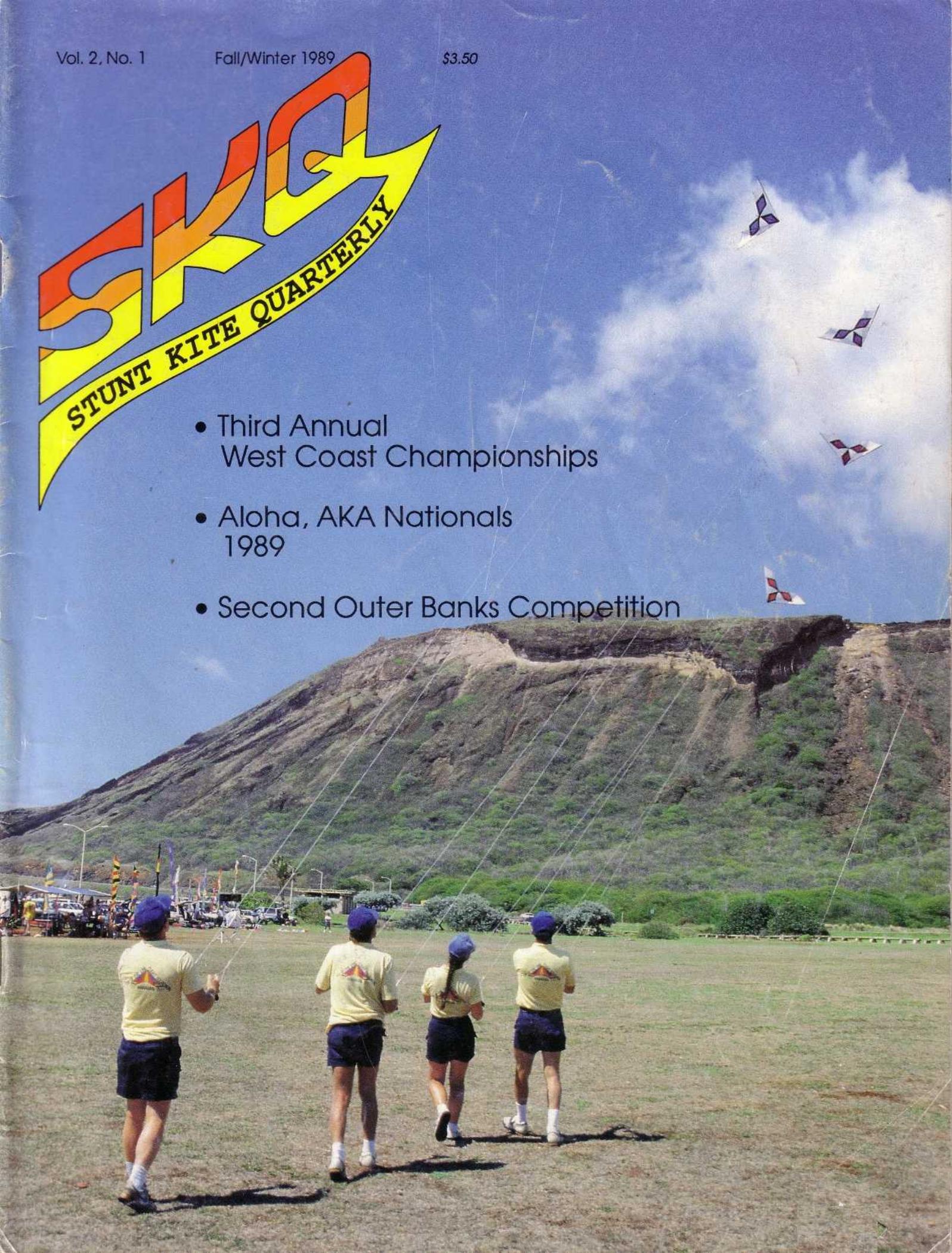


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STUNT KITE QUARTERLY

- Third Annual West Coast Championships
- Aloha, AKA Nationals 1989
- Second Outer Banks Competition



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MODELS:

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SPIN-OFF FREE STYLE

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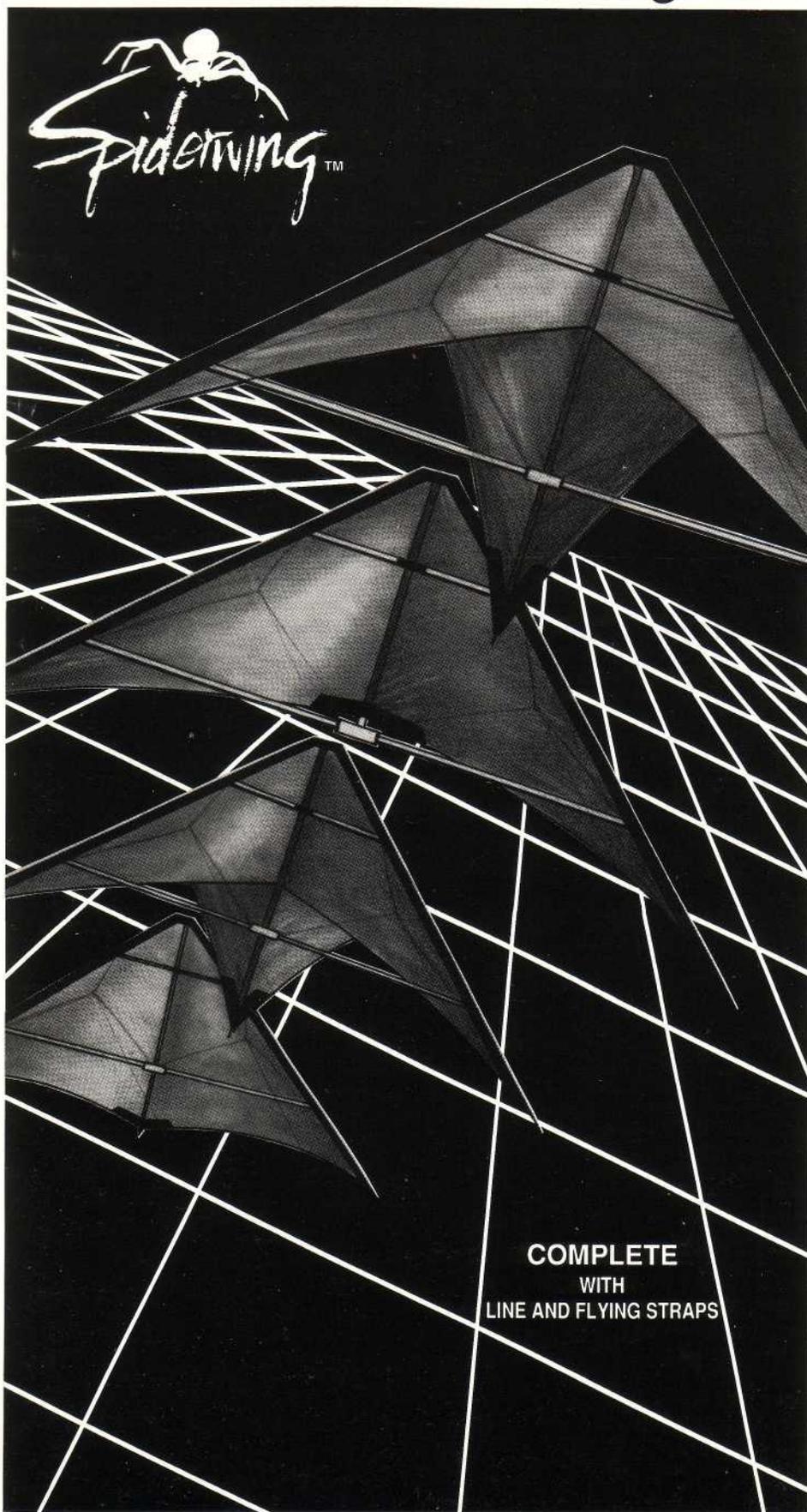


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kite model shown HAWAIIAN TEAM

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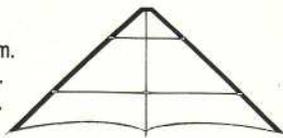
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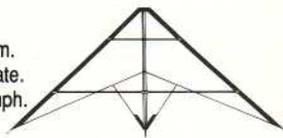
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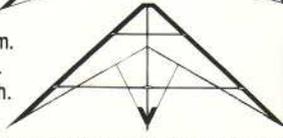
SPIDERWING II
Sail Area: 5300 sq. cm.
Skill Level: Intermediate.
Wind range: 2.5-18 mph.



SPIDERWING III
Sail Area: 5100 sq. cm.
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Wind range: 5-22 mph.



SPIDERWING IV
Sail Area: 4100 sq. cm.
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ON THE COVER: Nearly flawless form exhibited by the Top of the Line Team in their sweep of the Team events at the 1989 Aloha AKA Nationals.

SKQ Photo by Cris Batdorff

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Letters . . .

OH WHERE, OH WHERE, HAS MY FLYING FIELD GONE?

Across this land of ours, colorful flying objects are being reported in the skies above our parks. On closer investigation these objects are found to be stunt kites. To some they represent beauty and grace, to others they represent a noisy, intimidating intrusion in their park.

Lest we awaken the sleeping giant of prejudice that feeds on beliefs like, "If I don't do it, you can't do it"; It's time to think about what our kites mean to others.

While we're all confident that our skills will keep us from injuring someone with our kite, do we have to hit someone to hurt them? How often have you had someone wander thoughtlessly into your flying space? How often have you been irritated by some high flyer putting up their kite in "your" flight path. How often have you had to explain the potential problems caused by lines and fast moving kites. Too often, our concern is met with "I have as much right to be here as you do! Why don't you go somewhere else and fly." their righteous indignation at having to share their park, puts them at risk by their one stupidity.

Like it or not, we have to peacefully coexist with our non flying friends. If we don't, we may find that we've been banned from our favorite flying field. Whether we have a right to fly there or not isn't the issue. Our responsibility is to recognize that everyone doesn't share our love for flying.

At times we seem to be our own worst enemies. At a recent kite contest, the announcer on the public address system seemed to take some perverse delight in baiting nearby neighbors. Comments like "OK you rich people, it's time to wake up" are not going to make us any friends. In a recent Oregon contest the local kite shop sent new fliers out to fly unsupervised on a crowded beach.

Make no mistake about it, if we don't police our sport someone else will want to do it for us. Let's all agree to protect our right to fly by using common sense. Don't fly over people. Don't demand they leave because you're flying there. Try to promote responsible kiting. If we don't get along we may find ourselves like the atheist when he dies; all dressed up, and no place to go.

**Richard A. Peck
La Canada, Ca.**

Thanks for another timely letter, Richard. We are certainly in agreement. I'm sure that every stunt flyer out there could add his or her own horror story when it comes to safety. Your thoughts about self-policing cannot be restated too many times. A proper approach seems to have been in evidence in dealing with the situation at hand by the next letter to the editor.

I was present at the event you referred to where the announcer was causing more than his fair share of problems. He also took what seemed to be a certain amount of pleasure in running the city of Detroit into the ground. We have a good many friends from Detroit and thought that his comments were both childish and deplorable. They marred for us what was otherwise a very enjoyable weekend. Perhaps these would-be comics should save their routines for the legitimate theatre where they can be panned by professional critics.

Dear SKQ:

(Re: DUAL LINE DILEMMA (vol. 1, No. 4, Summer 1989 - page 4)

The problem outlined in the above article is a familiar dilemma to a group of us who fly just down the coast from Santa Barbara. An informal group of us use the park by the pier at Balboa CA to fly,

About a year ago (strictly by accident), we became aware that there was a motion before the city council banning kite flying in the park. BIG PROBLEM!

As it turned out, things worked out for the best; we did the right thing. Our approach was to work with the council and parks department. And the first thing we had to do was educate them. They can't make a good decision without the proper knowledge.

We attended the meeting and requested that the council hear our side of the situation. We asked for a week to get our paper together and it was agreed. The council showed a lot of interest and even arranged for us to meet with the Parks and Recreation department and commission. During the week we asked for, we prepared a booklet aimed at educating the non-flyer. We made enough copies to pass out to everyone involved. We also arranged for "expert witness" from flyers, pilots, even a non-flyer who has just observed us flying.

To keep a long story short, I'll just say we won our objectives and more! The only restriction involved is line length — 500 feet. In our presentation we made it a point to show that we were responsible pilots, following rules and policing ourselves. Granted, a fast moving kite CAN be dangerous. We are all aware of that and it's our responsibility to control our kites in a safe and sane manner.

Most of us belong to associations dedicated to safe flying. As for the aesthetic value, kite flying in the park is a visual plus for the city. Flying a kite in the park is as American as apple pie!

Michael Donnelly, Wind Pilot Access.

Dana Point, CA.

Dear SKQ,

Even though I am a newcomer to flying kites, "things that fly" have been a source of wonderment to me for many years. I've only been flying kites for a little over 12 months, but I've been

Letters Continued . . .

throwing boomerangs for 18 years. It's only since a boomerang-throwing friend introduced me to stunt kite flying that I have caught onto an idea that might appeal to other readers.

Whenever I go out to the local oval, I always take both my kites and my boomerangs. If the wind is up, I'll get out my stunt kites. If the wind dies down, I'll get the boomerangs going. Either way, I'm having a great time outside, and getting the heart and lungs working!

I think it would be worthwhile for readers to get in contact with some boomerang throwers and organize an "Aerial Festival," combining both of these relatively new sports. For more information on boomerang throwing in the U.S.A., you can contact the United States Boomerang Association at P.O. Box 182, Delaware, OH 43015.

I'd also be interested to read any articles from anyone who has done any study of the physics involved in kite flying. A number of years ago, a Dutch fellow wrote a thesis on the physics of boomerang flight as part of his work for a doctorate in mathematics — I'd be particularly keen to hear from anyone doing similar work through kites.

Even though I've been flying stunt kites for only a short time, I'd like to pass on an observation or two that I've made, and see if others are observing similar behaviour. I've noticed that flexifoils tend to go better the stronger the wind becomes. However, kites with spars tend to "shiver and shake" as the wind gets stronger. Also, kites like my Spinoff tend to be a lot more tolerant of changes in wind direction and strength, whereas flexifoils tend to fly erratically if either the wind or the direction changes significantly.

Thanks, once again, for a great magazine and I'm looking forward to the next issue.

Yours sincerely,

John Gibney

**P.O. Box 21, Blackburn South,
Victoria 3130, Australia**

How about it, folks? Any boomerang throwers out there? We'd be interested in replies dealing with the physics of stunts ... might make an interesting article for all of our readers!

Dear SKQ,

I would like to respond to Valerie Govig's letter correcting your use of the term "hybrid" to describe stock design kites that have been re-worked. (This is usually done to strengthen a weak point or accentuate a strength in the original design.) I don't think the correction is warranted.

As any sport or activity grows and becomes popular so does the terminology; usually from colloquial use. New "high-tech" materials and design concepts have caused a resurgence of interest and participation in kiting. New activities and products demand new terms and the flyers will, as the situation demands, introduce new words and phrases to the vocabulary just through their informal use.

As far as using the term "hybrid" to describe stock kites that have been reworked: WHAT ELSE WOULD YOU CALL IT? I have a couple of "hybrids" and they are the result of a continued process of working out the bad points and improving on the good traits. In other words, they have been bred over a long period of time with lots of effort. This is exactly what the word hybrid describes.

I have nothing but respect for Valerie Govig. Her record speaks for itself. She's done far more than most of us in her support of the sport of the kite. However, she's off base on this one.

**Michael Donnelly
Wind Pilot Access., Dana Point,
CA.**

Dear SKQ,

I had decided to attend one of the "biggies" in the world of stunt kite contests with the intent to compete in the novice events thinking that it was about time to get my feet wet.

What happened was unrealistic and ludicrous to say the least. From past years I have competed in model boat and airplane events with an entry fee of five to ten dollars plus three to five dollars per event added. I was so taken back by the fifty dollar entry fee per event that I turned around and went home.

No wonder there are so few entrants and so few people to travel between big events held all over the country. It is a wonder that there are any team efforts outside of the manufacturer's supported personnel.

Time has come for all contest directors and sponsors to get together and come down out of the clouds and rare atmospheres of the high places in which they reside. Most young kite fliers, as well as us older fliers cannot afford entry fees of this magnitude. We will enjoy flying and watch the occasional local contests, but compete we cannot. It simply costs too much. When an entry fee exceeds the cost of a good dinner for two, it becomes too much of a burden.

**Chuck Hough
Kent, WA**

Thanks for the letter, Chuck. Yes, the price for inclusion to some of the competitions does seem a bit high at first glance. A number of events, however have "perks" that go along with the entry fee. Many give event shirts as part of the fee. Others include dinner tickets. If the event has decided to give cash awards for the top places, many have no choice but to charge in the absence of a major sponsor. This money is often used to compensate judges for what can often be a tedious weekend involving long travel distances. At the next event, it might be interesting to ask the organizers where the cash goes. We think that you might find that the cost of running these larger competitions is far beyond what is taken in from entry fees.

WHEN YOU'RE OUT ... YOU'RE OUT.

BY CRIS BATDORFF

The AKA Grand Nationals are over. The winners are dusting new trophies, the losers are saying "wait 'til next year," and those of us in the frozen northland of these United States are counting the days until Spring. That, as they say on the Silver Screen, is a wrap. Time to kick back, relax, and do some deep thinking. It's been a significant year for the sport of stunt kite flying ... new events, better organization, keener competition and, mercifully, another safe year. These are, indeed, the best of times....

It is with great fervor that we hope they stay that way but, as all good sages are quick to point out ... nothing lasts forever. During the past year, I have had the pleasure of attending all but two of the "national" events. Without exception, all of them far outdistanced their previous efforts. They were all larger, smoother, and more efficient. Audiences were up in all cases and in some, remarkably so. Still, there remains, as always, areas of potential improvement.

The single disturbing point present at nearly all events this past season has been the relaxation of a number of rules. Now, there are some that can be easily justified because of existing conditions. Let's face it, when the schedule begins to run significantly behind, no one really quarrels with the dropping of a couple of figures in the Precision events ... or for that matter the elimination of the freestyle portion of the program. I've also heard painfully little opposition to a slightly relaxed crash rule during those competitions which have suffered from an almost total lack of wind ... particularly in the novice and intermediate classes. At the Hawaii AKA Nationals, tournament officials had to suffer through a potentially difficult situation entertaining the possible scrubbing of entire events due to a lack of appropriate conditions. Everyone understands that these are rough calls ... no problem.

There is one rule, however, that I have seen relaxed a number of times this year that organizers, judges, and flyers must confront for the continued good of the sport ... that is the matter of boundary restrictions. This last year saw this one element take an occasional beating in favor of getting a certain event out of the way despite less than requisite wind conditions. It is simply, a rule that should not be relaxed.

The problem presented is not one that is readily discerned in most cases. The flyers, in most cases are significantly advanced that there is relatively little chance of a mishap. The point being made here is that it will only take one such mishap to turn this wonderful competitive activity into a legal hotbed. Still further, there is another aspect to the discussion. That is the message that is being sent to those observing the competitions, not from the judge's chair or from the competitor's stance, but merely as spectators. These people, the novices and weekend flyers, are perhaps the greatest group affected by this wrong decision.

What the competitive community sees as a rules "adjustment" under adverse weather conditions to permit the timely running of a competition, the non-competing spectator sees as an endorsement of the relaxation of prudent safety standards if conditions are less than perfect. What such a ruling says is, "Look, if the wind is marginal, it's OK to ignore some of the conventional rules."

As active participants in this great sport, we must begin accepting the idea that many of the beginners and weekend flyers involved in it on a non-competitive basis naturally look to those that are as examples. Perhaps it's difficult for some to come to grips with the fact that, during a competition, we are putting our standards for proper behavior on display ... in short, that competitors become role models. It is, however, something that had better be gotten used to.

As a competitive flyer, I surely don't need the mental trauma of having someone fly their stunter out of bounds and straight into some sort of serious problem because he saw me do it during a competition and assumed that it was an endorsement on my part. No thanks. Particularly when it's all right there in the rules book: "You or your kites are not allowed outside the marked Competition field while you are competing." That seems plain enough. We have all heard the arguments both pro and con regarding the various interpretations of the infamous "wind rule" and it seems, to large degree, that the advanced flyers are saying: "We're professional flyers here ... you fly in what you've got. It's the luck of the draw." It would only seem natural to apply that same thinking to boundary restrictions.

The problem can be solved in a number of ways ... shorter lines, larger fields, or more precise flying. But the relaxation of a boundary restriction is something that can not be allowed to happen regardless of circumstance. The risk is simply too great. No reward is worth the price of jousting with what will, inevitably, wind up as a disaster.

Let's do it right ... if you're out, you're out.



The Stunters' News

BERKELEY HOSTS 3RD ANNUAL FESTIVAL

By Tom McAlister

In a time when a rift between dual and single-line fliers seems to be widening, the organizers of the Annual Berkeley Kite Festival and Competition have put together an event that has something for everyone. They even have an event for dogs! Only in Berkeley ...

The two-day event held annually on the last weekend of July took place at the Berkeley Marina's North Water Front Park. The park is about as close to kite

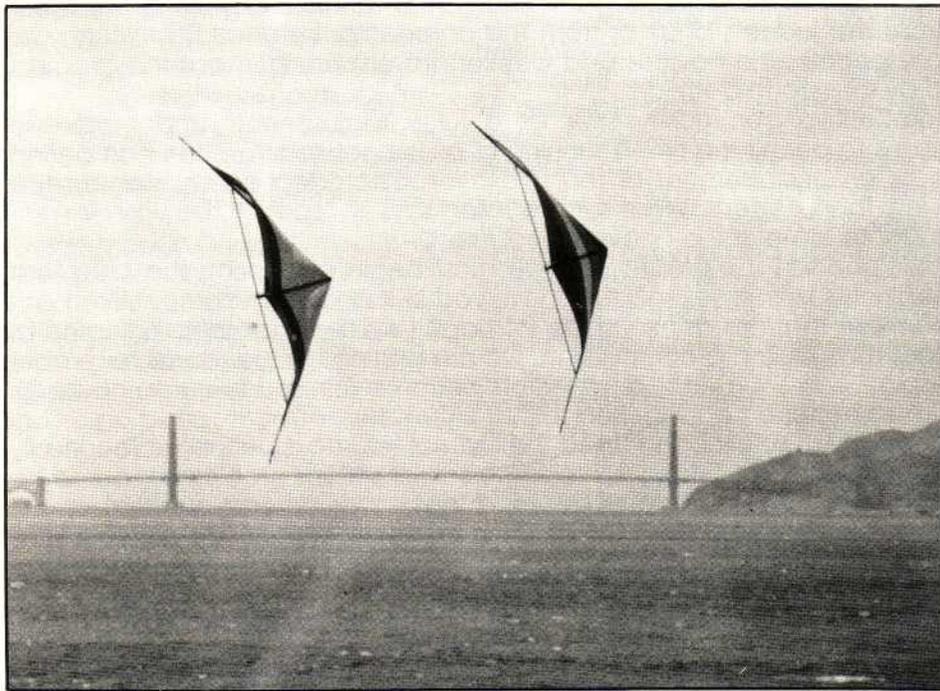
flying heaven as you can get: lots of space, excellent wind quality, and the San Francisco skyline and Golden Gate Bridge as a backdrop. Contestants coming from as far away as Canada counted in at 132 (81 dual-line, 46 single-line, and 5 dogs). The winners took away over \$2,300 in cash and prizes that had been donated by Highline Kites, the Kite Industry, and local merchants. Spectators numbered between 8,000 and 10,000.

Saturday was Family Day with a wide range of activities including children's and adults' single-line competitions, an aerial candy drop, longest stunt train, Open Class Team Precision and Ballet, and of course the Best Kite Chasing Dog event.

The candy drop, coordinated by Irving Reid of Canada, was a big hit with the kids (fortunately no one was injured). Irving's homebuilt parafoil which has a higher aspect ratio than a 10 ft. Flexi but is a single-line kite amazed everyone by flying most of the day. The Best Kite Chasing Dog award went to a team (yes, I said a team) of three Cocker Spaniels. Flying the longest train was Kenny Fredricks from Chula Vista. He put up 79 modified Hyper Kites. Team Rome I dominated the open team events taking first in Ballet and Precision.

In Open Ballet, Team Loo III tied with Rome II for second place. Second in Open Precision went to Rome II.

Sunday was devoted exclusively to stunters. Competitions started at 11:00 and ran almost non-stop throughout the day. Special thanks go to Head Judge Lee Thrall and Pit Boss Joanne Petithory who kept the events running smoothly. Thanks also to Chuck Sigal, whose computerized system for score tabulation made the results available in a flash. The Novice Team award (a custom Spin-off set) went to Team Primary of San Bernadino, California. First place wins for Novice, Ex-



A pair of Spinoffs head for open water, the Golden Gate in the background. Where's all this beautiful scenery and great flying? Berkeley, of course, at the 3rd running of the Berkeley Kite Festival. Good breezes and nice weather graced the two-day event which was sponsored by Highline Kites and the City of Berkeley.

perienced, and Open Precision went to Ron Ho, Jim Loo, and Mike Boyce, respectively. First in the Under 14 class was Jason Pearson.

When the end came on Sunday everyone realized what an accomplishment the organizers had achieved. They had run 14 events for 132 contestants in just two days and even had time to spare. Hats off to Highline Kites and the City of Berkeley, to the numerous sponsors, and especially to the countless volunteers from Berkeley's Water Front Regular Kite Group. See you next year!

1989 Berkeley Kite Festival and Competition Results

Novice Individual Precision

1. Ron Ho
2. Jeff Pilon
3. Todd Hackney
4. Brad Shifflett
5. Robert Neuber

Experienced Individual Precision

1. Jim Loo
2. Irving Reid
3. Bob Chavez
4. Peter Woolworth
5. Mike Minor

Open Individual Precision

1. Mike Boyce
2. Phil Bazell
3. Jason Loo
4. Keith Landes
5. Doug Scott

Kids Under 14 Precision

1. Jason Pearson
2. Liza Chavez
3. Seiji Abe
4. Jason Montiero
5. Ryan Dennis

Longest Dual Line Train

1. Kenny Fredricks

Novice Team Precision

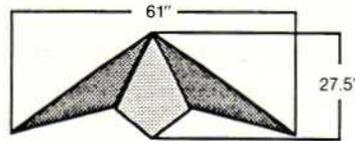
1. Team Primary
2. Top Duck
3. Team California Wasp
4. Skin & Bones

Open Team Precision

1. Rome I
2. Rome II
3. Revolution
4. Kite Busters
5. Stray Cats

Open Team Ballet

1. Rome I
2. (tie) Team Loo III
Team Rome II
3. Kite Busters
4. Team Primary

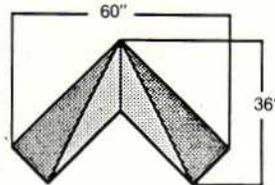
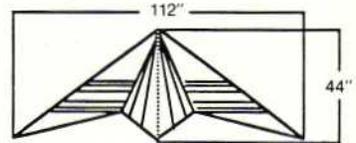


SKY DART

The ACTION KITE SKY DART receives rave reviews wherever it goes. This kite is a real winner! Its high-speed and extremely sharp turning ability should make this kite your choice for competition.

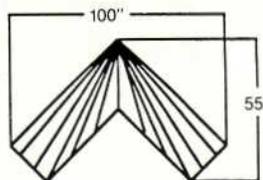
SUPER SKY DART

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.

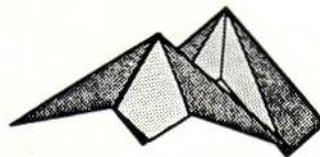
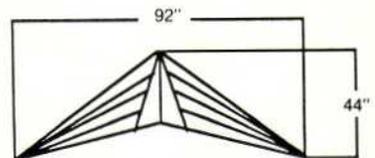


PHOENIX 20

Why mess with perfection? This mainstay of our company has been in production for almost five years now and still going strong. This award winning kite is a real performer in light to moderate winds. Its large size and bold colors in the sky are a sight to behold.

STAR DART

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

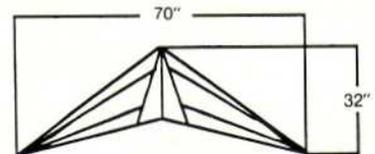


ACTION COMBO

The ACTION COMBO presents you with the competitive edge. This kite is an exciting new concept in stunt kites, combining dissimilar, but complimentary wings. The ACTION COMBO will give you a very unique style of flight.

New!

NoNaMe



ACTION KITES

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- 4202-Q Sorrento Valley Blvd., San Diego, CA 92121
- (619) 452-6151; FAX (619) 452-2536
- See our other ad on the back cover!

STEALTH Kites Photographed In Hawaii

Giving further credence to rumors of still further advancement in Stealth kite technology, Stunt Kite Quarterly has managed to obtain photographs of one of the first prototypes, shown here being bridled by test pilots in Hawaii. Rumored to be impervious to all elements except rain water, the Stealth kite is thought to be the mainstay of an as-yet unannounced multi-national conglomerate.

Flight characteristics have been describes as "elusive" by test pilots who are, understandably guarded in their reactions: "The kite's base capabilities are transparent," according to one flyer. "Upper end performance levels are yet to be seen."

Though perhaps adaptable for individual flying, we doubt



whether or not the Stealth will prove out as a viable team kite. Originators are even more skepti-

cal about team use: "This was clearly not designed for team flying," researchers commented.

CAREY WINDERS™

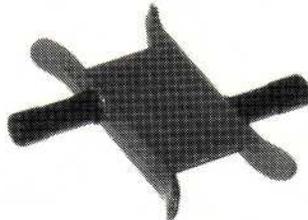
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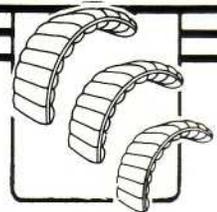
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On October 17, at 5:04 P.M., a major earthquake shook the coast of California and the lives of thousands were altered. In the wake of the disaster, Above It All, manufacturers of the Geo Sport kite, has announced the sale of a special edition "Quake Kite." Available directly from the manufacturer, the price of each kite (\$129.00) includes a \$50 donation to help victims of the earthquake.

George Edmonds, owner of Above It All, has set up a special bank account for the donations which will be channeled to either the American Red Cross or Toys for Tots, depending on the purchaser's preference. Contributions are, of course, tax deductible. Only 250 of the special edition kites will be manufactured and as a plus, include a complimentary copy of the San Francisco Examiner's "Earthquake Extra" edition.

The goal of Above It All is to raise \$20,000 for earthquake victims by sales of the limited production kite which is black with lime and hot pink wingtips, and sporting a hot pink lightning-bolt design across the sail. Each sale is numbered and registered with Above It All.

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ENGLAND STAGES

BACK-TO-BACK COMPETITIONS

Two major stunt competitions were held in England this summer during the month of July. The Blackheath Summer Festival hosted the Kite Store-East All-Comers Stunt Kite Championships on the weekend of the 8th and 9th while the Washington, Tyne, and Wear Festival of the Air hosted the Northern Goldsmith's Stunt Kite Championships the following weekend. The two S.T.A.C.K.-run events attracted a number of ranking U.S. teams and individuals, most of whom which had never competed previously in Europe.

While the first day of the Blackheath event was marred by less-than-marginal wind conditions which necessitated the postponement of competition, the second day proved to be more

suited and the competitions were squeezed in. It was Eric Wolff of the Chicago Fire Team sweeping both the precision and ballet events flying a three-stack of 6-foot Flexifoils. He was pursued in the Precision event by British Champion and Blitz Team leader Paul Jobin. Fellow Blitz teammate Tony Cartwright wound up in second place in the Ballet sequence. Mark Cottrell, making a return to the competitive arena after a 12-year hiatus (Mark was the first English champion in 1977) finished nicely in third place in the Ballet and fourth in the Precision. Felix Mottram, member of the Decorators Team, finished third in the Precision and sixth in the Ballet. In the Individual Overall standings it was Wolff, Cartwright, Cottrell, and Jobin finishing in that order.

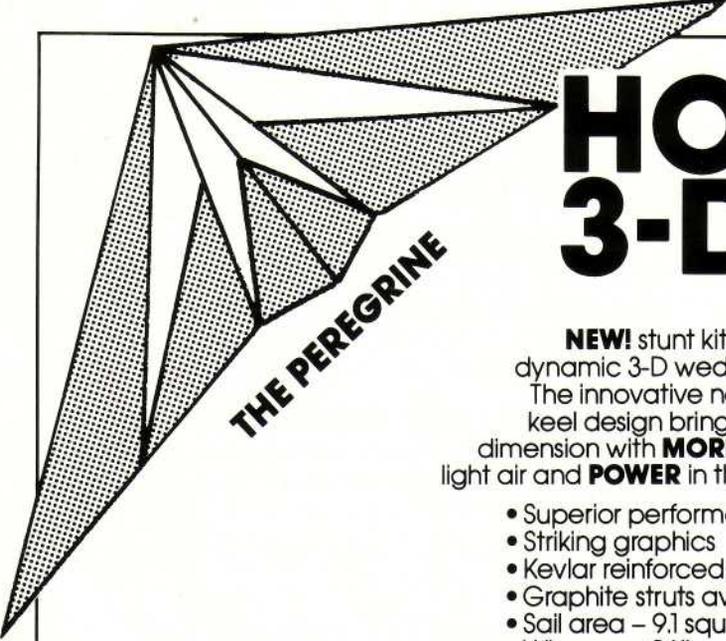
In the Team events, an abbreviated Chicago Fire Team composed of Eric and Dorothy Wolff flew 10-foot Flexifoils to win both the ends of the Team categories. The five-man Blitz Team came in second in both as well, with the Decorators holding down third.

Blackheath also saw the first official performance for the year of Robbi Sugarman, who has taken a year off from competitive endeavors to work the judge's chair. Robbi's Ballet routine was flown with a 12-stack of 6-foot Flexifoils which were kept in controlled stall for the duration of the routine (Robbi ran this one at Wildwood in '88, much to the delight of the audience).

A week later, the Washington, Tyne and Wear Competition was blessed with better wind, and, with the exception of a Sunday morning respite, blew rather nicely all weekend. The Chicago Fire Team was joined by third team member Frank Fieseler, and two other American teams, Top of the Line and Team Rome 1 had also made the trip for the event.

In the Individual events, it was Don Tabor coming out on top of each one. Team Rome 1 team member Phil Wiltz captured second in the Precision (and a fifth in Ballet), while TOL team member Pam Kirk garnered second in the Ballet (and fourth in Precision). Mark Cottrell and Eric Wolff took third places in Precision and Ballet, respectively.

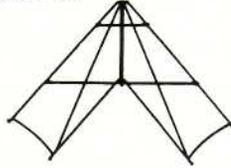
In team events, it was Top of the Line sweeping both the Precision and the Ballet with the Chicago Fire and Team Rome 1 trading second and third places. Following the competitions, the crowd was provided with some demonstration flying by the Chicago Fire team, who flew stacked Fire Darts, and Ron Reich who flew his famous "snake charmer" routine to Tchaikovsky's Arabian Dance from the Nutcracker Suite.



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THE NORTHERN GOLDSMITH'S STUNT KITE CHAMPIONSHIPS WASHINGTON, TYNE & WEAR RESULTS -



INDIVIDUAL PRECISION

1. Don Tabor	92.9
2. Phil Wiltz	89.1
3. Mark Cottrell	86.7
4. Pam Kirk	86.6
5. Phil Bazzell	(Tie) 84.4
Paul Jobin	(Tie) 84.4
7. Ron Reich	84.3
8. Keith Landes	83.9
9. Tony Cartwright	81.7
10. Martin Lester	81.5

INDIVIDUAL BALLET

1. Don Tabor	95.0
2. Pam Kirk	93.0
3. Eric Wolff	91.7
4. Frank Fieseler	91.6
5. Phil Wiltz	90.9
6. Ron Reich	90.5
7. Mark Cottrell	89.0
8. Phil Bazzell	87.8
9. Eric Streed	86.2
10. Keith Landes	85.4

INDIVIDUAL OVERALL

1. Don Tabor	94.0
2. Phil Wiltz	90.0
3. Pam Kirk	89.8
4. Mark Cottrell	87.9
5. Ron Reich	87.4
6. Phil Bazzell	86.1
7. Eric Wolff	(Tie) 86.0
Frank Fieseler	(Tie) 86.0
9. Paul Jobin	84.7
10. Keith Landes	84.6

TEAM PRECISION

1. Top of the Line	96.0
2. Rome 1	93.3
3. Chicago Fire	89.8
4. The Blitz	72.9
5. Decorators	68.1
6. Top of the Morning	57.9

TEAM BALLET

1. Top of the Line	97.1
2. Chicago Fire	89.6
3. Rome 1	83.1
4. The Blitz	75.3
5. Decorators	68.7
6. Top of the Morning	66.0

TEAM OVERALL

1. Top of the Line	96.6
2. Chicago Fire	89.7
3. Rome 1	88.2
4. The Blitz	74.1
5. Decorators	68.4
6. Top of the Morning	62.0

(MORE RESULTS ON PAGE 13)

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FOURTH GERMAN STUNT KITE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Information furnished to SKQ by Jens Jancke, *Kiters Magazin*, Munich.

Wilhelmshaven, West Germany, a port on the North Sea, hosted the fourth running of the German Stunt Kite Championships this past October. 150 flyers and 50,000(!) spectators turned out for the two-

day event which, like so many competitions around the world this year, was marked by rain and an absence of wind.

"It was a kind of big family party!" said Rolf Seligmann, president of the German Kiteflyers' Association. According to local sources, it was either the Saturday night dis-

co or possibly the evening fireworks that persuaded Petrus to change his mind and provide stable winds and clearing skies the next day.

Competition proved to be tough work for the judges. "Sometimes there were only a few points between the flyers," Rolf stated. "The level (of competition) has definitely grown up."

Four classes of stunters were flown competitively: single-flown stunters (individually-flown single kites), individually flown stunt-trains, team flight, and open (quad-line and 'show' flights). There was also a competition for single-line kites. The first two groups were required to fly five compulsory and a 3-minute free-style routine. The latter two groups flew only free figures.

As an indication of how far team flying in particular has come in Germany, 15 teams showed up for this year's event ... a lot for German standards according to organizers (a lot by any standard, according to American event organizers!). The youngest competitor was seven years of age and won seventh place in the single-flown category.

RESULTS - 4TH GERMAN STUNT KITE CHAMPIONSHIPS

INDIVIDUALLY FLOWN SINGLE KITES

1. Jörg Knudsen, Hamburg
2. Thomas Zierahn
3. Rainer Franke, Pinneberg

INDIVIDUALLY FLOWN STUNT TRAINS

1. Thomas Erfurth, Hofheim
2. Holm Gottschling, Neumunster
3. Raffael Krispien, Hamburg

TEAM FLIGHT

1. Raffael Krispien, Rainer Franke: Hamburg
2. Angelika Richter, Thomas Kratz: Berlin
3. Frank and Nils Schwiemann: Kaarst

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THE KITE STORE'S SOUTH-EAST ALL-COMERS STUNT KITE CHAMPIONSHIPS, BLACKHEATH LONDON RESULTS -

INDIVIDUAL PRECISION

1. Eric Wolff	93.3
2. Paul Jobin	87.7
3. Felix Mottram	87.3
4. Mark Cottrell	84.3
5. Tony Cartwright	84.0
6. Tim Paget	83.3
7. Robbi Sugarman	(Tie) 80.3
Romny Johnstone	(Tie) 80.3
9. Dave Clements	78.0
10. Kerry Adams	75.3

INDIVIDUAL BALLET

1. Eric Wolff	96.0
2. Tony Cartwright	93.0
3. Mark Cottrell	90.0
4. Dave Clements	87.3
5. Paul Jobin	78.0
6. Felix Mottram	74.0
7. Robbi Sugarman	72.3
8. Mark Millen	68.0
9. Tim Paget	67.3
10. Kerry Adams	65.7

INDIVIDUAL OVERALL

1. Eric Wolff	94.7
2. Tony Cartwright	88.5
3. Mark Cottrell	87.2
4. Paul Jobin	82.8
5. Dave Clements	82.7
6. Felix Mottram	80.7
7. Robbi Sugarman	76.3
8. Tim Paget	75.3
9. Romny Johnstone	71.5
10. Mike Millen	(Tie) 70.5
Kerry Adams	(Tie) 70.5

TEAM PRECISION

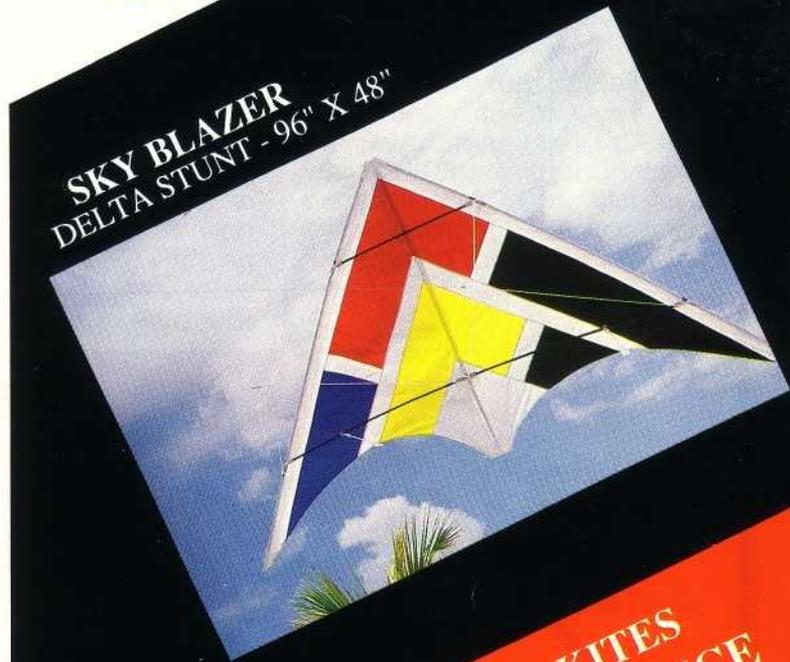
1. Chicago Fire	83.8
2. Blitz	78.5
3. Decorators	68.7
4. Wicked Allsorts	44.5
5. Double Trouble	36.8

TEAM BALLET

1. Chicago Fire	80.2
2. Blitz	74.4
3. Decorators	62.4
4. Wicked Allsorts	56.7

TEAM OVERALL

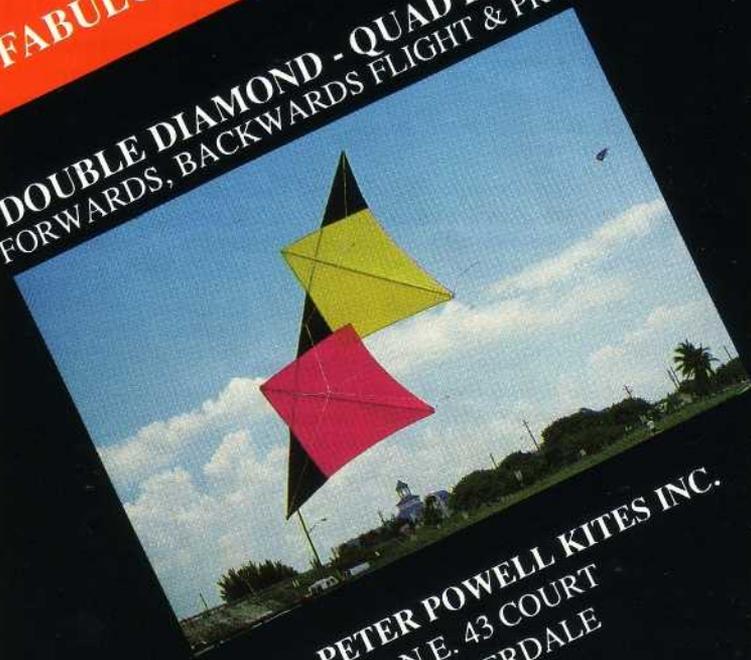
1. Chicago Fire	82.0
2. Blitz	76.5
3. Decorators	65.5
4. Wicked Allsorts	50.6



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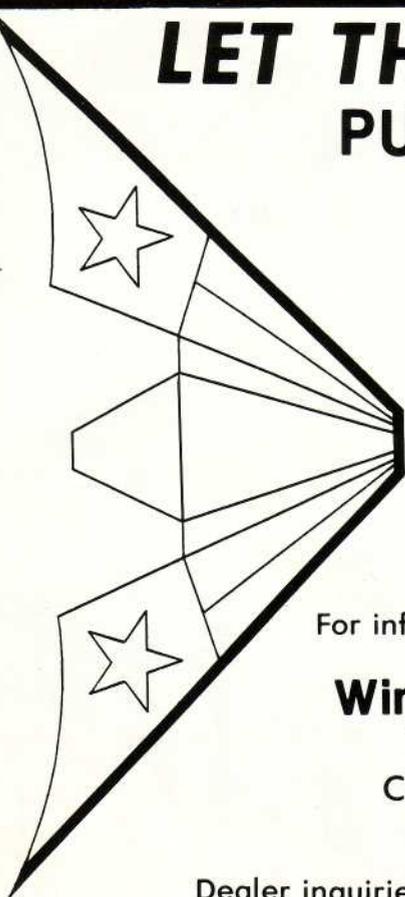
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STUNT KITE CHAMPIONSHIPS ANNOUNCES FORMATION OF EAST COAST STUNT KITE LEAGUE

Stunt Kite Championships, Inc. announces the formation of the Eastern League for 1990. The league started with the Outer Banks Stunt Kite Championships in October and will end with the New York Stunt Kite Championships on May 19 and 20. The league will tabulate winners for each season and announce winners at the East Coast Stunt Kite Championships in Wildwood. The league will award prizes for the overall winners in the Open and Intermediate (Experienced) classes. The East Coast Stunt Kite Championships will continue to retain its' international flavor as the largest event in the world, and in 1990 will institute further measures to meet the growth of the sport. The Intermediate class will begin pre seeding this year, from the winners of the Eastern League events, so that 8 flyers in both the Individual Ballet and Individual Precision will be pre-seeded into heats. The rapid growth of the Intermediate class will result in four levels of competition for 1990-91. The levels will be Novice, Intermediate, Experienced, and Masters. The term Open class in the future will be used to connote an event open to anyone, as in other sports. The other two events for the year will be the Philadelphia Regional Stunt Kite Championships held on April 21 and 22 at Belmont Plateau, in Philadelphia, and the Mid-Atlantic Stunt Kite Championships to be held in the Baltimore-Washington area, dates and location to be announced.

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1st Place Precision
Kite: W.A.S.P.

July 22, 1989 - San Francisco, CA
1st Place Team Precision
Kite: Spin-Off

August 26, 1989 - Long Beach, WA
1st Place Team Precision
Kite: Tradewind

August 26, 1989 - Long Beach, WA
1st Place Ballet
Kite: Tradewind

September 2, 1989 - San Francisco, CA
1st Place Precision Heat
Kite: Spin-Off

September 2, 1989 - San Francisco, CA
2nd Place Precision Heat
Kite: W.A.S.P.

September 2, 1989 - San Francisco, CA
2nd Place Choreograph Heat
Kite: Fire Dart

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Tradewind Kites, 19 W. Junipero, San Clemente, CA 92672
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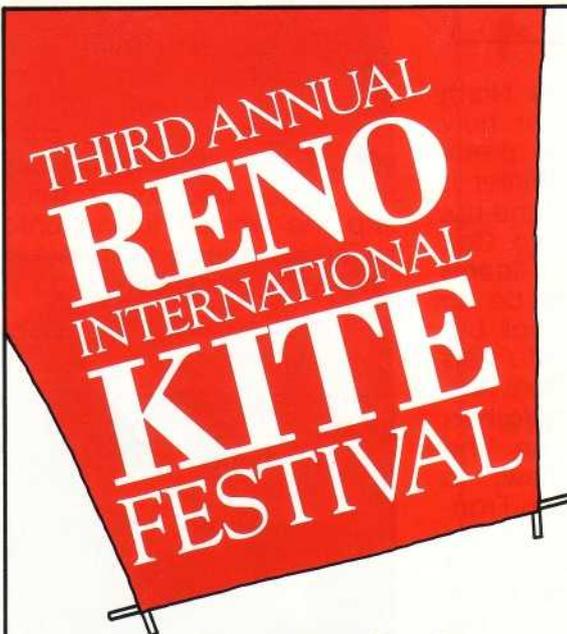
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(702) 829-7404



KITE PIT ANNOUNCES WINNERS

The Kite Pit of Reno, Nevada has released the names of the winners in the One Sky, One World International Kite Festival Sport Kite Competition, held in Reno. Individual Ballet was won by John Oliver (score 85). Placing in second was Jerry Dirlam (score 79), and holding down third was

Justin Huntington (score 70). The Team Ballet event was won by the Silver State High Rollers in a walkover. Seems that anticipated competition was too stiff for any other comers! Plans are reportedly being made for next year's event.



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April 1, 1990
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Sunday, April 1

- Kids' Kite Race • Workshop Kite Contest • Most Foolish Kite* • Bull's-eye Contest* • India Fighting Kite Keep Away • Most Beautiful Kite Contest*
- Stunt Kite Team Demonstration • Rokkaku Casino Kite Fighting Championships — Limited

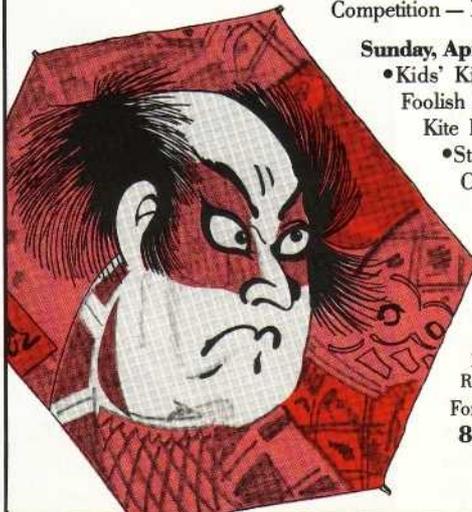
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Winter has finally hit the North Woods. Time to remember how you can possibly practice precision flying with mittens. Winter is also time for equipment tune-up. So from Ron Fikes of Palo Alto, Ca., some very "serious" stuff: Seems that Ron has invited me to be an honorary member of a small but very elite group of stunt kite fliers called "The Dump City Stunt Kite Flyers." Seems that the city fathers have let the stunt fliers use "the Shoreline at Mountain View," a beautiful park on South San Francisco Bay. The field was built on top of the old garbage dump. Just goes to show you that beauty is only skin deep. Thanks for the DCSKF sticker, Ron. It matches the rest of the "stuff" stuck to the back of the "Lizard," my 1978 VW Bus.

Another "short line" from the answer man of Palo Alto, Ca., Ron Fikes.

.... Here is one modification that you can make to your flying things — remember, everyone has their own ideas, but this one gives you a place to start. (The photos are of my "3/4 Team" kite conversion.

GRAPHITE SPAR REPLACEMENT (keep and use the stock spine and innerbattens).

Photo One (Insert Photo #1) Get our your new spars (it takes seven, 32½" graphite shafts). Place them alongside the stock spars that come with the kite. Cut the shafts the same length as the stock spars. Cut two sleeves (I use 5" lengths) from close fitting fiberglass tubing and glue to the new spars for the leading edge in exactly the same position as the stock ones (glue the sleeves to ONLY the

SHORT LINES

by
Al Hargus III

upper leading edge shaft — the lower shaft on each side needs to slip out of the sleeves for disassembly.)

Photo Two and Three — Make six adapters, using fiberglass tubing that fits well into the "T" tubing and the vinyls, cut 1¾" lengths and glue to the ends of the upper and lower spreaders (slip the whisker tubing onto the lower spreader bars before gluing on the last piece of tubing.)

Photo Four - Cut two ½" pieces of small vinyl tubing and glue to

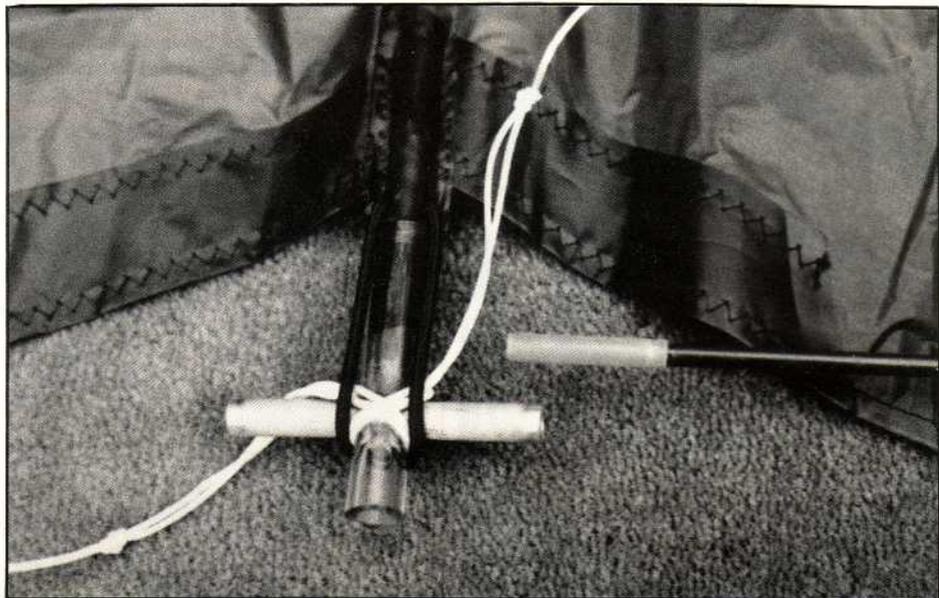
the upper leading edge spars in exactly the same place as the originals.

Photo Five - Glue nock adapters to the ends of the two leading edge spars (just like the original). Then glue on new nocks.

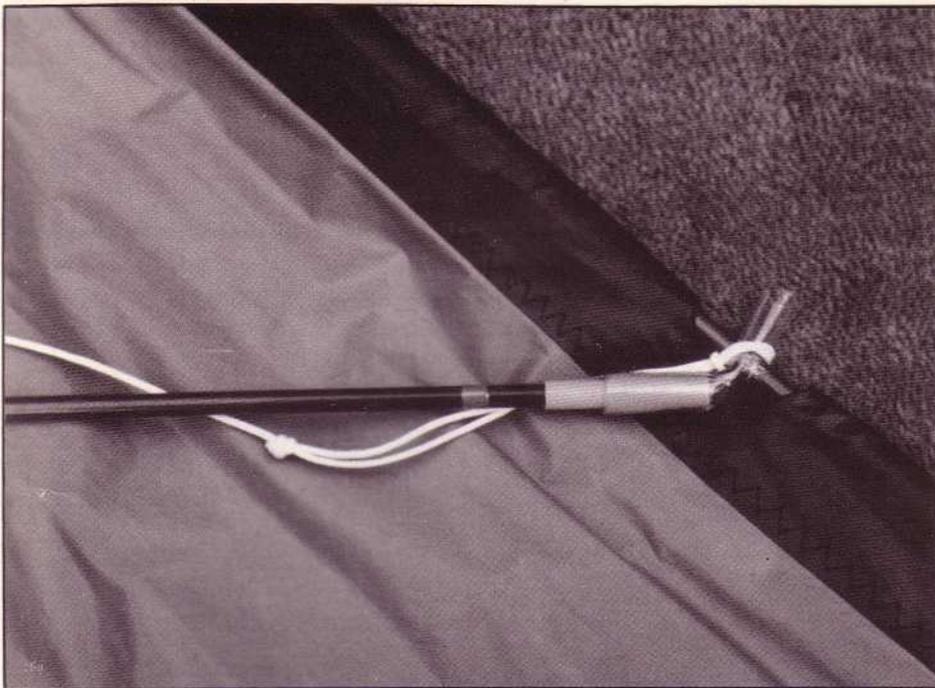
Let the glue dry overnight and reassemble the kite (be sure to get the bridles on correctly). The 3/4 Team kites are now much stiffer than the stock kite and are a delight to fly. When the winds really come up, you don't have to quit!



no. 1



no. 2



no. 3



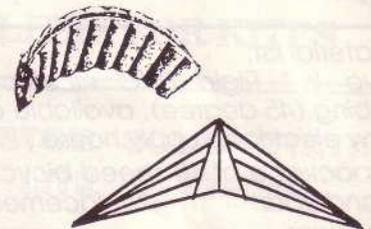
no. 4



no. 5

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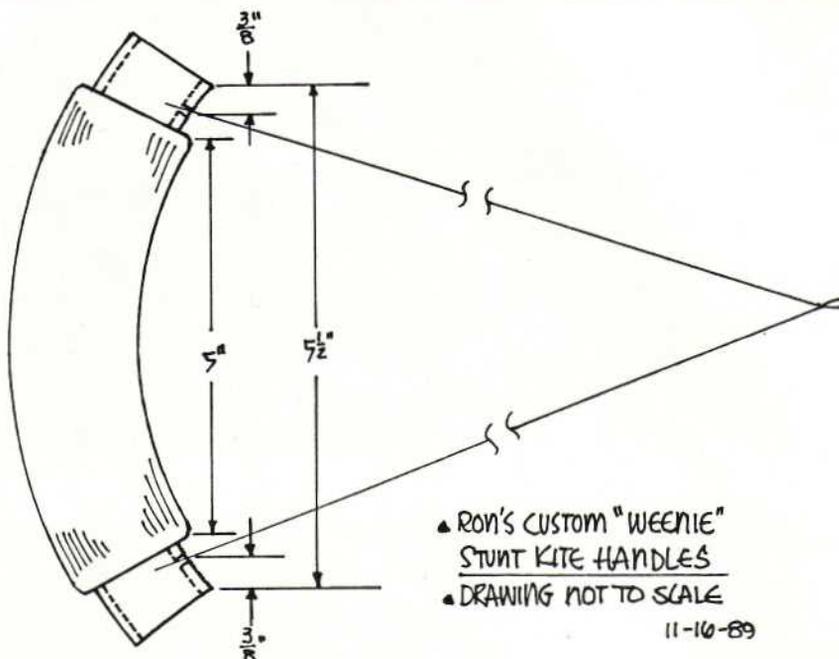
These are comfortable to fly with, lightweight and easy to put together.

Material list:

Two 1/2" Rigid PVC electrical tubing (45 degree), available at any electrical supply house.

1 package of 10 speed bicycle handlebar replacement cushions

40' of braided dacron line (200 pound minimum strength)



Assembly:

Cut the tubing to 5 1/2" and smooth all the edges with a fine file or sandpaper.

Drill holes (just the diameter to pass the dacron line) 3/8" in from each end of the handle (smooth edges of the holes).

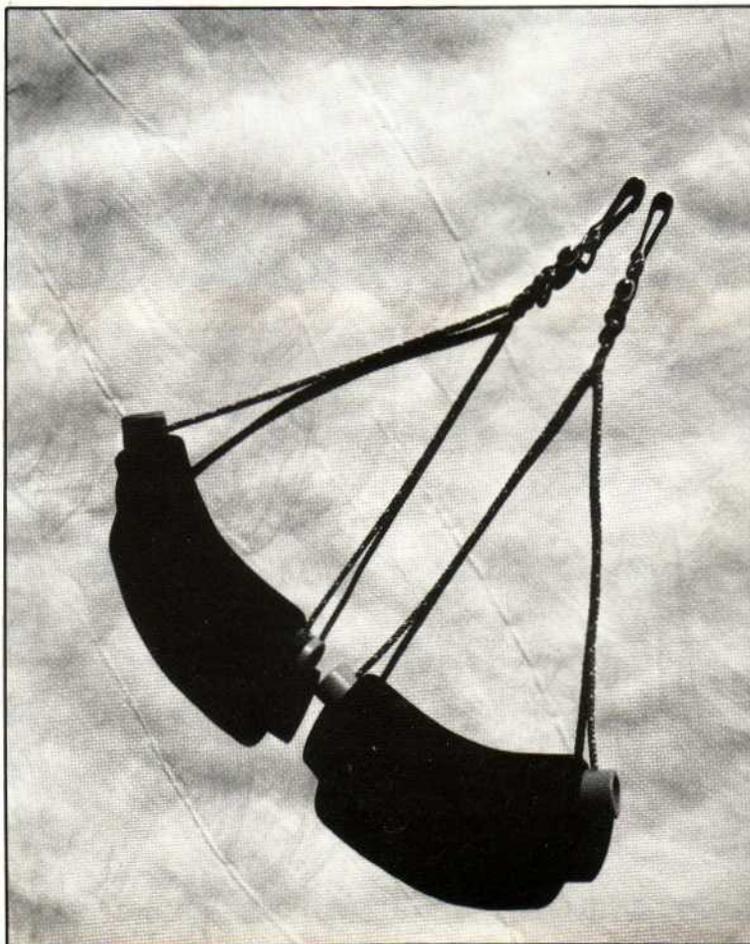
Cut the handlebar rubber to 5". Cut and sand the square ends to the same radius as the uncut ends.

Wet the rubber and the PVC and slide the rubber over the PVC. Center the rubber on the PVC and let dry overnight.

Cut the dacron into two 20" pieces. Slip the ends through the holes in the PVC and tie overhand knots. Check that the braid loops are the same length and put a drop of cyanoacrylate (Superglue) on the knots to keep them from undoing.

If you can't find red and black rubber, mark the right handle with a strip of red tape or use red marker pen to color the dacron braid. If you want to get fancy, buy backpackers cord and braid the swivel in before attaching to the handles (if the line breaks on one side, you don't lose the clip AND FLYLINE!)

Now go out and fly something ...



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Members of the Japan Stunt Kite Club battling the Force 10. Masato Horikiri reports that this feather class flier needed more weight when paired against the heavy-weight pull of the kite. Two other members of the club help out in the ballast department. The photo was taken by Masato this past November at the Tokyo Bay new Seaside Beach.

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1989 AKA NATIONALS

Ah, Hawaii ... land of enchantment, balmy trade winds, sand, surf, and sunshine ... this was going to be a National Convention worthy of a whole separate scrapbook! Flying at home, in the great snowbelt of the Midwest, was beginning to be a chilly experience and the break was eagerly anticipated. I'd even scheduled my flights and available time to get in some sightseeing and some free flying time on Sunday and Monday ... THIS WAS GOING TO BE GREAT!

Straightaway, things begin to go slightly askew. Not major things ... trifles really. Flights began showing up as delays on airport TV monitors and there were forecasts for "unsettled" weather patterns in the mid-Pacific. There was little doubt in my mind that all these insignificancies would vanish once I had reached my destination. With that thought lodged firmly in my mind, I allowed the hum of the jets to lull me to sleep on the last leg of the journey.

Waking up inside a plane as it's cruising along at several hundred miles an hour through an interminably thick cloud bank is an experience that I might well have lived my entire life without ever encountering ... and done so gratefully. A moment's disorientation, however, and "fasten your seat belts, we are beginning our descent ..." Sure. No problem. We ought to be dropping out of these clouds any second. Any second now ... "Just a little turbulence, folks" ... Any second now. (Don't worry, these pilots are trained professionals) ... any second now.



Joe Hadzicki performing in the Individual Ballet. The music, of course, is pure James Bond (note the graphics on the right-hand Revolution). In this particular scene, 007 has just given a large smooch to the set of lips on the left ... naturally, the routine also includes a chase sequence (with pyrotechnics, yet!). The fickle Hawaiian winds, however, prevented the timely detonation during the Bond-style crash, marring only slightly a very amusing performance.

The ride has become very rough. The view from the window reveals a plane wing disappearing into infinite fog. Any second now ... any seco ...WOW! An '84 Chevy materializes about 70 feet below us and the runway follows in the next breath. We have arrived: four hours behind schedule through a descent that Dante would have doubtless found fascinating.

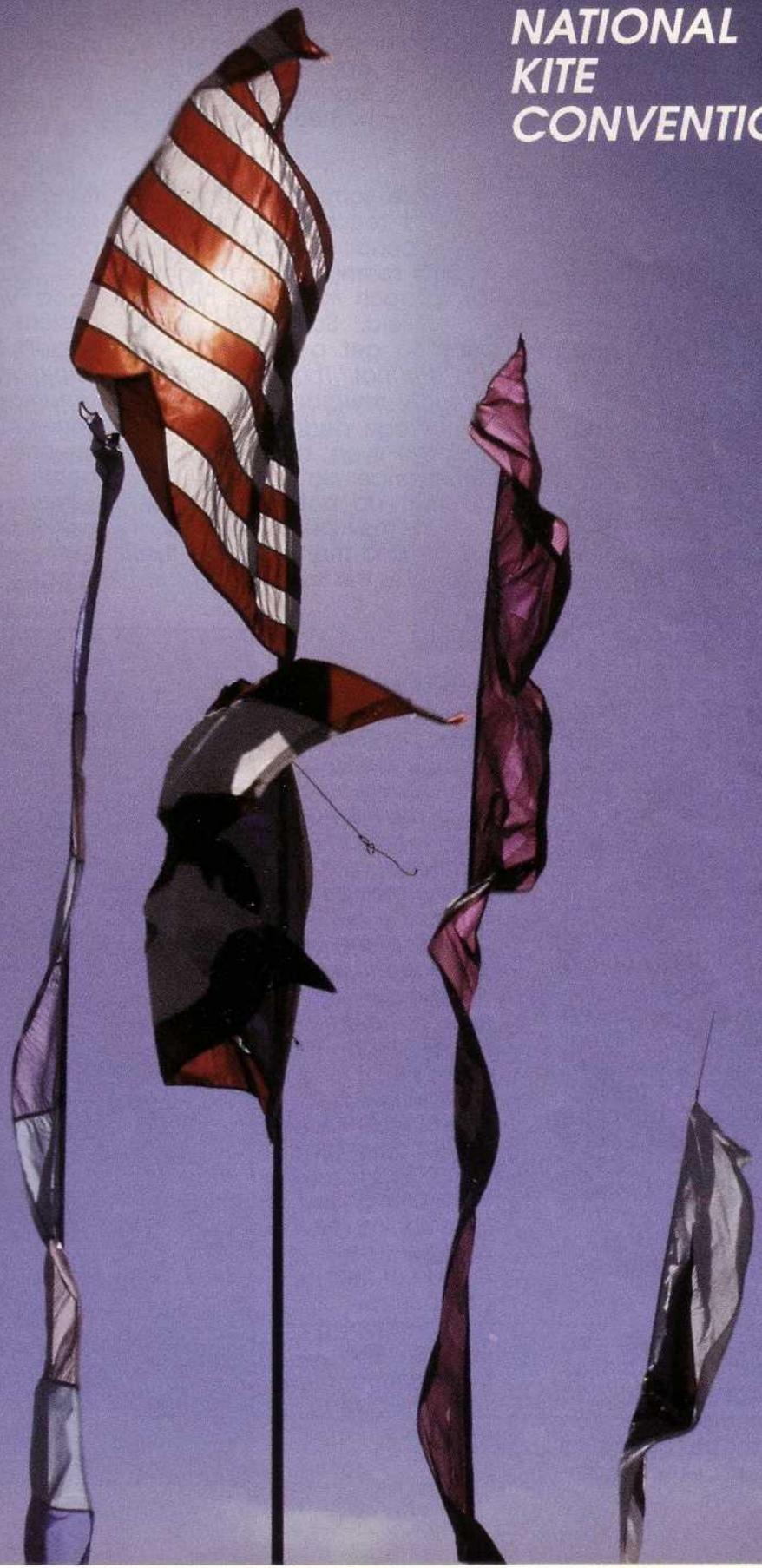
Negotiating the terminal, we are presented with a tropical set of the movie Bladerunner ... hot and steamy. Rain pelts the outside of the cab while rivulets of humidity course down the win-

dows on the inside. Nothing new for the tropics, and eerily beautiful. The rush of the hotel's air-conditioning is a welcome relief. Just in time enough to check in and head for the convention headquarters for a bit of relaxation. The first face was that of Robbi Sugarman, one of the two event co-ordinators. In my haste to seek out some R and R, I have arrived just in the nick of time for the judges' meeting. Oh well, we'll relax later! This is, after all, the AKA Nationals ... non-stop ... might as well jump in with both feet!

"If the judges determine that the competition should continue even though the wind is marginal, their decision will be considered final."

AKA National Stunt Kite Competition Rules

1989
AKA
NATIONAL
KITE
CONVENTION





WEDNESDAY. And so it begins. One look from the balcony of any hotel room in the downtown area and you can tell that Hawaii is a very special place. The scenery is as advertised: breathtaking. The day starts with an imposing group of clouds that seem to have every intention of moving off quickly. Flyers and field personnel begin to head for Kapiolani Park, the main venue for the events and, coincidentally, the site for the Hawaii Challenge.

This year's rule of thumb, however, has proven true to the very end: the wind is down. Even worse, according to local flyers, what little breath of air that is there is coming from the wrong direction. "No problem!" quips High Performance's Alan Nagao, "It'll turn around, this sort of thing doesn't usually last too long!" Other fliers familiar with the local conditions are not so sure. Unfortunately it is the majority that calls the weather correctly this day: intermittent mist, downpour, and blazing heat were the rule for Wednesday.

Occasional forays onto a quick-drying field helped give the first day continuity. Wednesday was an exercise in low to no wind flying. Still, in all, the spirits of the flyers remain high. Soggy equipment is dried, flown, and redoused throughout the afternoon. Event officials, however are beginning to encounter the first difficult feelings of possible "situations" developing. Again, the weather is calling the shots, and the competitive schedule is moving with protracted slowness. The day grinds to a halt early and a postponement is effected. Tomorrow will certainly be better.

THURSDAY. The weather has abated somewhat. There is little rain, but still little or no wind and the sun has become fierce. Sun block of every shade begins to appear on the faces of com-

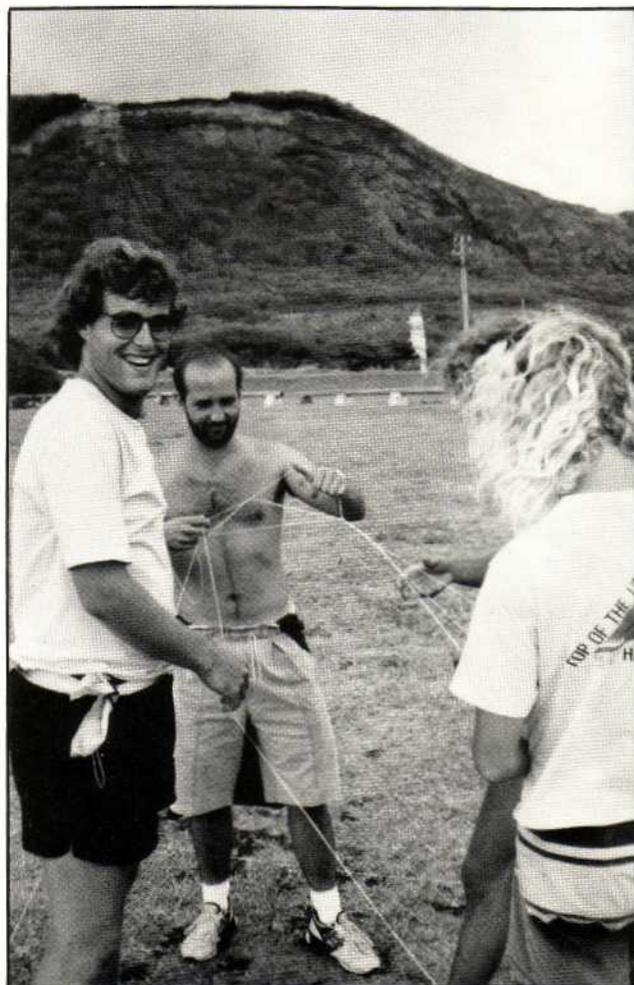
petitors. The judges are relayed liquids from the sidelines to stave off the heat. Event coordinators Robbi Sugarman and Rick Roberts are trying to keep things in perspective, but it begins to look as if some events will have to be scrubbed in order to complete the Nationals on time. Only the elimination heats have been run in the two Individual Precision events and the competitions are now officially nearly two days behind schedule.

There are some excellent performances recorded in spite of the poor conditions. Conversation in the pits seems to turn to lighter issues as each flyer waits his turn on the field. Some are lucky enough to get a breath of air, others are not. Those so blessed are usually rewarded with better than average performances. It is lost on the flyers, however. Those that advance do so gracefully, those that do not are, likewise, graceful in their loss: it's the luck of the draw and the skill of the flyer that dictates the final order.

The fabled "curse of a million wraps"! The dreaded affliction was visited upon the Killer Bees Team just moments before their performance. Mike Dvorak of Top of the Line Kites assists the stalwart flyers in the untangling. This erstwhile photographer was even involved as an extra hand (they were probably just stringing me along...). The Bees kept their composure, however, going on to win the Experienced Team Precision event.

The weather has now begun to affect the event critically. Far behind schedule, plans are discussed and decisions made as to the elimination of a number of events. There is, however, a resiliency about the flying community. Whatever is decided by the organizers will stand without argument. As a last ditch effort, it is decided to move the stunt events to a new location: Sandy Beach.

FRIDAY. Sandy has been a local flying spot favored for years. A number of teams have been practicing there for the previous two days and have reported good wind there on both occasions. Although it lacks the beautiful urban setting of Kapiolani Park, as well as the obvious appeal of a great amount of "drive-by" traffic, the wind is better and, at last, the competitions begin to surge forward. There is a glimmer of hope that events will not have to be scratched and everyone's spirits are momentarily lifted.



The happiness, however, is somewhat shortlived. Mid-afternoon sees the approach and arrival of rain. During the team events, the rain begins. As first lightly and then later in sheets, the downpour eventually forces everyone to take shelter ... mostly under the scorekeepers' and announcers' tarps. At one point, during the High Performance Team's routine, a waterspout is sighted and safety questions begin to rise. Conditions worsen and following a number of requests, a halt is called to the day's competition. Alan Nagao has promised better weather for the next day and everyone seems to be taking him at his word.

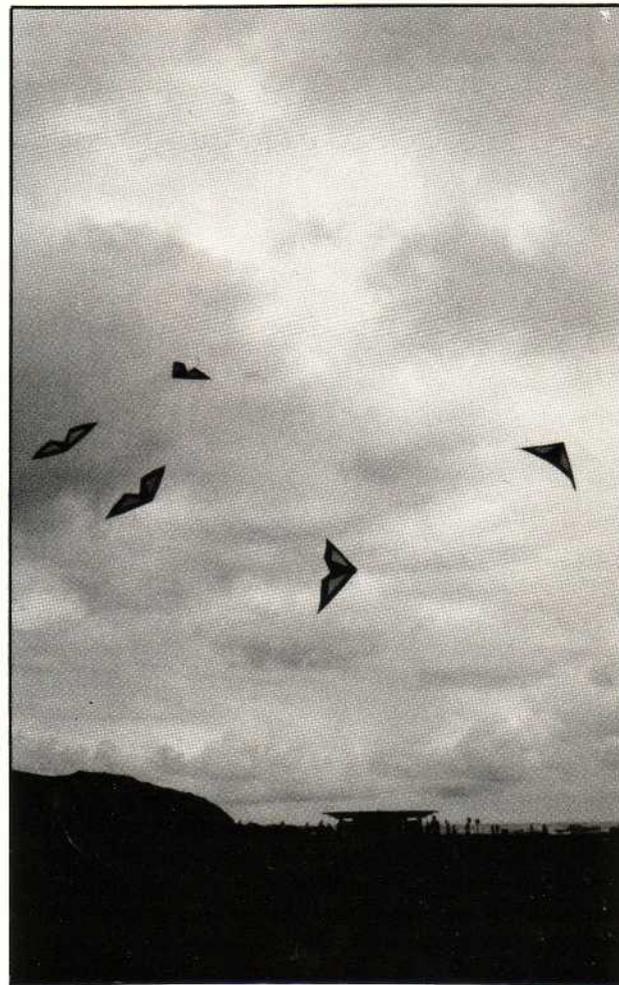
SATURDAY. Allan has made good on his promise! Team competition starts promptly and the day looks good. Although still marginal by most standards, this is more air than we've seen in three days! A decision has been made to do away with the heat system for the Ballet competitions. By day's end, the only events remaining to be flown will be the Innovative contests.

As usual, there are some beautiful performances carded. In the Experienced Individual Ballet, Vince Bobrosky turns in a stunning routine for the win. Kathi Larrabee takes a well-deserved second place finish with Stu Cohen showing third. In the Experienced Precision, Tomoyo Iwamoto's exacting figures netted him first place with Vince Bobrosky placing second. Ronald Ho was next in line at third.

Top of the Line was in championship form with new routines which gave them a sweep of both Open Team events by handy margins. The Chicago Fire team took second in both events nosing out High Performance in Precision and Team High Fly in the Ballet. In the Experienced Teams, it was the Killer Bees winning the Precision and Rome II in the Ballet. The Hawaiian Delights took second place finishes in both events, with Rome II showing third in Precision. Edison Flight & Power held down third in the Ballet.

Open Precision honors went (again!) to Ron Reich, who flew his figures with slow exactness. Top of the Line team-mate Pam Kirk was right behind Ron for second, with

Silhouetted against a sullen sky, the kites of the Blitz team play follow-the-leader in the Team Ballet. The only English team entered in this year's Nationals, they managed an 8th place finish in what was termed "highly marginal" wind. Only moments later, the downpour arrived in earnest forcing a halt in the day's competitive activities.



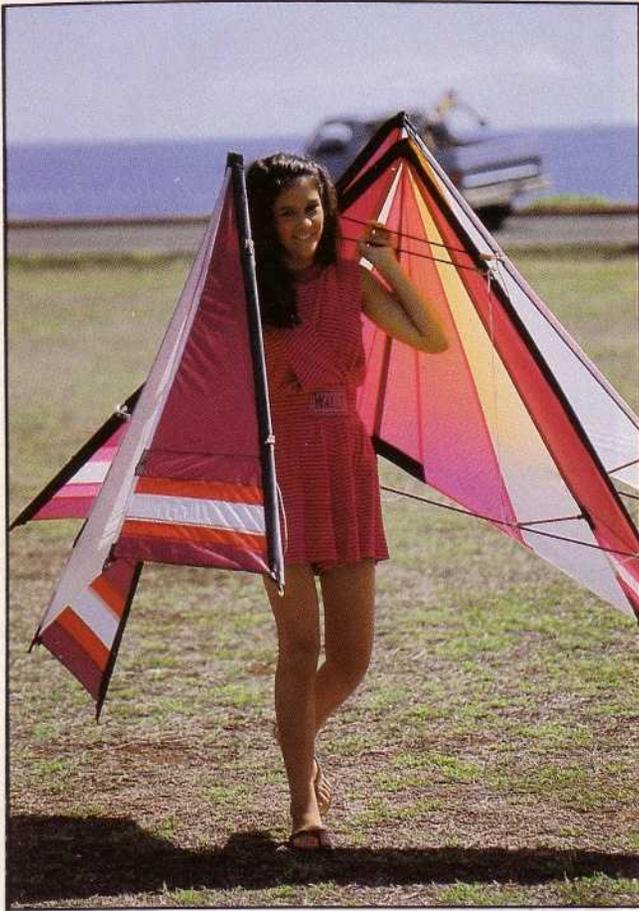
Chicago Fire team member Frank Fieseler coming in third. Open Individual Ballet was the last event flown on Saturday and it was one of the last performers to take the field, Dan Buxton, who took the win. Chicago Fire's Eric Wolff finished second with TOL's Ron Reich taking third place.

SUNDAY. This was to have been the official runover day for the event. Accordingly, the weather was nearly perfect. Innovative events were all that was left to be run. The organizers had gambled and won. The schedule was going to be completed. Those who took the day to come and view the competitions were rewarded with an excellent show. It was Mal Moore squeezing out a 6/100 of a point victory in the Individual In-

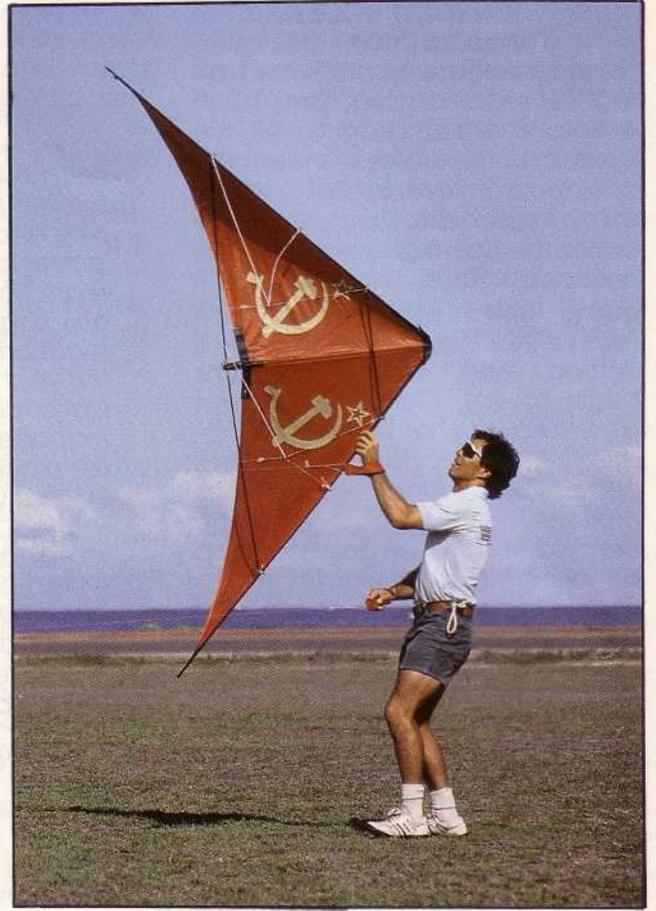
novative over Lee Sedgwick in two dazzling performances. Mal flew his Soviet/American routine, while Lee flew a visual story of his deep involvement with the sport of stunt flying. Ron Reich carded a third place for his new venture which included the first use of a live microphone narration on the part of the flyer. Additionally, Ron flew by the reflection of his kite off a helper's (Pam Kirk) sunglasses. Flying a kite off your hips is difficult, let alone facing backwards and using "mirrors" for eyes!

In the Team Innovative, it was the High Fly team of Lee Sedgwick and Sue Taft taking the win, with the Revolution Team placing second. The Elite team finished in third. While all of this was going on, the Action Kite Control Chal-

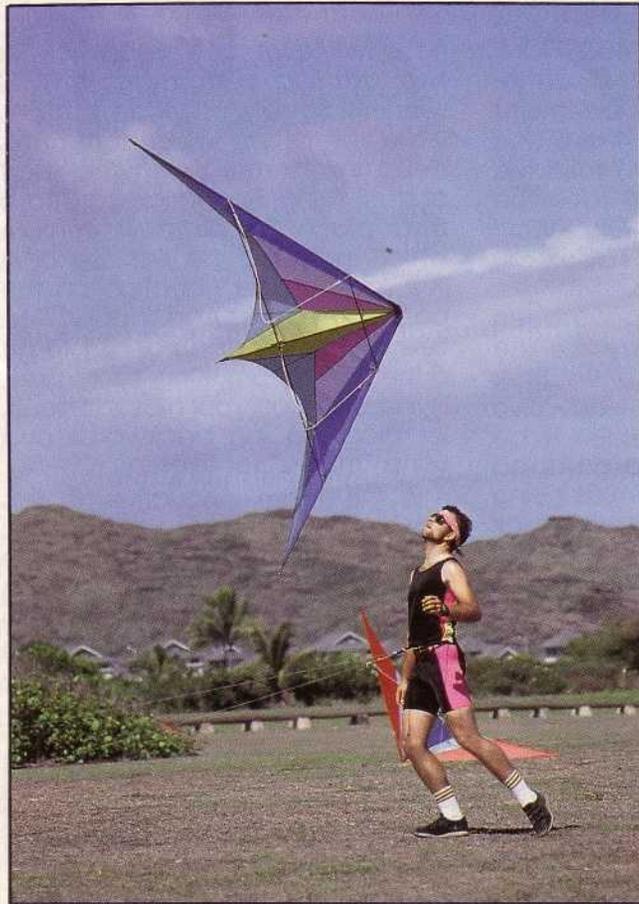
*"Hey! I think we're going to pull this thing off!"
Robbi Sugarman, high noon, Saturday.*



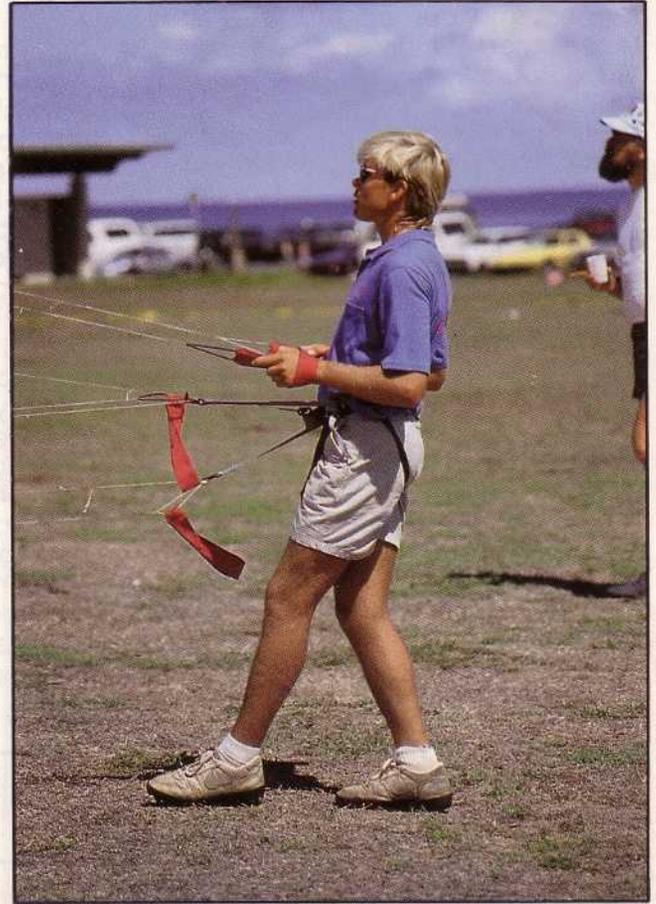
Missy Romero doing Team duties.



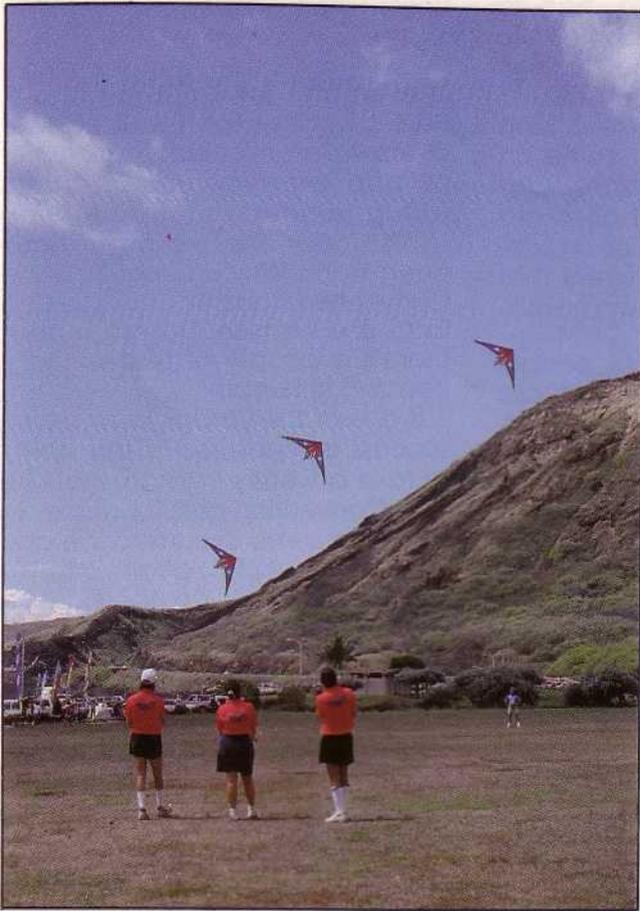
Mal Moore in his winning Innovative routine.



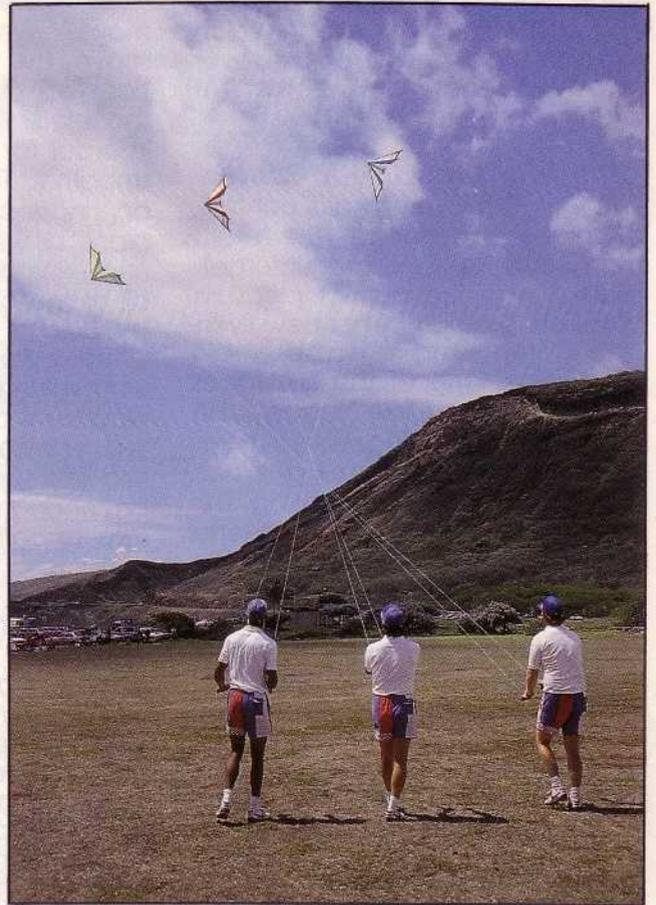
Brian "The Slice Man" VanderSlice in the Innovative.



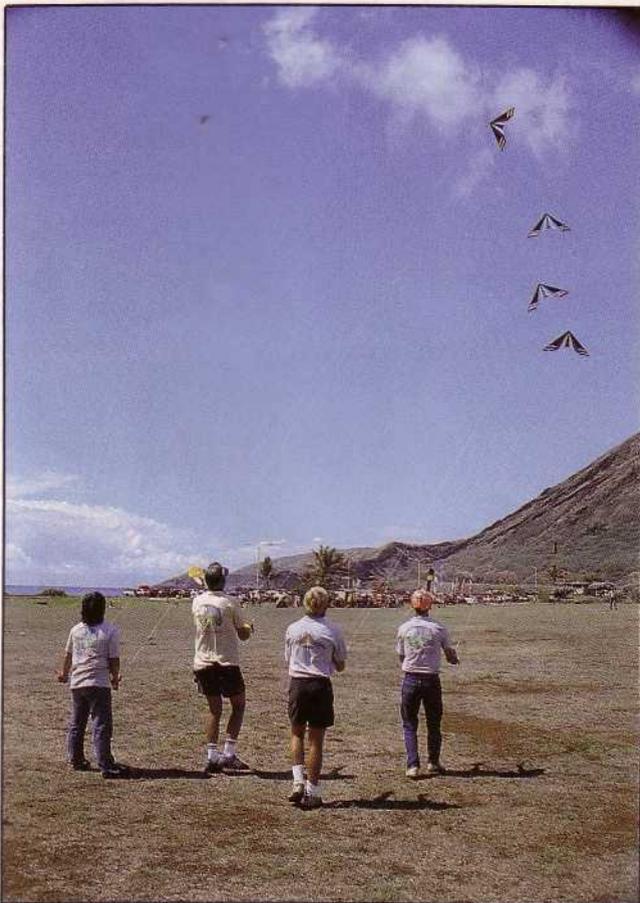
Scott Augenbaugh gearing up for a three-kite routine.



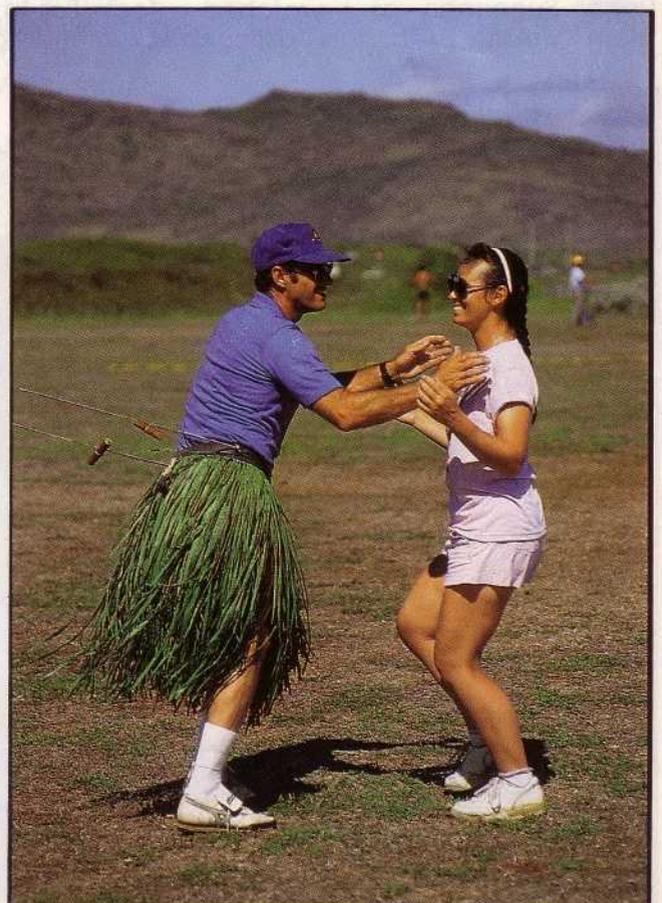
The Chicago Fire in the Ballet.



Team Rome I wrapping in Precision.



The High Performance Team in a Precision follow.



Ron Reich in the Innovative

lenge was being run on the other end of the field. This event, which requires the timed knocking over of three cones with intermittent landings was won by XXXXXX.

The 12th Annual AKA Convention was, like every year's contest, a unique experience. There are many images that are unforgettable. I had the distinct pleasure of meeting a number of new flyers and renewing some old friendships. One of the first faces that I saw was Allan Nagao's. He was, as usual, smiling. When it was raining, Allan was laughing. When it was sunny, Allan was smiling. This wasn't just Allan, though: seems like everyone was smiling ... all the time. And not those painted on for show smiles, either. The hosts of this convention had a lot to smile about and even when the conditions got bad, they smiled anyway. That says a lot about an event. It's infectious. It's aggravating! How can you get burned up about the rotten weather, or this or that, when people smile at you all the time? Answer? You can't! I guess we could all learn something from that.

I will not forget Rick Roberts and Robbi Sugarman as I watched them wrestle with the difficult

decisions that SOMEONE had to make. When push comes to shove, the weight of the decision has to rest on somebody's shoulders. There has to be a plan in order for an event to come off smoothly. There were plans, and contingency plans, and alternate plans; as well, I suspect, as a planned explanation in the event that all of the other plans didn't work. They did.

There were all of those people who volunteered, as well as those who were cajoled, prodded, drafted, or in some other manner pressed into service. There seemed to be enough help to make things run smoothly. Sometimes these good folks were recruited by Kyle Metcalf to work as safety personnel which resulted in another accident-free competition.

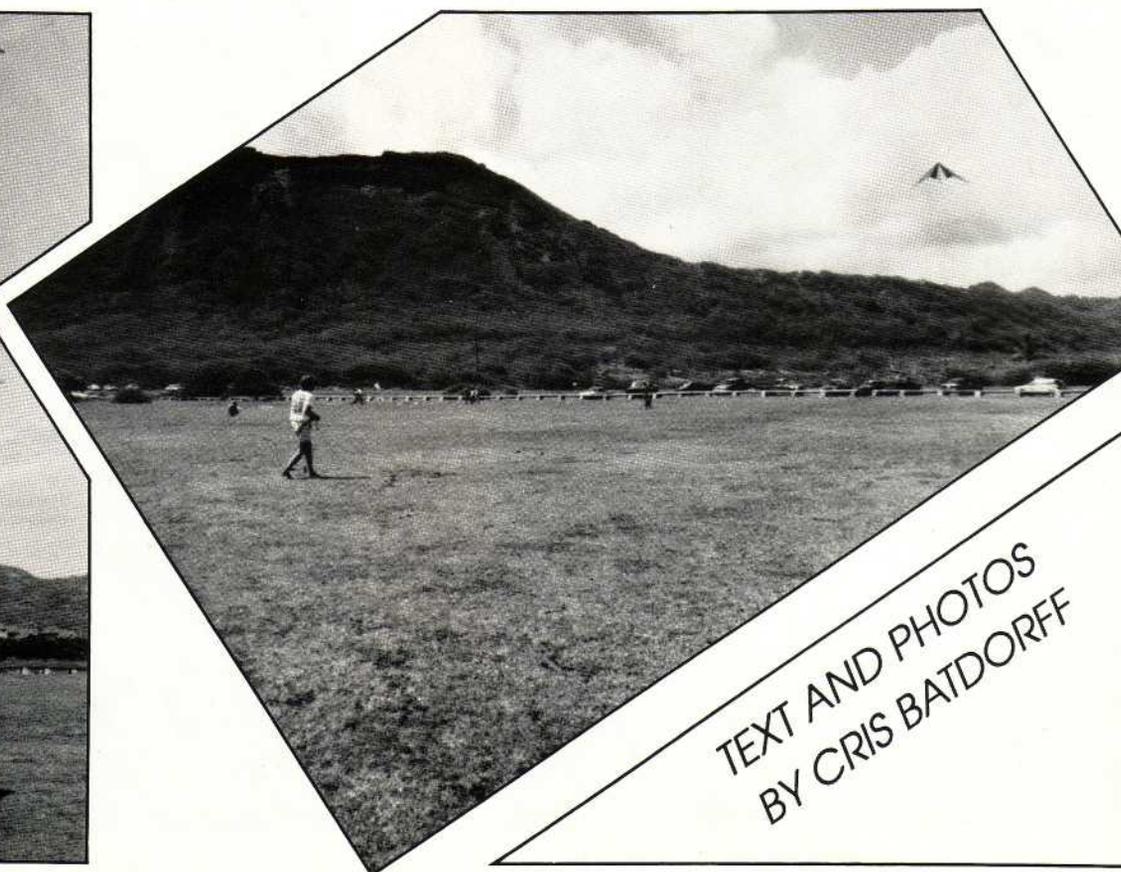
There was England's Mark Cottrell who flew his innovative routine with his lines tethered to his feet. Perhaps the bravest performance in the team events had to go to Steve Shapson of Force 10 Kites and teammate Brian Vanderslice who flew the two huge Force 10 wings in wind that was marginal for kites 1/3 their size. Dan Buxton's "up and over" flown with his 10 foot 'Foil in the Ballet event was breathtaking, as was Top of the

Line's new Precision freestyle routine.

I will remember the seemingly ever-present face of Brian Hirose. Here's another perfect example of Hawaiian hospitality. Brian turned up everywhere and always with a good word. In fact, I saw him so often that he might have been twins! Which brings to mind Convention Chairman Romeo Colado and his twin, Donald ... now there's a couple of fellows that I couldn't tell apart!

If one of the yardsticks by which success is measured is the ability to take adversity in stride, the 12th AKA Convention gets full marks. To take that same circumstance and turn the whole affair into a credible set of competitions is what sets some events apart from the others. It does not happen without a good working relationship between organizers, officials, and flyers ... the willingness to compromise and move forward.

This particular AKA Championship showed the maturity of the sport's participants from every side. It had that spirit about it. From the registration to the final take-down, this Convention was worthy of its Grand National title.



TEXT AND PHOTOS
BY CRIS BATDORFF

RESULTS: AKA GRAND NATIONALS

EXPERIENCED INDIVIDUAL PRECISION

1. Tomoyo Iwamoto	77.22
2. Vince Bobrosky	75.57
3. Ronald Ho	71.94
4. Mitch Onoyama	66.11
5. Jim Munro	65.67
6. Tim Mueller	58.74
7. Dave Malloy	58.30
8. Barry Nash	55.44
9. Stu Cohen	51.59
10. Sue Edison	48.29

EXPERIENCED INDIVIDUAL BALLET

1. Vince Bobrosky	84.13
2. Kathi Larrabee	76.76
3. Stu Cohen	75.76
4. Mitch Onoyama	74.20
5. Billy Jones	73.20
6. Brian Vanderslice	72.56
7. Nancy Lizza	71.40
8. Dave Malloy	68.76
9. Sue Edison	66.56
10. Nadine Koba	60.90

OPEN INDIVIDUAL PRECISION

1. Ron Reich	87.78
2. Pam Kirk	84.48
3. Frank Fieseler	82.50
4. Don Tabor	81.95
5. Alan Nagao	81.40
6. Lee Sedgwick	77.88
7. Vern Balodis	77.77
8. Eric Streed	76.44
9. Eric Fujii	48.62
10. Mark Cottrell	(conflict)

OPEN INDIVIDUAL BALLET

1. Dan Buxton	91.00
2. Eric Wolff	90.70
3. Ron Reich	89.53
4. Don Tabor	89.13
5. Cris Batdorff	88.90
6. Pam Kirk	87.60
7. Alan Nagao	87.03
8. Vern Balodis	86.73
9. Bill Edison	82.67
10. Sue Taft	81.63

EXPERIENCED TEAM PRECISION

1. Killer Bees	80.20
2. Hawaiian Delights	72.61
3. Team Rome II	69.73

EXPERIENCED TEAM BALLET

1. Team Rome II	74.57
2. Hawaiian Delights	73.03
3. Edison Flight & Powder	72.53
4. Killer Bees	61.37
5. Lift Force	57.70

OPEN TEAM PRECISION

1. Top of the Line	87.80
2. Chicago Fire	82.92
3. High Performance	82.63
4. Team Rome I	81.82
5. Elite Team	78.42
6. Kite Fantasy	61.40

OPEN TEAM BALLET

1. Top of the Line	92.35
2. Chicago Fire	88.23
3. Team High Fly	80.45
4. High Performance	73.98
5. Elite Team	73.70
6. What's Up	73.58
7. Team Rome I	72.05
8. Blitz	65.85
9. Renegade	62.45
10. Bay Area Sundowners	61.60

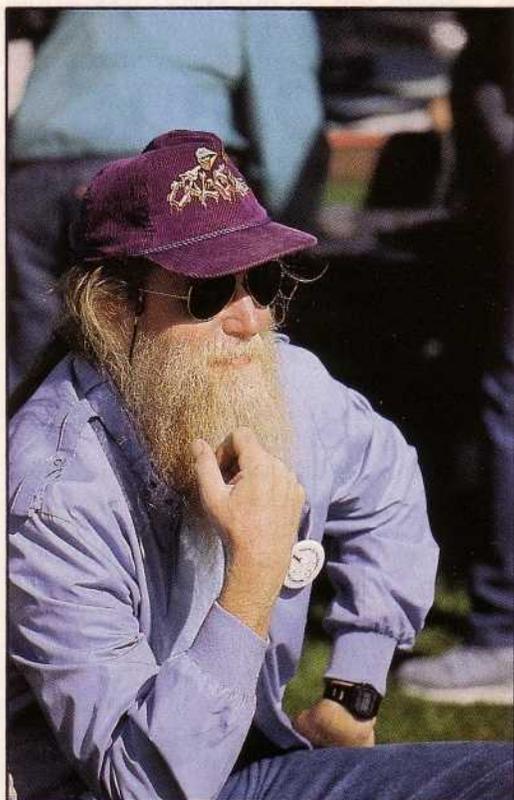
INDIVIDUAL INNOVATIVE

1. Mal Moore	89.16
2. Lee Sedgwick	89.10
3. Ron Reich	87.60
4. Sue Taft	86.40
5. Scott Augenbaugh	82.58
6. Billy Jones	73.75
7. Brian Vanderslice	71.68
8. Joe Hadzicki	69.25
9. Mark Cottrell	67.95

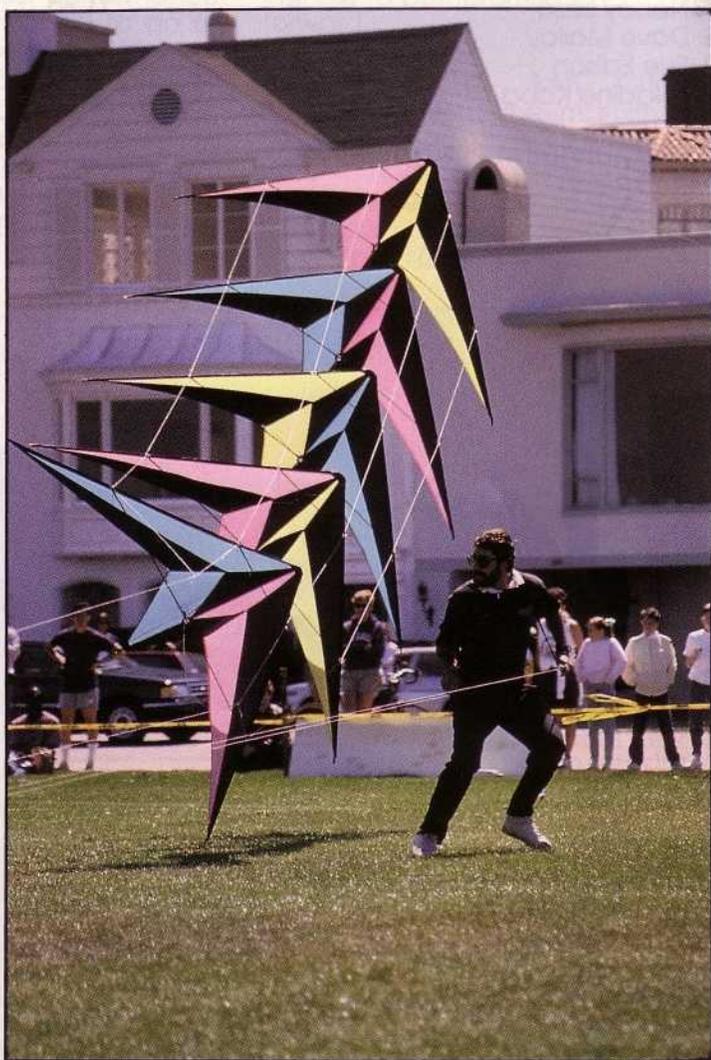
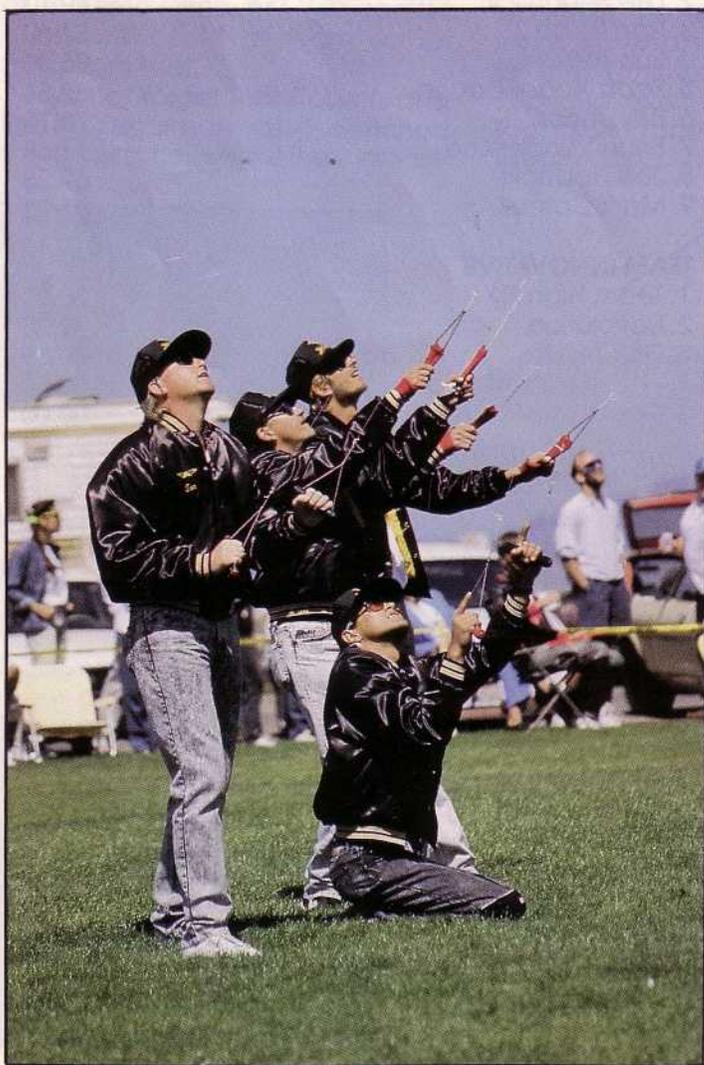
TEAM INNOVATIVE

1. Team High Fly	80.91
2. Revolution	72.38
3. Elite Team	60.31
4. High Performance	59.50
5. Death Squadron	00.00





Richard Van Mechelen, left, studies the competition. Above, one of the many ground displays in this year's "nylon Jungle."



The Bohica Flight Squad, (left) in the Ballet event. Above, Eric Wolff flying a stack of Fire Darts in the Innovative.

WEST COAST NATIONALS

DRAW RECORD CROWD

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY CRIS BATDORFF

Labor Day weekend had rolled around again and with it the third running of the West Coast National Championships on San Francisco's famed Marina Green. This event has become the last "tune-up" before the AKA Grand Nationals and, additionally, has gained the reputation of being the "money" event on the circuit. It's only natural that the West Coast Championships annually draw the biggest names in the sport. This year's event was no exception in that regard ... everyone was there. It was also blessed by something that has been in painfully short supply this year ... wind! No, not the Galveston blast but, rather, relatively steady, good old-fashioned kite flying weather. Another plus, especially for those who remember last year's contest, was moderately warm temperatures. Add to these factors crowds which exceeded 25,000 over the long weekend, coverage by five Bay Area TV stations (including Japanese TV), and a well-prepared staff and you've got the winning combination for great competition. Predictably, that's precisely how things worked out.

The organizational duties for this year's event were handled by a very active grouping of West Coast kite luminaries headed by Michael and Cherie McFadden, Kathy Goodwin, Patrice McFadden, Hawaii's Robert Loera, and Eric and Ginny (Free Hugs) Forsberg from Oregon. Judges were headed up by Robbi Sugarman.

Everything ran very smoothly, indeed ... this in contrast to last year's event, which had more than the occasional glitch in communications. "I think that the event ran very smoothly," commented organizer Cherie McFadden, "we learned a lot from last year. What I'm seeing most of all is that the flyers are more professional ... they know what to

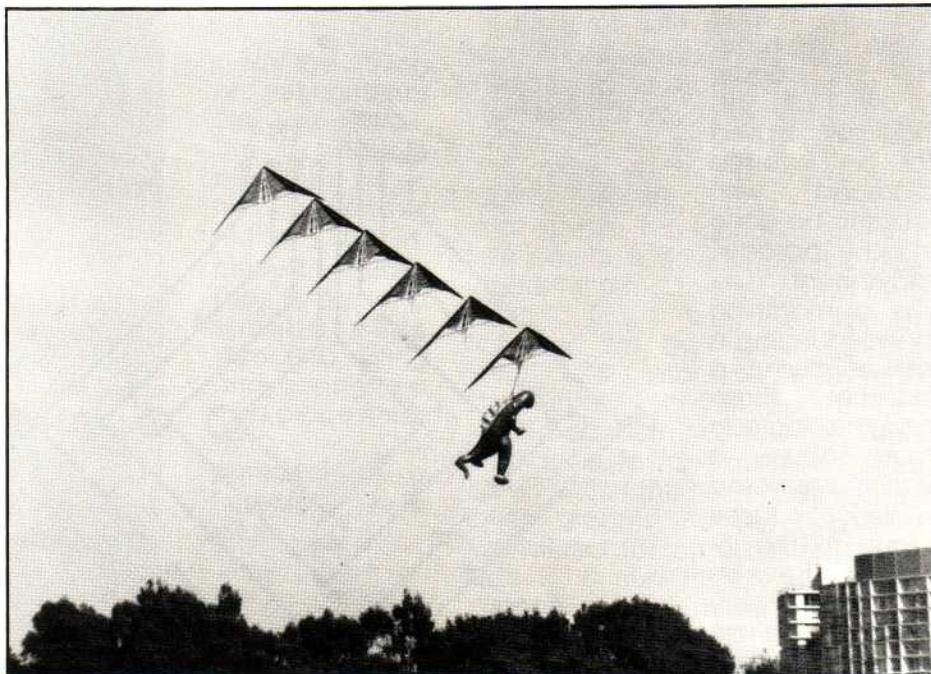
expect. They're helping a lot more with the system. Those people that are here for their second year are more knowledgeable and that's a big help as well. It's a great event!"

About the competitions themselves, Cherie continued, "There's a lot of upsets on the field. Some new winners have come up through the ranks ... a lot more West Coast flyers that are strong are showing up."

As the weekend wore on, Cherie's words would be more than just prophetic ... upsets and near upsets would be the rule-of-thumb for the entire event. Like an increasing number of large events, the West Coast Nationals uses a heat system of eliminations to arrive at a final round of competition. As in years past, this year's list of hopefuls included many of the sport's heavies.

After the elimination heats, however, some of the biggest surprises were those who failed to make the cut. Names like Wolff, Balodis, Taft, and Roberts were knocked out in Individual Precision. In Individual Choreographed, things were no better ... Moore, Streed, Tabor, Nagao, and Sedgwick were among the missing. Needless to say, the final round in each event was comprised of a goodly number of new faces!

In what was, perhaps the most exciting finish this year, young Jason Loo and veteran Ron Reich posted identical scores of 77.25 in the Individual Precision. Reich eventually won when the alternate judges' scores were tallied with a 78.20 against Loo's 77.45. Don Tabor finished in third two points back.



DINOSOAR! Godzilla, the legendary kite mauler, put in an unscheduled appearance at the West Coast Nationals. Originally rearing his head in Chicago, his aerial excursion here seems to confirm that he's moved to warmer climes. Though usually earthbound, the large green reptile decided to ride on Lee Sedgwick's train for this West Coast cameo.

In the Individual Choreographed it was Ron notching another narrow victory over Dan Buxton with barely a half a point between them. The margin was even less between Dan and third place finisher Michael Boyce. In fact, less than 2½ points separated first and fifth places in the choreographed event. One of the weekend's more stunning performances was turned in by a stunt kite newcomer, Eric Fujii, who finished fourth. Flying less than two points off the lead score, Eric's flying was right on target with his music and this, folks, after flying for "Oh, about three months ..." (!). We're going to see a lot more of this name in the coming months!

The team competitions were spectacular and intense as well. In the Choreographed, it was Top of the Line repeating last year's win with a strong 92.13 performance. A highly polished Team Rome 1, took second with the Chicago Fire holding down third. The real fireworks were to come in the Team Precision event ...

One of the figures presented to be flown precipitated a lengthy discussion between judges, flyers, organizers, and team sponsors. The figure (shown at right) basically called for an inverted diamond with loops to be done in a "parade" movement (i.e., like a marching band rounding a corner during a parade ... those on the outside must cover a vastly larger area while those closer to the inside of the corner move very little). It was argued by some flyers that the figure could, alternately, not be flown or could not be performed safely.

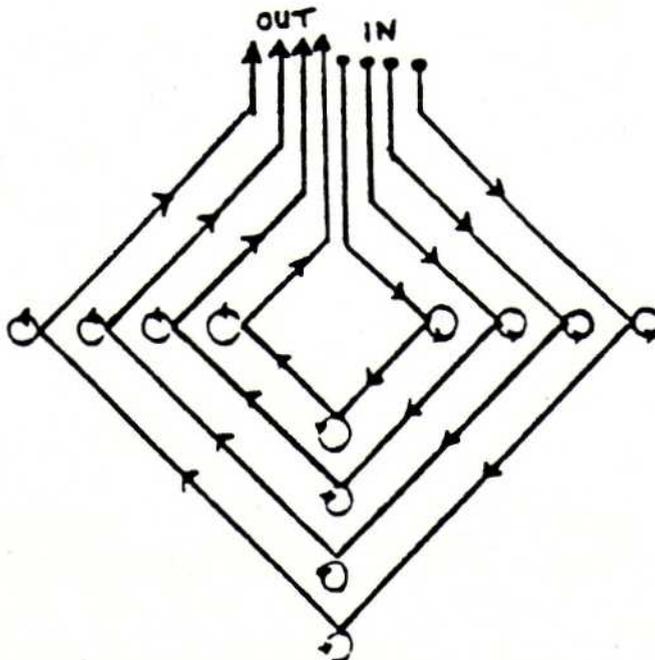
Trying their luck in the freestyle, Team Rome II works at the Marina Green. Their routine, flown with custom Wasps, netted the team 5th place in the Precision event ... the best finish for an Experienced Class team in the un-classed event.



In the midst of the debate, some of the teams stepped forward and declared that the figure could be flown as drawn and within the constraints of safety. With that, the opposition ended and the flyers took the field. The complexity of the figure and how the teams were going to handle the logistics of it were a couple of points not lost on what was proving to be a very large and well-informed crowd.

In what may have been the most carefully crowd-scrutinized event of the year, it was the High Performance Team that came out on top, with Team Rome 1 and the Chicago Fire hauling in second and third, respectively. The Top of the Line team, who flew beautifully, was disqualified following an unfortunate boundary call. The biggest treat for this reporter was standing behind the performing teams, with other team pilots who were queuing up to see how the competition going to handle the mystery figure.

The Team Precision event was one of three that pointed out what is possibly, the only large



drawback to the West Coast Nationals, or more precisely, the Marina Green location of the event ... that being the narrow layout of the competition fields. Bordered by a busy, 4-lane street on the south and the sometimes even busier parking lot on the north, the Green normally plays host to a number of other activities in addition to kite flying. Because of its location, the number of spectators turning out for the West Coast Nationals is large and usually spills significantly down the sides of the competition fields. Boundary violations on either side, therefore, present immediate safety problems to spectators and casual passersby.

This factor has prompted reactions from a number of flyers participating in events which require the use of long lines such as team events and, in some cases, Individual Innovative. As flying with 150 foot lines is a near impossibility, and 125 footers are a challenge, a number of flyers elect to fly the event on much shorter lines. Sometimes, this cannot be done.

The High Performance Team from Hawaii in a following maneuver. The islanders, flying Hawaiian Team Kites performed brilliantly in the Precision to garner 1st place honors in the hotly contested event. The competitions were blessed by good winds of 10-20 mph for most of the weekend.



Not the filming of yet another Star Trek sequel, but Mal Moore about to begin his Innovative routine. Mal included quad-line flying and simultaneous (two-kite) flying and managed a third place finish with his portrayal of a "special" love affair.

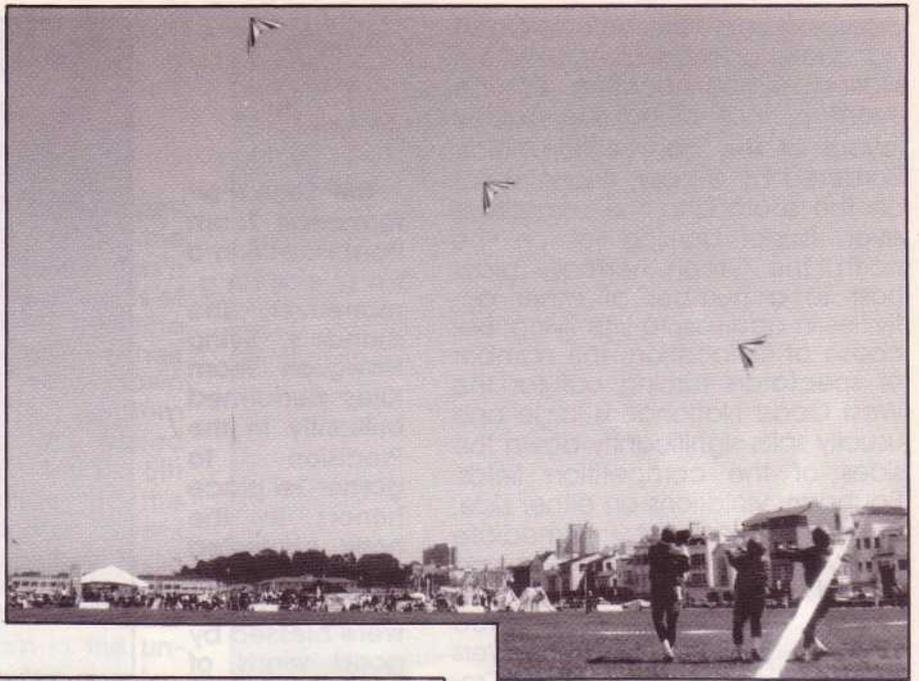
Such was the case with the Innovative routine of Ron Reich.

Flying the farewell performance of his three kite routine, Ron encountered problems near the midpoint. The program begins by Ron simultaneously flying two kites which are linked by a common tail. After working them through both following and mirrored maneuvers, he launches a third kite which is flown from his hips and is tethered to the ground by a second tail. It was the ground-tethered tail that broke as the third kite ascended. Though momentarily shaken by the unexpected turn of events, Ron managed to land all three kites safely within the field's boundaries even though the first two had wandered far off wind on either side ... a true display of performance under pressure.

Commenting on the field, organizer Cherie McFadden noted, "We're really watching the safety factor here. This (Marina Green) field is extremely expensive and extremely limiting. We are in negotiation with three other cities at this point in time and they're all

good wind fields ... they're all in the Bay Area and it's just a matter of me working with the city."

Attending this year's West Coast National was a treat. Gone was the tentativeness of last year's event. There were no long waits prior to competing and the last-minute corrections to the judges' scoring sheets were not needed. The system put together by tournament organizers and Head Judge Robbi Sugarman ran very smoothly. Posting of scores was done on a relatively timely basis. The crews both on and off the field seemed to have everything well in hand. Missing this year, however, was the grand array of food concessions present last year



Team Rome I (above) flying Team Hawaiians to a second place finish in the Precision. They also took second in the Choreographed event. Good spectator turnout characterized each day of the West Coast Nationals as evidenced by the intent looks on the faces at the left. The San Francisco event may have the best draw of any competition on the circuit.

... but this, we are told, was due to an untimely cancellation by a food vendor. Crowds were up appreciably and the level of their knowledge of what was taking place in the competitions was noticeable. This year's West Coast National was, indeed, a winner.

Team What's Up came all the way from Ohio to compete. While the team garnered only an 8th place finish in the Precision and a 9th in choreographed, Captain Dan Buxton took home second place honors in the Individual Choreographed.





Joe Hadzicki, of Revolution Kites, flying his product to a second place finish in the Innovative competition. Joe's pinpoint accuracy with the quad-lined kite is rivaled by few competitive flyers. Below, a happy AKA President, Jim Miller, served as Field Boss for a number of the events.



RESULTS - 1989 WEST COAST

STUNT KITE CHAMPIONSHIPS

INDIVIDUAL CHOREOGRAPHED

1. Ron Reich	92.17
2. Dan Buxton	91.53
3. Michael Boyce	91.37
4. Eric Fujii	90.20
5. Eric Wolff	89.83
6. Frank Fieseler	89.53
7. Cris Batdorff	86.13
8. Darrin Skinner	(Tie) 84.23
Pam Kirk	(Tie) 84.23
10. Dave Malloy	82.13

INDIVIDUAL PRECISION

1. Ron Reich	78.20
(Tiebreaker. Original score: 77.25)	
2. Jason Loo	77.45
(Tiebreaker. Original score: 77.25)	
3. Don Tabor	75.42
4. Frank Fieseler	74.08
5. Phil Wiltz	73.92
6. Pam Kirk	73.25
7. Randy Tom	72.17
8. Mal Moore	72.08
9. Michael Boyce	71.58
10. Jaz Hawkins	71.33

TEAM PRECISION

1. High Performance	85.82
2. Team Rome 1	84.73
3. Chicago Fire	81.63
4. Elite Team	70.03
5. Team Rome 2	68.09
6. Bohica Flight Squad	66.63
7. Hawaiian Delights	64.07
8. Team What's Up	59.08
9. Samurai	51.65
10. Point Fermin Flyers	43.87

TEAM CHOREOGRAPHED

1. Top of the Line	92.13
2. Team Rome 1	87.50
3. Chicago Fire	86.47
4. Team High Fly	84.43
5. Elite Team	81.93
6. High Performance	78.80
7. Team Loo	77.87
8. Bohica Flight Squad	77.63
9. Team What's Up	77.50
10. Hawaiian Delights	75.87

INDIVIDUAL INNOVATIVE

1. Lee Sedgwick	89.07
2. Joe Hadzicki	84.37
3. Mal Moore	81.12
4. Ron Reich	79.95
5. Scott Augenbaugh	79.93

2nd Annual Outer Banks Stunt Kite Competition

By Kelly Ryan

On a chilly (but thankfully sunny and windy) morning in October, 35 stunt kite fanatics met to battle it out on the rolling sand dunes of Jockey's Ridge State Park in Nags Head, North Carolina. It was October 21, 1989, and the second annual Outer Banks Stunt Kite Competition, sponsored by Kitty Hawk Kites, was about to begin. The field directors checked the boundaries marking the two flying fields. The pit bosses announced flying orders, the judges strapped on their headsets and standardized their scoring methods, and the competitors contemplated what to fly in the 20-25 mph winds. The Outer Banks is known by kite fliers for its strong, consistent winds (why else would Orville and Wilbur Wright have come here?) and this day was no exception.

Jockey's Ridge, the largest sand dune on the East Coast can provide a challenging arena for competing in stunt kite flying, as the hills rise and fall within the flying field; sometimes creating turbulent winds that you don't see in flatland flying. Although the local favorites may have had the advantage of practicing on the hill, the shifting sands present a new challenge each day.

There were all categories of competition, from junior to open class, precision and ballet, individual and team, and innovative. This year competitors flew for cash prizes and gift certificates. The Kite of choice for many was the Mirage, especially for ballet, manufactured locally by Mike Jones of Jones Airfoils. Also, there was a strong showing of Spinoffs.

Several manufacturers demonstrated their latest creations. Bill Baker of Peter Powell, Rob Crowell of Crowell Sailloft, Steve Shapson of Force 10, and Mike Jones of Jones Airfoils all helped to fill the air with sizzling displays.

For the first time in any stunt kite competition, the winners of the

Individual Intermediate classes, both in precision and ballet were pre-seeded into the upcoming 1990 East Coast Stunt Kite Championships in Wildwood, NJ. This was announced by Roger Chewning, one of the coordinators of ECSKC. Local and regional events can boast competition in the novice and intermediate levels, and now the intermediate winners can be propelled into the larger East Coast competition. "We're setting up a league of events," said Chewning. Kitty Hawk Kites is pleased to be able to have the winners of the intermediate classes in the Outer Banks Stunt Kite Competition be some of the pioneers in this plan.

"We saw a high degree of professionalism in the judges, and thank all of them for attending the festival and for judging some pretty tough competition," said Anne McCarter, Event Coordinator. They were Roger Chewning (East Coast Stunt Kite Championships), Corky Chewning (head judge at ECSKC), Mike Carroll (head judge at ECSKC), Ralph

Offredo (Hawk Aero Labs), Pete Ianuzzi (Maryland Kite Society), Mel Govig (Kitelines Magazine), Jim Christianson (Go Fly A Kite), Robert Crowell (Crowell's Sailloft), and Bill Baker (Peter Powell Kites). "They helped to keep the events running smoothly, and brought much experience to the scoring tables," added McCarter.

Top performances for the event included Mike Jones of Nags Head, NC, who placed first in Open Precision and Open Ballet. Experienced was won by team "Nemesis." Carter Stickney won the Experienced Precision and Experienced Ballet.

Awards were presented by Francis Rogallo, whose work in aeronautics led to both innovations in Kite designs, and the development of the hang glider.

Kitty Hawk Kites in looking forward to sponsoring the Third Annual Outer Banks Stunt Kite Competition next September. Goals are to obtain more sponsorship both locally and regionally, increase the number of competitors and to have just as much fun.



John Harris, owner of Kitty Hawk Kites (event sponsor) and Francis Rogallo, inventor of the Rogallo wing. Francis' work in the aeronautics field has led to many innovations in kite design in addition to the development of the hang glider.

**Second Annual Outer Banks Stunt Kite Competition
Results
October 21, 1989 - Nags Head, NC**

Junior Precision

1. Andrew Meggs - Richmond, VA

Novice Precision

1. Chip Yamasaki - Chantilly, VA
2. Melvin Cambert - Norfolk, VA
3. Arnold Head - Nags Head, NC

Intermediate Precision

1. Carter Stickney - Raleigh, NC
2. Chris Schultz - Kill Devil Hills, NC
3. Steve Huff - Richmond, VA

Open Precision

1. Mike Jones - Nags Head, NC
2. Billy Jones - Ocean City, MD
3. Rick Montminy - Newton, PA

Intermediate Team Precision

1. Nemesis - Nags Head, NC
2. Team Arnold Head - Nags Head, NC
3. Strike Force - Richmond, VA

Intermediate Ballet

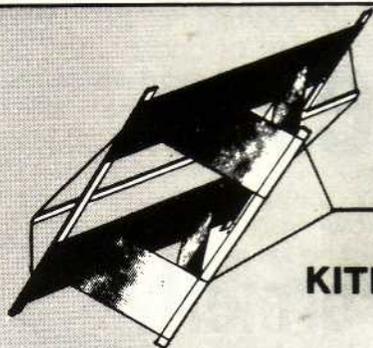
1. Carter Stickney - Raleigh, NC
2. Chris Schultz - Kill Devil Hills, NC
3. Marc Conklin - Greenville, NC

Open Ballet

1. Mike Jones - Nags Head, NC
2. Billy Jones - Ocean City, MD
3. Roger Chewning - Morrisville, PA

Innovative

1. Billy Jones - Ocean City, MD



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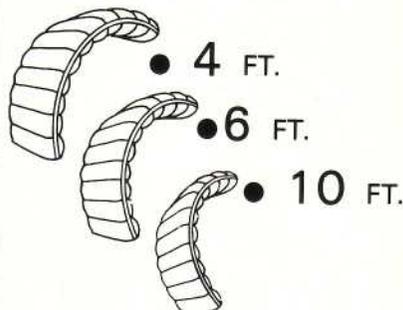
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DATES SET FOR MARCH 2-3-4

2-MAN PRECISION TO MAKE DEBUT AT HAWAII CHALLENGE

If you enjoyed the 1989 AKA Nationals and have a yearning to return to the beautiful weather for still more flying, the 1990 edition of the Robert Loera Hawaii Challenge is just around the corner. Scheduled for March 2-3-4, the event, which is now in its seventh year, annually draws some of the biggest names in the stunt-kite world. According to event organizer, Robert Loera, this year's contest promises to be even larger than last year's.

The Hawaii Challenge generally serves as the kick-off point for the season's competitive circuit. It is usually a good place to check out some of the new, hot routines before they're seen on the mainland. In addition, many of the new competitive events have their beginnings at the Hawaii

Challenge. According to organizer Robert, "We try to introduce a new event each year. It's become something of a tradition here. This year, it looks like it's going to be 2-man precision. It's a lot easier for two friends to get together for practice sessions than it is arranging for a larger team. I think that it will be accepted really well."

Look for some new things to surface competitively in the area of fighter kites, too. Robert added, "I think that we'll try team kite fighting in this year's Challenge." Of course, there will also be the usual contests for fighters in both traditional cutting line and non-cutting line categories.

The Hawaii Challenge will be held in Kapiolani Park, which was the original venue for the stunt

competitions during the recent AKA Nationals. The field has been reserved for the entire week before the Challenge, as well as for the event weekend so flyers should have ample practice time before the judging begins.

Early registration for the Hawaii Challenge is recommended. There are a number of ways that one can visit the Islands for this event but Robert recommends using a tour plan and booking as far in advance as possible. "Pleasant Hawaiian Holidays has always been a good firm to work with," says Robert. "Interested parties might want to contact them at: 1-800-2-HAWAII." For further information, also check with Robert at: Kite Fantasy, 2863 Kalakaua Ave., Honolulu, HI 96815; or call: 808-922-KITE.

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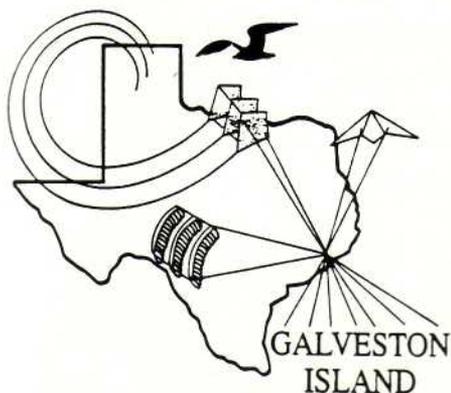
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APRIL 6-7

TEXAS GULF COAST CHALLENGE READY FOR 4TH YEAR



gin' rights go along with any victories garnered at this event. In a competition which has been noted as having perhaps the toughest precision figures on the entire circuit, that can prove to be a difficult goal to aspire to. The Texas Challenge has always lived up to expectations in that department!

Registrations for this year's Challenge will be taken until March 10 and have a cutoff figure of 100 so if you're interested in making the journey, best to let them know early. For information, contact Terry at: 409-265-0868, or write to the event's sponsoring organization, the Surfside Flyers, at P.O. Box 3105-B, Freeport, TX 77541.

R.A. Appfel Park in Galveston has been selected again for the fourth running of the Texas Gulf Coast Challenge, according to event organizer Terry Crumpler. This year's Challenge is slated for the weekend of April 6-7 and promises to be another good one. "We've already had a number of inquiries," according to Terry, "and we expect to have a much larger field than last year."

Last year's event was characterized by near-perfect conditions on day one which turned into high, chilly winds on day two ... definitely not the norm for an area that is characterized by temperatures in the mid-70's and near ideal prevailing winds. "We did have a touch of wind last year," Terry added, "but we're going to try to hold it down a little this year ... seems that some folks aren't used to Texas winds ..."

There will be competition in all classes, including Junior. Individual Innovative will, as usual, be run as an unclassified event open to all comers.

The Great Texas Barbeque is being handled in rather secretive fashion this year. No comments were offered when we asked the status of this grandiose affair. We were simply told: "Be there!" Reflecting on last year's extravaganza ... we won't miss it!

Again this year, as is tradition for the Texas Challenge, Texas Brag-



Sue Taft in the Innovative at last year's Challenge.



New Product Review

MODEL: CYBORG VIII Ultralight
FABRIC WEIGHT: .75 oz. ripstop nylon
COLORS AVAILABLE: varied
WIND RANGE: 1 to 15 mph.
CONFIGURATION: double wing
MFGR'S SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$149.95 (as tested)
MANUFACTURER: AERIALOGICS

Some months ago, as we were testing the Cyborg VI, we wondered aloud what it would be like to fly one of these unique double winged kites in a larger, 8-foot version. We didn't have to wait long ... Mike Sterling has done it again! Mike has just recently gone into production with this newest edition and has decided to make it a full-time venture.

Although the VIII possesses for obvious reasons, many visual similarities with its smaller counterpart, a good lot of the comparison ends there. The newer version is a gas! The model that was sent for evaluation was an ultralight model with weighed in at a trim 10½ ounces. The accompanying letter intimated that here was a kite that would perform in breezes as light as 1-2 mph. In the world of light wind flying, that's too large of a claim to be ignored. We decided to take Mike at his word and promptly headed for the field on the first windless day that came along ... and flew the Cyborg.

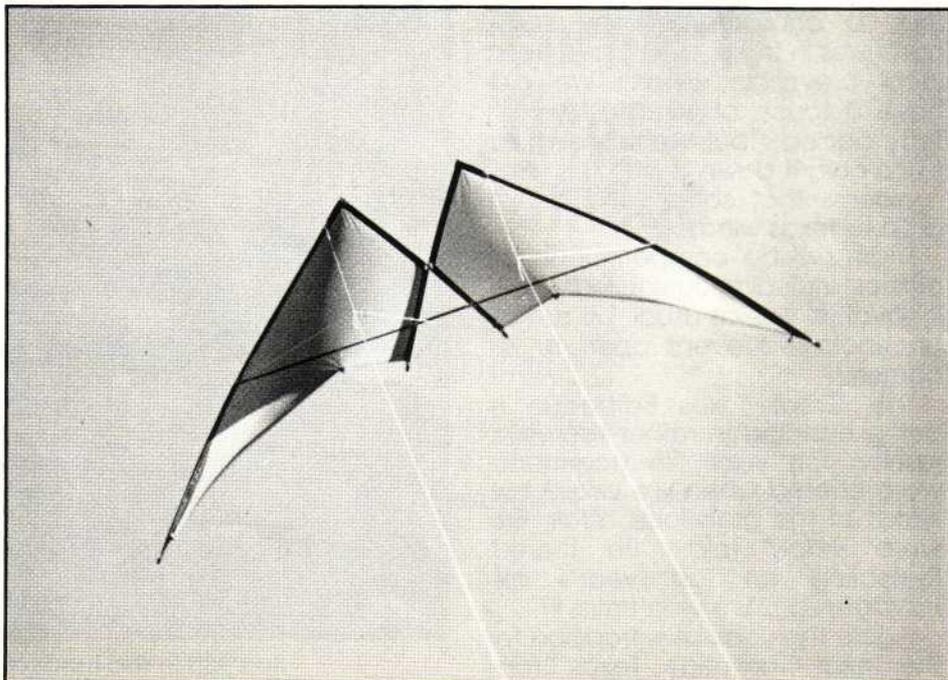
And flew right well, too. Turns were slow but effective. We never got the feeling that we had given control over to a lack of wind. We didn't wear ourselves out huffing and puffing as we ran to keep the kite aloft, either. For the most part, we were able to fly in a relatively fixed position. The kite is, however, light enough that should the flier feel like running 360's, it will handle them with ease.

The VIII has several subtleties in design that were not present in the smaller VI. At the head of this

list is the graphite sparring. The quick rebounding qualities inherent in the framing material remove any tentativeness in the flight characteristics. The kite is amazingly responsive. Item number two on the innovations list is the use of standoffs. The approach taken here, unlike a number of other manufactured kites, is that the standoffs are an integral part of the design. The sail, in fact, has seemingly been designed with the spars as a consideration. Until they are put into position, the kite fails to "lock in" to an efficient flying shape. Once they are positioned, however, the sail is nearly totally without wrinkles or dips.

The method by which the standoffs are connected to the sail is also unique. A grometed flap of pigskin has been sewn into the notch on the kite's trailing edge. The standoff spar is then inserted through the gromet from front to rear. The standoff is then grasped and the rearward portion swung back up to seat into the spreader vinyls. The result is a "catcher's glove" sort of affair that is one of the more efficient concepts that we've seen.

Rounding out the list of changes is a reworking of the Cyborg's interior sparring arrangement. Some of this was doubtless owing to the kite's larger size but a number of benefits have risen out of it. The



repositioning of spars after crashing is much easier. The leading edge of the VIII also by design, takes a curved position. But what does all of this do for the kite's performance? It improves it!

Although the kite has been flown in winds that approached and, even briefly exceeded, 20 mph, it is obvious that the VIII's peak levels are in the 12-16 mph range. It tracks well, lands effortlessly, and relaunches beautifully. Turning radiuses can nearly be set

at whatever the flyer wishes to fly. If pulled sharply, the kite can be made to dump sufficient air to stall out, but it takes some effort. Handled a bit more gently and the VIII will happily do controlled spins on a shorter-than-wingtip axis. It does square and acute angle turns just as easily.

Bridle adjustments did prove to be fairly critical. In most cases, 1/8" at a time was enough to handle differing wind situations.

What's next for the Cyborg?

Well, Mike says that if someone wants a high performance model ... "I've got a 'Hood River Special' they won't believe, but that's another chapter." We are also informed that some interesting sails are in the works for the kite. One thing, at least is certain in our minds ... the Cyborg VIII has the potential to fly right up there with the big boys. In fact, in the next year or so, we might even see it flying lead position.

C.B.



MODEL: SPINOFF

FABRIC WEIGHT: .75 oz. ripstop nylon

COLORS AVAILABLE: 9 different color combinations (basic)

WIND RANGE: 5-25 mph.

CONFIGURATION: Delta-type (102 inch wingspan)

MFGR'S SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$130-\$160 (depending on model)

MANUFACTURER: TOP OF THE LINE KITES

Every once and a while, it's good to return to something basic ... a known quantity in a sea of change. The Spinoff represents just that for many people. New kites seem to come down the pike at a dizzying rate these days and it's difficult to predict which will withstand the test of years better than the others.

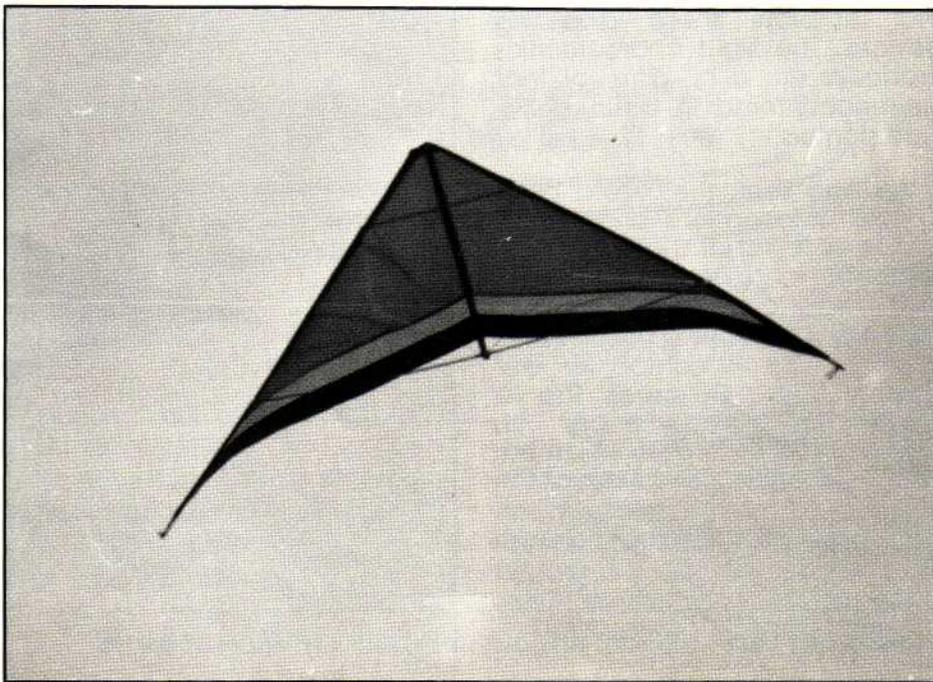
Since 1986, the Spinoff has, arguably, been the best selling kite in the country. There are a whole lot of people out there who were inaugurated into the sport/hobby of stunt kite flying with a Spinoff. It is, presently offered in what is essentially its original configuration with a number of different sail (graphic) designs, and in two spar configurations: the basic, and the ultralight.

Following on the heels of the Hawaiian Team Kite, the Spinoff is lighter, faster, and more agile than its big brother. It functions well in a wide range of winds and proves out to be a generally forgiving kite. It also handles those unplanned ground encounters in good shape. It is a very durable specimen.

The Ultralight model will handle winds down to 2-3 mph in the hands of an experienced pilot. A defensible case can be made for it being the best production ultralight on the market today ... it

is certainly among the top three. The upper end of the wind range for the Ultralight is about 9 mph. At this point, the basic model will serve quite nicely. The basic will handle winds to the mid-20's but with some distortion in the leading edges. We have flown them in higher wind conditions but that would not be recommended practice. The area to watch is the spine spar. As long as the spine remains rigid in flight, it's a fair bet that you're within the kite's range.

In the area of performance, the Spinoff is often used as a frame of reference for other kites. As such, it's very hard to list either positive or negative points. Generally speaking, the kite gets good marks. It tracks well in straight flight and turns quickly. There is a good amount of billow built into the sail which is both an asset and a hindrance depending upon the wind conditions. In heavy winds, it allows the sail to dump air as the leading edges compress.



At the low end of the Spinoff's wind range, there is a tendency towards stalling. This condition can be corrected, at the flyer's prerogative, by the addition of standoff spars which extend from the lower spreader to the sail. The standoffs tighten the sail, replacing the billow with taut three-dimensionality. This has the effect of extending the kite's stability in lower breezes. Additionally, relaunching becomes a considerably easier task. They are available from Top of The Line for a small fee and must be specified on the order as adjustments must be made on the sail's trailing edge.

Perhaps the best selling point of the Spinoff is that it is flyable on so many different levels. For the

beginner, the kite is easy to learn with. In the same breath, it has probably been flown to more competition wins than any other kite. This, in many cases, has occurred with little or no alteration to the basic kite as it comes from the bag.

The Spinoff can develop a fair amount of pull in the upper wind range. It is not comparable with the larger Hawaiian Team Kite, but the Spinoff will let you know that there is something on the other end of the line. Should the pull become great, it's also a fair chance that the kite is being flown beyond the limits of propriety and is usually accompanied by a shuddering motion.

For those "impromptu" team efforts that crop up on weekends at

the park, the Spinoff is often the best kite to have around ... most everyone has one in the bag making matched kites a more obtainable commodity. The Spinoff, in summary, is a grand basic kite. For the novice flyer, it is a forgiving learning instrument. For the casual flyer, it's a durable, stable kite that functions well in a very wide variety of wind. In the hands of an expert, the Spinoff can be a world-beater. Additionally, the Spinoff enjoys worldwide distribution making replacement parts readily available should they ever be needed.

The Spinoff has earned its "frame of reference" position in the market for good reason. We have every expectation that it will remain for some years to come!

C.B.



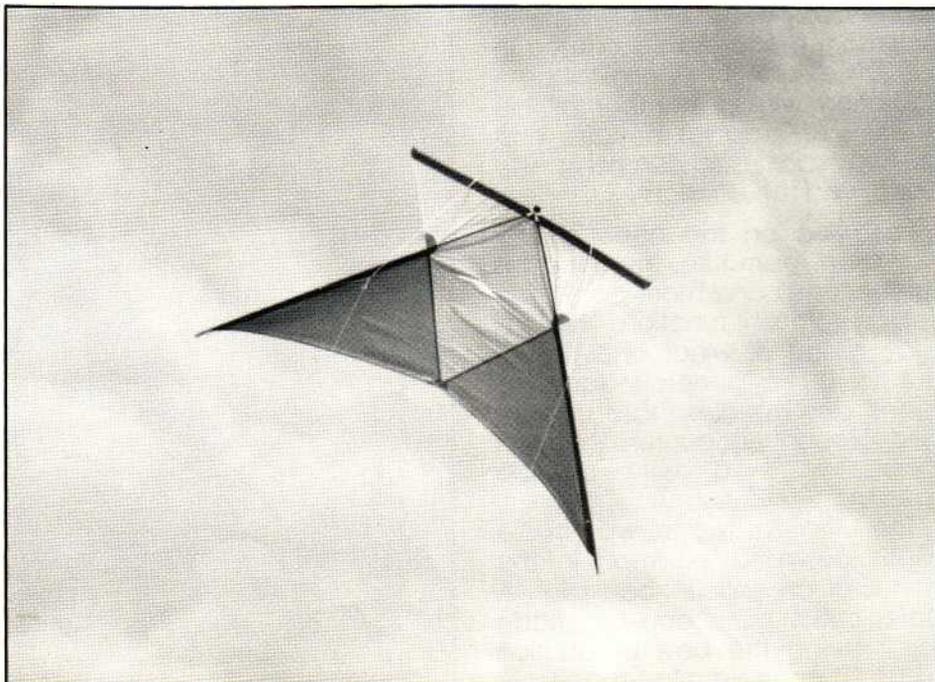
MODEL: X-ZETA
FABRIC WEIGHT: .75 oz. ripstop nylon
COLORS AVAILABLE: three
WIND RANGE: 20 to 20 mph.
CONFIGURATION: canarded delta
(68 inches wingtip to wingtip)
MANUFACTURER: X-ZETA, INC.

The X-Zeta, with its canarded leading edge, is representative of some of the newer kite technology on the market today. It is, insofar as we are aware, the only commercially produced stunter that employs these stabilizing devices. The flight characteristics produces are a bit different that we encountered in basic delta-type stunters.

We had seen the X-Zeta on a couple of occasions prior to our testing of it: first at the Windy City Nationals, and again at the KTA San Diego convention. At both viewings, it was being used in conjunction with its companion accessory, the X-Celerator. The X-Celerator is basically a bar with molded handgrips from which the kite is controlled. The layout of the whole system goes as follows: the flight lines are first secured through an anchoring device ... a ground stake, bench, or whatever. Next, the lines are fed from the anchor, through the eye screws in the X-

Celerator handle, and then to the kite. Thus positioned, the flyer is able to adjust line length while "on

the fly." The possibilities for inventive flying using this in-line hookup are greatly expanded.



The flyer may move off, up, or down wind altering line lengths with ease. With sufficient wind, the kite may be caught by the flyer and relaunched from his hands. There are, however some trade-offs in the use of the X-Celerator. The first is that arm movement is restricted to the length of the bar. Quick movements can result in overcontrol of the kite. It must also be mentioned that the bar appears to torque, or twist, a bit during high wind flying. These negatives are somewhat overshadowed by the fact that a relatively small arm movement is all that it required to control the unit effectively. As the line passes through the X-Celerator on its way from the anchor to the kite, the movement of the bar doubles the effect on the kite. Steering the kite with the X-Celerator, as is mentioned in the instruction sheet, is identical to steering a bicycle.

The X-Zeta kite itself proved to be a good performer ... most notably in lower wind situations. The graphite sparring gives the shape great resiliency. The surface of the X-Zeta is totally two-dimensional. There are no stand-offs. There is no built-in dihedral. There are, further, only four bridle connection points on the frame: the first set on the leading edge of the canard, the second on the leading edge of the delta. There is no spine spar, hence no center attachment point.

As the X-Zeta has only three spars, it is an extremely lightweight kite. When we first began flying it, questions were raised as to whether or not the kite would withstand a hard ground crash. The answer is yes, for two reasons. Using the X-Celerator, all the flyer must do is move forward and the speed of the kite is cut substantially. The second reason is that the X-Zeta is so light that it never develops much force, hence the possibility of damage is reduced.

Straight-line flight and wide turning abilities fell in line with other stunts on the fairly good side. Tight turns were easily accomplished but the kite tended to slow as the turn deepened calling for the use of the X-Celerator to gain speed by backing up slightly.

With practice, we found that both oversteer and understeer could be largely controlled with the flying bar. It also is possible to stall the X-Zeta at virtually any point and effect a relatively smooth recovery. Because of the kite's flatness, off-wind flight characteristics were not as good as we would have liked but were well within reasonable limits. Stability seemed good at most times with the exception of the occasional off-wind experience.

On the negative side of the ledger, there exist only a couple of points. The first is the method by which the wingtip bungee cords are attached. A lightweight cap is put over the end of the bare graphite rod and the cord is attached to the spar by means of a

As the kite is two-dimensional, relaunched once the kite is flat on the ground are impossible without either assistance or apparatus of some sort. There is, additionally, a near absence of pull generated in flight.

metallic eye screw which simply inserts into the shaft end. A good shot on the wingtip holds the promise, in our opinion, of a splintered shaft. The situation will become aggravated by cold weather flying which tends to make the sparring even more brittle.

The second minor problem lies in the plastic nosepiece. We managed to lose ours temporarily only once during the test and solved the problem with a dab of glue. We also noticed that the X-Zeta tended to distort a bit in higher wind situations. All in all, the X-Zeta and the X-Celerator provided us with a couple of very interesting afternoons of flying. It's a unique way to fly and terribly easy to learn ... just like riding a bicycle! It should be noted that the X-Celerator works equally well with other kites ... we tried! The performance is enhanced particularly during low wind periods. We really can't imagine anyone not having fun with this one!

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MODEL: 2200 XL
FABRIC WEIGHT:
COLORS AVAILABLE: THREE
WIND RANGE: 3 to 8 mph.
CONFIGURATION: Delta-type (86 inch wingspan)
MFGR'S SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$94.00
MANUFACTURER: GO FLY A KITE

Last year we took a look at Go Fly a Kite's first serious entry into the then-budding "serious" stunt kite market. What we found was a good, no-nonsense basic kite with a lot of value for the money. With one of the current trends in stunters heading into the realm of light wind flying, it seemed only natural that a light model was only a design modification away. Sure enough, a few months ago, the 2200 XL was introduced.

The 2200 XL is, essentially, a 2200cc with lighter spars. There are, however, more subtle differences. The attaching vinyls have been lightened. The nose has been given a lightweight treatment, as well. The kite's sail graphics have been changed but only slightly. As our test model arrived during a period of heavy wind, we waited for something lighter to suit the XL's 3-8 mph range.

The tests of the XL were marred by one significant problem. The XL used much lighter, narrower shafts in every location, hence, the lower spreaders kept unseating from the T-fitting on the spine, which was from a stock 2200cc. The fitting was simply too large to sufficiently grip the smaller shaft. An amount of tape on the end of the spreaders provided a quick fix to the problem, which, according to representatives of Go Fly a Kite, has been remedied now that the XL has gone into full production.

With the spreader problem solved, the testing for the kite proceeded in normal fashion and provided results very similar to those encountered during flies of the XL's heavier wind counterpart ... only at much lower ranges of wind speed. The straight line tracking of the XL was good in consideration of the wind in which it was meant to be flown. In fact, all of the test parameters were al-

tered somewhat owing to the lightness of the kite. Pull generated, for obvious reasons, was negligible even though the XL retains good speed through most of the maneuvers.

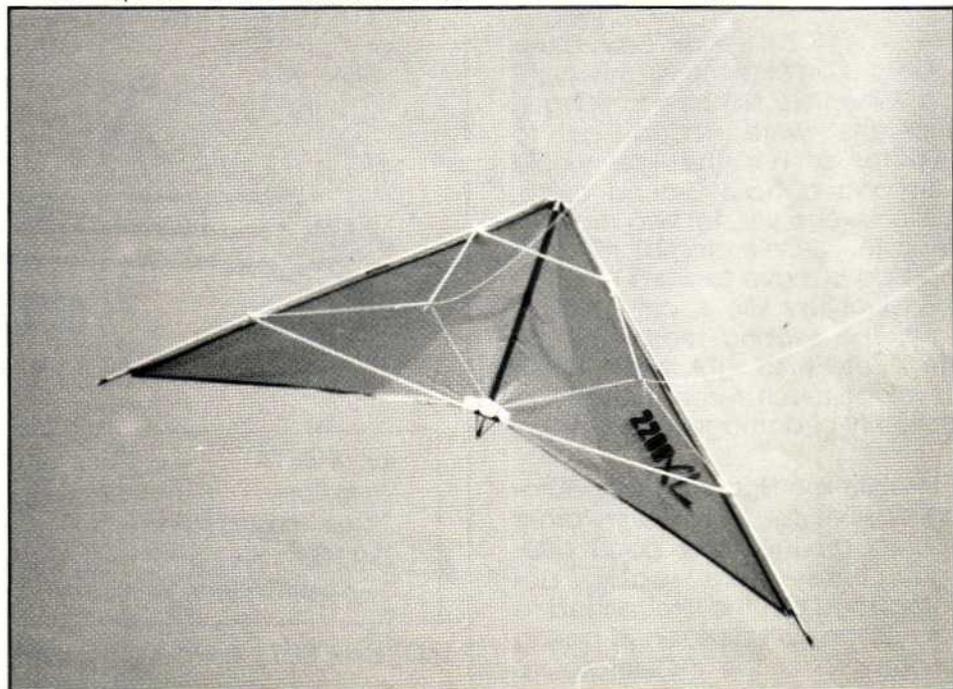
In tight turns, the lighter weight spars distorted the leading edge somewhat, but not beyond acceptable levels. The condition did, however lead to just a bit of oversteer. The 2200 XL is definitely a kite that must be flown at all times. This is true of most kites developed for light wind conditions. A momentary relaxation of attention can quickly lead to situations from which recovery is doubtful.

Like the basic 2200cc, there is a good deal of billow in the XL's sails. As in other kites of this sort, that factor can be both a help and a hindrance. As the basic 2200cc was not designed for use in the lower ranges, problems of that sort are less observable. The XL, however, exhibited some slurring during off-wind maneuvers and tended to fall from the sky when quick hand movements

were used. This problem can be solved by the addition of standoffs, which impart a three-dimensional design to the sail. The procedure, which is neither endorsed nor discouraged by the manufacturer, can clear up virtually all of the flight vagaries involved with the XL.

This is not to say that the XL will not perform maneuvers adequately without standoffs ... it does in most cases. The modification simply makes them easier to perform and gives the XL a more forgiving quality should the pilot's attention have an occasional lapse. They also make re-launch a much easier task.

Construction of the 2200 XL is, again, like the basic model. The sewing is good, color selection is likewise. We would like to see a shade heavier materials used in the nosepiece though, in its defense, we did bash it about a good deal, and it seemed to hold up well. Inside the seams, the leading edge and spine spars have been capped at the nose,



which is a nice touch.

The 2200 XL represents an attempt to put into the flyer's hands a reasonably priced low-wind flying machine. Such kites are not easy to construct given the best of circumstances. To build such a kite and suggest that it be retailed for under \$100, is a yeoman's job. As such, the XL is somewhat of a compromise. The use of super-lightweight materials that also retain a great deal of resiliency, such as some types of graphite sparring, would have pushed the price tag of the kite into the stratosphere. That was not, we believe, the manufacturer's aim with the XL.

In our earlier review of the 2200cc, we suggested that those who wished to get into team flying with a good kite at a reasonably low initial price might do well to take a look at the kite. The same applies to the 2200 XL. There are other light-weights out there and most of them cost a good deal more. If your pocketbook is on occasion smaller than your ambition to conquer those light breezes ... take a good look at the 2200 XL!

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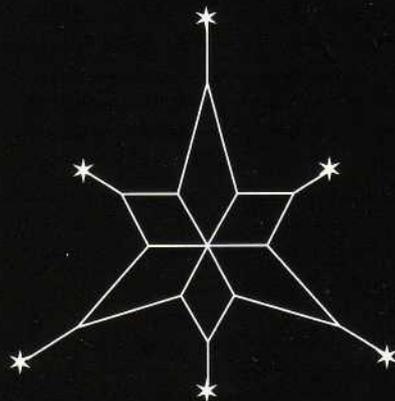
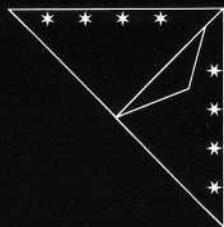
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