

A Few Lines on Flying.....

Out of the blue we had a contact from Climax lines asking us to test their products. After a bit of 'on line' (no pun intended) investigation we thought their web-site gave a good description of what all the different lines were about and asked if we could try out the 70 daN (150lb) breaking strain line.

A moment here for the anoraks:- daN is short for dekanewton or decanewton which is a unit of force equal to 10 newtons. The dekanewton is equal to 1 megadyne, to 1.019 716 kilograms of force. In engineering, the dekanewton is a convenient substitute for the kilogram of force or *kilopond*, since it is nearly equal to those units. You've guessed it I don't really understand what all these means or even if I got it 100% right – but if you multiply the figure by 2.2 you get close enough to the 150lb which we here are much more at home with.

With all the coaching and joining in with others we like to do, plus flying on the beach at Weymouth and now Margate and Palanga, lines do tend to go through it somewhat. We took the chance to downgrade the ones we currently use and have the new ones for demonstrations on grass or practice sessions where we have only ourselves to blame if we scrape a kite across them (see Cockney Montage video on our website).

The main problem with lines these days is that the longest you can buy from most manufacturers that are already pre-stretched, sleeved and ready to fly off the winder, are only 30 meters (100 feet). Climax is guilty of this too the reason being is that they only hold stock of the most popular lengths. They do offer to make up the longer lines if required but it's mostly experienced flyers who ask for them and, I am told, they have no problem with this. They obviously have not heard my catch phrase – "I don't do fiddley!" Single line is available in greater lengths than those seen on the web too!

For flying in pairs or team, shorter lines reduces the amount of space you have in the sky and it also makes the kites fly faster – not so good with full sized kites!

When Marilyn and I first flew in competitions we flew on 150 ft lines. This had a few drawbacks. Longer lines are obviously heavier and this gives more drag and puts a sag in the lines meaning that you have less direct contact with the kites. It also means that the lines are pulling slightly from behind the kite rather than straight to it. Longer lines also mean you require more arena and in serious competitions where safety is paramount they could mean that you have less room to back up or could more easily overfly the boundary resulting in your disqualification and a Zero score for that weekend. Of course some of the festival arenas are a bit small causing us all to struggle – places like Weymouth when the tide is in! I also hear that longer lines create more turbulence on the following kites in the team – I'll have to check that one out.



Eventually we settled for 40 meter lines as the best compromise. Climax line comes on 100meter spools which leaves lots of off-cuts too short for anything. The trick here is to order the line uncut. We had three hundred meters – it still comes on three spools but was continuous from one to the next – but that meant we got 3 pairs of lines and one line spare with only one small piece of waste.

By the time you have sleeved the line and made loops (make big loops and you can thread nappy brakes through them) you will have come down near to the length we fly on. Like most teams we use the Protec™ line.

Stretch I will go in to how to stretch lines another time (if anyone asks) but when people talk about low stretch with pre-stretched lines, what they mean is the amount of 'give' there is in the line whilst you are flying. Imagine how much control you would have if you were flying on long pieces of elastic - which is what some of the free sets of lines we've had with *some* kites feel like! This is where using high quality line like Climax really makes the difference. We also found that because of the tight weave used in the construction of these lines they are quite thin, therefore offering less wind resistance and therefore, widening the wind range because this means that you can still be flying on stronger lines when the wind suddenly drops – a useful feature when you are flying a ballet in front of hundreds of people and, you don't have to keep stopping so often when you're flying in a field on your own.

Being so thin and the colour it is, you have to be a bit careful when the lines are on the ground and people are walking around because they are difficult to see. This can also be a bit of a pain when the lines are in the air when you are trying to get the twists out. Fortunately, due to the polishing process used in the manufacturing, this line is so slippery that you can get a heck of a lot of twists before they create any problems with control. I noticed on the climax site that they have a cleaning fluid for ongoing maintenance but they didn't send us any – so no review yet.

There are, of course many other lines in the range which is as comprehensive as you will find, from the new 20daN right up to 500daN for some of the big single line kites or specialized sets for quad line kites including power.

More information can easily be found at www.climaxlines.co.uk but If you are not on line you should write, mentioning this article please to, EMKAY Kites Unit13C, 97a, East Road, Sleaford, Lincolnshire, NG34 7EH (a stamped SAE will get you a full CD with info and catalogues) or phone on 08451 301 161 or 01529 415 00 and 07960 056 678 You will find that Climax is associated with Kites 4U who also have a range of interesting kites which we hope to be testing and reviewing here and on our web-site in the near future.

The only 'down' we could find about these lines is their 'invisibility' but that is no more then slightly annoying at times and so we would have no hesitation in recommending them.

Allan & Marilyn Potheary are "Close Encounters" – former UK National Experienced, Dual Line Pairs Champions. www.closeencounterskites.co.uk

Allan is also a former UK Individual Champion at two levels and a former winter league quad line champion.