

## Pothecary Corner

### Kite Lines

I was talking to Michael from sponsors, Kite-world.co.uk about the range of sport kites there is available and the variance in quality. One thing seems to remain constant and that is they all fly. I've said this before about there being no point in manufacturing loads of kites which are just going to be returned because they are faulty.

That's not to say that most of the traders don't get their complaints but that's usually because its tough flying upwind, in no wind at all, when the kite has been wrongly assembled or some clever Dicky who doesn't know whether it's Tuesday or Norway, has taken the bridle to bits because it didn't look right. Newbie's will usually manage to find a combination of at least two of these and something else besides.

The most common fault of all though, for why a kite misbehaves, is because the lines are not the same length. This is what grinds Michael's gears the most. I have heard him telling his customers to let out all of the line and I have watched them come back because they didn't listen. This always going to occur as long as kite lines come on hoops. I used to try and explain about line length if we had time during one of our spots in the arena but it's more of a close up thing really.

We try to remember to check the line lengths frequently. We still wind up the old fashioned way which means that when we pay out the line we have a peg (screwdriver) holding the lines at the handles and can then check for "equalness " before we tie on to the kite. I used to have a special winder which helped to show which line was longer (or shorter) but it's just as quick for me to do it without.



**3 knots on this adjuster.**

So what happens if the lines are wrong? You hear me repeating something like "red needs to be longer – one inch, red needs to be longer – one inch" all the way back to the handles where I'm hoping I have remembered to put on an adjuster. An 'adjuster' is just a separate length of old bridle-line with a series of knots, one of

**The cut down lines were attached to this casualty.**

which I shall larch loop the offending line behind.



I've mentioned the Flexifoil lines before given to us by Kite-world.co.uk (40metres - one red/one blue) and we love 'em. These lines are sewn in to the sleeving on the ends which is OK until you break one and flying in a team which occasionally has differences of opinion about which is the TRUE left - break one, we did! Fortunately, if you can say that about a break, it was only about ten inches from the end. Even if it was ordinary sleeving I wasn't about to get out the sleeving kit when I could barely feel my fingers in the cold wind anyway. At the risk of sending sleeving kit makers and sellers to the poor-house, I can tell you there is a way to tie on without the need to pass the line through the sleeve. Firstly we had to cut the other line (I hate doing that) so that they were both the same length and then made a loop on the end of both buy means of a simple, overhand knot. Next a knot was tied at the end of the old sleeve and viola, the world is your lobster – larch loop the line on and you are back in the air!



Most breaks occur in team flying due to kites passing too close and clipping the line and that is usually close to the kite. Bolting firmly the stable door, what we have done now is to add a four foot length of bridle line 'extender' on the end of our lines as this will be far cheaper and easier to replace (more spares to carry!). If you are going to fly with us in team or pairs coaching (or just for fun) we might ask you to do the same with your lines.

Allan and Marilyn Pothecary



**Line Extender**

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**New Printer at Kites Up**

I called in at Kites Up the other day to pick up some material and was introduced to the new printing machine.

“It’s a wide format digital sublimation printer” owner Roy Broadley proudly exclaimed “It’s miles better and nine times faster than the old one!”

Apparently, and I stand to be corrected on this, what this type of printer does is to change the specialised ink to gas and impregnate the material rather than to just print on the surface. This gives a much better quality of finish and when using Icarex it is very difficult to see which side is which when you using a pattern.



**Roy Produces another masterpiece.**

**Pets**

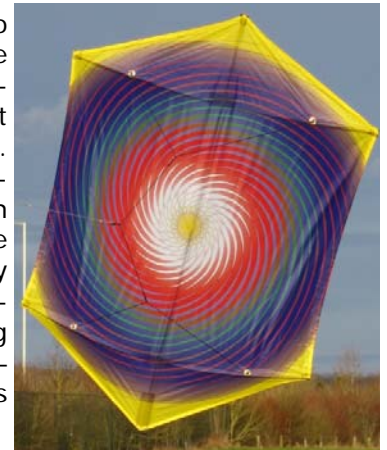
Roy told me that a lot of people have done what Close Encounters’ team member, Mags, had done which was to have a photo of their pet put on to a Rokkaku kite but the possibilities are endless and can print any computer generated image in as long a length as you can get the material. A colourful stage back-drop was appearing from the machine whilst I was there.



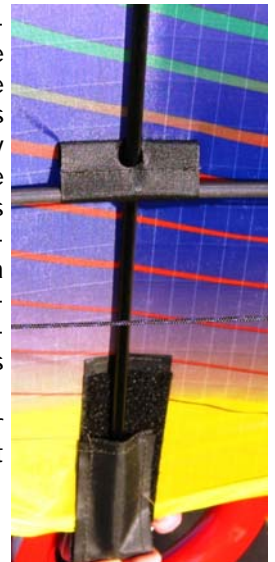
**Busy days**

Work is coming in from all over the world – it’s quicker for the Americans to have Kites up do it than they can get it done over there. The investment of around £20,000 was a good one – but you have to have the skill and experience too! To test out the machine Roy had rolled out some lovely patterns on to Icarex from which he made some

kites. Never one to miss a story for the ‘Kiteflier’ I commandeered one for a test fly and some photos. The unusual but effective spiral pattern was also used for the bag – very handy when you are scrabbling around looking for a particular kite – I hope that has started a trend!



I was expecting to have a tying job to do where the spine crosses the spreaders on the back of the kite but there was a commercial touch here by way of a tag with a hole made in it for the rod to pass through – and at the base, instead of having to loop a chord or bungee over an arrow knock, the spine is retained by Velcro. All of this was quite pleasing to me – I don’t know if you remember my saying this before - I don’t do fiddley.



**Setting up**

Roy hadn’t had time to trim the bridle settings on the kite before I took it but he’s put a few together in the past so it was pretty much OK straight off. Now not everyone reading this can proclaim to be an expert (I’m certainly not either) so a little tip when adjusting the amount of ‘bow’ on the kite is to have the bottom a little bit tighter than the top if you want it to remain stable in the sky. What can I say about the performance? – It flew like it was supposed to! You’d have to spend around £80.00 pounds or so for something like this but you can have it tailor made and if there’s anything you don’t like about it after – Roy can’t run very fast!

As I said, they are quite busy manufacturing these days so it’s always best to check out their web site [www.kitesup.co.uk](http://www.kitesup.co.uk) for opening times before paying a visit, The kite business has taken more of a back seat these days and you don’t see the Kites up tent at quite so many festivals as you used to but Roy and Hayley are still there taking the opportunity to join in with the fun with as much enthusiasm as ever.

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### Close Encounters?

Not just Close Encounters, this year it will be "The Close Encounters Kite Display Team" as well. Other members will join in on some of the arena demonstrations, all important ground crewing, helping out with coaching and the 'Try Before You Buy' of kites we carry on behalf of our various sponsors, in between times.

Marilyn and I will not only be flying some of our precision moves, colourful tails ballets and mixing some nostalgia of kites from years gone by wherever conditions allow but also there will be some team flying with even more tails, colour, and spectacle. This year we will be trying very hard to have some sort of kite demo flying for you even when there's no wind...!!

### Win a Kite!

There's going to be a new twist on me trying to break a kite session this year when I will be inviting members of the public in for a special competition and, talking of competitions – don't forget to get out that camera to enter Close Encounters "Win a Kite". The format is different this year as me and Marilyn don't really have to be in the photo at all. The prize, a Fury 85, worth around £175.00, in your own colour scheme and a set of quality lines is sponsored by multi time world beater Carl Robertshaw and Kiteworld.co.uk - and all you have to do is

enter a kite related photo, taken this year, with *COLOUR* as the theme to the web site. The one judged to be the best at the end of the season will win. This is a really easy peasey competition and a good excuse to go to as many kite festivals as you can throughout 2008. If you can't get your photo on line, you can send or give a print to a team member or Kiteworld.co.uk and they will get it scanned in for you.

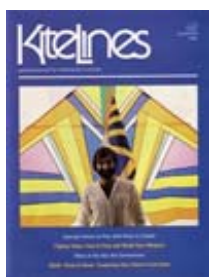
### New stuff

As well as the sport kite demonstrations, Close Encounters are always keen to show off their single line collection and hope to have many of the new range from co-sponsors HQ Invento ready for you to try.

If you have something new or different we'd like to see that too or even if you just want to say hello come on over and have a chat.

Marilyn has been hard at it at the sewing machine during the winter – she just loves spending three and a half hours cutting out 300feet of tails then a day and half sewing them all together twice! – NOT! – and I've been hard at them on the practice field - so you had just better get on down to see us – new tails, new kites, new music, new routines as well as some of the old stuff revamped – see you there!

## Kitelines and SKQ Archives



Unfortunately, the wonderful Kitelines magazine stopped production several years ago. Kitelines was one of the best kite magazines available. It covered a huge array of topics from detailed kite plans to festival reports and from kite builder profiles to kite reviews. Although Kitelines magazine is no longer produced, the full archive of all printed editions of this great magazine are now available online for you to download on the internet. It is well worth browsing through the back catalogue to reminisce about festivals and read a variety of articles that are, in many cases still extremely relevant and topical for today's kite enthusiast.



Stunt Kite Quarterly (SKQ) was another great magazine targeting (as its name suggests) sport kite flyers with kite reviews, competition results and a variety of other useful articles. You can access the full back catalogue of Kitelines Magazine and SKQ via the following websites [www.kitelife.com/kitelines/index.htm](http://www.kitelife.com/kitelines/index.htm) and [www.kitelife.com/skq/index.htm](http://www.kitelife.com/skq/index.htm)

Nigel Bence

**Kitelines**

**SKQ**  
STUNT KITE QUARTERLY

