

Soft Foils

This is something a little bit different for me but I couldn't help but notice the large number of small to medium soft foil kites there are available on the market. Even within HQ Invento there are several, all slightly different, to choose from within two ranges. Symphony Beach is the original, less expensive range whilst the New Symphony (the ones with the even number decimal points) has been hit by the price increases coming out of China. I looked at the 'Beach' 1.3 and the new Symphony 1.4 (Odd and even number decimal point – see?). I'm going to say right out front that around £36.00 to £40.00 and almost

twice the price the New Symphony is my favourite. There are noticeable differences in quality. Both kites have nice bags although the new one is smaller and lighter. The NS



The Symphony Beach

(New Symphony) has slightly shorter and better quality lower stretch, braided lines. It is good to see that both kites have handles rather than rings although in both cases the lines were of slightly different lengths. Having handles means that the beginner, who will always try to fly without unwinding the lines fully, has no choice but to be the correct distance from the kite – it can't be that difficult to make lines the same length can it? They go to all that trouble making the kite fly well by being symmetrical and then forget something really basic that a beginner will not realise like equal lines!

The NS only needs 4mph to get it going compared to nearly double that in the 'Beach' and it flies a little bit slower too giving slightly better control – or that could have been the fact there was less stretch in the lines. Overall, I preferred the shape, colour and general feel of



The New Symphony

the NS. Both kites, I have to say were little bundles of fun. You can't do much other than whizz them around in infinities, long ground passes, circles and dives to the ground, recovering just before you hit. Some sharp turns, especially near the edge of the window will result in the kite collapsing and rolling to the ground like a bag of washing. Once on the ground a little bit of careful tugging in the right way and a bit of luck can promote a successful re-launch, otherwise you either need a partner or some available sand to hold the kite in position whilst you go back to the pilot's end. I was surprised at how much fun I had and will definitely keep one in the car now so that I can scratch that itch to fly during the occasional gap between appointments. These kites are excellent, virtually unbreakable, ways of learning to stay airborne and so small and light to carry anywhere and even more so without the bag they come in – One for the holiday!

My views

It's easy for me to talk about Invento HQ kites because, as one of our sponsors, they often

make kites readily available for us to review and use for 'try before you buy' and training new flyers as well as use in our demonstrations. Yes there are other kite makers out there but, if they don't subscribe, I can't tell you about them.

Someone once said that I only say good things about kites in my articles? Well I try to be fair and give the best opinion I can, directed mainly at the novice to intermediate flyer – I've never pretended to be anything better than intermediate and some would say that I wasn't that good – but there are some kites that I have tried and have not written about because, in my opinion, they are so bad. Therefore you are free to assume that if I have not written about it then it's because either I didn't like it or have never tried it. I'm not about to confirm anything in print but if you still want to know – come over and ask me!