

## Start Safely

OK, this one really grinds my gears!

Much in the way a good curry is not measured by its heat or the bench-mark for a good car is not simply its top speed a good kite is not measured by how hard it pulls!

There is one person working in a kite shop somewhere along the south coast who would do well to remember that next time they sell a potentially lethal power kite to someone who has never even flown a kite before.

If I knew who they were, then I would name them here!

We got a letter in to the web-site asking about places to fly in the New Forest – in fact there are very few places there in which kite flying is permitted because of all of the wild life and free roaming farm animals and ponies and, those places where kiting is allowed don't lend themselves easily to much other than single lines because of the gorse bushes.

Anyhow this guy had managed to get something like a five metre kite very cheaply and put his girlfriend straight on the business end for her very first flight. I'm not going on about him because he obviously had not been warned of the dangers by the retailer and, thinking about it, he could just as easily have bought something similar from a catalogue type shop where good, personalized advice would also have been absent! As you'd expect, the girl quickly experienced the power just before she hit the ground. Well, I suppose they were young and thoroughly enjoyed it – bruises don't last that long at that age – and they were lucky that first flight wasn't near a busy road or on the edge of a cliff or even close to electric power cables – but they still thought that it was a good kite because it pulled a lot.

## Workout

Having said all that, I occasionally enjoy a good, workout battle with the wind (I always lose) but I have found a way to make it a lot safer – my joints and bruises take a long time to heal...!!

There are a few kites about with a third line attached to the bottom, trailing edge which enable you to collapse the kite and immediately take the

power out of it as soon as you feel that you have lost control or simply can't hang on any longer. The one we have is the Rush II 300 Pro by HQ Invento.

## Red's not Right!

It comes already to fly, straight out of the bag with the lines attached to the kite and the colour coded handle. Red is on the left with this one – that goes



against the grain with me – I'm so used to "Red is Right!" The safety line runs down through the middle from the trailing edge of the kite through the control bar and is attached with a Velcro strap to the flyer's wrist. This line gives a third dimension to the kite in that it is possible to fly the kite backwards and upwards when it is on the ground with the leading edge downward. After a little bit of practice relaunching the kite soon becomes a synch and enjoying flying time increases.

## Quick Release



The mechanics are that when the control bar is released the main flying lines become the longest and the third line pulls the bottom edge toward the flyer and the kite collapses. With a little bit of deftness the kite can even be recovered before it hits the ground. I found it great fun and a whole lot safer way to learn how to fly a power kite – this kite *can* pull by the way!