



THE KITE

NEWSLETTER

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Spring 2019



Welcome to our new Secretary Sarah Kay (above)

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Do you remember when ... with Bernard Crick

Ken Paull's first year as a "novice kiter"

**Another fiendishly hard puzzle, this one from Dorothy
(who was first to email the correct answer to the last puzzle)**

Ian Duncalf wins the kite making competition.

Festival report from Berck by Sarah.

**St Annes
Registration
is now open**

**Go to page 3
to find out
what you
must do.**

2019 Rokkaku Challenge

Following the successful contest last year SmileFactor10 have again kindly agreed to put up prize money of £100 for another contest at Country Fest in June. More details nearer the time, in the meantime get your Rok ready!

Chairman's Note - Spring 2019

Hello and welcome to this newsletter.

I would like to thank all those who attended our AGM in February, it was well attended and the group business was conducted successfully.

The AGM was characterised by the Chairman losing track of the business of electing a new Secretary and I must endeavour to do better next time! It gave everyone a good laugh however. So Dave our retiring Secretary stood down and was awarded a cheque to put towards some kiting goodies. His good lady Lynn was also awarded a bouquet and no doubt had a big sigh of relief that Dave's secretarial duties had actually come to an end.

We did of course welcome our new Secretary, Sarah Kay and I would like to wish her all success in this new venture.

I'm sure we would all like to extend to Dave and Lynn our heartfelt thanks for all they have contributed to the NKG over the last ten years and wish them lots of sunshine and good winds in their kite-flying endeavours in the future.

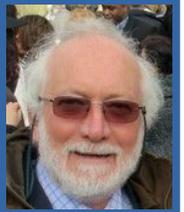
We are still to start our main flying season so there isn't a great deal else to say. May I take this opportunity to wish all our members a great new year of kite flying.

Stay safe and enjoy your flying.

Len Royles – Chairman

March 2019

From our
Chairman
Len Royles



Dave & Lynn Bleasdale

The **End of Season Do** will be held on Saturday 2 November at the Whittingham Social Club, 3 miles north east of Preston, PR3 2JE. Camping and hardstanding for caravans is available as well as a field for kites. More details will be sent closer to the time.

St Annes International Kite Festival



Great news!

Registration for St Annes International Kite Festival is now open.

We have a lot to live up to after last year's phenomenal festival, but we are going for it (I know, we must be crazy!) with a new committee and the help and support of the Fylde Borough Council.

To allow the festival to grow year on year whilst maintaining our open door policy, there have been a few necessary changes - including the tough decision not to pay expenses - but looking after our fantastic kite flying friends remains at the forefront of all we do and we are 100% committed to building a bigger and brighter future for the festival.

We have lots of plans so we hope you can join us at St Anne's Beach on Friday 9th, Saturday 10th & Sunday 11th August 2019.

Please complete the registration form before the end of May if you would like to attend:
<https://www.smilefactor10.co.uk/register>

Sue Kennedy and Craig Harby

Kite Making Competition

The Mary & Jack Cunningham Trophy

Ian Duncalf from Manchester won this years competition.

The blue kite is a light wind kite called "Urban Ninja" which was designed by Thomas Horvath from Switzerland.

The orange kite is a Mid Vented Revolution kite.

Ian said, "I have been making kites for over 25 years and after visiting St Annes Kite Festival in 2018 I decided I wanted a new challenge in kite flying and shortly after I bought my first rev. When i saw the simplicity of the kite I decided to make my own. "

"I sourced a plan of the internet and then made my first rev. A multi coloured one from bits of ripstop in my bits bag. I then made friends with Sarah Kay who put me in touch with Josh Mitcheson who supplied me with all the icarex and parts to make the orange rev."



I've been using kite tails a lot since I tried multi-flying, flying 2 kites together, which looks so much better to the eye with kite tails. But, the worst job in the world is winding them up afterwards – I'd rather do the ironing (don't tell my wife I said that !)

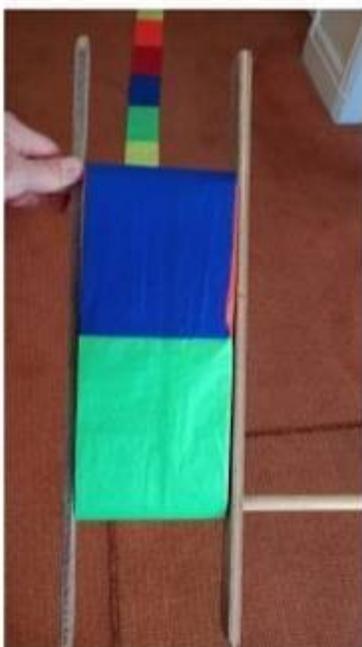
by
John Ellerton



With a bit of inspiration from YouTube, I made this winder, which makes light work of winding up kite tails. All for about £4. If you're interested, mine is two pieces of (scrap) plywood, 18" x 1" (10mm thick) and 2 pieces of wooden dowel, 12" x 12mm diameter. The dowel has a 25mm wood to metal dowel screwed into it, with the M4 bolt section sticking out. This screws into a 10mm M4, type D insert nut which has been screwed into the plywood. A 13mm hole is drilled into the plywood, through which the wooden dowel is inserted.



The wooden dowels act as handles to turn the winder and wind up the tail. When all wound in, separate the two halves of the winder, and you have your kite tail. A useful bit of kit.



A tale of three kites; bridles and tails

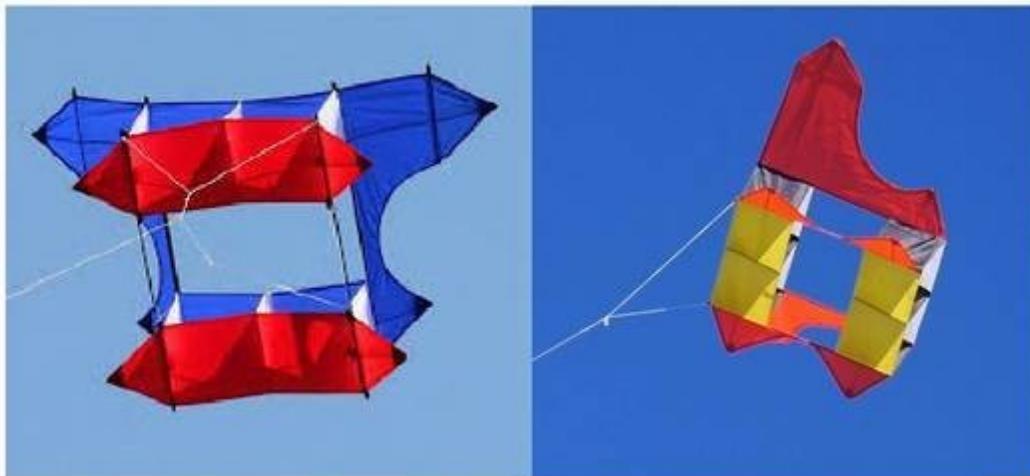
Eddie McGrath designed a beautiful small owl kite, great to fly and looked good in the sky, its only drawback was its limited wind speed range. One of the kite “magicians” thought it could be improved and played around with it . The result was a change to the spine from its original wooden dowel to a more flexible split bamboo spine. It will now fly in most wind conditions. **Why?**

A one metre fighting Rok I made would only fly properly with a tail attached. No good for fighting and not a proper Rok either. After several frustrating attempts to cure it I decided to scrap it, but just beforehand I made one last try. I turned it upside down and readjusted the bridles. Magic, it flew great! **Why?**

The third one is a small Greens “strato scoop”. This flew like a brick, so I tried turning it into a parachute for a teddy bear, this didn’t work either. Having lost the original bridle legs I tied on some others which were longer than the originals . It now flies perfectly. **Why?**

Bridles, these are the bits of string you fasten the flying line to. They make sure the kite flies square to the wind and at the correct angle, or do they?

Try bridling a Cody winged box. Martin Lester showed me how to bridle mine with the classic complicated arrangement. It flew no better than the four simple legs I had used.



We were test flying one of Bernard Crick’s Codys and it was clear the bottom bridles were loose and doing nothing at all. Another newer Cody Dave Bleasdale was flying only had two legs attached to the top! Two legs good, four legs bad as George Orwell might have said.

Try a simple box kite; the Gibson Girl does not have any bridles and most commercial ones have a two leg bridle.

John Welborn’s column



Some kites need long bridles and others only short ones.

My facet snowflake did not fly well. Tony Slater said he could cure it, to my horror he took out a knife and cut the bridles off! He then tied two short legs back on. It flew much better. **Why?**

Has anyone cured a wobbling Eddy? Mine does not do it all the time but when it does I cannot stop it wobbling.

Flat kites need bridles to hold the kite square to the wind, three, four or even more, but what about that clever flat workshop kite that does not have any, the flying line fastens directly onto the middle of the cross spar



The scientific analysts will tell you that there are four forces at work on a kite, lift, drag, thrust and gravity. Balancing them properly makes the kite fly well. The centre of pressure and the centre of gravity should coincide.

Some kites need dihedral or bowing to stabilise them and others need tails of varying length.

What about tails, these are the things fastened to the bottom of the kite. Technically they create drag and make sure the kite points upwards most or all of the time.

Experts say that a tail should be at least seven times the length of the spine.

If your kite misbehaves add more tail, if it still misbehaves add even more tail and then more again! If the the end of the tail is still on the ground when the kite is high in the sky you have overdone it!

I am told that if the tail is the right length it should wave slowly from side to side like a drunken man walking along. I walk like that most of the time anyway!

Tails are very light in weight but I have a kite that needs a heavy tail, a light one does not steady the kite at all however long I make it. **What's going on?** Answers on a post card please.

Trial and error, science and black magic are all in the mix. What hope does the poor kite flyer have of finding out why their kite will not fly? One kite expert said, study your kite carefully, analyse what is wrong, work out the best way to correct it and then do the exact opposite!

So, do not despair if your kite will not fly. Throw it away and buy a Rainbow Delta, otherwise you could go quite mad trying to cure it!



The NKG mini rainbow deltas

The NKG Questionnaire Challenge with Sarah Kay

Favourite Kite: From the moment I first saw Revolution kites (being flown by NKG members Steve Grimwood and Caroline Senior at Heath Kite Festival in 2016, I knew that four-line kites were the kites for me. I went home and spoke to Tony Dane straight after the festival, and two Revs were soon winging their way to me. I have quite a few four line kites now, including various home-made ones (a winter project last year). My absolute favourite is “Scrappy” – a brightly coloured patchwork of icarex, which I made using mainly off-cuts from other kite-making projects.

Best flying field: Has to be the beach at St Anne’s – a huge sandy beach with plenty of room for everyone, and lots of places nearby for food and drink.

If you could choose what would your super powers be? As a child, I often used to dream I could fly, and it still tops the list of useful superpowers for me.

What is your guiltiest pleasure? Umm, I think it’s still developing – I seem to be becoming fascinated by more eccentric musical instruments. It started with the ukulele a couple of years ago, and has recently spread to include the harmonica and the washboard. Oh, and spoons!

What was your dream when you were growing up? Every little girl’s dream is to have a pony of their own. I was no different, although I did think it might be nice to have a riding cow in the back garden if a pony wasn’t an option. Anyway, on my 38th birthday I finally achieved my childhood dream and bought my first pony, a gorgeous opinionated black Dales pony mare called Megan.



Sarah and Scrappy

Megan and her foal Max



What is the most important lesson life has taught you? To focus on the positives in life. I love the expression “It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness”.

What is your earliest memory? Uh-oh, it’s a bit of a strange one, and I don’t know why I remember this.... I remember a strange gurgling frog ornament in the next door neighbour’s house (when I was about 3 years old)

Which living person do you most admire, and why? Easy. Without a doubt, it is Mike Peters, the lead singer of my favourite pop group from the 1980’s – The Alarm. He was awarded an MBE for services to charity and to cancer care. He has personally fought cancer three times, and since his original diagnosis has just got on and raised funds for cancer care as well as encouraging concert-goers to sign up to the bone marrow register with a strapline “saving lives, one concert at a time”.

What is the trait you most deplore in yourself? Oh, er, it's probably that I am a compulsive collector of things. Not clutter, but useful things; inspiring things; things I can learn from.

Who would play you in the film of your life? Victoria Wood

What is your kiting ambition in the next 12 months? I'm enjoying finding out what I need to do as NKG Secretary, and I am also finding out just how much work goes on behind the scenes so that everything runs smoothly. I will be delighted if I can carry out the role even half as well as our previous Secretary, Dave Bleasdale, in the coming year.



Victoria Wood

Kites for Sale on NKG Website

Just a small selection of the kites available. Check out the website.



Due in part to the low uptake of the items for sale, Len has reduced the prices of the foil kites. The larger are now down from £25 each to £20, the smaller from £12 to £8. Appropriate discounts for multiple items. He is now offering to post items out and for a large jiffy this will be £4.85 or so. Larger items will be at cost and this can ramp up. So larger items might still be better delivered at events or fly-ins.

Len intends to open the sale up to other groups and Ebay as he must clear these items so if there is anything that you might fancy **don't leave it too late!**

The sale items can be accessed from the NKG website via the Items for Sale link.

Do you remember when...

You have got to be in it to win it, or if you never try you will never know what you missed.

by
Bernard Crick



Well they may be true words, but as you turn off the main road to go up a narrow country lane.

Any problems there? After a short distance you are on a hillbilly road, with rocks, boulders and very deep ruts. It looks just like the bed of a river, well it had been. A week or so before a tropical storm hit, and washed the road surface away depositing it in the pub car park at the bottom of the hill. Going back was not an option, then on the hilltop a road of crushed brick and stone.



There I had a beautiful view of the Pennines with birds chirping as I rolled across the moorland road. Sorry about this - I forgot to mention where I was going. The Peel Tower a well known land mark with commanding views over Bury and all the surrounding Pennine towns and villages.



The organisers of the Cancer Relief Fund raising event were busy setting up, and soon provide my favourite morning tippie, a cup of tea of course. Together with Rodger we set up a ground display of fish, no one really expects to see fish bobbing about on the top of a Pennine hill. One small child shouting "what's Nemo doing here"? Peter was busy tangling and untangling line. Len managed to get his handmade Genki into the air. They are not the easiest of kites to fly in skittish wind, and there was a lot of bog and mini ponds around so the landing had to be in the right spot. Dazzz who was as relaxed as always, with the latest designer gear. That is designed for the Pennine weather, with ear to ankle coat and a large hood together with actual waterproof footwear. *Dazzz lives in the Pennines so know exactly what to wear, and he was flying a kite.*

We were blessed with a little sunshine and spectacular views, with Manchester laid out in the far distance. The kites went up and down again, *such is the Pennine wind*. Then in the distance a cloud bank was rolling in very quickly, the view had gone and spots of drizzle now signalled it was time to pack up. We packed up the fish in double quick time, there is nothing worse than driving home with a shoal of wet fish in your car!

As the rain set in the volunteers were busy packing up, and afterwards we had a little time for a chat. We had made our mark and flew a few kites, everyone appreciated our efforts. For us it was not the easiest of places to fly kites, as it is very rare to get a warm beach wind on the top of a Pennine hill. We were then asked if it would be possible to do a teddy bear drop. This could have been done, but with a new name Bears in the Bog! The thoughts of soggy bears, children, and bear catchers in the bog covered in mud. The mind boggles!

The novice kite flier

In 2017, while on holiday with Sue Storey, we found a beach (Baie des Trepassés in Brittany, France) with wind ideally suited to flying a kite (steady wind, not too strong, sun behind us when flying). After flying a 2 line stunt kite for a while she asked if I wanted to try it and we found that I could manoeuvre it competently, even though it had

been 40 years since I flew one with my sons. Several months and flying sessions later I found I liked pairs flying. At the St Anne's festival that year Sue bought a grey Venom 2 line sport kite (at the auction) because it had a nice picture of a Panther on it. The following day we both liked its flying performance so I bought a new red one to allow us to fly in pairs formation. On arrival it was clear that the new kite was faster than the old one and Sue volunteered to adjust the pair with the result that the new kite now flew slower than the old kite. After a lot of debate and changing things (spars, stand-offs) there was still a difference in performance. Both kites were returned to the manufacturer for them to set them up identically and on their return they were closer in speed. Common sense said that adjustment of the angle of attack of the kite was required and looking at the internet showed how adjustments to the bridle were incorporated in the design and how they worked. A morning was spent measuring both bridles, marking the bridles to achieve datum points and changing the knots to allow adjustment without slipping and off we went to fly. A bit of experimental flying. some adjustment to the angle of attack and the kites' performance matched, at the speed the new kite achieved when it first arrived. We now have matched speed kites which fly a sequence of manoeuvres which make a display which we flew at St Anne's last year.

by
Ken Paulls



The people I've encountered while flying kites have been a mixed bunch but all are competitive. Those with manoeuvring kites compare manoeuvres - difficulty, complexity, precision. Those with static kites compare size, novelty, complexity. Both types are proud of their kites and want to demonstrate how good they and their kites are.

While practising our flying, passers by have come and talked to us, complimented us on the "show" and are pleased when we let them try flying. Passers-by often walk under the kites oblivious to the risk of collision they put themselves in, and often resent us warning them of the danger. Some want to argue about who has priority of use of public spaces, which I guess includes the sky above them. Many of the non-kite flying people "supervising" areas suitable for flying become "Jobsworths" and seem to take great pleasure in preventing flying. On the other side of the coin some kite flyers fly in risky areas just to see what they can get away with.

I enjoy flying pairs but find it frustrating that there's variability in wind conditions which affects the accuracy of the sequence we practice.

Kite Aerial Photography a beginners guide

*How you can produce stunning
photographs like these*

by
Sue Storey



I have been fascinated by the aerial photos I have taken over the last 12 years. My involvement in KAP has taken me to Holland, the South of France and the US to attend KAP conferences as well as various places in the UK & abroad just KAPing places which looked like they could be interesting from on high. The rigs I use have become more complex over the years ending with one which turns as the camera takes photos and I can tilt it using a remote control.

However, you can take aerial photos on any camera or phone which will take photos at regular intervals. I think all the small action cameras have interval timers as well as being good video cameras. The simplest rig I use for my **SJ4000 Action Camera** is a piece of kite line about 50cm long tied to the camera's waterproof case and to a small carabiner to attach it to the kite line. The camera tends to move round in the wind so taking photos in random directions. The horizon will also be in random directions!



Examples of simple rigs

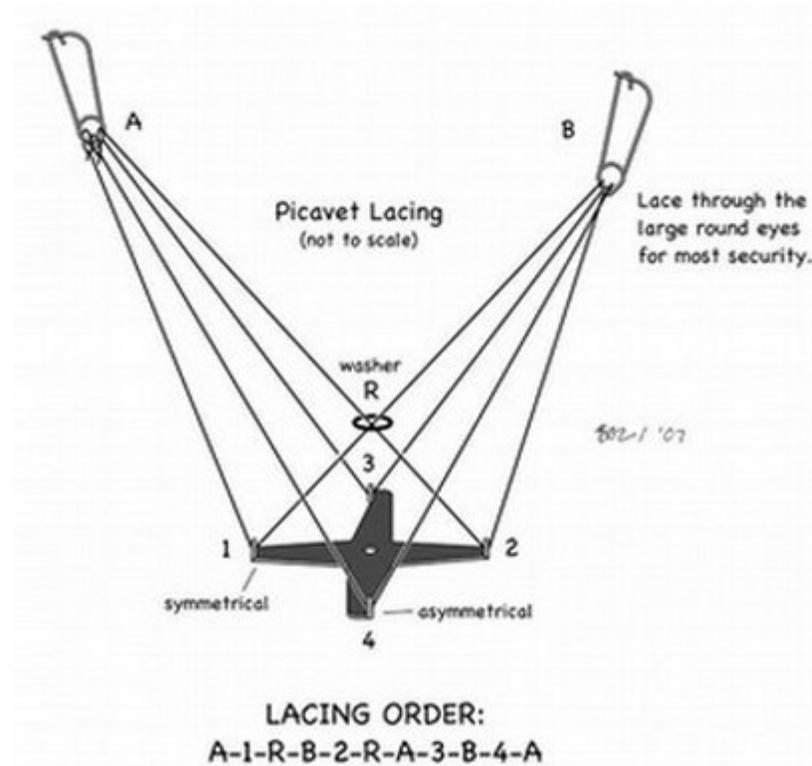
If you use some of the connectors for the Action Camera the camera can be tilted down quite a way to take (almost) straight down which can be fun to see.

Selfie Sticks with a Mobile Phone

Modern phones can be used, attached to a **selfie stick**. A "constrictor" knot is used to tie the selfie stick to the kite line. (It will give you more confidence of you secure the phone with a rubber band to the selfie stick) The up and down angle can be set and the direction in relation to the kite line has to be set before flying it. An app called "**Open camera**" is a good one to trigger the phone camera.

Picavet

There is a system called a Picavet which keeps the camera more level than these simple rigs. I made a tiny Picavet from a servo disk (available from model shops and online) and some screw eyes (see below).



My first Picavet was made from 1 x 0.5cm wood, screw eyes, kite line, small carabiners and small shelf brackets. It was adapted later to have pulleys instead of screw eyes. Here's a metal one.



A German friend, Wolfgang Bieck, made a mini Picavet for his Go-Pro. It also has a Wi-Fi downlink! He was proud to show me this tiny rig plus camera in a pill box about 8cm x 8cm which he took from his shirt pocket. He is known for flying a 1kg rig on a huge powerful kite. He now only uses the Go-Pro and takes some great photos with it.



Safety while KAPing

A camera wrist strap or string 'safety belt' can be attached to a normal point and shoot camera to the KAP frame. Strong elastic bands can be used on smartphones for peace of mind. I also tie the tripod screw to the frame with string so I don't lose them in the grass. You can buy them with a loop on for the string. On only one occasion has a tripod screw come unscrewed so I had a few vertical photos while the camera hung on its safety line till I restored things. On some rigs (leftover) carbon fibre legs can be attached to keep the rig off the sand and out of damp grass. I always use gloves as some of the kites I use can be powerful if the wind picks up. I have some ex-police pigskin gloves - man size - which I can pull off easily and quickly to attend to the rig & camera and put them on easily as well. They protect me from line burns if the kite line runs out fast. It hasn't often because something else I use is a very large smooth mouthed carabiner to run the line through. The line can be wound round the carabiner a few times which takes the load while attending to the rig & camera and also so the spool, kite & rig don't have to be chased. I wasn't using one when on the bank of the River Rhine. A gust of wind snatched the spool out of my hand and the kite flew across the river heading for Germany till a sailor captured it and brought it to the nearby marina. Phew. It was my homemade spool.

To give you confidence in flying your camera or phone; in 12 years I have only had two cameras have an unscheduled landings. The Pentax W90 and rig fell on the sand when my line was accidentally cut by the lines of a parafoil stunt kite at St Anne's kite festival a few years ago. The Brookes frame and the camera wrist strap bar bent. The frame straightened out OK and the camera bar lasted another few years. I sold that camera last year- still working OK but without the bar. The other was my first SJ4000 which landed on its lens when the rig came unscrewed from its attachment to the kite line. I wasn't using the waterproof housing or the lens protector or a safety belt! That one was a write off! They do say **"if you can't afford to lose it, don't fly it!"**

Pendulum rigs

I have made pendulum rigs using 21cm wide strap aluminium which is able to tilt up and down and swivel round too. A piece of coat hanger wire can be bent like in this photo too attach it to the kite line, winding the kite line round it as shown. They are easy to set up and attach to the kite line while still flying the kite – though it's easier still with a willing helper!



Off the shelf – the Flexifoil Camera Kite

There is a new KAP outfit made it is the Camera Kite made by Flexifoil. It is aimed at newcomers and is a superb kit which includes everything except a smartphone or Action Camera. The kite is 2metres across and the kit includes a superb reel with a brake and lock. there's also a specially made re-chargeable **gimbal** attached to the kite frame to keep the camera level when looking sideways from the kite. The kit comes in a sturdy plastic rucksack with a smaller bag with the straps and gloves etc in. Flexifoil keep having offers and have brought the kit down from well over £300 to less than £100 in some cases.

Festival Report

Berck sur Mer: Taking the Plunge

Kite-fliers who can go to Berck, do!

Here are my top 20 reasons for taking the plunge, going via Eurotunnel, and driving my car in France for the first time in 2018, and again this April.



- 1) Berck is one of the world's most prominent kite festivals, and it is only a short hop across the Channel from us.
- 2) It's a 9 day festival – 7 days longer than any of the UK festivals
- 3) It's an easy drive – it really is! Turn right at Calais. Drive south on the A16 for around 50 miles. Turn right and there you are at Berck.
- 4) The passion, ambition and commitment of all involved is remarkable: an estimated 700,000 people visit each year, along with 500 kite-fliers and an amazing selection of kites.
- 5) It's so inclusive! People of all ages and abilities are there to enjoy the show, and many bring their own kites to fly outside of the main arenas.
- 6) Awesome teamwork and communication bonds fliers from different countries, sharing their love of kites.
- 7) Six flying arenas, plus a wind garden, laid out along half a mile of a beach that goes on for miles.
- 8) Interactive arena with continuous displays including the formation flying of 2 and 4 line mega-teams (open to any competent flier).
- 9) Incredible night fly with entertainers and fireworks on a simply massive scale.
- 10) The whole town is vibrant – the promenade is packed with stalls, and many shops have window displays including kites.
- 11) My favourite kite of the whole week was a 4 line kite “le Coeur” made by a French flier – with many cutaway hearts on it, so when it flew close to the sand its shadow showed the shape of lots of hearts too.



12) A close second was a selection of kites, all of the same shape, but made to individual colours and patterns, by members of an Italian kite group.

13) In 3rd place was a combination of 2 new initiatives at Berck: an increasing number of people flying 4 line stacks, and the launch of the "Black Sails" team trying out new 4-line moves.

14) Two huge inflatable fish

15) A train of 25 sheep!

16) Beach walks to watch over 50 "phoques gris" (grey seals) basking on a sand bank or bobbing about in the sea watching all the people watching them.

17) A 10km circular walk around Berck

18) Horse-riding on a nearby quiet beach

19) Free parking!

20) And to end the day, a stunning sunset over the sea.

Feeling tempted?



A puzzle from Dorothy Rourke



	MISSED ROUND	LINE CUT	FAILED TO ENGAGE	TRIPPED OVER	WON THE CONTEST	SAMURAI PRINT	PLAIN GREEN	KOI CARP	DRAGON PRINT	STRIPED	1ST	2ND	3RD	4TH	5TH
GARY															
HOWARD															
JASON															
MARK															
ROBBIE															
1ST															
2ND															
3RD															
4TH															
5TH															
SAMURAI PRINT															
PLAIN GREEN															
KOI CARP															
DRAGON PRINT															
STRIPED															

REPORT ON THE CONTEST

The man with the striped kite was disqualified for failing to engage in the fight. The dragon kite flier came third.

Howard, with his plain green kite, finished one place behind the flier who had his line cut. The guy with the koi carp kite did not finish in second place. Jason finished in last place. Mark lost points when he missed a round to go off and buy a pint. Gary did not come first but warmly congratulated the winner.

JUDGES SCORECARD *complete this and email the answers to peter_hartt@hotmail.com*

NAME OF FLIER	HOW IT ENDED	KITE DESCRIPTION	FINAL POSITION

The Northern Kite Group



The Northern Kite Group has a committee made up of four officers:

Chair	Len Royles
Secretary	Sarah Kay
Treasurer	John Whymark
Membership Secretary	Keith Proctor

In addition Tony Kidd acts as the Group Librarian and Peter Hartt is the Newsletter Editor.

We have our own Website – www.nkg.org.uk which contains much information about the Group, our events, back copies of the newsletter, AGM minutes, contact details for the officers and much more.

This newsletter is made up of articles submitted by members for which we are grateful. If you can contribute to future editions in any way please contact the editor. Photographs are especially welcome as are descriptions of kites built by members.