

Festival – Ultra light paragliders

Sky Paragliders Antea

The Antea has really filled us with enthusiasm during our festival with DHV 2 rated gliders in 2007/2008. Above all because of its pleasing, easy flying behaviour and at the same time its great handling and good performance. This powerful glider of the 2 classification is in addition extremely light and therefore with just above 5 kg of weight an alternative in the class of ultra light paragliders.

For our festival in the 2 rating we have done a little bit “downsizing” and so we have chosen the size M (75-95 kg) of the Antea instead of the size L (90-110 kg). The designer Alexandre Paux proves that he understands designing ultra light paragliders, as already done with the Pro Design Accura glider and he follows with this trend a similar philosophy as Gradient.

When we look on the Antea glider we will be surprised, as originally the performance is contradictory to the ultra light construction: the higher the DHV rating and the more performance a glider has, the more you need to design a glider with “heavy” materials to ensure the profile and therefore the performance.

Although the Antea is a performance glider, the lines can be fast and easily sorted also thanks to the clear concept of lines.

Because of its aspect ratio (5.5) the Antea naturally can not be started so easily compared to the other test candidates with DHV 1 and 1-2 rating, which have very light qualities. But referred to the DHV 2 rating the Antea presents the simplest and finest start handling as well forward as backward. The Antea is no handicap even in difficult and demanding alpin open ground - provided that the pilot has the right ability.

Also the performance pilot feels immediately good under the Antea in the air, also flown on the upper weight limit. The wing makes its curves like an easy manoeuvrable speed machine and offers an excellent handling. The wing feels very well in thermal conditions and pushes up in the air dynamically. As the Antea glider is not only a flat turner, smooth conditions presuppose a very well handling to be able to turn over its whole performance potential: especially if you tear the break lines too much and/or if you use too much of your weight, you could destroy the existing performance through too much sinking in the starting weight range around the 95 kg.

But the feedbacks which the pilot receives of the cap are extremely exact, and in combination with the extreme manoeuvrability it makes only fun to move the Antea in the upwind.

And although the pilots of the Gleitschirm magazin have classified the cap characteristic rather as hard, the sensitive pilot feels behind the hard cap a soft core: soft qualities in the flattening, which make flying in turmoils so comfortable, which appear naturally stronger when you do area loading.

Concerning the aids in descending especially the deep spiral inspires, which can be induced fast because of the high facility. Also the B-stall can be completed well and easily. But we have noticed a remarkable backwards movement during the introduction and a notable forward movement during the release!

The performance glider of the DHV 2 class is a greatly interesting alternative for all those pilots who want to have an ultra light paraglider combined with a distance wing. Apart from the ultra light potential the Antea is a powerful paraglider in the DHV 2 classification. The paraglider only needs a little bit more of popularity as well as a German authorisation (all sizes have ENC) which will surely lead to a bigger diffusion in our country. We would wish this the wing well always.

Sky Paraglideres Cima

Besides the normal paragliders, which are extremely light, as for example the above described Antea, Sky Paragliders also has a special ultra light paraglider in its product line. This paraglider is 4.3 kg light and has 42 cells and is however constructed with the normal, persistent fabric and the standard enhanced lines.

Concerning the lines: they are easily to sort thanks to the color-coded separation and thanks to the assessable concept of lines. But you are surprised when you first see the steering handle of the Cima. The material is extremely thin and only a thin plastic amplification composes the breaking handle. But a real sensation is the attachment of the breaking handles at the risers: because of reasons of the weight you will not find any attachment. Press button or magnetic connection – negative report. Instead you find amazed a little and solid piece of material, which is sewed on the main breaking line upside the breaking handle. If this piece of material passes unnoticed through the breaking return shaft, the breaking handle is quasi locked. You can not have it easier!! In the beginning appealing rustically and like a relict of the “eastern bloc improvisation time”, afterwards convinced of simplest functionality.

Also you are able to handle the real start without any big tricks when you display the glider, which again is easy and assessable.

The Cima differs from the hard fun caps of this festival in the comfortable and for beginners suitable behaviour. Perhaps this is also a little bit due to the fact that we could only organize a Cima in size L for this festival. But also this L-size with its area loading of 3.5 and with its 95 kg starting weight lies in an area of other testing candidates. High nodding and rolling flattening and a little delayed reaction on steering impulses give a gentle “boat” in the air, which sail safely from upwind to upwind. A good climbing behaviour makes sure that you have no restrictions in the thermal and that you can also always fly high on the basis with the slight curved cap.

If you want to do manoeuvres like big ears and B-stall you will need a relatively high exertion of force, as the cap resists deformations. Also for the initiation of the deep spiral the Cima needs a little bit time, but turns then into a spiral with accelerated decline. The initiation is then very easy, the Cima turns willingly and without big swings into its normal flight. Also the speed system can only be operated a little heavyhanded and only with an exertion of force. If you consider the size, the maximum speed of 46 km/h is absolutely alright. The Cima is an allrounder, also suitable for beginners and it meets all requirements of an ultra light paraglider as far as the weight of a middle to big packing volume and the flight characteristics are concerned.