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Review : **CrossFire**
 Size : **All**
 Company : [HQ](#)
 Author : [Jerry](#)

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HQ Take a step up:

The Beamer is one of the most successful beginner/intermediate kites out there, and wanting to make a kite that would be the next step for flyers, but with the same affordability and robustness, HQ's foil designer Alex Hesse came up with the kite that was to become the Crossfire. Alex designed his own aerofoil profile, calling it the AH001, with the aim being to have predictable lift for the kite to be used for landboards, snowboards and the more extreme end of buggying. The initial size range is going to be from 2.4m to 7.7m.



On opening up the 4m prototype for the first time some key features became apparent right from the start. The kite is of very strong construction, with Mylar reinforced forward sections to the ribs the air vents are held open even with the kite lying on it's back on the floor. This to me means improved resistance to collapsing, with the vents held open the kite inflates readily on launched and can recover from any lack of internal pressure easily.

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All bridle attachment points are reinforced, which coupled with the fully sewn Kevlar/Dyneema bridle makes for a tough set up. Velcro closures on the tips at the trailing edge allow for any errant sand or much to be much more easily cleaned out, and the sensibly placed Velcro bridle keep makes control of the bridle during packing much easier if you are in the habit of swapping lines a lot. By placing this keep within the leading edge of the kite the trailing edge can be weighted down wind sand etc for launching without the problem of burying the stored bridle which happens when the keeps are on the trailing edge.



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Visually the kite is a little different from the rest. For the first time I can recall the benefit of the visual appearance of the kite is directed towards the pilot, rather than onlookers. With the underside being the main colour, and the upper skin in white the pilot is presented with an illuminated kite rather than the often pasty appearance of kites with white undersides and coloured tops. The decorative stripe which adorns the lower skin is reproduced on the top using the main colour of the underside of each kite size. With the kite aloft the pilot is presented with three layers of décor, the underside, the internal cross bracing ribs, then the top surface. Which all points towards a fresh looking kite which has good contrast against the skies which is easy to keep visually oriented.

The Crossfire comes complete with standard pre-stretched Dyneema flying lines. I have never had to adjust any of the lines supplied by HQ, so no problems there. The handles are an improved version of the Beamer types, with thicker softer grips which will appeal to a lot of people, and the addition of nylon ferrules to protect the leaders where they exit the handle. The backpack is an excellent piece of kit which carries the big comedy zip the Beamers have which does make me grin. Kite killers have been included and a stake too, so there is no reason to buy anything else to get yourself airborne out of the packaging.



So, to flying. This kite is very well behaved on the ground. Staking through the brake loops allows the kite to sit tight on the deck reliably without any tendency for the trailing edge to lift up. Launching is straightforward, the kite rises in a gentle power up and sits at the zenith with ease. It is here that the 'step up' from the Beamer becomes apparent. This kite has lift, and where the Beamer was designed to have reduced lift, the Crossfire has it in abundance. You're not going to get rest at the top with this one!

The pronounced arc shape to the kite means that the pilot is presented with a lozenge shape with it's curved leading and trailing edges. Manoeuvring around the edge it becomes apparent that the Crossfire is very stable, keeping in good shape in all but the most unsavoury of winds that all kites would suffer in. Unlike some kites the Crossfire responds well to control input whilst at the edge, so keeping it there is easy. Sending it through the power zone is where the real benefit of this kite comes to the fore.



The power these kites generate is big, very big. In direct comparison to a Beamer 5m for instance the Crossfire 4m generates way more power, and is rather more relentless in the way it delivers it. The airspeed is impressive too, one of the reasons why the Crossfire generates so much pull is due to the airspeed coupled with the aerofoil section working together. One thing I always look for is good control under braking. There are a number of 'high end' kites I could mention which become very twitchy with some brakes dialled in, so some time was spent perfecting the brake bridle configuration to ensure that the kite could be 'parked' in the wind window in a way which retains the controllability, but allows the pilot to get that extra 'bite' which comes from a slight application of the brakes.

One thing which the range achieves is a genuine progression as you go through the sizes. Predictably the little 2.4 is a little rocket which is amusing in it's speed alone. As you go up the range the kites retain the same characteristics with the inevitable trailing off of speed as you get bigger. My favourite though is the 6.3. I like the winds where this is the right kite to use, and the combination of speed and power is a real joy for me in a buggy. With the lift thing there have been a few occasions where I have been floated out of the buggy, but always with grace. This kite 'glides'. Ripe for buggy jumping this kite strikes me as being far more user friendly than some kites put to this purpose as the lift is realised in a progressive rather than a snappy manner. Free jumping is a grin with these, without the 'snappy' feel of others launching yourself is smooth and the landings soft.



It was always in mind that there was to be a variety of control options, the Crossfire will be available with three. Standard handles, a bar with reversing and re-launch facility, and a bar option which uses pulleys on the kite end to gain tighter turning and a sharing of power through the bar and a chicken loop arrangement. This last version requires some setting up, but has the advantage of allowing brake setting to be dialled in through a de-power strap.

In conclusion, and probably the most surprising thing of all, the price. Starting at around £160 these kites represent excellent value for money.

Is there anything that could be done to improve them, well, maybe I'd like a purple one...

Author : [Jerry](#)

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Comments by others.

[offshore](#) said : 10:11:22 : 11 January 2005

Nice!!

[racekites](#) said : 10:13:06 : 11 January 2005

good review Jerry.... I'm sure i recognise that orange and grey swoosh on the kite though.... hmmm... now where did i see that??? :oP

[vinniedriver](#) said : 12:44:53 : 11 January 2005

That zipper on the front of the bag must be the chunkyest zip in the world - ever!!!!!!!

[offshore](#) said : 13:07:21 : 11 January 2005

Glad they didn't lose it off the beamer bag!!!

[BizB](#) said : 14:49:14 : 11 January 2005

I'm chomping at the bit to fly one of these kites. My HQ 3.6 Beamer has been a joy to fly and it has served me well in many different wind conditions from a gnat's breath to blowing 40+mph (Yes, it beat the crap out of me when I flew it in 40+mph winds but I loved it). I've been using it for many purposes from body-surfing to scudding.. from kite-mountainboarding to kite-skateboarding (in a parking area). The quality of HQ products make their kites a value. The prices make them a steal. I should really write a review of my experience with the 3.6 Beamer.

[racekites](#) said : 14:50:53 : 11 January 2005

hey vinnie, maybe its a normal sized zip but a very small bag ???

[Rich Newflyer](#) said : 16:55:52 : 11 January 2005

Nice review Jerry. Cant wait to get my hands on a 3.2

[rainady](#) said : 20:43:09 : 11 January 2005

Great review Jerry. I too can twait to get my hands on one of these kites. A 2.5 because I have not got the 2.5 Beamer and probably the 6.3. Oh blow it, sell the Beamers and get a nice quiver of Crossfires. Jerry, your explanation of the Bar set up worries me a little though. Its not the full depower route which is what I was hoping for. Any idea if it will be possible to go down the depower bar route?

[Jerry](#) said : 12:55:49 : 12 January 2005

A full depower version of the basic kite will be following. I don't know enough about when

this will be though as it all depends on the initial findings of the testing. As soon as something concrete is known and I'm able to release the info I will.

.....
 ↻ [D-Alien](#) said : 14:52:54 : 12 January 2005

Wicked review Jerry - sounds like a damn fine kite - that pic of the kite n buggy on 2 wheels - has it been doctored ?

.....
 ↻ [Jerry](#) said : 17:34:24 : 12 January 2005

DA, to be pedantic, photos are always doctored, the camera always lies! But it what way do you mean doctored. In is almost certain that I have adjusted brightness and contrast because it was a dull day and the image was a little 'flat'. I may also have removed some people that were on the shoreline and I think the horizon was adjusted. But the buggy, a wide axle flexi was on two wheels, the kite is a CF 6.3 preproduction prototype which I still have, the pilot is me, what do you want to know?

.....
 ↻ [D-Alien](#) said : 22:31:36 : 12 January 2005

I see now it makes sense - just the pics show different kites, i know its easy to get buggys on 2 wheels, didnt mean any harm, or offence, just wondered, as i said Wicked review, wish i could write one like that but i dont class myself experienced enough to put together a good review.

.....
 ↻ [Jerry](#) said : 22:58:13 : 12 January 2005

DA, I did'nt take any offence at all mate, just a bit confused at what you were referring to. Here's an explanation of the kites shown, from the top. The first three are the same kite, a 4m pre-production proto, the buggy one is a 6.3m pre-production proto, and the last is a first run proto (the very kite offshore has flown) which does not bear any of the graphics which were under design when this kite was being trialled, plus of course the top skin is coloured and te underside white. In reality the top stripe is the same colour as the underside unlike the red kites here, and the 6.3 is the same lovely golden yellow of the Beamer 7. Here are the final colours [link to photo](#) Cheers

.....
 ↻ [Jerry](#) said : 23:02:44 : 12 January 2005

Btw way DA, I think anyone can write a review, you do not have to be mega experienced, in fact a newbies view of a kite could have more relevance to another newbie who has an interest. They would be coming from the same viewpoint, and often techspeak has little value to a newbie if they don't understand the lingo yet. J

.....
 ↻ [n00ber420](#) said : 18:02:33 : 13 January 2005

The kite looks brill. I see they havent let go of the shabby zipper :o

.....
 ↻ [Jerry](#) said : 19:17:05 : 13 January 2005

:-) People seem to love them or hate the mega zip, most think they are a gas! The three I have have been fine, and joking apart they are fast acting and bind free.

.....
 ↻ [Skyboy](#) said : 00:35:46 : 14 January 2005

Thanks Jerry for a great review of this kite. I think HQ have thought long a hard over the whole design process, which has ended up with a kite series that has the user in mind in many ways! I love the look of them in the air and the graphics-superb! The whole package seems to good to resist. Will start to save the pennies to see if i can get one later in the summer,i think the 6.3 will be ace for Jumping and lighter winds. Decided to get a Board/Harness & Helmet first tho!

.....
 ↻ [uncle fester](#) said : 20:07:59 : 14 January 2005

another volume written in dads way. but it needs to be made clear that this may not suit occasional flyers like me. i use a 3.6 traction quad, my only kite, and i've flown the 3.2 and 4 crossfires. they are quite a surprise first time out, you need to be ready for the power they give. In a buggy they can be a bit of a handful in the turns because they lift a lot when taken to the top. Its better if you are good enough to keep the kite low in the turns, and turn quickly. Full on sliding turns were best for me, but they are not as forgiving as the Beamers I have borrowed. So if you are thinking of getting one it would be best if you have some experience under your belt. Nice photo of the buggy though, wonder who took that? ;-)

.....
 ↻ [Jerry](#) said : 22:42:58 : 14 January 2005

Those are valid points Josh, but it's a kite which needs respect, but it's not one to be frightened of. Jerry (Dad)

.....
 ↻ [elli](#) said : 07:15:05 : 15 January 2005

The picture of the kite looks really nice, the sail is tight and the trailing edge looks good too. That always indicated good design and execution. Back to the topic, depower. Looks from the picture that the bridle is not so depower friendly, did you see a depowerable crossfire already? By the way the graphics are nice, is this your doing? That mega zipper probably

contains more petroleum than the entire kite, I think its time for it to go!

.....
 ↻ [Jerry](#) said : 12:54:59 : 15 January 2005

Elli: Your correct in saying that the bridle shown is not readily depowerable, the kite which will have this will have appropriate ABCD separation. The graphics are a joint effort between me and HQ Alex primarily, with input from other folk within HQ. I came up with the basic design, which was then passed to and fro to tune the graphics both for visual and practical improvement, same with the Crossfire logo. Last year HQ introduced wooden winders from sustainable sources for the lines as the winders are often discarded, arguably this offsets the plastics in the zip. HQ have quite a strong environmental policy, they even have a woodland area at their headquarters set aside for nature and go to some effort to encourage wildlife providing nesting boxes and other things. This can be seen on the German version of their website. So I believe there is a level of environmental consiousness and real practical activity which is worthy of applause.

.....
 ↻ [Old Tom](#) said : 17:14:44 : 15 January 2005

Enjoyed the review- just had the HQ wholesale price list in and it shows (as well as the three different versions of the standard Crossfire) the true depowerable version being available in sizes from 5-12.5 sq metres, but no delivery date although given HQ's track record it won't be long now they have listed it.

.....
 ↻ [josh](#) said : 14:51:20 : 22 February 2005

cool review jerry

.....
 ↻ [RACEK1TES](#) said : 01:21:44 : 27 February 2005

Seems a pretty cool kite - graphics are a bit naff and the bag zip must be a spare from a joke shop! Like the shape though.

.....
 ↻ [offshore](#) said : 10:04:14 : 27 February 2005

I questioned the graphics initially but know have to say that I think they are great the 6.3 I had to fly was as per the buggy photo (very same one) and it is a damned fine kite and looks incredibly cool flown!!!!

.....
 ↻ [Wildcard](#) said : 11:19:12 : 07 March 2005

Excellent review Jerry, really informative, and top pictures too... Still not a fan of the horrid (imo) graphics tho ;)

.....
 ↻ [Jerry](#) said : 18:51:30 : 07 March 2005

Numbers that like the graphics outweigh those that don't by a long way, a few people change their minds to liking them when they see one in the flesh.

.....
 ↻ [jona](#) said : 11:52:44 : 17 March 2005

This looks alot better than homemade look of the beamer. Any news on delivery ,I might be tempted. By the way this is my 1st input on this site, which is the best on the web. Great reviews, keep it up guys

.....
 ↻ [Jerry](#) said : 12:54:06 : 17 March 2005

To my knowledge HQ expect them to be in the UK shops mid April. Incidentally the Beamer's looks have beenchaged for this year.

.....
 ↻ [Wildcard](#) said : 10:25:05 : 18 March 2005

..and very professional looking the new Beamers are too, good move on HQs part. :)

.....
 ↻ [Skizzo](#) said : 15:09:57 : 23 March 2005

Friend of mine just got a 7m Samurai, I am planning on getting the 7.7 crossfire, this review helped me decide on it, I am already looking forward to it, will order it this coming weekend.

.....
 ↻ [nfk kite flyer](#) said : 21:48:30 : 28 March 2005

well after reading this i am going to get one myself they look and sound a great kite.excellent

.....
 ↻ [sas_air](#) said : 11:21:07 : 14 April 2005

Jerry, I am looking for a decent low wind kite and was thinking of the 7.7. I am considering the usual suspects,Blade3 8.5, Samurai 7.2. How do you think the Crossfire compares. I owned a 7m Beamer and had to get rid of it as it wouldnt perform. Grateful for any input.

.....
 ↻ [Jerry](#) said : 20:46:47 : 14 April 2005

Sas air, 7M+ kites are an area where, it could be said, that some confusion lies. Generally they are though best of maybe as 'super power kites', rather than being in the realm of really low wind kites. Certainly kites at the lower end of flyable winds, but still in winds. I

have avoided direct comparisons with other kites, mostly because the focus is on the kite being a logical step for the Beamers. One day someone will do a head to head with other lofty kites, but I don't see it as being me. The Samurai is a purpose low lift kite (difficult to have such a thing in these kite sizes). So by simple definition of characteristics the Blade would be a more relevant kite to make judgements against. I suspect though that you may conclude that these characteristics are different enough for you to make a decision on personal preference rather than hard judgments about cost/performance ratios. I would just try and fly the kites on demo if you can, you'll be better armed to make a decision then rather than me saying one thing and closing the door on something that may suit you better.

.....



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