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.: HQ : Crossfire review.

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➔ **Review : Crossfire**

➔ **Size : 1.7m**

➔ **Skill Level : intermediate**

➔ **Company : HQ**

➔ **Author : Chaz**

➔ **Submit Date : 20/3/2006**



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This review has scored **38** out of a possible **40** points and has **11** comments

After a good few weeks of immense fun flying the 3.2CF, I decided to add a small, high-wind kite to my quiver. Wanting the same level of performance that I get from the 3.2, I decided on the newly released 1.7CF.

The kite comes complete with lines & winder, handles, kite killers, ground stake, vcd, instructions, all contained in a good sized red bag complete with the obligatory HQ genetically modified zipper. The opening has drawstrings to prevent any danger from snagging the kite, or the lines in a zip. The crossfire bag is big enough to hold two 3m kites for example, if you were to put them both in stuff-sacks.

Now I love receiving a new kite, and as soon as I got in from work on a Thursday evening (not too long to wait to try it out), I opened the bag up, and laid everything out. The first thing you notice is that the kite is a rather fetching pink colour, with a yellow 'swoosh' design as per the 3.2. It all looks very nice and friendly. Again, no obvious problems with the quality.

I've have noticed a small change since I bought the 3.2 a couple of months ago... The end of one of the bridles now has some red stitching, to make attaching the lines and sorting out any twists a little easier. There is matching stitching on each end of one of the power lines also. The manual explains how to attach everything and prepare for flying, with which I've never had a problem.

**1<sup>st</sup> Flight**

Very blustery conditions, accentuated by having to fly in a new location at my local park, right in front of a load of trees and buildings. Winds gusting all over the place up to 26mph. Not ideal conditions, but I've got



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some experience under my belt with a larger kite in fairly strong winds, so lets have a go.

AlexT was with me with his brand new Rage1.8 (review to follow I'm sure), which had just taken off on it's maiden flight. It was giving him some pull, and a little lift, nothing unmanageable, so now my turn.

With the CF staked out and inflated nicely (ahhh, looks cute!), I strapped the kite killers on, picked up the handles, took a deep breath, and launched....

WOW! This little thing has some serious grunt!! It shot up to the zenith, dragging me forwards several feet, and nearly lifting me up near the top. Holding it at the zenith, it picked me up a couple of inches, and moved me quickly forward, arms outstretched, a good 6-8 feet. Blimey.... This is a real handful....

After struggling to hang on initially, and getting my feet firmly planted on the ground again, I set about moving the kite around, and checking out it's characteristics. It's quick, nowhere near as quick as the Rage1.8, but very maneuverable nonetheless. I started dipping it down into the power, and getting some scudding done, but the wind conditions were way too unpredictable, and soon enough the kite was caught by a gust, the handles wrenched from my hands, and the plastic d-ring from the right-hand kite killer was obliterated in the process (the bit the strap passes back through to hold it on your wrist). The handle shot off at speed, and luckily there was no one in the way. Once I'd got up and figured out what had happened, I staked down the single handle, retrieved the other one, and set up again with a spare kite killer attached. This was a shock, I've not had a problem with the HQ killers before.....

After a few efforts which consisted mainly of me being dragged about like a rag-doll, feeling like a complete beginner again with minimal control, the next launch was just that. On pulling the handles, I was 5ft up in the air before I knew what was happening, and still going up & forwards quickly, so being a chicken, I let go and let the kk's do their job again.... The wind was awful, impossible to tell where it was coming from, with big lulls, then big gusts producing explosive bursts of power.... Since I know from painful experience what can happen if you get too cocky in these conditions, I packed the kite away to save it & myself for a better day. I double checked that it was actually a 1.7m kite, and not just a larger kite on very-very long lines.....

Phew. Exhilarating, but very disappointing also.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Flight

What a difference a day makes! (sorry for the cheesy cliché!!!)

Flying in smoother but still quite gusty winds, roughly the same speed as the day before (up to 24mph) really showed what this kite can do. It is VERY stable and responsive, turning on the brakes quickly, and it'll sit nicely low down on the edge of the window so you can walk it back / have a brief rest – Flying it to the zenith is not how you have a rest with these. At the top, your arms remain stretched upwards, then every now and again you'll feel the tension building up on the lines, and depending on the wind strength, it'll lift you off the ground briefly!

Flying it through the power reveals that it has more than enough pull to get me (11.5st) scudding along quickly, even though my shoes aren't actually that slippy, and the grass was quite dry for this time of year. Nice. I managed nearly the length of a football pitch, then the goalpost got in the way, and my arms were tiring, so kite down (easy to land too), have a rest, and back again for more!

There is still plenty of lift to be had, and in smooth winds it's a lot more predictable, you have to go looking for it more, but it can still catch you out in the gusts (still got the mud on my clothes to prove it). It must be amusing to see someone being dragged along on their back, on the end of a little pink kite. When launching a CF directly downwind in nice strong winds, you are more or less guaranteed to get a long scud, followed by a healthy dose of lift as it goes up through the power, but be careful doing this, as even with a lot of practice, if the wind increases, you'll be going higher, further, and faster than you expected!! And the smaller kite will bite very quickly!

As a direct comparison, I have a 1.8 Beamer II also, which, in the same winds gives you a little pull, not quite enough for scudding, whilst the slightly smaller CF will have you sliding at high speed across the field! Considering the Crossfire is the next step up from the Beamer, there is a huge difference in performance.



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**Conclusion**

After spending all afternoon flying the 1.7 yesterday (static), I had so much fun, that I'm sure if the government found out, they'd probably put a tax on it, or make it illegal.

The 1.7 Crossfire is quick, VERY powerful for it's size, with both considerable pull & lift available, and also very stable and controllable for such a small kite. It shares all the characteristics of the larger Crossfires, but just does everything that much quicker! - Which includes embarrassing / hurting you if you take your eyes off it!

I like the HQ handles, but would recommend some biking / weight-lifting gloves, as these would give you some padding, extra grip, and protection from the leader line, which can scrape your knuckle up a bit after a long session. But this really boils down to personal preference, and hand size.

If you are experienced with 4-line kites, then I can't recommend this highly enough as a fun kite for high winds. It received the thumbs-up from everyone who's had a go so far, and if you don't mind flying a small pink kite, then go for it, you know you want to! ;-)

Author : **Chaz**

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**.: johnkiteman** [ 18:06:00 on 20 March 2006 ]

I had a short go on this kite yesterday and it put a huge grin on my face. Feels very much bigger than it's size and produces a shocking amount of pull and lift : ). Very, very impressed with it. Great review Chaz, be sure to update it with more flight time.

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∴ **robd** [ 21:38:00 on 20 March 2006 ]

great review, glad to read you're having so much fun! but that's what it's all about.

∴ **andyp1970** [ 12:12:00 on 21 March 2006 ]

Good review. Have read one or two reviews saying that the HQ kite killers aren't as durable as they could be. What's wrong with pink kites? I fly Busters and the 5.5mtr is birght pink, looks great in a clear blue sky, but then again don't all kites.

∴ **samkitelad** [ 17:04:00 on 21 March 2006 ]

you do like pink kites don't you chaz? nice review

∴ **Chaz** [ 19:57:00 on 21 March 2006 ]

Thanks all. Yep, pink is my new favourite colour! ;-) This was the first time i've had a problem with the HQ killers personally, but i've seen the same thing happen a couple of weeks ago too.

∴ **AlexT** [ 20:29:00 on 21 March 2006 ]

Yeah pink is you're favourite colour right now, but I bet it won't be when you get your 5m CF!

∴ **Nige** [ 21:56:00 on 21 March 2006 ]

I have flown this kite too and with the new Jerry/HQ Handles "Awesome". Why can't I win the lottery. Great Review. Multistorey Car Park for all my Cars and a Hangar for my Kites.

∴ **CharlieRoker** [ 08:08:00 on 23 March 2006 ]

I have been looking for a smaller kite and this is review has me sold...do you work for HQ??

∴ **Chaz** [ 09:42:00 on 23 March 2006 ]

Hi Charlie, no I don't work for HQ, or any other kite company for that matter! I actually install home cinema / automation systems for a living. I just came back from flying this kite in such a good mood and just wrote this as honestly as I could. I tried to be as objective and neutral as possible, but a little emotion crept into the review as I was still buzzing from a great days flying! I

just think that the CF's are great value, a lot of performance and good build for the money.

.: **Ferretish** [ 23:28:00 on 06 April 2006 ]

Where did you buy this? and how much? I hadn't heard of a 1.7 m and with the strong wind recently i am interested

.: **Chaz** [ 09:31:00 on 19 May 2006 ]

Got it from skymonster.co.uk. Speak to Ricc, he'll sort you out with one. He's a good bloke. For some reason it's not advertised much online, not even on HQ's website... Strange, as it's a fantastic little kite. Just thought i'd update my review with some more thoughts as this was my weapon of choice for a good few weeks in the high winds. I've found that just like all the CF's, it hates lumpy winds, the power gets very on/off in these conditions, making things a little hairy. The power this thing has got is huge for it's size, it's lofted me a few times, but get it out in strong smooth winds, and you'll have loads of fun. It's very responsive on the brakes, long FAST scuds are easy, and (I promise i'm not making this up), floaty jumps can be done with this too!! It's very stable, and if the wind drops slightly to make scudding / jumping hard work, then you can flick it around, stop it wherever you want, just generally practise your kite control skills. It's fast, but not to the point of being uncontrollable. I flew it for the first time in ages last night, and was reminded how much I like it. It's still my favourite kite.

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