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FREE RACING FOILS

We started off with the premise that freerace sails would be based round the twin cam principle. Wrong! While many lofts adopt this design, it's not universal by any means. So what started off as a twin cam test, ended up being something different.

The ultimate combination of racing power and user friendliness, the twin cam has got a lot to offer many different riders. At the top end they are closely related to full-on race sails and can deliver racing style performance but without the hassle. With fewer cams they are much quicker and easier to rig, as well as more forgiving and easier to handle on the water. They also don't need to be quite as powered up as full-on race sails giving them more range, especially at the bottom end. Compared to a zero cam sail on the other hand they offer more stability and power, especially in the bigger sizes where the foil shape created by cams is most effective. They can be the perfect compromise between a rotational sail and a full on, multi cam race sail, making them the ideal choice for fast freeriding and even slalom racing. We have a selection of the best twin cams available here on test, as well as a zero cam and triple cam sail at either end of the scale for good measure. The testing took place in Dahab, Egypt. With its reliable winds and varied water conditions it is a great place to test equipment. While on test we had some perfect conditions for the sails, with varied winds that pushed their abilities at either end of the scale. We also had a variety of boards to power, from big cruisey freerides to fast slalom boards, we had everything covered to test them to the max.

As always with sail testing, it all starts as soon as we take them out of the bag and unroll them, we are

looking for build quality, accuracy of the measurements and ease of rigging. Rigging a cambered sail can be a bit tricky if you're not used to it, so it's always worth having a quick glance at the rigging instructions if you're not sure. In most cases the best and quickest approach to rigging these sails is to sleeve the mast without engaging the cams, apply minimal down haul, fit the boom and pull on maximum out haul, this will allow you to pop the cams onto the mast before then down hauling fully and tuning. Once this is all done, it's then on to the water, where the hard work really begins! We are looking at bottom end grunt, top end speed, control, manoeuvrability and overall how the sail feels in a wide range of sailing conditions.

THE RESULTS.

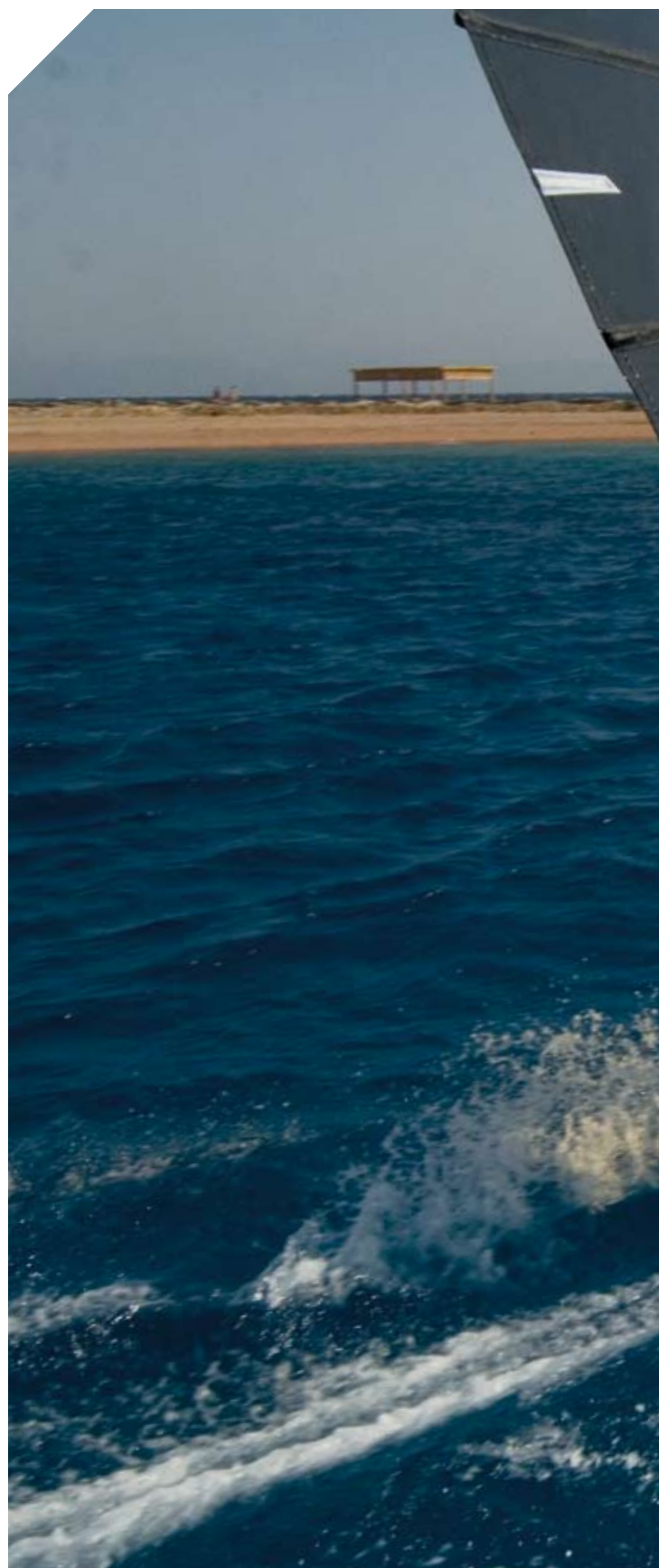
Best bottom end grunt came from the Tushingham Lightning, followed by the Point 7 AC-X and then Severne's Turbo. At the top end the best performers were the Point 7, closely followed by the Simmer 2XC and then the Severne and Tushingham. Manoeuvrability – Vandal Stitch, NeilPryde H2 and Severne Turbo.

So no surprises then that the triple cam Point 7 was fastest and the rotational Vandal was the best in manoeuvres but the surprise was that despite having no cams it was still capable of keeping up with most of the others on the straights.

We're not suggesting that the best twin cam sail is a zero cam sail but it is a good alternative, especially in the smaller sizes and if your freeriding style is more about manoeuvres.

For everyone else and for rigs 7.5 and up, a twin cam is the way to go, they offer the very best combination of performance and ease, unless you are a hardcore racer, in which case get a race sail!

As for which one would be best for you, then read on...







6.2
6.7
7.2
8.2
8.7
9.2
6.2
6.8

NEIL PRYDE H2 7.7

STATS LUFF (CM) 469 BOOM (CM) 207 BATTENS 6 CAMS 2
IDEAL MAST 460 **SDM 25 IMCS** EXTENSION REQ. 9 (CM) **PRICE** £???



5.8
6.5
7.2
8.5
9.4

POINT 7 AC-K 7.8

STATS LUFF (CM) 483 BOOM (CM) 216 BATTENS 7 CAMS 3
IDEAL MAST 460 **SDM 25 IMCS** EXTENSION REQ. 23 (CM) **PRICE** £489

You'll like... Light and easy, handles like a rotational sail but with the stability of a twin cam.

You won't like... lacking the out and out grunt of some of the others.

BACKGROUND

The H2 was introduced to the NeilPryde range last year. Not much has changed for 2011, mainly just updates to the graphics that mirror the treatment to the rest of the NeilPryde range.

AT A GLANCE

The H2 has a large distinctive cut out at the clew which not only reduces the boom length but allows the leech to twist off more easily in gusts. The luff tube is mid width and it has six battens and two cams. At the tack it has a straight cut foot while the profile, when tuning is optimised, is fairly flat.

RIGGING

Setting on a 460 mast, the H2 is very quick and easy to rig and tune. It can easily be de-powered by adding extra down-haul so when rigging, don't go

too crazy if you want to keep some grunt locked in.

ON THE WATER

The H2 feels extremely light in the hands and it feels more like a rotational sail. The short boom length makes it extremely easy to handle along with its flat profile that is not overly powerful. It's not the most grunty at the bottom end but the power feeds in very smoothly and constantly, this sail is more about control and stability, rather than fierce power. The easy handling is most noticeable when executing manoeuvres while the rotation of the cams is extremely smooth. The natural wind range is good but some down and out-haul tuning is required to get the very best out of it at either end of the scale.

SUMMING UP

A twin cam sail that feels and performs like a rotational. Very easy handling and user friendly, this sail will suit any level of sailor seeking a solid and stable twin cam to power their freeride board.

You'll like... The solid power

You won't like... The limited view through the window

BACKGROUND

The AC-K is a new sail range within the Point 7 line up. It sports three cambers and is a more friendly, tuned down version of the AC-1 race sail.

AT A GLANCE

The dark side of windsurfing! The point 7 has a very distinct stealthy appearance, with black panels and an orange tinted window in the middle. It has seven battens and three cams, with a fairly wide luff tube and deep solid foil.

RIGGING

Setting on a 460 standard diameter mast, the AC-K has a very wide tuning range. With three cams rigging is never the quickest especially on the first occasion as the AC-K comes with a bag of spacers with which to shim the cams up with the mast. This can take some extra time so it might be worthwhile doing this before heading for the beach but once it's done, it's done.

ON THE WATER

The AC-K feels extremely well balanced in the hands and while its un-rigged weight is around 1 Kg. heavier than the other sails this is not apparent when rigged and in use. It has solid power low down and remains very stable at the top end. It's down to the extra cam which also gives it a good natural wind range. The AC-K's handling characteristics are closely related to a race sail - it is fast and very controlled when fully loaded up. The dark appearance of the sail makes it really stand out on the water but the view through the window isn't the clearest, so you do need to take some extra care when blasting down wind or gybing, especially as you are likely to be going quite a bit faster than anyone else. Round the corners it remains well balanced, with a smooth rotation and solid power coming out of the turn.

SUMMING UP

Solid and exciting race style performance, this black beast will get you noticed on the water.





6.0
6.5
7.0
8.1
8.6
9.2

SEVERNE TURBO 7.5

STATS LUFF (CM) 482 BOOM (CM) 205 BATTENS 7 CAMS 2
IDEAL MAST 460 SDM 25 IMCS EXTENSION REQ 22 (CM) **PRICE** £520

You'll like... Lightweight and easy handling combined with high performance

You won't like... Very difficult to fault

BACKGROUND

The all new Turbo is the 2011 replacement for Severne's Element which has been the lofts twin cam freerace design for some time.

AT A GLANCE

The Turbo has a stealthy appearance with Severne taking advantage of the best, light weight materials available. It has a large boom cut out at the clew, resulting in the shortest boom length on test but it is the widest to the leech. It has a fairly narrow luff sleeve with seven battens and two cams.

RIGGING

It rigs on a 460 mast and we were supplied with one of Severne Red lines to test it on. It is a very quick and easy sail to rig and readily tunable to optimise it for just about any conditions.

ON THE WATER

The use of light weight materials and the aspect ratio result in a very light sail which feels very compact thanks to the short boom and luff length. So the handling is first rate. It's soft enough to pump up to power in the light winds, with decent bottom end grunt. The power feeds in very smoothly and it holds its shape well at the top end, remaining very well controlled, even when the wind pumps up. The light and compact feel makes manoeuvring extremely easy, coupled with the fact that it also has one of the smoothest rotations out of all of the sails. At the top end, this sail will power you along at some serious speeds and what's more, it is very easy to access that top end performance.

SUMMING UP

A lightweight and user friendly high performance sail, it will put a smile on the face of any rider that wants to go as fast as possible with the minimum amount of effort.



5.5
6.0
6.5
7.1
8.5

SIMMER 2XC 7.8

STATS LUFF (CM) 479 BOOM (CM) 218 BATTENS 6 CAMS 2
IDEAL MAST 460 SDM 25 IMCS EXTENSION REQ 36 (CM) **PRICE** £529

You'll like... Locking it down and holding on tight

You won't like... Having to put some extra effort in at the bottom end

BACKGROUND

The 2XC is a twin cam freerace sail that has featured in the Simmer range for several years. For 2011 it benefits from developments, designs and innovations filtered down from their race program.

AT A GLANCE

This is a six batten design with two mini cams, a mid width luff tube and a large boom cut-out and there is a medium amount of shape in the foil.

RIGGING

Setting on a 460 mast, the Simmer is very simple and quick to rig. It is easy to tune and it boasts a wide tuning range, allowing you to adjust the depth of the foil to best suit the conditions.

ON THE WATER

The Simmer feels extremely well balanced in the hands, the low down

power feeds in very smoothly, pulling you quickly up to speed, it hasn't got the fiercest bottom end power, especially in lighter winds but it does respond well to being pumped to get you going a little earlier. Once going it will keep on pulling. With its foot shape it can be instantly locked down with the slot closed and ready for warp speed. Very noticeable is the 2XC stability at speed making it really easy to just hang off the boom and go really fast. The wind range is especially good at the stronger end of the scale where it uses every gust to simply accelerate you faster. In manoeuvres it remains controlled, the rotation is very smooth and then the sail is instantly locked back down for full speed out of the turn.

SUMMING UP

Simple to rig and tune, if you want easy top end performance and effortless top speeds, then this sail is for you.





5.3
5.8
6.4
7.0
8.5
9.4



5.5
6.0
6.5
7.0
8.0
8.5

TUSHINGHAM LIGHTNING 7.8

STATS LUFF (CM) 490 BOOM (CM) 213 BATTENS 6 CAMS 2
IDEAL MAST 460 **SDM** 23 **IMCS** EXTENSION REQ 30 (CM) **PRICE** £415

VANDAL STITCH 7.5

STATS LUFF (CM) 494 BOOM (CM) 209 BATTENS 7
IDEAL MAST 490 **IMCS** 29 EXTENSION REQ 4 (CM) **PRICE** £459

You'll like... solid power throughout the whole wind range

You won't like... Nothing to mention

BACKGROUND

The Lightning has featured as Tushingham's twin cam freerace sail for a number of years, combining the racing performance of the X-15 with the user-friendly characteristics of the T4. For 2011 it has undergone a complete reworking, shed a batten and been graphically sharpened up.

AT A GLANCE

This six batten sail has a mid width luff tube with two roller cams. It has a deeper foil shape with a low, full cut foot and slightly shortened boom length.

RIGGING

It rigs on a 460 mast, requiring 30cm's of extension. We were supplied with a 100% carbon Ultimate Pro Tushingham mast. It has a good tuning range and can be tweaked to suit a wide range of wind strengths.

ON THE WATER

The Tushingham has awesome bottom end grunt and also responds very well to pumping so getting going in light conditions is never a problem and it is easily one of the best sails of this type and size for early planing. Despite packing all this power it is still very light in the hands and easy to use with a balanced neutral feel. The natural wind range is impressive and the Lightning reacts very well to gusts, without the need for constant adjustment. At the top end, it remains stable and controllable. All in all, in terms of straight lines this is a quick sail across its wind range and it is very easy to access those speeds. Round the corners it is very comfortable to handle, the rotation is smooth and the low down power will have you speeding out of any turn.

SUMMING UP

A great all round twin cam sail suitable for all levels of rider, from recreational freeriders to focused freeracers as well as speed freaks.

You'll like... Pimped up zero cam performance.

You won't like... if bling is not your thing.

BACKGROUND

The Stitch was introduced to the Vandal range last year. It is a no cam, freeride/freerace sail built for high speeds and power.

AT A GLANCE

The Stitch features Vandals head turning, now usual vivid graphics with added bling. The panels in the top of the sail are gold on one side and silver on the other, so this sail stands out on the water - seriously. It is a camless, seven batten design with a solid foil shape.

RIGGING

The Stitch 7.5 can be rigged on either a 460 or 490 mast. We did the testing on a Vandal Axis 490 75% carbon mast. With no cams to worry about, rigging is easy. It has a good wide tuning range and adjusts easily as well.

ON THE WATER

Despite the lack of cams to pre set the foil shape, the Stitch feels powerful with good grunt to get you going easily. It's also responsive pumping to get you going even earlier. The power feeds in smoothly and it is very well balanced, with good feedback through your backhand as you blast along. The top end performance is great and it is up there for top speed. The foil is solid and stable for a rotational and it holds its shape well, especially in gusts, although perhaps it's not quite as stable as a twin cam. Round the corners you really appreciate not having cams, with a smooth feed of power and no cams to pop.

SUMMING UP

This is a great option to a twin cam, at the top end there is really not a lot between them. Although you will slightly compromise stability, the lack of cams make it much easier to rig, manoeuvre and use.



