

GIN ZULU II 11M 2010

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Sub 15knots under the Zulu II

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THIS KITE JUST THRIVES ON BACK LINE TENSION - WE DETECTED NEAR ENOUGH NO BACK SLIDING, EVEN SUB 15 KNOTS



KS OPINION:

PROS: Good unhooked feeling; flies great on four lines; powerful low wind grunter. **CONS:** It looks a bit flappy, but give the double trimmer on the bar a fair trial before judging. **IDEAL FOR:** Riders that want a brand apart from their mates. The Zulu II is a fine example of the very refined and versatile four line SLE that we've seen come to market in the last 14 months or so. Dare we say it, a kite that does a lot and very well.

ABOUT THE ZULU:

The Zulu II is a 4 line SLE for new school, course racing and surf crossover. With this kite, GIN say that you can choose your style of riding depending on your location or mood without changing your kite. With a C shape tendency, the design of the Zulu comes from a balance of all its components. We were massive fans of last year's Zulu, thanks to its huge power band and solid flying characteristics, so what's new for 2010?

BAR AND SET UP:

The designers at GIN seem to be able to devise new ways of doing things for the genuine betterment of a product rather than for something to attach flashy marketing terms to. The Zulu's bridle this year comes without pulleys but it does have moving parts: a toughened ultra smooth eyelet replaces the pulley and allows the sliding action on the forward most section of the leading edge bridle. Then the bar is super clean and free from bits hanging down around it. The rotating chicken loop assembly has a good push away release and the trimmer has a clever pull / pull system. Clearly marked on the straps are the percentages to which the kite will instantly depower when you pull them. Two chicken loops are supplied, a standard one and a wider one for unhooking. Single point inflation, top quality marine sail cloth, interesting Jackson Pollock style graphics, 23m flying lines and a technical backpack complete the Zulu's tidy offer.

THE ZULU ON THE WATER:

The Zulu is a powerful kite for its size, and on the first go out in a fluffy 15mph or so we were trucking comfortably in the surfboard. The Zulu is able to produce board acceleration from very low speeds, even when it is not powered by simply

pulling the bar in. This kite just thrives on back line tension – we detected near enough no back sliding even when leaning hard against it with a quad fin surfboard. This isn't just a low end grunter though because depowered the Zulu is still very controllable. The sweet spot is big on this kite and on windier days with more slack in the rear lines you're still tightly connected to it. There are two rigging options on the Zulu this year which give you the choice of quicker handling for freeride and waveriding and a slower setting for unhooked and new school riding. As ever with GIN tube kites, stability and resistance to nose diving is impeccable. Relaunch is fine and the push away safety is flawless and the Zulu depowers safely and totally onto its front lines.

CONCLUDING THE ZULU:

Last year our only gripe with the Zulu was that it liked to fly off the front lines and was prone to the odd backstally moment. This appears to be completely engineered out of the Zulu II, and it can be trimmed so that it feels pretty much the

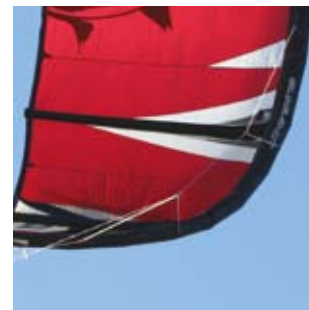
same when you unhook as when you fly it hooked in. The big hitting performance is all there and this year another plus comes in the two settings: new school people who've gotten used to giving their kites a proper turn of the bar to get them moving will settle into the wakestyle option pretty quickly whereas the freeriders and surfers will enjoy the quick turning of this 11m. We were also impressed with the bar trim system – it looks a bit different at first but once you're into it you realise that life's a bit easier without infinite incremental trim adjustment options. Once again GIN have a premium quality, well thought out kite with a stack of performance. If you still haven't tried one of these, a test flight may reveal that you've been missing out on quite a lot.



Tidy bar



Low friction rings on bridle



Canopy has C shape tendency