



Photo: Matthias Kasperian

STUBAI-CUP 2018

For the past twenty-seven years this has been a fantastic setting to present all the innovations for the coming year. The Neustift landing field is at the foot of the lifts.



Photo: Markus Gründhammer



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RUSH 5

The Rush 5 is a top of class Sport-Performance-Intermediate wing developed with Enzo 3 and Zeno technology. Next-gen 3D shaping, a refined OZONE SharkNose, a new low-drag line plan, and an enhanced internal structure have taken the speed, glide, and solidity to a level not seen before in this class.

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Pilot: Luc Armant Photo: David Dagault Location: Gourdon, France



The Freestyle Team, as always, flying Gradient's colours. Moreover, the company Gradient/Supair were clearly present, allowing, amongst other things, the chance to test their new harness, the Evo Lite.

Photo: Armin Kuprian

The Stubai Cup, which is one of the biggest events after the Coupe Icare, took place at the beginning of March.

Since 1988, it's been the event where the manufacturers fly their new products which have often been launched at the Coupe Icare. In this Austrian valley, with its unique microclimate, four ski stations provide take-offs in all directions. And once again, the region came good every day, up to a certain limit, against the Foehn which dominated everywhere else.

The pilots were thus able to test, in quick rotation, the manufacturers' ranges of wings and harnesses.



The Elfer take-off, just beside the lift.



Photos: Armin Kuprian



The Tyrol is the home of Markus Gründhammer and his brand, Skyman. He has worked intensively for four years on single skin wings. Shown here, a prototype of the Sir Edmund Race, a single skin with an aspect ratio of 6.01 and 20 m². The use of diagonal 'walls' has allowed the lines to be reduced by half and has been a good way to increase the performance of this single skin. The coherence of the wing is also achieved thanks to its lobe (its curvature in an arc), but also thanks to the pressure generated by the two closed cells at the wing tip, which creates tension along the wingspan.





Another single skin developed by Markus Gründhammer: the Grasshopper from Independence. It's the first EN A single skin, specially designed for beginners. The balls on the brakes increase the force through the controls when approaching a stall. In addition, they transmit a force onto the Ds: an extra increase on the angle of attack and improvement of the flare when landing. At free.aero, we are testing one and should have the results soon...

The Stubai Cup is a bit like the Coupe Icare exhibition, but with a very good infrastructure to allow visitors to test the wings. According to the organiser, there were more than 700 test wings!



Photo: Armin Kuprian



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This was the first Stubai Cup for the brand Phi, owned by Hannes Papesh. Shown here, the mid EN A Sonata. Photo: Mike Küng

We were able to confirm the trends that we have published on many occasions.

- All the wings, including those which aren't designed for the hike&fly market, are getting lighter.
- They are becoming more manoeuvrable and easier to inflate.
- EN A and EN B wings are becoming more sophisticated and have even better performance.
- The wings are becoming more colourful, the designs more fanciful: a bit like flying suits from the 1990s.

A little footnote on this: a few years ago, it was often said that the lightweight wings were mainly white because the fabric manufacturer, Porcher, had difficulty in manufacturing Skytex 27 in other colours. Not true.

Skytex 27 has always been available in numerous colours, but the manufacturers have to buy longer reels of coloured fabric (900 metres of fabric x 158 cm wide), whilst white fabric, which is more universal (about 80% of paraglider fabric), can be delivered in reels of only 150 m.

It is therefore easier to manage the flow of stock in white. But from now on, as more and more wings are being made in 27, the manufacturers can buy other colours as well, in the sure knowledge that they will be used quickly. This is why light weight wings are becoming more and more colourful... 

Despite the clear trend towards EN A and EN B categories, there are also changes to the top of the range models too, like this new EN C, the Volt 3, from Air Design. According to the manufacturer, its main characteristic is being very stable and solid at high speed. The photo was taken by Nicolas Cochin, Air Design's French associate.





Photo: Armin Kuprian

The stands were in the landing field, allowing visitors to test the wings and harnesses both on the ground and in the air. This sort of event also took place in France (a long time ago at La Plagne, for example), but haven't continued to the present day.



Sky Paragliders

An undeniable trend: increasingly colourful designs. Pictured here, the all new Kudos from Sky Paragliders. An EN B with great performance and handling, designed by Juan Salvadori who is part of the Alexandre Paux team.



The Stubai Cup benefits from the infrastructure of the **Elfer** and **Schlick 2000** stations (open respectively up until the 2nd and 8th of April).



Photo: Armin Kuprian

The Elfer take-off. An observation: the wings inflate increasingly easily, amongst other things, because they are lighter. This makes them safer and more comfortable.

The organiser of the Stubai Cup, Moni Eller (left), with some of the team from her school, Parafly. www.parafly.at



Photo: Markus Gründhammer



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