

TEST

APCO LIFT EZ

THE FAST AND EASY REFLEX WING

A completely new version of the Apco Lift is now available, christened the 'EZ', which stands for 'Easy'. The 2012 Lift was already very accessible and easy. The Lift EZ is completely different, offers better handling and has impressive speed for this type of wing.

*Test pilot: Sylvain Dupuis
Photos: Véronique Burkhardt*



According to Apco, the Lift EZ, which is a reflex wing for beginners, should be the easiest reflex wing in the world. The Lift EZ isn't a modified Lift but, instead, a complete remake and therefore an entirely new wing. Moreover this wing remains relatively simple: no ultra complicated risers (great for beginners), and no SharkNose either. However, on the prototypes, the manufacturer did tests with a SharkNose, but found that the results were better without! More about this later.

On the other hand, it does have other modern technology such as openings on the leading edge; this is Apco's Hit Valve system which allows the wing to be supplied with air and thus keep its internal pressure, even when the angle of attack is very low. The Lift EZ is made, as always with Apco wings, from siliconised fabric which comes from Gelvenor in South Africa. Its trademark silky look is very nice. The general impression is one of very good quality and details which have been manufactured with great care.

AT TAKE-OFF

Nil wind on a hot summer's day. Perfect conditions for testing the flying capacity of this beast! I get ready to do a forward launch without using the motor and with the trimmers at neutral: a pull on the front risers followed through with my body, and the Lift EZ comes up effortlessly. Without hesitation, sticking point, or any tendency to go to one side, it gives no problems at all, despite its 25 m² and the lack of wind! In this respect it's great, I remember these wings (whether reflex or not) which were very heavy to inflate seven or eight years ago, with pilots staying on the ground waiting for a light breeze... Those days are definitely over with a wing like the EZ!





IN FLIGHT

A bit of throttle and my 125cc does the rest, I'm flying. Running is easy and the take off is fast, without being too quick. The Lift remains a pretty fast reflex wing, we'll see. A little pull on the brakes (originally adjusted to be long) will clearly shorten the take off run. As for the rest, it climbs quickly! With my 70 kg, the 125 cc is too much, an 80 cc would more or less do the job. When cruising I let off the trimmers. The Lift accelerates cleanly which is really nice for a beginner wing where, in general, the trimmers are almost unnecessary. Here, the gain in speed is really considerable as it exceeds 49 km/h. But it can go a lot faster. The foot accelerator lets it attain 62 km/h, which is really amazing, especially for a wing which was principally designed for beginners.

The Lift EZ goes through turbulence without appearing to even notice it, thanks to the reflex profile! In addition, it was noticeable that the rear risers weren't

APCO LIFT EZ TECHNICAL DATA

Manufacturer: APCO Web : <http://www.apcoaviation.com/>
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| | 2015 | 2015 | 2015 |
|-----------------------------|--|-----------|-----------|
| DATE | 2015 | 2015 | 2015 |
| SIZE | S | M | L |
| CELLS | 42 | 44 | 46 |
| FLAT SURFACE AREA [m²] | 25,8 | 27,5 | 29,2 |
| PROJECTED SURFACE AREA [m²] | 22,3 | 23,5 | 25,1 |
| FLAT WINGSPAN [m] | 11,22 | 11,84 | 12,46 |
| PROJECTED WINGSPAN [m] | 9,15 | 9,65 | 10,17 |
| FLAT ASPECT RATIO | 4,9 | 5,1 | 5,32 |
| PROJECTED ASPECT RATIO | 3,8 | 4 | 4,2 |
| ALL UP WEIGHT [kg] | 70 - 100 | 85 - 120 | 110 - 140 |
| ALL UP WEIGHT PPG [kg] | 75 - 140 | 100 - 165 | 125 - 185 |
| WEIGHT OF THE WING [kg] | 5.5 | 5.85 | 6.1 |
| CERTIFICATION | EN-926-1 | EN-926-1 | EN-926-1 |
| MATERIAL | Sail Cloth : 42 g/m2 „Zero Porosity“ Ripstop Nylon - hybrid construction L/E Reinforcement : FLEXON® batten system | | |
| LENGTH OF LINES [M] | 301 | 321 | 346 |
| PRICE [€] | 3000 | 3000 | 3000 |



under a lot of tension at these speeds, proof that the profile really is 'auto stable' and is not just 'with a little bit of reflex'. The wing tip controls attached to little handles with magnets are very efficient and let the pilot do a quick change of direction without letting go of the bar.

Back down nearer to the ground to test the handling, with trimmers in neutral. Compared to the Lift back in 2012, which Sascha Burkhardt reproached at the time for not being very reactive, the Lift EZ is a lot more manoeuvrable.

We're a long way from the bus like wing, despite looking like a burger given its poor aspect ratio. By taking a wrap, the Lift EZ turns into a little bicycle.



There are lots of thoughtful details reflecting all the attention that Apco have put into its manufacture.

Video: Cédric Nieddu/Certika
<https://vimeo.com/182404102>





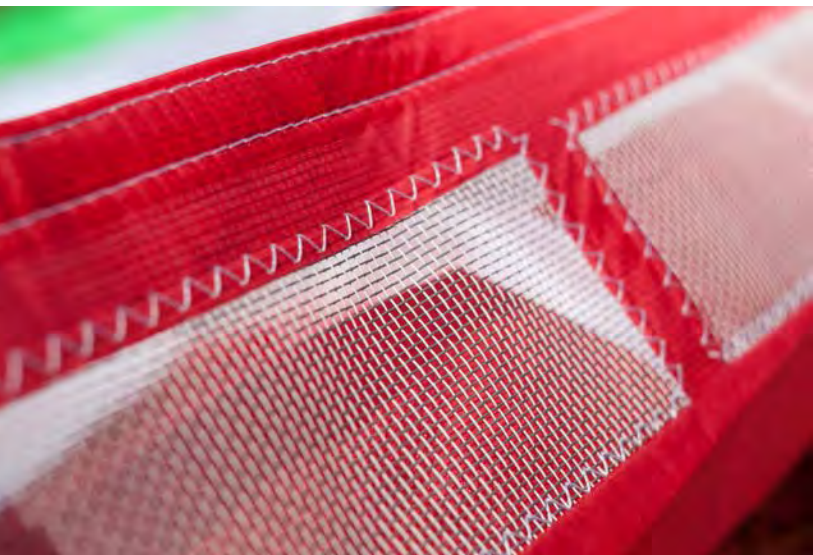
Metal pulleys, sturdy trimmers which are clearly marked, relatively easy risers and well thought out magnets on the controls. If you clip the brakes on the wrong way round, they will automatically turn themselves round to be correct - amazing!

A special feature with the secondary brakes on the stable: if you pull on them, a little pocket clearly forms increasing the drag at this point.





A very neat leading edge with efficient rods and valves for flying fast, to an impressive 62 km/h!



Of course it isn't a slalom wing but, for a beginner's paramotor wing, it's a good compromise and lets the pilot play easily. It's progressive and doesn't hold any nasty surprises.

It is also very precise and any object can become something to play round. You can arrive slowly above a ball, catch it with your feet and then a bit further on, drop it on a target. Or even touch the wind sock with your wing tip. Thanks to this wing the whole environment becomes a playground. A little bit higher and it's possible to tease a few wingovers out of the Lift EZ. By taking a wrap it goes into one easily. There is nothing particularly difficult but, like any real beginner's wing, it lets you know when you've made a mistake by collapsing if your timing is bad or you forget to brake a bit on the outside, for example. For landing, you just need to retrim, let it glide and flare as you learnt to do in school. The Lift EZ will stop and you'll land as if on egg shells.

CONCLUSION

A nice little wing! Flexible, fast and above all, safe! The Lift EZ gives confidence right from the very first flight. It's an excellent companion for doing scenic flights or for playing about using the natural terrain. The performance is very respectable for a beginner's wing; in fact it's even better than more advanced wings as far as speed is concerned. Being able to exceed 60 km/h clearly increases its potential! The Lift EZ is far from being ridiculous compared to other cross country wings, whilst offering a level of safety appropriate for a beginner type wing. Pilots starting their career on the Apco Lift EZ will, without a doubt, be able to keep it for quite a long time. ✈

