



## CRAZYFLY SCULP 9M

### TEST TEAM NOTES:

CrazyFly are possibly the most underrated brand that we regularly test. Making super reliable products at their own factory in Europe, their build quality standards are always outstanding (particularly on their twin-tips, which they originally made their name producing before kites).

In the past two seasons the Sculp has been one of the top pure plug and play freeride kites when it comes to ease-of-use and lots of available power. There's high-performance available for those who are forceful in their handling, but primarily the Sculp has always been a no-nonsense machine that's very easy for the masses and makes you feel good, especially in terms of nailing those jumps.

In previous tests we've praised the Sculp for being one of the easiest kites to learn to jump high on. You could send the kite roughly to the correct position for jumping without being very accurate and somehow always get a rewarding jump from it. All that CrazyFly say they've tweaked on this proven design is some strategic panel placement - specifically the Dacron frame, the strut to canopy connection and the overall Ripstop canopy panel cuts. The Sculp genuinely feels a bit faster and as such the sweet spot is a little narrower. The advantage is that the Sculp's more purposeful, delivering more bite, more board speed and higher all-round performance.

The shape and bridle remain the same and the Sculp is still a real contender when it comes to nailing the biggest jumps at the beach, especially so when the winds are lighter; with this nine metre delivering good power mixed with quite responsive handling. The Sculp punches very well for its size as a nine metre and the power delivery is fairly solid and quite quick. Moving the kite sharply between 11 and 12 gives you a big return in jumping power and this year we felt there's a bit more reward when you really get it right. The sweet spot is now more central overhead, so you need to be a little more precise, but when you are there's a lot of jumping prowess - and we're not talking very technical levels of accuracy; just a bit more than was needed before.

Capable of providing a fast riding speed there's now more true vertical lift. The Sculp now offers a bit more to the serious booster, taking you up quickly, but also bringing you back down a bit quicker than before; basically it feels a bit tighter and more C-kite like in that respect rather than most flatter shaped kites which have more natural float. Where the increased sharpness comes in is that the Sculp delivers power sooner when you start to turn it, compared to some pure freeride kites that are softer in their initial turning movement.

The Sculp's focused drive and turning momentum are also

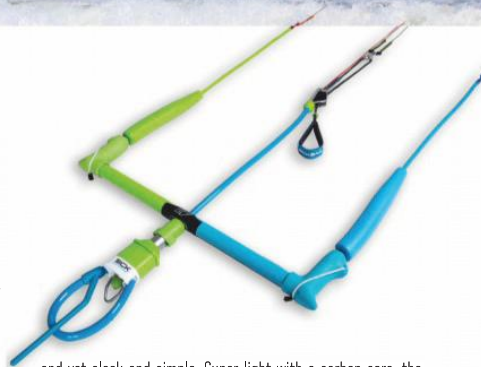
helped in their consistency because the depower throw doesn't shut off to zero, unless you have the kite more heavily trimmed. This means that the Sculp is always engaged and doesn't rock back and forth in the window, so it's easy to maintain board speed. The range in the kite remains very similar, but the increase in direct turning speed and bite require a bit more from the rider to edge as the wind picks up. If you're a heavier rider you'll really enjoy the Sculp, and as the wind picks up you have to do less and less with the kite to access easy and rewarding jumps. So if that's you, the Sculp is a really easy and fun kite to use. In fact we highly recommended it for that type of rider.

This is CrazyFly's all-round kite which they say has some application in waves and they score it highly for its suitability for foiling in their online description, too. When powered up we think there are kites that offer more depower for both of these disciplines, however the Sculp has excellent low end performance and drives without the need for too much kite movement. If you can get on a small size early then there is real potential there, but once you get more powered, the Sculp would be too much of a handful, especially for lighter riders when heading in and out through waves. So just choose your sizes accordingly. As we've always said, the Sculp is a fantastic low to mid range kite for most people.

As a twin-tip kite for fun all-round freeriding, jumping and looping, the Sculp is great. If solid and reliable power, stability, forward drive for easy tracking upwind, a good mix of sheeting power combined with an even, balanced feel for turning are important to you, the Sculp ticks all the boxes. However, we think generally in a size-for-size comparison it suits either stronger, more heavily set intermediates, or lighter riders who have a good technical ability and are looking for lots of bite in a smaller, more manoeuvrable kite. If you're a lighter rider wanting to kite loop for example, the nine will see you having a lot of fun from 18 knots upwards.

On that note, the kite loop has become more serious with the more rigid canopy, pulling fast and sharply. Like very few kites, the Sculp is fun to loop in light winds. There's no backstall and the Sculp drives forward positively and creates good power. Lighter winds obviously feel less menacing in general, so this is good for those wanting to learn kite loops in steadier conditions. In stronger wind the Sculp delivers quite a yank and although it gets round the loop quickly, you may find that it's pulled you more than many intermediate freeride kites would, so you'll need to steer the kite back into wind if it ends up behind you as you come in to land.

The bar is beautifully made, fully featured, comfortable



and yet sleek and simple. Super light with a carbon core, the rubber centre line is smooth, the swivel above the chicken-loop operates easily and the chicken-loop is a good size for both unhooking and remaining hooked-in with an unobtrusive chicken finger. Overall, this is a solid, strong product with every required modern feature that we always enjoy using and provides a really good user experience.

**SUMMARY:** The Sculp is a really fun kite to go out and boost high on for the masses with a slight increase in speed and bite this year. The control is very instinctive in feel however and the Sculp is balanced whatever you're doing; just be prepared for a little firmer power delivery now. We come to Cape Town to challenge a kite's limits and there's nowhere tougher. But if you regularly kite in 15 - 20 knots then this Sculp nine metre will be a huge amount of fun with a lot of jumping performance to tap into.

**KW LIKED:** Extremely good performance in its low to mid-range when you can easily access big jumping performance.

**KW WOULD CHANGE:** It's perhaps a little too bitey for lighter, inexperienced riders who will find they'd need to size down quite early.

### SCULP BALANCE POINTS:

Build quality: 8  
Full package: 9  
Low end: 8.5  
Top end: 7  
Steering speed: 6.5  
Turning circle: 6.5  
Bar pressure: 7  
Water relaunch: 8.5  
Drift: DT  
Boost: 8.5  
Hang-time: 8  
Unhooked: 6  
Crossover: 5  
Ease of use: 8

**SIZES:** 14, 13, 12, 11, 10, 9, 8, 7 and 5m  
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