

## **From a Buzz in my bonnet to a Sting in my step with the new Sting III.**

One year after my training with Tony Barton up in Newcastle I found myself back at the Airborne factory to pick up my new intermediate glider, the Sting III 154. For the past year I have been flying an Airborne Buzz 154, which was a training glider of the early 90's and was superseded by the Fun. I have been doing a lot of my flying with the boys here in Canberra which consists of many flying C4's and I can't tell you how good it feels to finally be flying something with a bit more excitement than a training glider - I now feel like I am a grown man!

The Sting III seems to win in every respect when it comes to an intermediate glider. The performance is good, the glider is easy to set up and pack up, the VG system makes a difference to performance and flying the glider is easy. The first difference I noticed from flying a beginner glider was that the nose on the Sting III did not want to pop up while holding the glider on launch and when launching, which makes me feel a whole lot more comfortable handling the glider on launch in windy conditions. When taking off the only difference I felt was that I was running faster before the glider wanted to lift me off the ground and I didn't have to use as much force to keep the nose down.

Once in the air the Sting III fly's very predictably. Once I initiate a turn I then centre myself and the Sting III holds the turn where I left it, which makes turning so much easier as less work is required to keep the glider in a turn than a beginner glider. Once the VG is pulled on I notice that the bar pressure reduces considerably which makes flying faster a lot easier on the arms. When the VG is pulled on fully the glider is harder to get into a turn but can still be manoeuvred around with relative ease. I have been flying around with the VG about 2/3 and have found the handling really comfortable.

At trim I have noticed a big difference in how far you can push the bar out before the glider wants to stall. With the Buzz there was not much bar movement from trim to stall. With the Sting III there is a fair distance after pushing out past trim before the glider stalls which I have found is handy when in a thermal as I can slow the glider down below trim speed and hold it there easily.

The most obvious difference in moving from a beginner glider to the Sting III is the approach for landing. When in the Buzz I simply had to line up above the landing paddock do a few S turns then pull on speed and the glider would drop into the paddock with ease. With the Sting III I now have to actually line up my approach as I am gliding a lot more efficiently (which makes me feel more like the big boys flying their topless gliders!!!). With being more efficient I can now stay in ground effect for longer which is pretty cool too, as I can come in with heaps of speed and wash it all off over a considerable distance 2 feet off the ground before flaring. While here I should mention that flaring the Sting III is awesome. My first flight in my Sting III was up in Newcastle where I landed on the beach. I was slightly nervous about landing as I knew it would be different to the good old Buzz, but when it came to landing I had no problems at all as the glider was very predictable in letting me know when to flare.

I have had the Sting for 3 weeks now and have managed 5 flights all of which I have enjoyed and not had a single problem with taking off flying or landing. For those looking at upgrading to an intermediate glider or buying a glider that they can feel comfortable in while still maintaining good performance I couldn't recommend the Sting III enough.

My plans now are to do some XC flights this summer and hit the 10,000ft mark! Keep a look out on [www.thebombout.com](http://www.thebombout.com) for videos and write ups from the guys here in Canberra!

Happy Flying  
Andrew Luton >:-)