

7.5-8.0 TWIN CAM SAILS

HOW DEEP IS YOUR LOVE?

AFTER TAKING A BUNCH OF NO-CAM FREERACE SAILS (7.5s, SEE APRIL 2014 ISSUE), WE QUESTIONED WHY ANYONE WOULD WANT CAMBER INDUCERS ON A RECREATIONAL RACING OR FAST FREERIDE SAIL?

Arriving in Tenerife to test these 7.8 twin cams, alongside full-on, cammed slalom racing sails and slalom and freerace boards (see May 2014 issue for reports), gave us the perfect opportunity to test the theory out. (Apart from the fact we should've brought the 'benchmark' no-cam sail for comparison, which in our opinion is the Severne NCX.)

TO CAM OR NOT TO CAM?

Even without such a 'control' sail, after the first run-throughs on each sail we continued to think that twin cams may no longer have a place in our quivers - apart from maybe in sizes over 8.0m and for use in gusty locations, such as tree-lined lakes and other locations with a lot of holes and light, fluky wind.

But there is, once again - as we see in so many sail and board test categories - a real 'scale' of use, generally ranging from the powerful, deep, drafty, more-technical-to-sail end, stretching to a friendly, efficient - which can arguably be faster - nature at the other extreme. So what should a twin cam deliver then? This question certainly had us scratching our heads. We remember them always being actually quite tight-sleeved, easy to use and still quite manoeuvrable toys for use over 6.5m. More hours on the water soon began to throw up a few answers ...

DRINK IN THE DRAFT

Primarily using the 110L freerace boards that are also reported on in this same (June) edition, we soon began to find that some of these twin cams are actually performance machines and, that, especially if you read the May issue slalom report findings, that there are some serious overlaps in range-of-use between these twins and some of the full-on racing machines, with some of them having, relatively speaking, quite deep sleeves and pretty full-on wind range and acceleration. That's what cambers bring over the no-cam sails - that little extra boost in the dirty air and, of course, some vital glide through lulls and holes around the park. Can a no-cam bring that and the same wind range? No - and yes - respectively is the answer.

PRINCIPAL TEST TEAM

Chris Rainbow 75 kg. Med. Height
Julian Da Vall 83 kg. 1.95 Tall.
Experience national and European-level racer.
Brian McDowell 100 kg. 1.90 Tall.

Thanks also to the various PWA pro sailors on hand in Tenerife who also lent a hand, showed us the best tweaks on their affiliated brands' gear and gave opinion on boards sails from rival manufacturers.

TESTING CONDITIONS

OK, so it's fair to say we only really got to test the upper limits of this

THE LINE-UP

EZZY LION 7.5
GAASTRA COSMIC 8.0
NEILPRYDE HORNET 7.7
NORTH S-TYPE 7.8
SIMMER 2XC 7.8
SEVERNE TURBO 7.5

gear thanks to howling wind and a super challenging sea state in El Médano, Tenerife. The lightest wind we got in two weeks was about 18 knots and most of the testing was carried out in 20-30 knots! But it's impressive how this group coped on the whole - another big plus for camber inducers.

CONCLUSIONS

Yes, yes, there's never any outright winners - although we do generally reach consensus on 'benchmark' products that encapsulate a category and are what we'd judge next year's gear or new entries to the market against. We'd like to start taking our benchmarks back out on trips with us to use as the yardstick of progress and the required standard. To help you sort out what's best for you from the individual reports to follow this is what we found:

Fastest: Comfy can be faster than pure power, but the Severne Turbo offers both. Light and medium weights will love the North S-Type too.
Best Entry-Level Racing Potential: The Severne Turbo or Gaastra Cosmic.

Best Wind Range:

For low-end the Severne Turbo, Gaastra Cosmic and the Pryde Hornet. The Ezzy Lion also has a vast tuning range.

Most Manoeuvrable:

Ezzy Lion and Simmer 2XC.

Easiest to Rig:

Ezzy Lion by a country mile.

Which Ones Would We Buy?:

For hassle-free, comfortable freeriding, the Ezzy Lion. To accessibly crossover into genuine racing/GPS performance the Severne Turbo or Cosmic. They'd both help you go straight into a top-end slalom board too. The North S_Type is also a lovely 'fingertip' sailing product.

Benchmark Product:

Absolutely everybody loved the Severne Turbo and we think it best bridges the gap between no-cams and full-on slalom sails - and can genuinely compete with many all-out racing models.

Special thanks to Tenerife Windsurf Solution (TWS) centre for hosting us - the best demo/hire centre in the world, F-Hot/Dave White for the loan of their mast mounts, I Love Meet and Greet Gatwick Parking Services and windsurfingfins.co.uk for the loan of control fins and North Sails for supplying adjustable outhauls for our test rigs. BM

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EZZY

WEB WWW.EZZY.COM // PRICE £599

LION 7.5



THE VERDICT

Easy to rig, effortless to sail and the most manoeuvrable of the bunch, the Ezzy Lion 7.5 offers rotational-style ride and handling and superb 'flickability'. Top-notch construction and fuss-free setup and tuning make for a compelling performance freeride or freerace option.

BRAND POSITIONING

- "Twin cams provide great light wind power and high wind control.
- Narrow mast sleeve doesn't fill with water, making water starts easy.
- Calibrated rigging guide gives precise tuning for better performance.
- Ezzy cam system will fit any RDM or SDM mast made in the past 20 years.
- RBS epoxy battens are stronger and stiffer than vinyl-ester battens.
- Every Lion is rigged and thoroughly checked over in the factory."

PERFORMANCE

The overriding impression of the Lion 7.5 is that it feels very much like a rotational, with a sensation of being soft and powerless, but this is very deceptive, as the power delivery is extremely subtle - something that you notice head-to-head in terms of early planing, acceleration and speed. This sail is super flicky. We mostly felt like we were using a rotational and couldn't stop commenting on that. In our minds this is what a twin cam should feel like rather than some sort of diluted race sail. There's also good feedback in terms of being in touch with the sheeting angle and the head 'wag' was notably positive too in how it pumped the rig over swells without stalling the drive. Obviously the flickiness was perfect for gybing and, with the wind, shall we say, mostly on the upper end of the range on this trip, we'll just leave the assumption that the Lion will be a good sail for basic tricks!

We wouldn't normally comment on rigging in this section, but it has to be said that this is the easiest cammed sail any of us have ever rigged. The straight luff makes it so simple to slide in the mast and of course we're talking a much, much narrower sleeve here than the rest of the selection, so there's never going to be any issues with water stuck in there. Naturally the straight luff means very little downhaul pressure or muscles are required either as you use their excellent calibration system to tweak it just right for the conditions according to the supplied instructions. Is this a sail for using powered-to-the max? Probably not. This is a freeriding sail of distinction, but with the comfort that delivers then, if the sound of being hauled around by a multi-cammed beast terrifies you, yes, you will be faster on this product than a more daunting type of rig. If racing or GPS competition interests you, you'll quickly find that

control is King and equals more hours on the water. And with that in mind, the wind - and tuning - range (although we can't comment on the low-end below 18 knots) is wide and this 7.5 provides decent value for money as a smooth-sailing, summer sea breeze product.



VITAL STATS

Size 7.5m Luff 477-479cm // Boom 206-213 // Battens 7 // Cams 2 // Ideal Mast Ezzy 460/25 RDM (SDM compatible too.) // Extension Req 19cm // Available Sizes 6.0/6.5/7.5/8.5/9.5