

THE PERFECT KITE BOX

PHOTOS AND DESCRIPTIONS OF THE VARIOUS WAYS FIGHTER KITE FLYERS CARRY THEIR KITES, REELS & REPAIR KITS TO THE FLYING FIELD

Bruce Lambert

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HOW THIS ARTICLE BEGAN

The idea for this article/photo gallery is Ralph Resnik's, phighter@graphica.com Yup.....it's Ralph's fault ;o) He emailed me about the wide variety of fighter kite carrying boxes he saw when he attended the Washington State International Kite Festival, WSKIF, at Long Beach, Washington in August, 2004. And suggested that all fighter kite flyers, experienced and new alike, may enjoy seeing how fighter kite flyers carry fighter kites, reels, repair kits, etc to the flying field. I totally agreed and decided to explore it.

HOW I GOT THE INFORMATION

I posted email requests to fighter kite flyers asking them to email me photos and/or descriptions of their fighter kite boxes.....this article/photo gallery is a compilation of all the responses I received. Virtually every description of kite boxes in this article I copied and pasted from the email of the fighter kite flyer who submitted it.....it is their own description in their words. I've included the email address of each so if you want to ask questions, you can contact the owner of the box directly.

AN IMPORTANT ISSUE WORTH CONSIDERING.....HEAT!

One of the issues that you should consider in selecting or making a fighter kite box or bag is how the box or bag will reflect sunlight and dissipate the associated heat. The reason is carbon fiber bows under tension, like in a fighter kite, can be easily broken simply by getting too hot. ***And 'too hot' isn't a very high temperature!***

I'm not talking about being in desert heat and sun. I'm talking about the sun and heat at a Pacific Northwest, USA beach with temperatures around 65-70 degrees F. Several Pacific Northwest fighter kite flyers, including myself, have had many fighter kite carbon fiber bows broken from the heat of the sun building up in our kite boxes.

When it first occurred I never thought heat could be the reason for the broken bows of kites sitting in my kite box. I thought it was defective carbon fiber, or that I had bent the bow somehow in the lid of my kite box. But after many broken bows of mine and several other fighter kite flyers, we discovered the cause; **HEAT** built up within the box.

A few suggestions that may help eliminate broken bows in your kite box:

- Vent the box. Allow air to circulate.
- Don't use a clear or translucent box or bag; it concentrates the intensity of the heat.
- Make the outside of the box or bag reflective. White roof coating is a very good reflective exterior coating for boxes. Use materials for box building that have good insulating qualities.

NOTE: Chuck Lund north32nd@harbornet.com did some temperature measurement tests inside plastic boxes with various exterior colors and coatings and discovered that white roof coating provides the lowest internal temperature.

As you'll see, fighter kite boxes and bags vary from beautifully crafted to unadorned pizza boxes to simple plastic bags.....each does the job to a various degrees of sophistication and customization! I hope you find these photos and descriptions helpful and/or entertaining.

LARRY GREEN larry.green@sympatico.ca



Rick had this made for me as a surprise birthday gift and as a thank you for running the fighter building workshop this past March.



The box is made from birch faced ply and has room for lots of goodies including a place for the FairStart in its pouch. The corners are reinforced with brass fittings and Rick copied the 'wood burnt' design from my original printed version I had on my pizza box.

DENNIS CROWLEY astonecrow@stonemclaren.com



hey...here's my dbox.

nine years old this next flying season...each year finds a little more need for duct tape and spittle, but it's just a true flying friend getting older...just like me.

an architect's plan box made of corrugated plastic...cost \$40...holds 21 indians, a couple bukas, 2 flying reels, and a field repair kit...it's extremely light and fits perfectly in the trunk of my porsche since i removed the spare tire.



when i do an airplane trip, i use a pizza box as carry-on...other than that, my dbox is perfect.

SCOTT BOGUE swbogue@yahoo.com

Box was designed by Sherman Gromme with email assistance by Scott Bogue; built by Sherman Gromme. Designed to easily hold the biggest kite I have ever built and still fit under an airplane seat. 16"x18"x5" or so.



The sides are 1/2" wood; the panels are very thin (1/8"?) birch plywood. The finger joints in the frame make it really strong and look sweet. The kite compartment side is 2 3/8" deep - I've got 15-20 kites in there right now



The two halves are held together with very cool little barrel hinges. I was worried about sand clogging them up but they are still working fine after many days on the beach. The kite compartment lid is hinged and held shut with small flat hooks.

The reels just rest on packing foam plugs that I cut out and glued to a sheet of corrugated vinyl.

The brass drawer-pull handle in photos looks great, but was very uncomfortable. I have replaced it with an ugly but comfy nylon web

handle.

JOHNNY HSIUNG jhsiung@socal.rr.com



Description and photos supplied by Gina Hsiung. I don't have any good, close-up photos of Johnny's box, but here are a few, that demonstrate that you don't have to have a super-duper box...just one that lasts <BG> This printer box, still Johnny's favorite method of transporting his kites, has seen better days, and has even suffered water damage with a flood in our house. Plus, this way he can use that rusty old luggage carrier to drag the box around with. <VBG>



Steve B even felt sorry for him, and gave Johnny his old green corrugated box once he'd made a new smaller version this past wsikf, but Johnny's determined to continue using the Epson box! And as you can see in the last photo, it makes a great table too! :)

TOM MCCLARA tmcclara2370@charter.net



My kite box is a plastic bag that a paper and bamboo Indian Fighter came in. Its bigger than all my other kites so any of them will fit in the bag. I rarely use it. I usually just take a few kites to the beach and leave the ones I am not flying in the car or put them in a jacket and leave them on the beach.

If I am traveling I use the bag to carry the kites.

I like to keep things simple.

RALPH RESNIK phighter@graphica.com

one of the things i noticed at wsikf was the various fighter boxes that people were using ... from scott's



amazingly small and compact wooden box, to steve b's newly designed box all the way to my cardboard box. will a box without air vents cause damage to the kites if it's left in the sun while you fly? should reels be carried inside the box or attached to the outside? there are many solutions ...

btw, remember my boX? here's a little story to make you grin ...

i'm enjoying every moment of flying before the bad-wet-rainy-miserable-cold-chilly winter gets the better of us. every saturday morning, 2-3 of us head out to the beach [10 minutes from home]. we leave at 5:30am and get there just before sunrise. we take a pot of coffee,

sandwiches and whisky. we start off the morning with a few shots of whisky, then we launch and begin to play-tangle-battle. at that time of day the winds are normally off-shore [easterly] and we get to fly over the sea ... which is really great. after an hour or so, we stop for coffee, sandwiches and more whisky. we normally leave the beach at about 8:30 am ... grinning ... what more could one ask for ...

this past saturday, it was really cold and the sand was dampish ... enough to wet my beautiful, but faithful kite boX. so, like in long beach, i had to dry it out when i got home ... sadly no log fire, just a simple bar-heater. anyway, in a fit of creative madness, i decided it was time to strengthen and have some fun with the boX ... i found a roll of that sticky stuff you line cupboard shelves with ... this one was black and shiny.

i took out my "nfka" original t-shirt that d. gave to me and what fun i had ... take a look at the 'new' boX ...

STAN KELLAR stankellar@hotmail.com

Ordinary pizza boxes work for me. After painting the sides and bottoms with



gold spray paint, the tops are covered in paper. The one on the right has sheets of Chinese joss paper stuck on at random. They look neater around the house, and the painted bottoms keep the boxes from absorbing moisture from the ground while flying, so they don't warp.

BRUCE LAMBERT kitefighter@nwinfo.net



The kite box I use most is a Rubbermaid hinged plastic box that I modified a little. I like to carry 40+ kites, several reels - each with different line, a repair kit, first aid stuff...just in case of a serious cut, wind speed meter, FairStart, chalk and maybe a bottle of water.....so I need a box bigger than a pizza box!

The photo to the left shows some of the 'stuff' I carry besides kites.

This box cost about \$16. When new, these boxes are translucent. I drilled some 1", 25mm, diameter holes around the sides for ventilation. And painted the exterior with white roof coating to minimize the accumulation of heat inside.



The reels are attached to the top of the box with small diameter bungee cord and a plastic cable tie that has a screw mounting sleeve or eyelet on one end. I cut a slit in the mounting eyelet so I could force the bungee cord into it. This simple mounting of the reels holds them securely and provides easy access to the reels when flying without having to open the box.



BRIAN JOHNSEN johnsen@eskimo.com



These first 2 photos show Brian's 'BikeBox'. Brian made this box from corrugated plastic board.



The box on the left is an open topped kite tote Brian made from corrugated plastic board.



Several of Brian's corrugated plastic sign board kite boxes. He's become very good at making kite boxes of various sizes and shapes from this material. Although this material can be sewn, I don't think Brian sewed any of these boxes. The corrugated plastic board is available in various thicknesses and in a wide range of colors.

CHUCK LUND north32nd@harbornet.com



This photo was emailed to me by Brian Johnsen.....Chuck uses a Rubbermaid hinged plastic box. He painted the exterior with white roof coating. His reels are very neatly secured with Velcro straps on the top. The bag on the lower left corner of his box is a chalk bag. Chuck also attached an improved carrying handle on his box.

STEVE CHILDERS fkiteman@comcast.net



Steve has much more than a kite box; it's more like a complete kite and camp set up! He has his folding chair, a Rubbermaid hinged plastic kite box, a pouch and net both attached to the top of the lid for holding any number of important items he may want to carry to the flying field, including his lunch.

What is amazing is to see Steve carrying this and much more on his bicycle when he chooses to ride it to the flying field or beach. Steve is always prepared!

These photos were emailed to me by Brian Johnsen.....I'm not certain of the significance of Steve's 'safety pin', but I thought we could each think of some obscure reason he would want to carry it with him ;o)



TOM HUMPHREY dragonflykites@hotmail.com



This is a photo sent to me by Brian Johnsen of Tom's kite box. Tom carries a separate bag for his reels and repair kit seen in the front of his box. Tom's kite box is a commercial art carrying case available at some office supply outlets for around \$10-\$12. It easily holds about 8-10 kites. It's made of corrugated plastic board.

Created by Bruce Lambert January 2005

TERRY MCPHERSON fighterkite@charter.net

Here are my Kite boxes, Numbered from left to right as 1,2,3 &4.



#1 is corrugated plastic artist box, very light weight, from artist supply store.

#2, #3, & #4 are boxes that I have made.

#2 is 21"x21" 3" deep made from 1/4" thick bass wood & 1/4" plywood. It holds lots of kites, and a couple of spools.

Next is #3 my beach model 22"x 22"x 5 1/2", when closed I can set it on edge to take a break, same construction as #2 except that I have added the two orange Velcro strips to help keep the box closed while traveling. TSA will not let you lock or seal any baggage. Also note the shoulder strap, got this idea from Woody.



#3 holds a lot of stuff, Fair Start, Spools, Wind meter, CD's, all other stuff.



This Box is #4 **The Big One**, It has over 8000 miles on it and I never lost a kite. This box is 30" x 22 3/8" x 6 3/4" made to hold the big stuff, don't use this anymore except for storage.



#4 open at left

I have made other boxes for other flyer friends, and for AKA raffles and auctions. The finish and the art work can be anything. Like making Fighters, it's a thing I enjoy doing.

PAUL PETERS Pjpeter@aol.com

This is just a Rubbermaid storage box that I have modified a bit to suit my needs. It holds most of my fighter kites. But some of the larger Indians get a bit crunched in there. Especially the ones with the triangular tail sections. The bamboo battens in them get bent. Pick a box that will fit your needs.



You will notice in the front (boxfront) and side (boxside) pictures there are some changes to the standard product. Vent holes have been drilled to let built up heat dissipate. This is fairly standard. I also have added some Velcro strips. In the (boxparts) parts picture you can see that they have also

been added to the top edge of the bottom of the box. This way I can flip the lid over onto the box and there is a bit of a grab by the Velcro strips (boxsetup). I lost some really good kites in high wind on a standard box that didn't have a securely fastened lid. Just after a trip out west and you know how treasured those kites are on the east coast. So I secure the lid. Also the fact that the lid has holes in it, has spools weighting it down, and is concave make it an unlikely airfoil to fly off again; spilling precious kites downwind.



Then picture with the top and bottom of the box (box parts) illustrates how I secure my spools to the inside of the box lid. It is simply a rubber band that is looped over a piece of stick and threaded through the lid. The inside end of the doubled band holds a length of either carbon fiber rod or bamboo. This just slips through a spool and the longer length of the rod holds the spools in place. I can use two positions along with extending the elastic and hold a parts box also. I am going to try bungee cords next as the sun deteriorates regular rubber bands over time.



KEVIN KILGOAR kkilgoar56@hotmail.com



It works pretty well as you can see, plenty of room for my fighters and pockets for flying line.

Here's some photo's of my kite bag, It's a garment bag that my wife bought for me from K mart.



HAROLD AMES HAmes@anteon.com



Here are some photos of my fighter kite box.

I won it in the raffle at Dayton!!! It was made by Terry McPherson and came with some kites made by him and others... Like some guy named Bruce!!!!

Created by Bruce Lambert January 2005

The back of it has Terry's fighter plan on it!!!! The lid has a line to keep it from coming open too far.

The lid has a thin piece of Aluminum and bungi to hold kites in it The bottom has bungi to hold two reels of line. Two reels came with the box!!!!



It also came with "The Determinator". A Die captive in a film can with a hole punched in the lid to randomize line touches...

It is thin plywood and quite well made!!!!!!!!!!

KAREN GUSTAVSON karengus@west.net



Karen Gustavson's kite box info...box made by Jug Buckles
19" x 19" x 4".

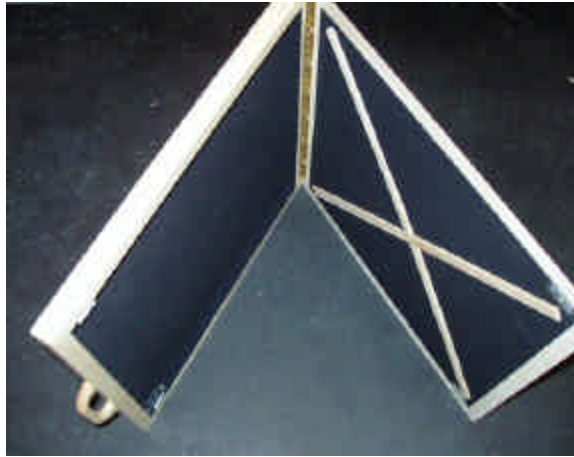
BILL SCHUMACHER ksrp@voyager.net

Here's a picture of one of the boxes I've made. This one sold at the AKA auction for \$275. I am also using a scrap booking companion bag that looks like a little piece of luggage with a handle pockets dividers and best of all wheels. It will hold about 40 kites, four 6 in. spools of line and some other odds and ends.



I got it at JoAnn fabric stores on sale for \$25. It has two hard sides and is made of the same material luggage is made of. For wooden boxes I use screen stock wood that is about 1/2 by 1 1/4 and birch plywood. and other screen stock that is 3/4 x 1/2. I use gorilla glue and a few brads to hold it together. The entire box is made, glued, sanded and stained before it is taken apart for the hardware to be added. Usually after the

stain and decorations I use 2 coats of polyurethane to seal it. Top it off with Brass trim and hinges and it looks very nice. Most boxes are between 20 and 24 inches square and about two inches thick. Several wood boxes have several thousand air miles on them and have no damage.



This kite box is what I call my 'executive' kite box. It holds about 4 kites and is more of a presentation case than a true 'take to the flying field' kite box. This was made by Mathias

Rosbund matmac@kampfdrachen.net of Germany. It is made of thin marine grade plywood and solid spruce with an interior of black velvet like material. It is a work of art!

The latches that keep this box closed are magnetic and mounted on the inside of the box. No exposed latches. There are two hidden small rounded finger grooves to open it.

MANNY ALVES M.alves@cox.net

Here are the pics of the kite boxes I use. The first one is a box I picked up at Walmart last Christmas. The box is used for holding Christmas tree ornaments. Even though the box is clear plastic it has holes in it so it does not hold enough heat to ruin the kites. The box cost was \$8.99. I have seen these boxes recently again at Walmart, they must be seasonal.





The second box was made by a friend of mine. He made the box out of cedar wood.

GIACOMO BORGHI dracovolanspt@yahoo.it



Here are two shots of my "K-Box".



It's made by one of those plastic sheets (italian name is "polionda") looking like corrugated cardboard. It has a belt running all around the bag/box and hanging from the right side you can see in the shot the reels bag. And, of course, my flying hat.

MATHIAS ROSBUND matmac@kampfdrachen.net



I bought this box because I want to have an absolute safe place for my fighters and enough space for different flying equipment.



This box has proved itself many times; in the car; in the airplane, it is weatherproof and can be used without hesitation as a seat.



Surely it was not the cheapest way to get a fighter kite box, but it has proven to be a great investment.

GERHARD ZITZMANN daniela.zitzmann@tplus.at



My kite box was made by a good friend of mine. The outside measurement is 46,5 x 46,5 x 19 cm, the compartment for kites inside the box is 39 x 39 cm. There is room for 50+ kites. I think the rest you can see from the photos.



The wood inserts between the reels you can take out for easier cleaning of the box.



The wood is a special wood for model aeroplanes; it is laminated from 7 very thin wood sheets and is only about 6 mm thick. It is very strong and light weight. The box is coated with transparent marine polyurethane which is very hard and seawater resistant.

ROBERT (WOODY) WOODS RWOODS5589@aol.com



These photos of Woody's kite box were emailed to me by his fighter kite flying friend Manny Alves. There was no description.



Created by Bruce Lambert January 2005

MICHAEL WOHLFARTH Michael@kampfdrachen.net

Michael's kite box photos and description were emailed to me by Mathias Rosbund.

Michael made the box himself from aluminum. He used 4 extruded pieces for the frame and used two plastic-coated aluminum plates for the top and bottom of the box. He bonded the aluminum bottom panel to the frame with silicone glue, the top is hinged. The lid is held shut with a magnetic latch and he added the handle for easy carrying.

The measurements are: 45cm x 45 cm x 3 cm



CARL ANDERSON gumbyoh@yahoo.com

The big carrier is from Joanne Fabric and is a scrapbook bag and the other is a vinyl artist case. The big bag has wheels and multi pockets and a handle for pulling. The smaller one I bought for carrying on board air flights. It can carry about 10 kites and 2-3 spools. The big one can carry about 100 if you wanted to and a lot of spools



with space for all your tools. Bill Schumacher turned me on to this one. I got it for \$25, on sale and the other was \$14.



JAY BELL jbelle@lodiussd.k12.ca.us

This plastic box is possibly made by Stearite (sp?) and I think was purchased at K-Mart. I added a divider board so that I could separate the reels and small bag of tools/supplies from the kites. The divider is hinged with clear duct tape and then held closed in the front by a bamboo spine remnant that slides securely into holes in the handle area of the box.



I also drilled rough finger holes in the divider to help lift it. The box was cheap, it holds a lot of fighters, it fits fighters up to and including Strykes, and it has protected my kites well. I always cover the box with a jacket or piece of canvas when it's in the sun to protect the kites from overheating.



I got this wooden artist's box a number of years ago at a garage sale. My wife wasn't using the box, so I started using it when I wanted to take just a few kites to the field. Fairly recently I decided to commit the box to my light wind/no wind fighters. I laid corrugated plastic on the bottom to protect the kites, fashioned a little lidded equipment compartment on one side, and made a corrugated plastic divider that fits into slots that were already in the lid. The front of the lid was already hinged and can be opened when the lid is down to let the kites breathe (fighters do breathe, don't they?) The box is very sturdy, yet quite light. The crowning improvement to the box is the artwork my wife wood burned the on the lid.



This artist's portfolio is made by DEKKO and was purchased at Aaron Brothers Art Supply store. There are a couple of smaller sizes and maybe one larger size. I use this one to get big fighters and other single-line maneuverable kites to the field, such as the Gareau "Patang" and the Charlie McClary "Gokaku Dako" that are in the picture. It's watertight, stiff enough, and light. Its accordion sides will comfortably accommodate up to a dozen kites.



I use a smaller DEKKO folio on those days I want to get just a few "normal sized" fighters out to where the wind is. When these folios are in the sun, I always cover them with a cloth to protect the kites from UV and heat.

KEN IMOEHL azemeu@aaahawk.com

(Ken didn't submit a photo only the description) My box is one I made myself out of 1x4 and 1/8" Luan. It measures 25" x 22" x 3 3/4". The top is 1 1/4" deep and the bottom is 2 1/2" deep. The bottom then has a divider that is located 6" from one side, this is for reels (PVC type) and a tool kit. The remaining space 1'-4"x1'-8" is for the standard size kites. The lid has a divider that is hinged to make a compartment in the lid for larger, low wind kites. It is 1'-11"x1'-8" in size. It has two latches, a handle and the two halves are connected with a piano hinge.

It is painted white for the AZ heat and the final touch is a picture of people flying kites painted on the cover by my two daughters.

So far I have almost twenty kites in it.