

First Impressions - Gin Verso Harness

The Verso is a lightweight reversible harness with an integrated under seat reserve container.

There has been a lot of interest in this good-looking harness from Gin and we have sold several in our shop, and spent quite a bit of time with customers, setting them up and comparing it with other brands.

STOP PRESS Sep 2012 - now available in size XL

The very first point is that the sizes are very conservative; several clients have asked to try a medium or even a small and ended up with a large size as the harnesses were quite a bit smaller than expected. Both in terms of seat plate length and width. Sadly there is at present no XL size, so many pilots (anyone over about 6ft and 90Kg) do not have a suitably-sized Verso available.

Once having chosen the right size the next challenge is fitting the carabiners which connect through two separate loops. This is quite fiddly to do and leaves one of the webbing loops tight against the carabiner gate... more on this later.

The harness is very comfortable and easy to adjust, and the high density nylon fabric and carbon seat plate makes it very light, but the real beauty of this design is the rucksack mode. It transforms into easily the best looking and most comfortable backpack available, which is a real pleasure to carry. Unlike some models, it is also good with very small gliders as the compression strap system works very well.

In comparison to other harnesses in this class is it certainly heavier than the Apco Chairbag integral (not to mention more expensive) - though the rucksack is certainly much better. There is little to choose in harness mode although the chairbag has a slightly wider seat making it better for weight shift or those of us who are not so slim-hipped!

In comparison to the 2010 Sup Air Hybrid, again the rucksack is much better for carrying loads, but in harness mode the Hybrid has some definite advantages; it has a newer design of click-buckles, and the seat plates are about 3cm wider. The hybrid is very easy to get in and out of, and is supplied with a foot stirrup which makes it much more comfortable and aerodynamic in flight. Mind you it costs £50 more…

There is no option to fit a foot stirrup to the Verso, which is a great shame, (We did try retro-fitting one to the main lift webbing but it tilted the seat and basically did not work).

Some pilots may also be influenced by the versatility of the Hybrid… you can fit a speed bag (to convert it into a pod harness) if you wish.

Conclusion

If you want a slim fit harness that converts to a brilliant rucksack the Verso is the one.

But do note you will not get a stirrup and I would advise you keep a close eye on the carabiners as I suspect the webbing could be eventually be abraded by the action of the gate as the harness is used. It is a bit of a shame as with a bit more thought applied to the carabiner connections, and fifty pence spent on adding loops to fit a stirrup, and this could have been spot on.

Addendum July 2011

Gin tell us that the supplied 30mm carabiners have no problems as long as they are properly installed with the narrower webbing loop resting on the vertical part of the crab, and they are installed the right way round.

Some pilots have preferred to swap the supplied carabiners for the 40mm Powerfly type which have a button lock (no rotating gate lock) which also ensures there is no chance of wear on the webbing.