



AIRXTREME JETCOM

Marcus King flies Apco's new lightweight helmet for both paragliding and PPG

Do you enjoy free flight and paramotoring and want a lightweight helmet suitable for both, without compromising on in-flight comms? Apco may have the answer in the shape of their new AirXtreme JetCom helmet with its modular design. I was sent one, including its rather luxurious optional helmet case and various optional accessories to try out.

Base helmet

The base helmet is lightweight and comes in two sizes S/M and L/XL. There's a size-adjustment wheel at the base of the skull so you can really get the perfect fit. In its lightest setup with free-flight ear-flaps and chinstrap I weighed the helmet at 485g. That compares well with the Supair Pilot, which comes in one size and is 380g.

Various ventilation ports mean you can regulate the temperature. Inside is a removable, washable liner. The adjustable chinstrap is secured with a neat magnetic clip that I found easy to use, even with gloves on.

The Jetcom is made using in-mould technology which, according to Apco, gives the best strength-to-weight ratio. It's a

technology used in bicycle and ski helmets and involves putting the shell and the polystyrene beads that form the inner foam in the mould together during production.

Available in four different colours, it is of course fully certified to the EN966 standard for air sports.

The visor

The first option that can be used for both free-flight and paramotor pilots is the half visor. This is orange tinted with anti-scratch and anti-fog coatings. The visor is category 2 and UV400 rated, meaning that it will filter out 99% of UVA/UVB rays. There is foam on the bottom of the visor so it seals against your face. Adding the visor only adds another 112g, making the total 597g: a fair bit lighter than Supair's Supairvisor helmet (710g); Charly's Vitesse is slightly lighter at 464g including visor.

I really liked the foam on the visor as it feels more like wearing goggles, but with the bonus of a bigger field of vision. I was able to wear prescription glasses underneath. The helmet is very comfortable and there is good ventilation if you open the vents.

Paramotor use


For paramotor use you will probably want to use the side-arc chin strap, which allows the use of earmuffs and headsets. To change over you have to slide out four metal bars to release the straps and then replace the new straps using the metal bars to resecure. Although quick – five minutes – it isn't something you'll want to do too often. If you mainly fly PPG you will probably choose to free-fly with these and forego the ear flaps.

Adding the ear muffs or headset is simple with one screw used to attach them. I was only supplied with the muffs, which were effective at reducing noise to a low level. These are Peltor style earcups and you can install your own communications system.

The final option for powered pilots is a clear full-size visor: perfect for flying in colder environments or microlights where there is more wind. With this and a headset you have a fully spec'ed helmet for ultralight flying that still weighs less than a kilogram. Again it has anti-scratch and anti-fog coating but no UV rating. Worth noting is it uses a different hole for installation, so there are quite a few mounting holes which are on show when you have none of the options fitted.

The optional helmet case won't be of much interest to paraglider pilots but for paramotor pilots it means your helmet will be well protected. Inside there is a dedicated area to hold your radio and a gloves pocket so you can keep everything together ready to grab and go.

The verdict

The Jetcom helmet is nicely finished and comfortable to wear. It's light and has plenty of options to customise it for your chosen use. Perfect if you are a pilot who likes to fly both powered and unpowered. 

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