

THE PYTHAGORAS MEGA-KIT

Mark Palmer, GØOW, 28 Westfield Road, Caversham, Reading. RG4 8HH

There seems to have been a lot of interest lately in the use of kites in amateur radio. Here's a home made design that'll support a topband quarter wave (if not more), will fly in quite a moderate breeze doesn't need helium and won't cost you £210 (+ postage)! It's not a particularly original design, but it WILL work.

You'll need:

1. A sheet of tough polythene 36 x 38", such as a garden refuse bag (an ordinary bin liner probably won't be tough enough)
2. Two pieces of quarter inch wood dowel 36" long
3. Two "cover buttons" (from haberdashers shops)
4. PVC or masking taps, string etc.

First step is to cut out the sheet according to fig 1. Polythene can be a bit tricky to cut straight - you need some good sharp scissors, or better still, some dressmaker's electric scissors. Take particular care over the holes. Then use tape to attach the two dowels as in fig. 2.

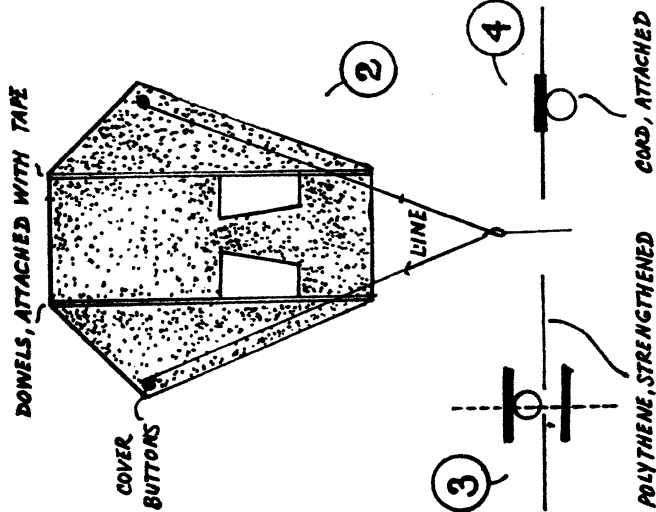
The next step is to use plenty of tape to strengthen the corners where the cord will be attached. Use a layer on both sides of the plastic, then make a small hole and attach the cover buttons (fig 3). The loop on the buttons should be on the same side as the dowels, i.e. facing towards you as the kite is flown.

Finally, cut a piece of cord about six feet long, tie a loop in the centre (where the line will be attached), tie the ends to the loops on the cover buttons, and your Mega-Kite is ready for flight!

The line needs to be lightweight but strong. I use the bright orange "string" from hardware stores, although you could buy proper kite line from a good toy shop. Remember, it's the line, NOT the wire that takes the strain - if you just attach a piece of wire to the kite it'll just stretch and snap. The wire needs to be thin and multi-stranded (e.g. Maplin's 7/0.2), since single-core will probably break.

There's umpteen arrangements of kites and aerial that will put out a good signal, so I'll leave that side of things up to you. I use a 40m wire as a halfwave on 80m and a quarter wave on topband. A counterpoise wire running along the ground can also be added, especially if the ground is dry.

One warning. Obviously, you won't be suicidal enough to go kiting in a thunderstorm a la Ben Franklin. However, even on a sunny day the wind blowing can generate enough static to damage solid-state front ends. It's essential that this can discharge to an earth spike. Either use an ATU that is DC short to earth, or else allow the static to discharge through a high-ish value resistor (e.g. 22k that won't absorb too much RF).



If, like me you're used to a grotty sort antenna in an area of high time-base QRM, you'll find working /P in the countryside with the Pythagoras Mega-Kite a total delight. Good luck!

WANTED : RADCOM Dec. 1975 of copy of Tech Topics from same with details of DJ2LR Tuner. Also need copies of RadCom for Dec. 93, Jan. 94, Apr. 94 and May 94. Complete copies or photocopies of Tech Topics, EMC, Eurotech and technical articles/equipment reviews. Will pay postage/copy costs. Needed due to subscription foul up.

WANTED for my small collection : 123 SET and MKIII SET. Also wanted any HF Military Pack or Ground Radios, and circuits or schematics related to spy radios. D.A. Michael, W3TS, 129 Church Lane, POB 593, Halifax PA 17032-0593 USA.