

# NAVIGATOR

## STABILIZING ARM/VEST MANUAL



***Navigator can also be upgraded to a full professional system by adding a GT sled in place of the FlowPod or GlideCam® handheld units.***

Thank you for purchasing the Navigator. Please read the instruction manual thoroughly before operating it for the first time.

The Navigator was designed to transform your FlowPod or Glidecam® 2000/4000 handheld stabilizer into a fully supported system.

Although it is fairly easy to set up the Navigator, ***you must know how to use the handheld stabilizer before you get started***, so read the instructions for the handheld unit first, if necessary. Operating the full system smoothly will require practice.

Included with your Navigator are the Arm, Vest, and Glidecam® adapter post with screw and washer for attaching the post to the arm or for directly attaching the FlowPod to the arm.



## Page 2 **The Vest**

The purpose of the vest is to comfortably distribute the weight of the camera and stabilizing system on your body. To achieve optimal results, you should adjust the vest so that it fits snugly.

Adjust the vertical fit by adjusting the straps, pulling the chrome release pin and sliding the chest plate up or down until you find the right position.

Adjust the tightness of the vest around your waist/hips using the Velcro strap, drawing it around evenly on both sides of the lower vest pad.

Adjust the tightness around your torso by positioning the Velcro straps across the back of the vest and securing the buckles to the chest plate. Make the vest as tight as possible to maximize operational quality and comfort. Once you've adjusted the vest, remove it for easy re-suiting by unclipping the buckles & strap on one side only.



## Page 7 **Operation Notes**

Generally speaking, you have to keep in mind that the stabilizer will not work like a magic wand and instantly transform your shots into brilliant footage. Operator skill is critical, and it takes many hours of practice to master this device, but the reward for all the practice will be substantial. Here are a few simple quick-start guidelines:

- Controlling the orientation of the sled is essential, so grasp the sled at the optimal control point - on the knurled grip just below the gimbal.
- Hold the grip lightly with only your fingertips – do not grab it like a handlebar. A soft touch is essential.
- Practice good posture and hold the sled fairly close to your body to minimize the leverage on your back.
- The way you walk will affect the quality of stabilization, so you'll need to develop a light-footed rhythmic pattern, and you may find that a sideways step works better.
- Practice before attempting to acquire usable footage.
- Seriously: practice, practice, practice.

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Start by fixing the Glidecam® handle adapter post to the arm platform. You can use a coin to tighten the screw. Make sure the post is secure by twisting it in the opposite direction of the screw as you tighten it. Attach the Glidecam® to the arm by sliding the handle over the adapter post.



## Adjusting the Arm

The next step is to set the “float point”. This is essentially the ideal point of spring tension, the state in which the sled rises and falls with slight force. At the front end of the arm you will find a tee-head knob for adjusting the spring tension. Clockwise turning increases tension while counter-clockwise turning decreases tension. You should adjust the tension until the camera base floats at a level below your collarbone, but the arm should not feel “mushy”.

Typically, the arm should be at or above the horizontal position, and you should adjust the tension to a point that minimizes bounce. The float point is not necessarily an exact setting, and you may find that what works for you may be slightly different than another person’s preferred float point. The important thing is the end result: you have a sled that rises and falls with slight force and absorbs most of the shock imparted by walking.

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### ***The Handheld Stabilizer, or “Sled”***

On a professional stabilizer, the “sled” is the subsystem that holds the camera, viewing monitor, and battery. With the Navigator, things are a bit more simplified, as your handheld stabilizer will become the sled, and your camera probably has an onboard monitor and battery power. In tandem with the spring arm, the sled creates a stabilizing or floating effect by keeping the camera level, absorbing shock, and allowing smooth panning action.

The basic principles of sled adjustment are that you want the section of the sled below the pivot point to be effectively heavier (slightly) than the upper section, and you want the camera’s mass to be centered on the rotating axis. The vertical and horizontal balance you need to achieve with the sled should be explained in the instruction manual of your handheld stabilizer.

Following the instructions in your handheld stabilizer manual, balance the unit with the camera mounted before proceeding.

### ***The Arm***

The arm is the link between your body and the sled. The arm provides vertical support and allows the camera and sled to float. The Navigator arm is a single-articulated spring loaded arm. It is designed to be adjustable in two weight ranges: 2 to 6 pounds and 6 to 10 pounds. As shipped from the factory, the unit is set up for the higher weight range.

Once you determine the exact weight of your fully loaded camera, you can decide if the weight range of the arm needs to be adjusted. If your fully loaded camera weighs more than 6 pounds, you can skip sectionz **A1**.

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If your fully loaded camera weighs less than 6 pounds, you may have to remove the non-adjustable spring to get the right tension range. If it is more than 6, you will not have to do this. If your camera is in the 5-6lbs range, you may need to try it both ways to see what works better.

**A1 – Start by opening the arm (see below)** Once you've removed the two screws, you will be able to swing the top half of the arm out and have access to the inside of the arm.



Remove two hex screws, one from each side at the top of the arm, as pictured (5/64" key, not included)

Next, remove **ONLY** the spring attached to the stationary bar – **NEVER** remove the spring on the adjuster assembly. Remove the spring from the stationary bar by grabbing it along its length and pulling it up and over the bar.



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#### Connecting the 'Sled' to the Arm

If you are using the FlowPod, attach it to the arm by following these steps:



Remove knurled knob from the handle by completely unscrewing it, then remove foam grip by sliding it off the handle. Store the foam grip for later use.



Insert handle into recess on arm mount, reinsert knob and thread in all the way, tightening thoroughly. Once the FlowPod is secure, you may proceed



**If you are using a Glidecam®, attach it to the arm by following the steps on the next page.**