

IKSURF!

ISSUE 52

AUG/SEPT 15

WELCOME TO IKSURFMAG

Welcome to Issue 52 of the World's Number One Kitesurfing Magazine! It's that time once again; here is another bumper edition of IKSURFMAG! Inside we give you the ten best reasons to get into

foil boarding, it's the start of a whole new era of kiting! Plus we have the Hood River Slider Jam, James Boulding, Jesse Richman, Christian and Karine with the technique, foilboard tests and so much more!

ENJOY THE LATEST ISSUE!



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INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE

IKSURF!

052 // AUG/SEP



ON A KNIFE EDGE

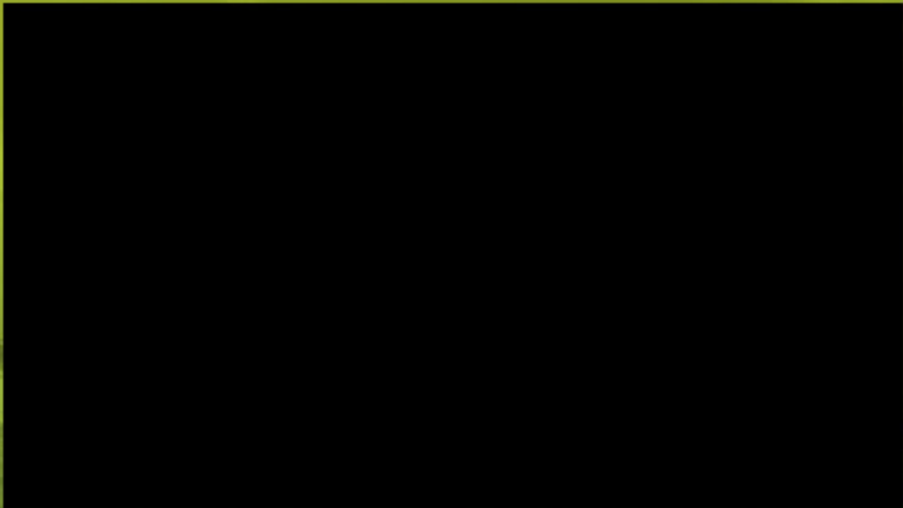
HOOD RIVER SLIDER JAM
BEHIND THE BRAND: SLINGSHOT SPORTS
TESTS, TECHNIQUE AND MUCH MUCH MORE INSIDE!

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Damien Leroy & Matt Elsasser facing off in the Gorge.

James Boulding

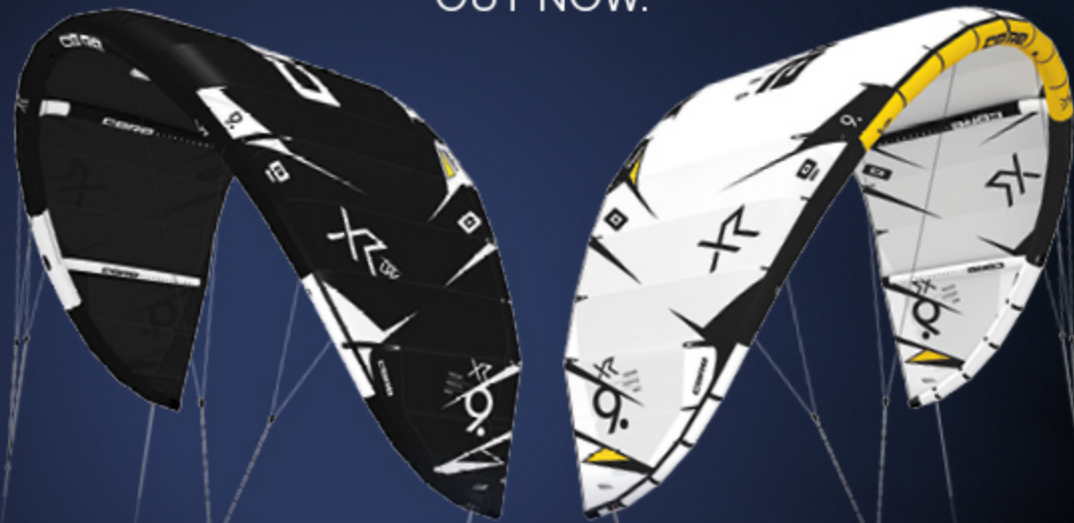
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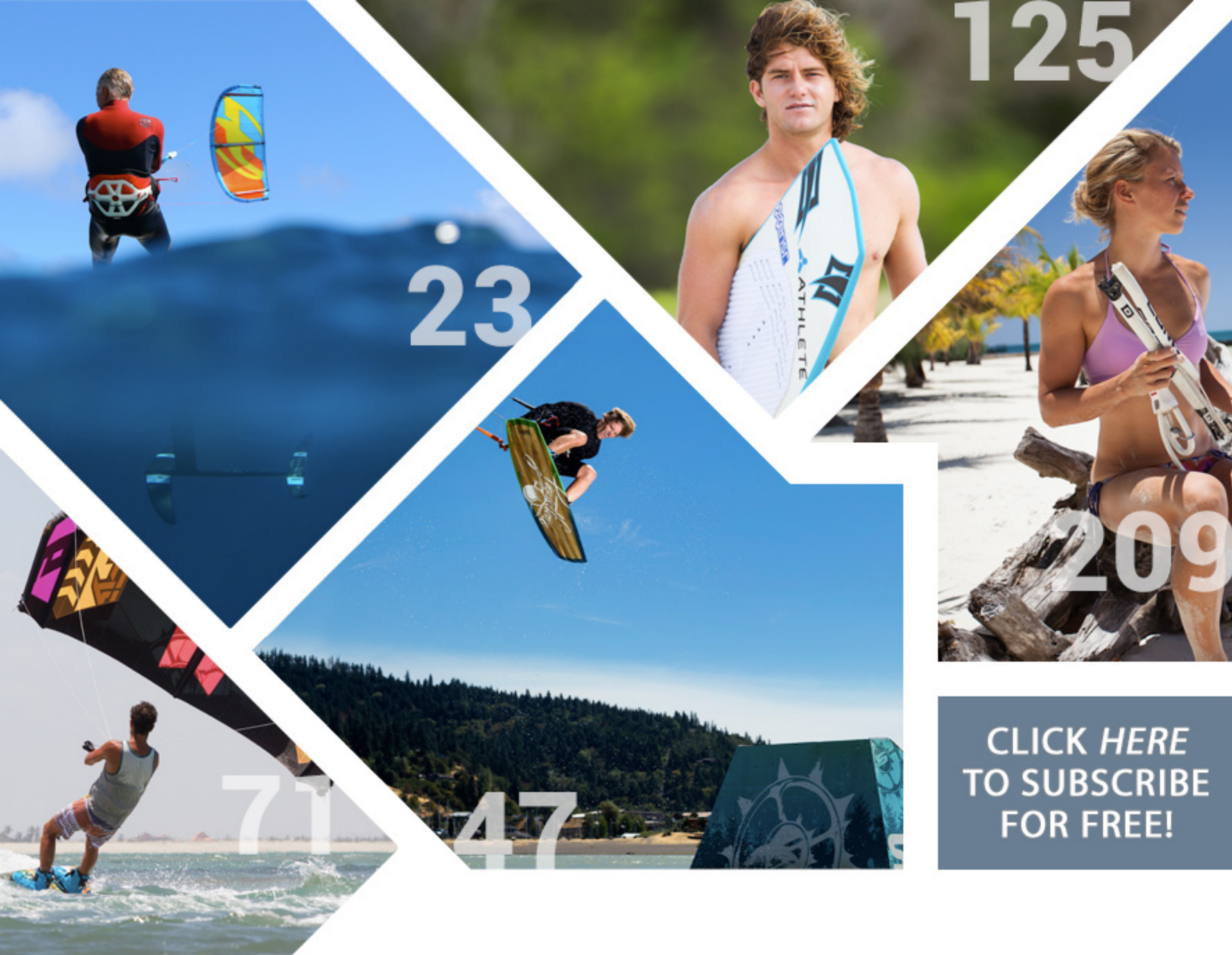


The world of kiteboarding is changing in front of our eyes. After a decade of dynamic growth it enters another - the professional stage. The competitors' and riders skills are becoming higher and higher, while the tricks are more complicated than ever. It requires hard work of our engineers from the R&D department, searching for innovations at every stage. And such is the new Nobile Kiteboarding collection which we named "Earth and Spaces"

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without full instruction in person by a
qualified instructor.

EUDAZIO DA SILVER THROWING DOWN IN EGYPT!
PHOTO COURTESY OF NOBILE



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We've got two fantastic prize packages to give away this issue thanks to the popular kitesurfing clothing brand tshOtsh.

tshOtsh were born out of a love for kitesurfing and their passion is reflected in their stylish and practical range of garments for the discerning kiteboarder.

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NEST Hoodie Heather Grey

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By subscribing to IKSURFMAG you'll be entered into all future prize draws and be first to read the magazine. We will never spam you and only email about new issues or important IKSURFMAG news.



tshOtsh[®]



ISSUE 52 Kitesurfing just keeps on getting better doesn't it! I don't think it matters where you are on this marvellous path, from complete novice to consummate professional, there always seems to be something exciting to learn with a kite. Whether that is your first board starts, or hitting your thousandth slider in the kite park, this sport presents a unique challenge every step of the way.

The progression is seemingly endless, just when you think we've reached a pinnacle the bar gets set ever higher. Equally, when you step away from the trusted twin tip with foot straps there are a plethora of new skills to learn, surfboards, skim boards, strapless trickery, wakestyle, wave riding, racing, foil boarding there seems to be no end to the fun you can have on the water with a kite.

The added bonus is that no matter where you are on the learning curve you will always have a smile on your face and a passion for whatever is currently floating your boat. The challenges are always there and the adrenaline and addiction will remain a near constant. The equipment is keeping up with this pace of development too, modern kites offer so much more than the basic tools of the trade I remember learning on.

I often wonder when the ride will stop, when will this rollercoaster drift back into the station at the end of its tenure? The good news is I honestly don't think it will, there are just too many innovators and trailblazers shaping the sport and the future of where it is headed. Kitesurfing, it seems, is just destined to get better and better...

Keep your arms inside the car at all times and enjoy the ride!

Rou Chater
Publishing Editor



EDITORIAL



Big Mama^{14.5}



Boss¹²



Punch^{10.5}



Smoke⁹



Mr. Green^{7.5}



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Bunny⁵



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TO FOIL OR NOT TO FOIL...THAT IS THE QUESTION!

The rise of the hydrofoil board in recent years has been unprecedented; this once fringe element of our sport is gaining popularity faster than a pristine portaloo at a music festival... Is it something you should consider though, is it worth the effort?





“ THAT MEANS FALLING IN A LOT AND BEING A COMPLETE BEGINNER ALL OVER AGAIN. ”

BRANDON SCHEID
RIDING THE
COMPETITIVELY
PRICED LIQUID
FORCE FOIL FISH.
PHOTO
VINCENT BERGERON

With all the major brands jumping into what has been a traditionally small aspect of our industry expect the onslaught of the foil on your consciousness to continue in a manner that would make an Apple marketing executive proud. Hydrofoils are here to stay, and they could well be heralding the biggest leap forward in our sports development since the Bow Kite...

Here are ten reasons why you should get involved, and get involved now before you get left behind...

1: An Investment

Lets start by addressing the biggest objection that comes out of most peoples mouths, it's expensive. Well we won't argue there, a full carbon foil and high end board is going to

set you back a large amount of hard earned cash. However, and this is important, there are plenty of lower cost options coming to market. Liquid Force were the first to address this with their Foil Fish program, brands like Cabrinha and Sroka have followed suit. You can actually now get a complete foilboard and foil set up for less than the cost of a new 12m kite, and certainly for a lot less than a 17m light wind weapon.

Naturally, just as with any market, there are products priced to suit all budgets so it really is just a case of deciding where you fit on the "investment vs. fun vs. getting-it-past-the-wife/husband" scale and going from there. Essentially though, getting a foil doesn't have to break the bank, and that is the important bit... Equally, as they are in such short supply these things are like an unobtainium sandwich filled with moon dust with a sprinkling of Jupiter flavouring; you aren't going to lose a bunch of cash when you come to sell it. Foilboards hold their value if you look after them, and as such can be considered a sound investment, which is more than can be said for your ailing pension fund right now.

2: The Feeling

Depending on when you learned to kitesurf will depend on how long ago you were a complete beginner. Do you remember that infectious enthusiasm for something totally new and utterly challenging? Foilboarding is a leveller, it doesn't matter how good a rider you are, you have to start at square one, and that means falling in a lot and being a complete beginner all over again. It's a humbling experience that all riders will attest to, and reading this it might be enough to put you off giving it a try...



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TYRANT
6'0"

WAVE SST
6'8" / 30" / 32M



PHOTOS BY ADAM LAPERRERE

“ IT'S SIMPLY ONE OF THE MOST AMAZING FEELINGS YOU CAN HAVE WITH A KITE, AND LET'S BE HONEST, WE ALL THINK "NORMAL" KITESURFING IS PRETTY AMAZING! ”



EARLY PROTAGONIST
ALEX CAIZERGUES
HAS BEEN FOILING
LONGER THAN
SOME OF YOU
HAVE BEEN KITING!
PHOTO
GILLES CALVET

It's short lived however, the learning curve is steep and depending on your current kiting ability you'll be foiling in a relatively short space of time. I've seen guys crack it in under an hour, it took me about 5 hours to really get comfortable though. Equally, I've known people give it a few hours and decide it's not for them. For those that persevere though, the reward is huge...

The moment you get your first proper runs on the foil it will all click and you'll

understand what the fuss is about. There is nothing, literally nothing, quite like it. The human brain is an amazing thing, and I have often marvelled at the calculations it makes while you kitesurf. Imagine the difficulties in creating a robot that could fly a kite whilst riding a board over a moving and ever-changing surface - they can barely get robots to kick a football without falling over... The human body is a marvellous thing, and kitesurfing, for me, embodies just how incredible we all really are.

Trimming a foilboard, with miniscule shifts in your weight, whilst you fly a kite and carve through the water in near total silence is a whole other ball game. The noise of the wind in your ears, the slight hiss as you part the ocean in a manner more majestic than Moses, well it's quite literally poetry in motion. I've heard people relate it to riding endless powder on a snowboard, but even that doesn't do it justice, it's simply one of the most amazing feelings you can have with a kite, and let's be honest, we all think "normal" kitesurfing is pretty amazing!

SKY SOLBACH RIDING THE UNIQUE
NORTH FOIL SET UP.
PHOTO COURTESY OF NORTH KITES



“ I NO LONGER CARE ABOUT THE STATE OF
THE TIDE, OR WHETHER THERE IS ANY
SWELL FORECAST, I JUST JUMP ON BOARD
AND HAVE THE RIDE OF MY LIFE. ”

Put simply, it will blow your mind, defy physics and get you totally hooked.

3: It makes crap conditions amazing

Where our current office is based we are not blessed with amazing waves, or butter-flat water conditions. It's choppy at best, at worse it's like riding over giant egg boxes that are being pneumatically pumped into the air controlled by a panel of buttons being operated by that ridiculously stupid android in Prometheus. People come and visit and say it's pretty outrageous, this means that the ideal time to ride at our beach is on a low tide, when we might occasionally get some waves and the chop isn't as affected by the back wash of the steep shingle shoreline.

So, riding at our beach is a tidal affair and at best it's not great... However, with a foilboard you rise above the mess and even on a maxed out 30 knot day you are slicing over the turmoil on a magic carpet that's smoother than Tom Jones in silk underwear drinking Baileys just before bedtime by a log fire. I no longer care about the state of the tide, or whether there is any swell forecast, I just jump on board and have the ride of my life.

4: You'll spend more time kiting

Depending on where you are along the wondrous journey of kiting will depend on how much you hold out for great conditions. I remember learning and spending every day at the beach, then as I improved I got a little pickier. The wind needed to be stronger, and these days unless it's blowing 20mph I'd rarely consider driving to the beach. In the UK during the summer that can mean going kiting perhaps 5 times in a month depending on how busy we are with work.

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
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" I'M NO LONGER WATCHING SWELL FORECASTS TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT TO GO TO THE BEACH. "



BRANDON SCHEID IS PUSHING THE ENVELOPE OF WHAT FOIL BOARDING IS ALL ABOUT...
PHOTOS VINCENT BERGERON

That's not a great deal of time spent doing the sport I love. As many of us know, getting the conditions to align, with time we have to spare in this busy day and age is often a tricky thing. In the 7 weeks since I've had a foilboard at my disposal that has changed drastically. It's always foilboarding weather, period. I don't have to wait for the optimum tides to align with the wind, I don't need over 20mph of wind to have fun and I'm no longer watching swell forecasts to decide whether or not to go to the beach. I just load up the van and go.

The month before the foil arrived I kited 6 times, the month after that figure went up to 19 sessions, and that was in the midst of a very busy period at work with a few trips away too. Anything that gets you more time on the water has to be worth its weight in gold and I don't think anyone will argue with that!

5: You don't need huge or special kites

I've got an 11m North Evo that I use for light winds, this also doubles up as my light wind

wave kite, it's got bags of low end power and with the foil I can be riding around in 8mph of wind with ease. OK, so if I crash the kite I'll have a long swim ahead of me, but that's not the point. If you have an existing quiver of kites, you can use those exact same kites with the foilboard, you don't need to invest in a huge 17m beast to get more time on the water.

Yes the top racers are all using foil kites these days, and if you want to race, then that is the way to go. However, most of you will just want to have fun and freeride and to do that your existing quiver will do just fine, no matter what set up it is.

“ IT'S FRANKLY RIDICULOUS THE ANGLES YOU CAN ACHIEVE ON A FOIL. THEY ARE SO RIDICULOUSLY EFFICIENT IT HONESTLY STILL BLOWS MY MIND. ”



A TRULY MAGICAL FEELING AWAITS...
PHOTO NORTH KITEBOARDING

If you have got a huge 17m kite that you use to mow the lawn on the summers days, sell that and get a foil, see the next point to understand why...

6: You can go anywhere you like

How's your lawn looking these days, do you ride up and down "mowing" it when the wind is light? Do you find yourself confined to the same patch of coastline when you are riding? Would you like to break free from

the shackles of always battling to go upwind? Get a foilboard; defy the laws of physics and go where you want. I've just been in Huelva in Spain and we rode at a spot that was next to Portugal, a large river separates the two countries and the wind was barely enough to ride on a 12m kite.

With Portugal on the horizon one of the guys on the beach asked if I could ride upwind to Portugal with the foil. It honestly looked a

fair distance away, and was directly upwind. 15 minutes later I was back on the beach, it took 4 tacks and I came back almost dead downwind. It's frankly ridiculous the angles you can achieve on a foil. They are so unbelievably efficient it honestly still blows my mind. When I ride at home I launch and then do 5 or 6 mile laps upwind and then blast back down, you average around 20-25mph the whole time, upwind and downwind is just fast and fun.

I used to be really into the Formula Racing scene and always thought those boards were great, they can't hold a candle to a foilboard though and Formula Boards are without a doubt one of the fastest craft upwind on the planet. I'm planning some long distance trips to far away beaches on this thing and that opens up another aspect of the sport, using the kite and foilboard to actually travel, not just to ride up and down in a rectangular box at one spot...

Steph and Guy Bridge just circumnavigated the Isle of White in the UK it took them 3.5 hours to get round, the previous kite record was over 6 hours... These things are fast, make no mistake!

It's eye opening and once you experience it you'll understand...

7: It's addictive

As humans, and indeed most species it would seem, these days we are all searching for a fix that releases endorphins in our brains to make us feel good. You can get them from drugs, exercise, meditation, whatever, but the feeling is addictive. I'd rate kitesurfing as one of the most addictive sports on the planet, how many people can you think of who have given up perfectly good jobs in order to just kitesurf more and more.

" YOU'LL GET FIT, GET RIPPED AND SPEND MORE TIME ON THE WATER UNDER A KITE THAN YOU CAN EVER IMAGINE. "



Kitesurfing should come with a health warning really, you'll be constantly searching for your next fix and forsaking anything that gets in your way to find it; it's "ruined" lives, families and many a career. Well, if kitesurfing is addictive, foilboarding is like mega smack jack the cracker man, I'd steal my own grandmothers TV and sell it to get a fix. It's kitesurfing on steroids... Of course, this can be seen as a good thing, if you're a meth addict you'll most likely lose your facial features. Get hooked on foiling and you'll get fit, get ripped and spend more time on the water under a kite than you can ever imagine. That may well be an issue if you have a job, family and responsibilities, but consider me the pusher man and give into peer pressure and give it a try, if only just to see what it is like... Go on, all the cool kids are doing it!

THE POSSIBILITIES ARE ENDLESS!
PHOTO GILLES CALVET

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PHOTOS: JASON WOLCOTT // PAUL SMYTH // TEAM RIDER: RYLAND BLAKENEY



“ ONCE YOU ARE OUT IN THE OPEN OCEAN YOU'LL BE ENVELOPED BY THE FREEDOM OF IT ALL. ”



SENSI GRAVES
RIPPING IN MEXICO!
PHOTO VINCENT
BERGERON

8: It's cool

Remember when kiting first came out, bemused bystanders would stop to ask you just what the hell you were doing tea-bagging your way down the coast line and ending up in a tangled heap miles from where you started. Foilboarding has that similar effect on passers-by, who by now are used to 'traditional' kitesurfing. From the beach riding a foil looks like you are just levitating about on a hover board, and as we all know, that is cool. Marty McFly with

self-lacing trainers cool.

Other kites will marvel at it too, and let's be honest being a kiter is all about having peacock syndrome anyway, so this will just add to the narcissism of it all and give you a warm fuzzy feeling inside.

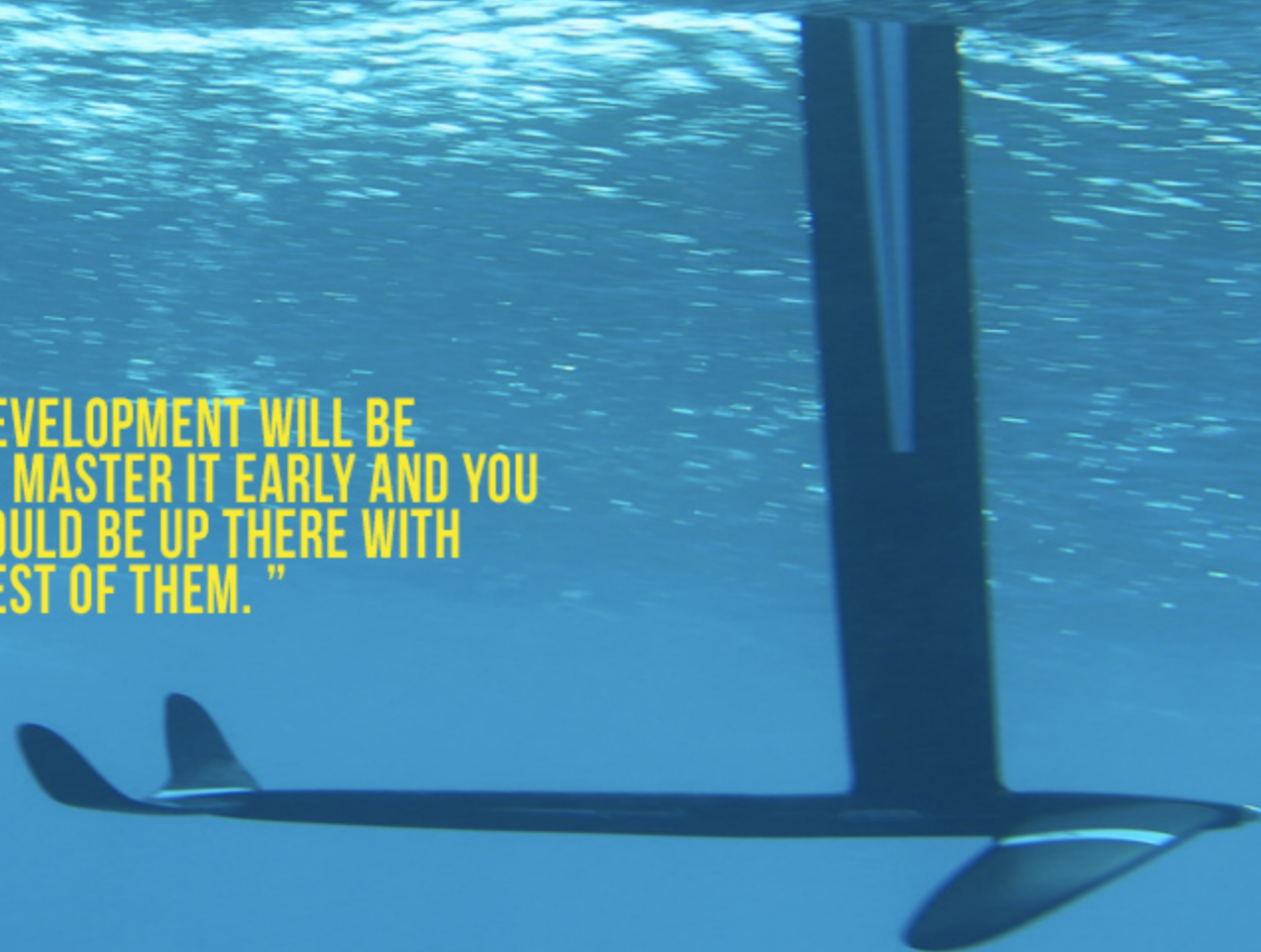
9: You can beat the crowds

Sick and tired of that launch spot at your local being full of kites performing their tricks in a small area for reasons mentioned above? Get on a foil and just disappear into

the distance and have endless amounts of water to play with. Going up and downwind is so effortless you'll be so far from the madding crowd you'll think you were back in 1999 when you were the only kiter for miles around.

For sure navigating the launch and landing spot can prove tricky when you are still learning, but once you are out in the open ocean you'll be enveloped by the freedom of it all. If you made any noise you'd probably find a bunch of dolphins might come and hang out with you. Sadly they won't even know you are there, foiling is all about stealth mode!

“ THE DEVELOPMENT WILL BE SWIFT, MASTER IT EARLY AND YOU TOO COULD BE UP THERE WITH THE BEST OF THEM. ”



IT'S A THING OF BEAUTY!
PHOTO GILLES CALVET



10: Be an early adopter

Do you ever think, “if only I had started kitesurfing years ago, I’d be so much better at it by now?” We all know society rewards the early adopters in all things, and right now you can still be an early adopter in foilboarding. I don’t want to sound like an AmWay rep from the 90’s but get on this gravy train now and in three, four even ten years time you’ll look back and be glad you did.

Foilboarding is here to stay, it isn’t going anywhere and the development will be swift, master it early and you too could be up there with the best of them. Hold off for a few years and you might find you’re the only one on the beach while all your mates have buggered off upwind to the next village for lunch in the pub on their foilboards.

You’ve got a chance right now to try something new, something amazing, something that is definitely here to stay. Go with the flow and get involved, you won’t regret it...

Final Note

While I’ve waxed lyrical about the benefits, it is worth noting that you do need to be pretty handy with a kite to get this cracked. If you have the basic skills and can ride up and downwind confidently on a twin tip, you’ll have a longer learning curve. If you are a shredder of the highest order, that curve will be shorter and easier. Believe it or not, I have introduced some people to the Holy Grail who haven’t liked it - falling in every 10 seconds after all isn’t everyone’s cup of tea.

Get beyond that, put the hours in and you’ll find yourself part of an enlightened movement of kites who are reaping the benefits of one of the most exciting times in our sport...

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BRANDON SCHEID BOOTS A BIG ONE OFF THE KICKER...

When good people do good things for the good of the sport, awesome stuff happens...
The Hood River Slider Jam is a product of just that, a low budget inaugural competition
fuelled by the fire of the people that wanted to make it happen!

THE HOOD RIVER SLIDER JAM!

WORDS LINDSAY MCCLURE PHOTO ANDRE MAGARAO



“ THE IDEA WAS TO ORGANISE EVERYONE'S EFFORTS TO BUILD LONGER-LASTING FEATURES TO REPLACE THE EXISTING ARRAY OF SHODDY OBSTACLES. ”



BRANDON SCHEID
IS NO STRANGER
TO HOOD RIVER!
PHOTO
TOBY BROMWICH

First a little history about the Slider Project in Hood River...

The Slider Project was organised in 2008 to facilitate the construction of a more quality and lasting kiteboarding terrain park at the Hood River waterfront. Before 2008, local riders were building smaller, standing features that would inevitably end up destroyed or washed down the Columbia River. The water level of the Columbia River

is always in flux, so if the water level rises overnight, standing obstacles are easily lost. Inversely, when the river level suddenly drops, these obstacles can become beached and difficult to move.

By creating the Slider Project, the idea was to organise everyone's efforts to build longer-lasting features to replace the existing array of shoddy obstacles. The Slider Project's first major build project was the 2nd

Wind/Airush boombox, a massive floating up-flat-down box with a wall-ride on the downwind side. The boombox was constructed over a couple months, with all the builders donating their spare time and expertise. Joby Cook, Jake Cook, and Forrest Ray spearheaded this project.

Next for the Slider Project came the Rosham Throwdown, a contest to help raise publicity and money for the park. The Rosham ran from 2010 through 2012.



Rich Sabo, Brandon Scheid, and Ian Daly took over the Slider Project in 2014. Although most of the features and faces of the Hood River Slider Project have changed since 2008, the ethos remains the same. Everybody involved takes pride in providing the largest freestanding kite park in the world. Because the features float in the water all summer, anyone can setup their boots board without fins and session the park. For this reason, the Hood River slider park attracts park rats from all over the world.

Hood River Slider Jam

The idea for a different style of competition had been brewing in the minds of a few of the world's most dedicated rail riders- Eric Reinstra, Brandon Scheid, Craig Cunningham, Rich Sabo and Colleen Carroll.

COLLEEN
CARROLL WAS
INSTRUMENTAL IN
HELPING TO
ORGANISE THE
JAM!
PHOTO
TOBY BROMWICH

“EVERYBODY
INVOLVED TAKES
PRIDE IN PROVIDING
THE LARGEST
FREESTANDING KITE
PARK IN THE WORLD.”

THE FAVOURITE ROCKETSHIP
FOR RIDING IN WAVES
OR XL RIDERS
SHINWORLD.COM

"ATHLETES WHO SIGNED UP FOR THE HOOD RIVER SLIDER JAM WERE WARNED THEY WOULD HAVE TO PUT SOME WORK IN OFF THE WATER."



In mid-July the call went out, first, on Facebook. Attention all Triple S riders, a slider jam is being organised in Hood River August 1-7 and you're invited. Please RSVP. Next came the Instagram video contest to fill the remaining spots with local talent. Winners of the video contest included Aymeric Martin, Blaine Baker, and Brendan Kerr. The core group of organisers wanted to keep the list of competitors small because the riders-as-judges format would be time-consuming.

Build

Unlike most competitions, athletes who signed up for the Hood River Slider Jam were warned they would have to put some work in off the water. Half of the contest was to take place on existing features, and the other half on yet-to-be-built obstacles. The sketching, organising, and executing of the build was part of the week-long contest. It was up to the riders to decide what they thought would be fun to ride, then make it happen.

A riders meeting was held at 11 am on Monday, August 3rd. The forecast, which was predicting grey skies and the gustiest of wind, swayed the vote to opt for a build day. Riders then dispersed to beg, borrow, and buy building supplies. Everyone contributed what they could to the effort. The more skilled builders spent the day sawing and drilling while the others helped by holding pieces in place while drinking beer and talking trash.

After this year's Triple S, these riders decided that the Slider Project should organize a small contest for the riders that spend their summers in Hood River. The format for the Hood River Slider Jam was loosely based on ideas from street league skateboarding. The concept was to present competitors with a few different phases during a single competition in order to determine the best overall rider.

The format was ironed out just a few weeks before the event. The first round would showcase technical hits on less consequential features, the next round would reward flow and consistency, and the final round was designed with high-stakes features. An added challenge was that the competitors were responsible for designing and building the park features they wanted to compete on.

SLAMSVILLE:
POPULATION
AYMERICK MARTIN
PHOTO
TOBY BROMWICH

“ ACTION MOVED FROM THE SMALLER RAIL TO THE BIGGER RAIL, AND THEN TO THE KICKER. ”



Newly constructed features included a flat corrugated tube, a pair of smooth incline tubes, and a flat green tube. Also, Joby's Pole, an older feature from the slider park, was brought back to life. By the end of the day, these features were nearly ready to go.

Tech Section

One unique aspect of this rider-driven event was that the competitors were left in charge of deciding when to compete and when to postpone. The first few days of the contest window were declared lay days due to unstable and unfriendly wind, but on Tuesday, August 4th, the skies cleared and the wind normalized. Competitors gathered at 11 am for the first day of competition, the tech section. Heats of three or four riders rotated through each of the existing features including the cheese wedge, the North Rail, and the kicker facing each direction.

These are the features that have been set up in Hood River all summer. Local residents, who are familiar with the setup, and visiting competitors alike impressed the crowd. Cheers erupted for the best hits and biggest wipeouts. The athletes encouraged the underdogs and heckled the front-runners.

Action moved from the smaller rail to the bigger rail, and then to the kicker. As the day progressed, smooth and technical rail riding segued into all-or-nothing kicker tricks. The last rounds off the kicker were impressive, highlights included Aymeric Martin's Backmobe and Moby Dick, Brandon Scheid's Backmobe 5, Sam Mydesky's personal first-ever Dum Dum, and Sam Light's Late-Melon Backside 5 and Moby Dick 5.

WILD CARD RIDER AYMERIC MARTIN WAS RIPPING!
PHOTO TOBY BROMWICH



LOCATION: BRAZIL, ACTION: BERGSSON



- PYRO MANIAC KITE HARNESS
- MANIAC SLIDING SPREADER BAR
- MEMORY FOAM RELIEF ZONES





“ IT WAS TOUGHER THAN EXPECTED TO GET THREE GOOD SCORES IN A SINGLE SWING. ”



YOU HAD TO BUILD AS MUCH AS YOU HAD TO RIDE!
PHOTOS
TOBY BROMWICH

Line Section

With the end of the contest window looming, the riders decided that an unusually early 9 am start was in order. On tap Wednesday morning was the line section, a phase where the North rail, cheese wedge, and the kicker were set in a right-foot-forward line and each rider was given three chances to run through the line. If you fell on or off a feature or crashed your kite, your run was over.

The scoring criteria gave each feature a 10-point value and riders took their top-scoring run to add toward their overall score. Competitors met some challenging conditions, with the wind cranking up for some runs and dropping significantly for others. It was tougher than expected to get three good scores in a single swing.

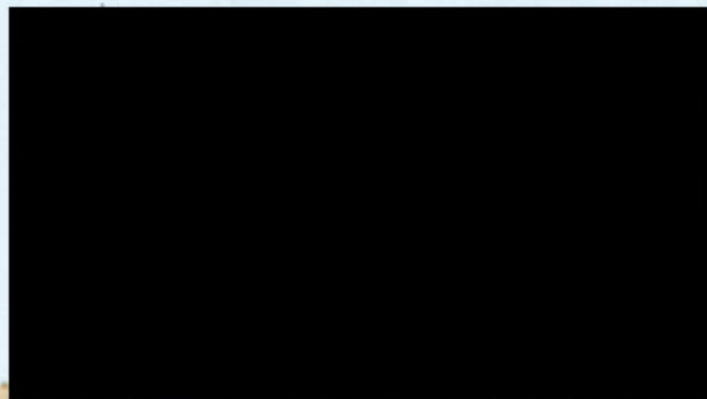
Impact Section

Thursday, August 6 started with some heavy

and awkward lifting, as all the newly built features needed to be hauled to the water then set in position. There were a few contentious moments, but the riders eventually reached a consensus about the setup of each piece.

With the new features in place, competitors took to the water for an hour-long jam session to get comfortable riding the new park. A couple of the new rails needed small repairs or adjustments during the jam.

Life is a race
Be Ready



Lior Gofer
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“ A SYSTEM OF RIDER-BASED JUDGING WAS ENACTED SO THE ATHLETES WERE ABLE TO CHOOSE THE WINNERS AND LOSERS THEMSELVES. ”



Sam Medysky, and Sam Light led the pack with smooth, solid kiteboarding.

Judging

A system of rider-based judging was enacted so the athletes were able to choose the winners and losers themselves. The riders gathered on Wednesday afternoon, and again on Friday evening to act as judges for the event. Steven Borja, the contest videographer assembled each attempt by each rider on each feature. The videos were played through and riders scored their fellow competitors on a scale of 1-10. Specific judging criteria weren't outlined, so everyone was able to interpret the scale based on their opinion.

Difficult decisions had to be made including - if a rider lands and starts to ride away, then crashes a wingtip of the kite into the water - what kind of score should they receive? While the occasional exclamation was hard to muffle, the riders were unusually quiet as they critiqued the clips and filled out their score sheet.

All the scores were then tallied, the high and low marks were dropped from each score, and the highest number for each feature was applied to that athlete's overall score.

CRAIG CUNNINGHAM HITTING THE CHEESE WEDGE! TOP RIGHT THE RIDERS JUDGED EACH OTHER BASED ON VIDEOS OF THEIR RUNS. PHOTOS TOBY BROMWICH

The contest began on the cheese wedge to corrugated flat bar. After this round was successfully completed, the focus shifted to the second feature - Joby's Pole with a gap transfer to a flat tube, which was renamed "Tubes of Death". After round two, the riders repositioned the flat corrugated tube at the end of the North Rail to replace the double incline tubes that were fatally damaged

during warm-up. For the finale, all the competitors joined into a single heat to session this feature together. The impact section saw no shortage of carnage and close-calls. The more comfortable and experienced rail riders stepped up during the impact section, and the rest of the pack did what they could to keep up. Brandon Scheid, Craig Cunningham,

THINGS GOT
PRETTY TECHNICAL,
CRAIG
CUNNINGHAM
LAYING IT ALL OUT
ON THE TABLE!
PHOTO
TOBY BROMWICH

“ THIS GRASSROOTS APPROACH
ALLOWED FRESH IDEAS TO SHAPE
THE EVENT. ”



Results

First Place- Brandon Scheid

Second Place- Sam Light

Third Place- Sam Medysky

Best Kicker- Sam Light

Best Slider- Craig Cunningham

Best Line- Brandon Scheid

Best Crash- Aymeric Martin

Future

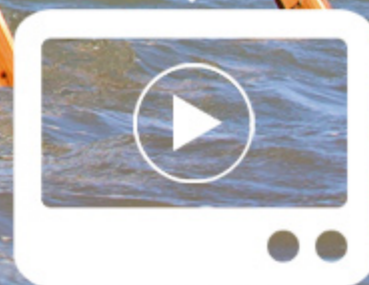
The Hood River Slider Jam was successful in a variety of ways. It was remarkable to see how the collaboration among the participants gave the event wings. No single person was in charge; instead the details of the contest were decided through group consensus. Differences in opinion were debated and the most popular ideas won out. The collaborative process was more time consuming, but this grassroots approach allowed fresh ideas to shape the event. The schedule for the week, along with social plans, was updated in a WhatsApp group message, and everyone had the opportunity to chime in.

One of the biggest goals for the future includes a crowdfunding campaign to build new features and raise money to keep the Slider Project growing.

Follow

<https://www.facebook.com/thesliderproject> for updates and to contribute to the campaign.

Momentum is rolling for bigger and better things to come in the future, so stay tuned.



MANERA
WATERMEN EXPERIENCE



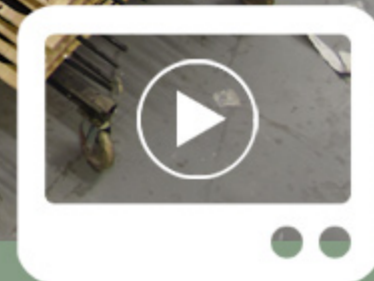
BEHIND THE BRAND

BEHIND THE BRAND SLINGSHOT SPORTS

Lindsay McClure takes a trip round the Slingshot Sports headquarters in Hood River and checks out their factory too. Team Manager Alex Fox and CEO Jeff Legosz were on hand to field the questions...

WHERE THE MAGIC HAPPENS... SLINGSHOT SWITCHED TO A US MANUFACTURING SET UP IN HOOD RIVER A FEW YEARS AGO

WORDS LINDSAY MCCLURE PHOTO ADAM LAPIERRE



Slingshot is one of the original kite brands in the industry; you were born out of the crucible of water sports that is Hood River and have remained there ever since. What makes the Hood such a special place for kite and board development?

Alex: Hood River is a global epicentre for wind sports, for very good reason. Those reasons, of course, are the relentless winds that funnel through the Columbia River Gorge. Along with that famous wind, we are also situated in close vicinity to a multitude of different conditions.

For example, right in front of downtown Hood River are the world famous HR Slider Park, where kickers, rails and sliders mix with the flat water of the Hood River, which doubles as one of best kite looping arenas in the world. We also have amazing school bus sized swell downriver in the rugged eastern Gorge and world class waves a couple hours west of us along the Oregon coast.

This amazing variety of conditions and terrain provides us with the world's best testing and development grounds for products that cover essentially every facet of our sport. One major reason we are able to make such great products year after year is because we live, play and exist in the epicentre of our sport.

PHOTO VINCENT BERGERON

“ ONE MAJOR REASON WE ARE ABLE TO MAKE SUCH GREAT PRODUCTS YEAR AFTER YEAR IS BECAUSE WE LIVE, PLAY AND EXIST IN THE EPICENTRE OF OUR SPORT. ”





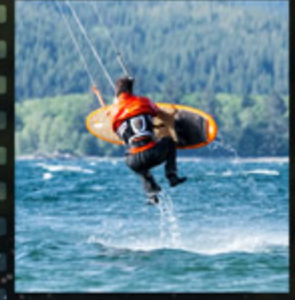
About 5 years ago you switched production for your twin tip and wake board line from Asia back to the US, building a large facility in your hometown and creating a bunch of jobs whilst taking back control over production. Was it a tricky decision?

Alex: The decision was simple; at the end of the day product innovation

has been our guiding passion at Slingshot. When manufacturing overseas, it can be extremely difficult to maintain exclusivity on your intellectual property when various brands are being manufactured under one roof.

Along with making sure we safeguard our innovations, having the factory in our backyard allows for a much more intimate and immediate R&D process, unlike competitors whose factories are thousands of miles away.

PHOTO ADAM LAPIERRE



MAKO DUKE





“ THE MORE YOU CAN TEST IDEAS AND INNOVATIONS, THE BETTER YOU CAN MAKE THEM. ”



How has that helped to improve your product and manufacturing process?

Alex: The more we prototype, the more we learn what works and what doesn't. There really is no substitute for time on the water; the more you can test ideas and innovations, the better you can make them. In this industry, if you aren't learning, you might as well stop trying; this constant evolution is what drives us.

Also, the more control we have over our manufacturing, the more sustainable and environmentally conscious we can become. Slingshot pays attention to these details and takes great pride in calling our boards the Greenest Kiteboards in the World. The amount of focus that goes into eliminating toxic materials in our products is unparalleled.

Has it improved the design and prototyping process; can you design a board in CAD, have it in your hands within hours, then test it at your local spot?

Alex: Yes, all in a day's work. We can print a test graphic, lay up a prototype deck, and have it in our hands in less than 24 hours... Then we can be testing it five minutes later just outside the office. It's a process that few brands have and few understand what kind of work environment that puts us in. We love our work and we hope that shows to the end consumer.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SLINGSHOT



PHOTO ADAM LAPIERRE



PHOTO CHRISTIAN BLACK

Do you have plans to move the kites and surfboards over in the future?

Jeff: Both surfboard and kite manufacturing require completely different skill sets than our factory's capabilities, so the answer is no. Kites are extremely challenging to manufacture. The amount of knowledge required to manufacture quality kites requires years of learning. Our kite factory has over thirty years of institutional knowledge combined with advanced material science knowledge. That is difficult to replicate in the USA, where as a country we have lost our ability to compete with sewn products.

You've always been known as one of the innovators in the sport, ideas like the SplitStrut and One Pump among others have set you up as a design focused

brand right from the very early days. Who looks after the design work on the kites and boards now?

Alex: The same person who came up with those innovations: Tony Logosz. Tony's vision and focus on innovation has served as an anthem for how we approach our products. Never satisfied and still just as in love with kiteboarding as when he started, I can't think of anyone else we would want to lead us in our pursuit of perfection.

In terms of kite design you've had some classics over the years, the Fuel must be the longest running kite in the industry, how hard is it to live with that legacy and update something that riders really love and are passionate about?

Alex: It's always difficult to think of ways to update any product, regardless of its reputation and following. With the Fuel, we have a simple concept: listen to the riders. Ultimately, with the Fuel, what they want is what we want to develop.

The RPM was the only bridled kite to ever win a World Championship; do you think that kite legitimized the concept of bridled kites?

Alex: I think bridle kites were legitimized long before the RPM won the World Championship. It's no secret that the depower and safety of the kites with bridles is superior to those without. On the subject of bridled kites with freestyle performance, that is an entirely different question. There were people doing impressive stuff on bridled kites, but the RPM is a magical kite and its reputation speaks for itself.




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Now, its reputation seems to be better than ever.

Lately the improvements made to the kite have been simple in concept but dramatic in effect. I was speaking to Carlos Mario on Skype recently and he attributes some of his new found success on tour to the performance gains from the IRS bridle. This was the first year we implemented this new pulley less bridling concept, and our whole team is backing it as the greatest RPM ever. That kind of statement really resonates with us. When you have that kind of feedback from the guys who spend more time on the water than anyone, then you know you are on to something.

The new Wave SST is obviously a new direction for you, the Rally has always been the wave kite that you have marketed, what sets them apart?

Alex: The goal of the Wave SST was to focus entirely on a wave oriented kite. We had instant success with the Rally, in the surf, in the hands of beginners, and for the guys who wanted to boost. Each year with each progression of the Rally, our consumer base came to us asking to make it better in each of those aspects.

At the end of the day, we couldn't achieve performance gains in each category without offering a new platform. Rather than try, we created an all new kite focused on performance in the waves, and then re-tailored the Rally to be more focused on loftier jumps, upwind performance and ease of use.

PHOTO VINCENT BERGERON



“ WHEN YOU HAVE THAT KIND OF FEEDBACK FROM THE GUYS WHO SPEND MORE TIME ON THE WATER THAN ANYONE, THEN YOU KNOW YOU ARE ON TO SOMETHING. ”





“ YOU CAN'T CREATE AN OVERLY STRONG BOARD WITH THE HEAVIEST CONSTRUCTION OR IT WON'T PERFORM, AND YOU CAN'T CREATE A FEATHER-LIGHT PERFORMANCE BOARD BECAUSE IT WON'T LAST ”

Both kites have been received extremely well and we are exceedingly pleased to have the Wave SST in our offerings.

Your surfboard construction has always been pretty revolutionary, I remember the first dedicated strapless Tyrant from a few years back that was as light as a feather but as strong as an ox, now you have the Fluid X damping and some very tough boards with a great feel, how important is it to get the construction right with a surfboard for kiting?

Alex: It's everything, and it's a difficult balance to obtain, no question about it. You can't create an overly strong board with the heaviest construction or it won't perform, and you can't create a feather-light performance board because it won't last. You have to pay attention to all of these aspects when creating a product line as diverse as ours. Luckily the construction has been top notch with early victories in manufacturing techniques, so Tony is able to focus on developing shapes that work for kiting.

The shapes have also been progressive, the first nose less design, the T-Rex was compared to the Vanguard from Tomo, was there an influence there and how has that shape progressed over the last couple of years?

Jeff: Tony has been an avid surfer, shaper and designer for more than 35 years. When he is inspired by something that works, no matter how strange, he is willing to test it. If a need exists or a void is present in the industry, Tony does not shy away from being first and introducing innovative design changes into our products.

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“ WE ARE ALWAYS STRIVING TO MAKE IMPROVEMENT IN EVERY ASPECT OF THE BOARDS. ”

PHOTO COURTESY OF SLINGSHOT

You have an extensive line up of twin tips, with just about every kind of rider covered, even the groms! Do you feel there are still improvements to be made with twin tips in terms of design or have we reached a pinnacle?

Alex: As we touched on earlier, no, there is never a pinnacle. We are always striving to make improvement in every aspect of the boards. There are always methods on improving shapes, construction, graphics or, as you said, covering a new demographic.

Ride Engine is going to be launching soon with

product in the shops in a few months, what attracted you to the brand and how did it fit with your ethos?

Alex: What didn't attract us to Ride Engine? It was a brand developed out of the garage of a Stanford graduate that was poised to shake up our whole industry. That's the ethos that resonated with us. A kid in the next generation taking an idea that is 30 years old and saying F*** that, "I can make something better." That's powerful stuff, and we respect that kind of a trait in a person and a brand. That's how Jeff and

Tony built Slingshot into what it is today. I think they saw a bit of themselves in Coleman and wanted to give him the support he needed to build Ride Engine into the global brand it could be.

Kite foiling, future or fad?

Alex: Future. It's too efficient and too fun to be a fad. With the resurgence of past pros and industry icons flooding the water with foils, you'd be hard pressed to convince anyone it's a fad. At Slingshot we are all about more days on the water, and foiling is the ultimate tool to ensure every day is rideable.



“ I LOOK AT THE PEOPLE ON OUR TEAM AND THEY GOT THERE BY BEING UNIQUE AND STANDING OUT AND DOING IT THEIR WAY. ”

The Slingshot Team is a real mix of personalities and abilities, aside from Carlos and Karolina there is a strong beard game going on, what do you look for in a rider?

Alex: Bebe is only 17; he will have a beard in no time. It's no secret the type of riders we are looking for. We look for significance, plain and simple. Significance is about the passion really. We look for the people who carved out a way to make a mark on the sport. I look at the people on our team and they got there by being unique and standing out and doing it their way.

You really can't say that anyone on our team rides like anyone else, because they don't want to. That's what we look for. We look for the people in that Jack Kerouac quote, "the crazy ones."

Over the years there have been some legends passing through the brand, names like Ruben Lenten and Ben Wilson spring to mind, is there anyone that you wish you had managed to keep along the way?

Jeff: We have kept all our prior athletes as friends and we're still big fans of what they are doing after their full time kiteboarding careers. We have always been innovators in our approach to our team. Every era of kiteboarding has enjoyed personalities and riding that was magic at that time. Moving forward, it's important to empower the next generation and help them find their magic.

PHOTO ADAM LAPIERRE

“ THAT PASSION DRIVES OUR COMMITMENT TO CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT AND NEW AND INNOVATIVE PRODUCTS ”



I know you run a fairly open and understanding policy for your riders, is it true the door is always open if they ever want to come back?

Alex: I wouldn't say it is always open, but we obviously saw something special or significant in those riders at one point. If they haven't lost sight of that special spark than we would of course be willing to explore our options.

The brand has won quite a few awards over the years as a brand, including a few of our Readers Awards, what makes Slingshot different to the rest of the pack?

Jeff: Kiteboarding is our number one passion. That passion drives our commitment to continual improvement and new and innovative products that will take kiteboarding and riders to the next level.

Thanks so much for taking the time to chat to us and show us around the factory Jeff and Alex!

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WORDS & PHOTOS CHRISTIAN & KARINE

Hello Ladies and Gents, trust you're all ready for action? Been a busy few weeks on the sporting calendar, plenty of kiting events with a strapless one in Tarifa for good measure, Wimbledon, the British GP, the perspective giving WSL final (most freaky and profound live event we've witnessed on a Sunday afternoon), the Ashes, the Golf. Doesn't seem to stop and it won't. Now it's your turn!

We're always harping on about grabs, adding some mustard to your moves. They feel good, they look good and if you're keen on the camera they'll reward you with your best photos. So we'll start this issue's technique with a jumped Roast Beef, ironically but gracefully performed by the French half of us. Continuing on this theme we follow that with another grab that will get you some great holiday snaps, a nose grab but added to a popped front roll to toe side. And finally with a nod aimed at those strapless warriors on the flat we have the delightful strapless pop to blind with Ole, a kiter's flat water air reverse. Hope you enjoy trying these...

Upcoming clinic availability:

The rest of our 2016 clinics are fully booked. Contact us for 2016 dates.

JUMP ROAST BEEF


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POP FRONT NOSE GRAB TO TOE SIDE


[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

STRAPLESS POP TO BLIND WITH OLE


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JUMP ROAST BEEF >

XO 133 with H3s & FX 7m

Now this is a good grab, and one that'll dazzle on a plethora of tricks. Our sage advice would of course be to start at the beginning, so we'll introduce this one with a regular jump. The idea being that you'll have ample time to both ponder and practice grabbing in the right place, as it is quite different from others that you've probably tried and therefore requires a bit of mental and physical rehearsal prior to your first airborne attempts.

So what and where is the Roast Beef. The Roast Beef is a back hand grab on the heelside edge of your board, reaching down in between and through your legs. Now just think about that for a moment. If you're sitting comfortably, imagine that you're jumping and decide which way, lift your legs and reach down between them with your back hand, palm facing forwards and grab that fictional edge, voila – le Roast Beef. Now let us have a look at the steps to crack this one during your jump.

The Jump Pic A

OK, we're not going to go through the complete 'how to' of jumping, however for controlled air with sufficient time to get this grab it will always be worth saving some concentration for the take off. You don't need massive speed, your edge and keeping it are more important so make sure that you approach with your kite around 1 or 11 o'clock, heading upwind



with the bar trimmed in sufficiently so that you can twist and look where you want to go with both hands happily reaching and gripping the bar. Remember that you need to keep your back leg working, push against your edge so that you're riding in a straight line upwind. Don't allow your back leg to soften and don't carve up. Once you're heading straight you can send the kite up and back positively, and when you're taking off feel free to pull the bar in. You can see Karine has a solid edge and she's given the bar a good sending to get some height and hang time, and her hands are centred on the bar so that she can happily take her back hand off to grab without the kite reacting too suddenly.



The Prep Pic B

Like any grab and jump you need to get balanced, have the kite in the right place, move your body to make room and bring the board within reach – not much then! As soon as Karine takes off she pulls the bar in towards her hips. This potentially gives her more height, and also by bringing the bar down parallel to the water it steers the kite forwards towards 12 o'clock, so that it doesn't keep going back from the initial send. Next up this grab requires a bit of a look back. This means that you need to turn your shoulders back slightly, as Karine has done here. This gives you room to reach down with your back hand without your harness hook and chicken loop getting in the way.



Finally, to reach the Roast Beef, lifting either your back foot or front foot won't help. You need to lift both legs to reach this grab. Here Karine is lifting the board towards her by bringing both knees up simultaneously. Keep your knees apart though, you don't want to block yourself.

The Grab Pic C

You can see here exactly where you need to grab the board. As you're grabbing with your back hand it'll feel natural to grab just in front of

"LOOK AT WHERE YOU WANT TO GRAB THE BOARD, DON'T GROPE IN THE DARK."

the back foot, so keep the knees up and reach down between your legs. Look at where you want to grab the board, don't grope in the dark. Once you have the grab, hold it. As with all grabs you still need to concentrate on the kite, so keep that bar in to keep tension on the lines, and try not to hang off your front hand, as you don't want to start diving the kite just yet.

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The Tweak Pic D

The beauty now is that the Roast Beef is an easy grab to tweak. If you hold it and push your front leg away it'll bone out nicely as Karine demonstrates. You can twist your body more for a decent look back or you can lean back and invert the board, the choice is yours.

Landing Pic E

Due to the position that this grab puts you in landing tail first with the board pointing downwind shouldn't be a problem. You still need to get the power on though, so as soon as you feel that the kite is flying over and past 12 o'clock it's time to release the grab and concentrate on the landing. Diving the kite with your front hand requires you to bend your wrist, so at first it's a lot easier if you get two hands back on the bar. The added bonus of getting the back hand on the bar is that it will bring your body back from the look back and help balance you for the touch down. Make sure you dive the kite down through the window and don't let it drift around the edge, you need the pull and the speed it generates to touch down softly.

Top Tips

Without a doubt you should practice this grab on terra firma first before taking to the skies. It's very different from the tail and nose grabs, not more difficult but you won't have muscle memory for the body movements, so some time on the beach or sofa won't hurt.

Yet again as with many back hand grabs, giving the kite a decent send will enable you to keep the bar in



more with the front hand, happy in the knowledge that the kite can and will move forward once you have the grab, without it down-looping you into the drink.

Now have a leisurely wander through the sequence and videos to imprint the movements into your mind.

Common Mistakes

Assuming that you're jumping OK, the problem will be 99% not reaching the grab.



You must turn your head and shoulders back after take off, otherwise there is no room to reach down.

Bring both knees up together to reach the grab. If you just bring the back leg up you'll instinctively go for a tail grab, and if you do reach between your legs the board will be tipped down and away from you making a solid grab very hard. If you lift the nose you won't have a long enough arm to reach the board where you should.



And finally, get balanced before letting go with your back hand, otherwise you're likely to let the bar out as you release the back hand and then you'll drop and have no hang time...

Keystones

1. Decent send from a decent edge.
2. Get balanced.
3. Turn back.
4. Lift both knees.
5. Look for grab.



POP FRONT NOSE GRAB TO TOE SIDE >

Ace 139 with H2s & FX 9m

This is a fun to do and picture-friendly grab, which will also lead you onto a host of other stylish chestnuts. We're deliberately offering this up with a toe side landing, as it is simpler, and looking forward a tad more progressive. Grabbing the nose on a pop trick comes with the inherent "risk" of the kite lifting or even sending behind you, so the front nose grab will train you to both control your kite with just your back hand, and resist using your kite for extra lift. Technically it's a win-win learning experience. To give this a go we'd recommend that you can stomp a popped front loop, if you've yet to master one of those have a look back five years (!) at [Issue 21](#).

Now let's have a run through of what you'll be focusing on when giving this a shot. Suffice to say that as this is a pop trick we'll take it as a given that Christian has approached off the wind, kite around or just below 11 (or 1) o'clock, with his weight back over the tail of the board, front leg extended and hands centred on the bar.

Pop & Prepare Pic A

Seeing as we're grabbing a pop trick, which will be over before you can say Mesopotamia, we are short on time. By grabbing with the front hand you can't even cheat by lifting the kite, as there is no way to dive it at the end, so this has to be speedy.



The emphasis is on getting both a decent pop and the grab early, so that you can make it count before you have to release and land. We mentioned having your hands centred on the bar, but if you can place the centre chicken loop line between your first two fingers of the back hand it'll be even better. Be careful though, if you have a rope centreline this can burn and nick your skin! You can see in the picture that Christian is popping hard up off his back leg by extending it fully, and he's lifting his front knee, which brings the nose of the board up close. However, the key point here is that Christian has already released his front hand and is looking for the grab before he's even left the water...



Grab Fast. Rotate Slow Pic B

Your next goal is to get the grab. Look at the nose and reach down to it with your front hand. You have already lifted the board so it'll be within reach. The beauty of mixing this grab with a front rotation is that they work together. You lift your front leg to rotate which makes the grab easier, and you throw your front shoulder down to rotate which also makes the grab easier – or by grabbing it encourages you to lift the knee and drop the shoulder. Whichever way your mind works the movements are encouraging each other! By dropping your front shoulder, lifting your front leg and kicking off hard you will start to rotate, slowly. This is a good thing, as you don't want to spin quickly,



you're only going to toe side after all. Once again if you look at Christian you can see that he is still looking forward. He has not turned his head into the rotation and therefore keeps it slow. Final point, his bar is still angled forward, he hasn't pulled in, so the kite keeps flying forward and doesn't drift up.

Getting Around Pic C

Once you've got the grab and know that you've set your rotation in motion it's time to make sure that you get around without moving the kite. As long as you got pop and you

" KEEP THE BAR IN ON THE SWEET SPOT, THEREFORE KEEPING SOME TENSION ON THE BACK LINES. "

set the rotation with your front shoulder you will get around, but just to make sure you can now turn your head. To guarantee that you don't drop from the sky you must keep the bar in on the sweet spot, therefore keeping some tension on the back lines. This in turn will pull you forwards through the move. To stop the kite from lifting with this tension,

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keep your wrist and elbow high as you would when body dragging. In this position you can keep pressure on the bar, whilst steering the kite forward. In the photo Christian's bar is still "tipped" forward.

Spot Your Landing Pic D

Always sounds so cliché, but to develop any sense of spatial awareness and consistency in your tricks, having an idea of at least where you might land will help no end. As you feel that you're coming half way round, when your back is facing downwind, you need to have a good look at where you're going and where you'll land (if all is going according to plan). Once you see the water and where you're headed you've got a lot more chance of sticking the landing. Here you can see that Christian is looking over his back shoulder and focusing on where he expects to land, and from now until touchdown he'll continue to do so.

Drop Your Landing Gear Pic E

Even though it's a toe side landing you're actually intending to land with your board pointing downwind,



not on an edge, so you'll need to rotate further than 180°. As everything will be happening quite quickly as soon as you've spotted your landing it's time to get ready for your touchdown. Looking at Christian here, he's let the bar out which will let off tension, giving him slack so that he'll drop down out of the move, he's released the grab so that he can balance himself with his free arm, and he's dropping his undercarriage so that the board will be underneath him and give him a stable platform to land on. And yes, he's still focused on where he'll land.

Touchdown Pic F

Your landing is the sum of all the previous parts, so if it's all gone swimmingly you'll drop down onto your board and your kite will still be flying forward. Christian has landed with his weight on the heelside



edge of the board, which is normal due to the way that you'll drop out of the move – his momentum will push him up onto the board. He's also pulling the bar back in to get tension in the lines and power from the kite. All that's left is to absorb the landing with his knees and then carve back up against the kite so that he doesn't run towards it and lose his speed and power. Job's a good'un.

Top Tips

Keeping the kite flying forward can be hard enough with two hands on the bar, yet alone with only your back hand for company! So when trying this for the first time don't start with your kite too low. Nobody who isn't exceptionally good ever does a pop trick with their kite down at 45°, so when you're learning something having it down there is trick learning suicide.



If you have some help from the kite from the off you'll be able to override your mental desire to lift the kite for additional help. Also practice controlling the kite with just your back hand on the bar. It may seem like a simple skill but like so many others it can always be improved.

Now have a good look at the **sequence** and **videos**....

Common Mistakes

We've already mentioned drifting the kite up to help. Often, let's admit, it's intentional! The only reason you ever need to move the kite during take off is because you're waiting for something to happen

rather than popping explosively – so give it some beans with your back leg.

If the kite drifts back during your rotation the chances are you're pulling too much on the bar. First off, try trimming the sweet spot down a tad as this may help. Keeping the elbow and wrist high is the best answer, but if it still drifts up let the bar out just a tiny bit as you take off.

If you catch your heels and fall on landing, it means that you're not landing downwind enough. This will likely be because you're not bearing off enough before take off - if you start heading too far upwind you'll land upwind, on an edge and off balance.

Keystones

1. Huge pop with kite around 1 or 11 o'clock.
2. Release front hand as you stamp.
3. Rotate with front shoulder down as you grab.
4. Look for your landing as you come around.
5. Drop and land downwind, not onto toes.



STRAPLESS POP TO BLIND WITH OLE >

Phenom 5'8 & FX 9m

It's been a while since we proffered up any strapless fun so here's a personal favourite. Also to any surf aficionados, apologies for the name, using the twin tip equivalent means that it'll make sense for those coming from a non-surfing background. If you do surf or at least know the names this could almost be a backside air reverse, but then there's still the matter of the bar, lines and kite. Either way what we're trying to achieve here is a pop to blind, and then on landing we'll continue to turn the board downwind whilst travelling backwards, and Ole-ing the bar, until the fins catch and we can continue to ride out as if nothing happened! Brilliantly fun trick, and one that will really help move you on towards other no-grab strapless tricks....

If you will be trying this we recommend, and therefore presume, that you're already happy popping off flat water or small chop. Therefore we won't go into the minute details of popping (promise to cover that soon though), but will remind you and then concentrate more on the blind and Ole. Here we go!

The Set Up – Pop Reminder Pic A

A few things that'll make the pop work in your favour when it comes to turning the board to blind.

First off, feet position. You can see Christian has his feet relatively wide apart, wider than shoulder width,



but not split wide. His front foot is quite far forward (on the forward most strap insert holes), on the upwind side and it's pointing forward. His back foot is on the pad, but not all the way back onto the kick. With too wide a stance it can be difficult to pop, but you need to be able to use your front foot here, so if anything your back foot only needs to be far enough back to push the board down, no further. Experiment a bit as different boards will require different stances. Next is kite position and trim. Due to the Ole at the end Christian has his kite high, around 12:30, and he won't move it to pop, only pull in on the bar for lift. Christian has his sweet spot trimmed down, so that he has plenty of throw to push his bar away, very important if you want to stay in control.



You'll need some speed if you're popping off the flat or small chop, but the kite must not be pulling you too much or you won't be in control as you'll either be un-weighted or you'll be edging hard, neither make it easy to get low over the board and pop with it.

Finally, even if you are going to cut upwind into a small ramp, remember that you can't pop off the edge, get your weight over the board so you can cork it up and sheet in as you do.

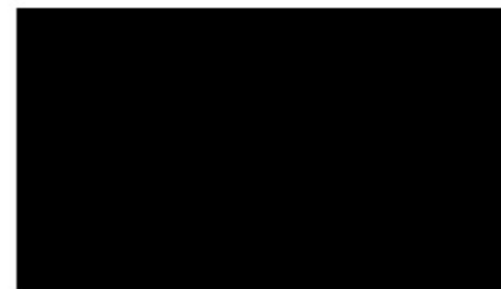
Air for Blind Pic B

The way in which you pop in order to control the board whilst turning to blind is critical. Your pop should be aggressive, stamping down onto the board and water, whilst lifting the front leg, Ollie like.

It's important to stay in contact with the board throughout, so don't overdo it; you want the front foot glued to the board and the back foot in contact with the pad. With your weight over the board as you take off the board will be under you once airborne – this is so much simpler if you take your back hand off as you stamp. Looking at this picture three things stand out; both feet are in contact with the board, with the back hand off Christian is already pushing the bar out to get rid of any pull from the kite, and finally, as he takes off Christian is leaning his head back and looking down to keep the nose high and board on his feet.

The Blind Pic C

You may have noticed that often when you pop well your board naturally wants to turn off downwind, so you're going to harness this, control it and exaggerate it in your favour. Turning to blind strapless is similar to blind on a twin tip, but you can't and shouldn't lift the back foot. Looking at Christian let's see what is going on. The bar is still right out, there's no pull from the kite so he's not getting pulled away from the board.



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His head is looking down and turning back whilst he throws his free arm around to turn his body. At the same time his body stays upright, giving him an axis to rotate around. Most of all though his back foot is still low, there is weight on it which keeps the foot back on the tail pad, meaning that as Christian pushes his back foot around, the board will turn with him. If Christian lifted his foot, it would slide up the board slightly and the board would turn under him independently.

The Push Pic D

What your legs do is really the difference between spinning the board and landing blind. Here in the blind, which by the way will be happening in a blink of an eye, the crux movement is pushing your front foot down as you come around. This will make the nose hit first, which will then pivot the board further, helping with the next bit. By pushing down, you'll get your weight onto the front foot, with your head and shoulders over the front knee, which will also assist in the next slidey bit and keep the back of the board up, out of the water.



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Oh yes, and the bar is still pushed right out. You can see where Christian's weight is, as the back foot is momentarily free of the board, but the front foot is pushing it down. (For any ex-windsurfers we're about to complete a Spock.)

Slide and Ole Pic E

The slide and Ole can feel a bit rushed, but unlike a twin tip your focus here is on staying balanced whilst the board slides downwind. As long as you have the kite high and the bar out the Ole will "just" happen as you turn under the bar. If your weight is over your front foot the board will slide, and because your front foot is on the original upwind side of the board, on your heels, your rail won't catch, so as soon as either the tail or the fins bite the board will complete it's handbrake turn. You can see the angle that Christian's board is banked at as it turns, whilst he remains upright and over his front foot. As the board comes around he naturally turns under the bar without having to push it around in front of his head.

Claim It Pic F

As soon as you feel the board turning through the eye of the wind it's time to get the kite moving. This should handily co-inside with you Ole-ing under the bar, so your front hand will be leading you and you can now pull the bar in to get both tension and power. To prepare for any pull you drop your weight back by moving your hips over your back foot and extending your front leg. The result will hopefully be much like Pic F, nose up, power on, front foot pushing the nose off the wind and maybe even an excitable



the nose off the wind and maybe even an excitable scream to claim the damn thing.

Top Tips

You don't need too much speed, the faster you go the faster it'll all happen and the less likely you'll be able to keep up. With a lot of speed the timing of the pop is always more difficult.

If you're trying on flat water it'll help if you don't jump too much into the wind as you won't have much

height/time to get around. Conversely, if you've got a bit of a ramp and are likely to get higher then jumping more into the wind will enable you to keep control of the board before you land.

Finally, as already mentioned, don't worry about the Ole. If you can land blind, upright over your front foot then the board will start to turn and the rest will fall into place with practice.

Have a good butcher's at the **sequence** and the **videos** to visualise this puppy.



Common Mistakes

Losing the board in the air. If you have too much speed or too much power (bar trimmed out) you'll struggle to keep it on your feet so slow down and trim in. Other than that if you lift your back foot the board will spin off without you.

If you're landing blind and continuing blind, but not sliding around. First off, well done, you're halfway there! You're either bending too much at the waist which puts weight on the rail and makes you edge, or you're not pushing the front foot down and therefore

landing flat. Stay upright and push your front foot down as you turn.

If your tail is digging in as you slide, your weight is too far back and this is probably a result of too much power pulling you. Push your bar as far out as possible and trim the bar down some more.

Lastly, if you're spinning off the board as you try and Ole, relax. If you try and push the Ole as on a twin tip you'll spin on the board, but it won't turn with you. Allow the board to turn first and go with it.

Keystones

1. Trimmed and just fast enough to pop.
2. Flat pop, bar out.
3. Keep back foot low as you turn.
4. Push front foot down.
5. Slide board with weight on front heel – then Ole.

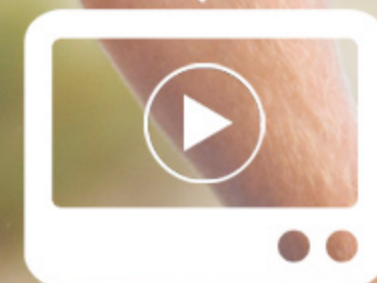


Jesse Richman is one of the greatest watermen in our sport. Nurtured from a young age on the Island of Maui he has won several world titles and the coveted King Of The Air title, but also has pulled off some of the craziest stunts on a kite too.

THE INTERVIEW

JESSE RICHMAN

WORDS ROU CHATER PHOTO QUINCY DEIN



“ THE BEST RIDER ON THE WATER IS THE ONE HAVING THE MOST FUN. ”



JESSE'S PROWESS IN THE WAVES IS IMPRESSIVE PHOTO FRANCK BERTHUOT

We caught up with Jesse in between a monster swell in Fiji and his latest trip to kite 1000km along the Great Barrier Reef!

What was your childhood like, growing up on Maui with a kiteboarding family?

I feel really lucky to have grown up on Maui, you learn that waves, similes, friends and family are the real things in life. Being one

of the groms down at kitebeach was radical, the community that kiteboarding has is so cool and the experience of growing with kiting has been awesome.

Maui itself is somewhat of a water sports youth training ground and pushes groms to pretty insane heights. It's cool to ride and hang out with so many talented athletes from a young age.

You're older brother Shawn is a ripper as well, is there a bit of sibling rivalry when you are on the water and who is the best out of you two?

We have always been very competitive, from the start it's been a competition, at the beginning it was who could stand up first (Shawn did), then it was staying upwind (I did), and then we had the first real contest (I got 5th, Shawn won). There was a long period of time when no one else mattered in the kite contest, it was an event between us, if I beat him in a race then I won, the rest of the fleet didn't even come to mind.

This rivalry has evolved to a lot more chilled out and fun place now as we don't compete so much, but instead push each other and continue to inspire each other. We both have such a different style that's it's almost impossible to compare. However, I do really hate losing to him in any way shape or form. As for who is the best now...the best rider on the water is the one having the most fun.

How has kiteboarding changed on Maui over the years?

The Maui kite scene has gone through so many different stages. When I started the pro pool was the place to be, if you weren't there then you were nowhere. I was a bit young to really be in the scene then, but now kite beach is my home, my favourite beach and one of my favourite places on the planet.

The kite scene is incredibly chilled. I think the strapless and bow kite transition made a big impact on the scene, tons of rippers around but definitely a mellowed out crowd compared to the back in the day... We do however have a badass crew of freestylers that will throw down on a good day and rock the place.



“ SURF SESSIONS NEVER GET OLD AND I’M REALLY PASSIONATE ABOUT WAVES. ”

THREADING THE NEEDLE... PHOTO FRANCK BERTHUOT

You have a creative style of riding that stands out from most riders who are all doing the same tricks. Where does your inspiration come from, and what are some of your favourite, original tricks?

I decided years ago that I wanted to be different; I think that just came with the lifestyle I chose. When I ride I want to be powered, I want to ride with as much power as possible, almost explosive. I like to think

of my Naish Torch as my super powered mussel car, I like to dance on the line of control vs. chaos. My favourite trick is the kite loop frontmobe because it feels so radical and scares me every time.

How do you come up with the 'Jesse Richman' tricks like the harness pass?

There are endless possibilities with a kite, the real fun is getting creative and carving new paths. It all starts with a crazy idea and

and can evolve into anything.

You're pretty handy on a twin tip and a wave board, which do you prefer and why?

Kiting is so versatile and the conditions make all the difference. I like to take the best set up for the day, so I ride different set ups depending on the conditions and my mood. Surf sessions never get old and I'm really passionate about waves.

It feels more like art, whereas freestyle sessions are my ultimate expression of power and rage.



PHOTO QUINCY DEIN

“ THE COOL THING ABOUT WAVES IS THAT EVERYONE IS DIFFERENT, EVERY SESSION IS DIFFERENT ”

There are days when I wake up and know instantly that I'm feeling good, powered, energetic and so ready for a freestyle session.

You rode some huge waves at Jaws a few years ago, and you are now out at Cloudbreak in Fiji, where was your best wave session and why?

The cool thing about waves is that everyone is different, every session is different, it will never be the same. Riding Jaws has been a childhood dream, so I have a lot of stoke out there, however it's an incredibly hard wave to kite and very rarely do the conditions favour kiting.

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“ THE KEY IS TO GET THE KITE STRAIGHT ABOVE YOUR HEAD AND THEN POWER IT UP ”



Cloudbreak on the other hand is one of the best waves for kiting I've ever seen. Really hard wave to ride, but so perfect...and really gnarly, after a week there it felt more like CloudBroken with nothing but reef cuts, thrashed gear and amazing images in my head.

Strapped or unstrapped?

Again, depends on the conditions. I will gladly do something that's considered "uncool" if it's going to work better. Most of the time I will ride strapless because it's more fun, but when it's huge and bumpy, straps are definitely the call.

Have you tried foiling yet, did you enjoy it?

I love foiling, such a fun experience. It's hard to do everything so I haven't gotten the chance to spend too much on the foil, but on light wind days I think foils entirely change the sport. 5-10 knots has never been that exciting.

You've been known to get some pretty big air, what's your best coaching advice for how to go big?

It's all about timing and angle of the kite. Many people send their kite in front of them and not above them. I think the key is to get the kite straight above your head and then power it up so the kite pulls you straight up. To do that sheet the bar in, send the kite, sheet the bar out so the kite accelerates up and then sheet in and power the hell out of the kite when it's straight above you. Time the power up with launching off a wave or piece of chop and you will go sky high!

“ LIFE IS SO FREAKING AWESOME, THERE IS SO MUCH TO BE STOKED ABOUT. ”



JESSE TWEAKING IT OUT... PHOTO QUINCY DEIN

You set a jaw-dropping world record couple years ago when you towed-up 790 ft. behind a boat with your kite. How did you come up with that idea and how would you describe that experience?

I was chilling with a few other riders in Hood River one afternoon when Jon Malmberg, aka “Bam Bam”, had the idea to tow up a kiter behind his paragliding rig. I instantly thought and told him that was a terrible idea...but it stuck with me and after a lot of thought and

planning with him over the next year I found myself flying. The way in which I flew threw the 3D airspace on the way down was such an incredible experience, it was so unlike anything else I’ve ever felt with a kite before. Scary, reckless and very dangerous but incredible.

What is your proudest achievement?

Waking up this morning feeling good and ready for another wild day on this beautiful planet.

You always seem to be super stoked, how do you stay so excited about kiteboarding every day?

Life is so freaking awesome, there is so much to be stoked about. The society this world lives in is really strange and for the most part pretty evil and negative. We create and control our reality, so it’s up to us what we want to focus on. I choose to see the stoke in every situation and feel stoked everyday. When I’m stoked I feel free, free from rules, negative vibes and anything but love.



PHOTO QUINCY DEIN

My ultimate freedom is kiting and my ultimate love is freedom. Splash some water in your face and realize it's all good. Never lose the stoke, it's the key.

If you could change one thing about the sport of kiteboarding, what would you change and why?

I would faze out the idea that incredibly hard landings are cool. It sucks to have some of the coolest tricks be so hard on our body. If keeping the kite at 12 scored highest in events the injury rate would probably be a lot lower. We are the test pilots of the sport and right now it's at a pretty impactful and hard place for our bodies. Focusing more on soft landings would be a good move for us I think.

“ IT SUCKS TO HAVE SOME OF THE COOLEST TRICKS BE SO HARD ON OUR BODY. ”

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“ IT MAKES A REALLY BIG DIFFERENCE AS A RIDER, BECAUSE NOW I RIDE EXACTLY WHAT I DREAM ABOUT. ”



TESTING THE NEW 2016 NAISH GEAR! PHOTO QUINCY DEIN

How do you like to spend your time when you're not kiteboarding?

I really like to push myself in activities that are both mentally and physically challenging. One of the fun ways to do that is freediving, it takes so much mental concentration and physical control and it's not about being a good diver, but more so just about enjoying it.

Why did you join the Naish team, and what do you like most about their gear?

I joined the Naish family because I felt we really saw eye to eye. The brand and myself have been able to grow together and now I'm honoured to work so closely with them. Seeing the gear develop to its young, but sophisticated phases now is awesome. I have my two favourite kites for my favourite conditions; the Torch for going huge, kitelooping and hitting kickers, the Pivot for any and all waves.

Do you get involved with the design and testing of the new products?

I'm getting more and more involved with gear development, it's a cool way to expand my kite knowledge and understand more about the sport. I love working with the Naish R&D team on the high performance products in the range. It makes a really big difference as a rider, because now I ride exactly what I dream about.

What makes Naish different than other brands?

Each brand in the sport has something cool and unique about them, almost all of them are really awesome. Naish has a good crew that focuses on creating the best possible product and changes the game with new innovations.



“ I WANT TO FIND NEW WAYS TO GO HUGE...AND SHARE THE STROKE WITH EVERYONE.. ”

DOUBLE KNEE BRACES ARE A SIGN OF THE TIMES FOR MODERN FREESTYLE RIDING **PHOTO** QUINCY DEIN

Some products take many years to develop, it's cool to be a part of projects like this where you can tell they have all those years of thought go into the design, countless remodels and eventually a radical and essential piece of equipment.

You used to compete a lot a few years ago and this year you went to Dakhla to compete on the VKWC, but you've not been to an event since, why did you choose not to go to the other stops?

I loved my days on tour; competing full time was a fun experience. This year I had a great time at the VKWC event in Dakhla. The riders were awesome, the event organizers, contest directors and judges all surprised me with a new level of professionalism and good calls. Our tour is definitely evolving into a more exciting and well put together beast. As for why I only did one stop this year, I think it's because I had so many other fun opportunities and wanted to choose where and when I went somewhere,

not follow someone else's schedule.

As we know kiteboarding is so condition dependent so the chances are when you plan the events months in advance with so many stops throughout the year, some events are bound to have terrible conditions. This year instead of sitting around waiting for wind, I chose to plan my trips last minute and dependent on the forecast. That way I can score the sickest conditions ever and minimize living the contest lifestyle of hurry up and wait.

What are your goals for 2015 are there any contests you plan to enter, trips planned, and new tricks or stunts you're working on?

There are always wild and fun ideas floating around in my head, plans to do something crazy or goals for something huge. Kiteboarding has given me so much and I really want to give back to the sport, push it in the right direction and have a great time doing it. For the rest of 2015 I want to have fun and continue to find crazy conditions.

The conditions are the key; with crazy winds comes crazy jumps, with huge waves comes huge barrels. So finding the extremes and riding them with a kite, surviving and showing the world what you can do with a kite is my goal. The days of doing the same handle passes over and over are behind me, I don't have much interest in doing what has already been done before, I want to find new ways to go huge...and share the stoke with everyone.

What do you think is the next frontier for kiteboarding?

This is the question, where will it go, who will take it there? Kiteboarding is in our hands, it's up to all of us. Fun is the way forward, do what is fun and it's all good.

Cheers Jesse, thanks for taking the time!

Thank you

WORDS & PHOTOS THE IKSURFMAG TEST TEAM

TRIED & TESTED

Continuing our foil-boarding theme we take a look at some entry-level rides from Liquid Force, Sroka and F-One. We've also got some fresh new kites and boards on test too!

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F-One Kitefoil
Liquid Force Foil Fish
Sroka Freeride Foil

◀ KITES

Core XR4 9m
Ozone C4 10m

◀ BOARDS

Liquid Force Focus 138 x 42cm
Cabrinha Ace 135 x 40cm
Shinn Monk Lover Edition 131 x 40cm





“ LIGHT, FAST AND EXHILARATING TO RIDE WITH A GOOD TOP SPEED AND GREAT ANGLES ”



AT A GLANCE

Alex Caizergues has been into the kite foil scene for a long time now, the F-One speed champion has won quite a few long distance races and it seems like his infectious love for the sport has now spread to the rest of the F-One crew. Interestingly they are going full bore into the racing side of it too, with the Diablo foil kite and 2016 board currently leading the standings at the Kite Foil Gold Cup under the skilful use of Maxime Nocher!

For 2016 F-One are offering three foil boards in different sizes, a 47cm wide version for the experts, the 49cm wide version we have here and also a 51cm wide version for beginners. There is also a carbon version of the board for the racers out there. The foil remains unchanged from the release early this year and together they make for a pretty impressive combination.

Aimed at the more advanced freeriders out there, the foil can be used by beginners but it will take some time to master if you have had no previous experience. The mast is 88cm long,

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“THE WHOLE SET UP IS LITERALLY BOMB PROOF, AS NOTORIOUSLY FRAGILE FOILS GO, THIS ONE TRUMPS THE LOT.”



AT A GLANCE

The crew at Liquid Force Kites all love foiling, and this is the culmination of a project that looked outside the box of the traditional cottage industry foil producers around the world. The Foil Fish became the first commercially available foil on the market from the big players in the kite industry and as such it is arguably a game changer.

Rather than create a high end, high performance craft that was tricky to ride, expensive and fragile the team turned the concept on its head and went for something that was easy to ride, bomb proof and reasonably priced too. The Foil utilises an aluminium mast and fuselage with a glass front and rear wing.

The foil itself bolts onto their converted Foil Fish board which actually doubles up as a light wind surfboard that works well in small fun waves. You can of course buy it as a foil only set up and bolt it onto anything you want, but the overall package from Liquid Force is a very polished one at a great price. You even get a neat travel bag to keep all the bits in!

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“ WILL KEEP YOU
EXCITED AND
ENTERTAINED
AS YOU
PROGRESS! ”



AT A GLANCE

Bruno Sroka is one of the original kitesurfers, he's got a string of accolades to his name including kitesurfing from France to Ireland, winning three world titles and being the only person to cross Cape Horn on a kitesurf. These days he has turned his attentions to building stand up paddle boards and of course hydrofoils too.

Perhaps the most interesting thing about this entry level/freeride set up is the board. A lot of thought and design has gone into it, Bruno firmly believes that whilst the board doesn't spend much time in the water, it is worth paying it some attention so when it is in the water it works well. What you have here is a pop out board that features a unique rocker and rail shape designed especially for hydrofoiling.

There is also plenty of volume too, so when you are learning to foil you can stand on the board and ride it around without it sinking. The idea is that this will make those first early steps on the board really easy. Another striking feature of this set up is the short mast, most masts are around the 1m mark, this offers plenty of length to get over chop, whilst retaining stiffness.

TO VISIT THEIR
WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



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BRAND CORE MODEL XR4 - BLACK EDITION SIZE 9M YEAR 2016



" THE XR4 IS PERFECT FOR BOOSTING HUGE JUMPS AND RIDING DOWN THE LINE ON THE WAVES! "



AT A GLANCE

Core Kiteboarding have been gaining lots of momentum outside of their home country of Germany of late. Their latest offering of the incredibly slick looking XR4 will excite plenty of riders. The XR4 is a Delta Bow shaped kite, designed as a freeride/wave/boosting machine. Featuring 5 struts, a wealth of different trimming options and also a new super short bridle system to really reduce the risk of any snags.

The XR4s construction has been at the pinnacle of its design. The struts and leading edge have been made with new 'ExoTex' Dacron, which features an asymmetric weave and a protective coating which not only increase airflow over the leading edge, but has also enabled Core to reduce the diameters of the struts and leading edge resulting in less weight, faster movement but improved kite stiffness and feedback. That's a lot of tech from some new material! Naturally the rest of the kite enjoys a similar amount of high-end build quality that Core have become famous for!

TO VISIT THEIR WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



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BRAND OZONE MODEL C4 SIZE 10M YEAR 2015



" THIS KITE
SIMPLY RIPS
YOU OFF THE
WATER! "



TO VISIT THEIR
WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



AT A GLANCE

The C4 has been in the Ozone line up as their freestyle orientated kite for 5 years and has gone from strength to strength, now cementing itself as one of the top performing freestyle kites on the market today.

The C4 is a relatively High Aspect C shaped kite with a compact pulley-less bridle system on the Leading Edge connecting to the front lines, while the back lines connect directly to the kite, via a few different bar pressure/ turning speed trim options. The kite features 5 struts, both a freeride and freestyle bridle setting, super quick inflate/deflate valve, and also an efficient one pump system.

The entire C4 package oozes quality, from the bag it arrives in through to the repair kit, manual, kite itself and the bar, no single aspect has been an after thought.

Sizes: 6,7,8,9,10,11,12,14

The Bar

The 2015 C4 Bar is very similar to the Contact Control Bar, but comes in a smaller 38 or 45cm size, perfect for keeping that kite steady whilst unhooked,

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" A GREAT ALL
ROUNDER THAT
HAS PLENTY OF
TOP-END
CAPABILITIES TO
KEEP YOU
ENTERTAINED! "



BRAND LIQUID FORCE MODEL FOCUS
SIZE 138 X 42 YEAR 2015

AT A GLANCE

With an exceedingly long-standing history as a wakeboard company, Liquid Force have been making fantastic kiteboards for what seems like a lifetime now. By infusing their extensive knowledge of creating the perfect wakeboard with the demanding nature of a kiteboard they have been able to produce some of the best boards around.

For 2015 Liquid Force has 11 boards in their stable.

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WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



" INCREDIBLE
ATTENTION TO
DETAIL,
PERFORMANCE,
TECHNOLOGY
AND LOOKS! "



BRAND CABRINHA MODEL ACE
SIZE 135 X 40 YEAR 2015

AT A GLANCE

A new addition for 2015, the Ace has slotted itself slap bang in the middle of Cabrinha's already impressive board line up. Marketed as an all-round freestyle board, it does not want to be confined to just one category, but rather be the board for those of us who like to have fun with all things kite.

This board is inundated with features and technology; parabolic rails, wood core, quad concave and even volcanic fibre make up this sturdy piece of kit.

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" A DREAM IN CHOP, FLAT WATER, WAVES AND FOR FREESTYLE, THE MONK LOVER TICKS ALL THE RIGHT BOXES! "



BRAND SHINN MODEL MONK LOVER
SIZE 131 X 40 YEAR 2015

AT A GLANCE

The Monk has been one of the most successful boards in the Shinn range over the past few years, and this years Monk Lover only confirms why it is a huge favourite among a plethora of riders out there!

Building on the impressive freestyle and freeride capabilities, this years board features new moulding and a new outline, though we have been assured it still feels like the same board, only better!

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The rise of the strapless surfboard within the kitesurfing community cannot be ignored; and with over 10,000 people on the beach cheering their heroes at the Tarifa Strapless Pro recently it is fair to say it's a definite crowd pleaser too...



Where
we're
going,
we don't
even need
waves!



MITU MONTEIRO IS NO STRANGER TO STRAPLESS RIDING...



If there is one negative aspect of kitesurfing, it is by far and away the weather... We are all slaves to a mistress called the wind and sadly for us there is no escaping her often cruel clutches. There is another element that we seek too though, and we need it to align with the wind to enable us to chalk up those epic sessions, the water.

The ocean upon which we ride can be butter flat, or perfectly groomed with peeling waves rolling in from the horizon. I would say either of these two states would appease even the pickiest of kitesurfers. Flat water is relatively easy to find, waves sadly are at

the mercy of the weather systems once more and hard core wave kites can find themselves with buckets of wind and not a ripple in sight.

Depending on your style of riding this may bother you or it may not, but we are seeing a strapless revolution in kitesurfing that is changing the face of the sport as we know it. Tarifa isn't blessed with waves in the summer, and you'd think the majority of riders would be out busting the WOO stats on a twin tip.

These days however, the times they are a changing, about 50-60% of the kites there are choosing to ride a strapless board, even when it is as flat as a witches tit!

“ We are all slaves to a mistress called the wind and sadly for us there is no escaping her often-cruel clutches. ”



AIRTON COZZOLINO CRUISING
IN FRONT OF THE CROWDS.

It seems that despite being called a surfboard, when you add a kite you don't really need surf to have fun.

For me this echoes back to the good old days of huge board offs and aerial trickery. Whilst the pure airstyle of the likes of Toby Braeuer might seem as out of reach as the pro level wakestyle moves of Aaron Hadlow to most mere mortals, it seems that the average kiter out there can find a bond with a surfboard no matter the water state, and get a buzz out of trying a few tricks.

“ the average kiter out there can find a bond with a surfboard no matter the water state. ”

Photo: Lewis Crathern / Best Kites

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“ The beauty of kitesurfing is that it is so damn versatile; you can “ride” anything from a McDonalds tray to an oil tanker ”

Of course, if there are waves we are all a lot happier, but this new direction offers entertainment not just for the masses on the beach, but for all the riders taking part too. It's legitimised the board off even more, essentially all tricks are board offs, and dare I say added an element of cool back into the sport.

The naysayer hard core wave heads will look upon it with an element of disdain, but let's be honest we don't all get to ride perfect point breaks all day, everyday. Adding an arsenal of strapless tricks to your bag of skills will make the flat days fun again and also present a new challenge that might just reignite a passion that perhaps was waning due to the frustrations of the weather.

The beauty of kitesurfing is that it is so damn versatile; you can “ride” anything from a McDonalds tray to an oil tanker crossing the ocean. That's a pretty bold claim, but look it up, it has been done before. If it floats, and often even if it doesn't, you just have to add a kite to ignite a magic that would usually be reserved for Paul Daniels and Debbie McGee behind closed doors.

At a base level strapless riding offers a freedom, gone are the straps and boots and you can now be free to move your weight around the board with ease. Learning gybes and tacks presents a challenge to newcomers that keeps them coming back for more. Cracking those first airs will be easy, but ultimately the tricks that follow may take a lifetime to master.



THIS IS NOT PHOTOSHOP, THIS WENT DOWN LIVE IN FRONT OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE. AIRTON AND MATCHU FACING OFF IN THE SEMIS...

I'VE NEVER SEEN SCENES LIKE THIS AT A KITE EVENT BEFORE...



From the beach it looks impressive, "My goodness, how are you staying on without any straps", it's a simple enough question. I think it's easy to appreciate from an outsider's point of view, and that is what makes it such a great spectator sport, as demonstrated at the recent event in Tarifa...

I'll be brutally honest, I'm more of a wave head than a strapless trickery fan. I'd sooner drop in at One Eye than try to land a kick flip with a surfboard. I headed south to Tarifa with a view of trepidation, and perhaps an element of uncertainty. All those thoughts were drained from my body when I saw the turnout of spectators lining the beach.

I've never seen so many passionate people screaming

and shouting at the riders as the heats progressed. This wasn't a bunch of kilters either; these were beachgoers who by chance had just happened upon arguably the greatest display of strapless riding the world has ever seen. They were certainly more animated and numerous than the crowd at the VKWC freestyle event a week later.

Freestyle kiting is always going to suffer in the eyes of the general public, it's too fast, too technical and too difficult to understand why one rider progresses over the other. Don't get me wrong I think there are moves in place to improve that, with the VKWC scoring big powerful tricks with lots of height over the smaller more technical ones.



"I've never seen so many passionate people screaming and shouting at the riders as the heats progressed."



KEAHI FROM ANOTHER ANGLE, ALWAYS SENDING IT THOUGH!

However, it is going to take a while for that to filter through to the masses and perhaps the top level of freestyle riding will always just be out of reach of the bucket and spade brigade...

It's easy to spot Airton Cozzolino busting out a triple front roll and respect the difficult nature of the trick, equally a massive strapless kite loop is always going to be a crowd pleaser. Huge airs and spins will always entertain the punters on the beach, but I just can't see them ever really getting their heads around a Mobe 7 or a Front Blind Mobe, heck even I struggle to spot the moves these days, and I know I'm not alone.

" Huge airs and spins will always entertain the punters on the beach "

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Slingshot have teamed up with us this issue to offer one of their limited Vision Vision Boards. This was one of our favourite sites last year and it's packed with their leading technology features such as the new Tech Channels and Fusion Systems are unique to Slingshot and the new Tech Channels will allow you to get the perfect shape set up.
All the Slingshot kites are handmade in the US at their factory in Pleasanton, CA. This means they can produce boards to extremely exacting standards while using techniques that they have developed in house. The Vision is the perfect board for Freestyle and Freeride performance and it looks good enough to eat!
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“ learning to jump, spin and flip is within every ones reach and great fun too. ”

Strapless kiting then is well and truly on the map after this event, and I expect we are going to see more competitions like this in the future. It's more marketable than I could have ever imagined and it has a bunch of riders who are already at a level that is, in reality, quite breath-taking.

I've seen Mitu Monteiro riding quite a bit on beaches around the world, and he is amazing. Watching Airtón Cozzolino and Matchu Lopes Almeida riding, now that is something else, it's almost a whole other ball game. The consistency with which they land their tricks was utterly spellbinding. I went from a sceptical industry type with no real idea of the direction of this event, to a totally sold, utterly getting it and understanding it fan in a matter of moments.

It's something we can all relate to if we own a surfboard too, and that's the majesty of it. So many riders have a surfboard in their quiver, and so many riders unfortunately live somewhere without waves. This style of riding offers an adrenaline fix that we all need. For sure we won't be busting out triples right away, but learning to jump, spin and flip is within everyone's reach and it's great fun too.

The equipment is much more user friendly these days as well, there was a time when jumping on your surfboard would usually result in an agonising snapping noise, and you prayed it wasn't your ankles. Modern boards have damping and flex built in and have been designed to withstand the abuse of the pros at the top throwing huge kiteloops and landing at Mach 10.

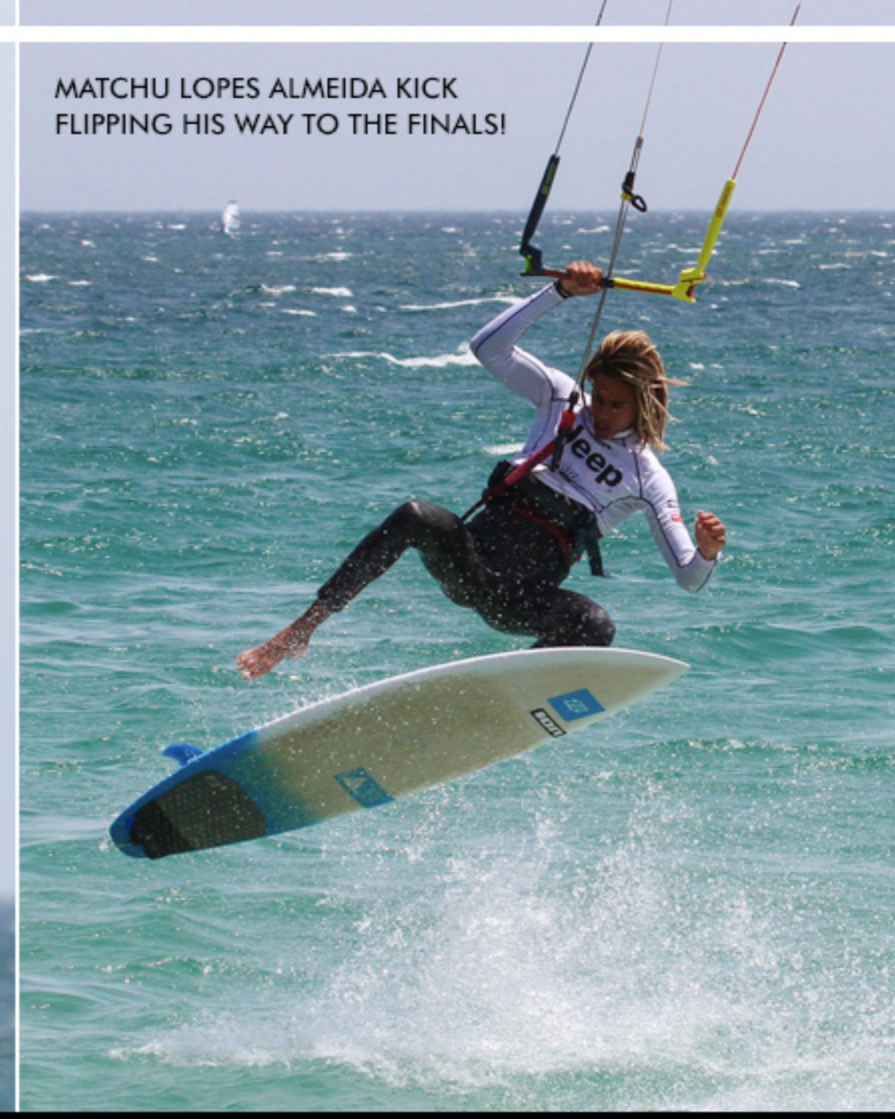
PAULINO PEREIRA WALKING HIS WAY TO THE PODIUM!



ARITON COZZOLINO WITH A NUCLEAR GRAB THAT WOULDN'T LOOK OUT OF PLACE ON A WAKE BOARD...



MATCHU LOPES ALMEIDA KICK FLIPPING HIS WAY TO THE FINALS!



With the fear of breaking your pride and joy gone, you can concentrate on the job in hand of mastering the art of flying a board through the sky with nothing but thin air keeping it on your feet. What's not to love about that?! It will put a smile on your face and send the groms on the beach into a frenzy...

Where is it headed? Well, if the event in Tarifa is an indication, there is definitely a market for this aspect of the sport. Could we see a tour starting up with all the best riders travelling the globe to show off their skills? Maybe. The competition scene is a complicated one at the moment though.

What you might notice is more and more surfboards appearing at your local beach, and the guys pushing

the limits of what is possible and moving the boundaries ever further forward. If you've not tried riding strapless yet then that's your first piece of homework. It is actually easier than you might think to ride along without the aid of straps, yet getting your first backroll won't be a piece of cake...

For me, it is great to see the sport diversify even more and be constantly evolving into bigger and better things. Can you imagine if progress didn't happen? We'd all be riding about on Wipika Free Airs and ridiculous directionals, after 15 years of doing that we'd no doubt be as bored as hell and looking to take up something else altogether. Crochet perhaps...

Embrace the changes in this sport, keep moving with the times, try new things, be brave and keep on smiling... At the end of the day it is all good, it is all kitesurfing!

" it is great to see the sport diversify even more and be constantly evolving into bigger and better things. "

TARIFA STRAPLESS KITESURF PRO RESULTS

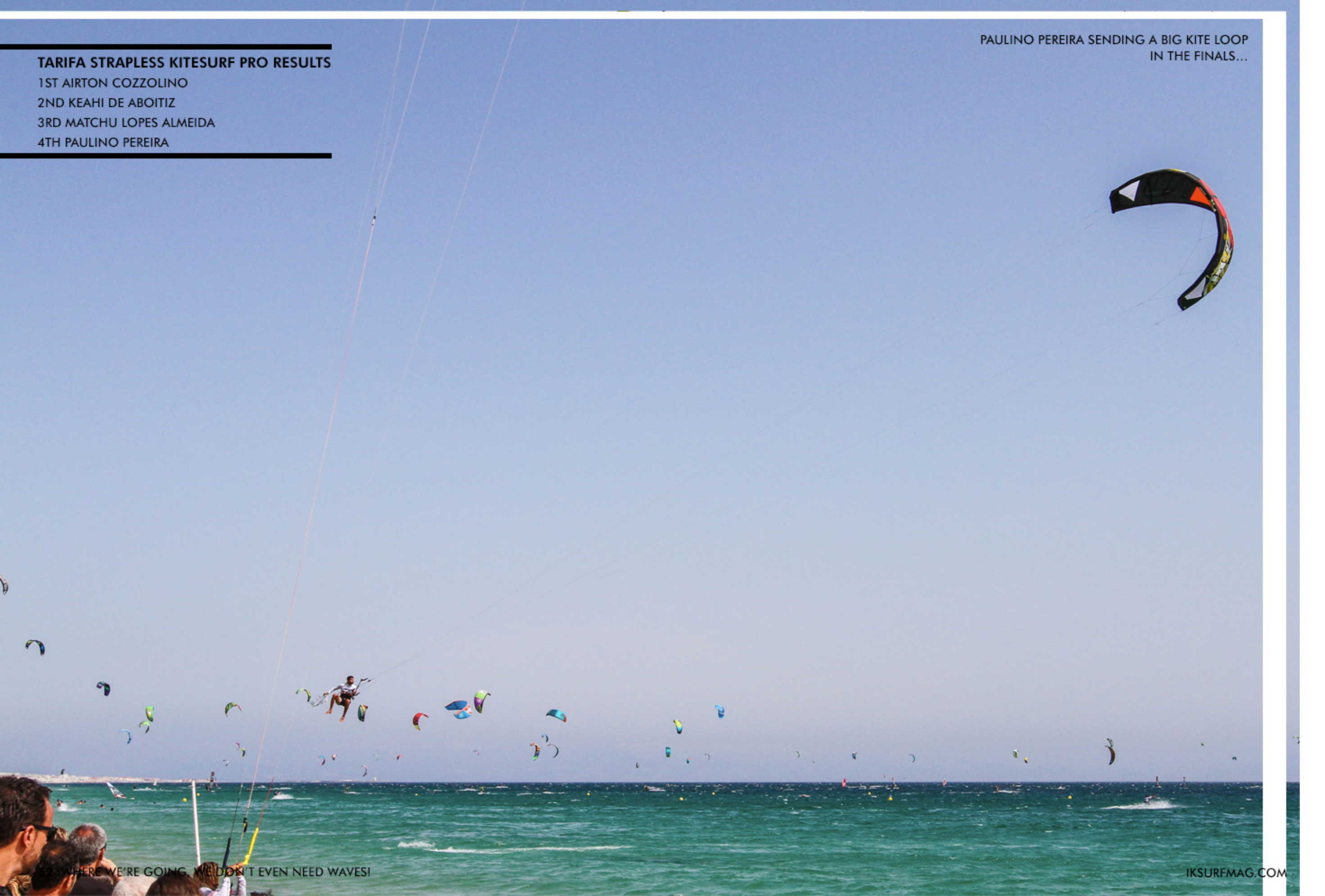
1ST AIRTON COZZOLINO

2ND KEAHI DE ABOITIZ

3RD MATCHU LOPES ALMEIDA

4TH PAULINO PEREIRA

PAULINO PEREIRA SENDING A BIG KITE LOOP
IN THE FINALS...



WHERE WE'RE GOING, WE DON'T EVEN NEED WAVES!

IKSURFMAG.COM

10 QUESTIONS

James Boulding

WORDS ROU CHATER
PHOTO ANDERS KRUGER



James Boulding is a rider from the UK who has carved a career for himself in the tough world of kitesurfing as a videographer. His recent edit, *Game Of English Thrones* caught our attention so we decided to ask him what it was like to shoot in the UK, and how he persuaded his buddies to get involved!

When did you have the idea to film a video in the UK?

I've always been keen to shoot something at home. We always spoke about it during 'the Freeride Project' days, with all 4 of us being British it made sense to shoot in the UK, but we were always away at different times and with similar schedules during competitions abroad it made sense to film whilst we were away.

I've wanted to shoot something for a few years, every year that goes by I love kiting at home more and more. I used to laugh and joke about going home and not bothering to kite much, but now it's such a treat; I love all the different seasons and conditions you can experience. It's been on my hit list for a while and with the freedom I get with Cabrinha we finally made it happen when schedules lined up with Anders Krüger and Alby.

I wanted to show off my home in the right light and have enough time, with help from Anders, so I wasn't always the one behind the camera.

It's not a location that gets filmed or featured very much, what were the biggest obstacles to getting the movie filmed here?

I think with the UK it's always about conditions.



“We're so used to being spoiled with perfect wind, perfect weather, perfect clear water locations abroad”

Sometimes you go long periods without wind and others it only comes during weather patterns bringing also rain and not ideal shooting conditions. The thing is this is what I actually think it makes it so special, it's rarely the same.

We're so used to being spoiled with perfect wind, perfect weather, perfect clear water locations abroad that often people don't even think about doing something at home. Actually, I'm astounded we don't do more here, we live on an island with the most stunning scenery and spots right on our doorstep. Anyone living close to one of the great UK kite beaches is so lucky!

Anyone living close to one of the great UK kite beaches is so lucky!

Was it difficult to persuade the boys to come and ride over here in the cold?

Not really, a few years prior I visited Alby in Italy where he showed me some of his kite spots and the Italian vibe and we always said at some point I'd do the same. He doesn't mind the cold given good conditions and Anders is literally game for anything. He is so creative and artistic that after I showed him some classic castle/beach locations in England he was amped.

JAMES LOVES HITTING NATURAL KICKERS WHEN HE ISN'T BEHIND THE CAMERA!



“ it’s definitely an amazing place to kite when windy and some of the backdrops to shoot are iconic ”



How did they find the UK conditions, it looked like you scored some good stuff?

Actually, we had amazingly warm weather, I was riding a 2mm short suit most of the time and the sea was still warm being September, it was a classic Indian UK summer, the only downside to this being there was no wind. We spent the majority of 2 weeks without much wind, a few sea breezes and then a couple of classic days right at the very end saved our bacon.

The key with projects like this is to score when things

are good, and when there was good light/wind we made it work on whatever kites we could. That’s really the key with trips where shots are the number one goal, there is a lot of being patient, but when it turns on you have to ride and score.

That’s one great thing riding with Alby, he can be so consistent with many technical and difficult tricks. The whole of this video was shot with us using a 15m Contra and 13m Chaos. That gives you an idea of what we had to work with wind wise.

You hooked up with Cornish Legend Dom Moore for

some of the locations, did the boys cope with him in the pub?

Ha! Yes we definitely enjoyed a few Rattlers and Doom Bars with Dom, he’s the man in the know down that neck of the woods, and especially cool now he has his surf school there. Halfway through the trip I made a decision to head down to Cornwall, there was no wind forecast throughout the whole of the UK and so we packed and headed towards Cornwall where there was some swell forecast so we could stay busy surfing and I could show the guys some of the amazing coastline there.

Sometimes you can't force the issue and you just have to enjoy things and be patient, it's definitely an amazing place to kite when windy and some of the backdrops to shoot are iconic so if the wind came through we'd be ready!

The cinematography was as stunning as ever when you make a movie, what camera gear were you using for this shoot?

I now travel with a fair bit of camera gear if I'm going to be shooting on a trip. I use a Sony Fs700 for all action. I use a Sony A7s for lifestyle and run and gun things as it's way smaller but the image is stunning and matches the FS look. I use a DJI drone for shooting helicopter imagery and finally for all photographs I use my Canon 5d mk3. It's a lot of cameras, but they each have their role and to make sure I have top quality stills and video I wouldn't leave home without any of them. Anders also has the same Sony cameras as me so whenever we are shooting together it makes things easy to work together and when it comes to shooting from the water there's no one better.

Have you got any advice for aspiring kite videographers out there?

I get really bogged down on the gear and tech sometimes but really it's not about that, it's all about the concept and direction. You can do so much with a cheap video camera. If you think things through carefully and come up with an idea that is different or creative, then it will make the video stand out much more.

THE WATER MIGHT NOT BE BLUE IN THE UK,
BUT THE SKY OCCASIONALLY IS!



“when it comes to shooting from the water there's no one better.”



“ I can't get enough of the UK at the minute and want to enjoy some time here this autumn, which is my favourite time to kite in the UK.”



There's some incredible pieces of work shot on iPhones and GoPros that prove this. It may not look as stunning as some of the edits out there doing the rounds by big time production companies, but you'll be surprised by what someone might take away from the video and its impact. I think the key thing with kiting is to know angles that work and show off what you're trying to shoot in the best possible way.

If you have a nice backdrop then try and shoot to include it, if you are more restricted or want to focus on the kite aspect look at shooting wide and getting right in there so you see both rider and kite. It's all about variety; the worst thing for me is to see a video shot entirely from one spot, trick after trick from the same angle. My philosophy is if I have scored a trick or shot from one angle I move to another to keep things different for the viewer.

Where is next on the travel list for you?

I'm actually going to be around Europe this summer travelling to a few locations, including a trip up to Scotland and the Hebrides as well as the south coast again in September. I can't get enough of the UK at the minute and want to enjoy some time here this autumn, which is my favourite time to kite in the UK.

The colours, the trees, the light, its all so beautiful and the sea is still warm and the autumn winds tend to pick things up after the summer. I think if I had to recommend coming to the UK for a kite trip it would be September/October, you have to be prepared to kite in a wetsuit and perhaps on the chilly side at times, but you'll enjoy some epic sessions.

I recently got some WOO devices too and I'm keen to get my boost on if the typical British October/November storms come rolling through.



“I used it this year at the Triple-S and the results show that it certainly helped my riding.”

10

How are you enjoying the new 2016 Cabrinha gear, what is your set up at the moment?

Riders these days are always going to try and blow smoke about the new gear being a zillion times better each year, but actually this year, especially the gear I'm involved with, there have been some nice developments. The CBL board has a new shape, specifically wider in the tips, which benefits upwind performance on a typically slower, larger-rockered board.

This helps the wake style DNA of this board especially

for hitting sliders and trick landings. I used it this year at the Triple-S and the results show that it certainly helped my riding. I can't wait to get it to some cables this summer in Europe as well as checking out some classic UK kicker wave action.

Kite wise the biggest change has come in a new 6 line C- kite Chaos. Since the bow kite arrived at Cabrinha they have always had bridles on their kites and this is the first year they have felt in control enough to bring out a C kite shape again with direct connections.

It feels amazing to ride a direct kite again, so I've already been enjoying some re-invigorated freestyle sessions with it. I'll also ride a quiver of Switchblades for sliders and free-riding. It's a bit more lively this year with a touch more performance which I think is great, all those riders who love the Switchblade are about to get an upgrade to progress with them as they learn and, for me, its stability is unparalleled for free-riding and sliders.

Cheers James thanks for taking the time!

The IKSURFMAG website is crammed with news and videos everyday, we only show the best videos, so to make it onto the site is an achievement in itself.

These are the 4 most popular videos that have been viewed on the site as voted for by you with your thumbs up likes in the last 2 months! Check out the full list [HERE](#), and if you see a video you like on the site, give it the thumbs up, it might just help to push it onto this page!

MOVIE NIGHT

#1 ISAF KITE RESCUE PACK DOWN

Arguably the most unlikely video ever to get such a huge number of likes, surely this is because most kites claims to know how to do a deep water pack down, yet in reality has no clue... If you fit that bill then check this out and learn something that might just save your life!



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#2 RED BULL MEGALOOP CHALLENGE

Everyone loves a mega loop and when the early call came for the annual Mega Loop Challenge in the Netherlands we all wondered what had happened to summer! Strong unseasonable winds battered the shores of Northern Europe and the worlds best went into battle!



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#3 BOARDRIDING MAUI CLOUDFOILING

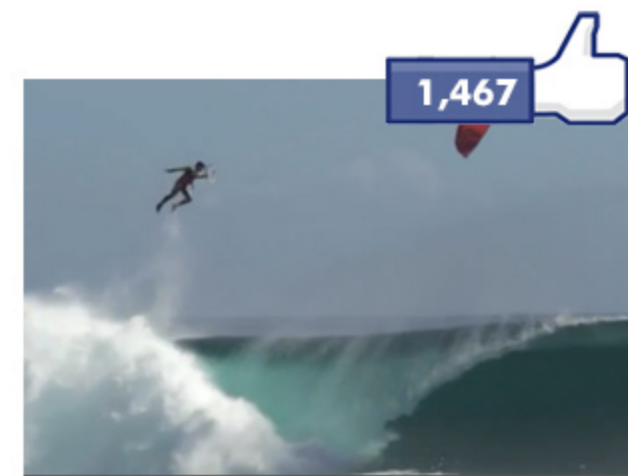
If you have ever ridden a foil board you will know just how ridiculous this video is. If you haven't ridden one it will still blow your mind, check out the insane talents of Greg Drexler as he whips around on a hover board like it 'aint no thing! Watch this and be amazed...



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#4 KITE CRASH 6

Kite crashes, we can't get enough of them, there is something about tripping an edge, or having a massive faceplant, or getting smashed by a big wave that we can all relate to. It doesn't matter how good you are, a tasty wipeout is never far away, check these out...



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

LIGHTROOM

NICCOLO PORCELLA GETTING HIS PUNT ON, DEFINITELY ONE
OF THE BEST STRAPLESS RIDERS AROUND...
PHOTO TRACY LEBOE



More shots with no particular place to go
this issue, feast your eyes!

Lightroom

LIGHTROOM

DYLAN VAN DER MEIJ GETTING WILD IN THE LIGHT WINDS!
PHOTO REINOUT SMIT



Lightroom

LIGHTROOM

FINN BEHRENS CHANCED UPON THIS PERFECT FLAT WATER SPOT IN DENMARK THIS SPRING,
THEY GOT CHASED AWAY BY AN UPSET FARMER, BUT GOT THE GOODS ALL THE SAME!
PHOTO CHRISTOPH KUTZ

Lightroom

LIGHTROOM

NO ONE QUITE RIDES A TWIN TIP IN THE WAVES LIKE THE LEGENDARY MARK SHINNI
PHOTO MIKE BIRT

Lightroom



Lightroom

THE NEW CHRONO V2 IS ON IT'S WAY TO A KITESHOP NEAR YOU,
THE ULTIMATE LIGHTWIND FREERIDE MACHINE!
PHOTO COURTESY OF OZONE

LIGHTROOM



Lightroom

STEVEN AKKERSDIJK HAS MADE A FULL RECOVERY AFTER HIS CRASH AT THE RED BULL MEGA LOOP CHALLENGE, IT LOOKS LIKE HE IS BACK TO HIS OLD TRICKS TOO!
PHOTO THOMAS BURBLIES

LIGHTROOM



Lightroom

DOM MOORE TUCKS INTO YET ANOTHER MEATY MONSTER
IN THE SOUTH WEST OF ENGLAND...
PHOTO ALEX CHATER

LIGHTROOM



Lightroom

THERE IS A FANTASTIC USE OF LIGHT IN THIS SHOT, SOME SERIOUS COLOUR COORDINATION GOING DOWN TOO... KI HWAN KWON IS AS STYLISH AS EVER!
PHOTO COURTESY OF CRAZYFLY



Lightroom

[FEMALE FOCUS]

MARILOU LAVALLEE

Marilou is a mother, a professional kitesurfer and a traveller. She has found her shangri la on the island of Roatan in Honduras. We caught up with her to find out what raising a family whilst being a pro kiteboarder is all about...

" WE FOUND MANY OTHER RIDICULOUSLY PRISTINE AND UNTOUCHED SPOTS. "



You and Christian Bergler own a resort on a small island in Honduras, Kitesurf Roatan. Why did you settle on Roatan, and what makes this location unique?

There have been two big moments in my kite career: Core and Carved faithful sponsorships and landing on Roatan Island. For both, I happened to be in the right place at the right moment.

For Roatan, from the plane I could see that whitecaps were all over the water surrounding the island, but because kiting was unknown people had a hard time guiding me. After a few days, we found out the

perfect area to play and launch, far from the tourist area where the wind is fully blocked. After a few seasons there, and with a boat in hand, we found many other ridiculously pristine and untouched spots. (It's always cool to surprise the guests with that).

Back then I was in Honduras to visit the mainland, thinking that was the place to go. I had no interest for the island...but everything was so perfect and dream-like. I think the universe must have put the full package out to impress me in order to realise I had to stay - I could not help but stay. It was easy; kiting with dolphins, turquoise warm water, incredible green landscape, friendly people and an affordable lifestyle

- I was sold! After researching and spending more and more time on the island, we discovered that the windy season is actually really long and nice, December until August.

Finally, the resort adventure actually just happened a few weeks ago. We used to only work hand in hand with hotels there, hoping to find our own thing eventually, and boom...we finally got it, a nice lodge/B&B style directly in front of where we always went kiting. It is quite a scoop you have here because we haven't officially announced it yet, but we are so excited about this! It's just going to be a whole other level of fun.

"IT KEEPS MY BRAIN FOCUSED, STEADY AND CALM, PLUS I LOVE TO DISCOVER."



How do you balance life as a mother and your commitments as a professional kiter, all while running your kitesurf resort?

Haha...I can still handle some extra suggestions. It's like anything and we all know it, there are easier days and harder ones. I guess living in a loving environment surrounded by nature helps me a lot, especially to keep faith when it's harder. Meditation and learning new skills do me very well too, it keeps my brain focused, steady and calm, plus I love to discover. And as we know, kiting and yoga are always good remedies!

How do you think yoga and kiteboarding compliment each other?

I love this question! For me they have become pretty much the same over time. The only point that might look different is the physical expression of each. Yoga (meaning "union" in Sanscrit) practice reflects in how I kite and how I take things in life. You can't always see it, but you feel it.

At first, you might start yoga to feel stronger or to stretch after kiting and it's perfect for that, but soon enough you are likely to discover the feeling of interconnectedness and a natural desire for mindfulness and that's when you realise how well they fit together and should be continued. This is how everything gets slowly and beautifully impacted.

Marilou, it seems that you have a very distinct philosophy that governs everything you do in life, including kiteboarding. Can you explain this attitude?

Thank you, it is a very nice thing to say. I take time to reflect a lot. Plus, I talk a lot, so it helps to keep my vision clear. While I do it all, I keep walking the walk,


and if I can't do an action, I work on strengthening my faith and personal balance. It's pretty much a daily practice and because I do it a lot, it becomes part of who I am. I have the chance to be surrounded by inspiring people, which is wonderful. I love to listen and ask them questions, because their natural being is our best teacher (plus, it creates more energy and everyone gets more inspired!).

You just finished a girls kiteboarding and yoga week on Roatan. How did it go, and do you have plans to do it again in the future?

Yes, it was wonderful of course! The girls and I really enjoyed ourselves with super memorable kiting sessions, nice yoga practice on a sublime platform, and a lot of time together. Plus, I have to say, Roatan really has something unique to offer so it makes my work even easier!

As a kiteboarding coach, in what ways do you find that women learn the sport differently than men?

Of course I could generalize a few things about girls and boys, but I prefer to say that the more you embody and practice what you teach (in this case kiting), the more input it gives you to teach, and the more infinite ways you find to teach and respond to the one specific way each person needs, girl or boy. That's the fun part of it, being aware so that you teach with care and mindfulness and therefore you can really respect the unique person in front of you.



"TEACH WITH CARE AND MINDFULNESS AND THEREFORE YOU CAN REALLY RESPECT THE UNIQUE PERSON IN FRONT OF YOU."



“ USE YOUR HEART AND EVERYTHING WILL BE POSSIBLE. ”

What kites and boards do you ride, and what do you like most about your set-up?

I ride a 130x43 Tantrum Carved board with boots and 10m GTS3 in light wind or 7m in stronger wind. I also like to go with the Ripper for surf. This combination gives me direct input and control while feeling free, quick, and agile. Plus, I can feel smooth with any ride, which I love!

What advice do you have for kiteboarders who

want to pursue their passion?

Walk towards your dream and keep on walking. Stay true to yourself along the ride, use your heart and everything will be possible. Don't forget to enjoy the journey!

Why did you decide to make kiteboarding such a large part of your life?

I consciously decided to go kiting around the globe for

for a year to see where it would lead me. I still remember this move as a hard one, to jump out of a conventional and good lifestyle for a passion that seemed completely unrealistic (plus, I could not believe I could be a “pro”, me?). Well, it happened to be one of my best moves. Today, I realise it's not about ‘deciding’, but it's about following. It's about not resisting your dreams, but following your inspiration, this is what we are doing!

Not that it's easy all the time, but from that moment life starts to show endless possibilities, and all of them were and are worth the effort, I guarantee!

You've travelled to many exotic locations, what is your favorite kiteboarding destination and why do you like it?

I've had a blast in so many places: New Guinea, Magdeleine Island, Australia, Brazil, and so many others. More than the amazing wind and environment, the people I met were so welcoming, open and loving that I cannot forget these experiences.

What are your goals for the future?

To be as loving and welcoming as the special people I met during those years travelling for kitesurfing. It's funny to realise it will now be my turn to welcome all those people living the search.

What new developments do you expect to see in the sport of kiteboarding in the next five to ten years?

Seeing the sport more and more adapted for people with physical disabilities, or used as a tool for kids and teenagers in need, or simply to continue creating a lever in peoples lives.



Mariloulavallee (facebook)

Kitesurfroatan.com

Mariloulavallee.blogspot.com



" FROM THAT MOMENT LIFE STARTS TO SHOW ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES, AND ALL OF THEM WERE AND ARE WORTH THE EFFORT, I GUARANTEE! "

READERS GALLERY

Thanks for all your contributions to the Facebook page these last two months. Once again we were inundated with pictures, so if we didn't pick yours we are very sorry, but thanks for sending it to us...

Turn the pages though maybe we made you famous?

This issues winner is Guilia Seppi. Well done Guilia, get in touch and we'll send you the t-shirt!

[CLICK HERE FOR A CHANCE TO WIN NEXT ISSUE!](#)



Guilia Seppi shares the tandem kiting antics of Andrea and Davide.

IKSURFMAG Says:

Daring entertainment, some very accurate kite control needed there! Great photo.

Winner! ★



▼
Kent McNish getting some late afternoon air at South Head Lagoon, Auckland, New Zealand. Photo credit: Mike Peffers.

IKSURFMAG says: Cracking photo! Looks like a stunning evening to be on the water.

RD



► Thanks to Nicolas Villedieu for this action shot.
IKSURFMAG says: Strapless airs seem to be the latest skillset to have!



Marc Skjødt Pedersen with the on-water selfies in Løkken, Nordjylland, Denmark. "I shall call it 'Post-knee-rehab frontroll'". The doctor said 2-3 months, but after 1½ I just couldn't help hitting the water again. Needless to say I was a happy man!"

IKSURFMAG says: Glad to hear you healed up quickly and were able to get back on the water again. Clearly taking it easy...?!

Morgan Tinsley throwing down at the British Kitesurfing Championships in Lancing, sadly he landed on his head and there was claret everywhere!

IKSURFMAG says: Looking stylish as ever Morgan. Hope to see you competing again at the BKC finals in a few weeks!





Ignacio Del Aguila Gonzalez-Outon doing a cheeky one footer in Huelva, Spain!

IKSURFMAG says: Old school is the best school!

George Dufty putting his muscles to good use during the BKC event in Lancing, UK earlier this year.

IKSURFMAG says: Great height and nicely powered George. Good concentration face too!



RUBEN VERSLUIS GETTING SOME SUNSET AIRTIME OVER IN CAPE TOWN!
PHOTO YDWER VAN DER HEIDE

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