

DEC 15 / JAN 16

## WELCOME TO IKSURFMAG

Welcome to Issue 54 of the World's Number One Kitesurfing Magazine! It's another bumper issue once again with all the best stories, images and videos from around the globe! Kai Lenny, Jesse Richman and Patri

McLaughlin take on some monster waves at Jaws, we go Behind the Brand with Till Eberle from North Kiteboarding and Eric Rienstra gets grilled in our interview. There is loads more inside so be sure to check it out!

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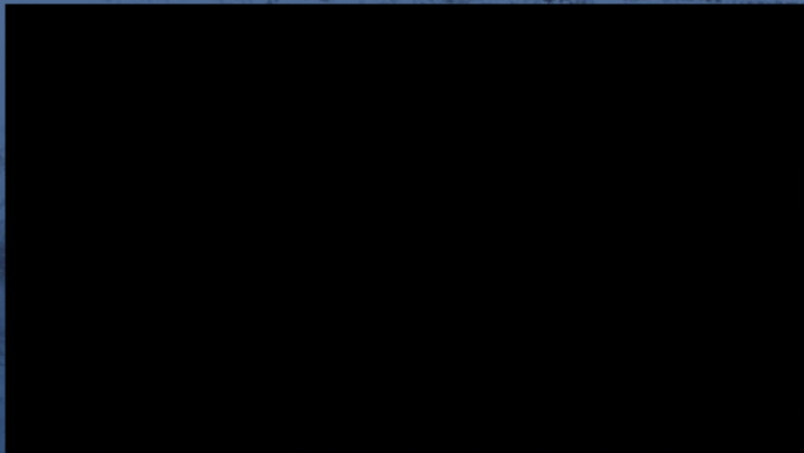
## MEN WHO RIDE MOUNTAINS

BEHIND THE BRAND: NORTH ARCTIC KITESURFING ADVENTURE

ERIC RIENSTRA, DAKHLA, TESTS, TECHNIQUE & MUCH MORE INSIDE!

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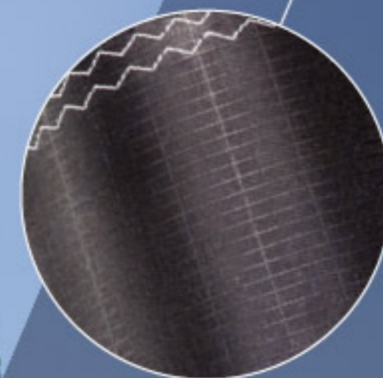
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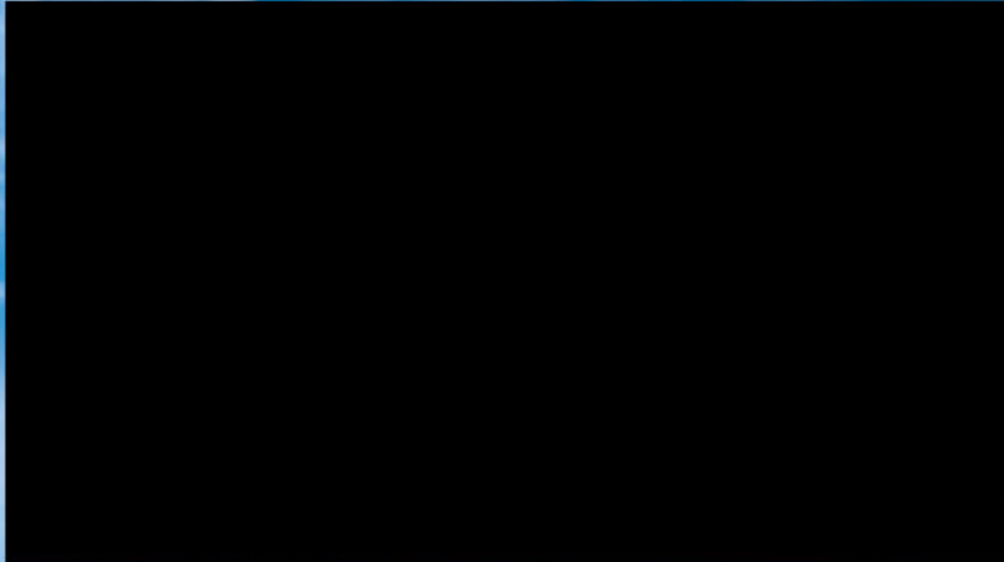


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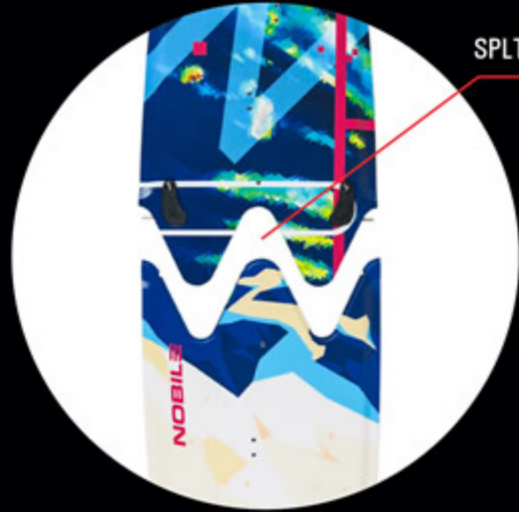


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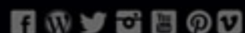


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17  
COMPETITION



19  
EDITORIAL



23  
MEN WHO RIDE  
MOUNTAINS



45  
ARCTIC ADVENTURE



71  
BEHIND THE BRAND



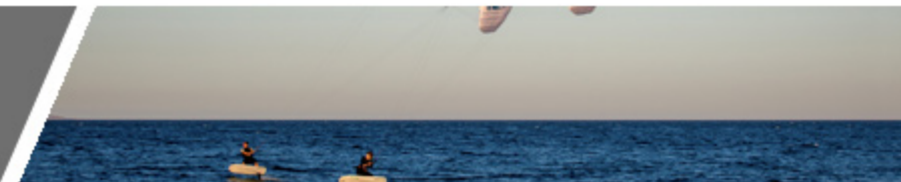
93  
TECHNIQUE



119  
THE INTERVIEW –  
ERIC RIENSTRA



137  
TRIED AND TESTED



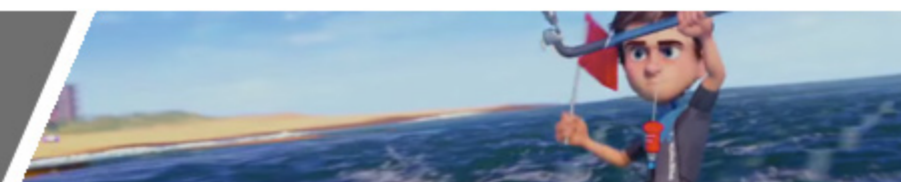
153  
DAKHLA – THE JEWEL  
OF NORTH AFRICA



171  
EVERY CLOUD  
AND ALL THAT



189  
MOVIE NIGHT



191  
LIGHTROOM



211  
FEMALE FOCUS



219  
READERS GALLERY



# CONTENTS



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WILLOW-RIVER TONKIN TWEAKING IT OUT IN MAURITIUS!  
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# WIN

...A WETSUIT AND HARNESS FROM MANERA!

We are teaming up with Manera this issue to give away a Meteor X10D wetsuit and an EXO harness!

We're big fans of the Manera range of accessories here at the magazine; the EXO harness is a personal favourite of our editor Rou Chater, who raves about the comfort on offer. The neoprene range with the 3D design technology is also of an exceptionally high standard, with top quality fabrics used throughout!

Be the envy of your friends at the beach with this set up, the Meteor X10D uses a 4/3mm combination of materials to keep you warm and is the most flexible suit in their range. The EXO harness features an external Energy Dispersion Frame to ensure you have the most comfortable ride of your life! You'll be turning heads at the beach with this stylish and technical wetsuit and harness!

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MITU MONTEIRO BUSTING THE FINNS OUT AT ONE EYE!  
PHOTO ROU CHATER



**ISSUE 54** After a summer of foil boarding, it has been great to get back on the wave board lately. With the winter storms delivering in the UK, I've also been lucky enough to score some great waves in the Indian Ocean during the last couple of months. On my last trip, there was a lot of swearing and packing and repacking of bags before the flight though.

I was heading to the Red Bull Lighthouse2Leighton race in Australia and no matter how hard I tried I just couldn't fit a foil board, foil and a surfboard along with two kites into my bag without creating something that I could barely lift. A top tip I have learned over the years is that if you can't lift your bag, neither can the baggage handlers and they do like to drop things every now and then.

In the end, somewhat dejected I came to the conclusion that I just couldn't fit the foil board and the wave board in together, so as the swell was looking good the foil board had to go. As it turned out, we got lucky and scored the west coast of Australia during a particularly windy and wave soaked couple of weeks.

I actually can't remember the last time I rode my foil board at the moment, which seems a shame, as I love it so much. Equally these last couple of weeks have reminded me how great wave kiting is. It's got to be one of the best ways to enjoy the swell when the wind picks up; the windsurfers don't have anything on us I'm afraid!

I guess that is the great thing about kiting, there are so many ways to enjoy it and get your fix, you just need to pick the right craft for the right conditions. It's just a shame I can't fit all the toys in a bag that doesn't break the scales on a check in desk.

As I have learned during this last trip though, sometimes that isn't such a bad thing!

*Rou Chater*  
Publishing Editor

# EDITORIAL

# TWIN TIP STOKE IS ON!

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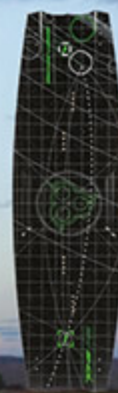
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JESSE RICHMAN GETS THE FIRST BARREL EVER  
ON A KITE AT JAWS!

WORDS ROU CHATER  
PHOTOS BENJAMIN GINSBERG /  
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# MEN WHO RIDE MOUNTAINS

Peahi or Jaws as it is also known is arguably the home of big wave riding, each winter when the swells roll in a team of watermen are poised ready to defy the odds and tame the beast. In recent years some of the world's best kitesurfers have been taking it on. Kai Lenny, Patri McLaughlin, and Jesse Richman just scored one of the best days out there on their kites, with Jesse pulling into the first ever kite barrel at Jaws! We hooked up with the trio to pick their brains about the some of the biggest waves ever ridden with a kite...





KAI LENNY HITS THE EJECT BUTTON TO AVOID A NEAR DEATH EXPERIENCE!

### KAI LENNY

You've grown up around the watermen of Maui and have ridden Jaws on just about every craft conceivable, what is the attraction of riding it with a kite?

The attraction to riding my kite out at Peahi is the aspect that I can tow myself into whatever wave I want and put myself in the

**" I HAVE LITERALLY BEEN ABLE TO FLOAT OVER DISASTER AND LAND SAFELY OUT THE BACK. "**

exact position I so desire. There really is no other sport where you can catch back-to-back waves beside maybe tow-in surfing in such a short period of time. The one thing kitesurfing has that no other sport does,

is the eject button, I have been behind a section, and I have literally been able to float over disaster and land safely out the back. I have seen Jesse do it a lot, and it's so rad.

**How do you decide what to attack the wave on each time it rears its head, is it conditions led or does it depend on how you feel?**

For me, personally, I analyze the conditions and make my decision based on what the wave calls for. It's pretty simple actually, I start with one sport and work my way through the rest of them as Peahi changes faces during the day. I have found the best kite conditions have always been in the afternoon because the wind is still strong, but the waves become even glassier and smoother, so it makes a bottom turn feel like butter!

**What's the heaviest wipeout you have had there; is it safer having a kite to tow you out of gnarly situations, or can it be worse when it goes wrong?**

One of the easiest ways to ride Peahi is on a kite, you get in early, and you have all the power in the world. Unlike other spots, though, you are not always going to be able to pull yourself through the lip when you wipe out. The wave has so much power that you might find yourself wrapped up in a rat's nest. So, that being said, kiting maybe the easier way to catch the wave, but by no means does that mean you're getting out alive!

**Who got the wave of the day during this session?**

Both Patri and Jesse were ripping. It's hard to say who since everyone was catching so many waves and pushing their own limits with each ride. I saw Jesse do some mean hacks, and I saw Patri going really deep.



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PATRI MCLAUGHLIN TUCKING INTO A BEAST...



“ THE LAUNCH WAS SO GNARLY AND DANGEROUS BY THE TIME WE GOT TO THE WAVE ”

The feeling out there was that of a magic session; I think everyone had their crazy moments.

**Are there any other big wave locations you would like to tackle with a kite?**

The place's that looks doable on the right day would be Nazare and Mavericks, those spots look really fun to go fly into on a kite!

### **PATRI MCLAUGHLIN**

**What was the first time you kited Jaws and what was it like, how did it compare to this session?**

I had tow surfed Jaws a handful of times before I kited it. One day the swell was pretty solid, and it was windy. Jesse and I decided to check Jaws from this spot known as The Lighthouse. We could see one kite on it, so we were eager to get out there. We didn't have a jet ski or a boat, so we decided to try to launch off a lava rock outcropping at the base of the cliff. I launched Jesse, and he launched me with his kite in the air. After both our kites were up, Jesse jumped upwind into a ten-foot surge and started the quarter mile upwind to the wave.

The launch was so gnarly and dangerous by the time we got to the wave the adrenaline had already subsided, and it was on. We traded off bombs for a couple of hours then landed our kites in a sheltered bay. Surprisingly everything went smoothly. This last session the waves were quite a bit bigger, but the lineup was more crowded, and I had a hard time finding a rhythm amongst the windsurfers. I still managed to get some bombs though.





HEADING OUT TO DO BATTLE WITH THE BEASTS...



**What are the logistics for kiting there, the launch is impossible with a kite, do you ride out to the wave from another beach or launch from a boat?**

After that first session we figured it would be smart to invest in a jet ski. It's the safest way to get out to Jaws - I would never recommend anybody try to kite Jaws without a ski to launch off. It's also the only thing that will come and get you out of the impact zone if you get into trouble.

**Does the kite crew have their rescue team out there or were you relying on your kite skills and not crashing?**

Generally you want support when you go out there. It's easy to get into a serious situation at Jaws.

"I WOULD NEVER RECOMMEND ANYBODY TRY TO KITE JAWS WITHOUT A SKI TO LAUNCH OFF."

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PATRI MCLAUGHLIN SETS HIS RAIL AND CRANKS A BOTTOM TURN!



Jesse and I brought our good friend Ryan Toaspern out with us. He's a legend. It would be near impossible for both of us to kite without him there on the jet ski. Kai has the best support team. He usually shows up with a boat full of toys, and a couple jet skis to watch out for him.

**Footstraps seem to be the regular when it is on, but mostly we see you riding strapless, what advantages do the foot hooks give you there?**

I'm goofy foot, but when kiting Jaws, I'm forced to ride switch. The wind direction is

too offshore to go backside, and I'm not super confident riding Jaws switch and strapless. The wave has massive wind chop, and you're going so fast. Footstraps help you stay connected to your board when everything is trying to buck you off it. Jesse and I kited Cloudbreak in Fiji when it was pretty massive. It's a left and, therefore, frontside for me, so I went strapless out there. I think I would give strapless a try at Jaws if it were a natural frontside wave for me.

**Who got the wave of the day with the kite?**

**" HE WAS IN A RHYTHM. EVERY TIME I TACKED OUT HE WAS CHASING ANOTHER BOMB TO THE INSIDE. "**

I'm going to have to say, Jesse. He was in a rhythm. Every time I tacked out he was chasing another bomb to the inside. He also got barreled out there which is a first for kiting. It wasn't the biggest wave, and he didn't make it out on his board, but he's the first guy to pull in kiting at Jaws. Kai got some mental ones too, and I got the biggest wave of my kiting career. However, I think pulling in out there is the holy grail of big wave kiting.



“ THE FEAR THAT YOU FEEL OUT THERE IS UNLIKE ANY OTHER. ”

### JESSE RICHMAN

**You must have been pretty stoked with how this session went down, how much planning went into it?**

The key to big wave riding is preparation, especially so when it comes to Jaws. To be comfortable out there and ready to push the limits you need to have the proper safety equipment, safety training, all the right gear dialed in and be physically and mentally ready to take a beating. This was the first big swell of the year, but we have been planning for it to come: our jet ski was running good, our big wave gear ready to go and after a long summer of training we were feeling pumped to get out there. This session we did end up deciding to go out with the flip of a coin, however, the spontaneous decision could not have been so easy were we not prepared for it.

**You've ridden Jaws on a kite a few times, are you getting used to it now or does it still scare you?**

Jaws is such a tricky wave to ride, there is so much water moving in such a wild way. Being out there is exhilarating and very scary, the fear that you feel out there is unlike any other. The wrong move and you are going for a violently wild ride, pick the right moments and make good choices, and you will get the biggest, sickest wave of your life. It requires 100% of your attention mixed with pure commitment. You can't let the fear get into your head and affect you the wrong way, or it will be the end of you. The only way that I see it is possible to ride the wave right is to utilize the fear, use it to your advantage, channel it to be the driving force in the moment to reach another level of concentration.



KAI LENNY SPENDS MOST OF HIS WINTER RIGHT HERE!



How are the other water users towards you when you are out there, do the kites get some respect? It looked like there were a bunch of windsurfers out on that day?

If you're out at Jaws, you are charging. When a fun session can easily turn into a life-threatening situation there is a sort of understanding in the water and bond between all the riders - you look out for one another. You all know the thrill of riding the waves but can see the inherent danger of being out there, so it's not so much the vessel you ride that commands respect in the lineup, but more so your preparation.

"THERE IS A SORT OF UNDERSTANDING IN THE WATER AND BOND BETWEEN ALL THE RIDERS"

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If you take all the right safety measures, are respectful to the other guys out there and prepared for the worst you will be respected, doesn't matter if you're surfing, windsurfing or kitesurfing. On the other hand, if you're

being foolish, unsafe or are clearly unprepared, even if you're charging on the waves, then you won't be respected because sooner or later you will go down and most likely need assistance. If there is a rescue driver ready who see's you they will save you, but this puts them and their riders at extreme risk by you not being prepared.

It's not cool to rely on others even though they will most likely help you and be glad to do it... It's really out there, and you need to treat it that way; be foolish and people will take note, be smart, safe and charge and you will be respected.

**Who got the wave of the day out there?**

It's hard to pick out one wave from that session. There were a lot of fun waves that came through,

PATRI MCLAUGHLIN IS RIDING THIS SWITCH, GO FIGURE!



“ JAWS IS INCREDIBLY STEEP AND FAST, SO YOU NEED TO BE HALF WAY UP THE FACE WITH THE PERFECT LINE TO GET BARRELED. ”

but I didn't really see one that stood out so much more than others...Patri got a pretty solid bomb, Kai did a sick turn on one, and the windsurfers kinda ripped the place up. I felt like I had a few sick waves, but wouldn't vote any of them the wave of the day... It was just such a blur of awesomeness; I feel like it wasn't one wave that made the day, but that so many sick waves were riding awesomely!

**Getting barreled at Jaws, that has to be the first time that has been done, how did it feel and is it a tricky wave to get shackd on?**

Jaws is so different from every other wave; the barrel is not like most for kiting where you can basically set yourself up at the bottom of the wave and, with right positioning and timing, watch the wave break over your head. Jaws is incredibly steep and fast, so you need to be half way up the face with the perfect line to get barreled. In the right spot about half the board will be out of the water (nose to tail). It took all the sessions I've had out there to understand it this much and then finally get the balls to go for one... That feeling, though, that view...makes it all worth it.





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I'm usually a hermit crab when it comes to the cold; I would rather spend my winters in my board shorts than a thick layer of neoprene! This year, however, I received an email inviting me to represent Cabrinha in Greenland for the Arctic Kite Adventure.



# ARCTIC ADVENTURE

WORDS RICHARD FLINDALL  
PHOTOS ARCTIC KITE ADVENTURE







**“ IT IS GOOD TO SEE THE MAINSTREAM BRANDS EMBRACING OUR SPORT. ”**

Allianz Insurance were keen to make an advert that featured kitesurfing, which is great as it is good to see the mainstream brands embracing our sport. On the other hand, they obviously didn't get the memo about my winter hibernation habits...

They were filming the video in the Arctic, which, if I am honest, has never featured on my bucket list of places to kitesurf!

That said, I'm never one to turn down an adventure so I replied with a hasty "yes"! The next challenge was to find some warm clothes, after eight winters in the Caribbean my wardrobe was somewhat lacking for an adventure of this nature!

The first leg of the journey began with a short, early morning flight from London Luton to Copenhagen. After an enjoyably brief plane ride, I arrived with 22 hours to kill before my connecting flight to Greenland. I managed to arrange a locker to put my two large suitcases and surfboard bag in so I could rent a car and do some exploring!

Without any form of navigation, I used my "manly" directional skills, which brought me to an awesome flat water kiting spot; it's funny how that happens sometimes! I spent a while there chatting to the incredibly welcoming locals, including the Dutch Freestyle Champion. My adventurous side soon began calling and I headed off into Copenhagen. There were bikes everywhere and Lidl supermarkets on every corner.

I stopped to grab some lunch and ended up with a parking fine, so quickly retreated back to the safety of the beach. After spending the majority of the night in the hire car, I met the rest of the team in the airport at 5 am. Geza was the organiser and the expedition leader, his brother Andre was there to help - it turned out he was a former backgammon World Champion! Also, there were the cameramen; David, a veteran of Sea Sheppard fame, and Bastian the Northern Lights expert.

We quickly realised our combined 18 bags of luggage between the five of us was exceedingly overweight. Fortunately, Geza had already cracked a deal with Air Greenland airline and they accepted all 350kg of our luggage. After not sleeping too well in the hire car, I slept like a baby the entire flight and woke up just in time to get the first glimpse of the icebergs.



Landing at Kangerlussuaq airport we layered up ready for the cold; I was pleasantly surprised by the warmth though and rapidly returned to just my t-shirt. We spent a few hours topping up our tans followed by the final plane journey to Ilulissat where we would spend the next few weeks. During the flight we were blessed with clear blue skies as we flew over the glacier, what an incredible sight!

“ WE WERE BLESSED WITH CLEAR BLUE SKIES AS WE FLEW OVER THE GLACIER, WHAT AN INCREDIBLE SIGHT! ”



ULTRASONIC

All Round  
High Performance  
Freestyle  
Diamond

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**“ I DIDN'T HANG AROUND FOR LONG, SWIFTLY LAUNCHING AND RIDING OUT INTO THE OCEAN SURROUNDED BY MAMMOTH ICEBERGS. IT WAS SO SURREAL ”**

---

A convoy of taxis was arranged to take us, and all 18 bags, to our apartment that overlooked the sea. With a forecast of possible wind the next day, we didn't hang about and got all the kite gear sorted, attached the lines ready to be launched from a boat, while the rest of the guys prepared the camera kit.

The morning greeted us with a light breeze and glorious sunshine. After refuelling with hot drinks and a quick breakfast, we checked the cameras, set up the boards and headed down to the harbour where the boat was waiting for us. Weaving through the ice on the boat we found the most amazing backdrop filled with icebergs just a short distance out. I pumped up the 15m Contra and I jumped into the icy waters with the Double Agent Foil.

I didn't hang around for long, swiftly launching and riding out into the ocean surrounded by mammoth icebergs. It was so surreal; my cheeks ached from smiling so much! This was a certainly a vista that I had never experienced before. However, it wasn't long before I had my first proper wipe-out and that large grin was soon wiped off my face. I was foiling in front of an iceberg and the film crew wanted the kite as low as possible; it was all going swimmingly well until the wind shadow caught up with me.

To my horror, the kite lifelessly dropped out of the sky and I came to a sudden halt. I was unable to relaunch the kite until I managed to drift far enough away from the iceberg and back into the wind line.



The NP Lucifer dry suit kept me exceptionally toasty, except for my feet. I quickly discovered I had forgotten to zip up my wetsuit boots and my feet were frozen. I most definitely learnt a valuable lesson that day!

The wind continued to increase as the session went on and I was joined by some of the other guys on the water. With everyone now on twin tips, it wasn't long before there was a 'who can jump the biggest iceberg contest'

**“ IT WAS QUITE A BIZARRE REALISATION AND SOMETHING THAT MOST OF US TAKE FOR GRANTED ON A DAILY BASIS! ”**

which consisted of a lot of aborted attempts. After around four hours of riding, we finished our session and headed for the warmth and comfort of our apartment. We weren't so lucky with the wind for the next few days but this gave us the opportunity to

explore and film the area. After a day of hiking and checking out the local glaciers and wildlife, it dawned on me that we hadn't seen a single tree anywhere. It was quite a bizarre realisation and something that most of us take for granted on a daily basis!

With a few more days of no wind, we decided to put the drysuits to the test and swim out to some icebergs just offshore with some camera gear. After learning my lesson last time, I zipped my boots up and my feet stayed toasty. We managed to get some remarkable pictures.

# MADE TO STAND OUT.



## FRONT-ZIP WETSUIT\*

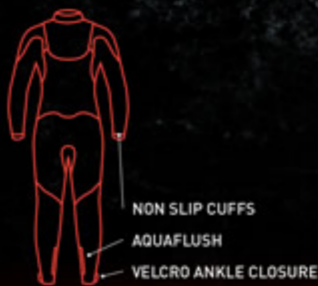
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### FRONT



### BACK



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**“ IF ANY OF IT BROKE OFF WHILE WE WERE CLOSE, WE WOULD BE INSTANTLY SQUASHED AND LEFT AS A TASTY MORSEL FOR THE GREENLAND SHARK.”**

After a lot of backgammon and waiting around, the forecast finally predicted wind and lots of it!

It was showing 30 knots for Super Sunday, yet that quickly changed to Mega Monday, and it didn't let us down! We were up early to get out on the water and make the most of the howling winds. To begin with I launched a 12m Cabrinha FX amongst the icebergs, and immediately realised we would be needing much smaller kites...

As we were in a much denser area of icebergs, it made the wind dangerously gusty; you'd easily get lofted 6 feet and then be looking down on the smaller icebergs waiting to impale you. We decided to change location and upon arrival at the new spot, the wind kicked in even more. We launched our 7m kites and were boosting as high as we could, which often proved tricky as you were not always clear for landing!

Once we had filmed lots of iceberg jumping, we headed to what can only be described as the Everest of icebergs. If any of it broke off while we were close, we would be instantly squashed and left as a tasty morsel for the Greenland Shark. Deciding it was worth the risk we made our way over. As we approached the monster-berg, we were all speechless. The sheer enormity of this iceberg is astonishing; it was definitely a "you have to be there" moment.

One of the guys, Andre, decided he was going to touch it, but as he got within a few metres, his kite luffed which scared us all into retreating a bit further from the colossal wall of ice.



Christmas came slightly earlier this year as Thomas from Allianz visited to see how we were getting on and brought us some presents! Unfortunately, there was no wind forecast during his stay, but one afternoon we were blessed with 4 knots! This was just enough to show him what kitesurfing is all about, so out came the ultimate light wind arrangement: the 17m Contra and foil board.

**“ WE KNEW IF THE WIND DROPPED WE COULD MAKE IT BACK TO LAND. IF NOT, WE’D HOP ON A PASSING ICEBERG UNTIL HELP ARRIVED! ”**

The wind was side shore, but as we were in a bay we knew if the wind dropped we could make it back to land. If not, we’d hop on a passing iceberg until help arrived! Luckily enough we timed it just right, after

explaining that lunch would have to come after as the wind waits for no man, I jumped onto the water and managed a quick session. No more than 45 minutes later, I landed my kite just as the water transformed into a vast mirror. That was the end of the wind for the day but I was super stoked I managed to get out for a short spell and show Thomas what our sport was kind of all about; ice-cold water, light winds and foiling, perhaps it wasn't the best example...



On the no wind days, we spent our time hiking with our new-found posse of huskies, eating snacks and playing backgammon and Yahtzee. The wind was never gone for too long though and for our third session, we headed to Kite Beach (yes even Greenland has a Kite Beach) on a marginal wind forecast. Upon arrival, the wind was already building and it turned out to be a great day! We took the fins off our boards and headed out to the world biggest ice slider park.

OCEAN RODED

# SOUL



**“ WE TOOK THE FINS  
OFF OUR BOARDS  
AND HEADED OUT TO  
THE WORLD BIGGEST  
ICE SLIDER PARK. ”**

Rider: Reece Myerscough Gear: Mako Duke board, Soul drysuit, Session 2 harness

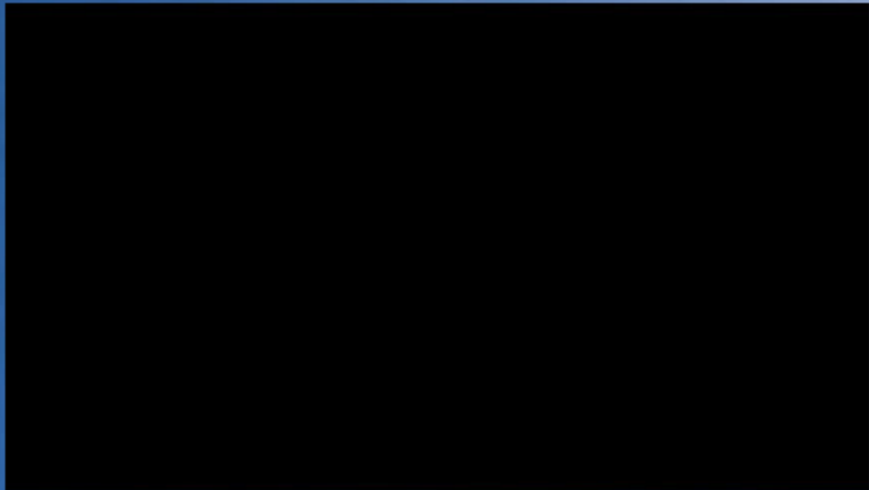




There were enormous wall rides and sliders that went on and on! The camera guys were getting all the shots and we had the drones buzzing around us. It wasn't only the camera team that were enjoying the scene; we had a boat full of Chinese tourists cheering us on too! Of course, the only polite thing to do was to jump over them several times!

The day came to an end with a breath-taking show of the Northern Lights. The locals believe the lights are their ancestors playing ball with the head of a Walrus and if you whistle, they will come and get you. Of course, we didn't tell Bastian this until after he whistled us over!

Our final kite session was in the snow, which was a first for me. It was freezing cold - this wasn't helped by the wind switching off. On arrival back at the harbour, the snow had accumulated over 4 inches in just a few hours. This meant a snowboarding and sledging session on our kiteboards! More no wind fun! Our last day was filled with more snowboarding, snowball fights, final interviews and filming and of course lots of dreaded packing.



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**PIVOT**  
FREERIDE/WAVE

SIZE 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 14



**ALANA**  
WOMEN'S FREERIDE/WAVE

SIZE 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12



**PARK HD**  
FREERIDE/FREESTYLE

SIZE 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 14



**TORCH**  
PRO PERFORMANCE FREESTYLE

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Meet the heavy-hitters for the 2016 season. With shapes customized to amp up the riding of weekend warriors, seasoned pros and everyone in between, the new line-up is ready to take you to the next level. Find the kite that compliments your style, visit [NaishKites.com](http://NaishKites.com).

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Facebook: NaishKiteboarding Instagram: naish\_kiteboarding Photo: G. Dein, Rider: Jesse Richman





The flight home was pretty eventful as the plane we were supposed to be on had some technical issues, so we were loaded onto a different plane resulting in a random stopover in Greenland before the next connection to Copenhagen. On landing in Denmark we all said our goodbyes, which was rather sad as we'd become really good friends over the past few weeks.

**“ IT'S ONE OF THOSE PLACES THAT HAS TO BE SEEN TO BE BELIEVED. ”**

(However, we have put in a request next time for the advert to be filmed in Brazil or somewhere hot!)

Greenland was certainly a different experience for me; it's one of those places that has to be seen to be believed. The locals are friendly;

the temperatures weren't as bad as I had imagined and a polar bear didn't eat me. I'm not sure I'll switch from my usual Caribbean winter habits, but it has certainly opened my eyes up to what is possible with the right gear!

It was definitely a once-in-a-lifetime trip and I cannot wait to see the final film! Keep checking back on my [Facebook athlete page](#) or [IKSURFMAG](#) and it will be on there as soon as possible.



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**2016** COLLECTION

Passion; having, compelled by, or ruled by intense emotion or strong feeling.

That is what we feel when riding that one wave, that first track, that perfect flat spot, or that massive obstacle, and maybe even more important;

that is what we feel when sharing these moments with friends and family. We already ride for 35 years, and we are still growing, learning, searching and discovering. We enjoyed our latest trick as much as our first jump. It isn't about

how big your trick is – it's about how big your smile is. Together with our team rider-developers we develop and test our own gear. This is why we call it *Rider Developed Products*.

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# BEHIND THE BRAND

## NORTH KITEBOARDING

North Kiteboarding started way back in the early days of the sport; since their early inception the brand has grown to dominate the industry. We sat down with Till Eberle, who heads up North Kiteboarding and also Boards and More in Germany. Till has been with North since the very beginning and has steered the brand to the position it is in today!

NEW TO THE TEAM BUT MAKING A BIG SPLASH  
IS AARON HADLOW!  
PHOTO TOBY BROMWICH

WORDS ROU CHATER



**O**ver the last ten years or so, the North Kiteboarding Brand has risen to become one of the strongest brands within the industry and marketplace. When you started, the team was uncharacteristically small. How many people work within the brand these days?

**TE:** In the very beginning, we were only four people. Christine Gutter was in charge of Marketing, Ken Winner for Kite Design, Jaime Herraiz was a Team Rider responsible for testing all the products, and I was Product Manager also taking care of Sales. A year later Dirk Hanel joined as a Team Rider and Product Manager. Now there are 14 people working at the brand between the office in Munich and our other bases around the world.

**As the brand grew, did it become much harder to manage, and do you ever look back fondly at the simplicity of those early days?**

Yes! Even today I get on the nerves of my team recounting those days when we managed the whole brand as just four to five people. To be fair, I also have to say that times have changed a lot. Fifteen years ago we would've been super happy to have a small, simple product brochure and a simple website. But these days you need a detailed print catalogue in six languages, progressive views, up-to-date social media, demo events, etc., the list is endless.

PHOTO QUINCY DEIN  
SKY SOLBACH TESTING OUT HIS CREATIONS!

**“ EVEN TODAY I GET ON THE NERVES OF MY TEAM RECOUNTING THOSE DAYS WHEN WE MANAGED THE WHOLE BRAND AS JUST FOUR TO FIVE PEOPLE. ”**

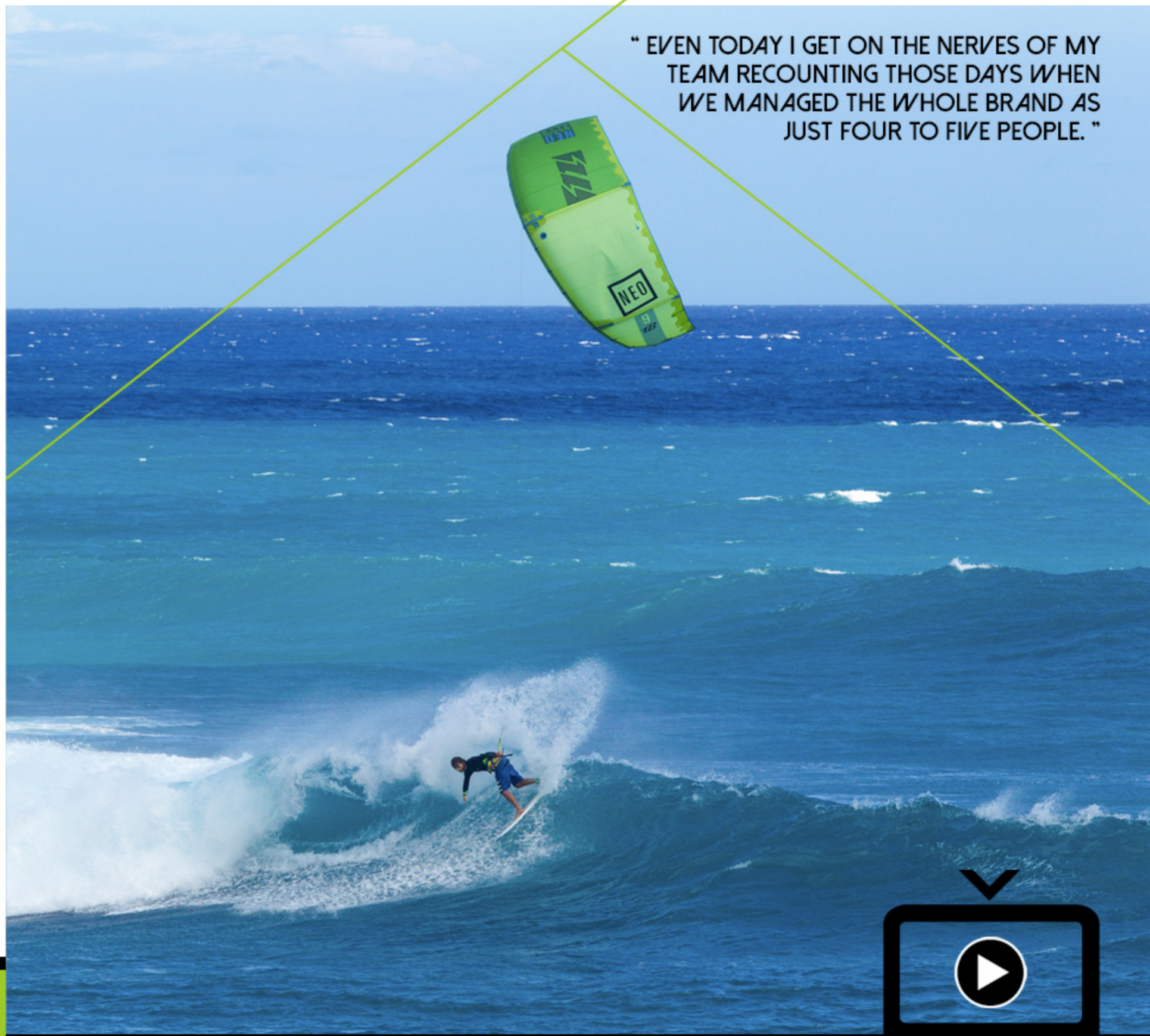


PHOTO TRACY LEOE  
SKY IN THE SHAPING ROOM ON MAUI WITH PATRI MCLAUGHLIN...



“ WITH SO MANY DIFFERENT CHARACTERS AND SKILL-SETS IT'S NOT ALWAYS AS HARMONIC AS ONE MIGHT THINK ”

Ultimately, it is important to be able to communicate well as a brand, fulfil the expectations of our customers, reach our expectations, and retain the motivation to stay a worldwide market leader.

It's similar when looking at our products. The first safety systems or straps we created were built out of a simple bit of Velcro, metal rings and standard plastic parts that we could put together fast and easy. Just have a look at a modern day bar and compare it to a bar from 2000 to 2004. Those were some adventurous constructions!

Today, when looking at developing an innovative product, we allow on average two years to come up with a technical idea and deliver the product to market. In the meantime, we have to secure massive investments in order to allow production to go forward.

**Who are the key players within the team that help steer the brand with you?**

That's not easy to answer. I've always been incredibly aware of employing people who are very different to each other, which makes an innovative and effective

team. Of course, with so many different characters and skill-sets it's not always as harmonic as one might think, but those discussions often lead to a very good result.

**Is it hard to entice great talent from the sport of kiteboarding to the offices in Munich? After all, there isn't much in the way of kiteboarding nearby.**

Kite design, surfboard design and testing is outsourced to spots like Hawaii or South Africa. But as Germany is the biggest kite market worldwide - after the US -

“ BOTH DESIGNERS HAVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR SPECIFIC KITE MODELS, WHICH ALSO SUIT THEIR RIDING STYLES. ”



it's not hard to find motivated employees for Marketing, Product Management, Bar Development and Twintip design. I often think that this is part of our success. Having a team made up of such a diverse group of people (not kite pro's only used to perfect conditions) ensures that they understand the needs of our varied customer base.

**Ralf and Ken have been working on the kite designs together for a while. Do they both have input across the range, or do they work on their own specific kites within the range?**

Both designers have responsibility for specific kite models, which also suit their riding styles. Ralf is designing the freestyle oriented kites; Vegas, Dice and Evo. Ken, together with Sky Solbach is designing the race, freeride and wave oriented kites: Dyno, Juice, Rebel, Neo and Mono.

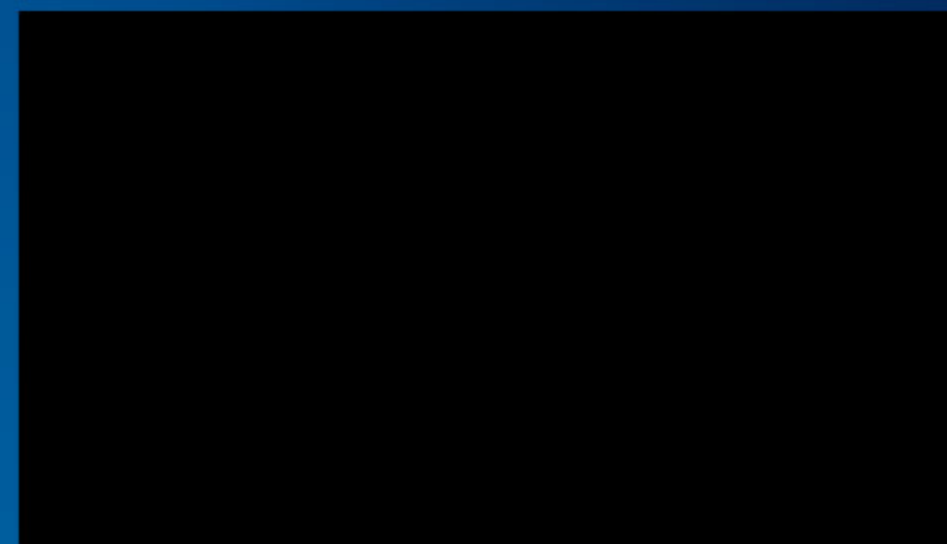
**PHOTO TOBY BROMWICH**  
ONE OF THE BEST RIDERS ON THE PLANET WORKING WITH ONE OF THE BEST BRANDS IN THE INDUSTRY, AARON AND NORTH GO TOGETHER LIKE PEAS AND CARROTS!

## TANGO

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“IT’S GOOD TO SEE THAT OUR FIRST BESTSELLERS BACK IN THE DAY ARE STILL VERY IMPORTANT IN THE LINEUP.”



Twice a year, the whole R&D team comes together to exchange the latest developments and to grow a united vision.

**Has the process of R&D changed at all as the brand has become larger or do you still operate in the same manner as the old days?**

The development of kite lines hasn't changed much, although today we really focus on quality. All our kites benefit from a construction kit system. For example, all of our kites are using the same strut construction and line attachments. If a kite designer wants a new construction for those pieces, it'll be tested for at least six months before it finds its way into serial production. Complex products such as the new bar we'll be introducing in 2016, which has a development period of three years! One of those three is purely for testing and refining.

**You've had some amazingly successful products over the years, boards like the Jaime and X-Series along with kites like the Rebel. Nowadays you have a really large product line, what are the most popular models in the current lineup?**

Looking at the kites, we sell similar quantities of the Neo, Dice, Evo and Rebel. The bestselling twin tips are the Gonzales, X-Ride and Jaime. The Nugget and the WAM are the most popular wave boards. It's good to see that our first bestsellers back in the day are still very important in the lineup and complemented by innovative newcomers.

PHOTO QUINCY DEIN  
PATRI MCLAUGHLIN GETTING HIS GOUGE ON!

**MANERA**  
WATERMEN EXPERIENCE





“ IN OUR EXPERIENCE, MOST KITERS HAVE A CLEAR PREFERENCE IN RIDING STYLE. ”

PHOTO TOBY BROMWICH  
CRUISING ON THE NEW 2016 DICE

**Would North ever consider reducing the range to offer one or two kites to keep things simple?**

We're constantly thinking how we can reduce the kite lines every single season, and always come to the same conclusion that it's not possible at the moment to build a kite that can do everything perfectly. In our experience, most kitesurfers have a clear preference in riding style. To be able to satisfy those needs, we offer everything from pure, specialist models like the Vegas for Freestyle/Wakestyle, the Neo for waves or the Dyno for racing. But we don't forget the all-rounders

that have their own special advantages like the Dice, Evo, Rebel and the Mono. The fact that we're selling around 6,000 pieces per line with four kite lines confirms our strategy.

**What is your favourite setup when you get to head to the beach?**

My personal quiver is a Neo 6/8/10, a Juice 15, a Pro CSC 5'7", and for flat water a Jaime 139cm.

**The 5th line is a safety feature you are still championing at North, the rest of the market,**

**however, seems to be switching more and more to 4-line set ups. Will North still pursue the 5th line set up and what benefits do you think it offers?**

In our view, the 5th line setup is still the most reliable safety system, with additional advantages for the straight forward water relaunch. Admittedly, in regards safety a front line safety system is very close to that of the 5th line system, that's why we're offering both! At the moment, 55% of our bars are still sold with a 5th Element System.



“ WE’RE NOW TESTING IN LOTS OF 25 TO 50 PRODUCTS PER UNIT, PREFERABLY WITH KITE SCHOOLS ”

The brand had a few warranty issues last year with the inflation valves and some canopy damage from the One-Pump system. How do you manage these issues as a brand when they arise and what systems do you put in place to stop them from happening in the future?

Unfortunately it still happens sometimes, although rarely. Even after extensive testing, not all weaknesses are localised, especially in those two cases where the valve and the kite had already been redesigned for 2016. We take action where necessary in order to avoid those things. In general, we’re now testing in lots of 25 to 50 products per unit, preferably with kite schools, as beginners can sometimes be the best testers due to their lack of knowledge.

PHOTO TOBY BROMWICH  
AIRTON COZZOLINO THE MASTER OF STRAPLESS FREESTYLE!



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“ IT’S GOOD TO SEE THAT OUR FIRST BESTSELLERS BACK IN THE DAY ARE STILL VERY IMPORTANT IN THE LINEUP ”

**All the kites are now made in Sri Lanka, what was it like to move the production from China and what benefits did it bring?**

**TE:** We had a good production facility in China, but they tried to keep the manufacturing 'know-how' to themselves. For us, it was very important to understand every detail of the production line in order to ensure the quality of our products was high and consistent, and at the same time to be able to develop in a cost effective way. In Sri Lanka, we now have a very open relationship with both production facilities, based on partnership.

**The twin tip factory recently changed. Where are they being produced now, and have you been able to improve manufacturing processes since the move?**

The new facility, Capita, is based in Kärnten, Austria. They opened their new production floor this year, offering the newest standards in sustainability and production techniques. They are now the benchmark in board production.

**I know when we interviewed you a few years ago you were keen to see production become greener, more environmentally conscious and offer better standards to the workers throughout the process, how is that going, do you feel like you have achieved some of your goals?**

As I said then, we're always trying to be as sustainable as possible, with what is possible.

TOM HEBERT THE KING OF FREERIDE!  
PHOTO TOBY BROMWICH



As we don't own a production line, we're dependent on others which doesn't make things that easy. Other challenges are the materials we have to use. Looking at kite materials, so far in the last five years there has been no alternative material being developed with a better ecological record.

Nevertheless, our whole company is taking every small step we can to become more sustainable and more environmentally friendly.

**What do you think is the current state of the kite market, are we still growing or have we started to level out?**

I think the amount of people going kitesurfing is still growing. However, we'll probably not sell noticeably more products as the material is more durable and longer lasting,

FINISHING THE NEW TWIN TIPS IN THE CAPITA FACTORY, AUSTRIA!



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FLYSURFER  
KITEBOARDING



“ WE’VE FULLY COMMITTED TO THE  
RADICAL WAKESTYLE/FREESTYLE  
SIDE OF THE SPORT ”



which results in a bigger second-hand market. Our products especially have good second-hand value.

**You recently signed Aaron Hadlow to the team; he must be a great asset, what attracted you to him, did it take a while to organise and what benefits does he bring the brand?**

In the beginning we were mainly looking at his experience in terms of testing, which has helped us to develop the new Vegas, the new Team Series and the Hadlow board. We knew Aaron was well known and highly respected within the industry, and still we’ve been surprised by the amount of fans he has -once we really started working with him and using him for marketing. Since Aaron came on board, we’ve fully committed to the radical wakestyle/freestyle side of the sport, where he’s now our main influence in developing this part of the market.

**Where do you see North in the next five years?**

Our aim is to expand our position as market leader and to produce cool products with which our customers get the most fun out of it!

**Thanks for taking the time Till!**

**PHOTO** TOBY BROMWICH  
AARON HADLOW ISN'T JUST A PRO RIDER FOR NORTH, HE'S AN AMBASSADOR, TESTER AND IS DEEPLY EMBEDDED IN THE PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT.

CKPERFORMANCE

# TECHNIQUE

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WORDS &amp; PHOTOS CHRISTIAN &amp; KARINE

Last one of yet another year! We hope that your 2015 was wind-filled and that a percentage, however small, was spent enjoying some well earned kite action. And before we go on, here's to another cracker during 2016.... This issue we've got a stylish grab, a fancy transition and a cheeky unhooked move to roll you along into next year. Kicking off we'll be adding a Roast Beef grab into the delights of your back roll. Then it's swiftly onto the Foot Wash transition, the old man's Jesus Walk (timely indeed), before we close the show with the slightly daunting unhooked grabbed popped front. All the best for 2016, C&K.

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ROAST BEEF BACK ROLL



CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE

FOOT WASH TRANSITION



CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE

UNHOOKED POPPED FRONT GRAB



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## ROAST BEEF BACK ROLL &gt;

Kite: FX 7m Board: XO 133

We're always on at you about spicing moves up with a cheeky grab or two. Funnily enough, a guest on one of our last clinics who could throw a hefty plethora of moves down did get well into the concept. To quote Jason, "I won't do a jump without a grab now." So this one is for all of you who agree: a sent back roll with a Roast Beef grab.

You may recall the Roast Beef, but in case you don't, it's the back hand grabbing your heelside edge, just in front of your back foot with your arm reaching down through your legs. What makes these grabs tricky is adding the required body position to a move that you're so used to doing in a particular sub-conscious way. Being able to Roast Beef in a straight jump doesn't necessarily make it any easier to add it to a back roll than cooking up a decent Sunday spread. Although at least you know that your body is capable of the required contortions!

So, let's have a gander at what'll make this easier to stick.

**Slow Mo Pic A**

Being able to add any grab of substance to a sent back rotation requires one thing, a slow rotation. If you hack it round like a Tasmanian Devil you're either going to over rotate or have no time and balance to get the grab in. Going around slow will give you the awareness, balance and confidence to concentrate on the grab.



First part of slowing it down is to send the kite. Your kite needs to go back behind 12 o'clock from either 1 or 11. With a decent send the pull from the kite will break your rotation into two parts, two 180° if you like. Karine has given the kite a sharp send from 11 o'clock to past 12. This will only work if you keep your back leg strong and edge against the kite. The second part of slowing your rotation down is what you do on take off. If you look at Karine, she has extended up into her rotation with her head looking forwards perpendicular to her shoulders. She uses her edge to get a small amount of rotation, but she's not throwing her head around, bending her back leg and spinning into it. In short it's send and up, not drift and around.

**Timing Pic B**

When to go for the grab is your next concern. You need time to get your legs up, having extended up into the loop, and you need to be balanced with the kite just behind 12 o'clock. On take off you should already pull on your front hand as you extend up, this will stop the kite continuing back and will get it moving slowly forwards. You can see in the picture that Karine is about half way into her rotation, so by this stage she is happy that her kite is supporting her, still behind 12, therefore she can keep the bar in whilst she is almost stalled in the sense that her rotation is slow. Both her knees are up, so everything is ready. As such she can release her back hand in anticipation of the grab.

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## The Grab Pic C

Adding the spice, which in this case should perhaps be horseradish in preference to the usual mustard. The question is how to get yourself into a decent Roast Beef from the previous picture of both knees high? The humble answer is to now pull the back knee up even more, right into your chest. This should give you an easier path between your legs to that elusive heel side edge. Do look at where you want to grab the board, going purely by feel may get you a lucky tickle, but for a solid hold use your eyes. You can clearly see that

Karine is focused on that part of the board. It's also worth noting that Karine has her bar in on the sweet spot, so she's supported and therefore it's more movements in the chair of air rather than ab strength and flexibility. Finally, and not to be forgotten, is the matter of continuing your slow rotation and not freezing half way around. Once you've got the grab get pulling on your front hand to drift the kite forwards. This will generate pull from the front side of the window and keep you rotating.

"KARINE IS FOCUSED ON THAT PART OF THE BOARD."

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**Enjoy It Pic D**

Once you've got the grab it's time to make the most of it, enjoy it and show it. Here Karine pulls the grab in towards her, whilst extending her front leg away from her, tweaking and boning it. With your back hand pulling on the board you'll feel more balanced and less likely to overdo it with the front hand on the bar. As the kite moves slowly forwards you'll come around, and with the front leg boned and pointing back it will keep the rotation slow. Note that Karine still has her head looking forwards, she's not looking over her shoulder, which could make her over rotate.

**Touch Down Pic E**

And finally, the all-important landing. As Karine comes around to face downwind she releases her back hand from the grab and starts to dive the kite aggressively with her front hand. It's tempting to let the kite drift rather than dive it, but if you do you'll land on an edge and without power. By diving it the resultant power will pull you out of your rotation and it'll be much easier to land softly, tail first and downwind.

**Top Tips**

Time and float are your friends, so giving the kite a decent send as if you were going for a jump is key. Not only does the send give you some height, but as you redirect the kite towards 12 o'clock after take off this movement will give you the desired float and hang time. If you drift your kite up, you'll most likely



experience a pulling feeling whilst you go for the grab, as the kite will already be moving down, rather than up.

Make sure that you resist with the back leg when you send the kite. In a back rotation it is too easy to soften the leg and roll back rather than stamping up into the rotation.



Now take in the videos and sequence so that you can visualise the move as a whole.

**Common Problems**

Not getting the grab! Assuming that you can already Roast Beef, the reason for not getting it in the back roll will be a lack of send and therefore float and time. Send it and make it slow.



Over rotating without getting the grab! Take a step back and concentrate on some slow back rolls. You're likely spinning into it, so make sure you extend against your back leg as the kite lifts and do not look over your front shoulder to initiate the rotation.

Getting the grab but over rotating! Nine times out of ten this will be because you are inverting your back roll too much. If you lift the board too high by rolling your head back as you rotate, your board, which is quite heavy, will take a short cut, which speeds your rotation up. So keep your head and shoulders up and over the bar.

#### Keystones

1. Send and extend = slow
2. Head looking straight between shoulders
3. Lift both knees high into chest
4. Look for grab with bar in
5. Pull back knee up even more



## FOOT WASH TRANSITION &gt;

**Kite: FX 9m    Board: Ace 139**

We're sure that this move has a multitude of apt names, but seeing as it fits into the "support" bracket of tricks such as the BLT Handwash, Darkslide, FLT Handwash etc. we'll keep the clean theme. This one is a lot of fun to learn and joyously not too full of consequence when it doesn't go to plan. Of course it also adds yet another string to your transition bow.

Stating the obvious has to be that a grabbed air gybe really is the pre cursor. If you can already one foot with the same foot it'll help no end too, but a controlled grabbed air gybe really needs to be in the bag for this to work. That said, there are a few differences between this and an air gybe so we're not saying that it can't be learnt off the bat with no previous experience. In order to get the necessary parts and skills into our minds, let's have a look at them in a bit more detail.

### The Approach Pic A

Kite position coming into this is the classic 1 or 11 o'clock. It'll help to have your sweet spot trimmed out, as long as there is plenty of power to prevent you from stalling the kite too easily. So far so familiar. However, contrary to your air gybe you want to take speed into and through this move, so you can wash your foot for a longer period of time rather than dipping a pinkie in to test the water. Yet you still need to approach on a good edge with your bum low to the water and back on the board. To achieve this you can



come in slightly off the wind and then edge up into this position. If you look at Christian all of the above is true, and there are a few extras too. First off, he's got his back hand in the centre of the bar to prevent the kite from moving too quickly, and he's pulling on it to drift the kite slowly up towards 12 o'clock. Secondly, he already has his front hand off and is reaching forward ready to grab the board so that he can get his foot out in double quick time. And finally, Christian has loosened his front foot in the strap, pulling it ever so slightly out. You can see from his wake how he has carved up into the move.



### The Pop Pic B

This bit is also very different from the air gybe. Rather than carving up and stamping to slow down whilst popping up and extending, here it's almost the opposite as you need to stay low and keep some forward momentum. The timing here is important as you need to get into the air before the kite gets to 12. As soon as Christian feels a hint of lift in the kite he pops. However, the pop is a tiny kick off the back foot from his low position, without extending the back leg. You can see in the photo that Christian is off the water,

but low, and he's already lifting both knees up towards his chest, with no sign of extension. At the same time he's reaching towards the nose of the board with his free front hand, focusing on where he's going to grab. That'll be the heelside edge just behind the fin. Whilst doing this, Christian pulls the bar for support and lift.

### Grab & Foot Out Pic C

Make sure that you get a good solid grab off the board so that you can control it. Now, if you look at this pic and the last one, you can see how Christian takes his front foot out. By keeping low and bringing his knees up, and having already loosened his foot, Christian can just lift the board up and off his front foot with his front hand. Note how Christian is supporting himself on the bar and as a result the kite continues to move up and back.

### Bath Time Pic D

The moment we've been waiting for, time to wash your foot. This moment will depend on how gently you've drifted your kite and how much speed you have. Assuming that all is well, you merely need to extend your now free front foot down towards the water. You have two choices of how to drag it: either toes down or heel down, either will do. However, what is important is to try and straighten your front leg. By doing this you will create resistance, which will slow you down and thus prevent you from



pendulumming away from the kite as it drifts back. You can see that Christian continues to look forwards, which should help him to keep the kite relatively still, although the very nature of the move means that it is well on it's way past 12. Keep the bar in so



that the kite will keep you up off the water, but if you yank it in it'll lift you up and off the water so there'll be no wash. Remember to keep the other foot up, so that the board is ready in position when it's time to get the foot back in.

**It's Time Pic E**

As soon as you feel the kite start to pull from behind, it's your cue to get back in and on the board. The lift from the kite will disappear and the lower and further back the kite gets in the opposite side of the window, the less power you'll be able to generate to get out of the move. There are a few important bits you can see in this photo. Firstly, why you need the bar trimmed out. Christian is clearly pulling hard on the bar, milking every last bit of lift and tension from the kite. Secondly, why you need to keep looking forward, it's easy for Christian to now focus on the strap, where his foot needs to go. And thirdly, with the right foot and front hand held high, Christian can lift his free foot up and lower the board down onto it.

**Multi Tasking Pic F**

The final piece of the puzzle to claim this prize is committing to the landing whilst stuffing your foot in the strap. This means that whilst you're pulling your board and pushing your foot to get nicely into the strap so that you can land, you also need to be diving the kite with your other hand so that the kite pulls you out of the move, rather than dropping you into the drink as it flaps to the edge of the window. Christian is definitely giving the bar a good tug even though his foot is not yet in the strap. There just isn't time to squeeze the foot in and then dive. Once your foot is



in you can make a call whether to keep pulling and loop the kite once you land, or get the kite back up and show real control.

**Top Tips**

This will be easier to learn with a supportive/larger kite and flat water. 9m and upwards will do, 11m or 12m is perfect. Sweet spot out is your friend, trying to pop up without extension from low whilst keeping the



bar in on the chicken loop will just make you miserable, so trim out, or in Drachmas – power up. And finally, loosening your front strap whilst learning this will not only make getting your foot out simpler, but getting the darn thing back in considerably more do-able.

Have a perusal of the sequence and videos for a complete run through.



### Common Problems

Can't get your foot in or near the water. You are likely standing too tall coming in, so even a mini pop will take you too high. Get low and close to the water. If that doesn't help, tone down your pop and make sure that you're not moving the kite too aggressively.

If you're flying forward and the kite is drifting back too quickly. Assuming that your hand is centred on the bar and you're going early enough, this will be a case of not creating enough resistance with your foot. Once it

touches the water really concentrate on extending your leg forwards.

If you keep dropping into the water once your foot is in. This means that you need to start diving the kite sooner, so that it pulls from downwind. This does however mean that you need to be confident that you will get your foot in!

### Keystones

1. Speed and low, loose foot.
2. Mini pop.

3. Lift board off foot.
4. Extend leg for resistance.
5. Dive whilst replacing foot.





**UNHOOKED POPPED FRONT GRAB >****Kite: Chaos 7m Board: XO 133 with H3 Boots**

Here we go – unhooked grabs always seem like a good idea until you decide to try one, and the task ahead seems a little bit more daunting than the initial light bulb moment. That said, there's no reason not to add some picante to your unhooked moves. We'll start off here with the popped front roll with a tail grab. The front rotation lends itself to both a tail grab and a down wind landing, so it's as good a place as any to start. Before we do, consider this: if a decent sent front loop allows you to grab for a second or so, then a rapid popped front won't give you much time to claim it...

Precursors for this, definitely a solid unhooked popped front roll. In addition, you'll need to set your kit up accordingly, more specifically you need to get your trim right. With two hands on the bar you may be able to muscle against a stalling kite, but with one hand it's more than advisable to trim your sweet spot as close to your chicken loop as possible whilst still maintaining enough oomph to pop well.

As is our custom, let's have a more detailed look at a few key parts of this gem before we add it all together in one quick flash of reality.

**It's a Pop Trick Pic A**

Being a pop trick all the usual "rules" apply. Karine has got her hips and weight back, with a slightly bent back leg and extended front leg. Her kite is around 11 o'clock, her bum is over the tail of the board and



close to the water, her shoulders are back with her hands centred on the bar, and she has good speed. She has pushed the board off the wind and keeps the bar angled forward, parallel to the kite's leading edge. The sudden change of direction allows her to unhook and then she immediately carves back up against the kite, which is the moment you can see in Pic A. One point to add is that unless you're on a large kite it will be easier, and less surprising, if you can grip the bar with the centreline running in between your fingers. This way the kite won't react violently when you release your back hand.

**Don't Wait Pic B**

Admittedly there is more than not waiting, but it is the classic error on a popped front, and here for the grab even more so. To generate both the pop and reduce the pull in the kite you need to be dynamic and explosive. It is only too tempting to wait for the kite to pull you up, but you need to explode against your back leg as soon as you carve up to get more than enough pop. You can see that Karine is stamping hard and at the same time initiating her front roll by dropping her head and lifting her front knee. This moment will make or break your chances.



You're aiming for a quick rotation without too much tension in the lines – so stamp hard.

#### Commitment Pic C

Gong for the grab, or at least dropping the back hand is something that you'll need to do for the first time once. After that you'll know that it actually doesn't have it in for you and you can proceed to do it again and again. As soon as you leave the water and start your rotation you need to release your back hand. You can see that Karine's arms are stretched out, and although counter



intuitive, this will make it easier to hang on, unless you've got IAAF supplemented guns. If you pop with your arms in close, then when you release your back hand the bar will pull away, giving you the feeling of being over powered. If your arms are extended, then nothing changes and as a result you won't feel anything and your confidence will remain intact.

"THE BAR WILL PULL AWAY, GIVING YOU THE FEELING OF BEING OVER POWERED."

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**Bring it Together Pic D**

Just like any other grab, you've got to get the body parts moving to make it possible. As soon as you can, stretch your free arm down and bring your knees up. Bringing everything into place, with your hand down and your board up is even more vital here as you'll be going for the grab by feeling rather than looking for it – there just isn't time to process so you need to make it happen from muscle memory.

**The Grab Pic E**

If all goes to plan you should feel the board and be able to get a decent hold on it. For this reason the tail grab is the simplest to start with. You've probably done a truckload of them over your kiting career and it is the most natural and closest place to reach down to. You can see that at this point Karine is quite stretched out, but as long as she is travelling with the kite, a result of her pop and speed, there won't be too much pressure. In this small together position she will be rotating quickly - so fingers crossed getting fully around won't be a problem. The important part here is to keep the head turning and hold on tight. The good news is that with only your front hand on the bar the kite will be moving down and therefore pulling you through the move.

**Landing Gear Down Pic F**

With her head around and looking forwards to where she'll land Karine can judge when to release her grab and drop her legs in anticipation of landing. That said, what the kite is doing will effect when you



release your grab. The more it pulls the earlier you'll need to release so that you can be balanced for your reception. If your kite is diving heavily off your front hand, your back hand will naturally want to come off early. However, if the move feels smooth you'll have the confidence to hold on. As soon as Karine lands she'll hurry to get her back hand back on the bar so that she can control the kite.

**Top Tips**

When you first learn this move make sure that your



kite isn't too low. With the kite higher you know that you have time to get around and reach for the grab, and more importantly, should the kite move quickly once you release there is more room for error and correction. However, having the kite higher should in no way mean that you pop less or later.

As already mentioned, try dropping your back hand from the bar during the rotation and then move on to grabbing it. This is a good step method to building your confidence.



Remember that time is short so the pop must be aggressive and the grab quick. It's better for a short tickle than to try and slow your front rotation down, as that won't work once you have the kite set at your preferred popping height, just below 11 or 1 o'clock.

So now you know what to concentrate on have a look at the videos and sequence to see the fully-fledged version and get an idea for how quick you need to be with the real time video.

### Common Problems

We've touched upon a few of these already, but don't be tempted to lift the kite in place of popping hard. With a very high kite not only will it be a different

move, but it'll also put a lot more strain on your front shoulder as in essence you'll be hanging under the kite. If your kite dives hard as soon as you release your back hand. On smaller kites and faster models this will always be a bit of an issue, although having your hand in the centre of the bar and your fingers split around the centre line will help no end. If you try and keep your arms in by pulling as you release, this will also dive the kite, so extend your arms and fool the kite that nothing has changed.

If you're missing the grab, the chances are that you're not bringing the back of the board up towards you enough post pop. So as soon as you extend, think about rolling into the rotation so that the tail comes up

naturally as it would in a sent front roll.

### Keystones

1. Good speed, good trim, good off the wind.
2. Explode early for big pop with extended arms.
3. Roll into rotation and lift tail of board.
4. Grab as you turn your head.
5. Release as you spot landing.





THE INTERVIEW

WORDS LINDSAY MCCLURE  
PHOTOS ANDRE MAGARAO



# ERIC RIENSTRA



**“ I WAS ONE OF THE TOP SNOWBOARDERS AND WINDSURFERS IN MY AGE GROUP IN CALIFORNIA. ”**

**When and why did you get involved with kiteboarding?**

Kiteboarding seems to have been my destiny since day one. My parents are outdoor

activity fanatics, so from a time before I can remember I was doing all kinds of sports and actives, especially snow sports and windsurfing. I spent the winter snowboarding on my school's team and in the summer we would spend every weekend down in the Sacramento Delta windsurfing. By the time I was a teenager I was one of the top snowboarders and windsurfers in my age

group in California. So in 2002, when kites started appearing at The Delta I was immediately interested, as it seemed like the perfect combination of the two.

**What happened to your infamous dreadlocks and how do you feel without them?**

The dreads were just too hard to take care of and keep clean. I had to make sure they never touched the ground and if they did it took forever to get them clean again. Or if I ever got rolled in shore break while surfing I would have sand falling out of them for weeks. Now that they are gone, I don't feel very different, but I spend a lot less time in the shower and have a renewed appreciation for pillows.

**You're on the road a lot, where is home for you?**

I hit the road as soon as I graduated High School, so I have never really made a home for myself. My family still lives in and around Tahoe, but I've spent the most time migrating between Cape Hatteras, Hood River, and Brazil. In the future I will most likely end up calling Hood River my home, but I am in no hurry to settle down.

**What sets Slingshot apart from other brands in the kiteboarding industry?**

In the beginning, when I was getting my first sponsorship offers, Slingshot stood out because of their hardcore punk rock image and their team of out of control misfits. They are the most successful brand that originated from kiteboarding and the only brand that produces products in the USA.



\*Terms and conditions apply. See policy document online for details.

Photo: Lewis Crathern / Best Kites

What is your gear setup, and what do you like about it?

I use the Slingshot Fuel 7, 9, 11, 13m for all things unhooked and high wind mega loops. Having been riding the Fuel since 2005, I have seen it evolve little by little each year, but it has never lost its legendary performance. Although Slingshot discontinued the 5th line in 2006, they still kept the attachment point there, so I have always been able to rig my own up after market. Even with the addition of the Nitros Bridle in recent years, the versatility to fly direct 4 or 5 line is still available, so I have always been able to rig the kite the way I want it.

**“ IT HAS NEVER LOST ITS LEGENDARY PERFORMANCE.”**

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**“ WATCHING WAKEBOARDING AND OTHER BOARD SPORTS GIVES ME A ROAD MAP FOR TRICKS SINCE THEY ARE SO FAR AHEAD OF KITERS ”**

For light wind I use the 17m Turbine, it relaunches great and has a huge range so I can hang onto it until it's windy enough to jump to the 13m. This year I also started using the new Sentinel Compstick Bar because it has above the bar depower, so I don't have any extra line hanging around my hands anymore. My primary board is the

Vision 142 with RAD bindings. It has fewer channels than the Asylum, which feels better on sliders, but still has just enough to give grip. The harness I use is the Dakine Renegade Hybrid because the balance of flex and stiffness is optimal for the kind of riding I do on a daily basis.

**How do you balance style and technicality in your riding?**

I tend to lean way more towards style. While I do strive to continually progress my tricks to the next step, I spend most of my

time perfecting and adjusting the tricks I already do, whether that means adding a different grab, different tweak, smoothing out the rotation, or getting more inverted. I like to see how long I can hold a grab rather than trying to spin more. But once I get it the way I want it I step up the technicality and start all over again.

**Can you talk a bit about how wakeboarding has influenced your riding style?**

Watching wakeboarding and other board sports gives me a road map for tricks since they are so far ahead of kites in both style and technicality.





**“ IT’S FUN AS HELL AND TAKES A LOT LESS ENERGY AND EFFORT TO GET UP IN THE AIR ”**

Although we have a lot more inconsistencies to deal with that will probably keep us from ever catching up, they still set a benchmark for us to strive for. I just try to copy exactly what they are doing and fill in the little things they missed along the way.

**You've been pushing the limits of kiteboarding kicker tricks, how do you stay motivated to keep booting off big kickers, and what's next?**

Motivation is easy... It's fun as hell and takes a lot less energy and effort to get up in the air compared to load and pop. That, and it is exhilarating to adapt wakeboarding tricks that have never been done on a kite. I'm trying to get all the tricks that wakeboarders can do. I've got all the mobes so now I'm working on wrapped take off tricks, 900's, mobe double passes, double flips, and double flip mobes, as well as using the kicker to gap over things and onto sliders.

**What is it about kiteboarding that made you want to dedicate your life to the sport?**

In my mind kiting is better than all the other board sports I do because it is all those board sports and more. I believe that if I get good enough I will be able to do any trick that I could do on any other board. Then when I considered the cost of gas, boats, lift tickets, etc. involved with other sports vs. free wind, kiting seemed like the only sport where I could ride as much as wanted without breaking the bank. Also, I didn't want to live in the snow anymore, and windsurfing gear sucks to travel with.



### In what ways does kiteboarding frustrate you?

The wind never does what you want it to do; there are kooks everywhere, the girl/guy ratio is horrible, and gear development caters for beginners and lawn mowers. Everyone and their mom claims to be a "professional kiteboarder" and promote brands when they are not even getting paid (aka selling out for nothing). Lastly, magazines (except the few good ones like IKSURF!) don't pay photographers for photos.

### In the kiteboarding world, who do you think has it all figured out and what sets them apart?

No one has it all figured out. Kiteboarding is so diverse that no one person has mastered every aspect of the sport. In my mind, I categorize all the different forms of kiteboarding as follows: Freestyle, Big Air, Park, Surf, Speed, Racing, Foil, Land, and Snow. I'd say the closest person is Jesse Richman.

**"KITEBOARDING IS SO DIVERSE THAT NO ONE PERSON HAS MASTERED EVERY ASPECT OF THE SPORT."**

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**“ DISCOVERING SOMETHING NEW  
CAN BE JUST AS REWARDING AS  
WINNING A CONTEST. ”**

He has mastered Freestyle, Big Air, Surf, and Racing and I am sure he would master the others if he did them more often. What sets him apart is his insane nature and competitiveness in everything he does. If he is even going to try something, he is going to go all out.

**What advice do you have for young riders who just started kiting, for kids who recently fell in love with the sport and want to ride as much as possible and progress as fast as possible?**

Just do it. Find a regional dealer and become his minion. Then, after high school, try to go to university at a place that has good kiting like Hawaii or Florida. Becoming a kite instructor is a good way to make money while you travel, but can often drain your energy before you get a chance to have your own session, so I would suggest trying to get a regular job that allows you to travel or adjust your work schedule to the wind.

To stay motivated on the water try to ride the way you want to ride and do the kind of tricks that interest you instead of trying to just copy everyone else. Don't get me wrong it is great to try to nail all the tricks that the riders on tour are landing, but it is not the end of the world if you can't. There are so many aspects of kiteboarding that have room for progression and discovering something new can be just as rewarding as winning a contest.

Sponsors these days are looking for riders that break the mold and have a good attitude just as much as they want the next world champion in freestyle.



**“ BESIDES BEING THE MOST CONSISTENTLY WINDY PLACE IN THE USA, THERE IS SO MUCH TO DO BESIDES WIND SPORTS. ”**

**From all of your travels as an athlete, where is your favorite kiteboarding destination and why?**

No place that I have found really has it all but Hood River, Oregon is about as close as you can get. Besides being the most

consistently windy place in the USA, there is so much to do besides wind sports. Mt Hood is open year round for snowboarding, there is epic mountain biking and white water kayaking, a skate park, hiking, and it is an hour away from Portland if you want to hit the club on the weekend.

Not to mention the atmosphere of the town is amazing! The Pacific Northwest is the most progressively liberal area in the States, so there aren't many, if any, ignorant,

irreverent, racist, rednecks like in the rest of the US. Growing and smoking marijuana is also 100% legal now! On top of that Hood River also has the only licensed public slider park for kiting that gets to stay in place all summer long.

I can't say enough how much of a pain setting up and taking down sliders every session is. The only thing it is missing is good surf, but you can day trip to the coast if you really want to but don't expect to wear board shorts or score a 10-point barrel.



THIS IS ONE OF ERIC'S FAVOURITE SHOTS, IT'S A GLIMPSE INTO THE FUTURE OF OUR SPORT...

**“ I SEE ELEVATED POOLS,  
HUGE WALL RIDES,  
INTEGRATION OF  
NATURAL AND URBAN  
FEATURES ”**

As one of the leaders in the world of wakestyle kiteboarding, where do you think this branch of the sport is heading?

Wakestyle kiteboarding is just following in the steps of wakeboarding. It will go wherever wakeboarding goes. In the future, I see elevated pools, huge wall rides, integration of natural and urban features, and lots more sketchy stuff that will push the risk factor.

**What's next for Eric Rienstra?**

In January, I'll be heading to Asia for the first time to compete in the Blue Palawan Kite Open in the Philippines. After that, the only thing on the agenda so far is Triple-S in June.

**Cheers Eric thanks for taking the time!**

# TRIED & TESTED

WORDS & PHOTOS THE IKSURFMAG TEST TEAM

Lots of hot new 2016 products on test this issue, including three kites, four surfboards and a couple of twin tips!

## KITES:

Core Impact 9m

Ozone R1 11m

Peter Lynn Escape 9m

## SURFBOARDS

Brunotti Boomer 5'8"

F-One Signature 5'8"

North Pro CSC 5'5"

Slingshot Angry Swallow 5'4"

## TWIN TIPS

CrazyFly Raptor 135x41cm

Shin ADHD 137x41cm

" INCREDIBLY STABLE WITH PLENTY OF POWER FOR ADVANCED FREESTYLE! "



#### AT A GLANCE

CORE have recently started a specialist range of equipment to compliment their very successful current line-up. The Impact is the wake/freestyle specific kite designed for all-out freestylers wanting a kite that will not hold them back. The kite features five struts, a classic C shape with square wingtips and the reputable CORE construction. The Impact uses a 5-line set up, which is, in fact, compatible with both the Sensor2 and Sensor Pro bars. Both front and back lines have three different trim options on the kite enabling you to customise speed and bar pressure.

As with all CORE kites, the Impact uses the incredibly effective Speed Valve 2, which eliminates the need for a specialist nozzle on the pump and will attach directly to the pump hose itself. This, coupled with the larger one-pump hoses, results in super fast rigging to get you onto the water as quickly as possible. CORE are very proud of their construction and materials, and so they should be. CORETex Triple Ripstop is of the highest quality; super strong and durable ensuring your kite will last longer.

TO VISIT THEIR WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



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BRAND OZONE MODEL R1 SIZE 11M YEAR 2016



" I'VE NEVER BANGED OUT SO MANY PERFECT DUCK TACKS IN A ROW "



### AT A GLANCE

After the huge success enjoyed by the Ozone Chrono both on and off the race circuit, the team stepped things up a gear with the new R1. Make no mistake this is an all-out high performance machine, aimed at the racer looking for the ultimate kite, or the freerider looking to go super fast and have an absolute weapon at the beach.

Ozone are no stranger to making foils; the Chrono arguably reshaped the racing scene a couple of years ago, but more than that they have been at the top of the paragliding game for decades. They have taken all their knowledge from the development of these styles of wings and put them into the R1.

The kite is very high aspect with a high cell count to offer unbridled performance. The higher number of cells reduces the "ballooning effect" between each cell to give more control over the shape of the wing. This, in turn, means a lot more work at the factory, but when you first look at this kite, you can see the hours that have gone into it during the production process.

TO VISIT THEIR WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



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BRAND PETER LYNN MODEL ESCAPE SIZE 9M YEAR 2016



"VERY EASY TO RIDE, FORGIVING AND STABLE, GREAT FOR IMPROVING YOUR KITESURFING."

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### AT A GLANCE

Peter Lynn have been making kites longer than most, starting with foil kites and becoming popular with the Twinskin design of the Guerrilla and Phantom. They started making LEI kites a few years ago, and the Escape is their latest design focussed on the freeride and freestyle side of kiting.

Interestingly, the Escape is a four-strut design, something that became popular a few years ago but isn't often seen these days. The kite features a large bridle system with low friction Ronstan rings for pulleys, and plenty of different knot options to tune the kite exactly to your liking.

The Escape has good construction, built with Teijin sailcloth and Dimension Polyant Dacron for the leading edge and struts. There is great reinforcement in all key areas including the leading edge and any attachment points on the LE. The Escape is a supported leading edge design kite, with square tips promoting quick turning and solid feedback through the bar.

Sizes: 5, 7, 9, 11, 13m

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" BEAUTIFULLY  
MADE WITH  
EXCELLENT  
CONSTRUCTION"



BRAND BRUNOTTI RDP    MODEL BOOMER  
SIZE 5'8"    YEAR 2016

#### AT A GLANCE

Brunotti have been making surfboards and kiteboards since the very beginning of our sport. Their twin tips have graced the feet of riders such as Ruben Lenten, Yuri Zoon and Annelous Lammerts. Their surfboards, however, have been quietly blazing a trail with a loyal following of hardcore riders from around the world. The Boomer is built using a sandwich construction for increased strength and durability; it also features an Extended HoneyComb material that you can see

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" THE NEW  
BOTTOM SHAPE  
IS WHERE THE  
MAGIC  
HAPPENS... "



BRAND F-ONE    MODEL SIGNATURE  
SIZE 5'8"    YEAR 2016

#### AT A GLANCE

The Signature series of boards have been in the F-One line up for a few years now. These carving machines are the favourite piece of hardware for Raphael Salles to go and shred the waves. While the Mitu Pro Model might catch the limelight, the Signature should not be overlooked. Built using the new HD Foam Composite technology the board offers great flex while being exceedingly strong too.

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WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



" THIS IS A  
FANTASTIC  
BOARD THAT  
WILL PUT A  
SMILE ON  
YOUR FACE "



**BRAND** NORTH    **MODEL** PRO CSC  
**SIZE** 5'5"    **YEAR** 2016

#### AT A GLANCE

Last year the Pro CSC was a big change in direction for North as they adopted the Compact Surf Concept, which is what the CSC stands for. For 2016, Sky Solbach has been refining the design and the 5'5" is his go-to board for most conditions. When you are riding the designer's board, you know he is going to have put all his energies into getting it just right.

The board is available in three sizes this year,

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PHOTO CRAZYFLY

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“ LOADED WITH  
TECH AND  
PERFORMANCE,  
THIS IS A GREAT  
ALL ROUNDER! ”



**BRAND** SLINGSHOT **MODEL** ANGRY SWALLOW  
**SIZE** 5'4" **YEAR** 2016

#### AT A GLANCE

The Angry Swallow from Slingshot is a further development of their ground-breaking T-Rex program from a couple of years ago. The 2016 Angry Swallow sees further refinements on last year's design; chiefly it's slightly narrower at 18" 5/16 or 46.5cm. The tail has also been redesigned, and the rear stomp pad pushed further back with the rear strap positions shifting towards the tail too.

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"RIDES LIKE A VELOCIRAPTOR: QUICK, PRECISE AND IS HUNTING FOR THE NEXT BOOST."



BRAND CRAZYFLY MODEL RAPTOR  
SIZE 135 X 41 YEAR 2016

#### AT A GLANCE

CrazyFly have been progressing up through the ranks for many years now. Starting off as a small company producing only a select few boards, they are now a fully-fledged company producing a wide range of kites, boards and other accessories. With their progression we have seen them go from strength to strength. We were lucky enough to get our hands on the new Raptor 2016. Over the years it has proved to be very popular with freeriders around the globe.

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"YOU ARE PROPELLED INTO THE AIR, KNOWING YOU CAN LAND WITH CONFIDENCE"



BRAND SHINN MODEL ADHD RUM  
SIZE 137 X 41 YEAR 2016

#### AT A GLANCE

Shinn, created by Mark Shinn former World Champion kiteboarder, has been a contender in the kiteboard market for some years now. Their range has always included a variety of boards to suit every need. Over the years as the wkestyle discipline came into kiteboarding there has been a development in wkestyle boards at Shinn

The 2016 ADHD RUM is now in its third year and has been fine tuned to create what some might say is the

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Brandon Bowe, an all-American expat to the Cayman Islands, had been dreaming about a trip to Morocco for some time. He finally jumped on a plane and made the long flight from the US to find out what the Europeans have been enthusing about for years...

# DAKHILA

## THE JEWEL OF NORTH AFRICA

WORDS BRANDON BOWE  
PHOTOS RYAN TAYLOR





I'd seen Morocco, and more importantly the kitesurfing hotspot of Dakhla, on the Internet - it had been tantalizing my taste buds with strong wind and clean waves for some time. It's been host to numerous world tour events and plenty of quality training sessions over the years. Once and for all, this hometown American boy finally pulled the trigger and ventured off into the windy wave-battered wonderland that is Northern Africa.

### **" DAKHLA IS WELL AND TRULY OFF THE BEATEN TRACK "**

If you're coming from the States, it can be a bit of a travel mission depending on where you depart, but I can assure you it's well worth it. Equally, these days it is getting pretty tricky to get here from Europe, Dakhla is well and truly off the beaten track as far as regular tourism goes. I flew from the US to Casablanca and then jumped on another

flight to the small airport in Dakhla. There are other airports and options including some long bus journeys, but flying to Casablanca and getting the connecting flight is probably the easiest way to go.

The first thing you notice once stepping off the plane is the cool breeze ripping through the runway. It's a 15 to 20 minute ride in a taxi from the airport to the lagoon where the kite spots are. I was staying at Dakhla Attitude, one of the more established kite centres here, and they laid on a shuttle service for us as part of the deal.



**“ IT’S AMAZING HOW MANY KITERS THERE ARE HERE THESE DAYS, THE WORD IS DEFINITELY OUT ON THIS SPOT, BUT IT HAS THE WIND TO KEEP KITERS HUNGRY FOR MORE ”**

After arriving late and grabbing a good night's sleep in one of the small bungalow huts I awoke to the most amazing sunrise. Pink, purple, and orange colours fill the sky as your nostrils and lungs are charged with the dry salt air of the desert. Any notions of an early session were put to rest though, whilst the sky was laying on a magic show the water was like a mirror...

The winds in Dakhla are thermal, as the heat builds in the desert after a cool night the breeze starts to pick up, becoming strongest in the afternoons. If you want to get on the water for a sunrise session and beat the crowd, forget about it, you might as well sleep in and enjoy the breakfast. The chefs here cook up an array of food with a definite Moroccan flavour; there is plenty to eat so at least you won't ever go hungry!

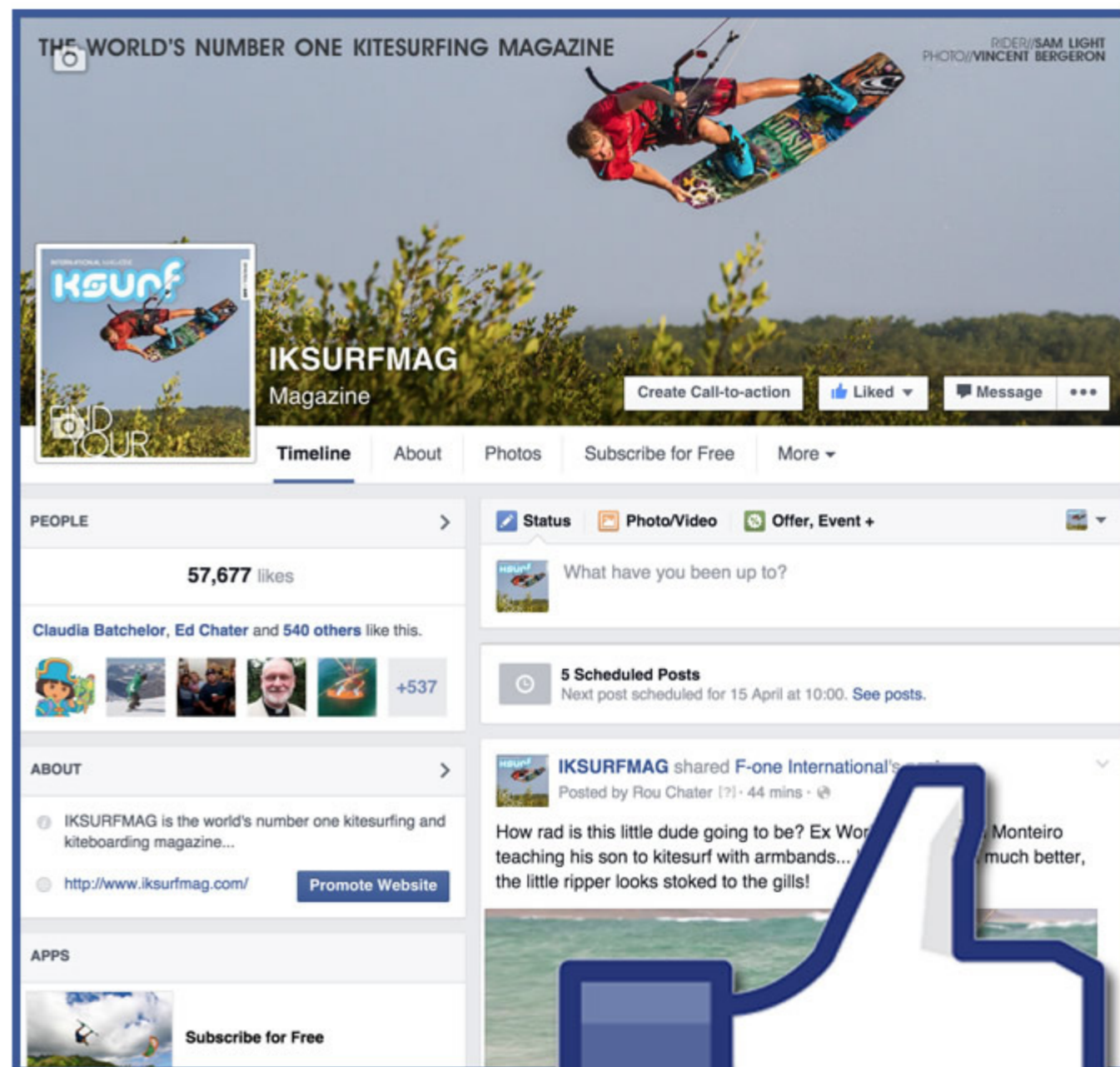
Between 9 and 10 in the morning the wind will usually switch on, it's light at first but builds surprisingly quickly. If you are desperate for a session, you can jump on the water with a bigger kite, or just wait an hour or so until it starts to get going! Every resort here has its own little spot on the expansive lagoon that the region is famous for. You will be rolling out of bed and straight into the water. It's amazing how many kites there are here these days, the word is definitely out on this spot, but it has the wind to keep kites hungry for more, and there is plenty of space for everyone.





Dakhla Attitude is nestled into the cliff side making it peaceful and sheltered from the wind. This area features a long narrow strip of dunes and sand cliffs, which reach out into the lagoon creating a peninsular with kiteable spots on either side. You launch and ride predominately on the right side of the peninsula with the desert winds whipping from the right. There are a lot of people in front of the resort kiting, usually about 20 but it there can be up to 40 kites in the air. You'll find small to moderate chop (ankle to knee, sometimes thigh high) so if you're anything like me you will want to explore to avoid the crowds and find the flat water.

“ YOU WILL WANT TO EXPLORE TO AVOID THE CROWDS AND FIND THE FLAT WATER ”



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**“ BUT THAT WASN'T GOING DOWN ON THIS TRIP, I LIKE HAVING MY LEGS WAY TOO MUCH. ”**

Directly downwind you have the famous speed spot, it's even labelled on Google Maps! On a low tide, you get glassy flat water and ripping off shore winds which makes for a perfect spot to obviously test

your speed. It is also great for taking your fins off and practicing your power slides, dark slides and all sorts of creative moves without a hitch from the chop of normal waters. This spot is usually empty especially at sunset because everyone is exhausted from riding all day, even if it gets crowded it's a very long strip of sand (2km at least), so there is plenty of room for everyone.

Directly downwind of the speed spot you have the marvellous Dragon Island where, depending on the angle, you can see exactly why it gets its name. Long narrow shearing cliffs shoot out of the water in a winding path to make the slithering shape of a dragon and the peaks of the cliffs make the rivets of its back. It's truly a sight to see, making for some of the most dramatic backdrops around and with the combination of a gentle pink sunset and fully powered kite loops, it's a session you won't forget.

You're able to view it almost all the way from town to the resorts and if you have time ride downwind and scope this beautiful landmark definitely make the effort. Just make sure the wind is going to stay because if you can't make it back upwind it's going to be a long hike back. A few people have even jumped off the top with a kite, but that wasn't going down on this trip, I like having my legs way too much. Maybe if it was mostly sand instead of jagged rocks, I might consider it!

Even further downwind and slightly to the left you have the iconic White Sand Dune. There are two ways to get there and back, the first being by boat, which sounds great because it doesn't involve hiking, but it's also quite rough going through the chop so if you take a load of fancy camera gear like we did, it tends to be a bit stressful. The second option is by car, which is maybe the way to go because the hike from the car to the dune, from what we could see, is only a couple hundred yards - not that big of a deal.

At first sight, it was slightly disappointing because in my head I had this giant breath-taking dune, which you had to fearfully huck yourself off to make it out alive. From the ground, I didn't get that notion.



Once at the top looking down though your mind might change back to the original idea; it is pretty steep and about 20 meters high. For a kid from Florida who is used to flat ground and can't even handle the bunny slopes, this is pretty decent drop.

Three, two, one, go! What a rush! And, "wow", what a blast! It's so much fun! If you can ride finless and manage to slide up the sticky sand to the top, then I'd recommend

**" AFTER A FEW ATTEMPTS OF GETTING STUCK AND TUMBLING YOU WILL LOOK LIKE A SAND SCULPTURE! "**

continuing and blasting off the top, soaring like an eagle down to the tiny protected waters behind the dunes. Make sure you keep your kite high!! It's about 20 meters up, which is almost your line length so if you dip your kite too low it will fall straight to the water in the swirling wind shadow of the cove.



After four of five jumps from the top, you may want to get creative like I did and slide around the sides pretending you have a full on sand-board. The sand is very compacted over years of blasting winds, and the consistency is like nothing I've seen before which makes it harder than I imagined to shred the sides. When you are wet, it adheres to everything and after a few attempts of getting stuck and tumbling you will look like a sand sculpture! It's a fun spot to check out though and worth the trip for the dune jumping alone!



**“ EVERYTHING WE POSSIBLY NEEDED LET IT BE FINS, BOARDS, LINE MOUNTS, FOOD, IT DIDN'T MATTER THE GUYS WERE EXCITED AND HAPPY TO HELP. ”**

Located just 10 minutes from Dakhla Attitude, about half way to town, is the famous point break of Fom Labouir. Being the only wave event of the VKWC, formally know as the PKRA, you could imagine its class and consistency. It's a relatively small curvy bay so your angle of attack changes depending on where you are on the wave but more or less its a side to side-offshore wind with the wave starting at the point and peeling all the way until it closes out on the beach. It's not the best spot to practice aerials off the waves since the wind blows at your back, but for rail-to-rail work this break is world class!

During a break from riding one of the crew from Dakhla Attitude went out on a limb to bring us some local couscous because we had spoken about it, maybe once, earlier in the week. It was so random and thoughtful, we truly didn't expect it, but that seems to be the way the locals, and especially staff members, are here. Everything we possibly needed let it be fins, boards, line mounts, food, it didn't matter the guys were excited and happy to help. These days that is quite rare to see and it was such a pleasure to be surrounded by people so humble and genuine.

We tried to score waves the next day, but the wind started late. After a couple of hours trying to paddle surf and figure out the right positions and take-off spots the wind started to fill in. However, by the time it came in strong enough the tide was too low and the waves had closed out.



This meant it was perfect timing for one last session with the local freestyle rippers! Larbi is the local Cabrinha rider here and the Moroccan freestyle champ so it was a pleasure to share the waters with him. As the windy week wound down and one of the most magical sunsets of the trip starting to appear, it seemed to be shaping into the perfect way to end our adventure in Morocco.

“ A FULL-ON UNHOOKED FREESTYLE SESSION WAS A GREAT CHANGE OF PAGE. ”

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We've got a brand new Ride Engine Hex harness to give away this issue, these game changing new harnesses offer superb support as well as an innovative take on the traditional harness design!

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INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE **Ksurf** OCT/NOV

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**“ WE HAD SCORED 6 OUT OF 6 DAYS OF WIND: FULL OF KITE LOOPS AND HANDLE PASSES, CAMELS AND SAND DUNES, AND PLENTY OF ADVENTURE AND LAUGHTER. ”**

Most of the week was full of power slides and kite loops, so a full-on unhooked freestyle session was a great change of pace. Larbi has a very smooth, fast style with full commitment, so to ride with him was a real treat. As we pushed ourselves to the max, the sun turned blood orange, and we had the spot to ourselves.

Finally the sun disappeared below the horizon, and the wind started to die, we packed up and enjoyed one last beer together. The stars were shining brighter than ever as we reflected on our past week in the African desert. We had scored 6 out of 6 days of wind: full of kite loops and handle passes, camels and sand dunes, and plenty of adventure and laughter. This was truly a trip to remember.

If you ever get the chance to come out to Dakhla, do so without batting an eyelash. Just make sure you book it for two weeks because there's something magical in this dry, desert air that will have you coming back for more.

If you want to see more of our adventures, you can check us out on [facebook.com/brandonbowekiteboarding](https://www.facebook.com/brandonbowekiteboarding) or Instagram [@ryantaylorvisuals](https://www.instagram.com/ryantaylorvisuals) [@eventaylorstudios](https://www.instagram.com/eventaylorstudios) or [@brandonbowe](https://www.instagram.com/brandonbowe).

WORDS ROU CHATER  
PHOTO PETA NORTH

# EVERY CLOUD, AND ALL THAT

The annual Red Bull Lighthouse To Leighton Race was plagued by freaky weather this year. It was the coldest day in December for 53 years and the usual sea breeze and sunshine were replaced by variable storm winds coupled with thunder and lightning... Rou Chater and Mary Booth went over to represent IKSURFMAG and Rou has given us his account of one of the maddest races on earth...



ONCE THE GREEN FLAG GOES UP ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE!





“ EVERY YEAR IT HAS DELIVERED A FANTASTIC EXPERIENCE FOR ALL THE COMPETITORS. ”

The Red Bull Lighthouse to Leighton in Perth is one of the premier racing events in the world. Limited to just 115 places you have to enter a ballot to get an entry, every year it is oversubscribed and every year it has delivered a fantastic experience for all the competitors.

The brainchild of Tim Turner, the events race director, the race involves a flat out blast from Rottnest Island to Leighton Beach in Perth. A total distance of 19km it's not insignificant when you consider the huge chop in the channel and the 20 knot winds that grace the Perth coastline all summer.

Last year you may recall I was a casual bystander taking photos and documenting the day's events, this year however, Tim had invited me to compete and given me a place

in the prestigious event. Amongst the racers are local riders from Perth, those from further afield and world-class racers such as Steph and Olly Bridge and Martin Dolenc from Croatia. Previous winners are also invited back to the event and you get an eclectic mix of riders entering some purely for the challenge and others looking to beat the course record of 22 minutes and 7 seconds set by Olly Bridge at last years event! Sam Light and Karolina Winkowska were also in WA on a Slingshot demo tour and managed to score a couple of wildcard places to have a crack at the twin tip class!



WINNER PETER MCKEWEN HAD THE RACE COME TO HIM WHEN THE WIND DIED AND THE POWER OF HIS FOIL CAME INTO PLAY!  
PHOTO PETA NORTH

“ A FULL-ON SLALOM BOARD WITH FAST AGGRESSIVE FINS IS THE WEAPON OF CHOICE ”

As for me, well I have been known to have a competitive streak; I spent 5 years touring the race series in the UK before it finished. I've actually not ridden a race board in years and when I was packing there was some careful consideration as to what equipment to take. If you want to be in with a chance of making the top ten then a full-on slalom board with fast aggressive fins is the weapon of choice among the leading racers.

With no upwind leg the hydrofoils lose their advantage if the wind is consistent and the swell in the middle can be a challenge for them too. In the end I opted to use an Airush Sector V4 60 board, it's not a full race board, but it's got some speed to it and if the wind was light it would offer enough volume to get me through the lulls. As for a kite, I picked the Ozone R1 race kite, choosing an 11m, which should be perfect for the consistent winds found in this part of the world.

I must give a huge thanks to Will at AusWind for the loan of the board and to Tom from Maxtrack in the UK for lending me the kite. At least I had the perfect set up for the race, even if I was a little rusty going into it. My good friends Steph and Olly Bridge were out there a few days beforehand too so we went for some training runs off Leighton Beach to familiarise ourselves.

The good news was the board and kite set up was fast, I could just about keep up with Steph - as long as I didn't crash - but Olly, living up to his World Champion status, was in a different league.



BICKLEY BAY ON ROTTNEST ISLAND GETS PRETTY BUSY WHEN THE RACERS ARE SETTING UP! PHOTO JEREMY LAING

“TIM MADE THE TRICKY DECISION TO GO AHEAD AND HOPE THE WEATHER GODS WERE IN OUR FAVOUR.”

I clocked over 25 knots average speed in the chop over a mile, but I reckon Olly must be doing close to 30, he was absolutely cooking across the water!

With the kit dialled in it was time to prepare for the race itself, you are allowed to take

two boards and two kites over to Rottnest Island to allow for changing conditions. I ended up just taking the race board as I somehow felt my strapless surfboard wouldn't be a weapon of choice whatever the conditions were. In case it was windy I had an 8m Slingshot Wave SST that I had been testing in the waves further up the coast in Lancelin and Geraldton.

With the kit packed it was time to get prepared mentally and physically, which

involved going for a meal and drinking lots of wine, beer and maybe a cocktail or two. Mary from the magazine was racing too, she was aiming to place well in the women's fleet and had opted for a twin tip and a 12m and 9m Core GTS 3, essentially her usual kite gear. That's the beauty of this race, literally anything goes!

There is a huge amount of logistics involved in making this happen, not just in the run up, but also on the day when the team need to transport 115 racers, photographers, crew and helpers, plus all their kit over to Rottnest Island. The Rottnest Express are one of the sponsors of the event and they play a key role, and do a fantastic job, in ensuring that all the riders and their kit arrives safely on the island.

The tricky thing about this event was the weather; all week we had enjoyed the howling Fremantle Doctor, with clear blue skies and sunshine. The forecast for Saturday, however, was for thunder, lightening and storms. The afternoon forecast was looking a little brighter, so Tim made the tricky decision to go ahead and hope the weather gods were in our favour.

When we awoke on Saturday morning, the skies were black and by the time we arrived at the Rottnest Ferry terminal the heavens had opened and we were wondering what on earth was going to happen. One element was there in abundance though; the wind was nuking and it was only 9am. It was clear that the weather was frontal coming in with the storm clouds, but second guesses were made about kit choices all the same!

The crossing over was pretty hectic. Usually during the mornings the weather in Perth is calmer and the crossing to Rottnest is a fairly tame one,

STEPH BRIDGE DOMINATED THE WOMEN'S RACE ONCE AGAIN AND PLACED 6TH OVERALL!  
PHOTO JEREMY LAING



THE WOMEN'S PODIUM, STEPH BRIDGE ON TOP, ALISON CHILD IN SECOND AND LARISSA ROTH IN THIRD!  
PHOTO ALF SORBELLO

“ THE CREW WERE ENCOURAGING US TO GRAB THE ‘JUST IN CASE’ BAGS. ”

yet this morning we were pounding into the sea and the crew were encouraging us to grab the ‘just in case’ bags. The physical and mental training the night before (in the pub) risked coming to say hello again!

It’s a 30-minute crossing, so whilst it was uncomfortable for a while it was short lived and we were soon in the lee of Rottneast and

the seas flattened out. Perhaps better news still was that the sky was at least brightening up! There was just about enough blue sky to make a sailor a pair of trousers, and in my Mum’s book that means you are allowed to go out and play.

On the island the team provided a special bus service to transport all riders the short hop over to Kingstown Barracks, which is near the launch spot at Bickley Bay and the start line for the race. Equipment is taken over in crates directly from the ferry, so you

don’t have to struggle carrying everything which is a bonus. It takes a while to get all the riders and gear over there given the sheer amount of everything, but the operation runs incredibly smoothly and the waiting times allow the riders to catch up with each other and bump into a few familiar faces from the previous races.

Once everyone has their equipment and is chowing down picnic lunches and high-energy snacks, the briefing is held with important safety announcements regarding flares, the rescue of downed kites and proper etiquette on the start line.

OLLY BRIDGE AND MARVIN BAUMEISTER WERE TUSSLING FOR THE LEAD BEFORE THEY HIT THE BIG HOLE IN THE WIND!



“ THE WEATHER HAD BEGUN TO CLEAR, THE SEA BREEZE WAS IN AND THINGS WERE LOOKING GOOD. ”

With 115 riders all going for a rolling start this is perhaps the most challenging part of the race for the competitors and the organisers.

Thankfully, the weather had begun to clear, the sea breeze was in and things were looking good. However, the wind was a little more west than usual, which would come into play once we all got on the water. Bickley Bay faces south-east and with some big dunes and limestone cliffs this made the wind shifty in the bay with plenty of holes to catch you out if you were not paying attention.

About 30 minutes before the start Mary and I launched our kites, we wanted to be early to get the start line right, but also in case there were any gear issues we would have a chance to fix them. Whilst the wind was blowing over at Rottnest the race directors got a call to say it had died at Leighton, so unbeknown to the racers getting prepared the start was postponed. With no AP flag this caused a bit of confusion at first.

After a few minutes a huge storm cloud loomed over Perth and the city and port disappeared into a black cloud of rain and no doubt bizarre winds. While the race crew waited for reports that this had passed the 115 riders now on the water did their best not to tangle in a confined space filled with less than perfect wind!

Both Mary and I managed to avoid collisions and eventually the class flag was raised signalling ten minutes to the start. We had been cruising around for an hour already so tensions were heightened,



YOU KNOW CONDITIONS ARE TOUGH WHEN THE WORLD CHAMPION GOES HOME IN A RESCUE BOAT!  
PHOTO JEREMY LAING

THE TWIN TIP PODIUM, DALE STANTON TOOK THE WIN, FLORIS DIELEN CAME SECOND AND MATT CURRAN CAME THIRD!  
PHOTO ALF SORBELLO



“ FAIRLY SOON I FOUND MYSELF BEHIND THE MAIN PACK OF FAST RACERS ”

and as the clock started ticking down we did our best to line up the perfect start. With such a small area this proved tricky as the wind was full of holes until about 100 yards before the line.

We had both positioned ourselves at the downwind end, aiming to reduce the angle somewhat needed to head to Leighton

Beach, and to be further away from the cliffs and dunes with a chance of better wind. On a usual southerly sea breeze it's pretty much a straight reach across the wind, but with this westerly angle it was going to be a lot broader than that!

We both made it over the line without tangling, which is a small achievement in itself! My strategy was to absolutely lay the hammer on the line, go full speed and flat out for about ten minutes and then hopefully relax a little in the middle before blasting for

the finish. 19km is a long way to go on one back leg at full speed, and I haven't got youth on my side like Olly and Martin!

Anyway, the best laid plans went out the window when after about a minute of going flat out I hit some weed and was catapulted out the front door as the board stopped dead. With so many kites around I couldn't head straight back towards them to get the board and had to sit with my kite low as per the race instructions until I had been passed by pretty much everyone and it was clear for me to get my board.

So much for having a rest in the middle, my only option now was to absolutely gun it for the finish! The Sector V4 60 was working a charm and I was clocking 20-25 knots on the GPS as I started to make up the places in front of me. I blasted past Mary who was going flat out on the twin tip and was pleased to see she was quite far up the field.

It was a real effort to go super broad in those conditions, and not something I had trained for as we hadn't planned for the more westerly winds. As we got further out the wind dropped a little and now not only were the legs getting abused, but the arms were constantly swinging the kit in the most aggressive arcs to keep the power on.

The 11m R1 was going great guns and fairly soon I found myself behind the main pack of fast racers with about thirty guys in front of me and then the rest of the fleet a way off behind. I crashed again and lost a couple of places but quickly made them back up as we got to the middle and started to blast past the tankers. As we got closer I had settled into the realisation that a top ten finish was way out of my reach after the early crash, I'd be lucky with top thirty, which wasn't where I wanted to be,



MENS PODIUM  
1ST PETER MCKEWEN  
2ND ANDREW COOKSEY  
3RD MARTIN DOLENC  
PHOTO ALF SORBELLO





CARNAGE ON THE FINISH LINE WITH PEOPLE GETTING OVER HOWEVER THEY CAN WHEN THE WIND DROPPED!  
PHOTO PETA NORTH

“ I SURFACED FROM THE CRASH AND LOOKED UP ABOVE ME TO SEE THE WING COLLAPSING AND TWISTING INSIDE OUT ”

but there was no way I was going to make up the 500 or so yards between myself and the main pack of fast guys.

Olly and the pro racers were even further out of reach beyond that, although to be honest I had never entertained the idea of mixing with them after that first training session and seeing just how quick Olly was.

As I settled into the burning pain in the legs I thought to myself this is probably the hardest thing I have ever done on a kite. In my mind it was certainly eclipsing the Megavalanche bike race I have done a couple of times, which is exceedingly physical. This was pure one-legged abuse and my left calf muscle was cramping up and screaming at me to stop going so fast and to take that foot out of the strap and relax.

Up in front I noticed the kites were really starting to swing around, and then they started to drop out of the sky... The whole fleet of thirty or so riders in front of me was either in the drink or frantically looping the kite to keep it in the air... A glimmer of opportunity started to grow inside!

Equally, I could also tell they had all ridden into a large bank of zero wind, and I was doing 20 knots straight for it. Hindsight is a great thing, I should have slowed down and stayed with the wind I had, but instead I sensed opportunity and ploughed on into the carnage.

## FINAL RESULTS

### Men Other (raceboards, foils etc)

- 1st Peter McKewen (WA) 34.39
- 2nd Andrew Cooksley (WA) 34.41
- 3rd Martin Dolenc (Croatia) 35.2

### Women Open

- 1st Stephanie Bridge (UK) 37.47
- 2nd Alison Child (Qld) 40.54
- 3rd Larissa Roth (WA) 41.00

### Twin Tip

- 1st Dale Stanton (WA) 38.42
- 2nd Floris Dielen (NLD) 40.32
- 3rd Matt Curran (WA)

### Marc Sprod Memorial Trophy

- Peter McKewen (WA) 34.39

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CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE

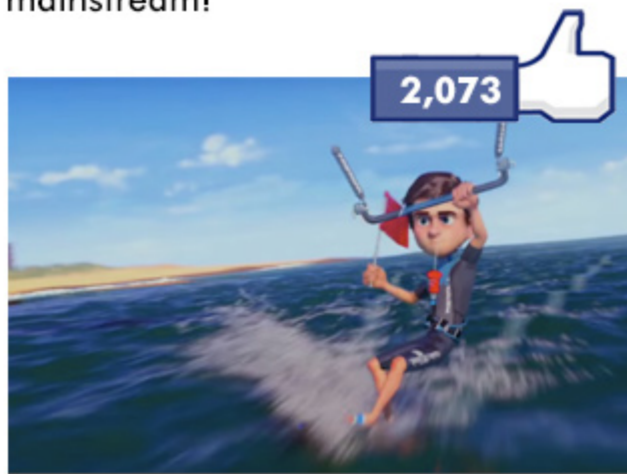
The IKSURFMAG website is crammed with news and videos everyday, we only show the best videos, so to make it onto the site is an achievement in itself.

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 CAPTURE THE FLAG INTERNATIONAL FILM TRAILER

A new animated movie is out soon, and the trailer features a bit of Hollywood inspired kitesurfing! Naturally they get it all wrong, and the kids are seen flying kites upside down and backwards through a pier. Regardless of the howlers it is great to see kiting going mainstream!



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

## #2 DAVI RIBEIRO YOUNGEST KITESURFER 3 YEARS OLD

This video is pretty mental; young Davi Ribeiro is ripping at just three years old on his strapless board and with a 2-line trainer kite! It's great to see the kids getting into our sport at a young age, so much better than sitting them in front of an iPod or a PlayStation!



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

## #3 STAND UP PADDLE FOIL

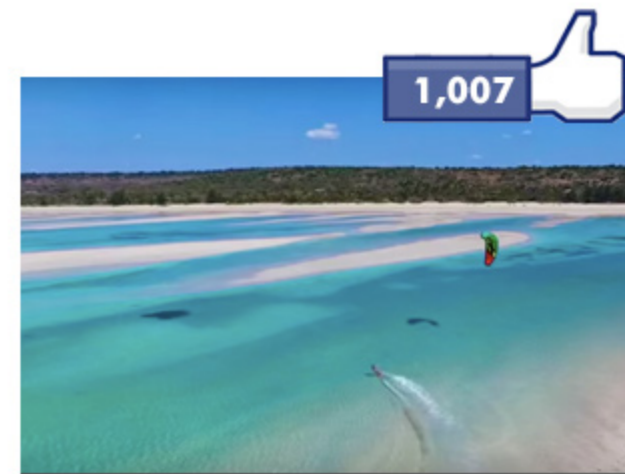
We thought kiting with a foil board was hard, but this just looks crazy, foiling with a stand up was a hit on the website this month. We can only imagine it takes extreme skill and balance to make this thing work, and the wipeouts are probably pretty savage, imagine getting rinsed with it!



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

## #4 MOZAMBIQUE KITESURFING PARADISE

Charlotte Consorti scores it big time in Mozambique as she cruises through pristine lagoons and idyllic beaches. This has put the African country firmly on the kitesurfing map, and it got us reaching for our credit cards, we'd like flights all round in the office, please!



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)



LIGHTROOM

MARK MOORE GETS WILD IN CANADA IN THIS STUNNING SHOT IN NOVA SCOTIA, CANADA!  
PHOTO ADAM CORNICK



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

*Lightroom*

LIGHTROOM

DYLAN VAN DER MEIJ GETS RADICAL IN MONTENEGRO!  
PHOTO COURTESY OF FLYSURFER



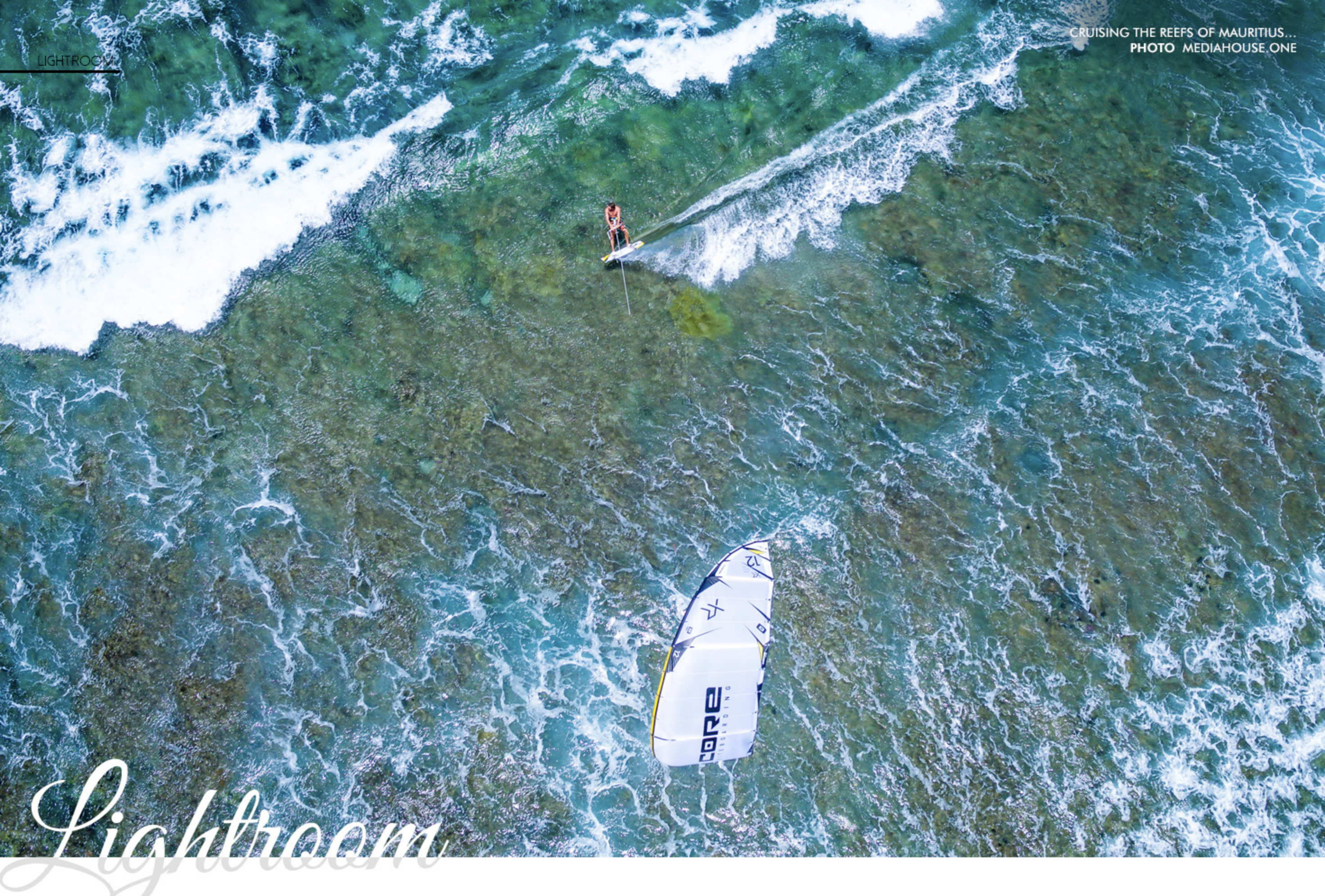
*Lightroom*



*Lightroom*

LIGHTROOM

CRUISING THE REEFS OF MAURITIUS...  
PHOTO MEDIAHOUSE.ONE



*Lightroom*

LIGHTROOM



*Lightroom*

MITU MONTEIRO FROM A DIFFERENT ANGLE AT ONE EYE IN MAURITIUS,  
THE BOAT DRIVER WAS TAKING SOME RISKS ON THIS ONE!  
PHOTO ROU CHATER

LIGHTROOM

NICCOLO PORCELLA TAKING IT TO THE LIMIT AT LANES ON MAUI!  
PHOTO: ERIK AEDER

*Lightroom*

LIGHTROOM

MARK SHINN WAS, AND ALWAYS WILL BE THE MASTER OF THE BOARD OFFSI  
PHOTO COURTESY OF SHINN



*Lightroom*

LIGHTROOM

JAN SCHIEGNITZ STYLING IT OUT ON THE GHETTO RAILS...  
PHOTO RUDY DELLINGER PHOTOGRAPHY



*Lightroom*



LIGHTROOM

CRUISING IN ARUBA  
PHOTO COURTESY OF EPIC KITES



*Lightroom*

LIGHTROOM

SHREDDING CRYSTAL WAVES!  
PHOTO COURTESY OF FLYSURFER

*Lightroom*



# HELENA BROCHOCKA

[FEMALE FOCUS]

Lindsay McClure catches up with the other ripper from Poland, Helena Brochocka, after three years on the tour she has just picked up an injury while training in Egypt. She'll be back though and stronger than ever!



WORDS // LINDSAY MCCLURE  
PHOTO // ALEKSANDER LEWANDOWSKI

**You're from Poland; can you tell us about your home spot?**

Poland has some great spots, from butter flat water in Pucka Bay, to kickers on the Baltic Sea! Most years, I rarely go there, but this year I've spent a whole two weeks in the Polish seaside, and I have to say it was some of the best kiting I got this season. It was windy every single day and really warm by Polish standards. If it were like that every summer, I wouldn't need to travel abroad! Unfortunately, it's not usually so perfect, but if you get lucky, like I did this year, it can be awesome.

**When did you learn to kiteboard, and what attracted you to the sport?**

I tried kiteboarding for the first time in 2008, but I didn't really like it in the beginning, maybe because I had my first lesson in Poland, in pouring rain and 5°C water. From then on, I kited for a bit here and there, about two weeks a year. It wasn't until 2010 that I got hooked.

**You've been competing on the VKWC, formerly PKRA, for a number of years, how has the tour changed this season and what do you anticipate for next year?**

This was my 3rd year on the tour, and we've definitely seen a lot of changes: new owners, new scoring system, new judging, and a new competition box. Adjusting was pretty tricky, as was preparing for the season because everyone trained for the old format.



"IF YOU GET LUCKY, LIKE I DID THIS YEAR, IT CAN BE AWESOME."

PHOTO SVETLANA ROMANTSOVA



" I PLAN TO CHILL OUT, TAKE IT SLOW, HAVE FUN, AND PRODUCE GREAT CONTENT. "

Some stops turned out well, but a lot have been cancelled. It's not possible to avoid a mess in the transition year, so we kind of saw it coming. I hope the tour situation will get sorted out by the next season, but honestly we have no idea what's up at the moment. Let's just wait and see!

**You recently had knee surgery, what was your injury, how did it happen, and how is your recovery progressing?**

It happened during our filming trip in Egypt, during a morning session. It was just a normal day, like any other, and quite windy. I went for a Blind Judge 3, passed a bar a bit too late, under-rotated, and my knee snapped. That's all there is to say about it.

Simply bad luck.

**Has your injury changed your goals for the future or changed your perspective about kiteboarding?**

Not much to be honest, it's just a little technical break. But when you get a long time off from doing what you normally do, you get to appreciate it more. As they say, "You don't know what you've got till it's gone." Luckily, with injuries like this you can come back, so it's a second chance, and this time I know I won't do anything, or go anywhere if my heart isn't 100% in it. I hope to spend more time traveling to the spots I always dreamed of visiting, and I think I would like to polish my style, instead of focusing so much just on adding another 180 to a trick. I plan to chill

out, take it slow, have fun, and produce great content. I still want to push my level and see how far I can get, but I think I'm going to enjoy the whole process more this time around.

**What advice do you have for anyone else who is battling an injury?**

It literally just happened a few weeks ago, so you'll have to wait a bit longer until I can produce any viable advice. But I guess my advice would be to not necessarily view an injury as a bad thing. I mean, of course, it sucks, but so far everyone I spoke with has said that battling an injury has helped them in the long run. For sure, psychologically it is a humbling experience; you discover you're not invincible,

" HE'S QUITE GOOD AT RESCUING TANGLED KITES AND DROWNING GIRLFRIENDS, SO THAT'S A BONUS."



PHOTO JAN SZLAGOWSKI

and your body has its limits. But also physically, it's a time when you train every day, two or three times a day. I have never trained this much before, so I am looking forward to being in pretty good shape when I complete my rehab.

**Your main squeeze is another talented kiteboarder, Christophe Tack, is he a helpful coach? When did the two of you start dating?**

Here it comes, a Tack question! There's always a Tack question. We met about five years ago at a kite

competition. We'd been really good friends for quite a while before we started dating in 2012, I think. That's quite a long time ago already! He's definitely great to have around on kite trips, as he knows a thing or two about tricks. Unfortunately, he learned the stuff I'm doing right now somewhere around the age of 14, so he probably doesn't even remember what the main issues were when trying to learn them. But I definitely wouldn't be able to land some of my tricks without his tips! Plus, he's quite good at rescuing tangled kites and drowning girlfriends, so that's a bonus.

**You made the move to ride for Liquid Force kites this year, how did the change of equipment come about and how do you like your new team?**

It all started one day when I borrowed a new HiFi-X from Tack, just to try. That day was a deal breaker; I just knew I had to ride this kite. It had this powerful pop and a massive slack, which was something I really loved straight away. In the beginning, it was a bit tricky to adjust, as the HiFi is different from any kite I'd flown before, but as soon as I got used to it, we became BFF's. A few months later, I had a contract with Liquid Force signed! I've been good friends with a lot of LF riders before, so I was super happy to join this crazy family. These are some of the most positive and passionate people I know, and we always have a great time together. I feel like LF is a brand that is out there for the love of the sport and wants to push the industry and make quality gear. That is definitely a value I can identify with.

**What gear are you riding, and what do you like about it?**

I ride the HiFi-X kite, which I love for the power and slack I described earlier. I have noticed some improvement in my style since I'm riding the HiFi; I can go really big, and still be able to easily pass the bar behind my back. I have a lot of time in the air, so I can add some grabs or tweak my board. I'm still working on all of that, but I feel that the kite has really influenced my riding. I also use two boards. When I feel like going for a freestyle session, I choose the 136 Element board. I like it because it always keeps a stable edge, whether in flat water, in choppy water, or in waves, which is really important for the competitions.

# READERS GALLERY

*Winner!* ★

Harry Winnington braving the conditions to get some awesome shots out in Mauritius! Rider Maxwell Ernest should be stoked with this one!

IKSURFMAG Says:

Some big swell really pumping through there! Question is, did Maxwell ride it out?!

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 Harry Winnington. Well done Harry, get in touch and we'll send you the t-shirt!

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





Moments like this is one of the reasons why we love Azov Sea and Dolzhanskaya Spit - perfect flat water, 9m weather and magnificent sunset. Thanks to Masha Aloha for the image.

**IKSURFMAG says:** Looks idyllic! What a stunning way to end a day - we can certainly see why you love it too!



Rider Grant Payne getting in a Spring kite session at Beachlands, Auckland NZ. Photo by Mike Peffers.

**IKSURFMAG says:** Nice colourful shot Mike! Hope you and the camera didn't get too wet!





▼  
Cedric Vandenschrik smashing the lip during a fun session in the shadow of Table Mountain out in Cape Town.

**IKSURFMAG** says: Chucking buckets Cedric! Bet that session had you grinning from ear to ear!



▼  
Bogdan Turtoi getting horizontal at Mangalia, Romania.

**IKSURFMAG** says: Well, if Black Sea Coast kitesurfing moments mean blue skies, flat water, wind and busting out tricks – we're all for it!



Jonny Smith styling out the strapless airs in Isla Holbox.  
Photo credit to Cathy Padgett.

**IKSURFMAG** says: Nailing it Jonny! Great capture with the lens by Cathy too!



Tomi Deák kitesurfing on Lake Balaton in Fonyód, Hungary during sunset. (Home spot of the AE - Adrenaline & Endorphin sports team apparently – there's a random fact for you!)

**IKSURFMAG** says: Enjoying the lake to yourself by the looks of it Tomi! Very nice too!

PURE MAGIC IN THE CARIBBEAN!  
PHOTO ANDRE MAGARAO

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