

AUG/SEPT 16

WELCOME TO IKSURFMAG

Welcome to Issue 58 of the World's Number One Kitesurfing Magazine! We've got arguably one of the greatest stories ever told in our sport this issue as Lewis Crathern gives us an in-depth insight into his crash,

his stay in the hospital and his recovery to getting back on a kiteboard! On top of that, the magazine is packed with the usual great articles, tests and technique! Enjoy!

ENJOY THE LATEST ISSUE!



- Click on the corners to turn the pages or use the navigation bars. If you are viewing on a touch screen device then you can use swipe gestures. Swipe left and right to turn the pages and up and down to bring up the navigation bars.



BACK FROM THE BRINK - LEWIS CRATHERN
MADAGASCAR, MEXICO, KIDS AND KITING, TECHNIQUE, TESTS AND MUCH MORE.
THE WORLD'S NUMBER ONE KITESURF MAGAZINE

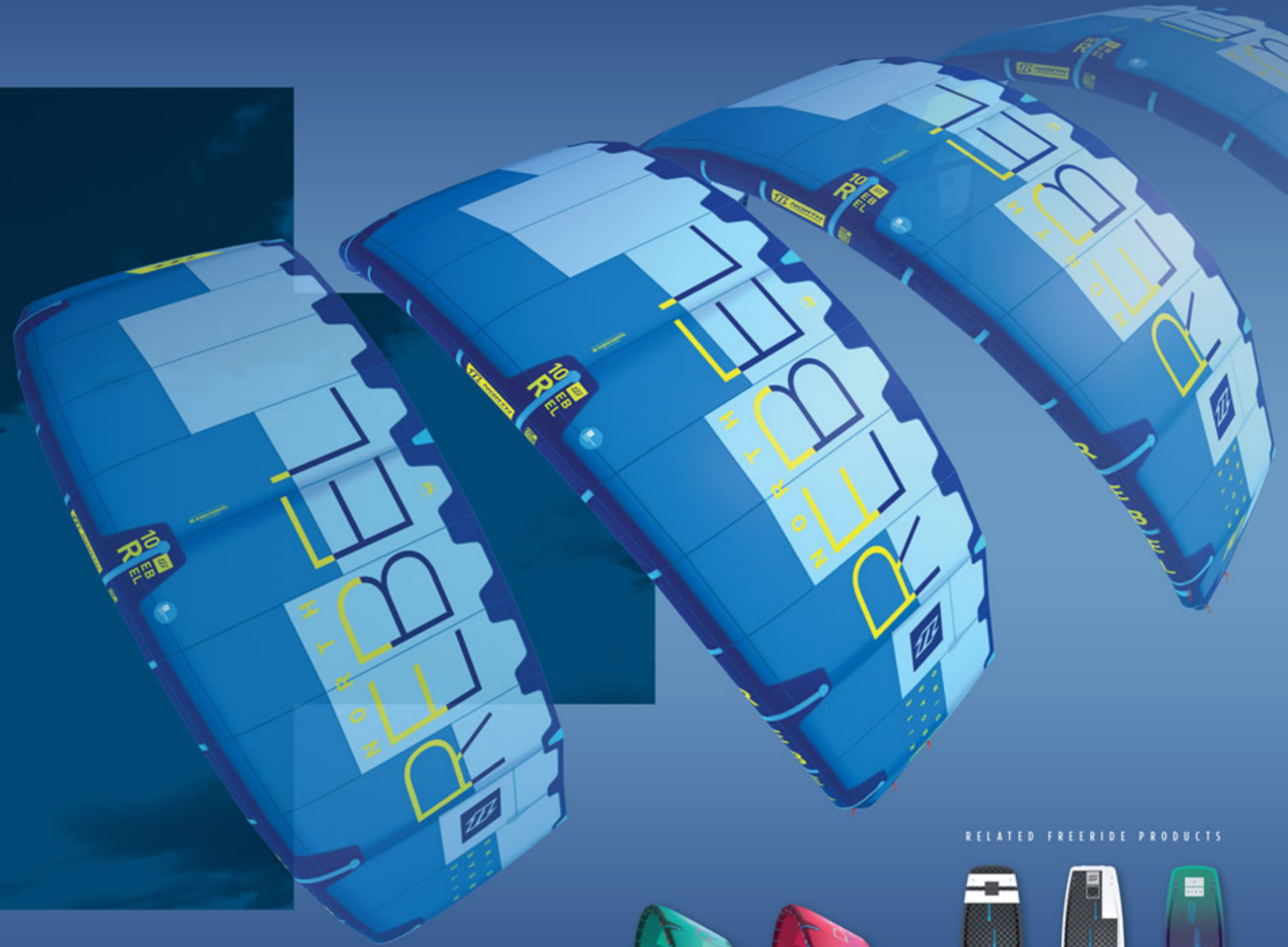
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BREEZE

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GAME CHANGER ^{F!}

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GTS4



- SIZES
- 5.0
 - 6.0
 - 7.0
 - 8.0
 - 9.0
 - 10.0
 - 11.0
 - 12.0
 - 13.5
 - 15.0 LW
 - 17.0 LW



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-  3 STRUT FRAME
-  RADICAL REACTION TIPS
-  ULTRASHORT BRIDLE SYSTEM
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Photo: Jörg Wittmann



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Sizes 5/6/7/8/9/10/12/14



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ALEX FOX RIDING THE NEW SLINGSHOT MISFIT IN MAURITIUS
PHOTO ANDRE MAGARAO



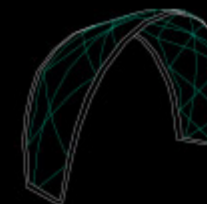
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We are teaming up with Cabrinha this issue to give away this fabulous prize! Unless you've been living under a rock lately you will have heard about the new Cabrinha Fireball system. It's an innovative way of connecting you to the kite that reduces the amount of load and pressure on your body while offering total freedom of movement. The set up has just been released, and you'll be one of the first to have one and be the talk of the beach.

Of course, you'll need a kite to fly with it, so included in the prize is the awesome high aspect kite from Cabrinha, the Apollo! Designed for outright freeride fun, boosting big jumps and blasting upwind the Apollo is an entirely new design for 2017. The crew over in Maui have been incredibly generous to offer this fantastic prize to one lucky subscriber; you'll get the kite, the bar and the Fireball system to run it with too!

It's the ultimate setup; make sure you are in with a chance of winning it!

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PAULINO PEREIRA PUSHING THE LEVEL AT THE TARIFA STRAPLESS PRO EVENT LAST MONTH.
PHOTO ROU CHATER



ISSUE 58 Things are looking up!

Last issue I wrote a very popular piece on the state of professional kitesurfing, it was spread far and wide, and we received plenty of positive feedback, as well as some negative too. Perhaps the best thing about that article is that it got a lot of people talking, and helped make some sense of the situation.

Since then in the last two months I have been fortunate enough to meet with Alex Pastor and Danny Galiart from the Kite Riders Union, and also Jörgen Vogt from the Global Kitesurfing Association. The meetings were positive, and it was fantastic to see these guys all share our passion for the sport moving forwards.

Even better than that, the KRU successfully held their first event in Cabarete with a new and exciting format that worked well. They have also had the exceedingly popular event in Germany confirmed as being a KRU event. This cements their place in the sport as the true replacement for the PKRA in my eyes. This is the freestyle tour to watch and the one that the riders are supporting, which is great.

The GKA have sanctioned and organised two successful strapless freestyle events in Tarifa and Fuerteventura, and you could argue that competitive kitesurfing has come alive in the last few weeks. The Hydrofoil Pro Tour is on in San Francisco right now with the best racers in the world competing, and I think this trifecta of organisations and event series have got the formula right for success. They have the riders, the locations and the ability to run great events that the competitors are enjoying...

It's that enjoyment factor that counts, we all do this sport because we love it, and the moment the love dies, it's over. No one wants that, let's keep pushing the sport forwards in the right way, hats off to those involved and long may it continue!

Rou Chater

Publishing Editor



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LEWIS PERFORMING AT THE RED BULL KING OF THE AIR
PHOTO CRAIG KOLESKY

BACK FROM THE BRINK

WORDS ROU CHATER

- LEWIS CRATHERN

Lewis Crathern had one of the worst crashes in the history of our sport in February this year at the Red Bull King Of The Air in Cape Town. He came as close to death as anyone would ever wish to get, but now he's back on his board and almost back to full fitness. Rou Chater sat down with him to get arguably the most compelling story we have ever told!



LEWIS BACK AT HOME RIDING NEAR WORTHING PIER,
THE FIRST PIER HE JUMPED OVER!
PHOTO EUNICE BERGIN



“ HE USES HIS PIER JUMP AS A SHOWSTOPPER FOR THE YOUNGSTERS AND GETS THEIR ATTENTION BEFORE EXTOLLING THE VIRTUES OF OUR GREAT SPORT AND THE MAJESTY OF OUR WONDERFUL PLANET TO THEM. ”

I've known Lewis Crathern right from the start of his kiting career; I remember him turning up to a kite competition at our local beach with his buddy Jez. At the time Lewis couldn't afford a board, but that didn't matter, he just went out, and body dragged around, when Jez had finished riding Lewis had a go on his board. That was the first time I met him, and that memory stayed with me.

His passion for kiting has never faded, and after kitesurfing non-stop for two years, he went on to become a 4x British Champion winning the BKSA tour three times and the KBBT once. He'd come a long way from those early days, his talents on a kiteboard were impressive, however, he never really managed to break through to the world stage like some of the other big name riders.

Lewis is from a modest background and was never funded by huge sponsorship deals or trust funds. His answer machine message used to crack me up, "Hi, you haven't got

hold of Lewis, I'm not here right now, but don't leave a message as I've got no credit to call you back"! Some kitesurfers get to the top through unbeatable talent, others from having sound financial backing, Lewis, though, made it through sheer grit, determination and hard work.

He was always known for his huge airs, "hangtime" was a phrase that he and his buddy Jez arguably invented back in the day. Therefore, I wasn't surprised when I heard he had jumped over Brighton Pier in 2010; it was an amazing feat that made him the most famous kitesurfer on the planet at that moment. Even to this day when I meet people and tell them, I kitesurf they will invariably mention Lewis and the pier jump. I usually, proudly, say he's a friend of mine, and I still find it amazing that six years on his riding has reached out to so many people.

I interviewed Lewis for the magazine after that jump, and I found out a little more about what made this eager-eyed kid from Worthing tick. You can read that piece [HERE](#). These days it would be fair to say Lewis has mellowed, but his passion for the sport still runs strong. In the UK he talks to thousands of kids every year about the benefits of kitesurfing, tied in with the importance of renewable energy and wind power.

He uses his pier jump as a showstopper for the youngsters and gets their attention before extolling the virtues of our great sport and the majesty of our wonderful planet to them. It's a side of Lewis that a lot of people who don't know him won't know about, he's modest to a fault and always seems more interested in what you've been up to rather than telling you all about his escapades.

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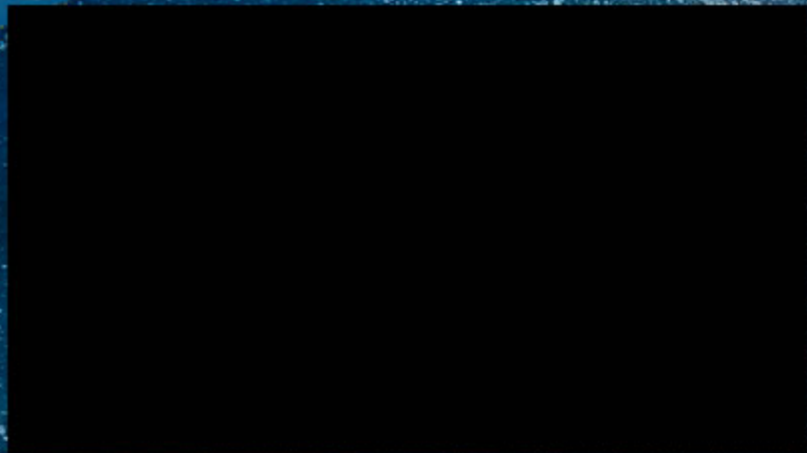
REO STEVENS
NORTH SHORE, OAHU

PHOTO: REO STEVENS

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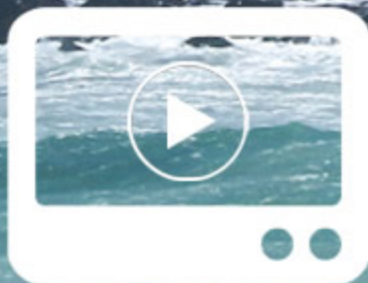
“THE RELIEF WHEN WE HEARD HE WAS GOING TO PULL THROUGH WAS PALPABLE; EVERYONE HAD BEEN ON TENTERHOOKS WAITING TO HEAR IF ONE OF THE UNSUNG HEROES OF OUR SPORT WAS GOING TO BE OK.”

The last time I saw him he was late for dinner, he just casually mentioned he had been teaching groups of teenagers back to back all day to fly power kites at a local school. Needless to say, he was excused...

These days Lewis is famous for something else, arguably an accolade many wouldn't want, but something Lewis carries with his immutable modesty and good nature. This year at the Red Bull King of The Air I had to watch someone I consider a good friend have one of the worst crashes this sport has ever seen and then, effectively, drown on live TV.

Shocking doesn't cover it, I wasn't in South Africa and was watching and reporting on the Live Stream from the Caribbean for the website. I was stunned, scared and incredibly worried the while feeling utterly hopeless. I wasn't alone of course, and the hundreds of people on the beach at Big Bay, including some of his closest friends as well as all the people watching the show from around the world, were left feeling the same fears.

Lewis spent what seemed like forever in a medically induced coma; I had guys on the ground giving me daily updates, and we relayed those to all the people at our kite spot asking after him. The relief when we heard he was going to pull through was palpable; everyone had been on tenterhooks waiting to hear if one of the unsung heroes of our sport was going to be OK.





“ I’M STUNNED BY HIS CANDID RESPONSES, BLOWN AWAY BY THE TALE AND TOTALLY SHOCKED BY SOME OF THE IMAGES HE HAS SHARED WITH ME.”

Lewis seems to have an incalculable knack of capturing people's hearts, he reached out to so many people when he jumped over Brighton Pier, and in February it seemed like the entire kiting world, and even those outside were hanging on for a piece of news from Cape Town.

Thankfully, Lewis is back; he’s riding his

board again, and it makes me incredibly proud to bring you this interview that he has given us. I’m stunned by his candid responses, blown away by the tale and totally shocked by some of the images he has shared with me. When I first read the story, I instantly knew he deserved the cover of the magazine, and I knew it needed to be something different, something special, to commemorate what a remarkable young man Lewis has grown up to be.

INTERVIEW

Let's go back to the King Of The Air in Cape Town, I was watching the live stream and thought you were riding incredibly well, I had you tipped for the podium! How did you feel the event was going before the crash?

The event was going amazingly; it’s the highlight of my year. To me, it’s like a celebration of big air kiteboarding in an extreme environment. It’s one of the few times at an event that a real crowd comes to watch.



ALL MADE IN EUROPE

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WITH JUMPS LIKE THIS LEWIS HAD EVERY CHANCE OF GOING ALL THE WAY IN THIS YEAR'S KOTA!
PHOTO CRAIG KOLESKY



“THE NEXT PART OF THIS MANOEUVRE WAS CRUCIAL, AND THIS IS WHERE I FEEL I MADE THE MISTAKE.”

I had only been riding my new North gear for a few weeks, but I felt comfortable on it. Finally, the conditions were 30 knots + which was exciting. Juggling the role of MC I'm completely immersed in the event which helps me relax and enjoy my riding. I found myself in the semi-finals, and I felt I could go all the way.

Can you talk us through what happened in the moments before the crash?

After watching it back, numerous times, I know exactly what happened. Simply put I made a mistake. 100% me, it was hard to accept at first it still is.

Now, in technical terms...

I committed to launching off a wave, which broke just before I took off. It pushed my board around behind me slightly so I was a little off balance on the way up. Still, I had a good body position and felt tension was fine so I committed to sending the kite into the kitemove. The classic picture you see very much looks as if I'm in the 'Boogy' Loop (Front Roll Megaloop) position but in fact, I'm almost in a reverse raley position.

At this point things still felt good, I was looking directly at the kite, and I never lost aerial awareness, which is my biggest fear when performing these moves.

The next part of this manoeuvre was crucial, and this is where I feel I made the mistake. I was now 'stuck' backwards, and my concern became to get back round. I chose to try and throw in a late backroll, but due to the strange position I was in when I looped the kite, I had no momentum to throw my body around.





“ I WAS KNOCKED OUT INSTANTLY ON LANDING. I STILL BELIEVE I WAS TRYING TO FIX THINGS, AND THAT’S POSSIBLY WHY I NEVER SAW THE CRASH COMING.”

If you watch the video closely, you can see I go through this thought pattern:

Throw the late backroll - Realisation it’s not going to bring me round so try to go the other way - Realisation that’s not going to work either so try the original way again - Accept I’m stuck backwards - Realisation in all this faffing around I’ve accidentally over steered the kite so it’s not above my head anymore - And the last act of desperation which takes place about 5 meters from impact, redirect the kite back to 12 - But it was too late.

It doesn’t often happen that we come in backwards in kiting. I describe it like cats landing on their feet. There have been numerous times I’ve experienced being backwards on a kite and it just seems to work itself out, but in this case it didn’t.

We’re you knocked unconscious on landing, or was there a moment when you knew what had happened?

I was knocked out instantly on landing. I still believe I was trying to fix things, and that’s possibly why I never saw the crash coming.

In the aftermath of the wipeout a few key people came and helped out, Reno Romeu was first on the scene, do you have much recollection of that, and have you watched it back on YouTube?

I have no recollection of the aftermath, but one thing I know is that I owe my life to the quick reactions to Reno Romeu and Andries Fourie.

LEWIS OWES HIS LIFE TO THE FAST REACTIONS AND QUICK THINKING OF RENO ROMEU WHO WAS THE FIRST PERSON TO GET TO HIM, WHEN A WAVE KNOCKED LEWIS AWAY FROM RENO, ANDRIES FOURIE WAS ON HAND TO KEEP HIS HEAD ABOVE THE WATER. LEWIS WAS UNDERWATER WHEN RENO FIRST GOT TO HIM, HE REMAINED UNCONSCIOUS UNTIL HE GOT TO THE BEACH WERE HE BRIEFLY CAME ROUND... HEROES DOESN'T QUITE COVER IT...



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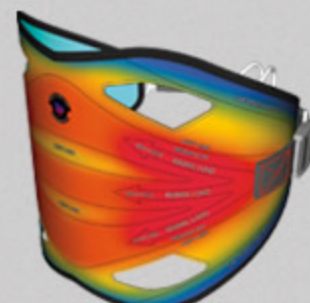
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SHOCK AND CONCERN ON THE BEACH AS LEWIS IS ATTENDED TO BY THE LIFEGUARDS...

“ HE THEN GOT UNDERNEATH ME AND PUSHED ME UP AND OUT OF THE WATER. WAVES CAME IN AND WE GOT SEPARATED THEN ANDRIES MANAGED TO GRAB ME ”

What they did completely encapsulates our sport and how together we are; ready to help each other, not only with launching and landing but also with the rescue if needed.

As far as I am aware, Reno got to me first. He mentioned to me that he just saw lines coming out of the water, and I had ended up beneath the surface. He then got underneath me and pushed me up and out of the water. Waves came in, and we got separated, then,

Andries managed to grab me and keep my head out of the water. One other element that was in my favour is that my kite was pulling me still towards the shore.

Can you tell us a little bit about what happened on the beach and at the hospital?

Again, I have nearly no memory of this, except slightly waking in the Lifeguard area and asking what had happened. I've learnt there was a concern I needed CPR but it was decided I was still breathing. It became a get him to the hospital as quick as possible scenario. I also remember very vaguely

asking in the ambulance 'what happened', 'what happened'? I had the same pain you get from breaking your ribs.

You had everyone pretty worried for a while there, your mum flew out to see you, and your girlfriend Courtney was there too, what was it like to wake up after being in a medically induced coma for the best part of a week?

That was the strangest experience ever actually. My mum and Dad had flown back out as they had only just come to visit three weeks beforehand. It was the first time they had visited me in Cape Town; they had the holiday of their lives! This second visit was rather different!



LEWIS PUKING SEAWATER OUT OF HIS SYSTEM WITH AARON HADLOW ONE OF HIS BEST FRIENDS LOOKING ON.

I woke up thinking the event had just happened so it was weird to be told it was all over a week ago. I was relieved to see faces I knew, and I was still heavily sedated on stuff and was quite scared. The doctor explained everything slowly, but I accepted what he said. I was in a lot of pain in my chest still.

The crash must have taken it out of you mentally and physically, how did you start to think about rehabilitation and getting back on your feet?

The challenge for me was mostly physical. The pain of breathing and worry of drowning again in the hospital if I didn't get my breathing right became my only concern. I was still bringing up seawater for quite a while when I came round (they said this was normal). I made a deal with myself that I wouldn't go to sleep.



LEWIS BEING KEPT ALIVE AND IN A COMA...



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- DIRECT HANDLING, HUGE DE-POWER, INSANE DRIFT
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“ WITH ALL THE DRUGS GOING THROUGH ME, I HAD BUILT UP QUITE A DIFFERENT PICTURE OF WHAT WAS HAPPENING. ”

That’s how scared I was of losing my guard, being so close to getting through it I kept thinking how bad it would be if it didn’t work out. With all the drugs going through me, I had built up quite a different picture of what was happening. I could write a book on the strange dreams and visions I was having (I might, one day!).

I’ll give you a little insight....

I would stare at the TV up above me, which was switched off, and the standby light represented Guitar Hero lights (one of my favourite console games). There would be a healthy number of them on if I was concentrating on breathing correctly, but if I started getting it wrong, they would start going out. When you get down to one and a half lights, you start to panic. Noises and bleep sounds were going off behind me, my life support stuff, which I was wrongly tying into this surreal game. At night it was quite scary. Only the messages and cards on the wall that people had sent me got me through this; it gave me hope.

How good were the medical staff at the hospital, we heard you got a very high standard of care...

They were brilliant; it works quite differently out in South Africa with private care. All the medical staff were very skilled, and I made some great relationships.

You couldn’t fly home after you got out of the hospital, and had to stay until you were well enough to travel back to the UK...

It was the longest I’ve ever stayed in Cape Town. I was out there on December the 1st to spend Christmas with my girlfriend and her family.

THANKFULLY LEWIS IS NOW BACK KITING ONCE AGAIN!
PHOTO CRAIG KOLESKY

IT'S GREAT TO SEE LEWIS BACK RIDING AND ENJOYING HIS KITING AGAIN, SOMETHING THAT HAS BECOME SO INTEGRAL TO HIS LIFE.
PHOTO EUNICE BERGIN



“ POSSIBLY MY PAST EXPERIENCES HAVE HELPED ME TO SEPARATE THE EMOTION FROM A SITUATION ”

My flight was originally due to return at the end of February, but when I was released from the hospital, in the middle of February, I was told I could not fly for a month due to the lung injury.

Pressure from a plane is not good for that. It was not hard to accept; at that point, I just listened to what was best for me. I was quite a nice time actually, it took me back to the days of being a baby when you have no responsibilities in the world, there are people around doing everything for you every day as you can't do anything yourself.

Mentally you must be incredibly strong to put that incident to the back of your mind and move forwards, you showed your mental strength and determination when you jumped over Brighton Pier, do you think your past experiences have helped you get over this event too?

I've had time to look back at the whole thing that happened at KOTA this year. I feel it was just the physical aspect that I had to endure. I look around at my family, friends and girlfriend and can see how much of a mental challenge they went through. That period of worry they endured must have been hard.

That wasn't the case with me. I didn't have to see myself while I was unconscious or in a coma. The images, which are quite graphic, of me at the beach do not set off any emotions within me. It is as if I am looking at somebody that I do not know in any way.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)



ARMOR SKIN



Nick Jacobsen by Christian Black



Nick doesn't need protection. But you do.

Fight winter shrinkage with the all-new Combat wetsuit with Armor-Skin neoprene. Arriving in stores in September, this new hybrid suit is made from a mix of Armor-Skin material for durable wind-chill protection and double-lined neoprene in zones where you need the most flexibility.



Durable



Wind-proof



Quick drying



Charlotte Consorti and Bruno Dubosq head to the far north of
Madagascar to discover the majesty for the Emerald Sea...

UNLOCKING THE SECRETS OF THE EMERALD SEA

WORDS CHARLOTTE CONSORTI
PHOTOS BRUNO DUBOSQ





“ YOU NEED TO WAIT UNTIL THE TIDE RISES
BECAUSE ACCESS IS ONLY POSSIBLE BY BOAT
AT HIGH TIDE ”

Hidden away, far in the North of the island of Madagascar, separated from Diego Suarez by high passes, lies the Mer d’Emeraude, or Emerald Sea. Here you will find a little treasure cove, in a heavenly setting between sea and forest, completely untouched by urban civilisation and where Nicolas Martin built the Babaomby Island Lodge kitesurf and windsurf centre in 2005.

Nico met us at Diego Suarez airport. However, to get to the paradise of Babaomby, you need to wait until the tide rises because access is only possible by boat at high tide. We took this opportunity to visit Diego Suarez with Nico, who lives here and therefore knows the city extremely well. We visited the market, the remnants of a few colonial houses and, on a street corner, we heard some drums. We discovered a band of girls who are training for the Diego music festival, the Zegny’Zo, and enjoyed the free show before eating on the seafront in the excellent restaurant ‘Le Melville’ overlooking Diego Bay and the

famous Sugarloaf Mountain. A rocky island of volcanic origin, which is considered a sacred place and with entirely restricted access. After lunch we drive to the Ramena pier ready for the last leg of our journey to the spot; it takes about an hour to get there from the city.

The boat and its captain are waiting for us. It’s a “boutre”, a small traditional wooden boat with a mast and a single sail. It’s blowing 40 knots, and the sea is rough, but our captain handles it easily during the hour-long crossing, we have such confidence in him that we even fell asleep! Upon arrival, the women of the camp, who are dancing and throwing flowers – what a way to be welcomed, greet us!



They show us around the lodge: the dining room and bar overlooking the kite spot, the kitchen with a wood fire oven, the two toilet blocks with showers, and a small shop with some essentials such as sun cream and hats, in case you've forgotten them. Finally, we are shown to our hut; it is a tent on a wooden terrace built on stilts with a direct view over the beach. The accommodation is simple and comfortable, with two beds inside and two sun loungers on the terrace. It's magical to be able to see the ocean from your bed!

" IT'S MAGICAL
TO BE ABLE
TO SEE THE
OCEAN FROM
YOUR BED! "

Shinn
EL STUBBO

A SWITCH TO A DIFFERENT MODE





“ IT’S AN INTENSIVE THIRTY-MINUTE KITE BACK UPWIND TO THE LODGE, DEFINITELY A THIGH-BURNER! ”

By now it was getting dark, so, unfortunately, we didn’t have time to kite on our first day, but we unpacked and got everything ready to hit the water the next day, excited by the prospect of a stunning new kite spot! We fell asleep lulled by the sound of the sea and wind.

The morning is a real surprise: we get to watch the sunrise from our beds! Today the whole crew heads to the mythical spot known as ‘La Piscine’. It’s windy, really windy on our first day and I find myself overpowered on a 7m kite. However, I still manage to enjoy the glorious scenery as we downwind five kilometres to the natural lagoon. We share the water with turtles and flying fish; it’s a magical experience! We spend the afternoon riding until the tide comes in, and we move to a beach on the other side of the island where we can enjoy a picnic sheltered from the wind. It’s an intensive thirty-minute kite back upwind to the lodge, definitely a thigh-burner!

Babaomby retained its claim as the windiest spot in the world for the rest of our stay. Every day the breeze starts at 8:30 am and rises gradually throughout the day reaching 30-35 knots. There are no rest days! The endless wind allows us to explore every corner of this immense lagoon; 12kms long, 3kms wide and lots of little islands. We also spent some time playing in the waves off the island of Suarez and were often accompanied by Pierre Joris Durand, an F-ONE rider from La Reunion. He is an instructor for the season at the Lodge and has an incredible riding level in waves - it’s a pleasure to ride with him.



“ THE RED EARTH AND GLOWING RED OF THE SUNSET MINGLE TOGETHER.”

There are four Malagasy (the official term for the people of Madagascar) working at the kite club, as well as Nico who is an expert in the waves windsurfing, Angelo and Abdou who are IKO assistants, and Franco and John. They are very caring, help with launching and landing, and are fountains of knowledge since they know the lagoon and Varatraza (Malagasy name for the wind) in this area by heart. They keep an eye on you

when you're out on the water and have a jet ski at their disposal for rescues if needed.

Usually, when we are on a trip we use the windless days to visit the surrounding area, yet in Babaomby it is somewhat different and when the wind blows too strong for kiting we use the afternoons for walking and sightseeing. Nicolas takes us to see the "Tsingy Rouge", a natural sculpture in the middle of the forest created by erosion. We arrive at sunset, and it was simply sublime. The red earth and glowing red of the sunset mingle together. I highly recommend making

the effort to go there.

We also made the trip to the forest on another occasion with Franco, this time during the day to look for baobab trees. Franco grew up on this island and tells us stories of his childhood in this undeveloped area. He used to have to walk two hours through the middle of the forest to go to school, and he remembers all games he used to play on the way, climbing vines, chewing leaves, and jumping bushes. There are very few baobab trees in the forest, so it's like finding treasure when we discover them. On the way back we keep an eye out for the native lemurs, but even with Franco, who has the local and knowledgeable eye, we hear just their cries.



“ IT’S HARD TO FORGET THE LITTLE
MADAGASCAN WORLD WE WERE
FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO BE PART OF ”

That’s not to say we didn’t experience any of the wildlife - we saw a chameleon and a zebu family on the way back, it was a little more rewarding than Pokémon Go!

In the evening everybody ends up at the lodge bar for an aperitif with the famous Three Horses Beer (more commonly know as THB) or the famous caipirinha made by Paulette. We all eat around a large table to enjoy Richard’s meals that are always tasty. There is nothing more delicious than eating fresh fish straight from the lagoon. These moments around the table are very relaxed and friendly and lend even more charm to this unique place. Nico has a gift for storytelling, and we listen and laugh, it creates such a great atmosphere, and everyone feels part of the team.

Cut off from the world for fifteen days; I genuinely feel sadness in my soul when the time comes to leave this island paradise. It’s such a special place, and it captures your heart.

The journey home is momentarily stalled with a long layover in Ivato, and we take the opportunity to visit the “Croc Farm” where we see crocodiles and finally some lemurs!

Returning to France and the reality of everyday life, it’s hard to forget the little Madagascan world we were fortunate enough to be part of for two weeks. It has left its mark on our hearts and has given us some amazing memories I will never forget.



HOW TO GET THERE

Arrival airport: Diego Suarez (Antsiranana) via Antananarivo (Ivato)

Several possible airlines for Antananarivo (Ivato): Air Madagascar, Air France, Air Austral, Corsair. Then from Antananarivo to Diego Suarez you must take Air Madagascar.

If you take your flight from France with Air Madagascar you are entitled to 2 x 23kgs and board bags are included for free on the two flights. It is approximately €1000 EUR from Paris or Marseille.

If you like adventure, you can also take the bus option from Antananarivo to Diego Suarez but allow about 24 hours.

" IF YOU LIKE
ADVENTURE,
YOU CAN
ALSO TAKE
THE BUS "

DAILY WORK WEAR

STRIKE AMP
ZIPLESS

AARON HADLOW'S
DAILY WORK WEAR

STRIKE AMP ZIPLESS



SURFING ELEMENTS



“ THE WIND BLOWS NON-STOP FROM MORNING TO NIGHT AND DAYS LESS THAN 30 KNOTS ARE RARE. ”

Once in Diego, the Lodge will organise the transfer to Babaomby: a 30-minute taxi ride to the pier of Ramena, then 45 minutes to Babaomby on the traditional 'boutre' boat. Pay attention and try to anticipate your arrival with high tide because the transfer cannot be done at low tide.

WHEN TO GO

The South East trade wind, called the Varatrazza, begins to blow in early April; it strengthens in July and August and starts to wane in late November.

The wind blows non-stop from morning to night and days less than 30 knots are rare. The spot is one of the windiest spots in the world.

During 15 days in May we kited every day: 1 day – 12m kite, two days with 9m and 8m kites, and the rest of the days we were using 5m and 6m kites. So don't forget your little wings, especially if you want to go in the waves!

The wind rises throughout the morning, reaching its peak in the early afternoon. It is side-shore in the morning and often turns onshore gaining strength in the afternoon.

WHERE TO SLEEP

Babaomby Island Lodge

Open from late March to late November. This eco lodge offers ten tents raised on terraces on stilts facing the lagoon. Two wash blocks with toilets,



“ THE WATER IS SO TRANSPARENT THAT THE REFLECTIONS CAN BE BLINDING.”

showers, and hot water. Rechargeable lamps give you light in the rooms, and you can charge all your electronics in the day thanks to the solar panel. You will eat fish caught daily in the lagoon. Full board is offered from €45 EUR per person.

Le Grand Hotel:

If you need to spend a night at Diego the most beautiful hotel is Le Grand Hotel and the boss, Daniel loves to kitesurf. It costs about €80 EUR per room.

CLIMATE

Water and air are around 26-27 degrees. Take a shorty especially in July and August when it can get cooler and also pack a sweatshirt and trousers for evening.

Also, it's a good idea to take sunglasses to use while kiting, particularly on the downwinder to the pool because the water is so transparent that the reflections can be blinding.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Local currency: The Malagasy Ariary. At present, it's approximately 1 EUR = 3600 MGA. It is better to have cash in euros and to change them for local currency at Ivato

airport where there are exchange offices. There is an ATM, but withdrawals are limited, and it does not always work.

Visa: You have to purchase it upon arrival at Ivato (€31 EUR)

Languages: French, Malagasy

Medical: No mandatory vaccinations, anti-malaria treatment is recommended for the northern area of Madagascar, but we did not take any because there are no mosquitoes at Babaomby (it's too windy for them!)

OTHER ACTIVITIES

At Babaomby:

Hiking in the forest of Babaomby and discover its tropical nature. You can cross the forest and see lemurs and zebu.



Accompanied by Franco who grew up on the island you will not miss the wealth of flora, fauna and wildlife, he knows even the tiniest plants and their hidden virtues.

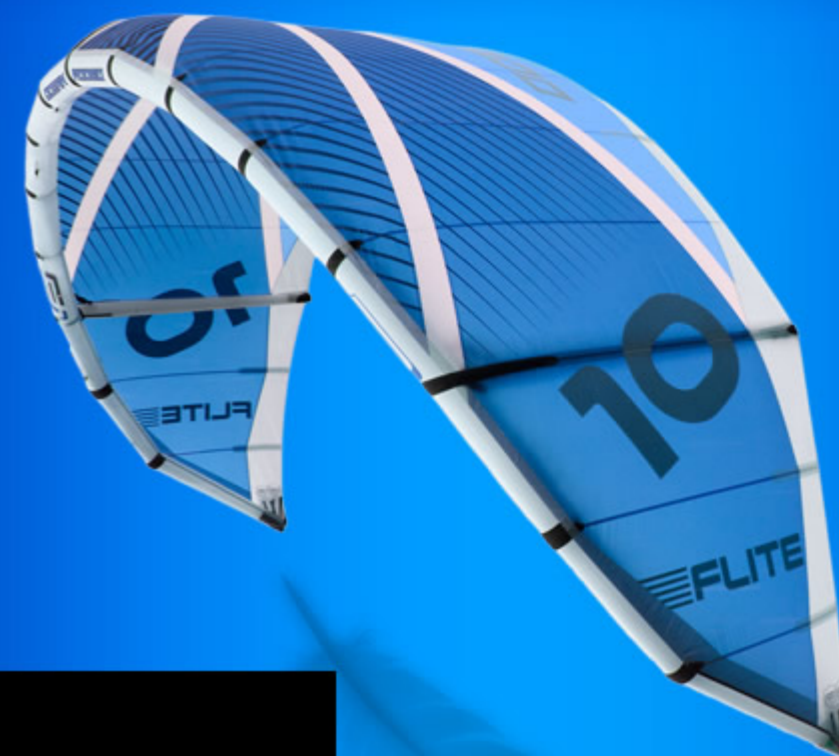
Do not miss the "Tsingy Rouges", a masterpiece of nature created by erosion.

Plenty to do on the water: snorkelling right next to the lodge on the left (make sure you take your mask), traditional canoe rides and fishing in the lagoon.

For the days that work with the tides, because these visits require a boat transfer:

- The market of Diego Suarez
- The Amber Mountain National Park (approximately 1-hour drive from Diego)
- Montagne des Français Reserve – a protected forest area in northern Madagascar

" TRADITIONAL
CANOE RIDES
AND FISHING
IN THE
LAGOON. "



FLITE ULTRA LITE

The 4th Generation Flite is the lightest kite we have ever built. The Ultra Lite design keeps your kite aloft even with single digit wind speeds, offering all levels of riders simplicity in flight and a fast, high performance light wind kite.

sizes: 8, 10, 12, 14.5, 17m





“ IT ALLOWS DOWNWINDERS AND SAFE RIDING CONDITIONS BECAUSE THE WIND AND CURRENT ARE ALWAYS BRINGING YOU BACK TO THE SHORE.”

SPOTS

A huge coral reef and many stunning islands surround the lagoon. It is 12kms long and 3kms wide. What makes this spot so brilliant is that it allows downwinders and safe riding conditions because the wind and current are always bringing you back to the shore. All this with maximum ten kites in the water! The Babaomby Island Lodge team ensures safety with jet ski cover and constantly have an eye on you with binoculars. It is perfect for freeride and strapless, and also ideal for foiling if you have the level for foiling in strong winds of course. For unhooked freestyle, there are very few really flat areas; usually the water is rather choppy because of the wind.

THE LODGE

Just near to the Lodge, a small beach of about fifty meters. The wind enters side-shore and often turns more on-shore in the afternoon. At low tide is the best time for the freestyle and freeride. At high tide, small perfect peaks appear for strapless jumps. Four assistants are there to help you launch and land.

LA PISCINE, freeride

Not to be missed! Every week the Babaomby Island Lodge organises a downwinder to "La Piscine" the flat spot of the lagoon: 5kms downwind. On arrival at the spot, the schedule is for freeriding at low tide in the "pool" and when the tide comes in it's a picnic on the other side sheltered from the wind of the island of Nosy Antaly Be.



“ THE WAVE IS A RIGHT-HANDER FROM 1 TO 3 METERS WITH A SIDE-SHORE WIND.”

The bravest can then return to the Lodge riding upwind (30 minutes for the fastest) or by sailing boat. The colours are breathtaking at the ‘pool’, especially at low tide.

LA POINTE (TIP), freeride

This spot is located just below “LA PISCINE” at the end of the island Nosy Antaly Be. This is a spot with a small flat area and waves that are coming around the tip. The advantage of this spot is that even at high tide there is a bit of sandy beach.

CRAB ISLAND

This small island is located just opposite to the Lodge just a 1km away. At high tide, you can find a small flat area to do unhooked tricks. There is even a small beach there to put down your kite but you need to be careful, there is very little water at low tide and a lot of rocks and coral.

SUAREZ, waves

Just opposite the Lodge, this wave is behind the island of Nosy Suarez. To get there, you first need to ride for 4kms. This is the longest and most popular wave. The wave is a right-hander from 1 to 3 meters with a side-shore wind. These are perfect waves for

strapless. At mid-low tide, it’s the best time when they are the glassiest. The more the tide rises, the bigger they are; but depending on your level you can stay ahead and play in small waves. The wind often blows a little stronger than in front of the Lodge.

TOREKY, waves

This spot is also located opposite the Lodge, but it is a little bit closer, about 3kms. The wave is coming just in front of Nosy Toreky Island (a large rock). This is a good spot when Suarez is too dry at low tide, and the wave is a bit easier and smaller than Suarez.

The Diego Suarez Tourist Office:

www.office-tourisme-diego-suarez.com

Babaomby Island Lodge: www.babaomby.com



INTRODUCING THE MOST ADVANCED
KITE CANOPY MATERIAL EVER MADE

QUAD-TEX™

Naish + Teijin Collab | Ripstop Fabric

OVER 30% STRONGER = Unmatched durability

OVER 30% STIFFER = Prevents distortion for ultimate control

QUADRUPLE RIPSTOP = Minimal stretch in every direction

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UNPARALLELED RESPONSIVENESS

TEIJIN-MADE Worldwide leader in high-performance textiles

AN INDUSTRY FIRST, EXCLUSIVE TO NAISH

2017 KITE RANGE



PIVOT

FREERIDE/WAVE

SIZES 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 14

SLASH

PURE WAVE/STRAPLESS

SIZES 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10

TORCH

PRO PERFORMANCE FREESTYLE

SIZES 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 14

*ALSO FEATURED ON 2017/18 KITES



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BEHIND THE BRAND

AIRUSH

Airush are one of the original kiteboarding brands. However, for the brand based in South Africa's kiting mecca of Cape Town, its role as one of the sport's founding fathers is no excuse to rest easy. A ceaseless quest for innovation is an inseparable part of the company's makeup. For kites worldwide, that out-of-the-box thinking spawned a continual flow of groundbreaking concepts that shaped the sport.

WORDS IAN MACKINNON
PHOTOS YDWER VAN DER HEIDE



The design-led company - on the "big side of medium" within the industry - has paradoxically never sought to transform its innovative prowess into becoming a kiting behemoth. Rather, its unshakable goal is to produce the best, simplest, most durable lines at the cutting edge of shape or technology, whether for the crucial recreational customers whose loyalty drives volume and economic viability, or fanatics specialising in any of kiting's multiplying disciplines.

In keeping with the Airush ethos, it is tweaking what it hopes will be the lightest production tube kite, possibly a single strut affair, making it ideal for light wind wave riding and foiling. It has just launched two hydrofoils, the all-carbon Team foil and the aluminium-masted and fibreglass-winged Core foil. Airush might seem late to the foiling party, but the goal was to produce the market's best aluminium foil. The beautifully engineered and styled Core looks stunning and is priced very aggressively.

Airush team rider and leading foil racer, Julien Kerneur, helped design the premium Team foil and carbon board. Likewise, the small roster of hard-working team riders, such as world champions Alex Pastor and Bruna Kajiya, contribute their expertise to kite and twin-tip development.



"AIRUSH MIGHT SEEM LATE TO THE FOILING PARTY, BUT THE GOAL WAS TO PRODUCE THE MARKET'S BEST ALUMINIUM FOIL."





The Majestic is the top end harness of the Mystic harness range. Due to the pre curved shape and memory foam membrane, it is the most supportive harness on the market.

MEMORY FOAM Enables you to become one with your harness and experience unrivaled support and performance

SOFT NEOPRENE EDGES Limits rash while riding on bare skin. It also creates a closer more comfortable fit.



COVERED SIDEPARTS

Prevents unwanted releases. It also provides a place for remaining webbing strap to fold into.

MULTI SPREADERBAR + LOW TORQUE Can be used for both kite- and windsurfing. The low torque fixture system is specially designed by Mystic to prevent the spreader bar from any upward rotation.

CLICKERBAR 3.0 Is our latest quick release feature. It really takes just one click and you are ready to ride!



MAJESTIC

KITESURF HARNESS

THE ULTIMATE IN
BACK SUPPORT



**360 DEGREES-PRE
CURVED PLATE**

THE 360 DEGREES PRE-CURVED PLATE
LOCKS ITSELF AROUND THE WAIST FOR THE
MOST EFFICIENT AND SUPPORTIVE FIT.



CLINTON FILEN

MARC SCHMID

“ AIRUSH’S SMALL, INTERNATIONAL TEAM OF 10 EXPENDS ENORMOUS ENERGY MULLING THE FUTURE. ”



It is an Airush guiding philosophy that customers can buy kit identical to that used in competition by the brand’s stellar team. That clear-eyed vision putting customers at the heart of the process also translates into a tightly-defined kite line - the uncompromising Razor “C” kite for freestyle or the Wave for surfing, for instance - rather than claim ‘one kite does all’.

Beyond kiter’s narrow interests, though, Airush’s small, international team of 10 expends enormous energy mulling the future. Be it increasing inclusivity by drawing in more women, or seeking to grow kiting’s social-lifestyle side akin to surfings broad

appeal. Similarly, the environment is a top priority. Airush believes developments like its Load Frame Technology that braces the kite canopy, dramatically reducing stretch and effectively doubling lifespan, is one way to cut our carbon footprint. It is also launching an “eco” board range. In the same vein, Airush heavily supports industry body, the Global Kitesports Association (GKA), as it tries to resolve the current chaos in competition kiting and shape the sport’s future.

On the sidelines of the Airush photo-shoot and “product development” week in Mauritius, I sat down

with Brand Manager Clinton Filen and Marketing Manager Marc Schmid to tease out the details.

Airush has been around since the beginning and was always innovative. How important is that today?

Clinton Filen: If you look at the heritage of everything we do as a group, you see that our company is pretty much run by designers. From Svein Rasmussen (founder of Starboard, the parent company of Airush) who is pretty much a product designer, to my background, I’ve always been a product designer. It’s part of our DNA.

“ WE HAVE OUR
“SPECIALITY” PRODUCTS
AND OUR MORE VERSATILE
“CORE” PRODUCTS THAT
ARE MULTI-FUNCTIONAL. ”

Marc Schmid: Even our team riders are product driven; they're heavily involved in how a product performs. We don't just send them a board and let them deal with it. We ask them questions to keep them thinking as much as possible on how to develop something, how it could perform better.

Mark “Paddo” Pattison, your kite designer, spends much of his time in Bali. How does that work in designing new models or lines?

CF: In terms of process, I work as design director. I'll write a brief for him. At the moment we're developing a kite for foiling and light wind wave riding. I give him a framework of requirements. I won't say it needs to look like this or have this many struts. That's up to the designer to work within the brief.

MS: First the prototypes go through his hands. He waits until he gets quite near to a finished product with, say, versions A, B and C. He would then pursue version C if that met everyone's demands.

CF: Generally kites get built in the prototype loft in China, where our kites are made. In five to ten days we can get a sample made and shipped. “Paddo” gets kites made in batches of six or eight at a time, whether it's the Wave, or Union, or the single strut. We've a very clear strategy: we have our “speciality” products and our more versatile “core” products that are multi-functional. We've two all-round kites, the Lithium and the Union. Our speciality kites are the Wave, the Razor for freestyle and the Diamond for women.





EXO

HARNESS

MANERA



ENERGY DISPERSION FRAME



COCOON CONCEPT



SEAMLESS NEOPRENE AREA



TUCK FLAP



ERGONOMIC PREFIT



DOWN HOLD SYSTEM



MANERA LEASH RELEASE

“MAYBE ONLY ONE WILL BE IDEAL FOR THE MARKET. WE’RE LOOKING AT THE WAY PEOPLE ARE RIDING.”



Some brands will claim their kites do everything. That makes no sense to us. For us, it’s paramount to highlight to the customer what it’s really good for.

You mentioned you’re working on a light-wind wave and foiling kite?

CF: That’s one of the challenges, exploring all the niches. You can think of ten ideas, but maybe only one will be ideal for the market. We’re looking at the way people are riding. For example, we’ll go to Tarifa and spend time with Alex Pastor, and you’ll see people are focused on high-wind strapless or freestyle. And then you go to Thailand...if you can

add two extra knots to the bottom end for the average customer, instead of getting one weekend a month they’ll get two, doubling their water time.

MS: That was the thing with the Sector. It doubled people’s water time. That was unheard of, or not paid attention to by most brands.

CF: It’s the same with Mark Pattison living in light-wind Indo; you get versatile out of necessity.

So now you’ve developed the foils. Where does that leave the Sector and the light-wind boards?

MS: It’s quite polarised. I was in Hood River [USA], a notoriously windy spot, and maybe forty percent of

the kites there were foiling. But then when I went to Florida, a notoriously light-wind area where it’s less than waist deep in many areas, that’s where the Sector and light-wind twin-tips shine. Foils were non-existent in Florida. Finding the right products for the right places is essential.

Let’s talk about your foils; one is aluminium with fibreglass wings, one is full carbon?

CF: The architecture and geometry are basically the same on both, though the aluminium one has a shorter mast, which works well. It’s 83cm on the aluminium and 93cm on the carbon.

We'll also bring out a 60cm mast in aluminium. One thing that I wanted to do was build the best aluminium foil on the market. So far the feedback has been really, really good.

MS: We're finding that even more avid foilers who've tested it are finding it perfect for just going and riding. What more advanced riders say is that you're going to spend an extra two hours to learn on it, but spend years riding it.

Since foils tend to be pretty expensive, how are they priced?

MS: I see foiling has a huge place, but to foster broad-based participation you need to bring down the cost of ownership to something reasonable. That's a big thing for us. The aluminium foil doesn't come at an insane cost. The carbon foil and carbon board is premium and will be around \$3,500 USD. There's a different focus on the free-ride market with the aluminium foil and Core board, which will sell for around \$2,000 USD.

CF: On pricing, particularly with kites, a big thing for us is the longevity. Three years ago we introduced the Load Frame. That pretty much changed everything. It's been our biggest single step as a company. It's not how good a kite flies for the first three months; it's about how good it is after two years. That's when you see the effect, in how well the kite still performs because we've fundamentally changed the way the kite functions.

"IT'S NOT HOW GOOD A KITE FLIES FOR THE FIRST THREE MONTHS; IT'S ABOUT HOW GOOD IT IS AFTER TWO YEARS."





You've stopped relying on the canopy. It's a huge challenge to stop it from stretching. If you crash a kite, the shock wave running through the kite will stretch the canopy. With the Load Frame, the canopy will give a little bit then go back to its original position. Without it, you lose the

kite's conic shape as it gets older and stretches. The shape keeps the kite stable, so you see stability, performance and steering issues. The Load Frame means you're not using the canopy to retain those performance shapes. We've pretty much doubled the kite's lifespan. Just like boards, they're lasting years. I think we're the only company to offer a two-year warranty on twin-tips.



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PASSION MK8

"EXCELLENCE THROUGH PASSION"



SPECIAL FEATURES:

- New 3-strut construction with additional reinforcements
- Leading edge seam protection
- Quick air flow valve with protection cap
- 45degrees Leading edge reinforcements panels
- Bridle anti-tangle device
- Radial reinforcements
- 3m version for schools

SIZES: 3 - 5 - 7 - 9 - 11 - 13 - 15 - 17



ORANGE-GRAY



CYAN-RED



PURPLE-PINK



3N-SCHOOL



“ YOU CAN'T GO OUT AND TEST IT YOURSELF. THAT'S THE REASON WE HAVE THE TEAM SERIES BECAUSE WE WANT TO OFFER A ZERO COMPROMISE BOARD. ”

You get your twin-tips made at Playmaker in Taiwan. How does that work?

CF: We've a press and CNC machine in Cape Town that we can make prototype boards on, or we can get prototypes made in Taiwan, depending on what we're trying to achieve. In board design, there's a certain level of fashion. We were just discussing channels versus no channels. Channelled boards do land more comfortably for freestyle, as much as we might argue channels create drag. But innovation goes in circles, and a change in kites might bring about a change in boards, or a change in disciplines, like "big air" or a rise in twin-tip racing.

Are your riders, such as Alex Pastor and Bruna Kajiya, heavily involved in development?

CF: Honestly, if you want to build the best freestyle board in the world, you can't go out and test it yourself. That's the reason we have the Team Series because we want to offer a zero compromise board. Even Alex Pastor's bindings are identical to those he wants to use.

MS: It's important to us people can walk into a shop and buy a board and kite, anything from our Team Series, and you're getting a premium product.

How does the current state of kiteboarding competition affect you as a brand and the products you offer?

CF: For us, the GKA is a really strong organisation.



“ THE CHALLENGE FOR US IS TRYING TO CONVINCING THE RIDERS THAT WE NEED A “BIG AIR” ELEMENT IN FREESTYLE. ”

The disruption in the kiteboard scene has unified the industry and the brands. As an industry, we want to continue running kiteboarding events, and we've put forward a strong concept of what we want to see; in terms of developing freestyle, seeing strapless wave riding and also strapless freestyle, plus watching the racing scene grow into something we can take to the Olympics. So we're looking at three key disciplines in where the sport's going to go. I work within the GKA to develop all the competition formats. I discuss it with the riders, our team and our competitors all the time. If you look at freestyle, the challenge for us is trying to convince the riders that we need a “big air” element

in freestyle. For the riders, freestyle is all about a low, technical style of riding. With the GKA Wave and Strapless Pro kicking off in Tarifa, and Mauritius and Brazil looking strong, we're also talking to Liquid Force who'd love to do an event in the Hood River in the US. There's so much energy around it.

Are you developing a board specifically for strapless freestyle?

CF: It's evolving as a discipline, so we will work on it, but it depends on the rider. For example, when the Slayer was brought to market, that was specifically for flat-water freestyle. We worked on that with Reider Decker with the aim of bringing strapless riding to a

broader range of people. We did that three years ago. Now it's interesting to see how many people have taken up strapless riding. Back then it was a bit niche. Everywhere you go, people are riding strapless these days.

Do you ever think about getting back into foil kites? You used to make foils for snow?

CF: We continue to look at it. However, the challenge is that commercially we want to sell products to everyday customers and for us, foil kites are very, very niche. We were first with the Zero, a strutless kite. But the commercial limitation, for everyday customers, was the relaunch.

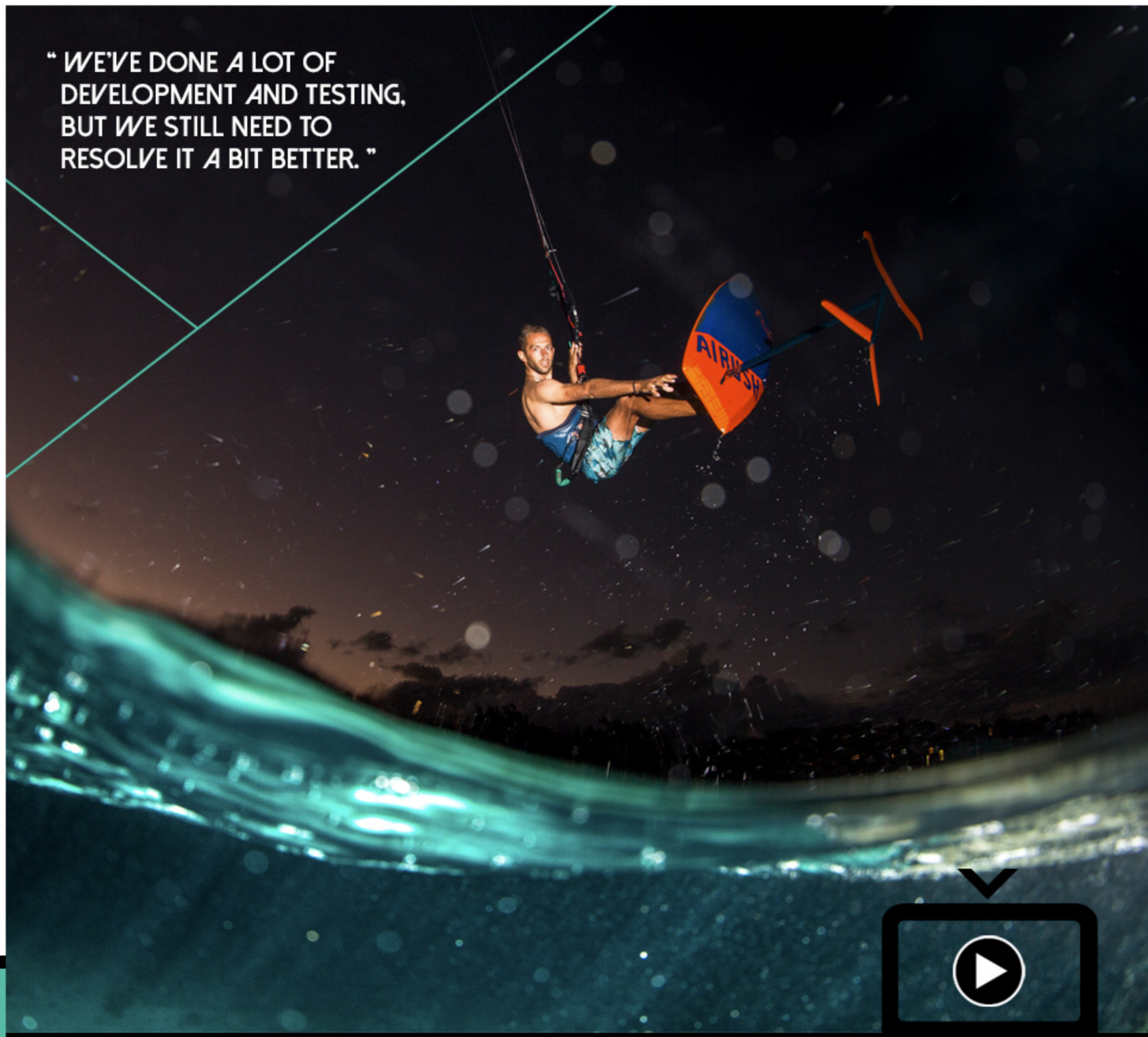
At the moment we're working on building the lightest inflatable kite on the market, one that can stay in the air in really light winds. That also has applications for wave riding, as well as foiling. If you're riding towards the kite and it's drifting, it has to be able to stay in the air in, essentially, eight knots. We've done a lot of development and testing, but we still need to resolve it a bit better.

Does all the innovation help grow the business for Airush?

CF: For us, it's good. We don't want to be the biggest company. It's not about size; it's about being able to influence the market. We'd like to be a top three brand, but I'd happily forsake size for making the right decisions. It's challenging growing when you make twin tips that last five to ten years and kites that last twice as long as before.

Over the previous five years, our average growth is 20 to 25 percent. The industry's growing at around 5 percent. Participation is still growing, and schools are growing, so that's good for us. Indeed, we find at a school level, the majority of students are female. So the thing is building a culture around the sport that becomes a way of life and a lifestyle. That's why we do female clinics with Bruna Kajiya, and why we have a female range, the Diamond. It's not going to make us millions, but if we can take that aspect of the market and grow it, overall it's good for the sport.

" WE'VE DONE A LOT OF DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING, BUT WE STILL NEED TO RESOLVE IT A BIT BETTER. "





“ WE’RE NOT OUT THERE TO BE THE BIGGEST. WE’RE OUT TO SEE WHAT REALLY CONTRIBUTES. ”

Does that sense of broader responsibility manifest itself in other ways?

CF: We’re trying to push the environmental side. We’re pushing to launch the first “eco” boards range, using an organic-based resin. It’s something we’d like to see the whole industry take up, so we’re sharing it with the industry. This year we’ll launch boards built from bio-resin, with a bamboo sandwich and EPS core. That’s positive for the environment. We’re looking at the whole carbon footprint. That’s why the durability of kites and boards is so important. We’re also trying to build service centres so that people can keep using their products for as long as possible. It seems counter-intuitive. We want to sell as much product as possible, but you see the way we work. We’re not out there to be the biggest. We’re out to see what really contributes.

Thanks, Marc and Clinton for taking the time to talk to us!

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WORDS & PHOTOS CHRISTIAN & KARINE

Hello sailors! We hope the winds have been huffing and puffing since the last issue, and that you've enjoyed the odd session, or perhaps even a kiting break somewhere???. It is our pleasure to give you three more potential tricks to work on and make your own. Number one this time round is the Double Grab Jump, but on this occasion, you'll be starting with a boned tail grab before moving swiftly on to a tweaked tickle of the nose. After that, we'll have you changing direction while riding blind, with the Blind Underturn Transition, a possibly low impact move, which always makes a change. And wrapping things up it's time to take to the skies for a stylish and satisfying transition, this time, the Front Loop Down Loop Transition with an Indy Grab. This should keep you busy for a few sessions, tootles! :-)

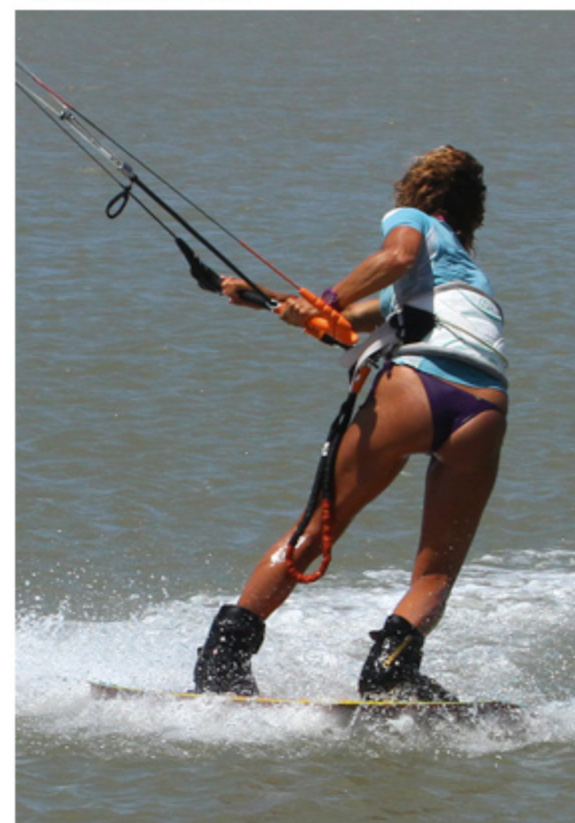

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DOUBLE GRAB – TAIL TO NOSE



CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE

BLIND UNDERTURN TRANSITION



CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE

INDY FRONT DOWN LOOP TRANSITION



CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE

DOUBLE GRAB – TAIL TO NOSE >

Kite: Chaos 7m Board: XO 133 with H3s

Forever on the search for that little bit extra, something to challenge yourself and add a touch more zest to your airtime? Then here's another stylish combo which should keep you busy for a while and looking good for even longer. Ten issues back we covered our first variant of the double grab, nose then tail, which one could argue is the simpler to squeeze in. This time, round we're reversing the order of the grabs, so it'll be a tail grabbed boner, hastily yet smoothly followed by a tweaked nose grab. Seems simple enough but there are a couple of hurdles to negotiate to nail this one:) Dare we recommend that you can tail and nose grab individually before moving on to this.

So let's look at what you should be doing, state a few not so obvious points and have a gentle walk through the tricky bits.

Pic A The Jump

If we only had a pound for each time we repeat this, your jump and more precisely your take off is everything. The more that you have to do in the air, the more time you'll need, so it needs to cut the mustard. You want height and float which equals time; you want the kite to be in the right place, and you want to feel in control. This all stems from the take off. To get both height and float, you'll need two things, a solid edge and a decent send.



Your kite doesn't want to be any higher than 1 or 11 o'clock; otherwise, you won't have a good edge. However, beware not to have it too low, as you need to be able to hold your edge while the kite moves, so the bigger the kite, the higher you'll start it. Give the kite a good send back past twelve using both hands, while edging hard, not carving up. You can see that Karine is edging like Franz Klammer traversing the Hahnenkamm, bum low, board pushed away from her, plenty of spray and she's given the kite a good send with her hands centred on the bar. This will give her float, height and control, a good mix of ingredients when you've got your plate full with what's to come.



Pic B Multitasking

You need to get a wiggle on as there's a deadline to meet. Normally after take off you'd be thinking about getting the kite set, making sure you're comfy and preventing any unwanted surprises. However, you've got two cheeky grabs to squeeze in, so it's time to connect with your feminine side (a tad easier for you ladies) and get on with a few things at once – this is your first potential hurdle. Looking at the pic, you can see that Karine has already released her back hand and is already lifting her back foot towards her, while her kite is still quite back post send. This means that you need both the confidence and ability to reposition



and fly your kite from behind you with your front hand, there's no time to get it into flight mode first. Karine keeps the bar in, and therefore keeps control of the kite, and gently steers it forward. There is no rush as; hopefully, she'll be up there for a while. And as mentioned her back hand is off the bar already reaching down for the board's tail, while she's lifting her knees up, particularly her back one, so that the board will be within reach for the tail grab.

Pic C Grab Numero Uno

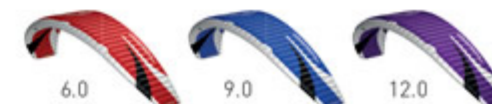
If you're already au fait with the tail grab, you should manage this without too much hassle, as long as it's quick enough. To make it look

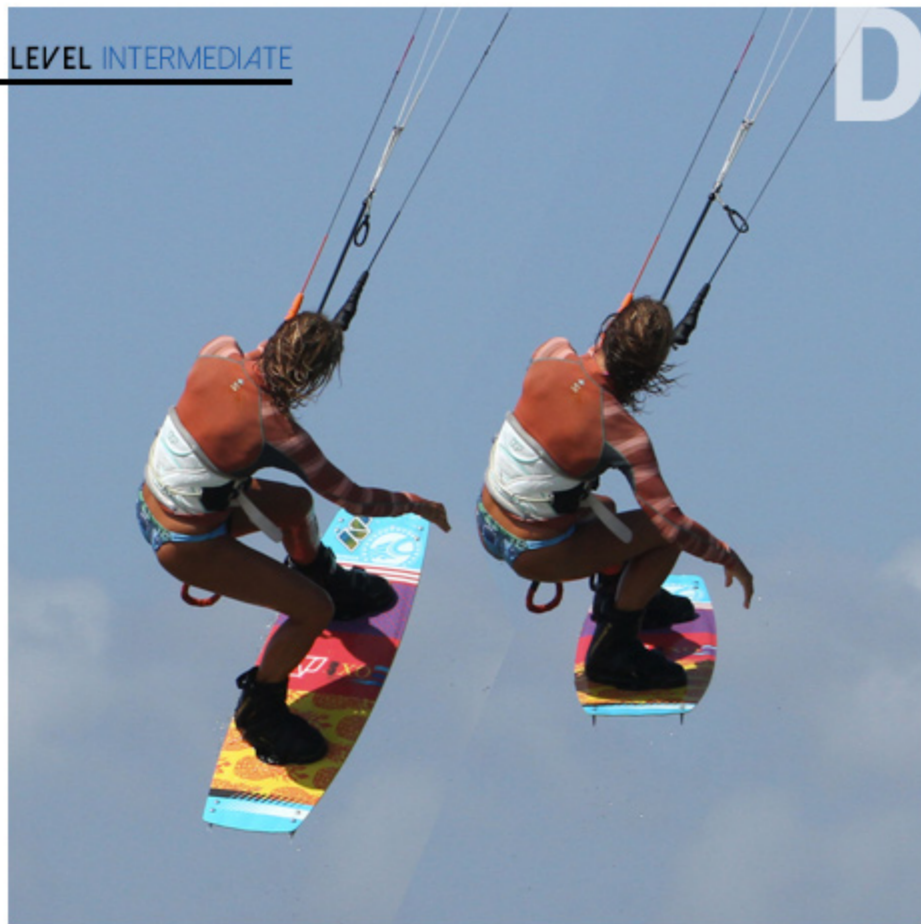
the bee's knees the boner is a welcome addition, so pull the tail up towards you and push your front leg away from you, boning the board out for that extra point from the judges as Karine is demonstrating here. However, it's crucial that you either bone the board up or horizontally. Some of you may be used to boning the board by dropping your front leg down, rather than stretching it forwards. There is nothing wrong with this, BUT if you intend to follow with a nose grab, it means you have a lot to do with the board before the nose is within reach. So remember to lift the front knee, keep the board up and push it out in front of you.



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Keeping the bar in on the sweet spot will help hold the board up.

Pic D And Here's Why...

Have a good gander at the two pics, from right to left and you can clearly see the importance of not letting your front leg dangle down during the tail grab. This is realistically the second hurdle in this move. You can see that because Karine keeps the front of the board up during the first grab, it makes it much easier to move towards the nose grab. As she releases the tail, she already has her front knee high and as she lets her back foot drop she can bring the already high nose across in front of her. It's also worth mentioning that although she has pressure on her front hand, her kite is still behind her, around 12:30. This not only keeps her balanced in the air but also if you cast your



mind back to the original nose grab, it's much easier to stretch and reach with the kite back. If it's forwards, you'll struggle to make the grab, as well as having the kite pull you off balance.

Pic E Grab Two

As a result of the previous step, Karine can quickly get her front knee high and across, so all that remained was to stretch her back leg down, et voila the nose grab is in the bag with time to spare. Once you've got the nose grab, you should start thinking about getting the kite above you so that it'll float you down and it's ready for landing. You can hold the nose grab until you're close to the deck.

Pic F Touch Down

Landing should be as per usual. Give the kite a hefty dive down, not a steer to the side. This way the kite



will pull you downwind which will keep you balanced and over the board. As the kite pulls aim your board downwind, drop your legs and get ready to take the landing. You can land this one or two handed, just be ready to steer the kite back up once you've carved back onto your edge.

Top Tips

Realistically you want to make sure that you've got enough power to jump well. You're not aiming to break any records, but you need the time, so start off with a few jumps, a few boners and a few nose grabs. Having the kite back during your flight will not only help your balance, but it will mean that when you drop down and dive the kite, you will get some late lift as the kite moves, which will give you more time to finish and land comfortably.



Have a good look at the sequence and the videos to take this double grab in as one flowing move.

Common Problems

We've really already covered them, your main reason for not reaching or making the nose grab (presuming that you can normally make one) will be the position of the board during the tail grab. Make sure you keep the nose level or higher, and then the transition from tail to the nose will be both quick and do-able... Other than that it's keeping the kite controlled with the back hand coming off early. If you're dropping like a stone you're letting the bar out and not redirecting the kite towards just behind 12. If you're pulled off balance towards your front foot you're giving it too much with your front hand, so ease off.

Keystones

1. Good edge with a hefty send
2. Early tail grab, so hand off and knees up immediately
3. Keep nose up during tail grab
4. Kite behind, front knee across and extended back leg for nose grab
5. Hefty dive to lift you over the board for a downwind landing



BLIND UNDERTURN TRANSITION >

Kite: Chaos 7m Board: XO 133 with H3s

Often it's welcome to have something (potentially) low impact, low altitude, but still high on satisfaction and fun, and in this case practicality as it's a transition. It's been a while since we covered anything hooked in blind, so now's the time to right the wrong. Ladies and gents the moment has come to reverse into the blind underturn (read non-aerial down loop) transition. Time and again we'll advise you on the base, so we will suggest that you can happily ride blind for a fair few metres, as it'll certainly make the learning curve steeper. So, what is involved and what do you need to concentrate on to make this a reality?

Pic A. Your Blind Approach & Set Up

This will be the long paragraph! We're assuming that you can already ride blind, but even so, there are a few things that you need to make sure of if you want to continue into an underturn transition. First off you need to be edging, so that you have tension in the lines and control of the kite. Make sure that you have both knees pointing back; your weight is on the balls of your feet, and your head is up – this way you'll be edging but with lots of the board in the water. Ideally, you'll park the kite about 11:30 or 12:30 so it's ready for both riding and the underturn. The next bit is very important, if you intend to steer your kite, let alone underturn it, you'll need both your hands on the bar, which in itself can be tricky if you've never tried it



before. To make this possible, you need to trim your sweet spot close to you, so that you can reach the bar! That said you will still pop to blind with your back hand off – just replace it once you've landed. Also if you're accustomed to popping with your front hand on the wrong side of the bar, it's time to iron that one out too, it needs to be where it belongs, left on left or right on right! Again with the bar trimmed in it will be easier. Finally assuming you've got the position and both hands on the bar, try not to pull on the bar. If you pull, the kite will stall and pull you up and over, off your edge. If you feel you don't have enough power, use your edge to put tension on the lines



rather than yanking on the bar. If you get this set up right, you'll find you can kite along further while maintaining an upright position, which will be good for numerous other tricks from blind.

Pic B. Mirroring what you would do heel side.....

Before pondering this blind, think what you did when learning this heel side with a slide turn. The first thing you do is slow down. How? By edging upwind a bit more, not by lifting the kite. Here it is exactly the same and to make things easier, you'll aim to keep the kite where it is. Once again make sure you don't pull on the bar, if anything you can let it out just a touch, as this will allow you to edge further upwind.

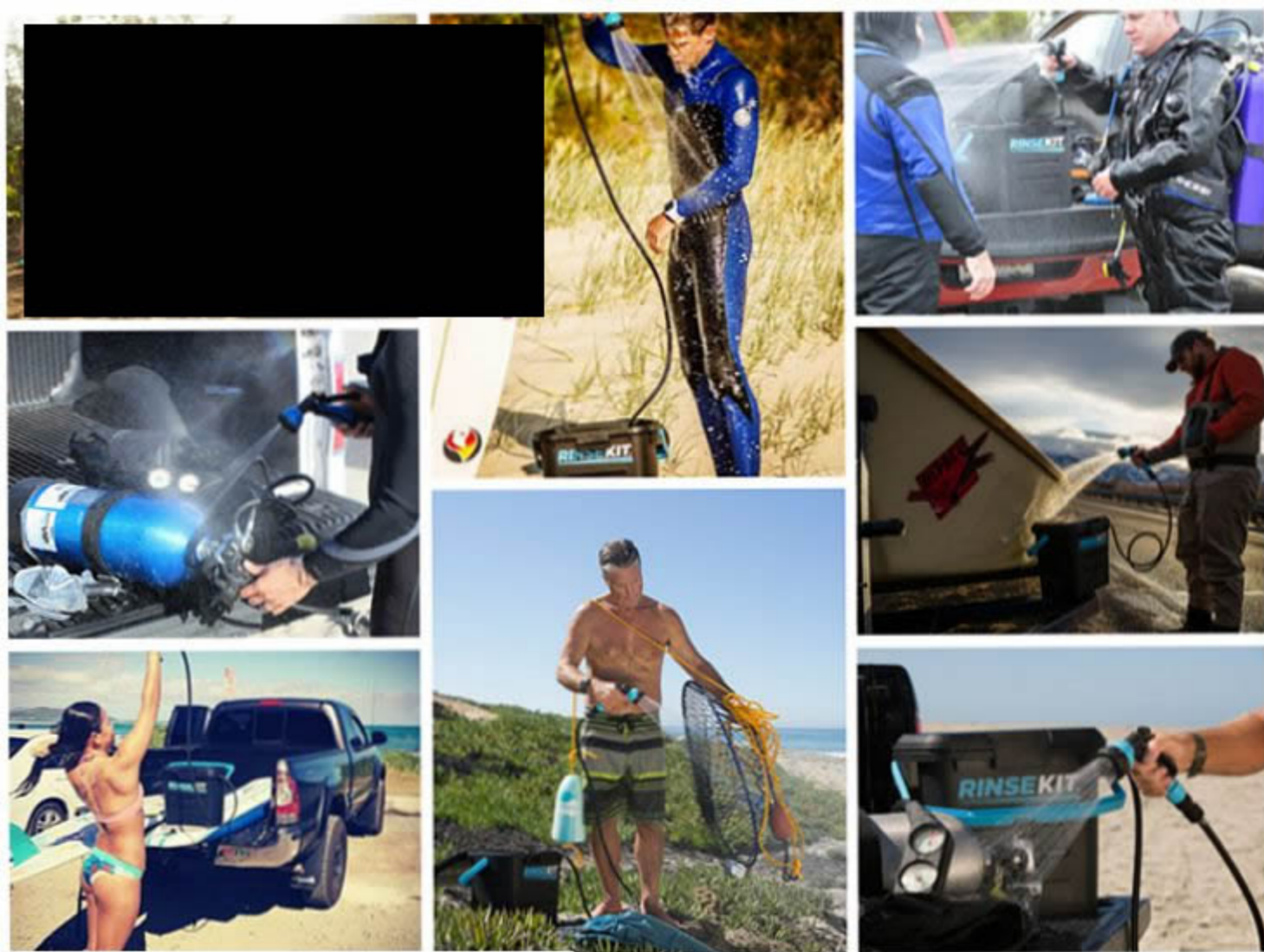


To get a bit more angle you can drop your weight further back and use the tail of the board to turn you up. If you've pulled the kite down during your blind, now would be a good time to give it a little yank on your back hand to get it up a tad in preparation for the underturn. You can see Karine is edging up, which both slows her down and puts the board in a better position for the next step.

Pic C Hammer Time

The two parts of this are yet again identical to what you will have done

for a heel side slide turn with underturn. First off you need to slide the board so that there is no edging resistance when you underturn the kite. To slide the board, you can see that Karine has moved her weight over her front blind foot, in this case, her right foot, by moving her hips over this foot. With her weight now on her front foot she can slide the board so that it points further downwind. This part is actually very easy when blind as the board always wants to slide out. However, you need to keep your weight on your toes so that you don't catch your heel edge!



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Once the board is sliding, it's time to drop the hammer and start the kite's movement around the underturn. You can see that Karine's hands are not centred on the bar, but slightly further apart. This will give her more leverage and allow her to turn the kite quicker. Her kite is relatively high, so she has room and if she turns it aggressively will get less power. She's using both hands to get a fast turn, pulling in on her front (left) hand while pushing away on her right hand. This is only possible because she has the bar trimmed in close to her.

Pic D. Commit to the Pull

The hang on moment! That said there is a bit more to it than just closing your eyes and praying. You have set the wheels in motion by sending the kite into an underturn, but you need to be both ready for and

anticipate the pull. To do this Karine drops her derriere even further back over her right foot, extending what will be her new front leg in the process. This way she's ready for the pull and can go with it, without being pulled over the front of the board when the power comes on. You can also see how Karine has continued to pull and push the bar with her hands, and as such has, even more, leverage on the bar. This really is the key to all under turns, down loops and kite loops, as when the kite starts to power it is too easy to let the bar out with the pull, which then stops the kite turning and actually increases the power. So commit fully to the underturn, and if/when you do, it will only be a relatively gentle pull. Finally note how Karine has her right knee dropped over on the toe side edge of her board, ready to go with the power back the other way as the kite comes under and through the window.



Pic E. Carve Out

If you've done all the aforementioned, this will be your reward. Your body will be ready to carve, with your hips back and your knees driving to the inside of the turn. The kite has come under low and is pulling Karine nicely back from whence she came and as such, she'll motor off on her toes. Note though how she still has the bar in on the sweet spot and she's still pulling pushing the bar. Don't be tempted to finish the underturn too early. Rather let the kite rise and dive it back down, than have it skimming the water and crashing. Now all that is left is to get comfortable on your toe side and then untwist the bar, but yet again there is no rush.

Top Tips

Controlling the kite while riding blind with two hands will take some practice. Most of us are used to keeping it still with one hand somewhere on the bar,



but not really proficient at moving the kite deliberately. Therefore, before diving headlong into this try riding blind with your two hands on the bar, with a more upright stance and your shoulders twisted so that you can reach it.

Once you're happy with this, try changing direction a tad more upwind to slow down. This will give you an idea of the timing – when to slide and pull.

Have a scan of the sequence and watch the videos to see the move in all its glory.

Common Problems

If you're struggling to ride upwind or at least on an edge blind with your two hands on the bar, the chances are that your bar is too far away from you. Trim the bar in closer and use your momentum to carry you blind while you acclimatise

to this new position.

If you get pulled backwards as you start the under turn, it's a sure sign that you didn't turn upwind and slide the board before pulling the trigger. Turn your head to look at the kite; this will help you slide, and as long as you have slowed down, it will enable you to commit fully to the bar and get the kite turning. As a side note make sure you drop your weight onto your blind front foot!

If the kite's crashing or you find there is too much power. Firstly make sure the kite is high enough before starting the underturn, 11:30 or 12:30 is perfect, higher is OK, but lower makes it trickier. Secondly keep the kite turning with your hands and keep the bar on the sweet spot. If you let off either, the kite will take a longer path round, with more power and less room.

Keystones

1. Trim your bar in
2. Two hands on the bar once you landed blind
3. Edge up, then move weight forward to slide back of board
4. Underturn with full commitment, lean weight away from kite
5. Keep the kite turning and follow it out carving onto your toes



INDY FRONT DOWN LOOP TRANSITION >**Kite:** FX 7m **Board:** XO 133 with H3s

We've always been massive fans of transitions. There's something hugely rewarding in making the simple act of changing direction into something more personal, different, showy, challenging and downright groovy. Who didn't want to BLT as soon as a back loop was possible and who doesn't love that moment of hang and weightlessness of an air gybe. So to continue the flow of all things that take us back the other way, here's the scrummy front loop down loop with Indy grab transition.

As is our fashion, let us start with a brief (or not so) look at the key moments that'll make this both more achievable and potentially less painful.

Pic A Approach and Take Off

First things first, as this is a transition you do need to knock some speed off so that you can land going back the other way, regardless of the down loop, so edge hard upwind as Karine is here, to slow down a touch. Along the same lines, you want a fairly up and down jump so that you feel controlled and confident, an elevator jump as it were, so you'll still want to start with the kite around either 1 or 11 o'clock and give it a proper send to give you that lift. As you will be down looping, you can send the kite further back than you would for a normal transition. Hands want to be centred on the bar so that you'll be happy with your back hand off and of course you'll



need a tad more space than usual, as the down loop will pull you downwind. That's the pre-flight check list sorted then!

Pic B Your Front Rotation

This part should be fairly straight forward as you'll be kicking off your back foot, turning your head and lifting your front knee – just like a front loop, or roll. However it's not uncommon to throw oneself across the board into a front rotation, which will still work, but it will also mean that you'll travel downwind and under the kite more, which could lead to an unresponsive kite come the down loop. Make sure



you kick yourself away from the board's edge, don't flatten it and throw yourself over. You can see that Karine is going up, sounds obvious but it's because she kicked herself upwind and away from the board. Her front knee is lifting, which is her axis of rotation, and she's already redirecting the kite towards 12 o'clock with the bar in on the sweet spot. Firstly because she gave it a good send and secondly because she needs the kite moving forward in preparation for the down loop. If she leaves the kite behind her, she'll have no pull when she down loops and thus will drop and stop, and if she lets the bar out the result will be much the same!



Pic C Preparation Time

Due to what's coming, you'd prefer to get your grab in early. The timing of your down loop means that you can't get too far around the rotation, and you can't be grabbing late. So as soon as you're up and off, you need to get things moving towards the grab. For the Indy, you'll be grabbing the toe side edge between your feet, so you need to bring both knees up together to get that part of the board near enough to grab. It's very tempting to pull the back leg up, but then you'll be more likely to grab by your back foot which in fact be a tindy, no problem,

but purists won't be happy. In the pic, you can see that Karine is still steering the kite forward with the bar in, as she actually wants the kite to fly just past 12 o'clock before she down loops it, and she's looking at where she wants to grab the board as she reaches down for it.

Pic D The Indy

With her knees right up Karine has plenty of room to reach between them down to the middle of the board. The wonderful thing about adding this grab to a front rotation is that due to the way you rotate,

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slightly off axis, the board comes up and round, which makes it look all the better. Karine is also looking at her grab, and not over her shoulder, which helps control the speed of her rotation, as it almost stalls her. This way she and you can hold the grab, feel where the kite is, hopefully just past 12, and move forward with it. At this point, you should be about half way round, and you should feel the kite pulling you slightly forwards. In a normal front, this would mean that you've redirected the kite too much and will struggle to land without letting the bar out and coming down heavy on the front foot. Here, however, it's perfect as you're now ready for the exciting bit!

Pic E The Down Loop

Timing is everything, but the preparation is even more important. Thinking back, we've been progressively

steering the kite forward, so to finally get the kite down looping you just need to give it that bit extra. The aim was not to park the kite and then pull the trigger, as this is a flowing move. As Karine rotates to almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way round, so that her (original) back foot, the right one, is nearly pointing downwind, she gives the bar that bit more and releases the grab. Her kite will hopefully start its new journey from 11:30 or even 11 as she is jumping to the left. As the kite is down looping and you're moving forwards with it, the pull will not be as violent as a kite loop. Hopefully, it'll be no more than an aggressive dive to land, but just taking you back the other way. As with all things loop, though, make sure you don't allow the bar to pull out as the power comes on as this will slow the kite down and increase it's turning circle, all of which equals more power and more potential to get it wrong.

Pic F Coming Down

This is the reason you want the kite movement to be progressive. Karine has got a lovely pull from the kite; it pulls her downwind and ever so slightly back in the other direction. It's actually turned down in the left side of the window and then goes through and back up on the right side. If the kite is too far back, it'll all happen on the right side, and there'll be no pull. The same applies if you just yank it like an emergency brake, the kite will whip round and won't pull you or set you down gently. As the kite pulls, Karine turns to look downwind, but back the other way; she'll land tail first and then carve up onto her heel side edge. You can see that although she is still committed to the down loop with her bar, it's nowhere near as extreme as the movement required for a kite loop. The final beauty is that not only did you just complete a front down loop transition with an Indy grab, but you won't have to unspin your bar either:)



Top Tips

Assuming that you're already front looping and down looping, adding the Indy shouldn't pose too many problems, however by going for the grab you're adding another ingredient to the mix so you may well forget something, which is usually the kite. However, by taking one hand off the bar, as long as you keep the bar in, you're more likely to drift the kite forward and as a result will be rewarded with a stunningly smooth down loop transition.

Now mosey on through the sequence and the videos to get a taste for the action in real world time.

Common Problems

Not reaching the grab. Generally, it's nothing to do

with flexibility, but you need to help yourself by bringing both knees up simultaneously. The most common reason for missing the grab is not looking where you'll grab it; it's pretty difficult to do it blind. Landing with no power. As lauded to earlier this is the most common problem with any down loop transition and will be more noticeable the smaller the kite that you're using. If you down loop the kite from behind 12 o'clock, the kite will just whip around behind you, and therefore it won't physically pull you out of the move. Before cranking the kite around you have to get it across the window to either 1 or 11 depending on your direction of travel. Do this and then you can down loop the kite through the window, generating power and pulling you out downwind.

Keystones

1. Good send for height
2. Kick yourself upwind
3. Both knees up
4. Steer kite forward over your head
5. Progressive down-loop to pull you downwind for landing



WORDS HELENA BROCHOCKA
PHOTOS JASON BROOK

DESTINATION: ISLA BLANCA

You will find Isla Blanca located on the northeast coast of the Yucatán Peninsula in the Mexican state of Quintana Roo. The tourist destination of Cancún is nearby, and you can get regular flights from most major airports here. After recovering from a knee injury Liquid Force rider, Helena Brochocka decided to visit and make the most of the summer breezes and flat water the spot has to offer.

“ IT IS A PLACE TO REST YOUR HEAD, MEET GREAT NEW PEOPLE, AND ENJOY LONG KITEBOARDING SESSIONS ACROSS WARM FLAT-WATER LAGOONS.”

Coming back from my ACL injury, I knew I needed to travel to a place that would provide me with the perfect conditions to ease back into freestyle. Comfortable conditions with flat water, light, steady wind, and warm weather were some of the criteria I had in mind; Isla Blanca seemed to tick all the right boxes, so I booked a flight and went to check it out.

Located just over an hour from Cancun Airport, Isla Blanca is a real kiteboarding paradise, a quiet soul asylum away from the busy touristic resorts, and noisy city life of Cancun. It is a place to rest your head, meet great new people, and enjoy long kiteboarding sessions across warm flat-water lagoons. This was my second time in Isla Blanca, and for the second time, I had a fantastic time riding almost every day, and getting my tricks back one by one. During the two trips I've had there, Mexico has become one of my favourite freestyle destinations in the world, and my new training ground. I am sure this is a place I will be visiting many more times, and I can't recommend it to you enough!

Getting There

While finding a good connection from the US is quite easy, Getting to Mexico from Europe can be both tricky and pricey. The best way to get to Isla Blanca is to find a direct charter flight to Cancun International. TUI and Jet Air offer them at decent prices, with connections from most major European cities such as Brussels or Warsaw.



From there it's about two hours drive to get you to the spot. Having a rental car is highly recommended, not only for the commute to and from the beach but also for exploring the area and many attractions it has to offer.

Where to Stay

Ikarus Kiteboarding is one of the very few estates along the peninsula and the only kite school offering accommodation directly at the spot. It is also home for two-times Junior World Champion Anthar Racca, for whom the place serves as a day-to-day training ground, and who's family runs the school.

"THE PLACE SERVES AS A DAY-TO-DAY TRAINING GROUND"

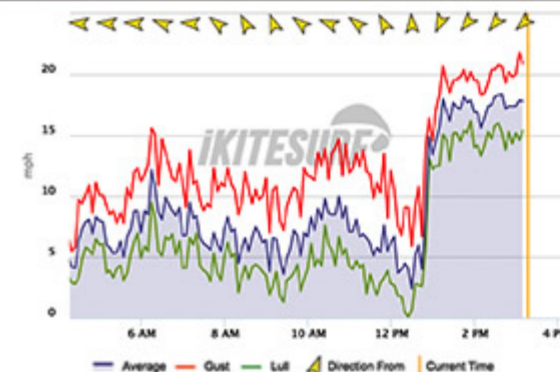


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Gust	27	28	29	29	30	31	32	33	35	37
Sky										
*F	56	56	56	56	56	56	56	56	56	55
Wave Ht(ft)	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	9
Per(s)	9	12	15	18	14	11	7	7	7	7

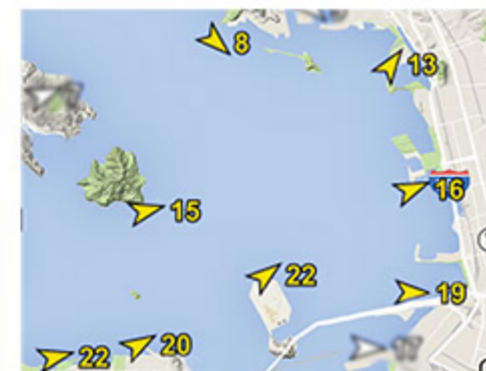
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“ THE BEAUTIFUL SETTING OF LA PUNTA GUARANTEES THAT EVERY SESSION WILL BE A GOOD ONE, THE SCENERY IS JUST OUT OF THIS WORLD! ”

With only four rooms, Ikarus offers super chilled out, friendly atmosphere, and perfect conditions to practice one’s kiteboarding skills nearly every day of the week.

The Spot

No matter the wind direction, you can always find a place to ride in Cancun area.

On a Northern wind, a little beach directly in front of Ikarus is the place to be. On the majority of other days, a three-minute ride upwind will bring you to the breathtaking La Punta, a spot that looks just like a page from a travel catalogue. The conditions are perfect for everyone; beginners will enjoy the steady wind and shallow water which saves a lot of swimming and body dragging, while advanced riders can learn new tricks and keep on crashing without worrying about rocks, trees, or waves. However, most

importantly the beautiful setting of La Punta guarantees that every session will be a good one, the scenery is just out of this world!

“Isla Blanca, it is pretty much a perfect spot with flat water and sunshine all year round, I am happy to call it my home spot! The good thing about it is that I have a lot of space to practice my tricks over and over again, without looking for space or waiting for people to pass, which is a good preparation for competitions. My ideal conditions to ride La Punta is on the southeastern wind, which is offshore. The water is flatter and a bit warmer than on the days with northern wind.” - *Anthar Racca*



“ I HAVE A LOT OF SPACE TO PRACTICE MY TRICKS OVER AND OVER AGAIN, WITHOUT LOOKING FOR SPACE OR WAITING FOR PEOPLE TO PASS, WHICH IS A GOOD PREPARATION FOR COMPETITIONS. ”



Where to Eat

Taco trucks are a permanent element of the Mexican landscape. They offer some of the best street food I have ever had - real tacos, nothing like the ones in Europe or Taco Bell. Not only it is delicious, but they're also cheap, which is ideal for travellers on a budget. There are several small places to eat on the peninsula, with a bar at Ikarus being one of my favourites. The restaurant offers a selection of traditional Mexican food, from tacos, through quesadillas, or enfrijoladas.

“ THEY OFFER SOME OF THE BEST STREET FOOD I HAVE EVER HAD ”

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“ THESE SPECTACULAR CONSTRUCTIONS ARE WORTH VISITING AND ARE A PERFECT DAY TRIP DESTINATION. ”

You can also choose to have a fresh fish from local fishermen in the huts just a few minutes away.

No Wind Activities

What differentiates Isla Blanca from many other tropical spots, is that even though

located in a wild, isolated setting, it still offers the proximity of a big city, with everything that comes with it; restaurants, shops, clubs and many beautiful beaches to discover. Moreover, the area is filled with ancient Mayan ruins, which are open to visitors, with Chichen Itza being the most famous one. These spectacular constructions are worth visiting and are a perfect day trip destination.

On a hot day, Cenotes, freshwater lakes and caves within the jungle, are the place to be. These incredible natural pools look almost like fancy tropical aquariums for humans. Some of them offer cliff jumping, cave diving, snorkelling, or zip lining, and there is so many of them it is hard to choose! Nearby Playa del Carmen is known for a great variety of bars and restaurants, and crazy parties until the sunrise.



**“ WIND OR NO WIND, A TRIP TO CANCUN IS
AN UNFORGETTABLE ONE. ”**



On a hot day, Cenotes, freshwater lakes and caves within the jungle, are the place to be. These incredible natural pools look almost like fancy tropical aquariums for humans. Some of them offer cliff jumping, cave diving, snorkelling, or zip lining, and there is so many of them it is hard to choose! Nearby Playa del Carmen is known for a great variety of bars and restaurants, and crazy parties until the sunrise.

Tulum or Holbox are charming small fishing towns, where time seems to have stood still, and are popular weekend destinations for Cancun locals, as well as foreign travellers.

**“ THERE IS SO
MANY OF THEM
IT IS HARD TO
CHOOSE! ”**



PHOTO COURTESY OF FLYSURFER

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“ THE WARM WATERS, CONSISTENT WINDS AND FLAT WATER THEN COMBINE WITH THE OPEN SPACES AND STUNNING BACKDROPS ”

Isla Mujeres is famous for Whale Sharks that have made the crystal blue waters around its coast home; they don't seem to mind sharing their home with scuba divers either! These are only some of the things to do besides great kiting. Wind or no wind, a trip to Cancun is an unforgettable one.

Arguably it's the lack of the madding crowd that makes Isla Blanca such a fantastic destination. So many of the popular spots these days are filled with kites, making it difficult to learn new tricks and not just spend the whole time watching out for other riders. The warm waters, consistent winds and flat water then combine with the open spaces and stunning backdrops to create my perfect kitesurfing haven! Hopefully, I'll see you on the water there sometime soon!

FACT BOX

Nearest Airport: Cancun International

Best Season: November - May

Conditions: Flat water, Light to Moderate wind

Spot Hazards: Shallow bits

www.kiteboardmexico.com

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Loads of kites on test this issue as we work our way through the remainder of the 2016 gear, plus a couple of 2017 offerings, crikey is it that time of year already?

WORDS AND PHOTOS THE IKSURFMAG TEST TEAM
PHOTO THIS PAGE FLYSURFER

TRIED & TESTED

KITES:

Cabrinha FX - 2017
Core Free
Flysurfer Boost 2 – 2017
North Evo
North Vegas
Ocean Rodeo Prodigy
Ozone C4 V6
Ozone Enduro V1
Peter Lynn Swell V2
RRD Passion MK8

BOARDS

Liquid Force Focus
ACCESSORIES
Cabrinha Fireball



BRAND CABRINHA

MODEL FX

SIZE 12M

YEAR 2017



" AN ABSOLUTE WEAPON! "



AT A GLANCE

Featuring again in the 2017 Cabrinha lineup is the popular FX, the big air/freestyle kite that leaves you wanting more time on the water. The modified c shape arc, 3-strut design along with its boxier tips and new leading edge profile give the FX the ability to boost high and loop fast while remaining stable. The FX also comes with some great unhooked characteristics plus it is responsive and fast turning with precise user feedback on the bar.

One significant change for the FX as well as other kites within the Cabrinha range is the introduction of Pure Profile Panels, here extra panels have been added to the canopy to refine the aerodynamic flow across the kite. A refined aerodynamic flow will increase performance thus making the kite faster through the sky. We also see an increase in stability. Other design features for 2017's FX include Cabrinha's Skeletal frame, 2DR double rip stop and the Sprint Airlock inflation system. Not to forget the usual wingtip and rear line adjustments for those who like to customise their ride!

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BRAND CORE

MODEL FREE

SIZE 9M

YEAR 2016



" PERFECTLY SUITED FOR FREERIDE, CARVING THROUGH THE WAVES AND DABBLING WITH FREESTYLE! "



AT A GLANCE

Founded in 2007 Core Kiteboarding have been advancing through the ranks at a rapid rate. Based in Germany, Core are highly reputed for their cutting edge technology and quality. With a growing kite range, Core brings the new Free to the table.

The Free is a 4-line, 3-strut, light framed, delta bow shape kite with an intelligent arc. Giving the Free solid upwind ability, insane boost, rapid turning as well as precision when powering and depowering at the bar. Perfectly suited for freeride, carving through the waves and dabbling at freestyle.

Tech and quality are something you won't be without when riding a Core Free. The 2016 Free features shorter bridles, giving you less potential for wingtip catches and more speed in the turns. Materials used across other kites in the Core range can be found on the Free, we see Exotex Dacron, Coretex triple ripstop, Grintex patches, speed pump system and the speed valve 2. These high-end materials make the Free feel incredibly robust and dependable while the speed pump and valve ensure you spend less time pumping, more time riding!

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BRAND FLYSURFER

MODEL BOOST2

SIZE 9M

YEAR 2017



“INSANE JUMPING POTENTIAL WITH A MASSIVE WIND RANGE.”



AT A GLANCE

The second incarnation of Flysurfers popular Boost kite, the Boost2 has had some excellent upgrades and is a welcome addition to their range. A high aspect 5-strut design, the Boost2 is a freeride and big air machine. Featuring a new inflation design which is very efficient, just make sure it is correctly inserted to avoid the rather embarrassing premature deflation after pumping!

The kite now uses the DT TechnoForce Double Ripstop by Teijin, which is a proven high-performance material aiding canopy stability and airflow. The larger sizes of the Boost2 come with a Trailing Edge Bridle, which adjusts the profile of the kite during flight, and also aid with light wind relaunch.

The bridle connecting the front lines is clean and straightforward with some interesting metal rings used to connect lines; something which would be very handy in the snow perhaps when using gloves to tie/untie knots.

Sizes: 5,7,9,11,13,15LW,18LW meters

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BRAND NORTH MODEL EVO SIZE 9M YEAR 2016



" EASY AND INTUITIVE TO FLY WITH PLENTY OF HANGTIME "



AT A GLANCE

The Evo from North has been around for a long time now, originally a delta design the kite retains its delta characteristics, but it has changed dramatically over the years. Sporting five struts the kite shuns the growing trend of fewer struts in the industry and offers instead a very stable platform from which to launch your moves from.

For 2016 the kite has had a lot more performance packed into it with a profile and plan shape tweak to make it faster and more aerodynamic. Billed as a freeride/freestyle machine by North the Evo has proved in the past to be so much more than that. As usual, it features the incredible build quality that North seem to be ahead of the game with for 2016. Reinforcements in all the right places, the best materials used in unison with incredibly stitching and workmanship that keeps coming out of their Sri Lankan factory.

There is a short bridle on the kite, and the adaptive tips don't feature on this model. Instead, there are three direct connection options, allowing you to tune the handling to your style and preference.

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BRAND NORTH MODEL VEGAS SIZE 9M YEAR 2016



“ AN
EXCEPTIONAL
BUILD QUALITY
THAT IS
DESIGNED TO
LAST ”



AT A GLANCE

The legendary Vegas has returned for its 12th year, yes you heard that right, 12th year! Now, with the likes of Aaron Hadlow influencing its design we're sure that the kite is only going to improve. For 2016, the profiles have been optimised to offer a more consistent pop; also the tension in the canopy of the kite has been increased, which leads to a higher structural stiffness and smoother ride. The new 3D-shaped canopy panels offer a cleaner airflow, while the new strut reinforcements enhance the durability of the kite so it can handle the beatings dished out by North's Pro Team! Anti-Snag is a new design for the leading edge tips, reducing the risk of lines tangling and the 2016 Vegas also benefits from North's improved Lazy Pump inflation system for better airflow.

Something quite different for the 2016 model is the graphics on the kite, they've gone for a simple yet bold design. Very different to gangster models of the past but we like it!

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WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



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BRAND OCEAN RODEO MODEL PRODIGY SIZE 9.5M YEAR 2016



“SMOOTH,
GRUNTY WITH
POWERFUL
PIVOTAL TURNS.”



AT A GLANCE

Based in Vancouver Island, Canada, Ocean Rodeo started off making drysuits before moving onto kites and now have a vast range of equipment. Considering that the conditions they ride in are so cold, rugged and often hit by North Pacific storms, getting the design and, most importantly, the build quality of their products right is imperative.

One key kite within the Ocean Rodeo range is the Prodigy. Revamped for 2016 the new Prodigy is the lightest model yet. The 3-strut design makes the Prodigy lighter and faster through the sky, setting the Prodigy up for being a fantastic freeride, wave kite.

The 2016 Prodigy comes with design features such as Speed Inflate, Direct Depower and Variable line lengths. The new high flow valves ensure you can get pumped and on the water a lot quicker and pack away quicker when those winter storms roll in! The Direct Depower enables the rider to release from the kite, with near total power loss, to then be able to quickly relaunch and continue riding.

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BRAND OZONE MODEL C4 V6 SIZE 10M YEAR 2016



"THE ULTIMATE BOOSTING, LOOPING, SLACK CREATING KITE THE C4 V6."

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AT A GLANCE

Ozone have been around since the beginning of time. Initially a paragliding company they have been designing high-end aerofoils for years, this has most definitely transferred to their kite designs. This issue we will be taking a look at the all new Ozone C4 V6.

The C4 V6 has been completely redesigned this year to boast the ability to fly either in 4-line mode or 5-line mode. The C4 V6 ships with the 4-line option as standard but can easily be converted to 5-lines in a matter of minutes down the beach. The 4-line mode can be adjusted to suit either wakestyle/freestyle riding with medium pressures and turning, the freeride setting in 4-line mode allows the rider to lighten the bar pressure and turning as well as gaining increased depower. As many high-end freestylers out there will know, the 5-line setting will increase the power obtained while popping. Maximising slack for those latest passes, while maintaining a direct feel from the kite on the bar.

Featuring Teijin Technoforce D2 ripstop and Teijin Dacron the kite is sure to be a well built and robust addition to anyone's quiver.

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BRAND OZONE MODEL ENDURO V1 SIZE 13M YEAR 2016



“ WELL BUILT,
PACKED WITH
PERFORMANCE
AND EASY
RELAUNCH! ”



AT A GLANCE

The Enduro V1 is a new model from Ozone for 2016, replacing the Catalyst of previous years, which has now gone back to its roots as a beginner/intermediate kite. As such, the designers have had free reign on this years kite to make it into the insanely versatile kite it is. Featuring 3-struts and an Open C design, it also has quite sharp tips making for increased power through the turn. A pulley-less bridle connects the lines to the kite, with minimal fuss and resistance.

Three very simple changes can be done to the bridle to alter the kite between freestyle, wave and freeride settings.

Sizes: 4,6,7,8,9,10,12,14 meters

The Bar

The Contact Bar has stayed the same for 2016, which is certainly no bad thing. Featuring the excellent push away 'Megatron' chicken loop, and an incredibly comfy ergonomic grip, it looks the bees knees. All Ozone kites are four lines, and all can be used on the same bar making things that little bit cheaper if you were to get a few different style kites from the brand.

TO VISIT THEIR
WEBSITE, CLCK HERE



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BRAND PETER LYNN MODEL SWELL V2 SIZE 7M YEAR 2016



"I WAS ACTUALLY A BIT BLOWN AWAY BY HOW BLOODY GOOD IT WAS."



AT A GLANCE

Peter Lynn were famous for their twin skin designs back in the early days of kiteboarding. Models such as the Gorilla had a huge following, but in more recent years, while they retain a twin skin model with the Charger, they have been pushing the LEI side of their range in a big way.

The Swell is a wave kite at heart that also lends itself to the free ride category too. It's a three strut design with a fairly open arc and swept back tips; the Swell V2 is the latest incarnation of the model, and they've tweaked it to increase the turning speed, drift capabilities and tighten up the handling.

It's a hybrid SLE design; with a very short compact bridle that uses two Ronstan low friction rings to help the kite trim it's angle of attack as you sheet in and out. There is a large inflation valve to make getting on the water faster, and there are also multiple trim options on the kite. It is well built with reinforcements on the leading edge and also the trailing edge too.

Sizes: 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12m

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BRAND RRD MODEL PASSION MK8 SIZE 9M YEAR 2016



" STABLE POWER
IN ALL WINDS,
AND FANTASTIC
JUMPING AND
UNHOOKING
CAPABILITIES. "



AT A GLANCE

The RRD Passion has been in the lineup for years now, and there are many fans of this great kite around the world. The Passion is RRD's big air and freerides kite, offering stability and boost in plentiful amounts. The Passion MK8 has had a huge overhaul for this year, with lots of changes to improve the performance. Stripping two of the struts away has resulted in a kite, which is lighter, faster and more powerful. RRD have also tweaked the profile shape and the aspect ratio to get even more power and boost from the kite. The diameter of the bridle has been increased by 1mm and the bridle now features a double pulley system too. Not only this, the trailing edge shape has been improved upon as well, all in all, a host of updates for what has been a hugely popular kite for the brand!

A 3m version has also been added to the lineup delivery schools and kids in mind as customers, which is great to see!

Sizes: 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17 Metre

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WEBSITE, CLCK HERE



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" FAST, SMOOTH RIDE... GRIPPY YET SNAPPY. "



BRAND LIQUID FORCE **MODEL** FOCUS
SIZE 138 X 42CM **YEAR** 2016

AT A GLANCE

Liquid Force made its way from wakeboarding into the kite industry back in 1999. Since then they have been developing an ever-growing range of equipment. Dedicating themselves to innovation, continued progression in design and robust build quality.

Boards are one of Liquid Force's many high points, and they have an extensive range. One key player in the 2016 board range is the Focus. This low-rocker,

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Competition

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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Issue #53

INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE **KSURF** 053 // OCT/NOV

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F-ONE: BEHIND THE BRAND
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NORTH KITEBOARDING

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pushing the boundaries

These boys really are pushing the limits of what's possible when snowkiting! Riding to the top of big glacier filled mountains and then shredding

2 hours ago | 11:35

Ireland's Off Shore Winds

Join Alan Kavanagh as he kite big waves in off shore winds in Ireland. Conditions like these are a rare find and Alan was lucky enough to have the

2 days ago | 12:23

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BRAND CABRINHA

MODEL FIREBALL YEAR 2017



"BLIND MOVES AND RIDING TOESIDE HAVE NEVER BEEN EASIER!"



AT A GLANCE

Change is on its way, and Cabrinha are making their mark once again on the face of kitesurfing! Across the globe, kite manufacturers have been piling tons of research and effort into designing their new 2017 equipment. With some brands launching incredibly exciting new products in August.

IKSURFMAG team members Mary and Robin headed over to the Cabrinha meeting at Alby Rondina's ProKite Centre in Sicily to check out the new gear. A combination of wind, sun and the 2017 Cabrinha range ensured a truly epic week.

Since 2000, Cabrinha have consistently delivered cutting edge products to the kite community, innovations such as the Recon relaunch system, the Bow Kite and many others been developed by the brand over the years. For 2017 they have developed what they are claiming is a complete game changer for us all. Kitesurfing incorporates various disciplines from other sports such as wakeboarding, surfing and windsurfing and in the past has taken various elements of equipment from those sports and applied them to kitesurfing.

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TO VISIT THEIR WEBSITE, CLCK HERE



WORDS ROU CHATER

DON'T FEAR THE FOIL KITE

Rou Chater takes a look at the rise of the foil kite in kitesurfing, and why they should be on your radar, even if you aren't into racing. Foil kites have enjoyed a huge resurgence within our sport recently and with good reason. A few of the leading brands have got on board and started offering options, but are they right for you and should you be considering trying one?

MATT TAGGART CRUISING ON THE OZONE R1
PHOTO PAUL HALIFORD



IKSURFING.COM

FOILS LIKE THE FLYSURFER SPEED 5 HAVE COME A LONG WAY IN RECENT YEARS. LOADS OF LOW END POWER AND EASY TO USE TOO!
PHOTO FLYSURFER

“THERE WERE SOME EARLY “WATER RELAUNCHABLE” FOIL ATTEMPTS, BUT INVARIABLY THEY WERE DEATH MACHINES.”

Foil kites have been around for longer than most of us, at the very birth of our sport there was a choice between foil kites and single skin kites with battens, yep think of stunt kites, and you are pretty much on point. Leading Edge Inflatables in those very early days still hadn't taken hold and certainly weren't readily available.

When Bruno Legainoux and the Wipika brand brought the first Leading Edge Inflatable kite to market in the late 90's it had one distinct advantage over the foils. It could be relaunched off the water. That was arguably its only distinguishing feature when held up against it's more advanced foil siblings.

Kites like the Flexifoil Blade had enjoyed years of development and tweaking; foil kites first became popular in the 1970's after all. By the time kitesurfing arrived the foil kites of the time were fast and boosted huge floaty airs. It didn't take a rocket scientist to point out which one was more aerodynamic compared to a LEI; that was plainly apparent. However, there was no relaunching for foil kites in those days. There were some early “water relaunchable” foil attempts, but invariably they were death machines.

The choice then was simple, have a kite that performed and boosted and went upwind, or have a kite that relaunched. Fortunately, the whole relaunching idea was deemed important enough for Leading Edge Inflatables to get the lions share of the development budget. It wasn't long before brands like Naish and Wipika were cracking the formula to making these inflatable kites work.

FOILS ARE ALSO AMAZING FOR SNOW KITING, THIS IS THE NEW
LIQUID FORCE ELITE GETTING RAD!
PHOTO RICHARD HALLMAN



“ IF YOU LOOKED AT IT IN PURE SALES VOLUME, THERE WASN'T EVEN A CONTEST AND FOILS REMAINED A VERY NICHE PRODUCT WITHIN A NICHE SPORT. ”

The writing was on the wall for the foil kite, why would you ride something that you had to swim in once you crashed it? Flysurfer were one of the first brands to crack a water relaunchable foil. Peter Lynn also had a few offerings on the table. However by the early 2000's the marketing drive of the bigger brands had cemented the dominance of LEI's within our sport.

Die-hard riders such as Chris Calthrop would cling on to their Blade kites from Flexifoil, even as all the others around them switched. While Chris might have been scorned at the time for not getting on the program, he might just be having the last laugh now. For a middle period in our sport, it was only really Flysurfer and Peter Lynn that kept pursuing the dream of a relaunchable foil, with increasing success in terms of performance too.

Flysurfer's Speed kite had a lot of fans around the world, especially in the larger

sizes. Around this time though the advantages and disadvantages between the two were stark. Foils you could launch and land on your own, inflatables needed a buddy to launch and land them (this is all pre-bow style and hybrid kites of course). However the performance and relaunch of the LEI's seemed leaps ahead of these closed cell foil designs, plus the simplicity of a 4-line c kite versus a foil kite with many bridles kept the LEI's in front. If you looked at it in pure sales volume, there wasn't even a contest and foils remained a very niche product within a niche sport.

Perhaps a trick that Peter Lynn and Flysurfer missed was making something that was high performance.

MATT TAGGART CRUISING ON THE NEW OZONE R1 V21
PHOTO PAUL HALIFORD

“ THE LEADING EDGE INFLATABLE HAD WON SO MANY RACES IT WAS ALMOST A ONE DESIGN CLASS WITH SO MANY RIDERS PAYING TO USE THE KITE ”

Instead, they concentrated on user friendliness; this resulted on their kites never getting the biggest jumps, or winning all the races. By the late 2000's kites like the Ozone Edge and North Dyno were high-performance LEI's that were winning races, boosting the biggest airs and sitting pretty at the top of the pile.

Then something happened. In 2012 a small group of racers started coming to race events on foil kites made by the Russian kite company Elf. Founded in 2003 Elf had been making foil kites for snowkiting and the Joker kite just so happened to be incredibly efficient and powerful in the light winds that Formula races were often held in. It wasn't until 2013 however that some of the better racers started using the kites, with devastating efficiency.

In 2014, Ozone launched the Chrono, a closed cell water relaunched foil kite, in response to losing out on the racing scene to Elf. Previously the Ozone Edge had been the kite to use when racing, the Leading Edge Inflatable had won so many races it was almost a one design class with so many riders paying to use the kite as it was that good.

Obviously, Ozone didn't want to lose the upper hand they had had, and their paragliding background made them a natural choice for developing a foil kite. The Chrono hit the race scene with a vengeance and by the end of 2014 with limited numbers of Joker's and not enough Chrono's to keep up with demand the riders stuck on LEI's felt like they were getting left behind.





“ IF YOU’VE NEVER RIDDEN ONE THOUGH, THEY CAN BE EXCEEDINGLY DAUNTING, AFTER ALL, WHILE YOU MIGHT NOT HAVE TO PUMP IT UP, JUST LOOK AT ALL THE BRIDLES! ”

The situation got so bad that the International Kitesurfing Association debated banning the use of foil kites at the end of 2014!

The foil kite had arrived, and for racers, it was the only piece of kit to have. F-One joined the game with the Diablo, and now Liquid Force has brought out the Elite. However, if you read the marketing blurb these kites aren't just for racing, they are

perfect for freeriding too. Their natural habitat of light winds are a place we often find ourselves in as riders, so should you be considering adding one to your quiver even if you have no intention of racing?

Many of us fear change, it's a natural human condition, some of us don't like learning or being beginners, it was tough enough the first time round, so why would we do it all again? Sometimes, however, there are developments in our sport that our worth stepping out of your comfort zone for, hydro foiling for one! You might go back to being a complete beginner for a bit, but the rewards are endless!

As a kite tester, I have dabbled with foils over the years. I've ridden the numerous offerings from Flysurfer and Peter Lynn, as well as some of the more modern designs. If you've never ridden one though, they can be exceedingly daunting, after all, while you might not have to pump it up, just look at all the bridles! Compared to the simple 4 line bridle set up most of us are used to, a foil bridle can seem like a bad day at a pasta restaurant.

Some of these kites are exceedingly high maintenance too, in an effort to win races bridles need regular tuning and they use lightweight materials that need care and attention. That alone can be off-putting enough, especially for someone like me!



THE NEW FLYSURFER SONIC FR RACE KITE HAS BEEN USED TO GREAT SUCCESS ALL OVER THE WORLD!
PHOTO FLYSURFER

“ THINK OF IT AS ANOTHER STRING TO YOUR KITESURFING BOW. OH AND NO ONE WILL NICK YOUR PUMP EITHER... ”

These days there are more and more foil kites designed purely for the freerider like you and me. These aren't the thoroughbred race machines that want to punish your mistakes; these are easier to fly with a better, more mannered temperament.

They can relaunch off the water, they will get you out in winds your previously thought were not kiteable, and they'll have you boosting some of the biggest, floatiest jumps you have ever done. There are rewards to be had with foil kites; you just need to get over the irrational fear.

If you are a competent kiter, with good kite skills looking for some improved low-end performance, this is where you want to be. If you are hydrofoiling and want the ultimate light wind weapon, you need to apply here, and with some basic knowledge, you can build your confidence until you are as happy with a foil kite as you are with fact LEI, think of it as another string to your kitesurfing bow. Oh and no one will nick your pump either...

Don't fear the bridle

The bridle is probably the single most off-putting thing about foil kites. It looks like a total birds nest at the best of times! However, it is, in actual fact, relatively straightforward when you approach it logically. And if you pack your kite away properly each time you could be on the water faster than you would be pumping up an 18m LEI. It just takes a bit of practice and experience.

PREPARATION AND PROPER PACKING AWAY IS THE KEY TO A TROUBLE FREE RIDE!
PHOTO: PAUL HALIFORD



The bridle usually runs in rows of three or four along the length of the kite; there will be a pulley system in between the front and rear lines. You should be able to pick up these pigtails and shake and stretch any tangles out of the bridle, especially if you leave your bar attached, or packed the kite away properly. Once you hold the bridle taught you can see where each line goes, take some time to look at it and understand how it works. It's a lot simpler than you think.

Preparation Is Everything

If you set your kite up correctly and pack it down properly, you'll spend a lot more time flying it and a lot less time swearing at it on the beach...

“ TAKE SOME TIME TO LOOK AT IT AND UNDERSTAND HOW IT WORKS. IT'S A LOT SIMPLER THAN YOU THINK. ”

THE WORLD'S NUMBER ONE KITESURFING MAGAZINE

RIDER//SAM LIGHT
PHOTO//VINCENT BERGERON

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Posted by Rou Chater (?) · 44 mins ·

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Monteiro
much better,

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**“THEY TAKE A GOOD WHILE TO DRY OUT AND THEY DO HAVE
A TENDENCY TO GO TITS UP WHEN THEY CRASH.”**

Foils Need Inflating

Whatever anyone tells you, foil kites need inflating; you can pre-inflate your foil by holding it up into the wind allowing the cells to fill. Launching a pre-inflated foil is far easier than trying to fly what is effectively a bunch of material and string... Ensure you keep constant back line pressure on the kite

after you first launch it, this will help to keep the kite steady while it pressurises.

Don't Crash It

When we learned to kite way back in the day, one of the most popular questions we asked other kites, aside from “how do you go upwind?” Was “how do you relaunch a kite?” The answer was always “don't crash it”. I see a big difference in the kite handling skills of people who learned in the early 2000's compared to those who have learned since the invention of bow style kites in

2005. Old school kites wipe out and keep the kite in the air as much as possible, because we have it in built into our system that while LEI's were designed to relaunch, they were pretty terrible at it.

It was easier not to crash it than to relaunch it. The same goes for foils, yes they can be relaunched, but they don't like getting wet, they take a good while to dry out and they do have a tendency to go tits up when they crash. If you do crash it, you can reverse launch it by pulling on the rear lines if it is nose down, or pull on the front lines if it is nose up. A foil kite will water relaunch in far less wind than an LEI kite.

THE RACE SCENE WAS WHERE THE FOIL GOT TRULY REBORN...
PHOTO ALEXANDRU BARANESCU



“ YOU’LL BE FLOATING THROUGH THE AIR LIKE A BUTTERFLY, AND RACING AROUND LIKE A ROCKET SHIP. ”

Practice makes perfect

These kites fly differently to LEI’s so spending more time underneath them will increase your skill set and muscle memory as to how they fly. Take the time to practice launching, relaunching and landing as much as possible. In light winds they are really easy to self-land by just pulling on the rear lines, reversing the kite out of the sky. These are all skills that may be new to you in your kitesurfing career; by embracing them you will make yourself a better all round kiter.

Enjoy It!

We wouldn’t do it if it wasn’t fun! With some basic practice you’ll start to feel as at home on a foil as you do an LEI. You’ll be riding before absolutely everyone else at the beach, you’ll be floating through the air like a butterfly, and racing around like a rocket ship.

Foil kites might seem intimidating, but they shouldn’t be, they aren’t for everyone, but until you’ve tried it you won’t know what you are missing out on!

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 BOARDRIDING MAUI CLOUDFOILING 7

Dayum Greg, back once again with the white kites! Greg Drexler from Boardriding Maui is performing his mind-bending tricks on his hydrofoil once again. This time, he is chucking a 3.5m kite around like it's a toy, treating it like a stunt kite and pulling some insane moves!



1,673



CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO

#2 BRUNOTTI RDP GLIDER

Just because you can doesn't always mean you should! Brunotti are chasing the twin tip hydrofoil dream and were the first to market with a product. Although why they made the board inflatable, we don't know. If we get a chance and fancy our skills, we'll give it a go!



1,341



CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO

#3 A LITTLE PIECE OF HEAVEN I

The Frenchies are fighting back in the king of the hydrofoil stakes, Stephane Goffinet is thinking outside the box in this edit, that's for sure! Those Maui Cloudfoiling boys need to watch out as Stephane has got GAME! Watch this and have your mind blown!



1,097



CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO

#4 ONE EPIC EYE

How is this for a wild ride? Join Dmitry as he takes you down the line at One Eye in Mauritius on a beautiful sunset session. The waves look amazing, and the sunset backdrop is stunning. If you ride waves then this spot has to be on your bucket list; it's phenomenal!



626



CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO

LIGHTROOM

MEET ADEURI CORNIEL A 16-YEAR-OLD SHREDDER FROM THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, HE'S JUST SIGNED UP WITH RRD INTERNATIONAL AND RECENTLY PLACED 4TH AT THE WORLD KITEBOARDING LEAGUE EVENT IN CABARETE!
PHOTO ROU CHATER

Lightroom

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

LIGHTROOM

ALEX FOX GETTING TO GRIPS WITH THE NEW 2017 MISFIT AND RALLY IN MAURITIUS!
PHOTO ANDRE MAGARAO



Lightroom

LIGHTROOM

PHILIPP ZACH SMACKS INTO A TASTY ONE IN SOUTH AFRICA!
PHOTO MEDIAHOUSE.ONE



Lightroom

LIGHTROOM

JESSE RICHMAN STYLING IT ON HIS NEW NAISH 2017 GEAR IN MAUI...
PHOTO QUINCY DEIN



Lightroom

Lightroom

NOT ALL DARKSLIDES ARE CREATED EQUAL! HERE IS A TASTY ONE
FROM THE CRAZYFLY PHOTO SHOOT IN THE CARIBBEAN!
PHOTO ANDRE MAGARAO



Lightroom

LIGHTROOM

HOW LONG IS IT BEFORE WE SEE THE FIRST FREESTYLE HYDROFOIL COMP?
WE RECKON MARK SHINN WOULD BE A CONTENDER!
PHOTO SHINN



Lightroom

LIGHTROOM

WILLOW RIVER TONKIN CARVING A NEW PATH IN SOUTH AFRICA,
IT LOOKS LIKE A FANTASTIC SPOT TO RIDE!
PHOTO MEDIAHOUSE.ONE

Lightroom

LIGHTROOM

EUDAZIO DA SILVA DEMONSTRATING WHAT REAL POP IS ALL ABOUT IN FUERTEVENTURA!
PHOTO NOBILE



Lightroom



WORDS // LINDSAY MCCLURE

[FEMALE FOCUS]
SILKE CASWELL

▼
Silke moved to Venezuela to live on Margarita Island in 2009 and has never looked back...





"IT'S ALWAYS SUNNY AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, THE WATER IS WARM. WHAT ELSE DO I NEED?"

Why are you in love with kiteboarding?

Kiteboarding means a lot of things to me. It's a great way to unwind. I'm one with nature, so the ocean always inspires me and makes me happy. While training, I can push my limits. Kitesurfing is an extreme sport, and for some tricks, I have to commit all or nothing. I love the adrenaline rush. I learn a lot about myself when I'm out there alone. I feel free while I'm on the water.

What was your life like before kiteboarding, and how did you get into kiteboarding?

I saw kitesurfing for the first time in 1999/2000 in Cabarete, where I was living at that point. That was the first time kitesurfing was on my mind. However, I decided to move back to Germany to study, and it is hard to start the sport because I was living in Berlin and the ocean was far from reach. When I saw that the Kitesurf World Tour (PKRA) had a tour

stop in St. Peter-Ording in 2006, I applied for a job and was accepted. I worked for them for four years. In 2008, I became a flight attendant. I took my vacation during the Kitesurf World Tour stop in Germany each year so I could continue to work for the tour. Finally, during my vacation on Boracay Island in 2009, I took a kite course and was hooked right away. One year later I moved to El Yaque, Venezuela, and since then I've been all about kiteboarding.

You live on the picture-postcard island of El Yaque, Venezuela; is life on this beautiful island as idyllic as it seems?

For me it is. On the water I forget everything. The country is facing problems with food shortages, power outages, and water issues, but I love Venezuela. It's the most beautiful country I've seen. In El Yaque we have about 300 days of wind a year. Coche is a perfect spot for freestyle with butter flat water. On the other side of Margarita Island, we have waves and great spots for surfing. It's always sunny and, most importantly, the water is warm. What else do I need?

What is the riding scene like at your home spot of El Yaque, what are the conditions like, and who do you usually ride with?

The wind is strong in El Yaque. I usually kite on my 6m or 8m kite. Morning sessions are better because afternoon sessions can be gusty. The water is choppy, but there's a lagoon at the entrance of El Yaque where the water is flat. On the other side of the island are wave spots and Coche Island is butter flat. A lot of kitesurfers come to visit El Yaque every year, so it's always nice to see the same people again.

And, of course, everyone living in El Yaque knows each other. It's a big kite family. I kite alone or with my best friend, Maria Alejandra Gonzalez, a local kite instructor. Or, I kite with my husband. He is mainly into foil kiting which I also enjoy, but my passion is freestyle.

What is your favourite place in the world to kite, and what's your favourite travel story?

I've travelled to 60 countries, and I've kited at a lot of spots in the world, but my absolute favourite place is Los Roques, Venezuela. It's paradise! My wildest travel story was crossing over from Venezuela to Colombia by land to go to a kitesurf competition in Riohacha and Cabo de la Vela, Colombia. I wouldn't recommend doing that. I flew from Margarita to Maracaibo and from there my friend and I took a taxi to the Colombian border with all our kite equipment. We then walked over the border to Colombia, and then took a shared taxi to Riohacha. It was not the safest way to travel, but I made it, and I loved the kite spot Cabo de la Vela.

What are your favourite pieces of kiteboarding equipment, and what do you love about them?

I love my Cabrinha Switchblade kites. They are durable, have a great wind range and perform in many conditions without losing the ability to be a great BFF for freestyle. I adore my Cabrinha X Caliber carbon board. The pop is amazing.

How do you like Cabrinha's new Fireball connection system, and could you describe this system for our readers?

"HAVE A GREAT WIND RANGE AND PERFORM IN MANY CONDITIONS WITHOUT LOSING THE ABILITY TO BE A GREAT BFF FOR FREESTYLE."





"WE SOLD EVERYTHING AT A FLEA MARKET IN MUNICH AND BOOKED A FLIGHT WITH NO RETURN TICKET."

I haven't had the chance yet to try out the new Fireball system, but as soon as I receive my new kite equipment, I will spread the stoke. Cabrinha consistently strives to create innovative products and, in my opinion; they have the best products on the market for riders of all levels. I think that a lot of women can benefit greatly from the Fireball system as it reduces forces and makes kiting easier on your body. It also resolves the problem of the bar being too far away. Women are smaller and have shorter arms. The new Fireball system makes it easier to reach the depower, which is essential for safe kiting.

What achievements in your life are you most proud of?

My best decision was to move to Venezuela. I had never been to Venezuela when my husband asked me if I would like to live on Margarita Island in 2009. I loved my job as a flight attendant, but living by the ocean had always been my dream. So, we sold everything at a flea market in Munich and booked a flight with no return ticket. Now, I've been living here for 6.5 years, and I'm the happiest I've ever been.

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

I would love it if kites knew the right-of-way rules. And, I wish kites were more aware of their surroundings. I always try to help other kites. I have been in a couple of situations where a kiter was close to another kiter

in need, but they weren't paying attention to the person in trouble.

What do you do outside of kiteboarding to push your level and keep progressing?

I do a lot of sports including TRX, yoga, SUP, surfing, skating and running. I also love to dance. Kiting can be quite hard on my body when I'm performing advanced tricks. I find it helps to strengthen my muscles and stretch a lot. Balance is the key to everything.

What philosophy guides your life, and what's the best advice you've ever received?

Stay positive. Don't be hard on yourself. If you can dream it, you can do it. Don't take life too seriously.



" I HAVE TO BELIEVE THAT I WILL GET THE TRICK, EVEN IF IT TAKES FOREVER. "

The best advice came from my stepfather, who passed away in 2006. He explained to me the phenomenon of the self-fulfilling prophecy: "Positive or negative expectations about circumstances, events, or people affect the behaviour of others in a manner that (unknowingly) creates situations in which those expectations are fulfilled." In other words, you can cause something to happen by believing it. This advice helps when I'm learning a new kiteboarding trick. I have to believe that I will get the trick, even if it takes forever. But, if I believe I can't, I won't.

What impact would you like to have on the sport of kiteboarding?

On my last trip to Los Roques, I met a girl from Chile. She came up to me to get a photo with me because she is following me on Instagram. She told me that she's super motivated by me, and she is trying new tricks because of me. She was learning how to do an s-bend. I gave her some tips, and shortly afterwards she managed to land the s-bend. She was super happy and that made me happy. I hope to have such an impact on more women.

What are your short-term and long-term kiteboarding goals?

My short-term kiteboarding goals always include learning new tricks. My long-term goals include hosting more kite clinics, especially for women, and organising more kite trips like the one my husband and I organised last year, our Kite2Unite kite cruise in the Caribbean.

Thanks Silke for taking the time to talk to us!

READERS GALLERY

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

Turn the pages though maybe we made you famous?

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

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

Winner! 

Russell Farrington enjoying the summer in Poole Harbour!





▼
Dutch Bay, Sri Lanka presents an ideal launch zone for
Dimitry Muttoo Khan



▼
Andrew Kenyon riding at the Virgin Kitesurfing Armada on
Hayling Island!
Photo Dave White



Brad Shaw, riding an Ocean Rodeo 12m prodigy, at Westward Ho! Devon.

Photo Craig Shaw



Stephan Zimmi, caught inside at Scott Creek, California.





Weston Super Mare delivering the goods, both with the sky and the parking spot!

Photo Tom Beaton



Toby Cooke riding at Lancing during the British Kitesurfing Championship!

Photo Paul Monti





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THE SUN SETS ON THE CRAZYFLY PHOTOSHOOT IN THE CARIBBEAN!
PHOTO ANDRE MAGARAO

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