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ISSUE **115**

SPRING 26

WELCOME TO IKSURFMAG

This issue, we kick things off in St Martin with Theo Demanez, chasing wind, culture and colour in a travel guide that goes beyond the usual spots and into the rhythm of the island. From there, we dive into a deep and honest conversation with Matchu Lopes, reflecting on the past, the present, and where strapless

riding sits today. We also catch up with Santi Cisneros as he hits the road once again for the Ozone Demo Tour, sharing stories from the journey, the people he meets along the way, and what makes this rolling mission such an integral part of the Ozone brand. Plus there's the technique, tests and plenty more inside!



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INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE

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115
SPRING 26



ST MARTIN TRAVEL GUIDE
MATCHU LOPES / LORDS OF TRAM / SANTI CISNEROS
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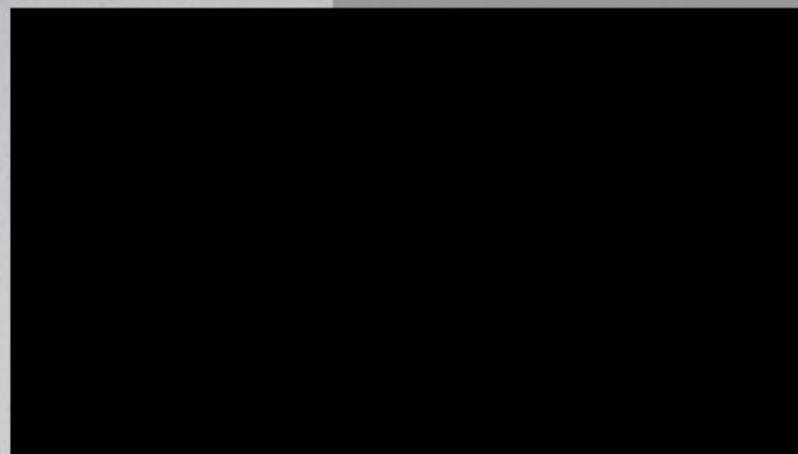
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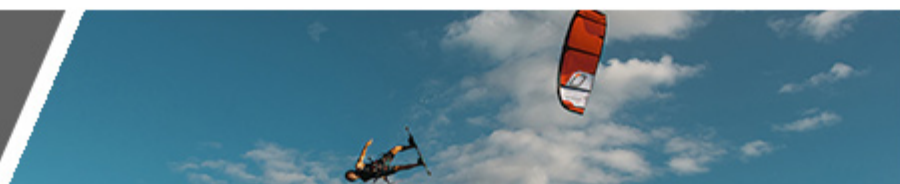
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ST MARTIN



THE INTERVIEW -
MATCHU LOPES



CHASING THE WIND
AROUND THE WORLD



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RIDER LUKE ATKINSON
PHOTO LUCAS K STILLER





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and I've just heard that the first sea breeze has arrived at the local spot. That can mean only one thing: summer is on the way. After the long, wet winter we've had, it can't come soon enough. There have been some incredible storms and a few standout sessions, but after a while, the sideways rain starts to wear thin. Normally by now, the temperature is creeping up, and the thick wetsuits are being packed away, but this year they've definitely overstayed their welcome. Hopefully, we're in for a strong season ahead in the northern hemisphere, one that gets everyone back on the water and fired up again.

A final word on the wider picture. A couple of months ago, it felt like the industry had turned a corner and we were heading into a more positive year. Since then, the global situation has shifted again, and it's clear there are some challenging times ahead. I've already heard reports of raw material costs rising by as much as 25% in the short term, which will inevitably push prices up across the sport.

That's not great news for anyone. Consumer confidence is already low, and higher prices won't help. The sport will weather it, it always does, but it would be nice to have a bit of stability for once. I often find myself looking back at the pre-COVID years with a sense of nostalgia. A world where things felt a little more predictable, and where everyone had a better chance to thrive.

In the meantime, there's always the simple solution: head to the sea and go for a session. I'd suggest you do the same.

Until next time,

Rou Chater
Publishing Editor

It's been a pretty wild month for our sport. The Big Air season kicked off in style at Le Barcarès for the Lords of Tram, and we've got a full breakdown of the action in this issue. It also marked an incredible performance from Jamie Overbeek, whose dominance felt even more significant given he was overlooked for KOTA last November. Somehow, I don't think that will be happening again.

It's exciting to see the progression at the sharp end of

the sport, but it's just as important to remember that kiting is about more than one discipline. That's why we've interviewed Matchu Lopes in this issue. He's one of my favourite riders, and one of the original crew from Cape Verde who helped turn the sport on its head during the rise of strapless riding. He's also one of the most humble people you'll meet, which makes him an important role model within the sport.

As I write this, the sun is shining outside the office,



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SAINT MARTIN

WHERE TWO WORLDS MEET THE WIND

Saint Martin isn't your typical kite destination. It's an island where two cultures sit side by side, where conditions shift from flat water to reef breaks in a single session, and where the experience goes far beyond the time you spend on the water. From the steady trade winds of Orient Bay to the raw energy of the outer reefs, and from long French lunches to late nights on the Dutch side, it's a place that delivers far more than just good kiting. For Theo Demanez, it's home, and even after travelling the world, it's still one of the most complete destinations he knows.





“ I WAS BORN AND RAISED IN SAINT MARTIN, AND EVEN AFTER TRAVELLING THE WORLD COMPETING, I STILL SEE IT AS ONE OF THE MOST UNIQUE AND COMPLETE KITESURF DESTINATIONS OUT THERE. ”

Saint Martin isn't just another Caribbean kite destination. It's a place where cultures collide, conditions shift from one session to the next, and the overall experience goes far beyond time on the water. One minute you're cruising across turquoise flat water, the next you're lining up clean lines on a reef, and by the evening you're choosing between a quiet French dinner or a full-blown party night on the Dutch side.

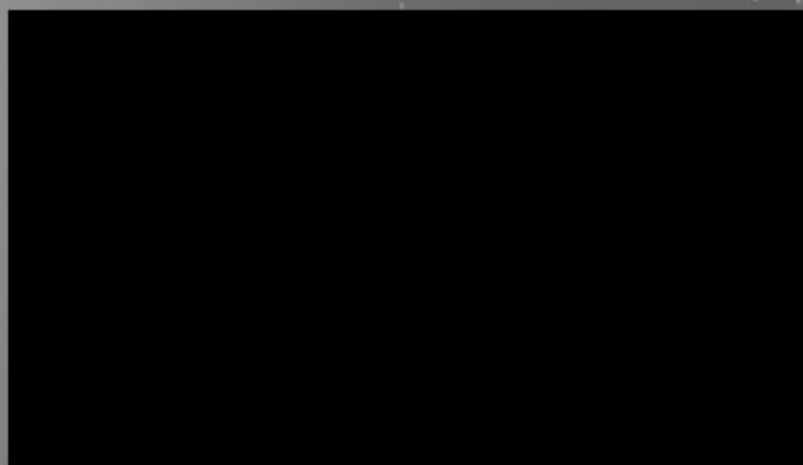
For Theo Demanez, this isn't a destination you discover; it's home. Born and raised on the island, and having travelled the world competing, he still sees Saint Martin as one of the most best kitesurfing destinations out there. Not just because of the wind or the variety of spots, but because of everything that surrounds it.

“I was born and raised in Saint Martin, and even after travelling the world competing, I still see it as one of the most unique and best kitesurfing destinations out there.”

TWO SIDES, ONE ISLAND

Saint Martin might be small on the map, but its identity is anything but simple. The island is split into two distinct parts, the French side and the Dutch side, also known as Sint Maarten. You can cross from one to the other in a matter of minutes, but the change in atmosphere is immediate.

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“ YOU CAN LITERALLY CROSS FROM ONE COUNTRY TO ANOTHER IN A FEW MINUTES, AND THE VIBE CHANGES INSTANTLY ”

The French side is defined by a slower pace. Life here leans towards nature, good food, and a more relaxed rhythm. It's the kind of place where time stretches out, where long lunches turn into evenings, and where the focus is on enjoying the moment rather than rushing through it.

On the Dutch side, things shift in the opposite direction. It's livelier, more built up,

and carries an international energy. Beach clubs, casinos, and nightlife create a constant sense of movement. It's where people go when the sun goes down and the day doesn't feel like it's finished yet.

This contrast is what gives Saint Martin its depth. You don't have to choose between a quiet escape and a more dynamic trip, both exist side by side, and moving between them is effortless.

“You can literally cross from one country to another in a few minutes, and the vibe changes instantly.”

KITE SPOTS FOR EVERY STYLE

From a kitesurfing perspective, that same diversity carries through into the conditions. The island offers a range of spots that work across different wind directions and riding styles, making it suitable for a wide variety of riders.

ORIENT BAY, THE HEART OF THE SCENE

Orient Bay is the main kitesurfing hub on the island, and for most riders, it's the starting point. A wide, open bay with turquoise water and a sandy bottom, it offers consistent trade winds blowing side onshore, creating reliable and accessible conditions.

What makes it stand out is how adaptable it is.

“IT’S ONE OF THOSE PLACES THAT WORKS FOR EVERYONE.”

Beginners can stay closer to shore, where the water is flatter and more forgiving, making it an ideal place to learn and build confidence. At the same time, more experienced riders can push further out towards the reef, where the waves start to form.

The setting adds to the appeal. Orient Bay isn’t just a spot; it’s a full-on beach village. Restaurants, bars, and kite schools line the shore, creating a space where everything is within reach. You can rig, ride, eat, and relax without ever leaving the area.

“It’s one of those places that works for everyone.”

OBSERVATOIRE, RAW AND REWARDING

For riders looking to step away from the main scene, Observatoire offers something more exposed and less predictable. It’s a spot that leans heavily towards wave riding, and when the swell lines up, it delivers a completely different experience.

The concept is simple: launch from the shore and head out to the reef, where the waves break cleanly across the outside section. When it’s working, the rides are long and flowing, with space to draw proper lines.

It’s not a place for beginners. The conditions require confidence and awareness, and the launch demands a more considered approach. But for those with the ability, it’s one of the most rewarding places to ride on the island.

“It’s definitely more for experienced riders, but it’s one of my favourite places to kite on the island.”





“ IT’S DEFINITELY MORE FOR EXPERIENCED RIDERS, BUT IT’S ONE OF MY FAVOURITE PLACES TO KITE ON THE ISLAND. ”

BEYOND THE ISLAND

One of Saint Martin’s biggest advantages isn’t just what’s on the island itself, but what surrounds it. Positioned in the heart of the Caribbean, it sits close to a number of other islands, including Saint Barthélemy and Anguilla, each offering its own unique conditions.

Through organised excursions, particularly with operators like Wind-Adventures, it’s possible to access more remote locations. These trips open the door to small islands, untouched beaches, and clear lagoons where there are often no other riders around.

These sessions shift the experience again. Away from the main beaches, the scale of the Caribbean becomes more apparent, and the sense of space changes completely. It’s no longer just about riding a spot, it’s about exploring a region.

“You end up kiting in places that feel almost unreal, like you have the whole Caribbean to yourself.”

WIND AND CONDITIONS

The reliability of the wind is one of the key reasons Saint Martin works so well as a destination. The trade winds typically run from November through July, with December and January often delivering the most consistent conditions.

On stronger days, the wind can blow steadily throughout the day, giving you plenty of time to get on the water. Even outside of peak wind season, there is usually enough breeze to get on the water, particularly if you can ride a foil.





“ YOU END UP KITING IN PLACES THAT FEEL ALMOST UNREAL, LIKE YOU HAVE THE WHOLE CARIBBEAN TO YOURSELF. ”

That flexibility is important. Whether riding a twintip, surfboard, foil, or wing, there is almost always a way to make the most of the conditions. Instead of waiting for perfect days, riders can adjust and keep progressing. It's definitely the kind of place where you want to pack all your toys so you can make the most of whatever the conditions throw at you.

“It's very reliable, which makes it easy to plan a trip.”

A GROWING WING SCENE

While kitesurfing remains central to Saint Martin's identity, the island is also seeing steady growth in wingfoiling. The same conditions that make it ideal for kiting naturally support winging as well.

Steady wind, warm water, and a combination of flat and wave spots create an environment where both beginners and experienced riders can progress. Orient Bay offers a safe and accessible place to learn,

while other areas provide opportunities to ride waves and push further.

This crossover between disciplines adds another layer to the destination. It's no longer just about one way of riding, but about having options depending on the day.

“It's a great place to learn but also to progress quickly.”

MORE THAN JUST KITING

What sets Saint Martin apart isn't just the time spent on the water, it's everything that comes with it.

The island is known as the culinary capital of the Caribbean, and that reputation is well deserved.

“IT’S VERY RELIABLE, WHICH MAKES IT EASY TO PLAN A TRIP.”

The quality and variety of food is unusually high, with a mix of local Caribbean flavours and strong French influence shaping the dining scene.

After a long day riding, it’s incredible to be able to eat some of the finest food you will ever experience. There aren’t many places in the world like that; the incredible food and atmosphere become part of the overall experience. It’s not just about refuelling, it’s about entertaining your taste buds as much as you’ve been entertaining yourself on the water.

Beyond food, there’s a wide range of activities. Hiking routes lead to stunning viewpoints across the island, offering a different perspective on the landscape. Diving opens up another side of the ocean, while quieter beaches provide space to step away from the main spots.

When it comes to nightlife, the Dutch side is where things come alive. It’s energetic, international, and always moving. The French side, by contrast, remains quieter, better suited to slower evenings and a more relaxed pace.

“It’s not just about the wind or the spots, it’s the whole atmosphere of the island that makes it special.”

GETTING THERE AND GETTING AROUND

Accessibility is another factor that works in Saint Martin’s favour. Compared to many Caribbean destinations, it’s relatively straightforward to reach.





**“ IT’S NOT JUST ABOUT THE WIND OR THE SPOTS,
IT’S THE WHOLE ATMOSPHERE OF THE ISLAND
THAT MAKES IT SPECIAL. ”**

The island is served by two airports. Princess Juliana International Airport on the Dutch side handles most international flights, while Grand Case Airport on the French side connects to regional destinations.

There are direct flights from major cities in the United States and Canada, and from Europe, there are regular connections, particularly from Paris, as well as routes through Amsterdam.

Once on the island, distances are short, and moving between different areas is quick. This makes it easy to explore multiple spots, switch between the French and Dutch sides, and experience different conditions without spending too long in a vehicle, speaking of which, if you do decide to visit, be sure to rent a car so you can make the most of the place and get to the best spots for kiting and the best places to eat.

“Whether you’re coming from Europe or the Americas, it’s a very accessible destination.”

Why It Still Stands Out

For Theo Demanez, growing up in Saint Martin played a defining role in his development as a rider. Having access to flat water, chop, and waves within such a small area creates an environment that encourages progression.

Each session brings something slightly different, and that variety builds adaptability over time. Even after travelling and competing across the world, that same mix continues to stand out.

**“ SAINT MARTIN IS NOT JUST A KITE
SPOT, IT’S A COMPLETE
DESTINATION. ”**

Saint Martin isn't about chasing a single perfect condition. It's about having options, reading the day, and making the most of whatever is on offer.

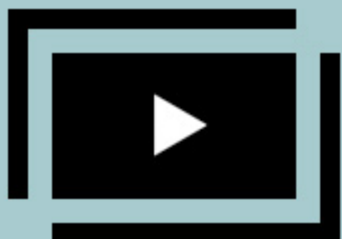
“Saint Martin is not just a kite spot, it's a complete destination.”

And that's ultimately what defines it. You might arrive for the wind, but it's everything else, the lifestyle, the culture, and the range of experiences, that make you want to stay, and come back again and again.





WORDS ROU CHATER
PHOTOS TOBY BROMWICH



MATCHU LOPES STILL RIDING HIS OWN LINE

For more than a decade, Matchu Lopes has been one of the defining figures in strapless kiteboarding. Alongside Airtton Cozzolino and Mitu Monteiro, he helped turn a small Cape Verdean scene into a global movement, pushing surfboard riding to the very front of the sport. Now based on Boa Vista, where he runs a Duotone Pro Centre and spends more time at home, Matchu reflects on the journey that took him from a small island to the world stage, and why wave riding still means everything.

**“ WINDSURFING GAVE ME SPEED AND POWER,
SURFING GAVE ME THE FEELING OF RIDING A
WAVE, AND KITING COMBINED THOSE TWO ”**

Rou Chater: Let's go right back to the beginning. How did kiteboarding first come into your life?

Matchu Lopes: Kiteboarding came into my life at the perfect moment. I was already windsurfing, and before that, I had spent years surfing, so when I first tried a kite, it felt like everything came together. Windsurfing gave me speed and power, surfing gave me the feeling of riding a wave, and kiting combined those two while adding something completely new.

However, the first time I tried it was actually terrible. I started on two-line kites, which were really difficult to control, especially at my age and weight. I would ride a few metres, lose control, crash, lose the kite and then spend a long time swimming after it. When I finally got back to the beach, the lines would be completely tangled, and because they were all white, it was almost impossible to sort them out.

After about a week and a half of that, I gave up completely. It just felt too complicated and frustrating compared to windsurfing, where I was already progressing and enjoying myself. It wasn't until a few years later, when I tried again with better equipment, a 4-line kite, that everything changed. Within a day, I was riding properly, and that's when it really clicked for me.

What really struck me was how much freedom I suddenly had. Instead of paddling and waiting for waves, I could move quickly, position myself exactly where I wanted and catch more waves in a single set.





“ HE REALLY HELPED ME STAY ON THE WATER BY GIVING ME KITES AND SUPPORTING ME HOWEVER HE COULD. ”

That feeling of control and flow was something I had never experienced before. From that moment on, I was completely hooked.

Rou: You were already pretty deep into windsurfing at that point. Was it a difficult decision to switch?

Matchu: In a way, it should have been,

because I was already competing and had some support in windsurfing, but once kiteboarding clicked it didn't feel like a decision at all. I became completely obsessed with it. Everything else just faded into the background.

I would sit in school staring out of the window, thinking about the wind, the beach and the tricks I wanted to try. Eventually, I changed my schedule so I could work at a kite school during the day and go to school in the evening. That allowed me to spend as much time on the water as possible while also supporting myself.

It wasn't always easy. During the windy season, I was constantly tired, and my grades would drop because I was pushing everything towards kiteboarding. But I loved it so much that it never felt like a sacrifice. Those years were intense, but they shaped everything that came after.

Rou: Who were the key people supporting you in those early days?

Matchu: Before any brands got involved, the biggest support came from the people around me, especially Airtón Cozzolino's father, Libero. He really helped me stay on the water by giving me kites and supporting me however he could. He believed in me, and that made a big difference.



I remember one kite in particular that he left with me for the summer. I used it every day, and by the time he came back, it was full of tiny holes. I had patched it everywhere with tape just to keep it going. It looked terrible, but it meant I could keep riding, and that was all that mattered. Libero couldn't believe what I had done to it when he saw it again!

My first brand support came from F-ONE, who gave me some kites and a board. One of those boards had belonged to Mitu, and he'd won the World Title on it, which for me was something really special. It felt like I was following a path that someone from my own country had already opened.

**"IT MEANT I
COULD KEEP
RIDING, AND
THAT WAS ALL
THAT MATTERED."**



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“ I JUST FOCUSED ON RIDING THE WAY I KNEW HOW, AND IN THE END, I FINISHED SECOND. THAT RESULT CHANGED EVERYTHING FOR ME.”

Rou: Your first competition was a big moment. How did that come about?

Matchu: That was a huge step for me. I went to Sardinia for my first international competition, not really knowing what to expect. It was a completely new environment, new riders, new level, and I was definitely nervous.

But once I got in the water, everything felt natural. I just focused on riding the way I knew how, and in the end, I finished second. That result changed everything for me. Straight after the event, I was offered a contract with Duotone, then known as North, and that marked the beginning of my professional career. I have ridden for them ever since, and I am really grateful for all the opportunities they have given me.

Rou: Getting to those events wasn't always straightforward, though, was it?

Matchu: No, that was probably the hardest part of my journey. Travelling from Cape Verde was always complicated. I often had to travel to another country just to apply for a visa, which meant extra costs, extra time and a lot of uncertainty.

Even when I had everything ready, crossing borders could still be difficult. I was questioned a lot about where I was going, why I was travelling and whether I had enough money. Sometimes people didn't believe I was an athlete at all.

To deal with that, I started carrying magazines with me that featured my photos and interviews.



“IT WAS AN AMAZING TIME. TO SEE SOMETHING THAT STARTED IN SUCH A SMALL PLACE GROW INTO SOMETHING GLOBAL WAS INCREDIBLE.”

Showing them what I did helped a lot, sometimes more than any official document. It was a strange situation, but it worked. Duotone supported me massively through all of this. They helped with paperwork, gave me backing and stood by me when things were difficult. That support was really important, and it's a big reason why

I've stayed with them for so long.

Rou: You've been with Duotone a long time now. What's kept that relationship so strong?

Matchu: It has always felt like more than just a sponsor. From the beginning, they supported me not just as a rider, but as a person. Especially during those early years when things were difficult, they were there for me.

When we travelled and worked on shoots, it never felt like work. We were riding from sunrise to sunset, trying to get the best out of every session. We were young, motivated

and fully focused on progression. It felt like the best job in the world.

Over time, that connection grew into something like a family. After so many years, that kind of relationship means a lot, and it's something I really value.

Rou: There was a time when strapless riding exploded. Surfboards were everywhere. What did that feel like from your perspective?

Matchu: It was an amazing time. To see something that started in such a small place grow into something global was incredible. We were just riding the way we loved, pushing each other, trying new tricks and new styles, but suddenly people all over the world were doing the same thing.



“BIG AIR IS EXCITING, AND IT’S PUSHING THE LIMITS IN A DIFFERENT DIRECTION, WHICH IS GOOD FOR KITEBOARDING OVERALL.”

I think what people connected with was the freedom and the creativity of riding a surfboard. It gave kiteboarding a different feeling, something more fluid and expressive. Even in places with no waves, people wanted to ride strapless because of that style.

Looking back, it still feels surreal that three riders from the same small town could have that kind of impact on the sport.

Rou: Now, big air is dominating. How do you feel about that shift?

Matchu: For me, it’s all part of the sport evolving. Big air is exciting, and it’s pushing the limits in a different direction, which is good for kiteboarding overall.

At the same time, wave riding will always have its place. There is something about riding a wave that you can’t replace. The feeling of drawing a clean line or getting a good barrel is unique, and it’s something that keeps me motivated.

The sport moves in cycles, and maybe one day the focus will come back to surfboards again. But even if it doesn’t, wave riding will always be there for the people who love it.

Rou: You’ve stepped back from competing a bit and are now based in Boa Vista. What drew you there?

Matchu: Boa Vista has everything I was looking for. There are so many different spots, so much space and not too many people on the water. You can find waves, flat water, good wind and still have that feeling of exploring something new.



What I really like is the connection to nature. It's not overdeveloped, it still feels raw, with fishing communities, simple living and a slower pace. That's something that became more important to me over time.

I wanted a place where I could stay close to my roots, keep progressing and also enjoy life in a more balanced way. Boa Vista gives me that.

Rou: And the school you're running there, how does that fit into everything?

Matchu: The school is a big part of my life now.

"I WANTED A PLACE WHERE I COULD STAY CLOSE TO MY ROOTS"

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7	ANDREA	24.5m
8	VAL	24.4m

“ KITEBOARDING CHANGED MY LIFE COMPLETELY. IT GAVE ME OPPORTUNITIES I NEVER THOUGHT I WOULD HAVE. ”

We opened the Duotone Pro Centre here, and it's been going really well. The conditions are perfect for teaching, especially in the bay, and for more experienced riders, there is so much to explore around the island.

What I enjoy most is sharing the place with people. It's not just about teaching someone to kite, it's about helping them discover the island, find new spots and experience what makes this place special.

There is a real sense of adventure here, and that's something I want people to feel when they come.

Rou: Final question. What advice would you give to young riders who want to follow a similar path?

Matchu: The most important thing is to believe in yourself and be willing to work for it. I came from a small island with very limited opportunities, but I saw Mitu do it, and that made me believe it was possible.

From there, it was about putting in the time, staying focused, and not giving up when things got difficult. There were a lot of challenges along the way, especially with travel and resources, but step by step, things started to happen.

Kiteboarding changed my life completely. It gave me opportunities I never thought I would have. So my advice is simple: don't focus only on the limitations. Focus on what's possible, work hard and keep going. That's how it starts.



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WORDS ROU CHATER

CHASING THE WIND AROUND THE WORLD

SANTI CISNEROS AND THE OZONE DEMO TOUR

What started as a throwaway idea in a meeting has turned into one of the most ambitious grassroots projects in kiteboarding. The Ozone Demo Tour is bringing gear, riders and community together across the globe, and at the centre of it all is Santi Cisneros, chasing wind, sharing stoke, and quietly building his own path in big air.





" HE TALKS ABOUT
THE SPORT WITH
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SOMETHING
HE LOVES. "

Sometimes the best ideas begin almost as a joke. For Santi Cisneros, a casual suggestion in a meeting at Ozone HQ turned into one of the most memorable years of his life. What started as a simple thought, put me in a van and I'll take the kites to the people, quickly grew into a full-scale international demo tour that carried him across Europe, on to Brazil, then Australia, and finally to South Africa. Along the way, he covered thousands of miles, introduced riders to Ozone's latest gear, and helped create the kind of beach atmosphere that reminds everyone why kiteboarding is such a special sport.

At its heart, the Ozone Demo Tour is about access. Most riders do not get many chances to try a full range of kites back-to-back in real conditions. They might read reviews, watch edits online, or hear opinions from friends on the beach, but that is never quite the same as hooking in and feeling a kite for yourself. That is where Santi's tour comes in. Rather than waiting for riders to find the product, he has been helping to take it directly to them, turning beaches around the world into rolling test grounds for the latest Ozone gear.

It is an idea that suits his character perfectly. Santi is one of those people whose energy seems to spill naturally into everything he does. He talks about the sport with genuine excitement and approaches a demo not as a sales job but as an opportunity to share something he loves. That is a big part of why the concept has worked so well. Riders are not being pushed into trying equipment. They are being invited into an experience.

Santi's story begins a long way from the famous windy coastlines most kitesurfers dream about. He grew up in the north of Argentina, far from the sea,



where kiteboarding for him meant lakes rather than waves. It was his father who first introduced him to the sport around 13 years ago. The moment he saw a kite in action, it made an instant impression. With no instructors in his area, his father taught him, and the local community helped him progress on the water. What had once been a tiny scene of only a handful of riders slowly started to grow.

That local growth mirrors something important about the wider kiteboarding world, especially in places that sit a little outside the traditional spotlight. South America may not always get the same attention as the rest of the world when people talk about the global kite scene, but riders like Santi are proof of just how much talent, passion,

"WHAT HAD
ONCE BEEN A
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ONLY A
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RIDERS SLOWLY
STARTED TO
GROW."

SPECTACULAR

THE ALL-NEW
SPECTRE

MAX SUPPORT

1050 G
LIGHT WEIGHT

STIFFNESS

HIGH PERFORMANCE

- DIRECT DRIVE.
- FEATHERWEIGHT.
- ERGONOMIC FIT.

and potential there is. In his part of Argentina, the local conditions can be relatively light, with 20 knots considered strong, meaning he learned on bigger kites and developed a real feel for efficiency and control. Yet not too far away, there are legendary inland spots where the wind can blow 50 to 60 knots, funnelling through the mountains, giving ambitious riders the kind of conditions that can shape serious talent.

That talent has carried Santi well beyond recreational riding. While many people meeting him on the beach may know him as the face of the demo tour, he is also a highly capable big air rider with real competitive ambitions. He has already won major events in Argentina, including the country's first official big air competition, as well as the South American Big Air event this year, and has made it clear that he wants more. He speaks openly about wanting to compete on the biggest stages in the sport one day, at events like King of the Air and Lords of Tram. It is not an empty dream either. He believes he has what it takes, and from the way those around him talk about his riding, it's hard not to envisage him on the world stage in the future.

That dual identity is part of what makes him such an interesting figure within Ozone. He is not only an athlete, but also a brand representative, and now he's joined the marketing department too. He sits somewhere in the middle, bridging product, people and performance. That matters when you are running demos, because riders respond best to someone who can genuinely explain what a kite does, how it feels, and who it is for, not from a brochure, but from lived experience. Santi can do that because he rides at a high level himself and still remembers exactly what it feels like to be progressing, learning and figuring things out.

"HE IS NOT ONLY AN ATHLETE, BUT ALSO A BRAND REPRESENTATIVE, AND NOW HE'S JOINED THE MARKETING DEPARTMENT TOO."





"THERE WAS NO RIGID MASTER PLAN, AND THAT WAS PART OF THE BEAUTY OF IT."

The demo tour itself came together after Santi suggested the idea at the end of 2024. At first, it was not taken too seriously, but early in 2025, Ozone came back to him and asked if he really wanted to do it. From there, the plan snowballed. He and a friend loaded a van with gear and set off across Europe, chasing wind, coordinating with local distributors,

and building each stop around whatever conditions and opportunities appeared next. There was no rigid master plan, and that was part of the beauty of it. If the forecast changed, the route changed. If there was no wind in Portugal, and France lit up, they drove to France. The tour followed the wind in the truest possible sense.

That flexibility meant carrying everything all at once. The van was packed with kites, boards and bars, ready for whatever beach and whatever conditions came next. Life on the road was not glamorous. Three months in a small van with two friends and a mountain of gear comes with obvious challenges. With two beds, one covered in kites and one to share with his mate, it was tough. Space was limited, and after long days on the beach, even a decent shower started to feel like a luxury.



But the hardship seems to have been outweighed by the connections made along the way.

One of the strongest themes to come out of Santi's experience is just how welcoming the kiteboarding community can be. At stops across Europe and beyond, locals opened their homes, offered showers, shared meals and helped spread the word. In return, Santi and his friend brought a bit of Argentina with them, often cooking asado (BBQ) for the local crews and turning demo stops into kite-focused social gatherings. That sense of community is perhaps one of the most underrated aspects of what the demo tour offers. It is not just about testing a kite. It is about meeting people, swapping stories, sharing sessions and spending time on a beach where everyone is there for the same reason.

" THAT SENSE OF COMMUNITY IS PERHAPS ONE OF THE MOST UNDERRATED ASPECTS OF WHAT THE DEMO TOUR OFFERS. "

CHANGE
THE TIDE

GO WITH THE FLOW

Effortless in every wave. Stable drift. Tight, smooth turning.

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"IT BECOMES A
RESEARCH TOOL
AS WELL,
CONNECTING
REAL-WORLD USE
DIRECTLY BACK
TO PRODUCT
DEVELOPMENT."

For riders, that matters. A good demo day can break down a lot of the barriers people feel around trying new equipment. Many kites get comfortable with the gear they know and are hesitant to move away from it. Sometimes that is because they are loyal to a particular setup. Sometimes it is because they are unsure whether a different kite will suit them. Sometimes it is simply because the effort of changing feels greater than the reward. A demo tour removes that friction. The kites are pumped up, the bars are ready, and someone is standing there who can help point you in the right direction. All you need to do is bring your harness and wetsuit, and ideally your board, then go ride.

That ease of access is a huge benefit for everyday riders. It allows them to understand not just whether they like a kite, but why they like it. They can try an Enduro, then a Vortex, then perhaps an Edge or a Mach 1, and feel the difference for themselves in one afternoon. Rather than relying on marketing language or second-hand opinions, they can build their own understanding. For newer riders, especially, that kind of experience can be invaluable. It accelerates learning, builds confidence and often opens their eyes to possibilities they may not have considered before.

It also creates a valuable feedback loop for the brand. Santi is not just sending riders out and waving them back in. He is gathering responses, impressions and opinions from the beach and feeding them into a system that helps Ozone understand how their products are being received. That makes the demo tour more than a promotional exercise. It becomes a research tool as well, connecting real-world use directly back to product development.

Among all the kites Santi has been putting into riders' hands, one in particular stands out for him, the Vortex.





" ONE OF THE BIGGEST ADVANTAGES OF A WELL-RUN DEMO IS THAT IT ALLOWS RIDERS TO FEEL THAT PROGRESSION FOR THEMSELVES. "

He speaks about it with the sort of enthusiasm that only comes when a product really has changed your riding. For Santi, it was the kite that helped unlock his progression into big air. Coming from a freestyle background, he found the Vortex gave him the confidence and consistency to go from no kiteloops to double loops in a year and a half.

He describes it as smooth, intuitive and easy to trust, the kind of kite that lets you focus on what you are doing rather than worrying about where the kite is.

That matters not just for elite riders, but for the people trying it on the demo tour as well. One of the biggest advantages of a well-run demo is that it allows riders to feel that progression

for themselves. Santi has already seen people come off the water having landed something for the first time or having discovered a new level of confidence. Thanks to the Vortex, and he's just been testing the Vortex 2, which he says is even better. Of course, you can ride the new Vortex 2 whenever you see him at the beach this year! That is the sweet spot of the whole project. The best outcome is not a sale. It is a rider returning to the beach with a huge grin and a story about what just clicked.

SUBSCRIBE TO



" HE IS AMBITIOUS,
TALENTED AND
DRIVEN, BUT
HE ALSO
UNDERSTANDS
THAT THE SPORT
IS ABOUT
PEOPLE. "

For 2026, Tarifa is where it all starts for the European leg of the tour. With a demo centre giving riders even more direct access to gear outside the bigger event days. That should make the whole project even more useful for visitors and locals alike, offering a more permanent space where riders can speak to Santi, ask questions about conditions, and try specific kites in a more personalised way.

Looking ahead, Santi is also stepping further into a marketing role within Ozone, learning more about the work that happens behind the scenes while still trying to carve out time for his own progression on the water. Balancing both will not be easy, especially in a sport where the top athletes often dedicate themselves full-time to training. But his ambition is clear, and if the last year has proved anything, it is that he is not afraid of putting in the effort.

In many ways, Santi Cisneros represents something valuable in modern kiteboarding. He is ambitious, talented and driven, but he also understands that the sport is about people. The Ozone Demo Tour works because it is built on that understanding. It gives riders access to great gear, yes, but more importantly, it gives them a reason to gather, to share and to push their own riding forward.

For anyone thinking about turning up to a demo but wondering whether it is really for them, Santi's message is simple. You do not need to be a pro. You do not need to send loops. You just need to come along, have a go and enjoy yourself.

And really, that feels like the whole point.



WORDS RACHAEL HOOPER PHOTOS HUGO MARTIN

LORDS OF TRAM 2026, SURVIVAL OF THE ABSOLUTE BEST

Le Barcarès: A spot where innovation and skill take control. Records are broken, and riders push the limits of Big Air kiteboarding. This event is known as one of the most extreme in the sport for a reason. Lords of Tram 2026 was an edition that had heads turning and questions being asked.



"COLD, POWERFUL AND UNFORGIVING,
THE TRAMONTANA DOESN'T JUST TEST
SKILL, IT TESTS SURVIVAL."

A UNIQUE ARENA

The location is what makes this competition stand out. A unique combination of flat water and freezing temperatures. Located in Leucate on the south coast of France, the area is renowned for the Tramontana, a strong, consistent northwesterly wind that blows over 300 days a year. Due to its offshore direction, it creates flat-water take-offs, something that separates the Big Air "kicker" riders from the flat-water perfectionists.

The competition window opened, and with it, the wind stormed in. Cold, powerful, and unforgiving. March 28th brought a green light for the opening weekend, with winds ranging from 40 to 60+ knots and temperatures sitting in the single digits. For riders who had spent winter training in warmer climates, the cold was a shock. For most of us, adding boots or gloves is just a way to extend a session, but for some of these athletes, it's an entirely new

experience, enough to throw them off completely.

SETTING THE TONE

Twelve of the world's top female Big Air athletes from 11 countries assembled for a fast and dramatic start. At 7:30 a.m., the competition kicked off, ready to set the precedent. In round one, heat one, four-time junior world champion and wildcard entry, 15-year-old Aya Kasabova, stepped up to take the win. With winds ranging from 30–35 knots and the Tramontana in full force, riders searched for the perfect gust to align with on take-off.



BRAINCHILD
PRODUCTION

Digital Printing!



"FLAT WATER TAKE-OFFS SEPARATED THE RIDERS, EXPOSING PRECISION, TIMING AND TOTAL COMMITMENT."

Zara Hoogenraad dominated her opening heat with calmness and consistency, followed closely by previous Lords of Tram fourth-place finisher Sarah Sadek. The round concluded with an incredibly tight heat between current Red Bull King of the Air champion Nathalie Lambrecht (17.29 points) and the sport's most decorated female rider, Mikaili Sol (17.62 points).

One of the most unique aspects of this competition is the viewing experience. The take-off zone runs incredibly close to the beach, creating an arena-like atmosphere for coaches, caddies, and spectators alike. The energy was electric, and the women's opening rounds gave the crowd a taste of what was to come.

PROGRESSION UNDER PRESSURE

Andrea Principi was the headline of the day before even entering the water, with pink hair and a whole new vibe. Cruising through the competition zone with effortless style, he had everyone questioning his game plan. But for him, it was simple: have fun. Despite the relaxed approach, he pushed boundaries, landing a world-first in competition with a board-over-the-lines into a board flip.

Day one wrapped up with some serious progression through the ladders. Some discrepancy in the final heat of the day between current Red Bull King of the Air winner Lorenzo Casatti and Josue 'Baby Shark' meant a rematch was due to settle the debate. Despite Baby Shark's refusal to enter the water and compete in this one-trick heat, it still went ahead. Lorenzo didn't manage to stick the landing, meaning the standings as they were did not change, and Baby Shark was set to compete in the semifinals.



Day two began with even stronger winds. The Tramontana was almost too much; the smallest kites weren't quite small enough. During the women's semifinals, conditions became unmanageable, forcing the heat to be abandoned and restarted later.

WOMEN'S FINAL, CONTROLLING THE CHAOS

The women's final became a battle of style and control in some of the harshest conditions the sport has to offer. The four-rider lineup, Alessa Mensch, Mikaili Sol, Lana Herman, and Zara Hoogenraad, brought together established champions and rising talent.

"AYA KASABOVA SET THE TONE EARLY, FEARLESS, COMPOSED AND READY FOR THE WORLD STAGE."

YOUR LIFETIME IS IRREPLACEABLE
YOUR LIFETIME IS IRREPLACEABLE
YOUR LIFETIME IS IRREPLACEABLE
YOUR LIFETIME IS IRREPLACEABLE



Dare greatly. Live wild.
Your lifetime is irreplaceable.
Call the crew and ride!



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The gusty, unpredictable wind forced riders to prioritise precision over size. Mikaili Sol delivered some of the most technically refined riding of the event, showcasing effortless control at the highest level. But it was Alessa Mensch who stood out, not for a single trick, but for a complete performance. Strong height, commitment, and consistency gave her exactly what the judges were looking for.

Sitting not so quietly in the background were Lana Herman and Zara Hoogenraad, battling it out for third and fourth place. While Zara rode so strongly in every heat leading up to this, Lana's extremity just managed to sneak the upper hand: "You had to be smart out there. Sometimes the best decision was not to go for the biggest trick but the cleanest one".

Final standings saw Zara in fourth, Lana in third, Mikaili in second, and Alessa taking a well-earned victory.

This sport is so special for so many reasons, but one of the best is the support from the athletes to one another. Previous Lords of Tram winner Mika's first reaction after finding out Alessa had taken the win was to go over and congratulate her and tell her how well she had done.

These moments tell a bigger story; the women's field is no longer just progressing, it is evolving rapidly.

MEN'S FINAL, TOTAL DOMINANCE

The men's final was controlled by chaos. Young rider Finn Flugel had a rocky start with a crash on his first trick attempt. The second trick attempt was over before it began; a catastrophic equipment failure set him back three whole tricks.



"ANDREA PRINCIPI PROVED PROGRESSION DOESN'T STOP, EVEN WHEN CONDITIONS ARE AT THEIR WORST."



“ IN THE HARSHTEST CONDITIONS OF THE EVENT, THE WOMEN'S FINAL BECAME A BATTLE OF CONTROL OVER CHAOS. ”

A mid-heat reset with a kite change and a new strategy, he wrestled the momentum back on track.

Then there was Jaime Overbeek.

Already a standout name in Big Air, Overbeek arrived with something to prove after missing out on a Red Bull King of the Air spot, a decision that sparked debate across the kiteboarding world. This competition was a

statement of redemption for the young Dutchman. He came into this wanting to prove to the crowd and competitors why he believed that this decision was the wrong decision, and he did so with flying colours.

His strength for flat water take-offs is like no other. The ability to build up an insane amount of speed and pressure through his

back foot and explode off the water in the way he does is potentially one of the many reasons why he excelled to the top of the podium.

Jaime's performance during the finals was noted as potentially one of, if not the most dominant, finals in history. With a three-trick score, he finished with five whole points between himself and Finn Flugel. A perfect 10 was a world first for Big Air kiteboarding history. He made it, and he deserved it.



Leonardo Casatti and Zac Adams kept their cool in the background whilst all the chaos of this final was unfolding. But Zac Adams had more than one thing on his mind; riding to his best ability came first, but putting on a show came a close second. "When you're out there, you're more focused than ever. You have the whole crowd and everything. I mean, you have to put on a show, right?"

Final standings for the men saw Zac fourth, Leonardo third, Finn second, and Jaime first.

Lords of Tram 2026 delivered exactly what it promised: high drama, extreme conditions, and world-class performance. It validated its status as one of the most demanding and visually spectacular events in global kitesurfing.

As Jaime Overbeek put it:

"At Lords of Tram, you don't just ride, you survive."





All Winds & Styles



Two Seas One Soul



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Wind and Soul Under Your Skin

In Andalucía, the wind doesn't just power your kite - **it shares its soul**. Along more than 800 kilometres of coastline, the meeting of the **Atlantic** and the **Mediterranean** shapes a playground of shifting moods: long glassy runs that feel endless, punchy wave zones that wake you up from the inside, and mellow corners where the southern light wraps everything in gold. Here, the sea is never the same twice. Each tack feels personal, each gust carries its own story, and every ride leaves a trace that stays under your skin long after the salt has dried. Andalucía isn't just a place you ride - it's a place that rides with you. **"Surrender."**



WORDS ROU CHATER

In a sport driven by innovation, it's easy to get lost in the noise of new releases and big marketing campaigns. Roode Boards has taken a different route. No hype, no rush, just a clear focus on building something that works, and doing it properly from the ground up. The result is a brand that's arrived quietly, but is starting to make a serious impact.



BUILT THE HARD WAY

“WE DIDN'T START WITH A BRAND, WE JUST WANTED TO BUILD A BOARD PROPERLY AND SEE WHERE IT WENT.”

Some brands launch with a plan. Big marketing budgets, a full range and polished messaging from day one. Roode didn't do that. This is a brand that started with a machine, a workshop, and a simple idea: build a board properly, or don't bother at all.

There's no big personality fronting it, no loud storytelling. In fact, it's almost the opposite. Marijn van Roode doesn't want to be the frontman and shuns the limelight; he prefers to be in the workshop, getting his hands dirty, and lets the boards do the talking.

Over the 5 years the company has existed, they didn't sell a product for 99% of that time; they worked on getting it right before getting it to market. Once they knew they had something, they looked at marketing on Google and social media, but decided to invest that money into a rider instead. Jamie Overbeek was already on the radar; he loved the way the boards had endless grip, perfect for big air riding.

Roode and Jamie cemented that relationship over the course of the year in 2025, working with him on prototypes and then signing him as a rider in November; their boards weren't publicly available as Marijn was still refining the concepts, but it felt like the perfect time to support Jamie. After his week at Lords of Tram, where Jamie dominated the event and then smashed the WOO world record, it looks like the gamble they took certainly paid off!





“IF YOU’RE GOING TO MAKE SOMETHING, MAKE IT PROPERLY, OR DON’T BOTHER AT ALL.”

When Jamie Overbeek took the win in Le Barcarès on a Roode Graphite, people started paying attention. When he followed that up with his world record of 42.3m in some insanely windy conditions, they started asking questions. Not just about the rider, but about what was under his feet. While everyone obsesses over kites, the board is still doing a huge amount of the work, and Roode exists

because Marijn decided to focus on it.

Like a lot of good ideas, this one didn’t start as a business plan. The roots of Roode go back to the Covid years, when work stopped, everything slowed down, and there was suddenly time to think. Instead of waiting things out, the decision was made to start building something.

The first move was buying a CNC machine. Not a small step, and not a casual experiment. It was a proper investment, based on one simple bit of logic: if you’re going to make

something, make it properly. At that point, there was no real brand and no roadmap to selling boards, just curiosity and a long-standing habit of taking things apart and figuring out how they work.

The first thing cut on the machine was just a rough surf shape in MDF to see what was possible. But that was enough to get things moving, and from there the idea of building a kiteboard took hold.

Twin tips look simple, but they’re not. It became obvious very quickly that making a board that actually rides well is a completely different challenge from just making something that looks the part.

MAJESTIC MAJESTIC MAJESTIC

5:4MM

4:3MM

3:2MM



- 900 Black
- 802 Dark Grey
- 698 Dark Teal

The Majestic was born from an ongoing pursuit of performance, balancing warmth, stretch, and durability in one iconic suit. This season, we've reengineered it from the inside out with next-gen materials that transform how it feels and moves in the water, built for serious flexibility to keep you riding through the cold and beyond.

Yamamoto 40

One of the most advanced neoprene rubbers out there. Yamamoto 40 is limestone-based and built for superior flex. It's got a naturally high rebound and longer lifespan, a lower-impact alternative to petroleum-based neoprene.

MYSTIC

*boundless
waters*



“THE FIRST BOARD WASN'T PRETTY, BUT IT WORKED, AND THAT WAS ENOUGH TO KEEP GOING.”

The first big decision was how to build it. Vacuum construction was an option, but for something that could scale and stay consistent, a press made more sense. That led to another project entirely, building the press itself.

That process took over nine months. This wasn't a hobby-style press to make a few boards, but something they thought could function at scale in the future. It was a serious machine designed to last. The thinking was always the same: if you are going to do it, do it right, even if it takes longer and costs more.

When the first board finally came out of that press, it wasn't pretty. There were air bubbles, rough finishes, and plenty of signs that the learning curve was only just beginning. But it worked. Even with a very basic bottom shape, it rode, edged and jumped well enough to show there was something there.

It then became a process of trial and error. Small changes, testing, refining, then doing it all again. Some ideas worked, others didn't. One early version with heavily curved channels barely wanted to go in a straight line, constantly pulling into turns. It was unusable as a twin tip, but it proved a key point: what happens on the base of the board really matters.

That became the focus. Over time, everything came back to one thing: grip.

Not just in a vague sense, but proper, usable grip. The kind that lets you hold an edge when the wind is strong and the water is messy. The kind that builds real line tension and gives you confidence on take-off. That's where a lot of boards fall short. They feel fine in easy conditions, but start to slip when you push harder.

“WE REALISED QUICKLY THAT WHAT YOU DO ON THE BOTTOM OF THE BOARD REALLY MATTERS.”

Roode went the other way. Every detail underneath the board was designed around that idea. Channels, concaves, release points, and angles all working together to give you something solid to push against. Because if you can't hold your edge, nothing else really matters.

Right now, the range is simple: two boards, the Silica and the Graphite. The Silica was the first to come together and sits as the more all-round option. It's built for freeride and big air, but also for everyday sessions, something that works whether you're pushing your limits or just out riding.

The feedback on that board has been strong. Riders jumping on it and immediately feeling comfortable, but also noticing how much grip it offers when they start to push harder. It's a board that doesn't demand too much, but still gives plenty back.

The Graphite takes things further. It shares the same outline and overall concept, but with a more advanced bottom shape and a more performance-driven feel. It's aimed at riders who want to push harder, load more power and get more out of their take-offs.

One of the key features is the central keel-style shaping through the base. It helps break the surface tension on landing and improves tracking when edging hard. At the same time, the board is designed to stay light under your feet. That balance is important. You can create grip, but if it comes with heavy back leg pressure, it becomes tiring over longer sessions.





“EVERYTHING CAME BACK TO ONE THING, GRIP, BECAUSE IF YOU CAN'T HOLD YOUR EDGE, NOTHING ELSE MATTERS.”

A lot of that refinement came through working with Jamie Overbeek. At that level, feedback becomes very specific. It's no longer about whether something feels good, it's about whether it holds up under real pressure, long sessions, strong wind, big loads, and no room for weakness.

Reducing leg fatigue, improving release and

keeping the board predictable when everything is maxed out were all part of that process. By the time Lords of Tram came around, the board had already been tested hard, but that was the first time it was out there in full view.

Lords of Tram is not an easy place to introduce a product. The conditions are extreme, the level is high, and if something is going to fail, that's where it happens. Seeing the board perform there, under a rider like Jamie, carries weight. Winning the

event was one thing, but the consistency and control in those conditions said just as much. Clean take-offs, strong edging and the ability to hold it together when others were struggling.

Whether you focus on records or not, it showed what the setup could handle in extreme conditions, not just in testing.

What Roode is doing feels different in a market that often moves fast and focuses heavily on marketing cycles. There's no rush to release a full range or cover every category. The focus is on getting a few things right and building from there.



“ YOU CAN HAVE THE BEST KITE IN THE WORLD,
BUT IF THE BOARD ISN'T WORKING, YOU'RE
LEAVING A LOT ON THE TABLE ”

That approach comes with challenges.

Production is still hands-on, every board is built individually, and growth takes time. But it also means control over the process and consistency in what's being produced.

The next step is building a solid base, working with schools, shops and riders, and getting more boards out into the real world. Letting people try them, ride them and make up their own minds.

Beyond that, there are plans to expand. New materials are already being explored, with a focus on improving environmental impact without compromising performance. It's not an easy balance, but it's part of the long-term thinking behind the brand.

It's easy to overlook the board in kiteboarding. Riders will often invest heavily in kites while continuing to ride the same board for years. But the board is where everything connects. It's what turns power into edge, and edge into height.

If that part isn't working, you're always going to be limited.

Roode's approach is built around that idea. Not flashy, not overcomplicated, just focused on making a board that does its job properly, every time you load it up. And based on what we've seen so far, it's doing exactly that.

"SEEING IT PERFORM AT LORDS OF TRAM,
THAT'S WHEN IT STOPPED BEING A PROJECT
AND BECAME SOMETHING REAL."



WORDS ROU CHATER

TECH FOCUS

HARLEM FLOW

PRECISION, DRIFT AND CONTROL, REDEFINED FOR THE MODERN WAVE RIDER

Wave riding has always been about feel. It is the discipline in kiteboarding, where subtlety matters more than spectacle and control outweighs raw power. The new Harlem Flow arrives with that philosophy at its core, a dedicated wave kite designed not to dominate the session, but to disappear into it. Built for riders who want to focus purely on the wave, it promises precision, drift and a level of predictability that lets you commit fully to the steepest of sections.



"THE FLOW IS DESIGNED TO DISAPPEAR, LETTING YOU FOCUS ENTIRELY ON THE WAVE."



There is a certain purity to wave riding with a kite. Strip away the megaloops, the hangtime and the spectacle, and what remains is something far more nuanced. Timing, positioning, feel. It is about reading the ocean and letting the kite take a back seat, becoming almost invisible. That is exactly the space the new Harlem Flow is designed to occupy.

Developed by Ralf Groesel and Aaron Hadlow, the Flow is Harlem's dedicated wave kite, a clean-sheet design focused entirely on surf performance. No crossover ambitions, no compromise. Just a kite built to sit in the pocket, drift when needed, and respond instantly when called upon.

At its core, the Flow reflects a very deliberate design philosophy. Everything about it points towards control, predictability and connection to the wave rather than raw power or explosive lift. In a market where many kites aim to do everything, the Flow stands out by doing one thing exceptionally well.

BUILT FOR THE POCKET

Wave kites live and die by their drift, and Harlem has clearly prioritised this from the outset. The Flow is designed to sit exactly where you place it, holding position down the line without surging forward or stalling unpredictably. This stability is what allows

riders to fully commit to their riding, especially in critical sections where hesitation is not an option.

In onshore and side-shore conditions, where maintaining tension in the lines can be tricky, this becomes even more important. The Flow's balanced drift keeps it responsive even when the lines momentarily slacken, giving riders the confidence to focus entirely on their turns rather than babysitting the kite.

This sense of "set and forget" positioning is what separates a true wave kite from a freeride crossover. The Flow is not trying to pull you off the wave; it is there to support your movement, not dictate it.



" BALANCED DRIFT AND PRECISE POSITIONING GIVE YOU THE CONFIDENCE TO COMMIT TO EVERY TURN. "

COMPACT DESIGN, FAST RESPONSE

The Flow uses a low-aspect, three-strut platform with a compact outline. This combination is key to its turning characteristics. Rather than sweeping through large arcs, the kite pivots tightly, allowing for quick redirection in the pocket in onshore conditions.

This tight turning radius is particularly noticeable during bottom turns and cranking top turns. The kite reacts immediately to input, but without feeling twitchy or overly sensitive. It is a controlled responsiveness in which speed is matched with stability.

The three-strut layout also helps reduce overall weight while maintaining sufficient structure to keep the canopy stable in gusty conditions. The PROWELD further reduces the kite's weight while increasing the stiffness of the leading edge. The result is a kite that feels light in the air, but maintains smooth handling in gusty or overpowered conditions.

PREDICTABLE POWER DELIVERY

One of the defining characteristics of the Flow is its smooth and predictable power delivery. This is not a kite that surprises you. Instead, it builds power progressively, allowing riders to anticipate exactly how it will behave through each phase of a turn.

Bar pressure is kept deliberately light, reducing fatigue over long sessions while still providing enough feedback to know where the kite is at all times. This balance is crucial. Too light, and the connection is lost. Too heavy, and it becomes a distraction. The Flow sits comfortably in the middle, offering clarity without effort.



PLANK SERIES

LIGHTWIND / PROGRESSION



- PAULOWNIA WOODCORE
- 100% MADE IN EUROPE
- TAPERED OUTLINE



- ASYMETRICAL DOUBLE CONCAVE
- IMPROVED WATER FLOW
- EARLY PLANING FLAT ROCKER
- FORGIVING FLEX



This predictability extends across a wide range of conditions. Whether underpowered in marginal surf or holding it together in stronger winds, the kite maintains a consistent feel. That consistency is what allows riders to push harder, knowing the kite will respond exactly as expected.

RELAUNCH AND USABILITY

Wave riding does not always go to plan. Missed sections, mistimed turns, or simply getting caught inside can all lead to time in the water. The Flow addresses this with a straightforward and reliable relaunch.

A single pull on a steering line is enough to roll the kite onto its side and bring it back into the air. The process is quick and predictable, which is exactly what you want when waves are approaching and time is limited.

This ease of use reinforces the kite's overall philosophy. It is designed to minimise complications, allowing riders to stay focused on the conditions rather than equipment management.

ADVANCED CONSTRUCTION

Beyond its on-water behaviour, the Flow incorporates a range of modern construction techniques aimed at improving both performance and durability.

The PROWELD leading edge is a standout feature, increasing structural integrity while reducing weight. By welding rather than stitching the leading edge sections, Harlem achieves a cleaner and more consistent frame, which translates into better load distribution and long-term reliability.

The struts use laminated Mylar, a material choice that helps maintain rigidity without adding unnecessary bulk. This contributes to the kite's responsive feel while ensuring it holds its shape under pressure.

"IT REACTS INSTANTLY WHEN YOU NEED IT, YET STAYS COMPOSED WHEN IT MATTERS MOST."



" SMOOTH, PREDICTABLE POWER DELIVERY KEEPS EVERYTHING UNDER CONTROL IN CRITICAL SECTIONS. "



The canopy itself is built from FlyLite material, chosen for its lightweight properties and efficient energy transfer. A lighter canopy reacts faster to input and drifts more effectively, both critical factors in wave riding.

Together, these elements create a kite that feels refined and purpose-built, rather than over-engineered.

EIGHT-POINT BRIDLE SYSTEM

A key part of the Flow's handling comes from its newly developed eight-point bridle system. This setup,

combined with a floating tip pulley, allows for more direct steering input while maintaining stability across the wind window.

The benefit here is twofold. First, it enhances turning precision, giving riders a more immediate connection to the kite. Second, it adds a level of forgiveness, smoothing out aggressive inputs and helping maintain control in turbulent conditions.

Bridle design often goes unnoticed, but it plays a crucial role in how a kite feels. In the Flow, it is clear that significant attention has been paid to refining this

balance between responsiveness and stability.

SUSTAINABILITY AND PRODUCTION

The Flow is produced at Brainchild Production in Europe, reflecting Harlem's commitment to more sustainable manufacturing processes. This includes the use of advanced materials and digital eco-printing technology, reducing waste and environmental impact.

While sustainability is becoming more common across the industry, Harlem's approach integrates it directly into the product without compromising performance.

An aerial photograph showing two kitesurfers on a wide, sandy beach. Two colorful kites, one blue and green with a white 'Y' logo and the number '09', are visible on the sand. The ocean waves are breaking on the right side of the frame. The background shows a rocky, vegetated dune area.

" A REFINED BRIDLE SYSTEM BRINGS TOGETHER AGILITY, FORGIVENESS AND CONSISTENT HANDLING. "

The kite remains fully customisable, allowing riders to personalise their setup while maintaining a responsible production footprint.

FINAL THOUGHTS

For riders who want to surf waves with minimal interference from their kite, the Flow offers exactly the kind of performance needed to stay connected to the ocean. Fast when required, stable when it matters, and always predictable, it aims to deliver a riding experience that feels intuitive from the first session.

In a category where subtle differences make a huge impact, the Flow stands out by getting the fundamentals right. It does not shout for attention, but once on the water, it quietly does everything you need it to.



MATCHA LOPES



GARY SISKAR



SANTI CISNEROS



STEVEN AKKERSDIJK



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RIDER MATCHA LOPES
PHOTO TOBY BROMWICH



WORDS ROU CHATER
PHOTOS LIEUWE

TECH FOCUS

LIEUWE BRUTE

The Lieuwe Brute is built with a clear and uncompromising focus, Big Air performance with maximum control. Designed for riders pushing into strong wind and demanding conditions, the Brute is all about delivering grip, stability and confidence when it matters most.



" IT MAINTAINS ITS ROCKER AND SHAPE,
ALLOWING RIDERS TO GENERATE
ENORMOUS AMOUNTS OF POP "



At the core of the board is a hybrid fibre construction inspired by the aerospace industry. By combining carbon, fibreglass and Kevlar, Lieuwe has created a layup that targets a precise balance between strength, stiffness and durability. This construction is designed to keep the board incredibly stable under load, maintaining its rocker and overall shape even when fully powered. The result is a solid and predictable feel, particularly at speed, giving riders the confidence to commit when pushing their limits.

This stiffness plays a key role in how the Brute performs. Built for powered riding, the board is designed to hold its edge during high-speed take-offs and aggressive edging. Rather than flexing and deforming under back leg pressure, it maintains its rocker and shape, allowing riders to generate enormous amounts of pop but also maintain full control in stronger conditions.

Grip is another defining feature. The Brute uses deep channels and an aggressive base shape to create a locked-in feel when edging. This translates into strong edge hold, helping riders maintain control and hold power even in the roughest conditions. The board is designed to feel planted and precise, especially when loading up for take-off.

Control extends beyond take-off and into landings. The Brute is engineered for instant recovery after touchdown, catching quickly even at high speed. This allows riders to regain control immediately and continue riding without losing momentum, an important factor in powered Big Air sessions and competitions.



The development of the Brute has been driven by rider feedback, with input from customers, ambassadors and team riders shaping its final design. The result is a board tuned through adjustments to stiffness, channels and outline, all working together to deliver a responsive and controlled ride in demanding environments.

Aimed at riders tackling strong wind and challenging conditions, the Brute is less forgiving than some of the other boards in the Lieuwe range, but it offers the pinnacle of performance. It is built for those who prioritise control, grip and stability when riding powered.

The board is available in four sizes, 132 x 39, 135 x 40, 137 x 40 and 141 x 41, with fin options of 45 mm or 30 mm, allowing riders to tailor their setup. Each board is crafted individually, so check with Lieuwe on production times. The Brute is available to order now!



"IT IS BUILT FOR THOSE WHO PRIORITISE CONTROL, GRIP AND STABILITY WHEN RIDING POWERED."



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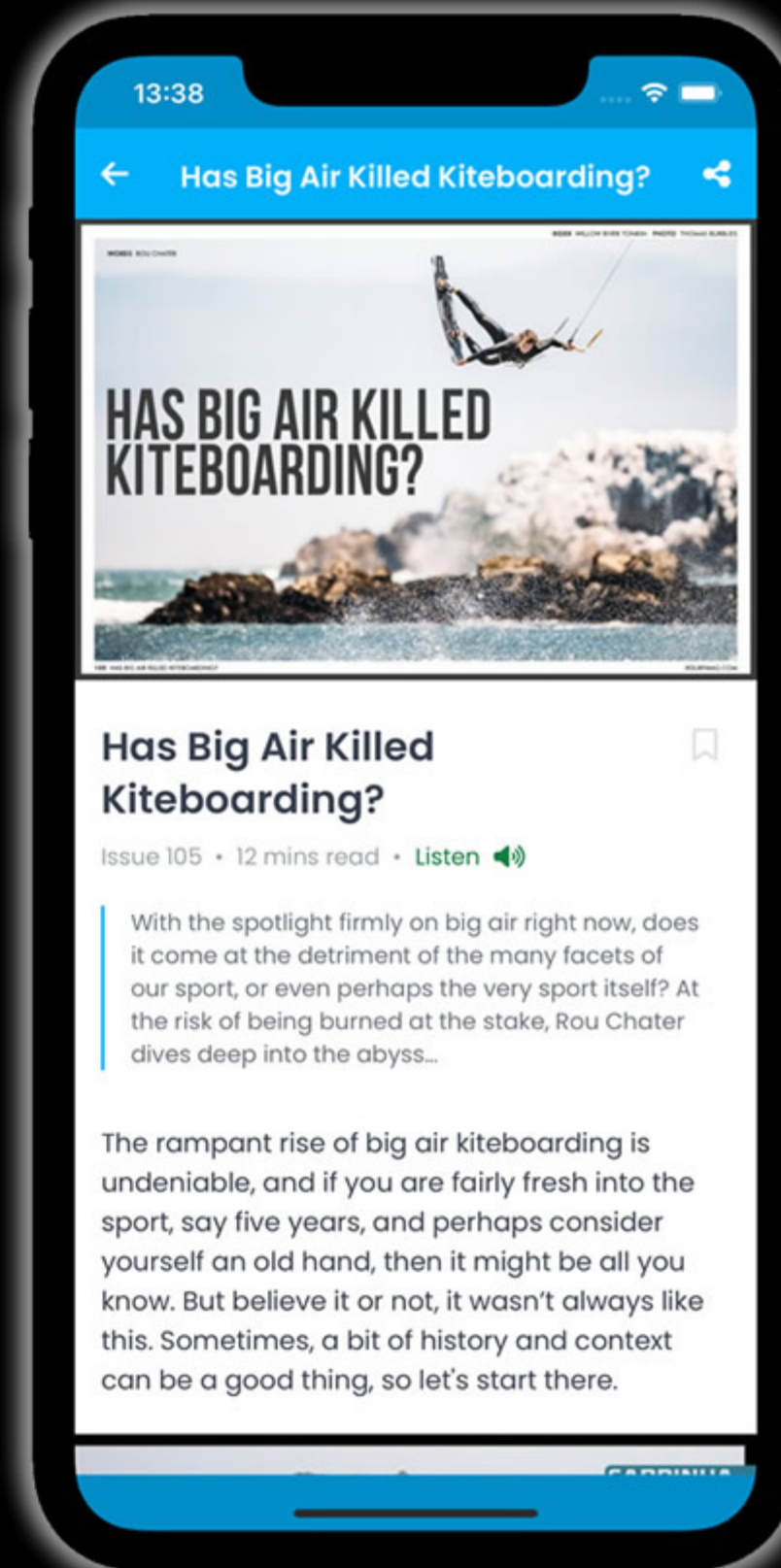
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WORDS ROU CHATER

TECH FOCUS

LIEUWE SHOTGUN AIR

The Lieuwe Shotgun Air is designed as a step forward in big Air progression, based on the incredibly popular Shotgun model it combines increased performance with a familiar and accessible feel. Positioned as a board for riders looking to push higher and ride more powered, it focuses on delivering more speed, more grip and greater control, without sacrificing comfort.



Building on the foundation of the Shotgun, this updated version introduces a refined outline and added channels to enhance overall performance. These design changes are aimed at increasing speed and control on the water, allowing riders to build power more easily and translate that into more effective take-offs. The result is a board that feels faster and more composed, while still maintaining a smooth and forgiving ride.

A key element of the Shotgun Air is its balance between stiffness and flex. The slightly stiffer flex pattern creates a more direct and responsive feel, helping the board react instantly to rider input. This makes it easier to hold an edge when powered and gives a more connected feel during take-off. At the same time, enough flex is retained to absorb chop and maintain comfort, ensuring the board remains manageable in everyday conditions.

Grip and control are further enhanced through the use of angled fins and increased overall grip. This setup is designed to provide more confidence during both take-offs and landings. Riders can hold their edge longer when loading up for a jump, and land with greater stability, even at speed. The added control supports progression into bigger moves, particularly in powered conditions.

"THE RESULT IS A BOARD THAT FEELS FASTER AND MORE COMPOSED, WHILE STILL MAINTAINING A SMOOTH AND FORGIVING RIDE."





**" MAINTAINING CONTROL AND
REDUCING FATIGUE ARE JUST AS
IMPORTANT AS PERFORMANCE. "**

Speed is another defining feature. The refined outline and additional channels help the board generate speed more efficiently, which translates directly into more powerful take-offs and increased jump height. This allows riders to access higher performance without needing perfect technique, making progression more achievable.

Despite these performance upgrades, comfort remains a central part of the design. The Shotgun Air retains the smooth and forgiving feel associated with the original Shotgun, allowing it to handle choppy conditions with ease. This makes it suitable for longer sessions, where maintaining control and reducing fatigue are just as important as performance.

Aimed at riders looking to progress into Big Air without giving up comfort, the Shotgun Air offers a carefully tuned balance between performance and forgiveness. It is built to help riders take the next step, providing the speed, grip and control needed to go bigger, while keeping the ride accessible and confidence-inspiring.



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WORDS ROU CHATER
PHOTOS RIDE ENGINE

TECH FOCUS

RIDE ENGINE CHARGER HELMET

Big air has never been more extreme. Riders are going higher, faster, and pushing harder than ever before, and with that progression comes a shift in how we think about safety. Helmets are no longer reserved for stormy days or when you are learning. They are becoming part of the conversation at every level of the sport.





**" ANYONE WHO HAS TAKEN A
HIGH-SPEED SLAM KNOWS THAT
WATER CAN FEEL LIKE CONCRETE. "**

Ride Engine's Charger helmet is built specifically for modern water use, not borrowed from another discipline, and it arrives at a time when protection is starting to feel less optional and more essential.

BIG AIR CHANGES THE SAFETY EQUATION

Kiteboarding has always carried an element of risk, but the pace of progression in recent years has taken things to another level.

With riders regularly hitting serious height and speed, crashes are no longer just about losing an edge or mistiming a landing. When things go wrong, the impact with the water can be heavy, unpredictable, and occasionally disorientating. Anyone who has taken a high-speed slam knows that water can feel like concrete.

In big air, the combination of vertical drop and forward momentum creates a unique type of impact. Riders can fall from a significant height, often still travelling downwind at speed, increasing both the force and the complexity of the crash. It is not just about the initial hit either; it is the rotational forces, the secondary impacts, and the potential for losing consciousness in the sea, which is the worst-case scenario.

This is the environment the Charger has been designed for.

WHY TRADITIONAL HELMETS FALL SHORT

Most helmets used in watersports today come from other disciplines. Wakeboarding, kayaking, and even cycling designs are often waterproofed and sold to us. While they offer protection, they are not designed for the way kiteboarders interact with the water.

The biggest issue is drag.

"THAT SMALL DIFFERENCE IN BEHAVIOUR HAS A BIG IMPACT ON HOW FORCES ARE TRANSFERRED DURING IMPACT."



Bulky, high-volume helmets tend to catch water during a crash, creating a sudden stop at the head while the body continues moving. That mismatch can increase strain on the neck and amplify the forces involved in the impact.

They can also feel awkward in the water. Whether you are body dragging, relaunching your kite, or getting worked in waves, excess volume creates resistance and discomfort.

The result is simple: if a helmet feels restrictive or awkward, most riders will not wear it.

Ride Engine's approach with the Charger is to remove those barriers.

HYDRODYNAMICS FIRST

The defining feature of the Charger is its low-profile design.

Instead of sitting away from the head like a traditional "bucket" helmet, it fits close to the skull, following the natural shape of the head. This reduces drag and allows the helmet to move cleanly through the water during a crash.

Rather than slapping onto the surface, the Charger is

designed to penetrate it. That small difference in behaviour has a big impact on how forces are transferred during impact.

For big air riders, where high-speed crashes are part of progression, this hydrodynamic efficiency is a key advantage. It reduces the abrupt deceleration that can happen with bulkier helmets and helps the helmet stay stable and in position when it matters most.

It is a subtle shift in design thinking, but one that directly reflects how kiteboarders actually ride.

MATERIALS AND IMPACT PROTECTION

At its core, the Charger is still about protection.

The outer shell is constructed from injected glass-filled nylon, chosen for its strength and durability. Inside, EVA impact foam is used to absorb and disperse energy from collisions, whether that is with the water, your board, or in rare cases, another rider.

Unlike single-impact helmets designed to crush and be replaced, the Charger is built for repeated use in real-world conditions. Kite sessions rarely involve one big crash; they involve multiple falls, hits, and resets, and the helmet is designed to handle that reality.

It also meets CE certification standards, ensuring it passes recognised impact testing for hard-object protection, an important benchmark as helmets become more common in the sport.

A DIFFERENT APPROACH TO FIT

Fit is where the Charger really separates itself.

Instead of relying on dial systems or mechanical adjusters, Ride Engine has gone for a customisable internal fit using EVA inserts. The helmet comes in two shell sizes, and riders fine-tune the fit by adding or adjusting padding inside.

It is a simple idea, but highly effective.

By eliminating moving parts, the helmet stays lighter and avoids the long-term issues that can come with saltwater exposure. At the same time, it allows for a much more precise fit.

Once dialled in, the helmet feels secure and stable, with minimal movement even during heavy wipeouts. That locked-in feel is crucial because a helmet that shifts on impact is far less effective.

" KITE SESSIONS RARELY INVOLVE ONE BIG CRASH; THEY INVOLVE MULTIPLE FALLS, HITS, AND RESETS "





"THAT SMALL DIFFERENCE IN BEHAVIOUR HAS A BIG IMPACT ON HOW FORCES ARE TRANSFERRED DURING IMPACT."

It takes a little time to get right, but the end result is worth it.

PROTECTION WHERE IT MATTERS

One of the standout features of the Charger is the extended protection around the ears and upper jaw. In kiteboarding, side impacts are more common than many riders realise. Whether it is your board rebounding in a crash or an awkward landing, the sides of the head can be vulnerable.

The Charger addresses this with EVA padding that wraps around these key areas, offering additional coverage without significantly increasing bulk.

Importantly, this protection is adjustable. Riders who prioritise hearing and reduced wind noise can trim or remove sections of the padding, adapting the helmet to suit their riding style and conditions.

That flexibility makes it just as relevant for freeride sessions as it is for high-wind big air.

THE BIGGER PICTURE

There is a clear shift happening in kiteboarding.

Helmets are becoming more visible, not just among beginners, but at the highest levels of the sport. As progression continues, the risks become harder to ignore, and the stigma around protective gear is slowly fading.

Snowboarding went through the same transition years ago. What was once rare is now standard.

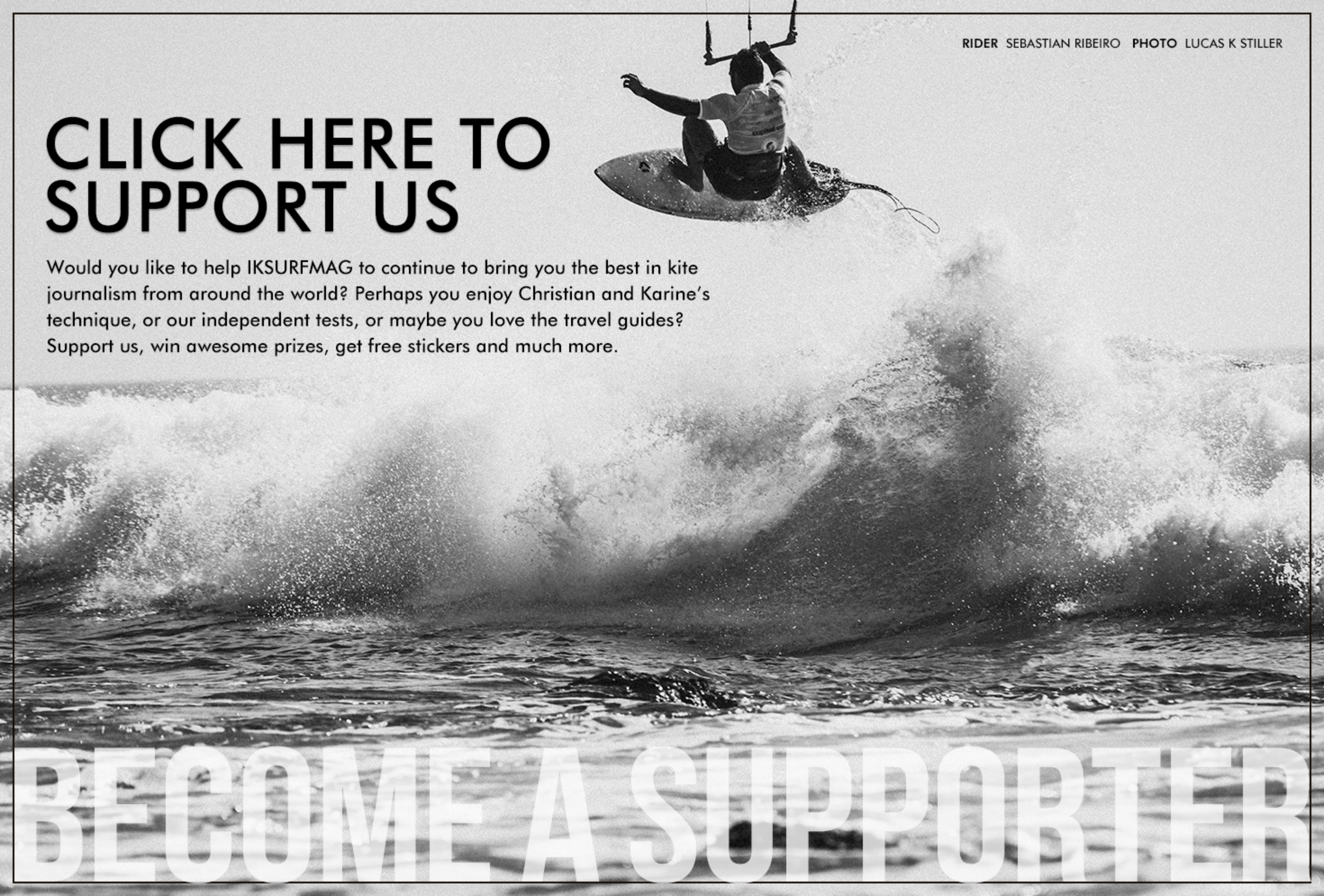


"THE QUESTION IS NO LONGER WHETHER HELMETS MAKE SENSE; IT IS WHEN THEY WILL BECOME THE NORM."

Kiteboarding is not quite there yet, but it is moving in that direction.

The Charger is a reflection of that shift. It is not just about protection; it is about making helmets that riders actually want to wear. The Ride Engine Charger Helmet is not trying to reinvent safety; it is refining it for the realities of modern kiteboarding. By focusing on hydrodynamics, fit, and real-world usability, Ride Engine has created a helmet that feels purpose-built for the sport rather than adapted from something else.

As big air continues to push boundaries and everyday riding speeds increase, the question is no longer whether helmets make sense; it is when they will become the norm. Products like the Charger suggest that the shift is already underway.



RIDER SEBASTIAN RIBEIRO PHOTO LUCAS K STILLER

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WORDS & PHOTOS CHRISTIAN & KARINE



Spring is most definitely the air. No matter where you're from, it feels good to be there. Whilst nature puts on its most resplendent of shows, all cherry blossoms and bouncing lambs, things are certainly starting to warm up here in Europe. Finally, the gloves are off and the cold flush of a wipe-out is more of a grin than grimace inducing shock. Which must surely mean that there's absolutely no reason not to have a go at something new...

First off, we're polishing your beach start, looking at the two footed version. No more ungainly hopping around with one foot in the strap. This one's more drop the board and spring on. Then it's onto the beach bounce transition. Buckets full of fun, definitely some humorous slow-mo tumbles in the making, but once nailed, you'll be the Don:)

Cheerio:)

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1 / HOW TO TWO FOOT BEACH START



CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE

2 / HOW TO TWO BEACH BOUNCE TRANSITION



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HOW TO TWO FOOT BEACH START ►

Kite - FX2 7m Board - Ace 135

Some time back we took you through a beach start method where you anchor the board by putting one foot in the front strap to stop it misbehaving and running off whilst you fly the kite. As effective a method as that may be, the launch can often be preceded by a game of hop scotch as you pogo around on one leg waiting for the perfect moment and your kite to support you. In still water this patience is often rewarded, but once nature starts to move the goalposts things can get a little more interesting. Enter the 2 foot springing solution. By standing on both feet before springing into your straps, you'll be more dynamic, possibly more stylish and definitely more effective.

All the principals are much the same, bar the hopping, so let's see how you're going to add this beauty to your box of tricks. We'd highly recommend not learning this in onshore conditions unless you have a lot of space and water down wind. Avoid rocky bottoms, sea urchins, mussel beds and a crashing shore-break! You get the picture.

PREP PIC A

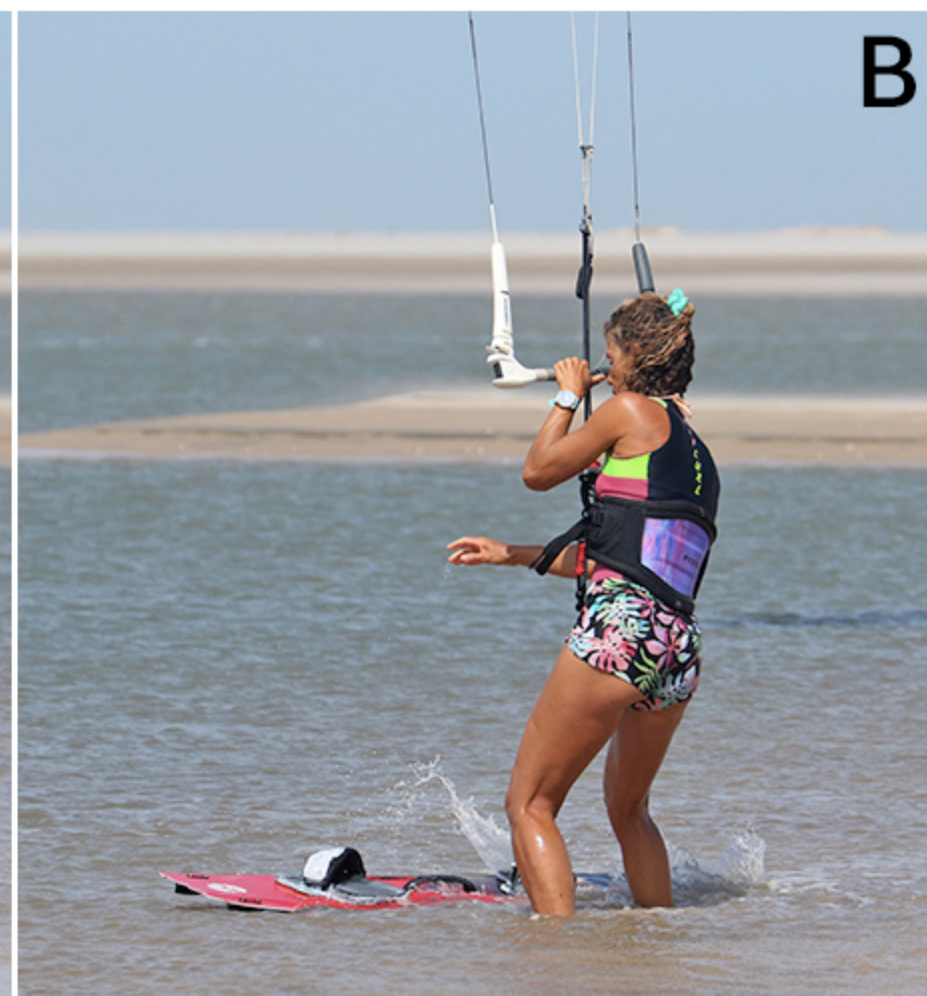
How deep you need to start will depend on the spot, wind direction and space. Ideally you don't want to be any deeper than half way up your shin. This gives you a good balance between a soft landing if you get it wrong, and an easy enough spring onto the board. Hold the board in your rear hand and control the kite



with your front hand. A handle will make this a lot simpler. If you don't have one hold the board in the middle on the toe side edge. Position your kite behind you, as you would to water start. In this case as Karine will be riding off to her left, she positions her kite between 12:30 and 1 o'clock. Keep a little tension in your steering lines to help keep your kite stable. This is your ready position. Walk in like this and you'll avoid all sorts of faffing around, swapping hands, repositioning the kite, dropping the board, and generally getting all out of sorts as you rush to get ready.

BOARD DROP PIC B

Have yourself a last little check that the coast is clear.



Make sure that you have your back into the wind. This will help get the board in the right place and give you the best support when trying to get on it. You want the board in front and in front! By this we mean slightly down wind of you, and slightly to the side that you'll be going. This allows you to jump with the pull of the kite. You can either drop or place the board in front of you. Dropping it has the benefit of being quicker and you can get the board further away from you. Drop the board so that it lands a little tail and heel side edge first. This means that the board will move away from you, rather than cork back at you! The board should lie across the wind, or ever so slightly up wind, but definitely not pointing off the wind. This will give you a solid platform to land on.



Whilst learning, if the board does skew off at the wrong angle you can push either the nose or tail with a foot to get it positioned correctly. However, once you've got it sussed, you'll want this to be quick. You can see that Karine has dropped her board in front of her, tail and heel side edge first, whilst keeping tension on her lines. She's ready.

POWER UP PIC C

Time to get the kite moving. The idea is much the same as the one footed variant, you want your kite to move up and over 12 o'clock so that it offers you lift and support. You need to be positive; you are stationary! With both hands now on the bar steer your



kite forward to get it moving. Make sure that your bar is on the sweet spot so that you'll feel the lift and the kite traces the edge of the window. As you do this concentrate on the board. With two hands on her bar, Karine steers her kite forward whilst looking at her straps and waits to feel the kite lift.

LEVEL & JUMP PIC D

Although this is a 2 footed beach start, you'll realistically be quick stepping:) What we mean is that you'll be leading with your rear foot, so it'll be the first one off the seabed. You won't be springing off both feet at exactly the same time. The idea is to use the lift from the kite to float you up a few centimetres and



support you whilst you slot your feet in. By going back foot first it'll keep the nose up and prevent you from submarining. As you feel the kite lift, level the bar so that the kite slows down and doesn't hammer down toward the water. With the bar level and your eyes on your rear strap, spring up off your front foot, pulling on the bar if you need some extra juice and aim your back foot at the strap. You can see that Karine has levelled her bar, has her eyes on the prize and is going back foot first.

BACK FOOT HOKEY COKEY PIC E

Even though you'll be landing rear foot first to stop the nose from sinking, you do need to keep your weight



centred. This way with the kite's support you'll stay balanced. If you lean back against the kite or towards the back of the board, you'll slide the board away and dip your cheeks in the water. Stay upright and guide your rear foot in with your leg. Karine guides her foot in whilst keeping the bar level, herself upright, whilst using the kite for support. As her back foot homes in on the strap Karine can lift her front leg.

FRONT FOOT HOKEY COKEY PIC F

Looking at the front strap and still supported under the kite, Karine jams her front foot in too. Rah, rah, rah!

F



POWER ON PIC G

With the kite moving slowly forward and both feet roundabouts where they belong, your need to direct your effort to the somewhat urgent need of kiting. The kite's support won't last long, so first job is to get your kite moving faster, so dive it. It will be so very tempting to pull on the bar as the support fades, but if you do, you'll stall your kite and dip your derriere. Focus on keeping the bar on the sweet spot whilst push-pulling to dive your kite and generate power through movement. As you do this, wiggle your feet so that they slide fully into the straps

and look forwards. Karine is diving her kite, and rather than lean back looking for power, she sits her weight onto her heels whilst keeping her upper body upright and bar on the sweet spot.

EDGE AND CONTROL PIC H

Once the kite pulls you can then look upwind, get back onto your edge and take your kite back up. As the power comes on, Karine turns her head upwind, engages her edge, moves her hips back into her riding stance, drives against it, and steers her kite back up to keep the power on and her kite dry.

G



TOP TIPS

The best way to learn this beach start is to break it into 2 parts, firstly the lift, spring and get your feet in. The emphasis here should be to land comfortably with both feet in the straps and the kite supporting you. Without the dive you'll then drop slowly back into the water, and as you do you can dive the kite to pull you back up. Once you're comfortable with this you can then anticipate the drop and dive the kite earlier and earlier until you exit dry and relatively powered.

Have a look at the sequence and videos to see the complete move, and also the video to see the movement of the kite.

COMMON PROBLEMS

The most common mistake is to start with the kite too high. If you start with the kite at 12 o'clock, the power will not come on until the kite pulls low and forward. The result is you get pulled across the front of the board, whilst manically attempting to lean back against the power. You'll either catapult over the front or have the board tea tray out in front of you as you fly off the back. Remember, you need the lift to support you getting on, and then the power to ride off.

If you are getting the lift but still seem to be sliding off the back of the board, it's the result of the board pointing too far off the wind.

If you keep dropping back into the water, regardless of what you do, make a point of focusing on what your arms and harness do. Your arms are just for steering the kite, and your harness should be taking your weight. If you hold onto the power through the bar you're both unable to steer the kite nor control it from the sweet spot.

KEYSTONES

1. Kite just behind you.
2. Bar in front hand, board in back hand.
3. Drop board across the wind, steer kite up and over.
4. Go up with lift, back foot first.
5. Once in, dive hard.



HOW TO BEACH BOUNCE TRANSITION ▶

Kite - Switchblade 9m Board - Ace 138

This is a beautifully fun move in its own right, and the first step to a stylish press. You've likely seen a picture or a clip of someone doing this, either on soft sand or far less sensibly on a solid object! It's a great one to add to your armoury and if you choose the right time and spot to try, the worst that can happen is you risk looking a tad silly sticking to the sand and not making it back into nature's finest.

In its basic form the beach bounce is an air gybe, a jump transition, so there's your starting point - if you have them nailed then it's all systems go. First and foremost, if you'd like to change direction you don't want too much forward momentum. Secondly when you're in the air and chilling you need the kite round about above you at 12 o'clock so that it supports you and is ready when you need it. And finally, you'll need a good old-fashioned hefty dive to pull you back the other way for a crisp landing. Oh yes, and having some power and the sweet spot trimmed slightly away from you will certainly help. The "only" difference is that to start with you'll not be wanting much height, as you'll be deliberately stopping on your board before lifting off again to go the other way.

Before haring off down to the beach to give this a go it's wise to recognise that some spots lend themselves to this whilst others don't. Wind direction will make or break this trick, as will what you're landing on - so please wait for another day if the wind is onshore or cross onshore to your chosen sand bar, and the only



obstacle is a barnacle encrusted rusty groin in 5cm of water! Basically, find some sand, preferably next to deep water and the Holy Grail will be cross off so that you'll naturally be blown away from Terra Firma.

Today we're going though how to learn your first beach bounce so that you can get yourself back into the drink. Here we go...

APPROACH PIC A

Having chosen your lump of sand, give yourself plenty of run up so that you can approach as for an air gybe. This means on a good edge, weight low in anticipation of your send, sweet spot positioned away from you and of course having checked that the coast is clear. It's OK to have speed so that you can get



comfortable and feel the tension in your lines, as long as you have space to slow down before take-off. Here Christian is all business in his approach, bit of speed, good edge, eyes on the sand ahead.

TAKE OFF PIC B

To preface the take-off, it's worth pondering that to get a feel for distance, it's better to start further away and take off too early, not quite making it to your chosen sandbar, in preference to screaming in, over-shooting and cartwheeling up the beach! As you approach your chosen grains, slow down by easing the bar out a bit. This will also turn you upwind a tad more. Send the kite gently, from either 11 or 1 o'clock, you don't want huge! The good news is that your bar is your break.



By holding your edge and keeping your weight low you can instantly wipe off speed by simply letting the bar out more. You can see Christian is still on a solid edge, he's steering his kite up and has feathered the bar out to slow down.

TAKE OFF PIC C

The take off is 'a la jump transition', you will help the kite by kicking up off your edge with your back leg, rather than waiting for the kite to lift you. That said, in a jump transition, you'll level your bar pre kick to stop it right above you. Here you can keep the gentle send so that the kite does move a bit further back. By doing this you've thrown the parachute out the back.



Stamp against your edge to kick yourself up, using your rear leg. Now a very important piece of the puzzle. As you kick off, pull the bar. Nothing special to see here? Well, with the kite in the rear half of the window, pulling in the bar puts tension in your parachute and slows you down. You can see how Christian has let his kite drift a bit further back whilst he kicks off and then pulls the bar in.

NOSE UP PIC D

As you take off you need to consider what's coming. When you "stop" it should be on the tail of your board, not the nose, not the edge and definitely not the whole thing. From the tail you can bounce back.



Any other part of the board will either dig in or stick to the sand! Whilst getting airborne lean back slightly and keep your front foot up. In this position you can use your bar to control height. Keep it in to keep moving forward, let it out to lower yourself down. As Christian kicks off, he leans slightly back, lifting his front leg and leading with his board as he approaches the sand.

STOP! PIC E

You're aiming to land on the tail of your board and momentarily stop. This is the plant. As long as you get the tail down first, you'll be good. You can clearly see that Christian has his front knee raised, is still leaning



back and is pushing his back leg and the tail of the board down onto the sand. To help with this planting action Christian has also pushed the bar away so that his weight drops onto the tail and he's looking down so he can aim the board. Ideally you'll be landing with your kite just behind 12 o'clock, so back over the water on the side you want to go back to.

BOUNCE PIC F

During the learning process you should aim to bounce off as soon as you land. Once you have the move mastered you can stall the plant all you want,

but for now get a move on before gravity or a loss of balance undermines your effort. You will bounce the board to help lift you off the beach, this is another reason why you must land on the tail, as thus you can use the board's flex to your advantage. Your other goal is to get the kite to pull you up and away from the beach, so give it an almighty dive. Looking at Christian in the pic, he has turned his head to look where he wants to go, he is pulling in on the bar, and steering the kite away from the beach. He's also extended his rear leg to launch himself up and spring back into the water.



CLAIM IT PIC G

With your kite diving from here on in you know the score. Look down wind, twist your hips and board, aiming to land tail first off the wind, and be ready to take your kite back up. This will all only work if your bar is on the sweet spot, so let your kite breath. Christian aims himself and his board slightly off the wind, watching his kite, dropping his new rear leg to touch down tail first, with his bar out on the sweet spot. You can see that he's already steering his kite back up as it closes in on the water!



Brilliant, have a look at the sequence for a step by step visual and check out the video!

COMMON PROBLEMS

It's quite common to land on the sand with too much forward momentum, even if you try and scrub speed off before the move. The main reason that you'll still have too much speed is because you are not sending the kite far enough. If you only send it for a short time it won't reach 12, let alone get behind you before you kick off. This means it's still pulling you forward. Make sure you start early enough, so that your kite has time to fly up and past 12.

Landing flat on the board. If you do this, the board will stick, and the chances are you'll either stay on the beach or come out of the straps. Keeping the front leg up alone is not enough, so make sure that you lean back as you take off, so that you're almost kicking the board away in front of you as you float towards the beach.

KEYSTONES

1. Good run up
2. Gentle send and slow down by letting bar out
3. Kick off, pull in and lean back with front knee up

4. Land on tail
5. Push down to bounce off tail, turn head and dive super hard



WORDS & PHOTOS
THE IKSURFMAG TEST TEAM

TRIED & TESTED

As we emerge from winter hibernation, the test team has had a few good days on the water. We've got the new ION Seek Select 4/3 on test, a great suit to keep you warm in the tween months either side of summer. Plus, we put two of Cabrinha's flagship kites to the test, the new Switchblade Apex and the Moto Apex!

Wetsuits

ION Seek Select 4/3

Kites

Cabrinha Moto Apex 10m

Cabrinha Switchblade Apex 10m

PHOTO JAMES BOULDING

BRAND ION

MODEL SEEK SELECT 4/3 FRONT ZIP

YEAR 2026

"FOR RIDERS
LOOKING FOR A
TOP-TIER SUIT
THAT DELIVERS
BOTH
PERFORMANCE
AND DURABILITY"



TO SEE MORE PHOTOS,
CLICK [HERE](#)

TO VISIT THEIR WEBSITE,
CLICK [HERE](#)



AT A GLANCE

The Seek Select 4/3 Front Zip sits right at the top of the ION wetsuit range, bringing flagship materials and construction to offer a lighter, more flexible suit.

This is the suit you reach for when winter starts to loosen its grip, but the water is still far from warm. Designed for spring and autumn sessions, it carries over the same premium DNA as its thicker 5.5mm sibling, including the recycled inner jersey and graphene warmth lining through the core areas, but in a more flexible, less bulky build.

You still get full internal and external taping, helping to massively reduce water ingress, alongside the same high-end panel layout and construction. On paper, it's a suit that blends warmth, stretch and comfort, rather than focusing purely on insulation.

ON THE WATER

The first thing you notice is just how light and flexible the Seek Select 4/3 feels. It has that same refined, premium feel as the thicker version, but without the density and weight that naturally come with a full winter suit.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

BRAND CABRINHA

MODEL MOTO APEX

SIZE 10M

YEAR 2026

" IT'S FASTER,
MORE
RESPONSIVE AND
MORE EFFICIENT "



TO SEE MORE PHOTOS,
CLICK [HERE](#)

TO VISIT THEIR WEBSITE,
CLICK [HERE](#)



AT A GLANCE

For 2026, the Moto Apex has had a full redesign. This isn't just a tweak; the kite has been reworked with a higher aspect ratio, a lighter airframe, a thinner leading edge, and a more refined bridle setup to push it further into the performance freeride category.

Key to that is the use of HT140 material in the leading edge, combined with Aluula composite struts, which helps reduce weight while increasing stiffness. The result is a kite that feels lighter in the air, more responsive on the bar, and more efficient through the window. The updated wingtip design and thinner Apex bridle also reduce drag, helping the kite fly forward faster and generate speed more easily.

The Moto Apex is designed to run on a 6m High V setup, which gives the kite a more supported and composed feel, especially when riding powered. By bringing the front line split higher, it helps stabilise the centre of the kite, resulting in smoother, more controlled turning and a more predictable pull through loops. This added support is particularly noticeable in stronger winds, where the kite feels more locked in and easier to manage without

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

BRAND CABRINHA

MODEL SWITCHBLADE APEX

SIZE 10M

YEAR 2026

"A KITE THAT
DELIVERS
CONSISTENT
PERFORMANCE,
INSPIRES
CONFIDENCE, WILL
IMPROVE YOUR
RIDING "



TO SEE MORE PHOTOS,
CLICK [HERE](#)

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AT A GLANCE

The Switchblade Apex takes one of the most iconic kites in the sport and gives it a serious performance upgrade for 2026. Built around the same proven five-strut platform, this version introduces a lighter, stiffer airframe using HT140 material in the leading edge. The result is a kite that retains the legendary stability of the Switchblade, but with a more refined, responsive feel in the air.

The thinner Apex bridle reduces drag and improves efficiency, while the updated construction helps the kite hold its shape better under load. That translates to more consistent power delivery, improved hangtime, and a cleaner aerodynamic profile when you're pushing it hard in overpowered conditions.

Despite the performance upgrades, the core DNA remains the same. This is still a five-strut freeride and big air machine, designed to be incredibly easy to use, but now with a polished, high-performance edge to ensure just about every level of rider can get something out of this kite.

IN THE AIR

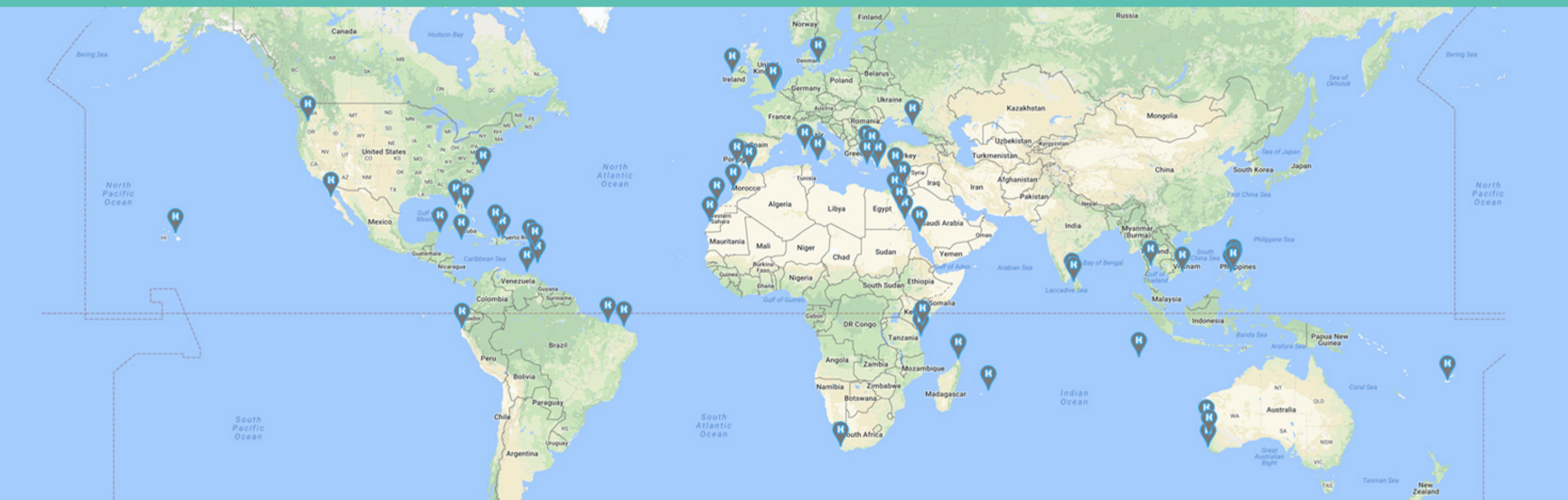
The first thing you notice with the Switchblade Apex is just how stable it is.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)



GOING ON A KITE HOLIDAY?

Don't go anywhere without checking our travel guides first! We have over 100 in-depth guides to some of the best places in the world! Get all the information you need, check the weather, book accommodation, organise flights and pack your bags for the trip of a lifetime!



The IKSURFMAG website is crammed with the latest news and best videos from the kitesurfing industry. With so much to see, where do you even start?!

These are the 4 most popular videos that have been viewed on the site as voted for by you with your thumbs up likes over 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!

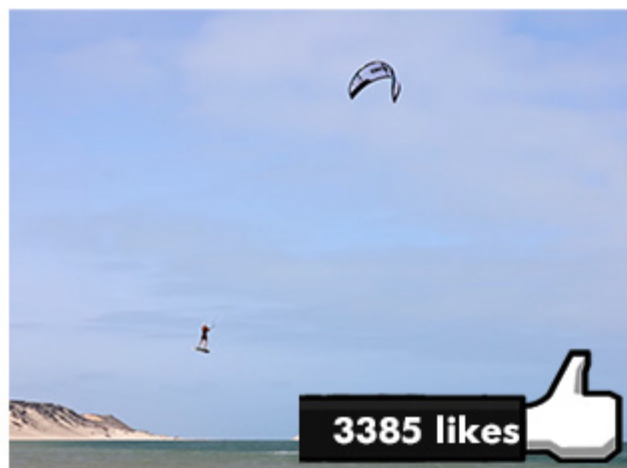
Put the popcorn on, it's Movie Night!

MOVIE NIGHT

#1

UNDERSTANDING THIS DETAIL WILL CHANGE YOUR JUMPS – KITEBOARDING SA MASTERCLASS

A proper deep dive into one of the most overlooked elements of boosting, breaking down a key detail that can seriously improve your height, timing and overall control when sending it.

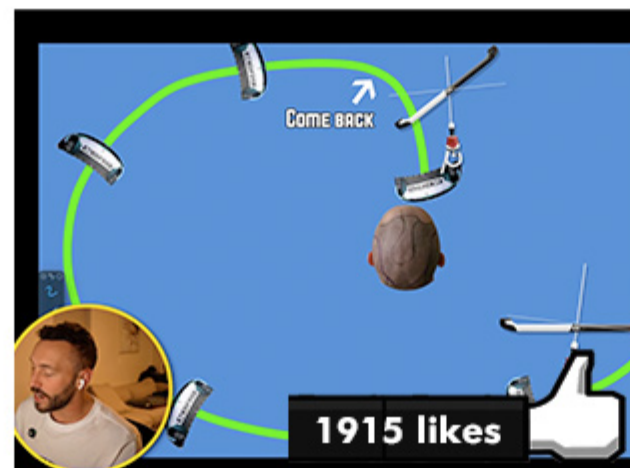


[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#2

HOW TO LAND SOFTLY WITH HELI LOOPS

Want to stay in control on the way down? This tutorial breaks down heli loops with clear tips on timing, kite movement and body position to help you land smoothly and ride away clean.

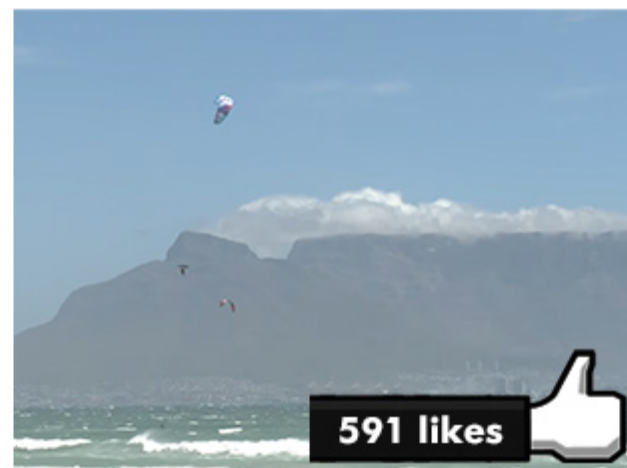


[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#3

LORDS OF TRAM ENTRY VIDEO – JAMIE OVERBEEK

Big air power and commitment from start to finish as Jamie throws down a high intensity entry packed with loops, height and the kind of riding built for the Tram stage.



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#4

FIXED BRIDLES VS PULLEY SYSTEMS – WHICH ONE DO YOU REALLY NEED?

A closer look at one of kite design's most debated topics, breaking down the differences between fixed bridles and pulley systems, and what they mean for performance, feel and your riding style.



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

RIDER GIANMARIA COCCOLUTO
PHOTO KILIAN BLOT

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