

APR/MAY 17

WELCOME TO IKSURFMAG

Welcome to Issue 62 of the World's Number One Kitesurfing Magazine! This issue Brandon Scheid goes on a voyage of discovery in the Philippines and we take an in depth look at the dangers of kiting in storms and how

to stay safe. Karolina Winkowska, Ewan Jaspán and Alexander Lewis-Hughes extol the virtues of heading into the unknown to discover new spots and we go kitesurfing underwater, yes, you read that right!

ENJOY THE LATEST ISSUE!



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



ASSAULT ON THE PHILIPPINES · RIDERS ON A STORM
HEADING IN TO THE UNKNOWN · TESTS · TECHNIQUE AND MUCH MUCH MORE INSIDE
THE WORLD'S NUMBER ONE KITESURF MAGAZINE

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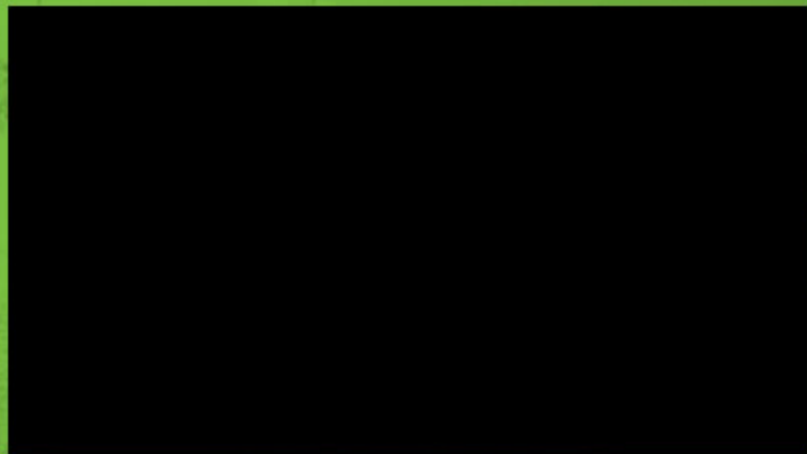
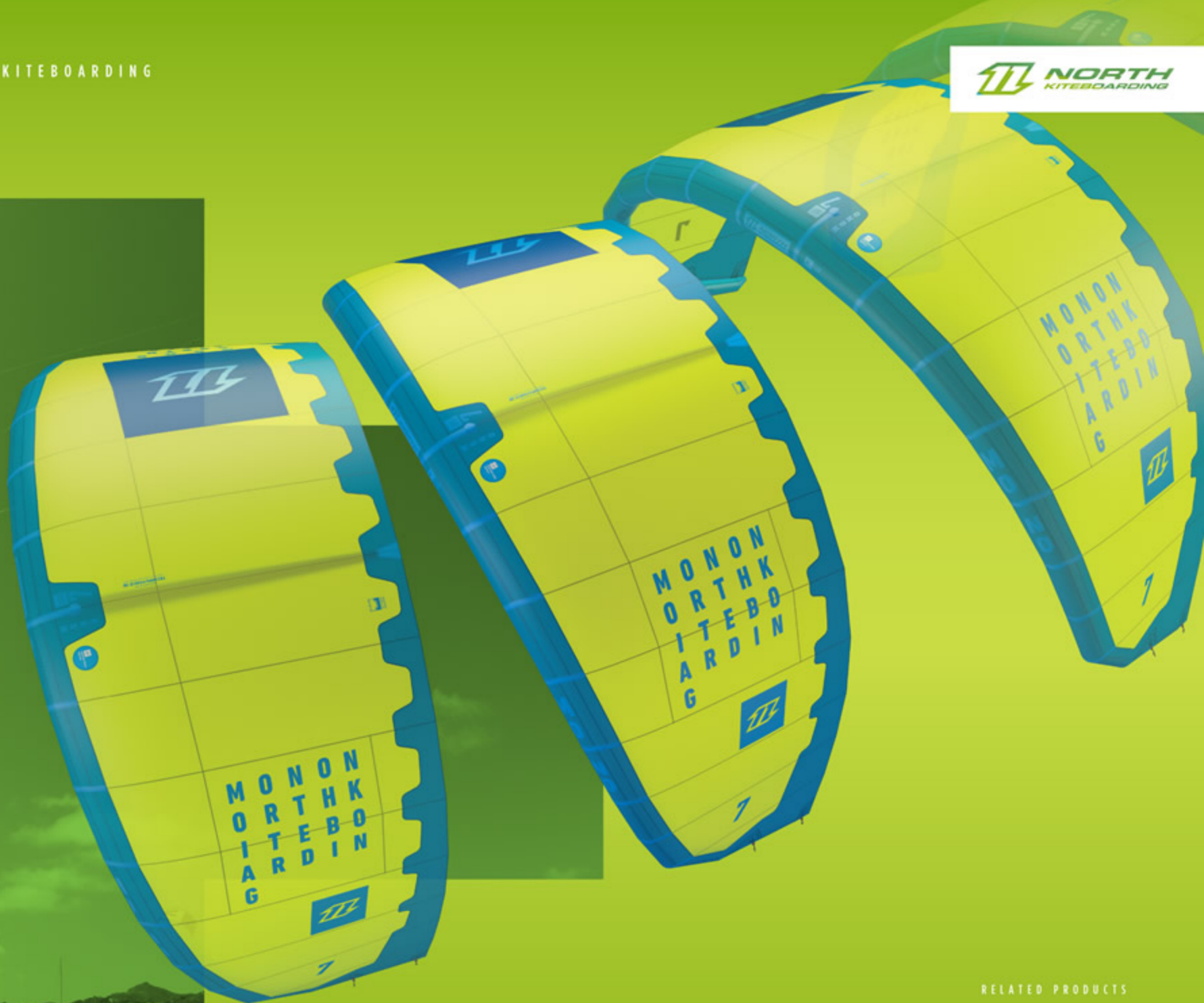
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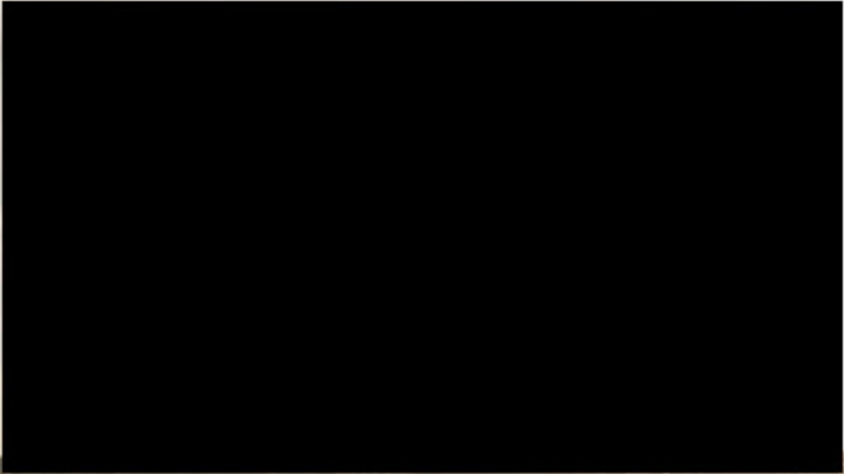
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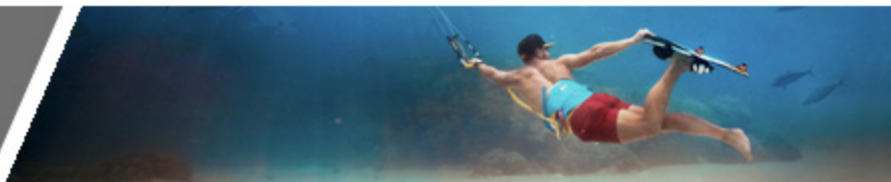
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DAMIEN GERADIN SENDING A BACK ROLL OFF A BIG ONE IN MAUI!
PHOTO OLI STA



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We have teamed up with CrazyFly this issue to offer one lucky kiter the chance to win a 2017 Sculp 9m with their excellent Sick Bar. The Sculp is a great all round kite perfect for freeriding, freestyle and wave riding! The Sick Bar is one of our favourite bar set ups, it's got everything you need and is crafted from carbon making it exceedingly light!

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DAVID TONIQUAN COMPETING AT THE WORLD KITEBOARDING LEAGUE EVENT IN NEW CALEDONIA LAST YEAR.
PHOTO WKL

EDITORIAL

ISSUE 62

The turbulent times for kitesurfing might finally be behind us; this season looks set to kick off with much of the wrangling and fighting over ownership and the top level of the sport finally over. The path ahead won't be easy, but at last, it looks like there is some real cooperation going on with interested parties talking and working together.

This season the World Kiteboarding League (WKL) supported by the Kite Riders Union (KRU) and the Global Kitesports Association (GKA) will be running the freestyle tour. Leucate will be the first stop with qualifiers on the 10th of April and the event running until the 17th. Then, a full schedule of events is planned for the riders, spanning six different countries in Europe, the Middle East and South America.

The GKA will continue to run the very successful Wave and Strapless Freestyle tour with even more events planned for 2017. This shows how much this side of the sport is growing and how popular it has become. The series was hotly contested last year, and with more and more riders training for these events, we are expecting the standard to explode!

Lastly, the racing will continue to be governed by the International Kiteboarding Association (IKA), they will be running twin tip, slalom and foil racing this season. They will also continue to oversee kitesurfing in the Olympics, the 2018 Youth Olympic Games is just around the corner, and slalom Twin Tip Racing (TT:R) has been included for that. 2020 is still an unknown at this point but by 2024 kitesurfing should be in the Olympics, as to what format it will finally take remains to be seen.

It's almost a year ago that I wrote the article "Is Professional Kitesurfing Broken", it is great to see that the industry and the various players have come together to secure our future and sort out the mess the sport was in! Well done to all involved and let's look forward to a fantastic year on the water!

Rou Chater
Publishing Editor

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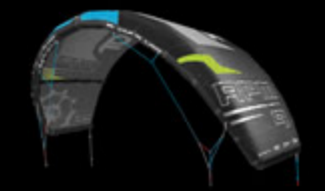
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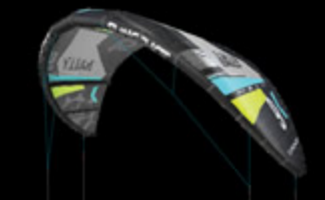
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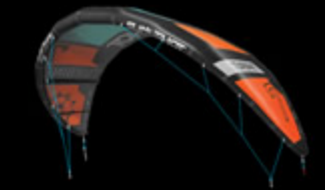
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TURBINE
5 / 7 / 9 / 11 / 13 / 15 / 17 / 19M



WORDS BRANDON SCHEID PHOTO VINCENT BERGERON

- ASSAULT ON THE PHILIPPINES -

"Sorry sir, that's not available." It becomes the phrase you dread the most after traveling around SE Asia for a few months.



PHOTO TOBY BROMWICH

“ OPEN YOURSELF TO NEW, EXCITING AND SOMETIMES SCARY EXPERIENCES.”

Maybe you had your hopes set on that lovely cheeseburger on the menu. Or perhaps you need to fly out to make a connection, but your plane just doesn't show up. You get lost, or your precious scooter, your only form of transport, breaks down.

Some things just aren't always available at your beck and call. There are certainly going to be a lot of up's and downs when

traveling, but that is where the adventure begins. No cheeseburgers? Try a delicious local dish. No flights? Hop on a bus through the night to a far off exotic destination. Broken scooter? I've never seen them fixed so fast despite how far we were out in the middle of nowhere.

To truly embrace adventure, you have to be able to roll with the punches, and open yourself to new, exciting and sometimes scary experiences. Of course, you could stay in an expensive posh hotel, eating "American" cuisine, and lounging poolside.

But then why go on vacation at all? Traveling is about gathering unique experiences and enjoying the unknown, even if it pushes you outside your comfort zone.

I think what I'm trying to say is best summed up by the following two quotes from Yvon Chouinard (Patagonia Founder) -

"The word adventure has gotten overused. For me, when everything goes wrong - that's when adventure starts. So, it's kind of like the quest for the Holy Grail. Well, you know, who gives a shit what the Holy Grail is. It's the quest that is what's important."



“ THESE THINGS ARE HARD TO FIND, AND HELP YOU GET A LITTLE BIT OF COMFORT IN A FARAWAY LAND. ”

Sensi and I have traveled to the Philippines before for other kite related events and this years return to the Blue Palawan Open would mark our fourth trip back the tropical island nation. We packed our bags, no easy feat when traveling to Asia for a month. Wakeboarding setups for two, six kites, boards, harnesses, and the like were crammed into four travel bags in our cold Hood River garage.

We also packed plenty of comforts from home. I would strongly suggest keeping 5-10 lbs of weight for tasty treats and food essentials. We pack beef jerky, fruit and nut bars, trail mix, good coffee, oatmeal, peanut butter and other snacks.

These things are hard to find, and help you get a little bit of comfort in a faraway land. Especially if you are spending lots of time on the water and in the sun, good healthy nutrition is key to top performance, and it's not always available. We also pack a fully stocked first aid kit. If you are going anywhere on a kite or active vacation, it is a must. Even a small one with bandages, ibuprofen, ear drops, anti-dehydration powder, antacid tablets, etc. Anything that you can think would come in handy.

We doled out plenty of supplies to unprepared kites while on the trip, Ewan Jaspán especially. The more you prepare for the worst situations, the better you'll feel, and you will be ready if something does happen to go wrong.

PHOTO VINCENT BERGERON

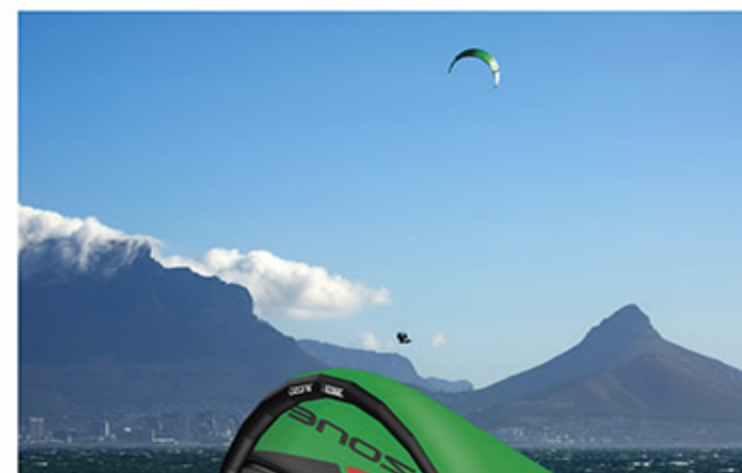


PHOTO BRANDON SCHEID/GOPRO

Our first destination was the cable mecca of Cam Sur. There are several cable parks in the area: Republic (Manila), IWP (Phuket, Thailand), and TWP (Bangkok, Thailand) to name a few. Take your pick, they all offer great riding, but we choose CWC because of tradition.

We first came to the Cam Sur Water Complex in 2010 for the Wind or No Wind Jam. The cable, built by the previous governor and wakeboarding enthusiast LRay VillaFuerte, provides enough tourism dollars to publicly fund the schools K-12 for the whole province.

“ THEY ALL OFFER GREAT RIDING, BUT WE CHOOSE CWC BECAUSE OF TRADITION. ”



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“ IT ALWAYS HELPS PROGRESS YOUR RIDING AND STAY MOTIVATED WHEN YOU HAVE OTHER PEOPLE PUSHING YOU ON THE WATER. ”

We have seen the place transform from a shabby cable park to a top-notch facility during our four visits and we were excited to return. Unfortunately, right before we were set to arrive the area was hit by a massive typhoon. It leveled many of the living structures at the cable, destroyed many of the rails, and wreaked havoc on the surrounding local communities.

It is always sad to see such devastation in front of your face, especially when it affects the poorest people the most. But their resolve and joy in the face of adversity is awe-inspiring. In a matter of weeks, they had the cable features fixed, cabins rebuilt, infrastructure reinstalled, and were well on their way to overcoming the storm damage. It seems nothing can keep the happiness found in the Filipino people at bay.

Our days at the cable were filled with plenty of R&R, AKA riding and more riding. We met up with fellow kitesurfers Craig Cunningham, Colleen Carroll, Ewan Jaspan, and Sam Light at the cable dreamland. It always helps progress your riding and stay motivated when you have other people pushing you on the water.

Ewan, Sam, and Craig were riding really well, plenty of 9's and tech rail hits were thrown down. However, it was more impressive to see the girls progression. Both Sensi and Colleen were able to land TS BS 5's and Sensi even snuck in a few Blind Pete's (something she landed before Ewan). It was amazing to see everyone stepping it up day after day and representing for our sport.

PHOTO BRANDON SCHEID/GOPRO





PHOTO VINCENT BERGERON

**“ TO EXPLORE, ROAM, BOOST, AND CRUISE,
KITEBOARDING REALLY IS A ONE OF A KIND SPORT. ”**

It seems that the wakeboarders are finally taking a bit of notice of kiteboarding and there were plenty of kite related questions on the dock. It's exciting to see our sport make an impression on our fellow boardsports enthusiasts, and know that kiting is finding its place amongst the others. Every time I go to the cable park I really remember how free we are when kiting, though.

To explore, roam, boost, and cruise,

kiteboarding really is a one of a kind sport. Getting ready for a kiteboarding contest, however, is nerve racking, and that's why cable is such an excellent resource. It's on for twelve hours a day, and so long as your body can keep up, you can practice endlessly.

We had plenty of good laughs, hard crashes, fun times, and sore bodies. While it was awesome to catch up with our friends again and spin circles, we had a kite contest to attend, and the wind was beckoning. So, at the first real sign of wind in the forecast, Sensi and I booked our tickets over to the island of Palawan.

Getting to Palawan is a simple one-hour flight from the international hub of Manila. The island sits off the west coast of the main island of the Philippines, situated between the South China and Sulu Seas. Not famous for its windy coastlines, Palawan is best known for its incredible beauty, and its government is focused on tourism and ecology rather than industry to fuel the economy.

It has been voted most beautiful island by numerous travel publications, and it does not disappoint. Most people, upon landing in the capital city of Puerto Princessa, hop in a van and are whisked away to the far north of the island. It's there, in El Nido that the true beauty of the island shines.



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“ THE WINDY DAYS THAT ONCE PUT A FROWN ON THE GUEST'S FACES NOW BECAME AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE RESORT ”

Jagged limestone cliffs tower over lagoons filled with azure blue water. As beautiful as El Nido sounded, we were on the island to do some kiteboarding, so we spent our first two weeks in the capital city. Blue Kiteboarding, located on the seashore in Puerto Princessa, was originally built as a traditional beach resort. Relaxing vibes, luxury cabanas, and pristine beaches were the original lure for tourists.

However owner, Jojo Mitra, quickly began to get complaints that the resort was too windy in the winter months for amazing beach relaxation. It was then that he met Paula Rosales (event organizer), and the idea of turning it into a kiteboarding based resort was born. The windy days that once put a frown on the guest's faces now became an opportunity for the resort to attract a new demographic of tourist-kiteboarders.

Jojo and Paula collaborated to create the Blue Palawan Open, a kite park contest, to bring some attention to this fabulous location for our sport. What better way to get some much-needed publicity than to invite the sports best riders to the resort for a week of kite shredding. The event was a huge hit, and now we were back for the second time ready to enjoy park once again.

This year there were a few new surprises for the riders. The first was the addition of the Bamboo feature to the park. Kiteboarder, dreamer and gnar master Eric Rienstra had shown up early and began work on the bamboo structure. Upon everyone's first inspection there was a lot of nervous faces and concerned riders.

PHOTO TOBY BROMWICH



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“ THE SECOND SURPRISE WAS THE AMOUNT AND STRENGTH OF THE WIND CONDITIONS DURING THIS YEARS EVENT. ”

The feature, although well built, was riddled with gaps and holes. Imagine a cheese grater ready to take you down bit by bit. However, once the riders had kites in their hands their reservations immediately vanished. The rail was a riot to ride and held up well in the wind and for the riding. It was unbelievable to see the potential that bamboo has for a building material. We usually only see it used to make single barrel rails, mostly up rails. To see such a significant structure made entirely of the material was really impressive and many kudos were given to Eric.

There were two magical sessions that went down on the rail, and I was happy to see everyone walk away from them considering the riding being done. I saw Sam Light, Eric, and Ewan make the step up to the handrail, which was quite a gnarly feat. The second surprise was the amount and strength of the wind conditions during this years event.

Last year, with a strong El Nino, the event was held in light wind conditions. Most of the time riders were on 17-15m kites, and there were several days without wind. With this year's La Nina conditions locked in, the island was assaulted with weeks of never ending wind.

We had wind every single day during the ten-day holding period, and we even had a few days of 7m mega looping wind. While it was not ideal for running a park contest, we were all super happy that our long days were filled with plenty of kiteboarding.

PHOTO TOBY BROMWICH





PHOTO BRANDON SCHEID/GOPRO

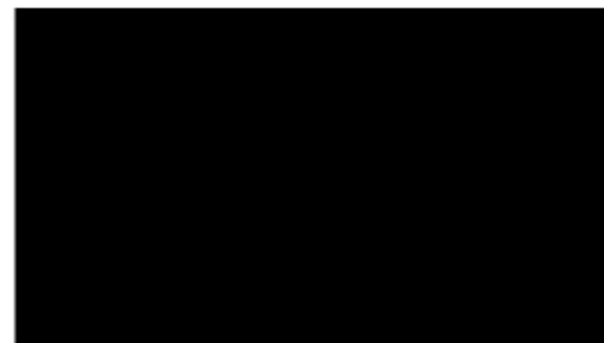
With the consistent windy conditions, we were able to get the contest done and over within the first three days of the event window. This left the rest of the time to be used to collect beautiful images, video, and explore all that Blue has to offer.

The contest was run as the first stop in the KPL Tour and thus was governed and ran with the KPL guidelines. This means that the men and women were broken down into manageable heats, with riders seeded from their previous year's standings. When all the heats were set, the riders poured over their possibilities.

“ WE WERE ABLE TO GET THE CONTEST DONE AND OVER WITHIN THE FIRST THREE DAYS. ”

Shinn

JUST DON'T EXPECT TO GO BACK TO YOUR OLD RIDE



MORE GRIP

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PHOTO TOBY BROMWICH

“ THIS FORCED ALL THE RIDERS TO RE-THINK THEIR HITS AND REALLY FOCUS ON PERFECT TECHNIQUE ”

The top two men would advance to the finals, third, fourth, and fifth would be put into a second chance elimination round, and sixth would be out of the contest. The ladies would essentially be run as two final rounds; then the scores would be averaged for a comprehensive final result. Each rider would be given three hits on each feature to score their single highest hit; they were also given one ride by, in case the wind wasn't cooperating.

In the end, a perfect score would be a sixty, as the rail features and kickers were ridden both ways. The judges were looking for perfectly executed tricks, with style and speed. It became very apparent after the first rounds that execution was key and riders were being rewarded for locked in presses and big kicker hits. This forced all the riders to re-think their hits and really focus on perfect technique moving forward into the finals.

After the first rounds and the dingle (second chance elimination rounds) had been run, we were left with the cream of the crop. Sam Light, Eric Rienstra, Craig Cunningham, Noe Font, Ewan Jaspen, Christophe Tack,

Aaron Hadlow, Axel Tack, and I all made it to the final round. We awoke on finals day to howling wind and sunny skies.

Most of the riders were powered on 9m kites and happily warming up for the days riding. During the warm-up the wind shifted directions ever so slightly, making the wind rather gusty. The wind was manageable on the sliders, but it really hindered the riders on the kickers. Most riders walked away with a 540 variation as their highest scoring trick, and this left the door open for people to move upwards in the ranking.

As the day progressed, the standouts became very clear, executing proper hits with speed and style.



“ THERE IS SO MUCH TO DO ON THE WATER FROM MANGROVE SLALOM RUNS, TO ROOF JIBS, AND EVEN KITE ISLAND HOPPING. ”

Due to gusty, high speed, winds, and nervous competitors it was decided that we would switch the North rail around rather than include and score the bamboo feature in the final. The day was concluded with the last slider hits, and when the dust settled, it was Sam Light who came out on top yet again.

It goes to show you that consistency is king and taking the win is all about landing your medium level tricks no matter the conditions. The ladies also finished out their last round in the park; standouts include Annelous's TS BS 540, a first in competition, Sensi's regular and switch HS FS 5's, and Colleen's technical speedy rail hits.

The women's level has come up a ton in the last few events, and it's good to see them pushing each other harder than ever. In the end, Annelous's 5 was too much to overcome so she took home the top spot, followed by Colleen and Sensi in 2nd and 3rd respectively. After a few long days on the water, the competition was over, and all the riders were left to free ride in the park or explore the pristine waters of Blue Palawan.

There is so much to do on the water from mangrove slalom runs, to roof jibs, and even kite island hopping. There certainly was no lack of activities for the competitors, and it was good to see everyone taking advantage of the long windy days.

PHOTO BRANDON SCHEID/GOPRO

“ IT GIVES YOU A FRESH PERSPECTIVE ON YOUR LIFE AND MAKES YOU REALLY APPRECIATE ALL THAT YOU HAVE. ”

Sensi and I spent the rest of our week enjoying the comforts of the resort, riding in the park, and planning our trip to El Nido. We ended our month long jaunt with a relaxing trip to one of the most beautiful places on the planet. If you're venturing to the island of Palawan, it's something; you cannot miss.

Pristine reefs, swimming pool like water, and empty beaches await you ready for exploration. I highly recommend taking a boat trip to the surrounding islands, and if you want the top-notch experience, hook up with Skippers Charters. Unlike many of the tourist trips, Skipper uses speed boats and visits ten islands instead of the four visited by most tourist companies. I will certainly never forget the places we visited while traveling around the Philippines and I hope we can return next year for another trip to the island nation.

Traveling is always such a great experience; it gives you a fresh perspective on your life and makes you really appreciate all that you have. I think it's the best way to make your life richer and leave you feeling more fulfilled. So next time you're on a trip, and something goes wrong, embrace it, maybe it's just the start of an incredible new adventure!

PHOTO BRANDON SCHEID/GOPRO





FEATURING

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— TRAILING EDGE —



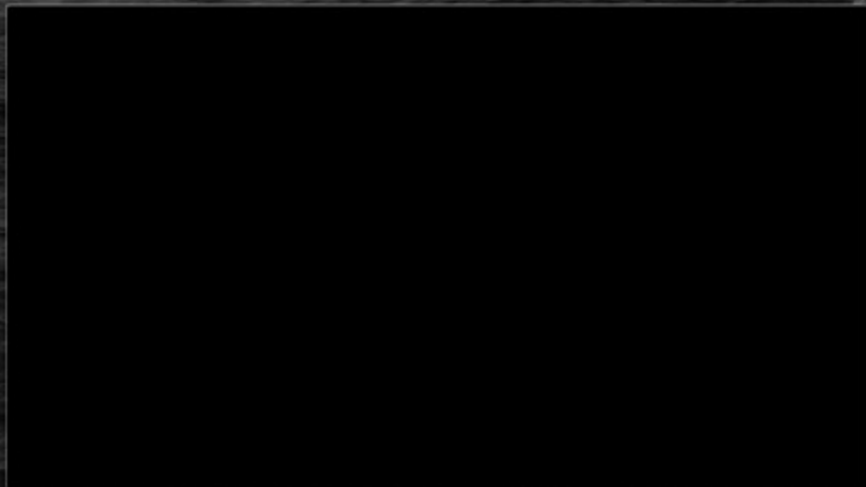
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An outstanding underpowered kite, the Boxer is incredibly easy to relaunch, light to the touch, responsive but gentle. Very easy to sheet-in-and-go, this kite is quick, easy to control and generates power quickly. It's light and lively feel at the fingertips makes it approachable and forgiving. In short, the Boxer is the proverbial "yes man"—eager to please, easy to control and supportive enough to explore your own style.

NAISH

RUBEN LENTEN IS NO STRANGER TO RIDING IN CHALLENGING CONDITIONS.
PHOTO ILJAHUNER.COM



Ruben Lenten, Steven Akkersdijk, Joshua Emanuel and Lewis Crathern join Rou Chater in an in-depth study aimed at keeping you safe during challenging conditions and how to understand the wind and weather around you and manage risk.

RIDERS ON A STORM

WORDS ROU CHATER



JOSHUA EMANUEL GETS SOME HANGTIME IN CAPE TOWN!
PHOTO MAX KAMOLZ



“ SOME HAVE GOT AWAY WITH A LUCKY ESCAPE AND SOME LIGHT HOSPITAL TREATMENT, OTHERS HAVE NOT BEEN SO FORTUNATE. ”

There has been a definite shift in kitesurfing over recent years, with the development of better equipment, improved safety, and now devices that can track your jump height, more and more kites are braving stronger winds, using larger kites and taking more risks.

This has led to a sharp increase in the number of kitesurfing related accidents and sadly even deaths in recent years. I've known a few of those affected, some have got away with a lucky escape and some light hospital treatment, others have not been so fortunate.

The fundamental issue here is that kitesurfing is relatively easy, anyone can go and buy a kite, and anyone can chuck it up in whatever wind they care to. Lessons these days are a two to three-day course teaching kites how to fly kites and waterstart. Safety is a factor; however, often there is just a cursory nod to the wind and weather, which can be overlooked by students who just want to get on the water.

Equally a misunderstanding of how the weather truly works can be an issue for some. When the extent of your weather knowledge is looking to WindGuru and hunting out big numbers for your next big jump escapade, you need to take stock and learn a little more about what is going on.

On the flipside of the coin, a portion of the blame lands with us, the kite media. Big jumps and huge megaloops are huge pulls for traffic on our sites.



Those GoPro mouth mount videos of massive jumps in Cape Town and elsewhere are click bait for the kitesurfing masses. Naturally riders see this and want to replicate it; after all, they have all the tools at their disposal to do just that!

The pro's that we place upon that pedestal seemingly ooze talent and make it look so easy. In reality, those pro riders have spent years and years of training and knowledge building to get to that level. Your average weekend warrior is not putting in the same amount of graft before pumping up their kite during the next low pressure that rolls in. These days the best kites are finely tuned athletes; they train day after day at the gym, on the water, building experience and strength that your everyday rider just doesn't possess.

THE STORM RIDING TIPS
IN THE ARTICLE ARE
RELVANT TO STRAPLESS
RIDERS TOO... MALLORY
DE LA VILLMARQUE
SENDS IT!
PHOTO
TOBY BROMWICH

“THE BEST KITERS
ARE FINELY TUNED
ATHLETES”

GET DIALED

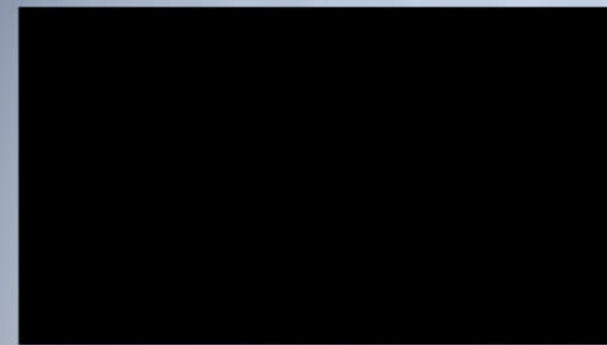


Photo By: Jay Wallace - Rider: Reece Myerscough - Gear: Stick-Shift bar, SoulCrymuit, Jester board

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THIS STORM SYSTEM IN HUNSTANTON LAST YEAR PRETTY MUCH WIPED OUT THE BKC EVENT THAT WAS GOING ON. ANYTHING THAT WASN'T TIED DOWN WENT SIDWAYS. ONE MINUTE IT WAS 20 KNOTS, THE NEXT IT WAS GUSTING OVER 45. THESE ARE THE CLOUDS TO LOOK OUT FOR.
PHOTO ROU CHATER



“ IN REALITY, IT’S LIKE BEING PUT IN A FORMULA 1 CAR WITH A BRICK TAPED TO YOUR RIGHT FOOT ”

That same weekend warrior can pump up the same equipment in the same conditions and simply pull on one hand to induce a similar thrill ride. Whether they then have the skills to ride it out is another matter, in reality, it’s like being put in a Formula 1 car with a brick taped to your right foot, without any of the necessary skills to actually control what is going on.

A fundamental understanding of the weather is crucial in these situations. It’s no surprise that Cape Town, with it’s howling Cape Doctor blowing upwards of 40knots on a regular basis is the location for most of the records on devices like the Woo and the PIQ. It’s the place where all the pros go to train for big air in the winter and of course home to the event that showcases this extreme side of the sport, the Red Bull King Of The Air.

Why is Cape Town so popular and why does it have these accolades? It is because it enjoys a trade wind, not a frontal one.

A frontal wind is usually accompanied by stormy weather; we’ll get to those later, but first, let’s explain trade and thermal winds a little more. This will help you understand why riders can jump 28m in Cape Town relatively safe in the knowledge of how the wind is going to behave while they are up there...

The South Easter or Cape Doctor blows during the summer months around the Western Cape; it is at it’s strongest around Cape Town, which is why Bloubergstrand has become such a hotspot for big air enthusiasts. The wind is created by two weather systems, the South Atlantic High-Pressure system and the Interior Trough Low-Pressure system over central southern Africa.

TRIGGER

9TH
GEN



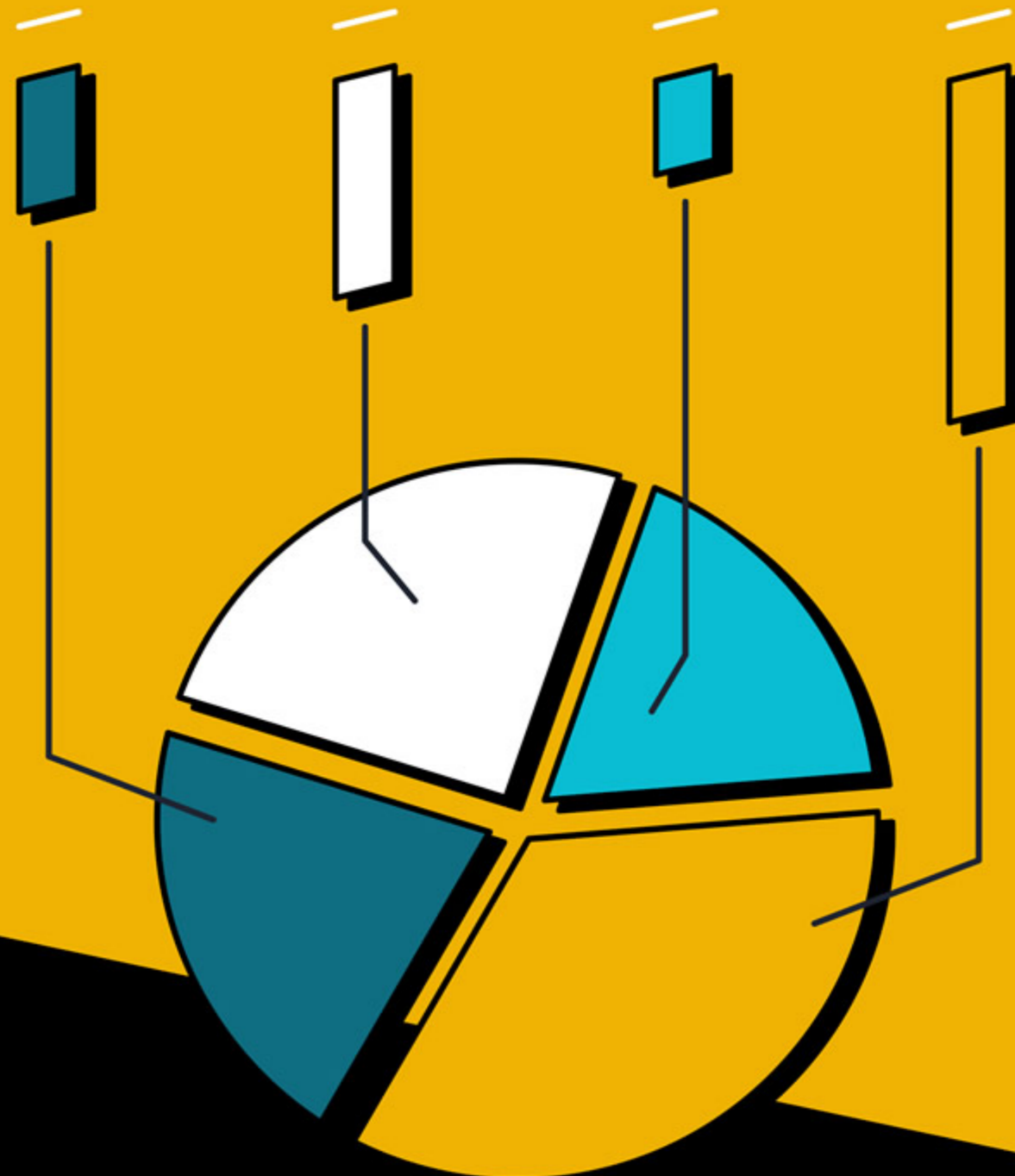
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“ THIS WIND IS CREATED BY THERMAL EFFECTS AND AN UNDERLYING TRADE WIND WHICH IS CREATED BY A CONVERGENCE OF A HIGH AND LOW PRESSURE. ”

In the Southern Hemisphere, wind flows around a high-pressure system in an anti-clockwise direction, and flows clockwise around a low-pressure system. In the middle of these two systems sits the Western Cape and Cape Town itself. Due to the size of these two airflows, they join forces and flow in the same direction at this point, creating a strong trade wind. Winds of 100mph have been recorded in Table Bay due to this phenomenon.

On a hot day, the air temperature will rise over the land and allow the inversion layer to rise over Table Mountain, a height of 1000m. When this happens, the familiar “table cloth” appears, and the trade wind can blow unimpeded up and over the mountain and accelerate down the other side into Table Bay and the surrounding beaches.

If the temperature doesn't push the inversion layer of the atmosphere up over the mountain, the wind cannot pass and instead flows around it causing light wind conditions in Table Bay. High winds can still be found at Cape Point where the wind is not impeded by Table Mountain.

Of course, this is the theory behind the Cape Doctor, and while it usually works in this pattern, there are exceptions to every rule. What I want to get across though is how this wind is created by thermal effects and an underlying trade wind which is created by a convergence of a high and low pressure.

LEWIS CRATHERN IS NO STRANGER TO HECTIC CONDITIONS.
PHOTO EUNICE BERGIN



LEWIS CRATHERN SENDS IT IN CAPE TOWN!
PHOTO GOPRO



“ IF YOU LIVE IN THE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE
FRONTAL WINDS AND LOW-PRESSURE SYSTEMS
ARE WHAT DRIVE YOUR KITESURFING. ”

Trade winds are predictable; they got their names from creating established trade routes. Before the days of engines, ships needed sails to get around, and as trade in spices and fine goods flowed from the East to the West trade routes were established using the prevailing winds, which soon became known as the trade winds.

A frontal or coastal wind, however, is very, very different. The chances are if you live in the Northern Hemisphere frontal winds and low-pressure systems are what drive your kitesurfing. During the summer months, there are locations that enjoy a sea breeze, where the land heats up and sucks in cooler air from the sea. Sea breezes again, are similar to trade winds and although often very localised, such as the one that blows on the South Coast of England around the Brighton area they are very predictable, usually reaching maximum speeds of around 25 knots. Perfectly safe for kitesurfing, however they only occur on hot sunny days, and so during the autumn and winter they are pretty much ruled out.

You'd be forgiven for looking at the pictures of pro riders heading out in 45knots in Cape Town with a 9m kite on a quest to smash their personal jump heights and each other and thinking you could replicate that at home. Especially when you see those deep purple numbers on WindGuru.

However, the conditions are fundamentally different and herein lays the rub.



Storm systems can be massive, and they move very quickly. In front of the system there may be some good winds blowing through, but as the system gets closer, those winds can sheer, shift and increase exponentially.

That last word is important too; wind is exponential. On a 10 knot day when a 15-knot gust hits you won't feel too much, perhaps a good boost in power at the kite. However, on a 35-knot day, that same 5-knot gust can feel like you've been kicked in the back. Move up the scale even further to a 50-knot day and another 5-knot gust, and it's enough to knock you clean off your feet. It's the same 5 knots of wind, except its power has exponentially increased...

TIME TO PACK UP IN POLAND,
THAT STORM LOOKS MOODY!
PHOTO MARK SHINN

“IT'S ENOUGH TO
KNOCK YOU CLEAN
OFF YOUR FEET.”



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STEVEN AKKERSDIJK GETS HIT BY UNSTABLE WIND MID LOOP RESULTING IN HIS KITE STALLING. GUSTY WINDS CAN BE VERY DANGEROUS, STEVEN WAS LUCKY TO SURVIVE THE CRASH THAT CAME AFTER THIS! PHOTO MAX SCHIERGENS



“IT STILL AMAZES ME HOW MANY PEOPLE ON THE WATER SEEM OBLIVIOUS TO APPROACHING STORM SYSTEMS”

The higher the wind speed, the stronger the gusts are, and it's those gusts that people often ignore when looking at the weather forecasts. Gusts are a hugely important area of the weather to check, 10 knot gusts might be okay on a 15-knot day, but a 10-knot gust on a 30-knot day is an entirely different kettle of fish. Quite frequently during stormy conditions at home, we'll let discretion get

the better part of valour and give sessions a miss when the gusts seem excessive.

As a storm front approaches, you should be able to see a giant black cloud looming on the horizon in the direction the wind is coming from. Depending on the speed of the system depends on the amount of time you have to make a decision. If you've checked the weather before hand and know the intricate details of the encroaching storm, you should have some idea about its effects.

It still amazes me how many people on the water seem oblivious to approaching storm

systems, and how many people get caught out. The safest thing to do is to get off the water before the weather front hits. Get your kite out of the sky and head for cover as usually a ton of rain is incoming too. It's always better to be overly cautious than not, after all, we all want to live to ride another day.

I've personally witnessed numerous storm fronts over my many years at the beach, and on the water, sometimes they will move in slowly, other times they will seemingly hit almost instantly. The overruling element they all share is unpredictability. Sometimes they can amount to just a bit of rain, other times they might see a wind shift of a full 360 degrees as they pass through.

“ KITES AREN'T LIKE WINDSURFING SAILS THAT WE CAN MERELY LAY FLAT AND WAIT FOR THE STORM TO PASS. ”

The worst instances are when the wind increases quickly and sharply catching many kitesurfers out. With a kite in the sky, it is hard to avoid a storm front when it hits; kites aren't like windsurfing sails that we can merely lay flat and wait for the storm to pass. No matter how much depower the manufacturer claims the kite has there will still be pull on the kite when things get really wild, which is why it is best, if you can, to get to the beach, get the kite out of the sky and hunker down whenever you see storm clouds approaching.

When you see the pro's pushing the envelope in nuking winds in Cape Town and you think you can emulate that at your local beach, you need to be acutely aware of the consequences and risks involved. Cape Town is a weird freak of a place that offers nuclear winds with a fairly predictable nature. A 40-knot day there is entirely different from a 40-knot day at your local spot when a storm front is pushing in.

There are two hard and fast rules for kiting in strong winds, which you should always bear in mind. When launching ALWAYS launch your kite closest to the sea, by doing this, it means you can keep your kite LOW and walk to the water. If you do the opposite and launch your kite towards the beach, you HAVE to swing your kite back over your head towards the sea in order to head out.

This motion is exactly what you do when you want to do a jump, and in most of the accidents I have seen in strong winds, this is what causes problems.





THE WEATHER IN FRONT OF A PASSING STORM CAN OFTEN BE CALM AND PLEASANT. IN ESSEX THIS CELL BROUGHT A HUGE WIND SHEER AND HAIL STONES ON A SUMMERS DAY. PHOTO ROU CHATER



“IF YOU PUT THE KITE UP TO THE ZENITH, OFTEN MISTAKENLY CALLED THE ‘SAFE POSITION’, THERE IS A REAL RISK YOU CAN BE LOFTED INTO THE AIR.”

You’re on dry land, you swing the kite and get lofted and land on the beach. **ALWAYS** launch towards the sea and keep the kite **LOW** and **GO**.

If you are on the water and you do get hit by a sudden increase in the wind speed as a storm cell or squall hits, again keep the kite on the deck, right at the edge of the window on the sea or the beach. When the kite is in

this position, it will drag you along the surface at worst. If you put the kite up to the zenith, often mistakenly called the ‘safe position’, there is a real risk you can be lofted into the air. Even if you fully depower your kite, there is a chance it can invert and then unleash all manner of hell.

Keep the kite low and at the edge of the window however, and there is no chance of being lofted. If you are getting dragged releasing the kite in this position is much safer too. If the worst comes to the worst, ditch the kite if it is safe to do so your life is worth far more than a kite.

Risk Management

Now you have, hopefully, a better understanding of the weather systems at play, a subject as a kitesurfer you should study as much as possible, it’s time to look at risk management. Every kitesurfer on the water should be acutely aware of the importance of risk management. Kitesurfing is a dangerous sport, and inherently there is a very real risk of serious injury and even death by taking part in it.

As with anything, such as wearing the seatbelt in your car, remaining sober and driving according to the speed limit you can manage these risks to improve your chances of survival in any given situation.



The weather, your kite gear, risk management, your personal protective equipment (PPE), and your own skill will all have a role to play in keeping you safe. When was the last time you undertook a risk assessment of your kitesurfing spot? Have you recently thought about the “what if” and “what then” and how you would handle those situations? When was the last time you checked your safety release, carried out a full service on your kite bar and lines and a thorough inspection of your kite and PPE?

These are things we should be doing all the time as kitesurfers, not once a year, but every session. Don't just check to see if it is windy according to WindGuru. Take a look at an isobar map;

A TOTAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE WEATHER IS IMPERATIVE!
PHOTO RUBEN LENTEN

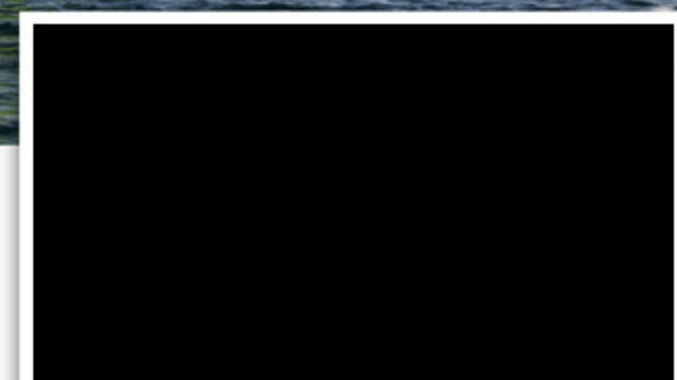
“ HAVE YOU RECENTLY THOUGHT ABOUT THE “WHAT IF” AND “WHAT THEN ”



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“ **BWARE ANY RAIN FORECASTS THAT MAY APPEAR MIDWAY THROUGH YOUR PLANNED TIME FOR A SESSION.** ”

understand how it works, look to the local meteorological office for information about storms and weather fronts. Check where your wind is coming from before it gets to you. Beware any rain forecasts that may appear midway through your planned time for a session. Look for gusts and potential wind shifts, really start to see the weather as a whole rather than a quick glance at the local weather station and what might be happening at your local beach.

Then before each kite session, you should always start with a site assessment, how does the beach look, has the tide and currents shifted anything, are there new obstacles in the way? Is the wind direction normal, does a shift in direction bring new hazards into play? If you do get hit by a gust and lofted where will you end up, what will you do and how will you react? Are there other beach users to consider? How windy is it and what sized kite should you be flying, an anemometer can help here if you don't possess the knowledge to make a call based on the water state. Be sure to check the wind speed at the water's edge, not in the car park or at the top of the beach where the wind can be accelerated and gusty.

Questions like this should run through your head every time you check the conditions when you get to the beach. As you unroll your kite check the pigtails, bridle attachment points, bridle lines and wingtips for signs of wear. Give the canopy a once over and finally pump it up and check it is holding air, if you always pump your kite first by the time you have done your lines you should notice any significant air loss.

CAPE TOWN PROVIDES STRONG WINDS WITH PREDICTABLE CONDITIONS, SOMETHING YOU JUST DON'T GET ELSEWHERE. AARON HADLOW SENDS IT AT THE KING OF THE AIR 2017, AN EVENT THAT HAS SHOWCASED EXTREME KITESURFING!
PHOTO TYRONE BRADLEY/RED BULL CONTENT POOL



RUBEN LENTEN SPENDS HIS WHOLE LIFE TRAINING FOR CONDITIONS LIKE THIS, HE'S READY FOR IT, AND HE KNOWS HOW TO HANDLE IT.
PHOTO ALEX REVERS



“KEEP SOME OLD PIECES OF LINE HANDY FOR TESTING AND MAKE SURE YOUR KNIFE WORKS, IT CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE..”

Run your lines out each time carefully looking for nicks or blemishes or signs of fraying, any damage to a line should be immediately addressed. A snapped line out at sea could lead to a potential fatality from exposure if it is cold and you have a long swim in.

Check your chicken loop release is functioning and check your depower line is in good order. All these things sound like they take time, but in reality, as you practice them they can take mere minutes and are things you can run through as you set up. Get into the habit of doing this every time you set up, but also when you pack down, that way any damage you incur to your equipment during a session can be fixed before your next outing. There is nothing worse than setting up only to find a tear in your kite or damage to a line that you should have spotted when you packed up at the end of a session.

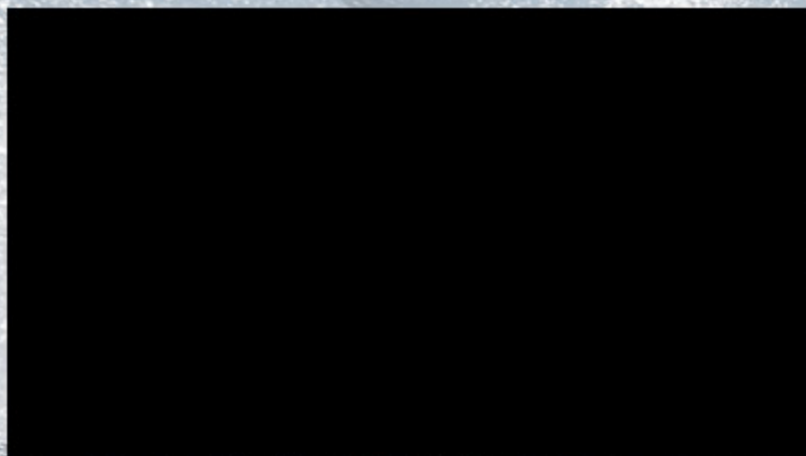
Having checked the weather extensively, done a sound site assessment and given your gear the once over put on your wetsuit, harness, impact vest and helmet which you should be wearing and check those elements too. The webbing on harnesses can wear through; a wetsuit full of holes won't keep you warm during a prolonged swim either. Always ride with a kite knife, you never know when you will find it useful, check it isn't rusty and can still cut through kite lines, keep some old pieces of line handy for testing and make sure your knife works, it can save your life.

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HEADING INTO THE UNKNOWN

The world is covered in water, with around 372,000 miles of coastline we are lucky enough to live on a real kitesurfers paradise. Do you make the most of it?

WORDS KAROLINA WINKOWSKA, ALEXANDER LEWIS-HUGHES, EWAN JASPAN
INTRO ROU CHATER

EWAN JASPAN RIDING AT ONE OF WA'S MOST
POPULAR SPOTS, SAFETY BAY
PHOTO PAUL SMYTH





KAROLINA RIDING A SECLUDED AND EMPTY SPOT IN MANDURAH

“ KITESURFING IS VERY VISUAL, WITH A BRIGHTLY COLOURED CANOPY WHIZZING ABOUT AROUND 25M OFF THE GROUND IT'S DIFFICULT TO MISS ”

The world is covered in water, with around 372,000 miles of coastline we are lucky enough to live on a real kitesurfers paradise. Do you make the most of it?

Kitesurfers are a strange breed, they huddle together in groups, often sticking to tried and tested locations. “Kite Beach” is a case in point; there is one just about everywhere you go! It's Kite Beach, the spot where you

should be kiting, right? Although perhaps not, as this article might explain.

Kitesurfing is very visual, with a brightly coloured canopy whizzing about around 25m off the ground it's difficult to miss as you drive around the coast. Years ago my brother and I prided ourselves on riding new beaches and discovering new spots near where we lived. One spot to this day retains the moniker we gave it “The Secret Spot”. Except it's hard to keep a secret with a kite in the sky; needless to say, our new spot didn't stay a secret for long.

When you go kiting do you seek and search,

or do you stay and play at the tried and trusted spots in your kite bank? With limited water time, precious moments wasted hunting for something new, which might turn out to be rubbish, are often avoided in order to secure some solid water time. You've only got to look at the travelling itinerary of a pro kiter to see what we mean.

The season usually follows the wind, but also the same familiar locations, Brazil, South Africa, Cape Hatteras, Hood River perhaps Morocco or Sicily if you are based in Europe... We see the same videos and images from the same locations all the time here at the magazine. It's as if the desire to try something new is becoming a lost art in the eyes of kitesurfers.



“ THEY NEEDED ONE LAST MEGA SESSION AS A SEND OFF ”

It's totally understandable of course; you don't want to spend a fortune heading to a new spot on the off chance it might be good. We've been skunked enough times to know how frustrating it is. The kitesurfing holiday market also reflects this, with your everyday rider choosing to follow the path most travelled in order to guarantee a fix. Of course with a limited budget and time constraints, this is totally understandable!

However, is there a case to be argued that we are missing out on some hidden gems? Even on a local level how often do you head to the beach you always kite at? Perhaps because that's what your friends do, maybe because you know what to expect? There are a couple of beaches near our UK base, which reflect this. At one particular spot everyone huddles together in a group, after a busy day they all complain on a forum about how crowded it was.

With a hundred kites on the water you could concede they have a point, but then when you come to understand that the beach is five miles long, this point very quickly breaks off. A quick kite upwind or downwind would give them all the space they need; instead, they flock together like birds of a feather.

At another spot, we can look downwind to hundreds of kites traipsing through miles of mud to get to the water. Three miles upwind is a beach that isn't so tidal, offers amazing waves and only has a maximum of five or six kites riding there.

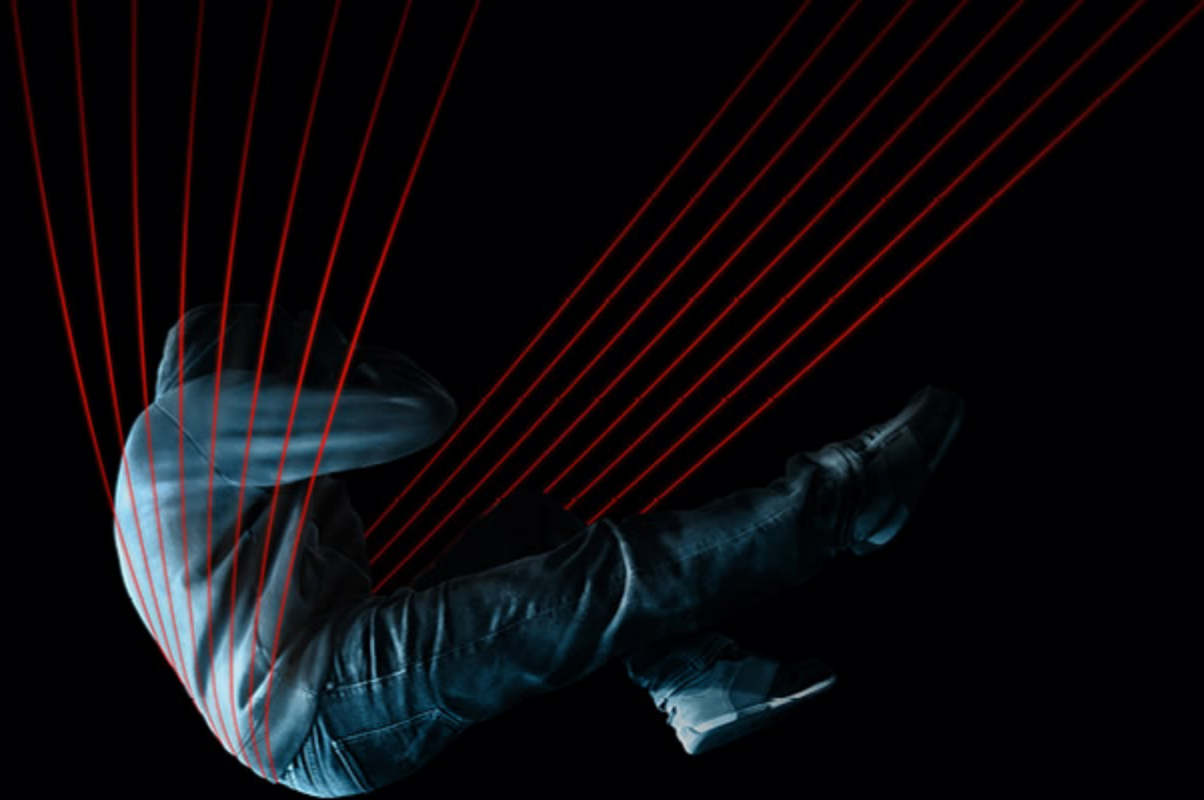
EWAN JASPAN BATTLING THE CROWDS AT SAFETY BAY
PHOTO PAUL SMYTH



How the masses haven't spotted it is beyond me, but they stick to the places they know, at least that is my only explanation.

Personally, I'd rather have ten average sessions searching for a new spot, than ten of the same old at the local beach. That said after ten sessions searching I'd be keen to have struck untapped gold somewhere, after all, that is what this sport is about for me. I see the same thing the world over, in Mauritius, everyone kites at Le Morne, in Cabarete everyone kites at Kite Beach, in South Africa everyone kites around Blouberg...

" I'D RATHER HAVE
TEN AVERAGE
SESSIONS
SEARCHING FOR
A NEW SPOT "



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SURFING ELEMENTS



" THE WIND JUST DOESN'T STOP BLOWING THERE IN THE SUMMER. "

This issue three like-minded pros, keen for an adventure recount some of their experiences of getting off the beaten path in Australia and the rewards it can bring. Karolina Winkowska, Ewan Jaspan and Alex Lewis-Hughes all know the value of looking for something different... Perhaps their inspirational stories about hidden secrets will inspire you to venture away from the pack, travel the path least trod and discover your own pot of gold!

Karolina Winkowska

Australia is a destination I always look forward to going to after a long year of training and competing. I usually go to a few different places in Australia as there many different spots to check out. As a freestyle rider, I am often looking for flat-water locations and small kicker spots of which some of the best ones are in Western Australia. The flat-water spots you've probably heard about are Safety Bay and Woodies (Woodman's Point). They are famous because the wind just doesn't stop blowing there in the summer.

These two places are excellent, but there are so many other sick spots as well; you just have to be brave enough to move around and check them out. Of course, it's impossible to go to every 'secret' spot in Australia, but I try to ride at least one new place every year. I usually end up checking more than one new location, but I know many people who came to WA from overseas and have never even ridden at a different beach. Training hard is important when you are a professional athlete, but it is also important to give yourself the pleasures of travelling and exploring a new spot. Australia is a big country, and as you can imagine it also has countless kiteboarding spots, which is why it's good to move around from the crowds to find the ultimate uncrowded spots.



Many of these places are in remote destinations where the wind is not very consistent, but once you get there when it's windy, and nobody is there you feel like you've discovered something awesome. It is the best feeling ever when you find the perfect spot, the wind is blowing, and nobody is riding. The entire beach is there for you, but since nobody is there, you have some questions on your mind. Are you allowed to ride here? Are there any hazards? Maybe there are dangerous animals? This last question applies to most of Australia of course!

" IT IS THE BEST FEELING EVER WHEN YOU FIND THE PERFECT SPOT "

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INSIDEVIEW

ALEXANDER LEWIS-HUGHES KNOWS THE VALUE OF FINDING SOME EMPTY WAVES!
PHOTO STEVE MCCORMICK



“ IT WAS AMAZING TO CUT LINES ON THE BUTTER FLAT WATER WITH NOBODY ELSE AROUND TO MAKE ANY CHOP. ”

This year I looked around Mandurah area, a little town south of Perth, located around a lake with many canals. Everybody knows that there are good flat water spots in Mandurah, but nobody wants to tell you where exactly they are and when is the best time to go there. We drove around a neighbourhood area for a while until we found this little, perfect pond, surrounded by a narrow concrete path for people to walk their dogs. Nobody was swimming there, or kiteboarding, it was that perfect location to give it a go. It was amazing to cut lines on the butter flat water with nobody else around to make any chop. I wish I had a house there so I could just have my perfect little sessions every day. If we had stayed at the usual beaches, we would never have discovered this place!

Alexander Lewis-Hughes

I also frequent the west coast a lot in the summers, but the truth is my home is on the east coast, and it also has many unique spots to experience and an entirely different flora and fauna set to explore. While the west is hot and dry the east is tropical and often humid in comparison. The whole east coast from Melbourne to Cape York is a travellers best friend. To explore the entire east coast properly, you would need tens of years; luckily this is also the reason it's still possible to find empty spots all to yourself!





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ON WATER



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SQUARE
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“ WE HAVE CONDITIONS FROM ALL AROUND THE GLOBE, PACKED INTO ONE ISLAND. ”

There's obviously the east coast kiting meccas like Melbourne, Sydney, The Sunshine Coast and Cairns, but in between these spots are a host of other flat water spots, beach breaks and point breaks for every skill level. My favourite stretch of the East coast is between Brisbane and Sydney, the weather is beautiful in summer, and there's a variety of waves to explore.

Half way between Brisbane and Sydney is

the hotspot; there's never too many people as it's as far as possible from the main cities and the climate and swell are about as good as it gets. I love this stretch of coastline and surrounding hinterland and could easily spend a long time exploring it all. The waves can be amazing here, and if you're an avid surf kiter and don't mind the odd windless day to surf, I'd highly suggest a trip here.

My suggestions for places to go aren't exactly direct; your best bet is to hire a car and start driving. Conditions change all the time, and you can't just go to one spot and get it firing

every day. You need to be agile and flexible in your approach. If you follow the wind forecast and check the spots on the map that look like they will line up, you will be rewarded. The lazy will perish.

EWAN JASPAN

What I love most about kiting in Australia is that we have conditions from all around the globe, packed into one island. From tropical rainforest and trade winds in North Queensland to perfect swell and sea breezes down the East Coast, rugged conditions on the south coast mixed with summer thermals and then the pumping 'Fremantle Doctor' out west, we've got you covered.



I recently just discovered a new spot not even 30 minutes drive from home, which mimicked the slicks of Cape Hatteras. Hatteras is one of the only places I've seen with these crazy rivers and ponds surrounded by grass, and I never imagined my own home spot had the same thing!

After a long session at the regular beach, I decided to go further down the coast with my kite and see what was down there. I kited along the beach and then after about 20 minutes riding saw a little inlet off the shoreline. After taking the risk of getting stuck in the swamp I actually found myself in a 1-2m wide river, weaving for miles,

" I DECIDED TO GO FURTHER DOWN THE COAST WITH MY KITE AND SEE WHAT WAS DOWN THERE. "



RUBICON
BRAH #NOBILEWAKE



“ KITEBOARDING IS A FANTASTIC SPORT; WE AREN'T BOUND BY ANYTHING AND CAN GO WHERE WE PLEASE. ”

connected by little pools that were in themselves perfect kite spots. I've never ridden through anything like that in my life; it was kite perfection right on my doorstep.

After about an hour playing around, I found a new way out which led me into some salt lakes all the way back to where I started. Totally unexpected and almost by accident I had one of my best sessions since I learnt.

Kiteboarding is a fantastic sport; we aren't bound by anything and can go where we please. I found myself travelling down a coastline with no roads, no pathways and no signs of civilisation to a spot literally only accessible by kite. Australia is such a vast country, and now I have more motivation to go and explore what the continent has to offer, as the possibilities seem to be totally endless, and I haven't even scratched the surface.

If you ever find yourself travelling out this way, don't stick to the spots that you see the pros riding such as Safety Bay in Western Australia, rent yourself a car and explore and you'll be astounded at what you can find (and how big the country is). Nowadays with Google maps we can quickly scout out far better spots and start to discover new kite spots almost every day, so get out there and explore, it's the best part about our sport!



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TECHNIQUE



WORDS & PHOTOS CHRISTIAN & KARINE

Hello Class! More essential and exciting moves for you! Our opener is the Beach Start with a Front Rotation. We spend so much time learning moves to throw down once we're on the water, why not have a few more to bridge the gap from beach to ocean? Following that it's a classic transition from bygone times that should have you hollering with joy and any onlookers wondering what you just nailed. Once they work it out, they'll realise that it was, in fact, the rather fetching Toeside Nose (or thereabouts) Grab Front Loop Transition. And finishing things off we have a positively great bit of hooked in tomfoolery. As Freestyle moves on, the connection between kite and harness seems ever less important, but let's remind you that it's possible to dazzle even with your Donkey's security pin firmly in place. Time to learn that Back from Blind. Enjoy the challenge. C&K.

BEACH START FRONT
LOOP/ROLL



[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

TOESIDE NOSE GRAB FRONT
LOOP TRANSITION



[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

BACK LOOP FROM BLIND



[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

BEACH START FRONT LOOP/ROLL >

Kite: Switchblade 9m with Fireball

Board: Ace 133 with H3s

We spend a lot of time offering up different alternatives to a full plethora of moves, often ignoring a few areas. As such we relish the chance to give you a brassy alternative to jumping off the beach. Thus, we have the front loop or roll beach start. As the name suggests, we intend to marry two of your skills. As such it is a fine idea to have both a decent front rotation and a handy jumping beach start already in the bag. In case you're not sure what we mean by a jumping beach start have a quick look at the sequence and/or video. Yup, it's the type where you send the kite and jump off the beach, preferably in an offshore wind and definitely not in an onshore wind.

As is the norm, we'll start by having a look at the individual parts that make this possible.

Set Up Pic A

It's all well and good having a go, but if you don't have everything set up in the right place, to begin with, you'll have little chance of success. For the sake of learning this, you should be looking for somewhere you can plant yourself on the beach with deep water directly downwind of you – it's always good to have a soft landing! The first thing to sort is the position of your board. You want it facing across the wind. If you're not 100% sure, it's better to have the tail of the board pointing ever so slightly upwind, in preference to the nose pointing upwind.



If you stand with the kite at 12 o'clock, the centre strut will show you which way the wind is blowing... Also, try and be on dry sand, as if it's wet there's a good chance that the board will stick. More so with the front rotation than with a standard beach jump as you won't be using the board's edge as much. Once you're happy, get your feet in the straps or buckle up your boots. Trim your sweet spot out towards the middle of your centre line and then slowly move your kite back around the edge of the window until it's around 1 o'clock or just under (11 if you're jumping left to right). Once it's there, you can pull the bar in slightly to keep your balance. As in the photo, you can see that Karine is close to the edge, on dry sand with her kite back at 1 o'clock and bar pulled in a tad for



balance. You're now locked and loaded and ready to rock and roll!

Send It Pic B

Now, this is where things start to get exciting. You're looking to get enough power to pull you up off the beach and get you away into the water, with enough time in the air to complete a cheeky front roll. Anyone who has tried a beach start will vouch that you'll need to give it more beans than you think is sensible. Without getting too theoretical, the reason for this is that you're standing still and as such your kite won't be pulling as much as when you're blasting along. Give the kite a hefty send forwards to generate enough power. It's important that you send the kite from the sweet spot. The reason is much the same as for a jump.



If you just yank on the front hand the kite will stall and rather than flying up and over; it'll cut the top off the window and pull you downwind. So use two hands, push and pull, to get it moving quickly, and where you want. As the kite moves you need to resist the power, so drop your weight back and low against the pressure in your harness. This will help put tension on the lines and increase the lift you'll get. It's very tempting to let the bar out as you feel the kite pull, but giving away all that energy won't do you any favours. You can see how Karine has given the bar a positive send with both hands, she's dropped her weight into a sitting position and is pivoting

the bar around the sweet spot.

Compress Pic C

It's not often that we'll use compression when talking twin tip technique, but here is a genuine exception. You'll be using your legs to help get airborne, and seeing as you are about to launch from terra firma, it seems only right to jump as we normally would with no kite. The idea being that we time our leg jump with the kite reaching 12, and therefore give it a helping hand in taking us up. As Karine feels the kite lifting, she drops her weight, even more, bending her legs, coiling up energy which she can then release.





This is the time that the beach start gets different due to the front rotation. You can see that as Karine compresses she pulls the bar in, levelling it to slow the kites forward speed and for extra lift, but also she moves her weight forwards onto her front foot, leaning her head, shoulders and hips towards the nose of the board. This gets her ready to roll into her rotation.

The Launch Pic D

As with so many moves, this moment of take-off will pretty much dictate whether you make it or you don't. Your objective is to get yourself forwards and pop up off your front leg. This combined with the kite will get you rotating into your front loop. With the kite pulling her up Karine launches forwards, she extends her back leg, which rocks her onto the front of the board. Then she stamps off her front foot, which should be



enough to initiate her rotation. Commitment is the key here, as you will feel the kite pulling you forwards, as opposed to up and back as per a sent front from the water, which could encourage you to bail. But have faith in your movements, and you'll soon be up and off.

Just Like Old Times Pic E

From here on in it should be business as usual. If you're up and rotating all the same rules apply as for a sent front. You won't have much time, so rotating quickly is a must. The best way to encourage a Tasmanian twist is to throw your head over your leading shoulder, bring your knees up close and look for your landing. Here Karine is leading with her head; she's crunched up small, her bar is in and levelled - so she knows that she'll make it around.



Touching Down Pic F

Again the ending is just like that of a sent front. Your aim is to land down wind, tail first so that you can absorb the impact before carving back up onto your edge. Therefore, as Karine comes down, she dives the kite aggressively to pull her out of the rotation and give her a bit of extra downwind. She's looking at where she thinks she'll land and the board is coming around to a downwind position. Happy days!

Top Tips

It goes without saying that the prep for this is to hammer out a few front rolls and a few no rotation beach starts so that you can make sure that you're rotating quick enough and get a feeling for how much power, and therefore send, you require for the beach launch.



Once you put them together, focus on going early enough that you're getting lifted, and really concentrate on rolling onto the nose of the board. Imagine that you're trying to press the nose down so that you can use the board's flex to help you up.

And yet again if you know the water is deep enough to stack it, you'll have far more confidence to go for it...

Now have a good look at the sequence and videos to get an idea of how the jump and roll combine in perfect harmony.

Common Problems

If you're not getting off the beach, and therefore don't feel that you have enough time or height to squeeze in the front

loop. Three things will help here, assuming that there is enough wind and that your sweet spot isn't trimmed right in for unhooking:)

First off, just like water starting when you were learning, if you need more power, start with the kite further back/lower. This way you'll use more window, but the power will still come as the kite reaches 12. If you just wang it from higher, the pull will come too late.

Secondly be positive with the bar. A decent push pull on the sweet spot. This will give you the feeling of power, which is what you want so don't let the bar out.

And finally, if you pull the bar in too much as you're sending, you'll choke the kite, kill the power and eat sand.

If the board slips (and you're not stalling), drop your weight onto your heels to edge a bit.

If you're not getting the rotation. This is the tricky bit as you can just turn your head and hope. You have to get your weight forwards on the board so that you can start the rotation and get the energy going before you've left the sand. Concentrate on bending sideways at your waist, so that your front shoulder drops down towards the nose. Don't throw yourself across the board.

If you're getting around but drilling yourself into the water, chances are that you're not levelling the bar on take-off, so the kite continues to dive fast, and therefore the lift disappears.

Keystones

1. Board across the wind
2. Kite 1, 11 or a tad lower
3. Positive send on the sweet spot
4. Level bar and get weight over nose
5. Compact and look for landing



TOESIDE NOSE GRAB FRONT LOOP TRANSITION >

Kite: Switchblade 9m with Fireball

Board: Ace 137 with H2s

This could almost be considered a touch old school. Remember those mutant boys, Shinny, Tobias, James, Flash et al.? They had a seemingly infinite number of variations that made changing direction look as positively exciting as the ginormous airs, spins and board offs (all with Mach 10 landings) that seemed commonplace amongst a freakish few back then. Nowadays there's a lot of turning, a few BLTs but the variation to change direction is almost lost. And that is why we thought it high time that you got your heads around this little beauty. It's basically a half popped front loop from toeside, with a grab near or on the nose, which is then turned into a transition, with an optional late kite loop to help if you're on a smaller, faster kite. Or let's be honest, if the kites gone a tad too far back for a plethora of possible reasons.

Before trying this, we will, of course, recommend that you've at the very least got a decent toeside and can manage a front loop transition. If you can already front loop from toeside, you'll have a massive head start.

So, with the above in mind, what are the important bits of this move that'll make it all the less frustrating to learn???

Driving Toeside Pic A

We called this a half-popped transition. Translated, this means that you will need to pop into it, but you



will also be drifting the kite up, so you'll have some help, and then plenty of lift during the move. The downside is that you'll need speed to pop, which means that you'll likely pendulum under the kite and find that it ends up a tad further back than you intended and expected! It goes without saying that the foundation for making this work as best it can, is to have your toeside nailed so that it's as efficient and effective as possible.

The key to a good toeside is using as much of the board's edge as you can, which require you to get your weight forward. Too much weight driving through the back foot will not only slow the board and encourage it to follow the kite downwind, but it will also make popping extremely difficult as all the power will be directed through your back leg, making popping against it physically demanding. To get more weight forward get both knees working together,



pointing forwards in the direction of travel. Then open your shoulders so that you're facing forwards and not turning them upwind. Finally push your hips over to the upwind side of the board, squeezing your glutes together so that you can drive against the board with the balls of your feet.

All this will be easier if your kite is at either 11, 1 or a tad lower. Any higher and it will be hard to edge against. Get your sweet spot set close enough that you're not tempted to pull in and stall the kite. If you pop to toeside from heelside with a bit of speed, it'll be easier to adopt this position. Looking at Christian, he's approached with speed, back hand centred on the bar and kite at 11 o'clock. You can see how his shoulders are open and up; he's driving off his feet against his edge, pushing his hips upwind, with both knees pointing forwards. And finally, if you hold your free hand forward it will encourage you to lean that way.

Once you're ready, you can drift the kite up towards 12!

Pop Early Pic B

Now back to that half pop thing! The fact that you're popping means that you're not using the kite to jump, but rather for assistance, so pop early. In real time action terms, this means that you should be popping before the kite pulls you off the water. To drift the kite, steer the kite with your back hand and keep the bar on the sweet spot. Once you've started to drift the kite with your back hand, it's time to pop.

To do this, carve the board suddenly up into the wind while dropping your hips and weight back onto the back foot. As soon as it's weighted, you can extend your back leg, stamping hard against your foot and the tail of the board. Here Christian has his hips back, and he's exploded up against the board with his back leg. The harder you carve and pop the more speed you'll kill and the easier the transition will be. However, if you just carve up, and for a tad too long, you'll lose all speed and won't get any pop! Christian may have his weight back, but his shoulders are still forward, open and up. Keep the bar in on the sweet spot so that the kite lifts as soon as it can. Let the bar out, and the kite will go too far back.

Grab to Rotate Pic C

Once you've popped, it's time for some serious multi-tasking. You must get control of the kite, encourage your front rotation and get the grab in. In the pic,



Shinn

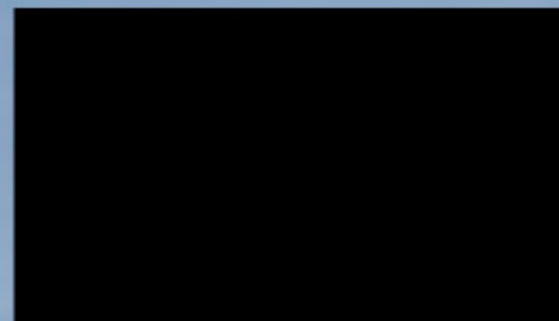
FOIL F P

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

Yeah, whatever...

We did our homework, you'll love it

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Christian has pulled his bar in, while keeping his elbow high. This will give him a bit of extra lift and height, while also levelling the bar so that the kite stops drifting back. From his pop, Christian's back leg remains straight, pushing him forwards. Simultaneously he turns his upwind shoulder down and around which puts his weight and momentum in front of and under the bar, allowing him to rotate. This is helped by the kite pulling on his harness, which will naturally try to unspin him from toeside. With his shoulders down Christian is looking at the board, reaching with his free hand towards the toeside edge near the nose, which should be within reach thanks to the fact that he already had his arm held forward.

Patience Pic D

If all the previous paragraph goes to plan you will be rotating, hopefully with a grab. As those of you who have tried a toeside front rotation before can attest, the rotation is fairly natural. With the bar held in and



levelled the kite shouldn't drift too much. Enjoy the moment and don't rush to get around. Christian holds his grab, keeps the bar in, head looking over his shoulder, and waits until he comes around far enough to see what is actually going on.

Take Control Pic E

From the moment you take off, the rest of your flight time is fairly automated. However, in order to claim this move with both dry hair and a dry kite you do need to take command of the situation once the time is right. Your visual reference is being able to see the water downwind of you as you come around your rotation. The reason is that if you do nothing the kite will drift way back, you'll keep rotating as you follow it and at very best you'll land pointing upwind with the kite at the edge of the window, before sinking like a miniature Titanic. Once you spot the downwind world, release your grab so that you can get both hands on the bar and look at where you'd like to land so that



you slow your rotation. As you release the grab, you should start to dive the kite. This will also help to pull you out of your rotation and get the kite moving down through the window, giving you power and preventing the kite from fluttering around to the edge where there'll be no pull.

Prepare for Landing Pic F

As the kite pulls and your rotation slows, you need to get everything in place to take the landing. It's probably time to ponder the kite's movements again. As mentioned you can land this move without a late kitemove, depending on your speed and position of the kite. If however, you've got a lot of speed, the kite has drifted too far back, or you got some height you will need to finish it with a late loop. The idea of a late loop is to get power once you've landed, not to nail yourself in the air. So even if you need the loop, think of it as diving the kite, but not having time to take it back up once you land,



and therefore continuing the pull so that the kite passes under and up helping you sail away. With the kite diving, your aim is to get the board underneath you so that you can soak up the impact. Christian has dropped his undercarriage, so that he can land tail first chasing the kite downwind. Try to keep your head up and if you want the kite to loop, keep pulling on what was your rear hand, with the bar on the sweet spot. Brilliant, job done.

Top Tips

We've covered the necessities in detail, but nothing will scupper this move more than a wobbly toeside, so make sure that yours is solid. Other than that kite control and timing are everything in this move. Drift the kite up with meaning so that you feel the tension in the lines as soon as possible. And we can't let you

go until we've repeated that you must pop early. Don't wait for the kite to lift you....

Now run through the sequence and the videos to see how it all comes together:)

Common Problems

The killer in all things toeside is dragging your weight back against a stalling kite. Check your stance and if your free hand is waving around behind you like a broken rudder - get it forwards. It'll all be more comfortable and achievable if you trim your kite and get forwards.

If you find that the kite is going way too far back make sure that you move it a bit quicker and that as soon as you move it, you pop into your rotation. This way you can stop the kite.

This way you can stop the kite.

Be aware that speed equals pendulum, which equals need for late kitemove....

Keystones

1. Dynamic toeside with sufficient speed
2. Drift kite positively
3. Pop early
4. Turn head and shoulders, look for grab
5. Dive once you can see downwind



BACK LOOP FROM BLIND >**Kite: Switchblade 9m with Fireball****Board: Ace 137 with H2s**

Some time has passed since we last covered a move that fits into the loosely labelled hooked-in freestyle category. Not everyone is keen on unhooking for various reasons, whether it be the conditions they ride in, the kit they own, the potential consequences, or even that it just doesn't rock their boat - but that doesn't mean that freestyle moves are off limits. These tricks are close to our hearts as they remind us of good times and some unique moments. Chris Valentine, the pioneer of kiting in Venezuela (even though he hails from Bognor) had an unbelievable repertoire of such moves and beat many a dangle passer in the Nationals. And Ali Barret pulled a plethora of hooked magic in comps when he was injured. Usually, this would be a Karine classic, but seeing as she must ride in boots as she slowly heals her foot, we're afraid that you'll have to put up with the other half of us...

To confirm what you'll be attempting, this will be a back loop using the kite, taking off from blind and landing heelside. Suffice to say that riding blind is a must, back loops will help, and straps will be loads easier than boots as you need to be able to adapt your position for take-off. And just to be picky the take off is crucial, as it must be from blind - we'll discuss this further on in the article.

It just wouldn't be the same if we didn't first look at the individual parts of this move that can make or break it!

**Riding Blind – 2 Hands Pic A**

There's a lot here, so bear with us. You're intending to perform a jump, so a modicum of speed is essential. The simplest way to carry momentum into this is to pop to blind with a bit of velocity so that you can use it for your take off. The tricky bit for most is getting into an effective blind position with both hands on the bar. We've all seen the rider that casually cruises across the bay, steering the kite with both hands while looking totally at ease. No doubt if you've tried to emulate this relaxed look it's resulted with you tied up in a hernia inducing knot. How to make it more comfortable? You'll never reach the bar while blind unless you trim your sweet spot down towards you, so this is THE place to start. Twisting your shoulders



down and around will have the magical effect of lengthening what would normally be your free arm. Grabbing the bar near the end, not centred will also help, and loosening your straps a tad so that your new front foot can twist in the strap should avoid anything going "ping". Looking at Christian you can see how his leading foot is twisted in the strap, his left shoulder is rolled down and around, his head is up and facing downwind, while the bar is in close and he's got his back hand near the end while his front remains centred. This way he can maintain an edge, speed and tension in the lines. His kite is around the 11 o'clock mark.

Prep & Send Pic B

Once you're in position, edging, balanced and have both hands on the bar, you can contemplate the takeoff.



Much like a normal sent back loop/roll you will still need to give a little bit of pop to help you get off the water before the kite travels too far. This means that you need to alter your position ready to pop while you send the kite. Your aim is to get more weight onto your back foot. You need to do this while sending. If you do it before you'll carve up and slow down. To move your weight, ultimately your hips you can extend your back leg, pushing your hips over the tail of the board. At the same time, you should be steering the kite, a tad more gently than for a normal jump, but sure enough that the kite moves positively. This is another reason to have your sweet spot close.

You can't easily push and pull with opposing hands from this position, so you'll be relying on back hand pull. If your sweet spot is out, you'll stall the kite and get yanked off your edge. Here you can see Christian pushing his hips back, straightening his front (left) leg slightly while pulling to steer the kite. He keeps his head up to keep weight on the edge. If you drop your head, you'll over weight the back of the board and drag rather than resist.

The Launch Pic C

This is the defining moment which will certify your move as the genuine article or dodgy imposter. As per pretty much every other take-off,

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Comet 111
Competition



the nose, or leading end of the board should be lifting first, as can be seen in the pic. If you've accomplished the previous steps, you have a good chance. However, muscle memory from all your previous moves will kick in, and your body will undoubtedly try and use what would normally be your back foot, in Christian's case his left, to pop from. If you allow this to happen, you'll push the board down into the water and then pop from that foot. If, however, you keep your leading leg extended and hips over the tail you can pop up off your trailing foot only, claiming a bona fide launch. Here Christian demonstrates a proper launch, carving and popping up off his trailing leg as the kite lifts. This is made simpler by the fact that the kite is moving past 12 o'clock. If you overpower yourself or stall the kite, it won't travel so far, and you'll be more likely to take off from the wrong foot.

Rotate Pic D

Seeing as how you were fighting to stay twisted in your blind position, unravelling yourself and initiating



your rotation should be fairly simple as long as you're on the way up. Your mission is to stop the kite going back any further and start redirecting it forwards while making yourself small so that you can rotate. To get the kite forward, you need to pull on your front hand and to rotate try and look at the bar. Christian has the bar in and is pulling on his front hand, looking at his hands, and he's brought his knees up to aid with his back loop.

Happy Place Pic E

Once you're half way around things should start to feel quite familiar. The main difference is that without a hefty kick and carve upwind you will be rotating slower than normal, so you need to keep things moving. Christian is looking over his front shoulder so that he keeps rotating, while bringing his knees up and steering the kite forwards. Now that he's more balanced he can use both hands to control the kite. What's difficult during this move is that because the board started from blind it gets left behind, so it takes



some effort (as shown by Christian's kite face) to bring it back to where it should be.

Landing Set Up Pic F

The final steps. If you've got this far the rest should be easy enough. You're aiming for a bog standard downwind landing, flat board and some pull from the kite. The chances are that the board is still playing catch up, so don't lower your undercarriage completely, rather keep the legs slightly bent so that you move as one when the power from the kite comes. You can see that Christian is diving the kite and looking where he intends to land although the board still needs to turn a tad further.

Top Tips

There is no denying that flat water will make this a lot easier, you'll be able to carry more speed and edge more efficiently. Seat harnesses, especially those with a low hook position won't make it any easier to contort either but you will be able to get the bar nearer.



If you struggle with the position at first, aim to pop into blind and then get into the move asap.

And finally, work on your blind position. It's the building block upon which all the others are stacked. Think of the position as coming from your shoulders, not from reaching and stretching for the bar. By rolling your body nearer to the bar, you can reach it.

Now have a good look at the sequence and videos to get a handle on what is happening and when.

Common Problems

If your board is skipping as you send the kite. This will happen whenever your sweet spot is too far. To get both hands on the bar, you're having to pull it in towards you, and as such you're stalling the kite. As a result, the kite doesn't go up to 12 as you send it, but

but it chops a bit off the top of the window and tries to pull you downwind. So Trim.

If you keep turning upwind too much, and therefore losing your speed and not being able to pop. Lift your head. It's easy to try and drop your weight by putting your head down. Unfortunately, this makes you bend excessively at the waist, so you can't drive against your edge, so you bend further still. Keep your head up, which means that you can move your hips to change weight, keep your edge and pop.

If you're popping off the wrong foot. Make sure you move the kite enough as it'll help you roll back onto the tail of the board.

And finally, if you're not getting enough rotation make sure to keep yourself small and compact so that you

bring the board with you. Really try to force your head and shoulders around, so that they lead you.

Keystones

1. Trim and speed
2. Roll shoulders
3. Push hips back as send kite
4. Pop off new back foot as kite passes 12
5. Keep small, redirect kite





UNDER THE SEA

WORDS ROU CHATER
PHOTOS NOUSTHA KOECKHOVEN

Have you ever seen anything like this?
Noustha Koeckhoven creates some
sublime magic with no trickery involved,
just a lot of dedication and hard work!
It's the first time ever someone has
successfully kitesurfed underwater...)

“ WE FOUND A PERFECT SPOT IN THE LAGOON WITH A SANDY BOTTOM IN THE MIDDLE AND CORAL ON BOTH SIDES. ”

Can you tell us a bit about yourself and how you came up with this concept?

I am Noustha, a young Dutch underwater photographer. While I'm travelling through Australia, I spent three months on Cocos Keeling Islands. Here I learned to kitesurf and fell in love with it. This was my new inspiration for an epic underwater photo shoot.

Is that where you shot this project?

The first idea was to do the underwater photo shoot on Christmas Island. There are some incredible marine drop-offs that I would have loved to have in the background of the picture. Normally the water there is totally flat around this time of the year, but I had some bad luck. I spent almost a month there looking at the big swell and waves around the coastline. For this reason, it was impossible to organise the photo shoot there, so I changed the plan. I flew back to Cocos Keeling Islands to do the photo shoot.

We found a perfect spot in the lagoon with a sandy bottom in the middle and coral on both sides. We set the kite up above the sand so that we wouldn't damage the coral. The location is a popular dive site called 'Cabbage Patch'. Luckily the weather was perfect on Cocos Keeling Islands for the photo shoot.

Who took part of this shoot?

I needed a team of four people for this photo shoot: a photographer, model, safety diver and an all-round diver. Of course, I also needed kite equipment. For that, I used the Skinny Boy 6m from Blade Kites who were very enthusiastic about this project.





The model needed to be someone who could freedive, scuba dive and kite. Luckily I found some energetic people to work with! They needed to be very comfortable under the water and not scared to be without air for a while.

For the whole team, including me, it was the first time to put a kite under the water. The only way to find out how to do this was by trial and error. The team members kept changing for the photo shoots because not everybody was available on all days.

“ THEY NEEDED TO BE VERY COMFORTABLE UNDER THE WATER AND NOT SCARED TO BE WITHOUT AIR ”



FOIL
KITE



ONESK
KITE



TWIN
KITE



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“ TRYING THIS UNDER THE WATER WITH MY DIVE GEAR ON FELT LIKE FLYING ON A HOVER BOARD. WHEN THE WEIGHT WAS PERFECT, IT WAS POSSIBLE TO DO EVERYTHING ON IT, EVEN MAKING BACK FLIPS UNDER THE WATER. ”

Photographer: Noustha Koeckhoven

Models: Levi Fowler, Hugo Heuman and Chynna Cahill

Safety divers: Chynna Cahill and Steph Hagen

All-round diver: Chris Dabbs

Kite brand: Blade Kites

Did you have any mishaps along the way?

During the photo shoot, many mistakes were made. We've had sand kicked up in front of the model, lines untying from the kite and floating away. The kite deflated and sagged down in the water. We lost the backstage camera, which was found a month later by a scuba diver. But in the end the photo shoot was successful, and luckily no one drowned.

How did you progress from each shoot and how long did it take to get the final shots?

The whole shoot took four days, and it panned out something like this...

Day 1:

The first day we were testing the kite equipment under the water so we knew what to expect for the real photo shoot.

We had to check how much weight we needed to keep the kiteboard under the water. Trying this under the water with my dive gear on felt like flying on a hover board. When the weight was perfect, it was possible to do everything on it, even making back flips under the water.

We filled the kite bladder up with water to create neutral buoyancy. We used weights and floats so we could hold the kite in shape and place.



“ THIS WAS OUR LAST CHANCE TO DO THE PHOTO SHOOT WITH GOOD WEATHER. THE FORECAST WAS CHANGING INTO HIGH WINDS AND HEAVY RAIN AFTER THIS. ”

Day 2:

It was a perfect day with very clear water. We made some amazing photos this day. Unfortunately, when I reviewed the photos, later on, I realised the shape of the kite was not perfect. We had lines tied on one of the corners of the kite back to the boat. The rope was pulling the kite out of shape. This was a mistake to learn from...

Day 3:

This time we tied the corners of the kite on the bottom of the seabed with anchors to hold the kite in the normal shape. The weather was perfect when we were setting up the kite. When we were ready to start the current changed which reduced the visibility to almost zero. It was impossible to see the kite clearly on those photos. It just looked like a faded out smear in the water.

Day 4:

This was our last chance to do the photo shoot with good weather. The forecast was changing into high winds and heavy rain after this. We learned from our previous mistakes from the other days. This enabled us to do the photo shoot perfectly. On this day we made the perfect shot!

How did you manage to suspend everything and get tension in the lines and the rider in the right place, it must have been really tricky?



We started early in the morning setting the kite up under the water. It takes 4 hours to get everything in the right position. First filling the kite up with water and tying the corners to the bottom with anchors. Secondly, we had to keep the struts in place with floats. When the kite was in the right position, we needed to tie the lines to the kite and put them on the bottom with a weight on the bar. It was a tough challenge to get this done without getting tangled. On the seabed, we weighted the board down in the right position.

“ FILLING THE KITE UP WITH WATER AND TYING THE CORNERS TO THE BOTTOM WITH ANCHORS. ”



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“ IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO SWIM TO THE SURFACE BY YOURSELF FROM THAT DEPTH, ESPECIALLY AFTER BREATHING FROM A TANK AND CARRYING ALL THE WEIGHT. ”

Before getting into the water, we talked about different signs to communicate under the water.

The photo is taken at a depth of 10 meters. Everybody was diving down while breathing through scuba gear. Of course, those big tanks are not exactly beautiful for the photo. During the photo shoot, we needed to remove the scuba equipment from the model. The model was breathing through the spare mouthpiece of the safety diver while getting into the right position.

Deep under the water, we had to sort out how much weight the model needed on the harness. When everybody was ready, the safety diver swam away quickly to get out of the shot. At this time I was busy taking photographs.

The first sessions of posing were very short but increased in duration as time went by. The board caught a lot of current; this made it hard to stay in the right position. For the model, it was also hard to be relaxed when they couldn't see the photographer or dive buddy. It is impossible to swim to the surface by yourself from that depth, especially after breathing from a tank and carrying all the weight. If something went wrong, so they needed to trust the whole team completely. Every time the model was close to getting out of air they could give a sign to the safety diver. The safety diver then swam directly back and gave them air. After some breaths, it was time to try it again, again and again. The model tried different raleys and grabs under the water.







To get the perfect photo I had to take hundreds of shots. After this, I had many hours of reviewing, selecting and editing photos ahead of me.

What about your kiting models, how does it feel to kite under water?

Levi Fowler

"When Noustha asked me about being part of an underwater kitesurfing photo shoot,

"I HAD MANY HOURS OF REVIEWING, SELECTING AND EDITING PHOTOS AHEAD OF ME."

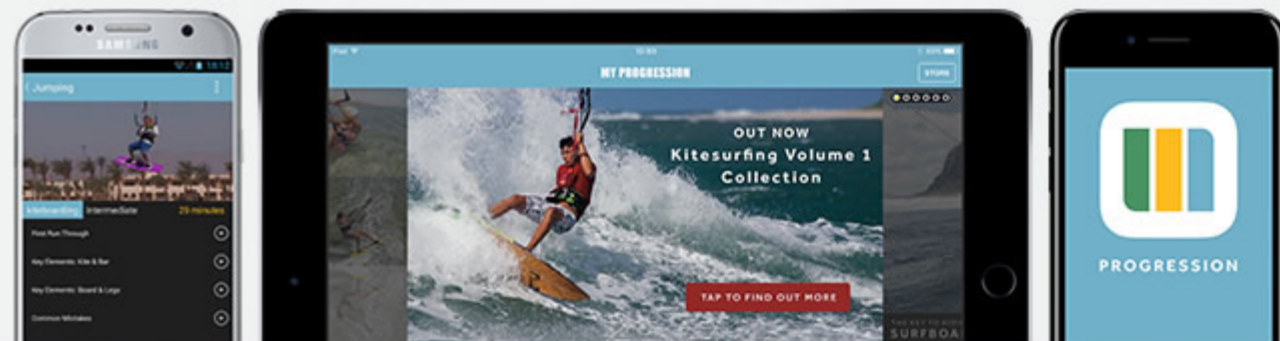


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“ YOU DON’T HAVE THE ENERGY GENERATED TO THROW INTO A ROTATION AS YOU HAVE ALL THE SAME FORCES WORKING ON YOU THE WHOLE TIME. ”

I was wondering how on earth we would get it to work. No wind, no air and I won't be able to see!

When you load and pop riding normally, you get the initial pull then weightlessness and freedom to throw your body around in free space before landing downwind and edging away. Underwater it is different;

you don't have the energy generated to throw into a rotation as you have all the same forces working on you the whole time.

You notice the forces working on your body as you try and pose, it is definitely harder than kiting on the surface. There is the pressure of the water from above which is approx. 3 atmospheres at the depth we were at, the tide and wave currents pushing you around and the buoyancy or lack of possessed by your body, the kite gear and rigging that you are constantly trying to balance out.

But it is FUN! Rather than only being able to hold your tricks for 2-6 seconds in the air, underwater you can hold them, sink into the trick and adjust it to where it feel perfect. It was good to practice getting your body into the positions you want for riding on the surface, as you are not bound by the time you are in the air but simply how long you can hold your breath! I would be keen to do another shoot in another location and try new tricks now that I have the first session under my belt. Hopefully, Noustha decides to do a follow up somewhere in a cool place around the world."



“ IT WAS A GREAT EXPERIENCE THAT NOT MANY PEOPLE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY OF DOING! ”

Hugo Heuman

"A kite photo shoot under the water doesn't have much to do with one on the surface. It took a while to figure out how many weights we needed to stabilise me at the bottom. A shoot like this requires great trust in the team you're working with. Since the weights are inside the harness, it would be tight on time to get up to the surface if your helper with the tubes couldn't make it back to you when you running out of air."

Chynna Cahill

"Being photographed with a kite underwater is a completely different feeling than kiting normally. You don't have the pull of the kite to keep you up and steady, instead, you have the movement of the water and current pushing your body in different directions. It was more complicated than I thought and it took a lot of time and effort to set the kite and board up with ropes and weights but definitely worth it to get such a unique and amazing shot. It was a great experience that not many people have the opportunity of doing!"

KITES

Blade Trigger 9m

Cabrinha Contra 13m

Gin Cannibal 2 9m

Naish Dash 10m

RRD Obsession 13.5m

Slingshot Wave SST 9m

BOARDS

Cabrinha CBL 142 x 43cm

F-ONE Trax HRD Lite Tech 137 x 42cm

Nobile NHP WMN 135 x 41cm

North Team Series 138 x 42cm

RRD Poison V4 138 x 42cm

Shinn ADHD Sunset 140 x 43cm

SURFBOARDS

Naish Skater 5'2"

BARs

Ocean Rodeo Stick Shift



TRIED & TESTED

Lots of twin tips and kites from 2017 this issue with brands like Blade, Cabrinha, F-One, Gin, Naish, Nobile, Ocean Rodeo, RRD, Shinn and Slingshot all going under the microscope!

WORDS AND PHOTOS THE IKSURFMAG TEST TEAM
PHOTO THIS PAGE SHINN

BRAND BLADE MODEL TRIGGER SIZE 9M YEAR 2017



“DEPENDABLE
LOW END POWER
AND UPWIND
ABILITY, WITH
EXCELLENT
JUMPING
CAPABILITIES.”



At A Glance

The Trigger is one of the long standing kites in Blades line up, and it's clear to see why. It's a three strut all rounder with a large wind range and the ability to handle a range of conditions and disciplines.

New for 2017, the Triggers profile has been updated. The designers have moved away from the grunty kite of last year and tilted the profile of the canopy to create a kite which sits further forward in the window; basically meaning easier upwind and higher jumps!

Also for the 9th Generation, Blade have added their new 'Cross-Fibre Ripstop' to the kites canopy which is a stronger material with an additional coating making the kite last longer.

A Max Flow inflation system gets you onto the water in record time, and the excellent reinforcements in key areas keeps your kite safe from premature wear and tear.

Sizes: 5,7,8,9,10,12,14m

The Bar

The Uni Control Bar has had an upgrade this year, though looking very similar there are some great improvements.

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BRAND CABRINHA

MODEL CONTRA

SIZE 13M

YEAR 2017



“ ONE OF THE
BEST KITES FOR
LIGHT WIND
FREESTYLE ”



At A Glance

The Contra has been in the Cabrinha line up for a quite a while now, it has changed a lot over the years with improvements being made every step of the way! The 2017 Contra is a three-strut high aspect ratio light wind kite. Designed to give the rider an easy to use, yet high performance light wind riding experience.

Cabrinha have jammed a lot of features into the 2017 version of the Contra, many we can see across their range. On the Contra we see Pure Profile Panels, Cabrinha's Skeletal Frame, Sprint Airlock, a variety of wingtip and line adjustments and best of all the Contra is built using Volae fabrics and 2DR ripstop so your going to get plenty of sessions in before it even starts to look tired.

The Contra can be used with any of Cabrinha's control systems, such as the Overdrive 1x Trimlite with Fireball or the 1x Trimlite Quickloop set up.

Available in two colours: Blue/Red and Yellow/Blue

Sizes: 13m, 15m, 17m, 19m.

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BRAND GIN MODEL CANNIBAL 2 SIZE 9M YEAR 2017



“ PERFECT FOR UNHOOKING WITH GOOD AMOUNTS OF SLACK. ”



At A Glance

We've recently tested the Egoist, which was a solid performer from Gin. We've now got our hands on the second version of the Cannibal; it has undergone some significant changes in design and style for this release. The Cannibal 2 is a high-performance open C 5-strut kite. We see some new construction and design features in the new Cannibal 2; there is a new arc shape, a fixed shortened bridle optimised diagonal and strengthened panels and a new wingtip. All of these additions not only make the kite look bomb proof but also are vital for the new feel and performance of the kite.

The Cannibal 2 comes with the Gin & Tonic V3 bar and is available in a variety of colourways.

Colours: Apricot, Blueberry, Cherry and Wasabi

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

The Bar

The new Gin & Tonic V3 bar has undergone some work in this addition and boasts new Eurocord lines, a large chicken loop, rotational donkey dick and much more.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

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BRAND NAISH MODEL DASH SIZE 10M YEAR 2017



"INSANELY FAST
AND WILL
ROCKET YOU
INTO THE AIR!"



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WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



At A Glance

Naish have introduced a couple of new kites this year, and some have made a return like the Boxer. We've hit the water on the new Boxer, but you'll have to wait until next issue for the low down on that. This issue we headed out on the all-new Naish Dash.

Targeting all kites, the Dash is aimed at being a fast, friendly kite to ride that has C shape kite performance traits.

It's a 3-strut high aspect compact C design, allowing for a rapid turning speed with a responsive feel. It features some of Naish's latest technology like Shark Teeth, Quad Tex, Octopus Inflation and much more.

The Dash is available in two colours and a bundle of sizes to suit any conditions.

Sizes: 5m, 6m, 7m, 8m, 9m, 10m, 11m, 12m, 14m.

The Bar

We took the Dash out using the new 2017 BTB Torque control system. The new Torque bars have undergone some serious work for this year, featuring a new release, new adjustable length bar ends,

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BRAND RRD MODEL OBSESSION MK9 SIZE 13.5M YEAR 2017



" EXCELLENT
UPWIND ANGLES
AND SUPER
FAST SPEEDS. "



At A Glance

Back again, the Obsession MK9 is a long-standing kite in the RRD line up. A big update in last years MK8 means this years MK9 has had a few tweaks to create an exceedingly polished product.

The Obsession MK9 is a three strut bridled kite with an emphasis on freestyle, and wave riding in the smaller (10.5m and below) models. The shape of the MK9 remains the same, while the Bridle and Pigtails have been under scrutiny and altered to add stability to the kite.

The kite is built well, with reinforcements in key areas without going overboard. There is an interesting attachment for the back lines with an extra flap of material between the bungeed pigtail and Leading Edge to keep things neat and reduce drag. One pump inflation comes as standard, and a larger size inflate/deflate valve makes setting up quick and easy.

Sizes: 5, 6, 7, 9, 10.5, 12, 13.5, 15m

The Bar

The Obsession MK9 is designed to be used with the Global Bar V7 which is very well thought out, with integrated chunky bar ends, and a coated centre line.

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BRAND SLINGSHOT

MODEL WAVE SST

SIZE 9M

YEAR 2017



" A GREAT KITE
FOR ALL LEVELS
OF WAVE
RIDERS "



At A Glance

Slingshot have long been a company at the forefront of kitesurfing, helping to push the sport with their incredible line up of kites: The notoriously aggressive Slingshot FUEL, pure C, wake-style/ freestyle mega loop machine. The RPM, a more user-friendly freestyle/free ride, open C all-rounder. And of course, the RALLY, a Delta C-shape kite, perfect for beginners and advanced riders alike. It is easy to re-launch, has oodles of depower and good drift, which often makes it the go-to kite for wave riding among Slingshot enthusiasts.

Slingshot addressed the need for a full wave kite in their lineup last year and launched the Wave SST. It hit the scene in 2016 aimed at advanced riders looking to push their skills on the wave with its super strong build quality and attention to detail both on the kite and bar. Can it live up to the reputation of its siblings?

Straight out of the bag, setting up the WAVE SST is a familiar sight if you've flown Slingshot in the past. You have three pigtail anchor points on the wing tips for adjusting your turning speed and bar pressure,

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" LANDINGS ARE LIKE PUTTING A HOT KNIFE THROUGH BUTTER. "



BRAND CABRINHA MODEL CBL
SIZE 142 X 43CM YEAR 2017

At A Glance

We're testing the CBL this issue, Cabrinha's wake style/cable board. Aimed at riders looking to stomp features in the kite park and even the wake park the CBL is designed to withstand and perform in all of your sessions.

The CBL is built like an ox; the P-Tex base ensures your not going to shred the board, just the features you hit. It comes with 20mm Cabrinha obstacle friendly Hex Flow fins. It uses a wood core,

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CORE

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Shinn

ozone

SLINGSHOT

MYSTIC

British Kitesports

EQ

KITE

NOBILE



" A SMOOTH RIDE WITH AWESOME POP "



BRAND F-ONE MODEL TRAX HRD LITE TECH
SIZE 137 X 42CM YEAR 2017

AT A GLANCE

The Trax has been the mainstay of the F-One twin tip line up for some years; 2016 saw the introduction of the Lite Tech construction and this year it makes a return. The board is built with a 3D Paulownia wood core for optimised stiffness and weight reduction. Bi-axial glass fibre is then used to lock in the torsional twist and flex of the board.

TO VISIT THEIR WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



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" IT HAS GAINED ITS PLACE AS A FIRM FAVOURITE WITH OUR TEST TEAM. "



BRAND NOBILE MODEL NHP WMN
SIZE 135 X 41 YEAR 2017

AT A GLANCE

The women's NHP board has been a favourite among our test team for some years now. It's undergone some tweaks and refinements over the years, but for 2017 has had more of an overhaul and some new sizing. Namely, a larger 135 being added to the line-up, which we have here – a nod towards the trend for slightly bigger boards that give better pop, smoother landings and lend themselves to being ridden with boots as an option.

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"FAST, EXPLOSIVE
AND WITH BUILT
IN LANDING
GEAR!"



BRAND NORTH KITEBOARDING **YEAR** 2017
MODEL TEAM SERIES **SIZE** 138 X 42CM

At A Glance

The Team Series is the premier freestyle board in the North Kiteboarding lineup, aimed at the avid freestyler looking to take on the competition and stand on the podium. Ridden by their pro team nothing has been spared in either materials or technology when it comes to this board.

For 2017 there is a new outline which gives the board a slightly rounder shape designed to make it even easier to ride. It is intended to be ridden with boots,

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" IT'S FAST,
SMOOTH, POPS
WELL AND
DELIVERS
FLOWING
CARVES "



BRAND RRD MODEL POISON V4
SIZE 138 X 42CM YEAR 2017

AT A GLANCE

The Poison V4 is one of RRD's top twin tip boards, targeting the pro freestyle market it is packed with technology and has fantastic build quality. Featuring a new straight outline through the middle of the board, the Poison V4 is somewhat swept in at the tips compared to other freestyle boards. A single deep concave is seen throughout the board. The main difference we see between the LTD V3 and the V4 is the lack of the Carbon layers.

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" BUTTER
SMOOTH RIDE,
WITH ENDLESS
AMOUNTS OF
POWERFUL
PERFORMANCE
AND BUILD
QUALITY. "



BRAND SHINN MODEL ADHD SUNSET
SIZE 140 X 43CM YEAR 2017

AT A GLANCE

Founded by two times World Champion Mark Shinn, the brand has grown massively over the years producing some fantastic and well-loved boards for the kiteboarding world. This issue we're going to be taking a look at the ADHD Sunset, the Wakestyle / Freestyle and Cable cross over board.

The ADHD Sunset has a split concave, double stepped tip channels, a constant and decent rocker line.

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“ THE PERFECT WEAPON FOR STRAPLESS AIRS AND SLICK CARVES. ”



BRAND NAISH **MODEL** SKATER
SIZE 5'2" **YEAR** 2017

At A Glance

The Skater is a square nosed, thruster setup directional board from Naish. The first thing you'll notice when you look at this board is the outline is very similar to that of a twin tip. Naish have packed technology and high-end construction elements into this board to make it very durable while offering excellent performance. The Skater has a honeycomb impact cell added to the core along with a bamboo laminate to ensure the board can withstand strapless freestyle tricks.

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BRAND OCEAN RODEO

MODEL STICK SHIFT BAR

YEAR 2017



" OCEAN RODEO
HAVE PRODUCED
SOMETHING
BRILLIANT WITH
THE STICK
SHIFT BAR! "



At A Glance

2016 was the year of the 'Game Changer', and while all eyes were on kiteboarding giants North Kiteboarding, Ocean Rodeo were quietly making their mark with a similar concept, the Stick Shift Bar.

The Stick Shift Bar takes away the need of a sometimes cumbersome depower system, and instead features the R3 Component bar end trim adjustment. Simply put, a twisting knob on the end of your bar. Sounds simple, and it is. Twisting one-way powers the kite up, and then simply nudge it with the heel of your hand it will unspin and depower. This, of course, is especially useful on those crazy wind days when taking even one hand off the bar can seem just that little too risky!

Making use of the already sound bar set up, Ocean Rodeo have taken their technology and design from existing bars and added it into the Stick Shift.

New for the Stick Shift is the open U-shaped design of the bar itself. This keeps everything very easy to clean and inspect, and also super light. It allows constant flushing of the entire system so there can be no build of salt and sand.

TO VISIT THEIR
WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



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10 QUESTIONS

WORDS LINDSAY MCLURE
PHOTO CHRISTIAN BLACK

Chris Bobryk

The American Sledgehammer has carved a unique path for himself through the kitesurfing industry. With new sponsor RRD on board, we figured it was high time to sit down and chat to Chris Bobryk!



Where did you grow up, when did you learn to kiteboard, and what sparked your interest in the sport?

I grew up in Muskegon Michigan. Riding a board with a kite is a ridiculously absurd thing you would see in a cartoon. Of course, that's what I wanted to do! What is more mind blowing than that? When I was in the 9th grade, I got a kite off eBay and made my own board in wood class that I used for a few years until my local shop, Mackite, started to help me out with gear. They eventually gave me a job and took me on my first trip. I have been working my way up in the kiteboarding industry ever since.

In many ways you've carved your own path through the kiteboarding world - what motivates you, who inspires you, and how do you stay ahead of the game?

Well, I started out by doing a few contests and some stops on the World Tour, but after two seasons of doing that to get my name out there, I realised that staying in the competition zone was the opposite of what kiteboarding is to me. What motivates me the most is always finding new ways to get that feeling of flow and focus that I got when I first rode a board.

As for "staying ahead of the game" I just do me, and no one else is doing that. Someone who inspires me is my local hero from my home spot in Michigan, Marc Hoeksema. He was the first guy with a kite at our local spot, and he's the guy who is out there no matter the conditions with the most stoked face on the water. No matter how icy it is on the lake or what responsibilities we have to blow off we always get out there for a session together!



"I got a kite off eBay and made my own board in wood class that I used for a few years"



“ working with the everyone
at RRD is incredibly fun ”

Congratulations on your new deal with RRD; what kit are you riding, and how are you liking it?

I'm riding the Juice twintip, Obsession and Obsession Pro kite, Thrive harness and Celsius Pro wetsuit. I have been extremely impressed with the gear and working with the everyone at RRD is incredibly fun. They are a big family of people that want to develop the best gear with no gimmicks, just the best possible products. I am so excited to be working with this motivated family of completely obsessed kite fiends!

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“ I just wanna see everything in the world. I can’t beat a session with friends in a new place. ”

PHOTO CHRISTIAN BLACK

Can you tell us about your nicknames and where they came from?

Haha yeah, I’ve had a few... RickyBobby is basically my last name “Bobryk” backwards, and everyone seems to think I’m a real “American”, and no one is more American than RickyBobby. I also Go Fast... American Sledge Hammer, well guess I kinda tend to break everything and my riding style, and body type seems to fit the description. There are a few more but next question, please...

How important is it, for you personally and for the sport as a whole, to maintain a balance between style and technicality?

Does there have to be a difference between style and tech? If it feels right, do it!

Where is your favourite place in the world to ride, and why?

Where ever I am next. I just wanna see everything in the world. I can’t beat a session with friends in a new place. For my favourite place to continue to come

back to I’d say the Nitro City Panama pool during one of their parties because with that setup I’m only limited to my imagination!

What do you do outside of kiting to stay in shape, and how valuable has cross training been for your riding?

I like anything that goes fast! For me, I can’t sit still, and I love progressing at anything, from increasing my max amount of pull-ups to skating a parking lot. If at the end I feel that I’ve pushed myself to the limit, I’m satisfied with it.

PHOTO CARLA LATA

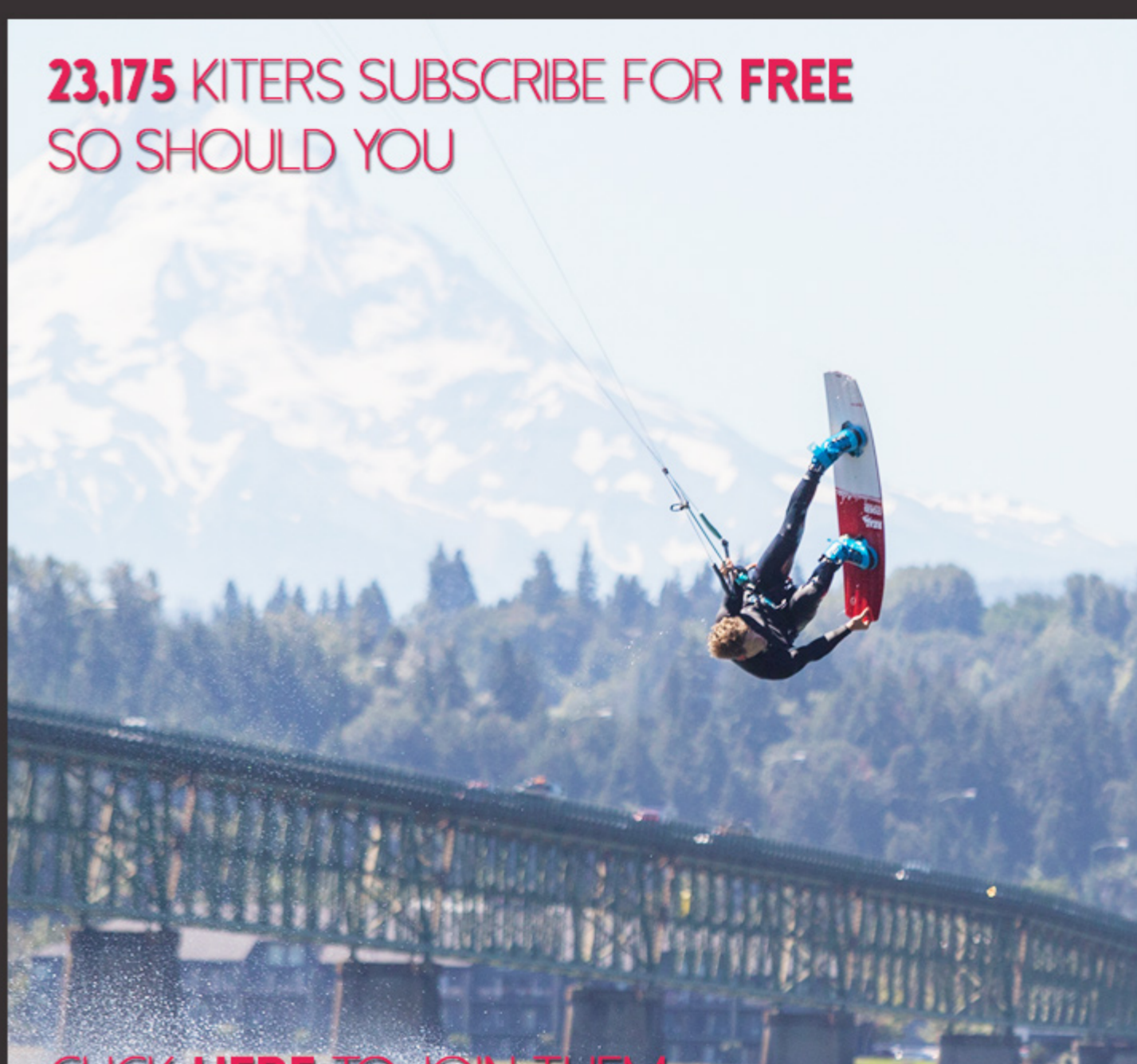


“ People want to see you risk your biscuits, so I think these big stunts will get kiting out to more people. ”

As a relatively young sport, kiteboarding still has a lot of growing up to do; in which direction would you like to see the sport grow and evolve?

You know when you see a video on your Facebook feed, and someone has firecrackers in their nose? You know you will press play. People want to see you risk your biscuits, so I think these big stunts will get kiting out to more people. I don't really care so much; I just want to keep doing what feels right at any given moment.

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PHOTO: VINCENT BERGERON

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You've been dedicated to releasing unique videos on a regular basis, what have you learned about how to make kite videos that stand out?

I have been obsessively watching extreme sports videos since dial-up Internet and VCR tapes. I always want to make the kind of videos that I want to watch, so that's what I think about when I'm producing a video. It makes it easy.

Do you have any exciting trips or projects coming up that you can tell us about, and what are your goals for 2017?

I just got back from a few fun trips from Mexico and Colombia. I will be doing some stops of the Kite Park League and taking trips as they come up, just out here cruising.

Cheers Chris, thanks for taking the time to talk to us!

10
" I always want to make the kind of videos that I want to watch "



PHOTO CHRISTIAN BLACK

IKSURFMAG.COM

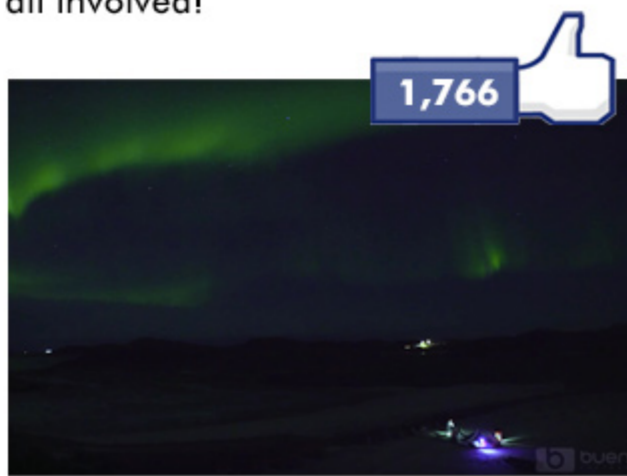
The IKSURFMAG website is crammed with news and videos everyday, we only show the best videos, so to make it onto the site is an achievement in itself.

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

MOVIE NIGHT

#1 KITING UNDER THE NORTHERN LIGHTS IN TROMSO, NORWAY

After many years in the making, David González and Kari Schibevaag have managed to achieve the dream of kitesurfing under the Northern Lights in Norway. It's a beautiful display from Mother Nature, Kari and David. Hope you stayed warm. Well done to all involved!



CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO

#2 BEST OF ZANZIBAR 2017 KITESURFING

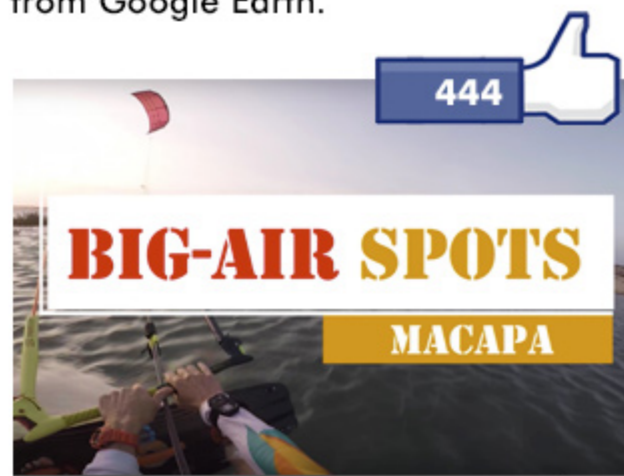
Flysurfer Kiteboarding riders Lukash and Andrea from Kite4Fun spent three amazing weeks in Zanzibar – the pearl of the Indian Ocean. Lukash has an impressive repertoire of airstyle and foil airstyle tricks packed into this one. Enjoy a stunning display of kitesurfing in this breathtaking location!



CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO

#3 BIG-AIR SPOTS: MACAPA, BRAZIL. THE BEST KITESURFING SPOTS.

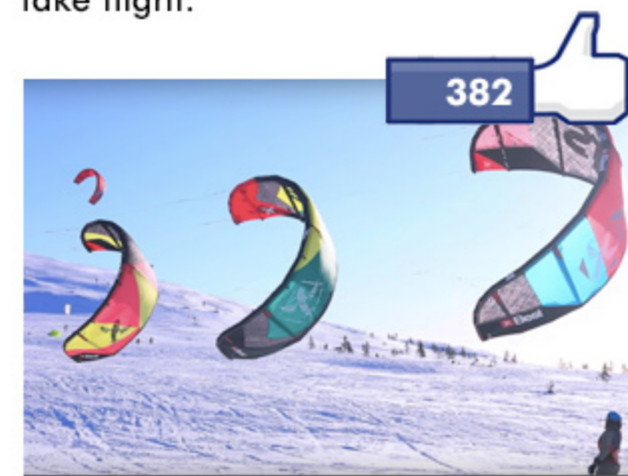
Anton Chernyshov produced a very detailed guide to Macapa, Brazil for you! He highly recommends the spot for big air. This informative and entertaining video tells everything you need to know about the spot using aerial shots, diagrams and images from Google Earth.



CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO

#4 FOUR KITES ONE MAN

Need more power? Snowkiter Kepu Alila and Peter Törnroos ride four kites at once! That's a lot of setup and pack down. This beautiful, short video was shot in the expansive snowfield at Finnish Lapland. These Scandinavians demonstrate how a creative approach can help new ideas take flight.



CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO



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

Lightroom

LIGHTROOM

DAVID TONIQUAN PULLING WHEELIES IN NEW CALEDONIA!
PHOTO WKL



Lightroom



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LIGHTROOM

FLORIAN TRITTEL LOOKING CALM UNDER PRESSURE WHILE DOING ABOUT 40 KNOTS
AT THE HYDROFOIL PRO TOUR IN LA VENTANA, MEXICO!
PHOTO SEBASTIAN TRON

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LIGHTROOM

OLLY BRIDGE ON HIS WAY TO A SECOND PLACE OVERALL AND A WIN IN THE UNDER 21 CATEGORY FOR THE HYDRIFOIL PRO TOUR IN LA VENTANA, MEXICO...
PHOTO SEBASTIAN TRON



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Lightroom



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LIGHTROOM

WINNER OF THE 2017 RED BULL RAGNAROK FELIX KERSTEN ON HIS WAY TO VICTORY!
PHOTO DANIEL TENGS/RED BULL CONTENT POOL



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MALLORY DE LA VILLEMARQUÉ SENDS A BIG ONE IN THE SOUTH OF FRANCE...
PHOTO TOBY BROMWICH

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PETER LYNN KITESPORTS AERO RIDER HUGUES BEAUME CRUISING IN THE MOUNTAINS!
PHOTO BERTRAND BOONE

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GETTING RADICAL ON THE NEW SHINN HYDROFOIL IN KENYA!
PHOTO SHINN



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LIGHTROOM

MAURICIO PEDREIRA GETTING A SOLID VERTICAL SNAP GOING IN BRAZILI
PHOTO BLADE KITEBOARDING

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LIGHTROOM

CRUISING THE LAGOONS ON A MERE BREEZE WITH THE FLYSURFER SONIC2
PHOTO FLYSURFER

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[FEMALE FOCUS]

FRANCESCA BAGNOLI

WORDS LINDSAY MCCLURE PHOTOS PRO KITE ROMA



Francesca has just been promoted to the North International team, expect to see big things from the Italian in the future!



When did you learn to kiteboard and how did you discover it?

I learnt to kite back in 2009 when I was 15 years old. For me, it was easy to get closer to this sport because my dad has practised in it since 2002, and he was my kite instructor. I had to fight a lot to convince my dad to give me the first lessons because I was tiny and he was scared I would fly away, but in the end, he taught me, and it was love at first sight!

Can you tell us a bit about the Italian kiteboarding scene?

I think the Italian kiteboarding scene has its ups and downs. Now there is a pretty promising youth scene, which is growing. Also, hopefully, the number of girls will increase a bit. I think the future will be brighter than the past!

Congratulation on being named to the North international team!

How long have you ridden for North, and what do you like most about North's products?

I have been riding for North since 2010. It was a very long journey to get to the North International team, but in the end, here I am! I can't explain how happy and proud I am. This was one of my biggest dreams, and it came true. Dedication and hard work paid off!

I love the Vegas. For me, it is the best kite ever because it has perfect slack in the lines, which makes the tricks a lot easier. The kite is very stable, and it's even more stable when used with the wake style bar. I wouldn't ride anything else!



" I CAN'T EXPLAIN HOW HAPPY AND PROUD I AM. THIS WAS ONE OF MY BIGGEST DREAMS. AND IT CAME TRUE. "



" I WANTED TO BECOME A PROFESSIONAL RIDER. LEARN NEW TRICKS AND PUSH MY LIMITS FORWARD "

What are your competition goals for this season, and what are your predictions for the women's World Tour?

I would like to pass the trials in Leucate to qualify for the whole tour. I'd love to compete with the ladies in many spots around the world. I can't give any predictions because in competitions you never know what will happen!

What is your favourite trick and which new tricks are you working on?

My favourite move is the Smobe 5. I could do it all day long! I'm working on the front to blind now, and I really want to land it.

How do you stay motivated to train your hardest?

Luckily, I have my boyfriend who is an amazing rider, and he always helps me push my limits.

Who are your favourite people to ride with, and where's your favourite place to train?

I love riding with my Italian friends in our perfect

spot, Lo Stagnone, here in Sicily. In Brazil, I had a lot of fun riding with Hannah Whiteley. Not only is she an amazing rider, but she's also a wonderful person!

What is the hardest obstacle you've had to overcome as a kiter?

I would say leaving my family and moving to Sicily to train was tough. I was 19 years old, and in the beginning, I was a bit homesick, but I knew it was the right decision. I wanted to become a professional rider, learn new tricks and push my limits forward, and I made my dreams come true.



What advice would you offer to young riders who want to pursue the level that you've achieved?

My advice is to never back down, to follow your dreams and make them come true. In kitesurfing, you must have a lot of patience to try new tricks and land them perfectly. So go for it as many times as possible and get completely comfortable with crashing.

" YOU MUST HAVE A LOT OF PATIENCE TO TRY NEW TRICKS AND LAND THEM PERFECTLY. "

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“ IF I HADN'T BECOME A KITER, I WOULD HAVE BEEN A GYMNAST FOR SURE. ”

If it isn't windy, what do you do?

Too many things! I love practising yoga, skating and I'm also studying Science of Sport. Three times per week, I go to an artistic gymnastics class because I think it's very helpful for kiteboarding. I always say that if I could, I would make the day last 36 hours!

If you weren't a kiter, what would you be doing with your life?

If I hadn't become a kiter, I would have been a gymnast for sure. I have practised gymnastics for many years, and I'm still in love with this sport.

What are you more passionate about, riding for the cameras or competing? Why?

They give me different feelings. If I ride for cameras, I'm more relaxed, and I have a lot of fun. Competing gives me a big adrenaline rush, and I really need it. So, I would say both.

**Thanks for taking the time
Francesca, good luck for the coming season!**



READERS GALLERY

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

Turn the pages though maybe we made you famous?

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

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Winner! ★

Spring has arrived in France, and the Tramontane winds know it! Karl Oskar Teien enjoying solo sessions with a breathtaking backdrop in Le Bacarès.



North Kiteboarding UK team rider Morgan Tinsley demonstrates focus and control.

Photo: Jeremie Tronet



Oron Kessel getting some absolute nuggets in Cabarete!

Photo: Longboard Chris



Ray, IKO instructor and founder of Kitesportcentre in Cork, Ireland, free wheeling at Garrylucas Beach, the starting point of the Wild Atlantic Way. Wild Atlantic Way is home to a large community of kites who travel the route following the wind. In their words, "Every day is a kiting day".

Photo: Dee McCaffrey



Darragh O'Brien, age 12, is one of Ireland's youngest kites. Ballynamona Beach is a popular kiting destination with the picturesque backdrop of the Ballycotton Lighthouse.

Photo: Dee McCaffrey



▼
◀ Dor Zarka showing off his impressive strapless freestyle skills at the Rif Raf Beach, Eilat, Israel.

Photos: Marcos Schonholz





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EVAN NETSCH DRAINING THE LAST RAYS OF SUNSHINE IN MAUI
PHOTO CABRINHA KITES

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