

JUNE/JULY 17

## WELCOME TO IKSURFMAG

Welcome to Issue 63 of the World's Number One Kitesurfing Magazine! It's another packed edition filled with the best images, stories and videos from around the world. Inside Nick Jacobsen jumps off two hotels, we have an

in-depth chat with Roberto Ricci, and Sensi Graves talks about the benefits of women's kiteboarding. Of course, we have Christian and Karine on hand with the technique and an absolutely huge kite and board test too!

## ENJOY THE LATEST ISSUE!



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**ROBERTO RICCI INTERVIEW · HOW TO SURVIVE A BOAT TRIP**  
STRONGER TOGETHER · YOURI ZOOM, ANNABEL VAN WESTEROP · TESTS · TECHNIQUE & MORE INSIDE  
**THE WORLD'S NUMBER ONE KITESURF MAGAZINE**



NORTH KITEBOARDING

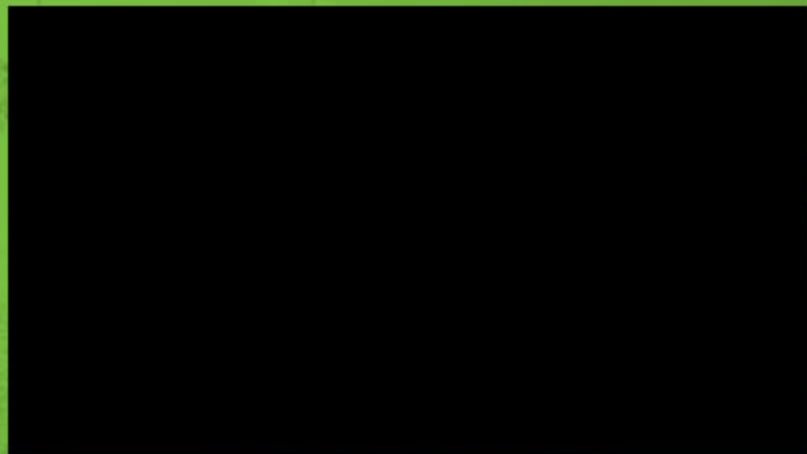
TRUE KITEBOARDING



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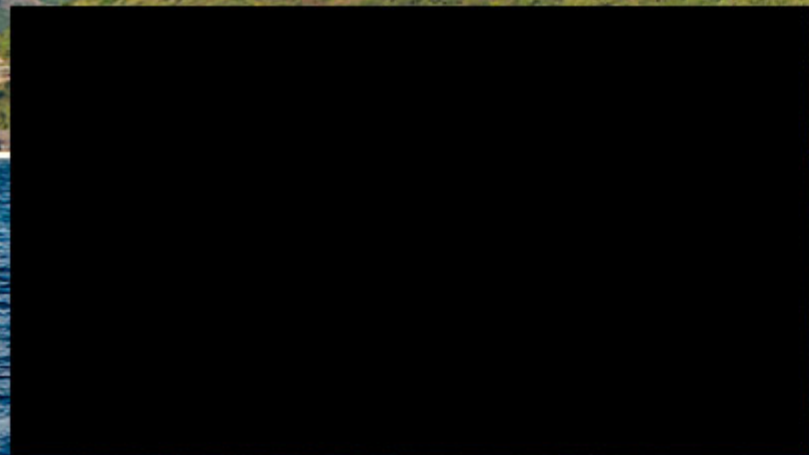
X-RIDE

WAM

VIDEO: JEREMIE JEONNET PHOTO: JOE SCARFEE/JEREMIE



# BREEZE



## BREEZE

The number of uses and disciplines offered by our sport is quite amazing and hydrofoiling has opened a wide array of new possibilities. The swift development of this new product under our feet requires the development of new kites to optimize the ride. This year we have used all the know-how of our design department to offer a kite designed specifically for foiling and lightwind riding: the BREEZE.

PROGRAM: LIGHTWIND / FOIL  
AREAS (m<sup>2</sup>): 11 / 13 / 15 / 17

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- ▶ Great maneuverability for intuitive transitions and a quicker learning process



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# INNOVATION THAT MATTERS

Nick Jacobsen



Graham Howes



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- 5.0
- 6.0
- 7.0
- 8.0
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- 10.0
- 11.0
- 12.0
- 13.5
-  LW
- 15.0
- 17.0
- 19.0

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# XR5





All photos Vincent Bergeron



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SOLO SIZES: 35 | 5 | 7 | 9 | 12 | 15.5 | 17.5



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pinch of salt. Kitesurfing is a  
dangerous sport & none of the  
activities depicted within this  
magazine should be participated in  
without full instruction in person by a  
qualified instructor.

LACI KOBULSKY HAND DRAGS FOR DAAAAAYS...





# WIN

## ...A GOPRO HERO 5 BLACK ACTION CAMERA!

We use GoPro's all the time and can't rate them highly enough! If you want to get a great action shot of your riding there really isn't a substitute! With the launch of the new Hero 5 Black action camera on the market, we figured this would be a great prize for our subscribers this issue!

If you've used a GoPro before you will know how great they are, the Hero 4 Black was a fantastic camera and has been in service for a couple of years now. The new Hero 5 Black is fully waterproof without a housing, features voice activation, one button control and has a 2-inch touchscreen display so you can frame your shot and adjust the settings!

- 4K Video Recording
- Image Stabilisation
- Voice Activated
- 12mp Photos
- 2 Inch Touch Screen Display
- Fast Charging
- Waterproof without any housing to 10m

This is without a doubt the best GoPro yet, make sure you are in with a chance to win the prize!

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### HOW CAN I WIN THE PRIZE?

Simply subscribe to IKSURFMAG for free and we'll enter you into the prize draw. We will pick a winner from our subscriber list, if you are already a subscriber, then you are automatically entered into the prize draw!

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





KEVIN LANGEREE KNOWS THE FEELING!  
PHOTO YDWER.COM



# EDITORIAL

## ISSUE 63

### Kitesurfing – There Is Nothing Quite Like It

You know the feeling, the wind hasn't played ball for ages, and you are suffering withdrawal symptoms from the most addictive sport in the world. It doesn't matter what your preferred poison is, big air junky, freeride freak, wave addict, freestyle fiend or even just a beginner who's got their first taste of the craic that kitesurfing provides.

When the wind isn't blowing, depression sets in, anxiety abounds as you trawl every forecast site out there hoping one will offer some divine relief from the drudgery of life without a kite in your hands. It's a bizarre state of affairs, one we often fill with substitutes to try and get that fix. Many of you mountain bike, some paraglide, perhaps you run or make fitness at the gym.

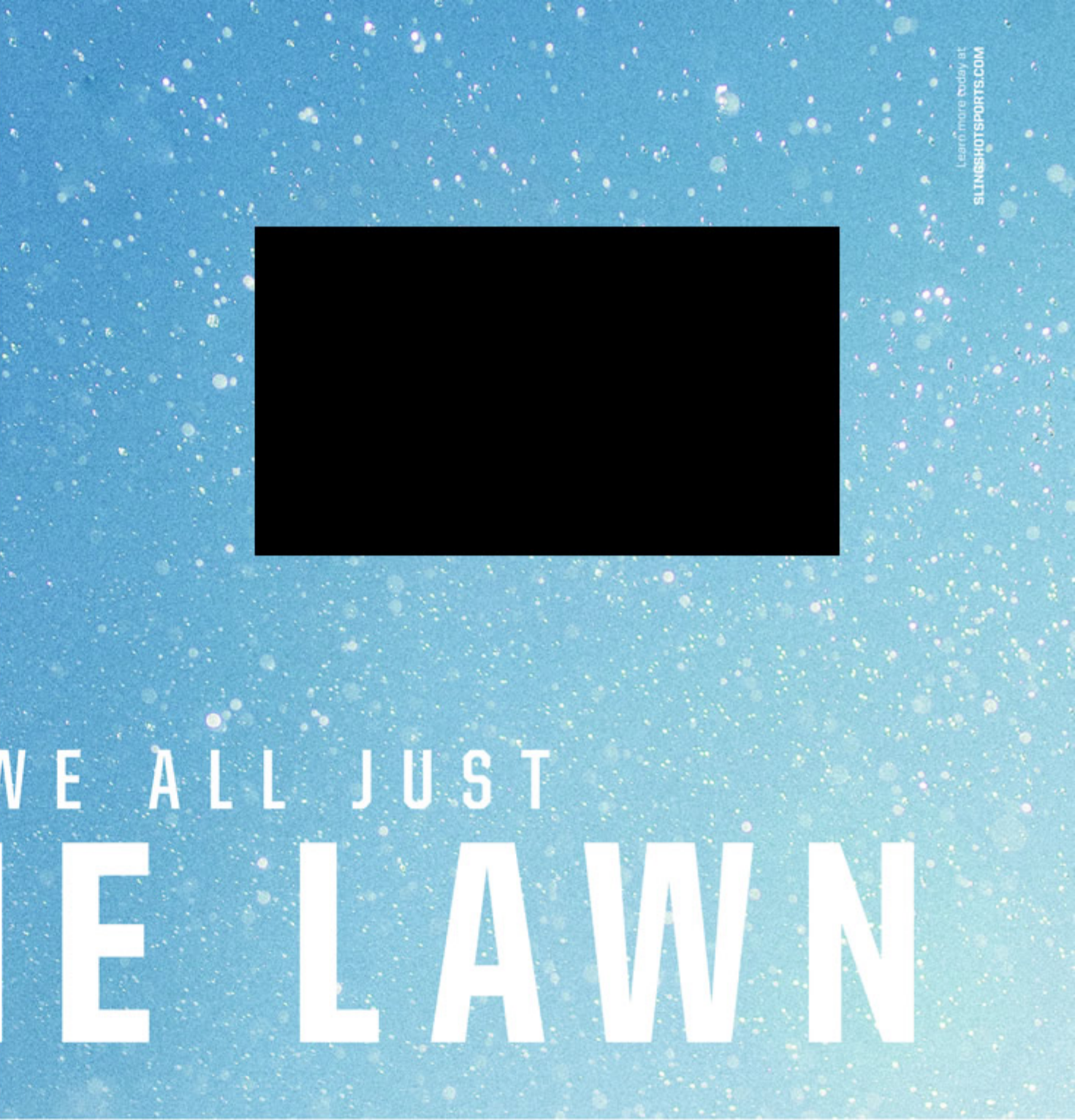
Whatever you do, essentially we're all just watching, waiting and wanting for something we know will be sweeter than nectar when we finally get our hit. After a pretty weak winter season this year I found myself falling firmly back in love with mountain biking. That was until I dropped down the face of a glassy double-overhead face on a remote island and got that instant buzz back, an unrelenting feeling of oneness washed over me.

Kitesurfing, there is nothing quite like it, no matter how hard you try and substitute it when the wind doesn't blow. When the conditions are on, only a kitesurfer knows the feeling...

*Rou Chater*

**Publishing Editor**





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# WHY CAN'T WE ALL JUST MOW THE LAWN



**FUEL**  
7 / 9 / 11 / 13M  
AGGRESSIVE FREESTYLE / MEGALOOP KING



**WAVE**  
4 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 9 / 10 / 12M  
SUPERIOR SURF PERFORMANCE



**RPM**  
4.5 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 9 / 10 / 11 / 12 / 14M  
FLAGSHIP FREESTYLE / FREERIDE CROSSOVER



**RALLY**  
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ALL-AROUND FREERIDE PERFORMANCE



**TURBINE**  
5 / 7 / 9 / 11 / 13 / 15 / 17 / 19M  
HIGH POWER / HIGH PERFORMANCE



THE INTERVIEW

# ROBERTO RICCI

## BEHIND THE BRAND AT RRD

Roberto Ricci is one of the original legends of our sport; the creatively minded Italian was building kiteboards before kiteboarding was even a thing. Over the years the brand has developed into the finely tuned machine, it is today. With a growing following around the world, an expanding pro team and products covering a whole host of water sports, we managed to grab a few minutes of Roberto's time for a chat!

WORDS ROU CHATER/LINDSAY MCCLURE PHOTO SVETLANA ROMANTSOVA





**R**oberto, you've been in the industry for longer than most people. What excites you about getting up and going to work each day?

The excitement about making a new product gets me into work each day. I'm always excited to see that there's something new in the pipeline that hasn't been finished yet, that needs to be touched up or tested. I'm excited about the whole testing, design and product making process. It's what drives me forward every day.

*"I WAS RAISED BY MY PARENTS IN THEIR HOUSE ON TOP OF THE FACTORY WHERE WE STARTED TO MAKE BOARDS."*

**Lots of people say that being part of RRD is like being part of a family, whether you are an employee, a sponsored rider or a customer. How do you create this atmosphere and how do you maintain it?**

Being based in Italy and being brought up in the Italian culture, we try to make everyone — clients, suppliers, team riders and everyone who works with the company — feel welcome. We are taught by nature to invite them to lunch or dinner. We have this natural hospitality attitude. We don't force it. I think it boils down to the fact that I was raised by my parents in their house on top of the factory where we started to make boards.

Every day at lunch my mum would be knocking with a broom on the floor calling, "Guys, lunch is ready! Come up!" We would all go up and have lunch,



DANNY MORRICE CRUISING ON THE NEW HYDROFOIL AND THE EMOTION KITE!  
PHOTO SVETLANA ROMANTSOVA





TRAVELLING IN STYLE!  
PHOTO SVETLANA ROMANTSOVA

and when we would sit down at the table, there would be no barrier. It's a very good way to brainstorm, share ideas and ask questions. I think this kind of Italian philosophy is very much felt within the company in general, it's natural.

My family likes to be around people because we can always learn something from other people. Meeting people, sharing ideas and possibilities is always rewarding.

It's an important give and take, and it's what life is all about in the end. Otherwise, we're just lonely wolves on the planet.

**The brand has always been big in Italy, but in the recent years, the global expansion has been very noticeable. How have you achieved that and is it hard to sustain in this modern climate?**

We've been distributing our products, starting with windsurfing,



# HYPERLINK<sup>vi</sup>

A NEW ERA

INNOVATION IS OFTEN INSPIRED BY BEING IN THE RIGHT PLACE, AT THE RIGHT TIME, WITH ALL THE RIGHT CONNECTIONS COMING TOGETHER ALLOWING THE GENESIS OF A NEW VISION OR ERA. THE HYPERLINK IS OUR VISION TO TAKE YOU INTO THAT NEW ERA.



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SUNSET SESSIONS IN CAPE TOWN FOR FORREST BAKKER!  
PHOTO SVETLANA ROMANTSOVA

since 1995, so we've had a few years to develop a strong distribution network. We launched kiteboarding in 1997 with boards and in 2000 with our first kite collection. We were one of the very first brands to launch kiteboarding products. Nowadays, with a very international team and more investment into marketing, it's quite easy to see that RRD is out there with a great line of products.

**"SCHOOLS ALSO PLAY A HUGE ROLE IN MAKING THE IMAGE OF THE BRAND."**

This is also thanks to our team riders who are the spokespeople for the brand, both in freestyle and in wave riding. Schools also play a huge role in

making the image of the brand. We have many schools worldwide who are loyal to us. They give excellent service to the customers, and they show a great example of how to teach and progress in the sport. Thanks to all of this, we have been able to build a really strong and robust global network.

Our home is in Italy, but we also have a base in Cape Town, and have been living there for some of the year. Also, we've been spending time on Maui and travelling to the World Cups too; this approach has also helped.

The connection is always very powerful between the Pacific area, the African area and the whole European area. Now, we also have a solid distributor in the US. The American market is the second biggest market in

the world, so we have to be there. We've set up a new company, RRD USA, with a new agent, Adam Super, who is very motivated. Now we're trying to feel out the other parts of the market.

**The RRD product range is extensive. What is the reason behind having such a large range, and for a new customer looking in, where should they start?**

It's a story about proposing something specific for each individual need. We aren't new to the market. The addition of many different models of kites, twin tips and surfboards all has a reason. For example, the philosophy with the names of the kites is a very important approach: Emotion, Vision, Passion, Obsession, Addiction, Religion.





For me, those are the steps in the mindset of the company. Looking at this it's easy to understand, if communicated properly, how people enter into the sport. They look at it with different eyes. The newcomer is called to the market, and we need to offer them a dream. We need to offer them a path that doesn't stop tomorrow. We start with the Emotion and Vision, with time in the schools, then move to the all-around kites, and then to freeride.

" IF YOU DREAM AND IF YOU ARE MOTIVATED, YOU CREATE PASSION. "

Then, eventually, we go to something more for freestyle, and then many people end up at wave riding and the Religion. I see a clear, logical path if you make people dream. I prefer to always talk about the real, philosophical approach to things. We give people the chance to enter into the sport and the brand, and they will always be dreaming about the next step. In the end, if you dream and if you are motivated, you create passion.

**You keep products in the range for a lot longer than other brands. What's the advantage of this method, for you and the customer?**

This has been our philosophy for the last eight years. We started with windsurfing, and then we expanded into kitesurfing and the whole collection. The philosophy is very simple. We don't go after the yearly catalogue, at least not for the technical products like boards and kites. We are looking to improve the products, not just to improve the appearance of a new collection.

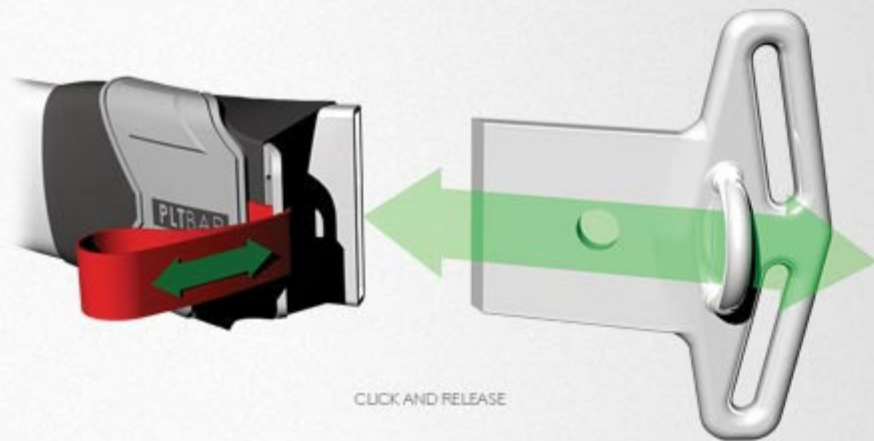
Instead, we're releasing versions of the same family. Each version, or MK, can last one or two years or more,





# PROLIMIT PIN RELEASE BAR

PATENTED TECHNOLOGY  
CARVED OUT OF STAINLESS STEEL



CLICK AND RELEASE

## EASY CLICK AND RELEASE

EASE OF USE, STRENGTH AND ADDED SAFETY



EXPERIENCE  
INNOVATIVE  
TECHNOLOGY

The patented Prolimit pin-release spreader bar is quick, easy and safe. This makes it the market leader in spreader bar systems. The system allows for quick engagement and release without the need to loosen and then readjust the webbing straps. EASY CLICK AND RELEASE.

The pin-release spreader bar has no articulation between the bar and the insert, unlike conventional systems that swivel and pivot at this point. This gives a symmetrical tension distribution from left to right, as the bar is locked into one unit.

This solid link translates strap tension into the bar keeping it from rotating up into the ribs and stomach. The pin-release can be released under load for further safety. Used on all our models. Refined for over 18 years. EASY CLICK AND RELEASE.





ABEL LAGO AND COLIN HECKROODT SHREDDING SCARBOROUGH, SOUTH AFRICA PHOTO SVETLANA ROMANTSOVA

depending on how testing and development goes. Consumers don't necessarily need to have new, flashy graphics and the same technology. We only bring to the market what we know is physically and realistically better than the previous version. This year's Vision MK 5 is a two-year-old kite. We didn't change it because we felt that the Vision, an all-terrain kite, couldn't be improved any more.

"I WANT TO GIVE THEM A SOLID PRODUCT THAT'S BEEN TESTED VERY WELL"

So, we focused on changing the other kites. It's the same with our surfboard collection, much of which

the same as the last year, but we introduced a new board, the Salerosa. We've had the same board, the Barracuda, that wasn't updated for four years. The shape is great. We've been trying to update it, but we feel that it's phenomenal.

We're replacing and innovating new versions whenever we have something that can be appreciated by the consumer. We're not releasing products simply because they're new and have different graphics and marketing gimmicks. I don't want to be the purest about this, but I also don't want to lie to my customers. I want to give them a solid product that's been tested very well and is proven. In the middle are the distributors and the shops. We offer them a lot

more value in the stock they carry compared with other brands because they know that the lifetime of the product is going to last longer.

**The quality of the products is very high, and Italy is known for producing a plethora of world-class products, from the automotive to the fashion industries. How many of the RRD products are made in Italy, and would you like to produce more equipment there in the future?**

On the technical side, we have very few products being manufactured in Italy. We have the Ten Knots LTD twin tip that was produced in Italy. We have a new foil that's built in Slovenia on the border of Italy.





ROBERTO HARD AT WORK IN THE OFFICE  
PHOTO RRD

However, we don't produce any technical products at home except our custom designs. Everything else is manufactured elsewhere. We produce a lot of clothing in Italy, which is a different business. We are happy because Italy retains some of the highest expertise in fine, luxury clothing, which is a different branch of the brand.

As far as the technology is concerned, we have been looking

to produce a bit in Italy and I think in the future it will become even more possible. But, we're a worldwide company that is looking for the best manufacturing plant.

We are one of the very few companies in the world with an in-house, custom factory. We are very attached to this approach. I like to see what's going on in the custom factory. I like to see the product coming along, to shape it,

# Shinn

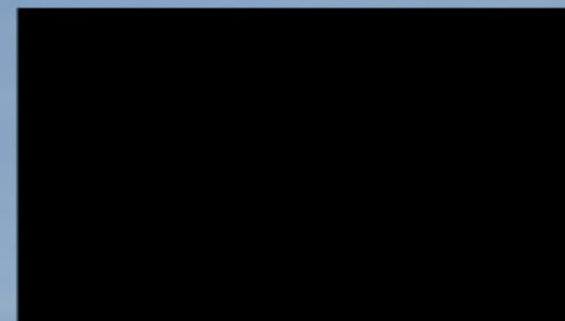
FOIL FP

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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touch it and test it out. One of the advantages of our custom factory is the excitement and the stoke that comes from being able to dream about a board, shape it, go in the water, test it, come back and modify it and then plan our graphics.

With the custom factory where we produce our designs, we often want to change the raw materials. By changing raw materials, we modify the supply chain. If we just produce something outside and don't own the production factory, we're never going to get the same feeling and the same value.

“ THE ONLY WAY TO BE SUCCESSFUL WITH THAT MODEL IS TO CUT CORNERS AND DELIVER STRAIGHT TO THE CUSTOMER. ”

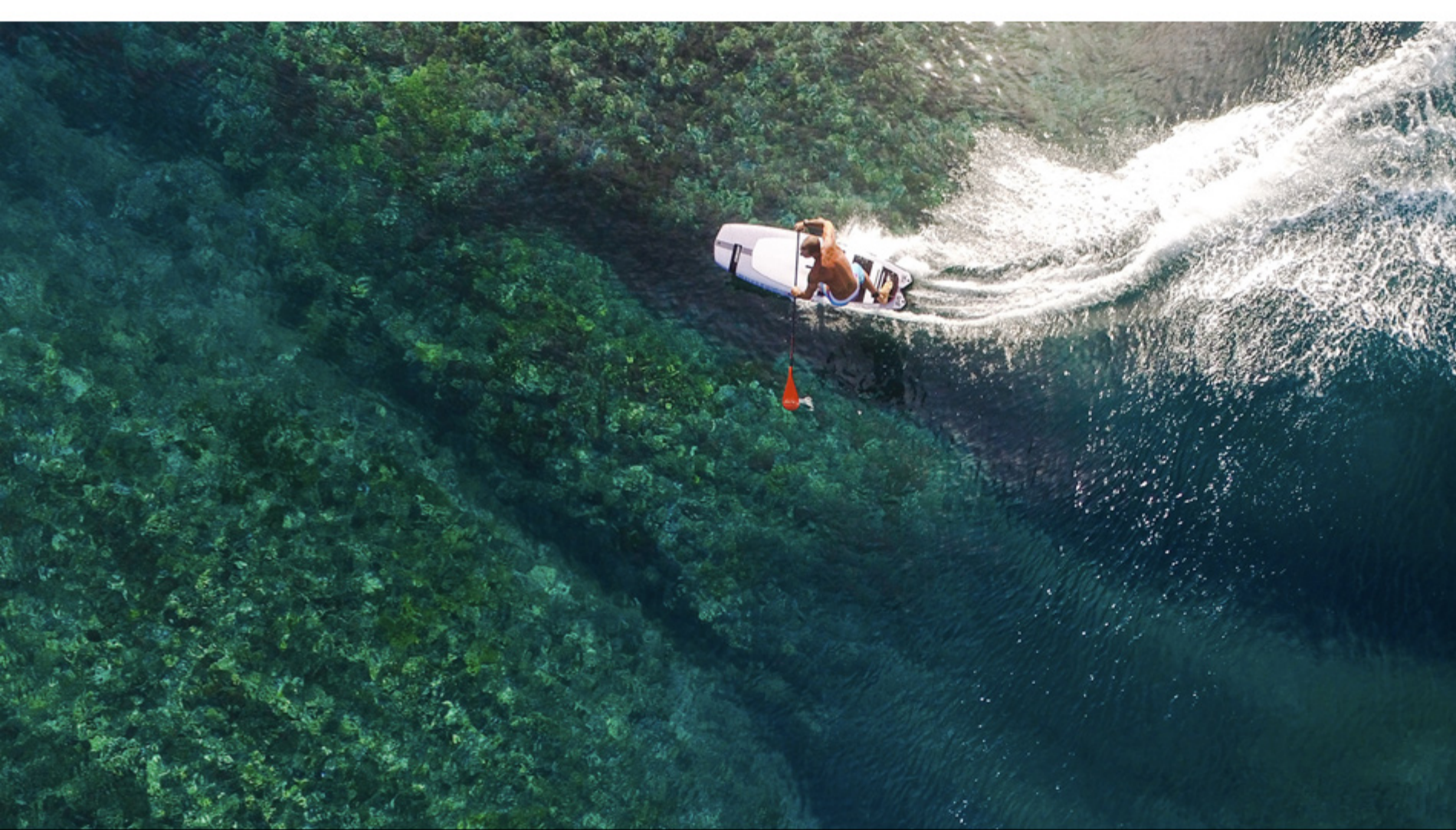
**With all the fashion houses in Italy, there must be some great factories for stitching. Is there a possibility of an Italian kite factory?**

Maybe in the future. We found a factory that was making parachutes and stitching special sleds for the military. We visited them to analyse the possibility of making some kites there, but realistically, there's no value there for the time being. Chinese and Sri Lankan production is pretty much flawless. Until the price of the manufacturing plants levels out, the only way to be successful with that model is to cut corners and deliver straight to the customer.

**These days, there's a big push toward sustainability. How are you embracing this as a brand?**

Sustainability is a big part of our lifestyle. It's time to see what kind of innovations there can be in this segment of the market, especially with the least recyclable part of our products, the foam for the boards.





RRD ARE HEAVILY INVESTED IN SUP, SURF AND WINDSURFING AND HAVE JUST LAUNCHED A NEW HYDROFOIL PROGRAM TOO! PHOTOS RRD

I'm not as worried about kites because fabrics can be recycled, but I'm really worried about the EPS core that will last over 100,000 years. I don't like that.

"THE NEW WINGS THAT WE HAVE BELOW OUR FEET MAKE US FEEL LIKE WE'RE GLIDING ON THE WATER."

We will keep our eyes open for alternatives. Green foams are a reality in the surfboard industry, and I think it's time to step forward with that. I'm a pragmatic person, in a sense. When it boils down to safety, security or environmental issues, I don't want to use them as marketing. I see them as real concerns, and I want to address them with a proper

approach. For our inflatable boards, we've been testing some TPU instead of PVC. The TPU is a less-polluting material. There are real possibilities, and there's potential.

**RRD has an extensive equipment arm of the business supplying windsurf, SUP, kitesurf and surf, not to mention accessories and wetsuits for all of those sports. How are those businesses split in terms of their current size and where do you see the most growth in the future?**

Because we're a worldwide market, we are pretty balanced. We're 40% windsurfing, 35% kiteboarding, and 20-25% SUP and surfing. Ultimately, I always like to see the company being very balanced, 33-33-33,

which is possible because we have a motivated team in each sector.

**In terms of kitesurfing, the rise of kite foiling has been a big resurgence for the sport. How do you view foiling within the sport? Is it something that every rider should be paying attention to, or is it just for the racers?**

Foiling is the new branch of the sport. It's not just for racing. Racing is just the most extreme part of foiling. Foiling is for windsurfing, SUPing, surfing and kiting. In the end, everyone is going to have his or her own foil for the type of sport they're doing. The feeling is the same. The new wings that we have below our feet make us feel like we're gliding on the water.



Foiling is going to feed in a lot of newcomers and keep the older customers interested because they're attracted to a new sensation. We're opening up a new R&D department specifically for hydrofoiling in Castiglione where I live. Foiling is an excellent approach to riding water and a great approach to brainstorming about new, endless possibilities.

“ IT'S POSSIBLE TO MAKE OUR KITES LIGHTER, MORE DURABLE AND BETTER AT FLYING. ”

**Where do you see the next big developments coming from within the sport? Have we reached the pinnacle of kite design and board technology, or is there still progress to be made?**

There's still progress to be made, both in technology and in design. It's possible to make our kites lighter, more durable and better at flying. We have a lot of ideas in the box. Part of our business is to understand when it's the right time to launch a new idea. We were the first to have real wave kites, nine or ten years ago. Our first wave kites were super fast, and everyone thought those kites were scary.

Nowadays, that's exactly what people look for in a wave kite. Sometimes we risk wasting our imagination and effort in product development if we launch a product that's too far forward. Each product has to be appreciated by the end consumer. Understanding who is the end consumer is the most challenging part of the business by far.

**A few brands have put a lot of R&D into their kite bars lately. The RRD Global Bar V8 is coming out soon. It's a vision in simplicity. What do you think about the rear line trim bars that we're seeing**



JERRIE VAN DE KOP GOING HUGE AT THE KING OF THE AIR!  
PHOTO SVETLANA ROMANTSOVA





**on the market? Are you keen to keep the RRD bar simple, or is there still scope for development in the future?**

We don't want to stop development. I think the push by North, Ocean Rodeo and other brands is quite interesting. I like the desire to simplify things by making new innovations that riders can actually use, like simplifying the bar, which is the most important tool in your hands when you're flying a kite.

The bar is an extension of your arms. It's too early to judge if the Click Bar is appreciated by the market or if it's just a new marketing gimmick. I've tested some of those bars, and I think they work great, but I don't know if they're needed. As the end consumer, I like to have something that's simple, well refined and reliable.

**" THE RIGID THREAD LINES LINK THE BAR DIRECTLY TO THE KITE AND CREATE A VERY STIFF CONNECTION. "**

**Can you tell us about the rigid thread lines that are exclusively used by RRD and how they are different from other brands on the market?**

This has been one of our biggest innovations in the last eight years. The lines are the most important part of the kite when it's flying. The rigid thread lines link the bar directly to the kite and create a very stiff connection. They are a lot more durable, and they don't loose or gain any length. Your kite stays trimmed. It's a very important feature. We're working on a special video about the bar to explain the lines because it will be essential for people to understand that these lines are unique. We have our own, exclusive supplier who makes them only for us.





ALEX NETO GRABBING NOSE IN SOUTH AFRICA  
PHOTO SVETLANA ROMANTSOVA

**You've been investing a lot in the RRD pro team, in young riders like Adeuri Corniel, Alex Neto and Chis Bobryk who are joining a large roster of pros. How important is a good team and what do you look to get out of them when they join the family?**

*"IF WE WANT TO SHOW WHO'S THE BEST, WE HAVE TO HAVE COMPETITION."*

It's a very basic philosophy. Riders need to be willing to push their limits and push us to make new products. Competition is the essence of our brand. Our drive and philosophy is to always be the best. Team riders have value in not only selling their results to us. They are an important part of our

image. We try to portray them as lifestyle promoters. Our sport, in the last ten years, has changed from a pure, performance driven approach to being about lifestyle. We can see it in surfing. There are surfers out there who are very famous, and they have never won a competition. We're not just the champions. The champion has a great value, but I also like to talk to people who are out there because they just love to jump or ride waves.

To me, good team riders are those who have kick ass results in the world cup and, at the same time, are great ambassadors for the lifestyle. It's important that we try to invite newcomers in. We need to break this idea that you have to be cool at all costs. Be yourself, portray your heart and you can't go wrong.

**What's your take on the current competition scene within the kiteboarding industry? It has been going through a lot of changes lately.**

I have really high hopes that the GKA will take on managing more events, mainly wave events. It's a big transition between the PKRA, which was driven down the hill by people who didn't have a real plan or attachment to the sport. It looks like there's a new movement coming.

We as brands decided two years ago that, until we found a separate association that could run events properly, we were going to redraw the events by ourselves. I don't think the GKA's intention is to run events forever, but there's no real association to drive the sport forward. Of course, competitions are super important for our sport. If we want to show who's the best, we have to have competition.

**You were a part of the windsurfing scene when the Olympics got involved. Having lived through that, how do you feel about kiteboarding in the Olympics?**

I never had a good feeling about the Olympics and our water sports. I was a big dreamer when I saw windsurfing in the Olympics. Stephan van den Berg and Klaus Maran were my idols way back in the 1980's. However, I don't think the Olympic philosophy matches with our outdoor sports philosophy.

I think that we sell more of our lifestyle, and it doesn't belong in the stadiums. We are free spirits who live outdoors. We enter into a sport that gives us the freedom to choose. I don't think that we're going to be helped by the Olympic Games if they carry windsurfing, kiteboarding or surfing. It's not going to change anything for the end consumer.





## Where do you see the future of competitive kitesurfing going?

Competitive kitesurfing is going to be run by professionals. I believe in being brought up to the professional level through circuits. We don't need to have the Olympic committee come in and tell us what to do. It could be good, but only for people who are competition-driven.

A lot of people who enter our sport don't care about winning; they just want to have a good time. I think the future will have more professional tours that are organised in a way that you don't only sell the results, but you sell the lifestyle.

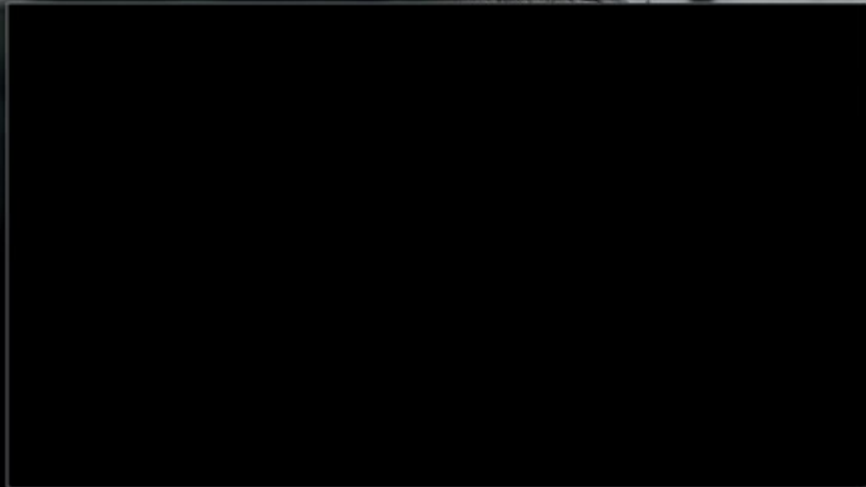
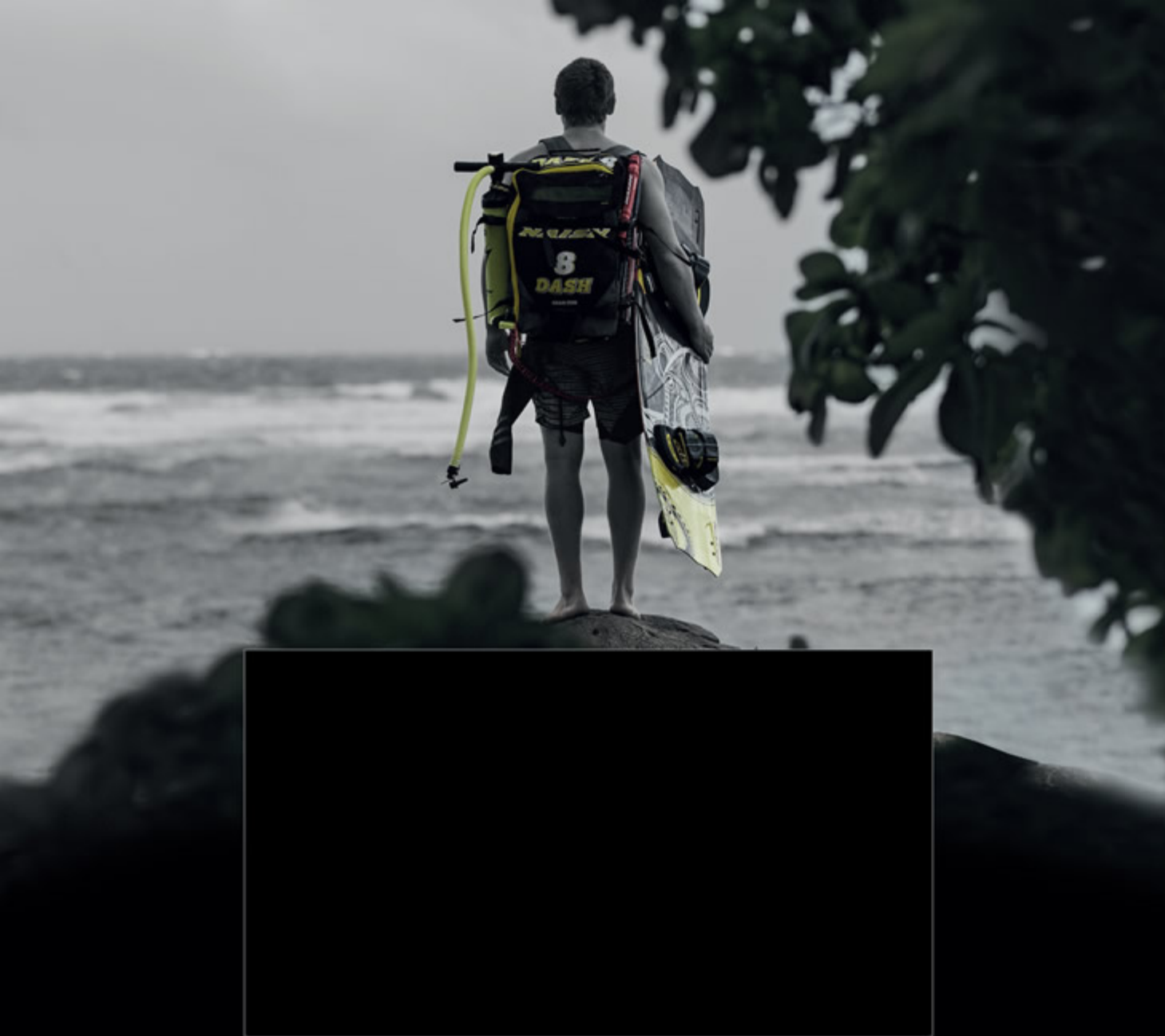
" I'D LIKE TO CREATE A PLACE WHERE CLOTHING AND THE EQUIPMENT COULD MERGE INTO ONE COMPANY. "

## What does the future hold for RRD? Are there any big plans you want to tell us about?

There's always a good plan. My priority right now is to find a new place for the company to work. I'd like to create a place where clothing and the equipment could merge into one company. I'd like it if the clothing design touches with the equipment design a little more. We have a unique approach and style with our products, and I think it would be profitable for the company if we go this way. I'd also like to increase the amount of R&D centres around the world. I'd like to establish an R&D network with centres where people can go, test gear and share ideas.

Thanks so much Roberto for taking the time to talk to us!





SEE IT IN ACTION



**2017/18 DASH**  
FREESTYLE/FREERIDE

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

### PUSH YOUR LIMITS

Not easily tamed, this fast-turning kite is built to move. Its powerful pull, ample bar pressure and direct feel makes the Dash the dynamic choice for any core kiter that likes to steer. Adrenaline junkies with the skills to unlock its strengths are in for an exhilarating ride.

#### FEATURING



4x-reinforced ripstop is the strongest, stiffest canopy material on the market



Buffers and disperses canopy flutter to reduce wear and enhance durability

# POWER TO PERFORM



## NAISH



WORDS EVAN NETSCH PHOTO OLGA SHMAIDENKO

# HOW TO SURVIVE A BACK OF BEYOND BOAT TRIP

**PERHAPS THE ULTIMATE KITESURFING EXPERIENCE?**

The pinnacle of any exploratory trip is being able to explore uncharted spots and lay claim to kiting in places where no one else has dared to tread. Evan Netsch was lucky enough to spend a bit of time aboard the Cabrinha Quest. In this feature, he gives us the low down on what he discovered...





**“ WE HAD TO BE TOTALLY SELF-DEPENDENT AND WE NEVER REALLY KNEW WHAT WE WOULD FIND.”**

The reality of any trip is that it's always different than imagined. Seldom do I find myself in a place more amazing than what I expected, but this was one of those rare occasions. The biggest difference on this trip was the level of the unknown and the magnitude of the adventure.

Heading out into an area as untouched and remote as Micronesia was different than any

other trip I've taken. We had to be totally self-dependent and we never really knew what we would find. First off, getting there was no easy task. Flying in from Hong Kong, I had to layover in Tokyo before landing in Guam, where I spent the night. The next morning I got on the island hopper, and after a few stops got off in Pohnpei.

Flying in, the island looked dense and green, more like a rainforest than a tropical island, with the trees going right up to the water line with no beaches to be seen. Surrounding the entire island I could see barrier reef.

As I looked out the aeroplane window, I could see a few different passes in the reef. One pass seemed to have an especially good right-hand wave. Being completely disoriented to where we were coming from and where on the island the airport was, I wondered to myself if this could be Palikir Pass. Or simply P-Pass, the wave I had dreamt of surfing but never imagined I would make it to. As it turns out, it was P-Pass.

The next day everyone has arrived. While Cabrinha sponsors the boat and, of course, Pete along with the rest of the team spend their fair share of time onboard, the boat is set up as a timeshare with all the owners eager to explore remote locations.





**“ AS THE SUN WAS SETTING, TOASTY WARM, WITH PERFECT WAVES AND NOT A SOUL AROUND. IT COULD NOT HAVE BEEN A MORE PERFECT DAY. ”**

In total there were ten of us on board. Tom and Emma take charge of the trip as the Captain, and First Mate, Lauren the Chief, Keith, Olga, Doctor Rob, Osh and Bowen were on board as shareholders, and I was helping out along the way.

After the boat had been provisioned, we headed out of Mangrove Cove where we were anchored. After about an hour sail we were out at Palikir Pass and not a minute was wasted getting into the water.

The surf wasn't much more than head high, but the wave seemed perfect. The best part... we were the only ones in the water. This set the tone for the trip, sitting in the water as the sun was setting, toasty warm, with perfect waves and not a soul around. It could not have been a more perfect day.

For the next five days, we kited, surfed and explored all around the island of Pohnpei. The swell had been good for weeks, apparently, and we were just catching the tail end of it. After a day and a half, we moved to some other spots around the island to do some flat-water riding as the swell died off.

Not every day was windy, and when it was windy it was pretty light, but no one cared. When the kiting wasn't good, there was never a dull moment. We swam with massive manta rays, snorkelled around the reef and WWII wreckage and even explored the indigenous ruins of Nan Madol from the 12th century.





PHOTO OLGA SHMAIENKO

After nearly a week in Pohnpei, we set sail for Ant Atoll. Only a few hours away, Ant is comprised of a couple of small islands, one of which is inhabited by just a few people. We spent a few days in Ant then we set sail for our next stop, Oroluk. This was a little over a 24-hour sail from Ant, so we left around 7 a.m. and sailed through the night, arriving in the middle of the next day.

We found different anchorages around the Oroluk Atoll, spending each day near a different little private island kiting, snorkelling, spearing food and enjoying the isolated setting.

“SPENDING EACH DAY NEAR A DIFFERENT LITTLE PRIVATE ISLAND”

# GET DIALED

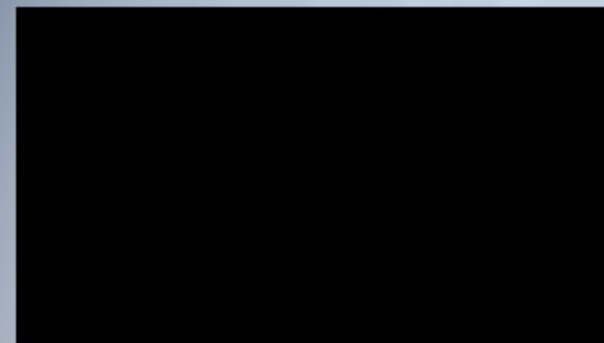


Photo By: Jay Wallace - Rider: Reese Myerscough - Gear: Stick-Shift bar, SoulCrymuit, Jester board

## STICK-SHIFT

Featuring 13 Back Line Trim



**Sidewinder**  
Back Line Trim. Twist to add power, bump to de-power.



**G Stop**  
Grip adjustable bar stopper - Simply slide your stopper to the sweet spot.



**Force Tensioner**  
Clean pay out of your lines, every time.



**Groove Bar**  
Carbon polymer, ultra lightweight open channel bar for constant flushing of all debris.





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

We sailed back outside of one of the atoll's passes into the open ocean to do some fishing.

As we headed for the far side of the atoll, we planned on meeting up with a few locals who lived on the main island. As we re-entered the lagoon through the pass, the sky was overcast, and it was raining on and off, making dangerously shallow reef very hard to spot by eye. In the distance, we could see the little island, oval shaped and only a few hundred feet long at the most.

Near the island, we could see a small mono-hull wrecked. At about the same moment as we were following the charts into the reef pass, we realised that what was labelled as a safe pass was far from it. Waves were breaking everywhere onto the shallow reef, and the nearest pass seemed to be far in the distance.

At this point, we realised that our charts were totally useless. The area was clearly not navigated enough to justify creating accurate charts. We continued to carefully navigate in by eye, keeping a close watch on the water depth. We eventually came to a safe anchorage a mile or so from the little island. We now understood why the sailboat we spotted had become wrecked.

Meeting the Islanders was one of the most memorable experiences of my life. They live off the land, eating mainly coconuts, crabs, fish and rice that is supplied to them via US aid, either by airdrop or a from ship delivery every six months.

PHOTO OLGA SHMAIENKO







**“BIG SEAS AND GALE FORCE WINDS MADE THINGS PRETTY EXCITING.”**

One of my first questions to them was about the sailboat wreck, which was just offshore because it looked very recent. I was told that we were the first people to visit since the shipwreck, just over a year ago. At that, I realised just how far out there we had gotten. The seven people on the island had not seen another human in a year, and the last people who came were shipwrecked.

To the islander's fortune, they were now the proud new owners of a small solar panel and a wind turbine that they had stripped from the vessel, giving them power to periodically run a radio that allowed them to communicate with neighbouring islands.

Words can barely describe how simple their life on the island was. The only boat they had was about eight feet long, and it wasn't much more than a raft with some makeshift paddles. Their homes were small, dirt-floor huts built from a mix of materials. Besides a pig and a few chickens, the only other

company they had on the island was us, for the day. After spending a majority of the day with the Islanders, we left them with some food, medicine for infections and a few colouring books for the three little kids. The next day, we set out for our final destination and departure point, Chuuk.

I'm not much of a sailor, which may be why the 32-hour sail seemed to take ages. Big seas and gale force winds made things pretty exciting. Wind speeds peaked in the pitch dark of the early morning hours with the sail at the third reef. Listening to dishes clanging and breaking in the cabinets all night long made it hard to get any sleep between watch shifts.



# TRIGGER

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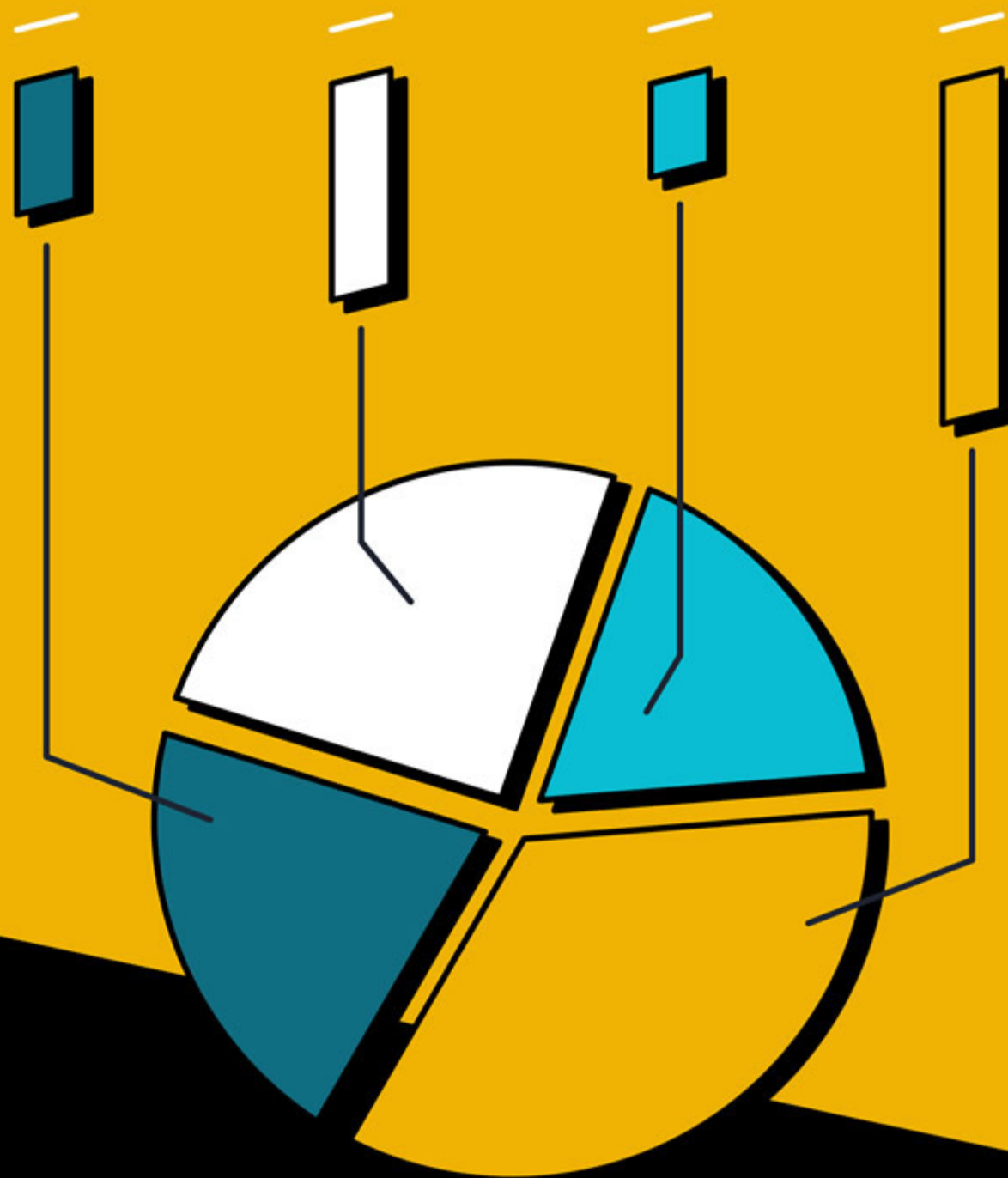
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## “ I’VE NEVER BEEN SO EXCITED TO SEE THE SUNRISE IN THE MORNING ”

There’s no doubt it was an adventure, and I was grateful to have a skilled captain and first mate on board to keep everything under control. I’ve never been so excited to see the sunrise in the morning, knowing we would be making it to our destination within the day. As Chuuk approached in the distance, subsiding winds welcomed us to the island.

While all of Micronesia may be seen as one island group, the reality is that it is four, each distinctly different. Each island group even speaks a unique language, with English being the common language that allows them to all communicate. Chuuk was entirely different from Pohnpei, not only in landscape but also in culture.

The economic damage left in the wake of WWII was evident. A serious lack of work and high crime rates made us realise that this was not an area where we needed to hang out for too long. After spending nearly an entire day just clearing customs, we had little time left to explore.

The next day, we got back on the same island hopper flight and said goodbye to our friends onboard as they continued to sail south-west, bound for New Caledonia.

### Pros and Cons

There are few places left in the world today that feel so undiscovered. Micronesia is one of the more remote areas left. While many of the islands suffered damage and are still healing their wounds from WWII, many are completely untouched.



PHOTO OLGA SHMAIENKO



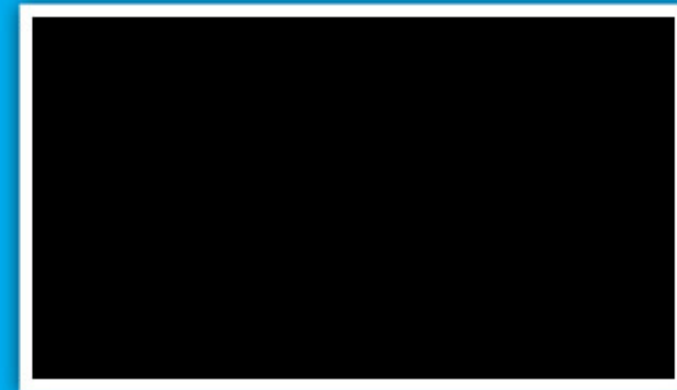
With over 600 islands, many of the outer atolls may not see a human for years at a time, and the ability to completely separate from the modern world is priceless.

The conditions are amazing, and options are endless. Many islands don't offer the best surf breaks because the open ocean just lands right onto dry reef. However, there are a few semi-famous breaks like P-Pass, the dream right-hand barrel on Pohnpei.

**“THE CONDITIONS ARE AMAZING, AND OPTIONS ARE ENDLESS.”**



YOU KNOW YOU WANT TO...







**“ EVEN IF THE WIND IS NOT BLOWING AND THERE IS NO SURF, THERE IS NO ESCAPING THE BEAUTY. ”**

Adventurers who make their way to the outer atolls might be the first to kite or surf at many locations. We found this in Oroluk, about 125 miles west of Pohnpei, where our trip started. It's an atoll surrounded by a barrier reef that offers endless, amazing flat water riding options, far from any civilisation.

It's paradise. Even if the wind is not blowing and there is no surf, there is no escaping the beauty. With incredible reefs and remote islands to explore, there is no denying the natural, untouched beauty. With a long boat trip being the only way to access the area, it helped me to appreciate the surroundings without the interruption of modern day distractions.

These islands remain so untouched and remote because access is no easy task. It takes a day and a half travelling to arrive at

any of the main islands in Micronesia, and to venture from there is nearly impossible. Without a live-aboard boat and captaining skills, getting to any of the outer atolls is not possible. This, in part, makes the islands so special, but there is no doubt, this is a limiting factor.

Micronesia is not a risk-free getaway. On any of the main islands, flights in and out are limited and so are general facilities. About midway through this trip, I broke a finger far from any hospital, and getting any sort of medical help was impossible. Ten days later, I was able to get an x-ray,





**“ WHILE YOU MIGHT MISS HAVING BASIC AMENITIES, THE DESIRE TO RETURN WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE TO RESIST. ”**

revealing that I needed surgery and some screws. And, with a significant time lapse from the incident to the surgery, the healing process became much longer. A finger is only a finger, but it could have been much worse. With extremely limited medical help on the main islands and absolutely no facilities on the outer islands, we were reminded to be a little extra careful.

If you go to Micronesia, you will be spoiled. After surfing a perfect, open point break without anyone else in sight, or kiting from one unnamed beach to the next, it is hard to go back to a civilised reality. While you might miss having basic amenities, the desire to return will be impossible to resist. It was unlike any Caribbean island or topical paradise I had ever imagined.



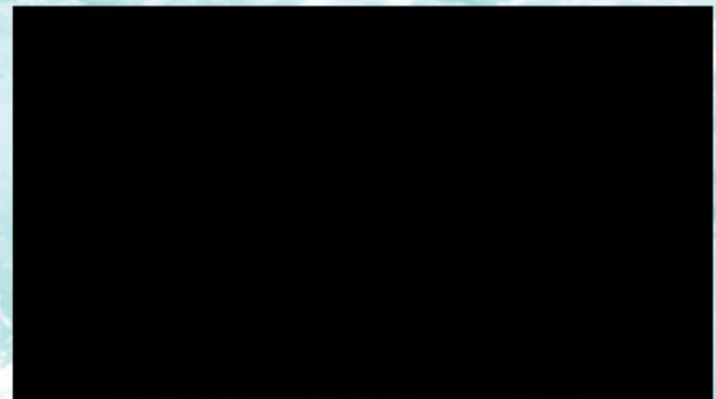


# MAJESTIC

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FREESTYLE




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**THE MAJESTIC X** is our brand new hard-shell harness. It's built around the unique BIONIC CORE FRAME, which is a rigid support plate for your lower back. It's exclusive composite material combines a very stiff support with flexibility, this allows for more freedom in movement. Giving you more back support in those critical conditions. Comes in teal and black (pictured), freestyle and surf (pictured).

M Y S T I C B O A R D I N G . C O M



A full-page photograph of two women kitesurfing on the ocean. They are both smiling and holding onto their control bars. The woman on the left is wearing a grey and blue patterned top and black shorts, while the woman on the right is wearing a pink bikini. The water is splashing around their feet, and several colorful kites are visible in the distance under a clear blue sky.

Sensi Graves talks about the power of girls within our sport coming together to help each other improve their riding.

# STRONGHER TOGETHER

WORDS SENSI GRAVES PHOTOS LUKAS STILLER



**“ SUPPORTING WOMEN WHILE WE SCRAMBLE FOR THE TOP IS STILL ABOUT GROWING OUR INTERNAL NETWORK AND EMPOWERING WOMEN WITHIN OUR SPORT. ”**

The debate about the representation of women versus men in sports has been writ large in the last few years. While leaps and bounds have been made over the last few decades, inequalities still exist. Media outlets still disseminate more photos, videos and interviews with male athletes than female ones. Women are still enduring the “sex sells” debate and female athletes are still fighting for equal pay. Despite the challenges, there has been a boom in female-driven events and women have become more acknowledged and represented in many arenas; from surfing to mountain biking to the WNBA.

For the reasons mentioned above, there is still work to be done. Mutual equality may be the name of the game, but supporting women while we scramble for the top is still about growing our internal network and empowering women within our sport. One of the ways in which I believe we can empower more women and increase accessibility is through female-specific camps.







And while you may be thinking, isn't the separation of women counter productive to enhancing a "we're just as good as the guys" mentality, here's why I believe exclusivity for women's camps is not only ok, but necessary for the growth of our sport. It revolves around three aspects: the benefits of relatable group learning, the supportive environment it fosters and the network it builds.

**"I BELIEVE EXCLUSIVITY FOR WOMEN'S CAMPS IS NOT ONLY OK, BUT NECESSARY FOR THE GROWTH OF OUR SPORT."**



FULL FLIGHT 90

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DOLPHIN1

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Optional RRD "Aviation academy" package

**THE RRD H-FLIGHT HYDROFOIL & DOLPHIN1 KITE FOIL BOARD**





**“ THE FACT REMAINS THAT MEN AND WOMEN ARE BUILT DIFFERENTLY, LEARN DIFFERENTLY AND HAVE DIFFERENT LEVELS OF CHEMICALS STREAMING THROUGH OUR BODIES ”**

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This March, I had the opportunity to run one such camp of my own. Motivated by a lack of other opportunities for women to progress past the beginner stage in kiteboarding, Colleen Carroll and I organised a women’s intermediate

kiteboarding retreat in El Cuyo, Mexico. Besides being an absolute blast, the women’s camps offered us a peek into the interesting dynamics that exist in how the fairer sex learns and confirmed my suspicions that sometimes the next best step in your progression is booking yourself with a group of driven and fiery females. Read on for those reasons why!

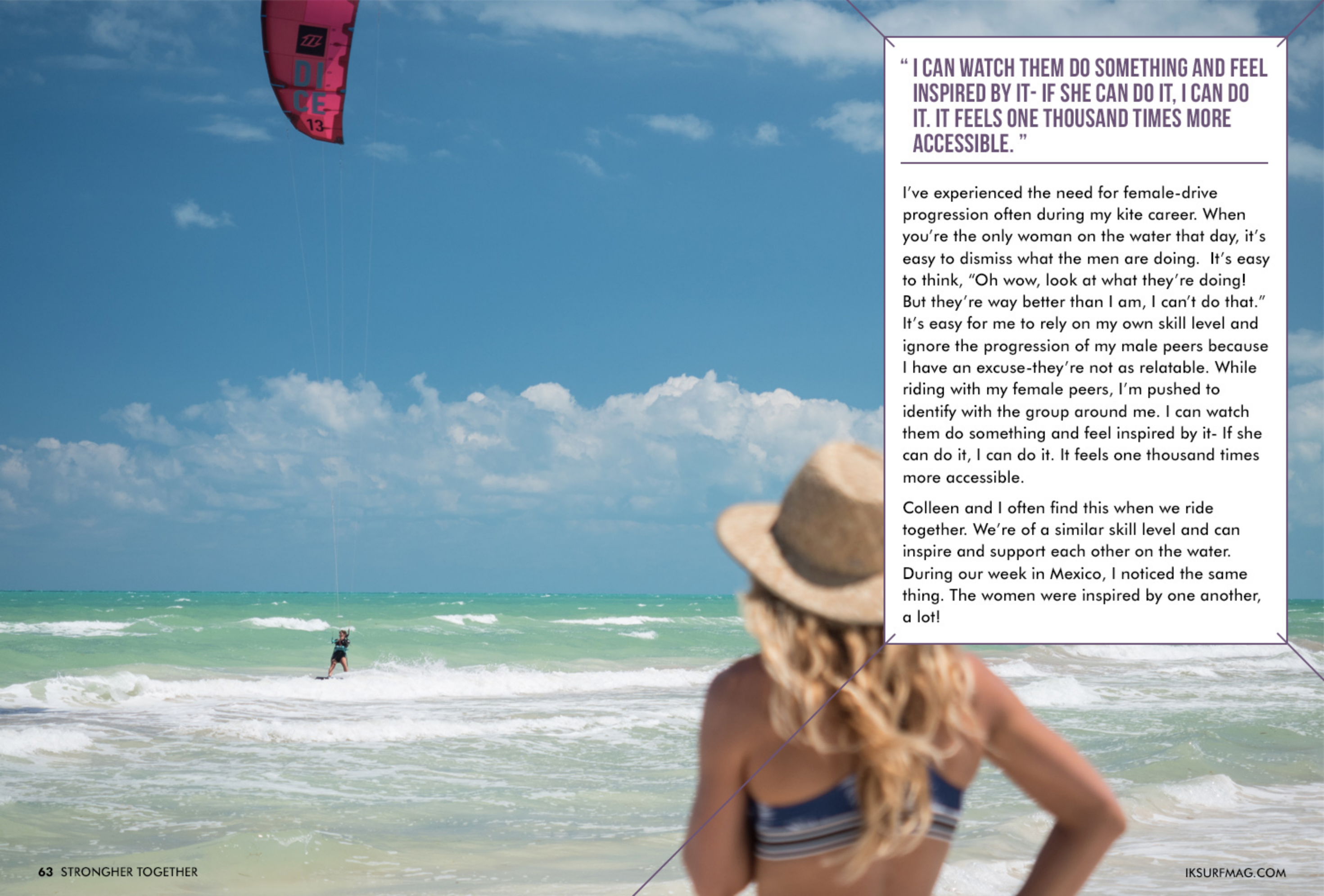
**Monkey see, monkey do**

Learning kiteboarding in a group setting is

super beneficial. The most apparent reason is that you get to watch another student try, fail and try again at the same things you are struggling with. It allows for encouragement among the participants and incorporates various means of teaching, especially visual.

I’ve found group learning to be especially effective with an all-female group. Despite the equality we push for, the fact remains that men and women are built differently, learn differently and have different levels of chemicals streaming through our bodies (affecting us in all sorts of ways!).





**“ I CAN WATCH THEM DO SOMETHING AND FEEL INSPIRED BY IT- IF SHE CAN DO IT, I CAN DO IT. IT FEELS ONE THOUSAND TIMES MORE ACCESSIBLE. ”**

I've experienced the need for female-drive progression often during my kite career. When you're the only woman on the water that day, it's easy to dismiss what the men are doing. It's easy to think, "Oh wow, look at what they're doing! But they're way better than I am, I can't do that." It's easy for me to rely on my own skill level and ignore the progression of my male peers because I have an excuse-they're not as relatable. While riding with my female peers, I'm pushed to identify with the group around me. I can watch them do something and feel inspired by it- If she can do it, I can do it. It feels one thousand times more accessible.

Colleen and I often find this when we ride together. We're of a similar skill level and can inspire and support each other on the water. During our week in Mexico, I noticed the same thing. The women were inspired by one another, a lot!





## ALL MADE IN EUROPE

All CrazyFly kites, boards and accessories are made in the CrazyFly Factory in Europe.

## UNITED DACRON PANEL

This revolutionary feature increases the kite's rigidity and reactivity allowing for better flight experience. Every seam on the kite gets stretched over time, especially in the stressed area pulled by the backlines.

So, instead of using multiple Dacron panels, we used a single United Dacron Panel. The reactions of the kite are noticeably quicker and they do not fade over time.



### Support is the name of the game.

The fact remains, there are more men than women that kiteboard and intimidation in trying something new, no matter your sex, is a real thing. The idea behind all-female run events is that you're removing as much intimidation as possible. The focus with many of these women-only events is the sense of inclusion and support you provide. Identifying the group or camp as all-female gives the group something to bond over (girls rule!) and enhances the idea that we're all there to support one another.

**“ THE FOCUS WITH MANY OF THESE WOMEN-ONLY EVENTS IS THE SENSE OF INCLUSION AND SUPPORT YOU PROVIDE ”**





**“ IMPROVING UPON HER WEAKNESSES AND SETTING GOALS AND THEN BRINGING HER INTO THE GROUP AS A WHOLE BUOYS HER CONFIDENCE AND REALLY SETS HER UP FOR SUCCESS. ”**

During our time in Mexico, we asked the women to name one thing they were good at and one thing they wanted to improve. Then out on the water, we'd hear them yelling at one another to try something new and encouraging each other. Every evening

during our camp, all of the girls would get together for dinner, margaritas and a re-living of the day's events. We'd listen as the girls gushed over what they were trying that day. Groups bond over shared circumstances and kiteboarding camps ensure a communal attitude of mental and physical exhaustion, a sense of adventure, a humbling experience and profound satisfaction. The camaraderie that the camp provides serves as both a unique experience and an accelerator for learning.

Supporting these women on an individual level by identifying her strengths, improving upon her weaknesses and setting goals and then bringing her into the group as a whole buoys her confidence and really sets her up for success

**Grow the network!**

As a female rider, I only want to see more and more women join this beloved sport of mine. Women's specific events provide an opportunity for that. They provide a place for support, an opportunity for inclusion and an enhanced learning environment.









At the end of the week, the group was beyond sad to leave, but they left with more than a tan. They left with a network to reach out to. They left with friends to support and rely on and encourage them. They left with inspiration to improve their kiteboarding and an infectious enthusiasm for the sport. If that doesn't help get more people into kiteboarding, I don't know what will.

**“THEY LEFT WITH INSPIRATION TO IMPROVE THEIR KITEBOARDING”**

# DAILY WORK WEAR

STRIKE AMP ZIPLESS



AARON HADLOW'S  
DAILY WORK WEAR

STRIKE AMP ZIPLESS



SURFING ELEMENTS





**“ ACKNOWLEDGING OUR DIFFERENCES IS OK AND BONDING WITHIN A GROUP AND SUPPORTING THAT GROUP IS EVEN BETTER. ”**

In conclusion, women’s camps are bad-ass ways to boost confidence, progress learning and empower the individual. Women’s camps offer a haven for collaboration and learning within the broader kiteboarding arena, and it’s ok to admit that.

While the equal rights debate continues to rile the media, it’s ok to admit that men and women are different and it’s ok to have sex-specific events. The point is it’s not about exclusion; it’s about empowerment and inclusion. It’s about setting yourself up for success. Sometimes that means admitting that women’s camps are beneficial. By no means does this mean we aren’t as talented or as driven or as good (don’t even get me started) as the opposite sex, it simply means that acknowledging our differences is ok and bonding within a group and supporting that group is even better. Community is about building a support network. We’re working towards that, one margarita infused group of women at a time, and hope you will join us!





COLORS



HAAPITI  
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The HAAPITI's got style but doesn't sacrifice on technique. It uses a performing 4-way stretch fabric and the material repels water like a charm. Good to be worn both in and out of the water.



TECHNOLOGY



STYLE  
ON LAND  
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COLORS



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The SQUARE-FLEX is our most technical boardshort with core features such as lightness, flex, water-repelling surface and comfort. It is built to be forgotten on water and to dry fast while on land.



SQUARE  
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CKPERFORMANCE

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# TECHNIQUE



WORDS &amp; PHOTOS CHRISTIAN &amp; KARINE

Hello sailors! Hope you're ready for some new challenges as we've got three beauties for you this issue – ripe to get you polished in time for some summer (or winter) wind posing. Coming straight in at number one we have the rather stunning air gybe nose grab. This is gagging to be tweaked and is a splendid way to show off your board. Following that it's time for the double grab front rotation. That's right you'll be cramming in both a nose and a tail grab while navigating your way through a front loop/roll. Another stylish knockout monster. And bringing up the rear is a jolly Darkslide variation. We'll have no kite looping, but rather you'll be rotating into a forceful forward rotation on the way out of your slide – pure, unadulterated satisfaction and showboating.

Enjoy the experience, C&K.

AIR GYBE NOSE GRAB



[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

FRONT DOUBLE GRAB



[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

DARKSLIDE FRONT



[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)



## AIR GYBE NOSE GRAB >

**Kite:** Switchblade 9m with Fireball

**Board:** Ace 133 with H3s

Another splendid way to make the essential art of turning around both exciting and aesthetically pleasing. There must surely be enough transition variations to keep you busy during a reasonable session, ensuring that you never need to pull off the same move twice. Now that's something we can all appreciate. Before adding this feather to your bow, we should perhaps note that the board's nose relates to the direction in which you'll be landing, and the hand you'll grab with will be your back hand, again for the direction you'll come out of this move. For example, if you can happily whip out a nose grab jumping to the left, then trying this transition will be simpler taking off to the right, as the mechanics will be similar. Now let's have a look at what you need to do.

### The Approach Pic A

It all starts and potentially ends here, so getting your approach right is essential. This is a transition; you'll be changing direction. Thus, you don't want to carry too much forward momentum into the move as it'll make landing the other way troublesome. Control your speed by edging harder, and if need be, letting the bar out a tad, but don't carve and don't drift the kite up. You still need some height and hang time, so the kite needs to be around the magical 11 or 1 o'clock so that you send it. In the picture, Karine is edging hard with plenty of board in the water.



She's given her kite an aggressive send so that she'll get good lift and early lift. This is the second consideration. If you move your kite too slowly, and from too high, you won't get lift until the kite has gone way past 12 o'clock, which again won't help your chances of sailing away as the kite will end up too far on the other side of the window.

### The Take Off Pic B

The take-off follows directly on from what you've just read. That's to say that you need to be going up when the kite's pretty much at 12, not when it's way past. As you most likely know, we call this going early, you're anticipating the lift and kicking against your edge to give the kite a wee helping hand. If you were



to soften your back leg, the kite would move further back, and the move will be harder. As well as kicking off you can see that Karine is levelling her bar. Again the purpose of this is to stop the kite in its tracks; you've got the lift, you want the kite above you, so why allow it to go any further!

### Making Space Pic C

Those of you who can nose grab during a jump will know that part of the movement is getting the bar out of your way by sending the kite. Here as you're transitioning and heading back the other way, this isn't an option. Instead, you need to move yourself to create room for the grab. Do this by twisting, starting with the board and moving on up. Best bet is to look at Karine.





As soon as she's taken off, she scissors her feet and twists her hips, almost as if she were going to toe side! What this does is bring what will be the nose around underneath the bar and positions it way off to the side. This will give you plenty of space to work in:) Oh yes, and it's worth noting that Karine keeps the bar level, to make sure that the kite is set above her, for float and time.

### Time to Commit Pic D

With the kite stable above you and the bar out of the way, the time has come to go for the grab. With what

will be her new front hand centred on the bar Karine has three things to do to reach the grab, and so will you. It's important to get your back/lower leg extended. This combines with bringing your front knee up and across, your second task. This movement pushes the nose of the board up towards you. Now releasing your new back hand helps you to drop that shoulder as you reach down towards the nose. If you don't reach, twist and lift the knee, or extend your back leg you'll be lucky to tickle the nose, let alone get a good grip on it.

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### The Grab Pic E

There is no denying that the nose grab is a beauty! It lends itself perfectly to a tweak due to the straight back leg, so go on, style this puppy out. Once you've got the grab, you can pull the nose towards you while you push your back foot away as far as you can. If your board has a pretty bottom this is the photo opportunity that you don't want to miss.

### The Dive Pic F

Chances are that while you've been busy with that extra tweak, your kite has decided to drift across the window a tad further than you'd deem acceptable. Fear not there is a solution. However, with



the kite likely at 11 or 1, depending on which way you're going, it will need one mighty dive to pull you out of the move and set you down for a marshmallow landing. You can see that Karine has released her grab and is using both hands to steer the kite in a classic push-pull combo. This way she can keep the bar on the sweet spot while getting the kite to move as quickly as possible. Imagine that you're trying to dive the kite straight down at the water. If you do and then point the board downwind, a smooth and claimable nose grab air gybe is yours for the taking.

### Top Tips

A short, sharp send is your friend. The quicker your



kite moves, the sooner it generates lift and the more chance you have of going up before the kite passes 12 o'clock - don't be shy.

Visualise your grab movement. You're not reaching down towards where the nose should be, but rather twisting the board across you so that it comes towards your hand. If you snowboard imagine that you're sitting on your derriere and you want to turn onto your front so that you can push yourself up. It's the same ungainly twisting of the board.

Have a good look at the sequence and videos to prepare yourself for the water....





### Common problems

If you get the feeling that you're being pulled away from your grab. This is the kite drifting across the window as you concentrate on the prize. Make sure you go early and stop the kite at 12 o'clock by levelling the bar.

Dropping into the water on your edge rather than landing smoothly flat downwind. Either the kite has

moved too far back, in which case revert to the first problem, or you're not giving it all the beans on the dive. Straight down and you'll have power.

### Keystones

1. Slow down
2. Short, sharp send
3. Pop and level

4. Scissor, twist, knee up and reach down

5. Hefty mother of a dive





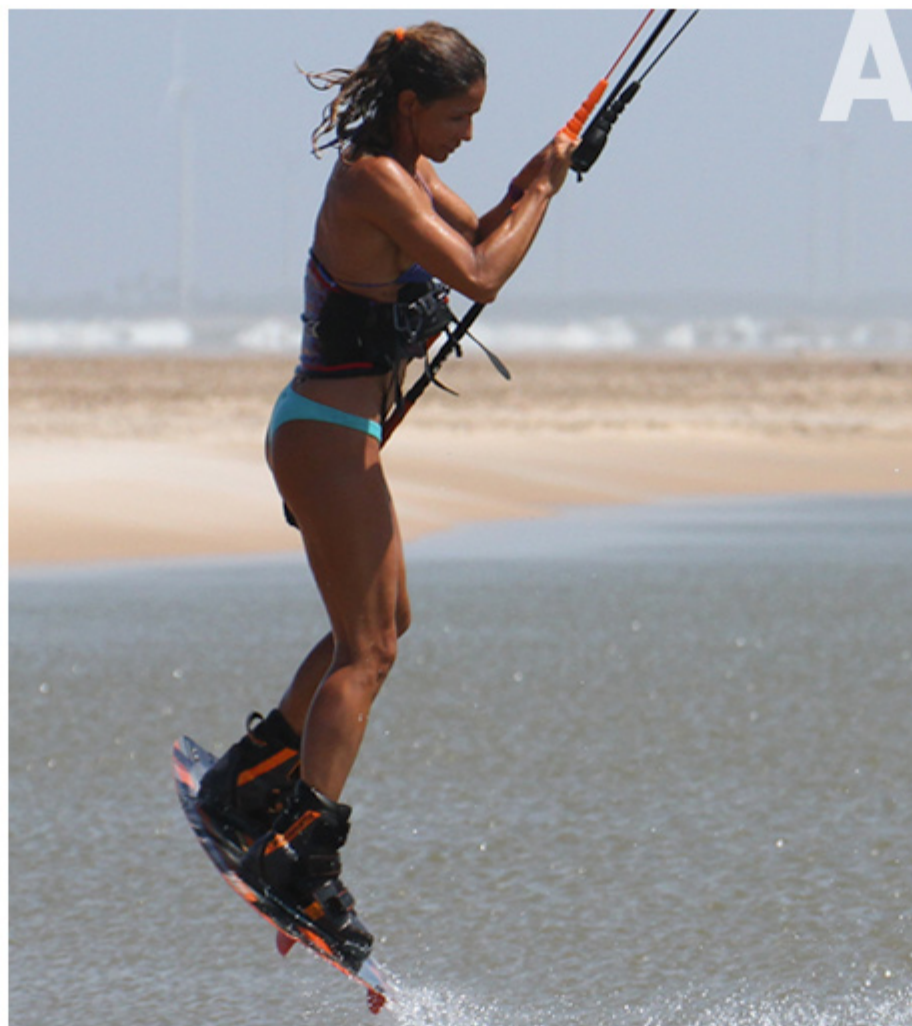
## FRONT DOUBLE GRAB &gt;

**Kite:** Chaos 7m      **Board:** Ace 133 with H3s

If you're a regular reader, you'll remember that we have already covered two variations of a double grab jump, both the tail and nose, and the nose and tail. If you've not seen those and are reading this, we haven't lost our marbles; we're on about the order of grabs here. To move things on further, it's time to add some rotation and this issue that comes in the form of a front loop/roll. Ideally, and in order of importance, we'd recommend that you can - a, front loop/roll, - b, nose grab and - c, tail grab. The trick to this move is a slow rotation, and as such, we'll have a look at how you can achieve this and find the time to squeeze both the nose and tail of your board, in that order.

**Approach and Take Off Pic A**

It should go without saying that if you're not as quick as Mr Myagi, then you're going to need some height and time to cover the necessities. As such you should approach this as for a decent boost. That's a good solid upwind edge, kite parked around the 11/1 o'clock or lower mark and be sufficiently powered. For the height, you'll need to give the kite a good send. This will also benefit you, as the kite going behind 12 after take-off will enable you to rotate slowly and fiddle about with the grabs without any unwanted down-loops. Needless to say, you'll want your front hand fairly central on the bar. Once you've sent the kite for lift off, you need to ponder two things. How to rotate slowly and how to reach the nose grab while



performing your front rotation. Some prior experience here will indeed help!

For the slow rotation, you don't want to kick off as hard with your back foot, and you must not throw your head and shoulders down, which would normally go hand in hand with lifting your front knee. If you look at the pic Karine has kicked but it's up, not forwards and down – she's already off the water but has barely begun to rotate. Her head and shoulders are not dipping forwards, and she hasn't tucked her front knee into her chest. That's the slow rotation sorted. In preparation for the nose grab while rotating she has leant her head back towards her rear shoulder as if she were clasping a telephone between them.



This will put her upper body into a better position for grabbing the nose.

**Kite Back for Release Pic B**

Now we get to see the bonus of the kite being sent well, and as it is here, parked at around 1 o'clock while Karine rises and rotates. Because the kite is "behind" Karine, it prevents her from rotating further, almost stalling her. And with the bar pulled behind her by the kite, there is plenty of space for Karine to sneak in the nose grab. However, your time in the air is limited, so you still need to fly a kite. Karine is pulling gently on her front hand to start redirecting the kite. The trick is to be gentle enough so that there is time to grab, while positive enough that the kite will float you.





### The Nose Grab Pic C

In this position, half way around your rotation you can use the energy to help with your grab. If you compare the previous picture to this one, you can see that Karine is in a very similar position. The difference is that to reach the grab she has continued the rotation of the board, which rolls it up and over, near enough for her to grab. Again this is only possible because the kite has not redirected to 12 o'clock yet. Half the move complete!

### Release and Check Pic D

Once you've held the nose grab time is of the essence. You've still got a good 180° to turn, another grab to stick, and a kite to fly so that you don't drop like a stone. To carry on with your rotation release your grab and turn your head. As you do this, the board will drop, and you'll be able to see downwind and get your bearings. At the same time, you need to have a feel of the kite, checking that it isn't too far back, or that you haven't honked it forwards.

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**August 25:** "Up Town Funk You Up" Party

**August 26:** Pittsburg Jazz Blues and Funk Fest featuring Lakeside (Band)

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If the kite is still behind 12, you'll keep moving slowly. In the photo, Karine has released her grab and is already looking at the tail of her board where she intends to grab it next. Feeling that her kite was moving forward, she's also released the bar a touch.

### Grab 2, Tail & Bone Pic E

The grand finale. The nice thing is that hopefully grabbing the tail isn't as technical as the nose, so even if time is limited you should be able to nip a quick one in! It's also possible to hold a tail grab quite long so you can still make it count if you hold it in until you're about to hit the deck. If you fancy tweaking it out into a Boner, pull the tail in with your



back hand and push your front foot away from you. Looking good.

### The Reception Pic F

All that's left is to stomp your landing. Whether you hold the tail grab for long or not, aim to keep the kite just behind 12 o'clock. From this position, you'll be able to dive the kite effectively for landing, and you won't get pulled off balance by the kite moving forwards around the edge of the window. In the picture, Karine has released her grab in time to drop the board underneath her. She's dived the kite hard with her front hand, which will pull her and aid with a smooth downwind landing.



### Top Tips

Breaking this down will give you time to work on the individual elements. Depending on how your jumps and rotations are, it can even be worth just sending big, keeping the kite back rather than at 12 o'clock, and even adding a tail grab to see how long and low you can hold it.

Next up try slowing your front rotation by not kicking as much and not throwing your head. Then add the nose grab, before finally going for broke and adding both grabs.

### Common Problems

There are three issues that people of have!





Number one is forgetting about the kite, so it stays way back, and you drop like a stone. If this is the case, it's fairly obvious. The solution is to send the kite hard, rather than thinking about it going back. Remember not to let the bar out too much before take-off, as this can encourage the kite to move too far back. A hard send with a good edge will mean that you get lifted earlier.

Number two is not reaching the grab. This will come from going into a normal front rotation. Make sure that you keep your shoulders up and grab that phone between you back ear and shoulder.

Number three, and probably most unpleasant is redirecting the kite too much. If you give it a good send and feel that it's too far back, it's tempting to bring it forward with gusto. With height, you'll swing back under your kite if it's behind, but if you pull hard on your front hand, you'll be surprised as you release your nose grab and find that you're accelerating downwind and forwards at quite a lick. Be gentle yet positive.

#### Keystones

1. Good edge and send.
2. Kick up, not down, head to rear shoulder.

3. Rotate with kite behind 12.
4. Hold nose grab then release and continue rotation with your head.
5. Hold the tail then dive hard for a soft landing.





**DARKSLIDE FRONT** >**Kite:** Switchblade 9m    **Board:** Ace 139 with H2s

It can be easy to take kiting for granted, a bad session when you don't feel comfortable, perhaps the wind's not quite right, you're off you're A Game, and in the end, the lawn gets a pretty good mowing. Sometimes it's worth giving ourselves a nudge and remember just why kiting can have such a strong hold and just why we got so consumed by it in the first place. This move is such a reminder. How many sports can you think of, where adding skills together equates to even more tricks, an almost infinite number at that, which can be achieved and mastered by hobbyists with day jobs. That's kiting, and this is another Darkslide progression, with a front rotation to finish.

Suffice to say; it's full steam ahead. To make this more manageable there is a particular method that you should aim for with your Darkslide. You want to be ever so slightly upright, and keep your head above the bar. This is, of course, a slight contradiction as we know that if you hold yourself forwards over the bar, you're more likely to catch all your board and stop rather than slide. Time for a cheeky peak at how you can perfect and learn this.

**Cinderella Pic A**

Cast your mind back to the formative sessions of your Darkslide development. If you didn't move the kite up enough and started with the kite still too low in the window, the result would be you sliding on a lot of the



board, your knees and with your weight on your front hand. This forward position with a better slide is what you're after. The key here is to get into your darkslide early before the kite reaches 12 o'clock and your carriage turns into a pumpkin! Realistically, unless you're on a large, lifty kite, you can only trip yourself with the kite around 11:30 or 12:30 or a tiny bit lower (that's really early), if you have enough speed to offer plenty of apparent wind in the kite. And you will need enough power so that you can trim the bar out without the kite stalling. This is why being proficient in the dark arts already is helpful. In the pic, Christian has a lot of spray, as he comes in with speed and a good edge to control it. Keeping his bum low,



he can then push the bar out, carve up and trip himself. By carving up, his weight will be back enough to keep the nose up even if he leans forwards onto the bar.

**Posture Pic B**

As the board bites, this is where you want to be. Looking at the image Christian has tripped his lower body, but his upper body is quite upright. With the bar pulled in, he's holding his shoulders up, eyes above the bar, and head somewhere between the bar end and the chicken loop. This way he can control the drifting of the kite, as he doesn't want it to go too far back, nor move too quickly. However, his weight is back just enough to keep the nose of the board up. In a normal slide,





you'd have your back shoulder rolling down towards the water, but from that position, it would be very hard to start a forward rotation. As you slide, you must anticipate the loss of lift in the kite so you can move onto the next step. As you develop, the skill here is to delay that loss of lift for as long as possible by digging the board in for tension and moving the kite super slowly.

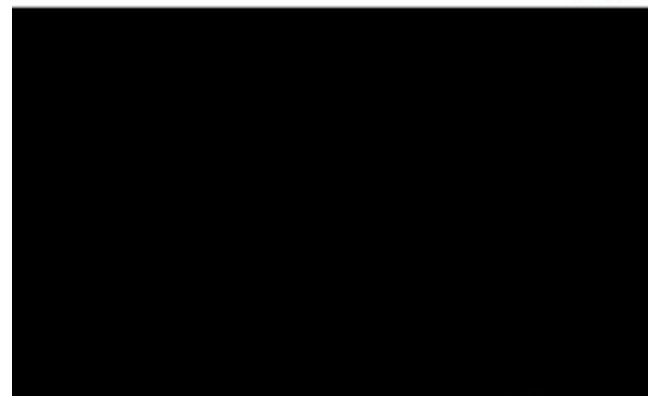
### Onwards & Upwards Pic C

Once you feel the kite lowering you, that's your queue to get up off the water. If you learnt to Darkslide with the kite forward finish, you should be accustomed to this. Admittedly this lifting is a lot simpler if you've got

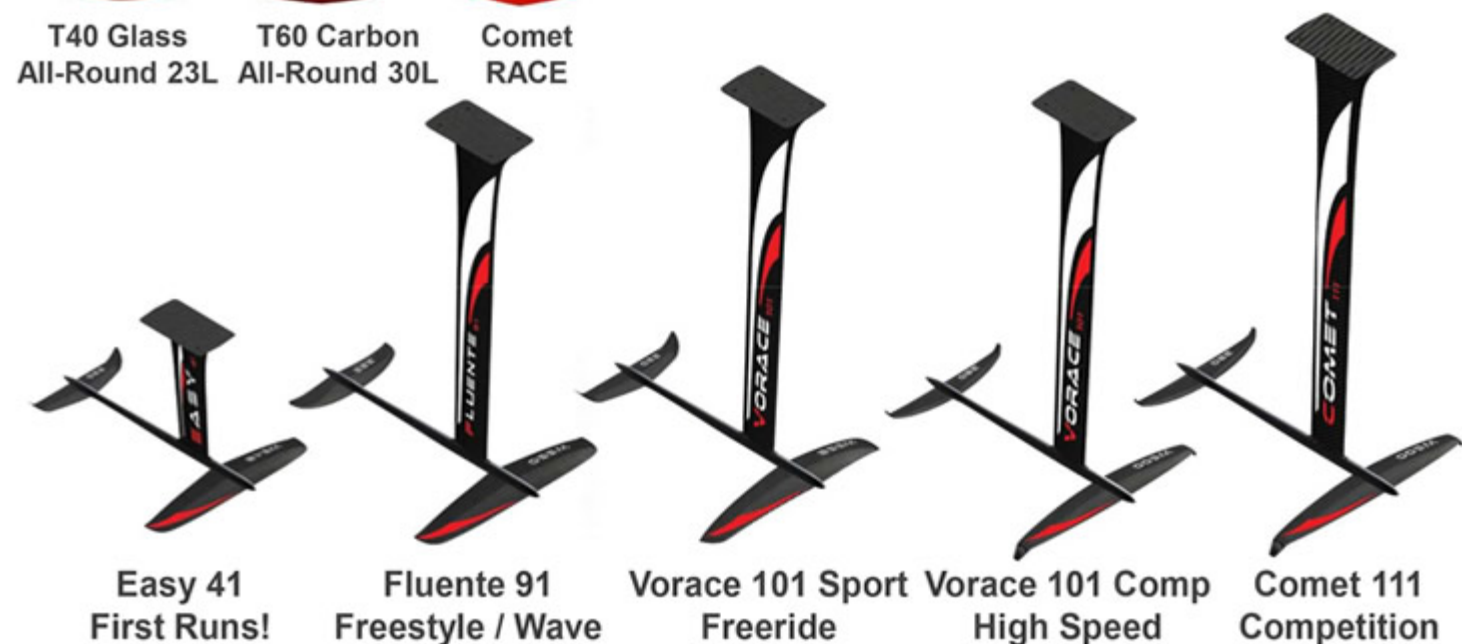
power in the kite – being underpowered will mean that you won't get as much lift. To get lift, you need to send the kite forwards towards 11 or 1 o'clock, depending on which direction you're travelling in. This can be trickier than it sounds because you'll be hanging onto the bar, so pulling on your front hand won't do much unless you release the pressure on your back hand. Here Christian is holding himself right over the bar, looking forwards while he starts to redirect the kite forwards. It's important that the board is still edging so that there's enough resistance to move the kite with enough force so that it'll lift you as it passes back over 12 o'clock.

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This part is very similar to the board behind water start.

### The Throw Down Pic D

Once the kite starts to lift you, it's all about initiating the rotation. This is, of course, the crux of the trick. What makes this challenging is that you can't kick yourself forwards as you normally would for a forward rotation because your back foot is dragging behind you! The only way in which you can conjure a rotation is to throw your head and shoulders down towards the nose of the board. This needs to be forceful. In the photo, Christian is throwing his head and front shoulder down as aggressively as he can. Combined with the lift from the kite he can fulcrum himself through the harness so that all his weight moves forwards in front of the bar which will start to turn



him. The timing of this is also important. It needs to coincide with the kite lifting. This means that as you throw down the kite is picking you up. If you're late and the kite has passed forwards of 12 o'clock, it's very difficult to get your weight in front of the bar and thus you won't rotate. A final note here is that Christian has the bar in and is still redirecting the kite forward.

### Head Leads Pic E

We've included this photo as it shows the effort, force and continuation of the previous Throw Down. Christian's head is forced down onto his left shoulder as if he were head butting a football. His facial expression, with eyes closed, demonstrates the effort involved. However, once he's rotating like this, you



can see that he's started to turn his head back towards the camera to increase his rotation and lead it into more of a horizontal 360° spin rather than an end over end somersault. At the same time, he's diving the kite forwards to keep him moving.

### Handy Work Pic F

Your throw and head are only going to get you so far around the rotation. Without the ability to kick this is the point that is attainable before we're obliged to fire the thrusters to complete our mission. This image looks quite ungainly and dangly, and it is. A result of the need to force yourself around. Christian is leading with his head, but his body has slowed and is stalling, hips facing upwind even though he can see the water where he wants to land. It's now down to your hands.





With your head spotting your landing and your rotation slowing drastically, you need to push the bar around with your hands. As long as the bar passes through the full rotation, so will you. From here on in Christian is trying to get his palms facing downwind, pushing the bar through first. If you do this the rest will follow...

### Top to Tail Pic G

If all goes to plan this is the result. Landing back on the tail of the board

where it all started pre-trip. With the bar pushed all the way around, you'll then be able to pull your knees and the board the rest of the way through the rotation. If you've redirected the kite enough, it'll be pulling you nicely for a downwind landing. Christian has spun around, the board is now leading, and as the tail digs in, he'll pivot the rest of the way around and sail off towards the kite:).



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### Top Tips

Your real challenge in this move should be the rotation, don't get too greedy, so go easy on the slide. As long as you get sliding a bit, it's fine. If you try and get too much length, you'll most likely move the kite too far back which in turn will make the rest far more difficult. Baby step! Once you nail the rotation, you can elongate your slide for extra style.

Remember that your normal Darkslide position will encourage a back rotation. Therefore, concentrate on keeping your weight further forward and over the bar, so you're ready to throw your head and shoulders down.

Now have a good look at the sequence and videos to prepare yourself.

### Common Problems

If you're not getting lifted when you send the kite forwards, the chances are that you're sliding on the top of your board or foot straps. You need tension, so make sure you get the edge in by getting your weight

a tad further back when you trip.

If you're not getting any rotation make sure that you're really throwing your head and shoulders down towards the nose of the board. Turning your head won't do anything.

You're getting the rotation started but then keep landing on your back, slightly inverted. This is the classic. It's a result of letting the kite drift too far back during the slide. The result is that with the bar pulled in, when you send it forwards for lift, the kite cuts the top of the window rather than travelling up and over 12. This gives a lot of downwind pull which invariably means it'll kill your rotation and dump you unceremoniously on your shoulders. The same often happens if you're underpowered as the kite tends to stall.

You get all the way around but get nailed on landing. Unfortunately, as with many kiting moves, the kite does require some flying, you can't always just pull and hope for the best. To get lift out of the slide you need to be aggressive, but then the kite may be

moving too quickly into a dive while you're still rotating, especially on smaller sizes. In this case, you will have to relax your pull or let the bar out a touch as you rotate.

### Key Stones

1. Fast and early slide.
2. Keep shoulders up and head forward.
3. Send kite as soon as lift decreases.
4. Throw head and front shoulder down with everything you've got.
5. Lead with head & push bar around with hands.





# 10 QUESTIONS

WORDS LINDSAY MCLURE

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## Youri Zoon

Youri Zoon is one of the biggest names in kiteboarding, the Dutchman exploded onto the scene over a decade ago winning his first European Championship in 2004. In 2011 he won his first World Title on the PKRA World Tour and then backed it up with another title in 2012. There aren't many people who have won back to back titles in this sport, and there aren't many riders who are still getting on the podium some six years later!





With a high profile switch to Best Kiteboarding followed by a slightly lower key return to his previous lifelong sponsors Slingshot Yuri has certainly had an interesting career. Lindsay McClure sits him down for ten of her best questions!

**Describe the feeling of winning your first World Championship. Can we expect to see you standing on top of the podium again this year?**

The feeling, it seems a bit cliché, is like a dream come true. As a little kid I always dreamed about winning a World Championship, and over the years it got closer and closer, and finally, I managed to win it. This year it's my goal to stand on top of the podium again, but it will be a hard one because there are more riders who are aiming for that spot.

**How did you get your start in kiting, and when did you first start competing?**

At first, I was always windsurfing and sailing. At some point, I saw kiteboarding at my home spot, and I wanted to give it a try. From that moment, I sold my windsurf gear and focused fully on kiting. After six months, I entered my first local competition and, of course, I got knocked out pretty quick, but I said, "I'll be back!" The next year, I did the European Championships, and I won.

**How do you find a balance between competing, riding for media and free kiting?**

It just happens. I do what feels good, and it seems to work out. I travel a lot for media events.

" it got closer and closer, and finally, I managed to win it. "







PHOTO SVETLANA ROMANTSOVA

Sometimes, it's tiring to go on so many short trips, but on the other hand, it's great to be able to visit so many places, discovering new things.

**On both the men's and women's side, what are your predictions for the 2017 World Kiteboarding League Elite League final standings?**

On the women's side, Bruna Kajiya still has a bit more to give than the others. On the men's side, I would love to be on top, but if I'm realistic, I would say that Carlos Mario will take it if he doesn't make any mistakes. Liam (Whaley) is always close, and I think Alex (Pastor) and I are there as well to keep the two young riders sharp.



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“ I need training for my body to recover and come back stronger every time. ”

10



**You've recovered from some serious setbacks, including major injuries. How did you manage your rehab in order to come back stronger than ever?**

I always like to look on the bright side and see the positives in everything. Keep smiling I always say. After my injuries I stayed focused on what I wanted to do, trained very hard and always pushed it! Sometimes I pushed a little too far, but it helped me, and I am back.

**How important are fitness and cross training to your overall training plan?**

Fitness is super important, especially as I'm getting a little older (I'm young, only 27). After so many years of riding, I need training for my body to recover and come back stronger every time. When you are young, you can ride so much more and heal so much faster.

**Both Slingshot and Brunotti have an all-star team**

**right now; how have your sponsors, teammates, and equipment helped boost your progression over the years?**

Yes, definitely and that's why I love to work with these brands! They have been supporting me since the beginning, so they're like family to me. On photo shoots, when I ride with my teammates, they always push me in a positive way. Together we make the brand, each other and the products better.



# 10

“ Support, a good product and a clear partnership  
are some things I need. ”

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PHOTO SVETLANA ROMANTSOVA

**You've made a couple of big moves between sponsors over your career, what key benefits are you looking to get out of your sponsors?**

Only one really and that was a major one: from Slingshot to Best and back to Slingshot.

Support, a good product and a clear partnership are some things I need. They need to make me feel good and happy to ride. That's the reason I changed back to Slingshot again because Best was not capable of giving me what I needed. If you're sitting at the water's edge and the wind is blowing 20 knots with blue skies and flat water, and you're still not motivated to ride, you know something is wrong, and you have to change.

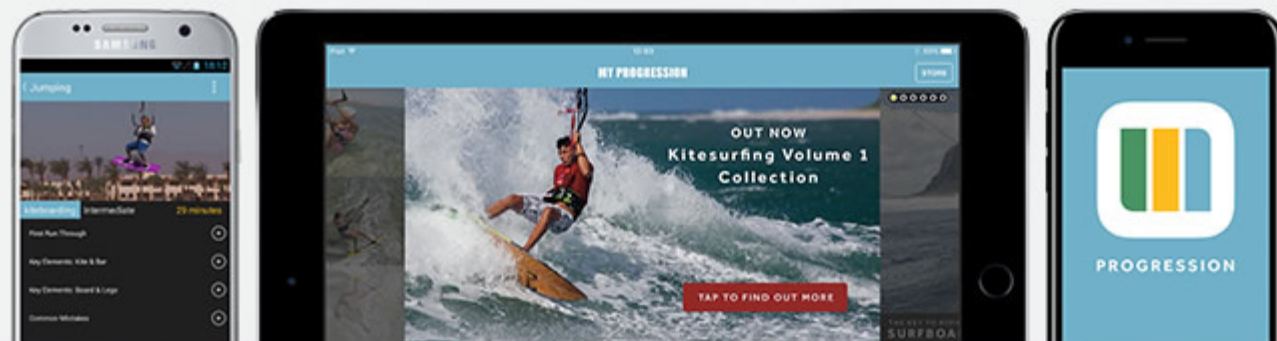


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This is why I always look for long-term partnerships. I've been with Brunotti 14 years already, with Slingshot for eight years and I'm signed for three more.

**As kiteboarding becomes more popular, more mainstream, and more mature, in which direction would you like to see the sport evolve in the coming years?**

I think that if the sport becomes more mainstream, it's good. However, it has to be on the terms of the riders. They should always push kiting in the direction where they want to see it going. Mainstream means more money, bigger sponsors and riders will be able to make a real living out of it. And once they retire from their professional career they could live from it.

**Outside of kiteboarding, what are you passionate about, and how do you like to spend your time when the wind isn't blowing?**

I like to work on my house. On the side, I'm a construction worker, building a lot of things on my house by myself. Also, of course, I like going to the gym, running, biking and just being active. I surf, windsurf and sometimes wakeboard as well. So, there is always enough to keep me busy.

**What is the best piece of advice you've received, and what would you tell young riders who want to follow in your footsteps?**

Just be yourself, and don't change! There is only one you, so keep it that way. Don't be somebody else. And, on the water, just ride like you ride at your home spot. My dad always told me that!



“ Mainstream means more money, bigger sponsors and riders will be able to make a real living out of it.”

10



“ There is only one you, so keep it that way.  
Don't be somebody else. ”

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10



This issue we let the kids loose on the Test Team! Who better to test equipment for younger riders than the youngsters themselves? We've got youth gear from Naish, Ozone, North and Blade, as well as toys for big kids from CrazyFly, Liquid Force, Cabrinha, Nobile and Naish.

#### YOUTH GEAR

##### KITES

Blade Tiny Beast 6m

Ozone Uno 6m

##### BOARDS

Naish Grom 125x36cm

North Gambler (Small Size) - 131x41cm

North Gonzales (Small Size) - 130x38cm

#### BIG KIDS GEAR

##### KITES

Cabrinha Chaos 11m

Crazy Fly Cruze 17m

Liquid Force Wow 10m

Naish Boxer 8m

##### BOARDS

Cabrinha Tronic 145x43cm

CrazyFly Girls 135x41cm

Liquid Force Moon Patrol 146cm

Nobile NBL 138x40.5cm



The IKSURFMAG Youth Test Team

# TRIED & TESTED



BRAND BLADE MODEL TINY BEAST SIZE 6M YEAR 2017



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### At A Glance

Blade's Tiny Beast is a three strut, all-round kite which has been designed specifically for smaller riders in lighter winds rather than just a small kite which still needs some solid wind to fly.

The kite features the same top spec technology we have become accustomed to with Blade.

The kite itself is made from the super high-quality Teijin Techno Force, which Blade have used for over six years in their kites. The Leading Edge has been made with Teijin Dacron, which adds rigidity to key areas and again is an incredibly high-quality material which will add longevity to your kite.

The shape of the kite is relatively delta-esq with larger tips to aid performance and stability in light winds. A Max Flow inflation system is also present so the young ripper can get out on the water in super fast time!

Size: 6 meter

### The Bar

The Tiny Beast is flown with Blades Uni2 Control Bar, which can be changed in size

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)



BRAND OZONE MODEL UNO V2 SIZE 6M YEAR 2017



" A HUGE WIND RANGE, FANTASTIC PERFORMANCE AND GREAT VALUE. "



### At A Glance

Ozone have long been looking at ways to make our kitesurfing journeys easier and more accessible. The Uno was launched to fulfil a gap created with the need for a straightforward and safe inflatable trainer kite for those to practise their initial kite skills, and for smaller children who just do not need a full sized kitesurf kite.

Now available in 3 sizes, the Uno V2 has all the tech of a full sized kite such as the high-end Teijin Technoforce D2 and Teijin Dacron, One pump inflation system and a large sized inflate/deflate valve for super speedy setup. There are low profile aerodynamic scuff pads and reinforcements in key areas, which can be especially useful for a trainer style kite when it is more likely to be crashed!

The Uno V2 behaves the same as a standard LEI but in a small and easy to use package. Featuring only one strut and a skinny Leading Edge, the Uno V2 is super light weight and efficient.

Sizes: 2.5, 4, 6m

### The Bar

The Uno V2 can be flown with the Contact Control Bar, or, as we had, the 'kids'

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

TO VISIT THEIR WEBSITE, CLCK HERE







" THE BOARD  
WILL POP  
EFFORTLESSLY  
OFF THE WATER  
AND COMES  
DOWN WITH AN  
INCREDIBLY  
SATISFYING SLAP"



BRAND NAISH      MODEL GROM  
SIZE 125X36CM    YEAR 2017

#### At A Glance

The Grom is a youth specific board from Naish we have had for test. In no way a scaled down 'grown up' board, the Grom has been designed through and through for kids who rip on the water. Firstly, this board looks awesome. It is fun, colourful and super cool with a shark gnashing across the deck. Secondly, it is so jam packed with technology we wished we were small enough to ride it full time!

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"ONCE POWERED UP, THE BOARD IS A WAKESTYLERS DREAM."



BRAND NORTH    MODEL GAMBLER  
 SIZE 131X41CM    YEAR 2017

#### AT A GLANCE

The Gambler, of course, is North's go to Wake Style and all out freestyle board. It does, however, come in a rather small 131x41 size making it perfect for those freestyle orientated groms who ride hard. This made it a perfect candidate for our youth riders test!

This board is jam packed with technology to live up to the demands of the most all-out aggressive riders.

CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE

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"SHOULD A GUST HIT YOU CAN QUITE EASILY EDGE IT OUT, ALSO SENDING UP A VERY SATISFYING AMOUNT OF SPRAY."



BRAND NORTH    MODEL GONZALES  
 SIZE 130X38CM    YEAR 2017

#### AT A GLANCE

The powerhouse of North Kiteboarding have had the Gonzales in their lineup for many years. A stable all rounder, it suits those who need their first board to those who want one board for everything. It is also no stranger to younger riders, NKB re-launched their 'Young Blood' project last summer, with the Gonzales being the designated board, along with the Mono kite.

CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE

TO VISIT THEIR WEBSITE, CLICK HERE





BRAND CABRINHA

MODEL CHAOS

SIZE 11M

YEAR 2017



"THE CHAOS IS AN OUT AND OUT FREESTYLE WEAPON."



### At A Glance

The Chaos has been around for a few years now, winning world titles in the hands of Liam Whaley.

The 2017 Chaos is an out and out freestyle weapon; it's not designed for your everyday rider. There aren't many C kites out there that are, if you're looking at the Chaos, you're going to be the kind of rider that is pushing your level to the max and need a kite that will do everything you need it too.

Cabrinha's 2017 Chaos comes with features we've seen on the 2016 model. Pure Profile Panels give the kite a smoother arc allowing for more stability, increased flying speed and higher performance. The 6 line Arc Support set up is back again too, stabilising the front of the kite for those big moves.

The Chaos has been constructed with all of Cabrinha's high-quality construction elements to ensure it won't give in before you do. 2DR Double Ripstop is present, the Skeletal Frame and much more.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

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BRAND CRAZYFLY MODEL CRUZE SIZE 17M YEAR 2017



“ HUGE POWER IN SUPER LIGHT WINDS, AND A MASSIVE AMOUNT OF DEPOWER.”



### At A Glance

CrazyFlys Cruze is back once again, ready to get you out kiting in the super light winds we all have to deal with. At 15, 17 and 19meters, they are big kites, but made to feel less by the lightweight nature and shape of the kite which aids speed through the air with minimal drag and resistance.

CrazyFly have now added the proven Double Ripstop to the canopy which aside from being lighter and of the same strength, it actually allows 30% less air to penetrate the canopy which would mean an additional 30% of power being generated by that air now being trapped.

The Cruze is all about weight saving to get flying in those super marginal winds. Logos have been sewn into the canopy rather than printed, and larger panels have been placed on the Leading Edge to reduce the amount to seams and thread used to eliminate even the smallest weights.

A Flat-Delta shape with a relatively high aspect ratio, the Cruze has been designed to get you riding, jumping and even a bit of freestyle in those light winds.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

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BRAND LIQUID FORCE MODEL WOW V2 SIZE 10M YEAR 2017



" PIVOTAL  
TURNING AND  
LARGE SHEETING  
ABILITY WITH  
FANTASTIC  
DRIFT. "



### At A Glance

Back for Version 2, the Liquid Force Wow has undergone some upgrades with its construction and performance. We now see the addition of the excellent Challenge Triple Ripstop in the canopy. Not only is this super strong, but it will also increase the longevity of the kite and keep that oh so sweet crispy feeling that much longer!

The kite itself stays the same with three struts and a simple bridle system. There are many attachment points on the kite to really adjust things to suit your own personal style and preference. Still primarily a wave kite, the Wow V2 also lends itself well to a classic freeride kite with excellent upwind ability due to the skinny Leading Edge, direct back line attachments for quick loops, and a relatively low aspect ratio for grunty power across the wind window.

Liquid Forces large 'Max Flow' inflation system is present for speedy inflation and deflation, along with protective EVA scuff pads on key areas along the leading edge should you have to self-launch on a rough surface.

TO VISIT THEIR  
WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)



BRAND NAISH MODEL BOXER SIZE 8M YEAR 2017



"THE BOXER IS BACK AND IT IS ON FORM!"

TO VISIT THEIR WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



### At A Glance

The Boxer may be a name you remember from the Naish range, the original C-shape Boxer or the Boxer SLE. Well, forget all previous versions, the 2017 Boxer is here, hugely revamped and updated.

Targeting the freeride and foiling disciplines for 2017 the Boxer is a single strut compact C shape design with swept tips. The characteristics should give the Boxer a forgiving yet precise feel through the bar. Heading down the foiling route, Naish have spent some time working on the profile of this kite, which evolves across the canopy to deliver the light wind stability.

Naish have been jamming a lot of new technology and construction features into their kites this year, and we see these come across to the Boxer. Quad-Tex quadruple ripstop makes this kite bomb-proof, the Shark Teeth feature on the trailing edge reduces flutter while keeping weight down, Easy Access Zippers on the Octopus system make bladder repairs a doddle, Moulded TE reinforcements and Bumpers also keep the kite protected when moving it on the beach.

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" PERFECT FOR THOSE WHO LIKE TO STYLE IT OUT... "



**BRAND** CABRINHA    **MODEL** TRONIC  
**SIZE** 145X43CM    **YEAR** 2017

#### AT A GLANCE

The Cabrinha Tronic has been around for several years now, Cabrinha's freeride and big air board has always been a big hit. For 2017 the Tronic has a rounded outline, being wider in the centre with very narrow swept in tips. This outline gives the Tronic its renowned feel, very flowing when carving in the waves and riding in chop.

TO VISIT THEIR WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



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" THE 2017 GIRLS BOARD WILL PROVE WHY IT IS USED ON THE WORLD TOUR "



**BRAND** CRAZY FLY    **MODEL** GIRLS  
**SIZE** 135X41CM    **YEAR** 2017

#### AT A GLANCE

A mainstay of Crazyfly's line up, the Girls board has been included for many years now. For 2017 the Girls board has had a complete redesign and is now a much higher performance bit of kit, keeping in trend with the advancement of women's kiteboarding.

Starting with the base of the board, and this year we see Crazyfly's Multi-Channel Bottom, which are two separate channels running along the length of the

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"THE MOON PATROL LEFT US GRINNING FROM EAR TO EAR. IT IS JUST EXTREMELY GOOD FUN"



**BRAND** LIQUID FORCE    **MODEL** MOON PATROL  
**SIZE** 146CM    **YEAR** 2017

#### AT A GLANCE

Liquid Force have dug deep with this one and engineered a board with links to twin tips, surfboards, mutants, snowboards, and everything in between. A truly new shape, the Moon Patrol has been designed to allow you to enjoy every surface of water you may encounter.

Taking technology from their already established boards, Liquid Force have been able to pick and

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"IT'S EVERYTHING YOU WANT FROM A BEGINNER TO INTERMEDIATE BOARD."



**BRAND** NOBILE    **MODEL** NBL  
**SIZE** 138X40.5CM    **YEAR** 2017

#### AT A GLANCE

When you first begin your kiteboarding journey, you need a board that will help you along the way during those early stages. You also need a board that will let you progress at a reasonable pace and not hold you back further down the line. The NBL from Nobile sets out to be exactly that board. It's pitched at an affordable price point, yet still, packs in some cool technology such as their Click'N'Go system as well as

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" PERFECT FOR RIDING STRAPLESS, CRUISING THE COASTLINE OR SHREDDING WAVES! "



### At A Glance

The Italian brand Moses has gone from strength to strength. It's great to see a company that is so actively involved with our sport and really helping to push foiling, especially in the UK. You'll find Moses at most of the UK's events allowing you to see the boards and demo them, which we highly recommend!

The Fluente is their wave/freeride foil; it's designed to get going at low speeds and allow control in turns while still delivering a decent top speed of over 20 knots! We used the T-40 board during our test. It is worth noting though, the foil is compatible with the entire Moses range of boards and uses the prominent four bolt connection system and can be used with any twin track or four bolt board.

It's always incredibly satisfying unboxing shiny test gear to use, and the Fluente is no different. Something we enjoy less is putting it all together, Moses have exceeded themselves here by providing detailed instruction on how to assemble the foil. There are also tips showing where to mount the footstraps and the fuselage to the board. We find this

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SAVORING EACH MOMENT IN PUNTA GALLINAS  
PHOTO DEVIN KUH



WORDS LINDSAY MCCLURE

# MAGICAL REALISM IN COLOMBIA

## A TRAVELLERS GUIDE

While breezing through the homeland of Gabriel Garcia Marquez, the grandfather of Magical Realism, the World Class Kiteboard Academy found bits of unreality emerging out of the Colombian landscape.





SEAN KARAM SENDS A FREESTYLE SESSION IN SANTA VERONICA  
PHOTO BLAINE BAKER



**“ AS TEACHERS, WE HAVE THE FLEXIBILITY TO ADAPT OUR LESSONS BASED ON OUR LOCATION. ”**

Traveling with World Class Kiteboard Academy is different than the average kiteboarding vacation. We wake up as early as 6 am, workout, hammer through a day of school, then head to the beach. When we arrive at the beach, we don't go unnoticed. In Colombia, we rented a commercial bus with a driver. We burst out of our bus every afternoon, looking like a rag-tag regional soccer squad. Fifteen minutes later, twenty-plus rippers would be in a rehearsed circuit, throwing tricks and cheering each other on. The mission of the World Class Kiteboard Academy is to provide a college-preparatory education and athletic training opportunities for the world's top junior kiteboarders, with a focus on global travel and cultural emersion.

Monday through Friday, we dedicate six hours a day to high school classes. Just like any other high school, we teach math, science, history, literature, language, and technology classes. As teachers, we have the flexibility to adapt our lessons based on our location. For example, the History of the Americas class studied Colombia's bloody past and the hard-won peace deal between the FARC, Colombia's infamous Marxist guerrilla group, and the Colombian government that was signed weeks before our arrival in Colombia. Our neighbor in Santa Verónica shared her family's deadly saga with the FARC in an impromptu lecture that combined history and Spanish. The Economics class examined the factors that are bringing opportunistic Venezuelans across the border into La Guajira, Colombia, hawking plastic soda bottles full of cheap Venezuelan gasoline.





**“ IT’S A DESTINATION WHERE THE SPORT STILL FEELS YOUNG AND RAW. THE KITE SPOTS ARE STILL RELATIVELY EMPTY AND UNKNOWN. ”**

In the Literature of the Americas class that I teach, our focus was on the style of magical realism exemplified by Colombian author Gabriel Garcia Marquez. Magical realism is a genre born out of a simple world where people are content to explain unusual occurrences as products of magic. Although most of the students at WCKA were adamant that magic doesn't exist, their

perspective changed as soon as we started talking about once-in-a-lifetime kite sessions. These magical experiences usually presented themselves in the form of heaven-like flat water spots. Colombia is no Brazil in this respect; world-famous mirror-flat lagoons don't dot the coastline. But, at nearly every beach we visited, locals would watch us ride and then approach us to tell us that, if we followed their instructions they could direct us to a perfect piece of flat water, usually just around that corner or across the bay. Pursuing these pots of gold made for some of our most memorable sessions.

As we planned our trip to Colombia, there was no slider park or Red Bull contest to center our plans around. In Colombia, we were digging for treasure. Sometimes we were rewarded by the journey, sometimes we were rewarded by the destination, and sometimes we had to go to bed at the end of the day without a reward.

Colombia, as a kiteboarding destination, is a bit like the Wild West. It's a destination where the sport still feels young and raw. The kite spots are still relatively empty and unknown. Love of the sport supersedes all other aspects of the sport. Kiteboarders in Colombia certainly don't ride because of the scene, because a kiteboarding scene there is nearly non-existent -





which isn't due to lack of wind. It could be a lack of publicity or a reputation of danger that has kept kites from visiting Colombia en masse.

WCKA arrived in Cartagena, Colombia after spending two weeks across the border, in Punta Chame, Panama. Cartagena, the oldest city in South America, is a charming, Afro-Colombian city that is steeped in layers of history. The colonial downtown is bound by hefty brick walls built to protect the city at the end of the 16th century. Fanning out from downtown are rough neighborhoods and rugged favelas. Cartagena's most popular kite launch, La Boquilla, is situated in a busy, beachy suburb. Every afternoon, locals come pouring from the streets onto the beach.

**“ FANNING OUT FROM DOWNTOWN ARE ROUGH NEIGHBORHOODS AND RUGGED FAVELAS. ”**



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BLAINE BAKER TUCKS IN  
PHOTO LINDSAY MCCLURE



**“ WE WERE READY TO CHASE THE STRONG WIND  
THAT LOCALS KEPT PROMISING WE WOULD FIND ”**

Pop-up beach parties, pickup soccer games, constant moto traffic, and hustlers selling their wares leave La Boquilla feeling more like the inner city than a tranquil beach. Crossing the frontier between the beach to the water changes everything. The kite scene on the water was quiet and uncrowded. We were in Cartagena for one week and experienced 13 or 9 meter conditions, with side shore wind and knee to chest high waves.

After a week of gentle wind, we were ready to chase the strong wind that locals kept promising we would find if we headed north. Our next stop was the quiet town of Santa Veronica. In Santa Veronica, we alternated between two launches: Salinas Del Rey and Puerto Velero. Salinas Del Rey is a wave spot with little peelers coming off an upwind point, wrapping through a small bay. Puerto Velero is a small strip of land with flat water on one side and waves on the other. The flat water spot is produced by offshore wind, which makes the conditions slightly gusty. The wave spot features a beach break with varying wave height, depending on the wind and the swell. We rode 13m, 12m, 9m, and 7m during the week we spent in Santa Veronica.

One of our mystical, Colombian sessions took place at Puerto Velero. Following some local info, a few members of the WCKA team pursued a flatter flat water spot that was rumored to have steadier wind. We were told that, just a little out of view, around the corner and beyond the marina,



**“ THE SUN DROPPED LOWER OVER THE OCEAN AND THE WATER STARTED TO GLOW IN SHADES OF YELLOW AND ORANGE. ”**

we would find a freestyle utopia. Just how far around the bend or how heaven-like the conditions would be were questions we didn't have answers to. When asked about how far downwind we would need to travel, and how far back upwind we would have to return, the answers we received were vague: “Not too far. It's easy!”

Following a treasure map that was drawn in the sand, we decided to check it out. We started downwind, went around the inflatable aqua fun park, past the marina, and we kept careening downwind until we found a cove protected by a thin strip of land that blocked the chop while allowing steady wind to fill our kites. The water near the shore was as flat as any Brazilian lagoon, and we were the only kites there. As we enjoyed our little slice of magic, the sun dropped lower over the ocean and the water started to glow in shades of yellow and orange. Little schools of flying fish launched through the air in sync. Local fisherman paused on the shore with looks of curiosity as we savored our session.

The trip back upwind was work, but it was also an opportunity to tour the remote shoreline of the little bay. Hundreds of palapa huts lined the shore, and behind them a lush, tangled jungle extended up the mountainside as far as the eye could see. We arrived back at our bus after a giant, red sun had already fallen below the horizon. And our friends and classmates were treated to stories that started with: “You should have been there!” and, “You'll never believe...”

LINDSAY MCCLURE FINDS HER PERSONAL UTOPIA  
PHOTO BLAINE BAKER





YOUNG AND FEARLESS COLOMBIAN LOCALS  
PHOTO LINDSAY MCCLURE



In Cartagena, we found Colombian culture and in Santa Veronica we found consistent wind, but we wanted more. So, after two weeks in Colombia, we loaded up our bus again, looking for somewhere that had it all. Google Maps told us that we could make it from Santa Veronica to Cabo de la Vela in eight hours. However, mechanical issues, exhaustingly long meals, slow-moving mandatory police escorts through notoriously dangerous stretches of highway and other surprises nearly doubled our expected travel time. Along with the unexpected delays, we were also seduced into spending some time in Uribia and Palomino, in the heart of indigenous Colombia.

**“ WE LOADED UP OUR BUS AGAIN, LOOKING FOR SOMEWHERE THAT HAD IT ALL. ”**

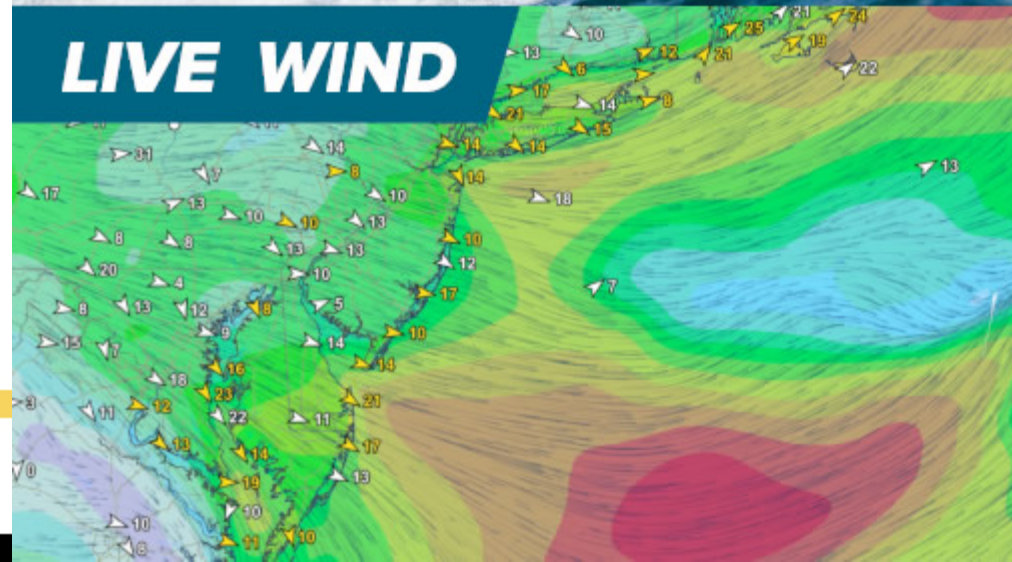


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## “ LOCAL KITERS RODE WITH LOADS OF POWER AND PRECISION, BUZZING AROUND EACH OTHER ”

Uribia is a busy commerce center where members of the semi-nomadic Kogi tribe brush with contemporary society. Palomino, a backpackers haven that feels like the setting of Jungle Book, sits at the base of the dramatic Sierra Madre de Santa Marta mountain range.

Finally, we arrived in dusty, sweaty Cabo de la Vela. The town, two rows of wooden huts

at the end of a beat up, dirt road, is three hours beyond major settlements and paved roads. The only power in Cabo de la Vela was supplied by generators that ran for limited periods of time each day. Wifi was a foreign concept and a weak cell connection from the local carrier, Claro, came and went. Cell phones and computers became passé, and connecting with people face-to-face came back into vogue. While the town was lacking infrastructure, it certainly wasn't lacking wind. The WCKA teenagers rode on 4, 7, 8, or 9 meter kites most days. The locals in Cabo de la Vela, members of the Wayuu

indigenous tribe, are a creative, resilient people who have survived centuries in barren, far-north Colombia. Like the cacti that survive in the desert, the Wayuus had a tough exterior, but they were full of life at their core. Local kites rode with loads of power and precision, buzzing around each other in an impressive circus act. Locals as young as eight were hidden in gear many sizes too big. Not hindered by their ill-fitting gear, they spent every afternoon throwing huge, unhooked tricks and fearless kiteloops. The camaraderie between the WCKA team and the locals made the energy on the water hyper-competitive. The WCKA team saddled up and adjusted to the powerful, gusty conditions.



“OUR HARD DRIVES ARE FULL OF FOOTAGE, AND THE LESSONS WE LEARNED ABOUT THIS MAGICAL COUNTRY WON'T SOON FADE AWAY.”

BLAINE BAKER, FUELED BY AREPAS AND FRIED PLANTAINS  
PHOTO LINDSAY MCCLURE

We learned new tricks from the Wayuus, and they quickly picked up tricks from us. The week and a half that we spent in Cabo de la Vela was the cherry on top of our sweet month in Colombia.

One of the most interesting aspects of kiteboarding is that nothing is guaranteed. Even the biggest kites need a breath of wind to fly. Straying from bread-and-butter kiteboarding destinations can be a risky call, especially when traveling with 16 opinionated teenagers. Luckily, in this case, we came home with more than just a suitcase full of sand. Our minds are full of memories, our hard drives are full of footage, and the lessons we learned about this magical country won't soon fade away.

### THE KEYS TO COLOMBIA:

#### Food

The traditional Colombian breakfast consists of eggs and arepas, which are fried discs of cornmeal. Don't miss out on the classic, bandeja paisa, a mountain of traditional ingredients and flavors, often eaten for lunch or dinner in many parts of Colombia. The bandeja paisa generally consists of red beans, coconut rice, ripe plantain, arepa, ground beef, sausage, chicharron, avocado, salsa and a fried egg. Expect your lunch to be served with a piping hot, sancocho, which is a soup with either meat and fish in a broth with corn, yuca, and potatoes.







### Lodging

In Cabo de la Vela, check out Hospedaje Jarrinapi, one of the nicest accommodations in town. In Santa Verónica, Casa Agua Vela is a hostel run by a super helpful French kiter, Romain and his Colombian wife, Zaira. This small accommodation is situated on a steep cliff overlooking the ocean. In Cartagena, Nativo Kite School + Posada Kalea is one option that combines a small hotel, restaurant, and kite school directly on the beach.

### Getting There

Bogotá will likely be your first stop in Colombia, whether you're coming from North America or Europe. From Bogotá, Avianca,

16-YEAR-OLD VETEA BOERSMA  
SPOTS HIS LANDING  
PHOTO LINDSAY MCCLURE

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ACCOMMODATION IS  
SITUATED ON A STEEP  
CLIFF OVERLOOKING  
THE OCEAN. ”

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BLAINE BAKER TRIES TO EVADE THE COLOMBIAN HEAT  
PHOTO LINDSAY MCCLURE

**“ TRAVELERS WHO EXERCISE A REASONABLE LEVEL OF CAUTION WILL FIND THE COUNTRY WARM AND WELCOMING. ”**

LATAM or Copa will likely take you to your final destination: Santa Marta or Cartagena. If you're planning on staying in Cartagena, you could manage without a rental car, but if you're heading to Santa Veronica or Cabo de la Vela, a rental car will help you get there. Be aware, if you're heading to Cabo de la Vela, the access road is long and unpaved. If you reach Cabo de la Vela and want to venture further, find a 4x4 outfit to take you out to Punta Gallinas.

### **Safety**

Colombia has a long history of violence, and travelers need to be smart. However, travelers who exercise a reasonable level of caution will find the country warm and welcoming. When shopping, it isn't uncommon for tourists to be short-changed, so agree on a price before making a purchase and then count your change in front of the merchant. With an exchange rate of roughly \$3150 Colombian Pesos (COP) to €1, be ready to deal with some big numbers.

### **Weather**

The best season for wind is December through April. The wind in Cabo de la Vela and Punta Gallinas can be 25 knots or more. In Cartagena and Santa Veronica, expect strong to moderate wind during the season. The air and water temperatures in Northern Colombian coast are hot to the point of being uncomfortable, so be ready.



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# MOVIE NIGHT

## #1 NICK JACOBSEN SENDS IT OFF A 210M HIGH HOTEL IN DUBAI

Don't miss this amazing footage of Nick Jacobsen sending it off the Burj Al Arab hotel in Dubai. Whatever is next for crazy Nick? Do not try this at home, although most of you don't live in Dubai so at least we are sort of safe!

## #2 KITESURFERS VS. FOOTBALLERS

The classic, tough man kitesurfer vs footballer edit. Who wins? I think we know the answer already. Footballers wiggling around on the pitch paired with classic kite moments gone wrong - an edit you won't want to miss.

## #3 CRAZY KITESURF KID

This youngster has some mad tricks on his homemade kiteboard rig! What a great way to get them started early. Is he a freestyle superstar in the making? What is the next generation capable of? Monkey-kid has grace and style. Up next: handle passes.

## #4 DIESEL - ONLY THE BRAVE HIGH

Nick Jacobsen, with a routine jump from the roof of a hotel, at night, in the middle of a city...all for a perfume ad! Nothing seems to be too daunting for Mr. Big Air. Don't miss this quick send. And remember; leave these stunts to the professionals!



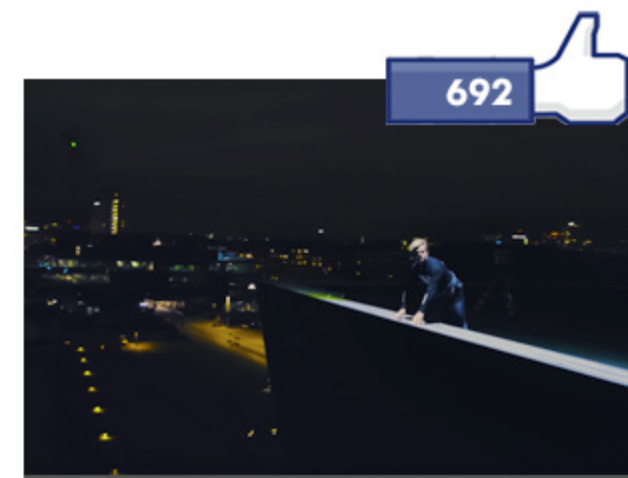
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LIGHTROOM

DAVID TONIQUAN MAKING THE MOST OF THE GOLDEN HOUR!  
PHOTO TÉ PINHEIRO PHOTOGRAPHY



*Lightroom*

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



LIGHTROOM



*Lightroom*

GIANMARIA COCCOLUTO GETTING WILD IN LO STAGNONE, SICILY!  
PHOTO LACI KOBULSKY

IKSURFMAG.COM



LIGHTROOM

ALI BARRETT SHREDDING THE CRYSTAL WATERS OF KENYA!  
PHOTO ROBERT HAJDUK - SHUTTERSAIL.COM

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FLYING HIGH ON THE NOBILE INFINITY FOIL SPLITBOARD!  
PHOTO ZBIGNIEW SZARZYNSKI



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LIGHTROOM

LUKE MCGILLEWIE RIPPING UP SOME SOUTH AFRICAN SWELLS...  
PHOTO ROGIER JAARMA

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LIGHTROOM

SET TEIXEIRA THROWING SOME SHAPES!  
PHOTO TÉ PINHEIRO PHOTOGRAPHY

*Lightroom*





*Lightroom*



LIGHTROOM

GUY HARARI TAKING ON THE AWESOME POWER OF MOTHER NATURE  
PHOTO URI MAGNUS

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MATTHIAS LARSEN CHUCKING BUCKETS IN SOUTH AFRICA...  
PHOTO GOPRO

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LIGHTROOM

KUBA JURAS HITTING THE CRITICAL SECTION IN FUERTEVENTURA I  
PHOTO NOBILE



*Lightroom*



LIGHTROOM

WE LOVE THE TRAILS THAT GIANMARIA COCCOLUTO IS LEAVING  
THROUGH THE SKIES IN THIS SHOT FROM SICILY.  
PHOTO LACI KOBULSKY

*Lightroom*



LIGHTROOM

NICOLAS DELMAS KEEPING EVERYTHING LOW ON THE LAGOON IN DAKHLA, MOROCCO!  
PHOTO F-ONE



*Lightroom*



LIGHTROOM

ALI BARRETT GOING NUCLEAR IN KENYA DURING THE SHINN PHOTOSHOOT!  
PHOTO ROBERT HAJDUK - SHUTTERSAIL.COM

*Lightroom*





*Lightroom*



LIGHTROOM

BAS KOOLE TWEAKING THINGS OUT BENEATH THE MOUNTAINS...  
PHOTO PETER LAMBERT

*Lightroom*



LIGHTROOM

RYLAND BLAKENEY UNHOOKED IN INDO I  
PHOTO JASON WOLCOTT

*Lightroom*

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[FEMALE FOCUS]

# ANNABEL VAN WESTEROP

WORDS LINDSAY MCCLURE PHOTO JOHNATHAN BAENA



Annabel is a shredder from the stunning island of Aruba; she has been kiting since she was fourteen and recently placed 2nd at the WKL event in France, missing out on the podium spot by less than a point! Lindsay McClure decided it was high time for a catch up!





**Hi Annabel! You're off to an impressive start in the World Kiteboarding League Elite League, currently sitting in second place. How did the event in Leucate, France go?**

Thank you! Yes, France was an unbelievable start of the year for me. I was quite nervous about it as I felt like I might not have had as much winter training as the rest of the competitors due to my studies at the University. The first heat was a rough start, but after that I picked it up and made it all the way to a 2nd place, losing by 0.53. I've never come so close to the top spot and am more motivated than ever!

**What are your goals for this season, both in competitions and outside of competitions?**

Of course World Champion is always on your mind, but first, I would love more than anything to make my first top podium place. Outside of competition I just want to enjoy. Enjoy this beautiful life we're given by combining all the things I am so happy to do, like kiting, getting an education, and practising yoga.

**How did you get started in kiteboarding, and what attracted you to the sport?**

When I was 13 years old, my dad got into the sport, and so my family and I started to visit the beach more often. I picked up windsurfing, as the kite school wanted kids to be at least 15 to kite. However, watching my dad and the other kites flying through the air, I knew that that was what I wanted. The possibilities and freedom that kiteboarding offered was what attracted me most.







“ I BELIEVE THAT EVERYTHING COMES ALONG YOUR PATH FOR A REASON AND AT THE RIGHT TIME. ”

So after lots of asking, when I was 14, the school made an exception, and so I became a kiteboarder. Being the competitive person that I am, a hobby soon became more as I started to compete in local competitions in Aruba and Venezuela. When I finished high school, I was offered an international contract by a sponsor and immediately began my career as a pro kiteboarder.

**Tell us a bit about your life growing up on Aruba, was it as perfect as it seems it would be?**

Aruba is a beautiful place to grow up, as the island is so warm and welcoming. I was 11 when I moved there, and I'm not going to lie about how hard it

was to pack up and leave everything in the Netherlands behind. However, I did become happy there very quickly, and the most beautiful thing is that kids can stay young and carefree a lot longer. We are not called the “one happy island” for nothing. I'm glad to call the island my home, and when you are a kiteboarder, it might be stated as being “perfect”!

**You just finished your first year at university; how do you balance studying with kiting, what are you studying, and what are your plans for after school?**

Indeed, I just finished my freshman year at the

University of Aruba. I am studying Hospitality and Tourism Management, which is a three-year course, so I have two more to go! Being a full-time yogi beside everything I do, I believe that everything comes along your path for a reason and at the right time. Leaving Cabrinha late 2015 created quite an opening in my schedule and gave me time to think about my next steps. I had been travelling full-time as a pro kiteboarder for four years and felt like it was time for a change. First I took a Yoga Teacher Training course becoming officially certified. After that, I thought about what was next, and before I knew it, I had signed up at the University of Aruba. I felt the need to get an education as a backup for the future,





PHOTO JONATHAN BAENA

but also to get an education and gain knowledge and skills. They have been incredibly supportive to help make the balance as easy as possible, which means that I can leave for competition whenever necessary and they give me a hand to stay on top of my studies at all times.

**How have your sponsors, including Core Kiteboarding, helped you achieve your goals?**

At the moment have three sponsors, FX Sports Aruba, NP Surf, and Saba Rock Resort. FX Sports is the local kite shop in Aruba that sells multiple brands, and they have been supporting me for over a year now by supplying me with Core gear. They gave me the freedom I needed to figure out my next steps and to balance my studies with kiting. NP Surf, of course, supplies me with the best wetsuits and harnesses.

“ THEY GAVE ME THE FREEDOM I NEEDED TO FIGURE OUT MY NEXT STEPS ”



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" IT DOES MAKE ME APPRECIATE IT MORE  
WHEN I'M ON THE WATER WITH PEOPLE THAT  
ARE PRACTISING SOME DECENT TRICKS "



PHOTO SVETLANA ROMANTSOVA

And finally, Saba Rock Resort is a tiny island and hotel in the British Virgin Islands and hands down one of the nicest places ever. They have been supporting me for five years now and always stand behind me with everything I do, which I'm incredibly grateful for.

I am also a brand ambassador for Drika bikinis and the charity organisation Stichting Clear Water Initiative.

**Who are your favourite people to train with, and how do you stay motivated to train your hardest every day?**

I love training with anyone that enjoys being on the water and preferably shouting motivating comments at each other while laughing at the good crashes. Throughout the years I didn't have much competition on Aruba as I was one of the very few freestylers, so I don't mind training alone. It does make me appreciate it more when I'm on the water with people that are practising some decent tricks as well. Brazil is always a fun time of the year where you meet a bunch of your competitors and other pros, and we all go out and shred together. As for off the water, my coach at Al Training Performance Center on Aruba pushes me to keep going and make my body as fit as possible for training on the water and the competitions.

**Describe your experience as a professional female kiter - what are the biggest challenges and the most significant advantages to being a female kiter?**

One of the greatest benefits is also one of the largest problems for women. Too often, it is all about appearances. The tinier the bikinis, the more media coverage, attention, photos, and eventually money, you'll get. But let's get real though.



"POSTING ONLY THE BEST SHOTS ON OUR SOCIAL MEDIA IS SIMPLY BRINGING FORTH THE AMAZING THINGS WE GET TO DO."



We all use it, and why shouldn't we? I've always found it crucial to stay myself, but everyone is free to define their promotion in their terms. Our jobs consist, to some degree, of making people believe it's perfect. Posting only the best shots on our social media is simply bringing forth the amazing things we get to do and see in our lives and making the very best of it.

Another major challenge is the fact that girls who kite are still not appreciated like the men are. We are heading in the right direction, and in some ways, it is fair that men get more attention, but we are shredding out there and risking our bodies just as much. On the other hand, I love that we can go out there and blow people's minds because we show the completely unexpected. Who would think

that that girl in the teeny tiny bikini can do a trick so complex and powerful that most people can't even understand it?

#### Who are your favourite riders? Who inspires you?

When I was 14 and just learning to kitesurf, I said with extreme confidence that I wanted to be just like Susi Mai, who was the female face of kiteboarding at the time. My motto over the years has been: "If you really believe, anything is possible". Just four years later, I stood next to her at the Cabrinha photoshoot, and another two years later I took over her place on the team. She is a good friend now and still inspires me for her passion for the sport next to many other top riders that inspire me to ride better and be stronger.



PHOTO SVETLANA ROMANTSOVA

There is one person that inspires me most on a daily basis. She passed away recently but has taught me more than anyone ever could have about love and gratitude.

#### What is the coolest opportunity you've had as a kiteboarder?

Late 2015 I was asked to come to Turkey for ten days for a video shoot. I wasn't entirely sure what the idea was until I arrived and fully realised it was the new commercial for Turkish Airlines and the Turkish Ministry of Tourism. There were over 40 people in the production team, including my very own personal assistant/translator. The video showed the beautiful, natural side of Turkey that most people don't know about, guiding the viewer to different locations through the wind and kiteboarding.



" I WOULD LIKE THE FUTURE GENERATIONS TO MAKE AN ACTUAL CAREER OUT OF THE SPORT. NOT RISKING EVERYTHING FOR NOTHING. "



An entire orchestra created the music, and I had the pleasure to be involved in the text behind the video and doing the actual voice-over in two languages. I ended up spending an entire three weeks in Turkey, and after I left, I still didn't understand the gravity of the commercial. A few months later it started sinking in when the video was played on TV, screens, and theatres worldwide, including Times Square, NYC, and won a total of 16 prizes. Home of Turquoise, as the video is called, will forever be one of the most memorable experiences of my life.

**What's the best advice you've ever received?**

Do what makes you happy.

**What progression and improvement would you like to see in the sport of kiteboarding in the next five years? Ten years?**

I would love for the World Kiteboarding League to grow to an internationally known and broadcasted event, setting kiteboarding on the map once again as an extreme sport that anyone can follow. Just like people that don't snowboard but watch all the major events, my hope is that people will find that entertainment in kiteboarding as well. Secondly, I would like the future generations to make an actual career out of the sport, not risking everything for nothing. And finally, I hope that kiteboarding becomes Olympic, even with foiling, as it will be a significant step for our sport!

**Thanks for taking the time to chat with us, Annabel!**



# 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 Jerome Loman. Well done Jerome, get in touch and we'll send you the t-shirt!

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



*Winner!* ★

Jerome Loman must really want that T-Shirt, I don't think there has ever been a more deserving Readers Gallery winner! We could look at this pic for hours and just imagine the horror!





Dor Zarka demonstrates why Eilat on the Red Sea in Israel is one of the best places for foiling.

Photos: Gonzalo Segura







▼  
SPLASH! This is what teamwork is all about. Kit Griffiths and Cameron Auld enjoy a session with World Class Kiteboard Academy at Balneario, Tarifa.

Photo: Devin Kuh



▼  
A blustery, spring session at a lake just west of the Dallas/Fort Worth metropolitan area in North Texas. The water is already getting warm, no wetsuit required!

Photo: Ralph Lauer







▼  
Flying the Jolly Roger last month in Cayo Coco, Cuba.  
Photo: Andrea Hardy.



▼  
World Class Kiteboard Academy athlete Juan Pablo Tron paints  
some spray mid backmobe 5.  
Photo: Devin Kuh







▼  
Nathan Bruneau has impressive skills on his directional board.  
Photo: Gunilla Imshaug



▼  
Nati Shabbat always shows style, both riding, jumping and in fashion.  
Photo: Gunilla Imshaug



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CATCHING THE LAST WAVES OF THE DAY SOMEWHERE IN CHILE...  
PHOTO FLYSURFER

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