

DECEMBER 20/JANUARY 21

WELCOME TO IKSURFMAG

With what might be the strangest year of our lives coming to a close, we're looking forward to a better and brighter 2021, with less COVID, less politics, and even more kiting! This issue is packed with features, including the story behind the latest MANERA film where Paul Serin and Maxime Chabloz made the most of what was close to home. Joshua Emanuel blows

our minds yet again with the sheer insanity of his quest for the infinity loop, Camille Delannoy ventures solo into the dunes of Brazil, and Aaron Hadlow talks us through his career - past, present, and future. As always, there's loads to learn in our technique, tests, and tech focus sections. Put your phone on silent, it's time to dive into IKSURFMAG!

ENJOY THE LATEST ISSUE



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- INFINITY LOOPS -

THE BIRTH OF A NEW GENERATION / AARON HADLOW
TECH FOCUS / TESTS / TECHNIQUE AND MUCH MORE INSIDE!

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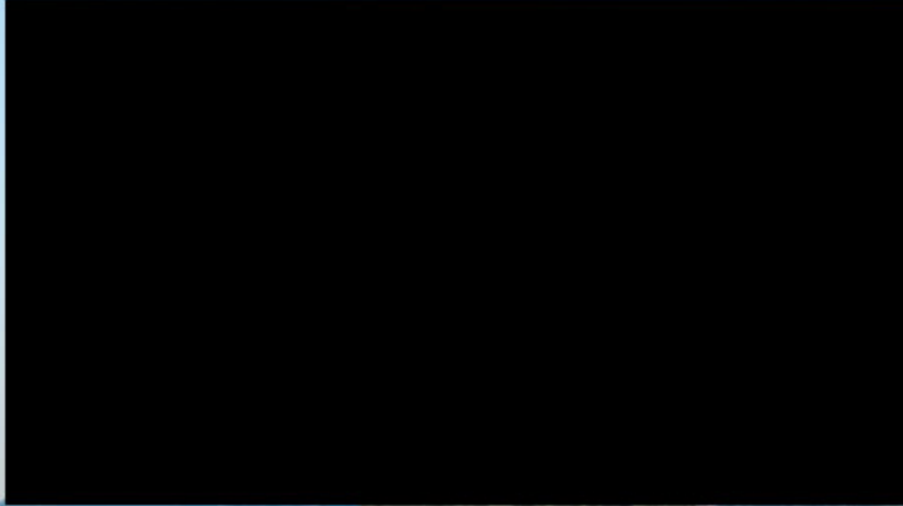
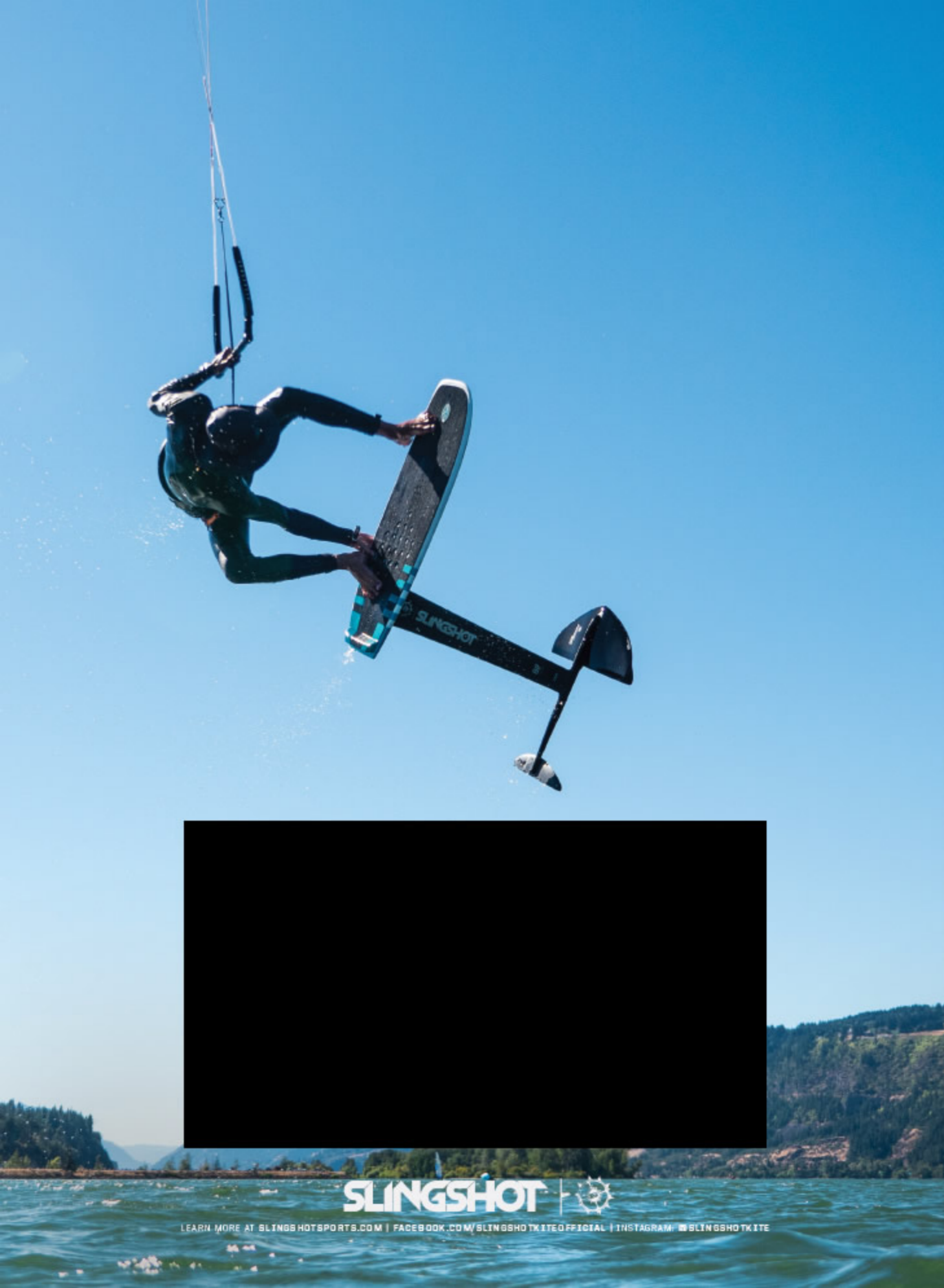
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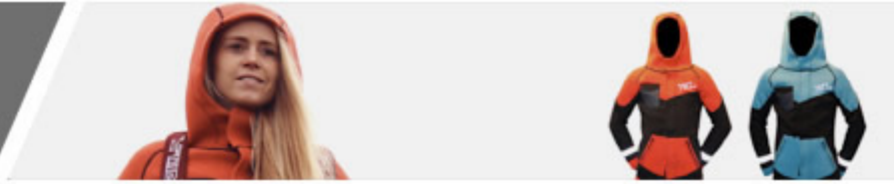


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SPEED | MANEUVERABILITY | RESPONSE
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RIDER LIAM WHALEY
PHOTO CHRISTOPHER POOLE





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We've teamed up with our friends over at 9 BFT to offer our subscribers this fantastic prize. It's especially apt as the mercury seems to be plummeting at the moment! The best way to keep warm as everyone knows is layering, yet as kites, we often just wear a wetsuit and wonder why we get cold.

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you are riding on the water and to keep you warm while setting up too! On top of that, the jacket features some bright colours and reflective strips, perfect if you get into trouble on a cold, miserable day in the water.

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Remember you've got to be in it to win it!

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ISSUE 84 What's The Big Secret?

It is with some sadness that I am writing this editorial. In the last few months, our sport has taken its toll on a few individuals, taken too soon, doing something they loved. I'd like to avoid the tired cliché if possible and ask a simple question. Why, when our sport is arguably safer than it has ever been, are more kitesurfers dying?

I have long held the view that while kitesurfing is the most incredible and addictive sport out there, it simply isn't worth dying for. Nothing really is. Last year in the UK there were sadly four deaths, this year, we have sadly seen deaths in the UK, Europe, the US and elsewhere too. It's a worryingly high number that only seems to get worse.

The overriding factor in most of these instances is that these were not inexperienced kites with no clue what was going on. These were seasoned riders with years and years of experience under their belt. These are the sort of people you don't expect to die while having a fun day at the beach. Surely this shouldn't be happening. What is going wrong?

If you look at other dangerous spots, backcountry snow sports, for example, they have bucked the trend of a rising death toll. More and more people venture off-piste than ever before, yet the number of deaths has not risen exponentially. As a keen backcountry snowboarder, I can safely say, I know why. It's a combination of equipment and education.

The safety gear when you head out into the wilderness in the mountains is second to none. Everyone should have, at minimum, a transceiver, probe and shovel. Preferably an airbag backpack too.



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LEWIS CRATHERN RIDING THE STORM
PHOTO EUNICE BERGIN

These tools can allow you to be found, find your friends and float on top of an avalanche should you end up in one.

The most effective tool though is education. The knowledge base around backcountry safety and avalanches is unprecedented. Driven by a desire to lower the death toll while still ensuring people can get out there and experience the wilderness, the sport is a beacon of example. Yes, there are always tragedies, and yes, sadly people die off-piste each year, but it's arguably safer than it has ever been, thanks to the tools and the education available.

With the right tools, proper education and plenty of planning before, and while out in the mountains, backcountry riding should be no more dangerous than a walk in the park. As you remove those tools, remove the knowledge and remove the planning, the danger level rises exponentially to a point where meeting your maker is pretty much assured with just Lady Luck there to prevent you from an early checkout.

Where does this leave kiting? Well, we have the tools, kites are safer now than they have ever been. Huge depower ranges, easy relaunch, they are even stable when left to their own devices at the edge of the window with no rider input. It's pretty incredible when you look back at the early days. We even have a recognised safety standard and release system now. The push away style release is a feature on all new kites for brands that have signed up to it.

That's pretty incredible when you think about it, brands coming together to recognise an internationally accepted release mechanism style and the parameters for it to meet. We have the gear. What we don't have sadly is education.



STIG HOEFNAGEL TAKING THINGS TO THE MAX IN HOLLAND
PHOTO THOMAS ROOS THE STOKE FARM

There is a gaping hole in the kite teaching system. You get your lessons, wobble your way to water start and off you go. Buy some gear, second hand on eBay of course, and you're on your way. Don't forget to take Lady Luck with you just in case. As the sport has progressed, education has stayed the same, a three-day course and you are good to go.

Where is the advanced wind and weather awareness course? Where is the information surrounding every accident being published and talked about so we can learn from it? Why are kite accidents shrouded in secrecy? Every avalanche that pops in the Alps is

documented EVERY SINGLE DAY. You can find out how and why the slope went, whether or not people were involved and how they were rescued if they needed it. This is invaluable information for everyone else thinking of heading into the mountains there next day when the snow conditions will likely be similar.

In kiting, we seem hell-bent on teaching people to ride along, selling them gear and sending them out into the ocean. When an accident happens, it gets hushed over and not talked about in public. What are we ashamed of? We shouldn't be judging the mistakes of others, but if we don't learn from them, where does this end?

When highly skilled and experienced riders are dying, what hope do the newcomers have? It feels like we are just dancing along a thin line, ignoring the glaringly obvious and hoping it will go away. Isn't it about time the GKA and national governing bodies came together to ensure that kites were made more aware of the potential dangers and how to avoid them? It would be time better spent than organising freestyle foil competitions if you ask me!

Shouldn't we have some serious, high-wind training for all these riders chasing Woo scores? Would you know what to do if your friend knocked themselves unconscious while riding? How would you help them? What is your get out plan when kiting alone at the beach and you break your leg? What happens when your kite gets ditched in a wave, and you get dragged underwater? When was the last time you risk assessed a session?

Every scenario you can possibly imagine has already happened in this sport, but the knowledge base is locked away and not available for you to use. It's time to be bigger and better about this sport we love and share the pitfalls and disasters so the rest of us can learn, reflect and avoid the same fate. We should be educating ourselves about these deaths and accidents, looking at how they can be avoided and sharing that with the rest of the community.

Structured education, along with knowledge sharing and the right equipment has to be the way forward. It is common practice in so many other sports and occupations. It needs to be happening in kiting too.

Rou Chater
Publishing Editor





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Above: Alexander Lewis-Hughes - Ewan Jaspán; Traverse Ewan Jaspán Pro Twin Tip Right: The Stoke Farm - Cohan Van Dijk; Monarch Twin Tip

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NAISH



WORDS CRYSTAL VENESS

Have you noticed some new faces at your local kite spot? Newly hatched beginner kites, old school riders with some extra time on their hands, or just your average, every day kiteboarder who finally gave up on the idea of a tropical kiting vacation and pulled out their winter wetsuit... the kiting community as we know it is changing. How do we evolve along with the arrival of this new generation?

2020:

THE BIRTH OF A NEW GENERATION

A SUMMER AT HOME MEANT JACK RIEDER GOT TO ENJOY THE COLD-WATER PLAYGROUND OF CANADA WITHOUT THE CROWDS
PHOTO CHRIS ROLLETT

RIDER LOUKA PITOT
PHOTO CHRISTOPHER POOLE



“ THEY’VE DUG OUT THEIR MOTHBALLED VINTAGE KITEBOARDING EQUIPMENT AND BROUGHT IT TO THE BEACH IN THE HOPES THAT IT WILL STILL BE FLIGHT-READY. ”

As we come to the end of this not-so-normal 2020, many of us are beginning to notice a suspicious increase in baby bumps popping up in our immediate vicinity. An upcoming generation of kitesurfers is undoubtedly on its way.

However, a more pressing matter is upon us: A new generation of adult aged kites has arrived on kite beaches around the world. In fact, many of you reading this might be a part of this freshly baked batch!

There are the fairweather kites who are finally desperate enough for a session that they’re ready to brave chilly winter weather and less than tropical conditions. There are bucket wearing beginners who may have just finished their lessons and are still getting a grasp of the right of way rules. Then there are the folks that have been a tad bit busy for the last year or ten that are now working from home. With all that free time on their hands, they’ve dug out their mothballed vintage kiteboarding equipment and brought it to the beach in the hopes that it will still be flight-ready.

For those that have been local spot regulars for the past several years, this influx of newly born (or reborn) kites “at my beach” can be overwhelming, and potentially even a bit irritating. There are undoubtedly upsides and downsides to this growing population. When your local beach is at risk of closing because there have been too many dangerous incidents in past months, or you can’t take off for a jump because someone is body-dragging through the landing zone, it’s hard to stay positive.



LUKE MCGILLEWIE SHOWING SOUTH AFRICA'S LOCAL BIRD POPULATION HIS NEW FLYSURFER GEAR WITH ROBBEN ISLAND IN THE BACKGROUND
PHOTO CRYSTAL VENESS

“ THE WIND IN YOUR HAIR, AND THAT INTOXICATING AND ADDICTIVE FEELING OF PROGRESSION. ”

Is there really an upside? If you're one of the new arrivals, abso-bloody-lutely!! You're experiencing the thrills of kiteboarding, the wind in your hair, and that intoxicating and addictive feeling of progression. You're joining a community that will soon become your family.

If you're an 'OG' kiter, it can be harder to see that silver lining. We can't look past the

benefits of growth in the industry. Many brands, shops, schools, and kiting-adjacent business owners are seeing a marked boost in business, even in a year where uncertainty has prevailed. While it can lead to some crowded water and some kooky behaviour, the unseen benefits of growth in the industry may one day trickle down to us. It may manifest as increased global recognition of our sport, faster technical advancements in gear, or the mythical drop in prices for new kiteboarding equipment. At the very least, there will finally be more people out there to

purchase our used kit so we can treat ourselves to some shiny, crispy new gear.

For those that are a little irked by the crowds, may I suggest taking a trip down memory lane to your early days of kiteboarding?

Do you remember the first time you flew a kite? Not a colourful, quadrilateral single line toy, but a two-line or four-line machine with a surprising amount of power. Do you remember that nervous feeling when you were passed the control bar for the first time, and somehow expected to know what to do with it? For some of us, steering a kite was instinctual. For others, keeping the kite in the air was an endless battle.



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“ THE MOMENT WHEN MY CONFIDENCE SURPASSED MY ABILITY IS STILL FRESH IN MY MIND. IT WAS THE FIRST OF MANY, MANY SUCH OCCASIONS, UNFORTUNATELY.”

I remember the 2-metre trainer kite that I wrapped around the mast of a Hobie cat within the first few minutes of flying it. The quiet sigh from the instructor that would have to climb up to detangle it, probably for the hundredth time. When I'd levelled up to the 'big girl' kite, I felt like I had such finesse and control over that mighty, flying beast. I can still hear the glowing praise from the instructor who had said that I was a natural. In hindsight, he likely told all of his students that, but that pat on the back had filled me with excitement. Was it possible that I'd finally found a sport that I might actually be good at?

The moment when my confidence surpassed my ability is still fresh in my mind. It was the first of many, many such occasions, unfortunately. I had ended up going heels over head into a prickly bush after my kite had back stalled into the power zone, and I made a critical error when trying to recover it. Did I let go of the bar as soon as I hit the ground? No, I most certainly did not. Did I spend an hour in front of the mirror pulling thorns out of my shoulder afterwards? Why yes, yes I did.

Do you remember your first major kiteboarding mishap? Maybe you had that first false hook on the beach, having to release everything, completely clueless as to how it had gone so wrong. How about bobbing around with your kite in the water struggling to get it back up again? Surely we've all been stuck in deep water trying to remember how to self-rescue.

CRYSTAL VENESS LOOKING DOWN THE LINE AT THE WILD NATURAL COASTLINE IN VIANA DO CASTELO, PORTUGAL
PHOTO LUKE MCGILLEWIE



PABLO AMORES SENDING IT STRAPLESS IN
TARIFA, SPAIN.
PHOTO SAMUEL CARDENAS




“ THERE IS A MOMENT WHEN YOU NO LONGER FEEL THAT YOU ARE LEARNING TO KITE, BUT THAT YOU ARE A REAL, CARD-CARRYING, FULL-FLEDGED KITEBOARDER! ”

Perhaps you even decided it wasn't worth it, resigned to floating back to the beach with a hopelessly tangled bar. Perhaps I'm just describing more of my own (seemingly endless) mishaps.

If you're lucky, you are now at the stage where you can look back and laugh at your beginner blunders. Some of you reading today, however, are still in the midst of that very frustrating reality. Don't fear! There is a light at the end of the tunnel. We've all been there. There is a moment when you no longer feel that you are learning to kite, but that you are a real, card-carrying, full-fledged *kiteboarder!*

When I was still learning to kite, I spent some time in the Dominican Republic, thrilled by this incredible new sport and so very happy to be outside of cold, wintery Canada in favour of the tropical water and endless sandy beaches of Cabarete. I arrived with a lot of confidence and readiness to learn how to jump and finally stick that blasted backroll.

Looking back on those early days, I had unwittingly made my journey more difficult before it had even begun. Without kiting friends or a community to fall back on, I had purchased a kite that was too advanced for my level. A difficult kite combined with a much too small board made riding upwind a constant battle. Embarrassingly enough, I was also trying way too hard to do jumps and learn how to unhook - so I could sit at the cool kid's table - instead of building a strong foundation of basic riding skills.

THE FUTURE IS NOW 



1950



2021

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“ THERE WERE MANY BAD BEGINNER HABITS THAT I HADN'T WORKED MY WAY THROUGH YET. ”

Instead of becoming that totally badass kiteboarding chick that I was picturing in my mind, I stayed busy getting my steps in with a walk of shame every day for at least the first 30 days. I remember shedding a few tears of frustration amid one particularly long walk back upwind with heavy, wet, sandy gear. I felt like I was in the way all the time, and had gotten shouted at and flipped off by (yet another) kiter that I'd inadvertently upset. It could have been for one of many reasons, for there were many bad beginner habits that I hadn't worked my way through yet.

I was still taking a bit too long to set up my gear and sort myself out, which was not ideal on a crowded beach. I'd often be dropping my kite after a particularly heavy tumble trying to get out in big shore break.

RIDER HAYDEN JONAS
PHOTO KYLE CABANO





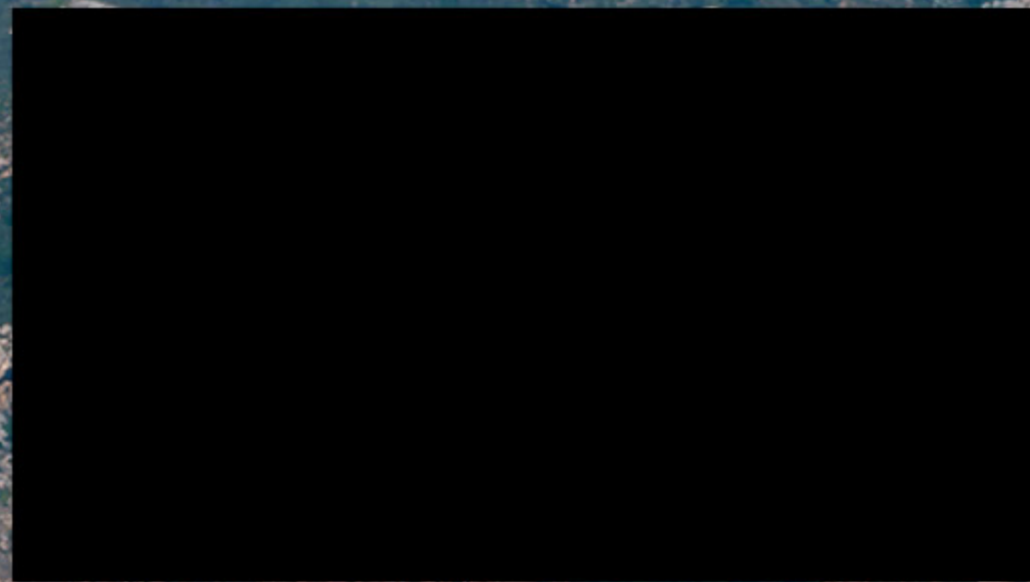
“ I’D HAVE HELP UNTANGLING MY LINES OVER A ROUND OF HAPPY HOUR DRINKS ”

I’ll even admit that I would sometimes forget to look over my shoulder before stopping or turning. When others came too close, I would panic and drop into the water with my kite at 12, even though that usually meant I was even more in the way of passing kites. This one earned me a fair share of stern words!

As grim as that part of my kiting life sometimes was, I won’t forget the kindness of the kitesurfing strangers. I had many a board rescue after one of my many yard sale wipeouts. There were several occasions when I’d have help untangling my lines over a round of happy hour drinks at the local kite club. I received some much-appreciated tips on all sorts of techniques, like how to trim my kite

properly, manage heavy shore break, and even how to adjust my stance to ride upwind better. What took only a minute out of someone else’s day became a game-changer for me!

For the frustrated kites out there, think back to how people treated you when you were still learning to fly. Were you ever intimidated by the confident, experienced crew that seemed to own the local spot? Put off by sour-faced surfers that looked the other way when you tapped your head for a landing?



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GOOD THING CAPTAIN ROBERT BROUGHT HIS FOILING EQUIPMENT ON BOARD SO HE
COULD SESSION IN THE WARM WATERS OF KLEIN CURAÇAO IN THE DUTCH CARIBBEAN
PHOTO JEROEN ROEVROS



**“ IT IS A GROWING AND HIGHLY
DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY, BUT IT’S ONE
WE’RE ALL FORTUNATE TO BE A PART OF. ”**

That looked on in amusement as you struggled with setting up your equipment and laughed as you floundered? I can only hope that you didn’t experience that, but I am almost certain that you’ve seen it happen. It’s even possible that we may have become those people in some ways, without realising that our last shreds of patience have been slowly slipping away.

If you’re one of that old guard of kiteboarders out there struggling to be nice to the new arrivals, may I suggest that you remember your own experience as a newborn kitesurfer? Choose kindness, and look for a chance to share your knowledge and provide support. You might save somebody’s session, or be that turning point in a new kiter’s journey.

To our new friends in this growing kiteboarding community, try not to worry about looking cool! Ask questions and be open to advice. Take your time and make safety a priority. Don’t miss out on the post-session beverage with your fellow kites - at a reasonable distance, of course!

This is what makes kitesurfing so special. We all love the wind and the water and don’t mind putting ourselves through the wringer to jump just a little bit higher or get just a few more minutes on the water before the sun sets. We are all part of a global family full of incredible people. It is a growing and highly dysfunctional family, but it’s one we’re all fortunate to be a part of. As they say, we’re all in this together.

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AARON HADLOW

WORDS JEN TYLER PHOTO TOBY BROMWICH

Winning five consecutive freestyle kiteboarding world championship titles and two successive King of the Air titles, Aaron Hadlow is undoubtedly the most well-known kiteboarder in the world with his innovative style and ridiculously consistent riding. In this feature, we find out what Aaron's been up to during this unpredictable year!



“ ON MISSIONS LIKE THESE, IT IS GOOD TO HAVE A SOLID CREW TO KITE WITH. ”

Aaron, thanks for joining us! You recently got back from a van trip with Sam Light, Lewis Crathern, and Tom Court. Can you tell us a little bit about the project? Was it challenging to find good kiteboarding spots around the UK to test Duotone's new equipment?

During these unsettled times, it has been quite a challenge to generate new content. At Duotone, we had to change our approach on how to get all the necessary shots and videos to carry on marketing the products. Earlier in the year, before the first lockdown, I was able to organise a small-scale shoot in Cape Town. Once the lockdown was lifted in the UK and the new Rebel was set to be released, Tom and I arranged to shoot some more.

We wanted to get on the road for a while, and our mission was to get some scenic shots en route to the West Country. Once a decent forecast popped up on the radar, we met up and hit the road with a loose plan to chase the wind. We decided on a few locations, including Durdle Door, followed by some deserted cruise ships that had anchored up due to the pandemic at a beach close by.

We timed it so that Gwithian, Cornwall would be our final stop, just in time for the storm. I love it there. It is where I grew up, and the beaches are great for both riding and shooting. As the forecast intensified, we made the call and let Lewis and Sam know we were heading down. On missions like these, it is good to have a solid crew to kite with.

In terms of finding good kite spots in the UK, I have always believed we are lucky with the options and unique locations available to us. Having travelled internationally for so long, I often find myself thinking about how lucky I am to have the UK as my home base.





There is a bit of everything, and this makes it great for many disciplines, shooting videos and pictures, and testing kites.

At only 14 and despite the cold, inconsistent, and gloomy training grounds of England's south coast, you were already competing at the highest level. The UK isn't exactly a world-renowned freestyle spot! What was it like training in the UK when you were first getting into kiteboarding, and how did the conditions affect your riding style?

That's very true, but the changeable conditions are what shaped me as a rider. I got to understand how to kiteboard in a variety of conditions. Every time I went out for a session, there were new challenges,

“ EVERY TIME I WENT OUT FOR A SESSION, THERE WERE NEW CHALLENGES ”

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82 cm when split
Next Generation Split Board
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Perfect Solution for Travellers

“ I HAVE ALWAYS TRIED TO PUSH THE BOUNDARY OR COME UP WITH NEW FORMATS AND CONCEPTS THROUGHOUT THE YEARS. ”



and this helped me massively when it came to competing. The more challenging spots on tour became comfortable for me, and the ideal places like Venezuela or Brazil allowed me to push my level, improve, and progress during competitions.

Over the years, you've released jaw-dropping kiteboarding movies. We've all watched them hundreds of times! Which was your most memorable film, and why?

The Andy Gordon films were incredible; I think the third one, Calibrate, was one of the best. I remember

the first one, Invent, the most though. It was completely unexpected! I was in Australia, and he came along on a demo tour for a couple of days around Western Australia. After that, I didn't hear much from him. About four months later, I had the movie in my inbox. I remember watching it for the first time with Ruben and a few mates. It blew our minds; we couldn't believe it! I rang him straight away to organise the next one!

Which film would you gladly make disappear?!

I don't have any movie regrets. I have always tried to

push the boundary or come up with new formats and concepts throughout the years. Of course, I look back at some things and cringe at myself; but it was so long ago.

If you could go back in time and relive one phase during your kiteboarding career, when would it be?

I would probably say around '06 - '07. I had just won my third title and was feeling on top of the world. My riding was on point, and I was fearless and learning and accomplishing so much, which for me is one of the greatest feelings.



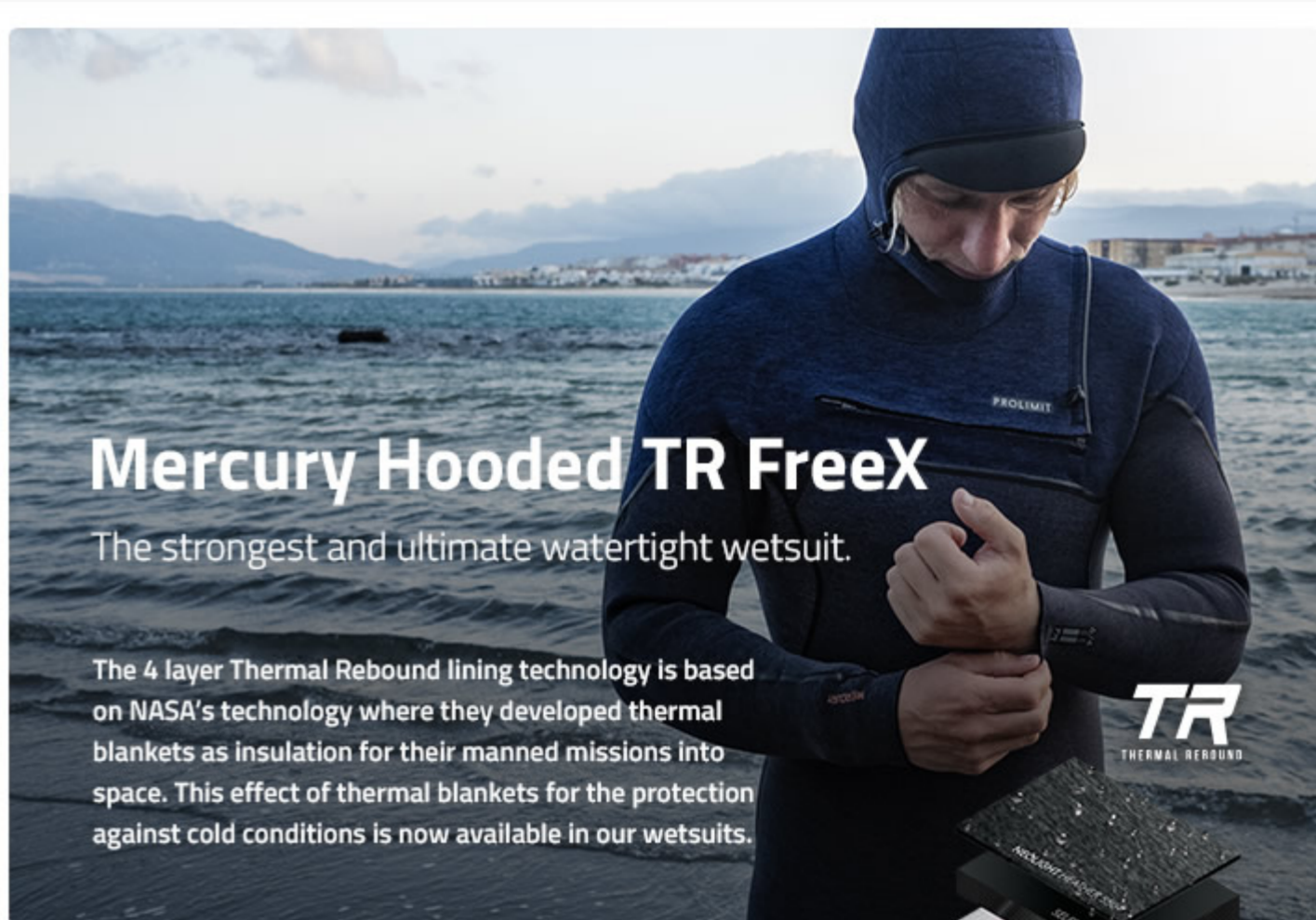
If you weren't a professional kiteboarder, what would you be doing instead?

It's hard to say, but I imagine I would still be a sportsperson of some sort. I was good at football, and I think that would have been the direction I would have taken if I wasn't exposed to extreme sports.

King of the Air 2021, do you see it happening with all the new COVID restrictions taking place worldwide?

As far as I am aware, they are trying their best to make it happen and still going ahead as planned, but you never know. Things are changing daily, and travelling is no longer the same. By the time this is read, anything could have happened, but I am hopeful to be out there competing in the new year.

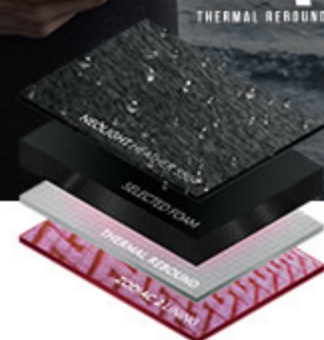
" I AM HOPEFUL TO BE OUT THERE COMPETING IN THE NEW YEAR. "



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Watching the next generation of pro kiteboarders, if you could give them one piece of advice that you wished you would have received at their age, what would it be?

Receiving advice is one thing; listening to it is another! I guess the advice I would give to a younger me is to listen and take note of more advice, but it is hard. I believe if the right person gives it at the right time and in the right way, it works, but for some things, you have to make your own mistakes and realise it for yourself.

In terms of the simple things that youngsters can take on board, a message I would give is to simply follow your dream no matter how impossible it may seem. If you love what you do, keep on at it and enjoy it as much as possible.

What role do you play in the R&D at Duotone?

I work closely with one of our designers, Ralf Grosel. He creates the Vegas, Dice, Evo and Juice. He played a massive part in bringing me to the team six years ago. We first worked together to bring out a new Vegas, then continued to develop that over the years. Over the last year or two, I wanted to understand other designs and kite models. Recently, we have worked much closer together and travelled on many test trips.

I would say my role is to adapt my feeling to technical design. This is something that Ralf is also really good at, but the combination is great. I have worked with designers for most of my career; it is natural for me to feel small details and understand how that translates to a design file. A lot of the work that we do later in the process, once we have the base design, is to implement set-up changes on bridles and pigtails to finely tune the kite to optimise its performance.

“ IF YOU LOVE WHAT YOU DO, KEEP ON AT IT AND ENJOY IT AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. ”



“ NEW MATERIALS ARE HUGE FOR THE INDUSTRY AND ARE BRINGING A NEW PERFORMANCE BENCHMARK. ”



Can you talk us through Duotone's 2021 line-up? What significant changes will we notice? What is your quiver of choice?

This year, we introduced the SLS concept, which is a new leading-edge material that is lighter and gives a stiffer frame. New materials are huge for the industry and are bringing a new performance benchmark. I know this sounds like a marketing spiel, but I genuinely believe in it after testing it first-hand. The biggest changes in the lineup will be the new Evo SLS and the Vegas, which have been redesigned to work

hand in hand with the new material. The weight and frame combine to give much more precise handling; the low end is better as well as the high end because of the consistency and stability of the frame.

I am lucky to have access to many kites, so one solid quiver is tough to organise due to the fact I love to ride across various disciplines. I have a freestyle quiver consisting of multiple Vegas, Hadlow Team Series, and boots; this is a must. A freeride/big air quiver is much more difficult to determine. I think this season it will look something like; 8m, 9m Dice and

10m, 12m Evo SLS combined with either a Select SLS or a Team Series with straps.

Can you tell us about ION's HADLOW Riot Harness?

I have been developing my signature harness with ION since I first joined the team. Every year, with new materials and technologies, we can improve it, and this year sees a great step forward. The concept has always stayed the same since day one. A hard shell (the stiffest in the range) with a comfortable mouldable insert to form around your back, combined with a slimline outline for maximum movement.

AIRUSH
KITEBOARDING

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MINI MONSTER



SLAYER



FOIL SKATE



TEAM FOIL



The idea is to evenly distribute the forces and pressure into your back and keep the sideways squeeze to a minimum. It is essential to me, as sometimes I am riding a 9m kite in 40 knots. This year, a new composite has been introduced into the harness. We can finely tune the stiffness and flex within the hard shell and keep the weight to a minimum. I understand that a single harness is not for everybody. A harness is particular to each person and their body shape, but I am pleased with the result, and I hope many others can enjoy it too.

Wind's on, who is the first person you call for a session?

It depends on the wind; if it's extreme, then I usually call Lewis. In heavy conditions, he is great to ride with. We always push each other to go bigger, but having that other person on the water who has an eye on you always helps. I am also really looking forward to seeing Ruben back on the water; it's been such a long time since we shared a session because of his injury. We have been riding together since we were 14 years old, and we still have the best time on the water together.

You recently bought a house on Hayling Island, how are the renovations going? Is it finished yet?

Haha no, I don't think it ever will be done! I love the location, but I learned it is pretty hard work. It is nice to make a place your own. I haven't had a solid base for most of my life. At the same time, I love to travel and be on the road. I'll stay focused on that for now.



" WE ALWAYS PUSH EACH OTHER TO GO BIGGER, BUT HAVING THAT OTHER PERSON ON THE WATER WHO HAS AN EYE ON YOU ALWAYS HELPS. "



" I STILL HAVE SO MUCH TO ACHIEVE; I CAN'T WAIT TO LEARN, PROGRESS, AND GROW MORE. "

What made you come back to the UK after all these years travelling to the world's best kitesurfing locations, what has the UK got that you can't find elsewhere?

I believe it is the home comforts and having a base that I can work from efficiently. I lived in a couple of other places and found it difficult to adjust and do what I want to do. When I was younger, I used the UK as a stopover, linking me to the next destination. As time went by, I got to realise what is available on my doorstep. I am lucky to be on the road as much as I can and enjoy the time that I am home.

Last year marked your 20-years-of-kiteboarding, and what a movie that was! What's next for Aaron Hadlow?

I still have so much to achieve; I can't wait to learn, progress, and grow more. There are a few projects in the pipeline, but also a few personal goals to accomplish in the next few years. I'm looking forward to when things open up again while making the most of what is available right now.

Thanks, Aaron! It's been a pleasure.

Thanks, Jen!



EXO 2.0

MADE TO BACK-UP
YOUR EVERY MOVE.



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WORDS PAUL SERIN PHOTO MATT GEORGES
RIDERS PAUL SERIN & MAXIME CHABLOZ

Every year, Manera releases a video from an other-worldly location that is undeniably breathtaking. This year, the team had to get creative to find a way to tell an exceptional story while being locked down in France. Thanks to their talented team of riders and media, we have a behind the scenes look at the filming of "La mer, le vent et le cerf-volant," translated as "The sea, the wind, and the kite."

THE SEA, THE WIND, AND THE KITE.





“ OUR FIRST STOP WAS AT A NEARBY KITE SPOT WITH THE SORT OF WEATHER WE LIKE: STRONG WIND, RAIN, AND WAVES. ”

Planning for a MANERA trip usually starts with the search for an unusual, yet beautiful destination at a relatively cold time of year. Last year’s escapade to the Kamchatka Peninsula was just that sort of place, and indescribably beautiful. This year, we had something similar in mind. However, in 2020, the word ‘normal’ took on a whole new meaning...

After two months of quarantine amidst a developing global pandemic, our travel plans were dashed at the last minute. With travel authorization slips in hand, we decided to follow the wind a little closer to home, and meet up with the best local riders around France.

It was a Saturday morning in front of the F-ONE/ MANERA offices in Montpellier, France when we met up with photographer Matt Georges. We stood outside our home for the next two weeks, Francis’ near-vintage 1994 RV. On the outside, it didn’t inspire much confidence, but the wood veneer that lined the interior gave it a warm and welcoming feel.

With wild wind already blowing on the Mediterranean coast, our first stop was at a nearby kite spot with the sort of weather we like: strong wind, rain, and waves. After we had our trip-opening session in the bag, it was time to hit the road in search of something new!

Freedom to go where the wind takes us... this is a trip I have dreamed of for years! Only a few kilometres into the drive, Matt spotted the first speed camera and reflexively slammed on the brakes - only to realize that we had already been going the speed limit because the RV had quite a bit less power than we expected. We exchanged a look, realising that we would be spending a lot more time on the road than planned. “Put it back in third - we can’t lose any more speed!”



In theory, following the wind is exhilarating, but in reality, it's harder than you think. The weather charts are updated every two hours and show a different forecast every time. We had to constantly monitor the changing forecast to be sure we didn't lose the wind.

Our second stop was on the island of Oléron, to meet up with local rider Oscar Perrineau. He had told us of a flatwater lagoon, ideal for freestyle with the perfect wind orientation forecasted for the next two days.

**"WE HAD TO CONSTANTLY
MONITOR THE CHANGING
FORECAST TO BE SURE WE
DIDN'T LOSE THE WIND."**



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The new patent pending lightweight Aluminium Quicklock Hook is our newest revolutionary take on kite hooks. Next Level safety, eliminating the risk of the chicken loop slipping out.





“ IT WASN’T LOOKING PROMISING, AND WE HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO ACCEPT YET ANOTHER LAST-MINUTE CHANGE OF PLANS. ”

We tried to get there before dark, but it felt as if we were racing against time in a slow-moving tractor. We arrived at nightfall, too late to get into the water - but just in time to catch a glimpse of the potential of the spot. A van pulled in next to us, signalling the arrival of Swiss rider Maxime Chabloz.

He had been waiting for the border between Switzerland and France to open to be able to meet us for this journey. With Olivier Sautet on board on the media side, our team was almost complete. Missing was Marcela Witt, who was stuck in Portugal in a battle with her embassy to get authorisation to fly to France. It wasn’t looking promising, and we had no choice but to accept yet another last-minute change of plans. Even with a small team, we knew this trip would promise something unique.

The next two days were spent in and around this beautiful lagoon, taking advantage of even the slightest gust of wind. While it wasn’t an extraordinary spot, it was a great start to the trip.

Our adventure continued north towards Noirmoutier. We enjoyed the scenery, and at the speed we were driving, we had plenty of time to do so. Upon arrival, we discovered that the entire peninsula had temporarily forbidden kiteboarding. This was not something we had even considered as a possibility! Our only option was to ride the ‘Gois,’ a submerged road at high tide which becomes a world-class freestyle spot at low tide.

Naturally, the wind on that day was parallel to the road rather than being perpendicular to it... which was not ideal. Regardless, as any self-respecting rider desperate to get some action knows, something is always better than nothing.

On our way to the water, I saw a "sludge" sign, which was intriguing. My next step to the side to unwind my lines left me knee-deep in gooey mud. Instantly, the sign made more sense.

We took off from the goo, and the light wind allowed us to do a few tacks and tricks. Riding back upwind wasn't possible, so we ended up making our way back on foot along the road with our kites in the air. We greeted bemused passers-by who must have been wondering why we would want to fly a kite here at this time of year.

Noirmoutier did not seem to want us there, and neither did the wind. After the sludgy experience, we were ready to make our next move and continue the journey north to a new destination.

On the road, I carefully studied Google Images alongside weather maps, trying to find spots which were pretty, rideable, and windy. This is not an easy combination. We decided to call in reinforcements in the local kiting community because one man's knowledge is better than 10 men's guesses! Etienne Lhote, our Breton weatherman/local kite school owner, confirmed that conditions would be good for the next few days. I put the RV into 4th and charged forward on the highway. "We're coming!" Olivier shouted on the phone.

Francis' RV seemed to be holding up. Despite the windshield wiper occasionally trying to get away, we were always able to repair it with a little bit of tape.



" WE DECIDED TO CALL IN REINFORCEMENTS IN THE LOCAL KITING COMMUNITY BECAUSE ONE MAN'S KNOWLEDGE IS BETTER THAN 10 MEN'S GUESSES! "

**“ WE WOKE UP TO THE WIND BLOWING, TRANSFORMING
THE QUIBERON BAY INTO A PICTURESQUE FREESTYLE SPOT.
“IT’S FINALLY TIME TO GO!” ”**



RIDER PAUL SERIN

We arrived before the wind did, so headed into the water with Max for a quick surf session on the ‘Cote Sauvage’ of Quiberon. The conditions were far from amazing, but after hours on the road, the water was the best place to be.

We woke up to the wind blowing, transforming the Quiberon bay into a picturesque freestyle spot. “It’s finally time to go!” I put my boots on and started throwing tricks for the camera. Confinement hasn’t been kind to pro kitesurfers. I started the session a little rusty and was having trouble finding my flow. Max seemed to be doing rather well, which was apparent when I watched him land a few clean double handle-passes. Olivier and Matt were happy, having captured some great shots.

After having the opportunity to spend the whole day on the water, we were stoked! We celebrated a successful day by grabbing a beer and enjoying the sunset together. In Brittany, you have to learn to appreciate sunsets when they come around because they are rather rare. When you’re lucky enough to catch one, they are incredible!

The following day, the RV was in dire need of a good cleaning, and Etienne offered us the luxury of a shower in his school. What an incredible feeling after five to six days, to finally take a shower and feel clean.

On we went to the next spot. This time, the swell forecasts seemed to be on point. “Crozon, we’re coming!” Etienne couldn’t resist following us to score in what looked like promising conditions. With La Palue beach in our line of sight, we rushed to get in the water, already picturing ourselves inside barrels with Max.



“ WE BOTH KNOW HOW TO SURF, BUT WHEN IT’S THAT BIG, IT GETS A BIT OUT OF OUR COMFORT ZONE. ”

First problem: a two-metre gate prevented us from accessing the parking area near the spot... We found ourselves blocked in at the top of the parking lot in the middle of several other RVs. From the top, we could see the offshore lines. Max and I shared the same look of apprehension. We both know how to

surf, but when it’s that big, it gets a bit out of our comfort zone.

Olivier then proceeded to add: "Guys, if I don't see you in a barrel, I won't even get my camera out." Nothing like a bit of pressure to help things along! We walked down the road leading to the spot and got a look at the low tide waves up close. They looked rather nice from the beach, but the swell was expected to increase heavily through this day and the next. I grabbed my

surfboard while Max waxed his Mitu 5'6, which he would surf for this session.

To sum it up: lots of duck dives, a couple of waves surfed, and a few serious adrenaline spikes when dropping in on those bangers. We slept with our fingers crossed, hoping there would be wind the next day.

When the alarm clock sounded, I woke up to see my favorite Breton's waking face, saying "So guys, ready to get smashed by mountains of water?" At the time, I was nervous, but in the end, the surf session wasn't too bad. I got caved a few times, but it was pure bliss!



It was mid-morning when the wind slowly picked up. We started getting the kitesurfing equipment ready, looking at our only opportunity to get a proper wave session in on this trip. With wind between 12-13 knots, I took the 13m Breeze and Etienne went on the 12m Bandit.

Before leaving, I asked Etienne, "Do you think I should use a leash?" He gazed at me with a surprised look, saying "If you don't want to drown, I'd say it's better, yes." Ok... In that case, I'll grab a leash.

**" HE GAZED AT ME
WITH A SURPRISED
LOOK, SAYING "IF YOU
DON'T WANT TO
DROWN, I'D SAY IT'S
BETTER, YES." "**



Rider: Jan Burgdoerfer
Picture: Helen Fischer

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La Palue beach is quite big, especially at low tide. We walked as far as we could upwind to take advantage of the slightest wave on the way down. I struggled to surf well. Etienne was killing it, even riding backside. You could instantly see his experience, and we were stoked he had come along with us. He linked back-to-back rollers despite the fact that his kite was barely flying. It was an impressive sight to see! I ended up surfing the reforms closer to shore, choosing to walk back on foot after having surfed three to four waves. That walk allowed me the opportunity to appreciate the view of the landscape and the cliffs, which are truly beautiful in Crozon.

France is beautiful! We tend to forget this sometimes... and it will have taken a pandemic for me to go and discover it!

Before leaving for the next destination, I went for a sunrise surf foil in the Goulien bay. The swell was rolling gently, ideal for the foil. After dropping in, I rode the waves and passed through a group of surfers and stand up paddlers who seemed intrigued by this strange new surf tool.

One croissant and no shower later, we were on the road again, heading to Brest, where Amaury - a local shop manager - was waiting to show us the best spots in the area.

Navigating through a city with an RV was no easy feat, but we were so big and wide that everyone made room for us to pass. Amaury had mapped out our next spot, showing us exactly where we needed to get into the water. We were headed to Plouguerneau, crossing our fingers that we'd get some sun so we could see the true colours of the incredible turquoise water.



“ HE LINKED BACK-TO-BACK ROLLERS DESPITE THE FACT THAT HIS KITE WAS BARELY FLYING. IT WAS AN IMPRESSIVE SIGHT TO SEE! ”

RIDER MAXIME CHABLOZ



“ WE STARTED LINKING TRICKS IN TURQUOISE BLUE WATER AND GLORIOUSLY SUNNY WEATHER THAT MADE IT FEEL LIKE A TROPICAL DESTINATION. ”

The scattered rocks create an ideal landscape for freestyle. I was feeling good about this place, which was different from Crozon, but just as nice. As the sun came out, thermal winds picked up, so we quickly inflated our 13m kites with Maxime and Lazare Gourney, a local freestyler and

member of our team who had joined us.

The current was strong, but we managed to get to the area behind the rocks, where we started linking tricks in turquoise blue water and gloriously sunny weather that made it feel like a tropical destination. The only reminder of reality was the 4/3mm wetsuits we were wearing.

Max was sending some big tricks, and I was focused on making the most of every tack while not wasting the drone and camera batteries with bails. The wind dropped gently

over the next two hours, until there was none left at all.

A well-deserved meal was waiting for us at the restaurant in front of our riding spot. We tried the Breton crepes in every area to see which city made the best ones. Crozon set the bar very high, I have to say!

Freestyle, waves, foil, surf... We were beginning to amass the footage we needed to make a good video. The photos were looking nice, too. We still felt like we were missing a little something, that classic 'je ne sais quoi' that makes a MANERA video epic, that would showcase the splendor that France has to offer.

Next direction: the Mont Saint Michel. For this one, we needed to prepare. We asked our friends advice on the best way to ride, ideal wind conditions, and the right tides... The opinions came back very different. In the end, we decided to go see for ourselves.

High tide was forecast for 9 pm, and it would be possible to ride until at least 10 pm at that time of year. With questionable conditions, our fingers were crossed for an afternoon thermal that would allow us to ride around this beautiful structure.

I sat in the shade of a tree, waiting for the wind to pick up and the tide to rise. I was thinking to myself that for once, luck could be on our side. We waited, under our little tree, facing the area where we would be able to prepare our equipment and walk to the water. With a foil and a 15 metre kite, you only need 7-8 knots to be at full speed.

At around 6:30 pm, we donned our wetsuits. A light breeze was rising, filling us with hope. We brought our 15m Halo's out and approached the water on foot. The path was sludgy and muddy, and by the time we got close to the water, we were boiling in our wetsuits.

We reached the water's edge only to encounter a small problem: the current was agitated, and the color of the water didn't allow us to measure the depth with our foils. It wasn't looking good. Max and I decided to put our kites on the edge of the water and wait for the tide to rise. We sat in the mud, contemplating this outrageously beautiful castle.



“ THE CURRENT WAS AGITATED, AND THE COLOR OF THE WATER DIDN'T ALLOW US TO MEASURE THE DEPTH WITH OUR FOILS. IT WASN'T LOOKING GOOD. ”



“ WE DID IT, WE WERE KITESURFING IN FRONT OF THE MONT SAINT MICHEL! WHAT A MAGICAL MOMENT. ”

It was 7:30 pm before the water was high enough. On my first attempt to set off, I got caught in strong current, but somehow managed to keep my kite in the air. The wind must have been oscillating between 5 and 6 knots. Max pointed out what looked like a riptide building on the side, where the current was swirling inwards. I tried again,

kite barely staying up in the air. I took off, pumped a few times, and I was gone. I could not believe it!

I turned around to see Max following right behind me. We did it, we were kitesurfing in front of the Mont Saint Michel! What a magical moment. I could barely feel any wind on my face, and the current was guiding us along in the right direction. The stress of falling gradually left my mind, and I began to relax and enjoy the moment. We tacked, Max leading the way, both of us hoping that Matt and Olivier would not miss

a moment of what was happening.

As the sun descended, it turned into a ball of fire, reflecting tones of orange from the Mont’s stained-glass windows. A few people inside waved as we passed. I suppose it’s not every day that two kitesurfers sail by at sunset.

We couldn’t hold back small cries of joy. A moment like that will be forever engraved in our memories. The sun finally dipped below the horizon, painting pink and turquoise hues across the sky. We headed back in, and with the rising tide were able to have some fun in the channels that we had walked through only a couple hours earlier.

“ WE THOUGHT PARADISE COULD ONLY BE FOUND FAR AWAY. THIS YEAR, WE FOUND IT AT HOME.”



I couldn't stop smiling, thinking back to what had just happened. What a day... And a reminder of the reason we kitesurf, to experience such incredible moments!

Our trip on the French coast was coming to an end. We made one last stop in St Malo to enjoy a natural swimming pool and roam around the city before settling back in for a long drive at our maximum speed of 80km/h. We were returning home with the feeling of satisfaction and success, and found the return drive much more relaxing.

This confinement has shaken us up and changed our habits. In the past, we thought paradise could only be found far away. This year, we found it at home.

At a time when the entire world is confined, when world debt is higher than ever, when scientists are working day and night to find a vaccine against this virus, there we were, four humans in an RV going where the wind blows and taking advantage of all that France has to offer. Voltaire said: "I have decided to be happy because it's good for my health."

What if happiness was the key to it all? What if living at 200% was the cure for this virus?

Either way, this is how we have decided to go about it at MANERA.

MAJESTIC

The Majestic is jam-packed with new features. First and foremost, the rubber in this suit is Yamamoto 39. A premium Japanese limestone neoprene with insane thermal and stretch properties. To improve stretch and heat even more we've Knitflex+ and Flaremesh+. Knitflex+ is an outer lining that stretches better and holds less water. Flaremesh+ is our new quickdry inner lining with a geometrical pattern to improve stretch. With the Majestic you can face the cold!

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TECHNIQUE

WORDS & PHOTOS CHRISTIAN & KARINE

The final technique of 2020! For those of us that that would normally flee the North at this time of year, we thought it only right to dedicate a large portion to Heliarde and the delights and warmth which are Brazil. Ladies first though! Number one on the list is the sacred art of popping. An absolute advent joy with the power to open many doors and reveal a whole host of sweet delights. Then it's over to Heliarde for the BLT to Blind. A proper cheeky transition that'll delight you and your peers. For the grand finale it's a daring embellishment for a classic, adding an initially nervous grab onto a Back Roll Kite Loop and then as the confidence grows tweaking it out for the masses. Enjoy, take care and can't wait to see you in 2021.

C&K and Heliarde.

POPPING



BLT TO BLIND



BACK ROLL KITE LOOP GRAB



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POPPING >

Kite - North Orbit 12m

Board - North Atmos Hybrid

As Kellogg's so rightly said, "once you pop you just can't stop". Popping is an absolutely fundamental skill in kiting, and as far as fundamentals go, it's potentially one of the most bamboozling. That's not to say that popping is super difficult, but there's a lot going on and when you come to learn it, you'll be bombarded with all sorts of advice and terminology that can tilt the most pleasurable pastime towards a frustrating smorgasbord of dilemmas. It's well worth pursuing, as once you nail it, doors will literally swing open to a world of new tricks and you can apply elements of it to your jumping too.

We will, as always, run through the separate parts which make up the move. However, seeing as popping is a fundamental, we'll also concentrate on a few design features of your equipment, so that you can understand what's going, which in turn should make the learning process a whole lot smoother. And we'll add a tad more theory, so please bear with us, we'll eventually get to the nitty gritty and you should then be primed and ready for it.

Before we start though, let's agree on what we mean by popping here, so that we're all singing from the same sheet and know which manoeuvre you're about to embark upon. By popping we mean getting yourself off the water using only your board, no ramps, waves or wakes and no sending of the kite. You're going to get a bit of daylight between the surface of the sea



and the bottom of your board – hell yeah! That said as you're learning we will be making things easier, so forget those images of boots and low kites...

A SUPER BRIEF THEORY OF BOARD DESIGN

First things first. We need to establish the difference between edging and carving, both as words and actions. By edging we mean resisting the power in the kite and riding in a fairly straight line from A to B, normally upwind. By carving we mean turning the board, steering it. You can carve upwind and downwind, left or right, like cornering a car. Here we'll be concentrating on carving upwind. Most modern twin tips will have a flatter planning area between the feet and a bit of rocker, curve, tail and nose kick at each end. The flat bit helps us get going and we use it to edge upwind, the curvy rocker helps us carve. However not all boards are equal, some are better at edging as they are straighter, think a light

wind door, whilst others are better at carving, think a more wakestyle rockered board. If you're reading this, you'll hopefully have something in-between. So, what's the point of this admittedly short theory session? Well if you want to pop, there is carving involved, and to carve correctly you'll need to use the correct part of your board.

The Set Up Pic A

Assuming that you are happy edging, can control speed and vary your direction of travel you're ready. In a perfect world you'll have some flat water, be comfortably and confidently powered and the sun will be shining. To get into pre pop position, set your upwind edge as normal. From here you can then jiggle a few things. First off, your sweet spot. You want it within reach, so that you're able to ride upwind with your shoulders back. If you're bent over whilst riding, you'll be really out of position when trying to pop.

Kite wise you need to be able to edge, but when you do pop it'll be brilliant if the kite can help you. Around 11 or 1 o'clock, a tad higher but no lower. Get your hands narrow on the bar, close up against the centre depower rope or plastic, this will help you keep the kite still when you're popping. As for your lower half you need to get on that curvy tail, so flex the back leg and move your hips back on the board, towards the tail. As you do so your front leg will straighten a bit. What you'll notice is that the nose of the board will start to ride higher, a very subtle wheelie, because you're resisting against the board with your weight further aft. Don't overdo it, else you'll slow down. And finally, your back foot. For popping you only have a complete foot so that you can keep the board on:) You only need a heel. To make the most of your heel, your back foot must be across the board, or pointing slightly backwards. It's very natural as you move your hips back to twist them forwards, which will pull the back knee forwards and twist your back foot in the strap. More of a hard boot slalom snowboarding stance than a twin tip popping stance. If you do this your weight is on your foot, not your heel. We need your heel for this. Now looking at Karine as an example. She's edging with some speed, her kite is parked at 11 o'clock, hands are close to the centre of the bar and the sweet spot is positioned so that the bar is very reachable. Her weight is low and whilst resisting she's moved her hips back over the rear footstrap, which lifts the front of the board. Her back leg is flexed, front leg almost straight. But her hips haven't twisted which means she can keep her back foot across the board and resist through her heel.



That's it, game on. Now that we've got that covered, let's get down to the bare essentials and learn to pop!

Your Approach Pic B

We mentioned carving upwind. However, you can't just ride along upwind and then carve into the wind. Why not? You'll come to a grinding halt. To combat this, you must start from a different course, you need to bear away, turn downwind slightly so that you're riding just past across the wind. The beauty is you don't actually have to worry about the angles, as long as you flatten the board, the kite will pull you in the correct direction. To flatten the board, relax, stop edging and resisting, and allow the kite to pull you up and onto your board. As it does let off some power so that you don't get pulled all the way upright.

Your point of focus here should be on keeping your weight back on the curvy bit. You can do this gradually. If you look at Karine, she's let the kite pull her up onto the board, but she sheets the bar out a little so that she's still upwind of it on the gentlest of edges. However, her weight is back, and her nose is up. From here she gently relaxes her back foot so that her weight moves from her heel, forwards onto her foot. You can see how her board has changed direction. However, she's not trying to carve off downwind. This would move her weight across the board and make the next part of the pop very difficult. Yet again don't look at the pros for inspiration here, Liam rocks but you'll struggle to set up for a pop like him and all those crazy kids.



Carving on the Curvy Bit Pic C

Now that the board is flat, the kite will have pulled you off the wind (towards it) and you're ready to pop. The first stage of your pop is the carve back onto an edge. The point of carving is twofold. Firstly, it will put tension back on the lines, which will give you something to pop against. Secondly as it puts you back on an edge, you will have something to stamp against with that patient heel of yours. The tricky bit here is that you're trying to carve from the flat of the board to a launch pad of an edge in the minimal amount of time. You don't have to carve far, just far enough to feel some resistance. Any further and you'll either slow down or the kite will pull you and you'll lose your position. If you were to read "carve - pop", that's the timing (assuming you read at our

speed of course). And this is why the wheelie is so important, and the gently coming off the wind. If you carve off the wind, you'll get all your weight on both feet and almost onto the other side of the board. Which means it'll take you an age to get back into position as you carve back up. Great for Back Mobe 7, horrible for a first pop. By keeping your weight back and upwind of the board you're literally dropping back onto your edge, and as you do so the board will carve up automatically and you'll be in a balanced position to pop. Looking at the picture, the two images are a fraction of a second apart (4/10ths to be exact). Karine drops her weight upwind, bum low, shoulders up, resists and the board turns. Try not to pull on the bar, as it will prevent you from carving up.



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D1

D2

The Pop Pic D1

So, what is this mythical pop? You may have heard of edge and release, well that's definitely not it! We've already edged and released to go bear away from the wind. The pop is a very aggressive stamp against the heelside edge of the board with your back heel. You're not actually trying to jump up, you're trying to kick yourself up wind against the edge. It's an explosive extension of the back leg. It's tempting to wait for something to happen, but nothing will. You have to make it happen and it has to happen quickly.

Look at Karine, you can see that she carves up with her back leg flexed and then kicks against the board, straightening her back leg. If we showed you the next frame it would look like she's jumping up or forwards, but that is the kite pulling her. In essence, this is the pop, a small but aggressive carve instantly followed by a humungous kick. Only once you kick can you pull on the bar.

Looking at D2 from a downwind perspective, yet again Karine is stamping against the board, "carve – pop". As soon as she extends, she pulls a tad on the

bar for help, but it's not compulsory.

Walk Tall Pic E

This is the moment directly after take-off. Karine carved into her pop with a flexed back leg and a pretty straight front leg due to her weight being back on the board. Now she's fully extended. If you've ever tried a standing jump, or had a go at high jump, you'll know it's about using everything you've got extending from your feet all the way through your body and into the very hair follicles on the top of your head.



You may be tempted to try and get your board off the water, or higher by flicking your heels up behind you, or lifting your knees in front of you. When you practice this stay extended, that way you will extend. If you're dreaming of one day banging out a Raley, it's much the same, just heavily exaggerated and with more power. The stamp and the kite do the work. You'll know if you're extending well as you'll feel that you're getting thrown forwards onto your front foot in the air. This is a good thing.

Coming Down Pic F

Another joy of popping is that you'll experience one of the benefits of gravity. Everything comes down naturally. As you haven't used the kite, you've

unwittingly propelled yourself upwards, with nothing to hold you up there. As long as the kite didn't move as you carved, you will succumb to the law of physics and everything will drop to earth. The surprising bit that Newton never knew, is that the mass of the Earth seems to have a greater effect on the board and your feet, as they always swing down underneath you. Much like jumping off a doll's house, there isn't far to fall so the landing should be relatively gentle. That said it's good practice to land tail first onto the flat underside of your board pointing slightly off the wind. You can assist this by dipping your kite down, but by the very nature of changing direction before the pop, your kite will have dropped deeper in the window and it will be pulling you that way. It helps if you look



downwind and if you turn your shoulders and hips to follow the kite as Karine does here, you'll enjoy the most Marshmallow of landings.

TOP TIPS

Looking at this for the first time you may be thinking that's quite a lot to take in. Realistically and hopefully, the background reading should simplify the actual physical movements. First time out have your kite high, find the flat water, go slowly, do little movements and build up. When your fins get a chance to gulp some air you've done it. The more you exaggerate the movements, the more aggressive the pop. Like everything it's a work in progress and the start is exactly that, the most wonderful of beginnings.



Have a look at the videos, take in the sequence and once you get up from reading this, hop around with your front leg held out straight in front of you. You'll reap the rewards.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Slowing down before bearing away. If your hips are too far back, you'll sink the tail rather than merely lift the nose, so find the balance.

Losing control when bearing off the wind. As you stand up you need to control the power in your kite. When you're edging you can hold a lot. However, if you're intending to stand on a flat board you won't want or need as much. Sheet the bar out as you flatten the board.

Stopping when carving up. This is a sure sign that you're softening and not resisting. The back leg may be flexed, but it should still be strong. Your front leg remains relatively straight because your weight is back. However, when carving, because you're dropping your weight, it's tempting to sit and bend both legs. This way you'll roll over the board and have no resistance to carve the board up, even for that short moment.

Getting pulled over the board before you get a chance to stamp. Either you're pulling on the bar, so leave it out, or it's possible that your bar is trimmed too far away so you can't get in a dynamic position to carve, so trim it in. Also, if you carve too long and wait for a miracle the kite will eventually pull as you continue to carve away from it. "Carve – Pop".

KEYSTONES

1. Hips back, foot across
2. Gently bear away
3. Short sharp carve
4. Almighty stamp through heel
5. Extend completely



BLT TO BLIND >

Kite - North Orbit 9m

Board - North Atmos Carbon

We absolutely love this one! A veritably fun little treat and an absolute banger of a cheeky move. Conjuring this out of the hat when turning low level next to the beach should get you a few laughs and plenty of appreciative whistles, smiles all round.

Basic requirements are a back roll transition and some form of blind. It's not a move that will hammer you, so well worth a shot and well within reach if you've got the aforementioned pair down pat. The best way to think about and visualise the BLT to blind, is more as a BLT to toeside, You'll then add the long spin around to blind on as a landing. Without delay we'll continue to the nuts and bolts of how to put this together...

Your Approach Pic A

This is a low level move and a transition, so you won't be needing bags of power or buckets of speed. You do need control of your kite and you still need to take off, so an edge and tension on the lines are musts on your approach. You won't be giving the kite much of a send, more of a gentle drift up towards 12, you'll do the moving a tad later. As the kite lifts it'll try and pull you up off your edge, so keep your weight low and resist with all your might. And if necessary, feather the bar out to dump a smidgeon of power. It's also good practice to keep your hands close to the centre of the bar because you'll be pulling against it later.



Glance over at Heliarde and you can see he's got a decent edge, his kite is drifting up whilst he's feathering the bar and keeping his bum low. This combo allows him to slow down but keep tension on the lines to lift off shortly.

The Carve Pic B

Being a low move, you won't have a great deal of time in the air. This means that prior to take off you'll need a strong carve upwind to initiate your back roll, and then a tad more so that you get a fair bit of the rotation done whilst still in contact with the water. To assist with this carve you will need to sheet out slightly to stop the kite pulling so that you can move upwind. At the same time continue to drift the kite back towards either 1 or 11. This way once you take off it will immediately start to pull you slowly back towards



where you came from. Looking at Heliarde, he's dropped his weight back and is carving hard into the eye of the wind, he's sheeted out and he's steering the kite slowly across to 1 o'clock.

Lift Off Pic C

Your take off will be the same dynamic kick up as always for a BLT/back roll transition. The only difference being that you will have carved that teeny bit further prior to stamping. It's a combination of kicking yourself up off your back leg against the edge of your board, whilst pulling in a tad on the bar and of course levelling the bar to stop the kite moving any further. Here Heliarde has kicked off his back leg, so both legs are now extended, he's pulled in on the bar for lift, but only to the sweet spot, otherwise he'll stall the kite, he's levelled his bar to stop the kite and



he's looking along the barrel of his shoulder to rotate slowly without giving it too much. No need to spin as you're only going to toeside in your head, remember? This part of the move is where patience pays.

Timing Pic D

You're trying to freeze the moment, because the blind is only the landing. You should be waiting here, hanging in aerial toeside, looking at where you think you'll land, until there is no more lift. This is then the signal to move, prepare for landing and throw the blind. When it's time your first job is to dive the kite, so that it pulls you for landing and also gives you something to pull against. When diving you can sheet the bar in more,



as although this will stall the kite slightly, it's a deliberate ploy to stop the kite disappearing to the edge of the window. Looking at the picture, Heliarde is diving with the bar in, but he's still hanging in toeside.

Throw It 1 Pic E

This could be something new if your blind experience is that of popping around whilst riding hooked, either from heelside or toeside there are a few new bits. If you're throwing Raleys to blind some of the skills here will already be in your armoury. Let us ponder for a moment what we need to achieve to land blind. You need to rotate 360° from this toeside position to get yourself and the board into a blind position.

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When you land blind, you need to be over the board so that you're balanced and can then continue, even for a millisecond in that position. In this part you need to concentrate on getting over the board. If you rotate 360° that's great, but if you leave your legs and ultimately your board behind you, you won't have anything to land on! You want to get yourself up and close to the bar and bring your front knee close and under the bar. The fact that you're toeside will help in a moment. Heliarde is looking at where he'll land, he's pulled himself up and over the bar with his arms and he's lifted his knees, so that the board is under the bar and underneath him.

Throw it 2 Pic F

To get enough rotation you need to use your lower body and board to build momentum and help you round. As you're pulling yourself up and over the bar,



you must bring your back knee through and under it, effectively pushing the front of the board forwards and round. The action is similar to lifting one knee up and across your chest whilst standing. This is why you wait in toeside mode. It leaves your back leg ready and primed to assist when you need it. As the board comes through you can start to turn your head back, so that the shoulders can turn with the board. Heliarde is pulling, he's bringing his back (right) knee through and he's turning his head and shoulders away from the kite.

Landing Pic G

All that's left is to release your back hand and commit to the blind by twisting your head and shoulders to face backwards. The kite should be pulling you a bit, and depending on how much you may want to dump power by pushing the bar fully



out. It's also probable that you won't get enough rotation. The great news is that it doesn't overly matter. You're aiming to land slightly nose first. As you're coming around you can lift your other leg, heel towards bum. This will guarantee a nose first landing and as such, as the nose hits, it will pivot the board around the rest of the way. Here Heliarde is coming around nicely, he's starting to sheet the bar out, he's looking back and he's starting to lift his other (left) leg so that he'll land nose first. Bingo!

Once you've landed, chances are that you will be creeping along with very little speed, so best bet is to quickly slide out of blind by turning your head to look where you're going and sheeting back in. As you progress with soft landings you can continue to ride blind, waving to the beach as you do so.



TOP TIPS

It won't hurt to learn or practice the hooked pop from toeside to blind, as featured way back in Issue 20. This will add urgency and momentum to your throwing of blind.

For your first attempts don't give too much thought to the kite. Get it set for a little BLT and try from there. Once you're getting around to blind you can add the more subtle kite movements.

Have a run through of the videos and sequence to burn the movements into your subconscious.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Can't get around to blind. First off if you over rotate your back roll and end up heelside you'll struggle to get any momentum from your legs and board, so freeze it toe side by using your head less and try taking off a tad earlier. The action to throw the blind is aggressive. And make sure you plant the nose in

first as it'll make up for a lot of missing degrees.

If you're getting pulled over on landing, it's a result of the kite pulling you. Try diving the kite less pre throw, and make sure that as soon as you're rotating to blind, you push the bar out to dump power.

If you're landing face first upwind of the board with a sinus full of brine, you're not staying over the board. You may be turning the head back, but also looking too far down at the water, breaking at the waist. It's also a result of trying to push the board around separately from your body, donkey kicking it out, rather than rotating together. Practice the movement on land, jumping up, twisting and landing on your feet. You need them under you.

KEYSTONES

1. Slow approach, good edge, drift kite
2. Carve right into wind, feather power out
3. Stamp up, stop kite, slow to toeside
4. Lift knees, dive, pull and front knee through
5. Release hand, turn head, lift trailing leg



BACK ROLL KITE LOOP GRAB >

Kite - North Orbit 9m

Board - North Atmos Carbon

At a time when you could be dressing up a turkey, tarting up an evergreen or decorating for some yuletide festivities, how about adding some glitz and glam, a fairy light and some tinsel to a timeless classic? There won't be anything finer to unwrap (Fortnum and Mason's brandy butter being the one exception) than a fully embellished back roll kite loop with all the trimmings, in this case a tweaked grab. And when Santa can't travel, who better to call in when in need of some serious style? Heliarde of course.

If you fancy pulling the bow on this gift, it will help to have the regular two handed back roll kite loop in the bag already. It's a much preferred version than the low spinning one handed variant, as controlling your rotation and your legs are key, whilst height and time will offer you the opportunity to grab, tweak and generally look your absolute best. Let's unbox this one step at a time to reveal exactly what'll make it a rip roaring success.

Approach A

You want to approach this as for a regular sent back roll. Your aim is to go up, it doesn't have to be massive, 2 or 3 metres is plenty, but it needs to be controlled. As such you need some speed, plenty of edge, good tension and some power in the kite with the sweet spot positioned out. With your kite at either 11 or 1 o'clock you can then give it a positive send for the required boost. Your rotation will come from your



take off, so make sure that you're in a strong position, resisting well and with your weight low. This will allow you to carve up just prior to leaving the water and set the back roll in motion. And just to be crystal clear, your back roll will be a 360°, you're not aiming for any funky inverted stuff here. If you hazard a glance at Heliarde you can see that he's got one almighty rooster because he's come in with power and resistance. He's given the kite a positive send back from 1 o'clock towards 11 and as the kite starts to lift, he's carving up into the wind, using his board to start the rotation. He's looking forwards, not throwing his head over his shoulder as he wants to rotate slowly.



Take Off B

It's all about the up, getting into the air balanced, comfortable and in control. Just as in a sent back roll the key movements here are the extension and stamp into the move and the subsequent controlling of the kite. If you're more familiar with a low and fast back roll kite loop, you'll be accustomed to compressing your back leg and rolling back into a more inverted roll. However, for a slow and high sent back roll you need to stamp off against your edge as you would in a jump. This not only gives you a leg up, it also increases tension in the lines, which forces the kite to fly more towards the edge of the window and

will therefore reward you with more lift once it passes over 12. As mentioned, the rotation should come from the carve before you stamp. If you throw your head, you'll rotate too quickly which will make the timing of both the kite loop and the grab tricky, so keep looking forwards along the line of your shoulder. As you extend up, you'll want to stop the kite going too far across to the other side of the window. This will make the imminent kite loop more predictable, higher in the window and potentially less violent. Simultaneously stamp and level the bar as you pull in on it for take-off. Another look over at Heliarde and you can see that his back leg is extended from his kick off, his bar is quite level and he's looking along his shoulder. A fine take off.

Balance & Timing Pic C

Essential if you plan on not just surviving the kite loop but also giving it the maximum embellishment. Your balance is a direct result of your take-off. If the kite is controlled and effectively supporting you from above, you're in a good place. If it's whizzed over to the other side of the window and you're momentarily defying gravity things won't look so rosy. When you're hanging from the kite and it's high you have as much tension as possible on the lines and the kite is ready and waiting for your next instruction. However, before you go pulling the trigger you need to make sure that you've brought your knees up. As well as helping with balance, it'll make the grab considerably simpler. Final point here is timing - when to give it the beans? You need to be halfway around, just enough that you are looking back from where you've come. If you've made it



this far the loop will pull you the rest of the way around. If you go earlier, it may not. The big BUT here is that if you go too late things can get uncomfortable, as the loop can over rotate you, so don't dilly dally either. You can see that Heliarde is halfway around, still on the way up. He's pulling his knees up and has his kite fairly high. From here he's perfectly positioned to pull the trigger with a hefty and aggressive pull push on the bar, using both hands to steer the kite and initiate the kite loop.

Busy Moment Pic D

This is when your brain really needs to be in gear, all synapses firing with coordination on tap. In other words, you'll be multitasking! Two jobs to do with many body parts to control, but oh so doable. You need to get the board where you can grab it and



you need to free your front hand so that you can grab the board. You'll be grabbing the nose of your board with your front hand, so at least there's no need for a contortionist's flexibility. To get the board close, bring your front knee towards your chest, this way it comes up and forwards and places the nose within easy reaching distance. There's no need to bring the back leg fully in, and if you'll be going for the full tweak, even less so. As you're pulling your front knee up you can release your front hand and extend it down towards the board. However, you've got to keep steering the kite into and through the loop. This requires the use of your hand and thumb, close up to the centre of the bar, so that you can crank it, but still control it on or around the sweet spot. You can see how Heliarde is forcefully steering the kite with his back hand.



The Grab Pic E

Looking at the pic it's almost as if Heliarde is grabbing the tail of his board whilst travelling the other way. It's a good pointer that the grab is achievable. Stretch your arm down and feel for the board to get the grab. This isn't really a move where you've got time to focus on the board and then hone in on it. At the same time, you still need to keep that kite moving. It's likely that the power is coming on from the kitemloop, so concentrate on keeping your bar in. It's too easy to let it slip out, which will then reduce the tension on your lines and slow the loop down.

The Keeper Pic F

Yes, we all want that money shot, and if you're going to tweak in a loop the golden rule is to look casual. If you relax, the tweak will be all the more natural. As Heliarde would say, breath. As the turbo kicks in and you feel the pull from the kite, it will try and straighten you out. Hold onto the nose tight, keep the bar locked on hard left (or right) and go with it. Seriously though, as long as you keep the kite looping all will end well. It's worth noting where you should be looking as the kite pulls you around. Easy answer is towards the kite, but that's assuming your kite's in the right place.



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WHY BE COLD THIS WINTER?



You want to be travelling with the pull, so you'll be just back of downwind (think very broad reach in the other direction), so look there.

Permission to Land Pic G

Landing from a kiteman always feels more hectic than it looks but the same rules apply, regardless. To soften your landing, you want the kite to travel back up so that it can catch you. This is more important the higher you get, but an important skill to practice. It's only possible if you keep steering the kite all the way around and don't let off until it's on its merry way to midday. Once it is you need to let the kite breathe, so that it can climb. Ease the bar out, releasing the

tension on the back lines that was necessary to steer the kite. At the same time release your grab, get your front hand back on the bar and focus on your landing, which will be downwind or yet again slightly back the other way. Looking at Heliarde you can see that he's sheeted his bar out, the kite can breathe, and it'll be rising up to 12, just in time to catch him and slow his descent.

TOP TIPS

To get yourself best prepared for this choose the right conditions. Preferably not on the verge of overpowered, with a fast-ish kite, and when you're feeling comfortable.

We'll obviously add deep water in there for good measure. Warm up with some slow back rolls, then some back roll kite loops whilst trying to keep the legs in, and then add the grab late on the way down. After that add it earlier and earlier, this way you'll always know the kite is going around.

It's worth noting hand position on the bar again. Many of you may be used to sliding the back hand a tad further down the bar before a loop. Here though you need it close to the centre so that you can get maximum leverage whilst keeping the bar in. It's worth practicing a few two handed loops with your back hand in this position, gradually relying more and more on your back hand for impetus.



And finally, even once you're feeling super confident, remember that you can always initiate the loop with two hands and then release for the grab.

Now have a good look at the sequence and videos for your pre-flight check.

COMMON PROBLEMS

If you're lacking float and time, it's very likely that your kite is going too far back into the other side of the window. This can be caused by a softening of the back leg and no kick, as well as letting the bar out too much during the send. Either way it can be rescued if

you make sure to level the bar just prior to take off.

If you're struggling to reach the grab, make sure to bring your knees up. The pull from the kite will always extend you, so be dynamic after take-off and use those abs.

If you're getting pile driven into the water by an unruly kite, it's a result of the kite not turning. It could be starting too far back, so check that it's more above you before pulling the trigger. However, it's also likely that when steering with one hand you're either not aggressive enough, or you're letting the kite pull the bar out.

KEYSTONES

1. Solid edge and good send
2. Carve and stamp whilst levelling bar
3. Knees up and 1st slow half
4. 2 hands to initiate loop before grabbing
5. Hold bar and grab firmly to complete the loop





FORTALEZA



MANCORA



CABARETE



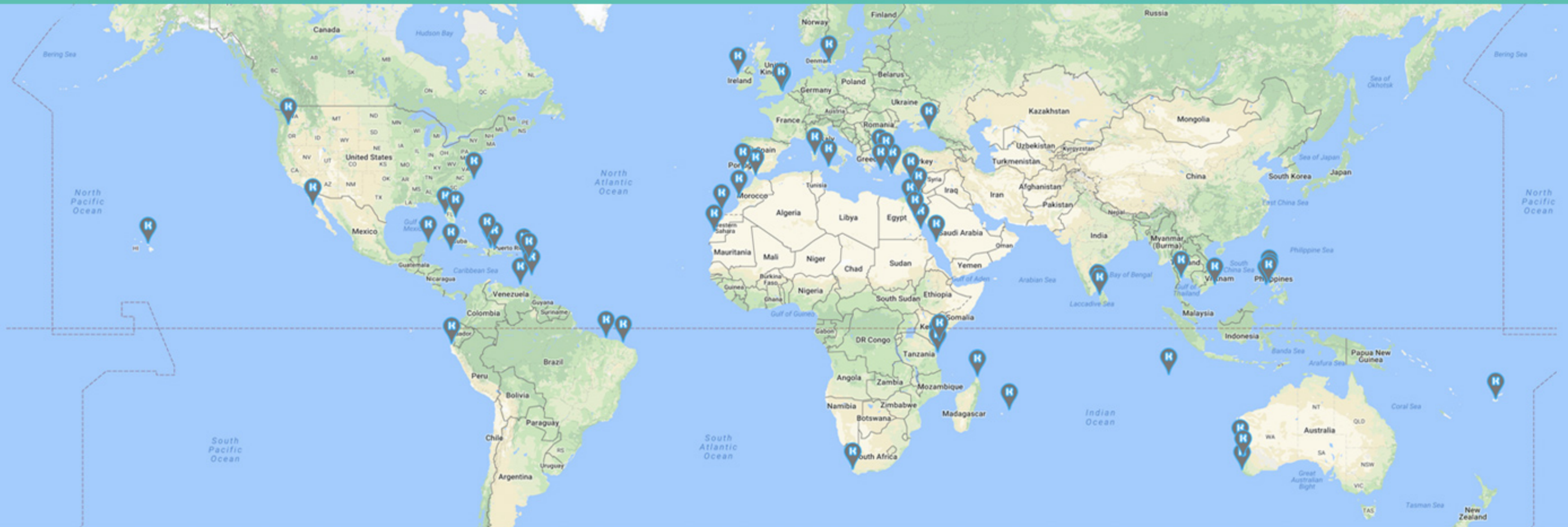
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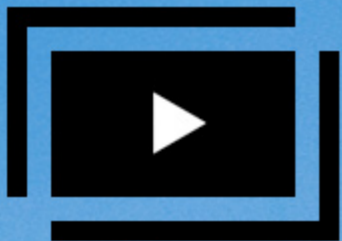
UNION ISLAND



CAPE TOWN



MAUI



WORDS JOSH EMANUEL PHOTOS BLAIR VAN BREDA

HOW LOW CAN YOU GO?

When it comes to extreme big air, few can compare to megaloop master Josh Emanuel. The South African local continues to use his kite to challenge the laws of physics, looking for the limit of a low kite loop. After years of analysing the paragliding Infinity Roll, Josh is ready to attempt the most extreme trick of his kiteboarding career: The Infinity Loop.





“WHEN THE TIME CAME TO TAKE OFF, I WAS FEELING SUPER AMPED AND PSYCHED FOR WHAT WE WERE ABOUT TO DO.”

You know you've gone off the deep end when you lie awake at night asking yourself, "How low can I go?" Is it possible to get the kite directly below oneself and recover in time to make a safe landing?

This is a discussion that has been raging for years with Steven Akkersdijk, fellow Core

team rider and megaloop addict. It always comes back to how hard we can push it, and how low we can truly go.

I'm speaking of the mythical 'infinity roll', a technique that comes from paragliding. A paraglider can perform an infinity roll by going into a spiral to generate enough speed to propel themselves into a complete roll, with the canopy beneath them.

How does this apply to kiting? Theoretically, it's a similar motion. At least, that's what I thought until Zenti from Fly Cape Town

Paragliding took me to perform this manoeuvre off of Lion's Head. When the time came to take off, I was feeling super amped and psyched for what we were about to do. Except for one the one small fear I struggle with, which is heights!!! I know it sounds ridiculous as a big air kiteboarder, but yes, it is a fear of mine. Maybe this was the ideal time to confront that fear!

The take-off was smooth until we were about 20 metres from the cliffside and sailing at an elevation of 200 metres. My panic level continued to rise along with the elevation. I can honestly say that I haven't been that scared in a very long time.



I had the GoPro pole in one hand, while the other was gripping the strap as if my life depended on it. Zenti smacked my hand, saying through his laughter, "Why such white knuckles?" He continued to remind me to relax, explaining that the higher we go, the safer we are.

"THE G-FORCE WAS OUT OF THIS WORLD. AS THE WING CAME BACK AROUND, IT FELT LIKE FLOATING INTO ZERO GRAVITY"

After about 10 minutes, we were floating 700 metres in the air. My fear had declined somewhat, and I began to enjoy the scenery as we glided out over the ocean. Zenti gave me a quick briefing about what was to come next: The infinity roll. We rocked left, then right. Before I knew it, I was looking straight down at Camps Bay, watching the world spin around me twice before we sent the loop. The G-force was out of this world. As the wing came back around, it felt like floating into zero gravity for a brief second before shifting back into forward flight once again. Never in kiteboarding have I felt the G-force that I did on the paraglider.

If you asked me before the flight if I thought these two things might be similar, I would have said an easy yes. Now, I'm not so sure. What I saw in the video compared to what I felt in the moment were completely different. With the kite, we steer it into the right spot and continue to steer to ensure we can stick the landing. On a smaller kite, our body acts more like an anchor that the kite pendulums around. With paragliding, I felt that we used our momentum to complete the loop. In a way, it felt even more connected than on the kite.

Perhaps a little background is in order. I had always loved the ocean, and board sports gave me the outlet to be able to play out there in the big blue sea. When I was 10 years old, I discovered that one of my friends from across the road had started kiteboarding. I had no idea what kiting was, and I had no idea what it would become to me.

“EVEN WHEN I’M SHARING THE WATER WITH THESE GIANTS, COMPETING AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL IN CAPE TOWN, THEY STILL INSPIRE ME TO WORK EVEN HARDER.”

For a few years, all my pre-teen self wanted to do was kite! I practised at every opportunity but had to take a few years off while in boarding school. The pull of kiting never went away. As soon as the opportunity came up again in 2009, I dove in headfirst. By 2010, I was ready to start pulling my first kitemoves at Sterkfontein Dam, a few hours away from my hometown of Durban.

Watching riders like Nick Jacobsen and Ruben Lenten fuelled the fire. As a teenager, I kept pushing myself to try more and more extreme tricks, hoping to one day ride with these legends. Even when I’m sharing the water with these giants, competing at the highest level in Cape Town, they still inspire me to work even harder.

Now that I’ve been kiteboarding for nearly 15 years, I feel like I have both the experience and the equipment I need to take extreme big air to a higher level while getting the kite as low as humanly possible. With the design and technology at Core advancing so much, I felt ready to put the gear to the ultimate test.





Everything has to come together to create the ideal conditions to attempt the adapted infinity roll, which we in the kiting community have dubbed, the "Infinity Loop." There is a lot to consider before even leaving the beach.

STRENGTH OF WIND: As I have always said, "the stronger the wind, the higher you go." When performing this type of manoeuvre, the extra height is critical. There is an instant when the kite no longer pulls you up, but pulls you towards the water, before looping around to pull you back up again.

**"THE STRONGER
THE WIND, THE
HIGHER YOU GO"**

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“ I DON’T HAVE THIS ONE DOWN TO A SCIENCE YET. AT THIS STAGE, IT’S ALL TRIAL AND ERROR - AND SOME ERRORS ARE MORE PAINFUL THAN OTHERS! ”

SIZE OF THE WAVE: A solid kicker plays a vital role in giving me the height I need. Without that ramp to boost off of, the kite would hit the water at the bottom of the loop. If it clears the water, it wouldn’t recover in time for me to make a landing. A big, rolling wave would be ideal, allowing

me more time to focus on where I need to steer the kite to get it lower.

KITE SIZE: This can be a tricky one because a smaller kite is desirable in high winds, but they also give less lift and time to recover from the jump. A small kite means that timing needs to be perfect, or it can end very badly.

LENGTH OF LINES: Megaloops can only get so extreme on standard equipment. I have been experimenting with various line lengths in the past few years, from 14 metres down to 6 metres. Once again, wind strength and

wave size play a role in choosing the ideal line length. I don’t have this one down to a science yet. At this stage, it’s all trial and error - and some errors are more painful than others!

PHOTOGRAPHER: Finding someone willing to swim out and float around in the crash zone with a camera is a challenge in and of itself. Finding the right someone who can also handle the wind and waves, deal with water on the lens, and still somehow be in the right position at the magic moment? Even harder. Fortunately, I’ve teamed up with Blair Van Breda on several shoots, and I know he’s the guy to get the shot!



There was a week of wind in the forecast for South Africa, but the waves were not looking too promising. Still being a little early in the season, the winds have not reached their normal level of reliability. Nevertheless, we had to give it a go.

“THE HARDEST PART WOULD BE LINING IT UP CORRECTLY SO THAT HE COULD CATCH THE BEST ANGLE OF THE LOOP FROM THE WATER.”

Our first attempt was at Kite Beach in Blouberg. It looked like the wind would come through at sunset, but the opposite happened. We found ourselves disappointed at the end of the day in the waning wind and light. We had to pack it in for the day and went back to the drawing board, desperate to make it happen before returning to Durban at the end of the year.

Looking further south to the village of Misty Cliffs, we found the wind blowing 30 knots, with the odd gust to 35 knots. It's a bit on the weak side, but the combination of wind and rolling waves could get us close to that magical moment!

My first session was on a 7-metre kite with 10-metre lines. It was a struggle to get the small kite going, but it felt good in the gusts. With waves on the small side, things were a bit more comfortable for Blair, who was in the water with the camera, but it was difficult for me to find a suitable wave to shoot off of to get the height I needed. The hardest part would be lining it up correctly so that he could catch the best angle of the loop from the water. There was an energy around the day, with Blair as excited as I was to capture the moment.



It is a nervous feeling, chasing that moment of weightlessness. I've always searched for the biggest storms and strongest winds. At 75 knots, it becomes one hell of a ride. It's also where the biggest potential for downfall exists.

The rib injuries are the most painful. An hour drive to the hospital with a rib torn from the cartilage, and the feeling of a knife in the chest being twisted every few minutes is a hard memory to let go of. All I can do is swallow the fear, and keep moving forward. Sometimes I ask myself if it's worth it. I know it is... If you love something, you will do anything for it. This is what I live for.

**"SOMETIMES I ASK
MYSELF IF IT'S
WORTH IT"**

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Funny enough, the conditions on this day weren't anything to write home about. The kickers were super hard and every jump felt completely different. After trying several times, I was almost ready to give up.

There was a moment when I was in the air where everything started to line up. I pulled the trigger. There was a rush I had never felt before, like a volcano or an atomic bomb had just gone off inside of me. When I saw the kite start to recover, I started screaming my lungs out. I was still screaming when I landed. It was a rush I have never experienced before in my history of kiting.

“THE NOISE OF THE WIND AND THE WAVES AND OUR SHOUTS OF TRIUMPH WERE DEAFENING.”

I could see as I rode over to Blair that he was as elated as I was. It is impossible to put into words this feeling of joy and excitement. The noise of the wind and the waves and our shouts of triumph were deafening.

We headed to the beach together, eager to see the shot up close. Without the stress of moving water and strong wind, I could feel my heartbeat return to some semblance of normal. We were celebrating, jumping around in the shallow water like children. The shot was perfect.

There is something that happens when you do something so extreme. It must cause a massive injection of dopamine in the brain. It's addictive, this feeling. I took two metres of line off of my bar and went back into the water, certain I could do better and get the kite even lower.





“I HAD BUILT UP SO MUCH CONFIDENCE THAT I WAS READY TO ATTEMPT THIS EXTREME LOW LOOP WITH A LATE ROTATION.”

Less line length equals less power equals less height. Perhaps that was a calculation I should have checked before going back out in the throes of euphoria. I had built up so much confidence that I was ready to attempt this extreme low loop with a late rotation.

Against all sense, I went for it. Midway through the backroll rotation, I realised I had loaded the backroll too long and my kite was already exiting the loop. I went into an overspin, as did my kite.

I hit the water backwards, knocking the wind clean out of myself. I saw nothing but colours I didn't even know existed for several seconds. As I started coming back to awareness, I was relieved to still be able to feel and move everything on my body.

Grabbing my board, I decided to stop

tempting fate and head back to the beach. It was a wrap for the day. Time to celebrate an incredible moment captured of a manoeuvre that had never been done, as well as me walking away from another slammer of a crash.

That last impact was a reminder of how lucky I was. I want to mention this again: What I am doing is extremely dangerous, and has taken years of practice, dedication, and training.

People have asked me why I keep chasing the most extreme elements of kiteboarding. What do I get out of it? I do it for the love and passion I have for the sport.



I believe that there is no ending to what you are doing. When you begin to think you are done, look at it from another perspective. You might realise that it's not the end, but only the beginning. What I get out of this is the joy of doing it and sharing my stoke with everyone else.

“ I KNOW I CAN GO EVEN FURTHER, TRAIN HARDER, AND FOCUS MORE TO ACHIEVE WHAT I HAVE BEEN DREAMING OF. ”

Today, I know I have pushed it further than anyone has before, but it's not the end of the road. My last crash woke me up, not because I got hurt, but because I know I can go even further, train harder, and focus more to achieve what I have been dreaming of.

What's next? Well, simply to get the kite even lower.

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DO YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY WANT TO LEARN TO KITE?

It's a bit of a mega test this issue with no less than 22 products getting put through their paces! We've got kites, surfboards, twin tips and harnesses all getting the once over this issue!

TRIED & TESTED

KITES

Duotone Neo SLS
F-ONE Bandit 2021
North Orbit 2021
North Reach
Ozone Enduro V3

SURFBOARDS

Cabrinha Spade Pro
Duotone Fish SLS
Duotone Wam SLS
Duotone Whip SLS
F-One Mitu Pro Flex

TWIN TIPS

F-ONE Trax
F-ONE Trax HRD Lite Tech
Fluid Lush 3.0
Kitelement Resolve
North Flare
North Prime
Shinn ADHD
Shinn Slicer

HARNESSES

ION Apex Curv
Manera EXO
Mystic Stealth

BARS

North Navigator

WORDS AND PHOTOS THE IKSURFMAG TEST TEAM
PHOTO THIS PAGE RIDER KEAHI DE ABOITIZ
PHOTO CHUCK HARLAN

BRAND DUOTONE

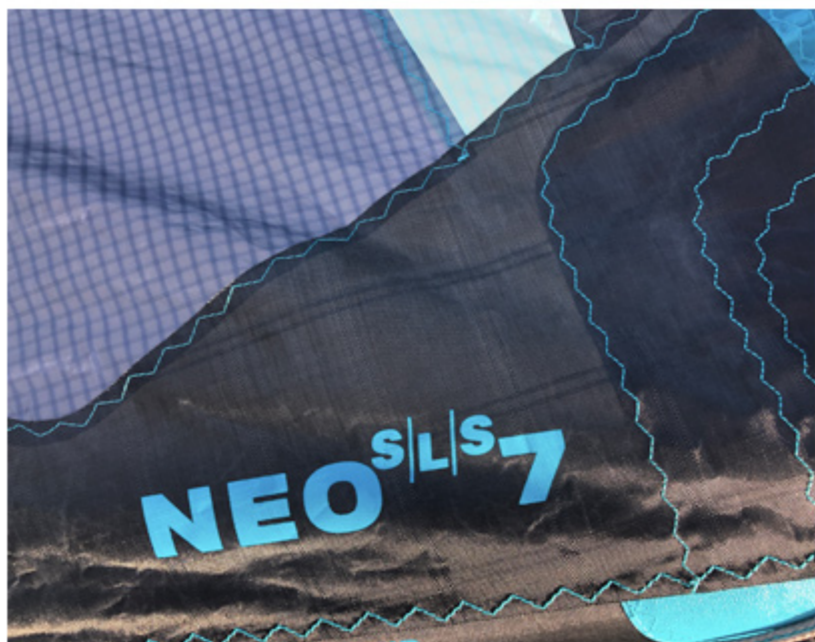
MODEL NEO SLS

SIZE 7M

YEAR 2021



" VASTLY
IMPROVED
LIGHT WIND
CAPABILITIES
AND SEEMINGLY
ENDLESS DRIFT
AND FLOAT "



AT A GLANCE

The Neo has been part of wave kiting folklore for so long now it is hard to remember a time without it. For 2021 this iconic kite sees some major updates designed to tempt even more riders into the fold. The big news is the new SLS moniker that has been added to the name. SLS stands for Strong, Light, Superior, it defines the very top end of the Duotone lineup and is seen not just on kites but on boards too.

As far as the kites are concerned, the name mainly denotes the use of a new material called Penta TX. For many years we have enjoyed multiple leaps forward in terms of materials although this was, in the past, more focused around the canopy of the kite. One of the heavier materials in kite construction has always been the Dacron used in the struts and leading edge. This can cause kites to be front heavy, leading to front stalls in light winds, think the dreaded Hindenburg and you get the idea.

Penta TX replaces all the Dacron in the new Neo SLS, and it is 25% lighter, and proven to be stronger and more durable too.

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WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



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" IT IS A KITE WHICH GIVES ME THE OPTION TO DO ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING ON THE WATER "



AT A GLANCE

The Bandit returns again for its 14th edition for 2021. Last year saw F-ONE split the Bandit into 2 categories, The Bandit and the Bandit S (for wave riding and freeride) and both kites have received amazing feedback. I was lucky enough to get my hands on the 9m and the kite from the year before it feels like F-ONE have made minor improvements to make this already amazing kite even better. Turning, lift, hangtime and loops are many of the great qualities the Bandit holds.

Looking at the kite, it has a three strut build with a Delta C-Shape offering amazing stability and steering. The wingtips are the same as the previous year, they have a squarer shape which again, helps with the speed and turning ability.

F-ONE have altered the panel layout and added a new trailing edge reinforcement which gives the Bandit its sleek profile. The connection between the rider and the kite has never felt better and what you put in is what you get out! The balance between stability and manoeuvrability is bang on.

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"THERE'S NO DENYING THAT THIS KITE BOOSTS AND PERFORMS TO THE HIGHEST LEVEL."



AT A GLANCE

For the past 2 years, the North Orbit has thrived within The Big Air scene. North's Jesse Richman took the 2020 Orbit to a podium finish at The King of The Air contest with Marc Jacobs recording the highest jump over the course of the competition. There's no denying that this kite boosts and performs to the highest level.

The North Orbit is a five strut design with a high aspect swept wingtip and efficient two-stage arc design. For 2021 there have been some design changes to address some of the feedback that was received about the first incarnation of the kite. The goal was to improve the overall stability at both the low end and the very top end of the kite, yet retain the incredible handling and boosting characteristics.

For 2021 North have a new lighter weight construction. They've replaced the heavier Dacron on the trailing and leading edge with a new light canopy reinforcement. Not only is it stronger, but it allows better control too. They have also modified the bridle system from the 2020 Orbit.

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BRAND NORTH MODEL REACH SIZE 12M YEAR 2020



" THIS KITE IS
SIMPLE TO SET
UP, EASY TO FLY
AND REALLY
HELPS YOU
PROGRESS
YOUR RIDING "

TO VISIT THEIR
WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



AT A GLANCE

The 'Desert Island Kite' from NKB is the hotly anticipated Reach. Born of the idea, this is a go-to kite to allow you to practise all disciplines within kiteboarding. Designed by Pat Goodman, it sits at the performance freeride end of the current four kite line up.

The Reach is a three strut, mid to high aspect ratio kite which benefits from high-grade Teijin D2 canopy ripstop for unparalleled weight to strength ratios. It uses a pulley-less contact bridle for precise feedback and control; and Kevlar reinforcements with Duralite Seam protection for next-level durability.

The Reach has larger wingtips than many kites in its class and with the balanced bridle system adds power and connectivity through the turn. This results in the confidence-inspiring ability to catch you on each loop as you head into the world of aerial acrobatics and more powered riding.

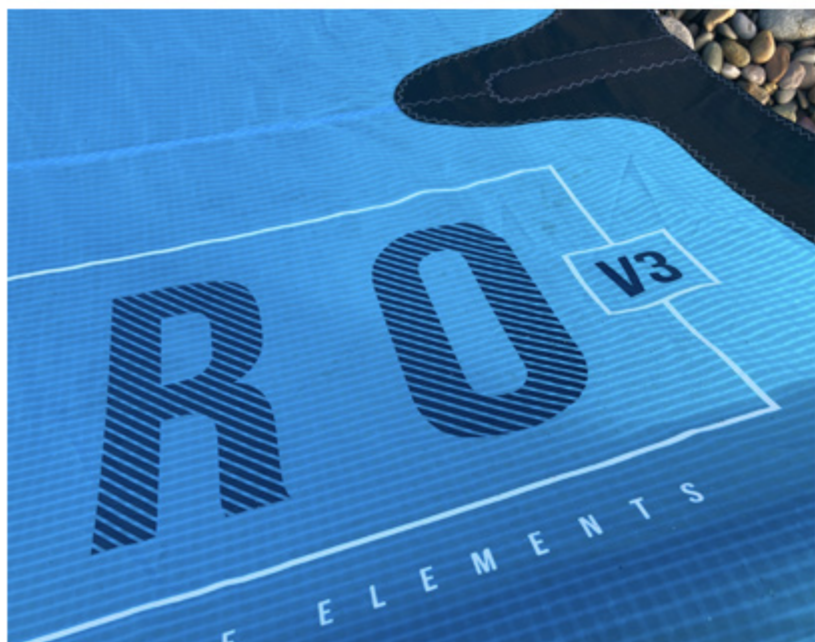
North have paid great attention to detail with the Reach and have made a considered effort to reduce excess weight and fuff by using only the essential reinforcements and added protection.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

BRAND OZONE MODEL ENDURO V3 SIZE 7M YEAR 2021



" ARGUABLY THE
LIGHTEST KITE
IN ITS CLASS
WITH SOME OF
THE BEST FLYING
CHARACTERISTICS
TOO "



AT A GLANCE

The Enduro has been part of the Ozone line up for a while now, it's a three strut do it all machine that is the go-to kite in their line up for riders who don't let a particular style of riding define them. It's designed to be able to perform at the highest levels for wave, freestyle and freeriding. Twin tips, surfboards and hydrofoils can all be friends with the Enduro V3 and so can you.

Ozone never release a new kite until they feel they have improved on the older version, it's a solid philosophy that has seen the kites hold their value on the second-hand market. Even better it stops riders chasing version years and only needing to update their gear when they need to. With a just in time manufacturing model and their own factory that runs off solar power, the Ozone brand is arguably one of the most ecologically conscious out there.

Known for creating lightweight no-fuss kites the brand is always striving to make a kite fly better, rather than cover it in unnecessary bumpers and reinforcements. However, for this year it is worth noting the use of some new materials.

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" SPEED AND GRIP ARE TWO WORDS THAT SUM THIS BOARD UP WELL"



BRAND CABRINHA **MODEL** SPADE PRO
SIZE 5'3" **YEAR** 2021

AT A GLANCE

The Spade has been part of the Cabrinha family for a while now, this year sees an update to the popular design. As well as a new construction, hence the Pro moniker. The new lay-up is an exciting development, the aim is to create a lighter, more responsive board that delivers even more performance to the rider. It's light, much lighter than the previous boards Cabrinha have made and it is still very durable.

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" IT'S SO MUCH FUN TO RIDE AGGRESSIVELY ON THE WAVE, THE BOARD DOESN'T SKIP A BEAT "



BRAND DUOTONE **MODEL** FISH SLS
SIZE 5'3" **YEAR** 2021

AT A GLANCE

The Duotone Fish SLS was first seen on the market last year, a bit of a change in direction from the previous Nugget design that had been aimed at light wind cruising and wave riding. By harking back to a different time, Sky Solbach the shaper has harnessed the flat rocker, forward wide point and fishtail that makes a fish, well a fish. Last year it was arguably the revelation in the surfboard line up, entertaining to ride and with plenty of low-end power and drive.

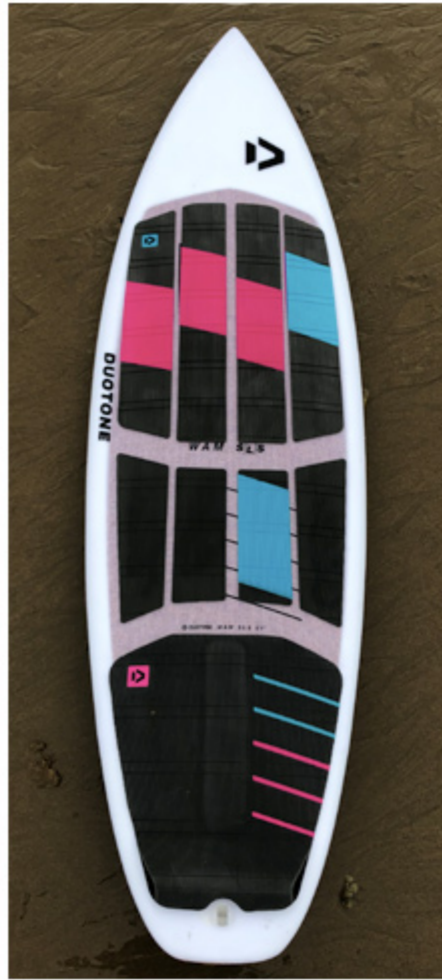
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"BIG WAVES,
SMALL WAVES
THE
PERFORMANCE IS
ALWAYS THERE"



BRAND DUOTONE
SIZE 5'7"

MODEL WAM SLS
YEAR 2021

AT A GLANCE

The Duotone Wam has been a stalwart in the line up for many years now, it's a trusty all-round shape designed for a range of riders and to suit a variety of waves. It's the Swiss army knife of the line-up, happy in the smaller stuff, but also confident when the conditions get bigger. It will see you through your first days of strapless riding, while equally, it can perform at a level that will excite even the most seasoned of riders.

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TO VISIT THEIR
WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



"YOU CAN REALLY
SNAP IT
VERTICALLY IN
THE CRITICAL
SECTION WITH
A HUGE
SATISFYING
KAPOW."



BRAND DUOTONE
SIZE 5'3"

MODEL WHIP SLS
YEAR 2021

AT A GLANCE

The Whip has been a massive favourite in the Duotone line up for many years, equally happy slaying waves as it is flying through the air, it's the board to buy if you want to ride strapless freestyle and wave ride with one board. The cut off nose and tail shape also means you can pack a lot into a small shape like this 5'3" so it's also an excellent choice for the travelling wave rider too.

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" THIS BOARD WILL APPEAL TO A WIDE RANGE OF RIDERS FROM BEGINNER TO EXPERT. "



BRAND F-ONE
SIZE 5'8"

MODEL MITU PRO FLEX
YEAR 2021

AT A GLANCE

The world's most popular kitesurfing board is back, Mitu and the team at F-ONE really hit this shape out of the park all those years ago, and it has remained popular ever since. It's a board that seemingly does the impossible, offer everything Mitu Monteiro needs to perform at the very highest levels of the sport, while still offering novice wave riders a forgiving, comfortable ride. It's this winning formula that has made the board so popular.

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" THIS BOARD IS PACKED WITH PERFORMANCE AND IS GREAT VALUE FOR MONEY "



BRAND F-ONE
SIZE 137 X 42CM

MODEL TRAX
YEAR 2021

AT A GLANCE

The TRAX has developed somewhat legend status among the F-ONE board range, it is now available in three different guises and constructions. This is the basic version that we have on test here, this version of the board also comes in 2 colours. The smaller sizes in Glacier and the bigger sizes in Papaya, both of which have a really tropical look to them, so even if you are kiting in the cold and wet UK, you'll feel like riding in the warm Caribbean wa-ters with one of these under

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" GREAT FOR FREERIDE/ BIG AIR WITH THE OPTION OF ALSO PERFORMING WELL FOR FREESTYLE. "



BRAND F-ONE
SIZE 137 X 42CM

MODEL TRAX HRD LITE TECH
YEAR 2021

AT A GLANCE

The TRAX HRD Lite Tech has a long and successful past with F-ONE, it is also one of the more popular twin tips on the market today. There are heaps of technical features within this board that make it special and I've had some really good sessions already!

F-ONE's unique Helical Rail Design or HRD for short is a construction process which benefits the performance of the board in all conditions. Unlike other twin tips where the board has the same outline throughout the whole shape,

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"WHEN IT HITS THE DECK, YOU FEEL THE GRIP STRAIGHT AWAY"



BRAND FLUID KITEBOARDING **MODEL** LUSH 3.0
SIZE 128 X 41CM **YEAR** 2021

AT A GLANCE

The Lush 3.0 from Fluid Kiteboarding is a board catered for those who enjoy freestyle and wakestyle kiting, hit also delivers exceptionally well for freeride. The Lush has been developed by Fluid team riders and local kites in the Netherlands to enhance the performance and give riders a board that everyone can enjoy.

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"A SHARP AND PRECISE FEEL TO THE RIDE WHILST EARNING YOU SERIOUS STYLE POINTS AT BEACHES WORLDWIDE."



BRAND RESOLVE **MODEL** BLACK
SIZE 136 X 41CM **YEAR** 2020

AT A GLANCE

As with all the Kitelement boards, the ReSolve is a highly polished bit of kit for which the ability to split just happens to be a bonus. Designed with freestylers in mind, the board features inserts for both boots and straps as well as the simple yet incredibly strong and effective A-lock system 'split' in the centre of the board for which you simply need to tighten the 6 screws to secure.

TO VISIT THEIR WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE



" THIS BOARD IS LIGHTWEIGHT, AND AT ITS CORE, IT IS PURE FUN AND FREEDOM. "



BRAND NORTH
SIZE 143X42CM

MODEL FLARE
YEAR 2020

AT A GLANCE

The Flare is the all-out wakestyle freestyle board from North. Designed for those shredders who demand a board equally at home in the flats or over kickers, the Flare is a no-compromise wakestyle dream.

From the bottom up, the Flare features a low friction P-Tex grind base for those features you have lined up; ABS rails for longevity and durability; a high wakestyle rocker for those powered landings and square tips to generate maximum pop.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

TO VISIT THEIR WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



" SIMPLICITY IS THE BEAUTY OF THIS BOARD "



BRAND NORTH
SIZE 138X41

MODEL PRIME
YEAR 2020

AT A GLANCE

The Prime from North Kiteboarding sits in their line up as their go-to, easy to use freeride board. A simple approach with this board means it does exactly what you need when you need. Coming in an array of sizes to ensure there will certainly be an option to suit almost every rider out there.

North have used sustainable Paulownia wood in the core of all their boards which not only provides a solid board

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" IT'S FAST,
CONTROLLED
AND A VERY
ENGAGING AND
LIVELY RIDE. "



BRAND SHINN
SIZE 138 X 41.5CM

MODEL ADHD DISTORTION
YEAR 2021

AT A GLANCE

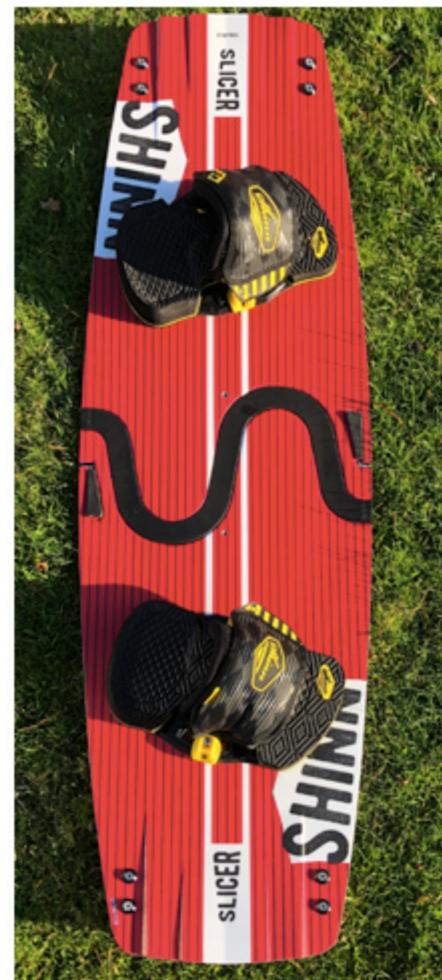
The Shinn ADHD has been the flagship ride from the Shinn team aimed at the freestyler looking for no compromises. It's the highest performance deck in the range from Shinn and is focused on freestyle and big air, offering unrivalled pop but also control on the landings. For 2020 the board has had a redesign with a totally new shape to maximise the performance.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

TO VISIT THEIR
WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



" RAIL TO RAIL
CARVING IS A
BREEZE, AND IT'S
A FUN BOARD TO
SMASH A FEW
WAVES WITH. "



BRAND SHINN
SIZE 138 X 41.5CM

MODEL SLICER
YEAR 2021

AT A GLANCE

Shinn have a huge pedigree in the world of kitesurfing, Mark Shinn has been creating incredible boards for what feels like forever, the Slicer though, is the first splitboard from Shinn. Splitboards have come in various shapes and sizes over the years, but Mark took the design back to the drawing board in order to focus on giving the Slicer a smooth, consistent flex right through the board.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

TO VISIT THEIR
WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



“ THIS IS A VERY POLISHED HARNESS THAT IS PACKED WITH FEATURES ”



AT A GLANCE

The ION Apex Curv 13 is a top of the line hard shell harness from the popular accessories brand, they grade all their harnesses with a stiffness rating, were at 13 here. Their scale goes from 20 at the top end for the ultra-stiff Riot CS down to a rating of 4 for their Axis Kite harness. The backplate is made from the thermal composite Curv material that ION developed, it's got a high profile to it to offer lots of support, and they grade it as medium stiff, to stiff.

The harness is compatible with the new C-Bar 3.0 and Kite Knife Multitool, this innovative set up is really something to behold. Instead of changing out the entire spreader bar when switching between rope and hook setups, you can use the multitool on the kite knife to unscrew three screws on the back of the spreader bar and swap out the hook itself.

ION have a range of hooks for this season including the new Quicklock Hook, this creative system aims to ensure you are always securely connected to the chicken loop. The hook snaps over the chicken loop when you want to hook in,

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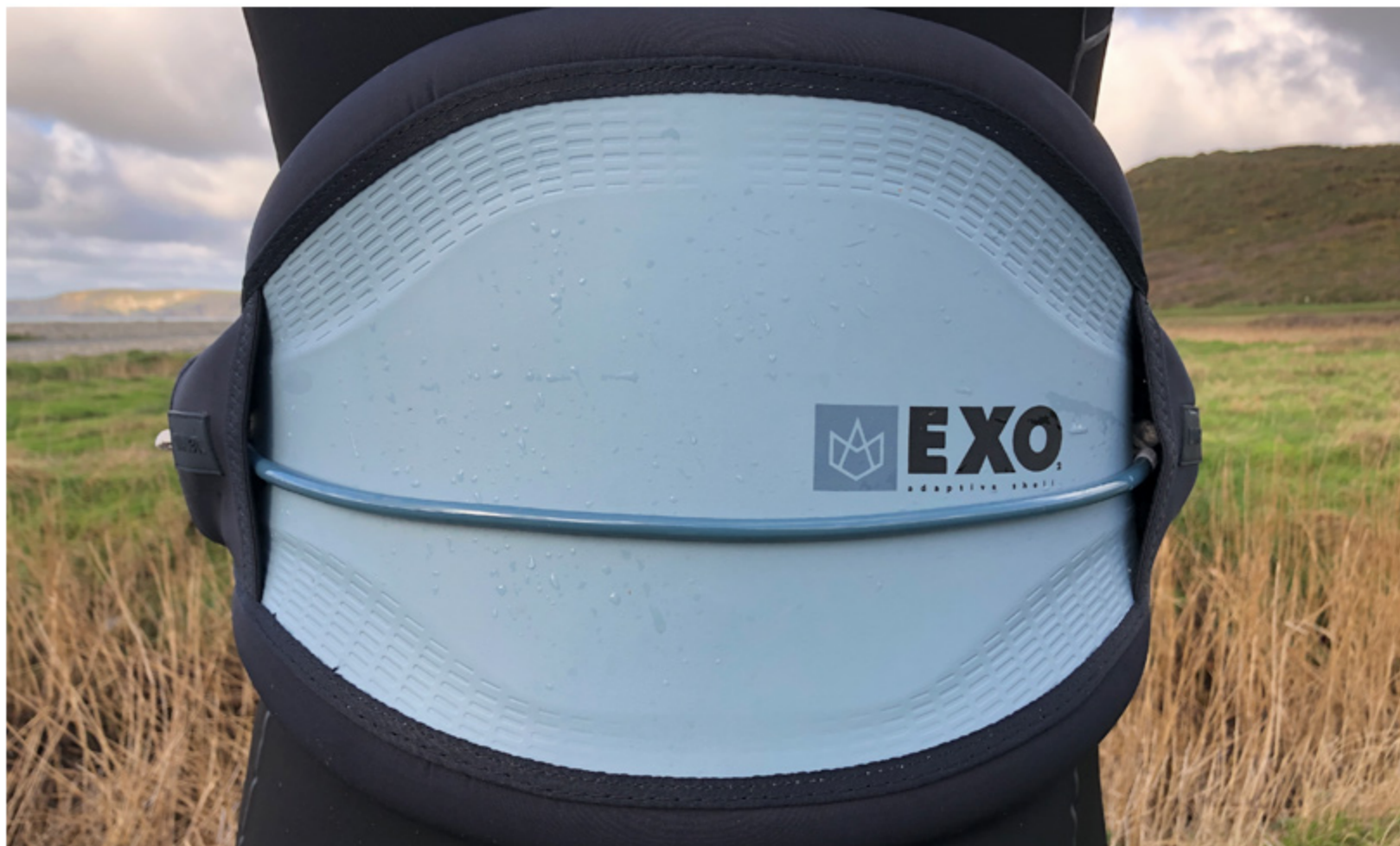
BRAND MANERA

MODEL EXO

YEAR 2021



“THE FINISH AND FEEL OF THE HARNESS EXUDES QUALITY.”



AT A GLANCE

The original Manera EXO was a harness that really truly changed the way we thought about harness design. It was the first harness to use an exterior load dispersal shell, at the time Manera worked with a university science team to measure the pressure points on various harness. They came up with the idea of the exterior load frame and using wider spreader bars to stop the harness from getting distorted under load.

It worked, I recall being at the dealer meeting where we all had our own favourite harnesses, and the Manera team asked us to try their new harness just for one session. We were all properly fitted and sized and hit the water. Out of the 25 or so people, there not one of us went back to our old harnesses. That was six years ago now, and the harness market has changed a lot, rigid shells are a big part of it, and while the EXO was the comfiest harness I had ever worn for some time, it was definitely in need of an update.

Manera have made two new harnesses since the EXO, the Eclipse and the Union.

TO VISIT THEIR WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

BRAND MYSTIC

MODEL STEALTH

YEAR 2021



"IT IS WITHOUT DOUBT ONE OF THE MOST COMFORTABLE HARNESSES I HAVE EVER WORN."



AT A GLANCE

The new Mystic Stealth harness hit the market a couple of months ago to some fanfare, it followed hot on the heels of the excellent Stealth spreader bar system that they released a little while back. If you've experienced the Stealth spreader bar you will have some idea of how this harness has been designed. The Stealth bar was a stylish, minimalist affair and the harness follows that design remit. Essentially a cross between the Majestic hardshell series and the Legend series it is poised to be the most advanced harness on the market to date.

The Legend was a harness made purely from foams that didn't absorb water, the aim was to make it light, and to stay light when wet. By combining this idea with the hardshell the plan was to make the ultimate lightweight hardshell harness. There is no neoprene to absorb water, no unnecessary parts to add weight, just the hardshell, Flexagon Drytech foam, buckles, webbing and buckle garage.

Obviously it works perfectly with the awesome Stealth spreader bar which comes in both a hook and a rope slider option for kites.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

TO VISIT THEIR WEBSITE, CLCK HERE

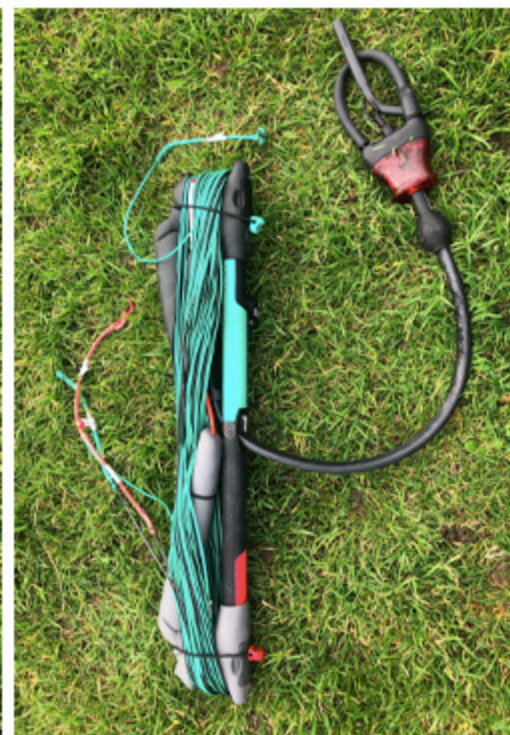


BRAND NORTH MODEL NAVIGATOR BAR SIZE 45-40CM YEAR 2021



“NORTH HAVE MADE THE MINOR CHANGES THAT MAKE THIS EXCEPTIONAL”

TO VISIT THEIR WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



AT A GLANCE

The 2020 Navigator Bar was packed full of neat features and was a very well thought out design. For 2021 North have made minor adjustments and improvements which make this bar even better, which was hard to do with something that already worked incredibly well.

Previously there were 2 bars to choose from in size, 45-50cm & 50-55cm. 2021 sees North bringing a third size to market, a 38-43cm, best suited to small freeride kites, young riders or freestylers and also an excellent addition for kite schools!

For 2021 the Navigator has a new omnidirectional grip with an offset finger bar making it super comfortable in your hands. They've also changed the colour from red/grey to a 'stealthier' looking design of black/green, in other words, North have gone down the route of their sailing background with port (red) and starboard (green). The grip is definitely an improvement from last year and makes the bar look a lot more premium. The thickness of the bar is ideal for everyone, it's not crazy thick, but it's not fat and chunky, it sits perfectly.

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RIDER RIDER RODERICK PIJLS
PHOTO MARIAN HUND

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WORDS CRYSTAL VENESS

RIDER CLINTON FILEN PHOTO SAMUEL TOME

TECH FOCUS

AIRUSH ULTRA BAR

Q&A with Dave Kay
(Product Design Engineer)



Airush has 5 control bars in the lineup. Where does the Ultra Bar fit in and what features are you most excited to tell us about?

The Ultra Bar is our Minimalist control system solution for the advanced rider looking for functional simplicity. The Ultra Bar is simple, clean, and lightweight. It has an extended throw of 60cm, so the rider has the full range of the kite available to them instantly, without the need for adjusting a trim system. This bar uses the set-and-forget off the water trim system. The main features of the bar are that there are no “extra features.” The bar is designed to have just what you need, and nothing more.

What is the ‘set-and-forget off the water trim system’? How does it work?

To account for line shrinkage and different wind conditions, the Ultra Bar has a set of three knots on a short pigtail just below the front line V point. This can be adjusted before launching the kite if required.

Most kiteboarders are familiar with some sort of trim system with a cleat or strap where we can control power on demand. How does a longer than the industry standard bar throw replace the need for a depower strap?

If we compare it to our current Cleat Bar control system with 50cm of depower throw and 10cm of cleat based trim, the Ultra Bar with its 60cm of throw has the same overall range, just with all of it available instantly by simply pulling in on the bar or pushing it away.

What sort of kites would want a minimalist bar such as this one?

The Ultra Bar is notably suited for both foil and wave riding because both groups tend to push the usable range of their kites at both the low and top end.



“THE MAIN FEATURES OF THE BAR ARE THAT THERE ARE NO “EXTRA FEATURES.” THE BAR IS DESIGNED TO HAVE JUST WHAT YOU NEED, AND NOTHING MORE.”



" I THEN HAD AN ISSUE - EVERY TIME I GOT A TEST RIDER TO TRY IT, THEY WOULDN'T GIVE IT BACK! "

Having lots of instant range available can be a big advantage to these riders over more traditional control systems. Shipped with a wave slider loop as well as a small harness loop, the Ultra bar is ideal for pairing with your sliding spreader bar, optimal for wave riding purists.

Riders with a shorter reach often have concerns about bar throw and being able to reach the bar. Can riders with a small wingspan manage the longer throw on the Ultra Bar?

The Ultra Bar wouldn't be the first choice of a short-armed rider in a high hook position or waist harness. We have the short (40cm) throw Access Bar which is ideal for these riders. However, a seat or shorts' harness with its lower hook position can be a good match for smaller riders looking to enjoy the

wide range of depower available from the Ultra Bar.

The Ultra Bar uses the IQR (Intelligent Quick Release) which is the new standard on all Airush Bars. How does the IQR work and what makes it such a user-friendly system?

The IQR is an ISO21853 compliant quick release 100% developed in house here at Airush. It features a very simple click in style reset system while still being compact and easy to service. The Airush IQR safety leash release system features an ergonomically designed red handle for added grip, making it easier to push the handle away from you when you need to be completely disconnected from your kite.

How does the Ultra Bar pair with the new foil range that you've just launched?

Foil kites are the lead group of riders the Ultra Bar appeals to, as the bar is lighter in physical weight, and the larger depower amount is perfect for varying speeds while riding. So yes, both of the product ranges are closely matched.

What was the inspiration behind this design? Who is the innovative mind behind this product?

I built my first Ultra Bar many years ago as an experiment while working on some other bar concepts. I then had an issue - every time I got a test rider to try it, they wouldn't give it back! This told me I was onto something special. I continued to ride this type of bar full-time for all styles of riding over the next few years. It took until I started to work on the Airush bar range that an opportunity came to release it as a commercial product.

WORDS CRYSTAL VENESS

TECH FOCUS

CRAZYFLY
PURE POCKET FOIL BOARD

Q&A with Juraj Bukovčák





" THESE POCKET BOARDS ARE NIFTY AND STIFF, WHICH HELPS YOU FEEL ONE WITH THE FOIL AND GET INSTANT REACTIONS. "

While our cell phones seem to be getting bigger and bigger every year, our foil boards get smaller and smaller! Why do you think that pocket foil boards have become such a trend and how do riders benefit from the smaller board?

As the community of foil kites progress, they have realised that they no longer need large boards. The level of foil riders is going up and up, and these experienced riders rarely touch down. When you're already up on the foil, you do not benefit from a bigger board. Of course, smaller boards are easier to travel with and carry to the water. Our 77cm Pure pocket foil board and Cruz foil with a 70cm mast can be packed into a regular travel suitcase, and you can still fit a kite or two without any extra charges.

What sort of foil skills should a rider have before dropping down to a super light, super small pocket foil board like the Pure?

These pocket boards are nifty and stiff, which helps you feel one with the foil and get instant reactions. The Pure board is designed for advanced riders who already know what type of gear they want for their foiling style. These riders are typically already jumping and landing their tricks most of the time, and have water starts nailed down to a science. Riders will feel a clear difference between a 3.5kg board and 1.4kg board when doing aials and board offs. We do have larger boards at CrazyFly suited for beginners and intermediate riders, such as the Chill and F-lite models.

How did you come up with the concept of the Air Inside WoodCore? Can you tell us more about what it is and why it's an exciting development?

One of the key design goals on the Pure was to create the lightest possible foil board. The heaviest part of the board is the wood core itself,



PURE

" THE FUTURE IS LOOKING GOOD AND WE HAVE SOME INTERESTING NEW RELEASES COMING UP "

so we explored options in materials and technology to reduce the core weight. Approximately 30% of the board is hollow. We cannot share the secrets of how the Air Inside Core is done, but there are true hollow, air-filled spaces in sections of the wood core. This drastically reduces weight, while the strategic placement of the air sections ensures the Pure board has the same strength as any other foil board.

It is by far the lightest foil board on the market thanks to the Air Inside WoodCore technology. In its smallest size, the 77cm Pure weighs 1.4kg including the full deck footpad. The air also increases buoyancy, and the 88cm and 99cm sizes float, even when paired with our 3.5kg hybrid aluminium/carbon Cruz foil with the 90cm mast, which is quite impressive!

The Pure comes in 3 sizes: 77cm, 88cm, and 99cm. Any advice on which size benefits which style or level of riding?

Style and riding level come into play when selecting the ideal board size, but the most important factor is rider weight. Even an expert foiler may struggle on the 77cm size, so we suggest the 77cm size for experts only up to 80kg. Riders in the 80-90kg range should consider either the 88cm or 99cm sizes. Larger riders should avoid the Pure board, and take a look at the F-lite board instead. The F-lite also has a full carbon construction, but with more carbon reinforcements in the centre of the board. If your goal is to foil in the lightest wind conditions possible, grab one of the bigger sizes and a larger front wing on the foil.

The growth of the kite foiling community has also created a new group of gear geeks... do you think the CrazyFly Pure board will excite the avid foilers out there?

Looking at our sales of the Pure so far, it has definitely excited foilers looking for high-end gear. We endeavour to push the limits of technology, staying one step ahead of competitors with precise European manufacturing. The Pure is a standout board in all aspects. Designing and making such products is what we love the most. For us, it is almost a form of art. From beautiful materials through to sleek design and hands-on craftsmanship comes the Pure. Seeing riders rave about these boards drives us forward to the next challenge. We are addicted to this.

Where in Europe is the CrazyFly factory? Has having European production helped avoid the supply chain issues that are affecting the kiteboarding industry?

Our factory is in Nemsova, Slovakia. Those familiar with our brand know that Jozef, the main man behind the brand, has been designing and making windsurf and kite equipment since 1992. He founded CrazyFly in 1999, so there are nearly 30 years of experience leading to products like the Pure board.

Our European location helped us a lot in these past several months. We have not had many issues with the supply of raw materials, as over 90% of these come from Europe. We have also been able to ship orders from our stock, so customers have not been affected at all. Still, the situation was far from easy to manage and it still affects us now. However, the future is looking good and we have some interesting new releases coming up including the Elite III twin tip, a brand new kite and one more foil, so stay tuned for CrazyFly news!

TECH FOCUS

ELEVEIGHT X4 RIPSTOP AND XT FABRIC

We at Eleveight believe in prime quality as the foundation of high-performance products. Our R+D team are in constant collaboration with our suppliers to develop innovative materials and push the limits of performance. Our X4 ripstop canopy and the XT high tenacity cloth are a result of our cooperation with different leading material suppliers.

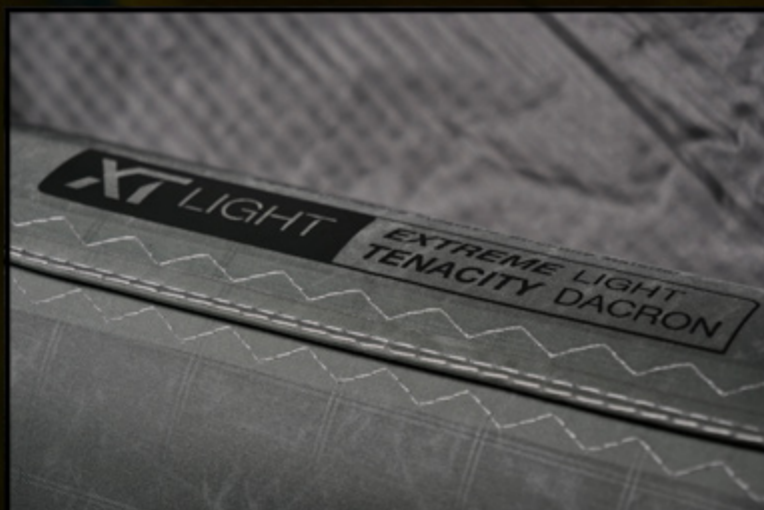


The X4 ripstop canopy is used across our entire kite range and features an ultra-high tenacity polyester cloth with 4 ripstop yarns. The ripstop yarn is spun from several yarns, reinforcing the cloth. The X4 construction also features a special coating with a high-temperature resin finish, including a UV filter.

We use our XT fabric for all inflatable structures (leading edge and struts). It is a highly tear-resistant material that offers the perfect dynamic frame for all Eleveight kite and wing models. The OS - our one strut kite - uses our recently introduced XT light fabric, which is 15% lighter than our normal material and is a perfect match for our light wind kites.

Our customers will notice improvements in performance, where we have achieved less stretch in all directions (0°, 90° & +/- 45°), resulting in precise and responsive flight characteristics. Less elastic fatigue and more rip protection against peak loads, tears, and punctures will result in a product that lasts longer. With the new materials, our kites have enhanced durability with less wear and tear. Our materials have been developed to ensure our customers have a more durable, responsive, high-performance kite.

“ WITH THE NEW MATERIALS, OUR KITES HAVE ENHANCED DURABILITY WITH LESS WEAR AND TEAR. ”



WORDS CRYSTAL VENESS

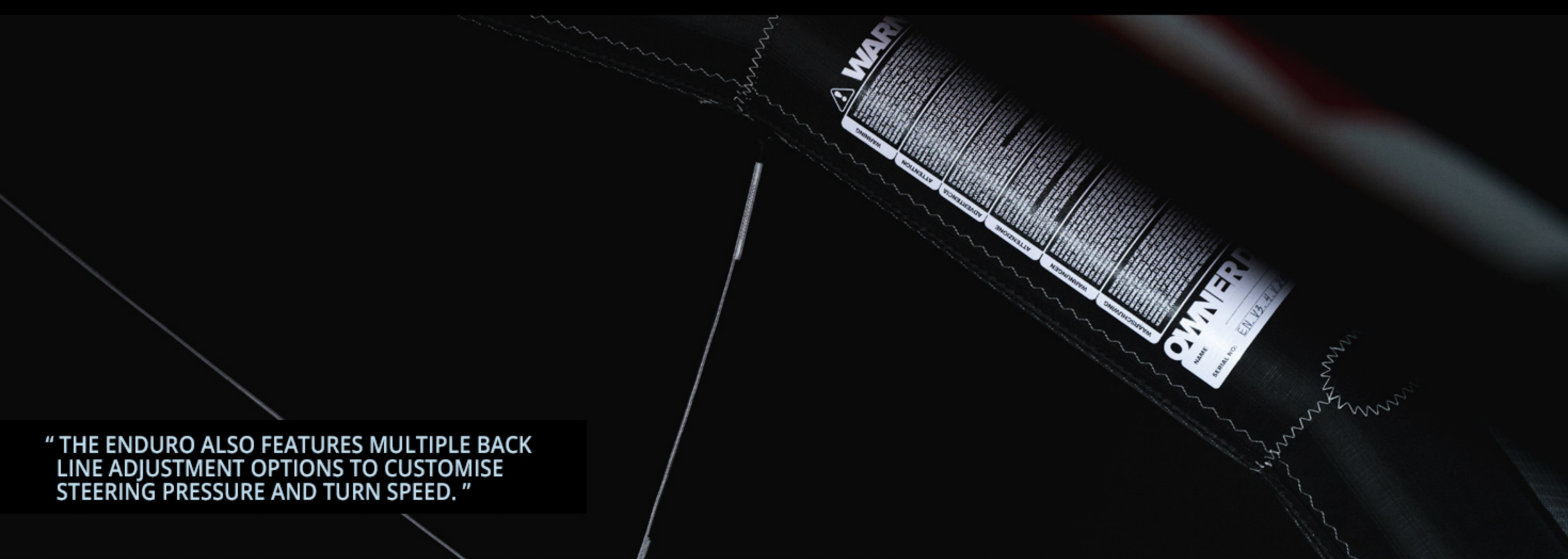
RIDER JAMIE OVERBEEK PHOTO COLD NAIL MEDIA

TECH FOCUS

OZONE
ENDURO V3

Q&A with Torrin Bright (Product Manager)
and Rob Whittall (Designer)





" THE ENDURO ALSO FEATURES MULTIPLE BACK LINE ADJUSTMENT OPTIONS TO CUSTOMISE STEERING PRESSURE AND TURN SPEED. "

Before we got on the water, the first thing we noticed while pumping up the new Ozone Enduro V3 was the adjustable bridle. What exactly is 'Variable Bridle Geometry'?

Variable Bridle Geometry is the adjustability of bridle angles (i.e. the 'geometry') to fine-tune the Enduro's performance and feeling for various styles of riding. We first introduced 'VBG' a few years back as a way to effectively extend the range of the kite and maximise the design potential. We now see many manufacturers adopting similar systems, backing up the validity of our idea.

When you change the knot from the Wave/Foil setting to the Freeride or Freestyle setting, what

does that change about the flight characteristics of the Enduro V3?

Freeride (middle knot) – The ideal balance in performance and feeling for all-round riding in any conditions. This is how the kite is set when it is shipped from the factory.

Wave/Foil (upper knot) – Decreases bar pressure and increases steering reactivity in all states of power and de-power. It is easier to turn the kite while de-powered when riding a wave or hydro foiling.

Freestyle (lower knot) – Increases sheeting bar pressure, increases power in kite loops, and increases pop for unhooked tricks. If you prefer a heavier and direct feel, try this setting.

Most LEI kites have adjustment points on the wingtips, but one at the centre of the leading edge is something unique. What gave you the idea to do things differently?

We are constantly trying all sorts of bridle configurations and we found this solution offers performance and feeling differences without adding pulleys in the bridle system or more connection points to the leading edge. The VBG system is quick and easy to change with no extra lines to add or remove, the user only needs to slide the bridle up or down the knots at a single point. The Enduro also features multiple back line adjustment options to customise steering pressure and turn speed.



**" IT GETS YOU OUT ON THE WATER FASTER,
AND MAKES PACKING DOWN A LOT EASIER. "**

This is the first kite in the lineup to include your new One-Pump Valve system. What does this mean and why is it an improvement over the previous system?

The One-Pump inflation system enables quick and easy setup with a single point of inflation on the kite. Our new system has almost twice the airflow capacity compared to the previous system, which means it gets you out on the water faster, and makes packing down a lot easier.

Have there been any changes to the material for this model of the Enduro?

The Enduro V3 features our new extensively tested triple rip-stop material combination. The new triple rip-stop canopy material is 15% stronger with reduced elongation characteristics, combined with an advanced ultra flex coating improving feedback in gustier conditions making for a smoother ride. The new technical triple rip-stop dacron is super tough, used on the leading edge and struts it improves strength, durability, and longevity.

Ozone has different models of kites for all different styles of kiteboarding from wave to light wind to big air to freestyle. Is the Enduro V3 designed to be the do-it-all kite? Should a wave crazy kitesurfer consider the Enduro over the Reo?

The Enduro is a very popular do-it-all model. It has amazing performance across all disciplines and delivers solid wave riding performance, but is not as dedicated to waves as the Reo. A wave crazy kitesurfer would most likely consider the Reo over the Enduro, but for the kiter that likes versatility and a little bit of everything: the Enduro will light your fire!



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WORDS CAMILLE DELANNOY
PHOTO CAIO PACHECO

ISOLÉ:

EXPERIENCING LENÇÓIS

A journey into the natural environment of Brazil, where dunes and lagoons meet the Atlantic Ocean. Camille Delannoy uses his time in isolation to see his life from a different perspective.



“ I WAS EXCITED TO BE ONE OF THE FIRST STRAPLESS RIDERS TO EXPLORE THESE IMMACULATE WATERS.”

I've always wanted to go to Lençóis. For those who have never heard of this place, take your mind to Brazil's North Atlantic Coast, with steady wind and sandy beaches. Parque Nacional dos Lençóis Maranhenses is a protected zone, home to endless white sand dunes with rainwater lagoons adding splashes of blue to the otherwise pristine landscape.

This is a kitesurfer's paradise. This beautiful landscape has been explored by the freestylers, who have laid claim to the butter flat lagoons. From what I had heard, it is one of the most beautiful places in the world. With the rise of strapless freestyle, I was excited to be one of the first strapless riders to explore these immaculate waters.

Living in Preá, Brazil allows me to be on the water nearly every day, either competing, shooting, or training. I had never found time to visit this ecological wonder. Due to the pandemic, the pace of my life, like most, has come to a grinding halt. Trips were cancelled, competitions struck from the calendar, and photoshoots postponed. It was an opportunity to slow down and do something different.

I knew I was lucky to be able to go in the water and train when most of the world was in lockdown. I had to make the most of my time. Knowing I wouldn't have any competitions for a while left me with plenty of time to try new things. I didn't only want to learn tricks that would score well in competitions, I wanted to do things in strapless freestyle that no one has seen or thought about before.

PHOTO DIEGO CORREIA



PHOTO CAIO PACHECO

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TONIC

WINGS / FOILS / SUP / SURF

06

WINTER 2020



I wanted to bring a new approach to this side of the sport, and find my own style of riding. After six months of hard work on the water, I couldn't be happier with where I am today. It was the right time to take a break and finally explore Lençóis.

It was a mission to get there. The first part of the journey was an eight-hour drive. On the way, we stopped in the Parnaíba Delta, where the water flows through a mangrove rich area on its way to the Atlantic Ocean. It is one of the biggest rivers in northern Brazil, and worth a visit if you find yourself on a similar adventure.

" AFTER SIX MONTHS OF HARD WORK ON THE WATER, I COULDN'T BE HAPPIER WITH WHERE I AM TODAY "

ORIGINS OF THE WING | SUP THE STOUR
INTRODUCING - OLIVIA JENKINS | TECHNIQUE, TESTS AND MUCH MORE INSIDE

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“ WITH HUNDREDS OF DUNES AND LAGOONS, THE VASTNESS OF LENÇÓIS TOOK MY BREATH AWAY. ”

Our guide explained that the many sandbanks in this area are a result of water travelling through the delta and carrying sand out to sea. They say that these sandbanks have created spots where perfect waves break for hundreds of metres. I will have to come back to discover if these rumours are true.

Eight hours into the drive, we loaded our

100kg of gear onto a tiny boat. After 30 minutes, we landed in Atins where we spent the night. Our journey continued the following morning with only a few hours of driving through extremely bumpy dunes. This place was so remote and difficult to reach, we spent the last part of the journey in restless anticipation, knowing that we would have earned our time in this special spot. Finally, we had arrived.

Here, only 500km from the busy beach of Preá, there is silence. My first thought was how unbelievably beautiful this place is.

It is as if you are dreaming. With hundreds of dunes and lagoons, the vastness of Lençóis took my breath away.

This is the sort of trip that I normally like to do with friends, but the travel situation meant that no one could share this experience with me. The thought of being alone on this adventure felt strange, but this feeling quickly faded away.

Looking in every direction, as far as the eye can see, it was apparent that we were completely alone. It felt crazy to be so isolated from everything and everyone. It was the kind of place that you could imagine getting completely lost in.

“ ONCE WE HAD DISCOVERED THE MOST DESIRABLE POCKETS OF WATER, I HAD SOME OF THE BEST SESSIONS I’VE EVER HAD. ”

It is an interesting phenomenon, the way these lagoons are formed. Rivers bring the sand from far inland out to sea, where the strong wind picks it up and blows it back onto the shore. There is 50km of heaping sand dunes that are created in this way. The dips and valleys between these dunes fill with water in the rainy season, and this water cannot drain because there is a layer of rock beneath the surface. After the rainy season, the water evaporates bit by bit, only for the cycle to begin anew the following season.

Because there are so many lagoons, there are countless spots to ride. Not every lagoon can support kiting, with the highest dunes disrupting the wind flow and creating impossibly gusty conditions. To find the right spots, you have to search. This became our next challenge.

We wanted to document our time in this otherworldly landscape, and we would need to find the ideal lagoons to do so. We needed strong, steady wind where I could kite and play worry-free. We had a lot of fun searching and exploring these different lagoons, and we finally found the best ones. Once we had discovered the most desirable pockets of water, I had some of the best sessions I’ve ever had.

For the first session, I launched my 10m North Carve with the Navigator Control System. The 5’0 Comp surfboard was the choice for these flatwater conditions. Once I stepped into the water, all of the apprehension of being alone on this trip disappeared.



PHOTO DIEGO CORREIA



We were really lucky with the conditions, and I had a lot of fun jumping from the dunes into the lagoons, riding down them and kiting from one body of water to another. I rode most of the time without fins so that I could explore every inch of these sometimes shallow spaces. It is a true kitesurfing playground. I felt like a child in an amusement park!

“ I HAD A LOT OF FUN JUMPING FROM THE DUNES INTO THE LAGOONS ”

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“ I TOOK A MOMENT TO PAUSE. IT WAS A DIFFERENT KIND OF PEACEFUL. IT FELT LIKE BEING ON ANOTHER PLANET. ”

Climbing the dunes with my kite in the sky was awe-inspiring. Coming over the ridge to see that there is nobody else sharing this vast space made me feel very small and humbled. The silence and stillness were interrupted only by the sound of the board cutting through the water, and the spray of fresh rainwater off the tail that followed as I drew lines through the landscape.

Standing atop the dune and looking over Lençóis, I took a moment to pause. It was a different kind of peaceful. It felt like being on another planet. I felt so lucky to be there, especially amidst the confusion outside of this perfect place. I was humbled by the beauty of our playground.

There is a message in all the craziness of this year. Sometimes, when we are forced to do things differently, we have the potential to find beauty in the unexpected.

LIGHTROOM

ODILE CAVIN GETTING UNDER THE LIP AT PONTA PRETA, CAPE VERDE
PHOTO FNINGA SURF KULTURA

Lightroom

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

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LIGHTROOM

LOUKA PITOT LEAVING HIS MARK ON THE WATERS OF DREPANO, GREECE
PHOTO CHRISTOPHER POOLE

Lightroom

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LIGHTROOM

OUT IN SICILY'S PRETTY LAGOON, ALBY RONDINA CAN ALWAYS FIND A PLACE TO RIDE BY HIMSELF!
PHOTO COURTESY OF PROKITE ALBY RONDINA

Lightroom

LIGHTROOM

WARECK ARNAUD RIDING UP THE STEEP PEAKS OF LA MIEJE IN THE LA GRAVE REGION OF FRANCE
PHOTO HUGUES BEAUME

Lightroom

LIGHTROOM

LILLO FOURRÉ SHOWING US HOW IT'S DONE DURING THE CRAZYFLY SHOOT IN SICILY
PHOTO LACI KOBULSKY



Lightroom

LIGHTROOM

GILION GOVEIA SHOWING OFF SOME OLD SCHOOL STYLE ON THE NEW FLUID KITEBOARDING EQUIPMENT IN THE NETHERLANDS
PHOTO GLENN HEIJNEN



Lightroom

LIGHTROOM

JESSE RICHMAN LAUNCHING OFF A WAVE AT HIS HOME SPOT IN THE HAWAIIAN PARADISE OF MAUI
PHOTO DAYANIDHI DAS



Lightroom

LIGHTROOM

SENSI GRAVES BRAVING THE COLD WINTER WATER IN HOOD RIVER AS SHE TESTS OUT HER NEW SLINGSHOT KITI
PHOTO RICHARD HALLMAN



Lightroom

LIGHTROOM

EVAN NETSCH POPPING OFF THE WATER IN OAHU
PHOTO CHUCK HARLAN

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LIGHTROOM

STIG HOEFNAGEL STYLING IT OUT IN THE NETHERLANDS
PHOTO THOMAS ROOS

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LIGHTROOM

PAU GISBERT MAKING THE MOST OF THE DAYLIGHT IN TARIFA, SPAIN
PHOTO SAMUEL CARDENAS



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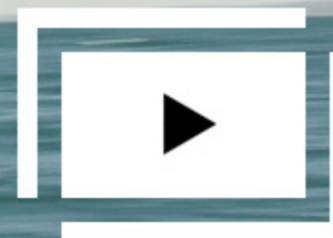
INSIGHT

ANNELOUS LAMMERTS

WORDS JEN TYLER PHOTO JAMES BOULDING

Annelous Lammerts is a jack of all trades, master of everything! The last time we checked in with Annelous in 2018, we were mainly focused on her career as a pro freestyler and her rise through the KPL rankings, but she hasn't stopped there! In this interview, Annelous tells us all about her 200 km kite for ALS, what she's been up to with all the Corona craziness, and her recent trips testing Cabrinha's latest line up.

We've got it all, right here.





"MY LIFE DEPENDS ON MOVEMENT AND SPORTS, AND I CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE TO LOSE THE ABILITY TO MOVE, TALK, AND EVENTUALLY BREATHE."

First things first, you recently completed a gruelling 200 km ride in support of the ALS Foundation. Can you tell us what that was like and why you chose that specific foundation?

I recently started working with Garmin, and they are the main sponsors of the 'Tour for ALS.' Their annual event was cancelled due to COVID, so they changed it to a 'Home Edition,' and that way we were all able to create our own individual challenges from our home spots. ALS is a severe muscle disease; the average life expectancy is three years, and there is no cure. My life depends on movement and sports, and I can't imagine

what it would be like to lose the ability to move, talk, and eventually breathe. When I heard about the event, my mission was to go the extra mile. I was eager to help raise money for the ALS Foundation; for research, to help patients, and give them hope for the future.

What were the biggest challenges you faced and what was the most rewarding part?

I faced quite a few challenges, to be honest with you! First of all, choosing the right day was essential, as the days are getting shorter. The week I had decided to do the challenge turned out to be super stormy. The forecast looked promising on Monday and

Tuesday, but on Monday, I had to get my wisdom tooth removed, which wasn't ideal before attempting a 200 km kite expedition! I promised the doctor to take it easy for a couple of days, but Monday night I rechecked the forecast, and Tuesday was by far the best day to attempt the challenge.

The wind was consistent, it had the least amount of rain, and it wasn't as windy, so I could hopefully do the full distance on my foil. I woke up on Tuesday at 5:15 AM and looked like a hamster! I took a couple of painkillers and headed to the beach, too preoccupied to think about the pain!

" AFTER 6 HOURS, I STARTED TO FEEL THE COLD;
I COULD BARELY FEEL MY HANDS, FEET, OR FACE;
WHICH HELPED WITH THE PAIN! "



PHOTO LENNART FILMS

The next challenge was the weather switch. After 4 hours of kiteboarding and almost 100 km in, the wind picked up, and I had to change from an 8m to a 5m kite. The clouds rolled in, and the strong wind and rain took over. The next 2 hours were heavy and the wind direction shifted slightly offshore, which didn't make it easier. After 6 hours, I started to feel the cold; I could barely feel my hands, feet, or face; which helped with the pain! But these challenges seemed trivial when I thought about the cause, and why I was attempting this challenge. Thanks to all the donations, I raised over €4000, and collectively we raised €62,565 for the ALS Foundation. The 'thank you' messages we received were incredibly touching!

**Why did you choose the hydrofoil for this ride?
Did you have backup equipment in case the
conditions changed?**

The point of this challenge wasn't to do it as fast as possible (although the foil was quick!), it was about doing something crazy to raise awareness. All the attention seems to be on COVID now, which is understandable, but it also means that the ALS Foundation couldn't raise very much money this year. I did have a twintip with boots ready to go, but I knew that would be pretty uncomfortable on the choppy water with stitches in my mouth. I was completely overpowered for the last 2 hours! Luckily, in the end, I was able to complete the 200 km on the foil just as a massive rainstorm and strong winds came through!

You experiment in various disciplines and excel in them all; do you secretly have a favourite?

Riding my twintip is still my favourite! My all-time favourite sessions were on my CBL, combining freestyle and park riding. There is still nothing that beats doing a line with air tricks and rails, hitting a kicker or a wave.



But after years of riding a twintip, I notice that I need pretty good conditions to enjoy it, whereas with other disciplines, I can enjoy a session regardless.

What are your takes on Wingfoiling? Fad or future?

Wingfoiling is here to stay! I've been so surprised by how fun it is in less-than-average conditions, and I see that almost everyone around me that gives it a try feels the same way. It might not be interesting for people who live in perfect kiteboarding spots, and it will never replace kiteboarding for me. Still, it can turn bad conditions into fun sessions!

The moments I would usually not be bothered to go out, I'm now having so much fun, and more and more people at my home spot are joining in. I've also seen windsurfers add it to their quiver, and even hardcore surfers who have never done other wind sports before are getting hooked. Seeing us ride almost invisible waves while waiting for the next swell to arrive has sparked their curiosity about this new sport!

You recently went to Lake Garda to test out Cabrinha's latest gear. Can you tell us about the latest line-up and what significant changes you've noticed?

The new 00 collection is entirely different, with significant changes in all products. The surfboards have been tweaked, and two models come in the pro construction. Foilboards, foils, and the X2 wing have been redesigned, and new wing boards have been added to our line-up. My favourite item of the 00 collections is our new foil, it is insane! It has really high performance and crosses over amongst sports. The foil just feels fantastic, and I've been having so much fun riding it while surf foiling, wingfoiling, and kitefoiling.

PHOTO JAMES BOULDING



“ WINGFOILING IS HERE TO STAY!
I'VE BEEN SO SURPRISED BY HOW FUN IT
IS IN LESS-THAN-AVERAGE CONDITIONS ”



"THIS SUMMER WAS ALL ABOUT TRYING OUT DIFFERENT DISCIPLINES, WHICH STILL KEPT IT INTERESTING BECAUSE THERE ARE SO MANY WAYS TO PROGRESS."

We caught up earlier this summer, and I remember you mentioning you were spending some time at home, surfing, foiling and winging. What was it like being home for a whole summer? That's quite a change of pace for you!

Yes, it's been an entirely different summer than what I'm used to! I usually spend the summer in the US training for the KPL competitions, learning new tricks, filming, and pushing my park riding. This summer was all about trying out different disciplines, which still kept it interesting because there are so

many ways to progress.

What have you been up to since then? Are you planning on spending the winter in the Netherlands?

I've been riding as much as possible! We organised some Cabrinha test events in Benelux, and I made a few short trips close-by. My most recent trip was to Fuerteventura for the Cabrinha 01 Collection (2021), and it was great to be back together with the team. I don't have too many plans for the winter. If COVID

has taught me anything, it's to go with the flow and book last minute!

What 2021 gear from Cabrinha are you most excited to have in your quiver?

There are some entirely new products coming out in the 01 Collection, but you'll have to wait until February to find out more about that! Right now, I'm the most excited about the brand new Autopilot 4'10, with a new shape and increased volume compared to last year. I love that I can use it for kiteboarding, surfing, and wingfoiling.

" THE YEAR WENT COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FOR LITERALLY EVERYONE, AND I SOMEHOW THINK WE'VE ALL BECOME MORE CONNECTED! "



2020 is coming to an end, and what a ride it's been! What are your bets for 2021, and what plans have you made? Are you optimistic that things might go back to normal?

What a ride it's been, indeed. The year went completely different for literally everyone, and I somehow think we've all become more connected! Hopefully, the vaccine will be ready soon, so we can live more freely. I am optimistic, but I also know it might take some time. Right now, I'm just enjoying what I can do. Everything is planned last minute these days, and that will stay the same for the start of 2021, so let's see what happens!

Are there any projects you are currently working on that you could share with us?

Planning is probably one of the hardest things to do right now, but I definitely would like to escape the Dutch winter for a little bit in January/February. The Cabrinha 01 Collection will be launched at the end of February, so the plan is to head to a windy destination and get some last footage of the new gear. If not, I'll be riding at home wholly covered in neoprene, which will also be fun!



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

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

MOVIE NIGHT

#1 'POINT BREAK' WINDSURF EDITION

The best scene from Point Break just got better! This one literally had us in stitches, and we're not surprised to see it at #1. "I can't just put boardshorts over my wetsuit. It's just wrong, mate." A windsurfer's ending to a classic movie.



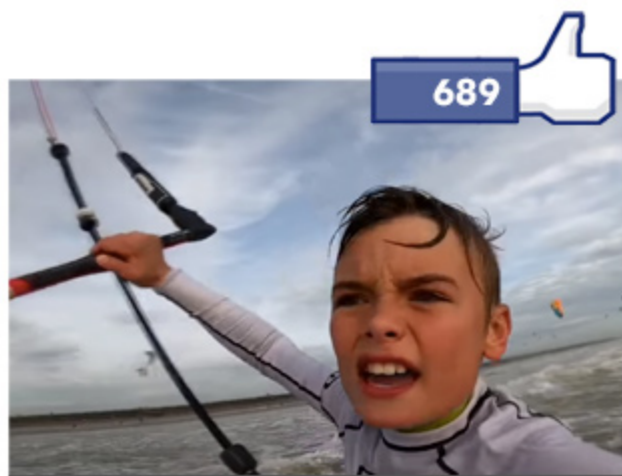
1130



CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO

#2 VLOG #1 AWESOME LOOPING SESSION WITH THE CREW

If you kite around the UK, you must have seen or at least heard of 11-year-old, Mad Max Tullett. Landing at #2 on our Movie Night list issue is his very first vlog from his favourite kite spot, Camber Sands.



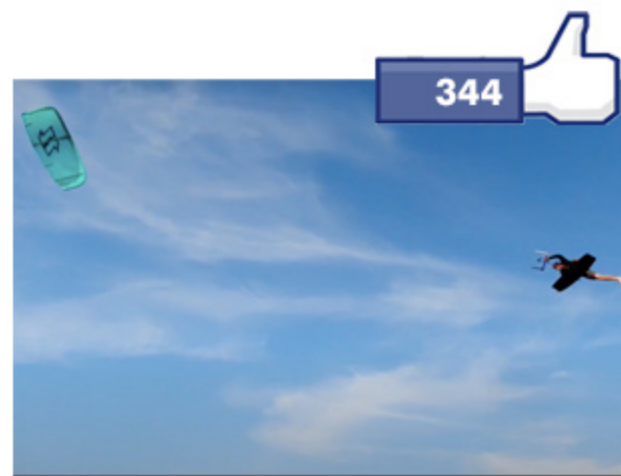
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#3 SHAUN BENNETT 2021 KING OF THE AIR ENTRY VIDEO

Landing at #3 on our Movie Night list is North Kiteboarding and Mystic USA rider/tech rep Shaun Bennett with his KOTA 2021 entry video. He loves big loops and is always waiting for the next 40 knot session!



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#4 STORM CHASING WITH THE UK CREW!

The UK crew - Sam Light, Aaron Hadlow, Lewis Crathern, and Tom Court - met up for a wild adventure in Cornwall. They faced Storm Francis the only way they know how... this issue's #4 video is one to watch on the big screen!



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RIDER AARON HADLOW
PHOTO CRAIG KOLESKY

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