

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 21

## WELCOME TO IKSURFMAG

Welcome to Issue 89 of IKSURFMAG, the World's Number One Kitesurfing Magazine!

The competition season is heating up, and when we're not scoring our own sessions, we're spoiled for choice when it comes to entertaining events to tune into! From big surprises on the big air scene to fast-paced action in the foiling world, we've got it all!

The F-ONE team heads south of the border in Baja while the Naish team chases freestyle perfection in Greece. We get up close and personal with Marc Jacobs, Rita Arnaus, and Frances Osorio Rivera. All this, plus behind the scenes insights on the latest products, new techniques to try, and gear tests to peruse. Issue 89 is ready for takeoff! Are you?

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## - GOING FOR GOLD -

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TECH FOCUS / TECHNIQUE / TESTS AND MORE INSIDE!**

THE WORLD'S NUMBER ONE KITESURF MAGAZINE







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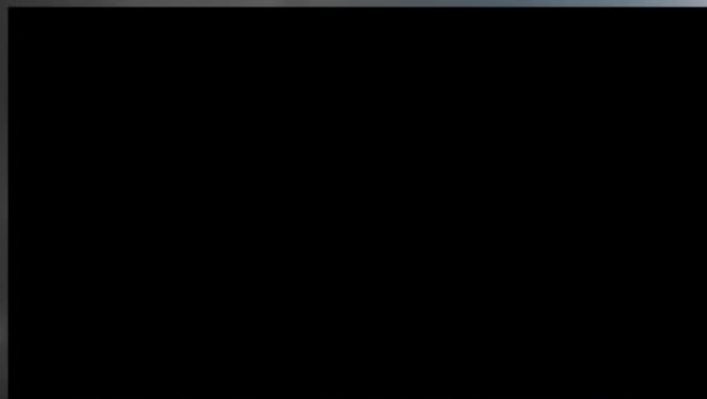
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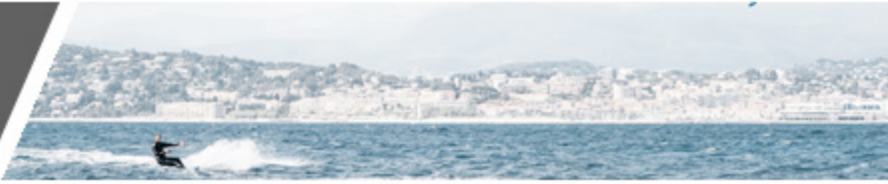
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COMPETITION



EDITORIAL



GOING FOR GOLD



CARRATERA FEDERAL 1



THE INTERVIEW:  
MARC JACOBS



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RITA'S TRAVEL DIARY



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INSIGHT: FRANCES  
OSORIO RIVERA



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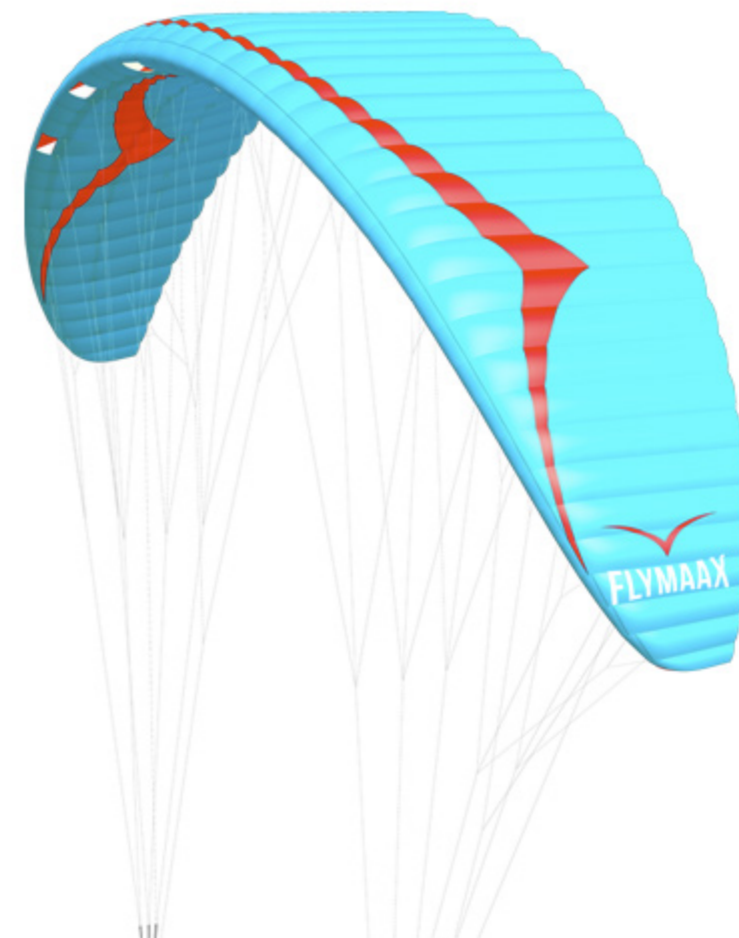
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RIDER JANEK GRZEGORZEWSKI  
PHOTO THOMAS BURBLIES







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## ISSUE 89 GET OFF MY LAWN!

... I'm busy mowing it! And it's not so easy when these darned kids keep jumping 30 metres over me.

The youth of kiteboarding are here, and they're hungry. They want our podiums and world titles, and they've got more than enough talent to take them. If the outcomes of recent events in big air, freestyle, and racing are anything to go by, the 20 and 30 somethings of kitesurfing should be quivering in their boots - or foot straps, as is more often the case these days.

Why are kids so blazingly good at sports?! It's a scientific fact that we don't become adults until the age of 25, with some scientists convinced adulthood starts in the 30s! Before then, we have a very low risk threshold. In other words, to get food for the elders and rest of the tribe, the young were stupid enough to take down buffalo, t-rex's, sabre-toothed tigers, basically anything that looked like a tasty snack. They were genetically and conditionally fearless, and they had to be. Once they hit 25, risk averseness creeps in. It's why in the mountains, most avalanche deaths are people under 25. As many of us that are a fair bit older than 25 now, even if we haven't hunted down a woolly mammoth, a fair few of us have had a life-disrupting injury to the lower extremities that still comes back to say hello on a cold day. Lack of fear plays arguably the biggest role in the kids putting us old folks to shame.

RIDER MIKAILI SOL  
PHOTO LUKAS STILLER



EDITORIAL



Of course, there's a lot more to it than that. The majority of kilters - and thus, our readers - picked up the sport in their adult years. The pros that inspired us, however, got going in their preteens. The next generation of young guns nipping at their heels today? They came out of the womb with their wetsuits on!

With a few years head start, less fear, more access to learning tools both online and on the spot with their peers, the next wave of World Champions is already taking centre stage. They're fearless, motivated, and innovative, and they've got an edge. The only thing they have going against them is experience. More often than not, they can jump higher, spin faster, and land smoother than the Aaron's, Kevin's, and Nick's of kiting. But when the pressure is on, and the heat clock is winding down? Experience wins over youth. (Unless your name is Mikaili Sol, in which case, you just win everything.)

As we see more and more breakout performances in recent kiting events - I'm looking at you, Cold Hawaii! - it's clear that it's only a matter of time before a Prince or Princess of the Air usurps the throne from the King. Looking at this year's KOTA riders lineup, 2021 could very well be the year.

Who will win? Youth or experience? Only time will tell. All I know for sure is: I'll be watching from the safety of my sofa between small air and lawn mowing sessions!

*Crystal Veness*  
Editor



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# GOING FOR GOLD

WORDS CRYSTAL VENESS

The Olympics are coming, and the race is on! With riders battling it out on the racecourse and brands toiling away behind the scenes to create the fastest foils in the world, Paris 2024 is sure to be an epic event. The question is, how does kite foil racing work?! Find out what's going on in the world of racing in this exclusive article!



RIDER GISELA PULIDO  
PHOTO SAMUEL CARDENAS





LOCKED IN AFTER THE GREEN FLAG IN GIZZERIA  
PHOTO IKA MEDIA, MARTINA ORSINI, GIOVANNI MITOLO

**“ ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT FACTORS, OUTSIDE OF THE RIDERS THEMSELVES, IS THE GEAR. ”**

Kiteboarding as an Olympic sport? It's kind of a big deal. Zeus himself would be in awe of our modern chariots of foil.

Let us not forget, however, that this is not our first rodeo. There are two gold medals out there, which came after a blazing battle on twin tips in the Buenos Aires Youth Olympic Games in 2018. Italy's Sofia Tomasoni and Dominican rider Adeuri Corniel were the first to achieve Olympic glory on the global stage, standing atop the

podium after proving to be the fastest in the fleet.

It's not the first, and it almost certainly won't be the last. It's been three years since the world - or, at least, the part of the world that tuned in to the YOG - got their first introduction to kite racing. We're relatively sure more of the outside world saw kiting in Season 3 of Formula 1: Drive to Survive when Romain Grosjean front rolled his way into our hearts before stepping into his chariot of fire on the circuit in Bahrain, but I digress. It will be three more years until Paris 2024, and the race format has already changed considerably. Twin tips are out, and foils are in!

Initially, races competed in pairs, with one woman and one man participating in a relay race, where transition strategy is key. The recent confirmation that two separate medals would be up for grabs was a relief for the foil racing community. Relay races are off the calendar, and we're curious to see what other developments we'll see in the next few years.

One of the most significant factors, outside of the riders themselves, is the gear. Regulation is a must in competitive sports. In Beijing 2008, when swimsuit technology was getting too advanced and giving competitors an unfair advantage, full-body suits and swimwear with shiny high-tech coatings were banned from swimming events. Let's not even get into the whole women's beach volleyball uniform fiasco from Tokyo 2020.



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EDITED: VICTOR HAYS & COLIN OUDOT



**“ WITH RACE GEAR CONSTANTLY EVOLVING, THE RACE BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE FACTORIES IS NEARLY AS INTENSE AS THE ONE ON THE WATER! ”**

From women not being allowed into the Olympics until 1900 until today, when there are rules on how teeny their bikinis must be, things have sure changed!

Bringing it back to kiting, in the old days (as in, a few years ago) of foil racing, you'd see a diverse mix of ram air kites and leading-edge inflatables. There'd be foils and foil boards of every shape and size. This laissez-faire approach made the sport accessible to most, but as this segment of the sport grew and gained credibility, so have the regulations.

Now, the IKA has a strictly defined set of requirements for equipment, with only five kite models approved for the Olympic Games. The registration and production requirements are so great that several kite and foil manufacturers have simply opted out, while brands like FLYSURFER, Ozone, F-One, Flymaax, and Aeros have charged ahead, being the only kite brands approved for competition. With race gear constantly evolving, the race behind the scenes at the factories is nearly as intense as the one on the water!

Speaking of on the water, this one is a little easier to understand. Who is on the racecourse, and which of these prize ponies are we putting our money on?! As the racers prepare for the Sardinia Grand Slam - the biggest Kite Foil World Series event in 2021 - we've reached out to a few of the athletes to get some insight on how it all works and how they're handling the pressure of becoming one of the 20 men and 20 women going for gold in Paris!



MAXIME NOCHER ROUNDING THE BUOY PHOTO  
PHOTO IKA MEDIA, MARTINA ORSINI, GIOVANNI MITOLO



LINING UP AT THE STARTING LINE IN GIZZERIA  
PHOTO IKA MEDIA, MARTINA ORSINI, GIOVANNI MITOLO





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# NAISH



RIDER AXEL MAZELLA

PHOTO ALEX SCHWARZ, 2021 FORMULA KITE EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP



**“ AS SOON AS THE GREEN FLAG IS DOWN, THE RACE STARTS. IT IS A MIX OF STRATEGY, TACTICS AND EFFORTS. ”**

First, what's going on?! We asked racer Axel Mazella from France how he would explain kitefoil racing to someone who had never seen a race before. The man must know how we feel about car analogies! *"I always compare Kite Foil racing with Formula 1 racing; We are racing on the same system, supported by kite and foil brands. Every competitor is on the start line together, waiting for the green flag. Everyone tries to find the best starting position. As soon as the green flag is down, the race starts. It is a mix of strategy, tactics and efforts. We all have to do the same course. The first one who crosses the line wins the race. The difference is, we have 5 to 6 races scheduled per day across 4 or 5 days! So we need to be consistent for the whole event!"*

The UK's Connor Bainbridge added some more detail, explaining, *"We usually complete 2-3 laps a race depending on the wind before reaching a finish line which is usually just off the beach. An event of 5 days has between 16-21 races. All scores are tallied, and the person with the lowest points wins. The racing is incredibly close, with riders often separated by less than a metre, which is a great spectacle when travelling at 40 knots towards the finish line."*

If you're keen to tune in to a race, you can find the schedule on the IKA website. However, you'll see two different types of events on the calendar; Formula Kite and KiteFoil World Series. Brainbridge tells us the difference, *"The Formula Kite tour is the Olympic discipline, using approved equipment. You can only race on four kites, one foil and one board per event."*





**“ GISELA'S GOAL IS TO DO AS MANY COMPETITIONS AS POSSIBLE AND GAIN AS MUCH EXPERIENCE AS SHE CAN IN THE HOPES OF BEING SPAIN'S LEADING LADY! ”**

*In the World Series, the equipment is completely open. This series of events will decide the open class World Champion at the end of the year. I mainly use these events as training events to test new gear to decide what I will use for major Formula Kite events.”*

A familiar face on the racing tour is Gisela Pulido, who earned her stripes in kiteboarding as a Freestyle World Champion. Gisela switched to kite foil racing a few years ago and has been fully focused ever since. Will she be competing at the Olympics? Each country will likely use Formula Kite events to help select their athletes, but every country will have unique selection criteria which remain to be confirmed. However, it looks clear that only one man and one woman will represent each country. Gisela's goal is to do

as many competitions as possible and gain as much experience as she can in the hopes of being Spain's leading lady!

The one athlete per gender per country rule will mean some heated competitions over the next few years. In France, the race for first place is a tight one. Alex Mazella shares some insight on the race, “We just came back from Austria where I fought a lot with a Théo De Ramecourt, a French friend and a big competitor. Benoit Gomez is also super strong, and Denis Taradin, who won the first stop in Gizzeria, in Italy. We're going to have for sure a tight race.”





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RIDER CONNOR BAINBRIDGE  
PHOTO ALEX SCHWARZ, 2021 KITE FOIL WORLD SERIES AUSTRIA







**“ AS THE RACING SCENE HEATS UP AND THE POPULARITY OF KITE FOIL RACING GROWS, WE CAN ONLY HOPE THAT THE OLYMPIC IMPACT ON OUR SPORT WILL BE A POSITIVE ONE. ”**

Over in the USA, it's almost a surety that Daniela Moroz will be representing Team America for the women; she has been dominating on her FLYSURFER VMG's. We spoke to Daniela a while back, and she took us through how she gets in the zone for an event. *"In my training, I focus on the variables I can control, like my physical fitness or my gear, and then also train myself to be as adaptable as possible. Because there are so many uncontrollable variables in our sport, it's essential to adapt to different wind conditions, currents, gear breaking, tangles, and so on... There's going to be all kinds of crazy stuff that happens during an event, and even when you're not doing your best, the best thing you can do is stay positive and remember that you're there to have fun. That takes a lot of mental preparation."*

As the racing scene heats up and the popularity of kite foil racing grows, we can only hope that the Olympic impact on our sport will be a positive one. While it's definite that the business side of our sport will benefit from kiteboarding reaching a wider audience, there is a question mark over the impact on crowds and safety at our local kite spots. Luckily, we've got a few years until we find out for sure! Until then, we'll keep you posted on what's happening in the race for 1st place!

RIDER DANIELA MOROZ  
PHOTO STAN KEUSCH





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WORDS MAËLLE RICCOBONI

# CARRATERA FEDERAL



The 15th anniversary of the BANDIT, with a name and design so distinct, could only be celebrated in a place that would honour the theme. And so, the F-ONE team packed their bags and headed south of the border to Mexico's Baja, California, for what promised to be a spicy product shoot!



PHOTO MATT GEORGES

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**“ WE WERE ALREADY GETTING SOME WARNINGS:  
"IT'S A DANGEROUS AREA", "THERE ARE SHARKS",  
"IT'S NOT THE RIGHT SEASON FOR WIND". ”**

A kite born from 15 years of passion and progress deserves a most brilliant debut. Much like a Quinceañera, a traditional Mexican celebration of a young woman's 15 birthday, this trip would be a pure celebration of a 15 year journey as the BANDIT XV and S3 take centre stage escorted by F-ONE's talented team riders.

In early July 2021, we made our way to the Baja California Sur, a desert peninsula nestled in Mexico's northwest, just below the southern border of California. None of us had been there before, but the photos were enough to make anyone dream. A dream trip needs a dream team, so we assembled a fine group of our best riders to share the bill: Mitu Monteiro, Hendrick Lopes, Liam Whaley, Marcela Witt, Paul Serin, Maxime Chabloz, and last but not least, Mickaël Fernandez. To accompany us, our excellent and long-time media partners: Matt Georges and Olivier Sautet. Only our dear friend Ydwer van der Heide was missing this year.

As we were groping our way through the organisation of the trip, we were already getting some warnings: "it's a dangerous area", "there are sharks", "it's not the right season for wind". Not to be discouraged, we knew with the proper guides, we would prevail. By a pure stroke of luck, the Pranik Kite-Club team reached out to us at just the right moment. Jeanne and Alex, a French-Mexican couple, owned a travelling kite school and spent part of their year living in this region. With their help and precious knowledge of the area, we began to form our road trip plan.

RIDER PAUL SERIN  
PHOTO MATT GEORGES







**“ WITH RULES AND RESTRICTIONS CHANGING WHAT SEEMED LIKE EVERY DAY, MITU WAS AFRAID OF GETTING STUCK HALFWAY AROUND THE GLOBE, AWAY FROM HIS FAMILY. ”**

As the departure date approached, the excitement of the riders grew, as did the fear of travelling during this period of uncertainty. With rules and restrictions changing what seemed like every day, Mitu was afraid of getting stuck halfway around the globe, away from his family. Yet, even though the trip was a risky bet, the team rallied together to take on the challenge.

After a 24-hour journey, the whole team landed in the city of La Paz after a surprisingly smooth journey. That was only the first step; there would be almost 1,000 km to cover before reaching the Bahia Asunción region. We planned to spend the first few days near La Paz, exploring the waters of the Sea of Cortés, also known as the Gulf of California. Then, we would continue north along the Pacific Ocean side to see the marvellous spots that we had only heard of. Jeanne and Alex would be in charge of all the logistics and our itinerary. The idea was to avoid a precise plan so we could follow the wind.

The first few days were dedicated to shooting "The Duel". Jeanne and Alex had found the perfect setting only forty minutes from La Paz. When we first set our eyes on this old, modest ranch, it felt like we had gone back in time. It looked like nothing in it had changed or moved for decades. The place was magical and worthy of an old western movie, offering everything we could hope for; endless stretches of desert, more cactus than we could count, and leather saddles resting on fences, aged only by the sun and passing of time.

The owners of the ranch welcomed us with kindness and curiosity. It is not often that a dozen people arrive with cases full of cameras, kites, and surfboards, requesting to borrow their horses to make a film!



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#SOULSESSION





## “ OUR VAN AND SUV WERE LOADED TO THE BRIM WITH EQUIPMENT THAT HAD YET TO MEET MEXICO'S SALTY SEA ”

What a strange thought that we would be using this setting, their home and living environment, as a backdrop for "The Duel"!

The shoot lasted three days, with our team travelling back and forth between the hotel in La Paz and the ranch. It was a demanding task, as some had never ridden a horse before. To make things more difficult, some of the team were afraid of horses! The heat was smothering, with the temperature hovering around 45 degrees in the dry, almost lunar landscape. In spite of these challenges, everyone did their best.

It was funny to see everyone settle into the shoes of Hollywood actors. Some took to it quite naturally, especially Mitu, whose angry look could have challenged Clint Eastwood's. His surly snarl may have scared the wind away, though, as we only had a very light breeze to cool us off late in the evenings. Our guides reassured us that the wind would be waiting at our next stop on the road trip.

Finally, after three intensive days, our small crew packed up and embarked on a 12-hour drive to Punta Abreojos. Our van and SUV were loaded to the brim with equipment that had yet to meet Mexico's salty sea. With each hour of asphalt swallowed, everyone was getting more and more impatient to finally score that first session. We watched the landscape pass by through the windows of air-conditioned vehicles. We passed miles and miles of desert, sometimes going hours without seeing the slightest sign of civilisation. On the horizon, the view was blurred by the heat vapours coming off the road.



**“ THE WIND WAS OFFSHORE, AND THE CONDITIONS WERE NOT SO EASY, BUT KING MITU WAS THERE TO BE THE EXAMPLE. ”**

RIDER MITU MONTEIRO  
PHOTO MATT GEORGES

After a long day of driving, our team stopped at a strange place that looked like a classic motel from the '50s. To complete the eerie atmosphere, we were the only guests. In the evening, after a delicious meal of local specialities that some found rather spicy, we all fell into our beds from fatigue after what was an exhausting day. The next day, after another 6 hours of driving, we finally arrived in La Bocana and checked in to a beautiful house overlooking the bay.

We scanned the spot below, noticing a few small swells. As soon as we arrived, Mitu, Hendrick, and Marcela rigged up their equipment to get on the water. The wave riders of the group had a great time with their first session on the new Bandit S3. The freestylers were more doubtful but managed to land some tricks in the swell. In the evening, everyone came together, invigorated after finally getting out on the water as a team.

The next day, we headed to a lagoon searching for strong wind and a flat spot to finally test the potential of the new Bandit XV for freestyle and big air. The wind was constant but light, not quite enough to satisfy Liam, Max, and Paul. Too bad, but there's always the next day! At the same time, Mitu and Hendrick had discovered a spot with a beautiful tubular wave, a nice right-hander that had them salivating at the idea of riding it. The wind was offshore, and the conditions were not so easy, but King Mitu was there to be the example.





**“EVERYONE CAME TOGETHER, INVIGORATED AFTER  
FINALLY GETTING OUT ON THE WATER AS A TEAM.”**







**“THE FORECAST DIDN'T LIE; THE WIND ARRIVED AS PROMISED, AND THE FREESTYLERS COULD FINALLY SATISFY THEIR DESIRE TO GET INTO THE AIR.”**

The conditions reminded him of his native Cabo Verde and the waves of Punta Preta. After two great sessions during the day, it was time to go home. As night fell, the temperature suddenly dropped, a sharp but welcome contrast to the heat of the day.

On our meagre internet connection, Alex checked the forecast, finding a

much-needed 25 knots on its way the next day. The forecast didn't lie; the wind arrived as promised, and the freestylers could finally satisfy their desire to get into the air. The wind was a bit gusty, but the kites did their job well and the boys finally scored some big loops and insane tricks. The fishermen on their boats in the surrounding water stopped to watch, astonished.

When it was time to leave La Bocana, we continued along the road towards Bahía Asunción. We stopped to visit ghost villages full of photo spots that were as strange as

they were incredible along the way. The few people we came across were friendly but intrigued; there are few tourists and even fewer foreigners at this time of the year. As we drove along, the landscape changed, and the familiar cactus began to disappear, leaving an infinite desert expanse that seemed to be without any life. And yet there, in the middle of nowhere, was a small seaside resort. It had been a long time since they had seen a single customer, and the few inhabitants welcomed us with open arms.

This is where we would spend our last few days before beginning the descent back to La Paz. After almost ten days in Mexico, a kind of routine had started to set in.





RIDER MARCELA WITT  
PHOTO MATT GEORGES

The mornings, mostly without wind, were spent in the surf. Often a group of dolphins would join to play in the swell. After lunch and a forecast check by Alex, the group would set off to find the wind. It could take up to two hours of driving to find the perfect spot, and we would sometimes arrive even before the wind had. Mid-afternoon, the sand would begin to fly on the beach, and finally, the magic would happen.

**“ IT COULD TAKE UP TO TWO HOURS OF DRIVING TO FIND THE PERFECT SPOT ”**



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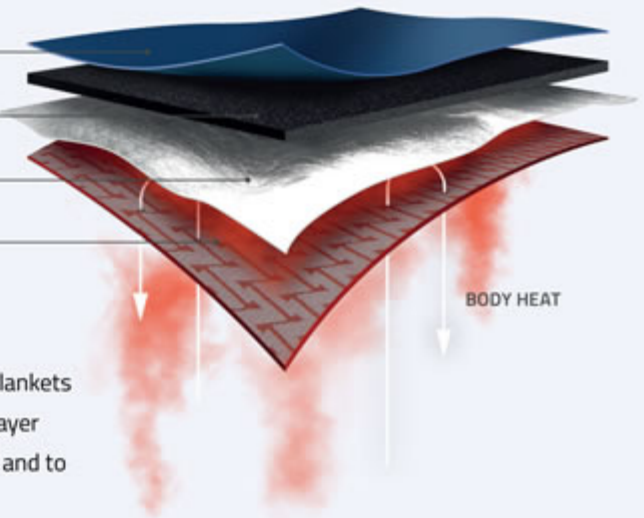
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“ MID-AFTERNOON, THE SAND WOULD BEGIN TO FLY ON THE  
BEACH, AND FINALLY, THE MAGIC WOULD HAPPEN. ”

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RIDER MICKAËL FERNANDEZ  
PHOTO MATT GEORGES



**“MEMORIES WERE ALREADY FLOODING IN,  
AND WE WERE ALL PROUD TO OVERCOME A  
NEW CHALLENGE ONCE AGAIN.”**

The sessions were so precious that the riders would stretch them out until the last light of day. In the evening, after returning back to base camp for dinner and a few rounds of UNO, everyone was falling asleep at the table, already dreaming of the next session. Everyone was tired but ecstatic to be able to ride in such wild and unique places.

Finally, the time had come to start the journey home. The road would be long, but the relief of a job well done put us all at ease. Memories were already flooding in, and we were all proud to overcome a new challenge once again. This trip had brought everyone together, creating synergy within the F-ONE team. Although sometimes the conditions were frustrating, this trip to the end of the world had a taste of luxury, and we enjoyed every second of it. A feeling that will remain anchored in our heads is that of absolute freedom. Thank you for the adventure, Baja; we had a blast!



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— Bruna Kajiya



THE INTERVIEW

# MARC JACOBS

WORDS JEN TYLER PHOTOS GRAEME MURRAY

Marc Jacobs knows a thing or two when it comes to Big Air! In this interview, we find out all about Marc: his childhood, KOTA, Big Air, mental health and even topics like marriage, handbags, and perfumes - we've got it all exclusively at IKSURFMAG!





“ I KNEW I'D FOUND MY SPORT. I WOULD WATCH HIM FOR HOURS AND JUST DREAM ABOUT THE DAY I'D BE ABLE TO DO THE SAME. ”



**Marc, it's great to feature you on 'The Interview' finally! Can you tell us a bit about yourself and what it was like growing up in the Jacobs household?!**

Awesome, thanks for having me! I was a very sporty kid with a lot of energy. I enjoyed making ramps, kites, go-karts, flying foxes and trying crazy stunts. My parents encouraged me to play outdoors. So I did many sports like swimming, surfing, soccer, tennis, skateboarding, BMX, scootering, and the last one before kiteboarding was mountain boarding. I've always loved the feeling of flying, so I guess it only made sense that I became obsessed with kiteboarding!

**When did you first get into kiteboarding, and what inspired you?**

I got into kiteboarding around 2005, and Dave Edwards was my inspiration! After seeing how high he could jump and what he could do, I knew I'd found my sport. I would watch him for hours and just dream about the day I'd be able to do the same. David became my mentor and lifelong friend.

**Freestyle seems to have been the name of the game in your early years of kiteboarding. Why the move to Big Air?**

Big Air was my root of kiteboarding here in NZ. I only got into Freestyle because my dream was to get on the world tour and be the World Champion one day. However, Big Air is the new big thing these days, while Freestyle has started to die off. I still love Freestyle, but there is something unique and magical about Big Air.

In 2014 and 2015, there were a few Big Air events on, so I thought I'd give it a go – it turns out I was pretty good at it, and I even managed to beat top guys like Jesse Richman and Kevin Langereee!



Rider Willow-River Tonkin  
Photo Steven Akkersdijk & Thomas Burbles



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## SECTION 4

WAVE







" I'VE WORKED EXTREMELY HARD ON MY SWITCH SIDE TO FIT THE REQUIREMENTS TO WIN THIS EVENT. "

I feel like I have a lot to show in Big Air, performing many new tricks in the 2019 Red Bull King of the Air, and now my main focus is to win King of the Air in 2021.

**We loved seeing the innovative tricks you landed in the previous two KOTA events! Considering the situation in New Zealand, do you think you'll make it to South Africa for the rescheduled KOTA in November 2021?**

Yes, I will do whatever I can to be there; it's my goal and dream to win it! I've worked extremely hard on my switch side to fit the requirements to win this event.

It will be challenging to book a quarantine spot with the limited spots available, but fingers crossed it all works out!

**There have been some recent lockdowns in New Zealand that have kept you off the water. What is the current pandemic situation there?**

Here in NZ and Australia, we are a bit behind the rest of the world. We are still trying to fight and keep the virus out of the country. We are also behind in the vaccine numbers, which is why they are still fighting with the lockdowns. They say once our population is 70/80% vaccinated, they might consider finally

stopping lockdowns and maybe opening the borders again. It's hard to take sides because I understand both, but I hope this is our last lockdown so that everything can get back to some form of normality.

**Having the North Kiteboarding HQs in NZ must be so convenient, especially with the travel difficulties! What sort of involvement do you have when it comes to R&D and Marketing?**

It is amazing! The office is only 25 minutes away from me, so it's easy for me to pop in and test products or help with anything they need. I mainly help with the Navigator bar, Orbit, Pulse, and a few other accessories.



I spend hundreds of hours riding in the strongest conditions to ensure the North gear can handle anything thrown at it. I work very closely with the R&D team and let them know my thoughts, and so far, it's been a blast. I'm so stoked to be a part of the North brand.

**After riding for Switch for so many years, what were the driving factors behind the move to North Kiteboarding?**

It was amazing to work with Switch Kites. We both started from nothing and became something. I learned a lot with them, and I'll be forever thankful for that. New North came to NZ in late 2019, and I would see them test all the time, and I thought they looked like they needed someone based in Auckland to help them grow. I never met Mike, but many of the local riders kept suggesting that I would be an asset to their team.

Mike eventually reached out to me, and we got to know each other quickly. I liked his plans and the goals he wanted to achieve in the kiteboarding industry, which got me excited, and I wanted to be a part of that. I felt like there wasn't anything big left for me with Switch, and I had so much more to give. It felt right to join a bigger brand and be a part of their journey. My gut feeling told me it was the right thing to do, and it paid off!

**You've been a part of the North NextGen campaign, working with young rider Seb Bramley. Tell us a bit about that experience! Have you been able to session with Seb recently? How has his progress been in the past year with you as his mentor?**

" I SPEND HUNDREDS OF HOURS RIDING IN THE STRONGEST CONDITIONS TO ENSURE THE NORTH GEAR CAN HANDLE ANYTHING THROWN AT IT. "







" IF YOU UNDERSTAND ALL THESE THINGS,  
YOU WON'T HOLD BACK AND PUSH TO  
YOUR FULL POTENTIAL. "

It was a big question at first because Seb had never kiteboarded before! He's a cable park rider from my local park. The park usually closes when it's windy, so Seb asked me if he could try kiteboarding one day. He excelled quickly, and within a year, he learned all of his air tricks with the kite that he does behind the cable. However, once he got to a similar level as his cable tricks, he struggled a bit to keep progressing.

In kiteboarding, it can be quite a different technique to be able to pass the bar. I've shared with him everything I know, and he's got natural talent, but it's up to him if he wants to push it to the next level. When I was his age, I had the same thing, so it's a familiar situation! It's been fun training a young kid.

**Big Air isn't a sport for the faint-hearted. How much mental resilience do you need to do what you do?**

Big Air is still growing, and we seem to be reaching new heights with slight gear improvements every year. It comes down to confidence and trusting your judgment and understanding if you made a mistake, what it was and identifying it. If you understand all these things, you won't hold back and push to your full potential.

**Is the confidence natural? Or is it something you can manage through training?**

From what my mum keeps telling me, I have always been a bit of a daredevil child. So I do naturally have a fearless attitude. But it doesn't mean I don't get scared and sh\*t myself sometimes, haha! But again, I find once you gain confidence and you're naturally a bit fearless, it's only a matter of time.





You gain experience by riding over and over, putting yourself in all conditions. This means the gusty horrible days too. It will improve your overall confidence, and you will learn to have great judgment for all conditions.

**Is managing and overcoming anxiety and fear part of an extreme athlete's training program? What techniques do you practise beforehand to put yourself in the right mindset before a big event? For example, breathing, visualisation, positive affirmations, distraction, etc?**

Yes, you start to hear more and more professional kiteboarders get mental coaches' help. It is essential. I learned that the hard way in Red Bull King of the Air. There was a tremendous amount of pressure at that event, and if you haven't experienced this before, you will fold. I have seen it affect many top riders in that event.

**" YOU WILL LEARN TO HAVE GREAT JUDGMENT FOR ALL CONDITIONS "**

S/L/S

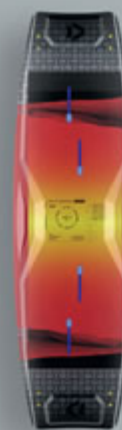
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To overcome these emotions, you can practice many things, but I won't give out all my secrets, haha! But breathing is essential for controlling anxiety and stress, profoundly affecting your performance if you don't know how to handle this. All the young and upcoming talent needs to focus on performing to their best abilities for an event like Red Bull King of the Air.

**Do you think your ability to overcome fear in your sport crosses over into everyday life? For example, does it make you better equipped to manage the psychological effects of the pandemic?**

Yes, I do believe it can help in a way. The stronger your mind is, the better you will be able to handle any life situation. For me, the lockdown was a struggle at L4 because I've never experienced the feeling of not being allowed to kiteboard. I didn't realise how much it contributed to my mental state and overall happiness. I had to be creative and find ways around the house to keep exercising to help keep my mind in a healthy place.

**What are the kiteboarding conditions like in NZ? What are your top 3 kiteboarding spots there?**

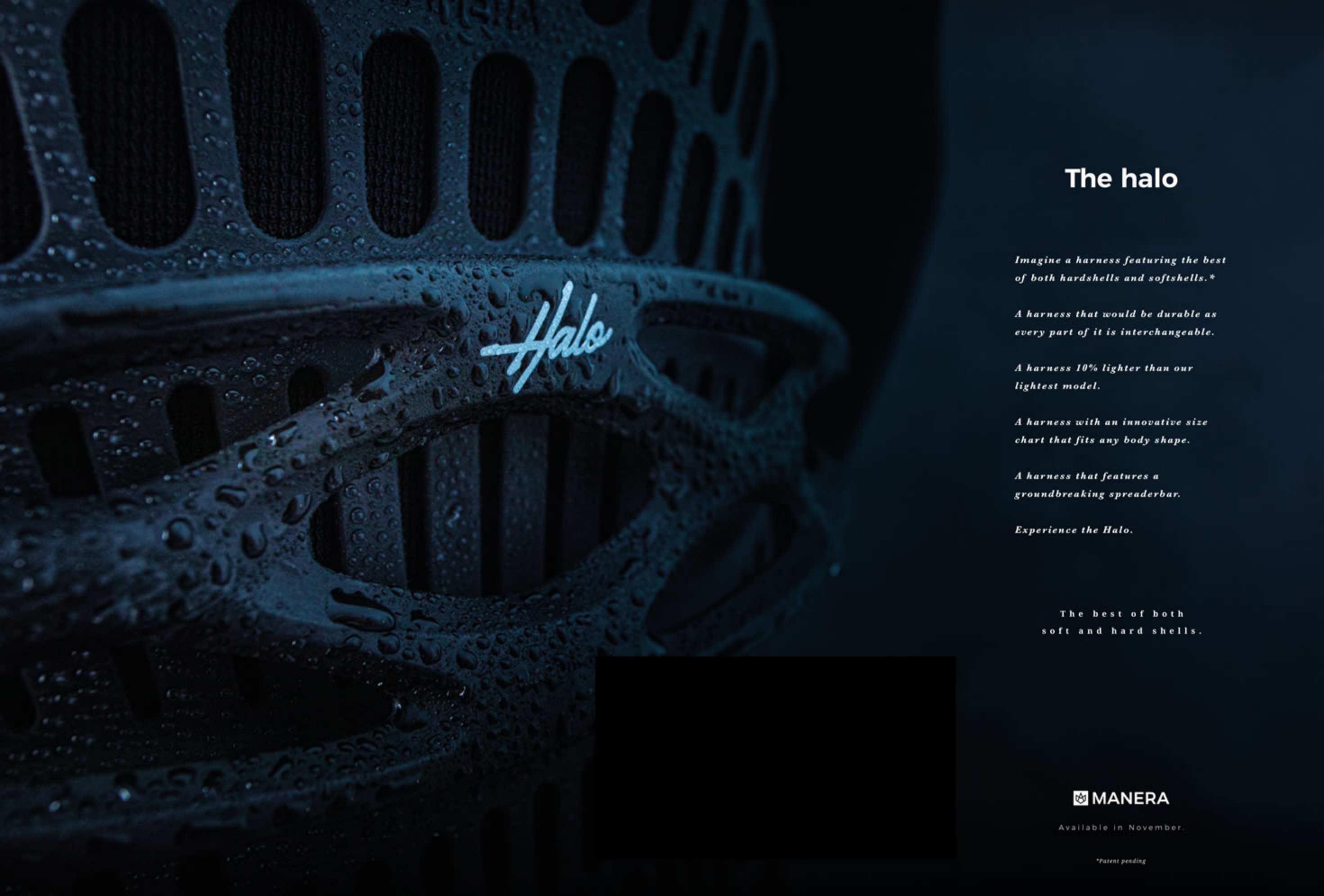
Our best seasons tend to be towards the end of winter and the beginning of spring. We have amazing empty, isolated spots here, which dream of filming unique content for North. Next year, I want to film more around the country to show how amazing some of our spots are! My top 3 spots for Big Air in NZ would be Muriwai, Mangawhai, and Tamaki spit.



“ THE STRONGER YOUR MIND IS,  
THE BETTER YOU WILL BE ABLE TO  
HANDLE ANY LIFE SITUATION. ”







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" I TYPICALLY DO 30 MINUTES OF CARDIO ON THE BIKE; THEN, AFTER THAT, I WILL HIT THE WEIGHTS FOR AN HOUR AND PICK TWO MUSCLE GROUPS A DAY TO WORK ON. "



**What is your go-to kiteboarding setup?**

For Big Air, the 8, 9, 10, and 11m Orbit with the 138 Atmos Carbon and stock 45/50cm Navigator bar with 22m lines. The 10, 12, or 14m Pulse with a 142 Focus Hybrid and the 38/43cm Navigator bar with 22m lines for Freestyle.

**Can you describe a typical non-windy day in the life of Marc Jacobs? What do you get up to?**

I need a minimum of 90 minutes of exercise a day, or else I can't sleep. First, I typically do 30 minutes of cardio on the bike; then, after that, I will hit the weights for an hour and pick two muscle groups a day to work on. After that, I finish with 30 minutes of

stretching. On my kiteboarding days, if I don't kite longer than 2 or 3 hours, I usually do this after kiteboarding as well. I then take Ace for a walk with Sophie or down to our local park for a ball throw!

**Congratulations on your and Sophie's engagement; that's super exciting! What do you have planned for the big day? Will you be honeymooning somewhere windy?**

Thank you! The big day will be October 29th 2021, right before KOTA! So no honeymoon is planned yet! The wedding is going to be in her mum's garden surrounded by family and very close friends. It's a casual event as we both wanted to keep it small and fun.

We had to move the date forward six months because Sophie's mum has terminal cancer, and we don't want to risk leaving it too late as we both want her to be there, healthy and well enough to walk Sophie down the aisle.

**We hope it's a very special day for you and your families! Does Sophie kiteboard? What are your thoughts on teaching your partner to kite?**

No, she doesn't. I did try to teach her once in Rarotonga on holiday, but she was a bit afraid and wasn't that keen, haha! So, I ended up getting dragged along the beach screaming, but she knows it's my thing and my magic place to keep me happy.





I think if she kiteboarded, I would be stressed on the water watching her!

**We've got to ask! Sharing a name with a renowned fashion designer, has there ever been any confusion or funny incidents you could share with us?**

There was an edit from Extreme Elements that I did in the early days, and it blew up like crazy with a lot of hilarious comments because they thought I was the real Marc Jacobs! Other than that, I usually get tagged in a lot of Marc Jacobs stuff, and I get lots of models sending in their photos on Facebook, saying it's their dream to model for Marc Jacobs – I just let them know that it's the wrong Marc Jacobs! Also, I recently had a lady messaging me on Instagram asking me when her perfume was arriving - I thought that was funny!

**" I WOULD BE STRESSED ON THE WATER WATCHING HER! "**

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**Speaking of perfume, if you had to create a Marc Jacobs Big Air Edition fragrance, what would it smell like?**

Good question! It would have to be a mix of sexy and muscular to get all the naughty kitty cats out there excited!

**What's next for Marc Jacobs? Any exciting projects in the pipeline you can share with us?**

Winning The Red Bull King of the Air is the main goal I have at the moment, and I know I need to put 110% focus into it. It's the only way I will be victorious. I also want to try and compete in the BAKL World Tour next year and go for the World Champion title! Last but not least, I can't wait to be married!

**Thanks, Marc! It's been great to catch up, and good luck at KOTA this year!**

Thanks, Jen!



**"THE STRONGER YOUR MIND IS,  
THE BETTER YOU WILL BE ABLE TO  
HANDLE ANY LIFE SITUATION."**





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# TECHNIQUE

WORDS & PHOTOS CHRISTIAN & KARINE



Welcome to our new-fangled and updated technique section! In these hallowed pages, each issue we will be revisiting and exploring one fundamental and, dare we say, essential kitesurfing move, not only in words and pictures but also in more detailed videos. To kick off proceedings, this issue, we'll be taking an in-depth look at the Slide Turn transition; unquestionably, the first transition on your radar and potentially the move you'll do more than any other.

Following on, it's time to reward your patience and let you have the goodies. We promised some embellishments on the Unhooked Pop from Toeside, and today's the day when we'll transform it into a dazzling blind landing with a celebratory surface pass. The Unhooked Toeside Pop to Blind with a Surface Pass; it looks and feels much better than it reads!

Enjoy, C&K.

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## 1 / SLIDE TURN



CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE

## 2 / TOESIDE TO BLIND WITH SURFACE PASS



CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE



## SLIDE TURN ▶

KITE – North Reach 9m

BOARD – North Astra 135

To kick off proceedings, this issue, we'll be taking an in-depth look at the Slide Turn transition.

Unquestionably the first transition on your radar and, unless you plan on crossing an ocean, a move that will top your frequency charts along with launching, landing and body dragging. The Slide Turn comes in many shapes and forms, long ones, sharp ones, carvey ones, spray ones, an endless list of possibilities with the same dependable opportunity to change direction. In short, it never gets old and can only get better.

As it is an absolutely fundamental and essential move, this issue, the Slide Turn gets the full CK'sentials treatment with an in-depth video. Once you've finished reading, please click and have a watch.

Before we get ahead of ourselves, we should admit that the Slide Turn also happens to be a hard nut to crack. We see many new guests arrive on clinics with good foundations but slightly wobbly transitions. In principle, what can be so tough about casually turning around without dipping one's derriere in the drink? In practice, quite a lot. In kiting, we have so many variables, from kites, water state, gust, lulls, conditions to name but a few, that it's way too easy to get sidetracked and bumped off the task at hand. The good news is it comes down to learning and appreciating a few separate skills before linking them together. Forget multitasking; it's a myth. Do away with rushing; it's an obstacle. We're going to look at it step by step,



concentrating on the separate parts. Once they're all sorted, they'll fit smoothly together, and you'll be the custodian of a Slide Turn to be proud of.

One last thought before we get into the nitty-gritty; we're going to nickname this the "Kite Last Slide Turn" method. The clue is in the name. It's most definitely in the slide, and you'll be moving the kite last.

With this in mind, let's have a look at what's involved.

## APPROACH AND SET-UP

First things first, we mentioned not rushing, so give yourself space. Don't leave your turn until you're about to hit the beach, and always make sure that you have room to turn, so have a good look in your mirrors. We can't emphasise this enough. There may be times when kites who are following you don't leave you

enough space to turn. In this case, there's not much else you can do but stop, wait for them to turn and then head out for another attempt. Remember that just because you looked, it doesn't mean that you can turn, but hopefully, it sends a clear signal to others of your intention.

Your aim is to approach your turn in control and on an edge. This way, you'll be in charge of both your kite and your board. As with all transitions, you need to slow down and get rid of forward momentum in order to go back the other way. The faster you approach, the more you'll have to slow down, which in itself is a worthy skill, and the longer it can take. In short, don't come into your turn at Mach 10!

Let's have a quick look through the checklist of your approach using Karine in Pic A for reference.





**KITE POSITION** – Nothing beats 11 or 1 o'clock. You don't have to be exactly on time, but these hand positions are often advocated for good reason. Simply put, if your kite is too high, it lifts, and the only real way to resist is to drop your weight. As you bring the kite down a little, it moves to a position where that lift actually pulls you to the right or left rather than up. When your kite is in this position, around 11 or 1, you can edge against it, and you're able to control your speed, direction of travel and the kite. In the photo, you can see from her lines that Karine's kite is parked around 11 o'clock, and as such, she can edge against it. We already alluded to the name. The kite last part starts here. Once you've parked your kite, you'll do everything else involved in the slide turn before you move it again!

**STANCE** – It's all about edging. In principle, come in on a comfortable upwind edge in your usual stance. Your edge works in harmony with your kite's position;

you have tension on your lines and control of the kite. And you can control your speed. Ideally, you should be travelling upwind, looking where you want to go, your bum low on stiff legs, with hips biased more towards the tail of the board so that you're driving against it through your back leg and into your heel. As just mentioned, it's easier to get into this position with the kite at 1 or 11. AND you are only in control if you can easily reach the bar with both hands. If you're hanging on for dear life or have to release your front hand, you won't exactly be in a great position to take control. If you aren't feeling comfortable, trim a touch. Brilliant! Kite is parked, you've got space, no one around, and you're in control. You are ready.

#### BRAKING

The first step then is to slow down. The big question is, how do you slow down? There are a few options available, but they don't all fit your remit.

One of the most tempting choices is to drift your kite slowly up to 12 o'clock. However, as you're leaving the kite parked at 11 or 1 o'clock, you can correctly assume that this is not an option. It will only hinder your chances of pulling off a beauty whilst most definitely increasing your chances of sitting down under your kite, doing your finest impersonation of a fishing float.

So, what's left and acceptable? You can edge harder, putting the brakes on, which will certainly help, but it won't be enough. You also need to let your foot off the proverbial gas. By easing the bar out and dumping power, you will reduce the pull from the kite. This, combined with your edge, will slow you down.

**PIC B.** You can see that the only difference between this photo and the previous photo is the position of Karine's bar. She has eased off the power, altering the precious balance between power and edge. As a result, she slows down. One won't work without the other. Love and marriage, horse and carriage! Without an edge, sheeting out will do diddley squat, and without sheeting out, an edge won't be sufficient.

There's another magical result of gently easing the power off whilst edging. We say easing because if you suddenly release all tension from your back (steering) lines, you won't slow down; you'll stop suddenly—extremely useful as an emergency stop, but not much cop when it comes to slowing down. When you ease the bar out, the kite flies more towards the edge of the window, and as such, it pulls you more upwind. With your weight on your edge and biased over your back foot, this has the effect of turning you and your board up into the wind. This is exactly what you want.





## THE SLIDE

Before we dive into the how-to, let's briefly ponder why you want to slide and what you want to slide? The reason for the slide is to move you and your board into the perfect position so that you're ready to go back the other way. Your board will be pointing in the right direction, the other way if somewhat downwind, and your stance will have magically transformed itself to take the power from your kite and ride back from whence you came. To achieve this, you want to slide the tail of your board away from you so that your back leg becomes a somewhat straight front leg, and your original front leg becomes your new bent back leg.

### SLIDE 1 - WEIGHT SHIFT

To be able to slide one end of your board, you first need to shift all your weight onto the other end. Much like walking, you can't move a foot when you're

standing on it. You can get an idea of the required weight shift on Terra Firma. Stand with your legs apart, knees soft and weight on both feet. Try to slide your right foot along the floor. Impossible! Now shift your weight onto your left foot by moving your hips over it and bending your left leg. Now you can slide your right foot easily! To really get ready for the water, rather than sliding your flat foot, lift your toes and push your heel away from you.

Back on the water, once you ease the bar out and the board turns upwind, this is your cue to shift your weight. Bend your front leg and move your hips over your front foot.

PIC C. As Karine eases her bar out and her board turns upwind, she takes full advantage of the situation by bending her front leg and moving her hips over her front foot. All the while, she stays on her edge.

### SLIDE 2 – HEEL PUSH

With your weight shift complete and hips over your front foot, you can now slide the tail of your board. Extend your back leg and push your heel away from you. As you do so, the tail of your board will skid out and slide away. Bingo!

PIC D. With her weight now on her front (left) foot Karine now extends her back leg and pushes her back heel away from her, forcing the tail of the board to slide. Have a look at her kite lines; they are still pointing off to the left of the picture because her kite is still over towards 11 o'clock. She hasn't moved it yet!

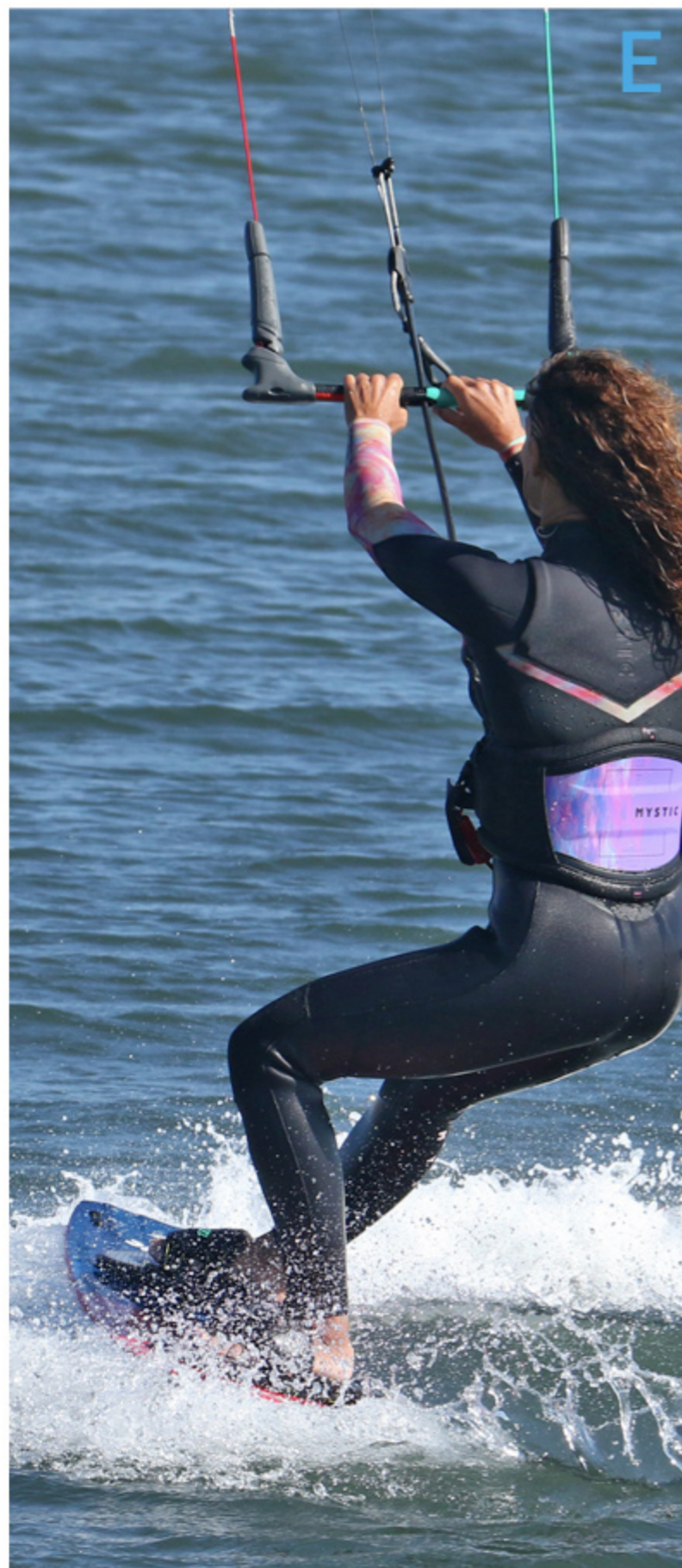
### SLIDE 3 – DON'T BE SHY

When you first slide the tail of the board, it will be a new sensation. As it slides away from you, your first thought may well be that you're falling.



However, resist the temptation of pulling the bar in for support and wait to see what happens. The worst will be that you get a little wet. What you'll find is that with your weight over your back foot, the further the board slides, the more "over" the board you'll find yourself and the more off the wind and ready both you and the board will be. We implore you to practice this step separately so that you become comfortable with sliding. If it means sliding, then slowly sinking before water starting back the other way, so be it. You should find the water start fairly simple because having not moved the kite yet, it'll be sitting pretty in a perfect place from which to start.

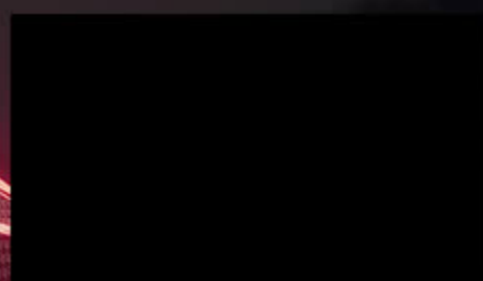
HERE IN PIC E. Karine's weight has come fully over her front foot as her back foot slides further away, and she has yet to turn her kite. The brilliant bit is that you can see how she and her board are perfectly poised to go back the other way.




# FEEL THE FUTURE



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## KITE LAST

You are officially primed and ready. The magic is complete, your original front foot is now your new back foot, and everything is gagging to get going in the new direction. This is the moment that your patience will be rewarded. With your kite obediently waiting around 11 or 1, it's in the perfect position to help you execute a flawless exit.

Your aim is to generate enough power to pull you back the other way. You need tension in the lines so that your kite will respond, so make sure you pull the bar in a little. Then give it a pull and a push to get the kite turning and moving. As you steer the kite, it will move up, supporting you and keeping you out of the water. Then it'll move across, generating power. Be ready to level the bar so that the kite doesn't actually dive down towards the water.



Turn your head so that you can follow the pull.

PIC F. Karine gives the bar a decent pull and push to set the kite on its way. As the kite starts to move, it supports her. Karine turns her head and follows the pull.

How hard you steer the kite will depend on how much power you have. The more power you have, the gentler you can be. Keep your leg bent with weight over your new back foot to resist the pull from the kite. You always need to be ready to take the pull from the kite, and as such, it's crucial to keep your weight back and on your heels. It allows you to open your hips and shoulders and to follow the kite. You're also in a strong position to control the pull by easing the bar out if needed.

PIC G. As the kite starts to pull, Karine is ready, weight on her heels, committed against the pull, and she's



able to pivot on the tail of the board, opening her hips and shoulders towards the new direction.

It's all about control, which will come with practice. The unquestionable beauty of starting with your kite around 11 or 1 is that you should not need to dive the kite hard down towards the water during the transition. This means that after moving the kite across the window, it should end up high enough to give you choices once you get back onto your edge and riding in the new direction. You can take it up or down for an extra boost to get you back riding upwind. Or you can level the bar and just park and ride if you've got enough power.

PIC H. The end result. Karine's kite is nice and high; she's followed the pull, and with her weight on her heels, the board has first pivoted and then carved back onto an edge. Karine is all set on her new path.





**TOP TIP**

Trust the process. We'd be lying if we said we didn't always want to be able to do something immediately. However, if we're honest, when does that ever happen, unless we're using a skill that we already have? Resist the temptation to go for a Slide Turn. Ignore the end goal and practice the individual steps, slowing down, leaving the kite, working on your weight shift and slide and eventually, dipping in until you can fit them all together to create a sequence of

flowing manoeuvres. This way, as you progress, you'll be able to follow each step more quickly until they morph into one casual sliding turn.

**FINAL WORDS**

We won't be looking at possible hurdles and solutions just yet, as your time is better spent working on the steps. However, we will add that once you're comfortable and everything starts to go swimmingly, don't be tempted to dive the kite to keep your bum dry or drifting it early. Work the "Kite Last" step

forward so that it comes right up and follows immediately from the moment that you push your back foot away into the slide. It's still last!





## UNHOOKED TOESIDE POP TO BLIND WITH SURFACE PASS ▶

KITE – North Pulse 9m

BOARD – North Focus Hybrid 139

A couple of issues back in IKSURFMAG 87, we enthusiastically dangled a carrot in front of your noses, with the prospect of goodies to come as long as you promised to do your homework on the Unhooked Pop from Toeside. Hopefully, you've had sufficient wind and time to complete it! If you have, it's well and truly time to start on this, the next instalment. The plan is to make the most of your well-honed take off, add on a cheeky blind and finish it off with a jaw-dropping surface pass. Once hammered into the box and claimed with a cheesy grin, you'll end up as you started, toeside and unhooked.

It all sounds rather brilliant. However, there are a few obstacles to overcome. First and foremost, the little matter of landing blind. Being able to ride blind is not essential, although it will, of course, help. If you're not particularly ambidextrous or two-sided, it's very likely that your toeside and blind side are opposite directions. As such, if you're happy popping from toeside, it may not be your chosen blind side to land on. There are two possibilities; either pop from your good toeside and land on a new blind side, or pop from your not so polished toeside and land on your comfortable blind. The choice is yours, but most of you will probably find it less difficult to pop from your good toeside and learn a new landing than to pop successfully from a not-so-strong toe side. We appreciate that for some,



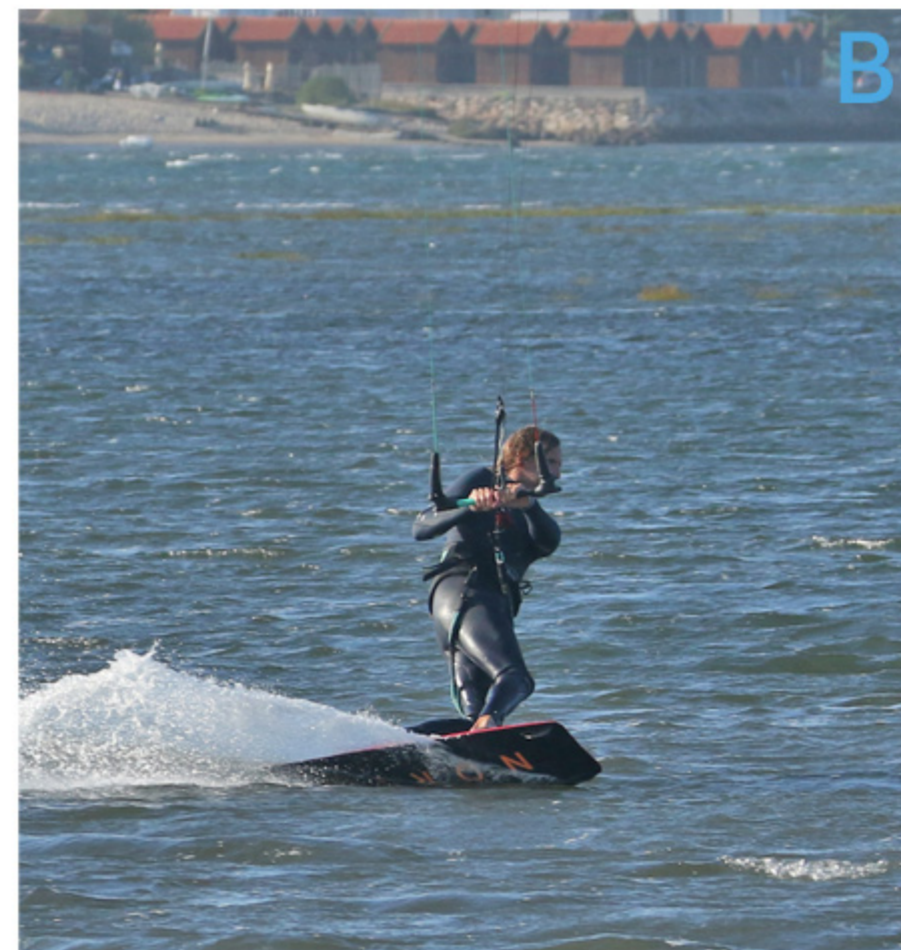
this won't be an issue, as you're fortunate enough to have two equally formidable toesides.

Don't forget to position your leash on your leading hip so that it's got room to twist around you. If you are going against your usual pass direction onto a new blind and your leash is on your trailing hip, you'll need to pass it over your head so that you'll actually unwrap it as you pass!

Let's get cracking...

### APPROACH PIC A

The proof is in the pudding. If you've done your homework, you should be confident here, as all the same principles apply; kite correctly trimmed around 1 or 11 o'clock, work in some oomph whilst keeping



tension on your lines with your heelside edge, and your hands centred on the bar. From here, you can either slide or mini pop to toeside and use the resultant loss of tension in the lines to pull the bar in and push it down to unhook. Here Christian has just switched to toeside, his board is flat, and he's using this opportunity to unhook. He's looking forwards not at his kite and is keeping pressure equally on both hands so that his kite doesn't steer up.

### TENSION TIME PIC B

Once you're unhooked, it's all about the pop. You can't pop without tension in the lines, so that's what you're looking for. To borrow from before, because you stood up to unhook, you now need to get your weight low again and in a position to carve back up against the kite.





Use the tail rocker of your board to initiate the carve by dropping your weight and hips over your back foot whilst flexing your back ankle and driving your back knee and weight across and upwind of the board to engage your toeside edge. All while keeping the kite still and the bar close. You can see how Christian has dropped his weight upwind, getting onto his edge and the tail, which will steer his board upwind. He's looking upwind, his shoulders and hips are open whilst all his weight drops onto both feet, knees driving upwind and forwards, the same position as you should enter any hooked toeside move. In this position, the board will

comfortably and quickly carve upwind and away from the kite, replacing tension on the lines and offering you power against which you can pop.

#### POP PIC C

Yet again, this bit should be no different to what you practised. From your strong carving position with weight on both feet, you're free to rock back and explode up against your edge with your back foot whilst trying not to let the bar get away from you. You decide when to do this, and your cue is when you feel the kite pulling against you. Wait too long, and it'll overpower you, pulling you over your board and off your edge.



**GIN**  
KITEBOARDING

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Go too early, and it'll be a bit of a damp squib, a non-event. Your aim is to go up, which will be the consequence of exerting your energy in the opposite direction to the pull of the kite. It's pulling you downwind; you kick yourself upwind. Here Christian's weight is back so that the board takes off at a steep angle. This is the result of both legs being used; the front leg forces his weight over the tail fractionally before his back leg forces him up. Once again, the toeside popping equivalent of a heartbeat.

#### TURNING BLIND PIC D

This is where things start to get interesting. The extremely good news is that even though you're going for a blind landing, it is a continuation of what you've

already accomplished. Previously once you left the water, you allowed yourself to be pulled forwards by the kite whilst keeping the bar close and lifting yourself over it. You then used your front hand as an anchor, a fulcrum point around which to turn so that you could lift your front knee and board around it, back to heelside. Now you'll do the exact same, which will give you momentum, which you can use to go even further. As the nose of the board comes around, keep going by turning your head back, allowing your front knee to come under the bar. This is about commitment. As you turn away from the bar, you have three jobs. Firstly, start to twist the bar down with your front hand. Secondly, bring your back foot up, lifting the tail of your board up towards your bum.



And last but not least, as you turn, you need to release your back hand. These three movements are precursors of what's to come and can, no should, be practised on land. We'll come back to this a tad later. If you have a quick look at Christian, you can see how he's rotating around the same anchor point as before. However, as his front knee comes through, he's turned his head, his bar is twisting down, almost staying parallel with his shoulders, and he's lifting his back foot.

#### LAND & TWIST PIC E

This stage is the reason for the above, the set-up for your landing. Rotating around your front hand with the bar in allows you to stay upright and balanced.





By turning your head and twisting the bar, it not only sets the turn to blind, but it actually allows you to turn further, twisting your palm up and unblocking your shoulder. And by lifting your back foot, your board will land nose first so that even if you don't turn enough, the board will pivot around the nose and turn further. If you get this far, the future is bright. Here Christian has released his back hand, which allows him to twist the bar further, which has the knock-on advantage of allowing him to turn his entire body away from the bar, which in turn brings the board around to blind. He's landing on the nose of his board. From here, you

have to take the landing. It's oh so tempting to try and rush the pass, but you need to land first so that you're in position to pass. Patience pays.

#### DOUBLE TAKE PIC F

To make the pass simpler, you've got to look for the bar both visually and physically. Turning your head once you land has the effect of turning your shoulders even further. This does two things; firstly, it will help to move your weight onto your heels, and secondly, it'll give you more reach with your free arm. With weight on your heels, you will turn downwind towards the kite, ditching tension in the lines and therefore bringing the bar in closer.

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Rider: Arthur Gullebert  
Picture: Patrick Schneider

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As your shoulders turn and the board moves towards the kite, you can wrap your front arm and the bar into the small of your back, palm up, placing the bar within easy reach. As Christian turns his head, his body follows, the board turns towards the kite, and Christian almost rolls around onto his bar. Now you can physically look for it...

#### HAND TO HAND PIC G

With the bar twisted and patiently waiting behind, you can go for the pass, physically looking for the bar with your free hand. The movement which you will practice on land first is very hand to hand. Your hands are very well acquainted; they can find each other in the dark, underwater, even in your sleep. Use this to your advantage. As long as you twist your free palm up

and reach behind you, your hands will reunite. Once they do, you can grab the bar and then release the hand you've been using. At the same time, keep turning your head and look forwards to where you're going, as this will give you a sense of direction and synchronise your movement with the board and kite. In the photo, Christian is looking around, his hands have found each other, he's grabbed the bar palm up and released his front hand.

#### BACK TO YOUR TOES PIC H

Once you've passed the bar, you can stand up. You'll be toeside, holding the bar in your back hand and hopefully, your kite won't be wet. The beauty of passing from front to back hand, and thus a blind landing, is that it encourages the kite to dip when you turn to blind,



but it then lifts it once you pass – as long as there's tension in the lines. As such, once you've got your bearings, check your kite. If it's low, get back onto an edge sharpish. If it's high, you can either hook straight back in or let it loop down to get some speed back up. You can clearly see that Christian has magically ended up back on his toes as if nothing happened.

#### TOP TIPS

You can't practice the rotate, twist and pass movement enough. You don't need to be flying a kite, just holding a bar whilst rotating around your front foot. Concentrate on twisting the bar whilst you still have two hands on it. Once you have released, twist some more, and you'll really get a feeling of how that unlocks you for the coming pass.





This is even more important if this is a new blind side or you've never surfaced passed before. This seemingly simple twisting action really is the key to riding away.

Landing blind is an add on; treat it as such. Concentrate on your pop and gaining balance in the air, and only then can you continue to blind.

Commitment is also essential. It will always be considerably easier to go for broke if you're not maxed out, full speed, gung ho. As long as you're planing, you can pop, so start off gently and build up from there.

### COMMON PROBLEMS

**NOT TURNING TO BLIND.** If you don't twist the bar, you can't get your body moving. That said, turning your head is key. You quite literally have to turn your back on proceedings to make this happen.

**GETTING PULLED OVER INTO THE WATER ON LANDING.** This is a result of the bar getting away from you. Blind is a landing. The pop comes first. Separate the moves so that you get over and close to the bar. Otherwise, your board and feet are left behind, and even if you turn wonderfully, your body will end up downwind of your board.

**FALLING QUITE HARD AND POSSIBLY CATCHING YOUR EDGE.** It could well be a result of landing flat on the board. Make sure to lift your back foot so that you land a little nose first so that you pivot off the wind as the board touches down.

**LANDING FINE, BUT THEN GETTING PULLED AS YOU'RE ATTEMPTING TO PASS.** It's because you've got weight on your feet, read toes, rather than your heels. You're edging against the kite, putting tension on the lines with only one possible outcome. Make sure that you turn your head, which will put weight on the heels and turn the board towards the kite. Don't rush.

### KEYSTONES

1. Concentrate on your pop first
2. Up and over the bar
3. Front knee through, turn head and release bar with back foot up
4. Land and then turn head, weight onto heels
5. Hand to hand, pass bar and look forwards







FORTALEZA



MANCORA



CABARETE



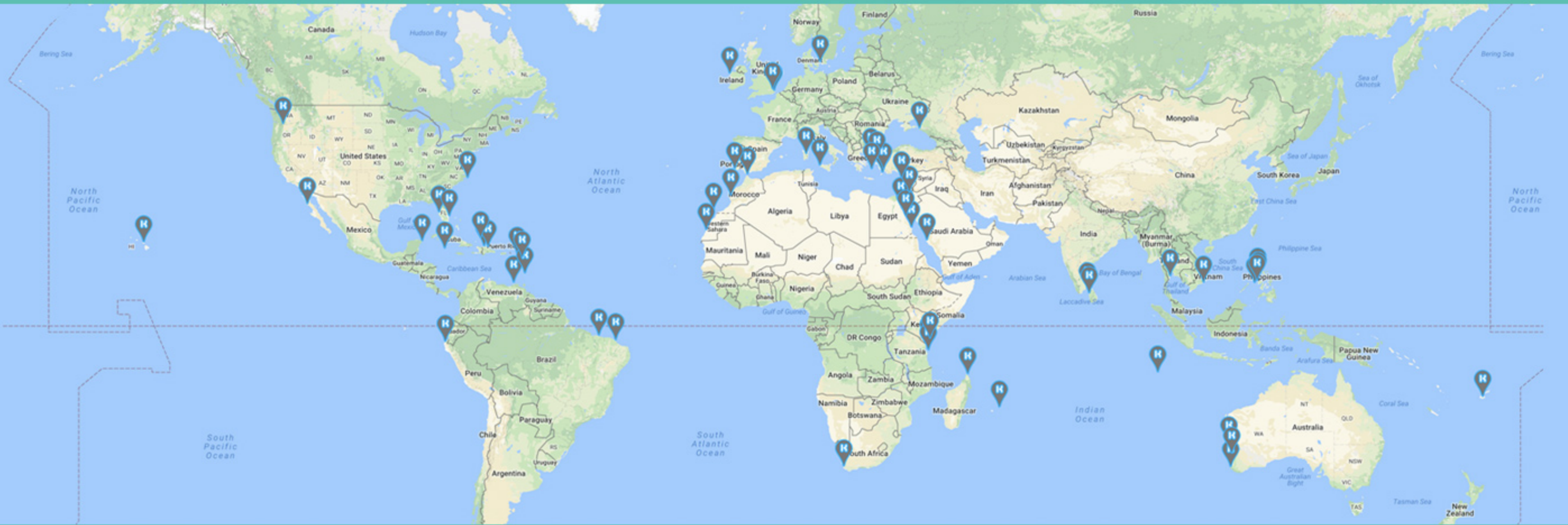
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WORDS RITA ARNAUS PHOTOS SVETLANA ROMANTSOVA

# RITA'S TRAVEL DIARY

After a tumultuous 2020, things had to get better in 2021, right?! For Rita Arnaus, this year has not gone as planned... With new challenges coming at every angle, Rita's Travel Diary is an exciting read!







**“ MOST OF ALL, I WANTED TO ACHIEVE MY LONGTIME DREAM OF BECOMING FREESTYLE WORLD CHAMPION. ”**

The book of life is written as we live it, and this past year’s story has been full of twists and turns. Still, each day is an opportunity to learn a new lesson and write a new chapter. With so much happening, good and bad, I’d hate to forget any little detail. It’s time to put pen to paper to keep these memories alive!

#### **2021: STARTING STRONG.**

I started 2021 with some lofty goals; Ride in as many competitions as possible, improve my riding level, share great content on my media channels, and level up my training game with new sports to improve my physical and mental condition. But, most of all, I wanted to achieve my longtime dream of becoming Freestyle World Champion.

Training was at the forefront of my mind as I planned my year, optimistic that things would work out. I had planned to go to North Carolina, Greece, and competitions in the Dominican Republic, Fuerteventura, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, and Madagascar, to name a few! But, unfortunately, reality had other things in mind for me. Events were getting cancelled as quickly as they were being planned, and we hadn’t even started yet!

#### **2021/MARCH: OFF TO MOROCCO.**

Taking advantage of borders reopening again, I boarded my first flight of the year to Morocco. Dakhla delivers conditions for every kind of kiter. The everyday routine is “eat, kite, sleep, repeat!” What better place than this to start training for the upcoming kite competition in Tarifa?!





**“IT WAS SMOOTH, FAST, COMFORTABLE, AND VERSATILE AND HAD ME STOKED BOTH WHILE FREESTYLING AND OUT IN THE WAVES.”**

We shot the new Brunotti collection in Dakhla, and I finally got to give the new Slingshot RPX a proper try. It's always a relief when a new piece of gear arrives that not only satisfies but exceeds expectations. It was smooth, fast, comfortable, and versatile and had me stoked both while freestyling and out in the waves.

Off the water, I spent time with the locals on quiet beaches and at Dakhla Evasion for endless laughs in what felt like a private paradise. It was a perfect trip... until it wasn't. While practising big air, I had a rough landing on a kite loop, resulting in bone marrow oedema and a trip home.  
**2021/APRIL-MAY: STEPPING BACK.**

It's hard to keep your head up when you have any setbacks. It's not that I put a lot of pressure on myself; it's part of my lifestyle, and I enjoy the hard work it takes to achieve my goals. I did my best to stay positive,

even with a two month recovery period ahead. In between sessions with my trainer, I spent a lot of time reading books and learning about nutrition and mental health. I knew I needed to have a clear mind and strong body for the GKA event in Tarifa!

**2021/JUNE: BACK IN ACTION!**

As the Freestyle event approached, it looked like we'd have perfect Poniente winds. Naturally, because nothing goes to plan, we ended up with super-strong Levante winds instead, which meant a 100% Big Air event! It was the right call in gusts over 50 knots, and the GKA did a great job adapting. But, I wasn't mentally prepared for it.



**“ THIS WAS WAY BEYOND WHAT I’D PREPARED FOR. BUT I KNEW THE CONDITIONS AND ACCEPTED THE CHALLENGE OF GOING FOR IT AND DOING MY BEST. ”**

I love Big Air and had been training kite loops, but this was way beyond what I’d prepared for. But I knew the conditions and accepted the challenge of going for it and doing my best. I gave it all I could on my 6m and made it to the final. I was surprised to see so many of us freestylers throwing huge megaloops and proud to be in the final with girls that I admire so much. It was a massive challenge that motivated me to improve my big air even more.

Off the water, I was pleased to be reunited with all the riders, especially my close friends Therese and Annabel, who I hadn’t seen in ages. Unfortunately, neither were competing; Therese was still recovering from a knee injury, and Annabel left the competition scene a few years ago. Still, it was great to be together, get some kite sessions in, and enjoy the best food in Tarifa!

**2021/JULY: STICKING AROUND SPAIN.**

Next, I travelled to Valencia for a stop on the Spanish Kiteboarding League. It was good to see the Spanish kiting community together, and I was happy to finish 1st in the Freestyle event even without much wind.

The light wind trend continued, so I headed home for a few days to visit my family. Nothing beats summer at home! My mum and dad both kitesurf, so a regular day at home means a lot of time at the beach. My family has taught me so much about wind, the ocean, and watersports in general and have been the greatest supporters in my kiting career; they believed in me from the beginning.







It was lovely to have a few sessions at home with the family before heading back to Tarifa for the next project.

#### 2021/JULY: START YOUR ENGINES!

As kiteboarders, we spend a lot of time on the road, looking for the best conditions. I've always dreamed of partnering with a car brand and couldn't be more stoked when Porsche came with an opportunity for me.

**"WE SPEND A LOT OF TIME ON THE ROAD, LOOKING FOR THE BEST CONDITIONS."**



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**“ I WAS ON A MAJOR LIFE HIGH, WHICH MEANT IT WAS TIME FOR ANOTHER REMINDER THAT LUCK WAS NOT ON MY SIDE. ”**

Becoming part of their family and seeing them so excited to support kiteboarding is incredible! My old friend Liam Whaley also partnered with Porsche, so we met up in Tarifa to shoot the announcement video together.

Things are a little different on a commercial shoot when it comes to tricks. A handle pass doesn't have quite the same pizzazz for a general viewer as an old school rotation or hand drag, so we got on the water and had as much fun as possible for this shoot!

#### 2021/AUGUST: FOILED AGAIN.

When I got home after the Porsche project, I was on a major life high, which meant it was time for another reminder that luck was not on my side. I was stepping off a boat,

and the gap to the pier was quite big. When I slipped, I instantly knew that I was in for another round of rest and recovery. This time, I injured my hamstring and strained a tendon. It will be October before I'm back at full power, but a little bit of foiling is good for the soul!

My dad is the craziest and most experienced kiter in the bay; a session with him always puts a smile on my face! We decided to go on a long downwind foil together, but I probably should have told him about my string of bad luck before we got on the water because the wind dropped about halfway to our destination!



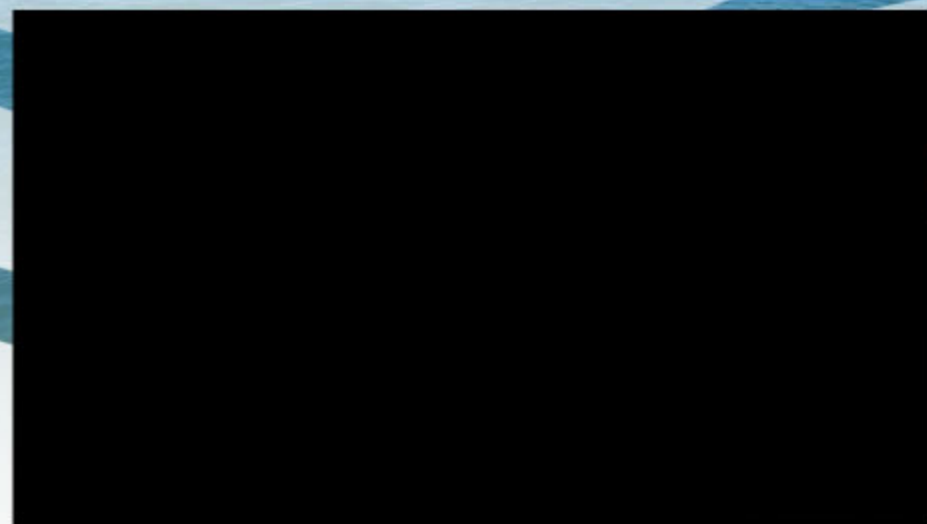
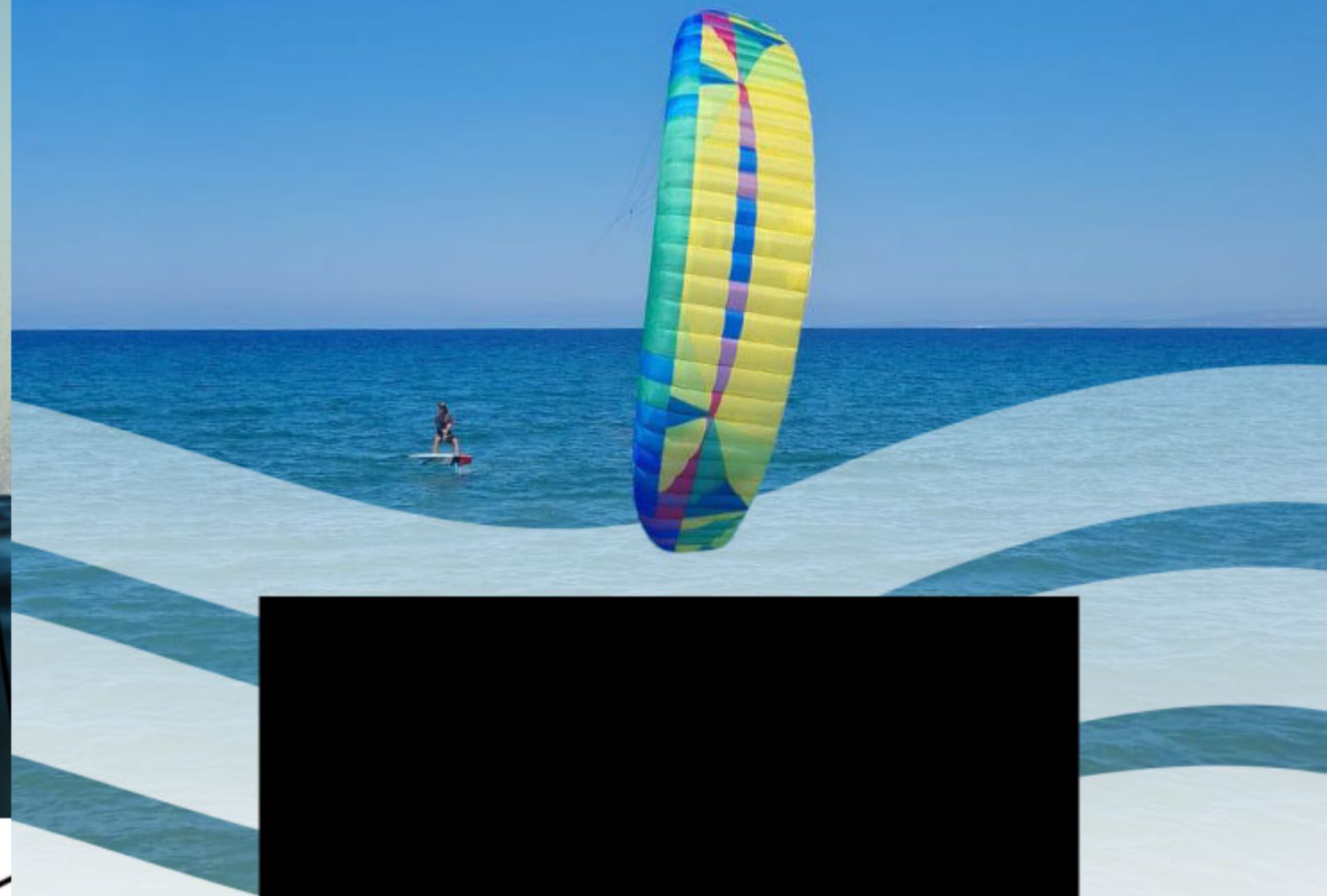


It was a bit scary being so far out at sea, but my dad looked completely relaxed. I tried to follow his lead and stay calm, but the bay was full of jellyfish, making it difficult! While we made it back alive and unstung, it's important to remember that even with a lot of experience, things can always go wrong!

It wasn't long before the craving for another adventure set in, but I couldn't go on a typical kite trip because of my injury.

**“ IT'S IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT EVEN WITH A LOT OF EXPERIENCE, THINGS CAN ALWAYS GO WRONG! ”**

**KOALA**  
5m<sup>2</sup> 8m<sup>2</sup> 10m<sup>2</sup> 12m<sup>2</sup> 15m<sup>2</sup>



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**“ THE GLOVES, BOOTIES, HOOD, AND SEALS SHARING THE WAVES MADE THE EXPERIENCE THAT MUCH MORE AUTHENTIC! ”**

PHOTO RANNY & ELIZABETH

My friend Ranny had been trying to convince me to join her in Iceland, and it sounded like just the sort of trip that would make this year special, so I booked the flight!

2021/SEPTEMBER: NEW FRONTIERS IN ICELAND.

While it wasn't meant to be a kiting trip, I don't go anywhere without kite gear! I'd never been to Iceland, so I wasn't sure what to expect, but I already knew it would be colder than what I'm used to! I piled into the car with Ranny and Elizabeth, and we set off on the road. I had no idea where we were going! Luckily, Ranny had the itinerary mapped out to visit all the must-see spots in Iceland during our short trip.

Surprisingly, we encountered wind on the very first day! It was quite strong with a lot of current, and I was extremely overpowered on my 8m RPX in the big ocean waves, but it was so fun to be back on a twin tip for the first time in Iceland. The gloves, booties, hood, and seals sharing the waves made the experience that much more authentic!

We continued the road trip for the next six days, staying in a different hotel every night and enjoying delicious Icelandic food, from road trip snacks to amazing restaurants. Everything about the trip left me speechless. Getting to know more about Viking history and Icelandic culture had me in awe of this strong community. I got to see nature in so many different ways, and the glacier and waterfalls were mind-blowing. This was nature at its purest.





PHOTO RANNY & ELIZABETH



### 2021: LOOKING FORWARD.

Now that I'm back in Barcelona and reflecting on the year so far, it's been a whirlwind. Life is always teaching you something, and you can never stop learning. With all the unexpected events of the year, learning to welcome what happens with peace and understanding is the biggest life lesson. Without the downs, we wouldn't appreciate the ups! I'm ready for the challenge and excited to keep pushing forward. It's all part of the game!

Next stop? It's time to put the wetsuits away and get ready for a trip to paradise to shred lagoons, surf waves, and catch up with a kite community that has become like family. Brazil, here I come!

**"I'M READY FOR THE CHALLENGE AND EXCITED TO KEEP PUSHING FORWARD."**

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SUMMER 2021



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WORDS CRYSTAL VENESS  
PHOTOS DUOTONE KITEBOARDING

# TECH FOCUS

## DUOTONE JUICE D/LAB

Q&A with Ralf Grösel, Designer

Known as the apex predator of light wind kites, the Juice D/LAB is an exciting new addition to the Duotone lineup.

We're going behind the design with Duotone's Ralf Grösel in this interview!





**" WE HAVE COMBINED THE LIGHTEST MATERIAL AVAILABLE WITH THE LATEST PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGIES. WE HAVE DEFINITELY REACHED A NEW LEVEL IN LIGHT WIND TUBE KITES! "**



**What is D/LAB? Is the future of kiteboarding design in the hands of the Duotone D/LAB team?**

D/LAB stands for Duotone Laboratory. At D/LAB, we combine the latest materials with production technology. We aim to create the products of the future and to set new benchmarks within the industry.

**What is your background, and how did you find yourself on the design team at Duotone?**

Before entering the kite industry, I worked as a paragliding test pilot and designed paragliders. I've been in the kite industry since 2000 when I cofounded FLYSURFER.

In 2005, I began working at Boards & More. The first tube kite I was involved with was the Evo. Since then, I have been working in kite design and everything else that goes into the kite; materials, production technologies, and everything required to put the kite together. Currently, I'm designing the Duotone Evo/Evo SLS, Dice/Dice SLS, Juice/Juice D/LAB, and Vegas.

**What was the design goal for the Juice D/LAB?**

It was quite simple: Create the ultimate light wind kite. With the standard Juice, we had already set the benchmark for light wind tube kites. Over the last two years, we have decreased the weight by over 28%. Now, with the Juice D/LAB, we have combined the lightest material available with the latest production technologies. We have definitely reached a new level in light wind tube kites!

**The kite is available in 13m and 15m, although these kites are not designed for the same purpose. What type of kiter should consider each size?**

We designed two different kites to meet different needs. The 13-metre version is dedicated to foiling.





**" IT HOOKS YOU SUPER NICELY AND LIFTS YOU UP ON THE BOARD, EVEN IN THE SLIGHTEST BREEZE. "**

There is no need to have anything bigger because it is so powerful. When you loop the kite down, it creates a lot of speed when it flies back up through the turn due to its light weight. It hooks you super nicely and lifts you up on the board, even in the slightest breeze.

The 15-metre is much more grunty in comparison to the 13. It's made to perform on a twin tip, particularly a big twin tip. If you want to go kiting in 7 knots of wind, you should have a big board, like a 165-centimetre board, to keep you going. The 15 is the ultimate lightweight kite for twin tip riding.

**Can it truly fly in 4 knots of wind? How skilled of a kiter do you need to be?**

Yes, it can. An 80kg rider using something like a Spirit Carve 950 foil combined with a board that has a little bit of volume can get going in 4 knots. It's not just the marketing blah blah; it is absolutely possible and quite easy to achieve.

Of course, it requires a certain skill level. You have to understand how to fly the kite in extremely light conditions. Once you get the technique right, everything that follows is just sensational. It's a real eye-opener because, in such little wind, you barely have any ripples on the water. Kiting on a mirror is a fantastic sensation.

**Can you take us through the project timeline for the Juice D/LAB? How did this project come about?**

The Juice D/LAB project took off after I made the first concept kite three years ago called the ultra-lightweight kite. It was a kite made entirely out of non-commercial materials. We used the lightest materials available today and developed new construction methods to manufacture and implement these superlight materials without breaking them. The first kite was a 13-metre and weighed less than 2kg. It was incredible to see what was technically possible, and this was the kite I took out and was able to get going in 3-4 knots of wind. It was such a successful experiment that, from then onwards, we have really tried to push our light wind construction further and further.



**What materials are used in the Juice D/LAB?  
How do these differ from the original Juice?**

The Juice D/LAB features the Aluula material, which is currently the lightest material available on the market at around 80g per square metre. In comparison, the Penta TX, which is also a really light material, is around 130g.

The original Juice uses a DLE 140, which is around 140g. In the past, we used material that weighed 160g per square metre. So, you can see the difference between the normal Dacron at 160g and the Aluula at 80g has resulted in a 50% weight reduction, which is a huge benefit.

**Working with new materials has got to be a big risk. What steps are required to ensure that the material is lighter while still durable and performing at a high level?**

We have to do a lot of testing because the standard tuning methods we have used for the last 15 years are not working for the new material. It is not a woven; it is a classical laminate. We had to figure out what had to be changed, what kind of material combinations we have to use, and what reinforcements we need to add to the kite to ensure that the durability is still there. Again, it's testing, testing, testing.

We put 30 kites into the schools, equipped team riders and I was constantly riding the kite and putting a lot of flight hours into this construction to check which areas could have problems. It took us over a year to figure out all the negative aspects and then solving them, it was quite a long challenge!



**" WE HAVE TO DO A LOT OF TESTING BECAUSE THE STANDARD TUNING METHODS WE HAVE USED FOR THE LAST 15 YEARS ARE NOT WORKING FOR THE NEW MATERIAL. "**





**" EVEN IN ONLY SEVEN KNOTS OF ONSHORE WIND, IT'S ENOUGH, ESPECIALLY ON A FOIL BOARD. "**

**Will the standard Juice be phased out of the Duotone range favouring the Juice D/LAB, or will these two products exist side by side?**

There is a considerable price difference between the standard Juice and the Juice D/LAB because the Aluula material is literally ten times more expensive than the standard material. We will definitely continue with the Juice; it's a superb all-around kite for everyone who wants to get on the water early when the wind is light. It's also ideal for schools that are teaching on light wind days.

The Juice D/LAB is the extreme; It is a benchmark kite,

something expensive, but also something kind of edgy because you need the skill set to fly the kite in almost no wind. Overall, it is a kite that allows you to ride every single day with only a little breeze. In the classical sea breeze conditions, when you go to the beach, and you have the feeling, "Oh my god, it's not going to be enough!" you will be able to go kiting with the Juice D/LAB. Even in only seven knots of onshore wind, it's enough, especially on a foil board.

**Of course, it is a decision that is up to the customer; are you willing to invest this kind of money in allowing yourself to hit the water whenever possible?**

**Now that the Juice D/LAB is out the door, what is the Duotone D/LAB team working on at the moment? Can you let us in on any of these top-secret projects?**

We are constantly working on developing new materials and construction technologies to push the sport further. Unfortunately, I'm not able to tell you in which direction. The Juice D/LAB and the Aluula material are not the ends of the line; It's more or less the beginning, and I think an entirely new set of material will lead us to some really interesting products in the future.

**Thanks for taking the time, Ralf!**



# TECH FOCUS

## MYSTIC WARRIOR X HARNESS

Q&A with the Mystic R&D Team

After more than a decade of innovation, Mystic's Warrior line has evolved, and the latest release opens the door to the hybrid era! We spoke to the designers to find out what's inside (and outside) the new Mystic Warrior X.





**The Warrior line has been a Mystic staple since the early days and is still going strong. How does the new Warrior X fit into the lineup?**

Yes, we are proud of the legacy and success of the Warrior, one of the first mainstream kite and windsurf harnesses. The Warrior has always been a really good softshell harness. A few years ago, we saw the opportunities in the hardshell and launched the first line of thermoplast hardshell harnesses that have been very successful: the Majestic model with a soft-touch inside and the Stealth models, which do not absorb any water. Between the softshell and hardshell, we also saw an opportunity for a semi-hardshell; this is the Warrior X.

**How would you describe the support and comfort to a kiter that may not have the opportunity to test one in person?**

The Warrior X is a semi-hardshell harness with plastic injected into a mould that creates a really strong frame for back support. It provides support and divides the load over your back. If you are used to a softshell and want a step-up model, this is the one. It really is positioned between a softshell and hardshell. And, it comes at an affordable price! Hardshells are quite expensive, and we understand people need to grow into these price points. As a brand, we like to have affordable price points to stay approachable for all customers.

**Which type of kiter or style of riding would favour the Warrior X?**

I would say this is a perfect model for the average rider. If you want to boost super high, go for the hardshells because you need the extra support.

**" BETWEEN THE SOFTSHELL AND HARDSHELL, WE ALSO SAW AN OPPORTUNITY FOR A SEMI-HARDSHELL; THIS IS THE WARRIOR X. "**







**“ THE DESIGN HAS A VERY STEALTHY LOOK BUT IS SUPER FUNCTIONAL AND DESIGNED FOR OPTIMUM BACK SUPPORT. ”**

But, average freestyle, wave riders, and foilers will have a blast with this model. It is a really well-performing all-around harness.

**It's not the Stealth, but it sure looks stealthy!  
What inspired the design?**

We call it the Next Frame. Our engineers have been developing this frame to give the plastic plate in the harness better support characteristics. It provides support and stiffness over the horizontal axis to prevent pinching of the harness and on the vertical axis to give more back support. The frame is also more tapered towards the edges to give it comfortable support on the bending points. The design has a very stealthy look but is super functional

and designed for optimum back support.

**Have there been considerations for sustainability in the design and manufacturing process?**

We have limited the amount of waste by going with injection moulded plates instead of cut out plates, which have some waste. We are also researching opportunities with recycled materials. We are still struggling with these materials as they tend to be less stable, but we will be pushing for these greener solutions in the near future.

**It comes in seven sizes, from XXS to XXL. Is this a unisex harness, or is there a plan to release a similar model in the women's range?**

We are super proud to see that the market share for our women's harnesses is growing. Our collection for female riders is huge, and we are proud of this. However, we have certain minimum order quantities we need to reach in our factories. For now, it's only available for men, but I think we could bring out a Warrior X for the ladies in the near future.

**Thanks for the insight into the new Warrior X! Any last words?**

We are always keen to push innovation. Go test a Warrior X at your local retailer, and you will see it offers great value for money! We are super stoked to see all the feedback from the water, analyse it, and learn for our future innovations.



WORDS CRYSTAL VENESS  
PHOTOS RIDE ENGINE

RIDER BRANDON SCHEID

# TECH FOCUS

## RIDE ENGINE WETSUITS

Q&A with Gary Siskar  
(Marketing Director, PLM Ride Engine)

Ride Engine's premium range of wetsuits has received an upgrade, and we're checking in with Gary Siskar to find out all about the new APOC and ELARA lines!





**" THE CHANGES WE HAVE MADE CERTAINLY ADD TO THE PERFORMANCE AND CONVENIENCE OF THE USER EXPERIENCE. "**



**Hi Gary! For those familiar with earlier Ride Engine versions of APOC, ELARA, and LUNA wetsuits, what are the most significant upgrades in the latest models?**

First off, I want to thank all the people that have owned a Ride Engine wetsuit! Hopefully, the suits have served you well, and we have made Ride Engine lovers out of you!

From the start, the wetsuits that we designed were all about achieving the most premium quality and highest performance wetsuit you can get. We only have one level of suit that we produce, and that is the best in class available. Considering this, there were not many sweeping changes or upgrades to be made from the prior season suits, yet the changes we have made certainly add to the performance and convenience of the user experience.

**Tell us a bit more about the key features of these wetsuits!**

As both the APOC and ELARA suits are front entry, this is where we started to look at potential improvements. All front entry suits have a tendency to "flush" - when water infiltrates the suit from the closure point. We changed our entry to eliminate flushing by bringing the internal opening gusset higher and closing off the shoulder entry by a small margin.

These improvements did not impact the ease of getting in or out of the suit at all, but they did eliminate flushing. In addition, we placed the zipper closure pull on the teeth. This makes zipping the suit easier by eliminating the need to put the zip on the teeth to close the suit. Inside the suit, we have changed to a new thermal liner called Thermal Lock Fleece.





**" THIS LINING IS LIGHTER AND LESS WATER-ABSORBENT THAN PILE LINERS "**

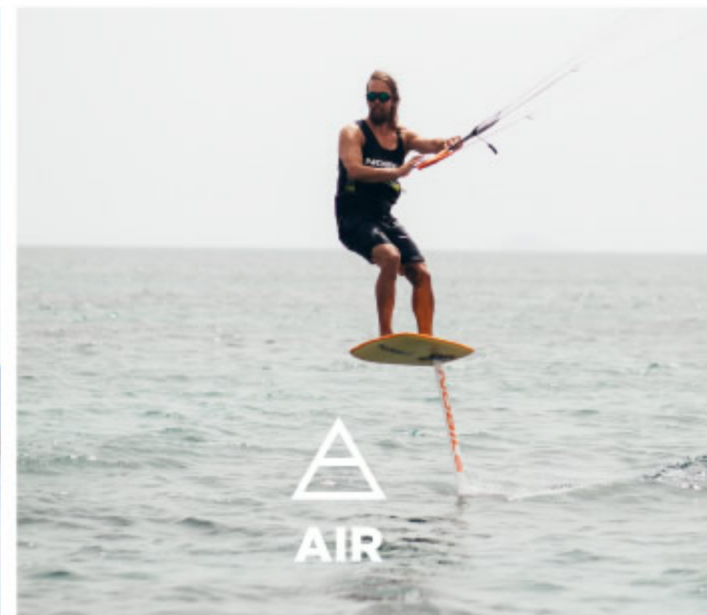
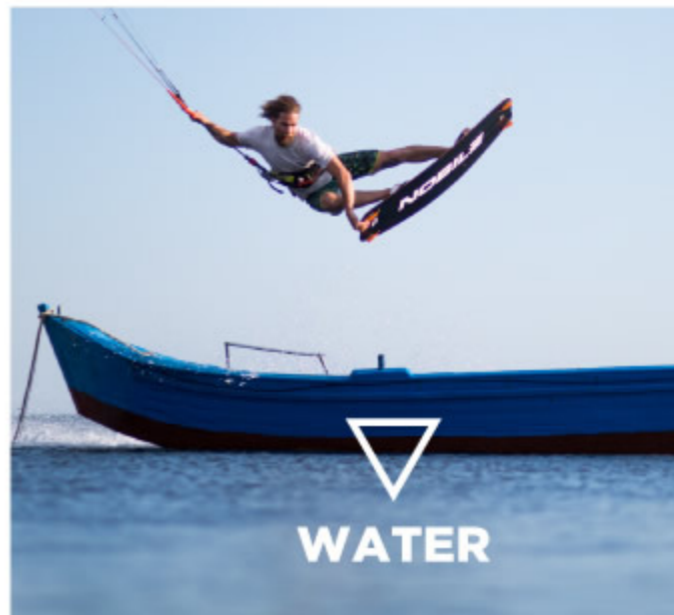
This lining is lighter and less water-absorbent than pile liners while providing the same retention of heat, drying faster, and overall reducing the suit's weight when dry and wet.

**Solid seams are a make or break when it comes to kiting in cool water. Nobody likes a leaky wetsuit! How do Ride Engine suits keep water out and make those perfect sessions last?**

We have spent a significant amount of time developing our seaming patterns and construction. Seams, after all, are what keep the entire suit together. Patterns and the seaming plan are important to ensure that you don't have seams crossing any area that might create comfort issues, and we make sure that none of the seams falls in any area that would take any form of stress.

# IRIDENOBILE  
# NOBILEKITEBOARDING

**NOBILE**



T H E E L E M E N T S

KITEBOARDING COLLECTION 2022

WWW.NOBILEKITEBOARDING.COM



**" WE HAVE STRIVED IN ALL OUR PRODUCTS TO BE SUSTAINABLE BY REDUCING, LIMITING, OR FULLY ELIMINATING ANY IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT "**



All the cold-water full suits are glued and blind stitched, creating a strong and waterproof connection of the neoprene panels. Then, we apply a Power Seam coating made of highly elastic liquid rubber on the outside of the seam to ensure long-lasting durability against water intrusion.

**These wetsuits are built with the same premium materials and construction, with the APOC tailored for the male physique and the ELARA and LUNA designed for the female body. How does Ride Engine achieve the perfect fit in the design process?**

We go through a very complex pattern process along with a lot of fittings on many body types. Another factor that impacts fit is the type of neoprene used along with the construction process when it comes to seams. We eliminated seams in this generation of

suits, which makes the suits stretch more, creating a better fit. Match fewer seams with our limestone-based neoprene that is ultra-elastic, and you get a very good fitting wetsuit!

**Environmentally conscious production has been a major focus for Ride Engine from the very beginning. What are some of the materials and methods that you use to achieve sustainability?**

We believe that all watersports equipment manufactures have the responsibility to protect our natural environment that we have fun in. Since day one, we have strived in all our products to be sustainable by reducing, limiting, or fully eliminating any impact on the environment that the manufacturing process or materials may have.

We also view the lifespan of a product as important in

this equation. Our wetsuits are made from the highest quality S-foam neoprene that uses earth mined limestone to replace petrochemicals found in other neoprene. Solvent-free lamination of the neoprene material liners eliminates all harmful Volatile Organic Compounds. We don't use any hydrophobic coatings or laminations on the suits making the suits 100% C-Free. And lastly, our suits are produced in a Fair Trade certified factory.

**Is there anything else you're stoked to share about the new wetsuits?!**

We know that when you try our wetsuits, you will be stoked. The countless hours poured into the design and engineering along with intensive testing across the world in every condition created wetsuits that will keep you warmer and, on the water, longer.



WORDS CRYSTAL VENESS

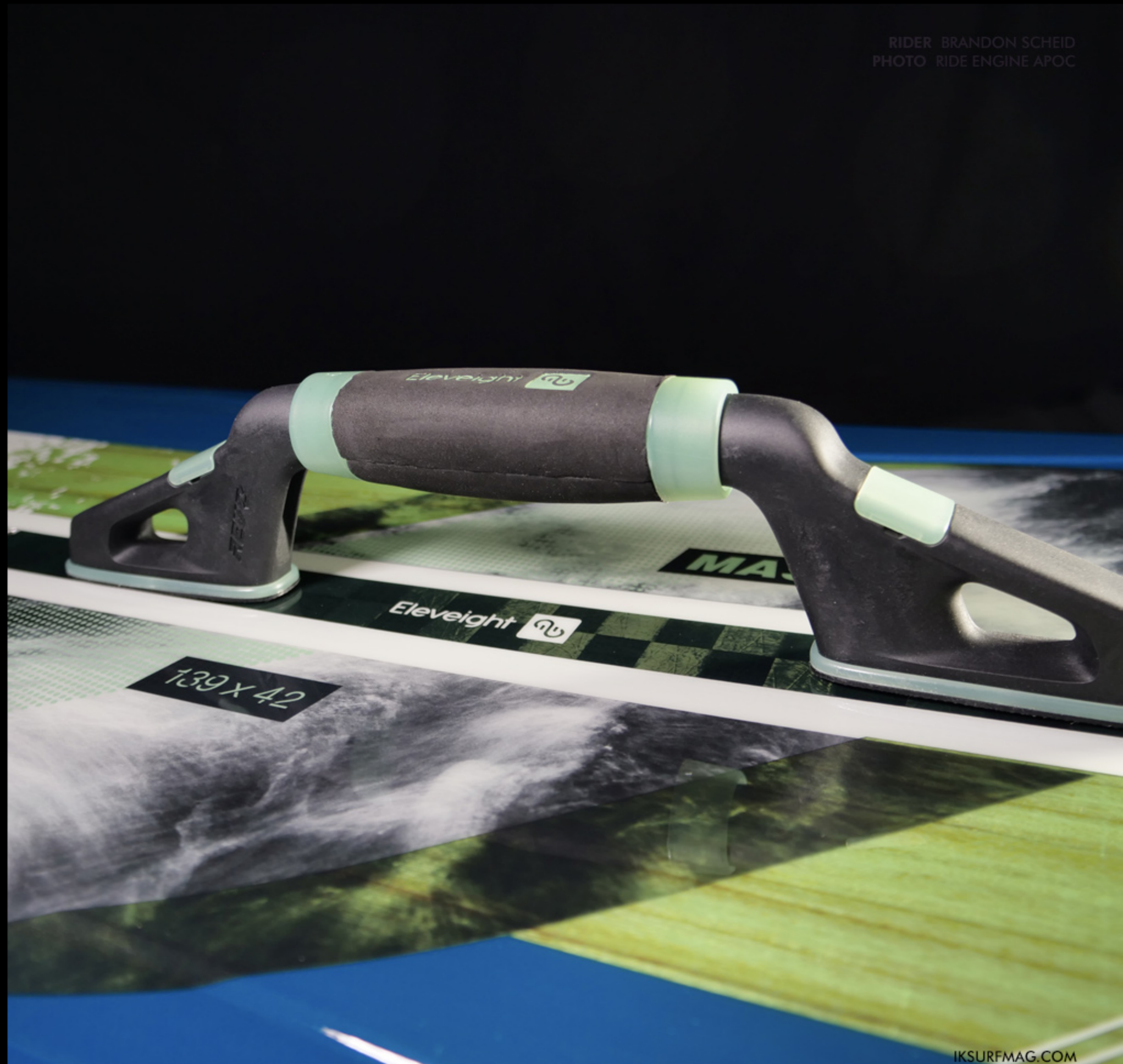
RIDER BRANDON SCHEID  
PHOTO RIDE ENGINE APOC

# TECH FOCUS

## ELEVEIGHT REVO GRAB HANDLE

Q&A with Robert Bratz

Is it possible to trim a twin tip?!  
Eleveight is taking a stab at it with the  
new REVO Grab Handle. Robert Bratz  
tells us all about it!





**Now, this is an exciting new innovation! A handle that can alter the way your twin tip performs. What is the REVO, and how does it work?**

The idea of the REVO is to make it possible to trim our twin tips. We are used to having trim options for our kites and bars to choose our set-up according to the conditions. Now, it's possible with twin tips!

The REVO is a turning mechanism built into the grab handle and is attached to the inclined plane of the board. If you twist the grab handle, you increase the tension on the two-sided base. This tension gets transformed into the board and flattens the camber/cavity, resulting in a flatter rocker line. In the end, this changes the performance parameters of the board.

You only have to turn the handle by 120 degrees to change from passive mode to active mode. You can easily change the set-up while riding, or as we call it, "on the fly."


**What specific aspects of the board does it change?**

Adjusting the REVO changes the rocker line and the related flex. In active mode, the board has a flatter rocker line that transforms into more grip, earlier planing, and better upwind ability. The main characteristics of the twin tip will remain the same, but you can adjust some performance parameters to better suit the conditions.

**" THE REVO IS A TURNING MECHANISM BUILT INTO THE GRAB HANDLE AND IS ATTACHED TO THE INCLINED PLANE OF THE BOARD. "**







**" OUR AIM WAS TO PRODUCE THE REVO WITH NEARLY THE SAME WEIGHT AS CONVENTIONAL TWIN TIP HANDLES. "**

**Does installing the REVO add extra weight to the board?**

In the R&D process, we put a lot of focus on keeping it light weight. Our aim was to produce the REVO with nearly the same weight as conventional twin tip handles. Material selection and design made it possible, so this new toy will not add any weight to your board!

**Which boards work with the REVO?**

The REVO is exclusively developed for Eleveight boards. Our inserts are reinforced, and all tests were done on our boards with our specific 3 stage rocker. Nevertheless, you can use the REVO on other boards with an insert distance of 20cm.



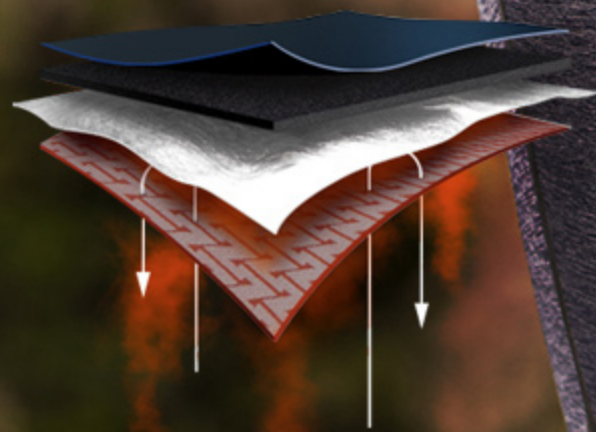
WORDS CRYSTAL VENESS  
PHOTOS PROLIMIT

# TECH FOCUS

## PROLIMIT THERMAL REBOUND

Q&A with Alex Cretier, Prolimit CEO

What goes into making a top-quality wetsuit? At Prolimit, it's the hidden elements that make all the difference! Prolimit CEO Alex Cretier is here to tell us what's inside!





**" OUR MERCURY, OXYGEN AND VAPOR SERIES ARE ALL USING TR. "**



**What is Thermal Rebound™, and in which part of the wetsuit is it used?**

Thermal Rebound™ is a very thin alloy sheeting, which is actually a NASA invention from the '60s now used for survival blankets. This survival blanket sheet is the extra layer between Zodiac 2.0 and the Airflex 500+ neoprene.

Our Mercury, Oxygen and Vapor series are all using TR. On these wetsuits, the whole body, apart from arms, collar and lower legs, is made with TR and can be easily detected by the RED Zodiac 2.0 inner lining.

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**Kitelement Travel Set is more than just split kiteboard, backpack and a vacuum bag.**

**It is the key to making traveling your lifestyle for good.**

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**" WE RAN A SERIES FOR OUR ATHLETES TO ENSURE THE WETSUITS DELIVERED EXACTLY WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR "**

**Take us behind the scenes of bringing new materials to market. How did you discover the Thermal Rebound™ technology, and how was it tested before being approved for use in Prolimit wetsuits?**

It took years of testing to achieve a strong bond between the layers. After we finished the lab tests (including elongation tests, UV A and UV B tests, sea and ozone tests, etc.), we ran a series for our athletes

to ensure the wetsuits delivered exactly what we are looking for: perfect insulation without increasing thicknesses. We can now say that a TR suit in 5mm feels easily like a 6mm or more.

**If you took the same model of wetsuit and produced one with Thermal Rebound™ and one without, what would be the difference in protection and warmth that the TR wetsuit offers?**

A TR suit can easily be worn at least 1mm thinner and

provide the same or better insulation. At the moment, a TR suit is the warmest wetsuit available on the market if you compare thicknesses. The combination of the Airflex 500+, which already has excellent insulation properties (more air enclosed in the cell neoprene), the Zodiac 2.0 inner lining, and TR, gives the best insulation values. Our TR wetsuits offer stretch, comfort, and quick drying combined with the survival blanket effect.



# TRIED & TESTED



WORDS & PHOTOS THE IKSURFMAG TEST TEAM

PHOTO THIS PAGE RIDER KATARZYNA LANGE PHOTO TOMASZ USTUPSKI

As we hover between summer and winter - or winter and summer depending on which hemisphere you're in - kiting conditions are changing as quickly as the colours of the leaves. That doesn't stop us from stealing a session whenever the wind blows! This issue, we've got quite the mixed bag of gear with big ticket items like kites and boards on test alongside the accessories that are essential to getting you out on the water. Find out what we thought of the latest gear from your favourite brands!

## KITES

Gin Spirit  
Airush One V2  
North Pulse  
Nobile V-Ride

## BOARDS

Nobile NHP Split Foil Board  
Lieuwe Carbonara  
North Flare

## OTHERS

Mystic Majestic Summer Wetsuit  
Airush Ride Bar  
AK Synth Harness



BRAND GIN MODEL SPIRIT SIZE 10M YEAR 2021



“ THIS KITE CAN BENEFIT ALL LEVELS OF RIDERS AND ALLOW THEM TO PROGRESS QUICKLY WITHIN THE SPORT OF KITING AND FOILING. ”



#### AT A GLANCE

At Gin Kiteboarding, the Spirit is their all-around freeride foil kite. Use this kite on the water, out in the snow or on the land... you choose! This versatile closed-cell foil kite is a fantastic choice offering easy handling with great low wind flying capabilities whilst also performing efficiently in high winds for the smaller sizes.

Light and easy to handle - The kite was developed by Hans Bollinger and is used by 11 times world champion Maxime Nocher who helped fine-tune the kite through its development process. Its lightweight construction makes it amazing in light winds, but it is balanced well with its strong wind performance.

Comfort – The Spirit offers direct feedback from the bar enabling maximum control, so when you're on the water, performance and enjoyment are the only two things on your mind!

Versatile – This kite can not only be taken anywhere, but it can do everything really well. Foil kites do tend to offer greater hangtime due to their construction, but the Spirit really keeps you in the air for what feels like a lifetime.

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BRAND AIRUSH

MODEL ONE V2

SIZE 9M

YEAR 2022



“ IF YOU'RE  
LOOKING FOR AN  
EVERYDAY KITE  
THAT WILL GET  
YOU OUT ON THE  
WATER MORE  
OFTEN THAN  
NOT, THIS COULD  
BE THE ONE (V2)!”



## AT A GLANCE

This is the 2nd generation of the One from Airush, just released in September 2021. Our South African based test team were lucky to get their hands on it so early, being a hop, skip, and a jump away from Airush headquarters, located in the surfside town of Muizenberg.

The One V2 has been designed with simplicity, usability, and durability in mind. From beginner kites to independent shredders, this should have you covered. According to Airush, the kite has incredible depower and an almost instant relaunch, perfect for lighter wind days. It has a 3-pulley cascade bridle designed to keep the kite as well balanced as possible, stable and responsive, with a ton of depower. Before getting the One V2 up in the sky, let's take a closer look at the features.

We're simple humans and can't argue that a nice looking piece of kit is an added bonus, so we were pretty taken by this colourway. The handsome blue Teijin Technoforce D2 canopy with the modern golden text is sleek and deliciously appealing. You can see that simplicity has been kept at the front of mind in this design.

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BRAND NORTH

MODEL PULSE

SIZE 9M

YEAR 2021



“EFFORTLESS  
RELAUNCH WITH  
GREAT  
UNHOOKED  
CAPABILITIES  
WITH LINE  
SLACK WHEN  
YOU WANT IT.”



#### AT A GLANCE

2021 has seen North bring out their second model of the Pulse. Already a favourite amongst freestyle riders, the Pulse is North's freestyle/wakestyle kite providing the rider with explosive pop, sharp turns and quick steering, precisely what you want when busting those moves.

This hybrid C kite consists of a 3-strut design with a pulley-less bridle system. The new improvements on the Pulse see North introduce new high-quality low-elongation bridle lines giving lower drag and a more direct feeling from the 2020 model. Like the majority of kites in the North range, the Pulse features a 2-stage Arc Design giving it a little more grunt when you need it. The wingtips are straighter, engaging a better steering response. Do bear in mind that the Pulse has a slightly narrower span, so it does hold a little less power compared to a kite like the Reach or Orbit.

The canopy includes premium Teijin D2 Ripstop Fabric. This fabric has the highest strength to weight ratio giving your Pulse the durability it deserves! Also, across the kite, North have lightweight reinforcements to protect areas such as the struts and leading edge.

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BRAND NOBILE

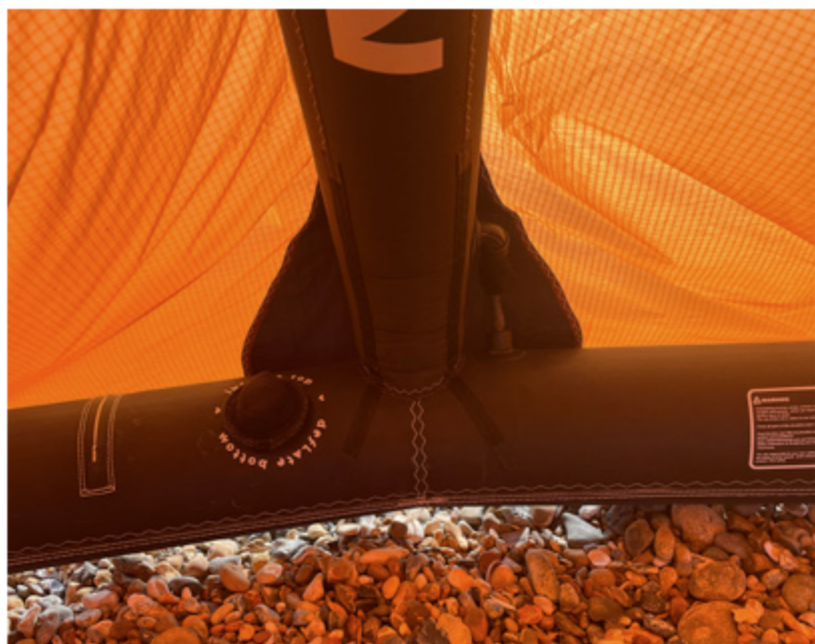
MODEL V-RIDE

SIZE 12M

YEAR 2021



“ AS FREERIDE KITES GO, IT’S A PRETTY SOLID ALL-ROUNDER - A COMFORTABLE RIDE THAT DOES EVERYTHING WELL.”



#### AT A GLANCE

The 2021 Nobile V-Ride is Nobile’s Freeride/Wave kite. What they’ve done is take their knowledge and experience from earlier models and given the kite a proper makeover. Not so much the kite for Freestyle or Wakestyle, but the V-Ride certainly delivers for big air, wave and freeride rider styles.

It’s a 4-line kite with pulleys on the bridles; there are also front and back bridle trimming options allowing you as the rider to really fine-tune your kite for whatever session lies ahead. Looking at this kite pumped on the beach, you can see it consists of a 3-strut design with swept-back wingtips to enhance wave riding performance but also make relaunching any kite size super-efficient.

Previously this kite was known as the T5, and with its new design, the V-Ride now performs exceptionally in the waves and for foiling. The build of the kite is solid, so it should be a great choice for schools. With plenty of internal reinforcements, double-stitched bond seams, Teijin double ripstop canopy material and Dacron places across areas on the canopy where most essential,

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"THE PRACTICALITY THIS DUAL-PURPOSE BOARD OFFERS MAKES IT THE BEST TRAVEL COMPANION OUT THERE."



**BRAND** NOBILE  
**SIZE** 139 X 41.5CM

**MODEL** NHP SPLIT FOIL  
**YEAR** 2021

#### AT A GLANCE

Nobile Kiteboarding is renowned for its innovative ideas to combat the extortionate travel costs that come with transporting kite kit when going abroad. Using technology and expertise from snowboard split boards, they have become THE split board specialists in the kitesurfing industry.

The newest innovation is the NHP Split Foil board, which is a twin-tip/foil split board.

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"WORTH A CLOSER LOOK IF YOU'RE DREAMING OF ACHIEVING NEW HEIGHTS IN YOUR BIG AIR SESSIONS!"



**BRAND** LIEUWE **MODEL** SHOTGUN CARBONARA  
**SIZE** 136 X 40.5 CM **YEAR** 2021

#### AT A GLANCE

If you take a product - any product - and add carbon to it, it immediately becomes better and faster; it's basically a fact! While this is not, in fact, a fact, Lieuwe has taken the most popular board in their twintip range, the Shotgun, and created a carbon version. It's the only carbon board in Lieuwe's range, and oh, she is spicy!

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





"FROM ADVANCED RIDERS TO BEGINNERS LOOKING TO PROGRESS, THE SHOTGUN WILL SEND YOU TO NEW LEVELS!"



**BRAND** NORTH  
**SIZE** 147 X 43 CM

**MODEL** FLARE  
**YEAR** 2021

#### AT A GLANCE

The North Flare 2021 is the dedicated wake-style and park board from North Kiteboarding. It's the board of choice of the innovative freestyle king Tom Bridge, who is renowned for throwing down some outrageous blind moves. The Flare with the highest quality manufacturing from North that has distinguished the relatively new brand into being a staple in the kiting industry.

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**RIDER** RODERICK PIJLS  
**PHOTO** LENNART VAN HOLTEN

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"UNBELIEVABLE SUPPORT BUT MOVES WITH THE BODY; IT'S ALMOST AS IF YOU'RE NOT WEARING A HARNESS AT ALL!"



**BRAND** AK DURABLE SUPPLY CO  
**MODEL** SYNTH **YEAR** 2021

#### AT A GLANCE

While not one of the "big three" kite accessory brands, we continue to be impressed by what AK Durable Supply Co has presented to the kite industry. Their innovative approach centres around creating products that become an extension of the human body to bring us as close to the elements as possible in a completely natural way.

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"LOOKS GREAT, FEELS GREAT AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, KEEPS ME WARM IN THE COLDER UK CLIMATE."



**BRAND** MYSTIC **YEAR** 2021  
**MODEL** MAJESTIC FULLSUIT / FRONT-ZIP **SIZE** 3/2

#### AT A GLANCE

The Mystic Majestic wetsuit is a staple suit across the range within Mystic products. Sitting as their top of the range suit alongside the Volt, it ranges in numerous sizes, including 3/2, 4/3 and 5/4, whilst also having front zip and back zip options. I've been using the 3/2 for the 2021 UK summer season, and it's been my go-to suit since June.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)



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" A SIMPLE, SAFE  
BAR AT AN  
AFFORDABLE  
PRICE THAT  
WILL  
COMPLEMENT  
ANY SESSION. "



BRAND AIRUSH  
SIZE 50CM

MODEL RIDE BAR  
YEAR 2022

#### AT A GLANCE

The all-new Airush Ride bar is a clean, simple bar that is easy to use and designed to work with all 4-line Airush kites. It comes with 24m lines and features the Aero cleat trim system and tool-less adjustable throw, which means you can set the length of your depower to fit the length of your arms; Even T-Rex's would be satisfied.

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# On The Fly

## AIRUSH // BEHIND THE COVER

**OSWALD SMITH:** Believe it or not, but this is Lithuania, and yes, you can kite there!

Although the country is small, it has a little freestyle haven that should not be underestimated. Mint had told me about this spot quite a few times, but come on, why would I believe him?



Then again, why not? So, I hopped in the car for a long drive to the seaside and was greeted with flat water perfection. The spot was covered with freshwater coves made from grassy patches creating that desirable flatwater spit. I was stacked on an 11m Razor and eager for something different.

It was my first time shooting with Mint, and from the start, there was a telepathic understanding of the "money shot". We came, we scored, and we made it happen!

It's hard to believe how many places are still uncharted. I guess it's always going to be a never-ending pursuit for something more. Explore.





*On The Fly*

## AIRUSH // BEHIND THE COVER

**MINTAUTAS GRIGAS:** I knew that it was Ozzie's last day in Lithuania, so I did not expect him to drive 700km for a kite session. Instead, I dedicated that day to kite by myself and enjoy my home spot that I rarely get to ride.

Then one moment, I saw the Razor dragging the man himself on the water with a massive smile on his face! It's not so often that such a high-level rider shows up on Lithuanian waters. Probably, it was the first time we had a pro rider here. Also, it is not often that I'm here myself as I usually travel and film for the GKA Kite World Tour. I could not miss that moment and had to capture it. Luckily, I had my camera gear all ready to go!

I hope that this spontaneous shoot captured at least a small piece of what Lithuania has to offer.







# KSURF

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## WINDY DAYS IN DENMARK //

Who knew that Denmark could deliver extreme wind conditions that rival even Cape Town?! Well, several people, we're sure, but now the whole kiteboarding community knows! The final few days of the WOO Worlds, which just wrapped up, meant kites from every corner of the earth were duking it out to see who could claim the top spots on their leaderboards.

RIDER LORENZO CASATI  
PHOTO JAKOB GJERLUFF



RIDER EVAN KLIJN  
PHOTO ANDY TROY



RIDER JAMIE OVERBEEK  
PHOTO ANDY TROY



In the Danish surf community of Cold Hawaii, Aaron Hadlow sent a strong message to his competition by clinching a 34.4m jump after the Cold Hawaii Big Air event. While Aaron lost his semi-final heat against Lasse Walker, who took 3rd in the event, the 1st place prize money from WOO wasn't a bad consolation prize!

In more Cold Hawaii news, Big Air legend Nick Jacobsen was taken out of the event by 16-year-old Lorenzo Casati, and current King of the Air Kevin Langeree got beaten by Giel Vlugt. Liam Whaley barely made it through his heat against 15-year old Jamie Overbeek, which allowed him to continue into the final. While Liam took 1st place, the rider of the day was runner-up Lorenzo Casati with a mind-blowing breakout performance! If this is what the future of kiteboarding looks like, sign us up!



On The Fly

# ION // WRITE YOUR OWN CHAPTER

The team at ION has put together a powerful message in their latest series, Write Your Own Chapter. Everyone's story is unique. So is every chapter of the series. We explore, we go on adventures, we seek thrill, we fail but then succeed and set out to inspire others. Whether on the trails, in the water or in the air, every chapter addresses one of these attributes. Watch the first video now, and stay tuned for more releases from the dirt, the sea, and the sky!



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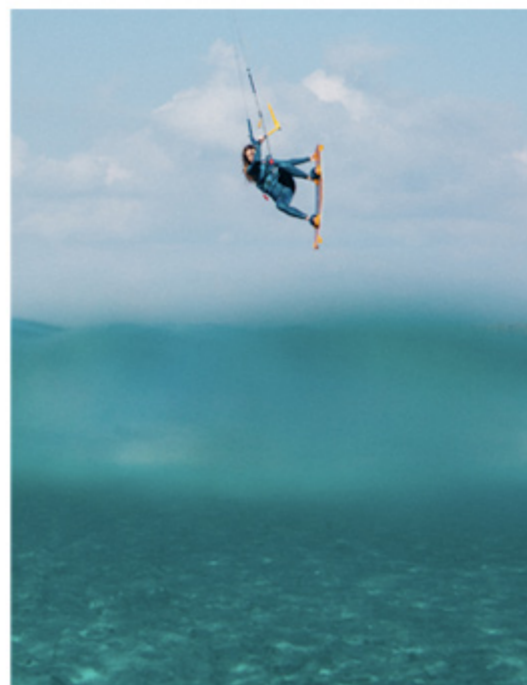
PHOTO MATT GEORGES



**MARIE SWITALA:** I have been riding for F-One for over 15 years now. I knew the beginnings of Manera, and I have always ridden for Manera. So the word “local hero” is a bit precious, but it means a lot to me because I am very proud to represent the brand. I ride in Montpellier, most often at Plage Sud or Petit Travers. I particularly like Petit Travers because it’s where I meet my family in the summer. My whole family - my father, mother and little brother - all ride Manera and love their products.

It is my mission to help kitesurfers identify with my gear. I want to show that Manera is a brand that offers high-quality products and that behind each product, there is a story. Each product is created by passionate people who keep the riders in mind. I appreciate the values at Manera and take pride in sharing them at my home spot.

On this shoot in the south of France, I joined Paul Serin, Bruno Semat and photographer Matt Georges and we had a brilliant time. These are the moments in life that will remain engraved in my memories, thanks to Manera. It’s more than a brand; it’s a state of mind. Stay Salty...



*On The Fly*

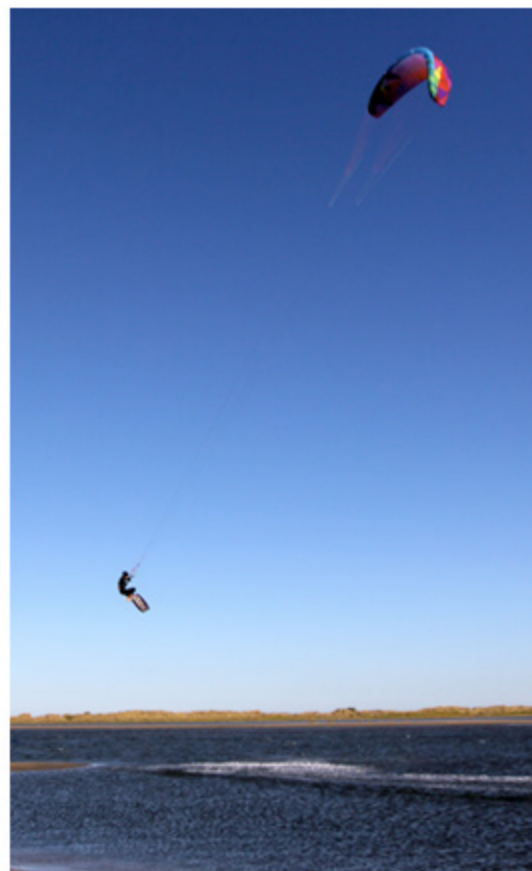
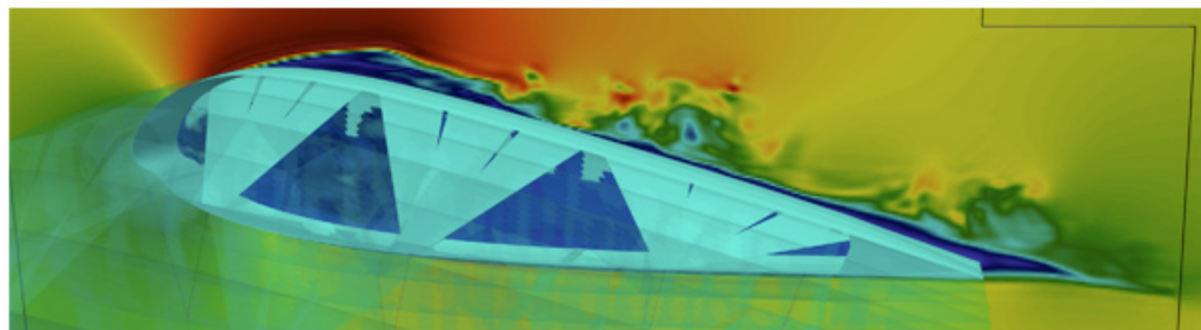
## MANERA // MEET MARIE SWITALA

Have you seen this radiant smile and serious kitesurfing style on the water in Montpellier? We spotted Marie Switala during a recent MANERA shoot and had to know more about this local hero!



# AIRWAVE // THE TOM LOLLIES INTERVIEW

What goes into creating a foil kite? We caught up with Tom Lollies from Airwave to find out all about it! We talk about a love for flying, what goes on behind the scenes of a kite brand, and the technology and innovation that goes into creating a top-quality kite!



**Tell us a bit about your passion for flying...  
When did you first take to the skies?**

Every member of the R&D team is motivated by a lifelong passion for flying. I am very lucky that my parents were both pilots and started to teach me how to fly at a very early age. I flew on my own for the first time in 2009, and my uncle gave me kitesurfing lessons in 2010. Both sports gave me a thrill that would change my life forever!

**Was this love for kiting and paragliding what motivated you to pursue aerospace engineering in**

**motivated you to pursue aerospace engineering in school?**

That's right. My DIY experience motivated me to dig deeper into the required scientific knowledge to properly design wings such as aerodynamic theory, structural mechanics and textile fabrics. I studied at ISAE-Supaero in Toulouse, France. My major was external aerodynamics and numerical simulation. Most of my classes proved to be very useful later on!

**What kind of work and preparation goes into starting a kite brand?!**

A lot more than I expected! I had no experience designing kites, nor did Bruce, so I started from scratch. It took me more than two years to understand how to obtain the level of stability tube kite riders expect. I am convinced more than ever that there is a great space for innovation in the foil kite market to make more versatile high performing kites with excellent pop and hangtime. Moreover, we are trying to bring colourful, never seen before designs that stand out from the rest of the market.

**Learn more about Tom Lollies and Airwave in the full interview on our website!**



## HARLEM // NORTHERN KENYA

With the monsoon season coming to an end, the wind on Kenya's southern coast was on the decline. Two kites set their compasses to the north to find the last winds in one of the most untouched areas of Kenya! Read the travel diary from Stavroula Zoë!



We left Diani early on a Wednesday morning, trying to avoid the rush hour traffic. Our final destination was Che Shale, a secluded beach hotel just north of Malindi run by Justin Aniere and his family. Two hours in and a short kite pit stop in Watamu seemed like a good choice since the 160km would take us up to 5 hours to drive in total on the Kenyan road.

It was such an incredible feeling to go kiting again after almost five days of no wind, and hitting the water during low tide was the cherry on top. We reached Che Shale in the late afternoon, and the wind was still pumping. We decided to save our energy for the next two days as the forecast seemed unbelievably good.

We woke up at 5:30 am to an otherworldly sunrise setting. The beach had started to widen as the tide was going out, and the more we looked at the colouring reflections on the water, the more it seemed like we landed on the moon. Around 7:30 am, the first breezes started to kick in, and less than an hour later, it was already blowing 20 knots. We quickly ate breakfast and ran to the kite school to pump our kites.



*On The Fly*

## HARLEM // NORTHERN KENYA



I couldn't resist bringing all my photography gear with me to shoot some new content. After a short pre-session meeting discussing angles, compositions and tricks, we both got in the water. I decided to come in early to get a few shots of Daniel while he was still riding. We were completely alone, and the only signs that we weren't kiting on a foreign planet were the shadows of some fishermen on duty, far out on the horizon.

A short while later, Daniel came in, and the camera switched hands. I'm not going to lie; I had my doubts about my ability to perform on demand, especially when a camera is involved. I reminded myself that I had just started kitesurfing recently, and nobody expected me to start doing crazy kitemoves. Plus, in the worst-case scenario, we could hide the images in my bedroom drawer. That seemed to do the trick, and I had a blast on the water.

The day ended with another stoked wingfoil session, and we stayed on the beach to watch the sunset while sipping a cold beer, wondering how this spot is even real.

Forever thankful to Justin and his family for the hospitality they've shown while we were there.



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Check out our extensive Schools Section on the website and find the best school near you to get your friends and relatives involved in this amazing sport, our interactive map has lots of information and some incredible schools too!

**DO YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY WANT TO LEARN TO KITE?**





*Lightroom*

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



LIGHTROOM

CHECK OUT LILOO FOURRÉ SENDING IT IN STYLE AT THE  
CRAZYFLY SHOOT IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC!  
PHOTO LACI KOBULSKY



*Lightroom*



LIGHTROOM

SICILY IS DELIVERING HEAVENLY CONDITIONS AS ALWAYS, AND ALBY RONDINA MADE THE MOST OF IT!  
PHOTO LACI KOBULSKY



*Lightroom*



LIGHTROOM

TWEAKED IN TENERIFE WITH SHINN TEAM RIDER MAREK ROWINSKI JR  
PHOTO ROBERT HAJDUK

*Lightroom*

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LIGHTROOM

PAULINO PEREIRA IS SLAYING IN THE WAVES ON THE NEW OZONE REO V6  
PHOTO RICARDO PINTO



*Lightroom*



LIGHTROOM

GOLDEN HOUR ON THE GOD OF GODS DESIGN FROM LIEUWE WITH RODERICK PIJLS.  
PHOTO ISRAEL GIL

*Lightroom*



LIGHTROOM

ELEVEIGHT'S JAN BURGDOERFER GOES FOR A SESSION ON THE XS IN PICTURESQUE GERMANY  
PHOTO HELEN FISCHER



*Lightroom*



LIGHTROOM

SENDING IT OVER BOATS ON THE SHORELINE IN SARDEGNA WITH JAN KORYCKII  
PHOTO TOMASZ USTUPSKI



*Lightroom*



LIGHTROOM

WILLOW-RIVER TONKIN EXPLORES SOUTH AFRICA'S  
CAPE ST FRANCIS BY WATER ON THE CORE XLITE 2  
PHOTO THOMAS BURBLIES



*Lightroom*



LIGHTROOM

JULIA LISEWSKA TAKES THE NEW SHINN MONKETTE FOR A SPIN IN TENERIFE!  
PHOTO ROBERT HAJDUK



*Lightroom*



LIGHTROOM

POSITO MARTINEZ STAYING CLOSE TO HOME IN THE DR; WHO CAN BLAME HIM WHEN HOME LOOKS LIKE THIS?!  
PHOTO LACI KOBULSKY



*Lightroom*



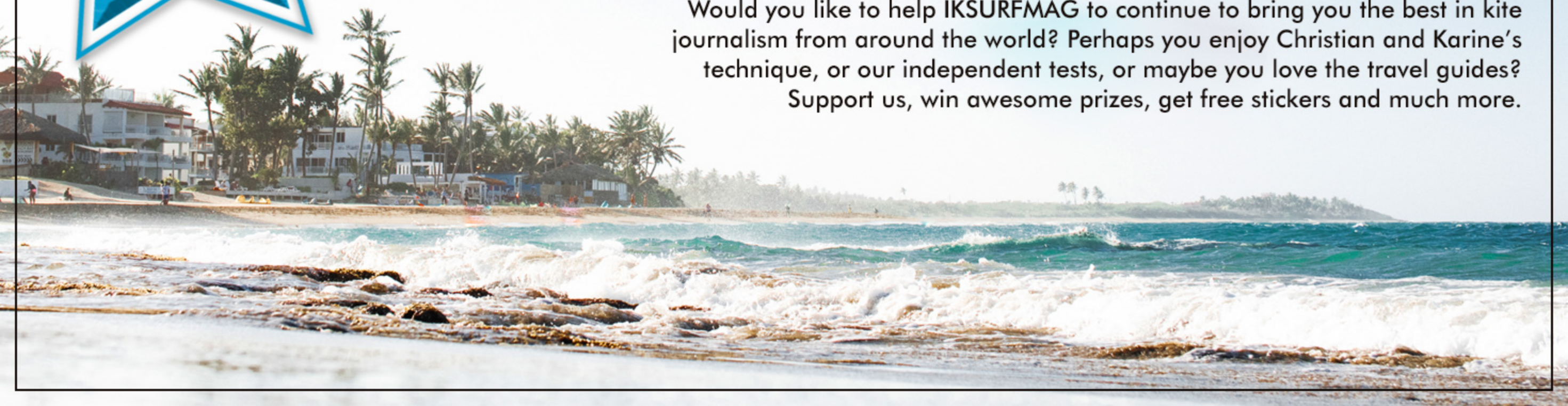
RIDER CARLITO MARTINEZ  
PHOTO KITESHOOTER

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Would you like to help IKSURFMAG to continue to bring you the best in kite journalism from around the world? Perhaps you enjoy Christian and Karine's technique, or our independent tests, or maybe you love the travel guides? Support us, win awesome prizes, get free stickers and much more.







With flat, crystal clear water and steady Meltemi winds, Greece is an irresistible spot for kiteboarders from all over the world! After completing his studies, Naish's Louka Pitot joined his friends and team riders for a freestyle adventure on the Greek mainland.

# TEAM NAISH TAKES ON GREECE

WORDS LOUKA PITOT  
PHOTOS CHRISTOPHER POOLE







“GREECE IS A SPOT THAT I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO RESIST RETURNING TO EVERY YEAR SINCE I'VE LIVED IN EUROPE.”

They say work hard, play hard. I agree. I moved from Mauritius to France four years ago to attend university, and I lived in Montpellier, studied International Business, and shot off for a session in Gruissan whenever possible.

As the summer started in Europe, the beaches on our home spots were getting packed. Between kiting restrictions in France and the never-ending traffic to get to the beach, it was about time to catch up with a few mates for a freestyle trip. So Nathalie Lambrecht, Tom Seager and I put our heads together to develop a plan, and that plan was Greece. After completing my final exams, I was ready to get my head out of the books and into some crystal clear Greek water!

When you find an excellent kite spot, you tend to keep going back. Greece is a spot that I haven't been able to resist returning to every year since I've lived in Europe. Kites know Greece for its Meltemi winds and the famous islands that offer an endless playground. However, our mission here was slightly different; we were on the hunt for perfectly uncrowded spots. Of course, it's not only the excellent kiting conditions and opportunities for progression; it's the friendly people and atmosphere that keep me coming back.

This trip was a little more complicated than usual. I would be flying from France, Nathalie from Egypt, and Tom from England. With the rapid increase in travel to Greece due to relaxed COVID restrictions, finding accommodation and rental cars at the peak of summer was a mission.





**“ ON THE RARE OCCASION WHEN THE WIND WAS TOO STRONG, I’D PUMP UP THE 8M PIVOT AND GO FOR A BIG AIR SESSION. ”**

With hotels and guest houses packed to the brim, we would have to change our AirBNB every few days if we wanted a roof over our heads. We knew it would be tricky, but well worth it!

Upon landing in Athens, we rented a small van and set off. We had chosen to stay on the mainland to avoid the holiday crowds on the islands. With a vehicle, we could follow

the wind and visit Athens and other cities along the way, such as Patras, Lefkadas, Nafaktos, and Lamia. On the search for a perfect freestyle session, our first stop would be at a secret spot we had heard referred to as “Brazil in Europe”. By that, I mean butter-flat water and steady wind.

After three hours on the road, we arrived in our kiter’s paradise. We were stoked to see our Greek friends who we’d met the previous years and some international riders already on the spot. With wind every day, we could get out on the water every morning in 18-20 knots of steady wind with

the ideal flatwater freestyle conditions.

For these conditions, I was ready with my go-to freestyle kites, the Naish Torch, in 10m and 12m. They’re stable in the air and provide the perfect slack for freestyle tricks. On the rare occasion when the wind was too strong, I’d pump up the 8m Pivot and go for a big air session.

We spent a few days here, kiting every day, indulging in delicious Greek food - especially my favourite, the Pita Gyros. A few of these after a session, and you will sleep like a baby! They must have given me the fuel I needed, though, because I was finally able to land a 319 again after several years!



Things were getting better by the day; Spanos Luxury Cars would lend us a new Defender 90 to support our search for special sessions and let us enjoy maximum comfort and luxury on the road. We traded in the van for the Defender, with loads of space for gear and more electronic gadgets than we knew what to do with!

After spending a few more days at the kite spot, Tom looked down at his phone and said, "Oh, Tack and Hela are coming!" Christophe Tack (2014 World Champion), Helena Brochocka, and their dog Morty were on their way from Portugal in their campervan. I knew Christophe from seeing him in Brazil and judging the French Nationals, but I had never ridden with him that much before. I was excited to have the opportunity to learn from this freestyle legend.

When I joined Naish at the beginning of 2020, I knew it would be the right decision. It had always been a goal of mine to ride for a brand that does it all. Naish is a strong brand with a rich history, and now I get to ride everything Naish; Foils, wings, kites, and every other toy I could dream of! Besides that, the people who work at Naish are all passionate riders, and I wanted to be surrounded by passionate people who love what they do.

I'm one of the younger riders on the team, but it's quite a solid and diverse crew. We're lucky to have Ewan Jaspán and Christophe Tack to help mentor us and push our progression. After spending some time on the water with Tack, I was impressed by his technical approach; he has thought every trick through. We all benefited from his world-class coaching on this trip.



**" I WANTED TO BE SURROUNDED BY PASSIONATE PEOPLE WHO LOVE WHAT THEY DO. "**









“ WE STAYED IN THE SAME SPOT FOR MOST OF THE TRIP TO PUSH OUR RIDING AND TRY NEW TRICKS IN THESE CONSISTENT CONDITIONS. ”

My priority was the Pete Rose 7, Hela and Nat were training the Front Blind Mobe, and Tom was trying to land a Slim 5. I'm always a bit scared to have a bad crash while learning new tricks, but that extra push from Christophe, especially on the technical toe-side tricks, was a major motivator.

More than anything, it was amazing to be surrounded by my teammates and to share moments with people who share the same passion and interest. We stayed in the same spot for most of the trip to push our riding and try new tricks in these consistent conditions.

As every trip calls for unique encounters, we met Australian photographer Christopher Poole (CJP Photography) on the spot. He has been living in Cyprus for the past few years and visits Greece regularly. He is one of those good vibes only types of people, an amazing and interesting person that helped us push our riding. While we haven't seen him on a kite yet, I'm sure we will see that next year!

Chris's passion is photography, but his kiteboarding knowledge is incredible. He knows the names of all the tricks, and that's an impressive feat considering how many there are! Just before our trip ended, Chris joined us in the water with his camera and took the stunning shots that you see in this article.

The rest of the trip was the best you could hope for in a dream kite trip. We spent three weeks on the mainland with wind every single day. It was session after session, with few days off the water.





**“ THESE ADVENTURES INTO THE UNKNOWN  
MAKE US EVEN HUNGRIER TO GET OUT  
THERE AND HAVE FUN ”**

When it was too windy, we'd go winging or do some big air, and if we were too sore, we'd head into the city for a massage to help get us back into action for yet another session.

Outside of our Naish team, we met people from all over Europe in Greece. We were lucky to have a perfect spot without crowds and to be surrounded by so many inspirational riders who were pushing each other day in and day out.

As we made our way back to the airport and onwards home, we knew it had been a fantastic trip, and the moments we shared in

Greece were magical. On this quest to adrenaline, your path will cross exceptional individuals, and that's where the magic happens. These adventures into the unknown make us even hungrier to get out there and have fun. I'm looking back at a fantastic time in Greece, and as the year continues, I look forward to meeting all these shredders again in the Brazilian lagoons in a couple of months!



# INSIGHT

## FRANCES OSORIO RIVERA

WORDS CRYSTAL VENESS

In Insight, we highlight the inspiring women behind the scenes of kiteboarding. In this issue, we meet someone truly inspiring - Frances Osorio Rivera, an adaptive athlete working on the Cabrinha team. Learn all about Frances in this exclusive interview!





**Frances, we are so excited to have you with us for Insight! But, first, tell us a bit about yourself! Do you come from a family of watersports lovers, or what inspired you to get into kiteboarding?**

I was born and raised in the mountains of Puerto Rico in a city called Caguas. My grandfather and his brother in law loved to go fishing in the southwest side of Puerto Rico in Cabo Rojo. Besides that, I am the only watersports lover in the family.

After being forced to join the swimming team at age five and spending over ten hours/week swimming laps, my affection for watersports began. From there, I learned to first boogie board small waves and then surf and skateboard at the age of 16.

I started kiteboarding at the age of 19 after breaking all of the ligaments in my right ankle while skateboarding. I realised then that concrete is unforgiving, and there had to be a better alternative. Back then, in Puerto Rico, the scene was tiny. One day, while hanging out on the beach in Ocean Park, I saw some guys boosting 30 feet in the air, and I was completely enamoured. I approached them and asked for lessons. Four hours later, I was up and riding, although I didn't know how to go upwind, so there were many walks of shame!

**Can you tell us a bit more about the accident that took your leg?**

In 2011, I was in the Army and stationed in Jacksonville, NAS, when I got into a car accident, sustaining severe trauma to the left leg. After eight surgeries and a month in the hospital, they broke the news that I would lose my leg.



**" I SAW SOME GUYS BOOSTING 30 FEET IN THE AIR. AND I WAS COMPLETELY ENAMOURD. I APPROACHED THEM AND ASKED FOR LESSONS. "**

PHOTO CAMILA BLAIN







"HAVING TO RE-LEARN TRICKS THAT I WAS PROFICIENT AT DOING BEFORE WAS ONE OF THE BIGGEST FRUSTRATIONS."

It has been by far the most challenging circumstance I've had to go through in my life, as it is a daily challenge. A few months after the leg got amputated, I decided to give kiteboarding another go. However, the doctors in the hospital advised me to just "tone it down" and get involved with "less physically demanding sports". I remained in the Military service for another three years until 2014, when I got medically discharged due to the amputation.

#### **What was it like trying to re-learn to kiteboard after the amputation?**

At the time, it was a big challenge, and I had to re-learn it all. It took years to get past riding for

30-40 minutes per session, and I was mostly taking it day by day. Sometimes the leg is a pain quite literally, and some days things are more doable.

Having to re-learn tricks that I was proficient at doing before was one of the biggest frustrations. I take much longer than the average person to learn new tricks, and that can be quite the mental game even after a decade of being an amputee.

Over the years, I have lost several prosthetics; most were found within hours or days. One ended up being found by divers 3-4 years after I lost it in Puerto Rico. At that point, it was just a reef with shells and fish living on it. My friend Dagmar sent me a picture of it, and it

was quite the emotional afternoon at Cabrinha's HQ.  
**Has your prosthetic been specially adapted for watersports?**

My prosthetic team at Advanced Motion Control / Arthur Finnieston produced two legs for me. One looks like a C-blade that you usually see on runners and has a sole adapted to it to level the curvature of the blade so that it stays on the straps without much hassle. I like this one for riding with regular straps and doing boards offs.

The second prosthesis has a smaller C-shape where the ankle would be to have good impact absorption but is made to withstand salt and corrosion.



" I CAN LIVE WITH SCARS AS LONG AS THE HARDWARE DOESN'T SINK TO THE BOTTOM OF THE OCEAN! "

The hardware of this one is made with stainless steel, and the shell is made of a composite material that gives some flex with impact. To finish both of them off, I use duct tape to secure the silicone sleeve, seal out water, and help prevent me from losing it. Sometimes the duct tape removes skin with it, but I can live with scars as long as the hardware doesn't sink to the bottom of the ocean!

**Your kiting journey began in Puerto Rico, but nowadays, you're hanging your hat in Florida. How did that come about?**

I began teaching kiteboarding in Puerto Rico in 2013 with a school called 15 knots, a Cabrinha centre and dealer. This was my introduction to Adventure Sports (back then, Pryde Group Americas). I occasionally would make a trip for leg purposes to Miami or come for a weekend and stop by to get gear for the school.

In 2015, I moved to Miami to become a "yachtie" and a few months later contacted Todd Greaux, who was Cabrinha's Sales Manager for the Americas at the time. I asked him for sponsorship, and he called back, offering me a job!

Six years later, I am still in Miami, loving life and South Florida.

**What is your job title at Cabrinha now? What does the role involve?**

My position in Cabrinha is Export Territory Manager. I take care of Central America, South America, and the Caribbean. I manage sales, demos, and I search for potential ambassadors, team riders, and clients.





" I DECIDED TO TAKE A LEAP OF FAITH AND CHANGE EVERYTHING MY LIFE WAS. I THINK IT WAS A CASE OF RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME."



**What is your favourite part of the job? Do you get to spend as much time on the water as those dreaming of a kite industry job might assume?**

The job allows you to connect with many individuals, including Cabrinha centres and dealers across the Americas. I hear their stories, create friendships, and have the opportunity to share the passion of the sport. Over the years, I have to say it has become more and more what people assume it is.

Under the new Cabrinha ownership, opportunities have arisen. There has been a shift to spending more time in the field with the dealers and the people,

engaging all demographics to be a part of the sport and the Cabrinha family. However, it is still mostly a 9-5, Monday through Friday job grounded in the Headquarters in Miami. Unfortunately, I am not in the water seven days a week!

**Did you ever think you would be working in the kite industry, apart from being a kite instructor? Or was this just a stroke of good luck?!**

When I was 19, I was doing simple tricks and techniques on the water. Occasionally, I would think that it would be nice to have this as a job one day, and I would go about my days thinking it was just an

unachievable dream. I was set on joining the Military and always thought it would be just a hobby that I would continue to have for years to come.

By the summer of 2015, I was medically discharged from the Army and was a recently single woman, and I decided to take a leap of faith and change everything my life was. I think it was a case of right place, right time. That call to Todd Greaux that ended with a job offer was a stroke of luck, but I also believe he saw my continuous years as a kite instructor that made him believe I would be a valuable addition to the team.



**Do you have any advice for anyone out there who dreams of working in the kite world?**

It's worth it. Even though it is a multi-million-dollar corporate industry, it is the least corporate job you'll ever have. Not everyone gets to say they make a living doing what they are passionate about, which most do as a hobby. Speaking from my experience with Cabrinha and Dakine, it has become a pretty tight family over the years.

**You've got a lot of other stuff happening outside of the Territory Manager role at Cabrinha! What else keeps you busy?**

Since starting with Cabrinha in 2015, I have worked with several non-profits teaching kiteboarding for wounded veterans. Cabrinha has always allowed me to do that as community outreach for the sport. It is now the 6th year that I've been involved with different groups, and it is something that gives me a sense of paying it forward after my time in the service.

These days, I am a board member of Veterans Adventure Group, a non-profit with multiple adventure- filled outdoor activities for veterans. I also am co-chair for the Woman's Kiteboarding Collective, and I seize every opportunity to advocate for adaptive sports. This year, I was part of the first two events with Newfound Freedom, a non-profit sponsored by Cabrinha.

Over the past couple of years, I have been doing documentaries and commercials. That includes a documentary that won the Toyota Viewer's Choice Award for the Miami Film Festival called Endure the Suck.

**" I HAVE WORKED WITH SEVERAL NON-PROFITS TEACHING KITEBOARDING FOR WOUNDED VETERANS."**



**PHOTO** SHELBY RING / NEWFOUND FREEDOM PROJECT



" KITEBOARDING HAS BEEN A CRUCIAL PART OF MY HEALING AFTER THE TRAUMA OF LOSING MY LEG AND DEALING WITH THE DAILY CHALLENGES "

PHOTO: SHELBY RING / NEWFOUND FREEDOM PROJECT

More recently, a documentary for Visit Florida just aired called Limitless Florida. I've also been an adaptive model in a recent campaign for the Adidas website.

**Tell us a bit more about the Newfound Freedom project. What is it all about?**

The Newfound Freedom project is a fresh new 3-year collaboration between Cabrinha & Estuary Brewing. The project purpose is to introduce those who face unique challenges to watersports through a series of instructional days, led by some of Cabrinha's top athletes and staff.

You can learn more about Newfound Freedom and learn how to support this project by visiting the Cabrinha website: <https://www.cabrinha.com/pages/newfound-freedom-project>.

**What was it like sharing your love for kiteboarding with the Newfound Freedom participants?**

It meant everything to me. Kiteboarding has been a crucial part of my healing after the trauma of losing my leg and dealing with the daily challenges of having a permanent disability. I've always found joy in seeing others stoked about this sport. When you share that stoke with people that experience similar challenges to yourself, it can be as thrilling as the sport itself. Maybe they can find healing even if it is just the experience of doing it for a weekend.

**Was there any particular moment or experience that stood out to you while working with the Cabrinha team on the Newfound Freedom project?**

Some years back, I met a double amputee named Bradley Johnson through a mutual kiteboarding friend. He ended up being one of the coolest people I've met,



" IF YOU ARE DETERMINED, YOU CAN MAKE THE BEST WITH WHAT YOU HAVE, AND AT TIMES, EVEN ACCOMPLISH THE UNIMAGINABLE. "

PHOTO FLORIAN KORZER

and he gave me some solid advice on my physical and mental struggles. During the first Newfound Freedom event in Charleston, I saw the roster of participants, and the name struck me as odd, but I didn't place it at the time. Then, on the first night, I unexpectedly see this man, and I'm stunned. After all these years, here was this cool dude - with the most real advice on dealing with loss and letting go of the past - at this event, to learn how to kite.

**If you hadn't taken up kiteboarding, where do you think you would be, and what would you be doing today?**

Woah, that's a tough one! If I didn't take up

kiteboarding, I would probably still be surfing or boogie boarding—at least a water-related hobby. I'm an island girl, and I need to be close to the water. But, who knows where I would be? I probably would have continued as a nurse, which is what I have a degree in.

**You've been an absolute inspiration to everyone who has met you, especially those who have wondered if they had what it takes to learn a sport like kiteboarding. What motivates you to share your journey with others?**

I guess my motivation and goal is to show that a disability doesn't limit what you can accomplish in life, although it sucks, takes longer, and is an endless

mental and physical battle. But, if you are determined, you can make the best with what you have, and at times, even accomplish the unimaginable.

**What's next for you?!**

I am open to any opportunity for growth available out there. I want to show the world that there isn't a limit to what one can accomplish. There are opportunities out there even if you are missing a part of your body. Life can be beautiful, exciting, fun and filled with opportunities if you put yourself out there!

**Thanks again for joining us today, Frances!**



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

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

**Put the popcorn on, it's Movie Night!**

# MOVIE NIGHT

## #1 TITOUAN GALEA SCORES EPIC WAVES ON RARE SOUTH SWELL

Taking the #1 spot by a mile is wave slayer Titouan Galea! When a wingsurfing edit gets 5.3k likes on a kiteboarding magazine's website, you stop what you are doing and you watch!



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

## #2 GAME ON

This is the kind of edit you invite your friends over to watch on the big screen, but we won't waste your time with a long video intro... Watch Airtion Cozzolino and James Carew take their discipline to new heights, literally. GAME ON!



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

## #3 MY 2021 MAX TULLETT

Claiming the #3 spot on Movie Night at only 12-years-old is Duotone UK rider, Mad Max Tullet! Max left us awestruck with this 2021 UK season compilation that he edited himself - Keep an eye out for this young shredder!



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

## #4 FOLLOW ROBBY NAISH IN THE MAKING OF 'THE LONGEST WAVE'

Take a look behind the camera and see how Oscar-nominated filmmaker Joe Berlinger shaped 'The Longest Wave' documentary to where it is now. Watch the full film on Red Bull TV!



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)



RIDER ALBY RONDINA  
PHOTO LACI KOBULSKY

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