

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 22

WELCOME TO IKSURFMAG

Welcome to Issue 95 of IKSURFMAG, the World's Number One Kitesurfing Magazine!

Seasons are changing, and the search for wind continues with kitesurfers travelling near and far to score the best conditions. In this issue, Editor Crystal Veness heads to Hood River to take a look inside the industry at AWSI. Join the MANERA team as they set sail to

the unforgiving north, session Silvaplane with Ben Beholz, experience El Gouna with Duotone's Young Bloods, and go on an Oman adventure with Mostafa Abbas. Dive inside the mind of Lasse Walker and get to know Hannah Whiteley, Roderick Pijls, and North designer Pepijn Smit. There's new Techniques, Tests, and more inside IKSURFMAG Issue 95!

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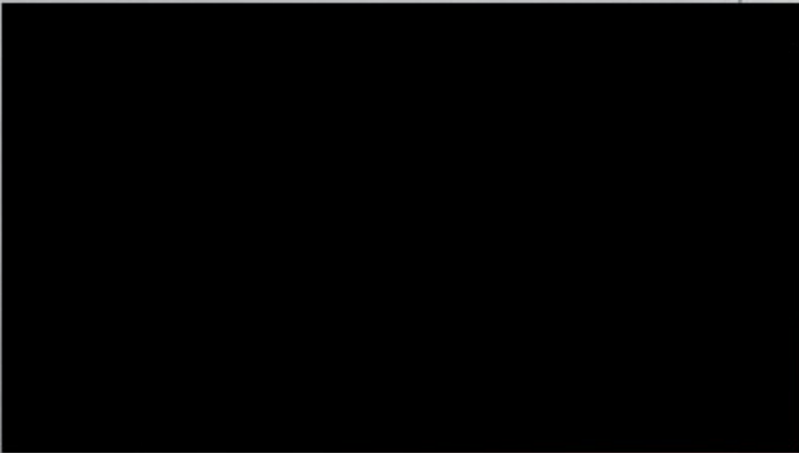
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- INSIDE THE INDUSTRY -

SVALBARD / OMAN / SILVAPLANA / YOUNG BLOOD
LASSE WALKER / HANNAH WHITELEY / TESTS, TECH & MORE INSIDE!

HIGH PERFORMANCE FREERIDE / BIG AIR



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Keahi de Aboitiz  C. Funk

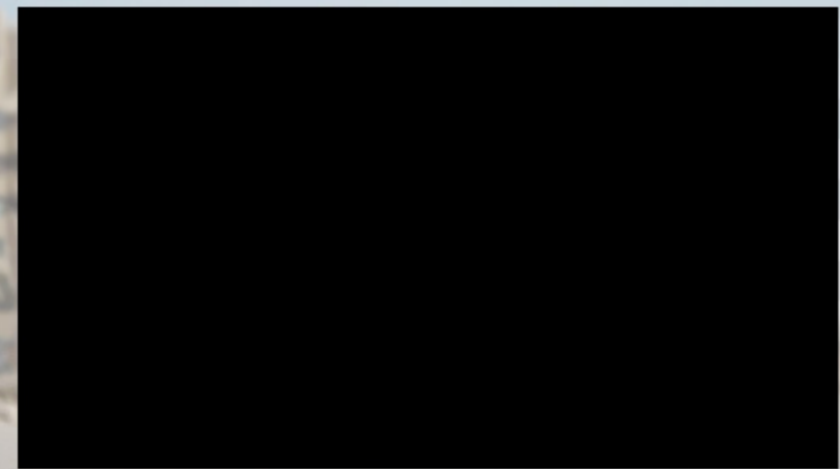
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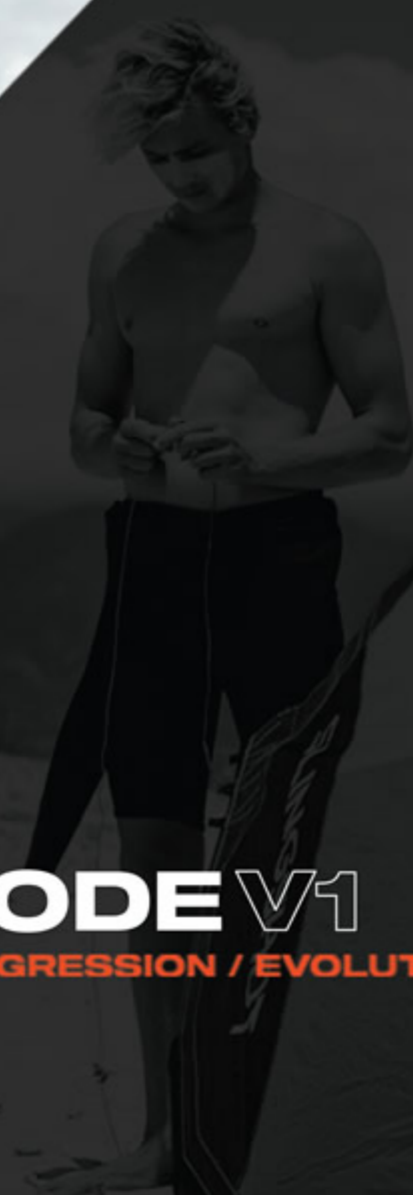


HIGH PERFORMANCE
BIG AIR / FREERIDE / FREESTYLE / WAVE



SLINGSHOT

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CODE V1

PROGRESSION / EVOLUTION / PERFORMANCE

CODE
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COMPETITION



EDITORIAL



INSIDE THE INDUSTRY
AT AWSI



79°N



SKYWALKER



TECH FOCUS:
NKB DESIGNER INTVW



INSIGHT:
HANNAH WHITELEY



PROLIMIT MISSIONS:
WINTER EDITION



TECHNIQUE



LIGHTROOM



TRIED & TESTED



THE INTERVIEW:
RODERICK PIJLS



YOUNG BLOOD



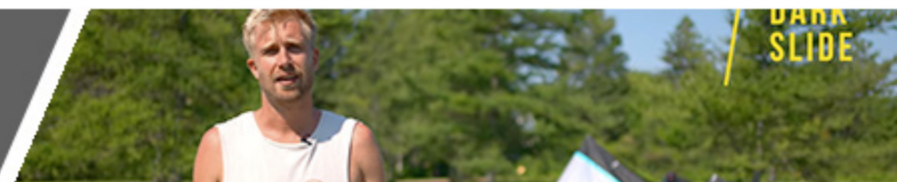
A TRIP TO OMAN



ON THE FLY



MOVIE NIGHT



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pinch of salt. Kitesurfing is a dangerous
sport & none of the activities depicted
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RIDER ADRIANO BONO
PHOTO ANTONIO HERRERA TRUJILLO





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RIDERS GRETHA AND ELSIEN ZIJLSTRA
PHOTO ANTONIO HERRERA TRUJILLO



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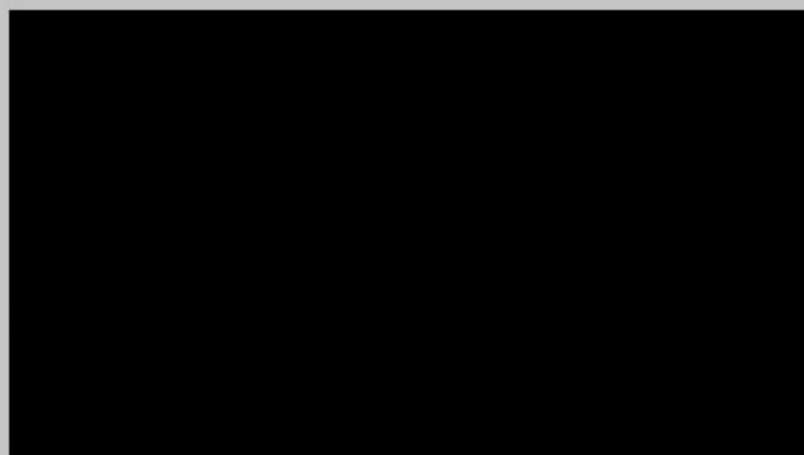
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NORTH

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RIDER CAPUCINE DELANNOY
PHOTO SVETLANA ROMANTSOVA, GKA KITE-SURF WORLD TOUR IN DAKHLA

ISSUE 95 WAVES OF CHANGE

Since I've started wave riding, my twin tip has mainly been in the garage collecting dust. It doesn't even have foot straps on it, and I'm not even really sure where they are! That's okay, though; for the moment, my directional and I are living our best lives.

Out there, in the waves, timing is everything. Every wave is different, and every session is its own story. You've got to be in the flow with Mother Nature, in tune with the wind, and have complete trust in your instincts. If you get it wrong, you could be in for a walloping.

It's the constant change that appeals; every session is a fresh one. What can beat that?! Change, as they say, is the only constant in our lives. I could get really

philosophical about this, but we're a kite magazine, so I won't. Anyway, change within the kite industry doesn't stop, either. In gear, brands, trends, media, and events, the news keeps pouring out.

It's not all good news, though. The kite magazine industry is thinning out, with a couple of big and well-respected publications closing their doors. Hearing news like that hurts because the publishing industry is a labour of love, especially for those who create content around kiteboarding!

We're so appreciative of you, our readers, for your continued support. Without you, and without the talented riders and photographers who contribute content, and brands who choose to advertise in our publication, we wouldn't be here!

Back to the waves, though. So, you may be wondering why I've gone off on a tangent about waves! It's because I'm writing this while tuned into the GKA Kite-Surf World Cup livestream, which is going down in Dakhla, Morocco. It's the final day of the event, the waves are firing, the riders are on top form, and just watching has got me frothing to get on a flight to Morocco and get out on the water to slice off a piece for myself!

We've got to give it to the GKA; they put on an extremely professional livestream and create some top-notch content throughout the event. Our very own Test Editor, Liam Dredge, has joined the commentary team, and it's been fantastic to see him in action on the beach, interviewing riders as they come off the water.

In the past decade or two, there have been a lot of changes in the competition scene, with different organisations coming and going, sometimes battling to be the one to crown the World Champion. While there have been some new event series and smaller events on the calendar, the GKA (Global Kitesports Association) has been hosting the Kite World Tour since 2016, and we are enjoying the stability in the events scene.

It's hard to get bored with the amount and variety of events on the calendar covering disciplines like strapless, big air, freestyle, hydrofoil freestyle, and strapless freestyle. While there's nothing quite like the vibe of being at an event on the beach and supporting your favourite riders, it's not so bad taking a break from the sand machine and enjoying it from the comfort of home.

The talent, in all categories, but for me, personally, in the growing women's division, is super inspiring. I plan to channel my inner Capucine Delannoy on my next wave session! I'll see if I can awaken my inner Sebastien Ribiero, but... I've got to be realistic about my own abilities!

The next event on the calendar is the GKA Freestyle World Cup in Neom, Saudi Arabia, later in October. I've got to say; my knees are really hoping I don't get too inspired by the freestyle action!

What kiting discipline inspires you? Let us know! Your opinion matters, and we'll keep working hard to show you the content you want to see!

Crystal Veness

Editor



RIDER SEBASTIAN RIBEIRO
PHOTO SVETLANA ROMANTSOVA, GKA KITE-SURF WORLD TOUR IN DAKHLA

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An underwater photograph of a kitesurfer in silhouette, gliding through clear blue water. The sun is visible at the top, creating a bright glow and illuminating the water's surface. The kitesurfer's arms are extended, and their legs are spread wide, capturing a moment of graceful movement.

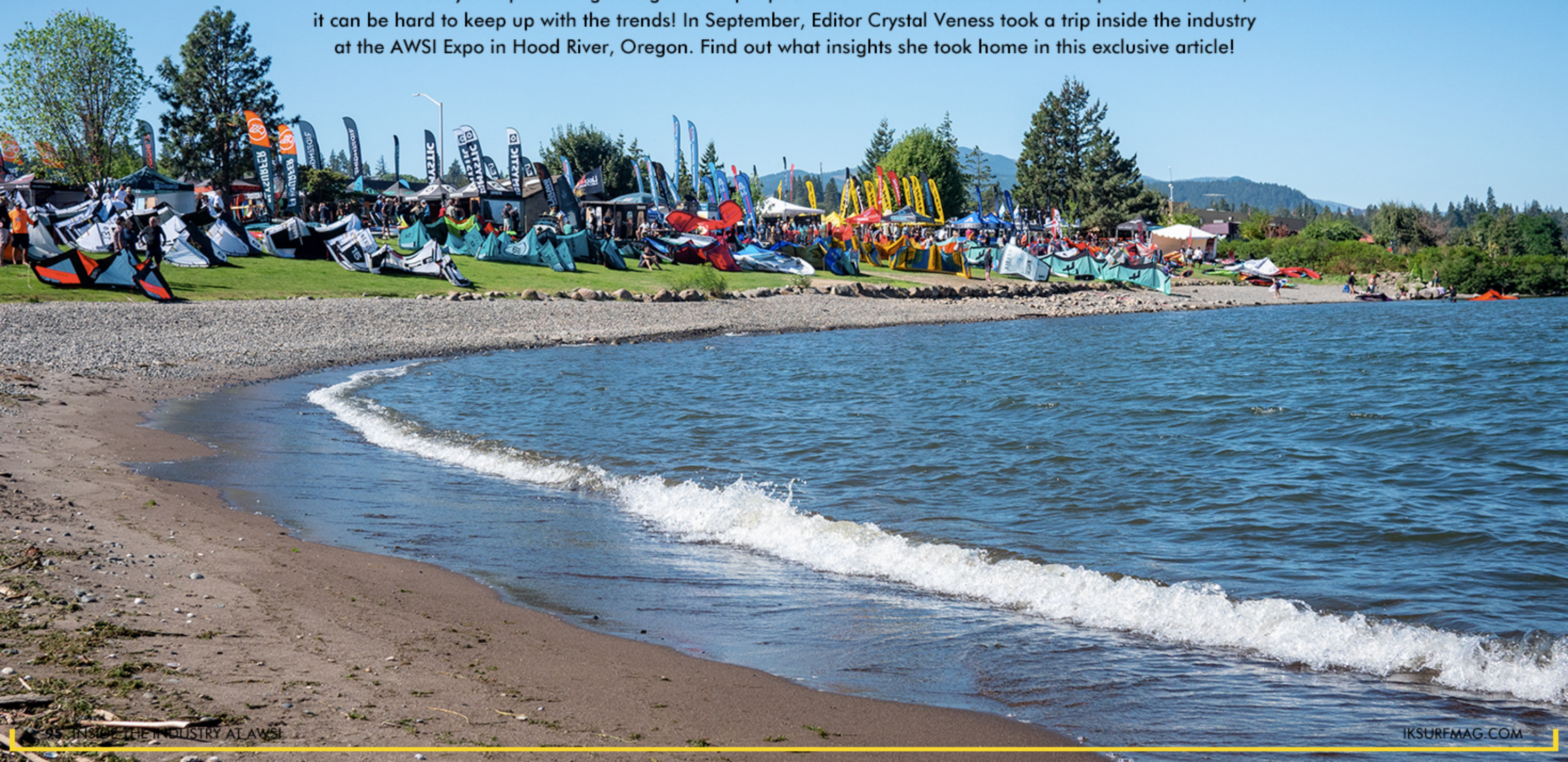
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WORDS CRYSTAL VENESS

INSIDE THE INDUSTRY AT AWSI

The kite industry is experiencing change at a rapid pace. From new materials to new shapes to new faces, it can be hard to keep up with the trends! In September, Editor Crystal Veness took a trip inside the industry at the AWSI Expo in Hood River, Oregon. Find out what insights she took home in this exclusive article!





“BIG AIR IS BACK, AND IT'S COOL AGAIN. OR, MAYBE IT ALWAYS WAS, DEPENDING ON WHO YOU ASK!”

The kite industry is constantly changing. We don't always see what's happening behind the scenes, but whether it's obvious or not, the train never stops trundling along the tracks. The development of kiteboarding equipment is not always about new technology, though. Sometimes, kite designs simply change with industry trends, like fashion, where bell bottom jeans, popular in the '70s, faded out in favour of skinny legs before making a proud return in recent years. Not all of us feel ready to rock these vintage styles, but it doesn't mean they're not happening... again.

On the kite side, old school big air reached its peak popularity in the '90s before freestyle and "extreme" big air (think megaloops) took centre stage. Now? Big air is back, and it's cool again. Or, maybe it always was, depending on who you ask! The mere mortals among us are trying to join the 10, 15, or 20-metre jump club, dialling in the classic board off, and sprinkling in some rotations and grabs in an effort to achieve that floaty, effortless old school style. On the extreme side, the pro rider community is innovating like crazy. They're chasing double loops and S loops and already adding variations and rotations. Short line loops are also gaining popularity, where the kite nearly touches the water mid-loop with the rider flying through the air well above it. At this stage, the simple old-fashioned megaloop seems like a thing of the past!

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Airush introduces the new Helios yellow colorway.

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“ THIS NEW "ALL-AROUND" KITE SEEMS TO HAVE CONSIDERABLE BIG AIR POTENTIAL ”

This blazingly fast progression has pushed the industry into developing kites capable of achieving these inventive new manoeuvres while still satisfying the general population's needs. If the latest edition of Cold Hawaii was any indication, kites like the North Orbit and Duotone Dice and Evo were leading the pack. A relatively new name to the big air game, Timo Boersema had a stand out performance, making a statement on his new Naish Pivot. On the new Slingshot Code V1, Jeremy Burlando wowed the crowd, hot off the heels of his big air win in Tatajuba. This new "all-around" kite seems to have considerable big air potential, and we go behind the design in this issue's Tech Focus section.

A world away from the nuclear wind in the North Sea, a gentle breeze settled over Hood River, Oregon, home to the flowing Columbia River and what many see as America's heart of the kitesurfing industry. With brands like Slingshot, Ride Engine, and the US headquarters for Boards & More (parent company to Duotone and Ion) calling this windy river region home, it's the ideal location for one of the biggest industry events in North America, the AWSI Expo. This event by the AWSI (Association of Wind and Watersports Industries) welcomes kite, wing, foil, and SUP brands to showcase their current and up-and-coming product lines to distributors, retailers, media, and other industry insiders.

Before planting (more like cementing!) my feet in South Africa a few years ago, and when travel was easy,

MAKING A STATEMENT ON THE NEW NAISH PIVOT RIDER TIMO BOERSEMA
PHOTO PATRICK VAN DER VEN





“ IT'S A PLACE WHERE THE WIND BLOWS PRETTY CONSISTENTLY THROUGHOUT SUMMER ”

Hood River was an annual pit stop on my wind-chasing circuit. It's a place where the wind blows pretty consistently throughout summer, the water is often warm enough to go wetsuit-free, and the community runs on adventure and action sports. The only rival to the action sports community is, possibly, the craft brewing and distilling community, whose production space and tasting rooms

claim most of the waterfront real estate around the all-new Slingshot and Ride Engine offices!

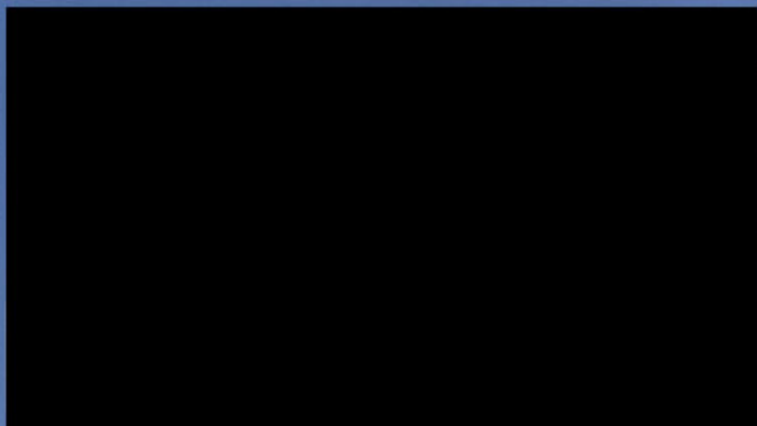
With so many delightful liquid-based indulgences on the menu, I was excited to pack my bags and brave 33 hours of travel to the Pacific Northwest to represent IKSURFMAG at AWSI. I was travelling light this time, and after checking into The Adventure Lodge, I realised I forgot to pack some of that pumping Cape Town Southeaster, and the wind sadly didn't pull in as hoped for the event.

Luckily, adventures were plenty, including a side trip to the nearby Multnomah waterfalls, a visit to the Bonneville Lock and Dam and fish ladders, and a lunchtime wine tasting at the Stave & Stone vineyard. I squeezed in a pretty solid tourist experience and still managed to score a bit of wind a couple of days before the event began to try out the new FLYSURFER Stoke and Cabrinha FX2. After that, light wind reigned supreme! I'm not a card-carrying hydrofoiler, so the light breeze and foil-friendly conditions meant I had a bit more time on the grass at the Hood River Event Site to check in on what's trending in the industry.

PIVOT

HIGH-PERFORMANCE FREERIDE/BIG AIR

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



NAISH



“ WINGFOILING HAS BROUGHT A COLOURFUL INJECTION OF ENERGY TO MANY INLAND AND LIGHT WIND SPOTS GLOBALLY. ”

Thanks to COVID, it's been a few years since the last AWSI event, attended by both US market members and international exhibitors and attendees. This event was reminiscent of a high school reunion, where old friends and local riders came together with international brand founders and representatives, all with the common goal of seeing and sharing what's new in the world of wind.

First and foremost, it can no longer be denied that winging is a THING! The wingfoilers dominated the scene throughout the event, with often 5-10 times as many wings on the water as kites. The explosion of wingfoiling popularity has not gone unnoticed by the kite brands, and there wasn't a single kite brand that didn't have wings as part of their expo display. Even CORE Watersports has finally joined the party, releasing its brand new XC Wing.

Wingfoiling has brought a colourful injection of energy to many inland and light wind spots globally. Spots where kiteboarding is not permitted and areas with little to no beach access or safe launch areas are open season to the fast-growing wingfoiling community. It's been easy to miss the wing-frenzy down in South Africa, where we're still in a big air and wave kiting bubble, possibly because the punishing Atlantic Ocean does not serve as a fertile breeding ground for freshly bloomed wingers.

That said, we shouldn't have been surprised by the rise of the wing, as the popularity of our wing and foil-focused sister publication, Tonic Mag,

“LIGHTER AND STRONGER MATERIALS CONTINUE TO DRIVE INNOVATION ACROSS WIND SPORTS.”

has been skyrocketing over the past year. If the scene in Hood River is anything to go by, we should probably chuck this publication in the bin and put all of our eggs into the Tonic basket!

Moving on, the development happening in the industry has become less and less about the shape of kites and more and more about materials. Lighter and stronger materials continue to drive innovation across wind sports. North has jumped into the materials game, announcing their exclusive new N-Weave Technology, a high tensile woven fibre material currently used on the new North Mode wing. Eleveight also dropped the upgraded model of the RS, the RS+, featuring Dynea Tex material.

ALUULA Composites have introduced a new material called Graflyte, purported to be even lighter than ALUULA Gold. Duotone and Ocean Rodeo are not the only brands that have tested ALUULA kites, but they are the only two with products on the market. Brands like F-ONE and Naish have tested ALUULA but have chosen not to incorporate it into their product lines at this stage. F-ONE founder Raphael Salles doesn't think the material offers twice the performance and doesn't justify twice the price. While he's almost certainly correct, it's apparent that consumers are still excited by these premium priced lightweight materials.

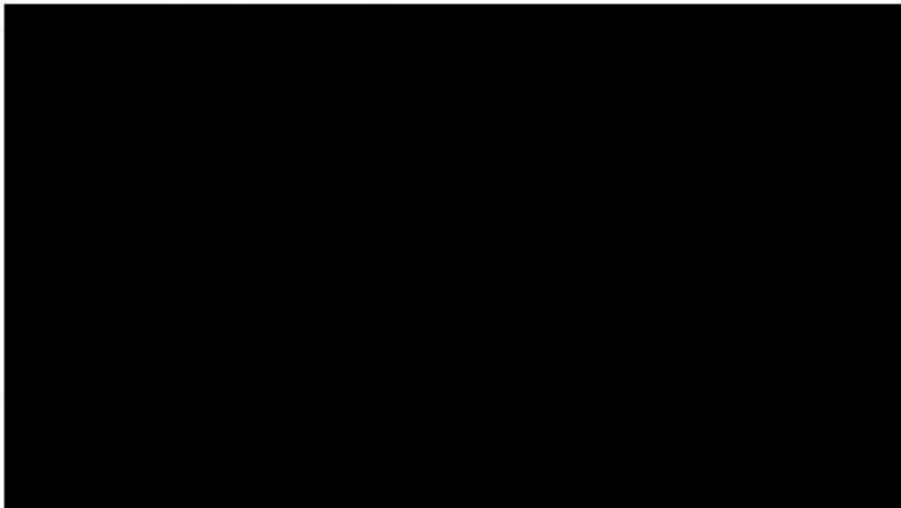
As consumers, making purchasing decisions is harder than ever. Simply reading the marketing buzzwords on product pages is no longer enough.

RIDER RODERICK PIJLS
PHOTO JORDY BROUNS





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CONTOUR SEAT



“ TOUCHING, FEELING, AND FLYING IS TRULY THE BEST WAY TO MAKE AN INFORMED DECISION. ”

If you want to keep up with the game, you've got to dive into the dirty details, like canopy material type and GSM (grams per square metre), net kite weight, tensile strength, line type, and so so much more.

Duotone continues to dominate in selection by offering three different construction models, standard, SLS, and the D/LAB, which feature ALUULA materials, ensuring the consumer has a plethora of choices.

This seems to be a winning approach because Duotone claimed Best Brand as voted by industry members in each division: Kite, Wing, and Windsurf.

Representatives from brands like CORE and FLYSURFER pointed out that their carefully-crafted wave kite products, weighed against competing kites marketed as super-light and super-strong, are almost the same weight, and in some cases lighter, while ringing in at a much lower price point. They explained that having only one base construction model does not mean it's a basic model. Comparing different kite model weights

online post-AWSI validated these statements. Reading marketing materials is a great first step in getting to know a product, but as kiting consumers, touching, feeling, and flying is truly the best way to make an informed decision.

Ozone has linked up with Patagonia to push for a different kind of development in the materials game. They've parked the lighter and stronger conversation at the door, instead forging a new path into more sustainable materials and methods. Together, they have spent the last couple of years developing a recycled kite canopy material, also aiming for a non-toxic manufacturing process. While they have not yet achieved their ultimate goal,



“ I AM ENCOURAGED BY THESE RESPECTED MEMBERS OF OUR KITING COMMUNITY WORKING SO HARD TO PROTECT OUR PRECIOUS PLANET. ”

they had an Ozone kite in Hood River made with primarily recycled canopy material, and it looked no different in appearance or performance than standard virgin dacron. Once they have achieved their goals of creating a high-performing, long-lasting kite using primarily recycled canopy material, they intend to make it available to the entire kiteboarding industry. As always, Patagonia shows again that its priority is the environment, not profit. I, for one, cannot wait to see where this project leads, and I am encouraged by these respected members of our kiting community working so hard to protect our precious planet.

There's action happening in the accessories range as well, some of which got quite a lot of attention from AWSI attendees. The long-awaited and happily received click-in quick-release system was just announced by Duotone, and their 2023 Trust and Click Bars and chicken loops will be receiving this snazzy upgrade. If you've wondered when to upgrade your Duotone control bar, 2023 might be your year!

Lieuwe Boards had a brand new prototype on display, and this one looks like a game-changer for their brand. While it's not ready for release, their new construction promises to bring something shiny and new to the Lieuwe lineup. In other board news, the demand for split boards must be growing because Duotone has added the new Voyager board to their lineup to contend with travel-friendly split boards from Shinn, Kitelement, FLYSURFER, and Nobile.

RIDER CLINTON FILEN PHOTO RAMIRO GALLART



CHOICE 5



CERTIFIED FOR STYLE

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FREERIDE
WAKESTYLE

Thanks to smart internal modifications and fine tuning of external contours, the new Choice 5 boasts greater power efficiency and response. Adding further potency, a new rail design delivers an unrivalled connection between the top and bottom decks. The end result is a highly engaging, fun ride feel in a board that's capable of helping anyone unlock their next level of riding.

“FROM TOP TO BOTTOM AND BACK TO FRONT, THERE IS CHANGE COMING ACROSS THE ENTIRE INDUSTRY”

Harness development continues to turn heads, and I finally got to pick up and play with the new MANERA Halo and see their 3D-modelled wetsuits in person. After hearing Julien Salles explain the design process behind MANERA wetsuits, I'm convinced. It's possible that I'm a sucker for good marketing, or that I'm a tech nerd. Either way, one of these suits is already on my Christmas wish list! The 3D approach seems popular, and Julian Lange, the Product Developer at ION, gave us a sneak peek at their 2023 harness products, which incorporate their new 3D Fit Technology, aimed at helping consumers find the true perfect fit.

AK Durable Supply Co's minimalist Ether range is growing, and dealers had the chance to interact with these consciously crafted products in person and check out the new white version of the AK Ether harness, a personal favourite of mine. Over at Ride Engine, I got the low down on an unreleased product, and this one will excite approximately 21% of our readers, which is the only hint I can give at this stage! Mystic's Stealth range is getting another update for 2023, and this one looks to take Stealth to the next level. From top to bottom and back to front, there is change coming across the entire industry

It's not only the designs that are big news but the designers behind them. North's new designer, Pepijn Smit, who led the recently released Code Zero project, is a fresh face from The Netherlands. Check out our in-depth interview with him in the Tech Focus section of this issue. With so many kites in their

JAN BURGDOERFER ON THE NEW ELEVEIGHT RS+ FEATURING DYNEA TEX
PHOTO HELEN FISCHER



lineup, Duotone has expanded their design team, adding Marian Hund and increasing Sky Solbach's role to include the development of the Neo, Neo D/LAB, and Neo SLS which has seen some significant steps between the 2022 and 2023 models.

Over at Airush, Su Kay claimed the title of the world's first female kite designer! Her experience and qualifications speak for themselves, and we couldn't be more proud of her for breaking into this male-dominated part of the industry. There was a top-secret new kite on display at AWSI that she has been hard at work developing, and it looks like it will

claim its well-deserved spot as THE big air kite in the Airush lineup. Stay tuned for that release in early 2023! We can't wait to see what else Su brings to the table over at Airush.

With a growing contingent of kites in their twenties now able to claim a solid 10-15 years of kiting and industry experience, it's no surprise that design teams are beginning to feature some younger faces. At F-ONE, Kite Designer Robert Graham is in his 60s and is training up 23-year-old Charles Brodel to take the reins somewhere down the line, but he's already had some influence on their new model, the TRIGGER.



RIDER LEIF GIVEN
PHOTO MIKAEL JONSSON



“GIN KITES, WHO RECENTLY ABSORBED THE FLYMAAX BRAND AND RANGE, HAD THEIR LATEST FOIL KITES ON THE WATER”

FLYSURFER's Maximilian Kühnhauser has moved over to focus on wing development, making way for 27-year-old Luke McGillewie to step into the role of inflatable Kite Designer. Over at Cabrinha, Brodie Sutherland, 27 years old, is in charge of wing and foil design, and John Lewis, at only 22 years old, is the new wing designer at Freewing. They keep getting younger!

We don't always take the time to differentiate between inflatable and foil kites because, for the most part, our magazine content is fairly focused on the traditional tube/leading edge inflatable kites and less on the foil/ram air kites. However, in Hood River, these soft kites made a strong impression. FLYSURFER designer Benni Boelli sent the first production models of their soon-to-be-released mystery kite to Hood River, and there seemed to be someone flying one non-stop during the event... I'm talking about you, Mike Jablonski! Gin Kites, who recently absorbed the Flymaax brand and range, had their latest foil kites on the water, offering twin-tip action when few tube kites could stay in the sky. On team Ozone, Axel Mazella was showing off the speed of the Ozone R1, ripping up and down the Columbia River at unmatched speeds. There still, and likely always will be, polarity regarding graphics and colour choices. North and Ozone continue to keep their designs simple and clean for 2023, while Boards & More has put the tone in Duotone with vibrant kite and board graphics that stand out.

RIDER FRED HOPE
PHOTO ERIC DURAN



CORE, allowing just a slight departure from their signature black and white, has added a small pop of colour into the latest kite range, and Airush has dropped a bright yellow colour choice into their typically subdued lineup. It's always exciting to see the different approaches to graphic design and colour trends that each brand adopts, and I can't get enough of the variety. After all, if everything looked the same, how would I be able to pick out my friends on the water at a distance?!

With wing foils, hydrofoils, and foil kites dominating the scene at AWSI, it sure looks like the industry has become more loyal to the foil than ever, and Fred Hope's seemingly impossible manoeuvres on the Slingshot UFO V2 indeed drove that point home.

“ IT SURE LOOKS
LIKE THE INDUSTRY
HAS BECOME MORE
LOYAL TO THE FOIL
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“ THERE ARE MANY PATHS TO PURSUE IN KITE AND WIND SPORTS, AND IT'S EASY TO GET LOST ”

Even the park riders, typically throwing it down in the Hood River Slider Project, are getting in on the wing thing. I saw more than a few park riders coming off the water after "down-WING-ders" while enjoying an afternoon craft beer at the wing launch with the Hood River locals!

All in all, after attending my first AWSI Expo in three years and seeing how the industry has been growing and changing in that time, I found myself feeling just a little bit basic. While I've stayed in touch with the different subcategories of kite sports, I've kept it pretty vanilla with my inflatable kites, twin tip, and wave board. There are many paths to pursue in kite and wind sports, and it's easy to get lost and feel like you're falling behind!

Being first in line to try that next new thing, attaining proficiency in every aspect of the sport, and having the storage space and bank account to have "one of everything on the menu" offers wind sports addicts the opportunity to session no matter the wind. For the rest of us with our small and simple quivers, I suppose we can't be faulted for only kiting when it suits what we've got and doing other stuff when it doesn't!

If you're in Hood River, though, you might be sessioning in any and all wind AND still find time for a downhill mountain bike run in the morning! I don't know how they do it, but it may have something to do with the uber-strong locally roasted coffees that had me buzzing in the mornings, which were a must after the hoppy, high alcohol content craft beers that had me buzzed in the evenings!!

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PHOTO RAMIRO GALLART



KITE DESIGNER SU KAY PHOTO MARK GRAAFF



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79°

WORDS PAUL SERIN PHOTOS MATT GEORGES

N

Imagine spending 12 days with 11 crew and 20 board bags on a 25-metre vessel. Even more, imagine sailing that vessel to an environment so icy and harsh that only polar bears and reindeer want to live there - and then going kiting! Paul Serin documents the MANERA team's incredible expedition to Svalbard, and tells extraordinary tales of kiting between icebergs and in front of glaciers in this IKSURFMAG exclusive!



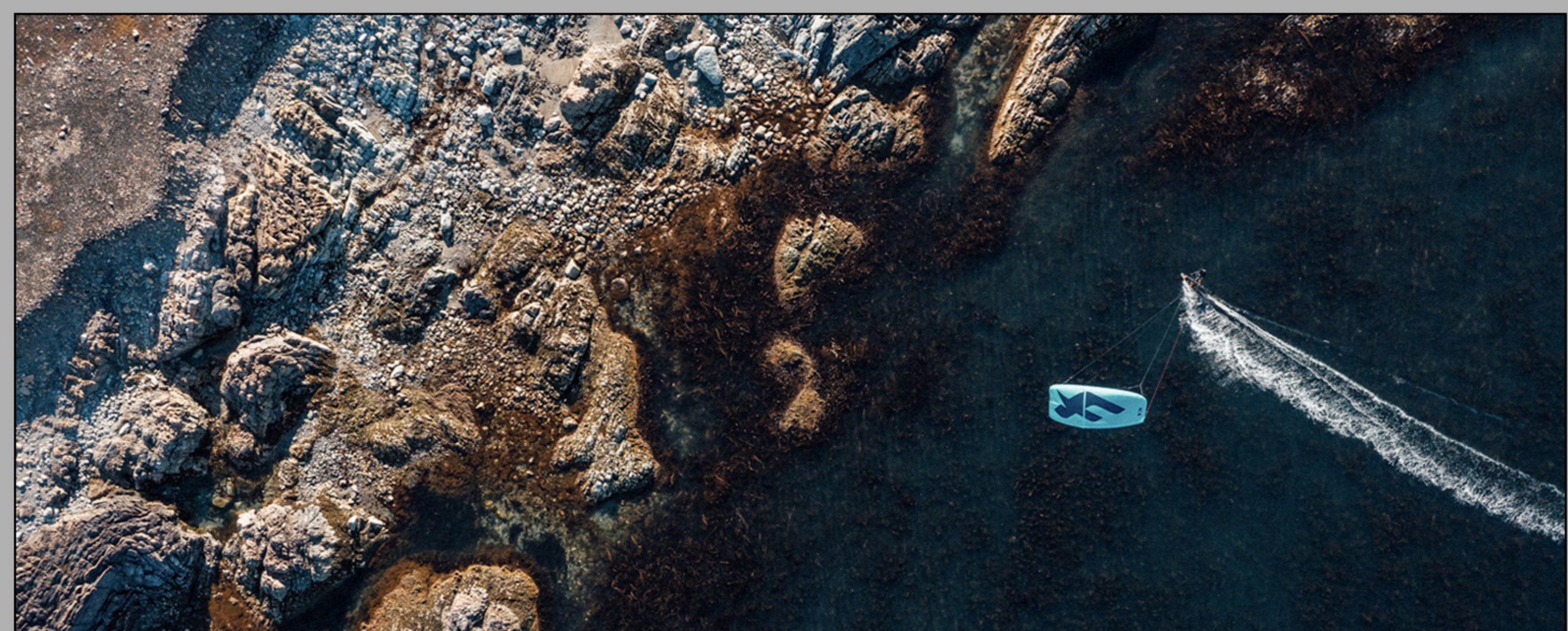
“ I’M MAKING LISTS OF ALL THE GEAR I NEED. I’VE PREVIOUSLY GONE ON TRIPS TO COLD PLACES, BUT I’VE NEVER DONE ANYTHING LIKE THIS. ”

D-day is approaching, and my excitement is through the roof. This trip was two years in the making, and it is finally happening. I'm increasingly worried about forgetting something, so I'm making lists of all the gear I need. I've previously gone on trips to cold places, but I've never done anything like this. To tell you the truth, I still have a hard time comprehending where we are going.

A documentary is running on my computer while I continue packing. Base layers, ski socks, ski gloves? Do I really need ski gloves? Rather than ask, I take them. Just in case, as they say. That's something I say with just about every accessory I add to my bag, on top of my winter jacket and ski pants.

Where exactly are we going? To Svalbard, an archipelago located north of Norway. The islands range from 74° to 81° north latitude. Keep in mind that the Arctic Circle is very close at 66°30' N. The people I talk to don't really realise where it is, and I don't think I do either. I don't go into details when they ask, "So, Paul, where is your next trip?" I just reply, "On an island north of Norway," and let them imagine what they want.

Like every trip I've been on since I began kiting, there are many boardbags involved. With MANERA, there are always a lot of them, and the airlines must truly hate us. But you don't want to leave it up to chance on a trip like this. You have to be ready for anything.



“ WE WILL KITESURF IN ONE OF THE MOST EXTREME AND NORTHERN PLACES IN THE WORLD. ”

I don't know what scares me the most: the cold, or the idea of spending 12 days on a boat between the Greenland Sea and the Barents Sea.

The trip starts with a stop in Oslo, the Norwegian capital. We wait for the whole team to arrive before leaving for Longyearbyen, the "biggest" town on Svalbard

with around 2,500 inhabitants. Our pit stop here feels a bit like a decompression chamber before the real cold, and the real adventure.

As for the riders, Mallory "Mallo" de la Villemarqué and Matt Maxwell are coming for strapless kite and wave, and Fernando "Mizo" Novaes for surf foil and wing. On the media team, Olivier Sautet is our videographer, and Matt Georges is our photographer. Anthony Lietart is here as well to film everything happening backstage during the trip. And, of course, Julien Salles,

MANERA's boss and without whom none of this can be possible, oversees the trip. And finally, there is me, Paul Serin, mainly for twin tip and freestyle, and some wing foil.

Our arrival in Longyearbyen does not go unnoticed. The other passengers on the plane think we are scientists because of all our big bags. When we explain that we are here to kite surf, their eyes widen, showing both astonishment and compassion. Yes, we will kitesurf in one of the most extreme and northern places in the world. Just writing these words gives me goosebumps.

“ WE ARE ABOUT TO LEAVE FOR 12 DAYS AT SEA IN TOTAL AUTONOMY, FAR FROM EVERYTHING AND WITHOUT A MOBILE NETWORK ”

For the next two weeks, our floating house is called Kamak. She is a 25-metre-long boat coming from Paimpol in Brittany. She normally hosts ski trips between Svalbard, Greenland, and Norway, but this time, the action will take place on the water and not in the mountains.

With the crew, there are 11 of us in total. Stress is starting to build. Are we going to get along well in such a small space for 12 days?

Gaby, the captain, manages his boat perfectly. We also understand quite quickly that he is a little bit obsessive when it comes to tidying up. I personally don't have a problem with that, but with 20 boardbags, cameras and all their chargers, it can get out of hand pretty quickly. He is assisted by Jean, a young Breton sailor familiar with the cold and expeditions of this kind. Last but not least, Minh is the cook. Despite his shyness, he will be the decisive asset of this trip and responsible for the good mood of the group.

The boat is almost ready to go. I help Minh with the last shopping trip to the supermarket. We are about to leave for 12 days at sea in total autonomy, far from everything and without a mobile network: just us and the grandness of nature.

Finally, we cast off, and the real adventure begins. We are heading straight north. We all gather next to the captain's screen to try to figure out exactly where we are going. Our first stop will be just outside the Longyearbyen Fjord, where we will have our first session.





I step out onto the deck and look around. The air is frigid on the only part of my face that isn't covered, but my eyes are in awe of the scenery. The sun is out on this first day. I have a hard time wrapping my head around the fact that it never sets at this time of the year. After three or four hours of sailing, we finally arrive at the first spot. The wind blows gently, the area looks clear, all lights are green.

Another essential detail to mention is that on Svalbard, there are about 2,500 inhabitants and 3,000 polar bears, so the chances are high for us to see one. Of course, our goal is for that to happen while on the boat, and not on land while inflating our kites.

**“ THE WIND
BLOWS GENTLY,
THE AREA LOOKS
CLEAR, ALL LIGHTS
ARE GREEN. ”**



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as we set foot on the ground, Mallo and I instantly look at each other, the same idea obviously having crossed our minds. We sprint up the hill to see what's above us, brandishing our kite bars and screaming, driven by a surge of unconsciousness.

No white-haired animal is waiting for us up there. On the other hand, reindeer antlers and the immensity of nature are. Once the adrenaline rush is over, we get into the water. It is cold, and the wind is light, but the sun feels so good.

I take my time to ride and enjoy the landscape. The mountains are high and steep, and the plains stretch as far as the eye can see. I feel like an ant in a world of humans. I imagine the potential creatures that could be underwater in such a remote corner of the world. But as soon as these thoughts cross my mind, I immediately turn around to get closer to the boat.

The first session of a trip is always quite special. It sets the tone and prepares us for the rest of the journey. Getting out of the water, I dread the moment when I will need to take off my wetsuit. Fortunately, my body is still relatively warm, so the transition from wetsuit to poncho is not so bad.

Ten hours of navigation are now ahead of us to reach the north of Svalbard and the 79th parallel north. The headwinds force us to turn the engine on to keep moving forward. But one of the advantages at this time of year is that there will be no night sailing, as it is daytime 24 hours a day.

The first dinner is joyful. It's a treat to eat Minh's dishes, which he also makes in great quantity. With this group of hungry guys, it is something crucial to keep in mind.

“ WE WERE OVERCOME WITH EXCITEMENT ABOUT THE DAYS TO COME. ”

The groups of skiers who usually come here are always accompanied by an armed guide to protect them in case of an attack.

Our only defence tools are a flare gun and binoculars. Before we land on any beach, we have to scan the horizon to ensure there are no big, white fur balls around.

The first session starts slowly. I put on my 6.4mm hooded wetsuit and my 5mm booties without forgetting my pair of gloves. It is impossible to start with a kite from a sailboat because of the shrouds and the limited space. However, Mizo can easily take off with his wing, so he will be the first in the water.

I get into the dinghy with Mallo, and Jean takes us to the beach. The landing area is slightly below a small hill, so we can't see if anything is up there waiting for us. As soon

“ I FORCE MYSELF TO GO OUT FROM TIME TO TIME TO APPRECIATE THE LANDSCAPE, BUT THE TEMPERATURE IS BONE-CHILLING ”

I, however, can only swallow a bit of soup before the boat starts swaying again. I decide to leave at once to lie down in my bunk.

A few hours later, the noise of the anchor chain briefly wakes me up. It is only midnight, but the boat is not moving anymore. It's calm again. I later find out that we still have a long way to go and that we would not ride that day. The goal is to reach the northernmost point of Svalbard and then sail around this region, depending on the wind.

The cellular network has left us for good. Strangely enough, we all suddenly feel closer to one another. No more phones vibrating on the table during meals, nor "Wait, I'll check on Google if it's true". We are back to the essentials: us, the boat, the trip.

We try to fill this day as best as we can with meals, card games and a long nap. I force myself to go out from time to time to appreciate the landscape, but the temperature is bone-chilling, and my eyes immediately start watering. The air reminds me of a day of skiing in the Alps, so cold and dry that my throat freezes with every breath.

We make headway little by little, but our current GPS point always feels so far away from our destination. We end up sailing for 15 hours instead of 10. A wave of relief washes over us when the captain announces that we have finally arrived. On the map, we can see the beginning of the sea ice, which is only a few kilometres away. The GPS indicates the long-awaited 79 North. It hasn't really hit me yet; I just know that we are very, very far up north.





The hours don't really have any value anymore. I put my watch away in my bag. Only meals punctuate our days. It's been a week since we left our homes. But apart from a short session on the water, not much has happened. Even though we all know that it's part of the game on MANERA trips, it's still hard to look to the future, especially in such a cold and hostile place where the wind forecast changes every two hours.

We are now anchored in a fjord that should get wind by the afternoon's end. Matt and Olivier check if there is a beach from which we can easily take off. The one they choose as ideal turns out to be the napping spot of a polar bear. Obviously, we decide to change spots and go for one a bit further away, without any land connection with the previous one.

**“ THE ONE THEY
CHOOSE AS
IDEAL TURNS
OUT TO BE THE
NAPPING SPOT OF
A POLAR BEAR. ”**

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A kitesurfer in a black wetsuit is captured mid-air, performing a jump. The rider is wearing a black hooded wetsuit and is holding onto a blue and orange harness. The kiteboard is black with orange accents. The background features a vast, snow-covered mountain range under a grey sky. In the foreground, there is a body of water with white foam from a wave. Another person is visible in the distance, also on the water.

“ WHEN I FINALLY ARRIVE ON THE BEACH, I DISCOVER A POOL OF FRESH WATER SURROUNDED BY ICE, PERFECTLY IN LINE WITH THE WIND. A DREAM. ”

Seeing their sparkling eyes, it's evident that observing a polar bear seems to be a unique experience. I'm so looking forward to it. Meanwhile, Olivier has spotted a perfect freestyle spot, a deep puddle inland where the wind seems to come in nicely. It's my time to shine.

It's been almost six months since I've done any unhooked freestyle, and I'm getting a bit nervous. I gear up inside the boat. Outside, the sky is grey. I think it's 11:00, but it's really 17:00. Freestyling in this cold is quite the ordeal, but Olivier is counting on me. This year, Maxime Chabloz is not here, so I'm the only one who can do these tricks for the video.

When I finally arrive on the beach, I discover a pool of fresh water surrounded by ice, perfectly in line with the wind. A dream. The only problem is that the temperature will not exceed 3°C. It's important to note that it is also impossible to put on neoprene boots and then fit into the freestyle boots. I must be barefoot.

I head to the water, and to my surprise, there are a bunch of walruses sleeping on the other side of this small lake. I don't feel like I'm disturbing them, so everything is fine. The cold pierces through the neoprene, and my feet and fingers are quickly numb. All my tricks are still there, and I land everything I planned to as if I were riding in Brazil at 25°C. Sure, it's nothing crazy and a lot of simple handle passes, but it's hard for me to do much more.

Olivier looks happy, especially with the alignment of my jumps with a vast glacier in the background.



“ I AM FROZEN FROM THE SESSION, BUT I DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT IT. WE ARE IN FRONT OF A POLAR BEAR.”

It's unlike anything we've seen before. I keep going for as long as I can. My feet have turned into two bricks and have been hurting for at least 20 minutes. I can almost feel the frostbite coming. However, and more importantly, I now remember how much I love freestyle, and how much I miss it.

I signal to Olivier that I can't do anything

more. He's not surprised, but tells me anyway, "That was totally stylish, man." Jean arrives with the dinghy, and we pack everything up. On the way back, Gaby warns us on the radio that the bear from earlier today is walking around nearby. We get as close as possible while keeping our distance so as not to disturb it. I am frozen from the session, but I don't even think about it. We are in front of a polar bear.

This animal is so mythical. I think back to all the books I read as a child and all the images and documentaries I've seen on it and its

natural environment that is disappearing because of us and our actions. And then there is the present moment when we, humans, are face-to-face with it.

I have mixed feelings. On one hand, I feel guilty for seeing this bear, for being here. I feel like I'm looking at a living work of art that nature has created without permission. On the other hand, I see this living being staring at us and looking anything but unhappy. We must do everything to ensure that these bears do not disappear. Our generation and future generations must protect this more than anything else. Our children must be able to talk about polar bears in the present tense and not in the past.



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“ LIKE OUR LITTLE ADVENTURE ON THE BEACH DURING THE FIRST SESSION, WE LOOK AT EACH OTHER AND IMMEDIATELY RUSH TO SEE IT. ”

RIDER PAUL SERIN



That night, I hear the wind blowing incessantly through the halyards. I'm looking forward to doing Big Air here and Matt and Mallo even more. We return to the same spot as the day before and split into two groups. Initially, my role is to be on polar bear watch and to ensure they don't approach us or come too close. Tricks are landed one after the other as we are all enveloped by the cold and the dullness of this seemingly never-ending overcast weather. That said, I am under the impression that we are getting used to it.

No bears on the horizon. After more than an hour, I start to pump up my kite. The wind is not as strong as I thought, but it will do. The walruses are still there, unconcerned. They sometimes show their big teeth when we pass by. It is quite surprising, but I think they are just curious and a little startled to see humans gliding on the water. It must be said that they, and the polar bears, are the only wild animals that we have seen since our departure. This place is so extreme that even animals don't want to live here.

It's my turn to go in the water, but the wind is too light to jump high. With Mallo, we spot a drifting iceberg on the other side of the channel. Like our little adventure on the beach during the first session, we look at each other and immediately rush to see it. The drones get ready and follow us, but it is farther than we thought. If something goes wrong, it would be really complicated to come and get us. Everything will be fine, I tell myself several times.



it's true that the situation could have turned out badly. Everything, however, ended well, and that's the main thing.

Once lunch is over, we go back to the water to wing foil this time. To minimise the risks, we decide to stay around the boat. But the wind is coming straight from a 500-metre-high mountain, so it is certainly going to be interesting. I put on my second wetsuit, which is only half dry, and my gloves which are completely wet. Instantly, my fingertips freeze and they hurt before I even touch the water.

Mizo is so impressive. For a Brazilian who rides in shorts all year, he has a rather exceptional resistance to cold. With nothing left to lose, I jump in the water and get going. I pass by Matt, the photographer, and tell him: "Get ready quickly; I won't last long". I do a few jumps and moves in front of his camera, but sometimes the wind gusts rip the wing out of my hands. Other times, we find ourselves waiting for one to get up and go again. My energy level drops quickly, and I head back to the boat after 30 minutes, leaving Mizo alone on the water.

The feeling of getting rid of a 6mm wetsuit is incredible, but not as much as the smell of the pizzas that Minh is putting in the oven at that same moment. Tomorrow, we change spots, and we continue our adventure up north.

The wind has decided to take a small break. We use this opportunity to explore our surroundings and, we hope, to see bears. The VHF crackles: "Gaby for Fred, Gaby for Fred". We all listen closely. Three bears are walking on an island a bit further north, near a whale corpse. We are all super excited.

"EVERYBODY IS ABSORBED BY THE RIDERS AND HOW TO GET THE BEST POSSIBLE ANGLE."

When we finally get there, we discover a piece of ice of midnight blue colour and a much bigger size than anticipated. We are both a little impressed, but we still try a few tricks around it. Until a piece comes off, and the whole iceberg starts to rise. My heart races as I can already picture both of us stuck under it in frozen waters.

A few minutes later, it has visibly and thankfully stabilised. We do a few more small jumps but eventually decide to head back before it gets bad, or the wind drops.

By the time we return, the wind has picked up a few knots, and we continue riding for a little while longer. No one is watching out for bears anymore. Everybody is absorbed by the riders and how to get the best possible angle. Back on the boat, Gaby is not happy. According to him, we took too many risks. Julien is of the same opinion. In hindsight,

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“ THEY LOOK SO PEACEFUL AND WITHOUT ANY WORRIES IN THE WORLD. WE CONTINUE OUR WAY TOWARDS A GLACIER AND LEAVE THEM TO THEIR FEAST. ”

Seeing one bear was already crazy, but three would be sensational. We layer up and go on deck to enjoy the view. The wind is absent, the sea glassy. There is not a sound, just the water on the boat's hull. It's good to have some peace and quiet, too.

Without binoculars, it is almost impossible to see the bears. Even though they are white, they blend in perfectly with the rocks and the remaining snow - just one more thing to keep in mind when we go kiting! The whale is indeed there, and so are the bears. We take turns with the binoculars to observe them. The legal distance is 300 metres, but with all the violations that have occurred recently, it will probably increase.

It is sometimes difficult for me to understand humans in certain situations. No one would like to have someone stand and stare a few feet away while they are eating. Bears wouldn't either. We can observe them from a distance, and that's already a lot. The two cubs are busy butchering the remains of the whale. Their mother watches them, lying between two rocks. They look so peaceful and without any worries in the world. We continue our way towards a glacier and leave them to their feast.

We hope that a breeze will appear so that we can ride a little. When we arrive at the anchorage, the wind is more than absent, but the landscape is hypnotising. This huge mass of ice has been carved in time. We all ask ourselves questions. Since when does it exist? Is it really melting? Mizo has his opinion on the topic.

" I WILL ONLY REMEMBER THE GOOD MOMENTS AND WILL QUICKLY FORGET THESE LONG PERIODS OF WAITING. "

For him, everything is cyclical. Personally, I find it hard to believe. I am not a scientist, but all the measurements show that glaciers are indeed melting.

We gear up to foil around the drifting ice blocks. We take turns trying to do dock starts, but the wetsuit, gloves, and booties don't help at all. It's hard to feel anything with all this neoprene. We end up simply having fun on the ice, jumping in the water like kids, as if the water was actually warm when it was probably only 2°C.

We anchor behind a small island that should protect us in case of falling ice blocks. The noise when a piece comes off resembles a gunshot mixed with a cracking sound. It makes my blood run cold, even though it's already far from warm!

The following days are very slow-moving. Except for a walrus family that comes to visit us, nothing else happens. Waiting is part of the game; sometimes, it's hard to take. I put things into perspective and tell myself that once the trip is over, I will only remember the good moments and will quickly forget these long periods of waiting. I write these lines in my bed while the boat is not rocking too much. We have been on Kamak for a week now. Tomorrow, we start to head back south while, of course, looking for good riding conditions.

A gale is expected in a few days. Gaby is analysing all the options so that we can get to a rideable spot which is, at the same time, safe. It has got to be easier with skiers, that's for sure. But he likes the challenge, so I'm sure he's also enjoying this.



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“ THE WIND IS STRANGE AND IRREGULAR IN STRENGTH AND DIRECTION. IT EVEN PAUSES SOMETIMES. ”

I get out of my bunk and discover that we have moved to a different glacier. We are in another bay, and there is wind! I rub my eyes to try to understand how it is possible that wind can blow directly from the glacier, but I don't think about it too much. I sense that Gaby does not want to stay here for a long time because of the ice and the bad

I get out of my bunk and discover that we have moved to a different glacier. We are in another bay, and there is wind! I rub my eyes to try to understand how it is possible that wind can blow directly from the glacier, but I don't think about it too much. I sense that Gaby does not want to stay here for a long time because of the ice and the bad weather. I rush to put on my wetsuit and boots and go back on deck. Olivier and Matt are also ready quickly. I have the feeling that this is the session that can make this trip magical.

Jean drops me off on a pebble beach to inflate my kite. He leaves me there alone because it is almost impossible for him to dock the dinghy with the swell caused by the falling ice blocks. It doesn't take me long to set my lines up, between the fear of bears, falling rocks and ice blocks, and other potential hazards I don't even want to think about.

Mizo joins me on the water. I don't even have time to tell him to watch out for the submerged ice blocks before he hits one and goes flying right in front of me. At least I don't have to worry about that on my twin tip. I feel one under my board from time to time, but it doesn't bother me much.

The wind is strange and irregular in strength and direction. It even pauses sometimes. I feel that Olivier and Matt are betting a lot on this session, so I give it my all. The glacier is behind my back. I can't really see it, but they can. Apparently, it's pretty insane. I do the best I can with the wind I have. After 30 minutes, I am frozen to the bone, but more importantly, I feel that the gusts are slowly decreasing in intensity. The end of the session is close.

I spot a small iceberg in the middle of the spot and jump on it to start packing my gear. I can finally turn around and see the glacier behind me. The blue of the ice is translucent in some places. The scene is unreal. I am standing on an iceberg, rolling my lines while a photographer and a cinematographer have their cameras pointed at me and this gigantic glacier in the background. I get back on the boat, and we quickly pull up the anchor to move to another bay. Community life is sometimes a little heavy, especially between the crew and the riders. We want to go to places where Gaby doesn't necessarily want to go.



“ THE FREEZING COLD AND THE LACK OF SUN ARE WEARING ON US, ON TOP OF THE LACK OF COMMUNICATION WITH OUR LOVED ONES. ”

But after all, it's his boat, so he has the final say. After yesterday's glacier session, we are anchored in a bay sheltered from the wind, but with a more bland landscape than we are used to. Julien and Olivier have asked several times if it could be possible to move, but the captain has categorically refused every time. We'll stay here. It's not bad anyways, and there is wind, so we can ride around the boat.

Everyone is able to get a session in: strapless for Matt, wing foil for Mizo and me, and a bit of twin tip for Mallo. We all feel fatigued. The freezing cold and the lack of sun are wearing on us, on top of the lack of communication with our loved ones. Moreover, I feel we are all a bit eager to head back, as daily life in this tight, cramped space is becoming difficult.

The following day, we start sailing at around 7:00. We continue moving south, but it will be rough, according to Gaby. I don't even think twice about it and take my seasickness pills. After more than 15 hours of sailing, the whole team feels alright and more than rested.

The phone signal is supposed to come back halfway through this sail, but it only comes back timidly, enough to let messages through but not enough to answer them. Deep down, I want it back, but only to talk to my loved ones, to tell them that I miss them and that everything is fine on Kamak. But, of course, a bunch of useless messages also come along.

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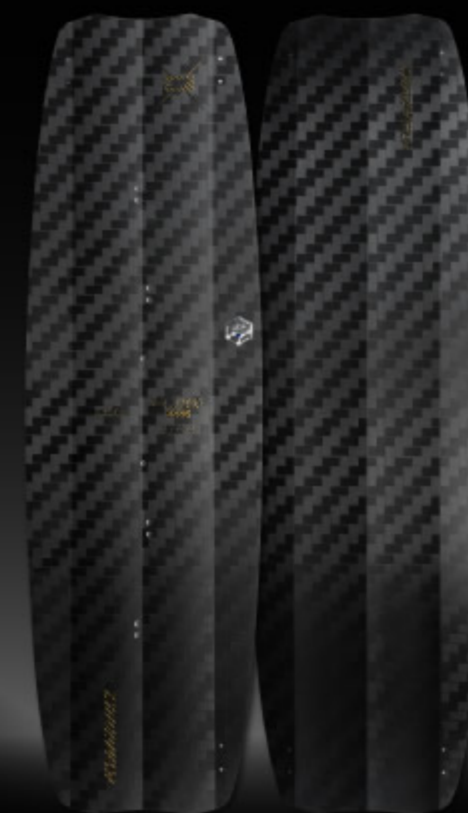
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SKYWALKER

WORDS LASSE WALKER
PHOTO THIS PAGE TYRONE BRADLEY

Being a top kiteboarder isn't only about being better than your opponents. One of the most challenging opponents can be yourself.

In SKYWALKER, a Red Bull documentary, Lasse Walker gives us a look inside his mind.

In this article, Lasse gives us some insights behind the film, his fears, and his motivations.

Dive into this IKSURFMAG exclusive!



“ UNDERWATER, IT'S ABOUT ENJOYING THE EXPERIENCE, EXPLORING THE ENVIRONMENT, AND BEING IN THE MOMENT. ”

When you're underwater, there's almost always an anxious whisper in the back of your mind saying, "Hurry up! You need to breathe air again. Hurry. HURRY!" It gets louder and louder the longer you stay under. Freediving, in a way, breaks that thought pattern. Being able to exist under the surface and have a peaceful mind is almost an art form.

Freediving is about breathing and efficiency, trying to lower your heart rate and clear your mind of other thoughts. It starts with breathing exercises at the surface to prepare your body and mind for the world beneath. Underwater, it's about enjoying the experience, exploring the environment, and being in the moment. For me, many conflicts somehow work in harmony when I dive. I'm in control of my emotions and fears while accepting that I have enough air inside my body. I'm excited but extremely calm. When I've settled into that meditative state, it feels

it feels like pure silence and stillness.

That first breath when I reach the surface is always a relief, a renewal, in a sense. After a good dive, my first inhale fills me with positive emotions. Every dive and every time I reach the surface feels like a little victory.

I found freediving because I needed a way to manage my nerves. I have been working with my performance coach on different outlets and have practised breathwork and the Wim Hof (ice bath) method almost daily. Freediving was a natural next step because all of these practices are compatible.



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“ I’VE BEEN LUCKY TO LIVE A VERY SAFE AND FUN LIFE, AND I HAD THE UNEQUIVOCAL SUPPORT OF MY PARENTS.”

After a challenging King of the Air event, I went to Bonaire with my friend and KOTA Caddy, Bas van Duijvenbode. There, we attended a course by Carlos Coste, who holds countless world records, including being the first person to reach over 100m deep on a single breath. He was a wise, inspirational teacher who gave me a new, valuable tool to manage my stress.

When I started kiting, I was just a kid having a great time doing something I enjoyed. I was trying out different things on the water, and it was all coming together. I’ve been lucky to live a very safe and fun life, and I had the unequivocal support of my parents. From the start, they and my friends pushed me to keep improving. Then, quite suddenly, I became sponsored by the biggest and best brands in the kiting and extreme sports industries. Now, I had this new pressure to deliver.

Nerves were never a significant part of my life, never in school, other sports, or even in public speaking situations. It only surfaced during kiteboarding competitions. On event days, I wasn’t eating right or sleeping right. I wasn’t in control. Furthermore, I was constantly setting goals for myself; small, big, short-term, and long-term; the list never stopped growing. I worked extremely hard on achieving them, to the point of obsession. It wasn’t healthy.

Back then, I was “just dealing with it”. My strategy was to hope it got better, but it never happened. Kiteboarding is on the small side when it comes to adrenaline sports. Getting help can be quite a struggle.

“ IT WAS BY FAR THE COLDEST I'VE EVER BEEN, FREEDIVING IN 10-DEGREE WATER WITH CONSTANT BRAIN FREEZE. ”

In Formula 1, every driver has a team with multiple assistants and coaches. In professional kiteboarding, for the most part, you're on your own. It is changing slowly, with more riders and brands looking into systems that build up and support athletes, including on the mental health side. Now, I have a performance coach who is there to help me find solutions and manage that stress, which is something I wanted to share in *Skywalker*, my Red Bull documentary.

The *Skywalker* film project, just released on Red Bull TV, has been one of the biggest projects I've worked on. I wasn't setting out to inspire the masses; I simply wanted to share my story. With filmmaker Floris Tils, we got to work on the project in Cape Town, South Africa. Mindset was always a central theme of the story, so we chose to incorporate freediving into the movie.

We captured the freediving shots in the film in Cape Town at a shipwreck called *The Antipolis*, an oil tanker that had sunk in 1977. As everyone that's been to Cape Town knows, the water can be cold... really cold! Divers are equipped with a thick wetsuit, gloves, boots, caps, and every possible neoprene accessory you can add. After two shots, Floris told me he couldn't recognise me in the footage, and I needed to take off the gloves and cap. It was BY FAR the coldest I've ever been, freediving in 10-degree water with constant brain freeze.



PHOTO ISRAEL GIL



I couldn't feel my fingers for hours, but, looking back, it was a great challenge.

Sharing my athletic journey and competition experiences on film felt pretty natural. But, sharing the more personal side left me unsure what other athletes, kites, and people from the industry would think and say. But, there was no doubt for me whatsoever; I wanted to tell the story. We recorded one (of many) of my sessions with my performance coach. Seeing the result after everything had come together was beautiful. I was proud of myself for opening up and saw it as an important learning opportunity. Floris and I were confident and proud to share this project with the world.

“SEEING THE RESULT AFTER EVERYTHING HAD COME TOGETHER WAS BEAUTIFUL.”



Discover the *secrets* of F-ONE's kite design.



F-one

SAIL ENGINEERING



“ I WAS FEELING GREAT, HAD FUN AND WASN'T EXPERIENCING NERVES. SO, THAT WAS A HUGE AND BEAUTIFUL WIN FOR ME! ”

I've always seen myself as a humble guy and not one to brag. So, I'll keep it simple. With Skywalker, I wanted to tell the story of what I've experienced. I do what I love, and I think I do it well and with great joy! But, somehow, with these competitions, all my love and passion for kiteboarding turned into nerves, making it so hard for me that I was on the edge of giving it all up. I'm glad I didn't; I owned it.

There are still tough days. I'm still obsessed with pushing myself to be better. And, sometimes, I still feel like I let myself down. There's no other way to say it, but losing sucks. I'm not a super competitive person, so it's not like losing is the worst feeling in the world, but I like to show what I do and give it my best. And losing means I didn't do that... which, yeah... it sucks!

Now, though, I feel like I can deal with it a bit differently. For example, I didn't perform well at the recent Cold Hawaii, which I'm disappointed about. On the other hand, I was feeling great, had fun and wasn't experiencing nerves. So, that was a huge and beautiful win for me! Now, I can see that I am taking that time to focus on the positives and grow from every experience.

There's so much to enjoy about relaxing your mind in situations where you're stressed or impatient, even silly ones. I used to always hate traffic jams. To be honest, I still do. But, now I try to enjoy them, stay patient, and look for the positives, even while stuck in traffic!



I'm excited to be tackling life with this new mindset. I still have so much to learn and achieve. As we speak, I'm working on my submission video for the 2022 Red Bull King of the Air, which is approaching fast. My fingers are crossed, and I hope to be back competing against the best of the best at KOTA again.

I've always been more on the extreme side. Jumping high and far, with explosive power, a low kite, and just going wild! Every year, I hope we get the same insane conditions we had in the 2016 event. A day like this in Cape Town will set new levels for Big Air kiteboarding. The younger and highly talented youth pushing the sport's technical side will make it an exciting year!

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AND FAR, WITH
EXPLOSIVE
POWER ”**



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“ I LOVE FLYING HIGH AND FAR AND AM ALWAYS AIMING TO GO MORE RADICAL AND EXTREME THAN BEFORE. ”

To prepare, I'm doing the same thing I always do. I'm riding as well as I can, preparing everything I have control over, and focusing on having fun. I've been told, and I believe, that having fun brings out the best in me and everyone around me. I love flying high and far and am always aiming to go more radical and extreme than before. Pushing myself in extreme conditions is what I love and live for!

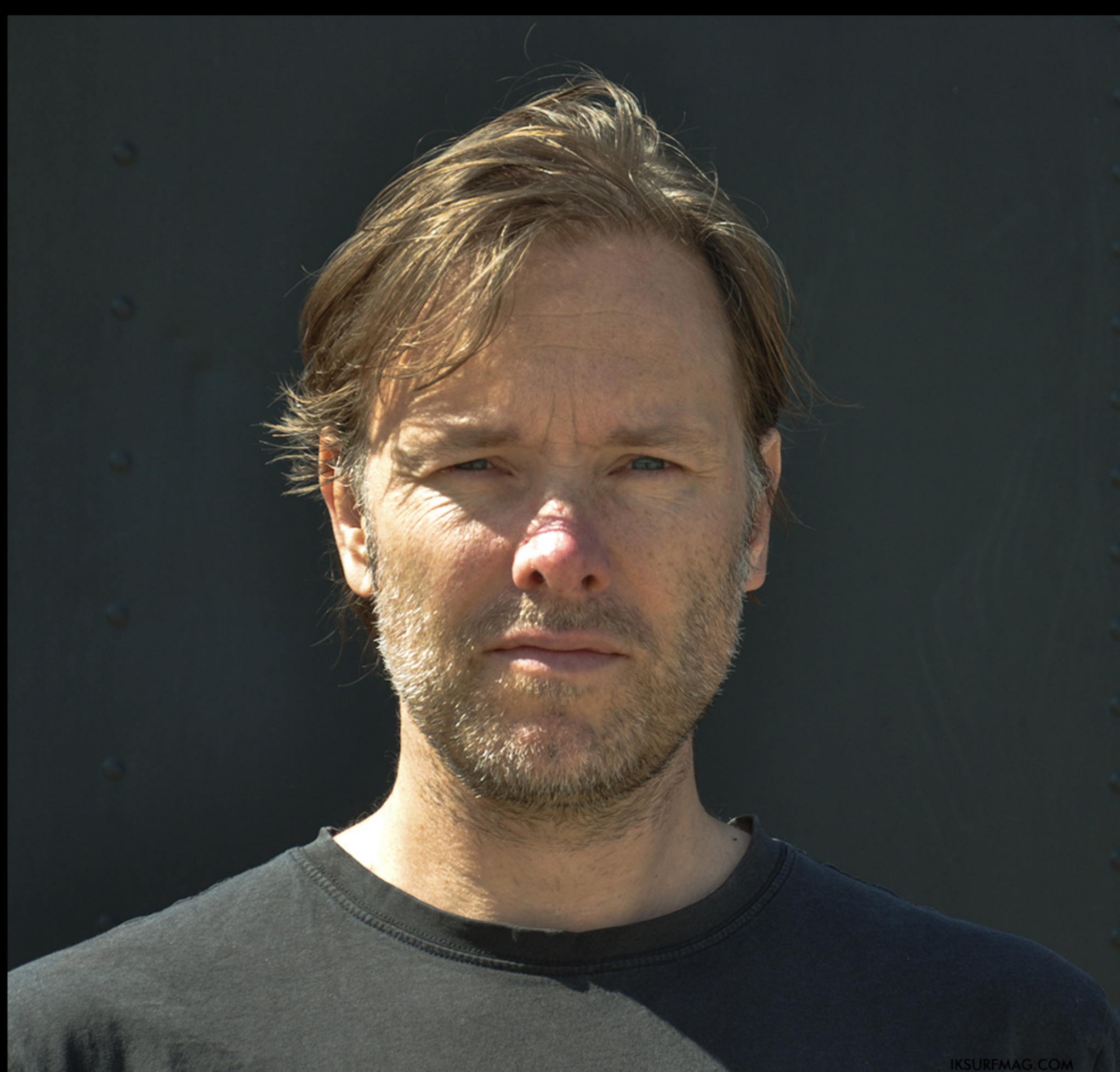
I'm no motivational speaker, and we've all seen more than enough inspirational Instagram quotes, but I can share what I learned and experienced. Insecurities are absolutely nothing to be ashamed of; everybody has their demons. We all experience our own challenges, big or small. Whether being shy, bad at math, afraid to jump from a cliff, speak in front of a big crowd, parallel park, or even walking up to someone new, we all have something. All I'd like to say is, just go for it. Don't be afraid of anything; put the work into making yourself the person you want to be. If you invest your time and energy into conquering your fears and achieving your goals, positives will flow!

TECH FOCUS

NORTH KITEBOARDING

Q&A with Pepijn Smit, Lead Kite Designer

The team at North has had some serious growth over the past few years, with an all-star team of athletes and some recent changes to the design team. With two major releases including the 2023 North Orbit and the all-new Code Zero, we got in touch with Lead Kite Designer Pepijn Smit to find out all about what's new behind the scenes at North!



Hi Pepijn, thanks for joining us today for this Interview. You joined the North Kiteboarding team in a full-time capacity a year ago - congrats! What is your role at North Kiteboarding, and how did that relationship begin?

Pat Goodman is a friend of mine. He introduced me to the team with a focus on developing a one-strut kite design while he and the rest of the team concentrated on refining our core podium-proven designs. After Pat left, I came on board as the Lead Kite Designer for North Kiteboarding and started with fine tuning the Reach for the 2022 model year and began working more on the other kites as well - that's more or less how it started.

There's been some big news coming out of North Kiteboarding in recent weeks, including the launch of the 2023 Big Air collection. We are super excited to try out the new 2023 North Orbit! What can you tell us about this kite?

For 2023, the Orbit feels even more responsive in all conditions. Without changing the DNA of the kite, we've made small structural refinements to smooth out the canopy, optimising the profile for less drag, faster forward speed and smoother turning.

What is new in the 2023 version vs the 2022 version?

Slightly refined bridling means the kite feels more stable and forgiving in overpowered, gusty conditions yet retains its ability to fly forward and catch you in kite loops.

We've reduced the kite's overall weight with lighter bladders in larger sizes and introduced a new 2-ply canopy material reinforcement on the trailing edge.

" SLIGHTLY REFINED BRIDLING MEANS THE KITE FEELS MORE STABLE AND FORGIVING IN OVERPOWERED, GUSTY CONDITIONS "





" IT IS A HIGHLY EFFICIENT KITE WITH A WIDE WIND RANGE AND IMPRESSIVE POWER DELIVERY. "

We've constructed the leading edge and struts in our lighter N-Dure Dacron to save significantly more weight without compromising strength or durability.

The Code Zero was also released very recently, and we understand that this is a project that you worked on well before our time at North!

Can you tell us the backstory of the Code Zero one-strut project?

Making special kites has always been a side development of mine. Not being able to work full time on this project meant it developed gently, becoming the most minimalistic kite I've ever made.

Tell us more about the kite! How does the Code Zero stand out in the market?

The Code Zero is the ultimate in light wind foiling. It is a highly efficient kite with a wide wind range and impressive power delivery. It's also one of the lightest single-strut kites available - the lightest made with conventional materials. Code Zero has a playful and agile feel with dynamic steering. It flies and turns quickly - with excellent drift and manoeuvrability, which makes it ideal for foiling and small surf.

Can you share some insight on what your design process is? How do you get from the idea to the final product?

The process is long, and it takes several prototypes that go back and forth to specific test-riders. I gather feedback from the riders and then make adjustments based on that to the kites. A lot of iterations go into materials and potential new technologies.

Whether it's discovering the lightest, strongest, or most innovative material or a kite design that is capable of taking your pro riders to the moon, do you feel a lot of pressure to find the "next best thing"?

As a designer, you are always pushing boundaries and trying to achieve more... It's the very act of seeking that keeps you energised and excited to create.

" IT'S ABOUT TAKING AWAY ANYTHING THAT ISN'T ESSENTIAL, ENGINEERED, REFINED AND INTUITIVE. "

RIDER FABIAN MUHMENTAHLER
PHOTO MILES TAYLOR



The goal when designing is to craft the most efficient and accessible kite – to simplify rather than complicate things. Our North Design philosophy isn't about having all the bells and whistles; it's about taking away anything that isn't essential, engineered, refined and intuitive.

We just got back from AWSI, where we saw the new North Mode wing featuring a proprietary material called N-Weave. What can you share about this new material? Any plans to include it in the kite lineup?

North developed N-Weave, a new low-elongation, high tensile strength woven fibre, to help reduce geometric compromise in inflated structures. N-Weave creates a stiffer, lighter rig that holds its shape when under load and has a highly efficient power delivery. N-Weave has 3.5x the tear strength of DLE160. The resulting stiffness helps to reduce structural deflection and transfer wind more directly.

It's also lighter than Dacron. The UHMWPE fibre used in N-Weave is 11x lighter than a polyester fibre of the same breaking strength.

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“ THE POSSIBILITIES WITH SUCH MATERIAL ON KITES ARE YET TO BE SEEN. WATCH THIS SPACE! ”



The N-Weave material is 40% lighter than a traditional leading edge Dacron (175gsm).

UPE is known for its durability and toughness. N-Weave also has a very high cut and abrasion resistance, resistance to water, moisture, chemicals, UV and microorganisms. The possibilities with such material on kites are yet to be seen. Watch this space! Our development of new materials is ongoing.

Let's go back a few years! You've had a passion for kite design since you were ten years old, starting with a simple single-line kite. Do you remember your first design success as a child? Can you tell us about it?

That's a while back! From what I remember, it was made from paper and bamboo rods. It flew with the lightest of breezes, and I had to trim it with fishing line lead to prevent it from leaning to one side - showing how important it is to make things symmetrical.

Did that early passion for kite design help guide your education and career? How so?

There's no education for becoming a Kite Designer except to question everything you see and do. That was also one of the strongest elements in study I did, and this approach is what brought me to where I am now.

You've had experiences with all kinds of kites, but when was your first experience with kitesurfing? Did your previous experience with stunt and power kites make your learning journey in kitesurfing a little bit easier?

My first experience was not really what I expected from it; it was a way too big foil kite on handles with no de-power, so yes, the previous power kite experience was a great help for sure in this,



as you're used to how to deal with kites in that situation. Nowadays, the kites are way more refined and can be trimmed down for less power.

As a Dutch local, you've got access to some pretty wild North Sea conditions. Do you enjoy kiting at home? What is your favourite spot in the Netherlands?

My favourite spot; is our 'secret' home spot! In the Netherlands, we have such a wide variety of wind and the North Sea - one of the best seas (not to say 'the' best sea). You get every possible condition you can ever think of. The wind is predominantly west, so ideal for the Dutch coast.

Another project that you've played a role in is Airborne Wind Energy Systems (AWES), doing some work on the Kitepower project. Tell us about it!

At Kitepower, they envision a world where kites are used to power systems that deliver clean, affordable, sustainable energy. This, all with up to 90% less materials used than a conventional wind turbine. For Kitepower, I designed a 60m² kite with enough power (and de-power) to generate enough electricity to power 150 houses.

Incredible accomplishment! Do you think that kites can provide real solutions for energy problems? Is this something that we might see some more progress and growth on in the coming years?

The product is not there yet, but as it evolves, it should get its own place and contribute to the energy-providing sector.

What are you most excited about for the year ahead with North Kiteboarding?

Everything; possibilities are endless, and we have plenty of ideas to make the products even better. The development never stops.

RIDER FABIAN MUHMENTAHLER
PHOTO MILES TAYLOR



" N-WEAVE CREATES A STIFFER, LIGHTER RIG THAT HOLDS ITS SHAPE WHEN UNDER LOAD AND HAS A HIGHLY EFFICIENT POWER DELIVERY "

WORDS CRYSTAL VENESS
PHOTOS LACI KOBULSKY

TECH FOCUS

CRAZYFLY SAVVY BAR

Q&A with Juraj Bukovcak

It's that time of year when new products are dropping left, right and centre! One product that has caught our eye is the all-new Savvy Bar, new to the CrazyFly lineup with some features that make it unique in the industry. We asked Juraj Bukovcak what makes this product stand out!





“ NEARLY EVERYTHING ON THE SAVVY BAR CAN BE EASILY REPLACED IN A FEW MINUTES IF IT GETS DAMAGED OR WORN OUT. ”

Juraj, thanks for joining us! Can you give us a brief introduction to the new bar? Where does it fit into the CrazyFly lineup?

It's always an exciting time of year when we release new products! As you pointed out, our most exciting product release this year is the new Savvy bar. With the Savvy bar, we had clear design goals: Safety, ease of use, simplicity, functionality, durability, and renewability. And we listened to our customers who were asking for automatic front line untwist, bar width adjustment, click-in safety and two chicken loop options. These features were all incorporated into the new bar.

The new Savvy is a 4-line system without any 5th safety line, so one less line to worry about! No bungees on any lines make the Savvy lines more durable and eliminate potential safety hazards. Safety was a top priority, so we've put the Y front-line split six metres above the bar, the correct length needed for a 100% full flag out of all kite sizes. The centre of the bar allows for more angle resulting in a more pivotal turning of the kite.

The Savvy bar comes in two versions, regular and XT. The regular Savvy has 24m lines, and the Savvy XT has 18m lines plus 4m and 2m extensions, so you can have 18, 20, 22 or 24m lines. Even though we have chosen the most durable materials, eventually, things will wear out on the bar—especially the moving parts and parts that experience friction. With that in mind, we designed the Savvy bar to be easily renewable. Nearly everything on the Savvy bar can be easily replaced in a few minutes if it gets damaged or worn out.



"RELOADING THE QUICK RELEASE HAS NEVER BEEN EASIER; JUST CLICK IT BACK IN. IT IS THAT SIMPLE."

Unfortunately, the Savvy bar is not fully backwards compatible with older CrazyFly kites because of the higher Y front-line split. On 2022 and older CrazyFly kites, we only suggest using the Savvy bar on sizes up to 12m. However, the Savvy bar is fully compatible with all kites of all brands that have a bridle with pulleys or sliders. It is also compatible with kites of all brands with a fixed bridle designed for bars with the Y split between three to nine meters from the bar.

The delta-shaped grip is something we haven't seen! How does this shape impact the kiting experience for the user?

Yes, the delta grip is a unique feature for control bars, but you have probably experienced this

elsewhere without even knowing about it, for example, on a car's steering wheel. The delta shape of the bar fits naturally into human hands and is comfortable to hold. It increases grip and reduces hand fatigue as hands rest on the bar in a natural position.

The difference is mostly felt during long sessions and downwinders. The increased grip also comes in handy during handle passes and kiteloops. During the development of the Savvy bar, we tested various grip shapes and thicknesses in warm and cold conditions with gloves on. The Delta shape and the diameter we chose for the Savvy bar were the best combinations for all conditions.

As the extremity of this sport increases, the safety

considerations do as well. Tell us a bit about your new quick-release!

Yes, the trend is going into more extremity, so safety was a top priority when designing the new Savvy bar. The SCR push-away quick release is the most crucial function on the bar, as it guarantees safety for the user. The bright red quick-release part is always visible and has an ergonomic grip shape that is easy to trigger in all conditions and emergency situations. Reloading the quick release has never been easier; just click it back in. It is that simple.

The Savvy bar has a single front-line flag out, and once the safety is triggered, the bar travels six meters from the rider. The safety line travels on its own only

through about eleven centimetres of the swivel and quick release, which minimises the possibility of getting stuck. The safety line is never twisted due to the automatic front line untwist function and slides through first with the PU tube, which tends to be free of debris to ensure clutter-free sliding through the quick release. We also avoided knots or any other connection on the safety line until the point where the bar stops after the safety is triggered. The safety line is bungee free because the bungee may bulk up over time and cause the safety line to get stuck. So, our choice was to eliminate the bungee.

We can not stress this point enough. The bar is an essential part of the gear when it comes to safety, and we see it so often that riders do not pay enough attention to the state of their bar and put themselves at risk. The bar has many moving parts, bungees in the quick release, friction on the centre lines and a ceramic bearing in the swivel. All these parts need to be checked often and maintained when needed. On the Savvy bar, such maintenance literally takes minutes.

Another feature of the new Savvy bar is the Italian leather grip. What made the designer choose this material? Does a premium material like this impact the cost?

The Italian leather grip is a proven material we kept from the previous Sick bar. It was a clear choice for our designers mainly because the leather grip is better than any other material in three key aspects you look for in a bar grip: non-slippery dry or wet surface, comfort, and durability. The leather grip is less slippery, more durable, and more comfortable to hold than any other material we have tried. We used it on the previous bar since 2015, and even today, we see bars from 2015 with a fully intact grip.



“ IT WAS A CLEAR CHOICE FOR OUR DESIGNERS MAINLY BECAUSE THE LEATHER GRIP IS BETTER THAN ANY OTHER MATERIAL ”



" THROUGH OUR THIRTEEN YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN MANUFACTURING BARS, WE ALSO CONCLUDE THAT LIROS LINE COATING IS THE MOST DURABLE ONE. "

When the grip gets wet, it soaks up a bit and gets even softer, grippier and more comfortable to hold, unlike other grips that tend to get more slippery when wet. Of course, such premium materials negatively impact the cost, but the user benefits ultimately outweigh the cost disadvantage. Our philosophy has always been to bring out the best possible products from the highest quality materials. To offset the higher material costs, we designed the new Savvy bar to be produced with more automation and less handwork and labour overall. By having our own factory, we are lucky and proud to be able to set up new production processes and technologies in a way that can bring premium materials in and offset production costs by

optimising the manufacturing process.

There seems to be a split in the industry about covered or uncovered power lines. The Savvy bar has heavy-duty PU tubes to protect the power lines. What does this offer the user?

The covered power lines last much longer than uncovered power lines because there is constant friction between these lines and the centre of the bar when riding. The friction becomes even more intense when you add sand into the equation. With PU-covered lines, sand tends to get washed off when the bar gets wet. We suggest dipping and rinsing your bar if it is sandy before you start the session.

On the other hand, sand gets stuck into the weave of uncovered lines causing the lines and the centre of the bar to wear out much faster. Another important aspect in the centre of the bar for the user is how the bar slides when sheeting in and out. Based on our testing and experience, we believe the sliding ability, feeling and kite control are much more precise and smoother with PU-covered lines.

Our designers have chosen a high-tech polymer called Delrin in the centre of the bar to minimise friction and create smooth sheeting. Even during extreme kiteloops and bar angles, the Savvy bar does not stick and sheets in and out very easily. I must add to this point, please always visually check the state of your power lines and bar centre inserts. If you see wear on the PU tubes to the extent that the line inside is getting exposed, make sure you replace these lines. Replacement of the lines or centre inserts takes only a couple of minutes on the Savvy bar.

You've chosen low stretch Liros lines for this bar. What made these lines stand out for you?

Liros is a proven kite line supplier, as we have been working with them since 2011. Over the years, their lines have gone through many improvements. We have been working with Liros closely and pushing their limits to have lines with minimal stretch, smaller diameter, but at the same time, higher breaking strength. Current Liros lines used on the Savvy bar stand out because they have the best result by far in all three key parameters: low stretch, small diameter, and higher strength.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

WORDS CRYSTAL VENESS

TECH FOCUS

ELEVEIGHT DYNEA TEX

Q&A with Robert Bratz

The recent release of the new Eleveight RS+ marked the announcement of a new material, Dynea Tex. We spoke to Robert Bratz to learn more about Eleveight's approach to materials innovation!





" WITH THIS MIX, WE CAN OFFER THE OPTIMUM BALANCE BETWEEN RESPONSIVENESS AND LONG-TERM PERFORMANCE."

Robert, tell us about the Dynea Tex material used on the new Eleveight RS+! Is this material exclusive to Eleveight? What are the key characteristics of this material?

Yes, Dynea Tex is an exclusive development for Eleveight, and we work in close conjunction with our supplier to reach the best performance outcome.

Dynea Tex is a special woven material that uses Dyneema fibres as a core component. As a result, the material is lighter and stronger than normal inflatable materials, but more importantly, it has increased flying performance. For example, our RS+ build with

Dynea Tex is lighter in weight, more dynamic and extremely responsive.

What was the process of discovering and testing this material? How does one come up with the idea of using the same fibres used in Dyneema lines in a woven fabric?

At Eleveight, we have a development process that's very driven by performance and technology. We are constantly testing new materials, and in the last few years, one of our main focuses has been the development of a new material for the inflatable structure. Our driving force behind the development is

kite designer and founder Peter Stiewe. He has extensive knowledge of different materials and has used similar materials already in past developments.

Which areas of the kite are using Dynea Tex?

Throughout the development process, we tried different specifications, such as the whole inflatable structure with Dynea Tex or only some parts on the leading edge. In the end, we used a mix of materials with Dynea Tex on the leading edge and our XT Light material for the struts. With this mix, we can offer the optimum balance between responsiveness and long-term performance.

What are the notable performance improvements over standard Dacron?

I think the hot topic is weight reduction. New materials are lighter and will decrease the overall weight of kites. This parameter greatly impacts low wind conditions and is easily noticeable compared to standard Dacron. But we also talk too much about weight; more important is the performance impact on the overall stability. For Example, the RS+ with Dynea Tex is stiffer and has less deformation and faster rebound, and as a result, it's more responsive. For the rider, the kite feels more dynamic; it reacts quicker and can handle higher winds better.

What does 50% less elongation mean and 80% better recovery of material mean?

All woven materials have a certain level of stretch which will increase over time. Elongation, in other words, simply means the stretch of the material. To decrease this elongation will have a significant impact on performance and long-term durability.


Better recovery means better form stability under load. The end user will feel the performance increase, particularly in higher winds. The kite can cover gusts much better, is more reactive and offers more control in these conditions. With a higher structural stiffness of the inflatable structure, we have less deformation of the profile and more efficiency in power development.

Being 32 times stronger and still 30% lighter than more traditional materials sounds like a major improvement. Why aren't all kites using these newly engineered materials?

First of all, traditional materials will remain in the industry. The vast majority of kite models still offer the best performance-to-value ratio for the customer.



“ FOR THE RIDER, THE KITE FEELS MORE DYNAMIC; IT REACTS QUICKER AND CAN HANDLE HIGHER WINDS BETTER. ”



" A HIGH-END PRODUCT ALSO HAS A HIGHER PRICE: WE TRY TO GIVE THE CUSTOMER A CHOICE. "

New materials have a great impact on the high-performance sector but also have an increase in price. Not every customer wants, or more importantly, needs, a state-of-the-art product.

What are the downsides of a specially engineered fabric like this? How much does it increase the cost of the kite if comparing the RS+ to the RS?

New materials like our Dynea Tex are much more sophisticated in the production process and, therefore, more expensive. We at Eleveight try to keep this price level as reasonable as possible. But a high-end product also has a higher price: we try to give the customer a choice.

With our Plus line, you can purchase state-of-the-art gear, but you also have the option to choose the normal range, which already performs fantastically. The price difference between the RS and RS+ is between 400 and 450 euros. For example, a 12m RS retails for 1499 euros. The RS+ model with Dynea Tex is priced at 1929 euros.

Which kites should look at the RS+ over the RS? Where does this kite shine over the base RS?

The RS+ is a bit like a top-performance racing car; it is light, direct and powerful. Combining the core DNA of the RS with our innovative Dynea Tex material, the RS+ offers a new premium, high-performance freeride experience.

WORDS CRYSTAL VENESS

PHOTO ANDRE MAGARAO

TECH FOCUS

SLINGSHOT CODE V1

Q&A with Adi Conrad

The new Slingshot CODE V1 just launched, and it already seems to be making a strong impression! We got in touch with designer Adi Conrad to find out more about this versatile new kite!



Hey Adi, thanks for taking the time to tell us more about the new CODE V1. First, what was the intended purpose of this kite?

Hi! The CODE was designed as an all-around freeride kite, easy to learn on with the capability of taking you to a very high skill ceiling.

Slingshot has a wide selection of kites to suit every kiter. Is the CODE V1 replacing a previous model, or is it aimed at a particular segment of the market?

I always want riders to demo gear—we can talk about kites for hours, but when you put a kite in the sky, you will know if it's right for you. I wouldn't say the CODE is replacing any kite in the range as it's a beast of its own, but if you were to segment it into the market, it would be an all-rounder.

Can you tell us a bit about the key features that this kite offers the end user?

A key feature of the CODE is predictability. We wanted to give riders full control and smooth lift—desirable for beginners and for someone on the top end like Jeremy Burlando, who is doing double mega loops in 50-plus knots.

What was your approach when it came to material choice or construction methods? Is it challenging to keep up with rapid changes within the industry?

Although I'm very excited about these advancements in materials, proper testing takes time. Some issues only show up after months and months of testing in heavy conditions. Other brands that were in a rush to use the lightest possible materials are now, unfortunately, having to deal with this due lack of comprehensive testing. No kiter or kite company wants to deal with material defects and recalls—that's bad for everyone. Safety and quality are always my priority in designing a kite.



" ALTHOUGH I'M VERY EXCITED ABOUT THESE ADVANCEMENTS IN MATERIALS, PROPER TESTING TAKES TIME. "

" I WAS INSTANTLY HOOKED AND HAVE FOCUSED EVERYTHING IN MY LIFE ON KITEBOARDING SINCE THAT TIME. "

RIDER JEREMY BURLANDO
PHOTO RAFA SOULART



What is your background, and what led you to a career in the kiteboarding industry?

I was a junior pro downhill ski racer during my teens and took up CAD very early on because of my father. I was introduced to kiteboarding back in 2004 while working in Puerto Rico as a 3D contractor. I was instantly hooked and have focused everything in my life on kiteboarding since that time.

How long have you been working with the Slingshot team on kite design? What other models have you had input into?

I've been working with Slingshot for two years. It's been amazing! The MACHINE and the CODE are the two kite designs I've worked on.

Is there added pressure to design a brand-new model? What is the process and workflow like?

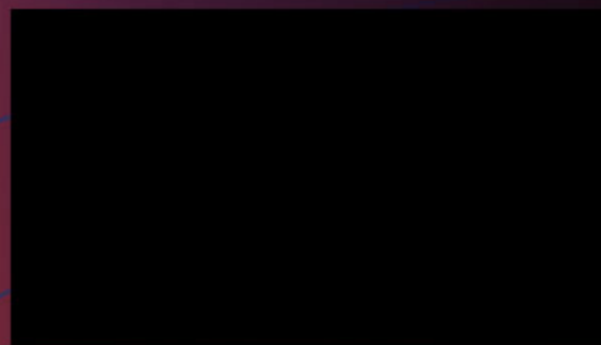
The workflow is Slingshot creating the initial product brief, then we go through several prototype designs and countless sessions of real-world testing until R&D agrees on the final product.

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" YOU MUST TEST IF THE KITE IS PERFORMING ITS ROLE IN ALL TYPES OF WIND CONDITIONS. "

New models always come with additional complexities, but we have data from previous designs to work from. The big challenge is getting all the desired kite traits to work harmoniously together.

How much time do you have from the first concept until a ready-to-release kite?

The MACHINE and the CODE were designed extremely quickly compared to my previous development times. Rapid development using a large R&D staff is one of the big advantages companies like Slingshot have.

When you create a kite designed for a specific

purpose, how do you approach the testing to ensure you achieve that goal?

Getting the kite in all types of wind conditions is the biggest factor. You must test if the kite is performing its role in all types of wind conditions.

You're based in Vietnam... Do you do most of your testing close to home? What are the kiting conditions like there?

Yes, I have a beachfront property that we launch from directly. Vietnam is a great place to develop kites; you get such diverse winds, from 50 knots with four-meter

waves to steady afternoon sea breeze. It's perfect for watersports—the whole country is coastline!

I understand that you worked with Jeremy Burlando quite a bit in the testing phase for the CODE V1. Was he able to provide some valuable insights?

I worked with Jeremy a lot on the CODE and received insight on how the kite reacts to high-level tricks and conditions. He is an extremely talented rider that has a very high EQ and IQ for his age. It is a rare combination to find—someone who can ride at that skill level and give such articulate feedback.

As a kite designed to be an all-around performer, were you surprised by the CODE's big air capabilities? Notably, Jeremy Burlando's performance on it, and his impressive double loops!

Those doubles were insane... any type of error due to the rider, condition, or equipment is catastrophic at that level. A lot of people forget that wind speed and kite size are the two largest defining factors in lift. What you really want in those kinds of conditions are stability and control, two key features of the CODE.

What is the early feedback you have received from the kiting public?

Everyone is super stoked! The feedback from the launch has been great, from team riders to the distributors to the shop and school owners. This kite and the new team at Slingshot have really helped up the level. It's exciting to be a part of it all!

Thanks so much for the time, Adi!

Thank you!

INSIGHT

HANNAH WHITELEY

Hannah Whiteley has been a kiteboarding icon for as long as we can remember and is one of the most talented female riders in the world with an innovative style and a mile-long list of titles and awards! In this feature, Jen Tyler takes Hannah on a journey down memory lane, finds out about her recent move to Cabrinha, talks about kiting in high heels, and gets the inside scoop on her Scotland adventure. Find out more in this exclusive interview with Hannah Whiteley!





" I STARTED TAKING KITEBOARDING LESSONS AND IMMEDIATELY FELL IN LOVE WITH THE SPORT."

Hannah, we've wanted to feature you in Insight for ages, and this interview couldn't have been more time-appropriate with your exciting move to Cabrinha! We've got loads to ask you, but for starters, can you give us an intro to how you first got into kiteboarding?

Thanks, guys! It's always a pleasure to be featured in IKSURFMAG!

My dad, Peter Whiteley, introduced me to kitesurfing. He came from a sailing and windsurfing background, and in 1998, he was the first guy in the North West of England to start kitesurfing.

Well... let's just say "health and safety" is not my father's strongest point! Little Hannah got absolutely launched down the beach - and head first into a rock! After a few more attempts at kitesurfing, I could ride along but was not in total control. I got dragged down the beach again, smashing straight into wooden breakwaters on the beach (fences) with my kite doing death loops, continuing to drag me. I remember being in a calm state of mind as I quickly approached the Fleetwood pier without a worry in the world. It did not cross my mind for a second to pull my kite safety! The next thing I knew, a random guy jumped on top of me and gained control of the kite just before we hit the pier! My introduction to kitesurfing was a pretty bumpy ride; it put me off kitesurfing entirely for five years.

Finally, at 15, I decided to give kitesurfing another shot. I quickly realised how special the sport was and got completely hooked.

Having a father like Pete, who has won the senior men's British Freestyle Championship five times,



must have been a blessing! Were your parents supportive of your desire to pursue kiteboarding as a career?

Funny enough, dad never believed I could make kitesurfing a career. Instead, he encouraged me to push kitesurfing as a passion, always encouraging me to learn new tricks and maximise every windy day. He made it clear from the beginning that he would not financially support my kitesurfing; I needed a real job and to think about my future. Kitesurfing was my hobby and a huge passion I loved sharing with my Dad. Being a professional kitesurfer never really crossed my mind. I was working and doing an apprenticeship, but I took every opportunity to go kite.



" BEING A PROFESSIONAL KITESURFER NEVER REALLY CROSSED MY MIND. "



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I started kitesurfing professionally in 2007, and it looked like I could make a career out of my passion. I still pinch myself. I am grateful for my sponsors, Cabrinha & Chiemsee, and all the brands I collaborate with. My parents have given me the best advice and mental support, and I will always be grateful for the support and encouragement from my family.

The UK isn't exactly a freestyle hotspot and can have some pretty gnarly conditions, especially in winter! So how did you find training in the UK when you first started kiteboarding, and how did the conditions affect your riding style?

Your surroundings are definitely what shape you as a rider. The UK's diverse conditions have helped me adapt to challenging competition conditions. I believe it's one of the reasons I'm more of an "all-round" rider, into freestyle, big air, and foiling. If you want to maximise your sessions in the UK, you've got to do it all!

Where is your favourite kiteboarding location around the UK, and what keeps you coming back to that spot?

My home spot, Lytham St Annes, will always be a special place to me. We get some lovely flat water lagoons depending on the tide state. When the Fleetwood channel is working, that's a great flat water spot too. Rhosneigr in North Wales is great for waves and has a flat water section.

What drew you back to the UK after spending so much time travelling to the world's best kitesurfing locations?

I have always had my base in the UK. I have an amazing family in the UK and often miss them.



" I BELIEVE IT'S ONE OF THE REASONS I'M MORE OF AN "ALL-ROUND" RIDER, INTO FREESTYLE, BIG AIR, AND FOILING. "



" I AM HERE FOR THE LOVE OF THE SPORT
AND TO GIVE BACK WHAT I LOVE. "

I spend a lot of time travelling around the world, and I always look forward to returning to the UK to catch up with my family and friends. Summertime in the UK is great; wintertime, on the other hand, is a bit more of a challenge!

What has been your favourite kiteboarding shot (of you) ever taken?

There are many shots I have loved, and I've worked with fantastic photographers over the years; I love working with different creatives. However, I think the lockdown studio shoot will always be my favourite shot. Why? Because of the story and what went into making

the shots. I believe that's what makes something special. I was struggling mentally at the time. It's the process and journey you make which makes something so rewarding.

The lockdown shoot featured on our cover in Issue 87, and we loved it! But, that epic studio shot resulted in a few interesting comments! How do you deal with negative feedback?

Honestly, people will always talk about whatever you do. If you do what you believe is right, that's all that matters. It's so easy to let one negative comment rule over 100 positive comments. It's human nature to

create problems where there isn't one. I am here for the love of the sport and to give back what I love. I simply don't have time to entertain negativity!

One of your most famous videos was your high heels on a kiteboard shoot, sitting at over 100,000 views on YouTube! Can you tell us more about what inspired that shoot and how it turned out?

I can count on one hand the times I have worn high heels! So I thought it would be fun and different to try kiting in heels and bring a feminine touch to a male-dominated sport. It was definitely a laugh; I was way better kiting in the heels than walking down the stairs in them!



There's no question that you are a badass, and your skills on the water prove it! So how do you balance being a tough-as-nails extreme athlete on the water with being a glamorous risk-taker and trend-setter off the water?

A lot of practice and failure makes something look effortless or badass. If kitesurfing in a bikini is glamorous, I guess I'm kiting somewhere hot and probably trying to get a little tanned. Otherwise, I'm rocking it in my wetsuit in the very glamorous Blackpool.

" A LOT OF PRACTICE AND FAILURE MAKES SOMETHING LOOK EFFORTLESS OR BADASS. "



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Tell us about your Scotland adventure! What islands did you visit, and what route did you take? It looked magical!

It was a fantastic road trip to Scotland. Living off the grid is undoubtedly magical in itself, plus the Scottish landscape is stunning with white sandy beaches, turquoise water and humbling hills. We did a follow-the-wind tour, which took us to the North West of Scotland. Kiting with Castle Stalker was my favourite session on the mainland. Then, we headed to the Isle of Tiree in the Hebrides. The island is totally orientated around water sports; everyone is a kitesurfer, windsurfer or surfer. It was a cool experience on Tiree. Fun fact: Tiree is the windiest and sunniest place in the UK!

Congratulations on your recent move to Cabrinha; that's super exciting! How do you like your new quiver, and what's your go-to set-up?

Thank you, I am honestly surprised how well I have bonded with the Cabrinha crew and gear already. Everything feels so at ease and natural. I have enjoyed getting to know the fantastic staff at Cabrinha and teammates Keahi De Aboitiz and Deury Corniel on my recent trips to Germany and the UK.

The FX2 is a great kite for freestyle and big air, and I have been having a lot of fun on the water lately. I'm impressed by the quality of the Cabrinha equipment; it makes me feel confident on the water.

What does the statement 'Live Free Ride Free' mean to you?

A huge sense of freedom that kitesurfing brings. There's something special about just being you with your kite in the middle of the ocean.



" THE ISLAND IS TOTALLY ORIENTATED AROUND WATER SPORTS; EVERYONE IS A KITESURFER, WINDSURFER OR SURFER. "



" THERE'S SOMETHING SPECIAL ABOUT JUST BEING YOU WITH YOUR KITE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE OCEAN. "

How was the UK Cabrinha Demo Tour?

I enjoyed joining the demo tour in the UK. It was lovely to meet new people and share the Cabrinha stoke, and we scored some great sessions in Hayling island and Cornwall!

What was the best piece of advice you have ever received?

"Nothing ventured, nothing gained."

Wind is on! Who is the first person you text for a session?

My Dad, Peter Whiteley!

What exciting plans do you have lined up over the next few months?

I have just arrived in Brazil with a cool road trip planned. I'm excited to get shooting some fun content. Then, I have a few more shoots scheduled before the end of the year in Cape Town and Mauritius. I'm looking forward to getting creative and doing my thing.

Thanks, Hannah! We're looking forward to seeing where this new chapter takes you!

Thank you for having me on this feature. I'll see you on the water, Jen!



Groundbreaking winter wetsuit technology begs to be paired with extreme conditions, and that's what the Prolimit team was in search of on their latest Prolimit Mission. Join Kim Douma as she meets up with Ben Beholz and the crew in snowy Switzerland!

PROLIMIT MISSIONS:

WORDS KIM DOUMA RIDER BEN BEHOLZ PHOTO FABIAN GATTLEN

WINTER EDITION



After last winter's Cape Town adventure with our Prolimit team, we decided to visit our riders who stay close to home and brave the cold every winter. One spot had climbed to the top of our "must-visit" list: Lake Silvaplana, Switzerland. Our team rider, Ben Beholz, calls this place his home spot in the winter, and he's filmed some epic videos and shot stunning photos in this spot, the destination for this Prolimit mission.

An adventure of this nature requires truly adventurous people, so we called on German freestyle kiter Ben Beholz and windsurf legend Julian Wiemar to join our crew. We were full of excitement and curiosity to discover this spot and experience something completely different from the norm.

Ben assured us that this was the place to be in April despite the chilly temperatures. Of course, we had seen the spot featured on Ben's vlogs before, but we decided to do a bit of research and look it up on Google, and we couldn't believe our eyes. Lake Silvaplana and its surroundings have everything an adventure enthusiast could hope for; you can kite, ski, snowboard, and camp, all in one small area!

Linda van Lakwijk, and I, Kim Douma, loaded the van with Prolimit's new winter collection, switched on the motor (and the heater!) and began the long drive to Switzerland. It was a 12-hour journey, and we finally arrived after what seemed like an endless road. However, we would need to be a bit more patient, as it was already well past dark, and we couldn't enjoy the view quite yet!

While it was a cold night, we received a warm welcome, with Ben and Julian greeting us with a cold beer. We were all staying together as a group in one house.



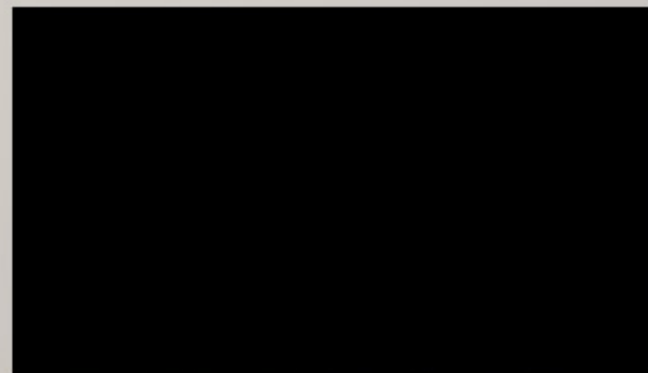
**" WE WERE FULL OF EXCITEMENT AND
CURIOSITY TO DISCOVER THIS SPOT AND
EXPERIENCE SOMETHING COMPLETELY
DIFFERENT FROM THE NORM. "**



Of course, van life master, Ben Beholz, parked next to the house in his RV, where he, his girlfriend Sarah, and their dog Lincy would sleep.

We drove our vans to the spot at 7 am the following morning, and I can tell you it was worth the wait; the view was far beyond our expectations. The water was flat like a mirror, and the sun was shining on the mountains; it was breathtaking. The team was complete with Ben, Sarah, Julian, photographer Fabian Gattlen, and videographer Floris Tils. The one thing missing, however, was the wind! Luckily, Prolimit has a wide range of waterwear for a variety of sports, so we started the day with a SUP session in the Prolimit dry suits.

"IT WAS WORTH THE WAIT: THE VIEW WAS FAR BEYOND OUR EXPECTATIONS."



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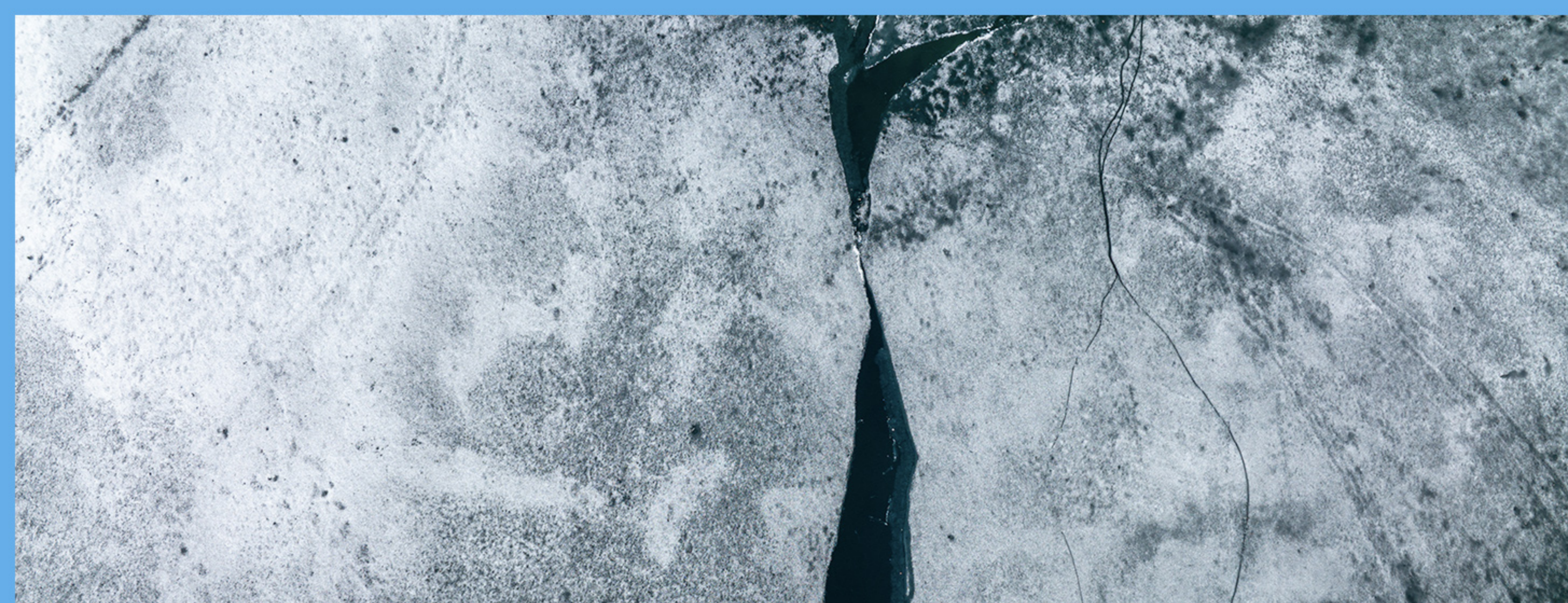
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“ WHEN WE FIRST ARRIVED AT THE LAKE, THERE WAS ONLY A CRACK IN THE ICE, BARELY WIDE ENOUGH TO PASS THROUGH WITH A TWIN TIP.”

At 1815 metres above sea level on a frozen lake, it's hard to imagine that a thermal wind is even possible. Yet, it is. As long as the land masses are no longer covered by snow and can catch some sun, the wind will kick in at 12 o'clock every day. Lucky for us, it did, and it was a very special feeling. At 10:30, we were still enjoying the nice weather in

our Prolimit sweaters, but after 12 o'clock, with the wind blowing, it felt like -20°C . We could even see people skiing from where we stood at the kite spot. How crazy is that?!

Once the wind had filled in, Ben, Sarah, and Julian changed into our new winter collection wetsuits and went out for a session. All of our winter wetsuits are made for these extreme conditions. The Vapor, Mercury and Oxygen wetsuits feature Thermal Rebound technology, an extra layer between the neoprene and Zodiac. Thermal Rebound technology goes back to the mid-1970s.


At the time, NASA developed thermal blankets for their missions into space. The same principle has been adopted at several sports events where athletes are wrapped in these shiny blankets to help regulate their body temperature, which can drop to dangerous levels when they stop moving. We use this technology in our wetsuits for protection against the cold.

When we first arrived at the lake, there was only a crack in the ice, barely wide enough to pass through with a twin tip. After a week at Lake Silvaplana, almost all of the ice was gone. We were super lucky with the timing of the trip, and it was incredible to watch the lake change from winter to spring.



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If you would like to see this phenomenon,
I highly recommend planning a visit in April.
You can check the webcam of Lake Silvaplana to
see if the crack in the ice has already formed.

Kitesurfing with snow and ice around you must
give you an extra dose of adrenaline. Seeing
Ben's happy face, I'm sure he wholeheartedly
agrees! It was amazing to see him enjoying the
frosty conditions. We didn't try it ourselves, but
we'll definitely go out next time! It's really cool
that Ben is pushing the limit for himself but also
for Prolimit. We are driven to innovate so that
riders like Ben can enjoy the extremes. It was so
nice to see his stoke in real life!

**" KITESURFING
WITH SNOW
AND ICE
AROUND YOU
MUST GIVE YOU
AN EXTRA DOSE
OF ADRENALINE."**

" AFTER THE LONG AND COLD DAYS OF SHOOTING, MOST OF THE TIME, IT WAS SNOWING BY NIGHTFALL. "



One morning, we did a 7 am ice bath in the mountains with some of the team. In the beginning, we could hardly breathe while we were in the water. Now, more so than before, I understand the importance of a good wetsuit if you want to enjoy a longer session in cold water. It was a good thing we brought all of the winter wetsuits with us!

After the long and cold days of shooting, most of the time, it was snowing by nightfall. So, we chilled in the house with the whole crew. It almost felt like going on a ski holiday with friends - super cosy! One night, Ben cooked rosties for everyone, which were delicious! If you're curious, you can ask Ben for the recipe. ;)

After the last session in Switzerland, we made a bonfire to end the trip properly. We learned a new game there, Ollie boellie, which is something to do with marshmallows. If you want to laugh, check out Ben's vlog, 'I Kitesurfed This Ice Crack.'

We had an amazing time at Lake Silvaplana, and we would recommend everyone to go there to see and experience this breathtaking natural environment for themselves. Just make sure you prepare yourself well! You will need a thick wetsuit, cap or hood, gloves and boots to conquer the cold.

That place is so peaceful and quiet in the winter. It was special to see how Ben and Sarah live up there in the winter; they are so dedicated to their passion. I find it amazing that they have built their life like this, and at the end of our visit, I truly understood why Ben comes back year after year.

With that, we've added another unforgettable adventure with the Prolimit team to the memory books! We are planning some more new and exciting Prolimit missions with our team riders, and we can't wait to share them with you. Until next time!



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TECHNIQUE

WORDS & PHOTOS CHRISTIAN & KARINE



Keeping the stoke alive - that's always the intention, and this issue is no different! Nothing beats adding a move to your repertoire. It's probably the kiter's equivalent of a new haircut; although it may take a tad longer than thirty minutes in the chair, the result should keep you smiling for a lot longer, and that's before anyone else gets a chance to lay their eyes on it. Number one today is adding a rotation to your pop. We do love wine and cheese, but nothing on the water pairs up quite like Pop and Back Roll. It's a match made in heaven that's guaranteed to liven up any session. Then we move onto the One Footed Leg Over, the original LO, and a fun addition to your air show with which you can initially confuse yourself, before bamboozling your peers. Enjoy, C&K.

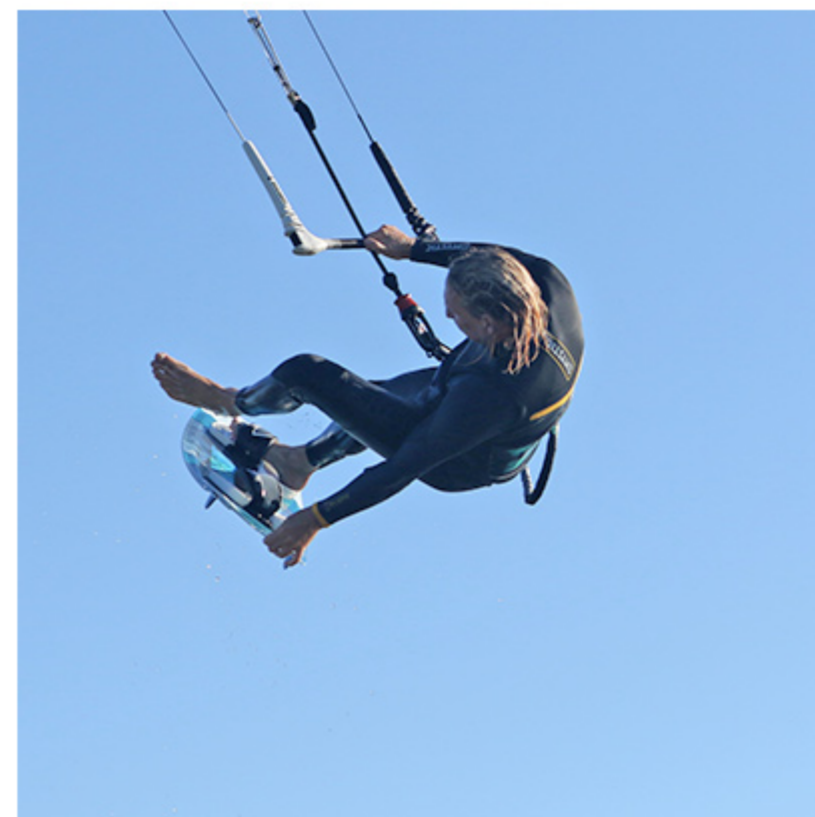
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1 / POPPED BACK ROLL



CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE

2 / ONE FOOT LEG OVER



CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE

POPPED BACK ROLL ▶

KITE – Cabrinha Switchblade 8m

BOARD – Cabrinha XO 136

Some time ago, back in IKSURFMAG Issue 84, we took you through the joys of popping and all its necessities, including a brief foray into board design. Today, we intend to marry your well-rehearsed pop to a perfect bedfellow, the back roll. We're talking full horse and carriage here! When the planets align and you hit a sweet one of these off the centre of your bat, it will feel more than incredible. As a prerequisite, you should already have popping in the bag. Now, to some, this will be your first venture into the world of back rolling. If so, it's achievable, but already having a back roll in the bag will be a massive bonus. Either way, read on to find out how you are going to turn this dream into a reality.

THE APPROACH PIC A

Your approach and set up are vital, as are the conditions. Search out some flattish water if you can, as it'll up your chances, but make sure it's deep enough for a soft bail. Just as per popping, trim your bar so that it's easily reachable when you have your bum low, get your hands centred, and approach on an edge across the wind. Move your weight and hips back to get on the curvy tail of your board and drive through your back heel so that you can feel the pressure in your leg; this is your default popping stance. Looking at Karine, you can see that she's edging, but not massively upwind. Even with her weight low, her bar is within easy reach.



Her hips are back so that she's on the curvy bit of the board. With her kite parked at 11 o'clock, she's locked and loaded.

BEAR AWAY PIC B

Bearing away and flattening your board off is probably the hardest part to get used to in popping. When going for a popped back roll, you'll need to exaggerate your bearing away, as it needs to be a fair bit more than for a straight pop. The same reasons apply. Bearing away means that you can carve up without stopping. It drops the kite deeper in the window, so you have something to pop against and something to pull you out of the move for your landing. Additionally, by bearing away, you can take off and complete most of your back roll in the air,



giving you more time and the potential for more height. If you carve most of the way around on the water, you'll just spin under your kite. To bear away, relax your back leg. With the pressure released, you'll come up off your edge and move towards the kite. Keep your weight back and upwind, so that you don't stand directly over the board or end up carving onto your toes. You can see that Karine's back knee is soft, which released her edge and allowed her to push her board off the wind. With her weight back, she's performing a little wheely, so her board is ready to carve back up, but her bum and shoulders remain upwind of the board. As you bear away towards your kite, you should feel that the kite depowers as tension is lost from the lines. If it doesn't, you've either got too much power or you haven't borne away enough.



CARVE PIC C

As we alluded to in our popping piece, carving up is turning back onto your edge using the curvy shape of your board. However, the tools will only do so much, whilst you, the craftsman, are saddled with the rest. The carve is important for two reasons; it enables you to regain tension so that you have something to pop against, and it initiates your back rotation. So, how do you carve up? In simplistic terms, you're turning the board back onto its edge whilst keeping your weight back. However, it's all in the way you get your weight onto that edge that matters. Your aim is to drop your edge deep into the water whilst banking your board over so that it's resisting again. The first part is fairly intuitive as you can turn upwind using your head,

shoulders, hips and feet. To make sure you have resistance, you also need to drop your bum whilst keeping the board between yourself and your kite. You can't sit down as this will flatten the board. You need to hinge at the hips so that your bum drops away from the board, enabling you to push against it. This is why you need your bar trimmed close enough, otherwise you'll end up with your shoulders forward, bum back, and you won't have a hope of popping. Karine is carving back up, her weight is back, her kite is still at 11 o'clock, and, although she's hidden by her rooster, you can see that her bum is way upwind of her board, and as such she can apply pressure through her back leg. One final point to add and live by: Don't pull on the bar as you carve! If you do, you won't be able to



carve upwind enough to initiate your rotation.

THE POP PIC D

This is it, the moment of truth. The pop doesn't just happen, you have to make it happen. Popping is stamping, explosively extending your back leg. The idea is not to give into six million years of evolution and bend your legs in anticipation, but rather use the bend in your legs that you have as you carve up. If you bend, you'll lose your edge and all that tension. The main impetus is coming from your back leg, but the front will automatically assist. You also need to think slightly ahead, in that you're aiming to rotate. This means that as you pop you want to continue carving, like a follow through after kicking a ball or a racket stroke. Keep carving by turning your head,



shoulders and hips to look upwind and drop your shoulders back. Once again, the tail of the board will do its job. Timing wise, you need to stomp before you slow too much. This is balanced against turning enough to get your rotation. The stamp is a full-on extension and even though your weight is back on the board, aim to kick yourself up, rather than throw yourself around. Whilst all this is going on, your challenge is to keep the kite still. As per the pop, make sure you kick before you pull on the bar. In the photo, you can see how Karine has carved well into the wind before exploding up off her back leg. Notice how everything is turning together. Her board, hips and shoulders are all aligned.

AIRTIME PIC E

A popped back roll will be over in a flash, so there

won't be much time to think. However, as each stage becomes more comfortable, you can think ahead to the next one. Up until this point, it's all been about carving and popping. If you manage to time it right, you will get around and find yourself facing the right way with a twist in your lines. Brilliant. After a few more attempts, you can concentrate on your position in the air. The first thing is to bring your knees up. If you've popped well, you'll have extended, and to make the rotation more controlled and the landing softer, you need to make yourself smaller. You can see that Karine has bent her legs and lifted her knees. Everything is still lined up.

LOOK PIC F

Once you're up and coming around, you need to



have some awareness of where you are. Once again, if you've managed to pop up and keep everything together, you won't have thrown your head into the move. However, you need it to keep your rotation going and to spot your landing. There is a beautiful moment when you hit the sweet spot in a popped back roll, after the aggression of the carve and pop, the effort of resisting and stamping, when you've lifted off and the lines momentarily stop pulling. It's an ethereal weightlessness in which you defy gravity for the briefest of time. It's at this moment that you need to get your vision focused on where you're going so that you can complete the back roll and stomp it with style. Turn your head and look over your front shoulder; you'll see where you're going and will get an idea of when you'll land.



This is also a great moment to give your kite a little dip down if it has snuck up. Karine has turned her head which brings her shoulders, hips and board around. She can see where she'll land and judge when to...

DROP YOUR UNDERCARRIAGE PIC G

After your moment of defying gravity, it does unfortunately return. As such, you need to get your board underneath you. Drop your legs and look forwards in the direction of the pull.

TOUCH DOWN PIC H

In an ideal world, your aim is to land tail first on a flat (not edging) board pointing slightly off the wind.



This is your softest option. The reality of this is connected 100% to your approach and kite position. As long as you bore away into the move, you will bear away out of the move. And if you managed not to move your kite up to 12 o'clock, the kite will keep moving forwards and help you achieve this. As Karine lands tail first and flat, she is over the board and as such she can absorb the impact. Once back in control, you can turn up back onto your edge, untwist your bar, and set up for another one! :)

TOP TIPS

For your first attempts, feel free to position your kite a tad high. If you're able to edge in, feel free to lift it a

tiny bit. This help from the kite will give you the confidence to go for the rotation. Once you've got the idea, you can lower it to 11 or 1 o'clock.

Getting into a little wheely position and feeling the board push back against your back heel is vital. Once you feel it, you know where to direct your anger when it comes to the pop part.

It's not unusual for the kite to lift a bit as you carve up into your pop and rotation. Once again, it'll give you a helping hand. However, be sure to steer the kite down as you come around and turn your head to spot your landing.



Remember to use the bend you have in your back leg. If you compress, you'll lose your edge and roll backwards with no up.

Right, have a look at the sequence for a step by step and check out the accompanying video for real time action.

COMMON PROBLEMS

You're not getting any pop. Chances are, you're flexing your back leg as you carve, flattening the board and, therefore, you have nothing to kick against. Keep your back leg stiff even whilst flexed.

Skipping out on landing or stopping abruptly. Make sure you go downwind and pop before you turn the board through the wind. Really make an effort to extend up before tucking up.

Over rotating the back loop. It's likely that you've thrown your head around, so keep it looking forward between your shoulders. If you're still over cooking it, keep the kite still as you carve and try diving the kite as you come in to land.

KEYSTONES

1. Across wind edge with little wheelie

2. Bear away whilst keeping weight back
3. Carve with bum low whilst resisting
4. Pop up and around
5. Turn head and look for landing



ONE FOOT LEG OVER ▶

KITE – Cabrinha FX2 9m

BOARD – Cabrinha XCAL Wood 138

The One Foot LO! Kiting never gets old, and one way to keep your stoke truly alive and the mojo firing is to add more tools to your box and tricks to your bag. This one is a great 'what next' if you've got your One Footers dialled and certainly adds another string to your bow and move to your show. If you're not quite sure what's going on, the idea is to take your rear foot out and then lift it up and over your rear arm that's grabbing the board, before releasing your grab, whipping your hand around your leg, and re-grabbing the board so that you can replace your foot and land smoothly! Yup, words don't quite do it justice or paint the picture! Consider it a kiting tribute to some of the most fun you can have for under £20. This is aerial Twister. Check out the pics and video and you'll soon see what's going on.

WOOD FOR THE TREES

We have no intention of teaching your grandma how to suck eggs, but when you're concentrating on something new, it's easy to ignore what you can already do. In this case, that's your jump. You want the same type of elevator jump that helped you learn the one foot. You don't need a ginormous send or massive height. A controlled, floaty one is the kind of jump which will instil you with confidence and give you more perceived time to get the job done.

Approach on a good edge and give yourself enough of a send to get up there, but nothing that'll ping you off downwind or extend you up into the stratosphere.



A

This way, your body won't get too extended, and you'll be able to grab sooner, your kite will be better positioned, not too far back, and you won't be travelling downwind waiting for impact, but rather hanging like a perfectly delivered frisbee.

As per your one foot, centre your hands on the bar so that your kite won't surprise you with any unwanted lunges. It's also a good plan to either loosen your back strap a little or wiggle your back foot out slightly before jumping so that your foot will come out and return in without too much effort. Right, let's have a look at the process...

TAKE OFF CHORES PIC A

On take-off, you've got two things to sort. Firstly, you need to get control of your kite so that you're comfortable in the air. Hopefully you haven't given it a massive wang, but even with a more prudent send,



B

your kite will keep flying back unless you level your bar to stop it. Make sure that as you kick off and pull the bar in that you level it immediately. The sooner your kite is under control, the sooner you can take your back hand off for the grab. Your second but simultaneous job is to get your board into position for the grab and LO. Lift your knees up in front of you to get the board up where it needs to be. As you'll see very soon, life will also be noticeably less difficult if you can get your bum close to the tail of the board. Try to move the board forwards by pushing your front leg away from you as you lift your knees. Here, Christian has levelled his bar so that he can release his rear hand, and he's lifting his knees whilst pushing the board forwards.

LLG PIC B

Excuse the initialism, but hopefully you can use it more swiftly than Lift, Lean and Grab.



C

The sooner that you can get yourself in position, the less rushed you'll be for the actual Leg Over. This is the continuation of what you did on your take off, the position you're aiming for. If you look at the photo, you can see that Christian is leaning back towards the tail of his board to reach his grab. Make no mistake, though, his back knee is fully up into his chest. Where you grab is up to you, whether on the heel side edge, the fin or the tail, whichever suits, or wherever your hand makes contact. :) While he reaches for the grab, Christian pushes the board forwards with his front leg. Once you have the grab, you can use your hand to push the board forward if you find it tricky with your leg. And finally, back to the wood, keep your bar level and in on the sweet spot for support and control.



D

FREE FOOT FORWARD PIC C

Now you're ready to take your back foot out and it'll become obvious why you've adopted this laid-back style to do so. Usually, we aim to lift the board off our back foot and push the leg down, under the board. Here, however, you need to get your foot up and over the board. The first intentional bonus of pushing the board forwards is that you have space to pull your foot out of the strap without having to drop it below the board. With his weight back and board forwards, Christian can slide his foot out of the strap and has room to extend his leg forwards towards his other foot. This way there is a lot of space to manoeuvre even if you have size thirteens.



E

UP & OVER PIC D

The proof is in the pudding and here it is. By laying back and moving your free foot forward, it gives you more than enough room to get your foot out of the strap and up, over the board. If you were to remain centred on the board, you'll be able to wiggle your foot out of the strap, but unless you're extremely agile, you'll struggle to lift your leg over it. This is a crucial part of the move as you have to start the Leg Over with your foot high.

BACK & OVER PIC E

Before you can think about passing the board, your leg needs to be over your arm and your arm under your leg! If you were/are a wizard at Twister,



this'll be your bread and butter. Keep a solid hold of your board and push it forward under your leg whilst moving your leg back and over your arm and behind your board. You can see that Christian is literally pushing his board under his leg, whilst balletically moving his leg back over his arm so that it clears the tail of the board. Now you're primed and ready.

THROW & GO PIC F

Your board is in clear airspace and your leg has the resultant vacuum to fill, so all that's left in this juggling sequence is to move your hand. In the scheme of things, it won't hurt if you give the board a gentle nudge up before you release your grab and go hunting for the board again. Just like you might toss a ball up from your palm before catching it again.



In the photo, Christian has given the board a little helping hand before releasing his grab.

HOW'S THAT? PIC G

Keep your eyes on the prize. As soon as you've tossed the board, bring your hand around your leg and grab the board again. Your back leg, or rather your abs, will give in and your foot will drop down, but make sure your hand is around beforehand. You can see that Christian is still in the same position and leaning back, it's just now his arm has moved around his leg. As long as the board is forward and your leg back, the board will stay put long enough for you to grab it again.

LANDING PREP PIC H

Once you've got your board back, it's business as usual.



Don't forget your kite. Hopefully it's just behind 12 o'clock or up there at midday. If so, you'll want to give it a steer forwards for landing, as this will give you a little bit more lift and a touch longer to wiggle your flippers back into the strap. Watch your foot in and hold the grab as long as you can so that you can get your foot sufficiently into the strap to make the landing more manageable. Christian is watching his foot in, and he's already started to steer the kite forwards for his dive and landing.

TOP TIPS

Even if you're an established one-footer, you may find the movement of taking your foot out and up rather unusual and against the grain. The best place to start working on this is to practice the position to get your



foot out and up before replacing it. Once you get your head around it and combat your muscle memory, you can then go for the full LO.

Although this move can be viewed as a board trick, concentrate on the fact that you're actually putting everything into position and that the real move is passing your hand around your leg.

If you don't have time to get your back foot back in the strap, it's worth hanging onto the board if you have the grab. This way you have two anchor points and there is no risk of the board twisting on one leg. Loosening your back strap will make it easier to slide your pinkies back in.

As you become more proficient, work on extending your leg to emphasise the movement of your free foot during the move and basically showboat that little bit harder.

Now, have another look at the sequences and play the video for a real time how to.

COMMON PROBLEMS

If you can't get the board forwards as you take off, it's possible that you're sending the kite too much. With a hefty pull off the water, you'll be extended and your stomach will be fighting to get your knees up, whilst your kite will be zinging off behind you. Tone it down a tad so that you can bring your knees up and keep your focus forwards rather than behind you.

If your leg drops down as you take your foot out, this is because you don't have room. Once you get your grab, don't take your foot out but instead push the board forwards and lean your shoulders towards the tail, as if you're going for a bone out. From this position, it'll feel more intuitive to get your foot out and up.

If you get your foot out but the board drops out of reach, and/or you kick the board, it's because you're tossing the board too early, before you've got clear space for your leg behind the board. Make sure you push the board forwards and move your leg way back behind the tail of the board. This way, the board won't fall, and you won't kick it.

KEYSTONES

1. Elevator Jump
2. Lift, lean and grab
3. Foot forwards and up
4. Twister - push board forwards and leg back
5. Board toss and grab



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

LIGHTROOM

KUBA MUCHA TESTS OUT NOBILE'S LATEST HOLI COLLECTION
IN THE WARM WATER OF THE RED SEA
PHOTO TOMEK USTUPSKI



Lightroom

LIGHTROOM

WARECK ARNAUD TAKES THE OZONE SUBZERO V2 INTO SUBZERO
TEMPERATURES ON THE LAUTARET PASS!
PHOTO WAWAMAX



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LIGHTROOM



SLINGSHOT

SLINGSHOT

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SENSI GRAVES SCORES 50 SHADES OF BLUE IN NAMOTU ISLAND, FIJI
PHOTO BEAU PILGRIM

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IF ANYONE MAKES HYDROFOILING LOOK EFFORTLESS, IT'S MARK SHINNI!
PHOTO ROBERT HAJDUK

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IF YOU HAVEN'T BEEN KITEBOARDING IN THE BAHAMAS, WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?
PHOTO ARITZ BELATEGI

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MATT MAXWELL FULLY COMMITTED ON HIS STRAPLESS BOARD IN GREECE!
PHOTO NICK SPILSBURY



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TIM WALSH HEADING INTO THE STRATOSPHERE WITH THE NEW S27 PIVOT!
PHOTO FRANKIE BEES



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LIGHTROOM

MATT MAXWELL MAKING SOME SERIOUS SPRAY AT THE GKA KITE-SURF WORLD TOUR STOP IN DAKHLA!
PHOTO SVETLANA ROMANTSOVA



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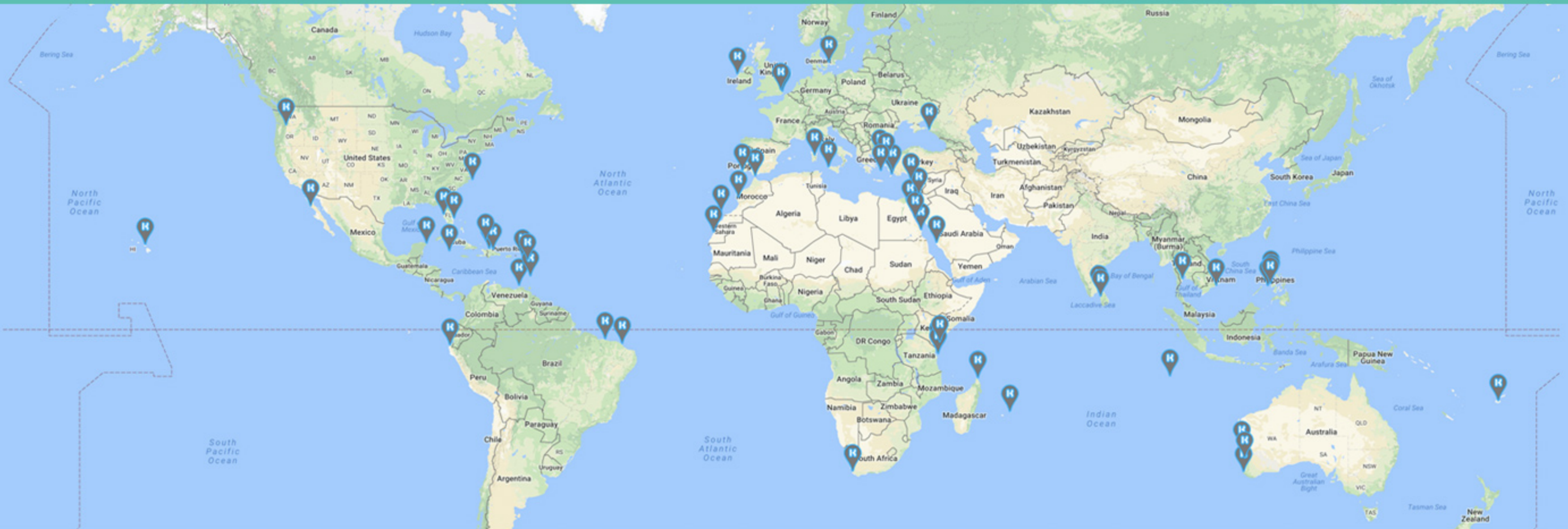
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MAUI

In this issue's Tried & Tested, our Test Team have all chipped in, getting their hands on whatever new bits and bobs we could find. We've put some of the newest gear from your favourite brands through the paces, and we're sharing our feedback with you! We tried out the all-new Cabrinha FX2, slic The windy season is back in the UK, and the IKSURFMAG Test Team has been taking full advantage of the warm weather and breezy conditions! This issue, we tested the out-of-this-world Slingshot UFO V2, the latest Ozone Reo, the CrazyFly Hyper, and one of F-One's most high-tech foil boards. The ladies will want to take a closer look at this set of reviews, as we've put three women's accessories to the test with wetsuits from Manera and Ion and a harness from Prolimit. Don't feel left out, dudes, as we've also got the lowdown on the latest Prolimit men's harness! Keep on reading to find out what we thought of these new releases!

KITES & BOARDS

Cabrinha FX2

Armstrong CF950 Hydrofoil

CrazyFly Elite

ACCESSORIES

Prolimit Vapor

Ion Sol Curv

Ride Engine Apoc 3/2

Ion Amaze Amp



TRIED & TESTED

BRAND CABRINHA

MODEL FX2

SIZE 8M

YEAR 2022



"ONE KITE WITH TWO SIDES TO IT, THE FX2 IS A HIGH-PERFORMANCE KITE LOOP AND FREESTYLE MACHINE."



AT A GLANCE

When Cabrinha released the 02 Collection at the start of the year, we were excited to see the brand's continued evolution. With some star-studded additions to the team (Hello Hannah!), a change of ownership in 2020, and the recent return of legendary designer Pat Goodman, this might be the most exciting Cabrinha era yet!

We got our hands on the new FX2 on a few occasions, and this is one of the kites in the Cabrinha lineup we were most interested in testing. A central theme of its product marketing is the two sides of a coin, and that's something that has been cleverly incorporated into the FX2.

The original Cabrinha FX was a megaloop machine, while the now discontinued C-shaped Chaos was the choice for hardcore freestyle. With this gap in the lineup, Cabrinha has taken the Freestyle Crossover concept, which earned the FX its name, even further. This kite has a completely new design with two very different sides, one for extreme big air and the other for high-performance freestyle.



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

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

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BRAND ARMSTRONG

MODEL CF

SIZE 950 V2

YEAR 2022



"AN IDEAL FOIL FOR THOSE WHO WANT A SURFY FEELING BUT WITH EASE, TRUST AND STABILITY."



AT A GLANCE

You can't talk about an Armstrong foil without first talking about the company. After all, Armstrong is one of the most renowned foil makers in the industry, especially amongst the wing, surf, wake, and SUP foil communities. While not as visible in the kite market, they most certainly have the gear to contend with the rest.

Designer Armie Armstrong has an insatiable love for the water, and you can see his passion in his designs, which are made with the experience of the end user in mind. At Armstrong, the intention is not to create the most affordable foil; it's to create the absolute best, with no compromises in materials, manufacturing, and design. It may come at a higher cost than the market average (foil, tail wing, fuselage, and mast ring in at about \$1900 USD), but you know what they say: You get what you pay for!

Knowing this about the company, I was very excited for my test model of the Armstrong CF 950 V2 to arrive in the mail. I've winged and surf foiled on friends Armstrong foils before but never had the true owner experience with all the excitement of unboxing.

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BRAND CRAZYFLY

MODEL ELITE

SIZE 136 X 41CM

YEAR 2022



" IF YOU WANT A
BRILLIANT BLEND
OF LIGHTNESS
AND
PERFORMANCE,
THIS IS THE
GO-TO CHOICE! "



AT A GLANCE

The Elite is CrazyFly's premium carbon board. It's lighter than a feather and features a blend of numerous advanced technologies to help offer unparalleled performance for the rider.

Made in Europe, the board comes with a premium content package. The pads and straps are already mounted, multiple fin options are available, and stickers, a t-shirt and the accessories are thrown into the mix, all whilst being presented in a premium padded board bag. You can tell CrazyFly is excited about this product.

The Elite features two layers of carbon on the top and two layers of carbon on the bottom of the board. CompFlex 4T5 Carbon is one layer with 45-degree angled fibres giving optimal torsion flex. Stiff in the heel-to-toe direction yet softer along the length of the board. The CompFlex 4T5 is topped with a brand new HMX-CF2 Carbon which gives the board its strength.

A CNC-shaped wood core sits between the carbon layers, and the designers of this product really focused on making the most flexible carbon board on the market.

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BRAND PROLIMIT

MODEL VAPOR

SIZE S

YEAR 2022



" IF YOU WANT TO INVEST IN A SOLID HARNESS THAT OFFERS TREMENDOUS SUPPORT, CHECK OUT THE VAPOR! "



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

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



AT A GLANCE

The Vapor waist harness sits just beneath PROLIMIT's top-of-the-range hardshell harness, 'The Alpha'. Equipped with the very best science, design and materials, this pre-shaped moulded hardshell harness offers endless support, comfort and stability whilst not being quite as stiff as the full carbon Alpha.

The Vapor is made out of a Pure TM composite shell with Flex-Gen memory foam equipped in the areas that need it most. Paired with the titanium electroplated Alpha bar, this system is solid when locked in and prevents the bar from riding up.

This harness still gives you the hard shell solid feel, but as it is not carbon but rather a composite shell, it offers a little more flex and movement. With this harness offering a little more flex, it may best be suited for those directional riders who are constantly turning on waves. The Alpha spreader bar has a quick and easy lock-in system with easily adjustable tighteners to offer the perfect fit. Once your fit is set, simply lock it in, and you shouldn't find yourself readjusting again.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

BRAND ION MODEL SOL CURV SIZE XS YEAR 2022



" IN TERMS OF DURABILITY, ATTENTION TO DETAIL, AND COMFORT, THE ION SOL CURV CHECKS ALL THE BOXES! "



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

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

AT A GLANCE

Having a comfortable harness is essential, and when you find a harness you are happy with, it's unlikely that you can be convinced to try other models. ION has an unparalleled reputation for its products. Throw in fancy words like Curv_Spine and Ergo_Pad, which provide the perfect fit for everyone's body size and shape, and they immediately had our attention!

When the ION Sol Curv Harness arrived in the box, my first thought was it looked like a solid piece of kit, and when I tried it on, it instantly felt like it was designed for me. The interchangeable Ergo_Pad offer optimal lumbar support on the inside (you can choose between medium or high support based on your needs - I went for the medium set-up, and I haven't found the need to try the other set-up yet). As opposed to putting pressure on the spine, the channel acts as a groove with padding on both sides to keep your spine in place and provide support where you need it.

ION's sleek spreader bar, including a lightweight aluminium hook, is the latest innovation in spreader bar technology. It is incredibly flexible and has a slim outline.

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BRAND RIDE ENGINE

MODEL APOC

SIZE 3/2

YEAR 2022



"AN ULTRA-FUNCTIONAL WETSUIT THAT GOES ON QUICKLY, OFFERS A COMFORTABLE AND HASSLE-FREE RIDE, AND DRIES OFF IN A FLASH."



AT A GLANCE

Ride Engine has had a reputation for innovation and quality from the very start. In the company's early days in 2010, it all started in Santa Cruz in Coleman Buckley's garage, with experimental custom moulded hardshell harnesses. It was an idea that lit a fire in the industry, as you can see by the number of hardshell harnesses that exist in the market now.

In 2014, he joined forces with 7 Nation, a boardsports company based in Oregon's Pacific Northwest, which also has Slingshot under its umbrella. With the benefit of being with a larger company with more resources and purchasing power, an expanded range of harnesses and a full line of Ride Engine wetsuits hit the market in 2015.

I remember my first 3/2 Ride Engine wetsuit, purchased in 2016. Since 2016, their line has kept the same high quality while remaining blissfully uncomplicated. If you look at the Ride Engine website, there is one model of men's wetsuit, the Apoc, which is available in several thicknesses and with short leg options.



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BRAND ION MODEL AMAZE AMP SIZE 5/4 FRONT ZIP YEAR 2022



"I LOVE BEING WARM, AND THIS WETSUIT DID JUST THAT WITHOUT ANY COMPROMISE ON FLEXIBILITY."



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

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

AT A GLANCE

Back in June, ION released its annual Amaze Pink Capsule Collection across multiple products, aiming to showcase women's determination to confidently conquer the oceans and encourage others to do the same.

I got a chance to try out the Amaze AMP 5/4 front zip wetsuit for myself. ION suggests this wetsuit is a good fit for temperatures between 11°C - 16°C (52°F - 61°F); however, I would say it is always nicer to be toasty warm in the water, and this number will most definitely keep you nice and warm. If you, like me, have lived in the northern hemisphere for most of your ya, this suit will be your perfect companion for most of the year.

Firstly, I have to talk about the new colourway, as this is the first thing you notice about this suit. It is an excellent combination of blues and pinks. It is subtle but still fun, making the suit stand out. I like a bit of colour in the sea of black wetsuits, which also means that you can be easily spotted on the water.

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RIDER BENNETT HOOP
PHOTO MORITZ

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THE INTERVIEW RODERICK PIJLS

WORDS CRYSTAL VENESS

Since dedicating his life to kiteboarding, Roderick Pijls has kited inside a volcano, between icebergs, and on toxic lakes, all with the mission of raising environmental awareness. International athlete, adventurer, model, and public speaker, Roderick Pijls is a man with many facets! Find out more about his life, passions, and purpose in this exclusive interview!



Roderick, thank you for joining us for The Interview! With so much to talk about, let's start simple and go back to the beginning... Tell us about your childhood and what kept you busy before kiting became part of your life.

Thanks for having me! I used to play field hockey in the national selection, which was my life and focus back then. I trained 5 to 6 times a week, and on weekends, we competed. I was waking up around 6 am, taking the bus for 1.5 hours to high school, doing some training on track after, and then taking the bus back home to get in bed at around 11 pm, only to do it all over again the next day.

You had a bit of a late start in kitesurfing compared to some of the other pro riders making headlines these days; how old were you when you first got into kiteboarding, and what inspired you to take up the sport?

I was about 15 or 16 years old when I discovered kitesurfing. I was usually off from field hockey on Sundays, so we would spend the day at the beach. One day, I saw dozens of people flying through the air with a kite and asked my parents if I could also give it a go. They promised to give my brother and me a lesson if we passed our year at high school. Luckily, we did!!

What do you remember about your first lessons? Did you take to the kite quickly, or was it a bit of a struggle?

I remember that we had so much fun from the start. Our teacher, Koen Molkenboer, was an absolute legend, and he taught us to kite and, more importantly, to enjoy the journey of learning.

" HE TAUGHT US TO KITE AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, TO ENJOY THE JOURNEY OF LEARNING. "





“ THAT FEELING OF FREEDOM AND ADRENALINE WHILE WORKING WITH THE ELEMENTS STILL DRIVES ME TO THIS DAY. ”

PHOTO MATIAS LEE



I remember it was pretty windy, but as a beginner, I completely trusted Koen. He reassured us and gave us the confidence to try. On the second day, he gave us a board, and, probably by pure luck, I managed to get up on my first try and get my first 100m ride in. After that, I got a couple more runs in, and by then, I already knew I needed to feel more of that rush! That feeling of freedom and adrenaline while working with the elements still drives me to this day.

When you were younger, did you ever think kiteboarding would become such a big part of your life?

Never. I never imagined becoming a pro. I was still playing field hockey and had my Olympic dream there, so I always kept kitesurfing to the weekends if I had time off. However, after accomplishing my goals with field hockey on the Dutch National Team, I decided to leave that chapter behind and spend more time on the water.

Nowadays, everything I know, do, possess, or decide is based on kitesurfing and everything around that. I could never have imagined this, and I must admit that I am grateful every single day that I can still do what I do.

You've just joined the FLYSURFER international team - congrats! What drew you to FLYSURFER? Do you share common values?

It's fascinating to see how much knowledge is in that company. From creating a fantastic wave kite that drifts like a maniac and steers super fast, but still feels light on the bar to having the fastest and most developed race kite on the market; FLYSURFER is varied and diverse, which makes it an amazing brand to work with.

“ YOU ARE ALWAYS SEARCHING FOR THAT PERFECT SETUP, AND, TO BE HONEST, THEIR RANGE OF BOARDS IS JUST MAGIC TO ME. ”



Now that you've had a bit of time to familiarise yourself with their gear, what kites make up your quiver?

I am mainly riding the STOKÉ for wave-riding and freestyle. They just released a magical new version of it, and it's my favourite kite in their lineup! For the racing discipline, I ride the VMG and the MOJO wing.

You are still riding LIEUWE boards; How long have you been with the LIEUWE team, and what made you decide to stick with them?

I've been with LIEUWE for 5 or 6 years, and there are numerous reasons why I still ride their boards.

As an athlete, you are always searching for that perfect setup, and, to be honest, their range of boards is just magic to me. The Shotgun and Oceana are, for me, such a great combo. I am riding the Oceana for freeride and freestyle and using the Shotgun for Big Air.

I love their motivation to keep searching and developing their product range. We've been experimenting with carbon and carbon stringers that resulted in the Teijin reinforcement. When it comes to their designs, they're incredibly creative with their artwork and release a new limited edition design every Friday, giving every board owner something unique. I love it!

Living in the Netherlands, what are your favourite kite spots close to home, and why?

We have some amazing spots in the Netherlands, all reasonably close together! There's Ouddorp, a sandbar that pops up when it's low-tide, and with a big storm and southwesterly winds, there are some long peeling waves. Nothing big, but fun and long. Just a couple of kilometres further, we've got Brouwersdam. With northerly winds and high tide, there's a harbour jetty with a little pond behind it with just perfect butter flat waters. A further 30 minutes drive is Maasvlakte, with approximately five lagoons that offer flat waters that work in many wind directions.

But, the main reason why I like the Netherlands is that I can kite with my old friends. I truly love kiting in the best conditions in the world, in places like Mauritius, Cape Town, Brazil, Namibia, etc. But, sometimes it's also the freedom to have pure fun with friends that's really special... not feeling the need to push yourself - for once! - and just shredding the gnar with some mates!

You would think that big air would be in your blood as a Dutchman, but that's not the case! You're an all-around rider and perform at a high level in waves, freestyle, big air, and even foiling. Why the decision to diversify and ride well in all disciplines rather than focus on just one?

In the Netherlands, we get different conditions, and thanks to that diversity, I can spend 80% more time on the water. Before, I only focused on freestyle or waves, but I noticed that 50% of my sessions were pretty crap. Often, the waves were sloppy, the flat water was choppy, or I was just waiting on the beach for the wind to pick up.

Now, I can race in 6 knots, shred waves if there's swell, or throw double swaps if there's flat water. That motivates me and pushes me to perform my utmost in all conditions. I am convinced that all the knowledge I possess from all disciplines helps me perform even better in each one.

In your professional career, you have chosen to concentrate on exploring epic places and telling incredible stories through movies and photography. So what was the latest big adventure you tackled?

" I CAN RACE IN 6 KNOTS, SHRED WAVES IF THERE'S SWELL, OR THROW DOUBLE SWAPS IF THERE'S FLAT WATER. "





PHOTO MICHI LEITNER

My most recent trip was to Hood River, Oregon, where I joined the FLYSURFER team to shoot an exciting new product. On that trip, I combined my curiosity for kiting and equipment technology with my love for sharing the stoke and the sport with the youth.

Before that, I was in Palma de Mallorca, where we had the European Championship for kitefoiling. It's a new discipline which will be featured in the Olympics in 2024, and together with the Dutch Federation and a couple of other lads from the Netherlands, we are trying to give it a go.

“ I JOINED THE FLYSURFER TEAM TO SHOOT AN EXCITING NEW PRODUCT. ”

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" I GET TO SPEND ALMOST EVERY DAY IN THE WATER, TRAINING, PLAYING AND WORKING WITH THE ELEMENTS FROM MOTHER NATURE. "



But, my latest big adventure was in Iceland, where I kited inside a volcano, on top of a glacier, on a waterfall and in between icebergs. It was a project for The Last Line to continue our previous adventures in Tanzania and Norway.

The Last Line might be one of the most epic expeditions in kitesurfing history. How did this project come about, and what was your end goal?

Hahaha, thanks, that is such a big compliment! I've said it before, but kitesurfing has given me everything I know. The joy, life lessons, positivism, all the cultures I've experienced... everything! And I get to spend almost every day in the water, training, playing and working with the elements from Mother Nature.

I see climate change happening and wanted to help, but I didn't want to only send money to a charity and think that I've done my part; I wanted to help and work on something tangible. So together with Rein Rijke, a photographer and good friend, we sat down, brainstormed and came up with this project. First, we had to get people's attention so that more people were aware of our project, so we decided that I would kite on a toxic and 70°C boiling hot lake. This got picked up by the National Media and was featured on TV, in newspapers, and on the radio. After that, we went to Norway and Iceland to do and capture extreme and 'never-been-done' action, but in an insanely aesthetic way to get people thinking and inspired to make more conscious decisions and motivate them to do their part.

What was your most memorable moment from that journey?

We went to Norway intending to capture me kitesurfing under the Northern Lights. We wanted to get to the Arctic Circle in a CO2-neutral way,



" IT'S MY PASSION AND WHERE EVERYTHING STARTED, AND IT WILL STAY LIKE THAT FOR MANY MORE YEARS "

so we sailed for more than three days, took an electric train, and then continued our journey by electric car. Unfortunately, once we arrived, we didn't see any Northern Lights for more than ten days; we even stayed up all night trying to capture them, but we were unlucky.

On the last night, when we had packed everything for our journey back, we went out for a goodbye drink in town, looked up, and saw that the entire sky was on fire! The lights were finally showing themselves! We were screaming like little kids, running around and making sure to get the shots, but being sure to find a moment of silence to enjoy the experience. That was

when I realised that we, as humans, can do our utmost to attempt to control Earth and think that we possess her, but only she can decide what will happen (or not).

Besides bringing awareness to environmental issues through your video projects, how do you live a sustainable lifestyle?

I try to make conscious decisions in every aspect of my life. In my career, I try to partner with brands that share the same values. Personally, I've decided to drive an electric car, stop using single-use plastics, take 95% of meat and fish out of my diet, and many other small but easy changes. So, I'm trying to

incorporate this mindset into my daily life as best as possible. I don't want to be that person who points fingers at others and tells them not to do this or that, but I would like to help open their eyes and inspire them to make their own conscious decisions.

You also do some modelling and public speaking! Tell us a bit more about that... and is kitesurfing your side hustle or your main hustle?!

Kitesurfing is my main hustle! It's my passion and where everything started, and it will stay like that for many more years. During a kitesurfing competition, I got scouted to become a model, and now, several years later, I've done many TV commercials,

campaigns for great brands, and loads of photoshoots. My main focus is kitesurfing, but whenever I feel I've got a gap for a job, I'll take it. But, if I have to choose between a shoot or a session, the session is number one!

As an athlete, you must make many decisions in critical moments, like during a competition or race, and even in how you live your life. I noticed that kitesurfing had taught me many life lessons, like knowing how to choose which direction to go or how to deal with failure and disappointment. When I was approached some years ago to give a motivational talk at a conference in Paris, I saw after the talk that everybody was inspired and motivated by what I had said and shared with them. I decided that I'd like to continue to share my lessons, motivation and perspective on life with many people, and I am passionate about public speaking.

What are your other hobbies or favourite things to do outside work and off the water?

As I spend so much time away from home (even in the Netherlands, I am always on the road for something), I love to be at my house, recharge and spend time with my family, friends and loved ones. In addition, I really enjoy cooking and trying new recipes; I find it helps me feel calm and relaxed, and I enjoy the time it takes to focus on creating food. I also love to do CrossFit! It keeps me insanely fit off the water, and I like the culture. It feels like a second sport for me, and the group always gives me a warm welcome when I am back training with them.

" I DECIDED THAT I'D LIKE TO CONTINUE TO SHARE MY LESSONS, MOTIVATION AND PERSPECTIVE ON LIFE WITH MANY PEOPLE "





"IT LOOKS LIKE THERE ARE SOME
BIG TRIPS COMING
THIS YEAR."

PHOTO MICHI LEITNER

Another thing I quite enjoy is going to the beach to get a coffee and watching people do their thing... does that sound weird?! I can happily sit somewhere with a coffee and observe people for hours.

What are you most excited about for the future? Are there any big trips or projects coming up?

We decided to make The Last Line a bigger, even more professional project. On that project, it looks like there are some seriously big trips coming this year and over the next couple of years, and that makes my heart beat twice as fast!

I am also excited to get the jersey back on and compete in wave events and racing. I would love to be back on tour in competition locations like Mauritius or Brazil; those locations are prime for waves, and I cannot wait to share some heats with friends again.

Next to that, I really hope that my Oasis VR project will keep growing and expanding to several other hospitals to motivate kids to chase their dreams.





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This summer, Mad Max Tullet joined the Duotone crew for the Young Blood camp in the warm turquoise waters of El Gouna, Egypt. Learn more about how the Duotone team is supporting the future pro riders of kiteboarding with this exciting program. In this exclusive feature, Max tells us all about a trip he won't be forgetting anytime soon!

WORDS MAX TULLETT PHOTOS TOBY BROMWICH RIDER THIS PAGE MAX TULLETT

YOUNG BLOOD



This summer, Duotone Kiteboarding revived the Young Blood program, a fresh take on a project that first began in 2006. The first-ever Young Blood camp hosted riders like Reno Romeu, Tom Court and Airton Cozzolino and helped launch their professional careers into what they are today!

Eleven riders were invited to attend the modern-day edition of Young Blood, including Andrea Principi, Beto Gomez, Edgar Ulrich, Camille Losserand, Davi Ribiero, Lorenzo Casati, Guilherme Costa, Keanu Mertens, Adrian Emmerz, Nathalie Lambrecht, and myself: Max Tullett. Along with the Young Bloods, there was a massive crew of photographers, videographers, and fitness and yoga trainers, as well as Team Manager Craig Cunningham and Philipp Becker and Lukas Sallomon from the Marketing & Communications team. We also had two pro riders along for the adventure, Aaron Hadlow and Young Blood alumni, Reno Romeu.

Everyone headed to the camp location of Makani Beach Club in El Gouna, Egypt, an ideal location with excellent kitesurfing conditions and great chilling, learning, fitness, food and drink facilities. Despite the global travel chaos, everyone arrived safely. However, team manager Craig did have to rescue Davi and Guilherme, Duotone's freestyle Young Bloods, from customs at Lisbon airport -and Aaron lost his bags!

I travelled with my dad, and we arrived in Egypt a couple of days before the camp started, so we checked into the Three Corners Rihana Resort, where all the riders and crew would be staying.

Unfortunately, it was late, and after two days of travelling with a stopover in Germany and a quick tour of Cologne, we only had enough energy left to go straight to our room to get some rest.



**“ AN IDEAL LOCATION WITH EXCELLENT KITESURFING
CONDITIONS AND GREAT CHILLING. LEARNING.
FITNESS. FOOD AND DRINK FACILITIES. ”**



**“ THIRTY-FIVE DEGREES AND TURQUOISE WATER!
I HAD NEVER BEEN ANYWHERE LIKE IT! ”**

We woke up with a full day to ourselves before the camp started, had breakfast and jumped straight on the daily scheduled transport to Makani Beach Club with all our gear. We received a warm welcome from the staff at reception, who gave us a tour of their extensive facilities. Once we'd seen the club, we unpacked our kit and headed to the

water, where I kitesurfed all day. Thirty-five degrees and turquoise water! I had never been anywhere like it! Finally, we returned to the hotel for a swim, dinner, and an early night before the camp kicked off.

Day one of the Young Blood camp didn't officially start until the afternoon, as some riders hadn't arrived yet. However, the riders and crew there took the opportunity to hit the water for a pre-camp session. We had three sessions that day, one for shooting

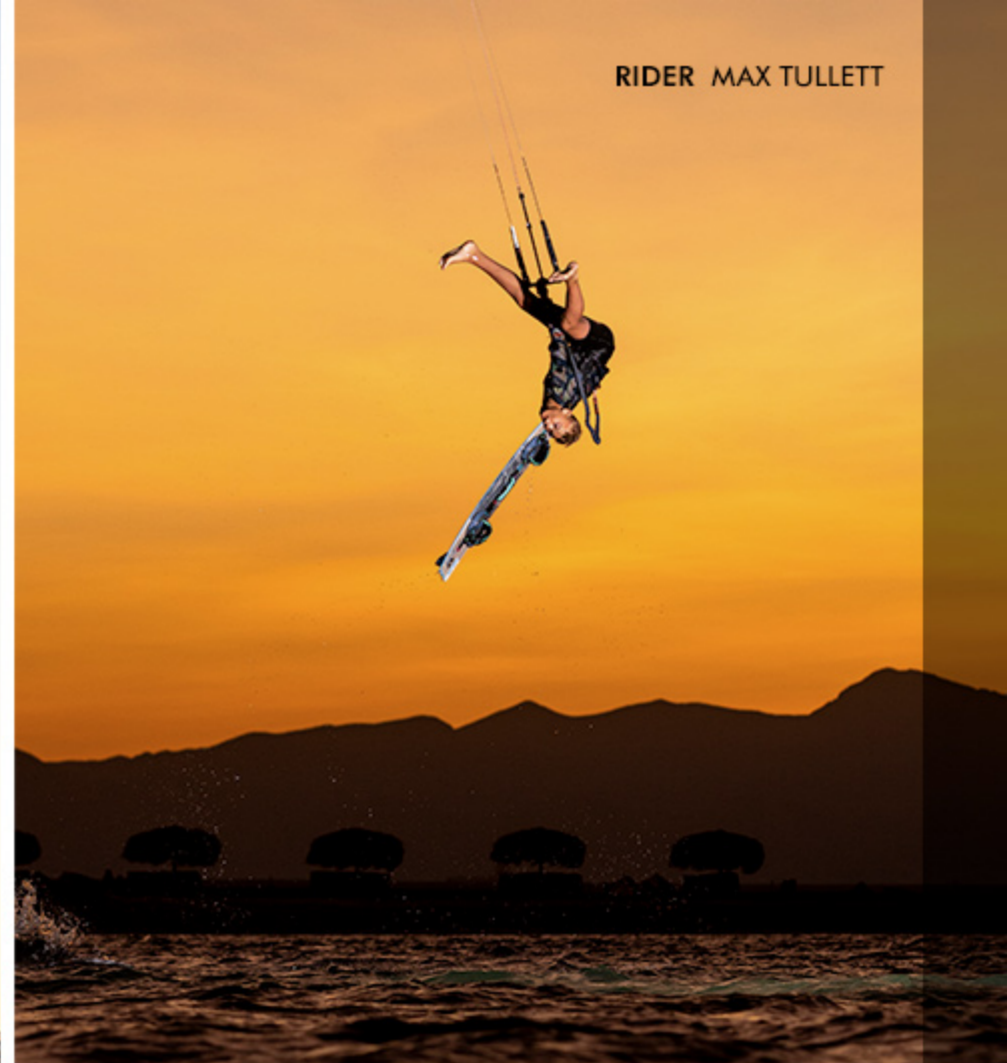
video with Charles Parker, one for video and photo with Toby Bromwich and Julien Leleu, and the last with professional coach Fabio Ingresso.

First, the camera crew briefed us on the different types of cameras and lenses they were using before we went out; I had never shot with professionals before, and it was a great learning experience. Next, we stopped for lunch in the lounge area at Makani, which the club had reserved for our crew; it was the perfect place to relax, catch up, debrief, and sneak a bit of sleep for those who had been travelling.

RIDER NATHALIE LAMBRECHT



RIDER MAX TULLETT



RIDER KEANU MERTENS



RIDER DAVI RIBIERO





“ KITESURFING ACROSS THE DEEP BLUE WATER WAS A CRAZY EXPERIENCE FOR ME, AS, BEFORE THIS TRIP, I HAD A FEW CONCERNS ABOUT SHARKS. ”

Although falling asleep there was risky, as you were likely to get pranked!

After lunch on day one, we debriefed with the crew and looked through the photos and videos captured so far to help us understand more about the camera equipment and where to position ourselves on the water. Fabio had also filmed on the water to help explain different concepts during and after his coaching sessions. Then, we took a quick break in the lounge before returning to the water until sunset, repeating a similar format as the morning, but with much more knowledge!

Day two was the last of the good wind for a few days, so we had a busy schedule. It was a 7 am start for Yoga with Lucia, which was a first for many of us. It was hard to believe we were promising athletes, but many of us still struggled with the basics! Yoga was on the schedule every morning, so we had plenty of opportunities to improve. Breakfast was at 8 am, and we all had to be ready at 9 am for transport to Makani.

Once we arrived at the kite spot, we hit the water with approximately 20 knots of breeze and headed to Bayout Sandbank, a turquoise water paradise about 2km out to sea. The session was super fun, and I enjoyed jumping over the boat with the camera crew! Kitesurfing across the deep blue water was a crazy experience for me, as, before this trip, I had a few concerns about sharks. Luckily, the water started to get shallower as we approached the sandbank, where we saw dolphins! We all had a great session and performed tricks for the cameras. The spot was incredible; I was one of the last to leave the sandbank and had a super kite back with Aaron!





RIDER GUILHERME COSTA

The next few days had lighter winds in the forecast, which wasn't a problem as we were there not just to be on the water but to learn what it takes to become professional kiteboarders. We had a nice air-conditioned conference room at the hotel where we went to a social media workshop and attended classes on the brand and the new products for 2023. We also had fitness training with Kuki, which I really enjoyed, especially training with Lorenzo and Andrea!

Some of the older Young Bloods did presentations on themselves and their projects, and we were stoked to receive gifts from brands that sponsored the camp, such as SunGod sunglasses, GoPro and Himaya Skincare. We travelled to Makani for lunch every day and spent the afternoons there listening to advice from Aaron and Reno. We still managed to get on the water on these lighter days using larger kites and the D/LAB gear, and I was excited to have the chance to fly a Porsche logo kite and board for some photos!

The last day will be a day I remember for the rest of my life. We travelled by coach to Hurghada Marina and boarded an 88ft/27m motor boat. Along with all our kite gear, we motored out into the middle of the Red Sea to the most insane location, a reef surrounded by shallow water and a white sandy bottom. As soon as the crew dropped the anchors, most of us jumped off the top of the 3-storey yacht into the sea!

This day wasn't super windy, but I had plenty of power on a 13m kite and twin tip. A few of our group joined Toby and Julien on a small boat to take some pictures whilst the rest kited off the back of the yacht. After shooting, we kited back to the boat, where I saw Lorenzo using his kite to jump off the top of the boat.

" AS SOON AS THE CREW DROPPED THE ANCHORS, MOST OF US JUMPED OFF THE TOP OF THE 3-STOREY YACHT INTO THE SEA! "



INSET COACH RENO ROMEU



" 5 OF US GOT UP IN THE AIR AND SUCCESSFULLY LOOPED DOWN BEFORE THE BREEZE DROPPED OFF. "

I had to try it too, and it was so much fun, I definitely had to do it more than once!

After the session, the yacht crew lit a barbecue on the bathing platform and prepared some food. When we finished, Edgar prepared a rope approximately 100m

long and explained the tow-up, where we could work our way up into the air by riding side to side against the rope tied to the anchored boat. Watching Edgar do it first was insane, and he made some crazy moves, including a 360 loop of the kite around him and against the wind from around 30m up in the air! We were all eager to try, and 5 of us got up in the air and successfully looped down before the breeze dropped off.

We went snorkelling over a beautiful reef before motoring back to finish the day. On the boat journey back, the whole Young Blood team met on the top deck to watch the sun go down; what a way to wrap up our final day in Egypt! This last sunset was the perfect end to a magnificent trip. Thanks to everyone who helped me get there, and hopefully see you all again soon!

Mostafa Abbas spent a month scouting kiteboarding spots and exploring his bucket list travel location: Oman. If you love the desert, nature, adventure and kiteboarding, then this destination might just be the place for you! Read all about his trip to Oman in this write-up!

A TRIP TO OMAN





“ SURROUNDED BY SEAS ON MANY SIDES AND COVERED IN BOTH DESERT AND TOWERING PEAKS ”

Growing up in Egypt, I was lucky to have a flat water spot near my house, where I was allowed to take my first kite lessons. That's where the love for the sport began. After years of training, teaching and coaching in the Egyptian Suez Canal, it was finally time to explore kitesurfing spots abroad.

From a young age, I have had a list on my phone of places I'd love to see. Oman was at the top of this list, and the dream finally became a reality this year. In October, Marcelo and Jamal, the owners of Majan Sea Sports in Oman, reached out to me. They invited me to come to Oman in return for clinics, and that was the start of a great partnership and friendship.

Oman is a small country set in the south of the Middle East. Surrounded by seas on many sides and covered in both desert and towering peaks, it's known for its stunning scenery. Besides the beautiful nature, the locals make Oman one of a kind. It's safe, warm, and trustworthy; even though there is a lot of poverty, all locals are fair. When my good friend forgot his kite on the beach, he found it at the exact same spot the next day!

There is a special magic about this country, and I'm proud to share a bit about my experience with you. Through these words, I hope you can imagine the beauty of Oman.

1 - MASIRAH ISLAND

Our first stop was Masirah Island, the place to be for all nature lovers. This ultimate wildlife destination is a famous turtle breeding ground but is also the home for many other animals and ocean creatures.

“ IT HAS THIS MAGICAL, LOFTY WIND THAT MAKES IT PERFECT FOR JUMPING, HANGTIME AND LOOPS.”

Besides, this Island is known for its never-ending wind conditions, which made it an appealing first destination! With many flat water and wave spots, it is a must-see for all kitesurfers out there.

The only way to get to Masirah Island was by ferry, and this crossing took us about 1 1/2 hours. I stayed at an apartment close to the spot for the next ten days. The harbour is next to the village, which turned out to be our favourite kitesurfing spot. Every session, the harbour became a local meeting point for people from around the village who came to enjoy the kitesurfing show.

I can't forget to mention Monkey Bay in Masirah! It was a perfect photoshoot spot, or at least that is what we called it. It has this magical, lofty wind that makes it perfect for jumping, hangtime and loops.

2 - ASSILAH

After ten days in Masirah, we travelled by Jeep to Assilah, a place that felt like home almost immediately, probably because the locals were so friendly and helpful! Assilah is a well-known wave spot, perfect for goofy-footed riders. The point break is right in front of the city, offering insanely long waves. Note to self: bring a strapless board next time because those waves are just begging for an epic session!

I spent the next week camping along the coast of Assilah and exploring different spots where the dunes meet the sea. We had the chance to experience camping life that was as good as it gets;





“ THE TURQUOISE WATER, UNTOUCHED NATURE, AND EMPTY LAGOONS GAVE THE PLACE A MAGICAL TOUCH. ”

we slept by the beach, cooked our meals in nature and spent every windy moment kiting along the dune-covered coastline.

3 - BARL HEKMAN

Barl Hekman, often called Maldiva Oman, was the 3rd stop on our journey; being in this place actually looks like being in the

Maldives! The turquoise water, untouched nature, and empty lagoons gave the place a magical touch. With our Jeep and tent, we had the opportunity to build a campsite right on the beach. Waking up in the middle of Oman's nature was a completely new experience for me, and it's definitely something I'd recommend!

4 - RAS MADRAKAH

It was a long road to reach our last spot of Ras Madrasah, 600km south of Muscat.

It took us six hours to drive to this spot, but it was well worth it once we saw the beautiful white sand beach. Once we arrived, we found hidden lagoons between the mountains, which are absolute treasures of nature, if you ask me! When we entered the water, we discovered it was salty, and everything floated. Kiting, therefore, was only possible for a short amount of time, but it was a kiting experience I will never forget.

When it wasn't windy, we had the chance to see the beautiful green nature of Oman. Taking the time



“ THIS TRIP HAS HAD A HUGE IMPACT ON MY POINT OF VIEW IN LIFE, AND I AM EXCITED TO ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO DISCOVER THE BEAUTY OF OMAN ”

to enjoy the waterfalls, trees, and lagoons is a must to get the most out of this incredible experience.

This was my first trip to Oman, but definitely not my last. I have already decided to return to Oman next year to host a kitesurfing camp, and I am looking forward to going back to this beautiful place. Looking back, this trip has had a huge impact on my point of view in life, and I am excited to encourage others to discover the beauty of Oman. One day, I hope to see you there!

On The Fly

TRAVEL TALK // BAHAMAS

WORDS SEAN BENNETT PHOTOS KITE BOAT CRUISES

During a week of exploration in the beautiful Bahamas, Kite Boat Cruises took me to some of the most epic places I have ever kited. The wind was awesome, the islands were incredible, and the water was the most insane blue you have ever seen!



It was like a playground with no one else around; great wind, sunshine and the magical feeling that comes from travelling to these remote spots by sailboat. Every day, we would explore a new kite spot, each and every one with beautiful sandy beaches to launch from. The Bahamas has so many different spots with unique features like a new land gap or tree to kitemloop over. On the days without wind, we had the opportunity to go snorkelling and island hopping. We saw an abundance of marine life, swam through the James Bond cave, and swam with pigs!

Sailing made the experience even more memorable, and it was a lot of fun learning some things about sailing and watching the boat set sail to new spots. As kiteboarders, we are always in tune with the wind, and it's so interesting to see how the wind knowledge from kiting transfers over to sailing. Sailing allows you to really connect with the ocean and the elements. Waking up in the morning and looking at the whitecaps is the best way to start your day!

Every day, after breakfast, Captain Aritz would take us on the dinghy to a new beautiful sandy beach for our kite session! Aritz and Ale, the instructor, always kept an eye on the kites from the beach and were ready to help with the dinghy if needed.

On The Fly

TRAVEL TALK // BAHAMAS



On my birthday we loaded the dingy with a ton of gear and set up on a private island. This day we kited and foiled next to the catamaran while Aritz made tacks. FULL SAIL!! It was absolutely unreal to be out there in the crystal blue water kiteboarding alongside the Madrigal V. What an epic day!

While I thought I was going to be eating pasta and sandwiches, as is often the case on a kiteboarding trip, we ate like kings and queens. Chef Lauren did an absolutely amazing job preparing breakfast, lunch and dinner every day. We feasted on fresh poke bowls, tropical red snapper with coconut rice, and even delicious fillet mignon on my birthday! Of course, there were always tasty snacks in between kite sessions, snorkelling and exploring new spots!

I am constantly amazed by the beauty of the Bahamas, the professionalism of Kite Boat Cruises, the quality of the crew and boat, and the killer kitesurfing! The crew is extremely knowledgeable about sailing, kiteboarding and they always have a TON of the latest gear to ride! I can't wait to go back!

Read more about kiteboarding trips in the Bahamas with Kite Boat Cruises in our Travel Guide at IKSURFMAG.com or at KiteBoatCruises.com!



On The Fly

THIS IS TRUE BIG AIR //

JAMIE OVERBEEK

After a strong showing in the recent Cold Hawaii event, Jamie Overbeek was unfortunately knocked out of the event by rider Luca Ceruti. Viewers could see a major difference in their riding styles and approach to big air. We caught up with Jamie Overbeek to get his perspective!

Your action-packed edit, "This is True Big Air Kitesurfing", was very impressive! To you, what defines Big Air?

Well, for me, it's defined by the word BIG in big air; that is the equivalent of extreme height in extreme conditions, 40+ knots at least. In these conditions, daring to perform technical kiteloop variations at 20+ metres with massive horizontal pull, including boardoffs and added rotations with low kite angles (kite horizontal with the rider or even lower) has the wow factor. That, to me, is the definition of big air.

There's some big change in the big air world, which was apparent to anyone that tuned into the recent Cold Hawaii event. Jamie, what types of tricks were getting the top scores in the event?

During the event, it quickly became clear that the prevailing big air tricks that used to get the high scores were no longer the best. This event, the highest scoring tricks were the new double loops and s-loops.

What were the judging criteria that the readers had to work with at Cold Hawaii?

Judging criteria, on paper, were height, extremity, risk and variation, which has always been the case. But, what was notable is that the 70% for height wasn't mentioned anymore. So, that was a sign that things from a judging point of view could be changing compared to previous competitions. Still, it was made

clear that lower jumps with high kite angles and very basic tricks wouldn't be rewarded with big scores. The judges made it clear they were looking for extremity, risk and innovation. On top of that, the variety score given at the end of the heat would count for 25% of the overall score.

There was a trend during the event of riders performing half of their heat on a bigger kite, getting some points on the board, and then swapping to a small kite to do double loops, with the effect of increasing the variety score. Something similar has happened in big air events of years past, but with riders swapping boards with boots for boards with footstraps. Do you think this is a good strategy

Looking at what was scoring high, I think this was probably a smart move for the riders who had a kite that was able to perform secure double loops. This was, in fact, a backdoor to move up the ladder and a smart part of competition strategy. The riders that anticipated this had a good chance to move to the next round. I couldn't use this strategy yet, because I didn't have suitable gear for double looping. Next time? I'll be pulling doubles. You can count on that!

What do you think about the direction that Big Air is going?

I'm convinced that, at the top level, innovation and evolution is necessary and inevitable, and I welcome it. I just think we need to make sure there is a format with a good balance between old and new. My guess is, we will be seeing great things at the upcoming events, and I'm glad I have the chance to be part of it.

Any last words?

Thanks for having me share my view and opinion and, of course, let's keep it safe!



On The Fly

SCOTLAND // AN UNDISCOVERED GEM

Scotland has a season that never ends, with a wide variety of conditions...

Many people will ask, "But isn't it cold in the winter?", and yes, this is true, but that's nothing some good neoprene won't sort out! Additionally, cold water has been shown to boost mental and physical well-being; add an adrenaline-boosting kite surf session to the mix, and you're in for a good time! However, in the grand scheme, the cold becomes irrelevant when you have some of the most epic conditions on your doorstep.

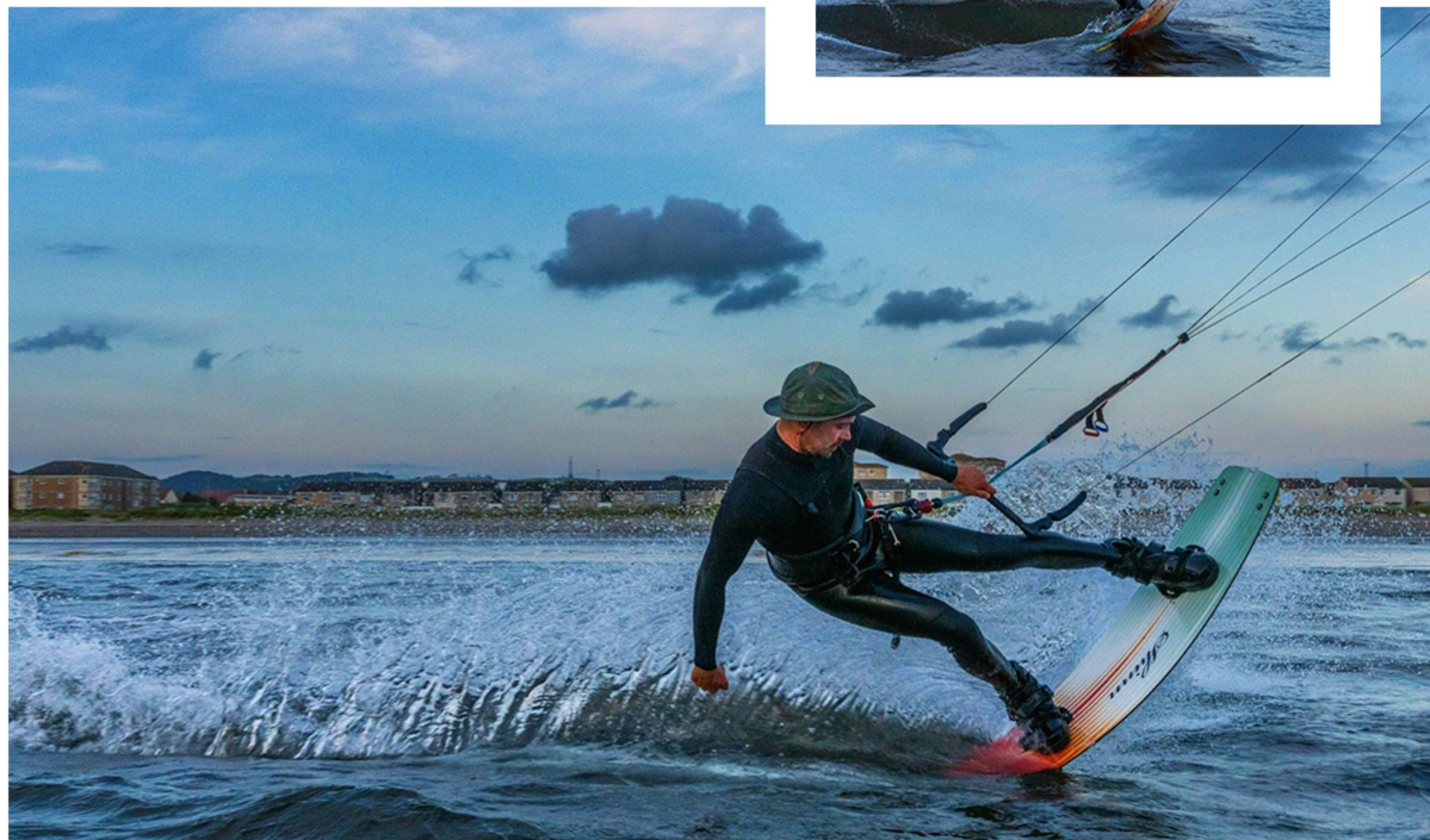
With a prevailing south-westerly direction, the west coast has a fast-growing community of local kitesurfers. Specifically, Troon, one of the biggest kite communities in the UK, will always be warmly welcomed.

During the warmer season, from late March until mid-November, you can expect to witness a huge range of spectacular conditions. They can range from butter-flat perfection for the smoothest freestyle to dramatic storm sessions with rough seas for the ultimate big air experience.

Turning attention to the winter months, Scotland's peak storm season will arrive in all its raw glory from November onwards to March. Strong winds are guaranteed, and small kites become the go-to at weekly sessions. In 2019, we witnessed five major storms within two months, each lasting a few days at a time, including Storm Brendan, Jorge, and Dennis. Multiple personal big air records were broken this season!

On The Fly

SCOTLAND // AN UNDISCOVERED GEM



The undiscovered Scottish Caribbean - this secret is familiar to riders from Scotland and the rest of the UK. Lose yourself in the un-spoilt Outer Hebrides, a vast network of breathtaking islands including Tiree, North Uist, Lewis and Harris. To venture onto these islands, you require a ferry, although once upon the islands, you will find that you require the absolute minimum and will be met with peace and cows walking the roads. These islands make for the perfect van-trip experience. Taking a moment to connect with nature and surrender to the elements truly will leave you feeling revitalised and recharged.

These spots are gems and ones I really cannot recommend enough. Crystal clear turquoise water, white sands, flat water, waves and some of the most constant winds you can find on the globe!





On The Fly

FOIL NEWS // SHINN WORLD

When a new product drops from the team at Shinn, foilers take notice! They've just released their new P2 1200 wing, designed for beginners and to make the learning process a breeze, and for riders who want to get on the water in less than ideal conditions!

"Born from a legend, the all new P2 1200 takes 6 years of kite hydrofoil development to produce what

is potentially the easiest and most versatile foil on the market today.

A foil where all the emphasis has been placed on confidence inspiring stability with amazingly early flight speeds and crazy low stall speeds to match. A foil dedicated to rider progression and we're talking about all levels of rider – beginners to advanced alike.

Intuitive, predictable and stable, the amazingly progressive take off won't surprise even first time foilers and allows the more advanced to focus on their moves rather than their foil control ability."

Click here to find out more!

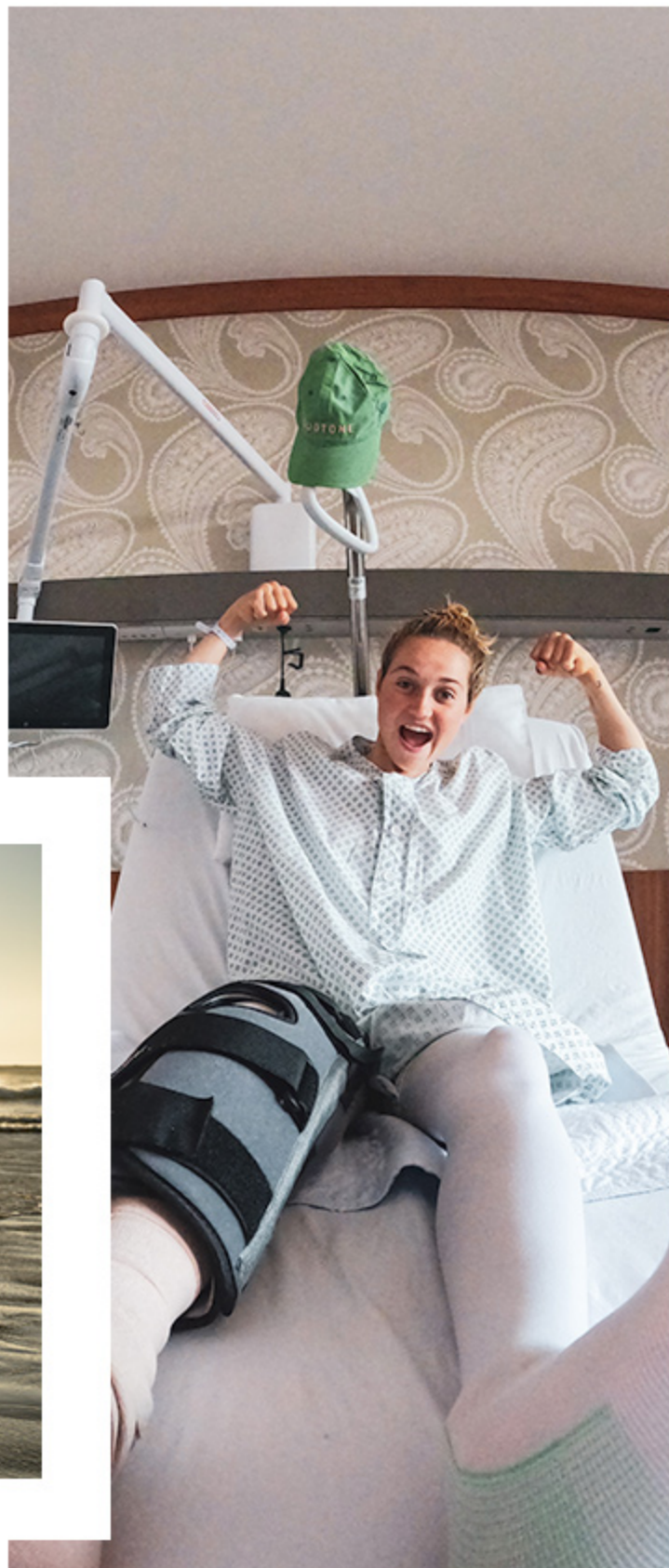


PHOTO ROBERT HAIDUK

BROKEN WINGS // ACCIDENTS IN KITESURFING

WORDS DENIS MAKOLKIN

Not paying attention for half a second on the water, not securing a line correctly or not securing the hook plate on the harness - kiteboarding accidents can happen quickly - and have thousands of reasons. With this article, we want to sensitise you so that your sessions are not only unforgettable, but also safe. Please always remember - you still have many great kite sessions ahead of you, but only one life.



Everyone has had injuries while doing our favourite sport and hopefully asked themselves afterwards - what should I have done differently? How do I build myself back up?

Earlier this year, pro riders Janek Grzegorzewski (@janek.world) and Pippa van Iersel (@pippavaniersel) suffered serious injuries. Both in Spanish Tarifa in a well-known spot. To find out how the pros deal with this issue, I spoke to Pippa van Iersel during her rehab.

Please tell us briefly about yourself and how you got into kitesurfing.

I have been kitesurfing since I was 13 or 14 years old. I live in the Netherlands close to the water. I got into kitesurfing through my father. I compete in freestyle and big air. At the moment I am leading the BAKL (Big Air Kite League) Tour and I have been third in the freestyle three times in the overall freestyle ranking of the GKA World Tour. I am a team rider for Duotone and O'Neill.

At which spot and when did you injure yourself?

I injured myself on 11 May this year in Tarifa at the Balneario.

What were the wind conditions like that day and which kite did you use?

It was a very strong Levante day - with up to 50 knots in the gusts. I was riding a 6m Duotone Dice.

On The Fly

BROKEN WINGS // ACCIDENTS IN KITESURFING



What did you hurt and how badly?

I tore my cruciate ligaments in my knee.

Was surgery necessary?

Yes, the doctors had to perform a cruciate ligament reconstruction surgically.

Was this spot familiar or new to you?

I know the spot well, it's probably the most famous beach for kitesurfers in Europe.

Was your equipment OK?

Yes, everything was fine.

The knee is one of the most stressed joints in the human body. What were the causes of your accident?

I had already suffered an injury in December last year. The cruciate ligaments in my left knee were

partially torn and I had bone bruises on both knees. Since then, I have spent a lot of time in rehab and training, and it went very well. I also had some hard falls in the meantime, but I didn't feel any problems in my left or right knee. Three weeks before the FULL POWER event in Tarifa, I got a stomach infection, took some medication and felt fine, but it took a while for it to disappear. Just one week before the competition, I bruised my left heel. For this reason, I wore a thin neoprene shoe. I think I was compensating too much with my right leg to compensate for the pain in my left leg. Then, during the heat, I fell and injured my right knee.

Did you warm up before the heat?

Yes, I always warm up.

What protective gear did you wear?

Impact vest and an orthosis for my left knee.

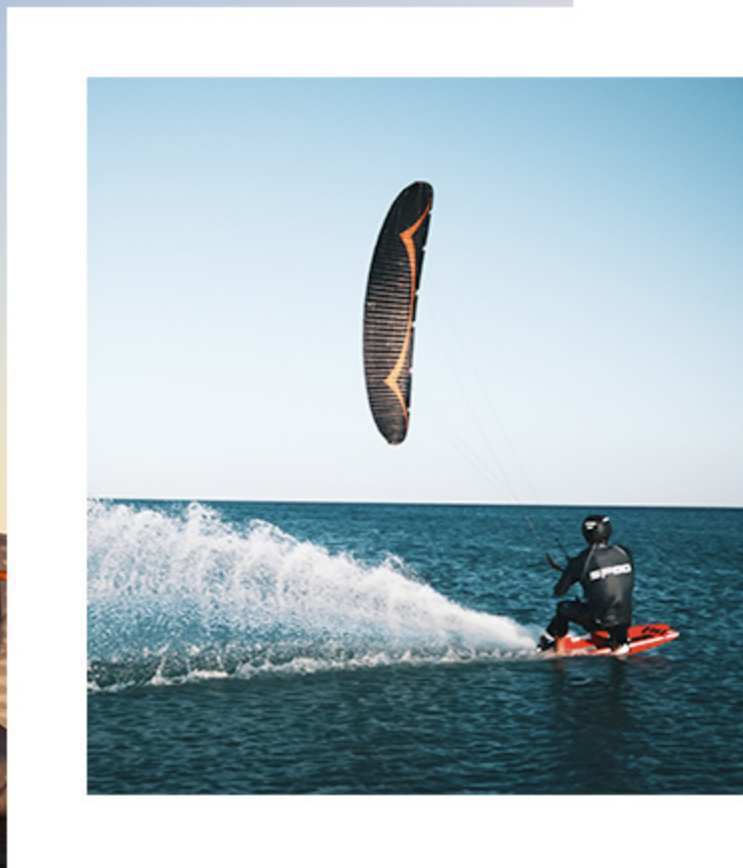
Who helped you?

My parents were there to help me; we went straight to the hospital.

How long did it take for a doctor to examine you and how quickly was the correct diagnosis made?

It was relatively quick; I was checked in to the nearest hospital right in Spain. I was examined. They felt my knee - through the wetsuit! - and told me that everything was fine and sent me home. But, I could clearly feel from the pain that there was definitely something wrong with my right knee. I spoke to my team, Duotone, who had an excellent knee specialist in Austria for me, and sent me there. In just two minutes, he was able to determine that I had completely damaged my cruciate ligaments due to stress and instability.

CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE



On The Fly

CHASING TOP SPEED // SP80

Joining the SP80 Team on their quest was a no-brainer for us. We have been given the duty to design a custom kite, a crucial element for breaking the world record. As a matter of fact, the kite will capture the power of the wind, which will transform it into propulsive force for the boat. The kite is the boat's engine.



For now more than 80 days, Gin Kiteboarding has worked with SP80 to understand the physics behind that innovative challenge. Several kites with a surface area spanning from 20 to 50m² are currently under development. To ensure optimal performances, the kite's size must be adaptable according to wind conditions. A steering wheel will be integrated into the boat's cockpit. A pilot will then be able to control the kite by only using the steering wheel!

But those kites will be very different from the traditional ones. Those ones will be specifically tailored to the boat. Besides, the considerable loads they will have to bear at 80 knots (150 km/h) require fabrics, bridles and lines developed specifically for the record. All of these elements put together require significant research and development work from our kitefoil engineer Hans Bollinger. His remarkable know-how and great experience in the kite and paragliding world allow him to take on this challenge with passion and devotion.

Gin Kiteboarding's high-performance kite coupled with a high-tech boat can only provide enough force and power lift to reach 80 knots (150 km/h) and break the world record!

[Click here to read more about this project!](#)

THE FABRIC OF KITESURFING HISTORY //

Ryan Mizzen: This past September, the annual Kitesurfing Armada festival was set to return to Hayling Island in the UK, which should have been one of the highlights in the kitesurfing calendar. Unfortunately, the event was cancelled, which, for those who've keenly awaited the event, was a big disappointment. But, for some exhibitors, months of hard work have gone into preparation for the event. One of those exhibitors was Louise Hadlow, who runs my personal favourite stand at the Armada. Louise's son is Aaron Hadlow, the five-time world champion kitesurfer and two-time Red Bull King of the Air champion.



Louise is a very talented seamstress, who had a brilliant idea to help avoid used kites being sent to landfill. She now upcycles Aaron Hadlow's used kites by turning them into an incredible selection of one of a kind bags. These include backpacks, beach bags, laptop bags, handbags, holdalls, dog walking bags, phone bags, sling bags, chalk bags, rucksacks, toiletry bags, and shopping bags, amongst a wider selection, which occasionally includes a teddy bear!

These strong, versatile and eye-catching bags generate a ton of interest at the Armada and Louise's stall is packed on the first day, but almost entirely sold out by the last day of the festival. These bags aren't just special because they're unique, they're sought after because they're part of the fabric of kitesurfing history.

Crystal Veness caught up with Louise Hadlow to find out more about her and her business, Sewn Again.

Louise, what inspired you to upcycle old kites into functional items?

The spark that ignited my journey into recycling Aaron's old kites into functional bags, arose from two key factors. The first being when Aaron changed his sponsorship to a new brand. The second factor came about when we were moving house.

Aaron had a long history with Flexifoil and over the course of many years we'd accumulated old, broken and prototype kites. All of which ended up being stored in our garage. Whilst sorting through the kites trying to decide how to dispose of them, we quickly came to realise that we couldn't just destroy them and waste all that expensive material - we couldn't just send them to landfill. We eventually thought about transforming them into bags even though I'd never made one before!



On The Fly

THE FABRIC OF KITESURFING HISTORY //

What is it like working with kite material?

Are there challenges using this sort of material in a sewing machine?

There are two types of material that are used to make kites. One is RipStop (the thinner material, which forms the main part of the canopy) and the other is Dacron (the thicker material, from the leading edge, struts and tips). Both offer challenges when making kite bags.

The RipStop is very slippery to work with and doesn't grip the small feed teeth that push it through the sewing machine, so trying to keep a straight seam in the early days was a real challenge. Working with the Dacron is even more difficult. It's tough material with no give, which is even more slippery, and doesn't want to be folded. So working with both these materials was a real learning curve.



Is it sometimes an emotional experience working with equipment that your son has ridden to achieve special milestones in his career? Is there a kite you've taken apart that had an especially meaningful story behind it?

All the kites that Aaron has used over the 20+ years are special, because of the memories they've created along the way and the milestones they have marked in Aaron's career. One of my favourites was the old Flexifoil Storm (they had some lightning bolts and turtles on them, which make nice details on the bags). I remember Aaron had a photoshoot in Shark Bay on this kite, and it was a beautiful sunny location. Then, more recently, the Duotone (old North) pale blue kites with all the Red Bull logos on them were also a great favourite of mine. But, any with the Hadlow logo are still my favourites, as seeing Aaron's name on the kites makes me immensely proud.

Click here to read more of the interview with Louise Hadlow!

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!

#1 HOW TO DARKSLIDE 2 EASY STEPS // KITEBOARDING SA MASTERCLASS

Steven Akkersdijk's tutorial on how to nail a darkslide in two easy steps lands at #1 in this issue. Keen to learn something new? This video is one to watch!



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#2 HANNAH WHITELEY X CABRINHA - OFF THE GRID IN SCOTLAND

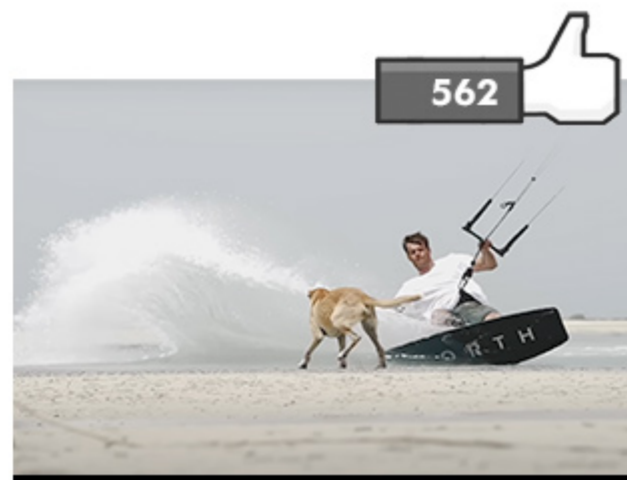
Check out this masterpiece of a movie by Andy Troy, following Hannah Whiteley's trip to Scotland! You'll be planning your own trip to the Isle of Tiree after watching this!



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#3 NICK JACOBSEN - IN QATAR

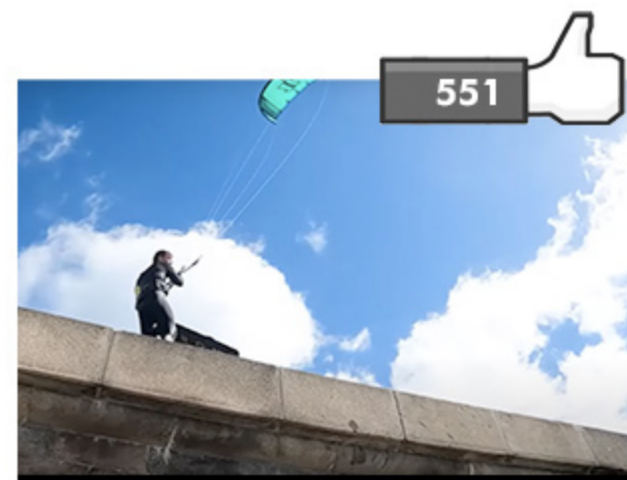
No one makes entertaining videos quite like Nick Jacobsen! So, when we heard about a 25-minute movie in the works, we knew it would be a good one. Grab a coffee and watch Nick taking on Qatar!



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#4 URBAN KITEBOARDING WITH NICK JACOBSEN EPISODE #2

Yep, Nick's also claimed #4 – told you his movies were entertaining! In episode 2, Nick explores urban features on a deserted island in Copenhagen – 5 minutes of pure fun!



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

MOVIE NIGHT

RIDER POSITO MARTINEZ
PHOTO LACI KOBULSKY



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