

APRIL / MAY 23

## WELCOME TO IKSURFMAG

Welcome to Issue 98 of IKSURFMAG, the World's Number One Kitesurfing Magazine! Storm chasing and swell hunting have been front-and-centre news this season, and we're here for it! In this issue, it's all about the extremes, from 70 knots in Tarifa with Ruben Lenten to an ice cold experience in Finland with Rita Arnaus. Editor Crystal Veness takes a look at the park scene in Patagonia and Publisher Rou Chater

heads to F-ONE headquarters in France. Go behind the cover with Jesse Richman and hear from Hannah Whiteley on the Intriguing Beings podcast, and that's not all! You'll meet the Rising Stars of Egypt, get to know extreme van lifer Kaimar Halliste, and follow the foil adventures of Andrea Zust. There's Tech Focus, Trick Techniques, and so much more inside Issue 98! Jump in!

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**- JESSE RICHMAN -**

**PARKED IN PATAGONIA / THE ICE EXPERIENCE / RISING STARS  
RUBEN LENTEN / HANNAH WHITELEY / TECHNIQUE / TECH FOCUS & MORE!**

THE WORLD'S NUMBER ONE KITESURF MAGAZINE



HIGH PERFORMANCE FREERIDE / BIG AIR



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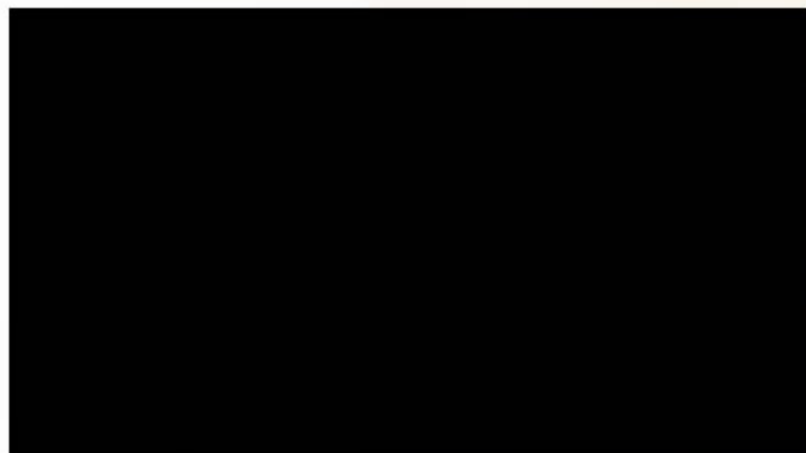
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6 / 7 / 8 / 9 / 10 / 12

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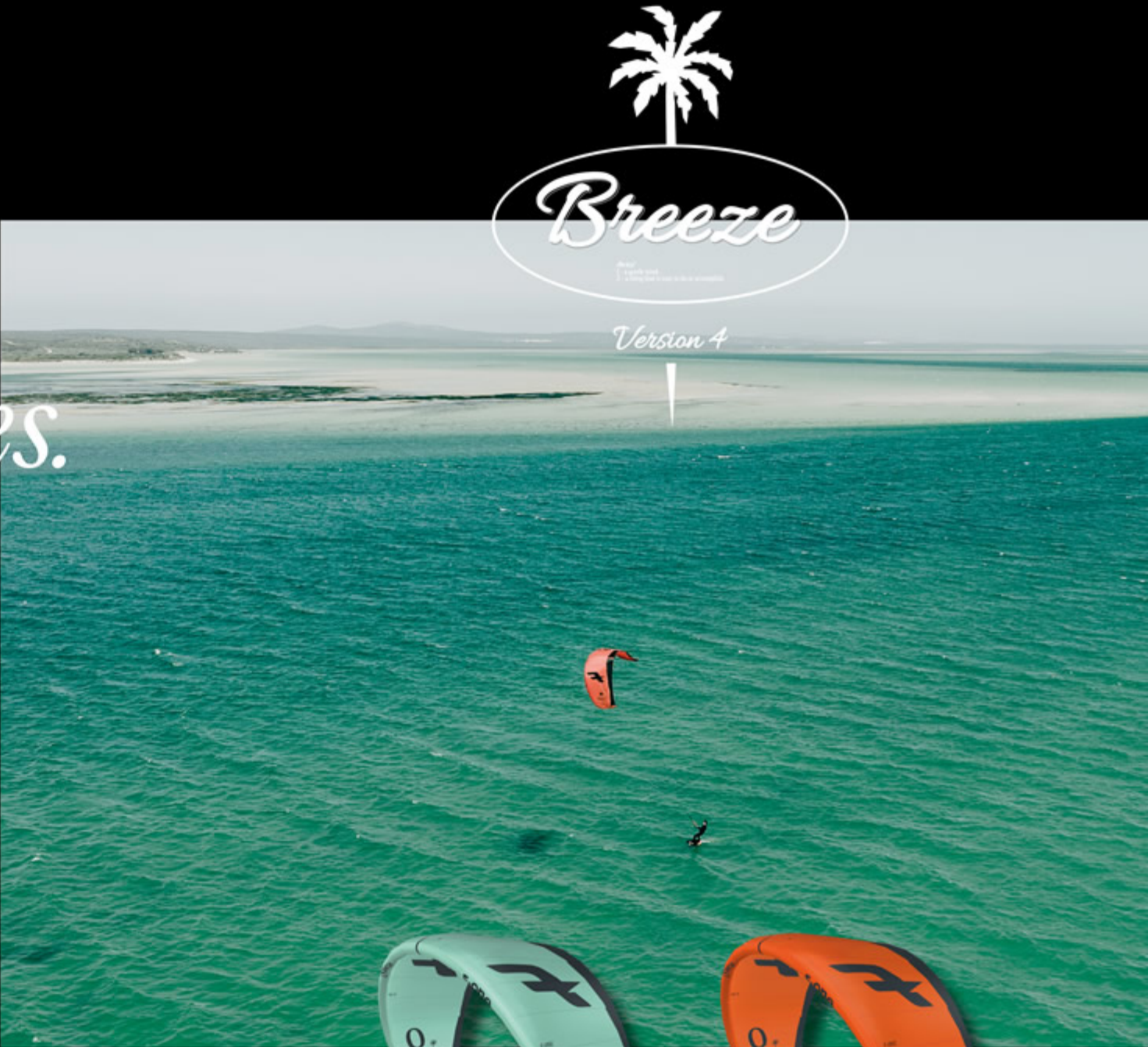
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Photo : Andy Troy

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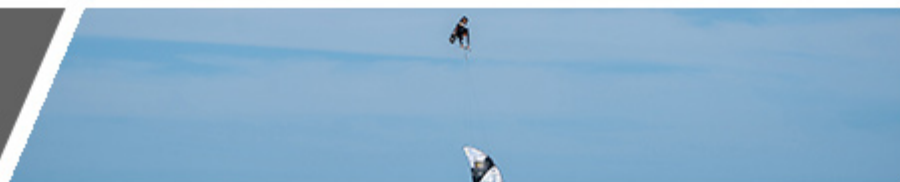
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COMPETITION



EDITORIAL



PARKED IN PATAGONIA



THE ICE EXPERIENCE



INTRIGUING BEINGS:  
HANNAH WHITELEY



THE INTERVIEW -  
KAIMAR HALLISTE



TECH FOCUS



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ANOTHER LEVEL - F-ONE



THRIVING IN  
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ON THE FLY



TRIED & TESTED



RISING STARS



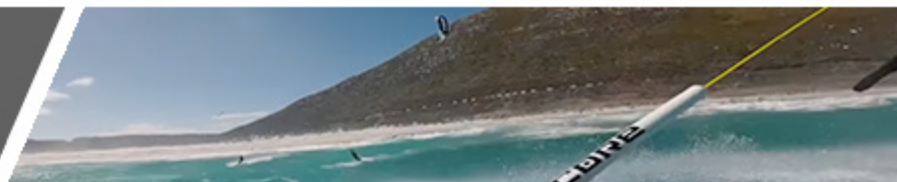
INSIGHT - ANDREA ZUST



LIGHTROOM



MOVIE NIGHT



FRONT COVER JESSE RICHMAN  
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pinch of salt. Kitesurfing is a dangerous  
sport & none of the activities depicted  
within this magazine should be  
participated in without full instruction in  
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PABLO AMORES CATCHING SOME SHADE  
PHOTO ANTONIO HERRERA TRUJILLO







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## ISSUE 98 THE PRICE YOU PAY

The windy season in Cape Town is drawing to a close. After a season reminiscent of pre-Covid times (and the crowds that came with it), it's a surprise to look down the beach on a sunny, windy day and see just a handful of kites on the water. Unfortunately, the change of season comes with a few more rainy days and not quite as many sessions, but you can't have it all!

With so many windy days in a season and a wide range of conditions, Cape Town has become a popular hub for kite brands to put their latest products to the test. It's always fun moseying down to the beach to set eyes on the latest prototypes from major brands and see what's happening in the middle of the development process. It's even more fun to spot new, fully branded kit before it's been announced to the market.

After a season of scoping out what's coming to the market soon, one thing is for sure: The lightweight materials train has left the innovation station, and everyone who doesn't have a ticket is missing the ride.

These new materials come in several different forms, and it's not just the shiny gold Aluula that has become the talk of the town. Top kite brands put a lot of time, investment, and money into achieving the perfect combination of high performance, durability, and astonishingly low weight. Unfortunately for us as consumers, you may also find that your wallet has achieved groundbreaking lightweight properties after buying these new kites!

So, are these ultra-premium kites featuring unbelievable new materials worth the cost? It's not a yes or no answer. Simply put, most of the market doesn't need it, and most of us would barely notice

the performance difference between a kite using standard materials and a kite using lightweight materials. In 2023, a kite is a kite; pretty much all of them will get you out on the water!

Then again, not all of us are Ferrari customers either - I'll gladly admit that I'm very satisfied with my Kia Picanto and its ability to get me to and from the beach. Just like I'm perfectly happy with my not-premium-range kite and not-fully-carbon board. That said, I'm not the entire market. When the biggest kite brands put so many resources into materials development, the demand is there.

Development flourishes when early adopters put their money behind these futuristic products and materials. Some of us doubted that winging would take off,

and others doubted anyone would ever justify the price for Aluula kites. But it has, and they have. Hell, some of us used to be windsurfers and thought kiting was for kooks. Yet, here we are now, so perhaps we should consider running towards change instead of shying away from it!

Being an early adopter doesn't come without some risk. Let's go back to automotive metaphors, which seem to have become a habit for me: Those that purchased the first electric cars or bought the first release of a new model vehicle would often be subject to the quirks or dependability issues that cropped up over time. After putting enough mileage on these vehicles, flaws would start to show that would be recalled or resolved in time for the next edition.

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RIDER EVAN KLIJN  
PHOTO ARNAUD PLAS





Manufacturers discover room for improvement every year, and car reliability often gets better the longer a model has existed on the market... with a few exceptions, of course. Life (or your car dealer) can throw you a lemon when you least expect it!

The same can be said for kites featuring high-tech, lightweight materials. Only time will tell how they hold up. For the cautious among us, perhaps it is prudent to wait a few years until kite manufacturers have ironed out the kinks. Or, perhaps not? Those buying premium lightweight kites can, in most cases, afford them. And are, hopefully, aware of the risk.

It is incredibly exciting to see our industry innovating and so many consumers opening their wallets and supporting this growth. We wouldn't see the rapid development we have seen in the past few years if it weren't for these early adopters who have come to the table. To all the groundbreaking, trendsetting kites out there: Thanks for coming to the party. The whole industry benefits from your purchasing decisions.

Looking at what's on the market now and what's on its way, it's clear that we've only cracked the surface of materials innovation, and there's a lot more yet to come. The kite brands that have taken on the challenge of working with new materials have shouldered a lot of responsibility, and hats off to them for keeping our lives as kites fresh and exciting.

We can't wait to see what's next, and you can be sure that we'll be chasing up all of the news that goes along with it so we can share it with you! Stay tuned!!

*Crystal Veness*  
Editor



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An aerial photograph of a kitesurfer riding a large, powerful wave. The water is a deep teal color, and the wave's crest is white with foam. A blue kite with white and yellow accents is visible in the lower right, pulling the rider. The rider is a small figure on the wave's face.

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Rider: Paulino Pereira

Photo: Ricardo Pinto



RIDER ERIC RIENSTRA

WORDS CRYSTAL VENESS PHOTOS ANDRE MAGARAO

Park riding, a niche segment of kite sports, is one of the closest-knit communities in competitive kiteboarding. After a quiet few years due to the pandemic, park riding is experiencing a revival, starting with the first Kite Park League event of the year in Patagonia!

# PARKED IN PATAGONIA



## “ THIS EVENT OFFERED THE BIGGEST PRIZE PURSES AND THE BEST PARTIES EVER SEEN IN THE WORLD OF KITEBOARDING ”

Ah, Patagonia. You'll be forgiven if the first thing that comes to mind is the world-famous brand, considering its history of event sponsorship within kiteboarding, supporting events like the Hood River Slider Jam, the Cape Hatteras Wave Classic, and the Triple-S Invitational. Park riding was in its heyday in 2019 when the Triple-S Invitational held its final event after a 13-year run. This event offered the biggest prize purses and the best parties ever seen in the world of kiteboarding, and its cancellation was the end of an era. However, it was well-timed, as the pandemic struck the following year, which effectively stopped international kiteboarding events as we knew them - for a while.

In this article, we're talking about the original Patagonia, the one that inspired the popular outerwear brand's logo and one of the most beautiful geographical regions in the world. We're taking a trip south - far, far south - to Argentinian Patagonia, the site of the first event in the 2023 Kite Park League World Tour!

Xander Raith, an athlete that lives in two worlds as a professional kiteboarder and semi-pro snowboarder, was right at home in the scenery of Villa La Angostura, with flat water at his feet and mountain peaks high above. As Chief Editor of the KPL, Xander took on the task of documenting the event, describing the surrounding environment beautifully: "Kiteboarding often takes place in some of the most beautiful locations, and the Patagonia Invitational was no exception.







**“THE PHOTOS ACCOMPANYING THIS ARTICLE PERFECTLY SHOWCASE THE INCREDIBLE ENVIRONMENT THESE ATHLETES TURNED INTO THEIR PLAYGROUND.”**

The event was held on the water's edge of a remote island in Lake Nahuel Huapi. The lake itself and the surrounding vibrant, green Patagonian mountain range co-existed as a pristine slice of unfiltered beauty that became unimaginably alluring with the temporary addition of a world-class kite park.

The park consisted of five individualised features that floated in stark contrast to the surreal crystal clear glacial water that riders had the privilege to ride on throughout the entirety of the event."

It sounds magnificent, doesn't it? If you closed your eyes, you could picture it. Luckily, you don't have to because top photographer Andre Magarao was on the scene, and the photos accompanying this article perfectly showcase the incredible environment these athletes turned into their playground.

In this article, we've caught up with three major players in park riding and the men that stood atop the podium in Patagonia; Noè Font, Eric Rienstra, and Ramiro Gallart, who was the glue that brought this event together in his home country of Argentina!

Before we dive in, let's take a closer look at what park riding is, for those that have little exposure to this avenue of the sport. We asked Noè Font, one of the most talented and creative kites on the planet in this modern day, to describe it: "To begin with; for me, what makes kiteboarding such a beautiful sport is that you can perform very different activities under the same kite.



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PHOTO: MITCHELL DOYLE MARKGRAAFF

RIDER: JASON VAN DER SPUY





**“ YOU CAN'T JUST GO TO ANY BEACH AND RIDE FEATURES WITH YOUR KITE. YOU NEED A CREW OF RIDERS WHO ARE WILLING TO PUT IN THE TIME AND EFFORT TO BUILD THESE OBSTACLES ”**

This being said, park riding is what I consider to be the most boardsports-esque discipline, which sits closer to the other sports I love, like surfing, skateboarding and snowboarding. In that regard, we take a lot of inspiration from them and incorporate tricks and different ideas into our style of kiteboarding.

Take a pause and watch Park Is Easy for a short and sweet introduction to park riding. Noè expands on the unique aspects of this discipline, saying, "As I said in my ION "Write Your Own Chapter" video, what makes riding in the park so special is the community aspect of it. You can't just go to any beach and ride features with your kite. You need a crew of riders who are willing to put in the time and effort to build these obstacles. That's what makes this discipline stand out from the rest; you are practising an individual sport, but without your community, there is no action."

Park riding is one of the most tight-knit communities in competitive kiteboarding. When your riding area is limited to a small pond with a few wake park style features installed by the riders themselves, there is no choice but to become close. Riders make their way into a smooth rotation, taking turns hitting the features, only interrupted by the occasional wipeout, resulting in a chorus of friendly jeers and casual ribbing. Conversely, when a rider sticks something truly impressive for the first time or achieves an NBD (Never Been Done) trick, the athletes around them erupt into excited cheers.

RIDER NOÈ FONT





**“ SOME EXPERIENCE WITH FEATURES AT A CABLE WAKE PARK WILL HELP YOU COME INTO A KITE PARK AND HOLD YOUR OWN. ”**

This is a group that aspiring pro kiteboarders often dream of joining, but achieving a seat at the table is no easy feat. So, how does one make their break into park riding? Perhaps the best person to ask is one of the riders on the outside. Matias Lee is an Argentinian athlete on the FLYSURFER international team. While he is not a known name in the park riding scene, he is an excellent example of a rider that gave it a shot, simultaneously proving that one doesn't need a C kite or a board purpose-built for park - he competed in this event on freeride equipment!

Matias says, "I wouldn't say I'm a park rider; I spent most of my time practising freestyle as a kid. I got into park while exploring the different faces of kiting to have fun. It is always nice to learn something new and feel the rush of progress - that exponential learning at the start. I never really tried it until a good friend of mine, Rami Gallart, introduced me to the cable park and later convinced me to go to Hood River. In park, you need a community; the park depends on the will of everyone."

When stepping out for the first time, it certainly helps to have the support of someone like Rami, one of the most respected riders in the park scene. Adapting to park riding is quite a bit easier if you're a high achiever in another category, such as freestyle, or another sport entirely, as was the case with Eric and Xander in snowboarding and Rami in skateboarding. Some basic freestyle moves and some experience with features at a cable wake park will help you come into a kite park and hold your own.





**“PARK RIDING IS GOING THROUGH A TRANSITION, AND PERHAPS NOW IS THE BEST TIME TO STEP IN AND GIVE IT A GO.”**

Camera skills might also come in handy because it seems like all of the best park riders are top-notch content creators as well!

Kite parks are few and far between, with the only permanent slider parks in Hood River and Cape Hatteras in the US. Having had the good fortune to travel to and ride in

both slicks, albeit never on the sliders and rails themselves, I can confirm it's an intimidating scene to be around. Everybody knows everybody, and their talent is through the roof! Someone aspiring to enter the world of park would need a whole lot of confidence and some thick skin. Think of it like switching terms in the middle of your senior year of high school. Being the odd man or woman out is uncomfortable, to put it lightly. Unless you can prove yourself quickly by stomping a solid trick off the kicker or back lipping the rail, you may be on your back foot.

If you constantly interrupt the rotation with crashes - not a big deal in big kite spots, but a major disruption in small kite parks - you might find yourself on the outside pretty quickly.

Though everything has its ups and downs, the park scene is no exception. It's clear that park riding is going through a transition, and perhaps now is the best time to step in and give it a go. Eric noted that most of the top-rated park riders took some significant steps in their personal life during COVID, some getting married, others starting families, and others taking on full-time jobs. He adds, "They will be back, though. Once a park rat, always a park rat!"





Fill Panel View

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## 2023 TRIAD

ALL-AROUND FREERIDE/WAVE  
SIZES: 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 14

Quality, durability and heritage are undisputable. Re-designed for 2023, we kept the perfect Freeride kite and added an extra wave feel to it. Direct bar feel and more instant power makes this year's Triad the perfect kite to add to your quiver.





**"THE TALENT IN THIS SCENE IS ABSOLUTELY UNREAL, AND THE PROGRESSION IT FOSTERS IS SERIOUSLY IMPRESSIVE."**

Rami also recognised the passing of the torch, saying, "A few of the legends that started this movement have moved on to their next chapter, and now it's our time to bring it up. A new generation is coming with many new riders from different places. We definitely will miss all these guys, and hopefully, they will still join us in a few events, but it is time to expand the frontier of park riding out of the US to assure the continuity of the discipline that we love."

One of the biggest conversations surrounding park riding is what is holding it back. The talent in this scene is absolutely unreal, and the progression it fosters is seriously impressive. But most of the kiteboarding world has never seen a kite park in person and never will. The riders weigh in on the issues, Noè noting the lack of access to a spot, crew of friends, or the resources required to build a slider park. Eric adds that the perception of park as a dangerous sport is another major factor. He says, "We need to do a better job of showing how easy it can be so that people stop thinking it is out of their league. For anyone who thinks they will never be able to do it, hitting a kicker hooked in is pretty much as easy as sending it off a wave!"

Ramiro takes a more philosophical approach when addressing the park community's barriers, looking at human nature as a limiting factor. "It's hard, and most people want to do what's easiest. Everybody wants to avoid learning. This has been reinforced in every aspect of our daily life, especially in social media."

RIDER ERIC RIENSTRA





**“PRETTY MUCH EVERYBODY THAT HAS TRIED IT LOVES IT - YOU JUST NEED TO GO THROUGH THAT LEARNING STAGE.”**

They all want this dopamine rush of a reel, like, reaction, and almost no one actually spends the time to read something with a message with actual value (thanks to everyone actually reading this). As we lose the struggle, we also lose the reward; because of our nature, we need the challenge. And that's why once you overcome the first struggle, the satisfaction you get is unmeasurable and pushes you for much more."

On how to break past this barrier, Rami continues, "I think the way to overcome this is just by showing that pretty much everybody that has tried it loves it - you just need to go through that learning stage. We can make learning easier by building parks and giving clinics, but we need to focus more on the reward you get and the community it builds. We must tell our stories and let everyone know we can enjoy the smallest things. In Hood River, locals at 60 years old go hooked in with their skimboards through the sliders. There is no need for impact or going gnarly; a hooked in cruise in the park can be super fun too."

Every park rider is in agreement: Community is key. The park community is super passionate, from the core crew that travels the world together to the new riders they meet in the local spots. Eric says, "They ride park because it is the way they like to ride, not for fame and fortune." Rami agrees, "We don't do events to compete and try to get a title. The main thing that gets us all together is sharing sessions, trying new setups and pushing the sport. Of course, when you compete, you want to win, but that's not what drives us. Most of the time, we just want to ride and shoot."









**“THE HARD WORK IS ANOTHER BIG FACTOR, AS MANY OF US PUT IN SO MUCH WORK AND LOGISTICS BEHIND THE SCENES TO MAKE THE SESSIONS HAPPEN.”**

Another strength of the park community is its creativity; seemingly every top park rider is also a whiz behind the camera or in the editing room. There is as much room for creativity on the water as off. Noë shares his perspective: "I like to think that riders are forced to be more creative in many ways. Coming up with new tricks, different lines,

and new ways of riding the same feature, even building new features, it's a creative process from top to bottom. You'll find a lot of the park riders are very creative people outside of the water as well. The hard work is another big factor, as many of us put in so much work and logistics behind the scenes to make the sessions happen. You definitely can't be a lazy person to do this." Oh, and back to the topic of his film, *Park is Easy*, he adds, "Riding park is most definitely not easy - in case someone didn't get the pun."

Ramiro examines the shift away from the boardsport mentality in the sport as a whole,

"Kiteboarding in the last couple of years has put its focus on the average rider that doesn't really care what's happening in the sport in terms of tricks, videos, or kite culture. It's all about new technology or how I can have more carbon in my bar or board. There is nothing wrong with searching for the improvement of the gear, as that opens the door to progress in riding, as seen in the big air discipline. But, when this becomes an obsession where the videos from brands are only about selling their new development and technology - like if they were a tech company - instead of sharing the passion for the sport and pushing the boundaries of what can be done, we are losing our souls as a sport."



# EL CAMINO

FINDING OUR WAY TO CHILE  
FIRST CHAPTER 4.II.23

RIDEENGINE





**“THERE'S ALSO AN EXCEPTIONAL OPPORTUNITY TO EXPERIENCE MORE CULTURES AND INVITE MORE RIDERS INTO THE FOLD.”**

Without this, we lose the sense of community, the admiration for the ones that made a change, and the drive from younger generations to be like their idols. If we lose this, then every rider becomes a passenger on a train that only cares about getting to the next station rather than where that train will end up. That's what we are pursuing for the future of park riding: bringing back the boardsport mentality to kiteboarding.

With the commitment and continuing work of passionate park riders to grow this sport, what does the future hold? Eric points to the number of features increasing and the growing use of natural elements, allowing more people to dabble in park style. He has noticed big air riders like Nick Jacobsen incorporating dock rails into his media, showing a whole frontier that remains to be explored. Noë has seen freestyle riders taking more interest in the park scene, pointing towards more growth in the future. He sees a bright future and is proud to be part of a community of genuine athletes who aren't there for business or profit but where everyone is doing it for the love.

Now that the Kite Park League has expanded to primarily global events, starting with the Patagonia Invitational, there's also an exceptional opportunity to experience more cultures and invite more riders into the fold. Eric's favourite part of this event was riding with the local Argentine shredders, where everyone was so stoked to have a park to ride and were sending it hard and cheering for each other - it was the highest energy session he's had in a long time.

RIDER ERIC RIENSTRA











## “ THE PARK SCENE IS QUITE POSSIBLY THE BEST EXAMPLE OF HOW YOUR KITEBOARDING COMMUNITY CAN BECOME YOUR FAMILY ”

For Ramiro, seeing his park community connect with the people he knew from home in such a unique location was incredibly emotional and gratifying. With forty people from all over the world sitting at the same table, playing ping pong, drinking fernet, and eating asado, it was a real celebration of life and community.

For Noè, his highlight was how Argentina welcomed them all with open arms and allowed the event to happen. As he said, it takes a town to make things like this happen on their modest budgets, and everyone who entered the event was one hundred percent down for the cause. He says, "It's inspiring to go to a new place you've never been to before or heard of much kite park action and see how many people are so stoked to do it. I'm looking forward to going back."

As someone that only found my way onto a kiteboard in 2015, I've always watched the park community with great curiosity. While it hasn't reached the popularity of the big air scene, freestyle scene, or the spectacle that is hydrofoil racing, it is an important style of kiteboarding that is focused on the soul of the sport. qIt is a community like no other; these riders travel, live, ride, and create together, and all in pursuit of park riding progression and encouraging the expansion of this niche segment of kiteboarding.

The park scene is quite possibly the best example of how your kiteboarding community can become your family and all the highs and lows that come with it.



**“ WE’RE LOOKING FORWARD TO  
SEEING WHAT’S NEXT AND, OF  
COURSE, WATCHING THE  
NEXT EVENT ”**

With talented riders and passionate athletes like Ramiro Gallart, Eric Rienstra, and Noè Font representing and advocating for the growth and success of park riding, we’re looking forward to seeing what’s next and, of course, watching the next event, kicking off in Sicily in May!

Click [here](#) to read the full recap of the Kite Park League Patagonia event by Ramiro Gallart.



RIDER RAMIRO GALLART





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Rita Arnaus embarked on the trip of a lifetime in Finland, an unforgettable experience with thrilling adventures and breathtaking landscapes. From drifting a Porsche on ice to snowkiting, split boarding, and witnessing the stunning Northern Lights; Read about her insane adventure in this exclusive feature article!

WORDS RITA ARNAUS PHOTO PORSCHE

# THE ICE EXPERIENCE





**“THE JAW-DROPPING BEAUTY OF THOSE SNOW-COVERED LANDSCAPES ASTOUNDED ME. IT WAS AS IF WE WERE ENTERING A MOVIE.”**

When I heard Porsche was planning a trip to Finland and I was invited, I had no idea what to expect. Before even hearing the itinerary, I was already excited! I'm accustomed to travelling to warm climates, though, so the first challenge was figuring out how much clothing to pack for the upcoming Finnish adventure. I had to be

ready for subzero conditions and venture well outside my comfort zone. But, no matter the temperature, I knew this would be an adventure to remember!

From the moment I touched down in Lapland, Finland, I was unable to keep my mouth closed. The jaw-dropping beauty of those snow-covered landscapes astounded me. It was as if we were entering a movie.

When you think about a kiteboarder travelling to a snow-covered destination,

you would naturally picture that person being pulled across the snow by a kite in front of steep mountains and wintry landscapes. But that image will have to wait because this trip started with a unique experience that we kites don't often get to try!

Near Levi, a small town in Finland, I was driven by Porsche to their Ice Driving Experience. After a short drive, we arrived at a large, snow-covered area filled with tracks and cosy little houses where we could have lunch and relax. This would be the setting of our first excursion on ice in Finland.



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It was a well-planned and organised experience that began with the Porsche engineers explaining how drifting works and how to manage the car on the snow and while drifting on ice. It is so different compared to normal roads; everything happens so fast!

Once I had my lesson and understood what I had to do, they put me behind the steering wheel of a Porsche 911 4S and let me tell you, I had one of the best experiences ever drifting and sliding on the snow. The instructors were helpful and professional and equipped me with a walkie-talkie so they could share instructions while I was driving.

We started on basic tracks to get the hang of it, and as we increased the difficulty, it got more insane! I could feel the moments when I was too stubborn and overthinking, but after many hours of practice, I began to gain confidence and believe in myself. By the final track, I was surging with adrenaline but up for the challenge.

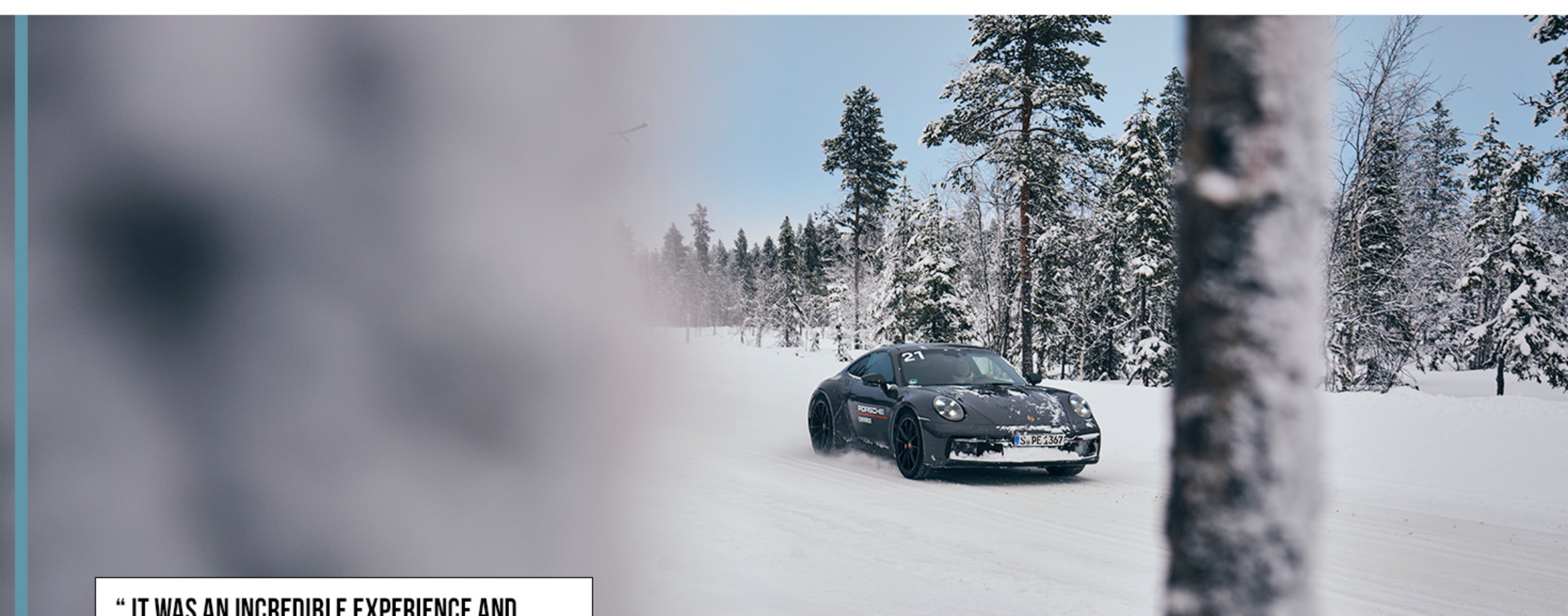
The last track was the most challenging one, winding through a forest where there was no room for mistakes! Keeping in mind the indications from the teachers and trusting my instincts, I could navigate the track smoothly and enjoy the drive.

Learning how to control a car while drifting around the snow was a dream come true. It was surprisingly emotional, and I even had tears in my eyes. I remember that feeling of being overcome with absolute joy and freedom well, and I know I've felt that burst of emotion before - on a kite. It was incredible to feel it again in this environment; I get goosebumps just thinking about it.

**“ WE STARTED ON BASIC TRACKS TO GET THE HANG OF IT, AND AS WE INCREASED THE DIFFICULTY, IT GOT MORE INSANE! ”**







**“ IT WAS AN INCREDIBLE EXPERIENCE AND DEFINITELY ONE OF THE MOST EPIC MOMENTS I'VE HAD IN MY LIFE ”**

Overall, it was an incredible experience and definitely one of the most epic moments I've had in my life; I still can't put into words all the fun I had! I'm already dreaming of the day I'll drive on snow again - I can only hope it will be in a car as powerful as this one!

After The Ice Experience was ticked off my bucket list, I was ready for the next challenge and one that I couldn't wait to try for the first

time: snowkiting! We spent the next few days trying to snowkite with poor conditions and little visibility. Finally, we got the best weather we could have hoped for. Finland delivered us sunny skies with constant wind and soft powder. Well, it was sunny, but it was also -20°C! Luckily, I'd packed enough layers that I could forget about the cold and focus on what was about to be another incredible experience.

On this trip, I was fortunate to have a professional team that prepared me for the

whole adventure, and we could make the most of my first time snowkiting. I was curious how the kite would react in such winds and temperatures, but it was beyond my expectations. I was blown away by how easy it felt to ride and jump! I felt immediately confident with basic jumps, back rolls and front rolls, so I tried unhooked tricks as I would normally do on the water.

The wind from the mountains gives you plenty of hang time, which makes jumping and floating in the air easier and super fun. Landing on the soft powder was a satisfying and unique experience, too!





Another fun aspect of snowkiting is as the mountain shapes around you change, so does the wind. You can find yourself riding the mountain in all different wind directions on the same day, sometimes with the kite and other times just by harnessing gravity.

I enjoyed exploring this beautiful mountainous region with just my kite and the snowboard. The spot had more rounded mountains, which were not too tall or too steep.

“ ENJOYED EXPLORING  
THIS BEAUTIFUL  
MOUNTAINOUS REGION  
WITH JUST MY KITE AND  
THE SNOWBOARD ”



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**" BEING ABLE TO GLIDE THROUGH THIS PRISTINE SCENE WITH JUST MY KITE WAS INCREDIBLE. "**

They were ideal for cruising uphill using the power of the kite and flying downhill on the snowboard, forgetting about the kite on the way down! On these hills, there were no roads, chair lifts, or any other way up, so being able to glide through this pristine scene with just my kite was incredible.

After that perfect day of snowkiting in the breathtaking Finnish mountains, the most fun and exciting activities were done. But travelling to a new country isn't all about action and adrenaline. I had never been that far north in the globe, so I spent the rest of my trip looking to try out as many new and fun activities as I could; I wanted to experience Finland properly.

One of the top goals for my trip was to see the Northern Lights, and late one night, I got my wish. It was a clear night, and we got the call that the Northern Lights would be visible. The whole team hurried to get ready, and as we drove towards the mountains, we could already see them! I was in absolute awe; it was as if the sky was alive and dancing with those lights. It was an incredibly beautiful and unforgettable moment.

With no more wind on the horizon, we decided to visit the ice baths, where you jump into a hole in the ice into freezing water and then go back into the sauna to warm up. We also went on a dog sledding tour, and seeing how the huskies manage the cold and snow so well was incredible. I was surprised to see the sled team so eager to run in the snow while pulling the sled.





I can't stay off a board for long, though, so we joined the local guides for another fun first: split boarding! They lent me a snowboard that splits down the middle into two halves, which look similar to skis. After splitting them, you put on textured 'skins' to get extra traction, allowing you to walk uphill. Once you reach the top, you take off the skins, click the two halves back together, and snowboard down.

**"YOU TAKE OFF THE SKINS, CLICK THE TWO HALVES BACK TOGETHER, AND SNOWBOARD DOWN."**

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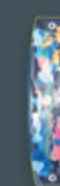
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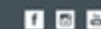


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There was so much powder, and because the locals knew the place so well, we were able to navigate through the forest, weaving around trees and ducking under branches. This was another amazing experience for the memory books!

The team I travelled with was based in Levi, Finland, a town with a ski resort only 100m from the hotel we were staying in. On the day of my departure, before heading to the airport, I hit the slopes for one last bit of action before heading on to the next destination. It was the cherry on top of what was a week to remember!

**“ I HIT THE SLOPES FOR ONE LAST BIT OF ACTION BEFORE HEADING ON TO THE NEXT DESTINATION. ”**



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# Intriguing Beings


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## INTRIGUING BEINGS / HANNAH WHITELEY

As one of the most influential women in kiteboarding and the dominant winner of Best Female Kitesurfer in the IKSURFMAG Readers Awards for three years in a row, Hannah Whiteley is, most definitely, an Intriguing Being. In this article, we share some of the highlights from the podcast. To get the full story, click the podcast icon on this page!







" HER FATHER WAS THE FIRST KITER IN THEIR PART OF THE UK, AND IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE WHITELEY FAMILY WERE A TRENDSETTING BUNCH. "

As fellow country people, you might assume that when Rou Chater and Hannah Whiteley linked up to record a podcast, they'd do so over tea and crumpets somewhere along the British seaside. However, that was not at all the case! Nearly 8,000 km from home, they caught up at Viva Mas, the Cabrinha dealer meeting on the sunny beaches of Mexico.

It's easy to kill an hour of chit-chatting when your conversation partner has so much

knowledge and interesting insights to share, and that's exactly what happened when Rou Chater sat down with Hannah Whiteley. Starting with a trip down memory lane and how she grew up before shifting towards kitesurfing trends, Queen of the Air, the new Cabrinha kit, social media, controversy, and dealing with haters... they cover it all! We'll share a few highlights and key quotes in this feature, but the full story can only be heard exclusively on the Intriguing Beings podcast.

Thanks to a wind-loving and forward-thinking father, Hannah Whiteley got her taste of kiting early. Her dad would haul the whole family down to the beach in their van, and they would all come tumbling out, ready to enjoy the sandy shores of Northwest England. When he first spotted kitesurfing in 1998, it was love at first sight. Her father was the first kiter in their part of the UK, and it was clear that the Whiteley family were a trendsetting bunch. With genes like that, it's no surprise that Hannah became a trendsetter in her own right!



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A woman with long brown hair, wearing a black and purple swimsuit, is kitesurfing. She is holding the control bar with her right hand and the kiteboard with her left. The kiteboard is light blue and black with a wave graphic. She is creating a large splash of water. The background is a sunset over a body of water with some trees in the distance.

" HE'S HONESTLY GETTING YOUNGER EVERY DAY, AND ITS BECAUSE OF THIS FOILING. HE'S JUST SOOO STOKED ON IT! "

After her first flights at 10 years old didn't go quite to plan, it was several years before she gave it another go. But, having a passionate kiter in the family makes it difficult to avoid for too long. Once she picked it back up, she was off to the races. Hannah and her father did their first kite competition together in 2007, both winning in their categories. Funnily enough, he was in the Master's Division (35+), which, for Hannah at the time, seemed quite old. But now that she's a few years away from joining the club, it doesn't seem so old after all! I think we can all agree that kitesurfing keeps us young!

While being a professional kiteboarder was never on Hannah's radar, her quick progression and personal drive to get better every session started catching the attention of others, starting with her local shop, Hang Time Kite. Their support motivated her to take things to the next level, and as her riding improved, international sponsors started reaching out. At that point, the idea of making a career out of kiteboarding still hadn't taken hold, but she was falling more in love with the sport and getting more motivated every day. Eventually, she handed in her notice with her dad's home building company and made the commitment to go pro.

Hannah's competition record is full of accolades, but, in recent years, competition hasn't been her top priority. Anyone that follows Hannah's social media knows that she is mega-talented with a kite, particularly in big air, freestyle, and even airstyle and old school. Nowadays, she only joins competitions to challenge herself to keep growing rather than to claim that top spot on the podium.



As the conversation turned to the rebirth of big air, Hannah and Rou were on the same page about big air being a big deal. After all, what makes kitesurfing unique compared to other watersports is that you can go high. As Rou says, "Most people have realised that we don't need to be wakeboarding with a kite; we can just get out there, do our own thing, and go as big as possible!".

The Red Bull King of the Air, widely known as the biggest competition in big air kiteboarding, or even kiteboarding in general, is a hot topic. A few years ago, Hannah joined Angely Bouillot for an expression session before the main event. Now, in 2023, both agree that it is a surprise that they haven't added a dedicated women's division, considering how much talent there is in the women's big air category. Rou points out that the Big Air Kite League, a relatively new tour, is outdoing Red Bull in bringing attention to women in big air, and Hannah has a lot to say on the subject!

Some of the biggest news surrounding Hannah over the past year was the big move to Cabrinha. There's an unwritten rule in professional kiteboarding to do with changing sponsors; If you change every year, you start to get a reputation. But, if you ride hard, work hard, and stay loyal, sometimes an offer comes along that you just can't say no to, which was the case with Hannah. Her pro kiter resume has a few sponsors that she's been with for several years, so the move to Cabrinha was headline news. It's great to hear her story on finding her home with Cabrinha, a small but elite team with a family-oriented vibe. For her, it's a perfect fit, and we're excited to see what she does there.



**" WHEN YOU COMPETE, YOU FEEL LIKE YOU HAVE NO LIMITATIONS, AND YOU JUST GO AND DO IT. NORMALLY WHEN YOU'RE IN THAT MINDSET, IT JUST WORKS, AS WELL. I JUST USE THE COMPS TO PUSH MY OWN RIDING AND JUST ENJOY IT ... AT THE END OF THE DAY, IF YOU DON'T ENJOY WHAT YOU'RE DOING, WHY ARE YOU DOING IT? "**



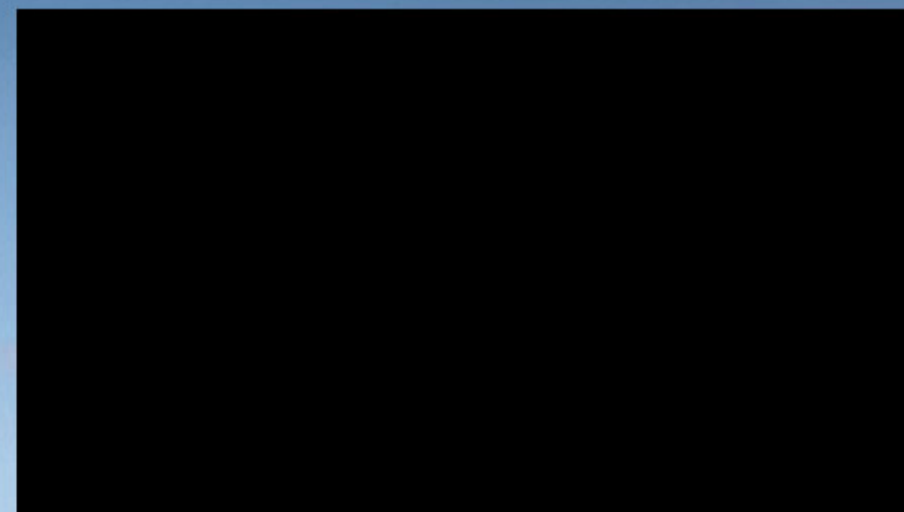


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" I'M NOT SURE WHY THERE'S NOT A GIRLS' CATEGORY, BUT THERE MOST DEFINITELY SHOULD BE ... WHAT ARE THEY DOING?! IT'S 2023! ... IF THEY DON'T WAKE UP THIS YEAR, I DON'T KNOW, MAN, WHAT'S GOING ON? IF IT'S NOT NOW, IT'S NEVER! "







" IT'S BEEN QUITE SOME YEARS SINCE I'VE RIDDEN A GIRLS' BOARD. IT STARTED OUT WITH ME RIDING IT FOR SOME PICTURES... NOW I'M LIKE, DAMN, THIS BOARD IS GOOD! IT'S SUPER LIGHT AND HAS A REALLY GOOD EDGE AND I CAN GET A REALLY SOLID TAKEOFF EVERY TIME. I THINK MY FAVOURITE BOARD IS ACTUALLY THIS GIRLS' BOARD, NOW! "

Joining a new team means getting familiar with new gear, and her pick of the litter is the Nitro for big air, and the quick and playful Moto X for a little bit of everything else. The boards were an interesting point, however, as she's often avoided women's-specific gear. After all, performance is performance, and it doesn't matter what colour the kit is. When joining the Cabrinha product shoot, Hannah was tasked to shoot on the women's specific XO twin tip, and, to her great surprise, it became her favourite board!

Another significant aspect of Hannah's career is social media, which has become so valuable to kitesurfing brands and a major part of her job as a pro kiter. With nearly 200,000 followers on Instagram, she's got her finger on the pulse on what works. Funky free ride and big air are what get the most likes, but Hannah admits that, on Instagram, you have got to share what the people want to see, especially if you want something to catch.

More recently, she's taken more of an interest in sharing her stories on YouTube. Her recent vlogs are raw, authentic, and real. Through her YouTube channel, she can get personal, focused less on getting views and more on sharing real stories and the personal side of her life, kitesurfing, and her adventures. If you haven't checked out her YouTube channel, you'll definitely get to know the real Hannah by going behind the scenes of her life!

It's not all sunshine and roses, though, as we know all too well. They dig deep into the topic of women in the kiteboarding industry and their wardrobe choices. As Rou points out, back in the day, male riders would often feature women in bikinis in their content,





" THE MORE PEOPLE YOU REACH, THE MORE SOME PEOPLE ARE GOING TO DISAGREE WITH IT. DON'T EVER LET YOURSELF NOT DO WHAT YOU WANT BECAUSE OF PEOPLE MAYBE DISAGREEING WITH YOU. "

whereas female riders are the women in bikinis in their content! Still, being a badass kite girl throwing some solid and stylish tricks in a bikini can draw the wrath of the keyboard warriors out there. Here at the mag, our last Hannah Whiteley cover from her creative Covid-era studio shoot, was a wild ride. We've never seen the sort of toxic and hateful comments that we saw after this cover, which was a real surprise from what we consider a very positive kitesurfing

community. Maybe they only read the headline and didn't read the story? I guess that's a common trait of a keyboard warrior! By the way, you can **CLICK HERE** to read that story!

She made the point that one negative comment stands out more than one hundred positive ones, but that, naturally, we are drawn to respond to the negative ones. Hannah's policy? Respond to the positive ones first. She avoids responding to a

negative comment unless she's also responding to all of the nice ones - the people out there who are sharing the stoke.

It takes a strong mind and serious dedication to achieve what Hannah Whiteley has, and we're proud to feature her in our magazine and on the cover. There is so much more to the story that we can't share in written word, but what I can say is, this is definitely a podcast worth listening to!

**CLICK HERE** to tune in to Hannah's episode of the Intriguing Beings Podcast with Rou Chater!





THE INTERVIEW

# KAIMAR HALLISTE

Van conversions have been a hot topic in the kite community, but Kaimar and Kerli Halliste have taken their van to a different level - and to a different continent! Read all about their ultimate kite van and road trip from northeastern Europe to northwestern Africa in this exclusive interview!

WORDS CRYSTAL VENESS  
PHOTOS KERLI & KAIMAR HALLISTE





A man in a wetsuit is kitesurfing on the ocean. In the foreground, a white dog with a black collar is walking on the sandy beach. Another dog is visible in the background near the water's edge. The sky is clear and blue.

"WE ARE IN DAKHLA IN THE WESTERN SAHARA, WHERE WE HAVE SPENT TWO MONTHS KITING AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE!"

Kaimar, we've been following your incredible adventures online and are excited to hear more about them! Tell us a bit about where you're from and how you got into van life!

My wife Kerli and I are from Estonia. We were the first to start such a lifestyle among surfers in Estonia, and we started our van life very modestly, in a caravan that hooked onto a regular car and cost only €1,500. We started small to understand if such a lifestyle would suit us. Three years and eight different caravans later, we finally understood which layout worked best and realised we would be more comfortable in a van instead!

**Where are you now?**

Winter in Estonia is not our favourite for kitesurfing. The temperature is between -5°C and -25°C, and the weather can be snowy and sleety, so we are not there! We rolled around Southern Europe on wheels for five months, spending the end of 2022 and the start of 2023 in Tarifa. But this year in Tarifa had below-average wind and weather, so we drove further south. Now, we are in Dakhla in the western Sahara, where we have spent two months kiting as much as possible!

**How did you cross from Europe to Africa? Was that a complicated process?**

We started in Tarifa, crossing to Africa by ferry. When we disembarked, we went through many security checks, including driving the van through a giant X-ray machine, which was quite exciting. When going to Morocco, you can choose which port to dock at. We chose the Tanger-Med one right next to the highway, allowing us to travel quickly to the south.





**What was it like travelling by road in North Africa?**

Being our first road trip outside of Europe, the idea was initially a bit scary, but we did a lot of preparation and research. Southern countries and cultures have always attracted us, but not everything is as easy there, making the journey more exciting and unpredictable. The first 850 km were nice highways, but then it got exciting! Passing through small villages with markets on the road and driving through them is an experience! People are everywhere waving and offering their goods. We drove down to Dakhla along the coast and saw many epic wave surfing spots on the way.

**"PEOPLE ARE  
EVERYWHERE  
WAVING AND  
OFFERING THEIR  
GOODS."**

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**Tell us about some of the spots that you visited and sessions you experienced in Morocco!**

Jumping down from the Dune de Blanche and the mirror-flat water of the speed spot were especially memorable. My favourite was the speed spot in Dakhla, where the water surface during low tide is magical - super smooth with golden sunsets. The most incredible thing about this spot is that you park right on the lagoon's edge. The wind quality is very stable and ideal for practising different tricks. You have wind there every day, and it's warm - this is all we want, right?!

There are more awesome flat water spots and several mega cool wave spots like LaSarga and "The Rock" (not sure what the official name of this spot is), but to get there, you need to walk through the desert with your surf gear for 3 km - an authentic experience, where you will surf in the middle of nowhere.

**How did you prepare for this epic adventure? Did you need any special equipment?**

Before the trip, we researched what we might need in the desert to make our life there more comfortable. We arranged insurance for the bus and contents and, of course, health insurance. We usually travel with a sauna on our trailer, but this time we left it in Tarifa, which meant we had plenty of extra space for luggage.

The first things on our equipment list were a shovel and plastic tyre tracks/pods that are good for driving on sandy surfaces. Next were a tow rope and a tow hook in the front and back, so it's easier to be pulled out if we get stuck! An extra water tank and a watering can are a must and were a big help while on the road and in Dakhla.



**"THE MOST INCREDIBLE THING ABOUT THIS SPOT IS THAT YOU PARK RIGHT ON THE LAGOON'S EDGE."**





You never know where the next place to get water is, and most camping sites do not have a convenient hose connection, so a watering can always helps! Of course, we also packed all possible medicines that we could need and essential equipment for fixing the car.

We brought lots of soft drinks because they are expensive in Dakhla. However, food, fuel and other living expenses are very low compared to Europe. For example, in Estonia, I pay 35€ for a hairdresser's service, whereas in Dakhla, they ask only 1.5€ for the same level of service! I gladly gave 5€, and we were both happy!

"FOOD, FUEL  
AND OTHER  
LIVING EXPENSES  
ARE VERY LOW  
COMPARED TO  
EUROPE."



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"YOU LEARN TO APPRECIATE YOUR LIFE AND THE COMFORTS YOU ARE TYPICALLY USED TO."



When we travel, we always have at least one month's supply of clothes with us and have always managed to find a suitable place that offers the option of washing clothes. But, in Dakhla, we were reminded of the magic of hand washing! It's good to experience such things sometimes. You learn to appreciate your life and the comforts you are typically used to.

#### What kind of kite gear did you bring with you?

We had everything we needed for kitesurfing - 7 Eleveight kites of different sizes, bars, twin tips, wave board and foil board, and wetsuits of different thicknesses. Many people like to wear neoprene

socks/ booties with thick soles in Dakhla because there are very sharp thorns. These thorns can be up to 4 cm long and sharp as a knife. I didn't wear socks, and luckily never injured myself, but it's good to know to take them with you.

#### What about when the sun goes down? Do you camp or sleep in the van?

I don't recommend driving at night because there can be 40 cm deep potholes, stones, and sand dunes of different sizes on the side of the road. Most people have said it is safe to stay in the van overnight at gas stations, but we always tried to find a camping site so there was security and other travellers. Campsites also

allowed us to fill the water tanks, empty the waste water tank, and wash the car if necessary. It's well worth it as the fee for all services is only between 30-70 dirhams, which is 3-7€ per car!

#### How did the van hold up to the environment and the long trip?

The dry and sandy climate and the intense sun are not good for the bus. Van lifers with more experience cover their vehicles when they camp - it was quite interesting to see. Finally, I started to understand them, and we sealed the area between the ground and the van so that the sand doesn't fly so much.





"KERLI IS ALSO A KITESURFER, AND DAKHLA HAS BEEN THE BEST PLACE FOR HER TO DEVELOP."

We broke the drive shaft and the window wiper mechanism during the trip to Dakhla. The approach to problems there is entirely different than in Europe - the work starts immediately and is done on the street. The cost of these works is also a lot less in Morocco. But generally, the machines hold up well because we always do major repairs and maintenance before the trip and often change parts before they need to be changed.

**Are you happy with the original design and setup? Do you ever feel like you need more space or supplies?**

Yes, we are very satisfied with this layout, which is why we built the van ourselves. Buying a factory van would have been even cheaper, but their layout is fully built and often not spacious. Our van and trailer have electricity, hot water, a shower, a toilet, a bedroom, cold drinks in the fridge, storage spaces, a grill, a sauna, and even a terrace on the roof.

In the early years, when we started van life, we missed having more space to be in, but as time passed, we got used to less, making our life happier. The fewer things there are, the fewer worries there are - simple as that. We have everything we need and more in our cosy space and amazing views of nature!

**How does Kerli enjoy van life?**

I am very lucky with Kerli because she values the same things as me - the most important thing for us is mental and physical well-being, gathering different experiences and keeping life simple. Kerli's favourite places to explore nature are mountains and green valleys. Kerli is also a kitesurfer, and Dakhla has been the best place for her to develop.









She is also a professional photographer, and all the pictures on my social media are by her. I'm glad to share my life with someone so similar to me as Kerli!

**Did you bring the dogs along? What is it like travelling with the dogs in the van?**

There are two types of people - dog people and cat people. We are dog people, which means a very energetic life that may not suit everyone. Dogs are made to love people and add so much value to our lives! Our Jack Russells are great friends and companions when travelling. When we got our first dog, immediately after that, we asked ourselves - "Why haven't we taken the dog before?!"

**" DOGS ARE  
MADE TO LOVE  
PEOPLE AND  
ADD SO MUCH  
VALUE TO OUR  
LIVES! "**





"SHE BARKS AT ALL KITEBOARDS THAT DON'T HAVE THE ELEVEIGHT LOGO ON THEM, AND IT'S SO FUNNY!!"

We chose Jack Russells because they love everything about water - just like us! They can run on the beach and follow the surfers endlessly, although we often have to stop them because they'll run even when they're out of energy. They are also not too big, which makes our life in the van more comfortable, and they have short hair with no undercoat, which means that a wet dog dries quickly and does not smell unpleasant.

Donna has been with us on every trip since the beginning, and this is our 7th year. At the end of 2022, Donna had four puppies, one of which we kept in our family. Now we travel as a team of four - my wife Kerli and I and dogs Donna (7 years) and Panda (8 months old). Donna really respects one particular kite brand, and it's not a joke - she barks at all

kiteboards that don't have the Eleveight logo on them, and it's so funny!!

**When you go home, what is life like? Do you stay in the van in Estonia, too?**

In Estonia, the winds are predominantly southwest, and the entire coast is open to the winds, so we still spend most of our time with the van moving from beach to beach, depending on where the wind blows. If there are rainy periods, we are more likely to be at home. But, if it's rainy and windy, we chase storms despite the bad weather.

Kerli is a portrait and wedding photographer, and very often, weddings are by the coast/beaches or at least very close to them, which means that I can surf

at the same time! I do most of my work by computer and phone, but I sometimes have to go to meetings. Then I will go to the city by car and return to the beach and to the camper van in the evening. In the near future, I would like my income to come only from surfing.

**Would you ever park the van to pursue a more traditional lifestyle?**

No. We value very highly the fact that we have the freedom to move and discover new places - it gives life so much spice! I am glad that we started this lifestyle so early, and this lifestyle will not change for us - we love minimalist life and will continue similarly. Although, we will likely update our van lifestyle to be bigger and even more comfortable!





People often ask where you get so much money to live like this, and I usually answer, "Where do you get so much money to pay utility bills and other expenses to live in big houses?" The utility costs necessary for our life are very low, but the views we experience daily are worth millions. When one million worth of views exhausts me, I turn on the ignition and choose the next one. The van lifestyle does not tie you to a particular place but gives you absolute freedom to adventure.

"THE VIEWS WE  
EXPERIENCE  
DAILY ARE  
WORTH  
MILLIONS."




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"WE KEEP DREAMING AND MAKING OUR DREAMS COME TRUE BECAUSE DREAMING IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS."

Can you share any "words of wisdom" with others dreaming of van life?

To experience new and exciting things in your life, you often need to step out of your comfort zone! I didn't know what was important in this life and what made me happy until I got out of my comfort zone. I urge others who have thought about such a lifestyle to start before age sets limits.

Don't forget that anyone can achieve any dream if they want it enough. If you dream of travelling in a motorhome, work hard for these goals - if your work sets limits for you, try to find a job that you can do from the beach. Take small but determined steps towards your goals - you won't be disappointed.

What's coming up next for you?

We are on our way back to Tarifa for 1-2 months. Afterwards, we will head back to Estonia, where the summer is so nice! Our next dream is to build a 4x4 truck with slide-out rooms, so we have even more space and can discover new beaches. We might drive the van from Estonia to South Africa... Why not?! We keep dreaming and making our dreams come true because dreaming is the key to success.

If you want to get advice on van construction or learn more about our van, get in touch on Instagram at @kaimarhalliste and @kerlihallistephotohraphy!



WORDS CRYSTAL VENESS  
RIDER FRED HOPE PHOTOS BRANDON BOWE

# TECH FOCUS

## SLINGSHOT UFO V2

Q&A with Fred Hope & Elliott Tauscher

To celebrate the release of the Slingshot UFO V2 - Green Edition! - we've caught up with a key member of the R&D team, Fred Hope, and Slingshot's Brand Manager to find out a bit more about this out-of-this-world kite!







**"WE DECIDED TO TAKE ON THIS CHALLENGE AND BE THE FIRST AND ONLY MAJOR BRAND TO HAVE A ZERO-STRUT KITE AS PART OF THE LINEUP."**

**Let's start with the basics! Fred, tell us about the concept behind the UFO!**

**Fred:** The UFO was designed with one concept in mind: to be the best kite for kite foiling. Riding a twin tip or surfboard wasn't thought of once, unlike in the development of one-strut kites. This kite needed to be light, responsive, have quick relaunch, and have high spike loads to get you up out of the water in light winds. We did this with a lower-aspect kite with a deeper pocket than most of our other kites in the lineup. This deep pocket, combined with a larger leading edge, sits the kite deeper in the wind window, causing a constant source of power and making it nearly impossible for the kite to fall out of the sky. If the kite were to hit the water, it needed to be able to prevent canopy laydown. This was prevented by the higher upturned wingtips that allow wind to move in and fill the canopy from the leading edge towards the trailing edge, pushing water upwind and away from the leading edge.

**It's the first zero-strut kite in the Slingshot lineup. Was this kite designed from a blank slate, or was it an adaptation of a one-strut kite?**

**Elliott:** Yes, the UFO was designed from a blank slate as a no-strut platform. We noticed the market was heavily invested in kite foiling, but nobody had the perfect kite foiling kite. Having Fred Hope on the team gave us the valuable team rider feedback that is needed to design a best-in-class kite, so we decided to take on this challenge and be the first and only major brand to have a zero-strut kite as part of the lineup.



What are the key changes between the UFO V1 and UFO V2?

**Fred:** The first version of the UFO came with a D1 canopy, the classic Cuzin bridle line, and Slingshots DP 175 leading edge material. The V1.1 then had a canopy change to D2. This D2 was more stretch resistant and lasted longer. As everyone knows here at Slingshot, testing never stops, and we are still finding ways to make the lightest kite on the market even lighter. The canopy material had to stay the same, but the leading edge felt heavy, and the bridle lines were overbuilt. The leading-edge material was switched out for DLE 140, a material that is 25% lighter than the DP 175 of the V1 and V1.1 UFOs. After the leading edge, we looked at the bridle. The heavy overbuilt lines were switched out for a new line called Liros DC Pro 401, which is 25% thinner. Thinner means less drag, and lighter means more range while foiling. Both benefits combined to create the UFO V2. The lightest kite just got lighter.

For those kites out there who have never tried a zero-strut kite but are considering it, any advice? Is there a learning curve or adjustment period for a kite like the UFO V2?

**Fred:** The only learning curve would be the few times you crash it so hard that the canopy lays down on the water. The solution to this is to take notes on my answer to the next question and just go out there and practice. Don't be afraid to drop the kite in the water, and after a few tries, you will see how easy the water relaunch actually is.

**" TESTING NEVER STOPS, AND WE ARE STILL FINDING WAYS TO MAKE THE LIGHTEST KITE ON THE MARKET EVEN LIGHTER. "**





**" GET READY TO GET USED TO THE FASTEST RELAUNCHING KITE ON THE MARKET WITH THE MOST LIFT, LOW END, AND MANOEUVRABILITY OF ANY KITE! "**



One of the key concerns for kitesurfers unfamiliar with zero-strut kites is the water relaunch ability. Was water relaunch taken into consideration in the design of this kite? How does it perform in this category?

**Fred:** We absolutely took this into consideration when designing the UFO, and the wingtips are designed just for this occasion. The solution to your

water relaunch is to adjust the kite so that both wingtips are an equal distance from you downwind. This allows air to fill in both sides of the wingtips and push the water off the canopy, and then you can relaunch just like normal. If the kite is at an angle to the wind, the canopy won't fill. Other than this trick, get ready to get used to the fastest relaunching kite on the market with the most lift, low end, and manoeuvrability of any kite!

**What is the most exciting feature of the new UFO V2?**

**Elliott:** What I love about the new UFO V2 is the new DLE 140 Dacron on the leading edge. This is a more lightweight material that allows the new UFO to drift even better and turn even quicker, allowing me to ride in an even larger wind range with one kite. They also pack down lighter so I can avoid paying overweight fees when I travel!



# TECH FOCUS

## GIN KITEBOARDING X SP80

Q&A with Tanguy Desjardin  
(Kite Development Team Leader)

We've been following the SP80 project since the start, excitedly awaiting the team's attempt to break the world sailing speed record using a giant kite attached to a trimaran. We caught up with the development team to see how the project is going in this Q&A!





Let's start with an introduction to the project goals, how Gin is involved, and the current status.

In 2022, Gin Kiteboarding became an official supporter and kite supplier for the SP80 project, which consists of shattering the current world sailing speed record with a giant trimaran boat developed internally, hauled by a giant kite.

July 2023 is the official deadline for the first launch on the water in the South of France. By then, the team will have prototypes ready for the foil and for the kite that will be closer than ever to the final result. The idea is to first test the boat with small kites and to gradually increase in size and speed as the pilots get more comfortable.

Everything is finally coming together! Even with a boat that won't be 100% optimised, it is a huge accomplishment to ultimately put it out on the water after three years of work. Everyone is absolutely psyched at that prospect, and this memorable landmark will for sure boost the troops and represent a big step forward in the project. That wave of energy will sail the team straight to their record that will officially take place in Spring 2024.

**Can you share some details on the progress of the development of the giant kite?**

The latest add-on to SP80's development setup is undoubtedly their custom-built test rig that serves the purpose of validating the steering system from inside the boat. Instead of a bar like for kitesurfing, a steering wheel coupled with a lever will give the necessary power.

**" THAT WAVE OF ENERGY WILL SAIL THE TEAM STRAIGHT TO THEIR RECORD THAT WILL OFFICIALLY TAKE PLACE IN SPRING 2024. "**







**" THE KITE'S PILOT DOES NOT HAVE MUCH SPACE TO MOVE; THEREFORE, WE HAD TO GET RID OF THE CLASSIC BAR SYSTEM. "**



A series of tests were conducted last November in the South of France, with wind conditions that will be the closest to reality. The whole purpose of these tests is to launch the kite from the water and steer it with a control system, like in the boat. The tests started with a small 9m kite, and they increased in size until reaching 44m. What worked well was the ease of piloting a kite, even for the ones who had never done it before. As for the regulars, moving from a bar to a steering wheel happened to be relatively intuitive.

**How does one adapt a kite bar to a steering wheel system? What challenges came up, and how did the team arrive at the final design?**

The first major problem to tackle is ergonomics. In the cockpit, the kite's pilot does not have much space to move; therefore, we had to get rid of the classic bar system. The rotation of the kite (from left to right and back) is achieved using a custom hydraulic system where the pilot uses a wheel to steer the kite. The trimming process also uses a hydraulic pump that imitates the sheeting.

Piloting with video feedback was also a first. As the visibility inside the cockpit will be pretty limited, it is imperative for the pilots to have a video feed of the kite, especially for launching and landing.

During the whole design process, we went through several versions, and the only way to choose one of them was to test each version. We tested the system to ensure that the solution was easy to use for the pilot. After small adjustments, we truly believe that the solution we have will work in all operating conditions, and no trade-off was made to ensure the safety of the crew and the performance of the boat.



"WE HAVE A KITE IN THE MAKING, BASED ON THE RESULTS OF THE LATEST TESTS"



The test rig allows the crew to test the kite's emergency release system in a secure way. It is crucial for the two pilots on board to be in position to cut the kite's power at any given time!

#### How is everything working with the kite testing?

The team carried out some kite launching and landing tests, with the same constraints as if they were launched from the water. A precise procedure to follow must be in place by July. Those precise tests were performed with a Boom V2 9m, 11m, and 21m, which contributed to the elaboration of the very first kite prototype, currently in the making with Hans Bollinger, our kite foil engineer at Gin Kiteboarding. We have a kite in the making, based on the results of the latest tests; it will be a 30m kite, based off of a Gin kite, but with an adapted bridle plan to suit the hydraulic control system inside the boat.

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What goes into scaling a 9m or 11m kite up to a 21m and eventually 30m kite? How many changes are there in the design for the SP80 kite vs a production kite?

The main challenge that we have to face for the scaling of the kites is to keep its structural integrity. The load cases that will be applied to the kites at such speeds and for such areas are way bigger than the ones applied when riding with a kiteboard. The changes reside in the internal structures of the kite and the type of material to use, because we have to keep a good strength-to-weight ratio. We're also looking into different materials regarding kite lines because they represent a significant drag that we want to minimise as much as possible.

Why use an inflatable kite instead of a ram air kite for this speed record attempt?

For the control system testing, we used inflatable kites for their robustness and ease of manipulation, but for the record attempts, we will use ram air kites as they are more efficient than inflatable ones. Don't worry; we have some striking ideas for developing a ram air kite that can provide enough power to reach 80 knots with our boat!

The project aims to break the world speed record, but can the equipment you are developing have a greater impact outside of this goal?

If, for now, we are focusing on the world record, our goal is then to apply our developments and skills to another field, such as maritime transport (for example, adding kites to cargo, as some companies are already trying) or competitive sailing; we have many ideas of what to do next!

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE!](#)



**"WE HAVE SOME STRIKING IDEAS FOR DEVELOPING A RAM AIR KITE THAT CAN PROVIDE ENOUGH POWER TO REACH 80 KNOTS WITH OUR BOAT!"**



# TECH FOCUS

## NOBILE NHP SNOWKITE

Q&A with Jan Korycki

For most kites, the first foray into snowkiting is on whichever snowboard or set of skis happens to be in the garage.

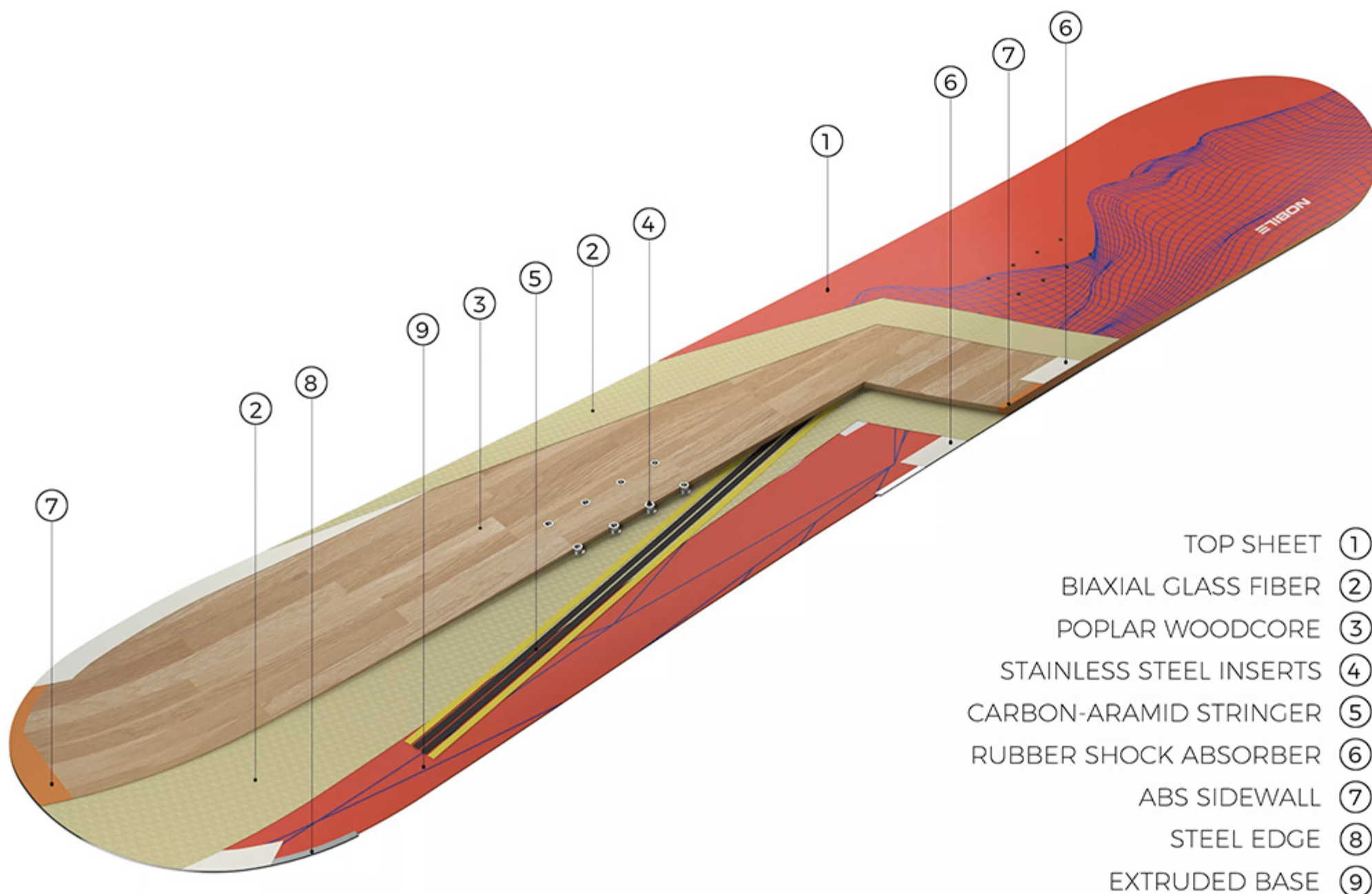
But, one kite brand has developed a dedicated snowkite board, and we've got the inside scoop!



PHOTO ADRIAN KRAWCZYK

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TOP SHEET ①

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STEEL EDGE ⑧

EXTRUDED BASE ⑨

**" SNOW KITERS GO OUT IN VARIOUS CONDITIONS AND TERRAIN THAT SNOWBOARDERS SOMETIMES DON'T EXPERIENCE. "**

Jan, thanks for taking the time! First-time snow kites usually don't have any specialised equipment, instead using whatever they can get their hands on. Can a standard snowboard work for snowkiting? What benefits does a kite-specific snowboard like the NHP Snowkite offer?

Sure, you can use a regular board for the first steps in snowkiting. However, snow kites go out in various conditions and terrain that snowboarders sometimes don't experience. Some snow kites ride on frozen lakes with ice surfaces, others go out on flatlands, and others try to conquer mountain terrains.

The NHP Snowkite has a specially designed straight rail that helps hold the edge, which, in snowkiting and with the need to go upwind, is quite crucial. This board is quite universal and was developed with a very soft flex pattern and soft tips. We keep it steady under your feet while still delivering plenty of fun on the tips for pressing jumps and smooth landings to bring ultimate joy in all snow conditions.

**What characteristics should a snowboard have to be a good fit for snowkiting?**

First of all, the flat profile exists to maximise the edge connection with the surface.

A versatile flex pattern with soft tips allows for nice presses and easy landings, while the harder flex in the middle of the board helps with edging. The NHP Snowkite's flat rocker keeps the edge dialled in the snow the entire way.





**" THANKS TO ITS GREAT DEPOWER, IT WORKS PERFECTLY ON SNOW AND DELIVERS A RELATIVELY SAFE RIDE. "**

**Does a snowkite board require a completely different factory and construction process?**

It is much like snowboard construction, using the same machines and the same factory but with a slightly different process. Both boards have Paulownia wood as a core, but the finishing process is slightly different. Kiteboards have PU edges, whereas snowkite boards have metal rails like snowboards.

**Can the NHP Snowkite work for snowboarding without a kite? What would its weaknesses be for "normal" snowboarding?**

It is possible, of course, but won't be anything spectacular when compared to the designated snowboards we produce. The NHP Snowkite is essentially a simple "twin tip" snowboard with large flex!

**Is there a kite in the Nobile lineup that is better suited for snowkiting? Which one, and why?**

We mostly use the one-strut kite named The One. Thanks to its great depower, it works perfectly on snow and delivers a relatively safe ride.

**Any plans to create snowkite specific skis??**

Nope, regular Nobile Skis work just fine!



# LITTLEHAMPTON WEEKENDER

## KITE AND WING DEMO

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9<sup>TH</sup>, 10<sup>TH</sup>  
AND 11<sup>TH</sup>  
OF JUNE

LIVE MUSIC, DJ'S PARTIES FRIDAY+SATURDAY NIGHT  
KITE AND WING DEMOS SATURDAY AND SUNDAY  
GREAT BEER AND FOOD ALL WEEKEND

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WORDS RUBEN LENTEN

When a mega storm pops up in the forecast, you know it's going to catch the attention of storm chaser Ruben Lenten! With a forecast hinting at 70 knots of wind in the big air mecca of Tarifa, you can only guess what happens next... In this article, Ruben tells the tale of his Tarifa Storm Chase, exclusively in IKSURFMAG!

# TARIFA STORM CHASE



RIDER RUBEN LENTEN  
PHOTO SAMUEL CARDENAS





RIDER RUBEN LENTEN  
PHOTO ANTONIO HERRERA TRUJILLO

"THERE WAS 4M SWELL AND OVER 50+ KNOTS ON THE WAY! IMMEDIATELY, I FELT THE ENERGY WITHIN MOVING, AND THE WHEELS STARTED TURNING."



After an amazing 3-month trip to Cape Town with my wife Nikki and our two children, we returned to the Netherlands, where a new house awaited us. My dad and brothers have a construction company, and they renovated our new home completely while we were away. Wow, what a makeover! Of course, there was a lot of stuff lying around and little bits that needed to be finished, but we were ready to get started as soon as we got home.

That's what I had planned, at least. But shortly after we got home, I opened my phone and saw a message from Ozone teammate Scott Barendsen. Scott is a 23-year-old Dutchie living in Tarifa and is sending it on the big air scene. The message read, "I've never seen anything like it", and included a photo of the forecast about to hit Tarifa.

The first thing to catch my eye was that tell-tale purple colour, which is a clear signal that a storm is coming. There was 4m swell and over 50+ knots on the way! Immediately, I felt the energy within moving, and the wheels started turning. This was going to be the strongest wind ever in Tarifa. I had ridden in 45-65 knots there before, but this storm had the potential to hit 70+ knots.

What would you do in this situation? There was only one thing I could do; I put on my puppy eyes and asked Nikki for permission to go. Of course, I didn't get it, but off I went. She married a pro kitesurfer, after all, and she knows that I will keep chasing storms, no matter what! She sent me off with a big hug, a kiss, and the usual "be careful".



"THINGS ARE CHANGING AS THE SPORT  
PROGRESSES INTO MORE TECHNICAL MOVES."



RIDER RUBEN LENTEN  
PHOTO ANTONIO HERRERA TRUJILLO

I quickly packed my bags only to discover that I never got around to ordering a 5m and 6m Ozone Edge. Over the last years, I hadn't even used my 7m, always choosing instead to be hanging onto the 8m, fully overpowered on 23m lines. However, things are changing as the sport progresses into more technical moves. Line lengths are getting shorter, kite sizes are getting smaller, and how they perform has also changed. Sometimes you can jump higher on the 7m than the 8m as you can hold your edge better for a proper launch instead of battling your way to the takeoff and getting pulled off your rail halfway through on a kite that's too big.



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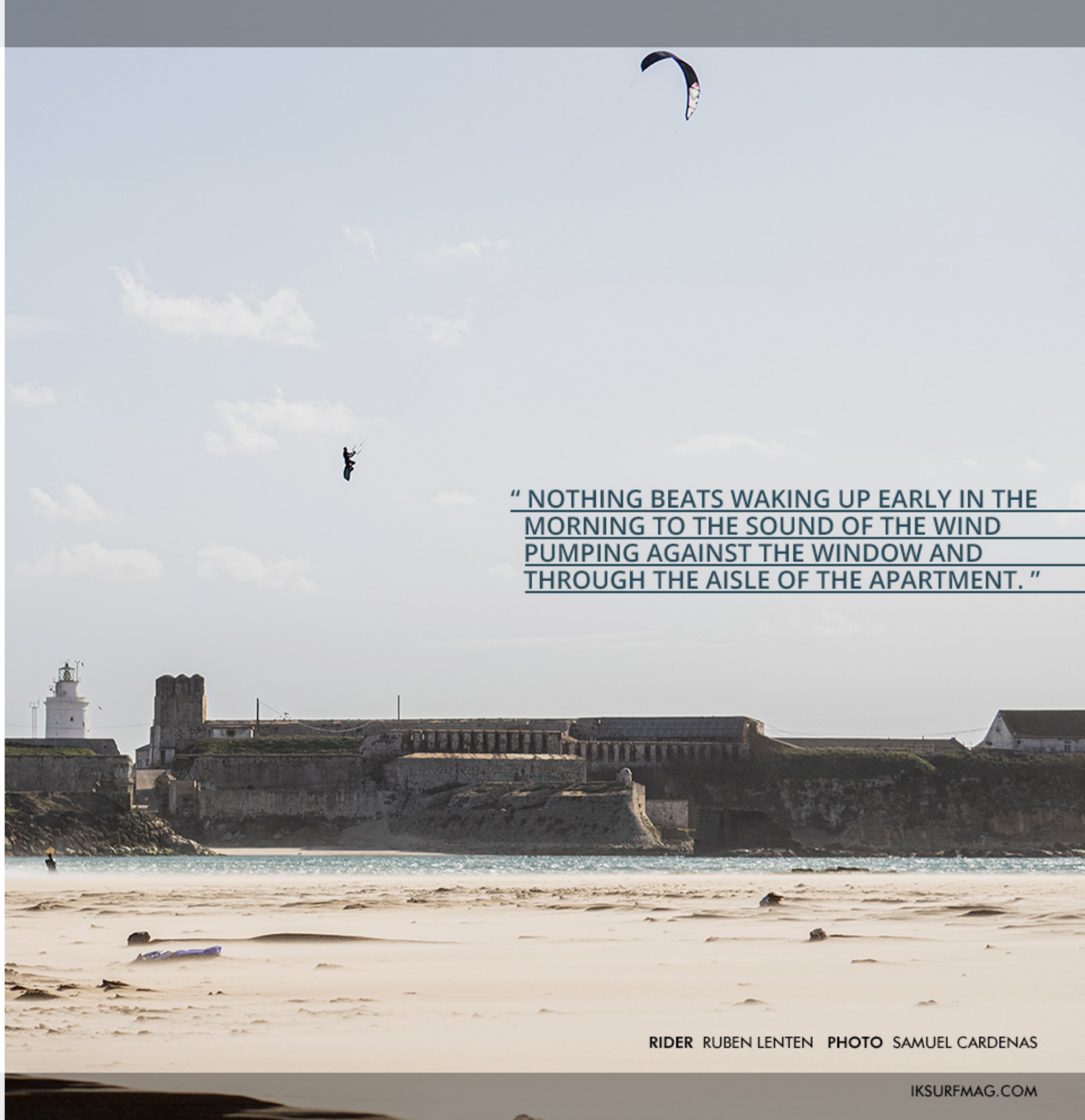


Short line lengths are also something I've dabbled with a lot more recently, so I took my 12m lines, 15m lines and the regular 23m lines. My vision was to fly as high as possible on the long lines to hopefully break or get close to Jamie Overbeek's recent new World Record of 35.3m on his 9m foil (Ozone R1V4) kite. Then, switch things up and pull some insane loops on the short lines.

I got to Tarifa Thursday night, where I met up with all the fellow Dutchies who had flown down to take part in the action and get some extreme content going. We had a nice dinner at Vaca Loca, one of the classic Tarifa restaurants. The first time I ate there, I was 14 years old, and I've been going back ever since. After a nice meal and a beer, we discussed the conditions and game plan.

What I didn't realise is that there weren't going to be any kickers. While there was a 4m swell predicted, it was the wrong swell direction to work in Balneario. That was a bit of a bummer to the dream scenario I had envisioned, but either way, I was super excited to wake up and see what the morning would bring.

Nothing beats waking up early in the morning to the sound of the wind pumping against the window and through the aisle of the apartment. I was getting excited and scared at the same time; it was soooo strong and noisy. I quickly remembered that I only had a 7m Edge in my bag and nothing smaller to conquer the storm with. Oh well. I would make do.



" NOTHING BEATS WAKING UP EARLY IN THE MORNING TO THE SOUND OF THE WIND PUMPING AGAINST THE WINDOW AND THROUGH THE AISLE OF THE APARTMENT. "

RIDER RUBEN LENTEN PHOTO SAMUEL CARDENAS







**" IT WAS ABSOLUTELY MENTAL,  
WITH GUSTS EASILY  
REACHING OVER 70 KNOTS "**



RIDER RUBEN LENTEN  
PHOTO ANTONIO HERRERA TRUJILLO

Speaking on the phone, Scott confirmed that this was some of the strongest wind Tarifa had ever seen. It was absolutely mental, with gusts easily reaching over 70 knots and sand and water flying well above the beach and waterline. We knew we had to make the most of these insane conditions.

We put a plan in action and set off for the half hour drive up the coast to Palmones, where the wind was a bit lighter and perfect for the 7m Edge on 23m lines and the 8m on 12m lines. Scott was riding the new 135cm Code V2, and I had just received my 138cm Torque V3. I had never ridden 12m lines, and it was definitely crazy to get used to a new feeling of power, speed, and angles, especially in conditions like these.

SCOTT BARENDSEN ENJOYING CRYSTAL CLEAR WATER  
ON SAFARI WITH THE WIND SEEKERS IN EGYPT!  
PHOTO ANTONIO HERRERA TRUJILLO




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RIDERS RUBEN LENTEN AND SCOTT BARENDSEN  
PHOTO ANTONIO HERRERA TRUJILLO

" THIS FEELING IS ADDICTIVE, AND I HIGHLY  
RECOMMEND YOU PLAY WITH YOUR SETUP  
ONCE YOU ARE READY FOR A CHANGE. "

Normally, with shorter lines, you can't jump as high as you don't have the same swing radius. However, the Edge has such a nice lift that even on short lines, it seems to keep going. In Cape Town, I had reached a height of 30m on my 15m lines. In the Tarifa storm, on the 8m kite with 12m lines, I managed to jump 24m. It was amazing to pull such aggressive loops on those lines and throw in some combinations. As I'm getting more and more comfortable with it, it almost makes riding long lines boring! This feeling is addictive, and I highly recommend you play with your setup once you are ready for a change. It's fun.

The next day the wind was super strong and gusty, making Balneario very scary to ride. For this session, Scott and I both rode our 7m kites on 23m lines. Scott threw one of the most massive megaloop late-backs I had ever seen. WOW! I only managed a few big jumps and some loops, but nothing too exciting; I was mostly focusing on surviving and timing the gusts. A couple of big drop outs resulted in hard landings and crashes. On my last jump, I landed on my ribs. But, we still hadn't gotten enough of the mental conditions and drove to Palmones for a fun sunset session and to capture a few more amazing photos. What an epic session that was. Antonio shot some great pics that will stay with us forever.

Conquering this storm didn't play out quite how I envisioned it, but it gave us exactly what we needed. We made the most of it with the right setups and spot choices. I already can't wait for the next adventure to keep on pushing it hard... I'm just waiting for that forecast to go purple again!



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# TECHNIQUE

WORDS &amp; PHOTOS CHRISTIAN &amp; KARINE



Trust you're all rearing to go and ready for a new challenge or two? Hopefully, we've got something for all of you. In number one this issue, we're adding some of Coleman's full strength onto an all-time favourite. Yes, we're spicing up your much loved and regularly thrown down Back Roll Transition with a genuine foot out for the One Foot BLT. Then for number two, snapping at the heels of your recent Popped Back Roll and Popped Back Roll to Toe Side, we reckon it's time you ventured into the mind-boggling, horizon-shifting world of a Popped Front Roll. Well within the limits of any front roller, we'll be looking at how to learn it without going full wake style. Better than Cadbury's Cream Egg, we think! :)

Cheerio, C&amp;K.

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## 1 / BACK ROLL TRANSITION ONE FOOT



CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE

## 2 / HOOKED POPPED FRONT ROLL



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## BACK ROLL TRANSITION ONE FOOT ▶

**KITE** – Cabrinha Switchblade 8m

**BOARD** – Cabrinha XO 136

You know how we love our transitions, and we know that you love them too! So, we've got another one for you to add to your list of funky ways to change direction. This one is a variation on the very foundation of great transitions, the Back Roll Transition, or if you've been in the game as long as we have, the trusty BLT. Adding a one foot to this gives you something a wee bit different to display to your peers whilst challenging you to sharpen up your skills. We highly recommend that you should already be the proud owner of a certified BLT, and if you've taken your foot out in a straight air before, it will help.

Looking ahead, the tricky bit of this move is finding both the time and the moment when you're free to slip your foot out, knowing full well that you'll need to get it back in again! You're in a bit of a catch-22; you need time and control in your transition, and these are not always the best of bedfellows. When you think of time, you can be forgiven for interpreting it as height. The higher you go, the longer you'll be in the air and, therefore, the more time you have. There is nothing wrong here. An aggressive edge and a bit more send, and boom. However, when you add control to the equation, things start to get a bit more complicated. Edging hard and sending with meaning can and often will result in less control on take-off as you'll be ripped off the water, and your kite will be flying fast back across the window.



To give yourself a chance, we'll be looking at the perfect compromise; you'll slow your rotation down and control your take-off! Let's have a look at what you need to negotiate in order to get this nailed.

### APPROACH PIC A

Your set-up is everything. Get this right, and you're on track. Seeing as how you'd like to change direction, you don't want to carry too much forward momentum into your take-off. To control your speed, edge into the move and gently let your bar out a touch so that you're going upwind without much pressure on your legs or bar. This will have the added bonus of flying your kite at the edge of the window, which will give you maximum up. You want your kite flying at the magical 1 or 11 o'clock. This way, your kite is driving forward and not lifting you, so you're able to edge. Resist the temptation to lift your kite to slow down!



Once everything is in position, it's time to send. Your send, as you can see in the video, needs to be sharp but short. The idea is that you get the kite moving quickly so that it generates power, but only for a split second so that it only goes up to 12, not past it. Your action will be a very positive pull-push, followed by a levelling of the bar. You can see in the photo that Karine is on a good edge, but she doesn't have buckets of spray - this is because she's not holding a lot of power. With her bar eased gently out onto the sweet spot, she slows down and can then give the kite a positive send up to 12.

### ROTATION PIC B

Two words, feather and carve. Your rotation starts before you take off, as does your control over the move. With the bar now level, you can feather it out to follow the power as the kite moves. This allows you to drive the board up towards the wind and carve.





By letting the bar out, you can carve with your weight on both feet, which leads to a slower rotation. If you don't let it out, you'll be forced to soften your back leg and lean back, which will make for a faster rotation and less control. Here Karine has levelled her bar enough to stop her send and is feathering the bar out, which allows her to carve up and away from the kite, thus starting her back rotation whilst still on the water.

#### TAKE OFF PIC C

With the board now carving slowly up towards the wind, it's time to get off the water. To help yourself get airborne, you need to stamp and pull - in that order.

Your stamp is against your edge, using the slight bend that you already have in your rear leg. It's an aggressive extension of your back leg. As soon as your back leg has fired, you can pull on the bar for some additional lift. The movements are almost simultaneous, but should you pull first, you'll find it very hard to stamp as the kite will pull you up off your edge before you get the opportunity to extend. It's also worth remembering that you've already started your rotation by carving. This means that as long as you go up, you'll continue. There is no need to throw your head around to encourage any more rotation - it's already happening! Karine has extended up against her edge and has pulled her bar in.



She's on the up. Note how she's still looking forward and has not thrown her head around.

#### GRAB PREP PIC D

This is where you approach, send and take off, hopefully joining up in blissful harmony and making your life considerably less demanding. If you dumped enough forward momentum, sent the kite around the edge of the window only as far as 12 o'clock, and feathered the bar out to allow you to carve up on both feet before stamping up, then you'll be rewarded with the sensation of time and hang. However, without getting too deep, time is relative, and in the grand scheme of things, you still need to get a move on!





You need to grab the nose of your board with your front hand. This will then magically, perfectly, and conveniently morph into the tail of your board and your back hand for landing. To do this, you need to lift the board within grabbing distance so that it's easily reachable. As soon as you've taken off, keep the nose of your board within your sights. Bring your front knee up towards your chest whilst releasing your front hand and extending it towards the board. Here Karine is focusing on her board, aiming her hand at the nose as she lifts it within reach. Keep your bar in.

#### FOOT OUT PIC E

The moment of truth; time to set your foot free! Before getting into the movement, we should consider the moment and have a look at Karine and, more specifically, where she is in her rotation. In this photo, she already has her foot out and leg straightened, yet she is only halfway around her back roll. This is key and the result of that slow rotation. If and when you're looking upwind, it gives you the impression of time and the confidence to wiggle your foot out. The other factor which we must not ignore here is the position of your kite. If it's high and above you, you'll be floating, and this again adds to the impression of time.

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Whereas if it's moving across to the other side of the window, you'll be rushing. This is a result of your short sharp send, followed by that levelling of the bar pre take-off, which you can see Karine has maintained up to this point. OK, back to the foot out. Holding your board up as if it's on edge will allow you to slide your foot down and out. Keep your eye on the strap. Once it's out, you can give it the full Monty by extending your leg to claim bonus style points.

#### FOOT IN PIC F

This is where previous experience of a foot out comes in handy as you've got two jobs now: Get your foot back in and start diving the kite to help finish your rotation and pull you downwind for a graceful landing. As long as you've got your eyes on your strap, you should be able to guide your foot towards it

without stubbing your toes! It may not seem like the most sensible option, but as you fiddle for your strap, you need to use your now front hand to dive the kite. This will actually give you a moment longer in the air and help soften your touch down. You can see that as Karine squeezes her foot back into the strap, she is already asking the kite to do its business with her front hand.

#### LANDING PIC G

This is all about the kite. If it's diving down hard from somewhere near 12, it will pull you downwind with it. This will make landing off the wind simpler. To help get the board pointing in the right direction, drop your legs and aim to land tail first. If the tail makes contact before the rest of the board, it will stop and pivot the nose further off downwind. Here Karine is looking in



the direction she wants to land, she's dropped her legs, and the board is touching down tail first. Game on. All that's left to do is get your back hand back on the bar so that you can stop the kite from diving into the drink and then carve back up onto your edge.

#### TOP TIPS

During the learning process, there are a few steps that'll help you reach the full money shot of a bona fide one foot out in the midst of your BLT.

On your approach, make sure that your hands are centred on the bar and loosen your foot a bit in your front strap. This will make it slip out much easier.

Try not to fully rotate your back roll. It's better to get only half or three-quarters of the way around than to over-rotate. Practise this without the one foot first.





Once you're happy and ready to take your foot out. For your first attempts, wiggle your foot back on the pad so that it's not fully out. This way, it's easy to slide it back in, and you'll have both feet in contact with the board should things not go fully to plan. Once this works, you'll have the confidence to take it out a bit further until you're comfortable enough to straighten your leg and get some distance between the strap and your foot.

And finally, it's normal to land nose first or across the wind as you get into this. With practice and patience, you'll work towards a soft, flowing landing.

Now have a good look at the sequence and the video to see how it happens step by step and in real-time.

### COMMON PROBLEMS

Not enough time! The classic. Your best course of action here is to concentrate on your BLT without a one foot or grab. Work on your approach and take off, feathering the bar out and stopping the kite at 12 so that you can rotate more slowly.

Not getting your foot back in or landing very nose heavy. Generally, the result of the kite drifting too far back during the move. Make sure to stop your kite by

levelling your bar before take-off. It can help to slow down a touch more on your approach.

### KEYSTONES

1. Slow down by easing bar out
2. Short sharp send and level
3. Stamp then pull
4. Lift knee for early grab
5. Dive whilst replacing foot





## HOOKED POPPED FRONT ROLL ►

**KITE** – Cabrinha Switchblade 8m

**BOARD** – Cabrinha XO 136

The popped front roll. A move which is well within your reach if you can rotate forwards under a kite, yet a move which can appear so utterly incomprehensible and/or terrifying. Seemingly defying physics, trying to pop up whilst throwing yourself down into a front rotation. The mind boggles, and the body hesitates. Well, fear not; we're going to have a look at how to learn this. It'll still be very much popped, but you'll have some support from the kite, a touch more time to rotate and, therefore, room to learn and improve along the way. Once you get the initial rotation down and the confidence that follows, you'll have ample opportunity to be more dynamic, pop even harder and maybe even lower your kite just a tad. As well as being a brilliant trick on its own, there's the added carrot in the fact that the popped front roll is a springboard into so many other tricks, whether transitions, unhooked moves, blind or wrapped landings, and so much more. Pumped? Ready? Let's do it.

### SET UP PIC A

Getting everything in position and ready is key to your success. Flat or flattish water will make a massive difference, so if you can hunt some out, it's well worth the effort. And make sure that it's not too shallow. If you know you can bail without hitting the deck, you're much more likely to fully commit.



You want to approach on an edge with some speed. No need for Mach 10, but your board needs to feel alive so that you have something to pop against. Power-wise, you must be in control. If you're hanging on and the kite is taking you for a walk, it's really not the best time. You want to be comfy and confident, just enough that you can get going without having to work the kite too much. Trim if needed. If your bar is within easy reach, you can edge upwind with two hands on the bar and your shoulders leaning further upwind than your bottom.

With your hands centred on the bar, position your kite at the magical 11 or 1 o'clock height. This means that your kite is just low enough that it isn't lifting you, and you can happily edge. Here Karine approaches on a good edge and gets her kite and weight sorted in preparation for the move.



### BEARING AWAY PIC B

As you know from any previous pop moves, bearing away is essential. It allows you to carve up and pop without turning so far into the wind that you stop. It allows the kite to drop back in the window and help with your landing, and it gives you the chance to get into a strong position from which you can pop. Before bearing away, you need to make sure that you've moved your weight slightly back over your rear foot so that you feel the majority of pressure through your back heel. This is the point of your body from which you'll launch, so it's a sound idea to have the pressure going through it now. It also means that you're back over the carvey bit of the board. How you bear away will have a direct impact on your take-off. It needs to be sudden and significant. If you slowly ease off your edge and gradually turn towards your kite, you'll likely accelerate and lose control.





Your best bet before bearing away is to give a sudden bit more edge. This lets you test the pressure on your heel while also checking your speed. From here, you can then aim the board off onto a broad reach by releasing your edge and standing over the board. In the photo, Karine has suddenly turned off the wind. Her weight is biased over her back foot so that the nose of her board is lifted, her bar is within reach, and she hasn't bent over forwards but rather keeps her head and shoulders high. This stops her from going onto her toe side edge and carving off the wind.

#### THE CARVE PIC C

Your carve back onto your edge is what gives you a platform to pop against and the tension in your lines

necessary to do so. In simple terms, what you're aiming to do is carve back onto the very same upwind edge, in the very same position that you were in just before bearing away. This needs to be dynamic and quick so that you can get into a strong position before the kite tries to pull you out of it. The beauty of being hooked in is that you can actually let the bar out a tad to help you get back into this position. The tricky part is resisting the urge to send the kite as you carve. The good news is that you can sneak the kite up slowly to help you learn. If you level the bar as you carve, the kite will move up, but in a slow and sedate manner. As you'll be carving and imminently popping, your kite won't have time to get to 12, so there's no danger of it actually lifting you off the water. Looking at Karine,



you can see that her bar is level, so the kite is moving. She's dropped her bum low whilst keeping her legs strong. This drops her edge deep into the water, and with her weight over the back foot, the board immediately carves up, building resistance and adding tension. THE one thing that you must not do as you carve is pull on the bar! It will prevent you from carving. This is only possible if your sweet spot isn't too far out.

#### THE POP PIC D

Before we get into the mechanics, it's really important to remember that, as with everything pop, you're the one making this happen. You're not waiting to feel lift. There's no cue from the kite. It's your responsibility to explode off the water.



As soon as you've carved onto your edge and feel resistance, it's time to stamp with your back leg. You're aiming to extend your back leg violently so that you suddenly push against your back heel and extend all the way through your body from your feet to your head. Even though you want to go up, you want to kick yourself away from your board and kite, upwind. The line tension will convert your away energy into up energy. Quickly back to the bar... The stamp gets you up, not the bar. Once you're going up, you can pull the bar in, BUT if you pull before you stamp, the kite will pull you over the board, and you'll have nothing to kick against.

OK, getting up is one thing, but how about initiating your rotation? The good news, it's all in your head, shoulders and front leg, much like the sent version. As you stamp off against your edge, bring your front knee up whilst dropping your head and leading shoulder towards it. This way, you will be extending up and lifting into your rotation as opposed to throwing down into your rotation. With the force of your stamp, this will send you on your merry way into your front roll. With the kite relatively high, your rotation should be more of a 360 around the axis of your lines and extended back leg. As you progress, this will remain the same; it's just your lines will change angle! Karine is most definitely on the way up into her rotation. Her back leg is fully straight, and she's used every muscle in her body to extend as she's popped. At the same time, she's lifted her front knee, dipped her front shoulder and dropped her head towards her shoulder to initiate the roll. It's also worth mentioning that once on the way up, she's pulled the bar in a tad



and has steered her bar forwards to make sure that the kite doesn't reach twelve and moves forward with her. As your head and shoulder dip, your bar dips with them.

#### ROTATE PIC E

This is very much a continuation of the last image. You can see that Karine is in an almost identical position, just further around her rotation, a quarter

way round, to be precise. The point is that your take-off, your pop, has set everything in motion. As such, you don't need to do much. And this is the simplicity of the move, give it everything you can on take-off and then you'll see that the rotation is in full swing and you don't need to do anything. Leave your back leg extended, your hands and bar where they are and feel yourself rotate. As long as your kite is relatively high, you'll have some support and, therefore, time to get around.





## EYES ON THE PRIZE PIC F

As you come around your rotation, you'll see upwind flash past and know that you'll soon enough be facing the right way again. You'll still be supported by your kite and have time. However, it's always a good plan to know where and when you're going to land. So, turn your head to get your bearings and see where you're going. Not only will this help you finish your rotation, but it'll also be the moment when you can dive the kite for landing should you feel that it's snuck too far up or hasn't followed you forward.

Once again, looking at Karine, you can see that she's in the same position; her back leg is still extended, front knee up, but she's now turned her head and is spotting her landing.

## LANDING PIC G

With your kite diving down from a relatively high position, your landing shouldn't be dissimilar to what you're used to, if perhaps a tad faster. The same principles apply. You need to drop your legs, get the board under you, and aim to land over your board, slightly tail first, pointing off the wind. Focus on where



you'll touch down and try to stomp your landing. With a bit of downward force, you'll settle the board onto the water and be able to keep your momentum going.

## TOP TIPS

Getting comfortably into your default popping approach and then bearing away are the precursors to any good pop. It's worth practising your approach and position and then bearing away whilst keeping your weight back and the kite controlled before you start popping into any front rolls.





To start with, it's all about keeping the kite high throughout the move. With support, you'll have confidence and be able to get an idea of what's going on. That said, you can't set up and bear away with the kite high, so make sure you only start to drift it as you carve up. You should find that this will be surprisingly natural.

As a result of drifting the kite, you do need to be prepared to steer it down/dive it as you come around your rotation. However, don't worry if it moves too far. You can progressively move it less, step by step, as your confidence grows in your pop.

OK, check out the sequence for a step-by-step walk-through and then watch the video for the real McCoy!

#### COMMON PROBLEMS

Sending the kite! All those years of evolution have

burnt self-preservation deep within our psyche. Two things that will help you send less. Firstly, trim the bar closer. With your sweet spot nearer, you'll be less likely to lean on the back hand as you carve up. Secondly, bear away more. By more, we mean further off the wind. The closer you are to the wind as you carve, the more you will pull. The broader you go, the less you are able to pull!

Not getting enough height. Chances are that you're pulling the bar in before stamping, which pulls you up and over the board and off your edge. Make sure that your back leg is your spring, not the bar.

Kite is moving too far back even though you're not sending it. This is the classic pop issue. It's a sign that you're waiting for lift, rather than creating lift. Once you carve up and feel tension, go for it.

#### KEYSTONES

1. Weight back and bear away
2. Carve and drift
3. Stamp, extend and pull
4. Lift knee, dip head and shoulder
5. Turn head and dive kite

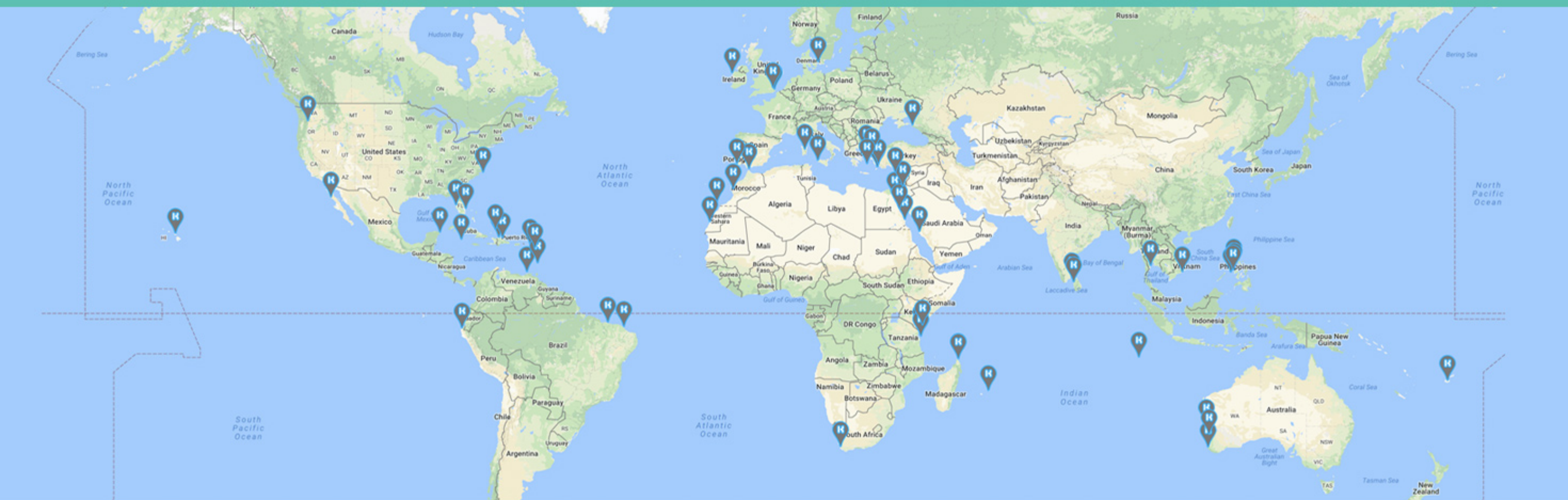






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WORDS ROU CHATER  
PHOTOS F-ONE

# ANOTHER LEVEL

There are few brands that have stood the test of time in the kitesurfing industry, and this one has been here from the start. With rapid growth and expansion over the past several years, F-ONE has shown that they're here to stay. Rou Chater heads over to Montpellier, France, to see what's happening behind the scenes of this impressive brand!



F-ONE is a brand that has been around since the very dawn of our sport. Launched in 1995 to sell windsurfing boards by Raphael Salles, they were the first brand to start selling kiteboards in 1998. If you've ever wondered about the brand name, Raph's racing sail number was F1, the number given to the number one ranked windsurfer in France of the time due to some small car organisation. There you have it, the short story of how F-ONE was born.

The brand has been synonymous with some of our sport's most significant developments from its inception and has always been leading from the front. The Bandit was a groundbreaking and game-changing kite back in 2007 that propelled F-ONE to a global powerhouse within the kite industry. From being tethered to the moniker, "All We Do Is Kiteboarding", and pushing the Bandit as the only kite you will ever need, F-ONE has evolved into a completely different company in these modern days.

In fact, the changes in the last four years are mind-blowing. My last visit to the offices in Montpellier was back in 2019 when wing foiling was just at the foundation stage, and there were a total of 20 people in the team. Just this week, my most recent visit saw F-ONE as arguably the biggest brand in the wing industry while remaining a major player in kiting. Manera has successfully penetrated the surf market, and the foiling arm of their division is in full swing too. Needless to say, things have changed a lot around here.

The warehouse is stacked to the rafters with equipment ready to be shipped out, and the large space that looked "full" in 2019 has redefined the word full, and now doesn't have an inch that isn't being utilised.

**" F-ONE HAS EVOLVED INTO A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT COMPANY IN THESE MODERN DAYS."**





**“ TO HAVE INDUSTRY-LEADING TOYS IN EVERY ASPECT OF WATER SPORTS IS ANOTHER LEVEL. ”**

In addition, the team has doubled in size, with now just over 40 people in the office working to keep the brand at the top of their game.

The team has grown at both Manera and F-ONE, and it's worth noting that the goal was always to do everything in-house, whether marketing, design, R&D, or operations.


When you step into these offices, you see the entire crew behind the brand working on everything from new ideas to graphics and supplying the global market alongside everything in between.

If you visit the F-ONE website, you'll clearly see the scale of operations these days, with ten kites in the range, six twin tips, nine surfboards, four foil boards and three dedicated kite foils. That's before you even scratch the surface of the wing, surf and SUP foil, and Manera divisions. It's incredibly

impressive when you consider that the F-ONE products are among the most sought after and well-respected in terms of performance in the industry. To make one or two good products is tough, but to have industry-leading toys in every aspect of water sports is another level.

That performance doesn't come easy. Raph has always been passionate about testing; he spends more time on the water than anyone I have ever met. And every session he is testing, I've never come across anyone with so much passion for developing new gear. Micka Fernandez joined him on the test team a while back,





RIDER PAUL SERIN PHOTO MATT GEORGES

**“FROM WRITING THE TESTING NOTES TO PUTTING A NEW FRONT WING IN THE WATER CAN TAKE LESS THAN A WEEK.”**

and now he also has Paul Serin and Jules Chollet helping him; this team contends with the testing and development of kites, wings, and foils.

That passion for testing and development is driven not just by Raph's demanding tastes but also by the joy the team knows they inspire in others. Talking to them about the recent trip to the US for the AWSI event, both Julien and Raph recalled how fantastic it was to hear from the customers. When someone enjoys using an F-ONE product and gets that feeling of stoke we all love and enjoy, it really drives them to continue on this path of seeking perfection. And, of course, they love riding the gear too. Sharing passion is a key driving force here in Montpellier!

The whole development process at F-ONE always blows my mind a little. It's a relentless process that they have refined even more over the last few years. They now have two 3D printers and a CNC machine at headquarters, allowing them to quickly prototype on the spot. They can build foil prototypes in days, and from writing the testing notes to putting a new front wing in the water can take less than a week.

For the kites and wings, the testing notes go to the designer Robert Graham on a Sunday evening, and then he will make the changes to the CAD and send the request for new prototypes on a Monday. By Friday, Raph will have the new prototype in his hands, and the process will repeat over and over until they are 100% happy. When I say 100%, I mean it; the new Strike V3 was meant to be released in January, but it's being shipped the second week of April because Raph and the team want it to be absolutely perfect.



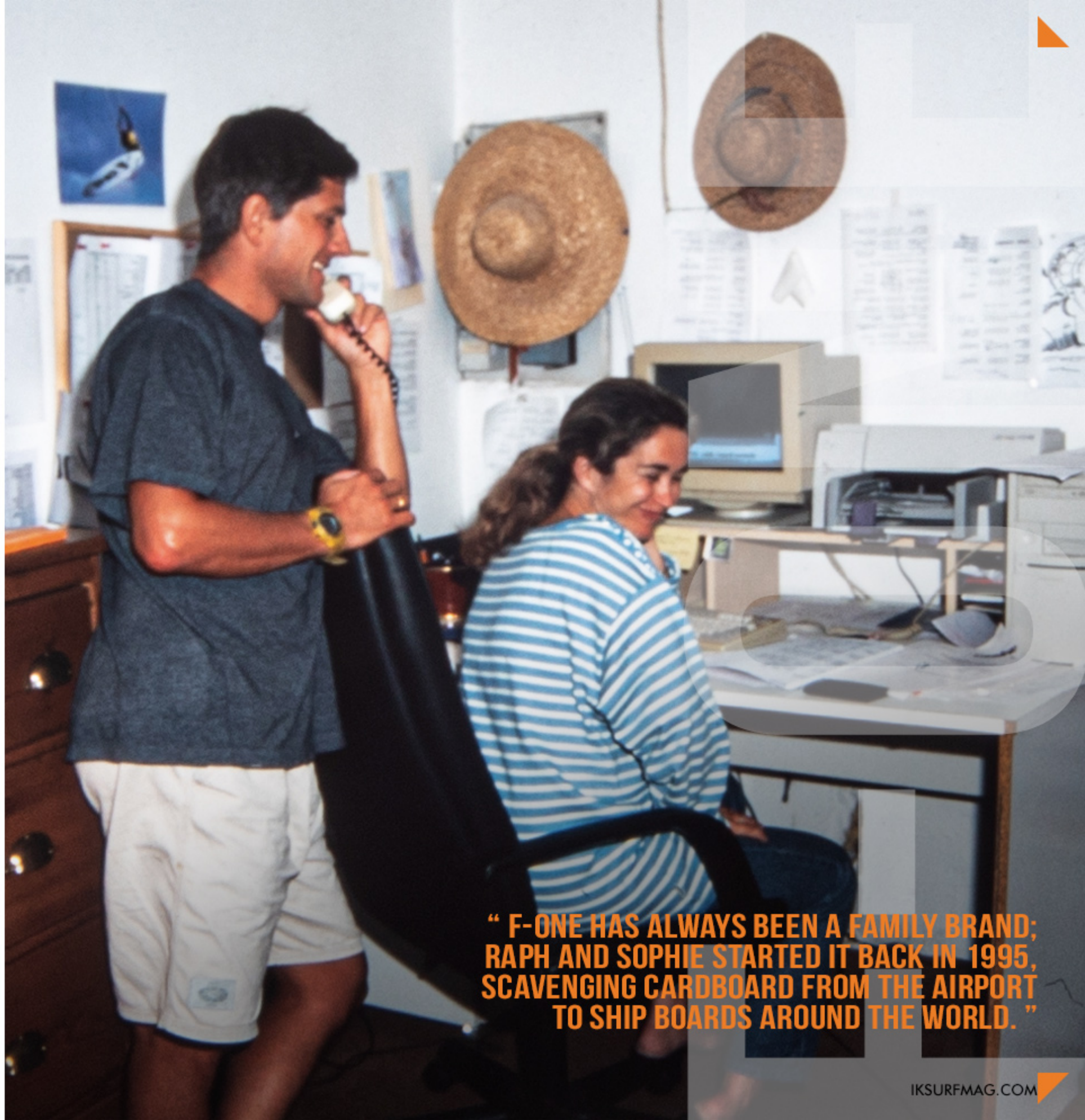
That's rare in business. Deadlines and sales often designate the release dates of products. When it gets to the cut-off, the product that is ready on the day is what you buy in the shop. It's refreshing to see F-ONE polishing everything until they are totally happy and only then pushing the product into our hands.

It's a process that has earned them a reputation of innovative products that just work right out of the bag. It's a testament that none of their foils needs shims or sanding or much messing about with. They have all been designed to work with the mast in the same position, with any rear stabiliser in the range. The idea being the less you have to muck around, the faster and easier it will be for you to progress. F-ONE already did all the tinkering, so you don't have to.

There is, of course, another step change at play here in Montpellier. Aside from the doubling in size of the brand with the explosion of wing and foiling, Raph is about to turn the big 6-0. It's been enlightening to hear him and Sophie, his wife and the brand Finance Director, talk about passing the baton to Julien, their son.

F-ONE has always been a family brand; Raph and Sophie started it back in 1995, scavenging cardboard from the airport to ship boards around the world. With the birth of their children Camille and Julien, the question has been put to Julien since he was just six years old, "When are you going to take on the family business?"

I've never really seen Raph ready to end his endless pursuit of perfection in every product he makes, but this trip has been different. Julien is already the Brand Manager not only for Manera which was always Julien's baby, but is also now the Brand Manager for F-ONE.



**“ F-ONE HAS ALWAYS BEEN A FAMILY BRAND; RAPH AND SOPHIE STARTED IT BACK IN 1995, SCAVENGING CARDBOARD FROM THE AIRPORT TO SHIP BOARDS AROUND THE WORLD. ”**





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LUIZ EMMANUEL SOUSA ON THE NEW ELEVEIGHT RS V7 IN BRAZIL!  
PHOTO ROGERSON BARROSO

# BECOME A SUPPORTER





# THRIVING IN TERRIFYING SITUATIONS

## JESSE RICHMAN'S FIVE-STEP FORMULA

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WORDS JESSE RICHMAN PHOTOS FRED POMPERMAYER

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If you look up "extreme" in the kitesurfing dictionary, you'll see Jesse Richman's portrait looking back at you! Having achieved the highest accolades in big air, performed some of the most mental stunts, and conquered terrifyingly huge waves, Jesse is the guru of keeping his s&\*t together. Read his guide to not just staying alive but thriving in the face of terror in this exclusive article!







**“ I ALWAYS WANTED TO BE A BADASS ATHLETE THAT DID EXTREME S&\*T, AND WHEN I FOUND KITEBOARDING, I KNEW IT WAS MY VESSEL FOR EXTREMITY. ”**

When I have a hard time making a decision, I like to think, "What excites me the most?" Answering that question can be super challenging, but I can usually tell which ideas sound more exciting than the rest, ultimately illuminating the most fun path forward.

I have no idea if it was nature or nurture,

but for whatever reason, my instincts have always been adventurous. I always wanted to be a badass athlete that did extreme s&\*t, and when I found kiteboarding, I knew it was my vessel for extremity. For a long time, I did radical things without hesitation and went full send, never thinking twice. But, it started to catch up with me as I found myself in hospital beds more and more. Bumps and bruises turned into breaks and tears. I realized that injuries weren't cool; in fact, they sucked! Yes, valuable lessons came with each injury, but they were highly unnecessary and a

massive waste of time. The goal was to ride on the edge but not go too far - to find that thin line between death and glory, and stay there.

I realized that to stay healthy, I needed a process, a manual of sorts, to take on extreme tasks. I had to look at risk through a magnifying glass and learn to live life like a warrior, where every move and every second counts.

In my quest to become a warrior, I crafted a mindset and created formulas. Today, I want to share my universal recipe for success, which works particularly well when applied to fear-filled endeavors.





**“ I STARTED WATCHING JAWS BEFORE I COULD EVEN REMEMBER, AND I KNEW THAT SOMEDAY, I WOULD BE ONE OF THE GUYS THAT WENT OUT THERE. ”**

The example application for this formula is kitesurfing Pe'ahi, AKA Jaws.

The 5 step process is as follows:

- Prepare
- Embrace Fear
- Find Flow
- Adapt
- Recover & Re-Engage

Let's break it down.

#### STEP 1: PREPARE

Preparation is the key, and it helps to be prepared on many scales (long and short term).

My Jaws preparation began before I was even born. When my parents moved to Hawaii and started a family, they allowed me not only to exist but to grow up in a waterman's wonderland surrounded by big-wave surfing. I started watching Jaws before I could even remember, and I knew that someday, I would be one of the guys that went out there. As a teenager, I decided to turn this dream into reality. I felt like I was pretty good at kitesurfing in big waves, but I also knew I wouldn't know what to do if I fell on a 50-foot wave. So, I looked at what other big wave surfers did and copied that. I learned how to freedive; I took multiple freediving courses and started spending as much time as possible holding my breath.



“IT WAS HUGE; IT WAS TERRIFYING, AND  
DROPPING INTO A WAVE ON THIS DAY, FEAR  
ERUPTED AT ME FROM EVERY ANGLE.”

There's a scientific side to breath holds and a spiritual/psychedelic side; understanding both sides is critical because you never know where your mind will go when being held under by a huge wave.

I started going out to Jaws before inflation vests were invented, but I still saw a ton of gear I needed to be safe out there, such as big impact vests, jet skis, rescue drivers, and specialized big wave boards. I learned about it all and did everything possible to acquire the necessary tools.

In addition to my mindset, strong body, and tools, I needed to have a deep understanding of the elements and the timing that I would have to nail, as well as the practical skills/movements I would need to master to rip it up out there.

Long story short, I spent years preparing for Jaws and haven't stopped. The analyzing/preparing phase runs until the very moment I find myself on a wave out there. Fast forward to the day pictured here in this magazine, the Eddie Swell 2023, on January 22nd. It was huge; it was terrifying, and dropping into a wave on this day, fear erupted at me from every angle.

## STEP 2: EMBRACE FEAR

Fear has been ever-present throughout my journey. From day one, thoughts and ideas of what could go wrong made me question the quest, but my desire to ride Jaws and to be the man out there was always enough drive for me to push through my fears.







**“ MY 7M KITE STARTS TO FEEL MORE POWERED UP THAN EVER. ALL OF THIS HELPS ME REALIZE JUST HOW TERRIFYING THIS IS. ”**

It's a different story when the stakes rise and I'm out on a wave. When I see the swell go from a 20' slope to a 50' beastly wall of water, the wind blasting up the face of the wave accelerates and picks up water particles which turn into a mist cloud that make my vision start to go blurry. I feel the wind surge, and my kite yanks me. My 7m kite starts to feel more powered up than ever.

All of this helps me realize just how terrifying this is. This wave has the power of 1,000,000 horses; it's millions of pounds of water stacked up, ready to explode, and could vaporize anything or anyone in its way.

My mind has so many warning signals flashing and beeping as every survival instinct screams at me to get out of there; this is when the "paralyzing fear" hits people, where the risk is too grand to conceive and then can't move. Fortunately, I did step 1. I did my prep which is a prerequisite for step 2. Since I did my prep, instead of being paralyzed by fear, I can harness it and use it as fuel. I trust in my training and myself and

embrace the fear; I grab that feeling and drink it up like a finely aged glass of scotch.

### STEP 3: FIND FLOW

By embracing my fear, I enter the next phase and find my flow. Since I have welcomed fear in, there is a rush, an overwhelming sensation of superhuman-like focus that comes over me. I enter into a flow state, the most incredible place to be and the most exciting mindset I've ever known. It's a place where I let go of thought, and I feel, I move, and everything flows; there's no time to think, just time to ride this wave.

Note - sometimes people skip step 1 and can find step 2, but it's implausible that someone who has missed step 1 will find step 3.





**“ NOT TRYING TO TAME THE BEAST, MERELY TRYING TO RIDE IT FOR ALL IT'S WORTH. ”**

#### STEP 4: ADAPT

It doesn't matter how good the plan is, there's a good chance it's going out the window as things change quickly and frequently. As one is going Mach10 down a wave at Jaws, there are bumps and pieces of chop that might only be a few feet tall, but going 40+ mph, they are little ramps that can send you straight into a horrific backflip to cartwheel combo. Gusts of wind could boost you 100+ feet in the air. So, at this moment, it's all about being adaptable. Move with the wave, and see what it provides, maybe see a good place to do a big turn, or perhaps if you're super deep, you will find the barrel section. No matter what, there is no exploring this place in control, simply trying to make sense in chaos, not trying to tame the beast, merely trying to ride it for all it's worth.

Now, win or lose, stick it or eat it; that doesn't matter. No matter what happens on the wave, or our plan, the approach stays the same. If it was the best wave ever, move on to step 5; if we hit a bump and take a wrong turn, buckle up and get ready to put all that training to use. And, I must say this is truly an exciting part; getting to utilize years and years of training to survive a hold day can be the best part. I can only have this fun/exciting viewpoint if I crushed it on step 1.

There are tons of techniques that are crucial for surviving this moment, to name a few briefly:

- In huge surf, never wear a kite leash, and always ditch your kite immediately when crashing. Getting tangled in your lines is game over.



“ A CRITICAL MOMENT IS KNOWING WHEN TO CALL IT FOR THE DAY. IF WE ARE NOT AT 110%, WE SHOULDN'T BE PUSHING THE LIMITS. ”

- Don't wear a board leash either; the last thing you want is to get smacked by a 14lb tow board.
- Have the right flotation; I use a padded wetsuit for impact and flotation, as well as an inflation vest. This combo is the gold standard in big wave surfing today.
- Have a safety team! I can't stress the importance of this enough. Without a jet ski, at Jaws or many of the world's big waves, one is just screwed if they crash; with a ski and a well-trained driver, a crash on a big wave can be fun.

Now, no matter what happens on the wave, eventually, we make it out to the channel again, maybe with our kite in the air or maybe on the back of a ski. Either way, we take a second and move on to the 5th and final step.

#### STEP 5: RECOVER & RE-ENGAGE

After all big wipeouts, the world feels funny and sometimes foggy; this fog can dissipate in a few minutes but sometimes lasts for days. A critical moment is knowing when to call it for the day. If we are not at 110%, we shouldn't be pushing the limits. If, however, we recover quickly, then, hell yes, let's re-engage.

A fun part about releasing the kite at Jaws during a wipeout is that you can go and get it back! The kite flies into the channel, so after the crash, you get worked, and the jet ski will come in like a knight in shining armor, pick you up, drive in so you can grab the board before it hits the rocks, and then go out to sea where the kite will be sitting there, waiting for more.







**“ I’VE SPOKEN ABOUT THIS  
PROCESS WITH SO MANY  
INCREDIBLY BRIGHT AND  
SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE FROM  
ALL WALKS OF LIFE ”**

It might require a bit of bar magic to untangle the lines, but because of step 1, this is easy. After the kite is back in the air, head out to the lineup for more. On the way back out, reset to step 1.

The best part of this 5 step process is that you can take it anywhere. It applies to The King of the Air, jumping over a huge rock pile, negotiating with sponsors, communicating with friends, family, foes, you name it. This methodology should work. I’ve spoken about this process with so many incredibly bright and successful people from all walks of life, who all find that we share a very similar process for success.

Thanks for reading, and best of luck with your preparations!



# On The Fly

COMING SOON //  
FOLLOW THE CURRENT

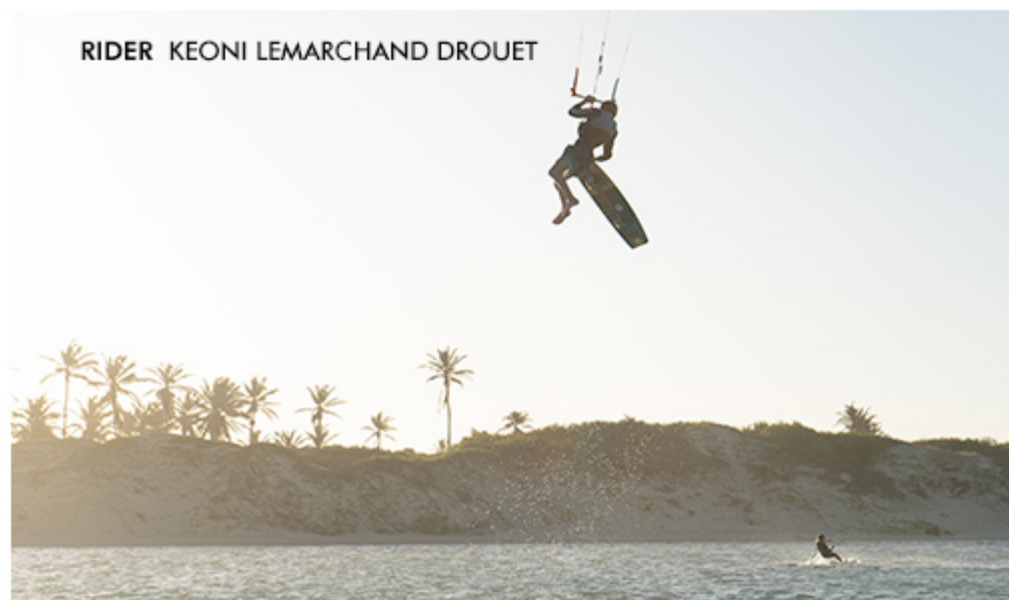


The Prolimit team made what has become an annual migration to Cape Town just a few months ago! This film production brings together Prolimit & Naish Kiteboarding international team riders Stig Hoefnagel and Helena Brochocka for an adventure along Africa's southern coastline.

Check out the teaser trailer here and get ready to Follow the Current with Prolimit! Stay tuned for the full film and the feature article in the next issue of IKSURFMAG...



RIDER KEONI LEMARCHAND DROUET



*On The Fly*



## BATTLE IN BRAZIL // WORLD CLASS KITEBOARD ACADEMY



After a full day of Maths, History and Spanish classes in the Brazilian heat, the students of the international high school for kites pile into the school bus, which happens to be 4X4 trucks laden with kite gear! Today is not an ordinary training session for the young talents at the World Class Kiteboard Academy; it's time for the Lukas Hanson Invitational 2022.

Each school quarter, the World Class Kiteboard Academy holds a school competition named after the

student winner of the previous quarter's competition. The vision is for students to have the opportunity to test their limits through healthy competition, emphasise sportsmanship and facilitate team building. It's a quick drive from the school campus in Flecheiras to the competition area, a tiny tidal lagoon that appears in the Taieri River mouth. This small spot is only rideable for four riders, an hour on either side of high tide. It's the size for a four-person competition heat and fills

up just long enough to run the competition. Jackpot! The action ensues, coordinated with students waving competition flags made of an assortment of Polly's exercise band (red), Simon's kite bag (yellow) and Alex's yoga mat (green). The heats are full of surprises, including a coconut tree rail ride\* from freestyle maestro from Poland, Maksymilian, switch tricks from the rookie rider, Amelie, and perfectly executed board offs from the youngest member of the team, Keoni.



# BATTLE IN BRAZIL //

## WORLD CLASS KITEBOARD ACADEMY



RIDER JOPPE VAN DE POLL PHOTOS WORLD CLASS KITEBOARD ACADEMY



In the end, it was Lukas Hanson (USA) who clinched the top spot once again. Will he hold onto the title next quarter in Southern Sardinia, though? Huge thank you to North Kiteboarding for the rider shirts and podium prizes - a hybrid Focus board and the Fix boot bindings.

\*Waxed up using sunscreen!

### OVERALL RESULTS:

1st - Lukas Hanson (USA)

2nd - Joppe van de Poll (NED)

3rd - Maks Mielczarek (POL)

### COCONUT AWARDS (HONOURABLE MENTIONS):

Best Sportsmanship - Keoni Lemarchand Drouet (FRA)

Best Trick - Maks Mielczarek (POL)

Most Varied Player (MVP) - Maks Mielczarek (POL)

Best Crash - Kenneth Penman (USA)

The Golden Boot - Amelie Adelgasser (AUT)





*On The Fly*

## PARK & RIDE //

### RAMIRO GALLART

Just over a year ago, freestyle and park rider Ramiro Gallart suffered a game-changing injury, tearing both his ACL and PCL, an injury that would take him off the water for a year. A recovery time of that length is an extreme challenge, both mental and physical.

**Click here to read more about Rami's injury and recovery process in his interview with Holly Keenan.**

Finally able to return to the water again, Rami joined the crew for a park and freestyle combo trip to Brazil, and he shared his insights!

**Ramiro Gallart:** As we know, a lot of the riders that built the park movement came from the freestyle

division, and at some point, it seemed that there was a division of the path a rider could take. But as things evolved and changed, we have seen that riders from these two worlds have been spending more and more time together with the same purpose: share the stoke on the water and pursue the sport's progression.

As much as we would love to share more sessions together, it can be hard as we all need to attend different events and meet different obligations. Nevertheless, Brazil is always there to recruit everyone for a month or two, where the only responsibility is to keep the body in shape and push the sport every single day, create outstanding media,

land NBDs, and make plans for the upcoming year.

This past year, we shared a house with friends from everywhere. From the freestyle division, Gianmaria Cocoluto, Maxime Chabloz, and Nina Font, and from the park side, Noe Font, Ewan Jaspán, Jack Rieder, Lauren Holman, and myself (Ramiro Gallart). Last but very far from least, our media friends Laci Kobulsky and Andre Magarao. It was a time to remember; good times, lots of riding, sunset shoots, some rails and air tricks, follow cams, and dinners together reviewing footage. We were all hyped by the experience, and we look forward to repeating it again.





*On The Fly*

## PARK & RIDE //

### RAMIRO GALLART



I found the division between the two disciplines somewhat similar to the conflict that often comes up at events where strapless riders more orientated on riding waves meet riders more into strapless freestyle. I remember from university studies that there is a magic number in diversity; too much brings chaos and lack of coordination, and too little may bring coordination but a lack of creativity and innovation. There is a sweet spot in between, and I do believe that, in the blend between park and freestyle, we have found it!



# SNAPSHOTS //

## JOHANNA-CATHARINA EDIN

After a full summer season in Cape Town, one thing is for sure: Johanna-Catharina Edin has made some incredible memories and experienced some epic sessions! Take a look at some snapshots from her summer in South Africa!



PHOTO CRAIG KOLESKY



*On The Fly*

# SNAPSHOTS //

## JOHANNA-CATHARINA EDIN







*On The Fly*

## NEW RELEASE // DREAM GREEN

A green UFO has been sighted over the waters of the Caribbean! Slingshot has just dropped a special edition of the UFO V2, along with a creative video concept! Check it out - you'll be saying bye to the winter blues and transported to tropical heaven in no time!

"Snow sucks. Nevertheless, sometimes that's what nature deals you and you gotta grind through.

But just because you're stuck in the cold doesn't mean your mind is trapped in a frozen wasteland, too. Deep in the hippocampus is where we hold those memories of warmer times with wind and water. Memories so vivid they melt the freeze. When the winter blues are peaking, that's when Fred Hope dreams green."

**Click here to learn more about the limited edition UFO V2.**

PHOTOS BRANDON BOWE





*On The Fly*

## RIDER REPORT //

### COHAN VAN DIJK



PHOTOS KYLE CABANO



He's already become a familiar name in the world of Big Air kiteboarding, and he's only just getting started! Cohan van Dijk has worked his way to the top of the big air scene (literally), joining North Kiteboarding's international team. His announcement made a splash, as the first time he was spotted on his new kites was at a critical competition!

This January, Cohan claimed the top podium spot at the Cape Town edition of the Big Air Kite League event and won the viewers' votes with the Rider of the Day award! Check out the video documenting his double victory by Kyle Cabano. We can't wait to see what's next from this talented Dutch rider!



# TRIED & TESTED

In this issue, it's all about quality, not quantity! From the sandy beaches of the UK to the whipping winds of Cape Town, our Test Team has managed to get in a few shoulder season sessions, testing out some of the latest and greatest gear from CORE, Cabrinha, and Airush. From big air to wave to light wind and free ride, we've covered all the bases! Read on to find out what we thought of some of this season's most talked about kites!

## KITES & BOARDS

Cabrinha Contra Aether

Airush Lift

CORE Nexus 3

CORE Section 4

CORE 720 Surfboard

WORDS & PHOTOS THE IKSURFMAG TEST TEAM

PHOTO THIS PAGE

RIDER STINO MUL

PHOTO JAMES BOULDING





BRAND CABRINHA

MODEL CONTRA AETHER

SIZE 9M

YEAR 2023

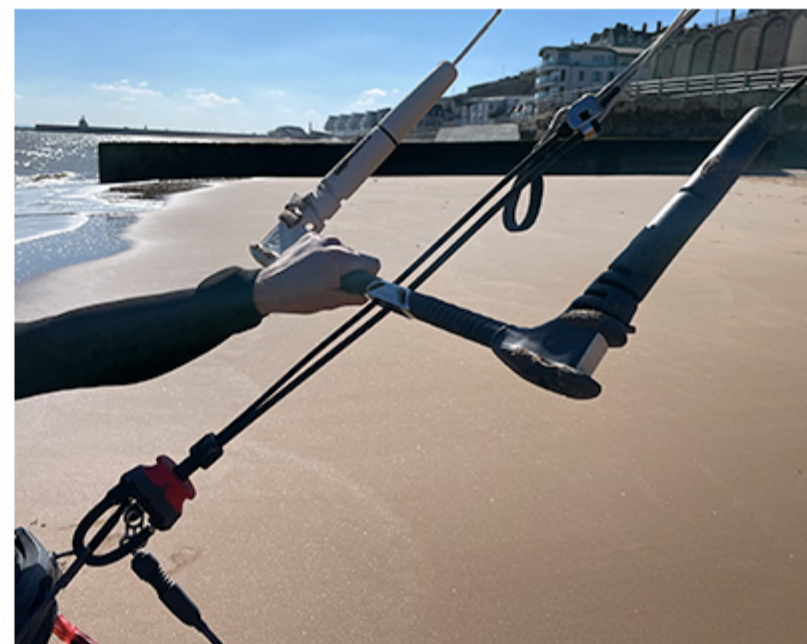


"IN LIGHT WINDS, THE CONTRA AETHER WILL PERFORM TO A LEVEL THAT WILL EXCITE EVEN THE MOST DEMANDING OF RIDERS."



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

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



#### AT A GLANCE

Cabrinha has stepped things up for 2023, with every kite in the range getting a major overhaul. The Contra Aether builds on the backbones of one of the most iconic light wind kites on the market, the Contra. The original Contra set the benchmark in light wind freeride performance. The Contra Aether takes that DNA and recognises that large kites aren't always necessary for having fun in big winds. This is a kite for having fun on foils; the largest size is 11m, which is a big nod to the direction Cabrinha wanted to take this kite.

Everything about the Aether has been stripped back, and the build is super light with a combination of materials offering stiffness and durability while saving on weight. The leading edge and trailing edge use Cabrinha's High Tenacity Dacron; this material uses ultra-high tenacity yarns with an increased thread count to create a stiffer material that won't warp or warp elongate when inflated to higher pressures. This makes it incredibly stiff and stable in the air. The struts use HTD Lite, which takes the advantages of the High Tenacity Dacron

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)



BRAND AIRUSH

MODEL LIFT V3

SIZE 9M

YEAR 2023



"THE LIFT V3 WILL DO EVERYTHING WELL AND EVEN MORE ONCE YOU START TO PUSH YOUR RIDING LEVEL."



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

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



#### AT A GLANCE

It's all in the name with the all-new Airush Lift. The Lift V3 is a kite that is purpose-built for going big, with a 5-strut design that anyone can enjoy, but with performance characteristics that the budding big air rider will really sink their teeth into!

Comparing the Lift V2 to the newly-released Lift V3, you can see that this is a brand-new design and a big departure from the previous model. Airush is clearly going in the right direction with this kite, however, because it's already earned itself a strong reputation, even in its pre-release phase.

South African big air pro, Jason Van Der Spuy, uses the lift V3 as his go-to kite, and his results in recent big air competitions speak for themselves. It's clearly a megaloop machine that can offer impressive height and hangtime, and the smaller sizes are absolutely capable of double looping.

Looking at the build, this kite is built to last, with reinforcements and protective patches throughout in the places that need it. It's not the lightest kite on the market,

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)





BRAND CORE MODEL NEXUS 3 SIZE 12M YEAR 2022



"A HIGHLY VERSATILE KITE THAT'S GREAT FOR RIDERS OF ALL SKILL LEVELS."



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

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



#### AT A GLANCE

The CORE Nexus 3 is a 3-strut all-around kite designed for riders who want a versatile kite that performs well in a wide range of conditions. The big headline for the new Nexus is the material mix to create the kite. Using ExoTex 2 in the leading edge alongside ExoTex Light for the struts creates a lighter, stiffer airframe, improving the handling. The canopy is CoreTex 2, a proprietary triple ripstop with a special coating designed to be exceedingly durable while saving on weight; it is also stiffer and helps the kite keep its shape in strong gusty conditions. In terms of the design, the team have focused on the arc shape, aspect ratio and tip shape to get the maximum in terms of performance and handling. Pitched as a versatile all-rounder, it's perfect for freeride, big air and wave riding.

Sizes: 4m, 5m, 6m, 7m, 8m, 9m, 10m, 11m, 12m, 13.5m

#### IN THE AIR

CORE is known for their exceptional build quality and attention to detail; construction is second to none on this kite. Once you've pumped up and launched, you'll find a very stable kite in the sky.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)





"THIS KITE IS FOR THE RIDER THAT WANTS TO RIDE WAVES AND ONLY WAVES, AND IT PERFORMS BRILLIANTLY."



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

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



#### AT A GLANCE

The Section 4 is the pure wave kite on offer from CORE; this kite is for riders that live and breathe wave riding! It's not a free ride, all-around, or big air kite; it is a wave warrior, and it's a fierce one!

In its 4th edition, CORE has incorporated its latest materials technology. For the canopy, the Section 4 features CoreTex 2, a triple ripstop material that is a bit lighter than the previous version of CoreTex, with a coating that offers more stability, stiffness, and durability.

In the leading edge and struts, you'll find ExoTex, which is an ultra-rigid dacron material that can hold a whole lot of pressure, even in an airframe that has a fairly small diameter. The struts in the Section 4 use an even lighter version of ExoTex, aptly named ExoTex Light, which should make for some snappy handling.

The Section 4 has a 3-strut design with a bridle with 3 pulleys, which should translate to a well-balanced kite in the sky. They also offer three different trim settings on the wing tips, called Onshore, Offshore, and Allround.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)





BRAND CORE

MODEL 720 V2

SIZE 4'11"

YEAR 2022



"IT'S A LOT OF FUN IN FLAT WATER WHILE OFFERING IMPRESSIVE WAVE RIDING PERFORMANCE IN SMALLER SWELLS."



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

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



#### AT A GLANCE

As of today, CORE has 3 wave boards in their lineup, the Ripper for any-and-all wave conditions, the Green Room for the bigger days, and the 720 for small waves and freestyle. The 720 is very freestyle orientated, which is clear when you look at what the professional team is doing on this board. However, its performance in waves is very respectable, indeed.

When you're shopping for your first wave board, it's often the traditional pointy shape that appeals, because when you think wave, you think of surfboards. The stubby nosed shape of the 720 may not tickle your fancy at first, but surfboards designed for freestyle are a ton of fun to ride, and the 720 is no different. The average kiter has no plans to do 720s (double spins) with their wave board, but it's always nice to know that it's possible.

At first glance, the bottom design is quite interesting. The deep vee hull features quad concaves, designed to eat up chop and make a softer and more comfortable ride. The construction is super-durable with water-resistant HD foam wrapped up with glass fibre and carbon strips on the bottom. It's a board that is built to take a few hits, that's for sure!

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)





# RISING STARS

Egypt is full of hidden kite gems, in the form of both spots and people. Who would have guessed a 16-year-old would catch the attention of the kite industry, turning their heads towards the young talents of Egypt? In this article, Nicole Lambrecht introduces Rising Star Hamza Ismael and shares some background on this inspiring project!



The beautiful Bedouin city of Dahab is located in the northern part of Egypt, one of those raw places you won't find anywhere else. In addition to providing stunning scenery, Dahab offers a perfect environment for big air kiting. It is the favourite playground and backyard of international kites and many up-and-coming Egyptian riders, one of whom we'll introduce you to today!

First, a little background: I'm Nicole Lambrecht, and I have been enjoying the "kite bubble" for the past few years. But, as most of the community knows, the lifestyle is unique. I grew up in El Gouna, Egypt, my home since 2001. My family got involved in the kite community when we created the Makani Beach Club. It's been a beautiful project that came to life with many individuals coming together and putting their magic into creating a home away from home.

## " IT IS THE FAVOURITE PLAYGROUND AND BACKYARD OF INTERNATIONAL KITERS AND MANY UP-AND-COMING EGYPTIAN RIDERS "

In recent years, I've also supported my amazing sister Nathalie Lambrecht by working as a part-time caddy, or "nanny," around her when she competes in both Freestyle and Big Air. Through that and Makani, I found myself having this network in the kite world and connecting with inspiring people. Many of these people are now friends who have helped to support and participate in our projects and ideas to make them even better!

Looking back, I know I am one of the lucky kids who lived barefoot all year and grew up in a magical place with the most impressive surroundings and people.



THE CREW AT MAKANI BEACH CLUB. PHOTO: TOM SEAGER





" MOSTAFA'S VISION IS FOR THE KIDS TO BE HAPPY AND TO BE PART OF AN ORGANISATION THAT HE WISHES EXISTED AT HIS AGE. "

I wouldn't have the open mind I have in life and would not be who I am today if it were not for growing up in Egypt. I always said I wanted to give back to my home in whichever way I could, bringing us to the next part of the story...

Last year, Nathalie and I went to Dahab for Kite Mania, a local Egyptian competition, to explore more of Egypt and to meet and see the young shredders we had heard so much about. In Dahab, we connected with Mostafa Abbas, a local rider from Ras Sudr. Before we arrived in Dahab for the first time, Mostafa had described the kids in Blue Lagoon and how they would share one kite, throw leashes between each other, and make do with so little.

It's hard to describe it until you see it for yourself—the passion and warmth of the people out here are just

different. If you ever go to Dahab, you will see the creativity these kids have in finding ways to be on the water, improve, and have fun together. Even the youngest had plastic bags as 'kites' on the beach, pretending they were out on the water!

"Everybody deserves a chance," is what Mostafa Abbas expressed when we first met. He is a fantastic role model to the kids here in Egypt, and we could not have asked for a better partner in this journey. Mostafa's vision is for the kids to be happy and to be part of an organisation that he wishes existed at his age.





He pushes the kids to take it into their hands and work hard so that they can reach their goals. Being a part of the kiteboarding community, Nathalie and I combined our knowledge and connections, laid out the vision, and made a plan with Mostafa Abbas of how we could support the kids in the best way.

Together, we created Rising Stars, a non-governmental organisation designed to support young talents in Egypt within the kite world - a platform to help kids reach their dreams.

" TO SUPPORT  
YOUNG TALENTS  
IN EGYPT  
WITHIN THE  
KITE WORLD "

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RIDER HAMZA ISMAEL  
PHOTO BISHOY BUSHRA



Rising Stars aims to support the kids with gear, funds for national and international competitions, and transportation in line with those goals. We aim to host camps and bring kids together to inspire and push each other. We focus on education, community, and inspiration, and providing stability through equipment. The aim is also to invite them into this lifestyle by inspiring and guiding them into finding their routines, setting goals, and motivating them to grow and evolve physically and mentally. Within education, we focus on English, social media, coaching on and off the water, and being a good ambassador—all the skills that play a big role in a kiteboarding career.

"INSPIRED BY THE RIDERS JUMPING HIGH AND DOING CRAZY TRICKS, MOTIVATING HIM TO CONTINUE PRACTISING AND PROGRESSING EVERY DAY."

Today, we're so excited to introduce Rising Star, Hamza Ismael, a 16-year-old from Dahab, Egypt. When we first met Hamza, we were reminded that one smile can tell a lot about a person. His big smile, crazy talent using whatever gear he can find, and humbleness at such a young age, are inspiring.

As a 13-year-old, Hamza started kitesurfing with his uncle Awda in Dahab, who owns a kite school and encouraged him to learn to kite. Hamza was inspired by the riders jumping high and doing crazy tricks, motivating him to continue practising and progressing every day. Once he started doing his own high jumps and tricks, he fell in love with being in the air. He's gotten better and better, but the more he achieved, the more motivated he was to go even further!





" MOST PRO RIDERS ALWAYS MENTION THAT IT IS ALL ABOUT FOLLOWING THE WIND IF YOU WANT TO BE THE BEST. SO LET'S SEE WHERE THE WIND TAKES HAMZA NEXT! "

A few months ago, Hamza joined Mostafa Abbas to travel to Cape Town. Mostafa is the first Egyptian rider to join an international kitesurf competition and an inspiration to the younger riders that they too can dream big. Supported by Makani Beach Club, Hamza spent a month in Cape Town training for the

Big Air Kite League's 2nd division. While he was happy to simply be in Cape Town, meet all the riders, get inspiration from them, and make new friendships along the way, he performed amazingly well. Hamza claimed 3rd place on the podium in his first-ever international competition, representing Egypt.

The beauty of travelling is that it can evolve a person so much. Seeing Hamza grow, his English progress, his confidence excel, and his kite skills rapidly improve in just a few weeks is a highlight of the year. Since then, Hamza has locked down his first international

support from Brunotti, which will be a fantastic chapter and is getting help from North Kiteboarding and the excellent Adrian Kerr. He is ready to push himself to become a world champion! Most pro riders always mention that it is all about following the wind if you want to be the best. So let's see where the wind takes Hamza next!

Seeing Hamza achieve his goals in Cape Town and take the next steps in his kitesurfing career reminds us of what the Rising Stars project is all about. My sister Nathalie is genuinely one of the most inspiring people I know, and she shares her story behind Rising Stars:



"In honour of Tim, Josh, and Nico - Three beautiful souls that I will forever remember—short-lived stars are the ones that shine the brightest, is what I've heard—when a young star dies, all the matter spreads across the whole universe, and I believe that the qualities we admire in these beautiful people apply to their surroundings. They live on through you and with you. Josh told me he wanted to make the world a better place, and honestly, he did and hoped to do the same in the ways we could. I discussed with my sister that I wanted to make a difference, and she brought the idea to life and executed it until where we are today; Rising Stars would not exist if it weren't for her; it was like a domino effect where one person started helping too, just seeing how so many wonderful people came together for the exact cause. Nicole, Mostafa, and my dad have worked hard to get this together. The size of their hearts is indeed an inspiration, and I admire them for bringing this to life. I am so happy we can give these children opportunities that were a privilege in my upbringing."

- Nathalie Lambrecht.

" WE ARE SO THANKFUL FOR OUR PARENTS, WHO ALWAYS INSPIRED US AND SUPPORTED THIS PROJECT WITH OPEN HEARTS "

To have been able to shift pain into power is one of many things I admire about Nathalie. We are so thankful for our parents, who always inspired us and supported this project with open hearts, for Mostafa's wisdom and kindness, for Alaa Bedewi for being our right hand, and for many more.







" WHEN ONE KID CAN DO IT,  
THE DREAM OF REPRESENTING  
YOUR COUNTRY BY DOING  
SOMETHING YOU LOVE CAN  
BECOME A REALITY. "

No matter what path the kids decide to take within the kite world, whether it is competing, becoming a brand ambassador, or being a kite instructor, being part of this industry opens doors into a different world for the kids to grow into and take a different path in life than what they were born into. The kids do the hard work; we're just a platform to educate them and give them contacts so they can get out there and be their authentic selves. When one kid can do it, the dream of representing your country by doing something you love can become a reality. And that's precisely what Hamza proved was possible, shining light on himself and Egypt.







WORDS CRYSTAL VENESS PHOTOS PEER SCHNYDER & ANDREA ZUST

# INSIGHT

## ANDREA ZUST

If you've been kiting in Switzerland in the last couple of years, you will no doubt have spotted the Swiss Foil Couple cruising around Lake Uri or Lake Silvaplana! In this Insight feature, we catch up with Andrea Zust to find out all about her foiling adventures and recent trip to Cabo Verde!



Andrea, we've seen you rocking the hydrofoil surrounded by stunning mountain sceneries and are stoked to get to know you more in this Insight interview! Let's start by hearing a bit about yourself and where you are from...

I'm half Swiss (dad) and half Czech (mom), but I grew up in Switzerland. I'm currently in my 4th year (out of 6) of studying medicine. Balancing my studies and kiting takes a lot of discipline. I have to finish all my university courses and work during the week so I can go kiting on weekends. My primary discipline is hydrofoil freestyle, and I won the Swiss hydrofoil freestyle championships last summer. My boyfriend, Peer Schnyder, and I are shop riders for a local kite shop (Andy's Kiteshop in Goldau). We are also sponsored by Armstrong Foils International, who support us with their amazing hydrofoil gear.

**How did you get into kiteboarding? Who inspired you to try the sport?**

My mom was a passionate windsurfer, so my brother and I spent a lot of time in the water during our childhood. In 2017 I went on holiday to Tobago with my mom and told her I wanted to learn kitesurfing instead of windsurfing - I thought it looked cooler! So we booked a course together, and now we're both hooked. My mom even sold her windsurfing gear! We loved the feeling of complete freedom; just you, your kite, the wind, and the water. It was perfect for forgetting the day-to-day life of work and school!

"BALANCING MY STUDIES  
AND KITING TAKES A LOT  
OF DISCIPLINE."



RIDER ANDREA ZÜST



" I LOVED HOW MUCH FUN YOU  
COULD HAVE IN SO LITTLE WIND. "

RIDER ANDREA ZUST

I started out on a twin tip, of course, and then got into strapless riding a little. In 2018 I spent four months in Dakhla, Morocco, got better at kiting, did the IKO Instructor course (currently level 2) and spent the rest of my stay and the following summer teaching at different kite stations in Dakhla.

#### **When and why did you make the move to hydrofoiling?**

I started hydrofoiling two years ago after I met Peer and started kiting in Switzerland on all the different lakes with him and the other Swiss kite addicts. The conditions here aren't always great and we get a

fair amount of light wind days. After having spent most weekends at the beach watching all the hydrofoilers have their fun and not being able to kite with a twin tip, I decided to go for it too. Supported by Peer, I fell for it instantly; I loved how much fun you could have in so little wind. Then I started to do little jumps and got into hydrofoil freestyle.

**Do you ever whip out the old twin tip or wave board, and what sort of conditions would cause you to do so?**

Peer sold his twin tip, but I still have an old one. When conditions are pumping, I still prefer the hydrofoil with

a 5m kite to a twin tip. The only times I switch from the hydrofoil is to a strapless for some nice waves, but even then, I sometimes prefer the hydrofoil. I'm hooked at the moment, and when you want to get better at something, you have to stick to it. I don't get as much water time as I'd like so when I do, I want to make it count!

**You've been pushing the envelope for women in hydrofoil freestyle and big air! What do you love about these disciplines?**

The gliding sensation and feeling of cutting through chop effortlessly are amazing; such an elegant sport!





" WE WENT TO MAURITIUS A LOT,  
AND THIS WAS WHERE I HAD MY  
FIRST-EVER KITESURF LESSON. "

RIDER PEER SCHNYDER

I feel weightless when I'm on the foil. Hydrofoil freestyle is so much fun because it's a very technical sport. You have to get everything exactly right, the pressure, the timing, and your body position when you're in the air. I like pushing myself and perfecting my style. I've always liked a good challenge. There are so many different tricks and trick variations to learn, and it never gets boring. Don't get me wrong, it can be frustrating sometimes (a lot of times), but the feeling that you get when you finally land a new trick is unmatched! And big air, I mean, who doesn't want to fly, right? The higher, the better! I guess I'm a little adrenaline junkie, too! ;)

**How challenging is it to learn new tricks on a hydrofoil?**

It depends on the trick. I learned some of them (sitting on the foil, little jumps, small back rolls and front rolls) pretty quickly, while others took me a few months to get right (one-footers, board-offs, etc). Once you've learned the basics of jumping and figured out the right timing for your heliloops, it's not a lot different than with a twin tip. The extra weight and size of the hydrofoil were the biggest challenge for me initially. Keeping my balance in the air and on the landings were the hardest. My current hydrofoil setup from Armstrong is one of the lightest on the market (full carbon), and yet still, my abs and legs suffer after a good session.



**Tell us about your #1 kite buddy, Peer Schnyder! You two look like a dream team! How did you meet? How long have you been together?**

Peer is a very talented kiter himself. He started snowkiting when he was eight and continued on the water when he was older. When we met, he was still on a twin tip most of the time but had started practising foiling a little bit already. The story of how we met is best told by Peer, and you'll see why!

"Andrea and I met each other nearly three years ago in our local kite shop. I was already a shop rider there and came in to discuss some new kites I had tested with the owner, Andy. When I came in, I noticed a really good-looking girl in the corner who was talking to Andy about strapless boards, so I sat on a bar stool next to them, listened and then started with a really shy "hello". I asked her about her kiting experience. We had a short conversation about kiting and private life until I needed to leave. With Andy and her mom there, I couldn't ask her for her phone number. So instead, I left the shop and, in the parking lot, checked all the car licence plates, went on Google to look for them and compared the car holders' names with Facebook profiles! That is how I found her name and Facebook profile! We started chatting, exchanged numbers, and the rest is self-evident." - Peer Schnyder.

**What is it like having a partner who appreciates the sport as much as yourself?!**

Heaven! If you do this sport as often and intensely as we do, every weekend on the water throughout all four seasons (next to working and university),



**" HE WAS STILL ON A TWIN TIP MOST OF THE TIME BUT HAD STARTED PRACTISING FOILING A LITTLE BIT ALREADY. "**





**" WE ALSO SUPPORT AND COACH EACH OTHER. WE PUSH EACH OTHER AND IMPROVE OUR SKILLS TOGETHER. "**

it is nearly necessary that you both share the same passion. Kiting, especially in Switzerland, is extremely time-consuming. You must plan the trips ahead of time, organise all the gear, drive to the different lakes, and wait for the right conditions and wind. We also support and coach each other. We push each other and improve our skills together.

**You capture a lot of gorgeous shots of each other! When the wind blows, who usually gets on the water first and who is behind the lens?**

Ladies first, for sure (Peer says)! If the forecast is promising and we know the wind will hold for a few hours, we have no stress, so we take turns filming and photographing. If the forecast is bad and we don't know how long our session will be, we each take a GoPro or the Insta360 instead to get some footage when we are out together. This way we can film our tricks and each other.

**Your home spot in Switzerland features in most of your kiting shots. Tell us about kiting in Switzerland! What is your favourite spot, and what are the conditions like there?**

My favourite two spots are Lake Uri and Lake Silvaplana. The wind is reliable and smooth/laminar in both spots, and the scenery is beautiful! On Lake Uri, huge rock faces surround you, and in Silva, you have the incredible white-topped mountain scenery. The average wind speed of these spots is between 15-25 knots, with temperatures in summer going up to 25°C-30°C. The winters are a little harsher, with temperatures sometimes dropping down to -10°C. It is worth visiting these two spots if you ever come to Switzerland.

RIDER PEER SCHNYDER





" IT IS GREAT FOR FREESTYLE, BIG AIR AND WAVE RIDING - THE BEST OF ALL WORLDS! "

**You've just come back from a trip to Cabo Verde. How was it?!**

Awesome! Wind every day, warm weather, good food and friendly people! It's a cool island to visit during our European winter (January to March). We rented a 4x4 pickup truck for two weeks to explore all the different spots. We really enjoyed hydrofoiling on Boavista. However, you need to be aware of a few things as a hydrofoiler. There are a lot of turtles, so be careful with your foil! Depending on the swell's direction, the shore break and waves get pretty big,

and it gets challenging to get out behind the whitewash. Lastly, some of the spots look like a dream come true, but once you get out there, there is a lot of seaweed, which is a hydrofoil nightmare. The main spot in Sal Rei is a bit gusty, but after a few days there, it feels normal, and you get used to it as you learn how to handle it. Practice makes perfect, right?!

**What was your favourite kite spot in Cabo Verde? Why?**

We were at six different spots, some wave spots and flat-water spots. Our favourite spot was Ponto Antonia.

It is a beautiful little lagoon in the middle of nowhere with onshore wind. It only has a small shore break with small waves towards the beach, a middle section of flatter water and big waves out back. It is great for freestyle, big air and wave riding - the best of all worlds! This spot is way less gusty than Sal Rei, and the water colours are amazing. Make sure to go there early in the mornings because sometimes, in the afternoons, the kite schools from Sal Rei bring their guests there. It is a small spot that gets crowded easily. We were there with three kites on the spot, which was just about perfect!



**What is your favourite memory from the trip?**

We had an incredible time with the rented 4x4. Driving around the island with it on dirt roads and through sand, turning the radio volume up and listening to good music while preparing for the next freestyle session were highlights of our trip! To be flexible in choosing spots according to the forecast and hopping from spot to spot was amazing!

**Foiling in light wind spots requires a particular type of equipment. So, what is the most used kite in your quiver? What do you like about it?**

The 10m Duotone Evo SLS and 11m Duotone Rebel SLS are the kites we use during most of our sessions in Switzerland. They are the perfect size as you have great low-end in light winds and get crazy airtime in strong winds. They are very light and reactive with fast turning speeds and great hangtime.

On Boavista, our most used kite was the 7m Duotone Evo SLS. Because we had such strong wind, it was a perfect choice nearly every day. The smaller kites are our favourite ones to fly because of their fast turning speed and excellent general performance! The lift while jumping, the explosive yank while looping, and the easygoing heliloops are amazing.

**" TO BE FLEXIBLE IN CHOOSING SPOTS ACCORDING TO THE FORECAST AND HOPPING FROM SPOT TO SPOT WAS AMAZING! "**





**" IT IS GOOD TO TEST ALL THE DIFFERENT  
OPTIONS AND COMBINATIONS TO FIND  
THE BEST SETUP FOR YOU "**

**Hydrofoils are a serious topic, so we have to know: What is your go-to foil setup for sessions at home?**

We both have the same favourite Armstrong Foils setup:

- Armstrong WKT Board 109cm with Armstrong Footstraps in Y-position
- 935 and 1035 Performance mast
- HS625 Front wing
- 50cm and 60cm Fuselage
- HS232 Back wing

**How do you adjust your setup for travelling, like on your latest trip to Cabo Verde?**

Our tip to all the hydrofoilers trying to get into foil freestyle is the more you train on the same setup, the faster you progress! Changing a front or back wing makes a big difference. In the beginning, it's best to only have to concentrate on learning the new trick rather than learning to manage a new foil setup at the same time. If you're more experienced at foiling, it is good to test all the different options and combinations to find the best setup for you in your main discipline and then stay with that. So, we always pack our main setup for all trips. In addition, we usually bring along a few bigger front wings for lighter wind days. Of course, sometimes we get to test some new gear by Armstrong Foils, which is always very exciting.





### What is coming up next for the Swiss Foil Couple?!

We constantly focus on improving our skills, learning new tricks and perfecting our technique. Currently, our main focus is on the Swiss Freestyle Series (Swiss Freestyle Championships mid-June), where we will participate in the Hydrofoil Freestyle category. A future goal would be to participate in a GKA Hydrofoil Freestyle event, although that is difficult at the moment due to work and university responsibilities. Hopefully soon!

Thanks so much for the Insight into your world of hydrofoiling, Andrea!

" A FUTURE GOAL WOULD BE TO PARTICIPATE IN A GKA HYDROFOIL FREESTYLE EVENT "

RIDER ANDREA ZUST







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LIGHTROOM

HELENA BROCHOCKA TWEAKING IT OUT IN SOUTH AFRICA'S HERMANUS LAGOON  
DURING THE LATEST PROLIMIT SHOOT!  
PHOTO KYLE CABANO

*Lightroom*

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

IKSURFMAG.COM



LIGHTROOM

ANGELY BOUILLOT PULLING OFF SOME ABSOLUTELY MENTAL LOOPS IN BARCARÈS, FRANCE  
PHOTO SAMUEL CARDENAS - GKA KITE WORLD TOUR

*Lightroom*



LIGHTROOM

JEROME BRINGING SELFIE TAKING TO ANOTHER LEVEL, CAPTURING THIS EPIC SHOT FROM A MOUNTAINTOP!  
PHOTO JEROME JOSSERAND



Lightroom



LIGHTROOM

WHAT AN ANGLE! LEWIS CRATHERN SESSIONS AT THE  
FAMOUS MISTY CLIFFS ON THE DUOTONE EVO SLS  
PHOTO ARLIN LADUE - WOO SPORTS

*Lightroom*



LIGHTROOM

JOHANNA-CATHARINA EDIN ADDING SOME COLOUR TO THE SCENERY IN SOUTH AFRICA...  
PHOTO SAMUEL TOME



*Lightroom*



LIGHTROOM

JASON VAN DER SPUY SENDS IT ON THE NEW AIRUSH LIFT WITH THE KOEBERG NUCLEAR POWER STATION AS A BACKDROP  
PHOTO MITCHELL DOYLE MARKGRAAFF

*Lightroom*



LIGHTROOM

BEHIND THE SCENES OF THE RECENT ELEVEIGHT SHOOT  
SHOWCASING THEIR LATEST BOARD AND KITE RELEASES!  
PHOTO LACI KOBULSKY



*Lightroom*



LIGHTROOM

SPOTTED: A PRE-RELEASE CAPTURE OF A GROUNDBREAKING NEW FOIL KITE FROM AIRWAVE!  
PHOTO AIRWAVE KITEBOARDING



*Lightroom*



LIGHTROOM

MATTHIAS LARSEN KEEPS IT CASUAL AT THE ICONIC SPOT OF LA BOCA RIVER, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC  
PHOTO CHRIS BOESCH



Lightroom



LIGHTROOM

CLÉMENT HUOT EARNS OUR AWARD AS BIGGEST RISK TAKER OF THE YEAR  
SO FAR AFTER HIS TRIPLE LOOP ATTEMPT AT LORDS OF TRAM!  
PHOTO SAMUEL CARDENAS - GKA KITE WORLD TOUR

Lightroom



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

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

Put the popcorn on, it's Movie Night!

# MOVIE NIGHT

#1

## IS THIS THE HIGHEST JUMP IN KITEBOARDING?

Evan Klijn sent it straight into the #1 spot with this video of his 32.7m jump at Misty Cliff in nuking winds gusting 45+ knots - and he couldn't have been more stoked! If you haven't seen this video yet, stop what you're doing and watch it now!



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#2

## LEARN KITESURFING IN 3 DAYS | THE ALEX CAMPET SHOW

Alex Campet is known for his French kiteboarding videos with English subtitles, and they are hilarious! His latest video ranks at #2 on Movie Night. Do watch, but definitely do not try this at home!!

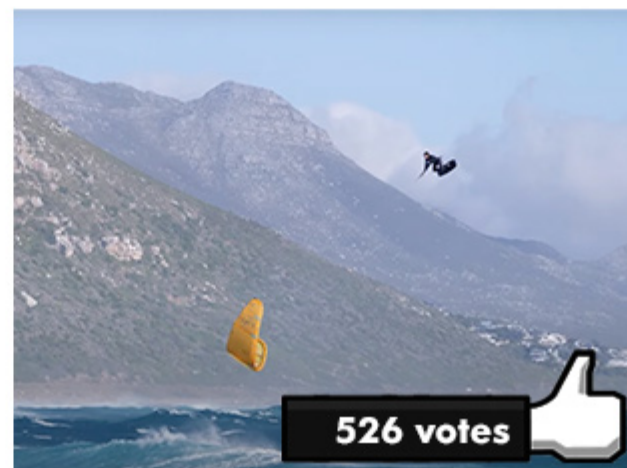


[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#3

## MEGALOOP CHALLENGE / JASON VAN DER SPUY

Airush Kiteboarding's Jason van der Spuy just released his Megaloop Challenge 2023 entry video and it is wild! His insane kite loops have earned him the #3 spot and hopefully a ticket into the event. Crank up the volume; it's a vibe!

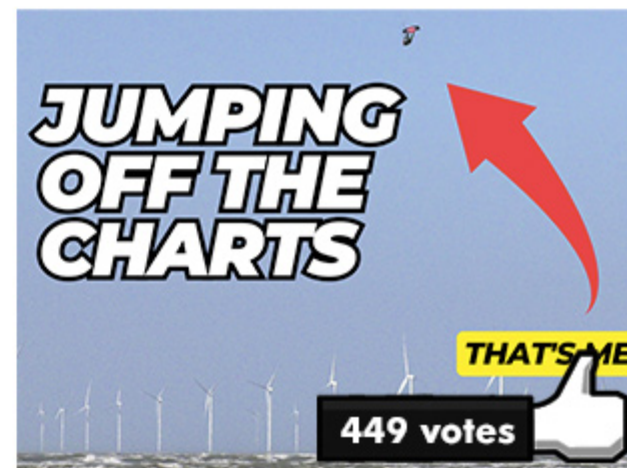


[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#4

## JUMPING OFF THE CHARTS

Jamie Overbeek heads into the stratosphere in his latest video! Don't believe us? Then you need to watch this! Unfortunately, Jamie's WOO didn't record the jump, but he's positive he would have beaten his own world record! What do you think?



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)



RIDER LORENZO CASATI  
PHOTO JAMES BOULDING

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