

JUNE / JULY 23

WELCOME TO IKSURFMAG

Welcome to Issue 99 of IKSURFMAG, the World's Number One Kitesurfing Magazine! We're halfway through 2023 and things are starting to heat up! Competition season is in high gear, and Editor Crystal Veness takes a swing at the prize money, asking if the cash is worth the crash. Inside this issue, Naish and Prolimit team riders follow the current in South Africa, Joshua Emanuel goes on a strong wind strike mission,

and Sensi Graves takes a look at life then VS now. Ever wondered how kites are made? Jim Gaunt answers that question inside the Ozone factory in Vietnam. Get to know Ellie Dimitrova and Valentin Garat, learn about the latest kite technology from the industry's most innovative brands, and study up on some stylish new techniques. There's all that and much more inside Issue 99!

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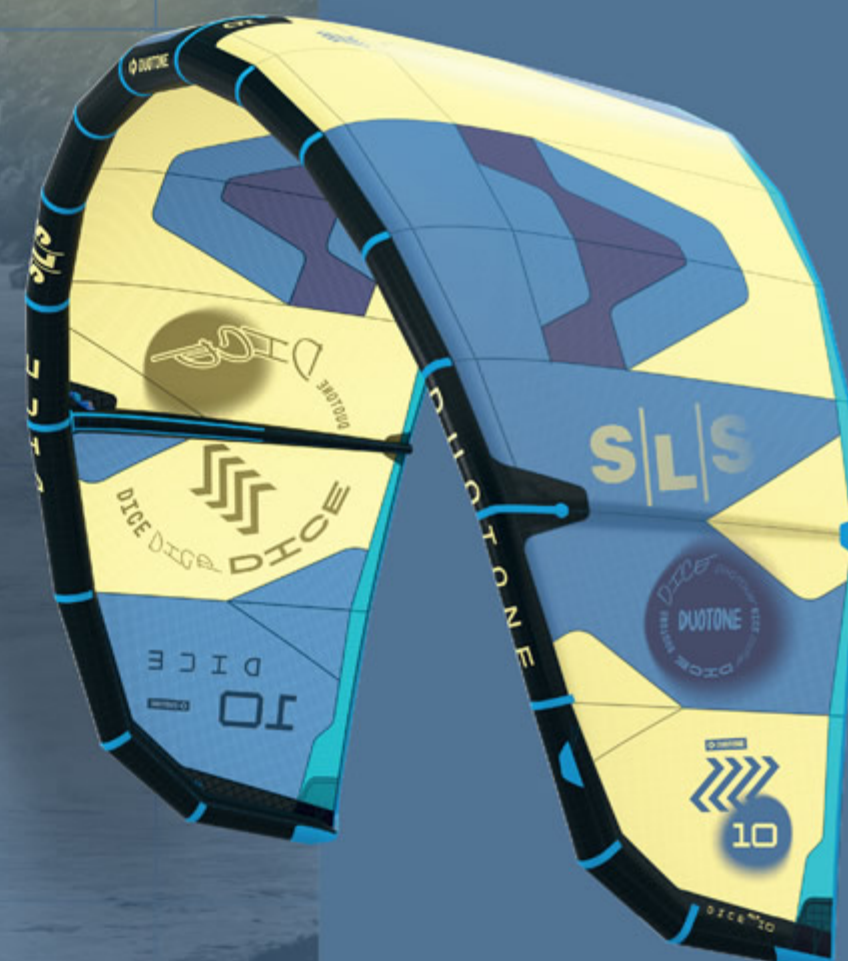
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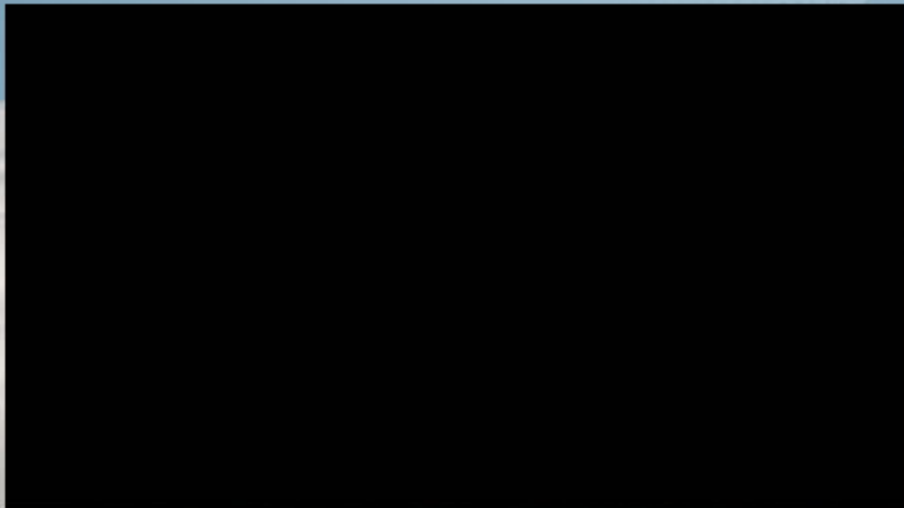
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BASIA MAJCHER SHARING THE STOKE WITH THE NEXT GENERATION!
PHOTO ADAM HARRY CHARUK



RIDER AARON HADLOW
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Ready to rock the latest harness technology from ION? This issue, we've linked up with the crew at ION to offer up a competition prize that will add a new dimension of comfort to your time on the water! The Rival is a super soft shell harness with all the technology you need for a safe and comfortable ride. The lucky winner of this prize will have their choice of size and colour! Meet the Rival, ION's latest addition to the harness line-up. With a flex index of 4 the Rival offers a very

soft shell with all the tools you need. It is equipped with the Kite Knife Multi Tool 2.0, comfortable to use PVC Buckles, and an internal flex belt - all mounted around the state of the art Spectre Bar. This one is for everyone; beginners, intermediates or world champions. Wait, what? Yes, correct, the Rival is the harness of choice of the likes of Big Air World Champion Andrea Principi!

Find out how to take this harness home...

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ISSUE 99 ...99 PROBLEMS

...but free access to top-quality kiteboarding content ain't one!

These days, it seems like everywhere you look, people are struggling. With the rapidly rising cost of food, fuel, and shelter and skyrocketing interest rates driving up those monthly bills, it's not looking too hot. From the UK to South Africa, our team are all seeing a shift in our everyday situations and those of our communities. We're living in tough times, and there's no doubt about it.

With financial stress impacting the physical, mental, and emotional health of so many of our readers, we know everyone is going through some degree of hardship. That being said, most of us kitesurfers are still fortunate. We have, or at some point have had, enough disposable income to buy into the sport of kiteboarding. It is still, as ever, a sport for those of above-average income. Don't worry - I see you hustlers out there who have managed to pick up this wonderful hobby on a shoestring budget, and I applaud you!

Yes, kite equipment is a costly investment. But, once you've got it, it will provide you with smiles and stoke for years to come - as long as you don't tomahawk your kite into the water and split it in half! For those worried about the longevity of their equipment, perhaps a shift towards extra-durable kites is more financially responsible than the latest super-light models. And, for those wondering if they should really spend that extra 100, 200, or 300 Euros on that carbon or SLS upgrade? You don't have to. The base models are excellent.



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RIDER SOPHIA ABREU
PHOTO VINCENT SCHAAAP

Sure, some of us may choose to travel less, which means finding joy in sessions closer to home. That may mean kiting in sub-freezing conditions or picking up a vintage land board on eBay to get in a session on a nearby field! One of the best things about kiting close to home instead of at a holiday destination is that you'll be meeting and hanging out with kites in YOUR local community. Vacation kite friends are cool, but close-to-home kite friends are even better!

Being a kiteboarder doesn't have to be an expensive lifestyle... it can be whatever you want it to be. You don't have to have the latest equipment every year;

that 2015 Cabrinha Switchblade will (probably) still get you on the water. You don't have to kite in the dreamiest tropical destinations; wherever you can (safely) get your kite flying is good enough! And, as much fun as trying out new boards or disciplines in kiteboarding is, we all know how expensive hydrofoils are; you can just stick with your trusty old twin tip.

The most important thing is to keep getting on the water as often as possible. Out on the water, your mind is free, you're getting loads of fresh air, you're getting exercise, your body is getting flooded with endorphins, and you - and your confidence- are boosting sky high. It's the best form of self-care ever!

In tough times, having a strong community is of supreme importance, and that will always be one of the best things about this sport. Some of us take a little extra convincing to get on the water, but in times like these, go grab that friend and bring them along. We could all use more water time, and kiting is always better with friends!

There are problems everywhere you look, and reading the news or reading stories of struggle on social media can be overwhelming. Kitesurfing is an escape we can all appreciate. Take advantage of it as often as you can! When you're feeling the pressure catch up to you, take a break and go for a session. Getting on the water, feeling the wind on your face, and letting go of everything except for what's happening at the moment, is something we should all be doing more of. It's the greatest escape.

If there's no wind or water nearby, tune into some new videos from your favourite riders and live vicariously through their stoke! It is, after all, sort of their job to spread the joy of kiteboarding and share that passion and excitement with all of us. Watching someone else's epic session while we're dreaming of our next will do in a bind!

Oh, and don't worry, if you're worried about pinching pennies, IKSURFMAG has and always will be free. Yes, you can support us and our efforts in collecting and sharing this content with you by clicking on that little button on this page, and we would be endlessly grateful. But, we will never force you to! IKSURFMAG is free and easily accessible to any and everyone with a screen and an internet connection. So, regardless of what else is going on in the world, you can count on us for free entertainment to keep your kiting fire alive!

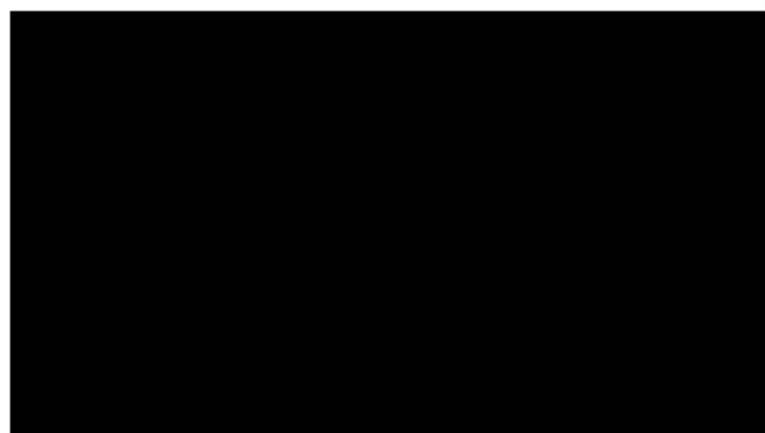
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The new Ultra Team, light years ahead.



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SHOW ME THE MONEY



RIDER JETT BRADSHAW PHOTO KYLE CABANO

Getting your name in the history books of kiteboarding takes some serious blood, sweat, and tears. For those professional athletes that have dedicated their careers to becoming the best in the world, is it worth it? In this article, Crystal Veness looks at the money behind competitive kiteboarding, with insights from some of the sports top riders. Read it here, exclusively in IKSURFMAG!



RIDER LORENZO CASATI
PHOTO RENATO CASATI

“THOSE WHO OFTEN MAKE IT ON THE PODIUM ALMOST ALWAYS DON'T EVEN RECOVER THEIR TRAVEL EXPENSES.”

Kiteboarding is a sport that requires immense skill, talent, and athleticism. If you've stood on the beach at any recent kite events or been lucky enough to suffer the sandblast that is the Red Bull King of the Air, you've seen the absolute extreme of our sport. It's safe to say that the professional kiteboarders that have made their way onto the international stage are truly remarkable. These riders, some just

teenagers, have pushed the boundaries of what's possible on the water and forever left their mark on the future of our sport.

Despite the popularity of kiteboarding and the impressive feats of the talented athletes that fly across our screens and sail over our beaches day in and day out, professional kiteboarders are often not compensated fairly for their talents and hard work.

While professional rider contracts are not public information, it is common knowledge within the industry that there are very few rider contracts that have a base salary or living wage built into them until you reach the absolute top of the sport.

Many pro kites are still making it work by living the ultimate hustle, creating content to earn media incentives, claiming prize money and gaining exposure by performing well in competitions,

and maintaining a high level of skill and a reputation for taking direction and working well within a team to be invited on paid product shoots. Others operate camps and clinics to share their skills with their fans, start working behind the camera, which often pays more than being in front of it, seek out external sponsors or partnerships, or develop their knowledge and education so that they can earn a coveted career role within the industry, such as an R&D or marketing position.

While contract specifics and athlete salaries are not public information, the amount of prize money that riders receive usually is, and that's what I'd really like to address in this article. Why? Because after the high of watching a major global kite competition, watching the big cheques with their little numbers walk out onto the podium is, to put it simply, a bummer.

Before I go further, I do want to recognise that the lack of prize money in local and national events and grass-roots competition series that are working their way off the ground is acceptable. The efforts of everyone, primarily volunteers, involved in pulling these labour-intensive events off are seriously impressive. It would be impossible without a passionate community and, of course, some assistance from the local brand reps, kite shops, and small businesses who come to the table with their time, experience, products, and, sometimes, cash. While events in this category are not financially rewarding for anyone involved, organisers or athletes, they are an excellent way for up-and-coming riders to get competition experience and exposure and a reason for young riders to invest time in training to prepare for the global stage.



“ GKA KITE WORLD TOUR EVENTS ARE A BIT DIFFERENT; RATHER THAN BEING A ONCE-OFF EVENT, IT IS A GLOBAL TOUR WITH SEVERAL STOPS. ”

GIANMARIO COCCOLUTO, 2022 GKA FREESTYLE WORLD CHAMPION, TRAINING IN BRAZIL
PHOTO ANDRE MAGARAO

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ENDURO^{V4}

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RIDER MATCHU LOPES PHOTO ANTONIO HERRERA TRUJILLO

Without conquering the local and national competition circuits, levelling up to the big leagues is impossible for promising young riders.

Back to the nitty-gritty, though. How much are these international competitions paying out? The Triple S Invitational event in Cape Hatteras finished off its 14-year run in 2019 with a 1st place prize of USD \$12,000 (with equal prize money for men and women!) out of a total prize purse of USD \$70,000 - not too shabby considering the first year of the event offered only street cred as a reward. At the time, that 1st place cheque was close to the highest possible amount an athlete could earn in a single kite competition. Unfortunately, it still is.

KOTA is, of course, the gold standard of big air, or appears to be. While the Red Bull organisation doesn't publicly share the actual numbers or hand out those giant cheques, there are plenty of rumours and estimates swirling around. An insider told us that 1st place at the previous event took home around €10,000. However, unlike some of the other events that pay only the podium places, athletes all the way down the list for KOTA take something home, even if it's just a bit. The number seems a bit low, though, doesn't it? It is, after all, the most extreme event on the calendar and the longest-running big air event in the sport, drawing the biggest audience. Not to mention, it has one of the most well-known brand names on the planet attached to it.

GKA Kite World Tour events are a bit different; rather than being a once-off event, it is a global tour with several stops. However, it still features the top athletes in the world, and riders have to work their butts off to get their places on the podium.

A GKA event has a total prize purse of between €25.000 and €40.000, depending on the stop. At each GKA event, the 1st prize winner takes home approximately €3.000. If you were to ride every wave event in the year, flying between Cabo Verde, Brazil, Germany, Morocco, and back to Brazil, and win every single event, you'd have €15.000 to show for it. I wonder how much those flights cost?

Matt Maxwell, a South African national and competitor on the GKA Kite Surf World Tour, shares his point of view on the prize purse, "That, to me, sounds pretty good, especially when you convert it to the South African Rand! But, when you consider the fact that every single trip to go and compete, for me, costs at least €2.500-€3.000 to get there and cover accommodation for a few weeks, it's not great. Considering the maximum money you can possibly win only covers those costs and doesn't make you any profit, it's not an ideal way to earn money."


Paul Serin is currently serving as a judge on the GKA Kite World Tour but has, in the past, been a competitor. I was excited to get his perspective as someone able to speak from both sides of the table. Paul says, "Kiting is a high-risk sport, and the ratio between cost and benefit is, most of the time, not really worth it. Now, with big air, the risk factor is so high that we're getting close to big wave surfing in terms of commitment and crashes."

Things haven't improved too much over the past decade of competitive kiteboarding, unfortunately, with the competitive scene taking as many steps forward as it has back. Paul goes on to highlight how the prize money has changed over the past 10 years,



"THE PROFESSIONAL KITEBOARDERS THAT HAVE MADE THEIR WAY ONTO THE INTERNATIONAL STAGE ARE TRULY REMARKABLE."

RIDER DEURY CORNIEL PHOTO LACI KOBULSKY / PRO KITE ALBY RONDINA



" MOST OF THE TOP RIDERS ON TOUR HAVE ALL OF THEIR COSTS COVERED BY BRANDS, SO FOR THEM, THE PRIZE MONEY IS PURE PROFIT "

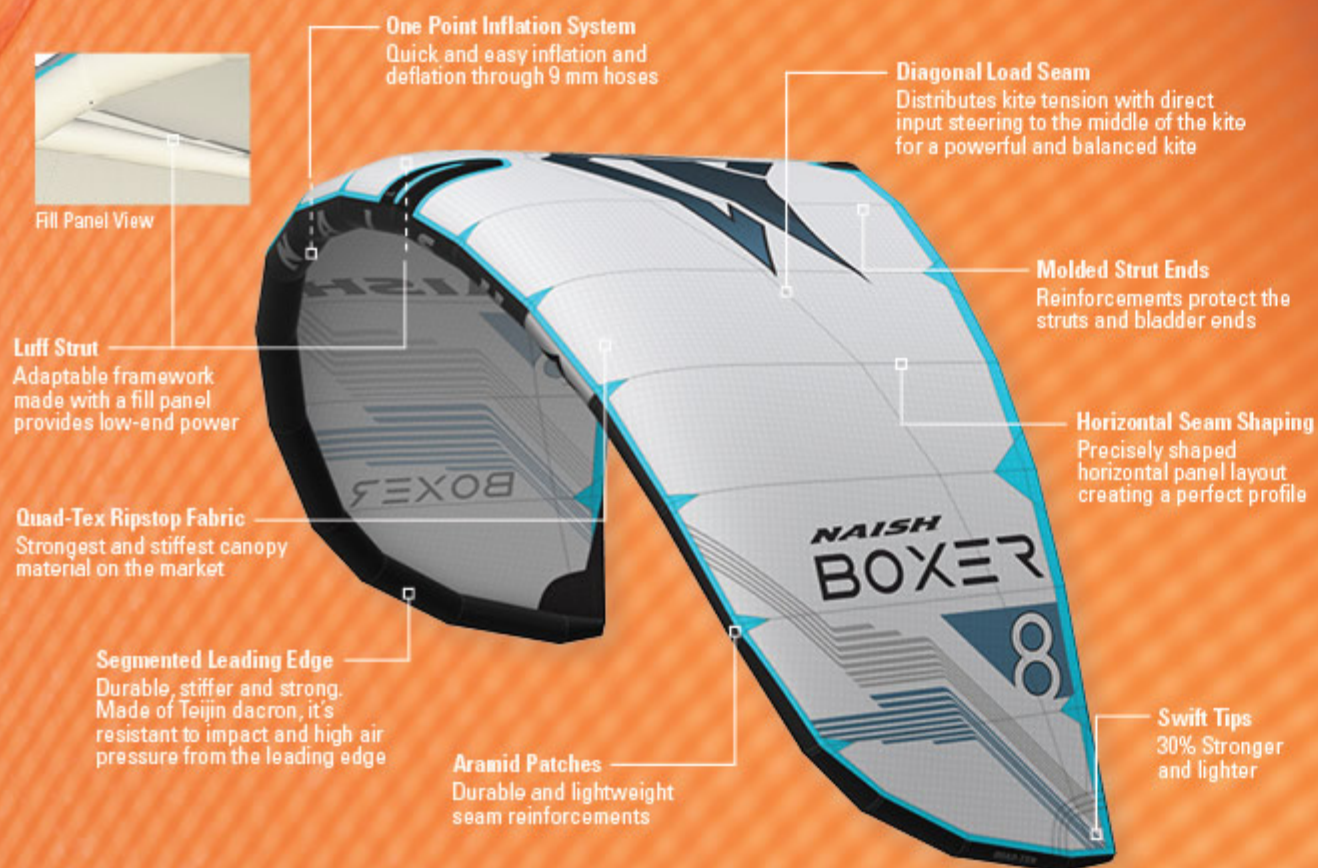
RIDER MATT MAXWELL PHOTO LUKAS K STILLER / GKA KITE WORLD TOUR

saying, "When I started competing back in 2012, freestyle was the main discipline, and the prize money was around €6.000 for first place at a PKRA freestyle event, which I thought was pretty fair. Then, the tour had some issues and started from zero with the GKA in 2018. When you need to rebuild something where all the trust has been lost, it's tough."

The demise of the PKRA resulted in a major hit to the prize money, but as Paul Serin said, "All the riders understood that, in the early GKA events, the prize money was 3-4 times less than what it used to be. The whole community of competitive kitesurfers are aware that if they don't push for events, even if they are small, it will be the end of the series." He continues on the positive impact of the world tour, saying, "The GKA is doing a great job today by pushing all the disciplines and keeping the sport thriving on a competitive side."

Many event series, including the GKA and BAKL, have made the commitment to equal prize money between men and women. Angely Buillot, undoubtedly the biggest name in women's big air and an athlete that has almost single-handedly sent the level of women's big air into the stratosphere, shares her thoughts on the disparity in prize money, "For a long time, women had lower prize money, but the risks are the same. I never really fought for that; it's not what I'm interested in. Inequalities reign in this world, and there are causes for me that are much more important than having the same prize money as men. I didn't really pay attention over time, but to my great surprise, at the last Lords of Tram competition, we got the same prize! Well, bravo, guys! You took your time, anyway."

“ COMPARED TO THE RISK WE TAKE AND THE
CONSEQUENCES WE CAN HAVE, THE PRIZE
MONEY IS VERY LOW. ”



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NAISH



“ I THINK MOST RIDERS DO COMPETITIONS OUT OF LOVE AND PURE PASSION FOR THE SPORT AND NOT FOR THE PRIZE MONEY, BECAUSE THERE OBVIOUSLY ISN'T MUCH! ”

RIDER JETT BRADSHAW PHOTO KYLE CABANO

Sensi Graves, an American athlete who hustled her way to the top and became a frequent podium-holder in the park riding scene, shares her take, adding, "Competitions rarely provide enough money to cover costs to attend events that inevitably happen on all corners of the planet. To even achieve that necessitates getting on the podium. While competing, I relied on sponsor support to travel to competitions, and whatever I won at

the competition was just a bonus. I believe this is why we don't see as many women competing in kiteboarding - with fewer sponsors supporting the route to making a name for yourself, it takes a long time." Whether it's big air, freestyle, or wave riding, the sentiment is shared across the board. Lorenzo Casati, current King of the Air who will be defending his title later this year, commented, "Most of the riders have no

income from competitions, and even those who often make it on the podium almost always don't even recover their travel expenses. You could do many events to get the experiences to emerge on top, but if each event is a considerable cost that you'll never recover, it's not easy to stand out, especially without a strong sponsor supporting you deeply."

Sponsors and kite brands are, it seems, the driving force to getting the top riders to competitions. It's clear that, based on the prize money alone, it would be impossible for riders that weren't financially independent to even participate. Matt Maxwell offers some excellent insight into how it works behind the scenes, sharing, "Most of the top riders on tour have all of their costs covered by brands, so for them, the prize money is pure profit, which makes it pretty decent. I've been fortunate to have F-ONE support me in attending events that match my discipline of wave riding and strapless freestyle."

As someone that has been in the money with the GKA over the past season, Matt says, "If I get 5th place or above, I get prize money, which is about €1.000 in 5th place - pretty decent, I'd say. However, a debate we've been having is, should riders that are not even on the podium be getting prize money at all? Or, should they instead be giving the winners on the podium more?" He continues, "It's just not viable to travel and compete unless your sponsors are paying for it. That said, I think one of the biggest problems with the tour at the moment is the spots we're going to. I think it would bring much more exposure to wave riding if they could send us to world-class spots, but we always end up going to spots where the local organisers put up the money, even if they're not suited to our discipline."

It sounds like a catch-22; do you go to the spots where there's the potential for more prize money or the spots that offer the best possible conditions for your sport? In a less-than-ideal spot, the conditions aren't great, but the purse is larger. In the perfect spot, the purse might not even exist, but the potential for world-class competition is alluring. Which one is better for the sport and/or the athletes?

Jett Bradshaw has made a name for himself in the kiteboarding world but chose to avoid the competition route in his career. He speaks frankly, saying, "We go out there and put our bodies on the line mentally and physically. It's crazy to go out at a big air competition, in 45 knots and super dangerous conditions - and the prize money can't even cover a plane ticket to the competition. So, I do think that riders get totally underpaid in competitions, and I don't think it's fair that the riders put themselves and their bodies on the line for the small amount that they can potentially earn."


Lorenzo Casati thinks there's room for improvement too, adding, "It would be nice if the prize money went up significantly. Now, prizes are unrelated to the risk that big air brings as an extreme and spectacular discipline. The hope is that kitesurfing will involve more and more important sponsors, which will bring higher budgets and bring us closer to the numbers in the world of surfing."

As the best big air rider in the world at the moment, Lorenzo is, if the numbers are correct, earning what the 33rd best surfer in the world is earning at a single event in the WSL Championship Tour. When you put it that way, it seems almost okay, given that the reach for kiteboarding is still much smaller than surfing..



"NOW, WITH BIG AIR, THE RISK FACTOR IS SO HIGH THAT WE'RE GETTING CLOSE TO BIG WAVE SURFING IN TERMS OF COMMITMENT AND CRASHES." "

RIDER PAUL SERIN PHOTO ANDRE MAGARAO



RIDERS JETT BRADSHAW AND GRAHAM HOWES
PHOTO KYLE CABANO


"I'VE TAKEN THE OPTION OF NOT DOING COMPETITIONS BECAUSE THE RISK VS REWARD IS NOT GREAT AT ALL."

But, Lorenzo has one shot at King of the Air to claim his piece of the pie, and the risk of injury is significantly higher than in surfing. In the WSL, there are 10 events in the WSL Championship Tour, so coming in 33rd in each of them would net you about \$100,000 for the year. If you came in 1st place in each of those WSL events, that's about \$800,000 for the year. Compared to the GKA Freestyle World Tour, where winning all 5 events in a calendar year will net you between €15.000-€20.000, the income potential,

compared to the cost of travel, is somewhat laughable.

So, how can we fix the compensation issue in kiteboarding and attract more money to the sport, and whose responsibility is it? The addition of major sponsors like Qatar Airways and Porsche would seem like a solution, but recent events show that it has not resulted in noticeable increases in prize purses. If you ask me, kites riskers it all should have more money on the table.

Whose responsibility is it to compensate these athletes fairly? Some may suggest that the brands get more involved. But, brands are already supporting the athletes by sending them to events and some offering contract bonuses for strong performance. Kite brands are much smaller than airlines, finance companies, energy drink companies, or car brands, and it's unreasonable to expect much more from them. The brands are too busy and invested in creating and building the foundation of the sport to be doing more than they already are in competitions. So, where is the money going to come from? Is it coming at all?



“IT WOULD BE NICE IF THE PRIZE MONEY WENT UP SIGNIFICANTLY. NOW, PRIZES ARE UNRELATED TO THE RISK THAT BIG AIR BRINGS”

RIDER LORENZO CASATI PHOTO RENATO CASATI

I often wonder why these athletes even do it, when the same amount of effort and energy that they put towards their kiting career can be put towards literally anything else and, in almost every case, result in higher earnings and far fewer broken bones.

Paul Serin has some ideas on what motivates athletes to risk it for the very small biscuit, stating, "We all know that a career in pro kiting is short, and you have to make the most of it when you're at your top level, and your body can endure all the crashes and hard landings. In events like King of the Air, the ratio of risk factor and reward is still far from being even, and it will never be. However, the reward of being crowned King of the Air is probably the highest reward you could hope to achieve in a competitive big air career. It's our Olympic Games! Most of the riders don't push themselves for the money, but to show the world and the other riders that they're the best."

Matt Maxwell shares a few final words on his 'why', saying, "I don't see competitive kiting as a lucrative profession, but I see the kiting industry as something I'm super passionate about, and I'd like to get more involved in the industry (R&D) side of the sport. Participating in competitions and growing my name that way is an avenue to help both get the exposure I need and make the connections I need. Hustling to perform as a pro rider and putting in that time without the financial gain is essentially investing in my own future in the kite industry."

Jett Bradshaw says, "I've taken the option of not doing competitions because the risk vs reward is not great at all." But, there is an exception to every rule,

JEREMY BURLANDO

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Sabert V3

"HUSTLING TO PERFORM AS A PRO RIDER AND PUTTING IN THAT TIME WITHOUT THE FINANCIAL GAIN IS ESSENTIALLY INVESTING IN MY OWN FUTURE IN THE KITE INDUSTRY."

and here's his, "Red Bull Megaloop Challenge is the only one where I am willing to put my body and life on the line. I don't need any prize money in that competition to do it! There's just something so special about Megaloop Challenge... I just want to go and participate in that event! I think most riders do competitions out of love and pure passion for the sport and not for the prize money, because there obviously isn't much!"

What drives Angelly Buillot to compete?

"It's true that when I'm competing, it's not for

the prize money, although I have the impression that it's starting to increase, don't you think? Compared to the risk we take and the consequences we can have, the prize money is very low. Fortunately, I'm not doing this for the money but to get out of my comfort zone and go beyond my limits of perseverance, determination and discipline - that's the hardest part."


Sensi speaks to the strength it takes to be a pro kiter, "Making ends meet as a professional kiteboarder requires persistence,

determination, and a fair amount of hustle. It takes a certain type of human to want to make it work - but there are different markers of success beyond money. Travel, freedom, a love of the sport and progression all yield benefits that keep the athletes engaged and the sport moving forward."

James Carew and Matchu Lopes, both top performers in the GKA Kite Surf World Tour, scored world-class conditions at the last tour stop in Cabo Verde. James shares how he feels when everything lines up, saying "Travelling days, packing last minute, stressing over results and possible outcomes,

“THE FEELING THAT WE HAVE AND SHARE THROUGH KITEBOARDING IS TRULY PRICELESS.”



A full-page photograph of a kiteboarder, James Carew, riding a massive, curling wave. The wave is a deep teal color with white foam at the crest. The kiteboarder is wearing a black wetsuit and is positioned near the base of the wave's face. The sky is a pale blue with some light clouds. The overall mood is one of intense action and natural beauty.

"NONE OF IT MATTERS WHEN IT TURNS OUT LIKE THIS. IT ALL FADES INTO A BLUR, AND ONLY THAT MOMENT ... IS WHAT MATTERS."

bosses counting on your judgement to call it... None of it matters when it turns out like this. It all fades into a blur, and only that moment, being in the spot, two guys out, scoring, is what matters."

There's no question that the riders that grace the pages of this magazine have put their blood, sweat, and tears into reaching the highest echelons of the kiting world and taking it on their very shoulders to drive the growth of our sport. While, in my opinion, the compensation doesn't come close to matching the effort and risk that these riders put in, it's clear that there's more to it than the money.

Despite the compensation challenges, kiteboarding is a sport that sits close to all of our hearts and connects riders of all levels and disciplines better than anything else can. The thrill we experience on the water and soaring through the air, paired with the camaraderie of the kiteboarding community, is why we're all here. While I fervently hope that the number of zeros on those oversized cheques increases, I know that the feeling that we have and share through kiteboarding is truly priceless.

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What happens beneath the water's surface? How do currents affect our kite spots? In this article, Prolimit and Naish riders Stig Hoefnagel and Helena Brochocka embark on a journey of discovery to the southern tip of the African continent as they Follow the Current, learning about how our ocean works as they go!

WORDS LINDA VAN LAKWIJK PHOTOS KYLE CABANO

FOLLOW THE CURRENT



Have you ever realised what is happening below the water's surface while riding across it? Why are the waves the way they are at your local spot? Why is the water so cold while the air temperature is relatively warm?

Ocean currents play a vital role in regulating the Earth's climate and weather patterns. Currents are driven by various factors, such as wind and temperature, and can travel thousands of miles across the ocean, flowing just beneath the surface.

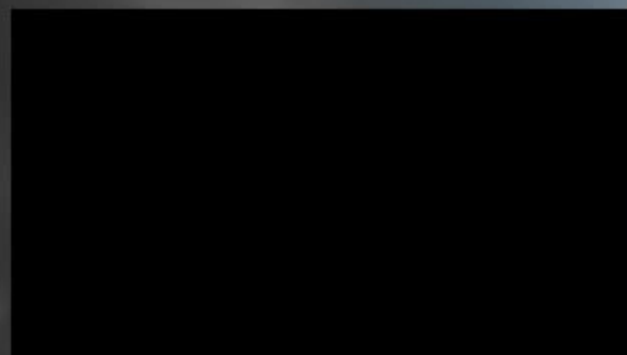
While this information isn't essential knowledge for the casual kitesurfer, it is for us. Behind the scenes at Prolimit, this information is critical when developing products that help our users explore the elements safely and comfortably. We collect water temperature and weather data and consult professional meteorologists and oceanographers to learn everything we can about currents, weather, water and air temperature, and the climate. With this data, we give insight into the complex relationship between ocean currents, water temperature and climate patterns. And most important, which wetsuit to wear, where and when.

We took our international team riders, Stig Hoefnagel and Helena Brochocka (kitesurfing) and Henri Kolberg (windsurfing), on a journey to South Africa. As professional athletes travelling around the world, these riders have a close relationship with the ocean environments they spend so much time around. For them, finding a deeper awareness of how they work is an important pursuit. They were ready to take the plunge as soon as they got their feet on the ground in Cape Town.

RIDER STIG HOEFNAGEL

**"THESE RIDERS HAVE A CLOSE
RELATIONSHIP WITH THE OCEAN
ENVIRONMENTS THEY SPEND SO MUCH
TIME AROUND."**





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“ WITHIN THE KITESURFING INDUSTRY, THE WINTER MIGRATION IS AN ANNUAL PHENOMENON ”



Cape Town is one of the most famous locations in the world for water sports. Many water sports enthusiasts escape their winter in the Northern Hemisphere for several weeks each year to surf the incredible coastline surrounding Cape Town. Within the kitesurfing industry, the winter migration is an annual phenomenon, with many of the world's best kitesurfers congregating along the windy beaches of Blouberg.

Everyone who has been to the stunning City of Cape Town knows you can expect four

seasons in one day. Even on the hottest summer day, the water is relatively cold - until you head to Hermanus or east to Cape Agulhas. In these regions, the water temperature is much warmer. To understand why the water in Cape Town is so much colder than it is just 200km straight to the east, our team embarked on a road trip to the place where two oceans meet: Cape Agulhas.

Our first stop was at Steve Pike's house in Kommetjie; Steve owns the oldest website

on surfing and marine weather in South Africa, Wavescape.co.za. He is a surf forecaster who looks at weather patterns, currents, temperatures, and swell. Steve - aka Spike - explained how the currents are distributed around the coastline of South Africa.

Cape Town is located on the west coast of South Africa, where the cold Benguela Current flows from the southern Atlantic Ocean. The Benguela Current brings cold water from the south, which cools the coastal waters of Cape Town. On the other hand, Agulhas is located on the south coast of South Africa,



where the warm Agulhas Current flows southwards along the east coast of Africa. The Agulhas Current carries warm water from the tropics, which raises the water temperature along the coast of Agulhas.

The Benguela and Agulhas currents are parts of the larger South Atlantic Gyre, a circular pattern of ocean currents in the South Atlantic Ocean. The combination of these currents and other oceanographic factors creates a distinct temperature difference between the waters off the west and east coasts of South Africa.

**“THE AGULHAS CURRENT
CARRIES WARM WATER
FROM THE TROPICS,
WHICH RAISES THE
WATER TEMPERATURE
ALONG THE COAST ”**



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"THEY EXPERIENCED THE FULL FORCE OF THE BENGUELA CURRENT ON THESE WILD COASTAL BEACHES, WITH HEAVY WAVES AND NEAR-GALE-FORCE WINDS."



RIDER HELENA BROCHOCKA

Armed with this new knowledge of what was happening beneath the surface, our team set off towards the second stop of the journey, and the starting point of our actual road trip, the Cape Peninsula. The conditions on arrival were super windy and misty, and the water temperature was 14 degrees Celsius. The air temperature was 22 degrees, but the wind chill temperature was much lower due to the strong wind and cold water.

The team spent a few days exploring the Cape Peninsula, taking advantage of every bit of wind they could find. From Misty Cliffs to Platboom, they experienced the full force of the Benguela Current on these wild coastal beaches, with heavy waves and near-gale-force winds.

After they'd had their fill of strong wind and chilly water around the Cape Peninsula, it was time to pack the car and head east. Since hearing about how much warmer the water was towards the east, everyone longed to swap their thick wetsuits for shorties. With a car laden with gear - and all kinds of new knowledge thanks to Spike, the group set off towards Hermanus.

As is often the case in South Africa's Western Cape, the wind was already blowing. After crossing Sir Lowry's Pass, the steady breeze had all the riders looking for the nearest body of water. Unable to hold in their excitement until Hermanus, we quickly stopped on the Botrivier to score a session on the lagoon. It was 24 degrees Celsius, and the water was around 17 degrees, with approximately 18 knots of smooth wind. It was a pleasant experience after the wild ocean conditions we'd just come from.



After a solid session, we hopped back in the vehicle to continue our journey to our original destination for the day, Hermanus and its well-known kite spot, the Klein River Lagoon, accessible from Grotto Beach. This spot was even more inviting, with warmer water measuring in at 19 degrees. It was quickly apparent that Stig, Henri, and Helena were starting to enjoy wearing their shorty wetsuits more and more!

The final stop of the road trip was the place we were most looking forward to, Cape Agulhas.

“THIS SPOT WAS EVEN MORE INVITING, WITH WARMER WATER MEASURING IN AT 19 DEGREES.”

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"WITH ITS SCENIC LOCATION, STEADY WINDS AND UNCROWDED BEACH, STRUISBAAI IS DEFINITELY WORTH THE DRIVE."



Most people who travel to South Africa believe that Cape Point is the southern tip of South Africa, as it is a prominent and well-known landmark along the Cape Peninsula. However, it would be more accurate to describe Cape Point as the southwesternmost point of South Africa. Cape Agulhas, 177 km to the east and south, is the true southern tip of the African continent and the place where the Atlantic and Indian oceans meet.

Naturally, we had to stop off to visit the red and white striped Cape Agulhas Lighthouse, an important historic landmark and the second oldest lighthouse that still operates in South Africa. From the lighthouse, you can see the sleepy coastal town of Struisbaai. Due to the location, Struisbaai benefits from consistent winds that are perfect for water sports. With its scenic location, steady winds and uncrowded beach, Struisbaai is definitely worth the drive.

Our expectations following the lesson with Spike turned out to be true; the water in Struisbaai was 22 degrees when we arrived and, therefore, the warmest water our team experienced on the entire road trip. It was the perfect place for the final session of our journey. Having this detailed knowledge of the currents and being able to fly across the ocean's surface while picturing the Agulhas Current flowing beneath added a new dimension to our session. As Stig said, "Nature turned out to be quite different than we were expecting..."

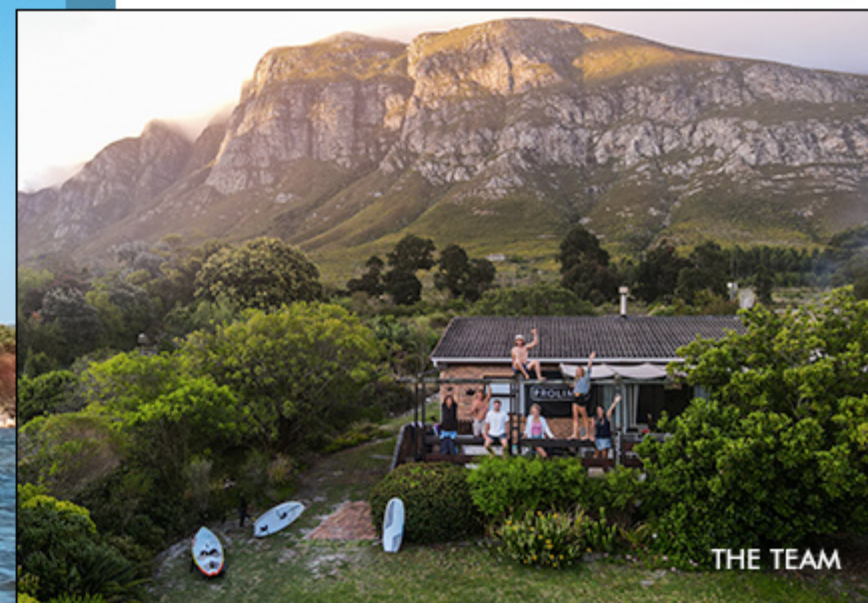
RIDER STIG HOEFNAGEL

“WE ARE DEEPLY ENGAGED WITH THE OCEANS AND NATURE AS A WHOLE, AND WE ARE DETERMINED TO CONTRIBUTE TO RESTORING AND IMPROVING OUR PRECIOUS ENVIRONMENT.”



Follow the Current is aimed at raising awareness about the impact of climate change on the oceans and the need to protect them. Ocean currents are likely to change as the Earth's temperature continues to rise, which could have significant implications for the planet's climate and weather patterns. At Prolimit, we are deeply engaged with the oceans and nature as a whole, and we are determined to contribute to restoring and improving our precious environment. One clear example is our Nature Prene wetsuit - the world's first truly sustainable wetsuit constructed out of 100% FSC-approved materials.

By understanding how ocean currents work and how they affect the planet's climate and weather patterns, we can all play a part in protecting the oceans and ensuring a sustainable future for our planet.



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WORDS & PHOTOS CHRISTIAN & KARINE



A couple of humdingers for you in this issue:) First off, we have another transition for you to add to your box of tricks. There's always room for more... and this one is a super fun variant. We'll be taking you through how to add the leg over one foot to your jump transition; a definite crowd pleaser and we're pretty sure you'll enjoy it. Then, we're progressing your popped hooked front roll from last issue, adding and stomping a solid blind landing with an ole out to really catch the eye and add some summer flare. Let us know how you get on!

Happy landings, C&K.

New 2023 clinic calendar up on:
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1 / LEG OVER JUMP TRANSITION



CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE

2 / HOOKED POP FRONT ROLL TO BLIND OLE



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LEG OVER JUMP TRANSITION ►

KITE – Cabrinha FX2 9m

BOARD – Cabrinha XCal Wood 138

Nothing beats the pleasure of combining two moves, whisking them together and cooking up something tasty! This one's an absolute belter; one measure jump transition, one measure leg over one foot, and boom! You've got yet another cracking way to change direction.

We'd recommend first practising the leg over one foot in a jump, as you'll have more time and control to learn the mechanics (see Issue 95). Once you've got it down, it'll work equally well as this transition.

As per any form of jump transition, the positioning of your kite is vital. Get it right, and you'll have time and float to add the embellishment of your choice! Let's have a look at how you'll get this one nailed...

APPROACH & SEND PIC A

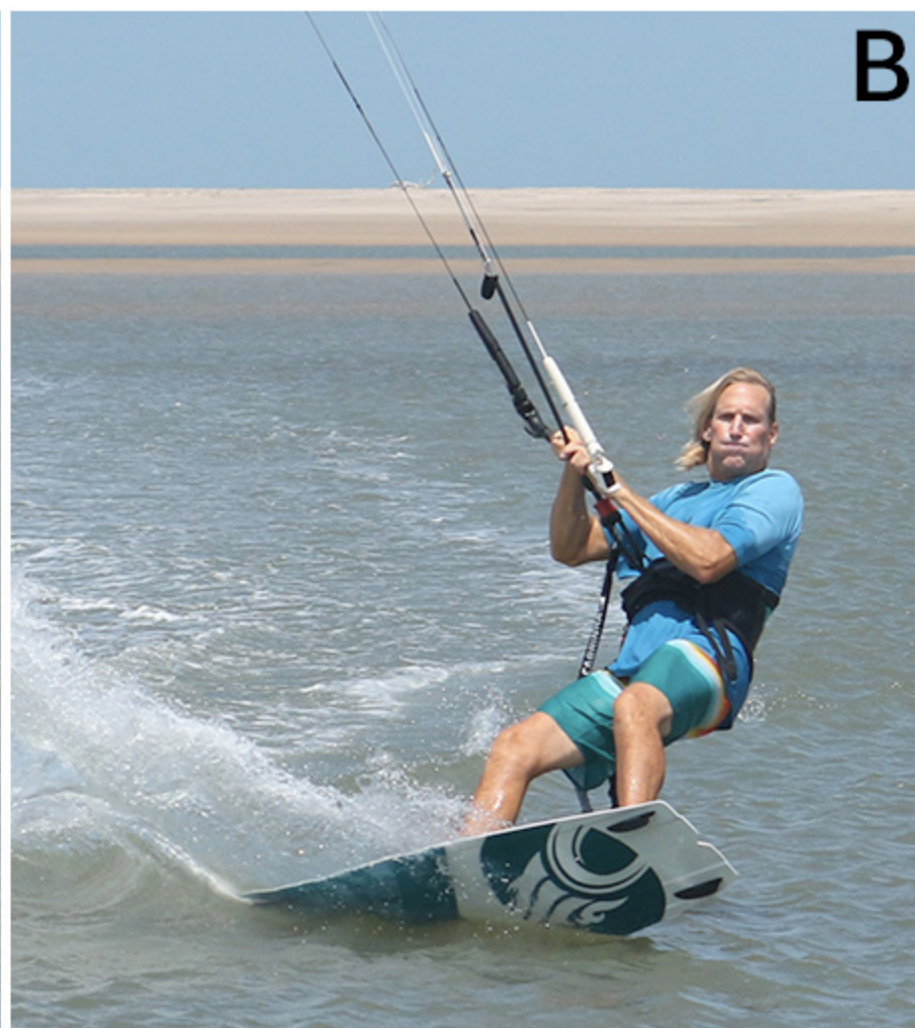
To give yourself time and float, you'll want to approach with a bit more speed than you might for a standard air gybe. This way, you can aim for a bit more height and a touch more travel. Add these two together, and you'll get a touch more time and have some momentum to stick your landing, even if your kite ends up not exactly where you want it. It's also a good idea to wiggle your front foot a little loose in the strap so that it'll slide out more easily. Approach on a good edge with some speed, kite at 11 or 1 o'clock. Keep your bar on the sweet spot and avoid pulling in too much power. The effort should be in your legs, not your arms. You want to get the kite moving



quickly to get max lift for your buck, but you don't want it travelling back past 12, so it'll be a short sharp send, positive and quick. Here you can see that Christian is coming in on a decent edge. He's looking forwards; he started with his kite at 11 and has given the bar a positive input to send the kite quickly up to 12. As the kite rises, he feathers the bar to follow the sweet spot and keeps his bum low and the board away from him on stiff legs.

FORWARD, STAMP & PULL PIC B

Your take off needs to be dynamic (kite face optional) and in order. First off, you need to stop the kite from moving back. In fact, you actually want to move it



ever so slightly forward! By doing this, you'll give yourself a bit of travel and position the kite forward, which will give you some room for error when you're fiddling about with your board. This forward send should be done on the sweet spot and should not be confused with pulling in on the bar. The second job is an aggressive stamp against your back foot, extending your back leg to launch yourself into the air. By kicking against your edge, you'll get more up and max bang for your buck. Once you've stomped, you can finally pull the bar in to help you go up. Looking at Christian, you can see that he's already steered the kite slightly forward; he's explosively extended his back leg and is now pulling on the bar to get all the beans.

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LEVEL GRAB & BONE PIC C

As soon as you lift off, think of levelling your bar. Moving your kite forward a tad is all good and well, but you don't want it pulling you off balance or drifting on, so stop it. The quicker you can get your grab, the sooner you can start your leg over and the more chance you have of completing it. Lift your front leg towards you and keep your back leg extended, as this will give you more room for what's to come. As soon as the board is within reach, grab the nose. You can see that Christian has his bar level and has grabbed the nose of his board whilst keeping his back leg straight. It's also worth noting that he's looking at his front foot, which he'll be taking out,



D

all performed whilst he's on the way up.

OUT & UP PIC D

Your aim for the Leg Over is to slide your front foot out of the strap, move your leg up and over the board, and then position it over your arm and the nose so that you can pass your board. To achieve this, you'll need to pull your foot out of the strap and pass it between the board and your other leg first. This is where having your back leg boned out is key; you have space to pass your foot and leg between the board by moving your foot towards your other one. This way, you don't need to be particularly flexible. Once your foot is out of the strap, extend your leg towards your other foot, and hey presto, you can get



E

it above the board. Once there, lift your leg and move it over your hand whilst pushing your hand under your knee. Here Christian already has his foot through and is lifting his leg up and forwards whilst pushing the board under his knee. You can see he's looking at the board, eyes on the target.

OVER & FLICK PIC E

The tricky bit. As we said, this is best practised in a jump first, and a few goes sitting on terra firma won't hurt either! Push the board as far under your leg as possible, as it's simpler than trying to contort your leg further forward. As soon as your hand and the nose have passed under your knee, let go of your grab and give the board a little flick up with your fingers.



F

You can see how far under his front leg Christian has pushed the board before flicking it up. He's still got his eyes on the prize, fully focused on the nose of the board where he'll grab it.

CATCH & IN PIC F

If you can catch the board, you're nearly there. The trick is all in your arm speed. As soon as you've flicked the board up, it's a race to lift your arm over your leg as it drops and grab the board. The further you push the board under your knee, the shorter the distance. Time is not on your side, so as soon as you've got the board, get your foot back in the strap. Out, over and in will all have passed in a flash. Whilst your attention has been taken up with your latest fancy, you still have a kite to control. Having your hand centred and looking forward will help not to pull on the bar too much, but your kite will be drifting slowly back. However, your little forward levelling will be coming in very handy now. Christian is now fully focused on his strap and getting his foot back in. It's fair to say that you will be on your way down!

DIVE & DOWNWIND PIC G

Same old, if you can land with your board pointing off the wind, you'll stay on the surface, and if you can get a decent dive in, you'll power out. Even as you're sliding your foot back in, you can start to dive the kite. The more aggressively you dive it, the deeper in the window it'll fly and the more downwind pull you'll get. Marry this to a tail-first landing (it was your nose a second ago), and you should be able to twist the board with your hips to point it downwind. You can see that Christian has given the bar a positive input to get the kite diving whilst twisting his lower half back to point his board downwind. Remember to get your free hand back on so that you can stop the kite diving into the water!



G

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TOP TIPS

Get the leg over practised beforehand so that you can do it quickly. It's all in pushing the board under your knee rather than trying to move your leg back over the nose.

You can practise the forward redirect with a normal air gybe first, just to get used to the amount you need. Have a look at the sequence and watch the video to see how we mix all the ingredients into one!

COMMON PROBLEMS

The most common problem here will be the board

dropping away from you when you try and pass your leg over and race with your hand. The most probable cause will be that your feet are too low, so the board is trying to go back where it belongs. If your board keeps dropping, try leaning back in your harness so that you can hold your feet and your board further up.

Another problem will be the kite drifting too far back, and as such, you'll struggle to finish the move. The redirect forward before take-off is key. Even so, if you keep the bar pulled in, your kite will drift. Feel the sweet spot, keep your bar on it and keep looking forwards.

KEYSTONES

1. Send and redirect forward
2. Kick and level
3. Grab and bone
4. Foot out and push the board back
5. Flick, catch and dive



HOOKED POP FRONT ROLL TO BLIND OLE ▶

KITE – Cabrinha Switchblade 8m

BOARD – Cabrinha XO 136

If all has gone to plan, those of you working on the hooked popped front from the last issue (98) will be ready for more. If there is one thing that is absolutely made for a popped front, it's a blind landing! And as if that's not enough, you'll also need a way to make your blind look panther smooth, so it's got to have an Ole tagged onto the end too. It's only June, but it already feels like Christmas! Marrying the popped front with a blind Ole gives you a super cool trick that you can bang out in so many conditions, any wind strength and water state. What's not to like? We have covered both moves independently, so we'll concentrate on the key parts to help you find the perfect flow from one to another.

Prerequisites for this are a popped front roll and the ability to land blind. If you've got the Ole down, it'll help to no end, as you'll be used to landing more over the board. As far as popping your front roll goes, we're not talking kite low mayhem but rather using your pop to get off the water rather than the pull of the kite. This means that during the learning process, you're more than welcome and very advised to have your kite high. It'll give you a tad more time and a lot more confidence. And, a final thought before moving on: Blind is a landing, so treat it as such. Although this move can flow beautifully, it is not one and a half front rolls. It's a front roll with a blind landing! OK, what do you need to stomp this?



YOUR APPROACH PIC A

You should already have this down, but it won't hurt to remind you that you have to bear away, heading suddenly off the wind. Bearing away helps the kite fall back in the window a tiny bit and allows you to get into the perfect position to pop. Front leg straighter, bum over back foot, shoulders back and upwind, and head looking forwards. It also helps you land off the wind, which is a must if you want a smooth blind touch down. Karine approaches with her kite around 11 o'clock (no lower), hands centred on the bar with her weight back, bum low and nose up.

POP AND ROLL PIC B

Popping into the front roll correctly will make landing



blind a whole lot easier. We can't emphasise enough how the stamp must precede the roll, and you have to resist the temptation to pull in on the bar for help, as this will only make popping less effective. However, you do need the bar on the sweet spot so that you get maximum pop and so that the kite pulls you through the move. Karine has carved super hard upwind; she explodes up off her back leg and then throws her shoulder and head to initiate her rotation. She consciously pulls on her front hand a bit to stop the kite from going up and to make sure it leads her through the move. Being pulled through the move by the kite is so important, as you can feel where you are, and you'll have something to physically pull against when it's time to throw the blind.



HEAD STALL PIC C

Looking over your back shoulder so that you can see what's coming is key to throwing the blind. If you can see where you'll land early on, it gives you control and timing. This is what makes a blind landing. Rather than rotating and hoping that you'll be fine, by looking ahead, you can actually control when you throw to blind. In essence, you're stalling your rotation for the shortest of nanoseconds. Although it never

actually stops, you're slowing it down until you need to speed up and throw the blind. In the photo, Karine is looking where she'll land. She's in no rush to bring her feet through, but she's safe in the knowledge that her head and shoulders are around. By breaking the move, even fractionally, into two parts, front and blind, you'll find it less of a blur and far more achievable. This is only possible if your kite is leading you.

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RELEASE & THROW PIC D

Throwing the blind should be no different to a pop to the blind. In a pop, you concentrate on the up and then the blind. Here it's the "then to blind" moment. With the kite pulling, you have something to physically rotate against. You can give the bar a quick little pull with your hands to help turn your head and shoulders away from the bar before releasing your rear hand and dropping your rear shoulder.

Keep your body locked and tight so that your hips and board turn with you. Karine has released her front hand whilst turning her head, shoulders and hips away from the kite. You can see that she's not high off the water; it's a late throw.

BAR OUT & CHIN UP PIC E

Once you're rotating to blind, you want to make sure that your feet and board don't get left behind. To do this, push your bar away and dump power.



This will allow your board to drop and make it easier to swing your legs around further and get the board to turn off the wind along with your body. Karine has her bar pushed right out, she's facing upwind, and her head is held high. This makes it possible to land over the board. It helps to keep what was your back leg slightly bent as you throw the blind. This way, you'll land slightly (old) nose first, which will help pivot the board more downwind.



RELEASE TENSION PIC F

Once you're on your feet, you need to get rid of any possible tension in the lines before you can consider the Ole. Your aim is to get any weight off the balls of your feet and onto your heels. This will turn the board towards the kite and give you room and slack to Ole. The secret is not to rush. Make sure your bar is all the way out by pushing your hand up. Leave it there and turn your head towards your free hand. You can see that as Karine turns her head, it rocks her weight onto her heels, and the board literally carves downwind. Wait to feel the tension go.

OLE PIC E

The cherry on the cake; with no tension, you can now comfortably move the bar across in front of your face. As you do this, you can pull in on the bar to steer the kite back down, which will give you some pull as you come through the Ole. And don't forget, a hearty "Ole" belted out will make this all the more satisfying. Looking at Karine, you can see that she's got plenty of room to push the bar past, and as she does, she's steering the kite down. You now have the option to ride out the toe side or slide yourself back to the heel side.

TOP TIPS

As you're adding two moves together, your best bet is to bang out a few popped fronts and then some higher pop to blinds. The fronts will give you the timing and allow you to think ahead, whilst the blinds will help you nail in the separate throw to blind moment.

Flat water is your friend. It's more than possible in chop, but learning will be easier as both the pop and your landing will be less of a challenge in the flats.



Although you're popping, don't fret about having your kite too high to start with. It'll slow things down, giving you more confidence and time. It will make coming out of the Ole with speed trickier, but you can build up to that. Once you feel comfortable with the movement, you can lower your kite by a smidgen.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Stopping on landing. If you've got enough momentum and speed coming in, then the only reason for this is that the kite is too high and has drifted behind you. Try popping without sending the kite, and give the kite a tug down before releasing your back hand.

Falling in backwards/catching your heelside edge. This is often the result of not sheeting the bar out when throwing the blind. Your feet get left behind,

and you'll catch your edge. Also, don't rush the Ole by leaning back to make room for the bar to pass. Make a point of landing and shifting your weight first. This is only possible if you trim your bar and head downwind to pop.

Burying the nose of the board and sinking when Ole-ing. If you're making the landing, setting the Ole in motion only to then nose dive, this is usually because you're rushing into Ole and turning your shoulders too much as you turn your head. The Ole shouldn't be aggressive if you shift your weight onto your heels first.

KEYSTONES

1. Off the wind approach
2. Stamp then head

3. Spot landing early
4. Throw blind late
5. Land over board, don't rush Ole



WORDS JEN TYLER PHOTOS NICOLA BAGAROV

INSIGHT

ELLIE DIMITROVA

If you've recently scrolled through Instagram, you've likely been entranced by Ellie Dimitrova riding in style in picturesque turquoise waters. Between kitesurfing excursions in Venezuela, tours of the Serengeti, and time spent in Zanzibar, Ellie had many tales to share in this exclusive interview with IKSURFMAG's Jen Tyler!

We're so excited to have you featured! To kick things off, we would love to hear more about what it was like growing up on the beautiful Bulgarian Black Sea Coast.

Thank you, Jen! The first seven years of my life were spent in Israel, and then we moved to Bulgaria. It was interesting to grow up between two different cultures, and that may be why I learned to adapt well to the world from an early age. My parents and I love the sea, so we decided to build a home at the seaside of Bulgaria. The town where I grew up is called Pomorie, a small touristic place full of life in the summer. As a child of the sea, I couldn't wait for summer and my parents to take me to the beach!

What is your family like, and how did they influence the person you are today?

They are truly unique! Ever since I was a child, my parents have supported me in every endeavour. Having parents like them instils a dose of extra confidence in the things I want to do and accomplish. Like most parents, they always wanted the best for me, and I grew up in a warm and affectionate family. That may be why I'm so sensitive and attached to them.

How did you initially get into kiteboarding?

Growing up in a tourist town, everyone worked during the summer season. From the age of 15, I sold summer accessories, made pancakes, and even sold nuts every summer. As I was starting university, I had saved up and decided that this would be my last summer before diving into adult life, where I would not be employed and take a break!

" AS A CHILD OF THE SEA, I COULDN'T WAIT FOR SUMMER AND MY PARENTS TO TAKE ME TO THE BEACH! "



RIDER: ANDREA ZUST



Having lived across the street from the kite spot all my life, I was always intimidated to approach the kiteboarders as they looked like a tight-knit family. Luckily, my best friend had already kitesurfed, so I asked her for a lesson, and from then on, my life changed forever!

Your riding and tricks are super smooth and stylish... How would you describe your riding style?

It's similar to listening to classical music; perhaps that's where the elegance I ride with stems from. I have been practising classical ballet for four years, which has taught me the values of patience and hard work.

" I WAS ALWAYS
INTIMIDATED TO
APPROACH THE
KITEBOARDERS "



FIRST TRACK LAB MEET THE GEEK'S CRAFTSMEN

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"I HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF INTUITION,
AND I SENSED AN INTENSE FORCE
DRAWING ME TOWARDS SOMETHING."



This is why I am so disciplined in kitesurfing. I don't like crashing, so I plan ahead and carefully consider each new trick I want to attempt.

You emit positive vibes! What inspired you to take the bold step to leave home and explore?

I have a strong sense of intuition, and I sensed an intense force drawing me towards something. I will never forget how, late at night, I would open Google Maps and gaze at the turquoise islands; Zanzibar, where I now live full-time, was one of them. You never know what fate will bring! However, my true

journey began when I stumbled upon a kitesurfing school in Turkey shortly after I began kitesurfing myself. It took a lot of work for me to watch everyone else enjoying the island's ideal conditions while I taught kitesurfing from morning to night. That's why my partner and I decided to travel the remaining six months around the world and enjoy it ourselves!

Where is your home base now, and what was the story behind choosing that location?

Home? I have many homes! Jokes aside, I currently live entirely in Zanzibar, where I first arrived in 2015,



and it was also my initial kitesurfing destination. This is where Covid brought me - as I am currently organising kitesurfing trips, and this was the only place available at the time, I decided to form a group. It was quite successful, as we were all eager for a kitesurfing adventure. The reason I returned with the group to Bulgaria, packed all my belongings, and came back with a one-way ticket to Zanzibar is love. And somehow, things worked out - I have a wonderful partner, one of the most stunning beaches in the world, which provides ideal conditions for kitesurfing and eternal summer. What more could a happy kite girl ask for?



You constantly travel between Cape Town, Barra Grande, Zanzibar, and Venezuela. Naturally, warm, tropical spots seem to be your favourite... but what do you think about the crazy big air conditions in Cape Town?!

Cape Town is one of my favourite places. No matter how much I travel to different destinations, there's no place like it where the entire kitesurfing industry is gathered in one spot. The conditions and wind it offers are unparalleled. As they say in Bulgaria, you can truly "set the clock" at your level, and the riders you meet and ride with on the water will push you to your ultimate limit.

"THE
CONDITIONS
AND WIND IT
OFFERS ARE
UNPARALLELED."



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" WITH A LOT OF EFFORT, YOU CAN BUILD A PERSONAL LIFE ON ONE ISLAND AND WORK ON ANOTHER AND BALANCE BETWEEN THE TWO. "

How did you end up hosting kiteboarding camps in Venezuela?

I visited Venezuela for the first time in 2018 with my friends. We came across a picture online and were impressed by the beauty of Los Roques. Not knowing what to expect, we impulsively bought plane tickets and landed in paradise. I still remember my first impressions of the place; it felt like a small Caribbean oasis disconnected from the rest of the world. The locals were and still are a close-knit community, with children running and playing barefoot on the streets, creating a lovely atmosphere. We spent two months in Los Roques and realised that being on a small sandbar without friends can be pretty dull. And so, the following year, we invited more people, and later the group grew to 40 people, with whom I assure you I'm not bored anymore!

Rumour has it that you are releasing a documentary from Venezuela and Zanzibar. Can you share with us the concept behind the project?

Overall, this is about my life on these two beautiful islands. The focus will be on how I got started, what it means to me, and what it has brought me. That's all I can share for now!

What message are you most excited to share through the documentary about yourself or kiting in Venezuela and Zanzibar?

The most important message is that with a lot of effort, you can build a personal life on one island and work on another and balance between the two. Many people ask me how I achieve it, and they will find the answer in this documentary movie.



How long have you been riding for FLYSURFER, and how has their sponsorship helped your kiteboarding journey?

I have officially been a part of the FLYSURFER team for five years, and it has been an incredible journey. I am grateful to be a part of such a talented team, and I am proud of the company's progress, especially in recent years. While the team may not remember, I recall that my social media account was hacked before signing the contract. I asked them, "Are you sure you want to work with me?" Their response was, "Yes, of course. We believe in you." This moment has stayed with me and made me the rider I am today. I want to take this opportunity to say a big 'Thank You' to them!

" THIS MOMENT
HAS STAYED
WITH ME AND
MADE ME THE
RIDER I AM
TODAY. "

CREATE NEW LINES







What is your gear of choice?

It depends on the wind and the conditions, but I do like them all!

Hybrid - Mountains

Stoke - Waves and Big Air

Soul - Freeride/Old School

FLYSURFER has just announced a new pro model featuring you! Please tell us about the new TRIP and what this project means to you.

Wow! What an adventure! Did you know that when I was told in Cape Town about the board that would have my name, I secretly cried from happiness? The name on the board represents me and my work.

" THE NAME ON THE BOARD REPRESENTS ME AND MY WORK "



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The photos on the board remind us of the beautiful memories we create while travelling. I hope everyone who travels with this board and looks at these photos can experience the same beautiful emotions I felt. I love to travel and feel honoured to have my name on this board.

A few weeks ago, I remembered coming across one of your posts where you said, 'Your daily reminder not to give up and build a life that makes you happy!' What advice do you have for someone too afraid to make that change?

Persistence. When you give up on one thing and rush into the unknown, I won't lie; there will be bumps in the road. However, to me, that's the charm of life in general. When you look back, reflect on the good and the bad because these experiences have shaped us as individuals and our personalities today. Never give up!

Thanks again, Ellie, for joining us! Any last words for our readers?

Just two: SEND IT!

" WHEN YOU LOOK BACK, REFLECT ON THE GOOD AND THE BAD BECAUSE THESE EXPERIENCES HAVE SHAPED US "




A full-page background photograph showing a kitesurfer in the upper left, flying a black and white kite. The kite has the word 'CORE' on it. Below the kitesurfer, the ocean has dark, choppy waves with white foam. In the background, there are green, rocky hills and a small coastal town with white houses. The sky is a clear, pale blue.

WORDS JOSHUA EMANUEL PHOTOS OLIVER FRASER

Scoring good kite conditions takes serious effort when you're in between windy seasons. Big air and wave riding machine Joshua Emanuel always has his eye on the forecast. Read on as he takes us along on his search for strong wind in South Africa's low season in this Western Cape Strike Mission!

WESTERN CAPE STRIKE MISSION



" SATURDAY LOOKED LIKE THE BIG WIND DAY, WITH WINDS EXPECTED TO REACH 40 KNOTS. "

In low-season kite missions, last minute is the name of the game. Unlike the predictably powerful summer winds on the west coast of South Africa, the winter wind is an unfriendly creature. Many of the local crew head east to my home spot of Durban, where the warm, subtropical climate offers a relieving reprieve from the cold Cape Town winters. But in May? Wind becomes hard to come by, and we're all on the hunt.

Having just returned from Mauritius, where conditions weren't as good as expected, I arrived in Durban in one of our worst months for wind. After not getting what I was looking for in Mauritius, I was near desperate for some proper sessions, but the forecast at home looked bleak. Doing a quick check on the wind forecasts around South Africa, I found myself zooming out further and further on the map. Finding ideal, or even good, conditions at this time of the year can be difficult, to say the least!

Cape Town popped up and, to my surprise, showed a solid southeasterly wind forecast for the weekend ahead. I double-checked on the Thursday before booking flights to decide whether it was worth flying over for just two days of kiting! Looking at the model, Friday was to be gustier with a solid wave forecast, and Saturday looked like the big wind day, with winds expected to reach 40 knots. It still looked promising, so I packed my bags and landed in Cape Town on Thursday evening.

"UPON ARRIVING IN THE MOTHER CITY, I WAS PRETTY UNPREPARED FOR THE COOLER TEMPERATURE"



Upon arriving in the Mother City, I was pretty unprepared for the cooler temperature, a fresh 13°C. Yes, I know that's not cold, but having come from Mauritius, where I had worn only board shorts for the past few weeks, it was chilly! Temperatures in Durban are not often below 20°C, even in the coldest times of the year.

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"THE SWELL AT THE BACK GOT ME SO PSYCHED UP AND READY FOR AN EPIC SESSION WITH NO ONE ELSE ON THE WATER."

Early Friday morning, I was woken by the sound of rain and wind. The forecast prepared me for this but also indicated that it would clear by midday. From previous experiences in Cape Town's autumn season, I know that wind after rain in these cold conditions is generally gusty and tends to be more offshore. Today was the day to go and do some wave riding.

I took a drive down to the beach at Haakgat to see that the swell had actually pitched up for a change, with solid 6-foot sets and about 30 knots of wind. I had arrived a little under-prepared; choosing what to pack can sometimes be testing when you're trying to travel as light as possible. Having only my strapless freestyle board, the Core 720 5'1 with a cut-off nose, made these larger waves just a little bit more challenging!

It was cold before I even got in the water, but the swell at the back got me so psyched up and ready for an epic session with no one else on the water. I had an awesome session out on a 7m kite, a tad overpowered, but the glassy waves with the offshore wind were totally worth it. I then enjoyed a second session with the boys, but at this point, the wind had gone more offshore and was just too gusty to be even a little bit enjoyable.

" I STARTED THE DAY BY CHECKING ALL THE SPOTS AROUND CAPE TOWN TO SEE WHAT THE WIND WAS DOING. "

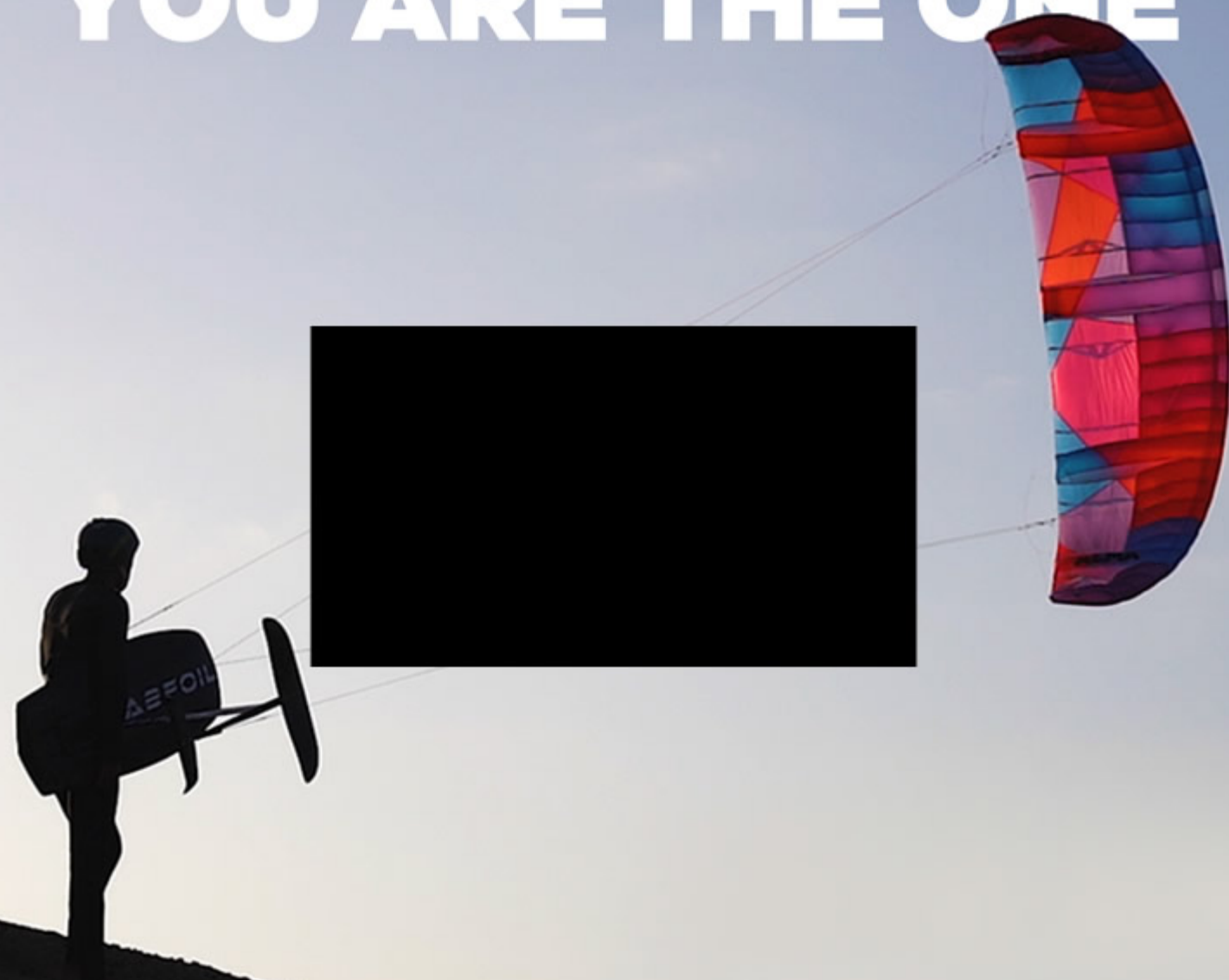


Better to save the energy for Saturday's big wind!

Saturday morning, with high expectations of pumping wind, I started the day by checking all the spots around Cape Town to see what the wind was doing. Options were all pointing to one place, and that was Misty Cliffs. From what I could see in the forecast, there was a small window that would provide some solid conditions.

ALMA

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We headed off at lunchtime, aiming to reach the spot by 1 pm. On our arrival, the waves were a fun size to use as kickers, and the wind was close to 30 knots. I headed out on my new Core XR8 9m, but it wasn't long before the wind blew me off the water, and I decided to come back in and switch to the 8m. I love the 8m kite, as I get good height and a great kite angle during loops.

After a solid session on the 8m, it was time to test the XR8 out on short lines. Oliver Fraser was behind the camera, and I would be on the water, looking for that perfect shot. As you may have seen, I always use the GTS6 for short lines. This time, I decided to mix it up and see what the just-released XR8 could do. The performance was impressive, for sure, and I can see some serious potential with this kite. But time wasn't on my side, and it wasn't long into the session before the wind started to turn a bit more east, and I knew the window of safe conditions for going big was ending fast. I wanted so badly to get a solid one in, but at the same time, knowing the wind was getting worse made things a bit more complicated.

On my last loop, on the landing loop, there was a sudden and significant shift in the wind, throwing me completely off on the landing. I took a nice little knock to the ribs, fortunately ending up with only a bit of bruising and no injury!



“THERE WAS A SUDDEN AND SIGNIFICANT SHIFT IN THE WIND, THROWING ME COMPLETELY OFF ON THE LANDING.”

RIDER: RUBEN LENTEN PHOTO: DENAS

A full-page photograph of a kitesurfer in mid-air, holding a black and white kite with the word 'CAPE' printed on it. The surfer is positioned in the center of the frame. Below them, the ocean has white-capped waves breaking. In the background, a range of rugged, green mountains stretches across the horizon under a clear blue sky. On the left side of the image, there is a vertical yellow bar.

“ WE WENT HOME WITH SOME EPIC SHOTS AND THE SATISFACTION OF RIDING IN STRONG WINDS AGAIN. ”

That was the clear message that it was time to get off the water. Autumn in South Africa is fickle at best, and those squirrely conditions at Misty Cliffs can quickly turn sour. As the wind turned east, I returned to the beach and packed it in.

Overall, it was worth the mission for two solid days of riding. Scoring any session at this time of year is a win, and getting to ride in both proper waves and send some solid low loops was even better. We went home with some epic shots and the satisfaction of riding in strong winds again. As we head further into winter, I'll be scouring the forecast for the next strike mission... Stay tuned!

WORDS CRYSTAL VENESS

TECH FOCUS

ELEVEIGHT WS V7

Q&A with Robert Bratz

Eleveight's performance freeride and wave kite, the WS, sees a fresh update in the new V7 version. Eleveight's Robert Bratz gives us all the details on materials, construction, and performance characteristics in this Q&A!



RIDER NUNO FIGUEIREDO PHOTO ANTONIO HERRERA TRUJILLO



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Congrats on the release of the WS V7! For kites familiar with the WS V6, what are the key changes in the newly-released V7 model?

The much-loved DNA of the WS remains the same with its open-C hybrid performance kite for waves, freeriding and foiling, but we implemented many incremental changes!

The most significant change is the new XT Light material we use for the inflatable parts manufactured by the leading supplier Teijin. The XT Light features light tenacity polyester yarn with a different final coating, achieving more direct flight performance and making V7 10% lighter than the previous model.

We also introduced two new sizes, a 10m and 12m, to open up the WS a bit more to the freeride market, as it's a fantastic kite not just suited to waves. To improve the flight stability further, we worked on the panel cut to distribute the force more efficiently and modified the wing tips for even quicker turning initiation.

It's hard to improve on an already top-performing kite! So, which areas did you identify to focus on? What was done to extract more performance in these areas?

Our development team all love the WS, so it's natural that we focus on details to steadily improve it over time. Eleveight is a product-driven company, and continued development to outperform our products year after year is a key value for us.

Our main focus was the inflatable material for the V7, to make the kite lighter and extremely dynamic. For the RS+ development, we used Dynea Tech, which was an interesting option, and we also tried Aluula, but we found it too stiff for a wave kite.

" OUR DEVELOPMENT TEAM ALL LOVE THE WS, SO IT'S NATURAL THAT WE FOCUS ON DETAILS TO STEADILY IMPROVE IT OVER TIME. "





" YOU WANT IT TO TURN ON A DIME BUT WITH LESS POWER GENERATION, ALLOWING YOU TO EASILY RIDE A WAVE AND DRAW YOUR LINE. "

Riders forget that sometimes a kite has to twist to a certain level, and for a wave kite, it's essential to have dynamic turn and drift performance.

With XT Light, we found the best balance between stability and stiffness, and we were very, very impressed with the overall improvement in kite performance. The lighter weight was also very useful for our bigger 10m and 12m sizes.

Turning speed plays a crucial role in a wave kite as you want it to turn on a dime but with less power generation, allowing you to easily ride a wave and draw your line. For the WS V7, we paid special attention to the wing tip shape, squaring them off for quicker turning initiation but with very controllable power development.

Tell us about the X4 canopy fabric used in this kite!

X4 is our prime ripstop that we developed exclusively in partnership with Teijin. We've been using X4 for years and can honestly say it's state-of-the-art material. The core 4X4 ripstop is woven with an ultra-high tenacity polyester yarn which is then treated with a high-temperature resin which includes a UV filter. This very sophisticated construction has two benefits for the consumer: First is the performance results which achieve less elongation/ stretch in all directions, which results in precise and responsive flight characteristics. Secondly, the quality results as X4 is longer lasting with extreme rip protection against peak loads, tears and punctures. It also has less elastic fatigue, keeping the kite crispy for longer!

" THE LATEST VIDEO WITH NUNO IS EXCEPTIONAL, AND I THINK ONLY A HANDFUL OF RIDERS WORLDWIDE CAN TACKLE THIS WAVE. "



We are impressed by the durable design of this kite - essential when there's a high chance your kite is going to get rolled up in a wave! Can you tell us a bit more about where and how the kite is reinforced?

Our latest photoshoot with Nuno shows that the WS has bulletproof construction! However, the WS actually uses the same construction methods as our whole lineup, with quality and durability as key elements in our production process. Aside from the

prime materials X4 and XT Light, we pay special attention to our Double Bond Canopy, where every seam is glued and stitched for maximum durability. We also use a triple-reinforced closing seam along the leading edge to make it practically indestructible. The centre segments have stronger reinforcements as the material load is much higher compared to the smaller diameter of the wingtips.

Our Ultra-Light Load Diffuser provides angled reinforcements along the trailing edge to diffuse the

load and strain on the canopy, making it more durable while improving kite stability and longevity. The 2 Step Force Transition helps with the load transition between the inflatable frame structure and the ripstop material, which is optimised for improved stability and durability. An extra layer of double ripstop also sits between the inflatable structure and the X4 ripstop to protect the load. Finally, we use additional leading-edge TPU reinforcements for further protection against wear and tear.

The WS V7 features a pulley-free bridle. What is your perspective on pulleys vs no pulleys? Why the choice for no pulleys in this kite?

We used pulleys in our previous versions, but the WS is made for fast turns and needs a very direct feeling on the bar. For this reason, we found the short pulley-free 5-point bridle setup enhances the kite's turning speed and agility. Your bar input is direct, while the risk of catching the wingtip is reduced.

The release video for the new Eleveight WS V7 features some pretty sizable waves!! What flying characteristics should a strong wave kite have to both perform well and keep a rider safe in heavy wave conditions?

The latest video with Nuno is exceptional, and I think only a handful of riders worldwide can tackle this wave. In general, a wave kite should be very stable with stall-free flying characteristics for easy drift and carefree riding. You want to trust your kite even when the lines are a bit slack or the wind gets iffy. You need to be able to turn rapidly and tightly but with less power development than other kites; this helps with the control of the turns and finding the right line on the wave.

A wave kite has to offer easy piloting and should have less bar pressure for optimised single-handed control. The overall construction plays an essential role when you wipe out, and a wave kite should relaunch quickly to avoid long swims in the water.

This kite is heavily oriented towards waves but also aims to serve the foil and freeride market. Which aspects of the kite work well across all three of these categories?

The interesting point is that a wave kite is also great for a freerider. The stability and huge wind range work well across all disciplines. The easy turning and general plug-and-play handling make the kite super user-friendly and great in all conditions.

We also offer a special bridle configuration for the WS, with a freeride as well as a foil setup. By changing the bridle line configuration, you have a significant impact on the turning speed. Our freeride setup is a bit more powerful in the turn, whereas the foil setup has a very quick pivot turn optimised for light wind.

What is YOUR favourite thing about this kite?

The whole Eleveight family loves the WS. We are based in Portugal in a renowned kite location with great waves and strong wind. Most of our best sessions are with the WS. I particularly love the fast and precise turning of the WS. As a strapless rider, I need a kite that turns well but with not so much force in the turn. The single-handed control is outstanding and becomes handy if you want to throw some serious spray!



"THE CHOICE FOR ME ALWAYS HAS TO BE THE WS. IT'S JUST SO GREAT AT SYNCING TO MY RHYTHM, WHETHER THAT'S CHASING BARRELS OR JUST HAVING A CHILLED FOIL SESSION. IT'S SO AGILE THAT I BARELY NEED TO THINK ABOUT MY KITE, EVEN IN THE MOST DEMANDING SITUATIONS!" - NUNO FIGUEIREDO

RIDER NUNO FIGUEIREDO PHOTO ANTONIO HERRERA TRUJILLO

WORDS CRYSTAL VENESS
PHOTOS MITCHELL DOYLE MARKGRAFF

TECH FOCUS

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**ETHER SURFBOARD
TRAVEL COFFIN**

Q&A with Craig Tompkins

A board bag isn't just a board bag,
and AK Durable Supply Co. proves that
with their Ether Surfboard Travel Coffin.
We found out all about their fresh approach
to board bag design in this Q&A with
designer Craig Tompkins!



CRAIG TOMPKINS & DONOVAN WICHMANN





"IT IS A HUMAN-CENTRED DESIGN WITH A FOCUS ON FUNCTION AND USABILITY TO BRING ABOUT THE POSITIVE EXPERIENCE WE ARE LOOKING FOR."

Hi Craig! What was the primary goal when designing the AK Ether Surfboard Travel Coffin?

Aligning with the Ether design methodology, we set out to create a minimalist product that integrates lightweight features and support for the best travel experience without compromising on board protection. This was achieved through the featured technology, while highlighting the unique styling known in the Ether Collection.

It's a totally fresh approach to travel bag design. Where did you find the inspiration to create this product?

In early concept development, initial material choices and ideas were established, which were then brought to life when resolving the concept of the Fly-Line technology. The structure plays off the load distribution and load-carrying capacity of thin support networks seen in the human body and within nature. We use the same technology in products like the Ether waist harness and Ether boot. Since the bag would be holding a significant amount of weight, it was through this process that we came up with a solution to disperse the load and give us the ability to create a high-strength system without adding much weight.

What were the top considerations that guided your design process?

The main considerations were board protection, lightweight, and durability. All of these features underpin the AK design ethos. It is a human-centred design with a focus on function and usability to bring about the positive experience we are looking for.

**" FEATURES A DURABLE AND
LIGHTWEIGHT NYLON FABRIC "**

This is the first board bag in the AK lineup that bears the Ether name - what sets this product aside from the more traditional travel bags in the AK collection?

Unlike some of the other bags in the range, the Ether bag makes use of technical components and unique construction to bring a product to the customer looking to shed a few kgs in their travel bag setup. Unlike traditional travel coffins, the Ether is stripped back to create a lightweight bag that you would use for local or international trips.

Apart from being a very good-looking bag, it's also packed with some serious technology. Tell us a bit about the key design features of the new AK Ether Surfboard Travel Coffin!

The Ether Surfboard Travel Coffin features a durable and lightweight nylon fabric for the exterior of the bag, with added drag-proof reinforcement around the nose and tail.

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"I THINK YOU WOULD BE QUITE SURPRISED HOW MUCH SPACE YOU CAN FIND IN THIS BAG."

Inside the bag, you will find a unique punched foam padding that allows up to 30% weight reduction without compromising on the protective function. The load distribution is managed by the Fly-Line technology, while everything is held together by the external compression straps.

The Fly-Line technology, also present in the AK Ether harness, is all about load distribution. Can you tell us how this works in the context of a board bag?

Yes, exactly - it's all about load distribution and weight management. The Fly-Line technology is seen

on the outside of the bag - the array of straight lines running from the top side of the bag centre through to the outer edges of the bottom of the bag. The Fly-Lines are stitched into the material, from the bottom side, through the top seam and are integrated into the carry handle and sling strap on the top.

The function of these Fly-Lines not only adds durability and stability right into the material itself but it serves the main function of distributing the load from the carry points out through the span of the bag, avoiding point loading. Usually, the carry points would place a huge strain on a single area of the bag, or the strap

would be designed with a heavy webbing cradle running around the bag.

How did you achieve the right combination of light and strong in this product?

Light weight is an interesting challenge. It really comes down to accounting for the small things. Once we add up the total weight reduction after combining many small weight-reducing components, the total weight reduction is quite significant. Strength is achieved by considering exactly where the ideal strength would be needed without compromising the weight or durability. For example, we could have reinforced areas with heaps of material, but instead, we designed for how the reinforcement could be achieved through the application of load distribution technology and specifically placed drag proofing.

How many kites and boards can comfortably fit in this bag?

This is really up to the customer and personal preference. The bag will comfortably fit three boards, but possibly up to four boards, depending on how big the boards are! The ideal travel setup would generally be two boards, three kites, or three boards, two kites. Often we get really creative when packing bags, so I think you would be quite surprised how much space you can find in this bag.

Can we expect to see the Ether stamp and Fly-Line technology on any other bags in the AK Collection in the future?

I wouldn't want to say too much, but the Ether series has always been an integral part of the AK range, so there will likely be some other products that may appear in this bag range...

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SUMMER 2023



THE INTERVIEW - THÉO DEMANEZ

WATERWOMEN - BOWIEN VAN DER LINDEN | EFFORTLESS - MANUEL SELMAN
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THE WORLD'S NUMBER ONE WING, FOIL, SUP AND SURF MAG

WORDS CRYSTAL VENESS
PHOTOS AIRWAVE

TECH FOCUS

AIRWAVE ALMA

Q&A with Tom Lollies

The Airwave Alma, the second kite in the Airwave line, is a kite that is completely unique within the kiteboarding industry; there is nothing else on the market like it! Find out more about this new release in this Q&A with Airwave's Tom Lollies.



Tom, thanks for joining and for the look behind this exciting new design. Give us a quick introduction to the all-new Alma!

Hi Crystal, thank you very much for your questions! The Alma is the first outcome of the new collaboration between multiple world champion Maxime Nocher as a test rider and myself as the design engineer. The Alma is a light, super stable, easy and versatile kite for hydrofoiling, snowkiting, surf kiting and twin tip. It performs well in various riding styles, such as strapless freestyle and freeride, but also in big air.

The Alma is intended to perform in every style and in all conditions, but it will give the very best when hydrofoiling in moderate to strong winds. Thanks to a tight loop, smooth power generation, great drift and good upwind/downwind performance, the Alma really transformed my foiling style.

For those familiar with foil kites but unfamiliar with the hybrid design, can you describe what makes the Alma different from a traditional foil kite?

Traditional foil kites have two skins - the upper and lower surfaces that go all the way to the trailing edge. On our hybrid single skin design, the lower surface stops at 50% of the chord length, leaving only one skin from that point to the trailing edge.

How does it fly compared to the Airwave Koala? What are the key performance differences?

We worked extensively on improving the upwind performance of the kite. Even though the Koala has better upwind angles, the Alma is not far behind, and has better downwind capabilities. Another key difference lies in the handling, where the turn is much, much faster.

"A LIGHT, SUPER STABLE, EASY AND VERSATILE KITE FOR HYDROFOILING, SNOWKITING, SURF KITING AND TWIN TIP."





"THE ALMA IS ALSO LIGHTER THAN THE KOALA, MAKING IT GREAT FOR DIFFICULT CONDITIONS BUT ALSO AGGRESSIVE SURFING."



The combination of good performance and tight turn radius makes it even good for big air and mega loops. Our team rider Maxime Desjardin thinks it is suitable for double loops, so stay tuned for the first-ever double loop with a foil kite!

Also, while the Koala has a more progressive depower (you have to let the kite fly towards a side of the wind window to reduce the pull), the Alma features an immediate depower when you release the bar, which feels similar to a tube kite. The Alma is also lighter than the Koala, making it great for difficult conditions but also aggressive surfing.

The drift is impressive! We are happy to say that the Alma keeps the nice bar feel of the Koala and the uncompromising stability.

What are the main benefits or advantages of this hybrid monofoil design?

The hybrid monofoil or hybrid single skin technology is very interesting for the lighter weight, as the cloth consumption is much lower. Most of the riders are now convinced of the incredible benefits of flying lighter kites, such as faster handling, better for hydrofoiling in light winds, and improved drift capabilities when surfing.

Using the right structure design, one can take advantage of the deformable nature of the kite to design it with a morphing aerofoil. Powered up, there is a high camber airfoil giving you all the lift you need. Depowered, the airfoil turns into a low-lift super stable reflex profile - giving you absolute confidence when overpowered, even in the worst conditions. As a result, the power to depower ratio is exceptional.

Finally, the power generation is very smooth. You will feel progressive shifts in the pull force in your harness, whereas an LEI kite, with a much stiffer structure, will give you strong shocks.

" MAX AND I WERE INCREDIBLY EXCITED. WE REALISED THAT HYBRID SINGLE SKIN TECHNOLOGY STILL HAD HUGE POTENTIAL FOR IMPROVEMENT. "



How do the 5 full chord inflated closed cells work? What problem do they solve, or what performance benefit do they provide?

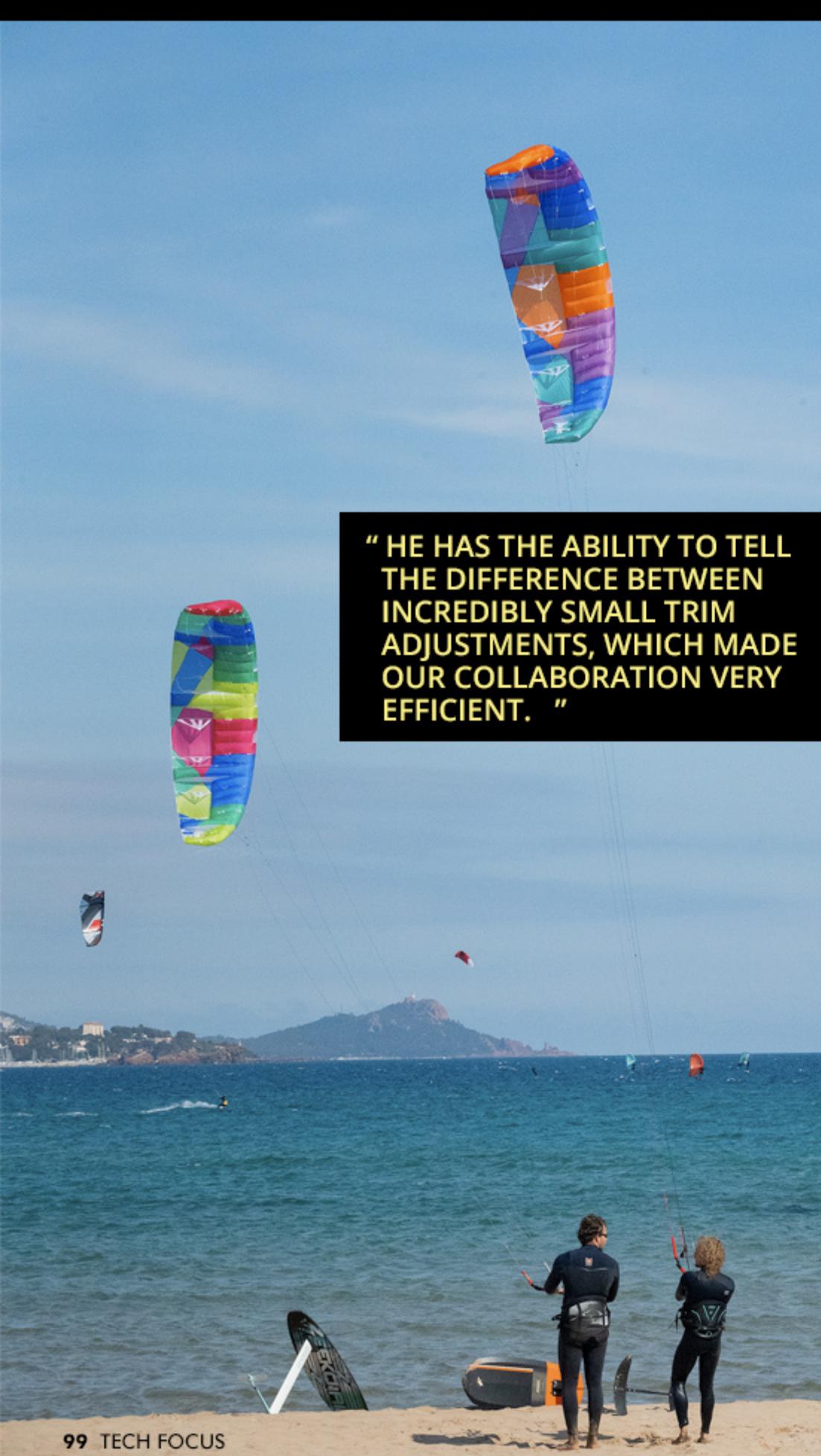
The main drawback of single skin and single skin hybrid kites was the constant flutter of the trailing edge when depowered. This resulted in an unpleasant feel in the bar and a very low upwind, pop and hangtime performance. Up to now, most kites like this could hardly be used to ride upwind with a twin tip!

Our design is a cross-over between LEI and single skin. The 5 full chord inflated closed cells work just like the 5 struts of an LEI kite. Here, the struts are inflated by the ram-air intakes and made rigid with long high-density nylon rods. Thus the kite is rigid enough so that the top surface does not flutter, and the whole canopy stays solid and stable even in extremely gusty and strong winds.

What was the inspiration behind the Alma? When you first dreamed up this product, what were you aiming to achieve with the design?

The initial project was to make a simple kite just for hydrofoil cruising in light winds. For that purpose, I started extending my simulation software to single skin kites to better understand the physics of these kites.

When the first prototype came, Max and I were incredibly excited. We realised that hybrid single skin technology still had huge potential for improvement. What if we could make a kite with similar performance compared to the ultra light LEI kites without the incredibly expensive Aluula cloth and without any inflatable bladders, but even lighter and with the nice bar feel of a foil kite?



" HE HAS THE ABILITY TO TELL THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN INCREDIBLY SMALL TRIM ADJUSTMENTS, WHICH MADE OUR COLLABORATION VERY EFFICIENT. "

Proto after proto, we kept on setting the bar higher and higher, seeing that the kite was performing in such a great range of conditions and riding styles.

Is designing a foil kite more similar to designing a paraglider or to a leading edge inflatable kite?

I would say that designing a foil kite is a lot more similar to designing a paraglider in the challenges that we have to face. The main issue is the same: keeping the deformations of the sail under control. Also, the structure is very similar.

Can you tell us a bit about the design process that you went through when creating the Alma?

I first spent quite a lot of time behind the computer running simulations to try to improve the performance of the kite or fix the issues observed in the previous prototype. It may be a lack of depower, an undesired crease on the sail, etc.

Then I send the design to the factory, and we test it with Maxime. Through his years of experience, he has the ability to tell the difference between incredibly small trim adjustments, which made our collaboration very efficient. My challenge was to reproduce the positive effects of a given trim change to try and reproduce them in the simulation program to see if we could optimise even further. It is a unique opportunity to be at the same time a design engineer and also be on

the water with one of the best riders in the world for the test sessions!

How much time and how many rounds of prototypes did it take to arrive at the final design?

We use a relatively small number of prototypes. In fact, using simulation and line trim, I really try to get the most out of every proto. Over the course of a year, we made only 7 prototypes. However, on top of the thousands of CPU hours to optimise the design before it was built, a lot of line trimming, cutting and sewing was involved once we received it!

How does it relaunch in water? Are there any special techniques required to relaunch this type of kite?

The Alma accepts different relaunch techniques depending on your skills and background (LEI or foil kite). In more than 12 knots, especially when using a small size, the auto-relaunch will send the kite back up in the air in seconds - you just have to keep tension in the lines. You can also use the one-line relaunch, which does not differ from the standard LEI technique.

My favourite is to use the foil kite technique, which consists in pulling on both back lines and then releasing one, because it is more efficient if you want to relaunch the kite as quickly as possible before the next wave hits!

What would you say to any of our readers who are sceptical about trying a foil kite, particularly a hybrid foil design such as this one?

Some riders do not really want to hear about foil kites, mainly because they don't want to have to deal with the bridles and pulleys and the different launch techniques. To these riders, I would say the following :

1. It will only take one session to get adjusted to nearly everything you need to know about foil kites;
2. The Alma features a very simple line layout making it a great transition from LEI to flexible kite;
3. It is much easier to deal with a few tangled lines from time to time than leaking bladders; and
4. Before, foil kites used to be much more expensive than LEI, which is not the case anymore. The Alma tech gives you great performance and yet much simpler construction.

Any last words to share about the all-new Airwave Alma?

I feel that the Alma has great potential to ride on crazy spots in crazy conditions - to explore places that were only thinkable with a wing foil or wind foil up until now. I am now looking at the coastline with a different eye, wondering what to do next.

My technique is to leave with the lines packed, sitting on the foil and hanging on both tips of the kite to get away from the shore. The super lightweight, high stability and easy relaunch will open up new possibilities. I can't wait to see what the riders will do with it!

Also, I can see now that using a small pocket board and one Alma, I can fit my whole gear in a small backpack, and yet keep a very wide range of use. So I am planning to go on a bike-trip kite holiday!

We can't wait to hear about it! Thanks, Tom!

" THE SUPER LIGHTWEIGHT, HIGH STABILITY AND EASY RELAUNCH WILL OPEN UP NEW POSSIBILITIES. I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE WHAT THE RIDERS WILL DO WITH IT! "




WORDS CRYSTAL VENESS
PHOTOS ARTHUR SAMZUN

THE INTERVIEW

VALENTIN GARAT

French pro rider Val Garat has been a fixture in the freestyle and big air scenes for several years. After recovering from a recent injury, this multi-talented athlete teamed up with videographer Arthur Samzun on a very special film project, *Dans L'Instant*. From sleeping on the beach to sunset sessions in Mykonos, we caught up with Val to find out what happened behind the scenes of this shoot!





" IT'S WHERE MY PASSION WAS BUILDING UP, AND I SPENT AROUND 8 HOURS ON THE WATER EVERY DAY. "

Val, your latest video, Dans L'Instant, is a powerful watch. We're stoked to have you here for The Interview to give us a peek behind the scenes! Tell us about your connection to kiteboarding! When did you know that this sport would become such an important part of your life?

I started kiteboarding when I was 10, and I still vividly remember the feeling of my first tack. I told myself I wanted to pursue this sport for the rest of my life and make it my profession. It was crystal clear in my mind

from the beginning. It's also a family affair and a passion that my dad gave me, and my brother Seb was also a professional kiteboarder.

I have some really lovely childhood memories of my summer holidays when we went with my family every year in the camper to the Greek islands to find the best spots to kite. It's where my passion was building up, and I spent around 8 hours on the water every day. My first podium at the European Junior Championships reassured me of my goal to become

a pro kiteboarder - that is also a beautiful memory.

In the film, you address challenges, falls, and failures. What happened that brought about this video project?

It's been a long love story with kiteboarding, but when it became my job, I started to forget how much I truly loved this sport. We tend to become a bit spoiled and get frustrated when we have bad sessions or struggle to land new tricks for a while.

Then, I suffered a pectoralis tendon injury last year, which forced me to take a few months off. During this time, I realised how much I missed the sensation of being on the water. When you're away from the water for an extended period, you begin to recall the indescribable feeling of riding a kite. The more I pondered why I missed kiting so intensely, the clearer the answers became. That's why we came up with the idea of this video; to make everyone understand the profound emotions we feel and why we are so deeply addicted to this sport.

How did you injure yourself? Where were you, and what happened?

I injured myself in Colombia last year in February, the day before my birthday. I was training for the first stop of the GKA, and the wind was quite strong in the afternoon, so I went for a big air session. I did a giant kiteman loop board off, and I saw a beginner downwind changing direction during my loop, and I was going straight towards him. I crashed in his lines, but my arm got stuck over and my body under, so it pulled super hard on my shoulder. I felt something weird, but it was not broken yet. When I started kiting again right after, I just put my hand on the water and I felt a big pop. That was my tendon that just snapped, and I understood straight away that it was something very serious.

What was your first thought after the injury? Did you worry about the future and your kiting career?

I returned to the beach, and I could not even carry my board. I was still hoping it was maybe just a muscle tear. But the next morning, I woke up with my arm completely blue, so I decided to go straight back home.

" WHEN YOU'RE AWAY FROM THE WATER FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD, YOU BEGIN TO RECALL THE INDESCRIBABLE FEELING OF RIDING A KITE. "





My doctor confirmed what I thought and saw the broken tendon on the x-ray. The next day, I went to see the surgeon, and they were super positive about the rehab. I was, for sure, really disappointed, but I really never worried about the future; it was already clear in my mind with the rehab path laid out. It went super well, and I'm really happy now... I'm like before or even better!!

" I'M REALLY
HAPPY NOW...
I'M LIKE
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EVEN BETTER! "



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"WE NEVER HAVE EVERYTHING WELL ORGANISED; WE ADAPT DAY BY DAY. BUT, IT ALWAYS ENDS UP BEING A REALLY GOOD TRIP!"



Who came up with the idea for Dans L'Instant? What was the brainstorming process?

Arthur Samzun and I really wanted to do a bigger project together, and we had a brainstorm session of not even one hour. It was already in my mind during the rehab, and Arthur added all the artistic parts. Together, we came up with this idea, and booked tickets to Greece the same day.

Tell us more about your trip to Greece! What was the plan?


We booked tickets to Greece with the plan of spending a bit of time on the mainland and then heading to the islands to shoot some big air. Arthur and I are used to travelling together, and we never have everything well organised; we adapt day by day. But, it always ends up being a really good trip!

What was your favourite session on the mainland? What made it stand out?

My favourite session was one of these sessions in Tsimari, where all my tricks came back, and Arthur had them on the camera. It was such an amazing feeling to land a few big double passes again after spending hours at the physio and at the gym to rehab my shoulder!

When it came time to head to the islands, how did you choose the next spot? How was the trip?

After some successful shooting days on the mainland, we decided to search on Google Maps for some unknown islands for kiting in order to find a secret spot. We found one super small spot not far from Paros/Mykonos. We booked the ferry tickets, but then we realised that all the accommodations on the island were fully booked since it was August.



" THERE ARE NEVER ANY PROBLEMS, ONLY SOLUTIONS, AND THAT'S WHY TRAVELLING WITH HIM HAS BECOME SO COOL! "

Consequently, we borrowed a tent from a friend. We almost missed the ferry due to a flat tire, but we managed to make it.

We were so excited, though. It was like, "let's go on an adventure, like back in the day!!" With Arthur and I, there are never any problems, only solutions, and that's why travelling with him has become so cool!

Tell us all about the secret island spot you found!

We arrived at such a beautiful spot with crystal blue water and not a single kite in sight. On the first day, we slept on the first beach we found. We thought it

looked like an uncrowded beach, so we decided to sleep there. The next morning, we woke up and saw everyone on the beach staring at us like, "What are those guys?!?"

We spent a few days sleeping on the beach at the spot and recharging our camera batteries at the small restaurants nearby. We witnessed breathtaking sunsets and had incredible kiteboarding sessions, and even though sleeping on the board bags was a bit uncomfortable for our backs, these unplanned and spontaneous trips are what we consider living life to the fullest.

What was your favourite memory or moment from the islands?

One of the best sessions was the sunset session we had in Mykonos. On the way back to the mainland, we decided to make a quick stop there for one day to get some stronger wind as we were missing this one small element to finish the video. The ferry was late, so we arrived just two hours before sunset, went straight to the spot, and had an amazing sunset session and some beautiful shots. That was the end of the shoot! Arthur and I were really stoked, and we had a good party to celebrate that!



Did you have any issues or pain from your injury during the filming?

I did some check-ups with my doctors and physio before, and they told me my rehab went really well and really fast and that I was good to go at 100% again. I trusted them, and I had absolutely no pain. Sure, I felt a bit of apprehension, but it went really smoothly.

“ I WAS GOOD
TO GO AT
100% AGAIN ”

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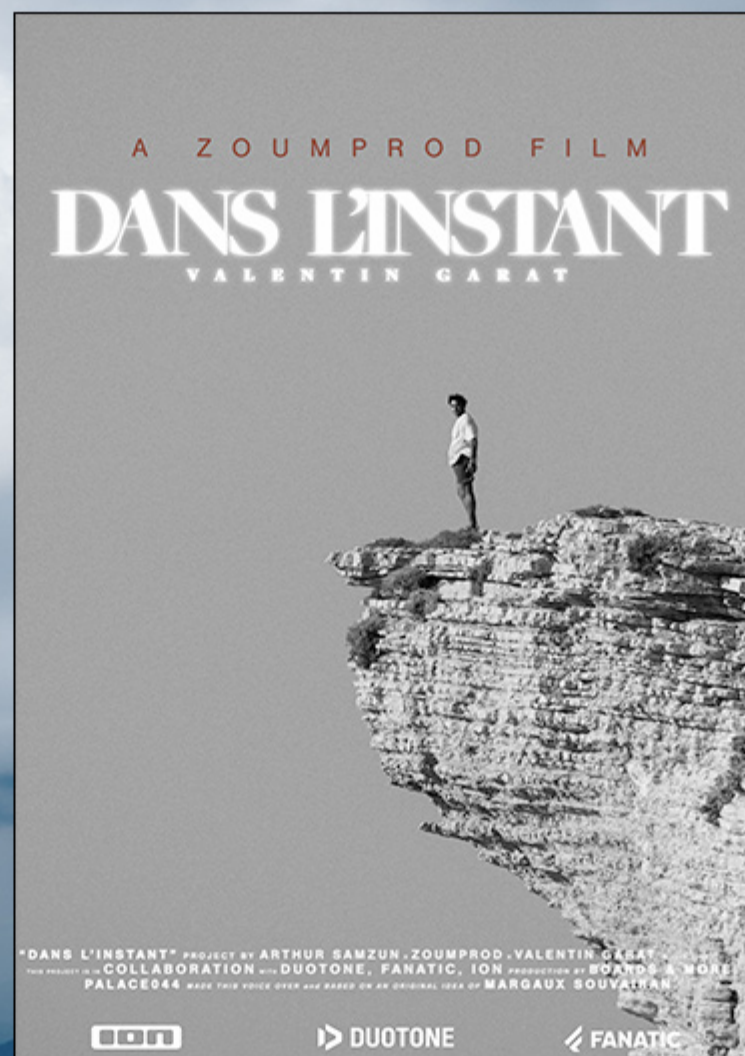
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"PEOPLE REALLY DIVED DEEPLY INTO THE VIDEO, AND THAT WAS THE MAIN GOAL OF THIS PROJECT, TO INVITE PEOPLE TO TRAVEL IN OUR WORLD."



The voiceover/song from the film was recorded by a French artist. What was it like working on this collaboration?

The song was recorded after the video. We wrote the text with Arthur, and had a few different versions to work with. We sent some feedback to the artist, and after a few revisions, we ended up with exactly what we wanted.

Are you happy with how the final film came together? How have your friends and followers reacted?

We were really happy because the outcome of the video was exactly how we imagined it, so that was really satisfying. We were quite stressed before we showed it to our friends, but we only got really positive feedback. People really dived deeply into the video, and that was the main goal of this project, to invite people to travel in our world.

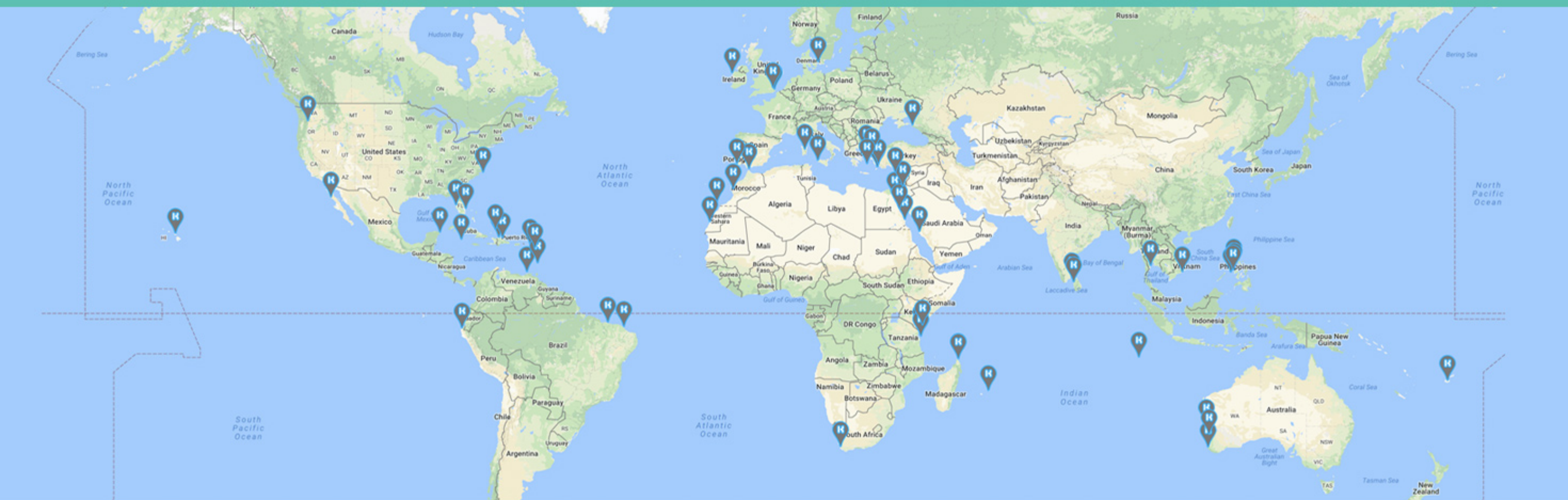
Thanks for taking the time to catch up with us, Val! What are you up to next?

Now, I'm back competing on the freestyle world tour, but I also want to train in big air and be ready to compete again next year in this discipline. We are also thinking of our next project with Arthur; we want to go even deeper and make something even better!



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IAIN HANNAY, OZONE KITES
GENERAL MANAGER

MADE FOR THIS:

INSIDE THE OZONE FACTORY

After 20 years of experience working on Kiteworld Magazine, ahead of taking up a new position at Ozone, Jim Gaunt took his first trip to Vietnam to visit Parapex, the company's own factory, where everything from paragliders and kites to hydrofoils and speed wings is made! See what happens Inside the Ozone Factory in this feature article...



WORDS JIM GAUNT PHOTOS OZONE KITES

BRIEF HISTORY

In March, I headed to Vietnam to check out the kiting conditions and visit Ozone's incredible factory in Ho Chi Minh City (also known as Saigon), first set up by David Pilkington and his Ozone colleagues in 2000. In 20 years as a kiting journalist, I've not once been able to step foot in another kite factory. However, with Ozone uniquely owning its very own facility and with my new access-all-areas pass, I couldn't wait to see how it all worked.

Ozone has a rich history in paragliding, with its owner's involvement in the sport dating back to the early 1980s. The brand was formed in 1998 and has since been instrumental in paragliding's development.

To address early concerns with factory limitations in China, David Pilkington, co-founder of Ozone, decided to explore developing their own production. His research led him to Vietnam, where, in 2000, he recruited 20 sewing machinists to learn how to make wings and scale up production. Parapex now employs over 1,000 people across nine factory floors, which together span the size of almost two football pitches.

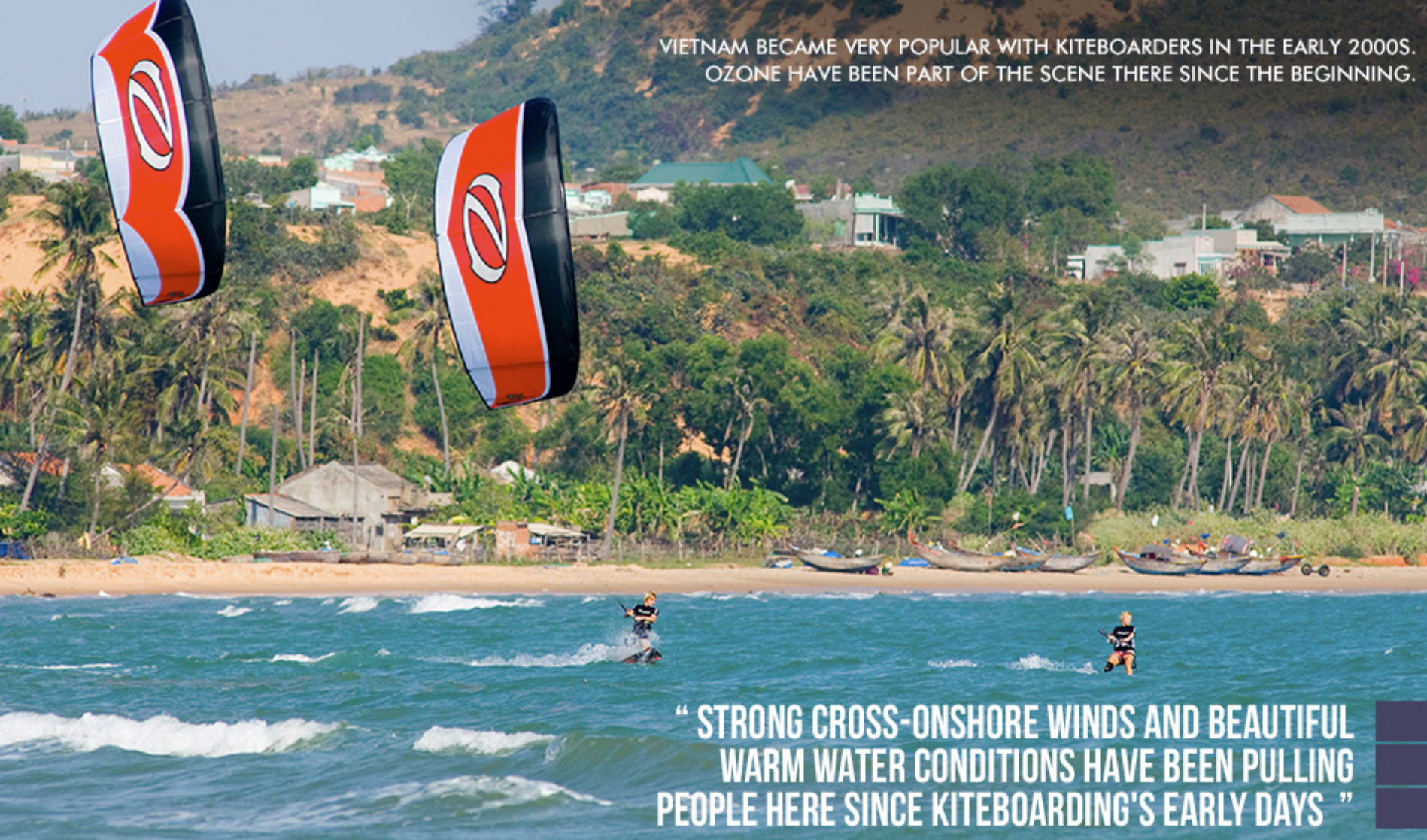
Today, each of the nine factory units is exclusively dedicated to manufacturing Ozone products, including paragliders, kites, wings, speed wings, twin-tips, hydrofoils, foil boards, bags, harnesses and many more accessories. Actually, I lied! As well as Ozone products, Squirrel wingsuits are also made in the factory, available in fully customised, sublimated colour prints; just one of the many customisable design options in the factory.

First, I had to hit the water! So let me first give you a quick indication of why you'll also love a kite trip to Vietnam.



"THE BRAND WAS FORMED IN 1998 AND HAS SINCE BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN PARAGLIDING'S DEVELOPMENT"

PARAMOTERING IS JUST ONE OF THE PASSIONS AT OZONE PHOTO: MATIAS NOMBARASCO



VIETNAM BECAME VERY POPULAR WITH KITEBOARDERS IN THE EARLY 2000S. OZONE HAVE BEEN PART OF THE SCENE THERE SINCE THE BEGINNING.

“STRONG CROSS-ONSHORE WINDS AND BEAUTIFUL WARM WATER CONDITIONS HAVE BEEN PULLING PEOPLE HERE SINCE KITEBOARDING'S EARLY DAYS”



MŨI NÉ IS THE WAY

After landing right in the centre of this sprawling city, it's a four-hour journey northeast, by road or rail, to reach Mũi Né, 220 kilometres away. This is Vietnam's home of kitesurfing, with a main season running from October through to early April (though the locals kite all year, particularly the foil fanatics).

Strong cross-onshore winds and beautiful warm water conditions have been pulling people here since kiteboarding's early days at

the start of the century. The food and lifestyle are definitely big appeals, too.

Having been based here since 2000, Ozone has built up an extensive network of local riders who they support with gear through Ozone Vietnam distributors Hung and Diep Tran, Twan van Lieshout and, more recently, Filipe Tvrdiscic. They're regularly joined on the water by some of the factory staff, including manager Khanh Nguyen.

The locals here are super welcoming, the culture is peaceful, and the parties can be

off the hook. Trust me, you'll have a good time here!

Phan Rang is a must-ride spot 90 minutes north of Mũi Né. It's where my new local bro, Phu Lai, smashed out the Asian Woo record in January when he boosted to 30.2 metres on his trusty Ozone Edge V11 8m - which gives you some idea of how good the conditions are!

My time on the coast was over in a flash. It was soon time to head back to the city to meet up with the guys at the factory as my tour was about to begin. I was excited to take a look at how my gear... and yours... is made!

PHU LAI, MUI NE RIPPER AND LOCAL LEGEND!
PHOTO JEFF NEWELL



BED TO BEACH OPTIONS IN MUI NE

MUI NE

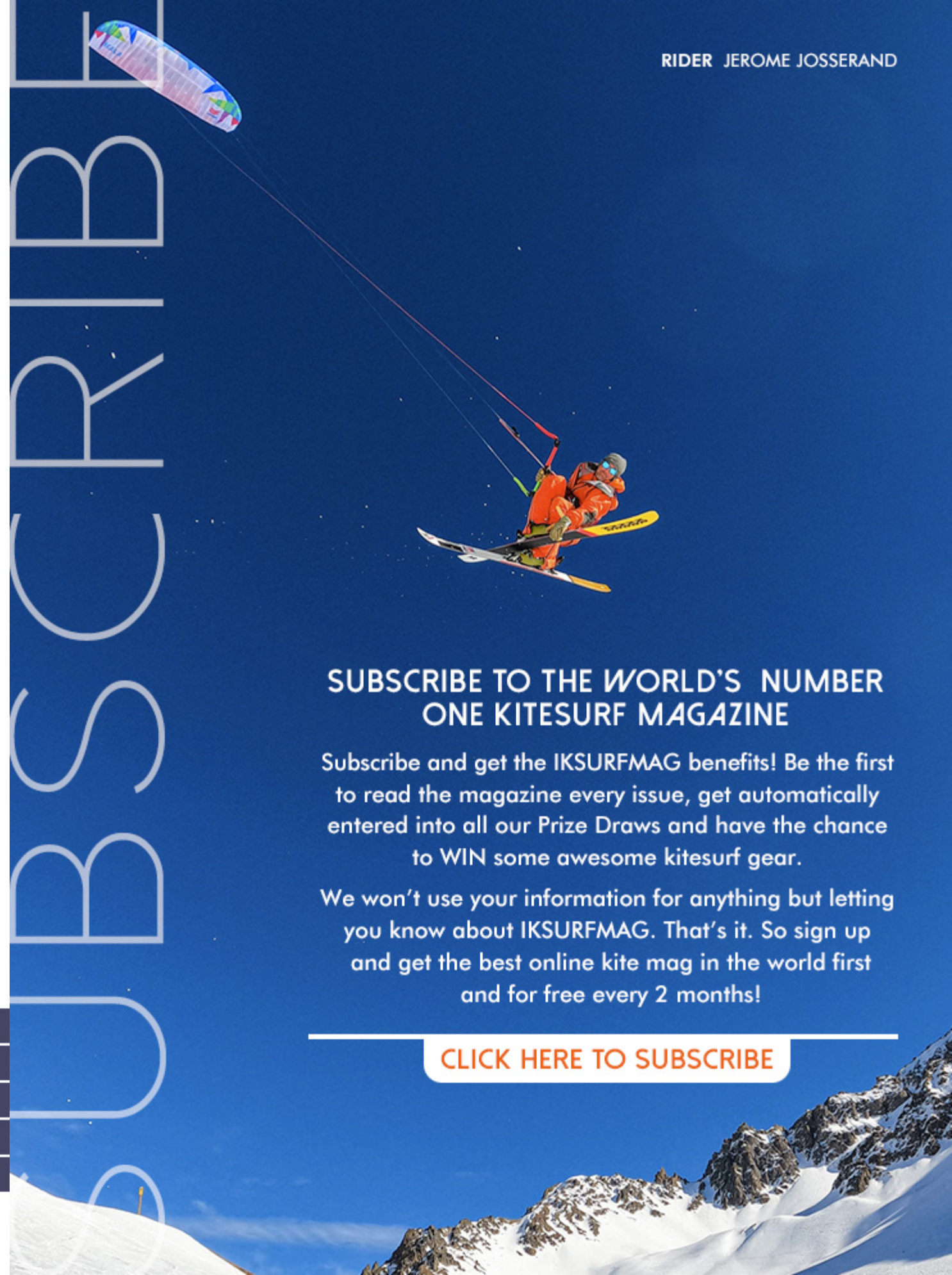
TRAFFIC!

Commuting to the factory for my first morning visit was quite the experience! Over 1,000 employees flow into work by 7:30 am, ebbing their way in across the capital alongside millions of others, also somehow making their morning journeys in one piece.

The road system and volume of traffic (mostly scooters) looked like chaos to me, but it seemed to work without the need for road rage. The story would be a little different back home in Europe!

**“LOOKED LIKE
CHAOS TO ME, BUT IT
SEEMED TO WORK
WITHOUT THE NEED
FOR ROAD RAGE.”**

RIDER JEROME JOSSERAND



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"THE SETUP IS MASSIVE, AND I FELT SURROUNDED BY MATERIAL, MACHINES AND PEOPLE."



Flip-flops into the racks on arrival; everyone must take their shoes off before entering any factory unit, as cleanliness is a top priority. The floor is absolutely spotless throughout.

Inside 'Parapex 1', you'll find the accounts office, logistics, material stock and quality control teams... as well as all the football trophies proudly displayed in the office of factory manager Khanh Nguyen!

Trying to imagine what it takes to manage everything makes my head spin. While David Pilkington is still involved (from the UK), the day-to-day operation is carefully guided by Khanh, who progressed to become factory manager after having begun as a helper on the factory floor.

I asked him to tell me more about the overall setup at Parapex: "We have nine factories, and they are basically split into tasks such as cutting, sewing, boards and the main offices. When someone is hired as a sewer, they'll first learn how to sew two pieces of cloth together with a perfectly straight line. Initially, they'll work on something very simple, like a windsock, and it takes about three months to progress to sewing real sections of a kite or glider. Reaching the working speeds of the most skilled people takes more than a year. Sewing gliders can be particularly challenging because the cloth is so slippery. In the past, people have arrived here as very good clothing sewers, but when put to work on a glider, they may say, "Oh, it's so difficult; I don't want to do that!"

The setup is massive, and I felt surrounded by material, machines and people. Popping up among each group in their pink shirts were the team leaders.

EVERYONE'S GOING SOMEWHERE IN HO CHI MINH CITY, ALWAYS PHOTO JIM GAUNT

"We have 35 team leaders overall," Khanh explained. "Many have been with us for ten years and understand the tasks very well. On my first day here in the early 2000s, we had just one building. The quality control, sewing, accounts... everything was under one roof. In the old days, we all did everything we could, whether it was putting the risers on the paragliders or packing boxes, managing paperwork, whatever. But we have always, and will always, try to improve things as we go along."

I was shown around two huge factory units dedicated to laser cutting. Across both, there are 35 ten-foot tables that seem to be constantly in operation, with an orchestra of busy, high-pitched sounds emanating from each glass-walled room. The nesting programme that runs each machine was designed in-house by the Ozone team, and it works out how to arrange all the template shapes to be cut in the most efficient way, wasting as little material as possible.

Also showing me around was Ozone Kites General Manager Iain Hannay. This mechanically-minded Scotsman has a wealth of knowledge when it comes to production and shares every insight with canny enthusiasm. Having first become involved with Ozone in 2006 as a Spanish distributor, he took over as GM in 2012 and had many factory visits under his belt, but he clearly never tires of seeing all the factory developments first-hand.

"We try to keep our waste to a minimum and are always looking at ways to do so," he said, standing alongside me, peering through the window as if this was also his first time seeing these machines in action. "Obviously, overproducing and carrying huge stock is very wasteful, so we don't do that."



RIDER SANTIAGO CISNEROS PHOTO SAMUEL CARDENAS



COLLECTING THE PIECES THAT MAKE UP THE INTERNAL CELL STRUCTURE OF A PARAGLIDER, FRESHLY CUT ON ONE OF THE 35 LASER CUTTING MACHINE TABLES IN THE FACTORY



EXPERIENCED, HAND-CRAFTED CARE MIXES WITH THE LATEST TECH THROUGHOUT THE FACTORY



ONCE THE VALVES HAVE BEEN ATTACHED TO THE BLADDERS WITH AN ULTRASONIC WELDING MACHINE, THE BLADDERS ARE THEN LEFT INFLATED FOR 24 HOURS TO CHECK THERE ARE NO LEAKS

We also make sure to use offcuts for pockets on kite bags where possible.

"These machines make the work so much quicker – we used to cut everything by hand," Khanh added. "When we imported the first laser cutting machine from China, it stopped working after a few months, so we found a guy here in Vietnam to repair it. Together with the help of local Vietnamese technicians, we've learnt how to build the machines here, and you can see how they've expanded as our production has grown."

Although the number of machines apparently increases all the time, it's not at the expense of manpower as the workforce also expands year-on-year. Khanh reinforced the idea that it's not just about the machines here.

"People are still very important. Everyone has their own skill that we need, from the cleaner to the sewer to the inspector. Their abilities are super important, and we try to keep workers for as long as we can by treating them with respect and offering the best conditions. Benefits include bonuses, healthcare, insurance,

opportunities for promotion, everyone gets a free lunch every day, and we also run a holiday for everyone (all 1000 employees) with days out and dinner at the end of the year. We operate Parapex like a family."

OZONE'S UNIQUE ORDERING SYSTEM

"One of the benefits of running our own factory is that we can precisely produce only what's necessary," Iain explained to me while we were passing the exports area. "Our lead time for every order is usually only between 15 and 30 days from order to delivery, anywhere in the world. That includes all our unique custom kite designs that anyone may wish to choose.



DAVID TONIJUAN IN GREECE
PHOTO SAMUEL CARDENAS



"ALLOWING THEM TO CHOOSE FROM A HUGE RANGE OF CUSTOM COLOURS - AND IN SOME CASES EVEN CUSTOMISED BRANDING ON THEIR KITES."

"Our custom-designed order system allows a shop owner to run through fine ordering details with the customer, even allowing them to choose from a huge range of custom colours – and in some cases even customised branding on their kites. Our manufacturing times are visible on the website at all times for both customers and the shops, so the whole ordering process is very transparent.

"The software also manages the queue of incoming orders for all products. Once the order reaches the front of the queue, it moves into the production process, whether that is a kite, wing, paraglider, board, foil, harness... whatever it may be and often, people only order one item at a time.

"Third-party factories often require a large upfront number of orders, sometimes placed nine months ahead of the delivery date. This eventually puts stress on the whole sales system. Instead, our customer's gear value stays high when they want to sell them, and, on top of that, spares from all older kites are also available as the files are kept in the factory."

MATERIAL

The local and internationally imported material stores off to my left were perfectly packed with shelves neatly ordered to full capacity. Rolls of cloth reached from floor to ceiling and wall to wall. It looked like a mind-blowing task to maintain such neatness!

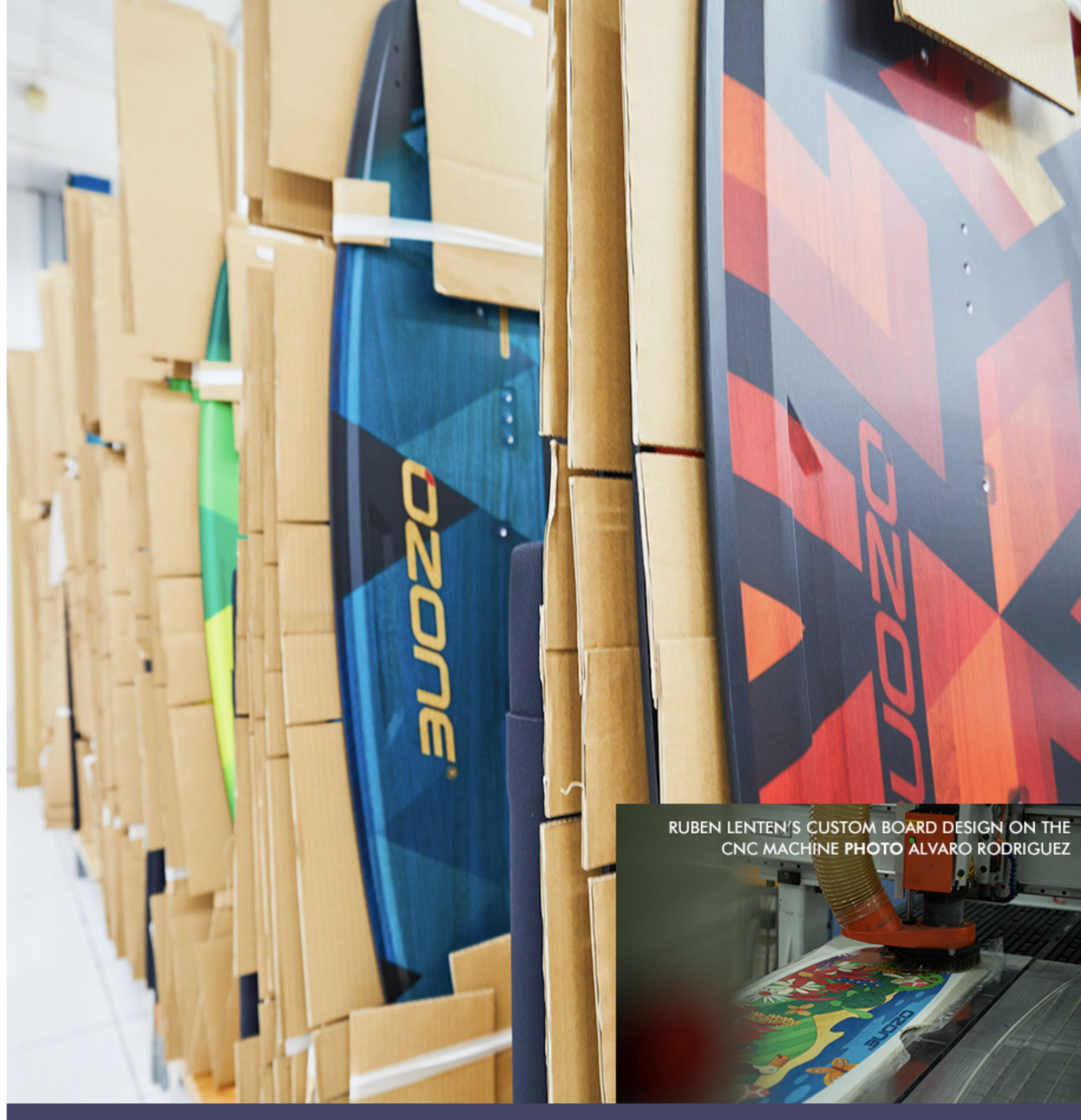
To give you an idea of just how much material gets used, each Ozone Edge V11 tube kite is made up of 26 leading edge panels, 15 in the struts, the sail cloth itself has 81 panels, there are six bladders and then 35 further reinforcement bits and pieces throughout.

However, for the really big numbers, we needed to find the box with all the material needed to make an Enzo race paraglider. I couldn't believe the technical skills; double skin production is crazy. An Enzo paraglider is made with 2164 pieces (not including the risers or harness). The piles of material on the sewing tables in one of the paragliding factories were absolutely astonishing. Ozone uses over a thousand kilometres of cloth a year on paragliders. If all that was laid out, you'd have a path stretching from Amsterdam all the way to Austria, a marvellous multi-coloured highway! I had no idea this level of detail and material coordination goes into making a paraglider or foil kite.

Ozone doesn't religiously update its products every year - only when improvements have been made, and there's an entire department dedicated to prototyping for all products, from kites and foils to paragliders. As soon as a new Ozone design is signed off, it moves immediately into production, meaning there's relatively little lag time between when innovation is achieved and when it reaches the market. That's more shred time, less dead time for a design!

Prototype production is done alongside that of the ordered products day to day. It makes for a quick turnaround on ideas, as explained by Ozone's board and hydrofoil designer Tibo Dos Santos, who was spending the week working on new production systems with the factory team while I was there.

"In an OEM factory, you just have to work with the particular facilities on offer. Parapex is Ozone's own factory, so we can tailor the manufacturing process specifically to our needs. I might work out some foil processes at my workshop in New Zealand and then come here, teach the guys, and away they go.



RUBEN LENTEN'S CUSTOM BOARD DESIGN ON THE CNC MACHINE PHOTO ALVARO RODRIGUEZ



THE ELEMENTS... PHOTO RICARDO PINTO



DAVID PILKINGTON, EARLY VIETNAM DAYS IN 2005,
WITH THE SEAGULL KITE PROJECT



**"IT'S SUPER EASY WITH THE TEAM HERE;
THEY LEARN, TRAIN, ADAPT AND THEN FURTHER
PERFECT THE TOOLING SO QUICKLY."**

"It's a constantly evolving process, especially with hydrofoils right now. If we see a possible improvement, we just go for it," Tibo shares. "It's super easy with the team here; they learn, train, adapt and then further perfect the tooling so quickly. The turnover on prototypes can be very fast once we have the systems in place."

"A lighter wing will simply fly better," Iain explained. "As far back as I can remember,

the drive here has always been to manage the balance between getting the reinforcement right and not making the product too heavy."

The drive here seems to be as it's always been. Ozone started in 1998 as a group of pilots with an idea: to build wings that just do everything better. They searched for more safety alongside better handling, tighter turning and improved glide speeds,

as well as more comfort in flight - primarily the emphasis on aerodynamics.

There was so much to take in each day. Considering the focus of everyone who works in the factory, well-earned breaks are enforced, as well as a good lunch, which I was happy to join them for! "All factory staff get food, literally everyone," Iain explained while reaching for some more grilled fish. "It's different every day and, as you can see, it's good! And quite the operation to serve it all up!"



Khanh remembered first starting his career here as a general helper back in 2001 when there were just 70 employees. While serving me a portion of spicy noodles, he explained how everyone mucked in, doing everything from packing the export boxes to cooking rice. He would then spend his evenings studying factory management and English over two years. To cut a long story short, after working alongside David to improve efficiencies as the factory grew, David eventually turned to him one day and said, "Okay, Khanh, you're now the factory manager!"

The rest will be an ever-evolving history.

Find out more at
www.ozonekites.com and
www.flyozone.com.

THE NOBILE TEAM CAPTURING THE ACTION DURING THE HOLI COLLECTION SHOOT!
PHOTO TOMÉK USTUPSKI

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

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BEFORE A SUPPORTER

WORDS & PHOTOS THE IKSURFMAG TEST TEAM
PHOTO THIS PAGE
RIDER MITU MONTEIRO
PHOTO LUKAS K STILLER / GKA KITE WORLD TOUR

Almost halfway through the year, and the IKSURFMAG Test Team has been chasing up sessions whenever the opportunity presents itself! But, is it ever enough? The answer is simple; No, when it comes to kiting, it will never be enough! In this issue, we've got the hottest new release from F-ONE on test, sure to please the wave riders amongst us. From Airush Kiteboarding, we take a closer look at the Lithium, their freeride machine. And for the ladies who are looking to upgrade their accessories in time for summer, we've got two of ION's latest releases on test. Find out how we rate this kit in Tried & Tested!

GEAR ON TEST

F-ONE Bandit S4

Airush Lithium

ION Nova Harness

ION Amaze Amp Wetsuit

TRIED & TESTED

BRAND F-ONE MODEL BANDIT S4 SIZE 8M YEAR 2023



"FAST THROUGH THE SKY AND VERY RESPONSIVE TO RIDER TURNING INPUTS, MAKING IT IDEAL FOR WAVE RIDING"



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

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



AT A GLANCE

A few years after the divergence of the Bandit and the Bandit S, the S is now in its fourth iteration. Having ridden the latest versions of both, it is clear that despite the two kites originating from the same Delta-C shaped DNA, they are as different now as they've ever been. I've been able to get the S4 out in both on-shore wave riding conditions and kitefoiling in flat water and small swells. As you'd hope, it felt at home in all of these scenarios.

F-ONE has always been one for details, and the 3-strut delta C Bandit S4 is no exception. Having already developed bespoke Dacron and canopy cloth densities with Teijin for their kites, there are now also variances in cloth weight between the bigger and smaller sizes of the S4 to ensure that performance, durability, and rider comfort are optimised for the conditions that each kite will see. So, whether hanging onto a smaller size in stormy conditions or relying on the driftability of a larger size in light cross-off conditions, know that they've done the research to ensure that the Bandit S4 will perform at its best for a long lifetime.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

BRAND AIRUSH

MODEL LITHIUM V13

SIZE 9M

YEAR 2023

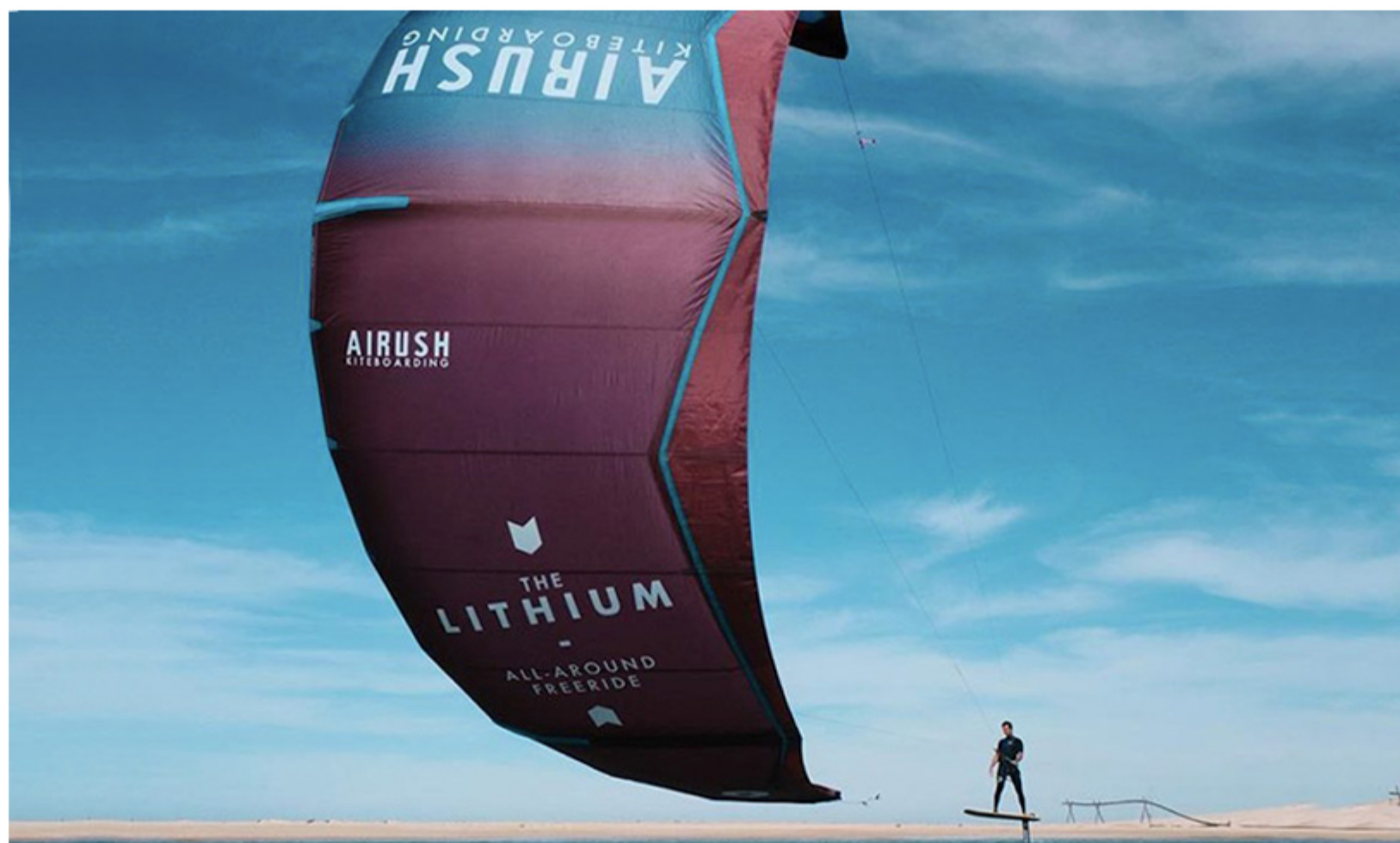


"WE PUSHED THE KITE TO THE ABSOLUTE LIMIT OF THE DEFINITION OF FREERIDE, AND IT HELD ITS OWN!"



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

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



AT A GLANCE

Is there such a thing as one kite that can do it all? Every brand has its own version of this, and at Airush Kiteboarding, the Lithium is their answer. The Lithium is marketed as a performance freeride kite that should satisfy any and every rider simply looking to go out and have fun on the water in any conditions.

Recently released in the V13 edition, this kite is designed to be as predictable as it is versatile. The Lithium is a classic 3-strut Delta hybrid shape, as it has been since the beginning of this model range. It's designed for ease of use and promises a massive wind range, something that riders who live that hooked-in life and are hoping to push their progression can appreciate.

Built to last with Airush Bumpers along the leading edge and Kevlar Reinforcements in clever places, this kite is designed to take a bit of a beating, from the classic beginner tomahawk to binning it in the surf, though we never recommend treating your kite poorly!! The Lithium V13 uses the Technoforce D2 canopy material, a 2x2 ripstop with double-coated polyester and a high-density structure.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

BRAND ION MODEL NOVA SIZE XS YEAR 2023

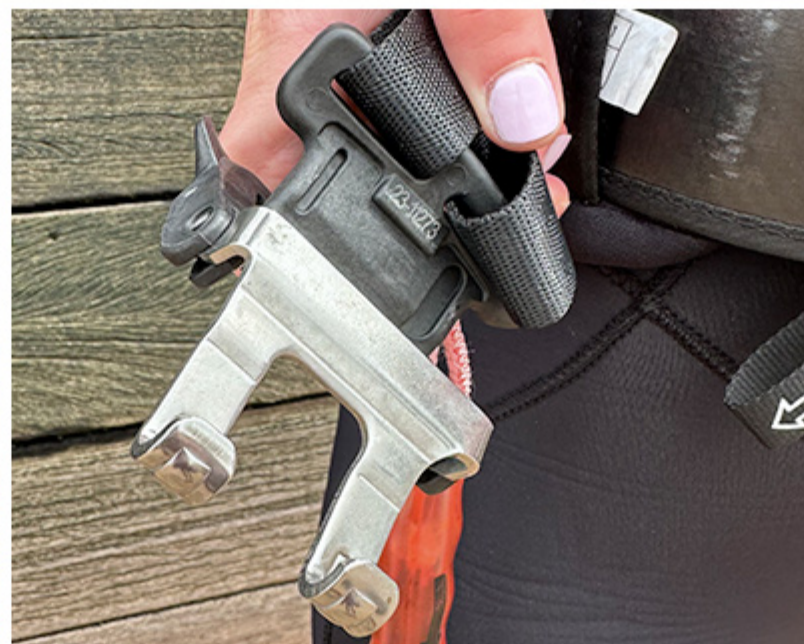


"DESIGNED WITH THE FEMALE BODY IN MIND, SO YOU CAN COMFORTABLY SHRED ALL DAY!"



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

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



AT A GLANCE

Recently, I got the chance to test out ION's hybrid shell construction mid-range 2023 Nova Harness—a harness specifically for women, with a shape and construction tailored to the female body.

As soon as I unboxed the harness, I was immediately blown away by its sleek and streamlined design. All black, accented by a pop of coral and with a cute palm tree icon. For those that prefer a bit more colour, the Nova is available in 3 different colourways, pink-gradient, light-olive, and the black model, which I tested. And the best part? When I tried it on, I barely noticed it was on; it's that comfortable!

One of the main features of the Nova Harness is its use of a 3D zone shape. This innovative design helps to distribute pressure evenly across the harness and reduces any potential hot spots or discomfort during your session on the water.

The PVC Buckle made it extremely easy to adjust, and once adjusted to your body, you won't need to spend time faffing around with it. The only part I slightly struggled with was tucking the stiff inserts that get tucked into the harness,

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)



BRAND ION

MODEL AMAZE AMP FRONT ZIP 4/3

SIZE XS

YEAR 2023



" HIGH-QUALITY,
HIGH-
PERFORMANCE,
QUICK-DRYING
AND STRETCHY
WETSUIT FOR
SERIOUS WATER
SPORTS! "



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

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



AT A GLANCE

Over the years, ION has maintained a sterling reputation in the kiteboarding industry, and I couldn't wait to test out the Amaze Amp Front Zip wetsuit for this issue of IKSURFMAG.

As soon as I unboxed the wetsuit, it felt solid, but as soon as I put it on, the super stretchy material and front zip design made it easy to get in and out of the suit. Advertised as 'The perfect composition of stretch & warmth' and I couldn't agree more!

At first glance, this asphalt black and grey suit is a stylish piece on its own, but the vivid coral stripes on the sleeves truly add the perfect finishing touch. It matched up brilliantly with the black and coral ION Nova harness I tested it with.

Once I put it on, it felt like it was designed for me! The wetsuit is meant to be snug but super stretchy, thanks to its new Max_Flex technology. Another one of the standout features of the Amaze Amp wetsuit is its use of ION's exclusive limestone neoprene, which is more eco-friendly than traditional petroleum-based neoprene and delivers superior warmth and flexibility.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)



MONSIEUR SVA NEET

WORDS SENSİ GRAVES
PHOTO ERIC DURAN

Earning one of the biggest names in park riding while running a successful bikini brand, Sensi Graves has had a noteworthy career. But being a pro rider isn't always about competing, and Sensi remains in the game even after retiring from competitive riding. So, what does her life look like Then VS Now? Find out in this article!

“BECAUSE DOING WELL IN COMPETITIONS MEANT PUTTING IN TIME AND ENERGY TO TRAIN, I KNEW I DIDN'T WANT TO DO IT ANYMORE.”

I stopped competing in kiteboarding in 2020. Like all competitions that happened worldwide, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Kite Park League (KPL) events were put on pause. The KPL, made famous by the Triple S Invitational, is the tour I've competed in for the past ten years.

To be honest, when news broke out that these events wouldn't be happening, I was thrilled not to be competing. This break came as a welcome pause for a few reasons. Number

one, I am competitive, and I found myself not able to put as much time into park riding as I had in years past. Number two, I wasn't passionate about it anymore—I didn't feel the need to "train" or spend long hours at the park trying to land a new trick. I wanted to allocate my time elsewhere, and because doing well in competitions meant putting in time and energy to train, I knew I didn't want to do it anymore.

The problem was—I was still good. Despite gains in recent decades, the number of

women competing in kiteboarding is dwarfed by the number of men, even more so in a small discipline such as park riding. We simply didn't have the numbers. I felt pressured to stay relevant as a competitor to represent other women and to support my gender, our discipline, and our sport at large.

So truth be told, when a global pandemic shut down all of our competitions, I breathed a sigh of relief. This was my chance! To "retire" from competition and continue my career as a professional kiteboarder and athlete in other areas. What an opportunity!

I remember that first summer of no competitions. I think I spent five days total riding in the park. In a "normal" year, that number would be about ten times as high. The rest of my time was spent on a wing (well, it was the new thing, after all), riding a surfboard or on a foil. I felt free! I was unencumbered by the need to perform, free to explore the many aspects of kiteboarding and fall back in love with wind and water sports.

But unencumbered is not how it started... When I first started competing in park riding, also known as rail riding, slider riding or wake style, I didn't feel like I was good enough. Don't get me wrong; I LOVED hitting rails. I bolted a pair of boots to my board before everyone on the world tour started doing it. The first summer, I learned how to do a back roll (2009). I was living on the Outer Banks of North Carolina and working as a kiteboarding instructor at the epicentre of park riding—REAL Watersports.

Hitting a slider was simply what you did out there. I remember sessioning the dock in front of REAL over and over again, enjoying the feel of the slide across the wood and how much it brought me into the moment. The feeling lasted longer than doing a freestyle trick—I had to stay completely focused the whole time. I loved it.

Because there were so few women back then, I got pressured into submitting a wild card video to the prestigious Triple S Invitational. I didn't get it (Colleen Carroll did), but during the opening ceremonies of the event, the organisers announced that the three of us women (Paula Rosales, Claire Lutz and I) and two men (Craig Cunningham and Rich Sabo) that had submitted wild card videos and were present on site would get to compete. WOW! I didn't feel ready or capable, but it was time to perform.



"I WAS UNENCUMBERED BY THE NEED TO PERFORM, FREE TO EXPLORE THE MANY ASPECTS OF KITEBOARDING AND FALL BACK IN LOVE WITH WIND AND WATER SPORTS."

PHOTOS THIS PAGE: BRYAN ELKUS



**“ OVER THE COURSE OF THE NEXT TEN YEARS,
I TRAVELLED ACROSS THE GLOBE TO TRAIN AND
COMPETE AT PARK EVENTS. ”**

"IF THERE'S ONE THING I'VE LEARNED IN MY 34 YEARS ON THIS PLANET, IT'S THIS-YOU'RE NEVER GOING TO FEEL SUCCESSFUL UNLESS YOU FEEL SUCCESSFUL NOW."



Over the course of the next ten years, I travelled across the globe to train and compete at park events. I'd spend months in Brazil working on my unhooked freestyle and drive 10 hours to ride a cable park for a few days to hone my skills. All the while, I was building up my swimwear brand, Sensi Bikinis, now known as Sensi Graves Swim. It was all-encompassing, yet I always felt as if I needed to do more.

I'd often be at a kite event answering customer service emails and questioning if doing both things, running a business and competing in kiteboarding, were possible. Perhaps if I quit one, I could excel at the other. I didn't feel successful at either or like I was doing enough. I didn't feel proud or stoked with where I was at. But if there's one thing I've learned in my 34 years on this planet, it's this—you're never going to feel successful unless you feel successful now.

Because there will always be the next kite competition, the next photo shoot to perform at, and the next shiny object you want to buy. Only when we can sink into the here and now, learn to trust the process and acknowledge that we are worthy, just as we are, can we lead a truly joyful life.

Now that I no longer compete, you'd think my travel schedule would diminish, but I travel just as much. Five years ago, Colleen Carroll and I started Strut Kiteboarding women's camps, where we empower women on the water by creating transformational kite and wing trips and experiences. You can find us in any given month in Mexico, North Carolina (yes, I still make an almost yearly migration out there), or in the Caribbean.

PHOTOS THIS PAGE: DEBBIE JEAN HOLLOMON

"IT'S IMPORTANT FOR HUMANS TO HAVE GOALS; GOALS KEEP US ENGAGED, KEEP DOPAMINE PUMPING IN OUR VEINS AND KEEP US FEELING PURPOSEFUL."



Today I am passionate about helping people feel good about themselves, on and off the water. I help people who look successful on the outside feel successful on the inside.

I believe that life is this balance of contentment and stretching. Stretching, expansion and growth are great. It's important for humans to have goals; goals keep us engaged, keep dopamine pumping in our veins and keep us feeling purposeful. But I would argue that what we need more of is contentment—stoke

with where we're at. Because if we're not stoked with what we're doing and who we are, we're never going to feel fulfilled, and we're never going to feel truly confident. The more that we can feel, as Brene Brown puts it, "wholehearted" or living embodied, and connected and stoked with what we're doing, the more connection we create, the more impact that we can have, and the more tendency toward joy we get to experience.

Today I focus on running my swimwear

company (11 years later, and we're still in business!), running women's camps and retreats, doing occasional photoshoots (thank you, Ride Engine and Slingshot for still supporting me), and speaking on confidence, mindset and business. The reality of my life as a pro rider has never been what I thought it would be—but that was mostly because I thought it needed to be something else. I had a carrot constantly dangling in front of me, and even when I'd reach the carrot, I wouldn't let myself enjoy it. I was constantly striving for more and forgot to enjoy the ride.



**“A COMMITMENT TO WHO YOU
ARE AND THE GOALS AND
DREAMS YOU HOLD”**

In truth, the reality of life is what they say it is—that your life is made up of the mundane—the feel of the wind on your face, basking in the sunshine on the first day of spring, and the first sip of a hot cup of coffee. It's also made up of the many moments where we feel most alive—slashing a powder turn, sending a big boost, and diving in an ice-cold river.

We never know where life is going to take us. As one of my mentors says, practise high intention and low attachment. A commitment to who you are and the goals and dreams you hold, but also a relaxing into trust, a cultivating of knowing that everything will turn out exactly as it's supposed to. Because it always does.



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On The Fly

COMING UP // C KITE FESTIVAL IN MAURITIUS!

On July 14-16th, 2023, the beautiful beaches at C Mauritius are ready to welcome back kite enthusiasts for the second edition of the star-studded C Kite Festival! Join Antoine Auriol, Youri Zoon, Tom Hebert, Paul Serin, Victor Hays, and more of your favourite national and international champions for a mesmerising display of colourful kites in Palmar on the east coast of Mauritius.



PHOTOS C MAURITIUS





We caught up with Antoine Auriol during a quick stop-off during his adventure with The Ocean Race's Team Malizia, and he says, "I can't wait to be back on my kite in July in Mauritius! When you go out of your comfort zone, as I'm doing now, I think life and all the details about life are much tastier, and that's why I think being back in July at C Mauritius for the 2nd edition of the C Kite Festival will be amazing! It will have a special flavour this year, especially after such a great adventure around the world with an amazing crew."

Check out the video recap of last year's event to get an idea of what to expect at the 2023 C Kite Festival in Mauritius!

Are you interested in attending this unforgettable event in paradise?

Click [here](#) to find out how!



On The Fly

COMING UP //
C KITE FESTIVAL IN MAURITIUS!



On The Fly

MAKING WAVES //

SOPHIA ABREU

Brazilian shredder Sophia Abreu has launched onto the scene with her impressive performance in the GKA Kite-Surf World Tour. Recently joining the North and Mystic teams and starring in the "New Season, New Prospects" release video from Mystic alongside Oswald Smith, Tom Bridge, and Camille Delannoy, we found out more about the shoot and the talented Sophia.

WHO IS SOPHIA ABREU?

"I feel like kite surfing is an extension of surfing, which is one of my greatest passions. Being able to surf with no wind and then kite surf when the wind starts to blow is just the perfect combo for a perfect day.

Kitesurfing allows me to surf and do manoeuvres fully powered, and I love that!

I'm inspired by a routine based on sports, mostly in the water! I feel renewed every time I go for a kite or surf sesh. In the ocean is where I feel most alive, where my worries fade away, and my only focus is to catch a good wave.

I feel like being where I am today is the consequence of my life choices. I chose the athlete life besides the college and "normal" life. It's definitely more enjoyable but not easier. To be an athlete, you need to have the courage to let go of some "certainties"

you might have when you follow a "normal" life (school, university, normal job). I just felt like enjoying my life and following my dream, which is being a professional athlete, was worth all the risks. And I don't regret it! I guess my motto would be: Dream big, work hard and never give up!"

"SUMMER" SHOOT IN FLORIANOPOLIS, BRAZIL

"It was super nice to have the team come over! We had a lot of fun and had to work out the unexpected, which ended up pretty well. :) Conditions were a bit tricky, but we managed to find good enough conditions to make the shoot happen!"



On The Fly

MAKING WAVES //

SOPHIA ABREU

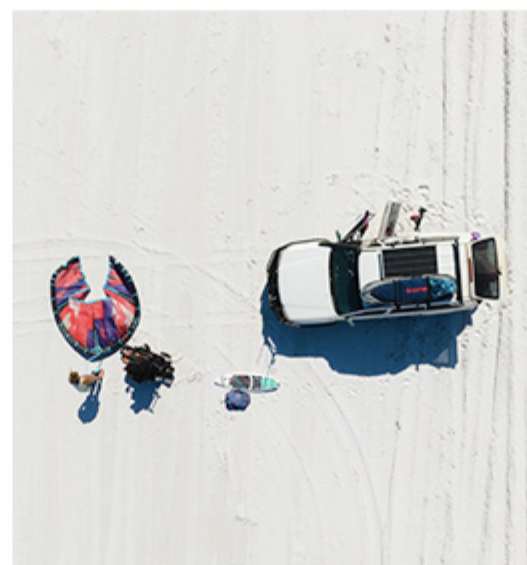


"The weather was cold, and I actually had to kite with a shorty because there was just one full wetsuit, and it wasn't my size! Haha, at least it suited Karlie. Anyways, I did my best to stay in the water as long as possible, and we managed to get some shots."

WHAT'S NEXT?!

"Right now, I'm focusing on travelling to create content for my sponsors, but I might show up at one contest or another! ;) My main goal as a pro kiter is to inspire new generations and to inspire more women to get into the sport and improve their abilities! To show them that it is more than possible for girls to have a lot of fun while kiting. :) Other than that, I'll be looking for the best conditions in the world to kite surf and get better and better in what I do!

Cheers, Soph"



SYNOPSIS BY MIRIAM JOANNA

"The Art of Adapting" serves as a beautiful reminder that in life, just like in the surf, it's all about impermanence and constantly adapting to the surge of always-changing and unpredictable conditions as they arise. Navigating the ebbs and flows, embracing and thriving on the continuous change of the colours on our canvas of life with its associated highs and lows, is an adventure in itself.

Originally from Austria and with over 80 countries under her explorer belt, Gabi first came to Western Australia (aka "WA") on a kitesurfing mission in 2007. Falling madly in love with the raw, rugged and isolated wild beauty of Australia's largest state (2.6 million km²), she adopted Western Australia as her home shortly after.

The film tells Gabi's story of devoting her life to Western Australia, to its waves and embracing the coastline's solitude. In bold road trips to the most remote corners of the state in search of new spots, Gabi is left to her own devices, often heavily challenged by the capricious moods of the elements. Constantly adapting to Mother Nature's rhythm and the typical rise of unexpected situations on her explorer journeys, Gabi lives and breathes for the autonomous search to pursue her passions.

On such a road trip in WA, Gabi meets Jaimen Hudson, a quadriplegic wildlife photo and videographer. After suffering a severe spinal cord injury in his teens that stopped him from enjoying most of the things he loved doing (motocross, surfing, diving etc.), Jaimen had to adapt and excelled in the challenges that life threw at him. Developing his skills to the point of becoming the award-winning drone artist he is today, Gabi proposes to Jaimen to film her kitesurfing. The two bond in an incomparable way.

Two completely different life stories, yet both are fuelled by the same strong connection to the two elements: air and water.

On The Fly

SHORT FILM // THE ART OF ADAPTING

Stop what you're doing and watch this compelling film by Miriam Joanna featuring Gabriele Steindl and Jaimen Hudson. "The Art of Adapting", released as part of ION's Write Your Own Chapter web-series, is one of the most powerful video releases of the year so far!

PHOTOS MIRIAM JOANNA &
JAIMEN HUDSON



PHOTOS GIN KITEBOARDING



On The Fly

GEAR GUIDE // GIN GEEK 4

There's a new board on the market: the Geek 4 from Gin Kiteboarding, in collaboration with the First Trick Lab, a cutting-edge research and development facility nestled in the picturesque mountains of Verbier, Switzerland.

Several values bond Gin Kiteboarding with the First Track Lab. The first component is really about the "Swissness" of the project. The Geek 4 is premium and

and handmade in Switzerland, with a minimalist and efficient design. Another key element that connects Gin and the First Track Lab is innovation, trying to find the best combination of materials and production processes to get the best product that will be innovative and give the user the best experience. Lastly, they share a strong common interest for the passion for riding sports, should it be on water, on snow, or wherever.



Watch the video to dive into the world of Geek's Craftsmen and go behind the scenes of the board's development with Yoann Chapel as he reveals their meticulous fabrication process, the unique features of their kite boards, and their exciting future projects.

Click here for a more in-depth look behind the new Gin Geek 4!

On The Fly

WEB SERIES // EL CAMINO

Ride Engine's El Camino is a 6-part web series where viewers experience each Ride Engine team rider transported to some of the most remote, exposed, and challenging point breaks in the world. The team explores Chile's rugged coastline, and we caught up with the athlete filmed in the first episode, Manuel Selmán!



Manuel Selmán: "I took a special ride down memory lane and landed right... in the land of lefts! Haha. Chile, my home country! Now, I haven't been back in couple of years thanks to the pandemic. But this time, it wasn't just for a contest, visit or a family reunion. This was an epic wind sports trip! And it all began when Gary Siskar from ride engine had the idea to gather a crew of ridiculously talented riders in their respective sports. And just like that, "El Camino" burst onto the scene!

One of the highlights was staying at Jesse Faen's house. Not only did he have the inside scoop on all the mind-blowing spots, but he also knew exactly what each spot demanded. It was like having a real-life surf and wind forecast as our host! But the absolute best part was how everyone in our crew was so ridiculously talented that we could handle anything Mother Nature threw at us. No wind? Small waves? We grabbed our foils and got epic sessions. No wind and waves? We hopped on our surfboards and got an epic surf. And when the wind and waves teamed up, we all suited up for a kite and wing session; that was so rad. Oh, and let's not forget about Bryan, the windsurfing wizard who worked his magic like a boss out there! Breaking masts and sails... but besides windsurfing, we were all sharing surf, kite, wing and foils sessions; I'm telling you, we were a bunch of water sports superheroes, and it was the sickest thing ever! Can't wait for the next trip with that amazing crew!"





On The Fly

NEXT GENERATION // VALENTÍN HOENDEROP

There's a new rider on the big air scene who is making a big impression! Valentín Hoenderop, just 16 years old, stood out with his performance in the recent Lords of Tram event in France. With the recent move to the Airush Kiteboarding team, this young athlete is on his way up!

Click [here](#) to learn more about Valentín, and don't forget to tune into the GKA Big Air Kite World Championships in Tarifa this June to see how he stands up against the world champions!

LIGHTROOM

DEURY CORNIEL LIGHTING IT UP IN THE FLATWATER OF SICILY AT THE PRO KITE ALBY RONDINA CENTRE!
PHOTO LACI KOBULSKY

Lightroom

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

IKSURFMAG.COM

LIGHTROOM

HERE'S WILLOW-RIVER TONKIN CRUISING OVER DARK BLUE WATER
ON A LIGHT WIND DAY WITH HIS NEW XR8 IN STARK CONTRAST
PHOTO THOMAS BURBLIES

Lightroom

LIGHTROOM

JAMES CAREW STANDING TALL IN A MASSIVE BARREL IN THE ISLAND COUNTRY OF CABO VERDE
PHOTO ANTONIO HERRERA TRUJILLO

Lightroom

LIGHTROOM

NOBILE TEAM RIDER WOJTAS MATYSIAK IS UNHOOKED AND MID-PASS IN THIS RED SEA KITE SPOT
PHOTO TOM EK USTUPSKI

Lightroom

LIGHTROOM



Lightroom

IT'S HARD TO BEAT A PERFECTLY EXECUTED OVER/UNDER SHOT,
AND THIS ONE FEATURING PAUL SERIN IS A WINNER!
PHOTO ANDRE MAGARAO

IKSURFMAG.COM

LIGHTROOM

BASIA MAJCHER GETS THE SHOT RIDING HER LIEUWE SHOTGUN IN CRYSTAL CLEAR WATERS
PHOTO ADAM HARRY CHARUK



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LIGHTROOM

AARON HADLOW SAILING OVER THE MOUNTAIN RANGE ON A WINDY DAY IN BRANDVLEI, SOUTH AFRICA
PHOTO CRAIG KOLESKY



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LIGHTROOM



Lightroom

LUIZ EMMANUEL SOUSA IS FULLY IN CONTROL IN THE LAGOONS OF BRAZIL ON HIS NEW ELEVEIGHT WS V7
PHOTO ROGERSON BARROSO

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LIGHTROOM



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WHAT A CAPTURE! ANDRE MAGARAO LINES UP THE PERFECT SHOT WITH AIRUSH RIDER LAUREN HOLMAN...
PHOTO ANDRE MAGARAO

IKSURFMAG.COM

LIGHTROOM

IS THIS THE FIRST TIME A PARK ATHLETE HAS COMPETED ON A FOIL KITE?!
MAXIME CHABLOZ SHOWS THE LEI CREW HOW IT'S DONE ON HIS F-ONE HALO
PHOTO SAMUEL CARDENAS / KITE PARK LEAGUE SICILY



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

KITESURF STEREOTYPES / THE ALEX CAMPET SHOW

How Alex Campet managed to do it is a mystery, but he's snagged the coveted top spot on our Movie Night list this issue! Tune in and watch Alex Campet Kitesurfing Stereotypes parody right here; it's hilarious!



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#2

HELP A KITER IN TROUBLE - (QUICK REMINDER)

Have you ever been at the beach and seen a kiteboarder in distress but didn't know how to help? Coming in at #2 on our Movie Night list, Petar Pavlovic shares his tips on how to safely assist a kiteboarder in need!



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#3

KAIMAR'S WORLD RECORD - WOO SPORTS

Coming in at #3, Estonian Eleveight rider Kaimar Halliste makes history! He shattered the previous World Record of 17.7 seconds of hangtime set at Lords of Tram in France, managing to keep in the air for an astonishing 24.3 seconds!

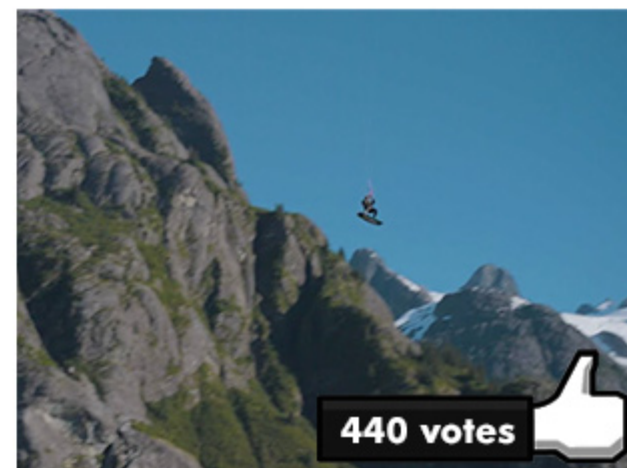


[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#4

BIGGEST KITESURF JUMP OF MY LIFE!!!

When Reno Romeu drops an edit titled 'BIGGEST KITESURF JUMP OF MY LIFE!!!' you know you've got to watch it. With one crazy updraft while kitesurfing in Alaska, Reno scored the biggest jump of his life! Watch it NOW!



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)



BASIA MAJCHER BASKING IN THAT SUNSET SESSION GLOW!
PHOTO EASYSURF

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