

ksurf!ISSUE **104**

APRIL/MAY 24

WELCOME TO IKSURFMAG

In this issue Rou Chater takes an in depth look at who is the Greatest Of All Time AKA The GOAT, some of the names he considers might surprise you! Jesse Richman checks in on his recent switch to Ozone. Phil Schennagel the CEO of CORE is in the spotlight for the Intriguing Beings Podcast and we also look at the upcoming Olympics in Paris 2024.

Jen Tyler heads to the St Lucia for the travel feature, Christian and Karine are on hand to help you learn to kitemloop, a must read for many of you and the Nobile Team head to Sicily to check out the conditions and launch the new range. We've got tests, tech features and lots of interviews too, be sure to check out the latest issue!

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INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE

ksurf!**104**
APR/MAY 24**- THIS IS NOT PHOTOSHOP -**

**WHO IS THE GOAT? // OZONATED WATERS // INTRIGUING BEINGS
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



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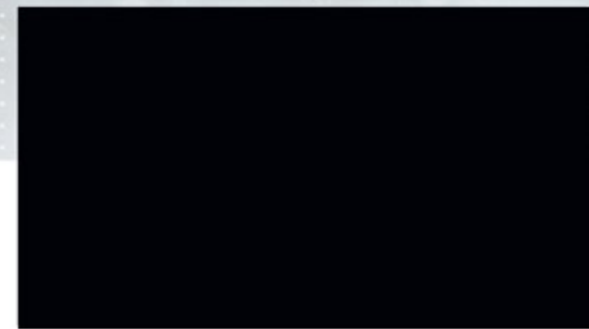
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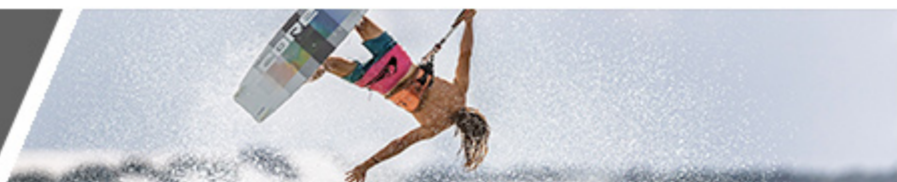
THE GOAT



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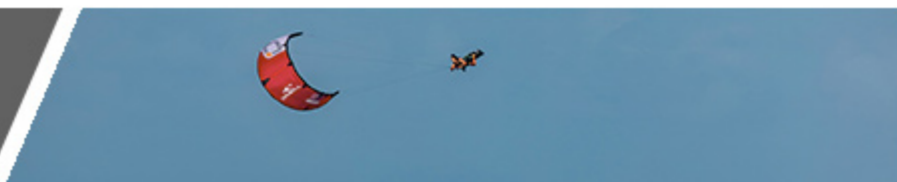
INTRIGUING BEINGS -
PHILIP SCHENNAGEL



TECH FOCUS



OZONATED WATERS



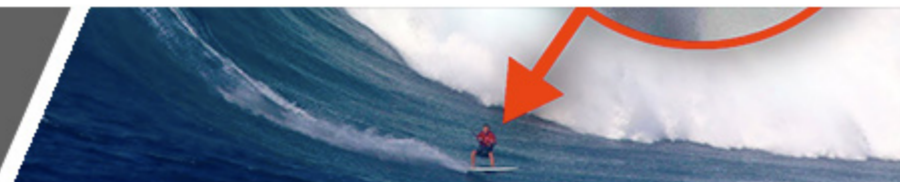
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MOVIE NIGHT



TRIED AND TESTED



INSIGHT -
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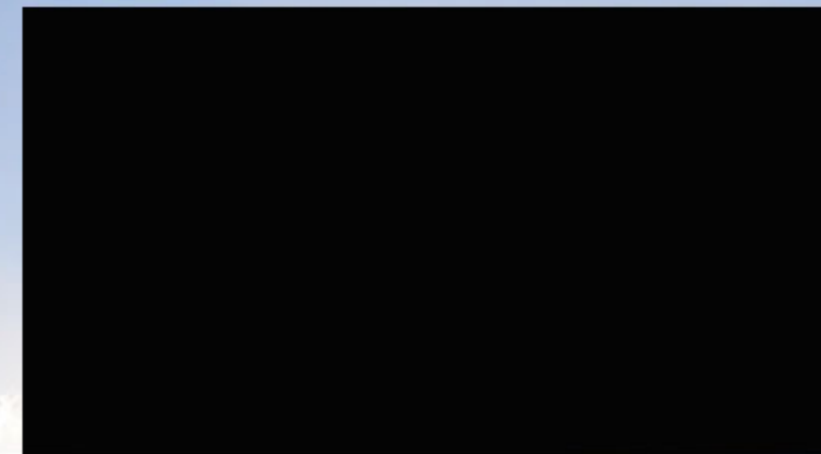
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ELSIEN ZIJLSTRA SENDING IT IN BRAZIL!
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also demonstrated the kite's capabilities with a massive jump of 35.1m in Cape Town.

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and I'll be honest, I might not last long as, realistically, with everything else I have on my plate, being the full-time editor for the mag isn't an option. Send your applications in on a postcard ;-)

One thing that hasn't changed is my love of watersports, which is still spearheaded by kitesurfing in the waves. Sure, wing foiling came and stole my heart for a bit, but last year, I was on the kite way more than the wing, and this year, I've barely touched the devil's cloth and have been kiting whenever the conditions are on as my preferred choice on the water.

I've been heavily into foil surfing and surfing the last year, but even that is just a crutch for getting into decent conditions with a kite. I'm sure many of you reading this will have embraced a few different sports over the years; kiting seems to have a draw like no other; it's something we just keep coming back to.

Learning to wing is a frustrating process; it's hard, but it is a great gateway into foiling sports and perhaps the easiest way to learn to foil on the water. Learning to kite, though, has that hook, that rush of adrenaline that gets under your skin and gives you the itch for more. I've long said it's the most addictive water sport out there, and it continues to give me the deepest thrills, even 24 years later. Winging doesn't even come close in that regard...

There aren't many things in life that can do that. If you are reading this, you are one of the lucky few, the ones who were bold enough to give kiteboarding a try, get hooked, and fall in love. There's a good chance it's changed your life—it certainly changed mine!

Rou Chater
Publishing Editor

I'm back... Crystal has left us to concentrate on her vacation rental business in Cape Town. If you are ever visiting, be sure to check out The Point ZA for a good time and fine wine! I'm honestly gutted to lose her, but that's how life is sometimes. She did an incredible job for us over the years at the magazine, and she will be sorely missed by the whole team.

If you recall, I stepped down a couple of years ago as the arthritis in my hands was getting so bad that I

could no longer type. The bad news is that it hasn't miraculously improved; if anything, it's worse and will continue to degrade until I can no longer use my hands. That's a long way off, but typing still gives me a really hard time.

I did think that dictation might have improved in the last two years, but sadly, it's still pretty sh!t and often seems like more hassle than it is worth. Jen Tyler has been doing a sterling job helping me on the latest issue,



WORDS ROU CHATER

WHO IS THE GOAT?

If you've not heard of the "GOAT before, it stands for Greatest Of All Time, and a question asked recently on the Facebook Kiteboarding page sparked a huge debate. Plenty of people weighed in with opinions, including yours truly, and to really understand it, you need first to appreciate what GOAT actually means.



“ACHIEVEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE AND THERE HAVE BEEN NAMES AT THE TOP THAT YOU’VE LIKELY NEVER HEARD OF.”

Many sports have a GOAT; in motocross, it’s Ricky Carmichael; surfing, it’s Kelly Slater; however, in kiteboarding, it’s not really been thought about as a mass topic until now... Looking at the definition in detail, “greatest” is pretty easy to understand, but the key here is the phrase ALL TIME.

I think that’s where the debate got lost, with names being thrown around that had no right to be. That brings up the subject of time itself; many kites are new to the sport, 3-4 years in; if that’s you, then the sport has been around for almost 20 years before it piqued your interest. Achievements have been made and there have been names at the top that you’ve likely never heard of.

By definition, the GOAT should be someone who’s had some serious longevity in the sport, was there at the beginning, and arguably is still around now. As our

sport grows older, new riders crop up all the time. The youth charging on the Big Air scene is a fine example of this, but some of them weren’t even born when kitesurfing was starting...

There are plenty of you reading this who’ve been kiting for five, maybe ten years, who feel like they are part of the furniture, and rightly so. But even then, you’ve missed out on a rich heritage of the sport’s inception. As such, when you are looking for the GOAT, you need to go back in time. This very definition excludes any of the new guys on the pro scene and also arguably means they will likely never be able to achieve GOAT status in the future.

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'OZONE PROGRESSION BIG AIR RANGE EXPLAINED BY JESSE RICHMAN'





“ HE WAS LEADING THE CHARGE AND PUSHING THE LIMITS OF THE SPORT RIGHT AT ITS VERY INCEPTION. ”

That fact makes the moniker of GOAT a tough one to achieve, and rightly so. One name that needs to be mentioned in any historic piece of kitesurfing literature is Lou Wainman. If you've not heard of him, have a quick Google. He was leading the charge and pushing the limits of the sport right at its very inception. At a time when riders were winning comps with back rolls, Lou was pushing the sport with wakeboarding-inspired handle passes and short-line kite loops that simply were on a whole other planet compared to what everyone else was doing.

Lou went on to create the Wainman Hawaii brand, but after its sad demise, he's fluttered in and out of the sport's radar. Could Lou be the GOAT? For me, he was the one who defined the sport as we know it, but his influence on it in later years has dwindled; Lou's almost on another level really. He was on another level back in the early 2000s, and he remains so now. If you're looking for the GOAT, then this is the wrong place.

Lou is rather, without doubt, the Godfather of the sport. Without him, the progression of kiteboarding would have taken a very different path. His influence is undeniable.

There are other names that need a mention in an article like this, before we get down to the contenders in my eyes. Robby Naish has to be up there, he's been around since the very beginning and still rips and has influence today, but he's the GOAT of windsurfing and always will be,



“THERE IS A RELATIVELY UNDISCOVERED WAVE SPOT 10 MINUTES UPWIND THAT REALLY COMES ALIVE IN THE RIGHT CONDITIONS.”

kiting was never his true passion and as such while he deserves a mention, he's not the rider we are looking for.

What was interesting in the chat on the Facebook page was that all the suggestions, bar none, were for men. As you know, we've been very progressive in women's kiteboarding since our inception, so it would be remiss not to look at the women who've influenced our sport here. For me, the names deserving a mention would be Kristin Boese, Gisela Pulido, Karolina Winkowska, Jalou Langeree and one other I'll get to in a moment. Kristin dominated the sport in the early days, winning multiple world titles. Gisela then became a child prodigy and won 11 world titles on the trot. She still rips today and aims for Olympic success in the Paris Games.

Jalou was a dominant force in freestyle, but she switched to wave riding and arguably held a huge influence over the sport for many years, inspiring lots of women to follow in her footsteps. Karolina has won multiple world titles and continues to shred; she has also had a big influence on the Park scene. For me, though, the female GOAT has to be Bruna Kajiya; she's been on the freestyle competition scene for what feels like an eternity and can still podium and win events to this day.

To be able to have a career like that in this sport is unprecedented and arguably a feat no man has achieved, so Bruna, in my eyes you take the crown here...





“ HE WAS THROWING MEGA LOOPS IN 2005, BEFORE MOST OF THE BIG AIR CREW WERE BORN, WHAT A CRAZY THOUGHT THAT IS! ”

There are a bunch of young riders who were the upstarts back in the day, much like the new crop of big air talent we see today. Jesse Richman, Kevin Langeree and Ruben Lenten were those guys, and all of them are worthy of a nod in this piece. Jesse Richman arguably has the biggest claim here, with

with multi-discipline mastery and some seriously impressive results at KOTA. He still, of course, shreds today and is a big player in the sport. For me, though, as GOAT status, he falls just a little short.

Kevin Langeree had an almost unmatched run of competition success. He was also one of the first riders to really embrace YouTube with his Kevlog series, which has huge reach and influence. A threat at KOTA until a few years ago, too, he is most definitely a contender, but in my eyes, he doesn't quite surpass.

Ruben Lenten also was a massive influence on the sport and is the father of big air kiting. He was throwing Mega Loops in 2005, before most of the big air crew were born, what a crazy thought that is! Sadly for Ruben his career was always peppered with injuries which hampered his competitive success, but his influence on the sport is huge and in this day and age of big air madness he's a worthy mention indeed. I think one of the hardest things about finding a GOAT is that kiteboarding is so versatile; there are so many ways you can enjoy flying a kite, and that, of course, leads to experts in that field. Park riding, for instance,

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Robby Naish | Maui | Triad

NAISH



“ HE CAN STILL BE A THREAT AT EVENTS TO THIS DAY AND RECENTLY CAME SECOND AT THE GKA EVENT IN CAPE VERDE. ”

is very niche but also very visual, perhaps out of favour at the moment. There was a time when a cover wasn't a cover unless there was a slider or kicker in the shot. Here, Brandon Scheid was a dominant force with multiple Triple S victories, and he is still a shredder today, I hope he makes a full recovery and returns to the top table after his injuries from his speed wing crash.

Sam Light entered the park scene with a vengeance and was seemingly unbeatable for a while, but with such a small appeal in the world of kiteboarding, can a park rider be the GOAT? Sam, of course, was a lot more than just a park rider. He had multiple KOTA entries and won the British Freestyle Champs, too, but he's still a long way off being the GOAT.

If we are looking at the niche parts of the sport, then a nod to the wave riders is needed, too. Here, riders like Airtón Cozzolino and Matchu Lopes have certainly stamped their authority. Keahi De Aboitiz has also had a lot of influence and won lots of events too and still shreds to this day. However, in my eyes, Mitu Monteiro would take the prize here as the man who started strapless freestyle and dominated the wave scene in its early years. He can still be a threat at events to this day and recently came second at the GKA event in Cape Verde. He can't be the GOAT, but perhaps in his field, he's the one to put the silverware on.



“ ANYTHING THAT ANYONE ELSE COULD DO, HE WOULD DO BETTER, AND WITH A STYLE THAT WAS UNSURPASSED. ”

With a dutiful nod to the contenders, I feel worthy of a mention. Apologies, dear reader, if you feel I missed someone. Please remember my strict criteria for time in the sport, influence, and competition results. The penultimate name I am going to mention is Andre Phillip, a name some of you may not remember.

Back in the early days of the sport, things were pretty kooky; riders were just working out how to do moves and not a lot of thought went into style. But there was an exception to that rule. Andre Philip was one of the pioneers of the sport from its inception. Anything that anyone else could do, he would do better, and with a style that was unsurpassed. Andre Philip made kiteboarding look cool. Period.

He was on the cover of every magazine, featured in full-length VHS videos and DVDs (remember those), and became the benchmark for anyone wanting to perform tricks with a stylish flare that was arguably unmatched. A pro rider for Cabrinha for many years, he was humble and a lovely guy to meet and hang out with. However, for the last ten years or so, he's not really been on the scene.

While he pioneered the sport and was the first to perform many of the tricks we see today and had a steeze that everyone else dreamed of, for me, he's not the GOAT, and that is quite simply because there is only one name that needs to be mentioned with those four letters. It doesn't matter. Whoever anyone tries to dress up to be the GOAT, they simply cannot surpass Aaron Hadlow.





“ HE WASN'T JUST WINNING THEM BUT DOMINATING IN A WAY THAT NO ONE ELSE COULD GET CLOSE. HE WOULD WIN EVERY EVENT BY A COUNTRY MILE ”

Aaron Hadlow is the GOAT; accept no substitute. He was winning PKRA World Championships back when they were really a thing, and he wasn't just winning them but dominating in a way that no one else could get close. He would win every event by a country mile, bank the cash and move

on to the next one. Winning five world titles, gracing the cover of every magazine and being the rider that people wanted to be. When he retired from the PKRA he switched to Park Riding, and he had some success there and, more importantly, gained the respect of his peers.

Moreover he's the only rider whos been in every KOTA since it started and he's still a threat on the big air scene today. Perhaps the only thing we've not really seen Aaron do is ride in the waves, but I've no doubt

he's a shredder. He just chooses to spend his time on his chosen weapon, the twin tip and in terms of mastery he's certainly done that.

His video releases each year were the stuff of legend. I'd recommend a trip down memory lane on his YouTube channel, which has some of the most groundbreaking videos ever recorded with the partnership of Andy Gordon and himself. Even in recent years, his edits from Sicily with Laci Kobulsky were huge, and of course, his "Twenty" full feature film documenting his time in the sport was a huge event, too.



“ NO ONE WILL EVER GET CLOSE TO WHAT HE’S ACHIEVED IN OUR SPORT, AND FOR THAT REASON, HE IS MOST ASSUREDLY THE GOAT ”

Of course, he’s now been there for almost 25 years years, and while arguably I reckon he’ll retire from competing soon, he’s headed to the Lords Of Tram big air event in France this month, and I expect he will be a threat, even if he’s not a contender.

He’s had one of the longest careers out there, created some of the most influential films we’ve ever been blessed with, and has a string of unmatched competition results. No one will ever get close to what he’s achieved in our sport, and for that reason, he is most assuredly the GOAT and will remain so forever.



Intriguing Beings

WORDS ROU CHATER

PHILIP SCHINNAGEL

Another interesting podcast just dropped! Rou Chater sits down in Cape Town with the CEO of one of the biggest watersports brands, CORE. It's an interesting tale that differs from some of the usual paths that these industry stalwarts take. Phil came to watersports quite late in 1999 and started his career wet sanding boards in the CARVED factory on Fehmarn...



RIDER WILLOW-RIVER TONKIN

" I SAW KITESURFING FOR THE FIRST TIME, AND I THOUGHT THAT COULD BE A NICE ADDITION TO MY SURFING."



RIDER WILLOW-RIVER TONKIN

CARVED was Bernie Hiss's brainchild. Launched in 2001, he started creating twin tips in his garage on Fehmarn in Germany. If you've never heard of Fehmarn, it's a small island off the north coast of Germany in the Baltic Sea. The island has a long history of watersports and was a favourite location for windsurfers in the 1980s and still is to this day.

Phil Schinnagel grew up on Fehmarn, surrounded by the sea, windsurfers, and sailors, but the bug never bit him to get on the water. He worked at his parents' laundry business until a trip to Cape Town in 1999 dramatically changed the course of his life.

"In 1999, I was staying at a backpacker in Cape Town. The owner was an old surfer from Jefferies Bay who played a role in the Endless Summer movie. He told us he would teach us surfing, and that's what he did."

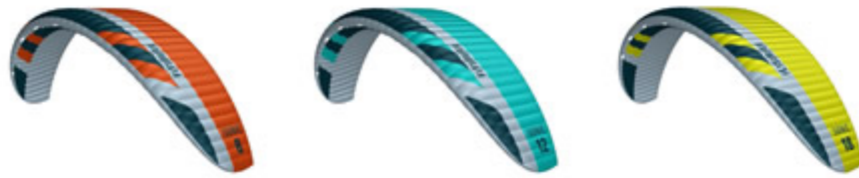
"He took us on the water, and I did all those funny things that happen during your first surf lesson, like putting the wetsuit on the other way around with the zipper at the front. After a few wipeouts, I was surfing, and I got immediately hooked. Back at my home spot in Fehmarn, I tried to surf a bit. It wasn't good, so I had to return to Cape Town for more lessons."

"That was in 2001, and it worked quite well. During that trip, I saw kitesurfing for the first time, and I thought that could be a nice addition to my surfing. In low winds, I could kitesurf, and then when the wind picked up, I could surf. We usually only start to have waves at 25 knots plus in Fehmarn, so for me, kitesurfing was a light wind sport to start with, although that soon changed!"

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" WITH THE FOUNDING OF CORE IN 2007, I BECAME RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BUSINESS'S INTERNATIONAL GROWTH, AND WE GREW VERY QUICKLY. "

PHILIP SCHINNAGEL



This differs a lot from the guys who've been windsurfing all their lives, who then came to kitesurfing and usually made up the upper tier of the watersports industry. Phil was a keen skier from the age of five and went every winter and still does to this day. He was never one for team sports, despite his parents pushing him to be involved. However, once he found water sports, he got the bug and never looked back.

In 2003, he started working for Bernie Hiss, wet sanding his boards, which were becoming very popular in the German market.

"So I was allowed to wet sand the custom kiteboards that we were making, and after a

while, I think, four months, I reached the next level, so I was doing the paint jobs, and then we were getting more and more successful. We also started getting inquiries from dealers, so it became more commercial, and somebody had to take on this role. Looking after the invoices and taking care of the stock became my job as I transitioned out of the factory. I was doing emails and phone calls, and within a very short period, I moved completely to the administrative and sales side of the business. We hired more people to work in the factory on the boards, and the brand was starting to grow. Then, with the founding of CORE in 2007, I became responsible for the business's international

growth, and we grew very quickly."

CARVED has always been seen as a very high-end product, and it still is to this day, commanding a high price point with an army of loyal fans and riders. The goal of CORE was to set up a much more mainstream brand that would cater for all kites and not just the ones looking for peak performance from a product. Over the years, CORE has become synonymous with quality and has a massive range of products catering to everyone from the rank novice to some of the world's most talented professionals.

CARVED still coexists alongside the brand as the pinnacle of design, technology, and performance. To this day, they produce one board, the Emperor, now in its seventh version, which shows their dedication

" ONE THING THAT WILL ALWAYS SEPARATE THE BRAND, THOUGH, IS THE ICONIC COLOUR SCHEME "

RIDER JOSHUA EMANUEL



and is a testament to the brand's identity. Meanwhile, CORE makes kites, boards, bars, foils, wings, and harnesses that cover a wide range of disciplines and styles to suit a multitude of riders.

One thing that will always separate the brand, though, is the iconic colour scheme...

"There is a reason for the black and white; we wanted to have a very high recognition, and it's still like that. If you are approaching a beach, no matter where on this planet, you can see from one kilometre away, oh, there's a CORE kite. As you get closer, you can even see the size of the kite; we want to have it very visible. That was always a goal for us: to stand out and to make it easy for anyone arriving at the spot to see what size they should be pumping. Then there's another advantage, in terms of stocking goods as a retailer or as a distributor, it's also very easy and very nice if you only have to order two colours, instead of four. The black and white is here to stay and separates the brand from the others out there."

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RIDER BEN BEHOLZ

" BRAND LOYALTY AND FOSTERING THAT FROM WITHIN, ARE AMONG THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS FOR US. "



RIDER PHILIP SCHINNAGEL

CORE and CARVED always feel like a family; the riders tend to stay for what feels like forever, and the staff have a low turnover, too. I've been going on trips and hanging out with the team for over a decade, and they always seem to have a solid team both on and off the water.

"No matter if we're talking about our employees, our partners, and also our team riders, brand loyalty and fostering that from within, are among the most important things for us. And this is what we believe works best; it's not easy. It's challenging sometimes. But having this opportunity to live and work at this spot in Fehmarn is attractive. If we are growing and need more employees, the location of the business will always attract new talents. Working on products during the day, and they can jump in the spot and ride them in the afternoon and evening is a huge bonus for us."

"We are looking for young talents as well. However, they need to grow into the role and do some work before they become international players like Willow or Steven, for example. We like to work with riders over a long period, growing with them and helping build a profile for them. We are also looking at what they can do for us as well. Steven is very active on YouTube, and Willow is very busy on social media. So a CORE rider needs to bring something to the table..."

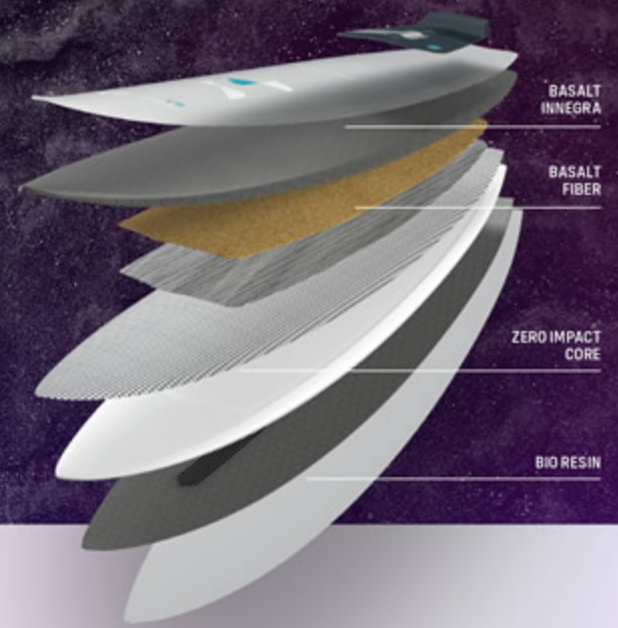
"That's one of our most important points: creating content. We are, of course, profiting or benefiting from their reach and from the engagement that they create. So, we will fund their projects, no matter what they have in mind. We're doing our photo shoots, for example, also in a different way."



" CORE HAS ALWAYS BEEN KNOWN FOR EXCEPTIONAL BUILD QUALITY AND LOW PRODUCT WARRANTIES "

We have a core CORE team, which is invited. Then we have some people like Ben Beholz visiting the photo shoots and creating his content while using the new products. So we have a wide variety of content when a new product is launched. This feeds all the social media channels for weeks after the launch as well."

CORE has always been known for exceptional build quality and low product warranties, which is one of the reasons riders and customers are so loyal to the brand. I asked Phil how importance they placed on this area of manufacturing. "It has been difficult to achieve, and it's still sometimes very challenging to maintain this high level of production, especially in very hectic times. But it's our top priority for us.



VOLT ^{S/L/S} CONCEPT BLUE

TAKE YOUR RIDING TO THE NEXT LEVEL

SMALL WAVES



VOLT SLS CONCEPT BLUE

CONCEPT BLUE INFO



First of all, it starts with the sourcing of the materials that we use. Then, the craftsmanship has to be 100%. We also ensure that it's maintained at every production stage and that the product is long-lasting. Every single flaw or blemish is always reported to the factories, no matter if it's kites, bars, or boards. We are their most annoying customers; we have the longest quality checklists. This is how we started, and this is how it should be. It sets us apart, and that is important.

Phil and I enjoyed a long-ranging conversation that touched on all sorts of things, including the current state of the industry and where the brand is headed in the future. We talked about the changing climate in the EU towards green auditing, which will put even more pressure on brands to be sustainable, how much he enjoys his role, and where it has taken him.

Phil is one of the nicest guys in the industry. He's quiet at times, humble, and always thinking. It's always a pleasure to hang out with him on the water and at the beach, and I thoroughly enjoyed the time he afforded me for the podcast!

Be sure to listen to the full episode using the link here and at the beginning of the article!



RIDER ZARA HOOGENRAAD

" IT'S ALWAYS A PLEASURE TO HANG OUT WITH HIM ON THE WATER AND AT THE BEACH "



In this exclusive feature, Jesse Richman discusses the importance of saying no to lesser commitments in order to pursue one's deepest desires. He shares his experience of letting go of competing at King of the Air to explore new passions, about his excitement joining the Ozone team and highlights the qualities of the Ozone team, the quality of their gear, and their commitment to avoiding unnecessary yearly updates. Find out more in the latest issue of IKSURFMAG!



OZONATED WATERS



We often say no to almost everything else to honestly say yes to our deepest desires. This 'deeper yes' drives us, defines our passions, and is worth risking it all for. Many of us recognise this but become overwhelmed by lesser commitments, losing the chance to give our deeper yes the energy it deserves. Sometimes, significant sacrifice and embracing uncomfortable change are necessary to achieve something truly great.

Change has always been a mixed bag for me. Mostly, it's exhilarating, but occasionally, it feels wrong to depart from long-established routines. Letting go of competing at King of the Air was a difficult change. For years, KOTA defined my life; I was determined to win, preceding many parties, fun adventures, and downtime to stay focused on training. I wanted to be the best and did everything possible to prepare for the war that KOTA is. After my victory in 2020, I knew I had accomplished what I had set out to do, and my heart was set on new adventures. But that didn't make it easy to step back and watch new talent emerge with innovative tricks, fresh energy, and unfathomable fearlessness.

" I WAS DETERMINED TO WIN, PRECEDING MANY PARTIES, FUN ADVENTURES, AND DOWNTIME TO STAY FOCUSED ON TRAINING. "



**YOUR SESSION
YOUR WAY**

THE ONE

MYSTIC

boundless waters

mysticboarding.com

" I'VE CONNECTED WITH INCREDIBLE PEOPLE.
I'VE ENJOYED SEVERAL YEARS WITH O'NEILL "

Post-KOTA, I began exploring the combination of freestyle and wave riding, experimenting with strapped kitesurfing. This new passion quickly developed into a profound drive to redefine the limits of wave riding with a kite, seeing potential from head-high waves to monumental 100-foot waves. This shift helped alleviate my FOMO from stepping back from KOTA and growing as I embarked on a mission to push my boundaries and the sport itself. In this new phase, I've connected with incredible people. I've enjoyed several years with O'Neill and recently re-signed with them, continuing my dream job with this behemoth of a surf brand committed to creating the planet's best apparel and wetsuits that are out of this world.



RS

FREERIDE
CROSS OVER
SERIES

ELEVEIGHT 



LIMITLESS
FREERIDE
PERFORMANCE

 **EXTREME HIGH TENACITY**
4X4 RIPSTOP WEAVE

 **EXTREME HIGH TENACITY CLOTH**

 **LIGHT AND TOUGH MULTI STEP**
LOAD FRAME CONSTRUCTION

ELEVEIGHT.WORLD

Rider: Luiz Emmanuel Sousa / Picture: James Kameida

This year, I also had the privilege of joining Ozone, a brand unlike any other kite company I've known. The reasons are clear: the people are exceptionally kind, humble, and hardworking, creating a unique team spirit; their gear is simply revolutionary, offering unmatched quality and performance; and their ethos—focused on sustainability and ethical business practices—sets them apart from industry norms. To elaborate a bit:

PEOPLE: At Ozone, I've learned that while a good idea is the start, successful execution by a dedicated team makes it a reality. I am immensely confident in the capabilities of the Ozone team.

GEAR: There's much to say about the gear itself, but it's meticulously refined and crafted to perfection. I'm thrilled to be using the finest equipment I've ever experienced.

" I'M THRILLED TO BE USING THE FINEST EQUIPMENT I'VE EVER EXPERIENCED. "



“ OZONE’S PHILOSOPHY IS SIMPLE BUT POWERFUL -
BUILD THE BEST, NOT THE MOST. ”



ETHOS: Ozone’s philosophy is simple but powerful—build the best, not the most. This is evident in everything from customer service to managing production.

Ozone controls every aspect of its manufacturing, running a factory that produces only ozone products. This ensures the highest quality control and the flexibility to move away from unhealthy industry norms like overproduction and unnecessary yearly updates. The current market is suffering from supply chain issues, compounded by a surge in demand during COVID, leading to overproduction. Many shops now need help to purchase new stock as they still need to sell existing inventories. This situation is detrimental to brands, retailers, and riders, and even impacts the value of second-hand gear.



Wouldn't a more sustainable model be better? One that avoids needless yearly updates and focuses on real improvements? Once I understood Ozone's approach, I was hooked. They spend extensive time testing and refining products, ensuring that new models offer real advancements before their release. Owning their factory means they can produce on demand, avoiding excess inventory. This lean system also allows for customisation in colour and graphics, fulfilling orders efficiently (this is something that I freaking love, there is nothing like looking up at your custom kite).

I've joined the Ozone team as a rider and part of their marketing and R&D divisions. This role enables me to leverage content to forge stronger connections within the kiteboarding community, bringing enthusiasts closer to the brand and vice versa. I'm so motivated to be in a new position with more freedom and responsibilities. I'm excited to use every tool available to connect with kiteboarders as they pursue their passions and achieve their deeper yes, whatever that may be.

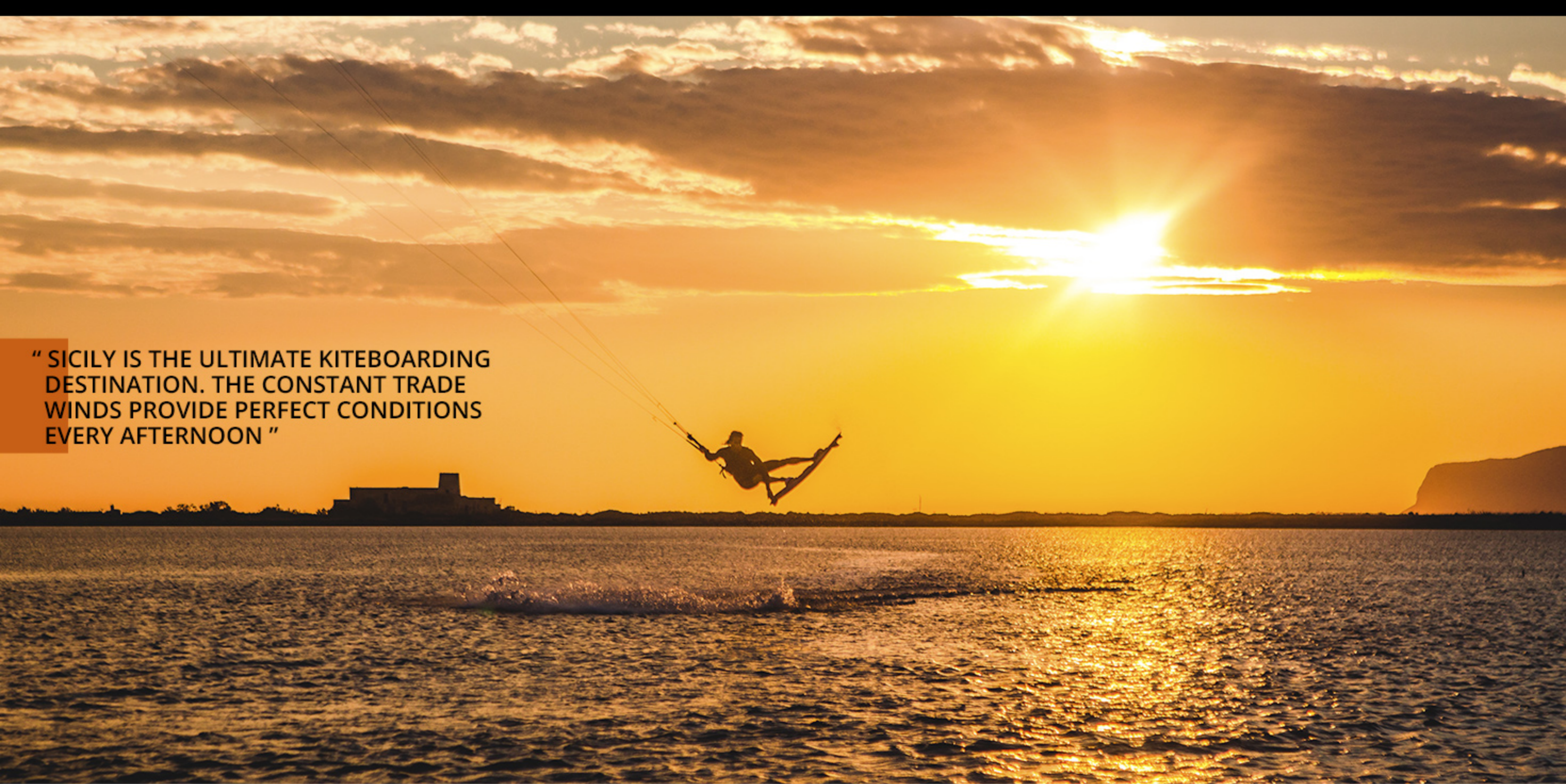
" THEY SPEND EXTENSIVE TIME TESTING AND REFINING PRODUCTS, ENSURING THAT NEW MODELS OFFER REAL ADVANCEMENTS BEFORE THEIR RELEASE. "

WORDS JAN KORYCKI

Get ready for an exciting adventure as the Nobile team sets off to Sicily for their 2024 photoshoot. With ideal kiteboarding conditions and breathtaking landscapes, this shoot was guaranteed to be good! In this feature, Jan Korycki, reveals the extensive planning that goes into such a shoot, ensuring that they capture enough shots to last the entire season. Read all about it here!

SICILIAN DREAMS





“ SICILY IS THE ULTIMATE KITEBOARDING DESTINATION. THE CONSTANT TRADE WINDS PROVIDE PERFECT CONDITIONS EVERY AFTERNOON ”

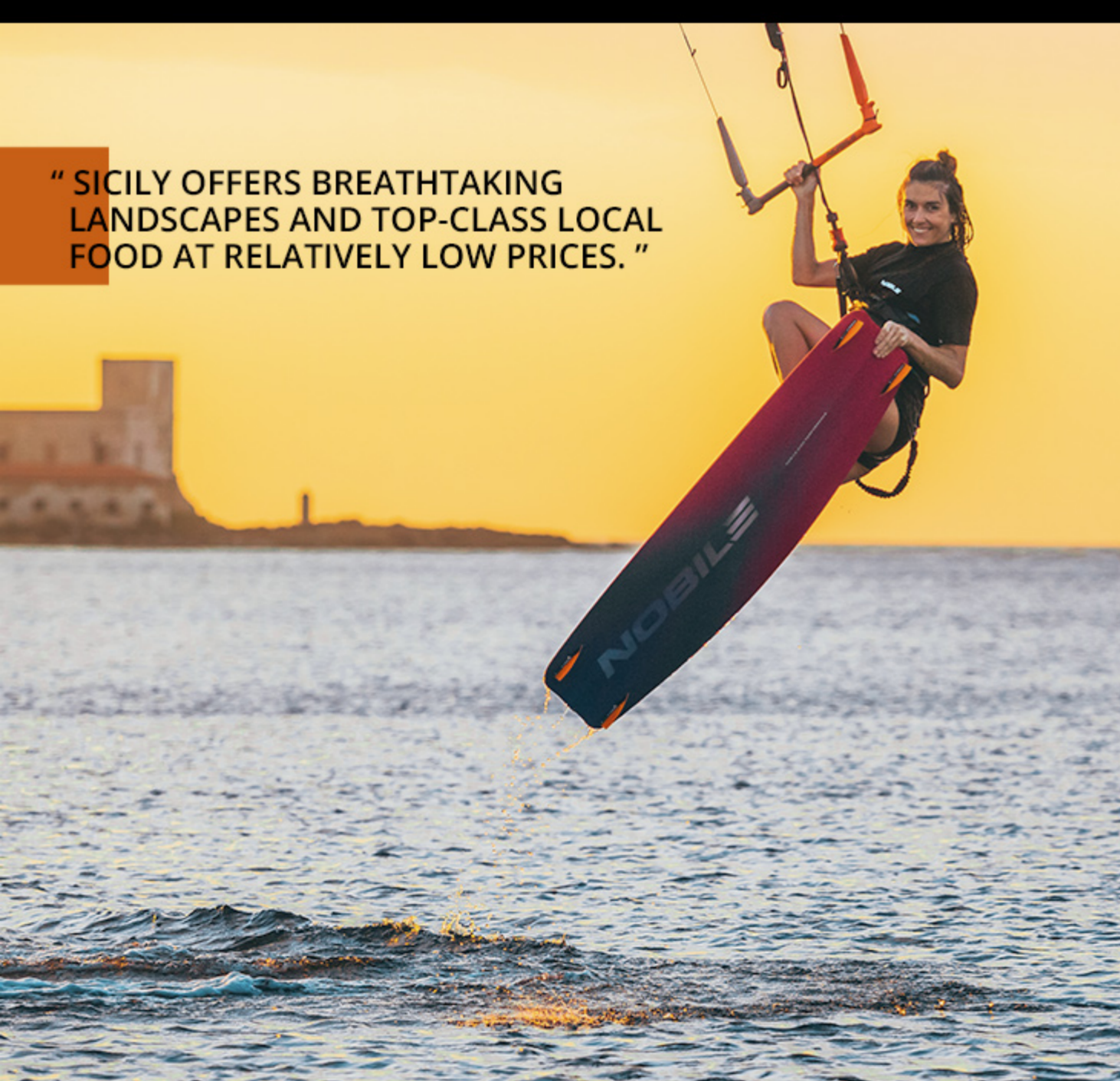
Every year, we organize a photoshoot to create promotional materials for the premiere of our upcoming collection. During this event, our riders come together to test new gear and spend quality time as a team. This allows us to share the stoke within the Nobile Family.

For the 2024 photoshoot, we chose Sicily, a popular kitesurfing destination in Europe during the fall.

Sicily is the ultimate kiteboarding destination. The constant trade winds provide perfect conditions every afternoon, and the spacious lagoons offer plenty of

flat water space, making it an ideal location for flat water twintip conditions that can last for days. If you prefer foil conditions, you can head out to the open sea and enjoy deeper blue water, foiling by yourself anywhere you like. To promote the new collection, we needed a sufficient number of pictures for the

" SICILY OFFERS BREATHTAKING LANDSCAPES AND TOP-CLASS LOCAL FOOD AT RELATIVELY LOW PRICES. "

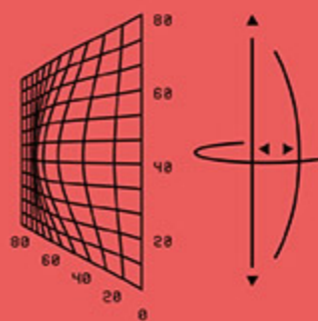
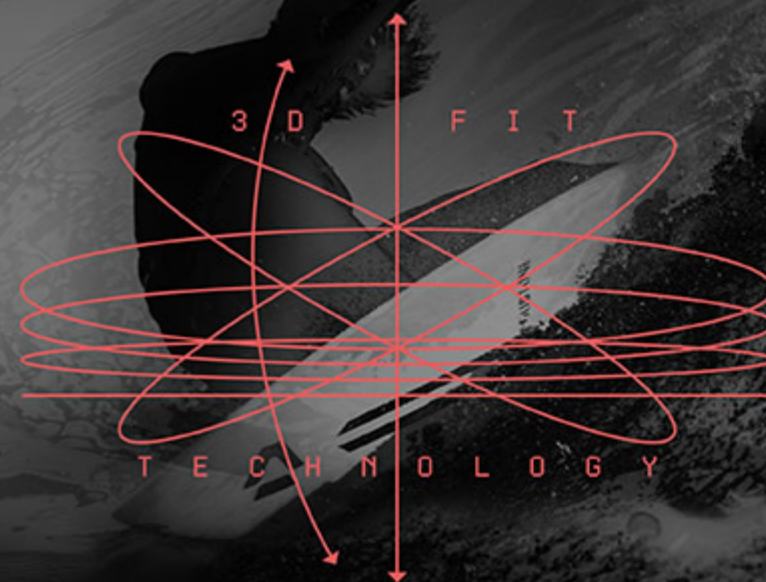


entire season, which required lots of planning, analysis, and preparation with the riders and camera crew. We had to align the angles of the shots as well as the best time of the sun and also to identify multiple locations to shoot at.

Besides kitesurfing, Sicily offers breathtaking landscapes and top-class local food at relatively low prices.

ERGO CONCEPT

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3D FIT TECHNOLOGY

- Less pain
- More performance
- More water time



RIOT CURV

SURFING ELEMENTS





We indulged in street food, pizzas, and plenty of seafood daily. Besides food and kitesurfing, Sicily offers insane landscapes and locations to visit. Natural Hot Springs were our favourite pick; after a long day in the water, everyone was happy to chill in wild hot springs in the evenings and give our muscles time to rest and relax. Another favourite spot we had was the top of the mountain, where we enjoyed a sunset view from above named Erice. Erice is a medieval town on top of a mountain with an ultimate vibe and insane sunset panorama, albeit quite a challenging drive.

What made this photoshoot unique was the variety of locations and different landscapes we had to pick from, as well as the breathtaking sunsets we experienced daily on the water. We had to plan the shoot according to wind conditions to make the most of our quick stay, especially considering Sicily is quite a large island, so it was important not to drive around. We spent the windiest moments shooting our new freeride kite, The Horizon, combined with various twintip boards. We used light wind sunsets, slow mornings to shoot Foils, and light wind kites like The One. This allowed us to make the most out of every day on the water and squeeze the most out of the entire stay.

We hope you enjoy the results of our photoshoot as much as the new product range we were shooting.

“ WHAT MADE THIS PHOTOSHOOT UNIQUE WAS THE VARIETY OF LOCATIONS AND DIFFERENT LANDSCAPES WE HAD TO PICK FROM ”



RIDER SIMON BOUCHER

IKSURFMAG.COM

“ NOBILE NHP SPLITBOARD IS OUR ULTIMATE TRAVEL-FRIENDLY IDEA THAT IS RECOGNISED ALL OVER THE GLOBE ”



As usual, our line consists of various products to fulfil the needs of every kitesurfer out there. From lightwind and school entry-level boards, through classic twintips for freeride and jumps, all the way through directional wave and foil boards, and our most famous SPLITBOARDS. Nobile NHP Splitboard is our ultimate travel-friendly idea that is recognised all over the globe by travel enthusiasts.

CLÉMENT HUOT PICKS
THE HARLEM FORCE

BIENVENUE À HARLEM



YEP, ANOTHER BIG NAME IS JOINING THIS HARLEM BRAND YOU HAVE NEVER HEARD OF. WHY DO FAMOUS RIDERS LIKE KOTA WINNER LORENZO CASATI, SCOTT BARENSEN AND JOHANNA MÜLLER PICK OUR HARLEM FORCE FOR THEIR NEXT COMPETITION?

THE PROWELD LEADING EDGE IN THE HARLEM FORCE OFFERS THE ULTIMATE STIFF AND LIGHT KITE CONSTRUCTION, WHILE STILL USING PROVEN AND RELIABLE MATERIALS. MADE SUSTAINABLE IN EUROPE BY BRAINCHILD.

FIND OUT MORE ON HARLEMKITESURFING.COM







“ WE HAVE THE GEAR TO SUIT ALL RIDERS IN ALL CONDITIONS, SO ENJOY THE 2024 COLLECTION ENTIRELY WITH NOBILE KITEBOARDING. ”

We're expanding the kite range this season as well. To make the collection whole, we're adding a freeride 3-strut kite called The Horizon on top of our existing The One single-strut lightwind kite.

Together with the EZ Bar, we have the gear to suit all riders in all conditions, so enjoy the 2024 collection entirely with Nobile Kiteboarding.

This way, another well-tested set of equipment is already here; the 2024 collection, inspired by the ocean, is out there for you to enjoy.

See you all on the water.



WORDS & PHOTOS THE IKSURFMAG TEST TEAM
PHOTO THIS PAGE ALBY RONDINHA RIPPING ON THE DRIFTER IN TIREE
PHOTO JAMES BOULDING

This issue we test two of the top wave dedicated kites from Cabrinha and Duotone, plus the Core XR Pro gets put through it's paces and the all rounder Moto X from Cabrinha gets an outing too!

KITES

- Cabrinha Drifter 7m
- Cabrinha Moto X 9m
- Core XR Pro 8m
- Duotone Neo 9m

TRIED & TESTED

BRAND CABRINHA

MODEL DRIFTER

SIZE 7M

YEAR 2024



"THE BUILD QUALITY IS FANTASTIC, AND THE MATERIALS USED ALL OOZE QUALITY"



AT A GLANCE

The Drifter is Cabrinha's dedicated wave kite, designed to "drift" (the clue is in the name) down the line and allow you to concentrate on riding the wave. It's a firm favourite with the team here at the mag, and it's a great kite to ride. The kite is a three-strut, moderate aspect ratio hybrid design with a simple short pulley-less bridle system. The large wingtips are a nod to its wave pedigree and help to improve the turning speed and control. The kite has been designed for wave riding, but it's also got the capabilities to perform for strapless riding too; it's worth noting this is the first kite ever to do a triple kitemloop too, so don't underestimate the Drifter's ability to perform in the air as well as on the waves.

For 2024, it's in the Lite Series range from Cabrinha; this range features a High Tenacity Dacron - Lite, it weighs less and improves stiffness and response, the canopy design has been further refined to reduce weight, and the struts all use a lighter material too. Cabrinha's proprietary Nano Ripstop Canopy material is used as well, and this light, micro ripstop material further enhances the performance of the kite.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)



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

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

BRAND CABRINHA

MODEL MOTO X

SIZE 9M

YEAR 2024



"THE QUALITY IS TOP-NOTCH, AND IT FEELS REALLY SOLID AND WELL-BUILT IN THE AIR."



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

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

AT A GLANCE

The Moto X has emerged as a versatile weapon in the freeride and crossover kiteboarding scene, catering to riders who enjoy riding twin tips and surfboards.

Crafted with the innovative HTD Lite airframe and boasting features such as the ISC (Intuitive Steering Control) and Bi-Directional Pure Profile Panels, the Moto X strikes a perfect balance between high performance and user-friendliness. Its three-strut, moderate aspect ratio hybrid design, coupled with a reactive wing tip and a lean profile, enables quick and nimble flight around the wind window and makes it exceptionally responsive.

The use of HTD Lite, a lightweight yet ultra-rigid Dacron, along with short, pulleyless bridles, enhances the kite's reactivity. Ultralite bladders significantly decrease the overall weight of the kite, while EVA rigidity battens on the trailing edge, Nano Ripstop canopy and durable TPU leading edge bumpers ensure durability and stability. For 2024 the Moto X features a refined canopy design integrated with a full HTD Lite Dacron skeleton,

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

BRAND CORE

MODEL XR PRO

SIZE 9M

YEAR 2024



"EASY TO FLY,
STABLE AND
PREDICTABLE,
YET CAPABLE OF
DELIVERING
BLISTERING
PERFORMANCE"



AT A GLANCE

The CORE XR Pro is the kite for the riders who want the best of the best, it's CORE's flagship model, and it delivers on every front. The XR Pro is the cutting edge of technology, and the brand has pulled out all the stops in its design and build. The XR Pro is a tuned-up version of the XR8, it's important to remember this isn't just the same kite with different materials, it was redesigned and built from the ground up around those materials, maximising the performance. Where the XR8 is all about ease of use and smooth handling, the XR Pro sets its sights firmly on the performance end of the spectrum.

The XR Pro boasts the most rigid airframe material available, Aluula, resulting in a thinner leading edge and strut diameters compared to the XR8. This reduced diameter minimises air resistance, leading to remarkable kite speed. Paired with its exceptionally stable 5-strut frame, the XR Pro maintains minimal deformation and quickly responds to steering inputs, no matter how subtle. This enhances its responsiveness and control while ensuring outstanding stability even in overpowered conditions.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)



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BRAND DUOTONE

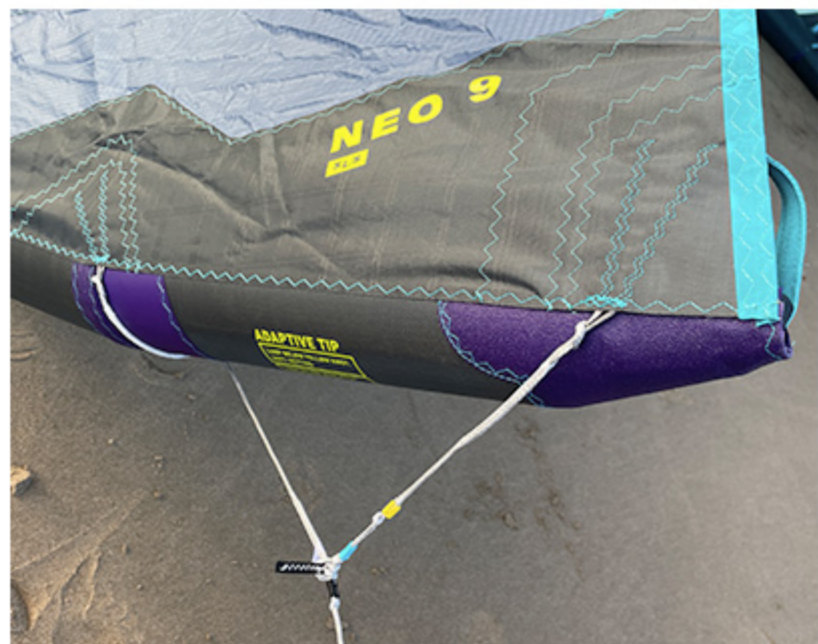
MODEL NEO SLS

SIZE 9M

YEAR 2024



"THE 2024 VERSION SHOULD BE ON YOUR RADAR IF YOU LIKE RIDING WAVES AND STRAPLESS FREESTYLE."



AT A GLANCE

The Neo SLS is the ultimate wave riding kite in the Duotone lineup, and for 2024 it has been tweaked for even better performance. The kite features new Hybrid Flex Struts, which have been straightened and given a wider, squarer wing tip shape. These changes improve the handling and responsiveness of the kite, allowing for smoother turns, faster steering, and a shorter depower stroke. The Neo SLS features construction with Penta TX and Trinity TX materials, which reduce the weight of the kite and improve its drifting capabilities.

The Neo SLS features a high-quality construction with a range of materials and design elements that enhance its performance and durability. The canopy is made from Penta TX, a lightweight material that has five times higher tear resistance than standard Dacron. This ensures precise and reliable steering, even in strong winds. The leading edge and struts are made from Trinity TX, a 3x2 canopy material that is exclusive to Duotone Kiteboarding. Trinity TX offers superior durability and dynamic performance, allowing the kite to withstand the harshest conditions and maintain its shape and responsiveness.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)



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

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

QUESTIONS JEN TYLER

INSIGHT

CATHARINA EDIN

Jen Tyler catches up with Catharina Edin to discuss her amazing journey from growing up in a vibrant Swedish surf town to her exciting new role at Naish. Her inspiring journey is a true testament to her determination and passion. Don't miss the full interview, only in IKSURFMAG!



PHOTO CRAIG KOLESKY

Hi Catharina, It's great to have you here. From modelling to blogging to competing to marketing, congratulations on your new role at Naish; how exciting! Can you tell us what growing up in Sweden is like and how you initially ended up in the kiteboarding world?

Thank you so much. It has been a long and exciting journey leading up to this opportunity at Naish. I grew up in a small surf town in Sweden, and thanks to my parents' interest in sailing, I spent a lot of time on the ocean as a kid. I used to work in the local surf shop and had friends who were into kitesurfing, so it felt natural to try it. Back then, it was all just a dream: to travel the world, compete on the world tour, work on video projects, be in magazines... The list goes on. Looking back on all the achievements and goals I've accomplished over the years feels surreal. Over the last year, the idea of taking on a new challenge slowly grew on me. Taking on the combined role with Naish felt like the most natural step, and today, I'm exactly where I'm supposed to be, which is a fantastic feeling and so rewarding.

Transitioning from a team rider to a marketing position must be attractive. Please tell us more about that. Do you have previous marketing experience?

As mentioned earlier, my role at Naish involves a part-time position as a team rider. This allows me to work behind the computer part-time and also spend time on the water when it's windy. I have completed several marketing courses and have a genuine interest in social media and marketing in general.

" IT WAS ALL JUST A DREAM: TO TRAVEL THE WORLD, COMPETE ON THE WORLD TOUR, WORK ON VIDEO PROJECTS, BE IN MAGAZINES... "





I am very creative, and the experience I have gained as a team rider, as well as working with brands outside the industry over the years, has involved producing and planning content, leading to this opportunity.

What are the biggest challenges and opportunities in combining your passion for kitesurfing with your creativity in a marketing context?

The biggest challenge or realisation is understanding how much time and effort goes into marketing. As a team rider, I know that you only see a small part of all the work and arrangements needed for something that "seems so simple," haha.

" YOU ONLY SEE A SMALL PART OF ALL THE WORK AND ARRANGEMENTS NEEDED "



WIDA

A MOMENT FOR LIFE




Shot - Nicolas Peltier

Rider - Maxime Desjardins



Instagram Facebook YouTube www.airwave.aero
sales@airwave.aero





" I AM VERY PASSIONATE ABOUT HELPING, GIVING TIPS, AND PROVIDING GUIDANCE TO RIDERS ON SOCIAL MEDIA "

I have great colleagues, and together we make a strong team with endless opportunities. I have a seamless understanding, and I am very passionate about helping, giving tips, and providing guidance to riders on social media and how they can maximise their full potential on the marketing side.

What excites you most about joining the international rider team at Naish?

The new Naish gear is excellent, and it's very convenient to have kites, wings, boards, and foils all

from the same brand. I'm excited to push my winging and foiling game even more this year. In a couple of weeks, we have a product shoot in a place I've never visited. There are constantly new and exciting things coming up along the way.

Do you plan on staying mainly in the UK or travelling around? Are you able to work remotely in your new role at Naish?

I work remotely on a freelance contract, allowing me to travel between my bases in the UK, Sweden,

and Cape Town, and join trips and shoots.

Tell us about your 'Trip to Cape Town Travel Guide' and what inspired you to write it. What destination is next?

I have been travelling to Cape Town for over a decade for kitesurfing during the European winter months. Many reasons draw me back year after year, including the food, nature, and people. The numerous messages I received asking for travel tips to Cape Town, along with the ever-growing list of eateries and activities,



inspired me to write a travel guide. I was surprised when the guide ended up being 100 pages long. While I don't think I'll write another 100-page travel guide, who knows? Maybe a few small editions will be released at some point. When you purchase the book, you automatically donate to a particular organisation in Cape Town, helping kids in need learn how to sail an optimist. Giving back to the community and learning how to write a book properly has been incredibly rewarding.

Will you be competing on the GKA Kite World Tour?

Maybe... I won't do the entire tour again, but I might make a few stops here and there, depending on the location.

" LEARNING HOW TO WRITE A BOOK PROPERLY HAS BEEN INCREDIBLY REWARDING."

NOBILE

NHP

NOBILE HIGH PERFORMANCE

SPLIT



THE ONLY
TRUE
SPLITBOARD



#LIFEISBETTERWHENYOU'REKITEBOARDING

WWW.NOBILEKITEBOARDING.COM



" DON'T LET YOUR SURROUNDINGS LIMIT YOU FROM CHASING YOUR DREAM. STAY CURIOUS AND ASK QUESTIONS. "

PHOTO CRAIG KOLESKY

104 INSIGHT

Could you share one of your most memorable experiences while travelling the world in search of the perfect kitesurfing conditions?

I went on a trip to Madagascar with Jalou Langeree, Olivia Jenkins, and the camera crew Ydwer Van Der Heide and Mintautas Grigas. We filmed "118ft of Freedom" while staying on a boat and sailing around the south of Madagascar to kitesurf remote spots. One of my most memorable sessions was when we found a wave in the middle of the ocean.

You're continuously motivated and inspired to try new things outside your comfort zone. What's your top tip for someone working up the courage to try something new?

Check in with yourself regularly. Don't let your surroundings limit you from chasing your dream. Stay curious and ask questions.

Can you share any upcoming projects or goals you have for the future, both in your kitesurfing career and your new role at Naish?

I can't disclose much, but there are exciting developments at Naish. Our goals are confidential; only time will reveal them!

Thanks, Catharina; best of luck! Hopefully, we'll catch up in the UK this summer.

Yes, absolutely!

IKSURFMAG.COM

ROAD TO THE OLYMPICS

WORDS JEN TYLER PHOTOS LAURIANE NOLOT AND MAX MAEDER

In this exclusive feature, Jen Tyler interviews Lauriane Nolot and Max Maeder about their inspiring 'Road to the Olympics'. They discuss how they got into racing, their unwavering determination to succeed, and how they balance their rigorous training schedules with their intense competition regime. Both riders also share advice and excitement about competing in the upcoming Olympics!



PHOTO ROBERT HAJDUK

IKSURFMAG.COM



Lauriane and Max, it's great to have you here! Please share a bit about your background in kiteboarding and, specifically, racing. When did you start, and what were some early challenges you faced?

LN: When I was younger, I used to go horse riding. However, when I left my parents' house to go to university, I could no longer visit the ranch and had to search for new adventures. That's when my father and brother introduced me to kitesurfing, a sport that immediately captured my heart. Eager to kite even in light winds, I started foiling. Luckily, Hyères had a renowned foil training centre where I began my training under the guidance of Ariane Imbert, who was responsible for the French team and the training centre. Initially, I struggled to keep up due to my outdated gear inherited from my father. But during my first competition, my brother lent me his high-performance gear, enabling me to give my best on the water!

“ IT TOOK ME A WHILE TO MASTER HYDROFOILING DUE TO NUMEROUS FAILED ATTEMPTS TO GET ON BOARD. HOWEVER, THE MOMENT I SUCCESSFULLY FOILED, IT FELT MAGICAL TO ME. ”

MM: I started kiteboarding at six because my father introduced me to the sport. He thought putting the little guy (me) onto the kiteboard would be fun. After a while, I decided to venture into racing. Surprisingly, it took me a while to master hydrofoiling due to numerous failed attempts to get on board. However, the moment I successfully foiled, it felt magical to me.

What inspired you to pursue racing and eventually aim for the Olympics?

LN: From the beginning, my motivation for training stemmed from my desire to outperform my father and brother in small regional competitions. I immediately fell in love with the vibe; these events captivated me, especially being able to compete alongside the legendary French racing team. My ambition to become a champion grew as I spent more time with these riders. My focus was to beat Daniela Moroz and claim the world champion title. However, when we received news that kitefoil would be featured in the 2024 Olympic Games, my goals shifted towards representing France on the grandest stage!

“ FROM AN EARLY AGE, MY COMPETITIVE NATURE AND LOVE FOR RACING HAVE BEEN INCREDIBLY STRONG, PARTICULARLY IN SPORTS WITH RACING. ”

MM: From an early age, my competitive nature and love for racing have been incredibly strong, particularly in sports with racing. Naturally, this led me to the world of kiteboarding racing. However, success in twintip racing required a lot of strength and size, which I needed to improve when I was only 11 or 12. That's when I discovered foiling. Initially unaware of its future Olympic status, my drive to excel always motivated me to go above and beyond.

How do you balance training, competitions, and other aspects of your life leading up to the Olympics?

LN: Focus and physical fitness during competitions is a year-long endeavour involving the concerted efforts of my coaches and staff. We plan my calendar,





carefully coordinating training camps and gym preparations for maximum efficiency. The challenge lies in accepting the importance of rest, as staying away from the water can be highly stressful. However, after several years of competing, I have developed a deeper understanding of how my body operates and now strive to maintain a consistent routine.

“ I HAVE DEVELOPED A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF HOW MY BODY OPERATES ”

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PHOTO LAURIANE NOLOT

“ I FIND TESTING AND FOLLOWING MY FEELINGS VERY INTERESTING, WHICH HELPS ME IMPROVE MY KNOWLEDGE OF TUNING THE KITES I USE. ”

MM: My lifestyle revolves around my passion for training and competition. So, decisions like continuing homeschooling and not staying in one place for too long became second nature to me. Of course, I grew up

travelling with my parents and being homeschooled since the beginning made finding a balance between everything much simpler.

How have FLYSURFER supported you on this journey?

LN: I recently joined the Flysurfer International team at the start of 2024. Joining such a big team is exciting, especially since Flysurfer has been the most successful

brand in kitefoil racing for the past few years. I was invited to test and help develop their new VMG3 this winter. As an athlete, I find testing and following my feelings very interesting, which helps me improve my knowledge of tuning the kites I use. I'm confident the VMG3 will be a game-changer in the next cycle!

MM: FLYSURFER has always been my go-to kite brand because of the exceptional quality and engineering in every product they produce. When I used their kites and performed well in competitions,



they took notice of my skills. As a result, they sponsored me with their gear for my journey in the sport and have always treated me as part of their racing team.

Can you describe when you realised you had a real shot at qualifying for the Olympics?

LN: I may have a chance to qualify for the Olympics in 2022 after achieving my first international podium at the 2021 World Championships. The French level of competition has always been very high, but being in contention for the world's top spot is a positive sign."

MM: I can't point out a specific moment when I realised how important winning the world championships was, but the moment I qualified my nation for the event and won was truly special. This achievement meant the world to me because it was the culmination of all the efforts and resources invested by the people who supported and helped me. Seeing my nation represented and being crowned champion was an experience that I will always cherish.

"THE ULTIMATE GOAL SHOULD BE TO STRIVE FOR SELF-IMPROVEMENT, CONSTANTLY SURPASSING YOUR PREVIOUS ACHIEVEMENTS AND PUSHING YOUR LIMITS FURTHER."

What advice would you give young athletes aspiring to compete in the Olympics someday?

LN: The most crucial aspect of excelling in any activity is to have a passion for it. I have a deep love for kitting, which drives me to put in all the necessary efforts to prepare for competitions. The ultimate goal should be to strive for self-improvement, constantly surpassing your previous achievements and pushing your limits further.



“ I AM DETERMINED TO PROVE THAT OUR SPORT IS SUPER QUICK, FUN, AND SICK, AND I AM CONFIDENT WE WILL SUCCEED IN MAKING IT SHINE. ”

MM: Love your sport! That starts everything and is part of a solid foundation for your journey. When people see your passion and you inevitably start to do well, they will support you if you stick with it. Treasure and be grateful for that support because it is vital to helping you do well. Finally, have patience

to helping you do well. Finally, have patience in the process; if you are very competitive and always want to do better, always look to improve as best you can, and dedicate yourself to your sport more than most others, time is the only thing standing in your way to your dreams.

What are you most looking forward to about competing in the Olympics?

LN: I am excited about the upcoming games in France. It's an excellent opportunity to showcase the awesomeness of kitefoil to my

friends and family, who will be there to support me. I am determined to prove that our sport is super quick, fun, and sick, and I am confident we will succeed in making it shine. I am eager to perform at my best and bring home a nice piece of metal. Additionally, I am thrilled to share this experience with my friend Axel Mazella. We have been dreaming of going to the games together, and our dream has finally come true.

MM: The opportunity to represent my nation at such a stage, being watched by so many and showing the beauty of the sport I hold in such high regard to people who haven't seen it before.

The Olympic version of our sport is very different from what the average rider does at the weekend. Is that an issue for the sport as a whole?

LN: I don't think it's an issue. It's similar to many other sports where the limits have been pushed to the extreme, and only a few elite athletes can perform at such high levels with specific gear. It's just like Formula 1, for example. The Olympics aim to showcase the best possible performance in a sport, which is why an average rider cannot do what we kitefoil racers do. A full-time job is required to be a kitefoil racer. However, many average riders dream of being as fast and skilled as us. I encourage them to keep practising and improving their skills. Perhaps one day they'll join us on the start line!"

"THE THRILL, EXCITEMENT, AWE, AND INSPIRATION COME BECAUSE IT IS SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT. THIS IS ONE OF THE REASONS WHY THE OLYMPICS ARE GREAT"

MM: I don't see this as an issue at all. Why would it be? How could people be excited about an event for which individuals put in so much effort, time, and resources that only occurs once every four years for it to be something similar to a recreational weekend? The thrill, excitement, awe, and inspiration come because it is somewhat different. This is one of the reasons why the Olympics are great, not just for our sport, but for any other.

Thanks, Max and Lauriane. We wish you the best of luck!



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WORDS & PHOTOS CHRISTIAN & KARINE



Today is the day you've been waiting for. We're coming at you with not one, but two learning to loops!

That's right. Why? Because by the time you've worked through both of these you'll be styling out the smoothest of jumping transition down loops and pulling your first loops whilst still airborne! All the practice, patience and following the process up to this point has prepared you perfectly for the next couple of steps. These two "episodes" are all about the Down Loop Air Gybe or Jump Transition. Whichever name you prefer, the excitement and thrill of feeling a little tug in the air as you transition should light up any session. Let's get to it!

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1 / LEARNING TO LOOP #5A



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2 / LEARNING TO LOOP #5B



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LEARNING TO LOOP #5A ▶

JUMP TRANSITION DOWN LOOP PART 1

Cabrinha Moto X 8m

Cabrinha XO 133

We've split the Down Loop Air Gybe into two parts as we're very much aiming this at those of you who have been patiently following this series. We've been going at it in baby steps, to make sure that you're ready for the next step. So far you've earned yourselves more than a few stripes, working through the fundamentals and then onto some killer combos. So, Part 1 today is about understanding what you're aiming for, getting your head around what you're going to do and therefore building up to your first potential air loop. Before getting ahead of ourselves, we must mention the elephant in the room. You do need a solid and dependable jump transition before giving this a whirl!

You may be wondering why the down loop is next? The beauty of the down loop is that even in a transition, we are looping the kite forward whilst travelling forward. This means that the loop and resulting pull is less aggressive than a bona fide kite loop. Also, just in case you're wondering, an air gybe and a jump transition are the same thing:)

The aim here is to practice an air gybe or jump transition, with a super late down loop. By super late we mean that the down loop will happen after you land, so no pull from the kite whilst you're in the air. Almost as two separate moves. Jump transition, landing almost toe side and then down looping out whilst carving round back onto your heels and upwind.



This gives you time to think, gets you comfy with the actions and allows you to convince yourself that you can do it. Here in Part 1, you'll build up your confidence and understanding so that when you move onto part 2, you'll be primed and oh so ready!

All the same rules apply, and you'll be following the same process that you're fully accustomed to. You know the mechanics of the loop, so once again we'll be focusing on the two most important factors, timing and kite position, and how they fit into the fact that you'll be off the water and hanging under a kite.

Note that in all pics, sequences and videos Karine is doing this riding to her right. The same as she did for her initial slide turn down loop, and the same as her toe to heel carve down loop. Once again, the reason

is because Karine will finish the move and take the pull once she's strong foot forward, left foot in this case. This isn't essential, but it can certainly help.

OK so let's have a look at the parts that will make this possible.

APPROACH AND CHECK PIC A

Assuming that you're already happy air gybing/ jump transitioning, you don't need anything large. A gentle transition, one meter off the water is perfect. As such approach on a good edge with your kite around 1 or 11 o'clock and slow down a tad by letting the bar out a touch. Make sure you've got plenty of space behind you and downwind of you. You can see that Karine is edging in, riding solidly upwind, bum low and bar on the sweet spot.

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THE SEND PIC B

Previously you've put your kite up to give yourself room to loop and to help loop high and therefore with little power. Here the same applies, however, you need to take off first. The good news, once you're up your kite will be high and in position. Give your kite a short sharp send to 12. It needs to move quickly enough to generate power and lift, but you don't want your kite travelling too far past 12, as it'll make the rest of the move less intuitive. So rather just to 12 than past 12. The resulting little bit of forward momentum in the air won't hurt. Karine has steered the bar with both hands, push and pull to get the kite



moving swiftly up and then levelled it, resisting all the time against her edge. As the kite lifts, she has eased the bar out to follow the sweet spot. This way, the kite goes up around the edge of the window.

TAKE OFF PIC C

To get up and take some speed off you'll want a decent kick against your edge. Do this by extending your back leg suddenly with your bum still low. You also want to pull in on the bar, however, make sure you kick first. This combo will get you up off the water and help knock off any excess speed. As soon as you're lifting off, make sure that your bar is level.



This will keep the kite at 12 o'clock. Karine has stomped off, extending herself against her edge and has pulled her bar in, level. As Karine kicks off it turns her slightly upwind, not an issue with a transition as it helps later with the landing.

THE BIG CHILL PIC D

We've already said we're going late. There is absolutely no rush. Bring your knees up and hold the bar in as you go up. With a level bar, you can hold this position for as long as it takes for you to come back down to earth. Karine's bar is in, her knees are up and she's patiently waiting to descend.



PREPARE FOR LANDING PIC E

Undercarriage down, bar back to sweet spot and point the board downwind! These three are consistent with what you'd normally do in a jump transition. However, at the moment Karine has done nothing else, she hasn't turned her head and she hasn't dived her kite. When we said super late, we mean really super late. The crux here is to get your board into position and ready for the forthcoming pull. Downwind in this case will be ever so slightly biased forwards, so that you'll land slightly



toe side of dead downwind.

TOUCH DOWN PIC F

As you brush the water you can give it the full Monty on the bar. This is your cue to pull the trigger. With your board pointing towards where the pull will come from and your kite above you, you're set. The kite will start its down loop and the pull will come from the same direction as in the slide turn or the carve, slightly forward of 12 o'clock. Commit, lock in and be ready for any surprises. Karine's board lands off the



wind and she's just starting to pull and push to initiate her down loop. As always, watch the loop as you carve back to heel side.

LEVEL OFF PIC G

Carve back onto your heels and level off the bar as the kite starts to rise towards 12 o'clock. If you level a bit late, no problem, you'll just slow down. Better too late than too early. Once you get the hang of it, you can time it so that you come out with pull, as you did in the carve, and remember to let the bar out to encourage the kite to breath.



TOP TIPS

For your first attempts, less power is preferable. In fact, if the wind is light you can land and then loop yourself up and out of the water. The important thing is not to resist, so no edge against the power.

Start with a few air gybes to get in the mood and then some down loops, before adding the down loop on landing.

So, timing wise, we're all on the same page, late, very late. It's likely that on your first few you're almost too late. With practice you can start a tiny bit earlier, pre-empting your late loop, by steering the kite just before landing. This way there'll be less delay between you touching down and the kite pulling. You can see in the SEQUENCE 1 that Karine has telegraphed her kite what she wants on landing, starting to pull gently before she touches the water, and then giving it the full Monty once she lands. It's worth noting that the timing will differ greatly between kites.

As for kite position, high as always. The only point to

add here is high where? What's important is that the kite doesn't start from behind 12 o'clock. It always wants to be just a fraction in front of 12, much like in your carving down loops. This way the pull comes from where you expect it, and it helps pull you out of the transition. If the kite is behind 12 and you initiate the down loop, it won't give you a smooth pull out, and will just loop gently behind you. Bear this in mind for Part 2!

If you have a look at the wide-angled SEQUENCE 2, you can see how the kite is just in front of 12 as Karine comes down, and this is what gives her a nice smooth pull once she's landed.

Excellent, go give this a go, and we look forward to seeing you over in Part 2 once you've done your homework!



LEARNING TO LOOP #6 ▶

JUMP TRANSITION DOWN LOOP PART 2

Cabrinha Moto X 8m

Cabrinha XO 133

Well distinguished readers, here we are, part two of the jump transition down loop. We'll take it as given that you're here after progressing from the prequel, and if you're not, but feeling somewhat gung-ho, we won't stand in your way - but it never hurts to read the instructions first....

In the simplest terms possible the aim today is to go earlier than before. How much earlier? In keeping with tradition, baby steps and achievable chunks, we're going to start off just a tad earlier. You may have already pre-empted your landing, as suggested in the later stages of Part 1, so that the kite dives before you land, even though it loops after you've touched down. If you haven't yet, this is the perfect place to start.

The reason for this is that it's not just about going earlier. It's also hugely about what you do with your bar, or rather how you instruct your kite to turn. You must start gently, moving the kite forward before starting to dive it, and then being far more aggressive on the bar to down loop it. It's almost a two-step movement, but we like to think of it as a progressive loop.

Before we move on to the ins and outs of this move we should establish what we're after in a jump transition down loop as there are two quite different moves and outcomes.



The first is for the purists and first timers. The objective being to exit the move smoothly, the kite pulling you out in complete control, adding to the fluidity of your jump transition. This requires the kite to pull before you land, but it won't complete it's loop until after you've landed and are carving back onto your heels. This gives you a constant and very useable pull, looking super styley whilst also being unbelievably functional.

The second is what you can aim for once you've got the first one nailed firmly into your box of tricks. Tearing through the loop whilst still in the air. This also looks incredible, feels just ohhh soo incredibly yeeeeeaaah, but there is a but. Once your kite finishes its down loop and you're still flying, you'll end up with

a lot of slack and will likely stutter slightly before regaining your edge and regathering some tension on your lines. As such not the most practical of moves, but oh boy, it's all about the feeling. And even more importantly, it's also about getting dialed with your first ever loop in the air!!!

OK let's get our breath back, and with the above in mind, look at what you'll be doing and when you'll be doing it in order to get a fluid and smooth down loop air gybe, option one.

APPROACH AND CHECK PIC A

This time round you're going for a little more height. Nothing extreme, but in order not to be rushed you want more time to get your bearings and prepare.

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B

Check that the coast is clear! You can approach with a little bit more speed, comfortably powered and on a good edge. It's still a jump transition, so treat it as one. You'll give the kite a short sharp send, but this time it doesn't matter if the kite goes past 12 o'clock as you'll have time to reposition it! You can see that Karine has a solid edge and is aggressively resisting as she sends the kite up.

LEVEL & CHILL PIC B

Once you've kicked off it's all about stopping the kite going any further back and waiting patiently for the moment. First port of call is to level your bar. This won't bring the kite forward, but it'll sure as hell stop it moving further back. With a tad more height this



C

means that the kite will stop somewhere just behind you. In this position it'll support and float you. Keep yourself steady, look where you're going and wait. Nothing else should be happening on the way up. Here Karine has the bar in and level, she's lifted her legs a tad and is looking forward to where she's going.

PROGRESSIVE START PIC C

When you start to drop it's time to get things underway. This is where the progressive steering comes in. If you just give it the beans your kite will drop too quickly and from the wrong place. The result, you'll have no pull out of the move and you'll just sink. To get with the program you can start to



D

steer the kite forward, so that it moves past 12 and in front of you. You need the bar on the sweet spot to get maximum response. If anything, it's slightly better a touch too close than letting the bar out and giving away tension. You can clearly see that Karine has let her bar out, but only a little, whilst she's started to steer her kite forward, dropping her board as she does and looking towards where she thinks she might touch down.

A BIT MORE PIC D

As the kite moves over 12, you'll get some hang before you carry on down. This means that the kite is moving forward and is on its way to 1 o'clock here (11 if you're going left). It's now where it should be.



You don't want the kite to fly around the edge of the window, otherwise you'll have no room to down loop it, so it's time to dive a bit harder, looking for that downwind pull you'd want from a jump landing. Karine is starting to give it the beans on the bar.

THE FULL MONTY PIC E

With the kite starting to dive you'll feel the pull. You can now point your board towards the pull with your new front foot and fully commit to the down loop by giving it everything on the bar, whilst staying locked in. Keep your eyes on where you'll land and prepare for landing by dropping your legs. Karine is



giving it the full Monty on the bar, has turned her board towards the pull and is looking at her landing pad. She's locked in and committed.

KITE & CARVE PIC F

You've followed the pull and landed towards it. This is the just toe side of downwind we were talking about. It's now time to focus your attention on your kite, so that you know where it is in the loop and get yourself heading back the other way. Now that you're back on the water, this should be familiar territory and well-practiced. Drop your weight onto your heels to carve back onto your heel side edge whilst watching your kite. Karine has her eyes on her kite,



and weight on her heels. Looking good.

CLAIM IT PIC G

You can encourage the kite up and around by letting your bar out a little and allowing the kite to breath. Keep carving to keep tension on the lines and follow the kite around. Once it's flying back the other way, level the bar to stop it looping and you can then steer it forward in the new direction. In the photo Karine is still gently carving back onto her heels, she has tension on her lines and has guided the kite in the new direction. All the while with some stylish and practical pull from the kite. Job done.

KITE FLIGHT SEQUENCE 1

A continuation of your dive! Have a look at the bar and kite movements in Sequence 1. You can see that because Karine gave it more send to get more height the kite did fly past 12 o'clock as she took off. With her bar level, the kite moved more above her whilst she chilled, but not back to 12.

As she starts her progressive dive the kite moves forward past 12, into the perfect starting position, from where she gives it the full Monty and it pulls her.

As it pulls it guides her toward her landing spot, before coming around as she carves back onto her edge. Smooth and Perfect.

In essence your down loop air gybe is a jump, but on landing, rather than bring the kite back up, you let it loop, land with your other foot forward, and follow it back the other way!

TOP TIPS

Timing. Finding the moment to get things started is key. Regardless of height you certainly don't want to go any earlier at the moment. Having the brunt of the pull as you're landing is perfect, with the smoothest outcome.

Kite position. Once again, it's starting high and after your initial input, slightly forwards.

Your bar position relative to your sweet spot is crucial. If you let the bar out too much before landing and give away too much tension, you'll suffer a massive delay and risk diving your kite down around the edge of the window and into the drink. Better a tad too much, which you can then let out later to get the kite up and forward.



S1



MOVING ON – LOOPING IN THE AIR

Once you've got this down give yourself a massive pat on the back. It's been quite a journey, but you'll hopefully be fully addicted to the sensational overload of exiting a jump transition with such a constant pull and smooth reception. This will remain as you go too variant for the transition...

However, as alluded to earlier, when you're able to execute this in your sleep and are more comfortable than a pair of fluffy slippers and a hot buttered crumpet on a winter's morning, you can take it one step further, or rather one step earlier, option 2!

Have a look at SEQUENCE 2. Karine's intention is to loop the kite whilst she's still in the air.

Karine hasn't necessarily gone higher, but she has pulled her down loop at the apex of her jump. Also, she hasn't given it such a progressive pull, but more of a full Monty straight out of the gates approach. This means that the kite loops earlier, quicker and a tad more downwind.

The result. The kite completes its loop before she lands – an air loop! You can see that the landing is still with her new front foot as before, but she has already leveled her bar to stop the kite as it's already way back up towards 12.

This means that her kite is high and stationary, whilst Karine is motoring downwind, gaining slack under her kite each and every board length she travels.

What is vital here is to use your landing speed to get back on your edge, driving upwind so that you can reclaim some ground and win back that tension. Be ready for a little jolt as the kite catches and be prepared to save and steer it depending on how it falls.

How did that loop in the air feel? Like the end of summer term!! That's it your first bona fide loop under a kite whilst flying. Time to party like it's 1999:)





WORDS JEN TYLER
PHOTOS JEN TYLER & CHRIS TAYLOR

Jen Tyler and Chris Taylor jump on a plane on an unforgettable journey to the breathtaking island of Saint Lucia! From the iconic Pitons to the vibrant culture epitomised by the motto 'One Love, One Saint Lucia,' this destination beckons with warmth and beauty. In this feature, they share their adventure, from the flight to the welcoming shores of Coconut Bay Resort. Whether seeking a kiteboarding adventure or serene moments exploring the island's rich heritage, Saint Lucia promises an experience like no other!

ONE LOVE SAINT LUCIA



“ WE INSTANTLY FELT THE WARM CARIBBEAN BREEZE WHEN WE GOT OFF THE PLANE. ”

When we first got the Saint Lucia Tourism Authority email inviting us to visit, I responded with an instant YES! Then I grabbed my phone and went to Google to check out its location among the 700 Caribbean islands! If you're in the same boat as me, it's a gorgeous island between St Vincent and the Grenadines and Martinique. You can easily spot Saint Lucia as it's home to the Pitons, a World Heritage Site located in the Southwestern part of the island. Petit Piton is 743m high, and Gros Piton is 798m high, but they look the same size and are

stunning from a distance - they are also the two symbols on the Saint Lucia flag.

Another standout point for us was their popular slogan, 'One Love, One Saint Lucia' It reflects the unity and solidarity among the people of Saint Lucia, emphasising the importance of togetherness and mutual respect regardless of differences. Combining that with an abundance of rainforest in the central part of the island and the most stunning beaches, we couldn't wait to make the trip over.

We took a direct flight from Gatwick Airport to Hewanorra International Airport on British Airways, which was easy. The flight over was 8hr 15min, and if you have kids, you'll fully

understand how much we dreaded the flight with our 3-year-old; BA ensured we were comfortable, fed and hydrated the whole time, and the flight went smoothly. We instantly felt the warm Caribbean breeze when we got off the plane. It was 26c, the sun shone, and we couldn't wait to see Saint Lucia.

We picked up our bags and walked outside. As soon as we went through passport control, we submitted our entry forms (they'll give you those on the flight). It was busy for such a tiny airport, but there was a Coconut Bay Resort kiosk, and Jean Pierre was waiting for us there. He walked us over to his Toyota Landcruiser, where he had a child seat for Ryan and drove us to the resort. Travel Saint Lucia booked us into a gorgeous all-inclusive resort called Coconut Bay Resort, the only resort in the southeastern part of the island, in Vieux Fort, the biggest town in the southeast.



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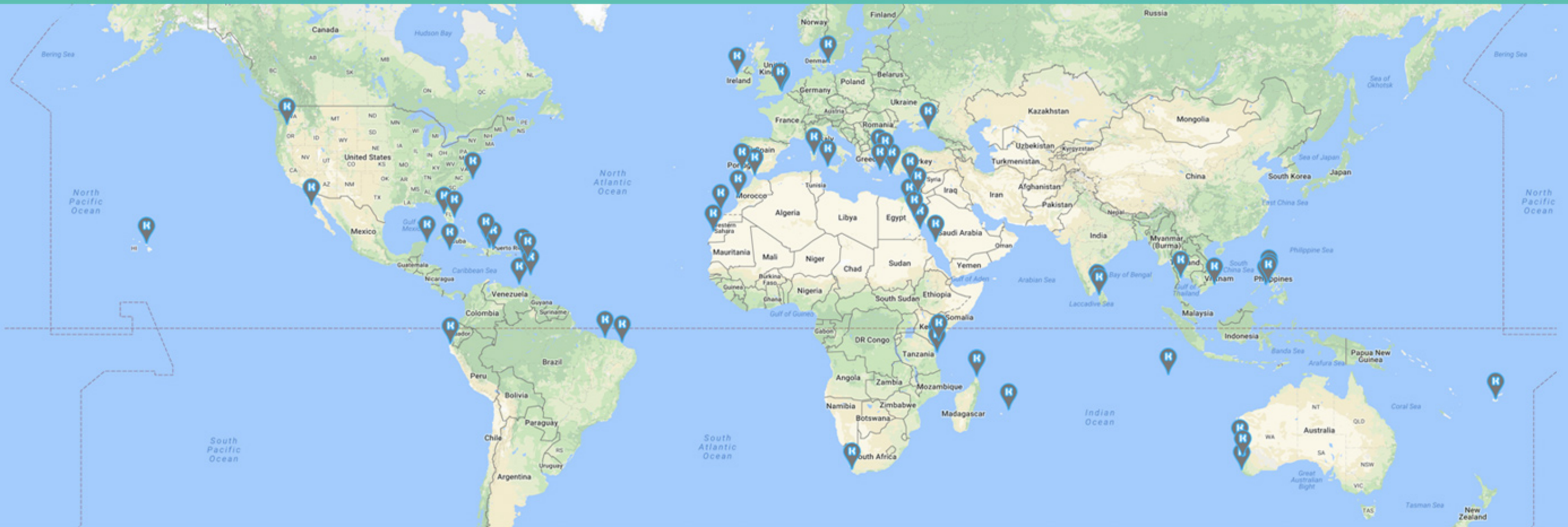
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“ I HAD GOOGLED THE RESORT BEFORE WE ARRIVED, BUT WHAT I SAW ONCE WE ARRIVED BLEW MY MIND! ”

The drive from the airport to the resort is about 5 minutes, meaning you could be at the Surf Shack (the resort's watersports facility) just 45 minutes after landing!

Once we arrived at Coconut Bay, Mia Chin, the Resort's Guest Relations Manager, greeted us with the biggest smile and the most delicious, refreshing cocktails. I had googled the resort before we arrived, but what I saw once we arrived blew my mind! Palm trees were everywhere: a watersports centre directly on the beach, eight restaurants, seven bars, five pools with three waterslides, a gym, tennis and basketball courts, and more!

Our vibrant and sunny room had gorgeous views of the palm trees and the main pool. Two bathrobes, slippers, and a kids' gift pack were provided for Ryan—you'll notice him wearing his blue cap throughout the whole trip!

WIND & WEATHER

The Caribbean islands enjoy a hot, tropical climate year-round, with temperatures for most destinations ranging from the high 20s Celsius in the winter to low 30s Celsius in the summer.

If you're planning a trip to Saint Lucia, make sure it's sometime between December and July. The windiest months are December and March. From December to March, the trade winds blow 18 – 25 knots and sometimes stronger. Coming from the Northeast, this gives a cross-shore direction at Coconut Bay. Some days, the wind averages 15 – 20 knots from March to July.

“ THERE IS A RELATIVELY UNDISCOVERED WAVE SPOT 10 MINUTES UPWIND THAT REALLY COMES ALIVE IN THE RIGHT CONDITIONS. ”

Speaking with the guys here at the surf shack, there is a relatively undiscovered wave spot 10 minutes upwind that really comes alive in the right conditions. The guys mentioned overhead-height left-handers coming in nicely with no one around to get in the way!

Between February and May, the weather is driest. Temperatures are pleasantly warm year-round, with average highs ranging from 25c to 30c at sea level, though it can be significantly cooler up in the mountains. You can expect typical Caribbean weather changes from rain clouds passing through to blazing sunshine.

You won't need a wetsuit, but we recommend you pack a rash vest to avoid sunburnt!

THE SURF SHACK / KITEBOARDING SPOT

The spot is suitable for all kitesurfers, regardless of your level. With waves on the outer reef and flat water inside the bay, there are choices for kitesurfers who like to vary their sessions. If you want to travel light, the Surf Shack has loads of kit available for rental, including kites, twin tips, surfboards, wings, foils and more. The instructors at Surf Shack are on hand for lessons and further coaching should you be looking for it.

The stunning area is a postcard-perfect holiday destination, so for families or mixed groups that include non-kiters, there's still plenty for them to do and enjoy.





“SEVERAL RIDERS I MET AT THE CENTRE VISIT YEARLY AND ABSOLUTELY LOVE IT.”

The Surf Shack is cosy with everything you need, including toilets, showers, a compressor, and a massive white sandy beach where you can land and launch your kite safely. We'd recommend you bring a snack and some water, as it's about a 10-12 min walk from the resort.

If you're travelling alone, you're in good hands! Linus, Notice, Jeremy and Andre will

instantly make you feel at home. There's a whole wall dedicated to the photos and postcards of previous visitors and returning guests. Several riders I met at the centre visit yearly and absolutely love it. We also met many pilots who kite at the surf shack during their layovers. As we mentioned before, Hewanorra airport is only 5 min away! They even gifted the surf shack a wind sock at the centre.

For kitesurfers not staying at the Coconut Bay Beach Resort, storage facilities are available, and it is possible to rent equipment, too, if you want to travel light.

They currently offer Naish gear at the Surf Shack. They also have loads of surfboards for rental.

It's worth mentioning that if you're travelling with your family, Coconut Bay Resorts offers a Kidz Klub for children between the ages of 12 and under with a variety of activities, including Finger painting, little tykes times, visits to the Animal Sanctuary, SPASH TIME!, and more. It's a walk-in service, so you can quickly drop the kids off and go for a session without worrying about booking in advance. They'll also give you a local cell phone to call in and check on the kids. They are open from 9 AM - 5 PM daily. They also offer a babysitting service in the evening, but you must book that beforehand.



“ IF THE WIND ISN'T WORKING IN OUR FAVOUR, THERE ARE LOADS TO DO AT THE RESORT ”

GETTING AROUND

Getting around the island is easy. There are shuttle services and private taxi services that run for the resort daily. You can also hire a car. We used drive-o-matic, and they were brilliant. The office is located exactly 3 minutes from Coconut Bay resort; ready to sign, they'll pick you up from the reception and take you to the office. They had all. Ready to sign, a car seat they'll, and the car was in mint condition. You can also drop the car off at the airport, which makes it super convenient to travel with a 3-year-old and loads of kite gear!

Free airport transfers are included for those staying at the Coconut Bay Resort, and other excursions can be booked through the resort tour desk. Alternatively, taxis are readily available at the airport and most resorts, which is a simple solution to get around.

NO WIND

If the wind isn't working in our favour, there are loads to do at the resort, including the pool/waterslides, daily entertainment, themed nights, foam parties and more. Coconut Bay Resorts also offers daily activities, including Poolside Bingo, volleyball, Aquacise, pilates, yoga, (and some more)

We highly recommend that you scout Vernon and take one of his Aquasize classes at the main pool—his energy is hard to miss!

Or if you decide to leave the resort, we recommend you contact Jean-Pierre or Tage from Travel Saint Lucia and ask them to take you to Soufriere.

“ YOU’LL GET GORGEOUS VIEWS OF GROS AND PETIT PITONS, JALOUSIE BAY, AND THE YACHTS IN THE CARIBBEAN SEA. ”

We spent a day out with them, starting at the Sulphur Springs Mud Bath, located to the southwest in the part of Soufriere, a name given by the French meaning 'sulphur mine' because of the town's proximity to the site. This is the most popular tourist destination on the island (If you time it to get there for 9:30ish, you'll easily beat the crowds), with about 200,000 visitors annually, and after that, make sure you visit the world's only drive-in volcano. I thought it was a dormant volcano, but it last erupted in the 1700s. The tour guide mentioned that they watch for signs that the volcano would likely erupt with monitors. If SO₂ is detected at a non-erupting volcano, it could be a sign that it will erupt soon. By monitoring the amount of SO₂ being emitted from an active volcano, it is possible to calculate the amount of magma that is supplying the eruption) They also monitor the animals' behaviour in the area; it was exciting to see, and we'd recommend you check it out.

Another recommendation, especially if you're into walking and photography, you should head to Tet Paul. You'll get gorgeous views of Gros and Petit Pitons, Jalousie Bay, and the yachts in the Caribbean Sea. You'll also be able to spot other towns, including Choiseul, Maria Island, and Vieux Fort. The views are truly breathtaking!

Another activity we'd highly recommend you check out is Fond Doux, located on a historic 19th-century working cocoa estate. Surrounded by rainforest, cocoa fields, and tropical gardens, this experience is authentic history, culture, and character.

PHOTO JACQUELINE HICKS



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“ HE WAS KNOWLEDGEABLE AND FUNNY AND KNOWN TO BE ONE OF THE BEST COCOA DANCERS IN SAINT LUCIA ”

It's 100% Saint Lucian-owned, managed, staffed, and considered among St. Lucia's leading sustainable resorts. Make sure you ask for Clinton! We had him as our guide, and he was brilliant. He was knowledgeable and funny and known to be one of the best cocoa dancers in Saint Lucia, and we got to witness it first-hand.

We also highly recommend exploring the island's northern part of the island. Rodney Bay has gorgeous views of yachts moored in the marina and at anchor,, accompanied by loads of vibrant bars and restaurants. As you venture beyond Rodney Bay, don't miss the opportunity to visit Pigeon Island. Originally an isolated island in the Caribbean Sea, it was ingeniously connected to the mainland in 1972 through the construction of an artificial causeway, utilising soil excavated during the creation of the Rodney Bay Marina. Pigeon Island,

characterised by its twin peaks, holds historical significance, boasting numerous forts, including an 18th-century British fort and Fort Rodney, strategically utilised by the British to surveil French ships from nearby Martinique. Recognised as a national park in 1979 and subsequently designated as a national landmark under the stewardship of the Saint Lucia National Trust (SLNT) in 1992, Pigeon Island stands as a testament to the island's rich heritage and natural beauty, awaiting your exploration - don't forget a good pair of walking shoes for this one, especially if you want to make it to the very top!



PHOTO CHRIS TAYLOR



“ CARRIBEANS LIKE TO PARTY. FACT! AND WE LOVED EVERY SECOND OF IT. THE RESORT HAS PLENTY OF ENTERTAINMENT FOR ALL AGES ”

FOOD & DRINK

Coconut Bay is an all-inclusive Resort with nothing short of variety when it comes to food. As I mentioned previously, they have eight excellent restaurants to choose from, from casual beachside to top-end fine dining, including Coconut Walk Market Place, which is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner and offers pretty much everything you could think of, including Miss Emee's Mamma Mia station, a grill, seafood, salads you name it. There are also themed dinners on the pool deck (including Caribbean Night and Country & Western), Flip Flops, a casual made-to-order grill, and Jerk Tree House, which is Caribbean cuisine and more!

We tried Silk, which serves Asian cuisine, and it was sensational; La Trattoria, which is a little more casual and set outdoors near Flip Flops and serves the most delicious Italian cuisine; and Calabash on our final night, which offers Caribbean cuisine and that I would have to say was my personal favourite.

There are so many choices to keep things interesting during your stay!

NIGHTLIFE

Carribeans like to party. FACT! And we loved every second of it.

The resort has plenty of entertainment for all ages, with themed evenings, films under the stars suitable for families, adult-only pool parties, music and

“ COCONUT BAY BEACH RESORT & SPA IS RIGHT ON THE SPOT AND IS AN AWARD-WINNING, ALL-INCLUSIVE RESORT. ”

poolside bars. There isn't much on offer locally around Coconut Bay Resort, but if you stay a little further away, you might find some local nightlife in some of the other main towns.

During our stay, we were lucky to witness Saint Lucia's 45-year independence day, which was one of the highlights! Singers and dancers overtook the pool deck, leaving the crowd in awe.

ACCOMMODATION

Coconut Bay Beach Resort & Spa is right on the spot and is an award-winning, all-inclusive resort. This is your best bet if you want to be as close as possible to the kitesurfing action and first on the water when the wind picks up. The resort is split into two sides – Harmony, which is adults-only, and Splash, which is family-friendly and offers more for kids. There are 250 rooms with a garden or ocean view and several suites. There are other accommodation options with resorts and hotels along the coast, though you will need transport to get to the kite spot if you stay elsewhere. If you decide to stay off-site, the watersports complex Surf Shack offers secure kit storage (for a charge) and equipment rental, which is available if needed.

There are an abundance of accommodations on the island, ranging from luxurious resorts to cosy Airbnbs and hotels. During the final leg of our trip, we stayed at the SeaView Apartments in Morne.



PHOTOS JEN TYLER



“ WE WERE TREATED TO THE SEVERAL MAJESTIC RAINBOWS GRACING THE HORIZON - TRULY UNFORGETTABLE! ”

True to its name, the property boasted breathtaking views of the sea. What pleasantly surprised us, however, was its prime location on top of a hill, offering panoramic views of the ocean, the rainforest, the domestic airport, and the lively cruise ship terminal. Lounging on our terrace, we found ourselves in a state of relaxation, yet still able to witness the vibrant energy and occasional rain showers coming in. And as if that weren't exciting enough, we were treated to the several majestic rainbows gracing the horizon - Truly unforgettable!

INTERNET

The Internet on the island is generally quite good, but of course, it depends on the connection available where you are staying. If necessary, check the details with the resort before you arrive. At Coconut Bay Resort, the standard connection is available in all rooms and central areas, and you can pay to upgrade to the premium, faster connection if required.



QUESTIONS JEN TYLER
WORDS TOM LOLIES
PHOTOS AIRWAVE


TECH FOCUS

AIRWAVE KITES

VIDA

Meet the VIDA, the latest addition to the AIRWAVE lineup! From the secrets behind its high aspect ratio to the absence of fibreglass rods, we'll unravel the mysteries that make the VIDA kite a game-changer in the racing and airstyle world. Discover the challenges faced and conquered during the VIDA's development journey and the groundbreaking innovations that set it apart. Check out our exclusive interview with AIRWAVE's Tom Lories right here.





" THE RIDER CAN SEND HIS POP WITH AN INCREDIBLE LIFT FORCE, AND THE HIGH ENERGY RETENTION WILL KEEP THEM AIRBORNE FOR A LONG TIME. "



How does the VIDA kite's high aspect ratio contribute to its agility and performance, especially in racing and airstyle conditions?

The main advantage of the high aspect ratio is a very high lift-to-drag ratio. As a result, the kite will go very far on the edge of the wind window and will cross it without losing energy. Combined with a lot of depower, the rider can send his pop with an incredible lift force, and the high energy retention will

keep them airborne for a long time. On the racing side, we want the kite parked as far as possible in the wind window to achieve incredible upwind angles.

You mentioned that the VIDA kite lacks fibreglass rods; how does this design affect the kite?

New racing kites now feature fibreglass rods, making these kites not very durable, impossible to fold, and hard to relaunch. The Vida is not like that;

designed with "free-racing" in mind, it features a robust construction and is incredibly easy to water relaunch for its category.

What role has Maxime Desjardins played in designing the VIDA?

He is the "free" in "free-race". He helped me trim the kite to the best compromise between pure race and airstyle. He is also our video star!

**" OUR INNOVATION LIES IN THE SMALL ATTENTION TO
DETAIL IN THE PROFILE SHAPE, PLANFORM, ARC, ETC.,
WHICH MAKES THE KITE FLY SO WELL. "**



What challenges did you face during the development process of the VIDA kite, and how did you tackle them to achieve the desired performance and usability?

The greatest challenge was to achieve high stability and ease of use with an outstanding depower at the same time. This was missing in the world of race kites. The main issue is that both characteristics are susceptible to tiny design changes to the profile shape, billow shape, arc, etc ... going through these parameters with prototypes alone would have been impossible. I thus used the new version of my simulation program, initially developed for powered paragliding sail design, to better refine the compromise between stability and depower. As a result, you will feel that the wind range is infinite on this kite with a wide usable trimmer range.

Are there any specific innovations or technological advancements incorporated into the design of the VIDA kite that set it apart from other kites in its category?

Our innovation lies in the small attention to detail in the profile shape, planform, arc, etc., which makes the kite fly so well. There is nothing in particular that you can see on the ground, but the feeling once the kite is in the air is unique.


QUESTIONS ROU CHATER
WORDS ROBERT BRATZ, ELEVEIGHT CO-FOUNDER

TECH FOCUS

ELEVEIGHT RS V8

We shine the spotlight on Eleveight's RS V8 kite, the latest addition to the RS lineup. It is designed with advanced materials that ensure optimal flight performance and durability. It has undergone tweaks and improvements that make it a versatile choice, highly praised by freeriders. It provides fun and flexibility across various disciplines and weather conditions. Find out more here.



A person is paragliding over a rocky coastline. The paraglider is wearing a dark suit and a helmet, and is suspended from a large, colorful kite with blue, orange, and black panels. The kite has a white logo on the top panel. The background shows a vast, hazy mountain range under a clear sky. The foreground consists of rugged, brownish rocks and some green vegetation. The ocean is visible at the bottom of the frame.

" WE ARE ALREADY WORKING ON THE NEXT VERSION BEFORE WE RELEASE THE NEW PRODUCT. "

PHOTO ANDRE MAGARAO

The RS has been in your lineup for a long time now; how do you start thinking about the new version, and what are the design goals for it?

Indeed, we're already in our 8th cycle this year, and our evolution continues. The production cycle for the next season's products already starts once we have approval for the current product. In this case, the new RS V8 started its production process in November 2022! It is a bit strange as it means that we are already working on the next version before we release the new product.

The initial thought at the first stage is very analytical. It reflects the findings of the previous production, some new developments in construction and material selection, and, of course, new ideas too. The second stage comes much later and reflects the feedback from the market and our team. Here, we focus on performance outcomes and related requirements for the next production.

The design goal for a product like the RS is fairly simple: we want to improve the kite as much as possible without touching its core DNA or main characteristics. More incremental changes refine the performance to make it the perfect all-rounder.

Materials have seen a huge change in recent years, whats new on the RS V8 and how did that affect the design process?

In recent years, we've tried to build different market segments into our lineup to reflect the different materials and their related performance. For the RS V8, we want to offer the right balance between intuitive flight performance and very durable construction, but the consumer price plays an important role in consideration. Some materials are very expensive and not necessarily the best material for the target market.



“ THE NEW XT LIGHT FABRIC IN THE 14M AND 17M SIZES INCREASES PERFORMANCE IN LOWER WINDS AS WELL AS THEIR TURNING SPEEDS TOO. ”

The RS V8 features our X4 ripstop and XT fabric which has a great balance. For the bigger sizes, we use XT Light for the inflatable structure which is lighter and stiffer to increase performance in larger kites.

Our high-end plus range features the RS DNA but uses top-of-the-line material such as Dynea Tex. As a result, the RS+ is more dynamic in flight performance but also comes with a different price tag.

What changes were made for this year's model?

For the RS V8, we made new panel cuts in the canopy to give more efficient lift and loops. The wingtip curvature has also been adjusted for dynamic turning performance, and the angle of attack has been

performance, and the angle of attack has been altered to enhance loop recovery and improve double-loop capabilities. The new XT Light fabric in the 14m and 17m sizes increases performance in lower winds as well as their turning speeds too. Finally, the bridle attachment points have moved further towards the tips for faster turns and reduced bar pressure, and a new 3D bridle deflector protects the kite from inversion.

The larger sizes are geared towards improved low-end and early power delivery; how did you achieve that?

This year, we paid special attention to the bigger sizes and their performance. By using XT Light for the

inflatable structure, we decreased the overall weight and related low-end capability, which also allowed us to fine-tune the sizes.

XT Light is stiffer than XT material and it gives the bigger sizes a more reactive feeling. The 14m feels like a 12m with very playful behaviour for a kite of its size.

It's billed as a versatile free ride kite, a category that is rather busy with offerings, what sets the RS V8 apart from the rest for the pack for 2024?

In the versatile freeride segment, we have a lot of competition, but we stand by our important vision: for Eleveight to be known for performance products.

We wanted a performance freerider with exceptional crossover potential. Over 8 years of development has gone into the RS and it's why it's by far our best-received kite in the lineup. The RS is loved by freeriders, and those who like to go big and throw some loops.

Our team love its fast turning speed for double loops, and it makes it also very playful in waves. We also include a turning trim set-up to allow you to fine-tune your kite.

How much of a performance differential is there between the RS and the RS+?

The main DNA of the RS and RS+ is the same with a fairly similar 3-strut delta hybrid design. However, the difference is in the used inflatable material and the related performance outcome.

The RS uses our X4 ripstop with XT fabric for the inflatable parts and offers intuitive and balanced flight performance. The RS+ uses our Dynea Tex which is a cutting-edge material for supercharged performance. In comparison with the RS, the inflatable frame of the Plus version is 30% lighter, the material is much stronger and stiffer, and we have 50% less elongation. The result is not only a lighter kite that's very dynamic, but it offers an ultra-direct feel.

For the RS+, having maximum structural stiffness with less deformation is a key advantage as it improves the turning speed, making it much loved by our looping big air guys - the RS+ is super responsive !!! Furthermore, the strong Dynea fibres maximise durability with more form stability under load.



" OUR TEAM LOVE ITS FAST TURNING SPEED FOR DOUBLE LOOPS, AND IT MAKES IT ALSO VERY PLAYFUL IN WAVES. "



What sort of rider should have the RS V8 on their shopping list?

The RS is the right choice for any kind of freerider. Most of us like to be versatile, and we face different conditions at our home spots or while on kite trips where we need one kite in our quiver for the job. The RS is the right companion and a classic all-rounder.

It might be the perfect flat water session with some nice tricks, or the time to go big when the wind picks up, and you want to break some records, or even if the waves are pumping and you want to show off some strapless tricks and big turns with your directional. The RS will help you to progress in all disciplines and offers you a tonne of fun!

QUESTIONS ROU CHATER
WORDS DES WALSH
PHOTOS ANDRE MAGARAO & SAMUEL CARDENAS

TECH FOCUS

NVISION TWINTIPS

Naish is dedicated to exploring new horizons when it comes to materials and designs for their products. Their latest innovation, the Nvision, is a testament to this commitment to pushing boundaries. In this Tech Focus, Des Walsh delves into the features and benefits of the Nvision and what sets it apart - From its lightweight construction to its innovative design, the Nvision promises to deliver an unparalleled experience for riders of all levels.



PHOTO ANDRE MAGARAO



We're seeing the Nvision moniker across the Naish range, and it seems to be geared towards lighter, high-performance equipment. What makes the difference for the Nvision twin tips?

Yes, that is correct. The Nvision products are all about anticipating the future and exploring new possibilities in designs and materials. The Nvision Twin Tips uses proven designs and the most advanced materials to deliver the ultimate ride.

Foam was always used in the original kiteboards, and they had a habit of snapping until the wood cores came along circa 2004. How hard was it to use the foam in conjunction with the wood core, and what were the benefits?

Some of the earliest twin tips were crafted with high-density foam cores. Back then, boards were smaller and less wide, often paired with larger kites. Surprisingly, these boards held up fairly well. However, as riders began pushing boundaries with higher jumps and faster and harder landings, pure foam core boards wouldn't withstand the pressure.

The advantage of employing a hybrid core, combining high-density foam with wood, lies in achieving the necessary strength where it matters while reducing weight in other areas. Different foam types offer varying benefits, requiring thorough testing to ensure optimal performance for each board. Determining the ideal placement of wood and the appropriate amount of foam has been a process of trial and error.

" THE NVISION PRODUCTS ARE ALL ABOUT ANTICIPATING THE FUTURE AND EXPLORING NEW POSSIBILITIES IN DESIGNS AND MATERIALS. "





**" OUR GOAL WASN'T JUST TO CREATE THE
LIGHTEST BOARD POSSIBLE; WE ALSO
AIMED FOR OPTIMAL PERFORMANCE. "**

PHOTO ANDRE MAGARAO

What is special about the 3k Carbon, and how does it differ from standard carbon?

The 3K Carbon stands out due to its specific weave pattern of the cloth and the number of filaments. We chose 3K carbon for these boards because it offer the ideal balance of flex characteristics and durability that we were looking for.

Were you able to get a good balance of flex and torsional stiffness with the new materials?

By carefully adjusting the design and thickness of the board, we achieved a good balance of flex and torsional stiffness. Our goal wasn't just to create the lightest board possible; we also aimed for optimal performance. Soft flex provides comfort but can limit big manoeuvres. After numerous prototypes and feedback sessions, we found the right balance where weight and performance met expectations. While some ultra-light boards generated excitement, they couldn't match the performance of slightly heavier ones, leading to a noticeable decline in riders' abilities.

Why did you choose the Motion and the Alana for the Nvision treatment?

We selected the Motion and the Alana for the Nvision treatment because they are tried-and-true designs suitable for all riding styles and skill levels. Additionally, their flex and torsional stiffness complemented the hybrid core exceptionally well.

How much weight do you save roughly, and what are the performance advantages?

Depending on the board's size, we typically save at least half a kilogram in weight. The lighter weight, combined with the carbon construction, allows riders to feel every subtle movement of the water and

PHOTO ANDRE MAGARAO



PHOTO SAMUEL CARDENAS





“ WE ARE COMMITTED TO PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES WITH MATERIALS AND DESIGNS TO EXPLORE NEW POSSIBILITIES. ”

PHOTO ANDRE MAGARAO

experience rapid, reactive flex. If you seek an active ride and want to maximise performance in any conditions, these boards are the ideal choice. Additionally, the Nvision boards utilise the ICP 0.15mm top sheet, further reducing weight while ensuring durability.

Does it take much skill to unlock the performance gains or will the average rider be able to feel the benefit?

Most riders will notice the performance gains immediately. However, it may not be the perfect fit for every rider. In rough water conditions, some may prefer a heavier board that ploughs through chop with less reactivity.

Will we see more boards getting the Nvision treatment in the future?

We may not necessarily see more boards receiving the

the Nvision treatment in the future, but we are committed to pushing the boundaries with materials and designs to explore new possibilities. The NVISION project is also a challenge for our R&D team to Envision what is possible for the future. Our Naish Vision!



CLEMENT HUOT JOINS HARLEM KITESURFING

Clement Huot recently moved to Harlem Kitesurfing and tells us all about his first impression of the kites and how he sees this switch making a massive impact on his progression.

Keep an eye out for Clement Huot!



Clement Huot, congratulations on your recent move to Harlem! What motivated your move?

I had a great experience working with Alex and Victor. They were very pleasant and professional, and the quality of their work on the material was truly impressive. When I used the kites for the first time, I immediately noticed how much easier it was to progress and have fun.

Harlem Kiteboarding stands out for its unique kites; what aspects of the company's philosophy resonate most with you?

The company appears to be very family-oriented, with a focus on two key aspects: first, their shared love for kites, just like mine, and second, their commitment to providing kites that are more affordable, efficient, and eco-friendly.

"I IMMEDIATELY NOTICED HOW MUCH EASIER IT WAS TO PROGRESS AND HAVE FUN."





“ THEIR ADVANCEMENTS ARE TRANSFORMING THE SPORT OF KITING. ”

What are the key differences you've noticed in the Harlem kites when it comes to Big Air?

The word that comes to mind is easy! Going into 40 knots is always scary, but with these kites, everything becomes easier.

What kiteboarding tricks are you currently working on? Will we see some of them at Lord of Tram?

Triple loop and doobie contra board off double loop - I hope to have the conditions to do it again!

Have you and the Casati brothers had any training sessions together yet?

Yes, we've enjoyed good conditions at Barcares, and it's always a pleasure to be with them. They're always so smiling and pleasant—they're a great family!

How do you see the kiteboarding industry evolving, and what role do you believe Harlem Kiteboarding will play in its future?

They are innovative in the pursuit of better performance, and their advancements are transforming the sport of kiting.

What are your plans for 2024? Do you have any exciting projects you want to share with us?

This year, I want to return to the King of the Air and push my progress!

Thanks, Clement; we're looking forward to seeing what the next chapter brings!

Thanks, Jen!

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SPRING 2024



- WILD TIREE -

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Put the popcorn on, it's Movie Night!

MOVIE NIGHT

#1

LARGEST WAVE KITESURFED - GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS

With over 4K views, prepare for an adrenaline-packed Movie Night as we dive into the action with 'Largest Wave Kitesurfed - Guinness World Records!' Watch Patri McLaughlin conquer a monumental 22.5m / 72' 4ft bomb at Jaws, landing at #1!



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#2

TWO UP, ONE DOWN (MOST EXTREME KITESURF STUNT)

#Throwback to a decade ago, remember 2Up, 1Down? Well... it's back! Join Stig Hoefnagel, Stijn Mul, and Giel Vlucht as they resurrect the heart-pounding thrills of a legendary kiteboarding stunt like no other!



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#3

THIS KITE SESSION COST \$9,000

\$9,000 Kite Session, anyone?! Find out more here! Landing at #3 on our Movie Night list, join Mike MacDonald as he talks us through his spenny session and unveils the latest BAKL updates.



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#4

THE JEZUS DIP

Just because it's cold in the Netherlands doesn't mean Jamie Overbeeks is spending any less time on the water or is getting lazy with his innovation! Landing at #4, Jamie introduces us to his latest move, the 'Jesus Dip,' in this video.



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TITOUAN GALEA ENJOYING THE FRUITS OF HIS LABOUR!
PHOTO GILL C