

ksurf!

ISSUE 105

JUNE/JULY 24

WELCOME TO IKSURFMAG

Welcome the World's Number One Kitesurfing Magazine! In this issue, Rou Chater asks a pertinent question: Has Big Air Killed Kiteboarding? It's an interesting synopsis; with such a huge focus on getting high, are we forgetting all the other wonderful facets of our sport? We think so! We also sat down with Cabrinha head honcho Jon Modica for an in-depth

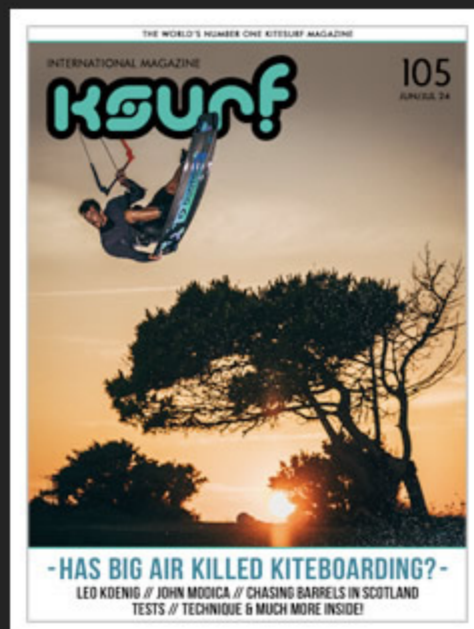
chat about how things have been going since he took over the brand a few years ago. The Eleveight team got cosy on a catamaran in the Mediterranean; did they get seasick? Find out here. Rou chats with Leo Koenig, the founder and CEO of WOO Sports for Intriguing Beings. On top of all that, we have tests, techniques with Christian and Karine, tech features and lots more inside!

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INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE

ksurf!

105
JUN/JUL 24



- HAS BIG AIR KILLED KITEBOARDING? -

LEO KOENIG // JOHN MODICA // CHASING BARRELS IN SCOTLAND
TESTS // TECHNIQUE & MUCH MORE INSIDE!

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



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COMPETITION



EDITORIAL



HAS BIG AIR KILLED
KITEBOARDING?



THE INTERVIEW -
JON MODICA



ELEVEIGHT ON
LOCATION IN SARDINIA
AND CORSICA



INTRIGUING BEINGS -
LEO KOENIG



FROM HARLEM TO
NECKER ISLAND



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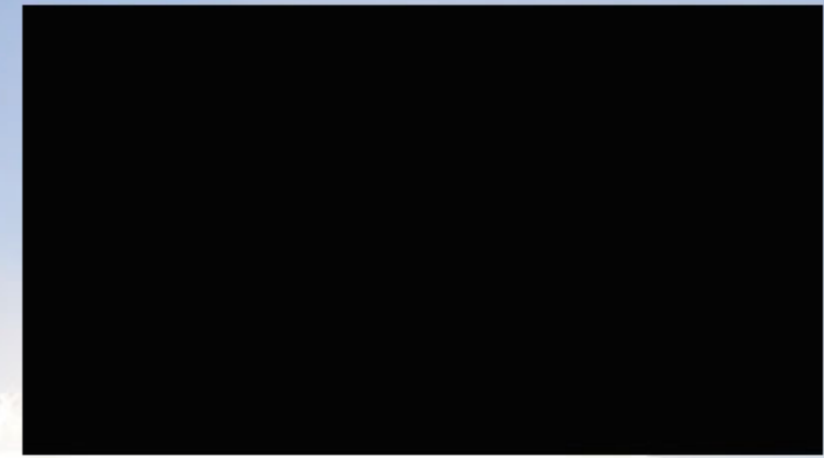
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LUCAS



Sometimes, life can be shocking, cruel and unkind.

I've known Lucas Arsenault for a long time, and while we might not get to hang out all the time, he's always struck me as a true beacon for this sport and an ambassador of fun wherever he goes. The first time I spent real time with him was at a youth rider camp in Sicily in 2018. Pro riders are an interesting breed, and young ones can be even more intriguing.

Often blinded by the innocence of youth and a passion for the sport that knows no bounds, they can

be hard to connect with. Maybe that's because I'm what these young riders consider ancient today, but Lucas was different. I was there to give the Cabrinha Youth Team some guidance working with the media, which I have done for groups of youngsters on several occasions over the years. Often, it seems to wash over their short attention spans, sometimes equating to a brief career in the sport.

I remember Lucas as attentive, helpful, and charming to a fault. He was the only rider who followed up with

me after the event about good ways to work with the media. Furthermore, he carried that enthusiasm and willingness to help into his pro deal with Cabrinha. Lucas was recently made the team manager, and deservedly so; he's a poster boy for someone who has carved a career for themselves with hard work, determination, and a winning smile.

Over the years, I've spent time with him in Mexico, the US, and Europe, and he's always been the standout. Needless to say, with his infectious character, we became good friends. With a mutual love of The Big Lez Show and his colossal appreciation for my daily weather forecasts for FacePlant, that friendship grew. He's genuinely one of the nicest people in the sport and is always willing to help; whether packing up after a long day of shooting or continually hitting the same trick in the same spot to get the shot, he always has a smile on his face.

Hailing from Canada and spending lots of time in the Turks and Caicos, he's well known to the North American and Caribbean markets. If you are reading this, there's a good chance you have met him at a Cabrinha demo over the years. I expect he would have left a lasting impression.

Sadly, on the 23rd of May this year, Lucas was attacked by a shark while snorkelling with family and friends in the Turks and Caicos, where his parents have a home. I can't even begin to imagine what this was like for him, and the injuries he suffered were severe and life-changing. He's lost his right leg above the knee and suffered severe muscle and tendon damage to his left arm and leg, making his recovery all the more difficult. He is, however, thankfully still with us, as this could have been so much worse.



It's the sort of horrific injury you wouldn't wish on your worst enemy, let alone one of the nicest guys ever to be part of our incredible sport. Fortunately, Lucas is surrounded by friends, family, the Cabrinha team, and the wonderful community that makes up kiteboarding. His grit, tenacity and determination are on his side, too, and his incredible personality and positive attitude will help a lot.

I've no doubt that Lucas might well become one of the best adaptive athletes our sport will ever see, but that's a long way down a winding and rocky road. For the moment, he's focused on healing from his wounds and not getting infections. He's returned to his native Canada and has a fantastic group of people around him to help as he recovers.

There's a GoFundMe set up to help Lucas when he needs it. If you are feeling generous, you can click [HERE](#) to donate.

Incidents like this remind us that life is incredibly short, challenging, and often full of obstacles. It's how you deal with them that counts. Lucas will handle this in his own immutable way; for the rest of us, it's worth remembering that anything can happen, and we should cherish our health and happiness and all the good things in life that we have.

Kitesurfing is one of those good things; get out there whenever you can, while you still can...

Heal fast, Lucas.
Rou Chater
Publishing Editor

WORDS ROU CHATER

With the spotlight firmly on big air right now, does it come at the detriment of the many facets of our sport, or even perhaps the very sport itself? At the risk of being burned at the stake, Rou Chater dives deep into the abyss...



HAS BIG AIR KILLED KITEBOARDING?



“ WITH A HUGE, POWERFUL KITE, SUDDENLY YOU DIDN'T NEED A DEGREE, MASTER'S, PHD AND DOCTORATE IN WINDSURFING TO BE ABLE TO JUMP TEN FEET. ”

The rampant rise of big air kiteboarding is undeniable, and if you are fairly fresh into the sport, say five years, and perhaps consider yourself an old hand, then it might be all you know. But believe it or not, it wasn't always like this. Sometimes, a bit of history and context can be a good thing, so let's start there.

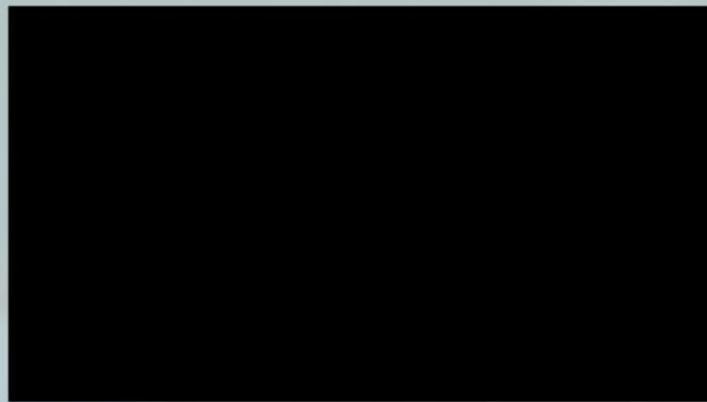
When kiteboarding first hit the water in the late nineties, the thrill was undeniable. At the time, windsurfing was the big water sport, and while it had developed into a crazy behemoth of a sport with intricate tricks and loops, it was hard. To get good at windsurfing took years, perhaps a decade, to even get close to being good. It was a hell of a time investment, and that was a huge barrier for a lot of people.

Then along came kitesurfing, or kiteboarding, depending on which side of the pond you are on. With a huge, powerful kite, suddenly you didn't need a degree, master's, PhD and doctorate in windsurfing to be able to jump ten feet. Literally, any idiot could simply steer the kite and get launched into oblivion. The landing was a different story; landing on the water in one piece was another matter altogether.

The hook was obvious if you are reading this because you kite and know the buzz and adrenaline of hooking in and launching a death machine above your head. Thankfully these days, we've got the safety side of things a little more dialed, but a kite will quite happily hand your ass to you on a plate all the same, given half a chance.

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“THE FOCUS WAS SO FIRMLY ON THIS STYLE OF RIDING THAT IT DOMINATED THE PRODUCT DESIGN CYCLE, AND IT WAS ALL YOU SAW ON BEACHES”

At the sport's inception, jumping big was the thing. Then came the spins, loops, and board-offs, all backed by the basic premise of jumping big. Now, for the newcomers, you might not believe this, but as kiting evolved in the mid-noughties, wakestyle riding took over, and suddenly, using the kite to gain height for a trick was deemed a huge no-no.

And I mean huge. Riders were ridiculed if they performed any tricks with the kite above 45 degrees or sent the kite back in any way. In competitions, you got marked down for it. Foot straps were uncool, and it was all about riding boots and trying to pretend you were a wakeboarder, just with a kite and not a boat. It wasn't necessarily a good thing for the sport, but that is immaterial.

Beginners learning to kite wanted to master the handle pass or raley (note the spelling of that trick; there is no l in raley). The focus was so firmly on this style of riding that it dominated the product design cycle, and it

was all you saw on beaches; riders were just looking to progress their freestyle tricks. The whole industry was focusing on this: competitions, equipment, media, everything said sending a kite to go big was just not cool, and people who did were very much on the fringe.

There were a few exceptions, well, maybe one; Ruben Lenten, while still doing all the freestyle and wearing boots, would occasionally go out in some mega storm and send it as he perfected the Megaloop. We published a video of this in 2006 in our first issue, but when you consider that it was 100 pages of freestyle and one nod towards the intriguing storm chasing Ruben was doing, it gives you an idea of the zeitgeist of the time.

“MITU MONTEIRO, AIRTON COZZOLINO, AND MATCHU LOPEZ SEEMINGLY CREATED THIS GENRE OUT OF NOWHERE, AND NOW IT WAS MAINSTREAM.”

So, for context, big air hasn't always been cool. In fact, if you do a board off at a spot, you might be treated back on the beach like a pig at a bar mitzvah. Of course, Freestyle/Wakestyle had its moment in the sun, quite literally, but with kiteboarding being such a diverse sport with the ability to ride so many different types of craft, it didn't last forever.

I've got Fiddy bucks for anyone who can tell me who the current top three riders are on the GKA freestyle tour... I'll keep my money because 99% of you don't know. Heck, I'd have a good guess myself, but I'd be wrong. Freestyle, wakestyle—it's dropped so far off the radar of the masses that it's untrue.

It's not the only victim, though. I remember being excitedly told once that there were more people riding strapless surfboards in Tarifa than there were twin tips. Why's that important? Well, if you've ever been to Tarifa, you'll know it's just about the world's worst wave spot. Every once in a blue moon, when the moon aligns with Uranus, it gets a wave, but it's a twin-tip spot and always has been.

What caused this rare natural phenomenon, strapless freestyle? Mitu Monteiro, Airtón Cozzolino, and Matchu Lopez seemingly created this genre out of nowhere, and now it was mainstream. Brands were selling more surfboards than twin tips. The Mitu Monteiro Pro Model from F-ONE was the best-selling board in the world for a number of years.





“KITING IS SO GOOD AT BEING SO MANY THINGS TO SO MANY PEOPLE. IN MY EYES, A GOOD KITER SHOULD BE ABLE TO EMBRACE ALL ASPECTS OF THIS SPORT.”

All the media, competitions, and brands were focused on this, and it was a kind of wild time. In my opinion, it wasn't very inspirational for the average kiter. The tricks were so impossibly hard that it was difficult to see how you could ever go from being a humble beginner to pulling an unstrapped triple front roll.

However, it caught the mood then; it seemed like Strapless was here to stay. The brands were selling more surfboards than twin tips. Just ponder that for a moment. It was a crazy time for sure in kiteboarding's storied history. Then, like a bolt from the blue, the hydrofoil arrived...

They'd been around for a while, but in 2015, they were popularised from a racing niche to the mainstream, with brands like Liquid Force and Slingshot getting reasonably priced, easy-to-ride gear to the market. Suddenly, kiting was all about foiling... Although foiling never took off like strapless did, it made up a considerable chunk of the brand's turnover for a while.

And here's the rub: Kiting is so good at being so many things to so many people. In my eyes, a good kiter should be able to embrace all aspects of this sport. They should be proficient on a twin tip, able to throw a few unhooked tricks, capable of riding a surfboard in the waves, bust a few strapless tricks, and know their way around a foil...

Sadly, a lot of these skills are becoming forgotten arts... It's a big air fault...

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“IT’S THE KIND OF DOMINATION THAT I’VE NOT SEEN IN THE SPORT BEFORE, AND I WORRY THAT IT’S SLOWLY KILLING KITEBOARDING.”

Ten years ago, the King of the Air gave Big Air a rebirth. From small acorns, it developed into the behemoth it is today. The world’s biggest kiteboarding competition caught the attention of the masses in a big way. However, there was a product that helped turn Big Air into what it is today.

In January 2015, the WOO was launched. This little blue box promised to end the speculation of who could jump the highest once and for all. It is an accelerometer that you attach to your board, with a cool interface and an app that allows you to compete not only on a global level but also locally with your mates. Personal bests, mini competitions, and the gamification of kiteboarding were born.

Fast forward almost ten years and big air is bigger than any discipline in this sport.

Everyone talks about it, watches the live streams, knows who’s pulling the latest tricks and gives thousands of little thumbs up on the social media shorts accompanying your morning coffee.

It’s the kind of domination that I’ve not seen in the sport before, and I worry that it’s slowly killing kiteboarding. Before you call me a witch and grab a pitchfork, hear me out...

Kiteboarding has been a success because of its diversity. You can be many things when you are a kiteboarder. You can be a beginner, intermediate, or expert. You can ride a twin-tip, surfboard, or foil.

“IT’S NOT EVEN SOMETHING NEW RIDERS ASPIRE TO OR HAVE ON THEIR RADAR BECAUSE ALL THEY WANT TO DO IS GO BIGGER AND BIGGER AND RIDE STRONGER AND STRONGER WINDS...”

You can ride flat water, waves, or obstacles in the park. You can cruise in light winds or go big in strong winds... You have a freedom that not many other sports offer.

Big air, for me, is stifling that. When was the last time you rode a kitefoil, slayed some waves, or busted some unhooked tricks? Kitefoiling feels like a forgotten art; it’s not even something new riders aspire to or have on their radar because all they want to do is go bigger and bigger and ride stronger and stronger winds...

This leads me to my next point: Kitesurfing is a sport that can be enjoyed in such a wide range of conditions. It’s why I got into the sport; the thought of being able to cruise in 12 knots on a huge kite was a massive draw for me. These days, the biggest kite in the average quiver is 12m. Naish once produced and sold a 30m kite. Ponder that for a moment, haha.

Worse than that, most kites are just hunting stronger and stronger winds so that they can boost higher and higher, and when those conditions don’t come, they are bummed out... I read WhatsApp groups complaining about a lack of wind, and I think to myself, I’ve been on the water every day this week, and it’s been incredible.

Kiteboarding should be about embracing every possible opportunity to get on the water and be free, whether on a twin-tip, surfboard, skimboard,





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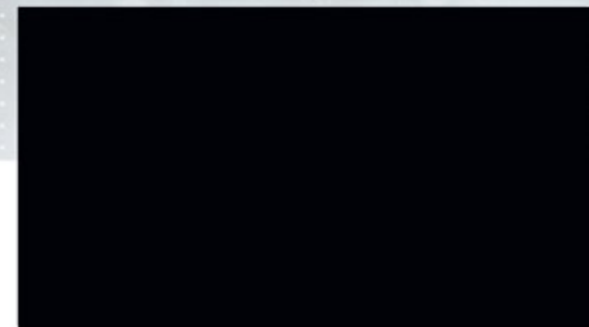
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“ WHILE SENDING IT TO THE MOON IN 40 KNOTS IS A WHOLE BUNCH OF FUN, WE’RE SO MUCH MORE THAN THAT ”

foil, wakeskate, or even a tea tray. Kiteboarding is about having fun, and while sending it to the moon in 40 knots is a whole bunch of fun, we’re so much more than that, and I feel like, as a sport, it’s getting lost in the big air hype.

This also means that the development money within the sport is being spent in one particular place. There is a huge pressure and focus on brands to have a big air kite, and that is where the bulk of the prototyping and development goes, at a detriment to other products in the lineup, and that’s a bad thing for you as a kiter...

There’s a good chance you are reading this thinking, “I’ve got a foil, a surfboard, a twin tip, and I get out whenever I can, no matter the conditions”. Kudos to you; you are one of the few... There’s a higher chance you are reading this, having long since sold your foil and surfboard, and you’re addicted to looking for purple colours on Wind Guru and checking the leaderboards on WOO daily.

That’s fine too, and kiteboarding is about doing whatever the hell you like after all, but maybe, just maybe, think about the endless possibilities this amazing sport offers us. Then think if you are maximising your opportunities or sulking at a wind forecast that is only 20mph...

As a magazine, we have always tried to embrace every aspect of this sport and support it. Moving forward, we will continue to do so. It’s an exciting year for kiteboarding, after all. With the Olympics in Paris coming up this summer, how many of you wish it was a big air event, though? I rest my case.

“DREAM ABOUT THOSE MAGICAL STORM DAYS IF YOU WISH, BUT DON'T FORGET EVERYTHING ELSE THIS INCREDIBLE SPORT CAN BRING YOU.”

Kiteboarding is arguably one of the few sports that allows us to do so much once we have learned the basics of flying the kite. If we keep pigeonholing it into just being focused on big air, then the danger is that the sport dries up and becomes about one thing...none of us want that!

Why would it dry up? Windsurfing did the same thing years ago; it went from being a fun sport you could do in any condition to a sport purely focused on high-wind, adrenaline-filled action. The problem is that the weekend warriors with day jobs who are the backbone of the sport get despondent.

There are only 52 weekends in the year. If they spend a few of those at family functions, 50% aren't windy, and they are only happy if it's blowing 30mph plus so they can get their WOO on; the sport is doomed. They'll get disenfranchised, try other things, discover road cycling is more bang for their buck (it isn't), and we lose more kites.

If it can happen to windsurfing, it could happen to us, but if we embrace the many arms of kiteboarding as solid aspects of the sport worth pursuing, we can keep the dream alive...

I firmly believe that it's a dream well worth keeping alive. Dream about those magical storm days if you wish, but don't forget everything else this incredible sport can bring you. It's quite literally the stuff dreams are made of!





THE INTERVIEW

QUESTIONS ROU CHATER

JON MODICA

Rou Chater catches up with Cabrinha's Chairman of the Board, Jon Modica, to discuss taking over the company, product development, relocating the headquarters to Miami, the brand's pro team, future plans for the company and much more. Read all about it in this issue's "The Interview."



" I HAVE AN AMAZING TEAM THAT BALANCES MY FEEDBACK WITH THEIR DAY-TO-DAY RESPONSIBILITIES."

Hi Jon, I hope you are well. It's been a few years since you took over at Cabrinha. How has it been going, and has it turned out how you expected it to?

I've definitely learned to expect the unexpected! When we took over, we knew we'd face many challenges inherited from the previous owners. While we were relatively prepared for this, we could never have anticipated the extraordinary events brought on by COVID-19. Fortunately, one of the reasons I got

involved was because of the incredible people at Cabrinha & Adventure Sports. I knew we could overcome any obstacle, and I'm proud to say we did.

Kent Marinkovic heads up most of the day-to-day operations. How hands-on are you with product design and involvement, rider picks, and other such matters?

Yes, this is a common point of confusion. Kent is the CEO of the company for a reason. While I'm extremely passionate about certain areas of the business,

there are many aspects that might surprise people with how little I get involved. As Chairman of the Board, my role is to represent the other owners of the company. Although product development isn't typically part of my duties, I have an amazing team that balances my feedback with their day-to-day responsibilities. I usually get more involved in products designed for lighter wind conditions because I live in Florida, where it's often light. This creates a perfect balance, as most of the product team is based in very windy areas.



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The products coming out of the factory are a few steps ahead of where things were before you took over. What are you incredibly proud of in the range for 2024?

We've definitely invested a lot of time and energy into product development. When we took over the company, it was almost stagnant in this area due to the previous owners' dire financial situation. The new Apex construction is something I'm particularly proud of, and it probably hasn't received the attention it deserves. Our team managed to significantly enhance the performance of all our kites without a substantial price increase. While experimenting with materials has become the new norm, I believe the Apex range offers the best value for improvement available.

We heard the Miami office, with its Hawaiian heritage, is going to become the brand's main headquarters. How difficult was that decision to make, and what advantages do you get from being based in Miami?


Maui will always be the heart and home of Cabrinha, and we continue to have a dedicated team there actively working on product development. However, Miami serves as our business office, being closer to the market and more convenient for travel. Therefore, it made sense to shift more of our team to Miami.

The markets in the UK and Europe have taken a dive lately. How is the US market holding up at the moment?

Certainly, there is a lot more happening in the EU and UK compared to the US. While COVID impacted the entire world, the EU and UK have also faced multiple wars and other economic challenges.

" OUR TEAM MANAGED TO SIGNIFICANTLY ENHANCE THE PERFORMANCE OF ALL OUR KITES WITHOUT A SUBSTANTIAL PRICE INCREASE. "





" I WILL ALWAYS BE THANKFUL TO EVERYONE WHO HAS SUPPORTED THIS BRAND AS MUCH AS I HAVE OVER THE YEARS. "

It's a tough time for everyone there. The US has fared somewhat better, but the current oversupply issue is causing significant difficulties for US dealers, so they are not without their struggles.

There has been a run of bad luck here, with war pushing up prices and hitting consumers in the pocket. How are you navigating these tricky times as a brand, and what advantages do you have as a business?

Many industries are grappling with inflation and rising costs, making it hard to complain without sounding tone-deaf compared to what others are facing. Typically, wind sports have been relatively recession-resistant. However, I believe our industry is feeling the economic strain more acutely than in previous years, though I remain optimistic about the future. Cabrinha has many strong assets, but our greatest strength is our community of supporters. I'm often in awe of their loyalty and am extremely grateful for it. I will always be thankful to everyone who has supported this brand as much as I have over the years.

Do you feel like the good times are due to come back for the sport as a whole?

I feel they are already on their way! There is so much to be excited about. We have one of the best-structured tours in history, numerous new events for both professionals and amateurs and a variety of new sub-sports offering unique wind experiences. Plus, we have some very special new Drifter kites coming next year—wink wink.



You have a relatively lean pro team at the moment. Was that by luck or planned, and has that helped you navigate these more challenging times?

Quality over quantity? We certainly prioritize individuals we want to grow with as athletes and beyond. It's important to me to provide professional riders with a pathway to a career in the industry. I'm proud to be part of a brand that focuses on team members who fit our long-term vision rather than just short-term gains. Quite a few of our current staff operating through our network of retailers and distributors came through Cabrinha's team and ambassador program. Even myself! I started off my journey in the sport as a national rider in the US, and lots of the people I currently work on day to day basis with were part of that journey. This certainly forms part of the Cabrinha DNA and is clear to see at each dealer meeting we host.

" I'M PROUD TO BE PART OF A BRAND THAT FOCUSES ON TEAM MEMBERS WHO FIT OUR LONG-TERM VISION "



ELITE SURF/KITE BOARD BAG WITH SLIDER WHEELS

The Prolimit directional surfboard boardbag for traveling and daily use, featuring patented and newly developed Prolimit slider wheels.

The slider wheels are a new and patented innovation by Prolimit. Uniquely constructed wheels, which can be mounted UNDER the bag, lift the bag to a comfortable height, roll better, and with the Slider base, the wheels can be mounted quick and easy and stowed away when you travel by air in the separate Slider wheel bag.


WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED.



PROLIMIT

RIDER STIJN MUL
PHOTO JAMES BOULDING



A high-angle photograph of a kitesurfer riding a wave. The surfer is wearing a black wetsuit and is leaning back, holding the kite's control bar. The wave is breaking, creating white foam and spray. The background shows the ocean and a clear sky.

" I'M WAITING FOR THEM TO GET OLDER SO THEY CAN START TRAVELLING WITH ME AND EXPERIENCING ALL THE AMAZING PLACES AND COMMUNITIES. "

We know you're a very keen rider, and there was talk of you entering the GKA wave events. Have you found the time to do any of those, or are you planning to do any in the future?

I am definitely eager to compete again before I officially enter the master's division! While I'm not sure if I'm at the level to qualify for tour events, I'm certainly going to give it a shot within the next year! **Miami has generally light winds and small waves.**

Where's your favourite place to get some decent wave-riding action, and when was your last getaway?

I live in Jupiter, FL, about 1.5 hours north of Miami. The waves may not be amazing, but the people at the beach and the general atmosphere make it one of the best places in the world to kite, in my opinion!

Are you ever tempted to get involved with any of the photo shoots?

It was great to see the brand shooting in Tiree last year. Is that somewhere that you'd like to visit?

Believe it or not, I've never been to a Cabrinha photo shoot! That might need to change soon. I'm always eager to visit new places. Now that I have two kids, I'm waiting for them to get a bit older so they can start travelling with me and experiencing all the amazing places and communities out there.



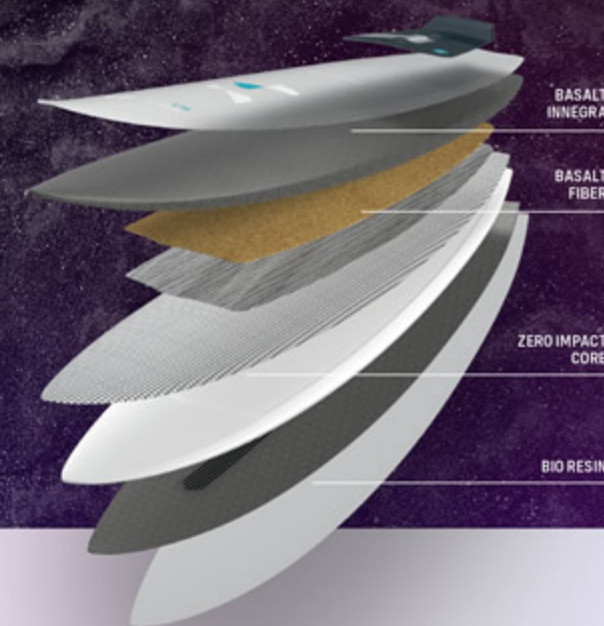
Is Cabrinha working on anything exciting for the future regarding materials that we should be aware of or that you can talk about? This is where we are seeing the biggest advancements in kiteboarding right now.

We explore many ideas that don't make it to production. My goal as a brand is to find a better balance between high-quality materials and affordable pricing. We achieved this with the Apex product line. It's been amazing to see this noticeable step-up in performance that customers feel when demoing these products while remaining incredibly competitive on price. That said, I believe there's so much more potential to unlock and without saying too much, our Design Works program looks at these possibilities and emerging materials. Hopefully, you'll be seeing some of this in our upcoming products soon!

" IT'S BEEN AMAZING TO SEE THIS NOTICEABLE STEP-UP IN PERFORMANCE "

T
R
U
E

DUOTONE



VOLT ^{S/L/S} CONCEPT BLUE



TAKE YOUR RIDING TO THE NEXT LEVEL

SMALL WAVES



VOLT SLS CONCEPT BLUE

CONCEPT BLUE INFO



" HE HAS SUCH A WEALTH OF KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE PRODUCTS WE MAKE "

What's your proudest moment since taking over the brand?

Bringing Pat Goodman back was a game-changer! The first year without him just didn't feel quite right. Once he rejoined the team, it truly felt like home again. He has such a wealth of knowledge and understanding of the products we make, and he has an infectious personality full of energy and passion! His back catalogue of competition-winning kites is substantial, and he's played a huge role in our current kite range. All the kites have that special P.Goodman feel that really just puts the fun into kiteboarding and gets people grinning ear to ear as they come in from a session.

What was the toughest challenge?

Sending off all the great prototypes to other team riders! Ha. Overall, we've navigated many rapid changes in the industry, but for me, the toughest moments have been when members of our team have faced personal struggles. It's through these tough times, though, that the power of the group shines bright, and it's humbling to see the dedication, passion and care shown by every person who plays a part in the brand.

What are you looking forward to in the future for Cabrinha?

Finding new and innovative ways to bring wind sports experiences to everyone is key. Focusing on the products is easy, but the experiences create lasting memories. As a company, I hope we can continue to support and enhance these experiences.

STELLAR



LIMITLESS
BIG AIR
PERFORMANCE

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BASALT CARBON
CONSTRUCTION

GREENPOXY
PLANT-BASED MATERIAL

CFT VENTURI
CHANNELS

ELEVEIGHT 



Fider: Kármán Haliste / Picture: Korfi Haliste

ELEVEIGHT.WORLD

ELEVEIGHT ON LOCATION IN SARDINIA AND CORSICA

Five content creators sailed to Sardinia with Eleveight to capture the magic. Caroline Morris managed the production, with Kaimar Halliste and George Kintis as the pro riders, Cristiano Adorno shooting video content, and Kerli Halliste behind the camera. Thanks to Kite2Sail, they discovered a paradise kite cove in Corsica, making kitesurfing history on camera. Go behind the scenes with the Eleveight crew here!



“CAPTAIN MARCO TOOK US TO THE MOST STUNNING KITE SPOT I HAVE EVER SEEN, AND GEORGE WAS LITERALLY READY TO KITE BEFORE THE BOAT EVEN ANCHORED.”

CAROLINE MORRIS -
ELEVEIGHT'S CONTENT MANAGER

I put the project together after an opportunity arose that I couldn't ignore. I was catching up with Lea from Kite2Sail, and she suggested I join their yacht for a sail around Sardinia, which sounded like an offer I shouldn't refuse! After some musing, I gave her the idea to see if we could turn the trip into a media shoot, and she very much agreed to have our entire team on board. Before I knew it, I was planning the production schedule, having never worked from a boat before!

I selected the team based on glimmers of 'magic' I'd spotted, and they all offered something unique to me, but we'd not met before, so staying together in the confines of a boat would be a test for my theory. Sure enough, the team slipped into their natural roles from the get-go, and the Kite2Sail crew facilitated everything perfectly.

On the first morning, Captain Marco took us to the most stunning kite spot I have ever seen, and George was literally ready to kite before the boat even anchored. Just as well he did, as he managed to get out in a fleeting breeze to foil with the new OS V5. Our videographer, Cris, has bags of personality and probably the most energy out of everyone, and he was ready to capture George against the idyllic backdrop of Isola Tavolara.

Besties George and Cris constantly spark ideas with each other, spring into action, skipping lunch to get on the water, and taking every possibility to capture beautiful video. Cris has become quite the FPV drone pilot and can get that thing into impossible angles,





“ THE MEDIA TEAM AND CAPTAIN GEARED UP TO SEE IF WE COULD GET ONTO THE ROCKS AND BASE OURSELVES THERE FOR FILMING, AND IT ALL WORKED OUT PERFECTLY. ”

so the pair did their utmost not to miss a beat. His energy is infectious and reflected in the riders pushing to do their best on camera for him, even if it meant diving into cold water repeatedly.

Kaimar is more calculated, finding the right time to score the best wind window for the day and helping shape where we travel. Thanks to his focused study of the forecast apps, he was able to suggest where to go for

the most promising wind. This led us to Corsica, where we sailed past Bonifacio to find the perfect turquoise stage for our shoot. Cris wasted no time putting the drone up to survey the area, and the riders started exploring a secret cove with rocks to jump off. The media team and captain geared up to see if we could get onto the rocks and base ourselves there for filming, and it all worked out perfectly. We filmed for 2.5 hours in nature's paradise playground, with George and Kaimar jumping off the cliffs, sending floaty airs and dark slides, and Jesus walking close-up. Cris was in the water using water

housing to capture above and below the water line, Kerli was perched below me, and I was up high on the tripod filming from an additional angle.

The boys were on the water, yelping in delight, and even though the wind was light, they could find all sorts of new ways, inventing moves and using the rocks and scenery around them. Cris switched from filming in the water to taking out the FPV drone for amazing action and panoramas. Kerli was making noises of wonder below me and confirmed it was the most beautiful shoot she had ever done. She has such an eye for photography that she can capture the magic in any situation and a great creative vision in the action shots she wants to achieve.



Her ability to direct the riders from a small splashing dinghy in 360 really stood out. My production side was always busy organising gear, directing the team to meet objectives, and stepping in where needed, but I couldn't wish for a better team!

KAIMAR HALLISTE - ELEVEIGHT TEAM RIDER

Wow, that was a crazy cool week on the yacht! I will do it again soon, as we discovered many epic hidden spots! I really loved shooting from a boat because you can sail everywhere with it and follow the wind according to the conditions. The yacht was super good for shooting and filming because you could choose all the necessary angles.

" I REALLY LOVED SHOOTING FROM A BOAT BECAUSE YOU CAN SAIL EVERYWHERE WITH IT AND FOLLOW THE WIND "

WORLD WORLDS

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BEST VIDEO

For more information about the competition or events visit - wooworlds.com

“ THE TRIP WAS INSANE, AND ALTHOUGH I WOULD HAVE LIKED MORE WIND TO SEND SOME TRICKS, WE COULDN'T HAVE IT ALL. ”

The magical after-surf vibe it offers with sunsets and fishing on the yacht is something for my soul.

Shooting with these talented friends is something different. Their spirit is just insane; they always put 100% into everything, and you can see it in the results. So many crazy cool ideas about shooting arose, and everything was so easy for me working with the team because they loved what they were doing. We understand each other without even saying anything. This is something magical!!! I already saw the content results, and they gave me goosebumps!! Everything was perfectly organised during the shoot, and we couldn't have done it without Kite2Sail hosting the crew!

GEORGE KINTIS - ELEVEIGHT TEAM RIDER

The kitetrip with Eleveight and Kite2sail was one of the nicest experiences I've had in a while. The feeling of actually following the wind on a catamaran and being able to wake up in the heart of the nicest spots in Sardinia, pump a kite, and launch in zero time is just insane.

There were great vibes with all the crew, and my teammate Kaimar made our filming so much fun. The communication with our videographer Cris and our photographer Kerli was excellent, making us enjoy every minute of kiting.

The trip was insane, and although I would have liked more wind to send some tricks, we couldn't have it all. We managed to get the coolest shots, being very creative with every possible scenario we could think of.

“ THE SECRET COVE WAS REMOTE AND FAR OUT TO SEA AND ONE OF THE BEST SPOTS I HAVE EVER SEEN FOR KITESURFING. IT WASN'T BEGINNER-FRIENDLY, BUT OF COURSE, OUR PROS PERFORMED. ”

CRISTIANO ADORNO - VIDEOGRAPHER

I'd never been on a catamaran or sailed before, so I was very stoked about the opportunity. However, I discovered the boat could be challenging at times due to the shaking on board, and I had to have the right equipment and work on the editing to make the shots as smooth as possible. It was also amazing to be so flexible in finding spots.

I used a variety of lenses, a gimbal stabiliser, waterproof housing for above/below-waterline shots, a DJI drone for cinematography, and an FPV waterproofed drone for acrobatics and aerial shots.

The highlight for me was sailing to another country to catch some wind and hunt the best spot, as the forecast was relatively light for the week. Once in Corsica, I flew the drone to a channel I had seen on Google Maps and found a slice of paradise hidden between the rocks. The Secret Cove was remote and far out to sea and one of the best spots I have ever seen for kitesurfing. It wasn't beginner-friendly, but of course, our pros performed. The FPV came in handy as there were many gaps and holes in the rocks for my drone to jump through and capture the action!

Throughout the week, we all bonded and coordinated amazingly without knowing each other before. In such a short time, we could perform well as a team. The boat allowed us to get to know each other pretty quickly!



“ THE GUYS WERE READY TO SURF FOR A LONG TIME, THEY HAD A LOT OF IDEAS AND A LOT OF ENERGY AND SOOOO MUCH POSITIVE VIBE! ”

KERLI HALLISTE - PHOTOGRAPHER

It was a really cool experience photographing surfers from a catamaran. We were able to move to where the wind and conditions were best at the time, and you could shoot surfers in all directions. It was so amazing! It was very special when we reached the perfect spot of paradise, with light blue water, sun, and interesting rocks in the water — everything was perfect.

When taking photos from a catamaran, it's difficult to move where you want as there are ship masts everywhere, and you have to be careful not to fall into the water. When you are in full-focus shooting, you don't watch where you step, but luckily, the Captain helped so much! He was always ready wherever we needed him.

I work with a Sony a7iv (hybrid full-frame camera) and lenses: 35-150mm (zoom lens) and 20mm (wide-angle lens). The light was great, and the sun shone every day. We also got rain one day, but then there was no wind anyway!

All of us in the team met each other for the first time, and we didn't know how we fit in, but we were a dream team from the first moment. Everyone contributed their maximum, and it was fantastic. The guys were ready to surf for a long time, they had a lot of ideas and a lot of energy and soooo much positive vibe! We could discuss very well with the videographer who would take pictures and film from which angle and when. The cooperation was perfect.





Intriguing Beings

WORDS ROU CHATER

THE LITTLE BLUE BOX

LEO KOENIG, CEO/FOUNDER OF WOO SPORTS

Rou Chater sits down with Leo Koenig, the founder and CEO of WOO Sports, to discuss the highs and lows of a company that quite literally changed the game for kiteboarding. If you've never heard of the WOO, then there is a chance you've been living under a rock. The small blue box known for bringing both joy and pain has likely been attached to your board at some point during the last ten years or so. If you are a real fan, you might even have a few of them stuck here.



" TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES HAVE ENABLED WOO TO CREATE A PRODUCT THEY TRULY STAND BEHIND "



Sitting down with Leo was a great opportunity and an interesting conversation. I recommend you listen to the full episode on Spotify or wherever you get your podcasts. It's an insightful journey into Leo's passion for making kitesurfing fun. There is no denying that the WOO is a bit of a marmite device. You either love it or hate it, likely depending on your own experiences with it over time.

The WOO 4.0, a groundbreaking product that entered the market a few months ago, is being acclaimed as the ultimate WOO.

With its new and improved hardware, the company believes it has not only met the physical demands of kiteboarding but also that the device now consistently delivers impressively accurate results.

WOO was established back in 2013, with the first WOO hitting the market in 2015. The brainchild of Leo, he was determined to definitively answer the question of who jumped the highest. At that time, technology was just beginning to emerge, and this could make this a reality. Fast forward to now, and technological advances have enabled WOO to create a product they

truly stand behind, not only in terms of durability but also accuracy, which has always been the company's goal.

I asked Leo about the origins of the business and his background in mechanical engineering, which he studied at university.

You don't start your career thinking you will do something entrepreneurial—at least I didn't. But I studied mechanical engineering and always had an interest in technology, physics, and understanding things. Back then, I lived in Boston and worked two different jobs. One was in product design. So, I followed my true engineering background and everything I've been taught at university.

" THERE ARE PLENTY OF GOOD, ACCESSIBLE BEACHES, A GREAT COMMUNITY, AND GREAT PEOPLE. "

I did that for a year and a half, but it was a bit boring. I don't want to say boring, but you don't get to make design decisions as an engineer. You're just executing someone else's ideas, and you always have in the back of your mind that you could do it smarter, you could do it better, but you can't do it. So there was a little bit of a lack of freedom at that, at least at that time, I felt. At that time, I thought it would be a good move to go perhaps to a bigger company. So I joined a big software company that does software for mechanical engineers, worked a bit more on the commercial and the sales side, but quickly kind of got caught up in the corporate American business world and politics and those kinds of things. And really wasn't too enjoyable as well. And I think both parties found out quite quickly that we're not a good match in that sense. And then you start brainstorming a bit.

I was kiting a lot in Boston. There are plenty of good, accessible beaches, a great community, and great people. When you're on beaches, naturally, the topic comes up. Did you see my jump? Did you see how high this was? And I don't know what the exact kind of initial kickoff was, but there's always one thought that starts everything right.

There must've been a thought at one point, like, huh, couldn't we measure this somehow? So I started tinkering around with strapping a phone to the board and getting some of that data from the sensor. And we very quickly found out that it's quite doable. Then, the next question is, can you commercialise something like this?

Around this time, companies like Fitbit, Jawbone, and other wearables, Nike FitBand, for instance,

" I WAS ABLE TO CONVINCHE THEM TO QUIT THEIR DAY JOBS, JUST LIKE I DID, AND START THIS VENTURE "

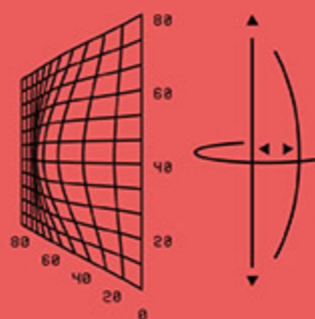
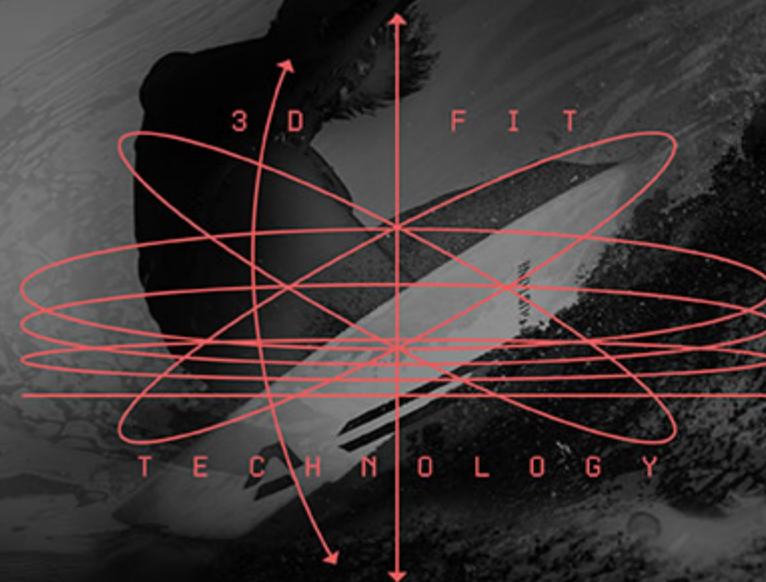


came around and showed that all the components necessary to do something like this are available in a low-power consumer environment. This means that you can fit it into a small device, you have connectivity via Bluetooth, and you have enough processing to do the math.

The next step was to find a team and start a business. Two friends of mine who were kiting in Boston back then as well, I was able to convince them to quit their day jobs, just like I did, and start this venture, and off we went. It was very hard to pinpoint where exactly it started, but these things sometimes naturally develop, and I kind of felt like this was what I was meant to do at that time.

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SURFING ELEMENTS



If you remember the early WOOs, 1.0 and 2.0, you'll remember that hardware issues were often a problem. Leo was really honest in his answer to my questions on this.

There were some issues with 1.0 and 2.0, particularly with waterproofing and corrosion resistance. We had those pins on there for charging, and they would start to corrode if they weren't rinsed in fresh water. Those early issues cost us a lot in warranties and caused us a lot of frustration. They also created a lot of unhappy customers and problems. We could have avoided a lot of these things if we were just more of a product-focused company.

In the early days, my mind was 100 % on running the business and everything that goes with it. That distracts you from the really important things, and what you learn at the end of the day is that a supplier or a third party that does design work for you will never care quite as much as you do. And so there were some hiccups, some lessons learned. However, I think with Woo 4 .0 it's really the first time we were able, just from a pure resource standpoint, to refocus our internal resources on that physical product itself. We were really able to make sure, you know, late nights and testing, testing, testing, and all sorts of iterations and everything to ensure this thing is bombproof. So it took us a while. But yeah, it was a challenging time early on, for sure. Lots of blood, sweat and tears.

I also asked Leo about the new device and how different it was from the original. If you, like me, had an early device but gave up on it because of the issues, it was interesting to hear Leo's answer.

" IT WAS A CHALLENGING TIME EARLY ON, FOR SURE. LOTS OF BLOOD, SWEAT AND TEARS. "



" I THINK THE BIGGEST CHANGE, AT LEAST FOR ME AS A MECHANICAL ENGINEER, IS THE PURE PLASTICS SIDE OF THINGS. "

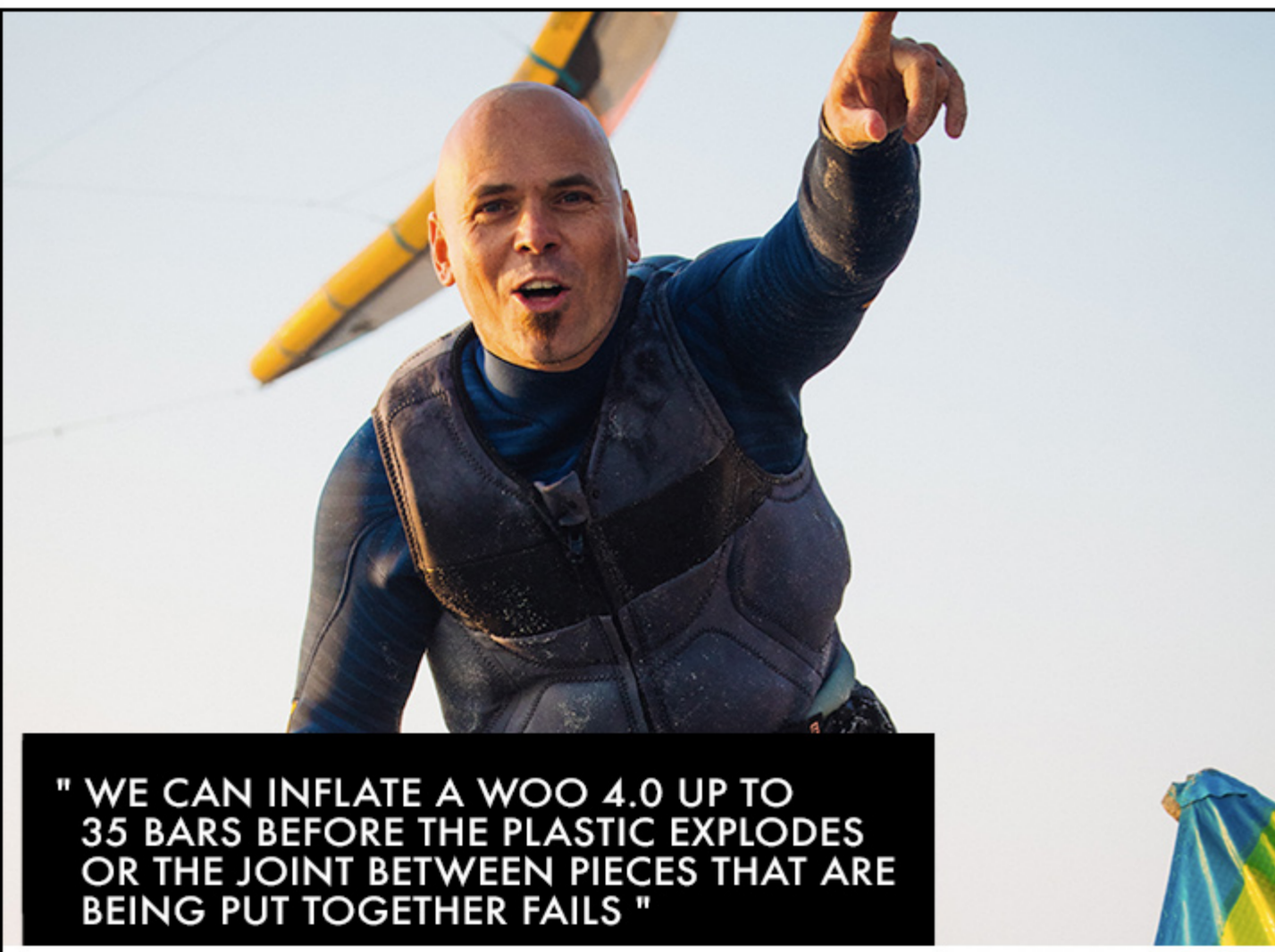
I mean, it's a combination of many things. You mentioned already that technology improves. So, the two main components that we have on our electronic side are the processor and motion sensor. So how much of a workload can that processor have? Multiple factors have increased that from our first device to the new one. Then, of course, the motion sensor itself has gotten a lot, lot better. So back then there were devices that had much more noise, which were just less accurate, harder to calibrate and so forth.

That's one part, just merely the electronics is a night and day difference. You can easily say, let's take a laptop or a phone from 2013 when we started and take one from today and just look at the screens and everything, right? It's a night-and-day experience. So, it's the same internally for WOO as well. The second thing that really played a big role was the experience that we gained with the product.

All the little details on choices of materials and components are a big, big thing. So we as a team learned as well. Of course, our developers over the years had more and more data. By now, we have granular data for almost every single jump in our servers that's being transmitted because we have a better Bluetooth connection. We can do that because Bluetooth improved over the years as well.

I think the biggest change, at least for me as a mechanical engineer, is the pure plastics side of things. Effectively how this device is built and how it's being sealed. We have wireless charging now, so there are no more contacts on the outside. From a glueing standpoint, we made it so much better, and this is some of the testing that we've been doing.





" WE CAN INFLATE A WOO 4.0 UP TO 35 BARS BEFORE THE PLASTIC EXPLODES OR THE JOINT BETWEEN PIECES THAT ARE BEING PUT TOGETHER FAILS "

There have been hundreds, if not thousands, of products being destroyed and tested to destruction in an effort to find the best kind of combination of materials, glue and geometry for really waterproofing them. Now we can inflate a WOO 4.0 up to 35 bars before the plastic explodes or the joint between pieces that are being put together fails; you have to wear safety glasses and duck for cover when that happens.

The frustration we had from our users was never, hey, you know, I bought your product, it's boring, can I give it back? It was always, hey, I bought your product, and I'm having so much fun. I just went on vacation to beat my record, and now it no longer works. That's just heartbreaking when you get this, you know that it's because at the end of the day, you didn't do your job. So that's the hard part.

HADLOW

FIND OUT WHY THE G.O.A.T. AARON HADLOW JOINED THE HARLEM FAMILY

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You can't be too hard on yourself because you'll drown otherwise. But yeah, you got to at least take ownership and say, yes, that's our job. And finally, with 4.0, we had the time and the resources to do it right. And 4.0 came out exactly the way we wanted it to. So that's great. But yeah, it's a night-and-day difference between the 1.0 and the 4.0.

It was easy to see Leo's passion throughout the interview. We chatted for 90 minutes, so this is a mere snippet of what we talked about. I asked him about cheating with the WOO and how they monitor that, as well as the darker side of the device and how it has encouraged riders to perhaps put up bigger kites in conditions they can't handle.

We certainly covered a lot of ground, and it was a really interesting chat with a very dedicated kiteboarder who really wants to spread the fun of the WOO far and wide. It definitely changed my perception of WOO for the better. However you feel about the device, if you listen to the podcast, you'll no doubt love it a little more after listening to Leo chat with real enthusiasm about the product he's created.

STIJN
Team Netherlands

▲ 10.3m

" WE HAD THE TIME AND THE RESOURCES TO DO IT RIGHT. AND 4.0 CAME OUT EXACTLY THE WAY WE WANTED IT TO. "

JOIN RIDERS WORLDWIDE SCORING SESSIONS ON WOO!

BAPTISTE
▲ 18.6m

WOO LEADERBOARD		
Misty Cliffs, ZA		
1	BAPTISTE	29.3m
2	CYRIL	27.2m
3	AARON	26.7m
4	JAN	26.6m
5	STIG	26.2m
6	STIJN	25.1m
7	ANDREA	24.5m
8	VAL	24.4m

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105 INTRIGUING BEINGS

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FROM HARLEM TO NECKER ISLAND

Harlem Kitesurfing's CEO, Alex Morgenstern, and team rider Lorenzo Casati attended a sustainability-focused event on Sir Richard Branson's private Necker Island. Morgenstern presented Harlem's eco-friendly innovations, and Casati showcased the ability to customise their kites. The event emphasised the importance of sustainable partnerships and highlighted the alignment of Harlem's vision with the island's ethos. [Click here to read more about it.](#)



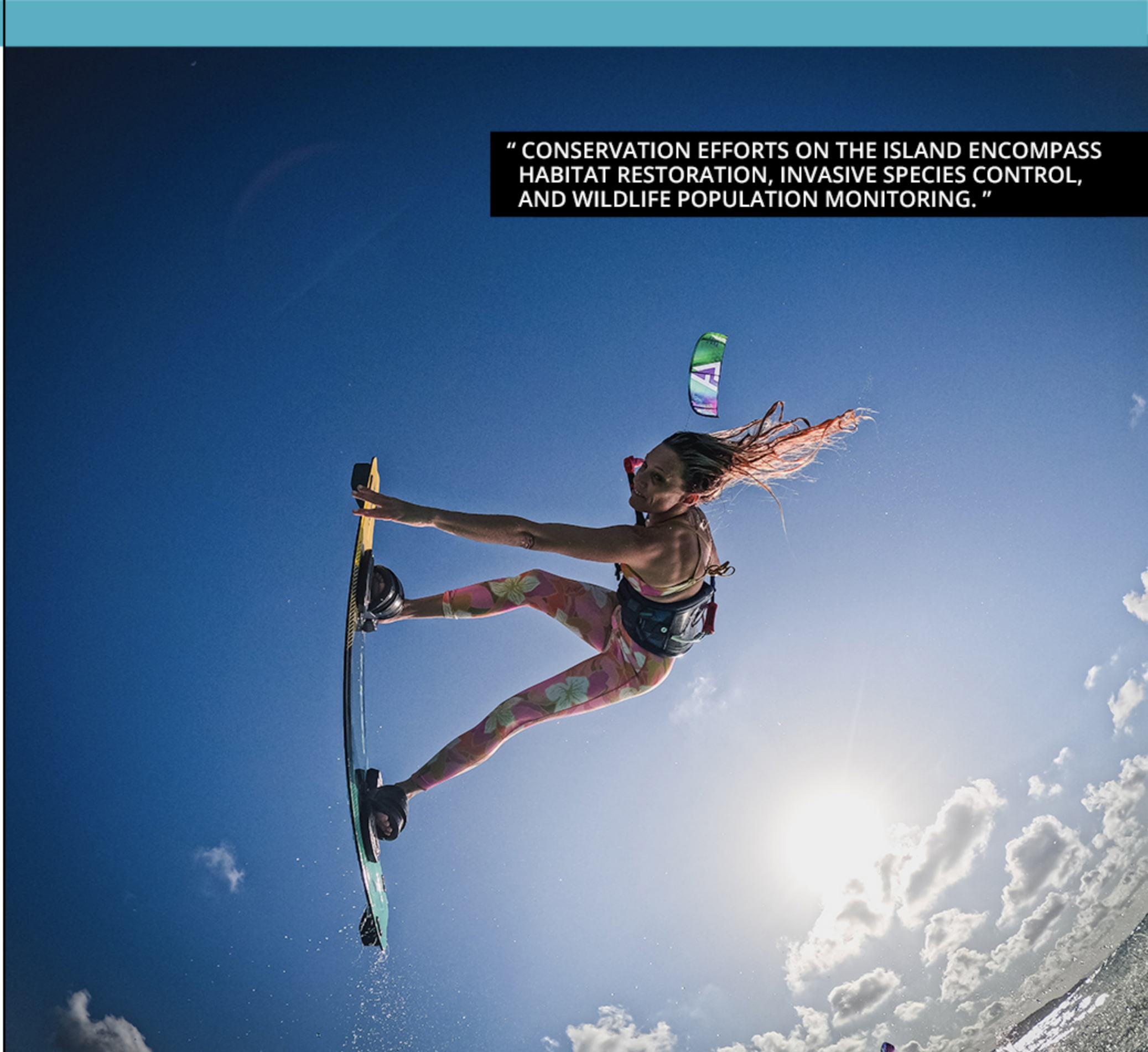
In the midst of Europe's chilly winter, Harlem Kitesurfing's founder and CEO, Alex Morgenstern, alongside team rider Lorenzo Casati, embarked on an exhilarating Caribbean escape, setting their course for none other than Sir Richard Branson's private paradise - Necker Island.

Invited by pro kitesurfer and ocean activist Susi Mai and Greater, Germany's leading coaching platform, the Harlem duo joined a vibrant community of entrepreneurs from diverse industries, alongside business leaders and experts, converging for a 4-day immersion in collaboration and networking at the "Visionary Mastermind" event organised by the platform.

Part of the British Virgin Islands, Necker Island is renowned for its dedication to sustainability and conservation initiatives. The island is a haven for diverse, carefully protected and preserved wildlife. Conservation efforts on the island encompass habitat restoration, invasive species control, and wildlife population monitoring.

Necker Island also champions sustainable practices, utilising renewable energy sources like solar panels and wind turbines, implementing water conservation measures, and promoting organic farming. This combination of environmental stewardship and luxury travel makes Necker Island a prime example of harmonious coexistence between nature and human activity.

" CONSERVATION EFFORTS ON THE ISLAND ENCOMPASS HABITAT RESTORATION, INVASIVE SPECIES CONTROL, AND WILDLIFE POPULATION MONITORING. "





“ SHARED PASSION FOR KITESURFING FORMED THE HEART OF THE DISCUSSIONS ”

Innovation, sustainability, and shared passion for kitesurfing formed the heart of the discussions and cooperation during this action-packed gathering on the pristine island. The group shared their knowledge, experiences, and collective commitment to pushing the boundaries of sustainability and setting new standards within their respective sectors.

YOUR LIFETIME IS IRREPLACEABLE
 YOUR LIFETIME IS IRREPLACEABLE
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 YOUR LIFETIME IS IRREPLACEABLE



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 Your lifetime is irreplaceable.
 Call the crew and ride!



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" HARLEM GAME CHANGER KITES ARE MADE WITH PREDOMINANTLY LOCALLY SOURCED RAW COMPONENTS "

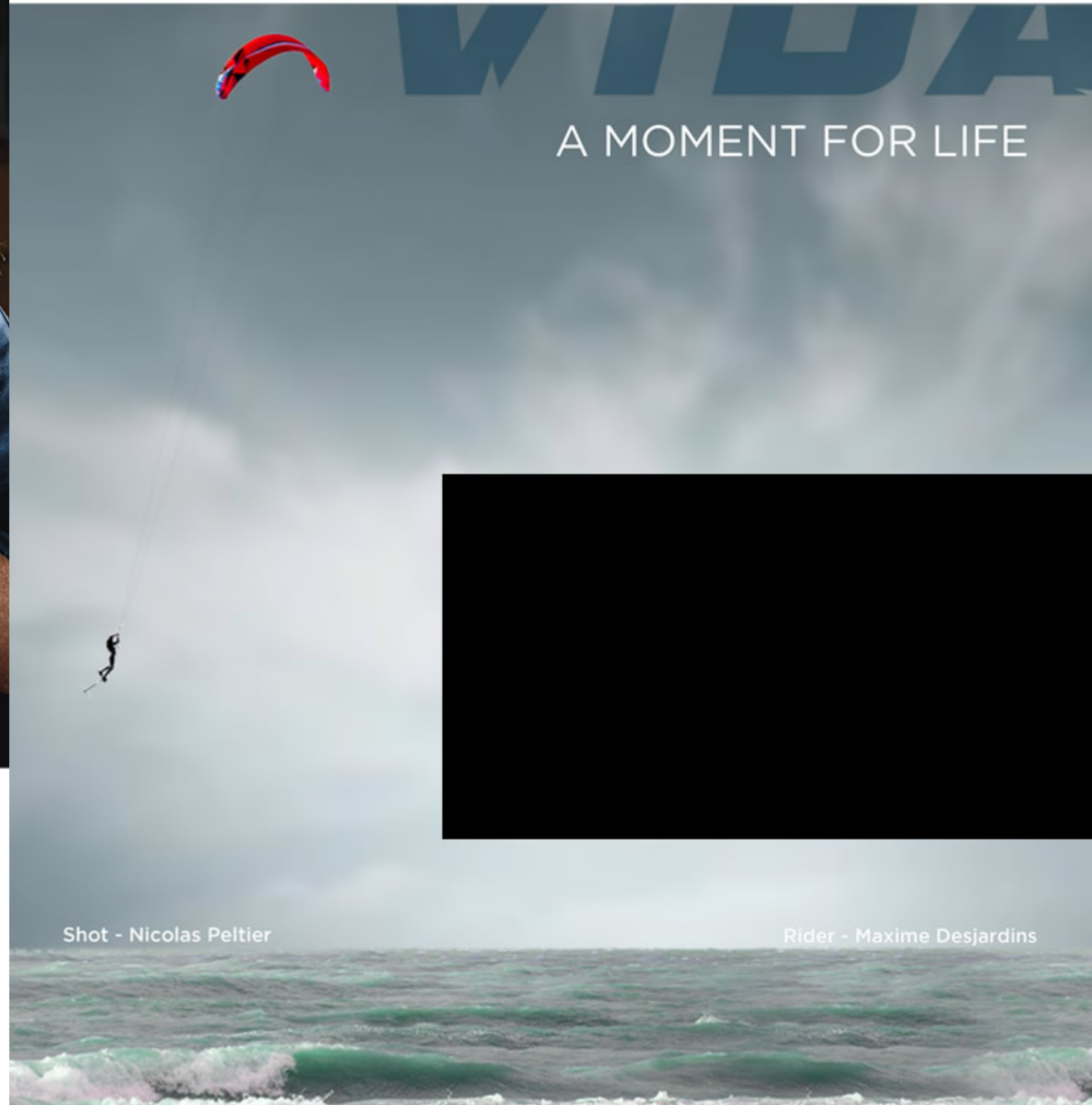


In a captivating presentation, Alex Morgenstern delved into the sustainability ethos of the Harlem brand, unveiling the latest eco-friendly innovations and customisation features implemented into the Game Changer Lineup kites. Produced at Brainchild Production, the first sustainable, fully solar-powered production facility in Europe, Harlem Game Changer kites are made with predominantly locally sourced raw components and, where possible, recycled raw materials, to elevate the usage of recycled materials to an impressive 90% by 2029.



WINDA

A MOMENT FOR LIFE

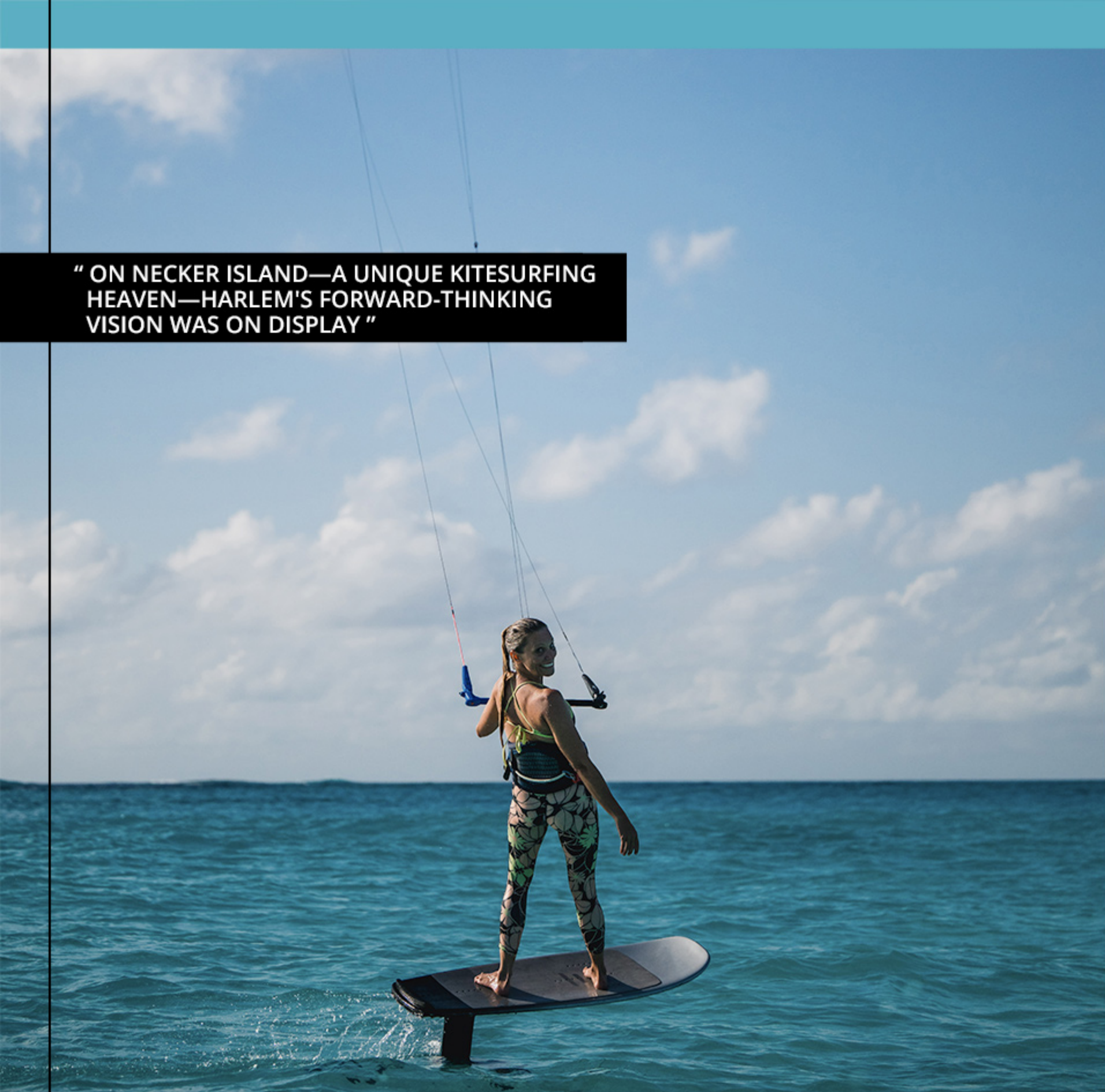


Shot - Nicolas Peltier

Rider - Maxime Desjardins



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



“ ON NECKER ISLAND—A UNIQUE KITESURFING HEAVEN—HARLEM'S FORWARD-THINKING VISION WAS ON DISPLAY ”

The Game Changer Lineup also features innovative digital eco print technology that uses non-coloured fabrics and eco-friendly ink, saving up to four times more water and energy than traditional methods while reducing significant amounts of waste.

“Sustainability is no longer just a buzzword but a critical component of our future success. By coming together, we had the opportunity to forge sustainable partnerships that will not only benefit our businesses but also have a positive impact on our planet”, shared Alex Morgenstern in reflection of the event's impact.

Beyond networking, this event illustrated the essence of fostering social connections across industries and entrepreneurs, shaping the trajectory of their future strategies.

During the collaborative gathering, former King of the Air Lorenzo Casati led a stellar clinic showcasing the cutting-edge technologies of Harlem's kites. He put on a show that wowed the crowd. He spotlighted the customisation abilities of the Game Changer lineup due to the innovative digital printing technology utilised, unveiling the limitless advertising opportunities it presents to global businesses.

A kitesurfing enthusiast and entrepreneurial icon, Sir Richard Branson loves innovation and living in harmony with nature. On Necker Island—a unique kitesurfing heaven—Harlem's forward-thinking vision was on display, aligning seamlessly with the island's ethos.

Follow for part two of the story as we reveal some exciting projects coming very soon.

Tom Court hadn't been on a decent kite trip for ages, but a promising weather system on Scotland's northern coast delivered an unforgettable kiteboarding experience. Join him as he recounts the highs, challenges, and pure stoke of kitesurfing Scotland's wild highlands in this exclusive feature!

THE FREERIDE KINGDOMS

WORDS TOM COURT PHOTOS SAM SCADGELL RIDERS TOM COURT & ROSS WILLIAMS

PART #1 SCOTLAND

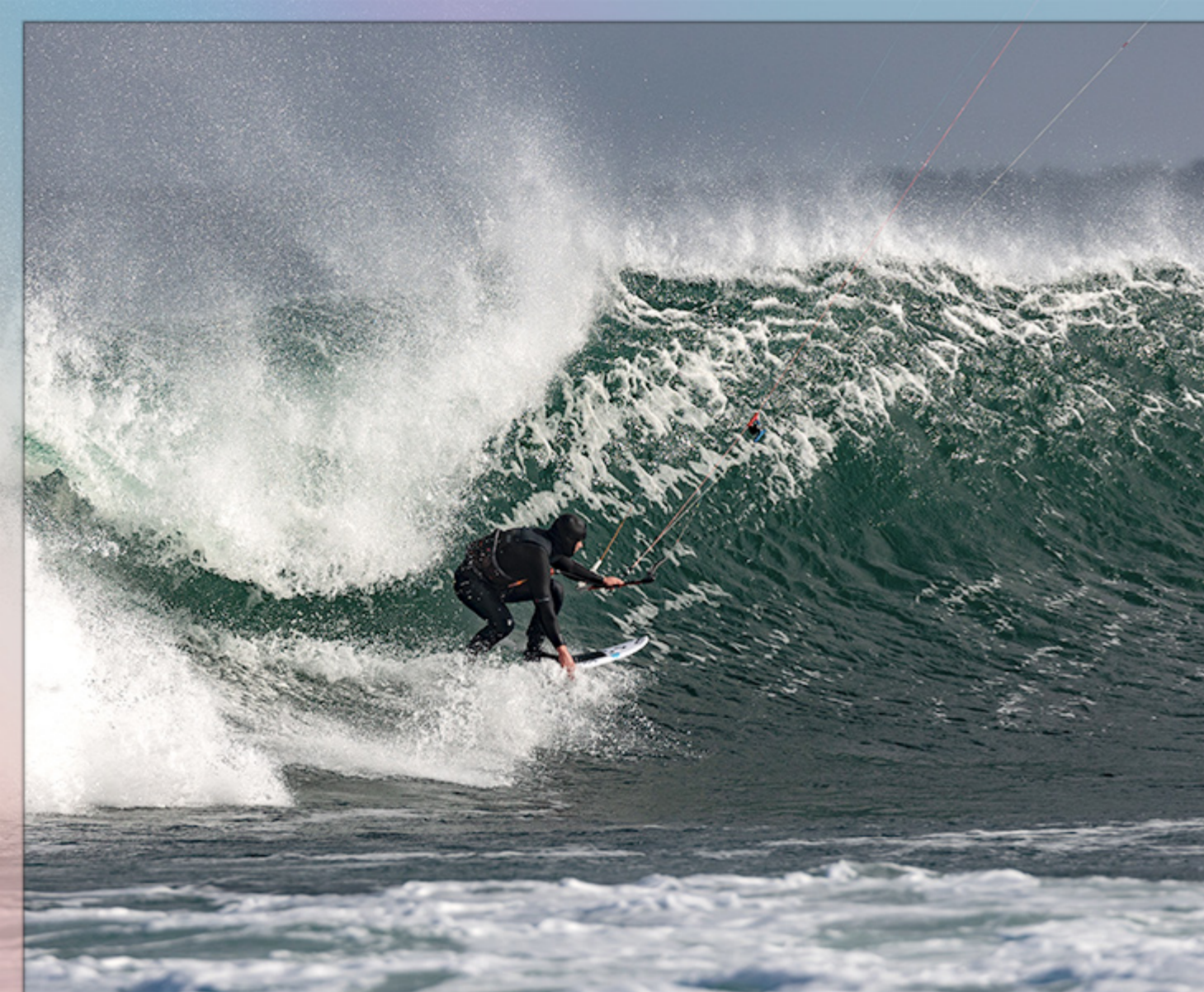




**“THIS IS WHAT ACTION WATER SPORTS HAVE BECOME FOR ME,
AND WHERE BETTER PLACE TO START THAN IN THE KINGDOMS...”**

It has been a while since I have made a decent kite trip, the sort of trip that tests your steel on the water, where the conditions make you double-guess your equipment choice, and you feel that uncomfortable feeling of being perched on the edge of your seat the whole time. When you have been kitesurfing for as long as I have, that is a tough trip to book. It certainly wasn't the sort of kiteboarding trip that I thought I would get right on my doorstep... the fun starts at the edge of the comfort zone, at least that is the result of experience over time, the inevitable push to find new adventure, fresh pastures and more gnarly conditions! This is what action water sports have become for me, and where better place to start than in the Kingdoms...

One evening, a good friend called me. He had been eyeballing the low-pressure systems rolling into the north sea from the Atlantic, as you do on a quiet autumn evening with nothing else to do; he was frothing on what it could deliver along the Northernmost coastline. Having been to Scotland himself a few years previously, he was way more excited than I was at the prospect of hitting the highlands in search of the perfect shreddies. For some reason, 'Scotland' doesn't often come up when planning a quick kiteboarding getaway, a long weekend or a trip with the boys... I would say 'I am not sure why' in an ironic tone, as the prospect of heading as far north as you can drive in your own country, into the cold temperatures, midge's and torrential rain, brutal storms and crushing coastline that the highlands are known for; however now that I have been, I am not sure why...



We boarded our easy jet flight, nice and smug in the knowledge that Ross Williams, pro windsurfer and good friend from the Isle of Wight, was driving most of the heavy gear, windsurfers, foil boards, wing boards, spare wetsuits, etc., up to the furthest reaches of Caithness on a solo overnight mission, as we sipped iced latte's from the cabin comfort at 32.000ft. Half an hour later, we landed at Inverness Airport swiftly, with no passport needed, and went directly to the rental car. We loaded the board bags and set off on the 2-hour drive to the centre of our Scottish exploration, Thurso.

"ON A SOLO OVERNIGHT MISSION, AS WE SIPPED ICED LATTE'S FROM THE CABIN COMFORT AT 32.000FT"



**THE
ACTION
CRUISE**

THE ACTION CRUISE

KITE & SAIL CAMPS

Kite Adventures from a Sailing Catamaran
SARDINIA | GREECE | GRENADINES | ANTIGUA



“WATCHING ROSS HIT THE APEX OF HIS THIRD TURN DOWN THE LINE ON THE SAME WAVE, IT WAS CLEAR THAT THESE WERE WORLD-CLASS CONDITIONS.”

At the stage in life that I am now entering, which I assume is the stage of life of most kiteboarders, it is hard to find any friends without kids, so to get the opportunity to get two of my good mates away and on the search again, was a special occasion.

Arriving just after dark, having rented ourselves an Airbnb for less than £100 per night, we immediately set up the gear for the dawn session and analysed the developments in the forecast.

One of the most interesting things about this area of the world is how fast the weather can change. You have to up your forecasting game, be fluid with your decisions, and take your chance to score the right conditions when they present themselves. So, with a

detailed analysis of Windy, Windguru, Magic seaweed, Charts, the local weather forecast, and Google Maps, we identified the best spots for us to check at first light. Lights out.

Lights on. Rain streaming down the windows, 30+ knots rustling the stunted trees out the window, full English breakfast, three coffees, gear check to the car and on the road. The first point we identified on the map was Merkel Point, a twisted hook of land bending back into a sheltered bay, with perfect sheets of flagstone rock forming the reef.

We had considered the swell direction, wind direction, and twists and bends of the weather fronts rolling through. This was the spot! Checking it with the drone, we knew it was time to get the first session underway. Bumping down the long, overgrown, off-road track to find the secret bay, as soon as we saw the ocean, there wasn't any doubt that this was the first shred.

Ross, one of the UK's best windsurfers, got on the water first, confident about the reef and its appearance. It wasn't until I saw him making the lineup that we had an accurate idea of size: a windsurfing mast around 4m tall, some of the sets rolling through as high as the mast. It was on! Rigging the Dice SLS 7m and the DLAB pro fish, I was set for the shred. On a kite mission like this, you never know what set-up to take until that last minute. Sailing out, watching Ross hit the apex of his third turn down the line on the same wave, it was clear that these were world-class conditions. Side to side-off shore wind direction as the waves lapped onto the reef. This was nothing like I had ridden in a long time, since my last trip to Mauritius, just about 25 degrees colder, but not another person in sight!

Pulling into some waves, it was clear that this was a 4/5 turn lineup, with options on the upper reef and maybe even a barrel section as the wave wrapped back into the wind on the inside and dried out on the kelp bed that lay on the inside. Lacing into the clean butter, smooth water on the bottom turns and cranking as hard as possible back to the lip, keeping the lines smooth and flowing as the pro fish demands, the dice fluttering downwind as they reacted to each turn of the bar. One hand is on the controls, and one is in the wave, brushing the smooth water to judge the radius of the turns. On my backside, it is my weak direction, backhand, regular on a long left-hand wave. Luckily, some time in Mauritius had sharpened me to these conditions, and after a few warm-up waves, we could start pushing. I was happy that the tide, rips, winds and weed were safe enough if anything went wrong. Ross and I traded waves for hours; the first session of the trip must have been at least 4 hours. Sam is on the beach with the camera, and endless head-to-double-over-head swells are rolling through. It is hard to come off the water when the stars align like that, a pilgrimage paying off in the most accurate form.

Buzzing like a fire alarm that's run out of battery, we came off the water exhausted to find out the rental car had a flat tyre, and we were stuck in the middle of nowhere. When all we needed was a cold pint and some food to complete the first day shred, we spent a few hours on the phone to the local garage, waiting for the mechanic to come and fix the tyre. I was still unsure if it was a coincidence or whether a local surfer had obliged us not to return to this hidden gem. Only adding to the adventure, after we had the tyre replaced, that beer tasted even better as we sat in the local watering hole in Thurso,

"IT IS HARD TO COME OFF THE WATER WHEN THE STARS ALIGN LIKE THAT, A PILGRIMAGE PAYING OFF IN THE MOST ACCURATE FORM."





analysing the coming day's forecasts and dreaming about the potential these northern shores had in store for us.

After a solid, dreamy sleep filled with barrels and deep water hold-downs, we awoke for day two of the Scotland raid. After kiteboarding for well over 20 years now, it is always amazement when a trip over-delivers, and it has also become clear to me that the success of your enjoyment relies on how versatile you can be as a rider. If you are fixated on one style of riding, then it can severely limit you on what spots and conditions you find appealing.

“THE SUCCESS OF YOUR ENJOYMENT RELIES ON HOW VERSATILE YOU CAN BE AS A RIDER.”





“ONE SECOND, IT'S FIRING 40+ KNOTS POINT BREAK SHREDDED FOR KITE OR WINDSURF; THE NEXT, IT'S LIGHT OFFSHORE BARRELING SLABS”

That is why I have progressively expanded my learning journey to encompass all the forms of shuddery, stepping into the 'Waterman' category and following in the footsteps of riders like Kai Lenny or Robby Naish, who have set the level of enjoyment on the water. There are not many other locations that embody changeable conditions like Scotland does. One second, it's firing 40+ knots point break shredded for kite or windsurf; the next, it's light offshore barreling slabs, and you bump into the likes of Nathan Florence surfing 10s as you scour the coastline for the next session. When you find yourself rubbing shoulders with fellow adventurers like the Florence brothers and bumping into Sam Light in his RV, you know you are on the edge of the marble, in the right place at the right time and usually in the middle of the storm! And there we were!

We spent the day scoping slabs to find a rideable section and finally ended up surfing our personal point break, no one around, scoring barrels and turns to our heart's content. So, to have the ability to Multi-task on sports, I filled the windless gaps that would only last half a day before the next weather front hit. As the wind started to build again, we raided the back of Ross's van, as he had driven with the Lion's share of the equipment, digging out the wingfoil setup to score an outer reef we had found. Tucked behind a small harbour village near the Doom Ray Nuclear reactor, Ross and Myself spend the afternoon trading waves, riding ocean humps as they come in from the North Sea. Too off-shore to kite effectively, the freedom of a wingfoil and being able to ride directly into the wind became apparent. When making the most of what nature throws at you, you need the right toys for the job and the hours of practice honing the skills start to pay off!



“ONE OF THE MOST SPECIAL KITE SESSIONS I HAVE HAD IN A LONG TIME. IT'S NOT ALWAYS THE CONDITIONS THAT MAKE THE SESSION, BUT IT'S THE EFFORT THAT HAS GONE INTO GETTING THERE.”

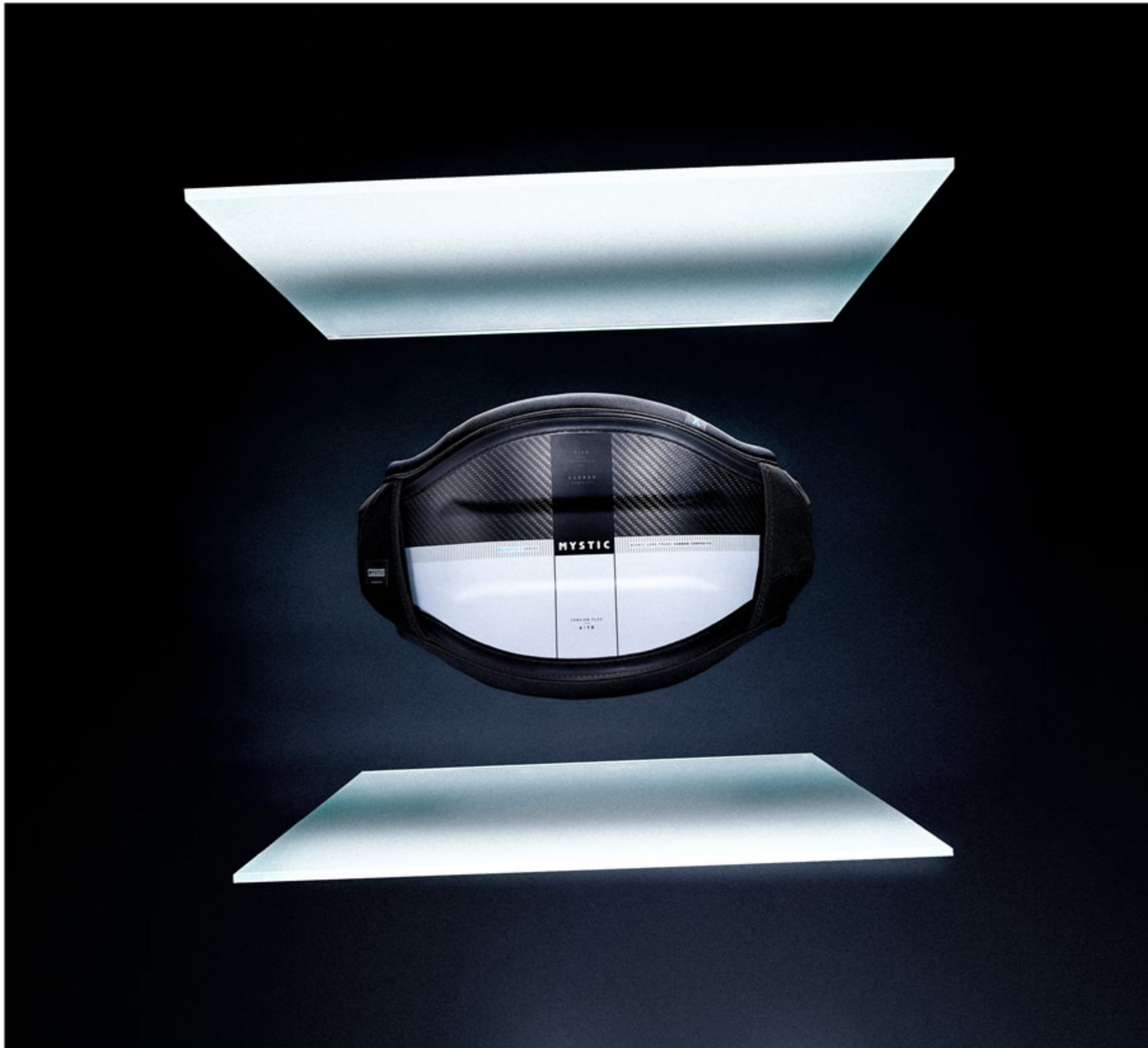
Riding the endless humps inshore as the sunset and weather fronts rolled through was nothing short of stunning; the glimmering light casting shadows on the water and rainbows in the sky made nothing short of magic in the air.

Cracking around the edges, hands sore, backs in pain, we arose to another shred. Wet wetsuits stuffed in the bucket in the back of the van, we set off to find the furthest northern tip of mainland Britain, Dunnet Head. A lighthouse situated atop a massive cliff that looks north towards the Orkney islands.

Onto of the cliff, near the lighthouse, is a group of interconnected lakes (or lochs in Scotland), and the aim was to score a free-ride kite session in the northernmost loch. As we arrived, the wind was howling on top of the cliffs, the sea raging below, and the morning light bursting through the clouds.

Using the drone to scope out the best spot to ride, we scoped the area and set out the plan. Pumping up the kite in the heather and hiking across the open Scottish backcountry was sunning. The land was flooded with constant rain; it's easier to kite across some of the landscape than walk, and as I got to the loch, the wind picked up, and the rainbows started to pop out. This was one of the most special kite sessions I have had in a long time. It's not always the conditions that make the session,

but it's the effort that has gone into getting there. As the rain showers cleared, the rainbow burst into the sky, and I ripped downwind through the small channels connecting these water pools. It was a feeling of the actual backcountry kiteboarding free ride I look for on my exploration trips. Something so unique, and to be possibly the first person to have ever kited, there was an insane buzz... Coming in, packing up my kite in the rain, and bundling my gear into the back of the rental car, we had to rush directly to the airport; late for the flight back south, we were exhausted from the trip. However, there is nothing quite like the satisfaction of feeling the blood flow back into your fingertips as you warm up from a mission that has pushed you to your limits, feeling content in the knowledge that we had shredded as hard as we could. We left nothing on the table as we made the most of everything Scotland could throw at us!



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TRIED & TESTED



Kites from Airwave, Core, and Ozone, along with accessories from ION, Mystic, and Ozone, are put through their paces in this issue. Check out the full reviews here!

- Ozone Vortex Kite
- Vector Vest Amp Front Zip
- Airwave Vida 15m
- Ozone Connect V4 Harness
- ION Amaze Core 4/3 Front Zip
- Core Nexus 4
- Mystic Stealth Harness

WORDS & PHOTOS
THE IKSURFMAG TEST TEAM

BRAND AIRWAVE

MODEL VIDA

SIZE 15M

YEAR 2024

" AIRWAVE HAS
CREATED A
PRETTY
USER-FRIENDLY
HIGH-ASPECT
FOIL WITH THE
ASSOCIATED HIGH
PERFORMANCE "



AT A GLANCE

It is pertinent that the Airwave Vida test should be published in this issue, given that we are around two months away from kiteboarding's debut in the Olympics in the form of Formula Kite. Whilst a small selection of brands has been competing to produce an IKA-registered design for use by Olympians, Airwave has made it their mission to bring that race course high-aspect foil kite design performance in a more accessible package.

Ease of use wasn't just a focus of Airwave with regard to flying characteristics but in all aspects of the kite's operation and storage. High-performance foil kites with racing in mind must handle huge speed ranges/wind ranges and high loads. These loads must be distributed appropriately, and the kite profile must be adequately supported so that the kite profile does not distort away from the designer's intended shape under load. There is, however, a delicate balance to achieve. Increased bridle complexity will better distribute loads, and increased material use, heavier weight fabrics, or battens will increase the cell's structural stiffness.



TO SEE MORE PHOTOS,
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BRAND CORE

MODEL NEXUS 4

SIZE 8M

YEAR 2024



"IT'S FAST,
POWERFUL AND
DYNAMIC, SURE
TO MAKE YOU
SMILE WHEN YOU
FLY IT."



AT A GLANCE

The Nexus 4 from CORE Kiteboarding is a three-strut, all-round kite aimed at the rider looking for a do-it-all kite with a penchant for wave riding. It has some new materials and features in the construction, and this new fourth-generation promises to be even better. The Nexus 4 uses what CORE has dubbed Future-C shape technology. The kite is designed for huge jumps, fast kite loops, and excellent drifting in the waves.

It's a three-strut design with a thinner and lighter frame than last year. This improves the kite's speed through the air and helps it turn faster.

The profile is flat and open, and the kite has a swept-back leading edge and wide tips. The wing tips are where most of the changes are for the new kite; they have been made bigger to improve the turning speed and response in the waves and during kite loops. The struts are fairly thin, and the canopy is made from CoreTex 2 material, which is lighter, stiffer and more durable than other materials used today. The leading edge features ExoTex 2 material, exclusive to CORE and lighter and stiffer than traditional Dacron.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)



TO SEE MORE PHOTOS,
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BRAND OZONE

MODEL VORTEX ULTRA-X

SIZE 8M

YEAR 2024



"IT'S FAST,
POWERFUL AND
DYNAMIC, SURE
TO MAKE YOU
SMILE WHEN YOU
FLY IT."



TO SEE MORE PHOTOS,
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TO VISIT THEIR WEBSITE,
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AT A GLANCE

It's always exciting when a brand releases an entirely new product line, but especially when it is their foray into using an Aluula Composites airframe. Now, Ozone is no stranger to new ideas and cutting-edge R&D, and they're often the pioneers themselves, bringing exciting developments to market. But, having developed and put to good use their own Ultra-X performance dacron throughout their kite and wing offerings, we've had to be patient for their Aluula debut. Will it be worth the wait/weight? ;)

Ozone promises responsive big air performance for intermediate to pro-level riders from the Vortex. Despite the Ozone Edge being synonymous with big air and hangtime for years, Ozone now presents the Vortex alone in the 'Big Air' category when looking at their website, with the Edge and Enduro occupying the 'Progression' space. If you read my review of the recent V12 release of the Edge, you'll know that Kite certainly doesn't disappoint in the big air category! I remember early rumours making it sound as though the Vortex was effectively going to be an Edge with an Aluula airframe.

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BRAND ION MODEL AMAZE CORE SIZE 4/3 FRONT ZIP YEAR 2024

"A SOLID WETSUIT THAT COMBINES PERFORMANCE, COMFORT, DURABILITY AND STYLE!"



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

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



AT A GLANCE

ION's Amaze slogan this season is all about how it embodies women who always take their chances, express their style, and are fun and confident, and this suit couldn't be more suitable!

When I first unpacked the ION package, my jaw dropped. The vibrant colourway is the most stand-out feature of the suit and is guaranteed to make heads turn at the beach! I've had ION wetsuits for a while now, and they're built to last and are of high quality and attention to detail. With this suit, ION has again lived up to its name by delivering a premium product. The more you look at the suit, the more you notice the intricate details.

Putting the wetsuit on was easy; it's super stretchy, and the Hot_Stuff 2.0 lining is a dream. It's one of the most flexible thermo linings I've tried on, making it comfortable to wear for as long as you want. The Silk_Stuff interior lining adds comfort against your skin while being impressively durable and flexible.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

BRAND MYSTIC

MODEL STEALTH

YEAR 2024

"IT'S SUPER COMFORTABLE, AND THE NEW LOWER PROFILE ALLOWS EVEN MORE MOVEMENT."



AT A GLANCE

Always striving for improvement and efficiency, the latest upgrades to the Stealth harness are a testament to their commitment to creating the best products. The Stealth harness, its lightest yet, now weighs only 900g (1.98lb), a whopping 37% lighter than the previous model. This weight reduction is achieved thanks to the clever design and 3D padding, providing a minimal yet comfortable grip. By reducing the height on the sides, they have optimised freedom of movement while minimising pressure points during rides. The Battlebelt has also undergone improvements, now being thinner and half the thickness of its predecessor, saving weight and reducing friction. To top it off, the Stealth now includes the innovative Flexcover storage system with an integrated pocket for a safety knife.

It's important to note that the safety knife and handle pass loop are sold separately.

The harness's Bionic Core Frame offers stiffness in the horizontal direction while still allowing for flexibility that follows the body's movements. The use of carbon composite enhances the stiffness, making it ideal for extreme conditions.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)



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

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BRAND OZONE

MODEL CONNECT V4 HARNESS

YEAR 2024



" IS LIGHTWEIGHT,
COMFORTABLE,
SUPPORTIVE, AND
EASY TO USE. "



AT A GLANCE

One of Ozone's product taglines is 'Born Light - Genetically Strong'. This perfectly sums up the new Ozone Connect V4 harness range. The fourth iteration of the Connect harness series is lightweight, travel-friendly, and functional compared to fashion. By prioritising an ergonomic fit to deliver support where you need it without hindering a rider's freedom of movement, Ozone has delivered a simple harness that allows you to forget to focus on your riding.

If you're the sort of person who painstakingly selects their accessories to ensure that the colour scheme of their harness matches their wetsuit, etc, this probably isn't the one for you. It only comes in a straightforward all-black colour scheme with some Ozone logos. You'll have to choose which of the seven size options you want (XXS to XXL) and whether you prefer the hook or sliding spreader bar variant. The spreader bars are interchangeable should you wish to try the other at a later date, but they will be supplied separately. Both spreader bars feature a high-quality emergency hook knife for cutting lines,



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BRAND ION MODEL VECTOR VEST AMP FRONT ZIP YEAR 2024

"EXCEPTIONAL FLEXIBILITY, COMFORT, AND SAFETY FEATURES TAILORED SPECIFICALLY FOR KITEBOARDERS."



AT A GLANCE

The Vector Vest Amp Front Zip by ION is a top-tier impact vest designed specifically for kiteboarders and wingsurfers who wear a harness. Constructed with a unique material blend and highly flexible materials, it prioritises safety and ensures comfort and freedom of movement.

Strategically placed upper padding allows for ample space for harnesses without restricting mobility. The Vector Vest uses the most flexible materials possible without compromising durability; this means you can ensure a perfect fit, which is important when taking those big air wipeouts. Additionally, incorporating ION's Dry_Grid Material on the sides reduces drying time and minimises water absorption, which helps keep it light even when wet.

The Vector Vest Amp features a central front zip, allowing easy entry and exit. When closed, a secure pouch at the top stores the zipper, ensuring you can't snag it on your hands or catch it in your lines in a crash. This also helps lock it in place when you are getting dragged.



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

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QUESTIONS JEN TYLER


INSIGHT

INES RODLAUER

In this issue, Ines Rodlauer gets our 'Insight' spotlight. Ines, raised in Austria, is a passionate kiteboarder and freelancer for FLYSURFER, managing PR and media work. At GKA/GWA, she coordinates the media team for events. Ines has a busy event schedule - Dive into this exclusive interview to find out more about her life on the go!



PHOTO MIRIAM JOANNA



" MY PARENTS INTRODUCED ME TO SAILING AT AN EARLY AGE, WHICH IS HOW I GOT INTO WINDSPORTS. "

Ines, it's great to have you here! Could you share what it was like growing up in Austria and what sparked your passion for kiteboarding?

Hey Jen, thank you for the opportunity and for interviewing me!

I was born in Vienna and went to school there. Every weekend, I would go with my parents to the lakeside. My mom is from Gols, located right next to the historic Surf World Cup spot "Podersdorf am See." The famous Surf World Cup was an event everyone looked

forward to. It was a chance to see international athletes compete on the lake, as well as an opportunity to enjoy sundowner parties with friends.

My parents introduced me to sailing at an early age, which is how I got into windsports. However, my first kiting experience was in Cuba in 2008. I went there with my parents and met a Bavarian family whose son showed me how to launch and land a kite on the beach. From that moment, I was hooked, and a few months later, I did my kitesurfing course in Podersdorf at Kiteriders.

Could you tell us about your role at FLYSURFER and what led you to get the job there?

I have been freelancing for FLYSURFER for the past 1.5 years. On official records, I run my own marketing agency. Previously, I was employed full-time by FLYSURFER for 3 years as an international marketing and event manager before starting my own business. My role involves handling PR and media work for FLYSURFER, FLARE, and Skywalk. This includes supporting them during events, managing social media takeovers for my colleague Luisa,



creating advertisements, banners, and graphics for sales purposes, and providing assistance wherever needed. I consider myself a versatile marketing professional with event management expertise and a strong networking passion.

To start with, Christoph Hesina, the brand manager, brought me onto the FLYSURFER team in late 2019. Before that, I worked for three years as a Marketing Manager for the European Distributor "Pryde Group" of Cabrinha and Neilpryde. Christoph and I had been friends for a long time, and being from the same area, we connected well, leading to him offering me a new opportunity.

I am also involved with GKA, GWA, and Lift Foils, which many of you may be familiar with.

" WE CONNECTED WELL, LEADING TO HIM OFFERING ME A NEW OPPORTUNITY."

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Could you give us a glimpse into your daily life at FLYSURFER? How do you balance your work and passion for kiteboarding, especially with the flexibility of remote work?

As a freelancer, I work remotely from Vienna, but I often travel for work. This year, I've only spent 8 weeks in Vienna. Now, for the fifth time, I'm spending the European winter in Cape Town, where many of my friends in the kiteboarding and windsurfing industry work. This is the time of year when the kitesurfing, wingfoiling, and windsurfing community gathers in the southern hemisphere of Cape Town.

Although I still love kiteboarding, my new passion is paragliding. After working in the same industry for a long time and kiting for 15 years, I needed a different type of balance. Sometimes I stopped kiting altogether because it became overwhelming. I became extremely interested in paragliding when we introduced the FLARE brand in 2022 and the famous MOUSTACHE, a parakite. Last February, I obtained my paragliding license in Wilderness, South Africa, which was a very rewarding experience. Paragliding not only opened up new horizons but also introduced me to new friends and provided a different source of adrenaline and tranquillity. It's like finding a balance between opposites for me - air versus water - and serves as a complementary activity to kiteboarding on less windy days.

You're always on the move. Does travelling this much make it lose its novelty, or do you still enjoy it every time?

I still love travelling to new places. Most of my friends live abroad, so it's always nice to visit other countries and stay with friends, which makes the whole experience feel like home for me.



" . IT'S LIKE FINDING A BALANCE BETWEEN OPPOSITES FOR ME - AIR VERSUS WATER - AND SERVES AS A COMPLEMENTARY ACTIVITY TO KITEBOARDING ON LESS WINDY DAYS. "



“ I REALLY ENJOY COLLABORATING AND EXCHANGING CREATIVE IDEAS WITH COLLEAGUES TO BRAINSTORM NEW PROJECTS.”


However, being at home is the best for recharging my batteries and returning to "normal" life. It's important for me to see my friends and family back home. I think spending at least 3 weeks at home in between travels is a good balance. At least, that's how it works for me; everyone has their own recipes.

Travelling for work is definitely different, especially for me as I work at kiteboarding, wingfoiling, and e-foiling events. It's not the same as just going somewhere to rent a place and work remotely or have a holiday. Many people following me think I'm always on vacation and living an easy life, but they don't see that "nomads" like us work really hard, often for many hours into the night, and sometimes waking up at sunrise for a skipper's meeting. The reward is that we can work from anywhere we want.

This was my goal when I became a freelancer, and I wouldn't want to change it, at least not until I feel it's time to properly "settle". In the meantime, I'm enjoying the journey.

What's your favourite part of your job, and what keeps you motivated?

Working with people is definitely the key. Whether it's colleagues from FLYSURFER, GKA, GWA, or Lift Foils, having a great team to support you and vice versa is crucial. I believe that this accounts for 80% of the job. I really enjoy collaborating and exchanging creative ideas with colleagues to brainstorm new projects. Whether at the GWA events in Gran Canaria or the beach in Leucate, sharing experiences with like-minded individuals who share the same passion and are always willing to go the extra mile is wonderful.



" THE TOURISTS WERE SO EXCITED THAT THEY PULLED ONE SIDE OF MATIAS LEE'S CONTROL BAR WHILE HIS KITE WAS UP, LEAVING IT PULLING AND KITE-LOOPING MATIAS ACROSS THE BEACH. "

What has been your most memorable experience while working at FLYSURFER?

This is a pretty easy answer - It was our photoshoot in Cape Town in 2021 when the beaches were closed. Talking about this now feels a bit surreal, to be honest. Luckily, we booked the tickets when the government opened the beaches during lockdown. But when we were supposed to fly in for the biggest and longest shoot ever planned, we had organised a media crew, which was already in Cape Town. However, flying in all the athletes resulted in last-minute flight cancellations and not being allowed to step on the beaches. We were chased by the police,

bought lots of fishing rods, and could only shoot from boats through a slipway. This made the whole photoshoot experience slightly different than planned, but we made it work as a team.

During the STOKES3 photoshoot in Cornwall, many tourists who had never seen a kitesurfer before wanted to take a picture with two FLYSURFER athletes. Unfortunately, the tourists were so excited that they pulled one side of Matias Lee's control bar while his kite was up, leaving it pulling and kite-looping Matias across the beach. I took Matias to the hospital, but after a few stitches on his head, we were able to continue with the shoot. Matias then helped us behind the lens.

At the end of the day, it's always about the people. I really enjoyed working with Alina, Adam, Luke, Crystal, Theo, Olly, Megan, Catta, Roderick, Flo, Lukas, Lidewij, Miriam, and many more.

What's it like being on the GKA/GWA media team, and what does your role entail?

As a media coordinator for the GWA Wingfoil World Tour, I manage the media team during the events I attend. Typically, I work with 1-2 videographers, 1 editor, 1 photographer, 1 MC and commentator, and 1 social media manager. My responsibilities include coordinating interviews with athletes for the videographers, assisting the photographers during

registration and with recording intros and outros, helping the social media team with captions, sending event newsletters, checking photos and social activities, communicating with the riders, approving shared content, uploading event videos on YouTube and our cloud, creating thumbnails and social media graphics, informing the media team about event updates and winners, and organising debriefs. My main priority is to ensure that the media team has everything they need, is well-informed about the latest event updates, and can do their job as smoothly as possible.

I also make sure they are well-fed and properly protected from the sun!

In addition to my event work, I also serve as the GKA Awards Manager, comparable to the Oscars of the Kiteboarding Industry. I handle the communication and organisation of the awards. Currently, submissions are open until October 7th for everyone to submit their Moves, Photos, and Videos to be considered for the Qatar Airways GKA Awards 2024, which will take place in Cape Town on January 10th, 2025.

Travelling extensively as part of your job must have its ups and downs. Could you share some of the most challenging and rewarding moments you've experienced?

DOWNSIDE: Seeing family and friends from home is not very often. Building a relationship is not easy unless you're travelling together or working in a similar field.

REWARD: Seeing your international friends often, usually working in warmer areas. Going wherever you want to, and doing sports whenever you want to. Working in beautiful places where people are spending their holidays.



“ THERE'S A LOT MORE PLANNED, SO IT'S GOING TO BE AN EXCITING SUMMER. ”



How does FLYSURFER stay ahead in such a competitive industry?

FLYSURFER has carved out its own niche in the kite industry by championing foil kites when other brands didn't believe in them. Fast forward 25 years, and the FLYSURFER VMG2 is the kite of choice for kitefoil racing at the Olympics in Marseille this summer, designed by Benni Bölli. FLYSURFER's range includes the SOUL, SONIC, HYBRID, and PEAK, which are popular for freeride foil kiting on water, land, and snow.

Not everyone may know that FLYSURFER also produces tube kites and wings such as the STOKE, INDIE, and ERA. The ERA, designed by Maximilian Kühnhauser and Luke McGillevie, is especially favoured for high-performance freeride and big air. Additionally, athletes like Luca Ceruti, Ellie Dimitrova, Evan Klijn, Kenan Azzam, Hugo Wigglesworth, and Borja Vellon are among those who are hooked on these kites!

The latest addition to FLYSURFER's lineup is the INDIE, a one-strut kite designed for lightness, ease of flight, and travel convenience in the l.e.i. product range.

What are your plans for the summer?

Spring and summer are the busiest seasons for me because of numerous events. The event season has already started for me in Leucate, followed by Lisbon, Berlin, and Hyeres. Next week, I'll be heading to Munich for a good friend's birthday. After that, I'm joining Lift Foils for the European Demo Tour in the South of France and the Balearic Sea. Then, I'll be heading to Gran Canaria for the Big Air event as a media coordinator for the GWA Wingfoil World Tour and GKA Kite World Tour. There's a lot more planned, so it's going to be an exciting summer. Try to catch me if you can!

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- WORDS JEN TYLER PHOTOS THE ACTION CRUISE -

Summer is around the corner in the Northern Hemisphere, and many of us are itching to book the perfect kiteboarding holiday and combining sailing and kiteboarding is a great way to welcome summer. The Action Cruise Kite & Sail Camp provides a perfect opportunity to discover new locations with like-minded people for a week.

Learn about The Action Cruise sailing adventure in the latest issue of IKSURFMAG!

DISCOVER THE PERFECT GETAWAY THE ACTION CRUISE



“ WHETHER YOU'RE A BEGINNER OR AN ADVANCED KITER, GREECE OFFERS CONDITIONS THAT CATER TO ALL SKILL LEVELS. ”



The Action Cruise team offers kite cruises to many stunning locations, including Greece, Sardinia, Corse, Grenadines, and Antigua & Barbuda. For those seeking an exciting new experience that aligns with the Northern Hemisphere's summer season, the Greece and Sardinia Kite & Sail Camps are definitely worth looking into. These camps run from May to October, giving you the best opportunities to enjoy the warm weather and consistent winds.

GREECE: THE SUMMER PARADISE

Greece is ideal for those chasing summer, with sailing dates from early July to early September. The Greek Kite & Sail Camp takes you through the picturesque Cyclades, starting in Paros and exploring islands like Antiparos and Mykonos. The reliable Meltemi wind ensures you'll have plenty of opportunities to kite, with wind speeds typically ranging from 15-30 knots.

Whether you're a beginner or an advanced kiter, Greece offers conditions that cater to all skill levels. The spots we visit are unconventional, secluded, and uncrowded since we move with the boat. We visit some of the most beautiful and most known islands, but the spots are not standard.

SARDINIA & CORSE: THE HIDDEN GEMS

The Sardinia & Corse Kite & Sail Camps in May/June and September/October are perfect for those looking to avoid the summer crowds. Known for the Mistral wind, which delivers strong and consistent breezes, this region is a kiteboarding haven. Starting in Cannigione, you'll explore spots like Tavolara, La Maddalena, and the Strait of Bonifacio. Even if the Mistral isn't blowing, your experienced crew will find east or southeast winds in secret locations, ensuring you're always in the action.

LIFE ON BOARD: WHAT TO EXPECT

So, what does a week of kite & sail on a sailing catamaran look like? Your camp coaches will work with you to improve your kiting and winging skills, teaching you techniques for kiting from a boat, riding in unique spots, downwinding, and kiting in the open sea. Media analysis is included, providing you with valuable feedback to elevate your skills.

There is breakfast, lunch, and dinner onboard provided by the crew in order to maximise kiting activity.

NON-STOP ADVENTURE, ON AND OFF THE WATER

Safety is a top priority; the crew is always ready to assist you. When it's time to relax, you can learn the basics of sailing or engage in other activities like wakefoiling, wakeboarding, paddleboarding, and exploring the islands. With so many options, there's never a dull moment, regardless of the wind conditions.

EXPLORING LOCAL CULTURE AND SCENERY

Beyond kiteboarding, sailing through incredible locations offers a chance to experience and explore local culture and scenery. From the historic ruins of Greece to the rugged beauty of Sardinia, each destination provides a unique backdrop for your adventure. Combining action-packed days on the water and immersive cultural experiences makes Kite & Sail Camps an unforgettable journey.



“ BEYOND KITEBOARDING, SAILING THROUGH INCREDIBLE LOCATIONS OFFERS A CHANCE TO EXPERIENCE AND EXPLORE LOCAL CULTURE AND SCENERY. ”

“ THE SCENERY AND WIND CONDITIONS
MAKE SARDINIA A PRIME LOCATION FOR AN
UNFORGETTABLE KITING EXPERIENCE. ”



LET'S COVER SOME OF THE FAQs!

WHAT SKILL LEVEL DO I NEED?

Kiteboarders of all skill levels are welcome. However, beginners' spots are limited, and the riders must the team know their ability in advance and take beginner lessons or supervised sessions. Intermediate and advanced kites should be able to ride upwind, control the kite on land, body drag upwind, relaunch the kite from the water, recover a lost board, and self-land the kite with the chicken loop quick release.

WHAT KIND OF BOAT WILL I BE ON?

The type of catamaran varies by destination. In Sardinia and Corse, you'll be on a Nautitech 46

Fly Bridge Catamaran, while in Greece, you'll sail on a Lagoon 500 Fly Bridge Catamaran. Both vessels are equipped with ample space for rigging gear and relaxing.

WHAT IF I'VE NEVER KITED FROM A BOAT?

No worries! Qualified kite instructors will teach you the ins and outs of kiting from a boat, riding in unconventional spots, and handling the open sea. A tender/rescue boat will always be on hand to rescue you.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT IN GREECE?

You'll experience the reliable Meltemi wind in Greece, which is perfect for kiting. You'll sail through the Cyclades, visiting spots like Paros, Antiparos,

and Mykonos. If the wind isn't cooperating, the crew will find the best conditions elsewhere, ensuring a week of excellent kiting and adventure.

WHAT IS UNIQUE ABOUT SARDINIA?

Sardinia is famous for its Mistral wind, providing strong and reliable conditions. Starting in Cannigione, you'll explore many different kite spots with the crew. The scenery and wind conditions make Sardinia a prime location for an unforgettable kiting experience.

WHAT IF IT'S NOT WINDY?

Even on light wind days, there's plenty to do! The boats are equipped with SUP, wakeboard, and wakefoil gear.



" YOU'RE GUARANTEED AN UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE FILLED WITH KITING, SAILING, AND EXPLORATION. "



You can also explore the islands through hikes and treks or simply relax and enjoy the stunning environment.

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

Your Kite & Sail Camp includes coaching and training, spot guidance and rescue, three crew members, photos and videos for media analysis, meals (breakfast, lunch & dinner), SUP, wakefoil and wakeboard equipment, a safety boat, and The Action Cruise annual membership.

The only meals not included are the ones when we go on land for dinner 2-3 times per week on a rescue boat.

WHAT EXTRAS CAN I ANTICIPATE?

Additional costs include travel to and from the departure port, kite and wing equipment if needed, beginner lessons, dinners on land, alcoholic beverages, and personal spending.

Lessons are available for intermediate and advanced kites who want to learn tricks and improve their technique, and also for foil and wingfoil lessons.

CAN I COME AS A SOLO TRAVELLER?

Absolutely! Solo travellers can book a small solo cabin or share a cabin with other solo riders. It's a fantastic way to make new friends with fellow kites and wingers.

CAN I RESERVE THE ENTIRE CATAMARAN FOR MY GROUP?

Yes, groups can reserve the entire catamaran. In Sardinia, the boat accommodates up to 7 kites, and in Greece, up to 9 kites. A crew of three will ensure your group's needs are met.

Kite & Sail Camps offer an unparalleled adventure for kiteboarders looking to embrace the summer sun! Whether you choose the historic beauty of Greece or the rugged charm of Sardinia, you're guaranteed an unforgettable experience filled with kiting, sailing, and exploration. So, pack your gear, gather your friends, and sail on the adventure of a lifetime!



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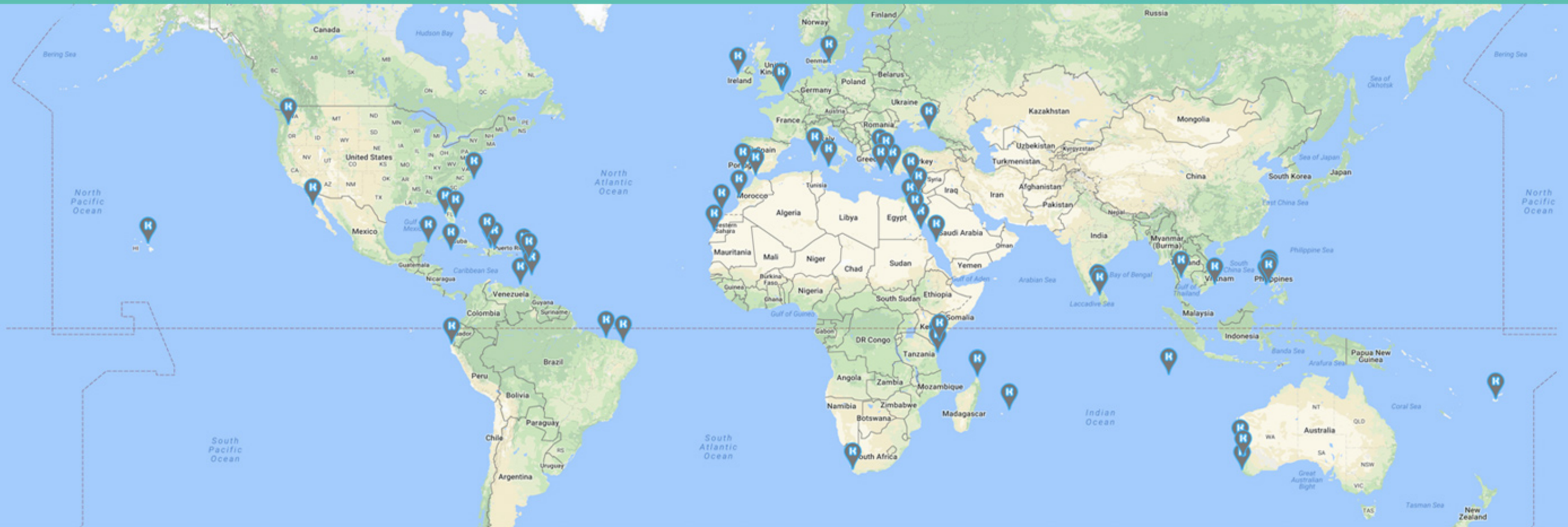
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WORDS & PHOTOS CHRISTIAN & KARINE



We thought we'd give you a well earned rest from learning to loop this issue! However, fear not, this doesn't mean that it's plain sailing, summer holidays and no homework. Oh no, we've got a couple of tricks in store that will add some excitement, style and a certain je ne sais quoi to your repertoire.

First off, adding to the once you pop, you just can't stop theme, it's time to up the ante and go for something other than a tail grab. Ladies and gents it's definitely the moment for a popped Indy grab.

Then after a very long hiatus from these pages, we welcome back the twin tip duck tack. It's been over ten years since we last pulled it out for a spin! If there's any transition that'll both confuse and impress your peers, this is the one.

As always, enjoy the challenge.

C&K

New 2024 clinic calendar up on:
<http://www.ckperformanceclinics.co.uk>

1 / POPPED INDY GRAB



CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE

2 / TWIN TIP DUCK TACK



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POPPED INDY GRAB ▶

Cabrinha Switchblade 8m

Cabrinha XO 133

It's been a while since we reintroduced how to pop back in IKSURFMAG 84! Hopefully, this means you've had plenty of opportunity to practice, hone and perfect your stomp. If the answer is affirmative, then it's surely time to add a little spice and tart up your pop with a cheeky Indy Grab! This is a great way to style your pops and a really good grab that you can tweak more and more as you get the hang of it.

So, what is an Indy Grab? An Indy is when you grab your board with your rear hand, on the middle of your toe side edge (between your feet). The best way to get a feel for this is to sit yourself down on your derriere whilst on dry land and try lifting your knees until you can reach down and tickle the area you want to grab. The good news is that it's harder to lift your knees and board while reaching down on terra firma than if you get some decent pop off the water.

OK, you've got your pop in the bag, and you know where to grab it; let's look at what's involved, along with a little reminder to ensure you get off the water cleanly.

APPROACH AND SET UP PIC A

If you cast your mind back to the popping article, it's all about getting yourself and your board to carve hard upwind so that you can stamp against your edge and pop off the water. Setting yourself up in your default popping position will put you over the tail of the board, riding with the nose of your board slightly



higher than usual, and will make the whole trick more achievable. You also need to ensure that your sweet spot is within reach so you can pop it with both hands on the bar. Set your kite around the 11 or 1 o'clock mark, get your hands butted up against your depower line, drop your weight back and approach on an edge with speed. Once you're ready, you can flatten off and bear away by softening your knees and rolling over the board. In the photo, Karine has her weight over the tail of her board, mini wheelie, both hands on the bar, kite parked at 11, and has started to bear away so that she can then carve up without the risk of grinding to a halt.



CARVE & POP PIC B

With the board flat, you're primed to pop. The first thing is to carve hardback upwind to put tension on your lines, giving you something to pop against. Do this by dropping your weight, bum low to the water, turning your head and shoulders back upwind so that you drive against your board, carving it upwind. Remember the "carve-pop"; it still holds. You can't carve for long, or else you'll stop. As soon as you're carving it's time to pop, kicking yourself upwind and away from the board by explosively straightening your back leg and stamping your heel hard against the edge.



We say it in every pop move: you make it happen; don't wait for something to happen! You can see that Karine has carved suddenly upwind and has stamped hard, fully extending her rear leg against the board. The result is that she pops up. She still has both hands on the bar, which keeps her balanced, and her bar is out of the sweet spot. You mustn't pull on the bar. If you do, the kite will pull against you, and you won't be able to kick.

RELEASE & LOOK PIC C

If you get your approach and pop right, this next part will be more intuitive. What we mean by this is that with better pop, the board will want to spring up towards you, bringing it nearer to you. It'll also push



you forward over the board into a more balanced position. And, of course, the better the pop, the more time to squeeze the grab in. Eyes on the prize, look down towards the board and focus on where you want to. At the same time, release your backhand. Having fully extended into her pop, Karine now targets her grab, looking at her toe side edge whilst releasing her rear hand.

FOCUS & LIFT PIC D

You're in the air and balanced—it's time to get the board up. Turn your head back so that you're looking behind your centre line. This frees you from the obstruction of your chicken look, harness, et al. and allows you to lift your knees more easily.



Concentrate on lifting your front knee, as this will bring all of the board closer. See how Karine is still focused on where she'll grab, but she's rolling back behind her centre line whilst lifting her knees. Her front knee is pulled right up. Note how her bar is still out on or past the sweet spot. If you support yourself on the bar and pull in, the kite will pull you forward and away from the board, making the grab near impossible.

BOOM PIC E

The moment of truth, the money shot. It won't last long, but try and get your fingers under the board to make it count. You can clearly see how Karine is reaching down and around behind the centre line,



which makes the grab possible. This is so much more achievable if your air comes from pop. Using the kite for help will pull away from the board and make it feel too difficult. The bar is still out!!

DROP & DIVE PIC F

There's no time to hang about, and whether you have a decent grasp of your toe side edge (or not), you will want to get set up for a softer landing. Two jobs: get some forward pull and drop your undercarriage. With the kite leading you at either 1 or 11 o'clock, all you need to do to soften your landing is pull the bar in.

With tension on the lines, your kite will power up and drop back into the window, pulling you forward and preventing you from just dropping. Relax and let your legs and board drop under you as you do this. Karine is ready for a touchdown.

CLAIM IT PIC G

As your board swings under you and the kite pulls, you should end up over the board. If you can, get your weight back for a tail-first reception. Reach up for the bar with your free hand to balance and control yourself.



TOP TIPS

Flat water is always going to help when learning anything popped. You'll feel more controlled, and without chop, there'll be more chance of keeping some momentum through your carve.

Within reason, more upwind speed on entry and a more off-wind bearing away will give you better and more controlled pop as your kite will pull from a more downwind position. The one caveat here is that kites which fly with a very upwind edge to the window will require you to be much quicker with your carve-pop!



It extends into your pop. It's counterintuitive, as you'll be planning ahead, thinking about lifting your legs. However, the bigger and better the stomp, the lighter and nearer the board will feel, making for an easier grab.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Don't pull on the bar. Ninety-nine times out of one hundred, you'll struggle with pop because you're asking the bar for help. It's all in the legs.

The kite is too high. In many pop moves, we suggest using the kite for a bit of help, but not in this one. The board will feel heavy and far off if the

kite lifts and supports you.

Tindy? It's very likely that you'll first grab near your back foot. It is more easily reachable as you'll likely concentrate on bringing the back leg up whilst inadvertently extending the front leg away, especially if you're accustomed to tail grabbing in jumps. You need to over-ride your muscle memory and concentrate on bringing the front knee up, bringing the Indy within reach.

KEYSTONES

1. Hands centred, kite 11 or 1
2. Weight back, bear away

3. Carve – pop, bar on the sweet spot, fully extend for maximum spring

4. Look back and down, lift the front knee

5. Grab between your feet. Pull on the bar for landing



TWIN TIP DUCK TACK ▶

Cabrinha Switchblade 8m

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Like the proverbial Phoenix, we're resurrecting this classic move as it became trick of the week during one of our recent May clinics in Dakhla, so thank you, Sean and Rod, for your unwavering enthusiasm. It's been over a decade since we last put pen to paper on the twin-tip duck tack! That's when board shorts didn't stretch, and kite racing was on ginormous windsurf-like boards. To be fair, it's still not a move you see every day on the water. As you know, we love our transitions, and this beauty, selfishly borrowed from the surfboard fraternity, is an absolute banger. If you're after a slick and casual USP, look no further.

So, what is it? Have a look at the sequence, starting at the bottom left. Your mission is to carve up and through the wind before shifting your weight, burying the nose of the board, and stepping through to heel side so that you're heading back from whence you came. It's a tack as you're changing by turning up and through the wind, and it's a duck tack as you're ducking under the bar! Although it does have a back-roll transition look, the movement is actually quite different.

Before delving into the how-to, we should consider some things that could have you pulling your hair out. Firstly, your kite, or rather your relationship with your kite. In the twin-tip duck tack, you will need to get rid of power and pull in order to carve your board as far upwind and through the wind as possible. If you ride a surfboard or a foil, you'll be more accustomed to



not having support or pull from your kite at all times. However, if you only twin-tip, this lack of engagement will be new, unusual, and unsettling. Stay with it, as with each and every attempt, you'll get more and more used to it.

Secondly, carving. Encouraging your board to turn that far into and through the wind without grinding to a halt, or at least dunking your derriere, will take some getting used to. Add this to the fact that you're dumping power and support; you have some new skills to add to the bow. This may be a low-level transition, but it'll require all the concentration of its airborne brethren.

Right, let's have a look at the key moments and fit them together to make this happen...

APPROACH PIC A

Three key points for your approach.

1. You'll need some momentum if you'd like to turn your board as far through the wind as possible. You don't want your foot to the floor speed, but you should relax your edge to quicken up a tad. Do this by relaxing your legs so that you roll up over the board.
2. So that you can carve without rolling off the back of the board, you need to get your weight on both feet.



Centre your weight by closing your hips. Turning them more parallel to the centre line of your board.

3. You don't want to be fighting against any pull from your kite, otherwise there's no way you can carve up, so you need to dump power and get the kite up at 12 o'clock, at the edge of the window. Gently steer your kite up and feather the bar out so it doesn't pull as it rises.

Here, Karine has flattened off a tad to increase speed. She's centred on her stance and is gently drifting her kite up.

THE CARVE PIC B

As the kite rises, you must drop your weight low, sinking as much of your heel side edge into the water whilst hinging your hips. This way, you can keep your



upper body upright and carve the board upwind. Really try to turn the board, rather than twist your body, so that you and the board turn together. Dropping your weight and carving upwind will increase tension on your lines. As such, you'll need to further feather the bar out so the kite doesn't lift or pull. You can see that as Karine drops and carves, her hips are still parallel to the board's centre line; they're turning in unison. She's still slowly steering the kite and has broken at the waist to push the bar out.

KEEP CARVING PIC C

The crux of the move. You need to keep carving so that you turn your board's nose through the wind's eye. Your aim is to keep the kite moving slowly, tracing the edge of the window so that it passes through 12 o'clock without pulling you. What you do



here will vary depending on wind strength, how quickly you moved the kite or even the sweet spot position. You don't want to get lifted, and you don't want to get wet. If you have a lot of power or moved the kite too quickly, you'll need to sheet out further. If you steer the kite slowly, you can squeeze the bar in a touch. This will give you just enough support to continue to carve, driving against the board so that it passes through the wind. Karine is upright, still steering her kite softly across, and now that it's at 12, she pulls gently on the bar for support whilst continuing to carve on her heels.

Weight Shift Pic D

Once you've got the nose through the wind and heading back, it's about shifting your weight onto your original front foot – in this case, Karine's left foot.



Using the support you benefitted from to get through the wind to hold you, bend your front knee and move your hips towards the nose of the board. Turning your head to look at the front of the board. You can be quite dynamic here, as your aim is to sink the nose and plant it in the water. Karine is supporting herself with the kite and has thrown her weight forward, digging her nose in. It's worth noting that she is still gently steering the kite across the window. At this point, it's preferable to have the kite just past 12 as it will help you shift forward.

STEP THROUGH PIC E

As soon as the nose goes down, you need more from

the kite to help you step through. The action is not unlike bringing the board through to go toe side, it's just that you're stationary! Pull the bar in to get more power from the kite and keep steering the kite. As you feel it lift, bring your rear leg up and through, pivoting around the sunken nose. Here, Karine has her nose under and has pulled her bar in, and as the kite lifts her up over the board, she steps her rear foot through.

Dive & Go Pic F

To claim it, you need some forward momentum. This part of the move should already be in your armoury. Dive the kite and prepare for the pull.



To exit smoothly, you need the pull to come from the side of the window in which you want to travel. It'll do the job if you've drifted the kite across the past 12. Karine's kite is diving and pulling her out of her duck tack.

TOP TIPS

It's worth trying to learn this in two stages. First, work on getting your carve, as once this is in the bag, you can think ahead and throw yourself forward into the pivot. The carve must be just that, a carve. If there is any sliding, it'll be game over. So practice carving as far as you can, moving the kite up to 12 o'clock and letting the bar out as it drifts.



Once you've carved the carve, it's all about timing. Wait too long, and you'll sink; go too early, and you won't make it around.

As with all moves, it'll start off as a bit of a blur. The more you practice, the more time will slow down, and you'll get a better feeling for where you are, where the kite is and what it is you should be doing.

COMMON PROBLEMS

If you are "losing" the tail as you carve up, it's because you're subconsciously going into slide-turn mode. This means that as you carve, you are bending your front knee and moving your weight forward too early. With your weight on your front foot, the tail will slide

out as you push. Keep your hips centred and concentrate on carving the board so that you push through your back heel while sinking as much edge as possible.

If you're falling downwind of the board, it's because the kite pulls you. Be sure to drift the kite up to 12 and let the bar out as you go. Break at the waist as you turn so your upper body stays upright.

If you get pulled over the board as you pivot, nearly making it but ending up on your front, this is because the kite is diving from 12 and pulling you downwind. To exit, you want your kite diving into the new side of the window, so drift it further before pivoting and diving.

3. Carve – pop, bar on the sweet spot, fully extend for maximum spring
4. Look back and down, lift the front knee
5. Grab between your feet. Pull on the bar for landing



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



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QUESTIONS ROU CHATER
WORDS BOUWE KERKSTRA
PHOTOS ANDY TROY

TECH FOCUS

LIEUWE THE FALCON

Bouwe Kerkstra discusses the new Falcon kiteboard designed for big air, combining grip, stiffness, and control with comfort and soft landings, prioritising high performance at high speeds. Do we have your attention?

Find out more in this Tech Focus!





" IT'S A HIGH-PERFORMANCE BOARD THAT OFFERS EXCELLENT CONTROL AT HIGH SPEEDS, MAKING IT EASIER TO ACHIEVE PERFECT TAKE-OFFS. "

Hi Bouwe, Thanks for joining us today! What made you decide to design a big air-specific board?

Hey Rou! We already have the Oceana, a big air board that's super rigid and provides excellent grip even in stormy conditions. We noticed a gap between the shotgun's comfort and the Oceana's extreme performance. So, we decided to design a carbon board that combines grip and comfort, which is quite challenging for a carbon board.

What characteristics were you looking to create that aren't in the rest of the range?

Grip, stiffness, and control are the primary characteristics of a big air board. These characteristics

are combined with comfort and a soft landing while maintaining a lightweight design.

Many riders focus on the kite for big air; why is the board so important?

It's a high-performance board that offers excellent control at high speeds, making it easier to achieve perfect take-offs. This makes the board ideal for big air and high jumps. Additionally, we've ensured that you will experience soft landings with this board.

You've opted for a daily simple double concave on the bottom rather than many deep channels. What is the reasoning behind that?

Deep channels offer excellent grip but can impede landing corrections by immediately gripping the water. The Falcon includes a channel along the edge to provide the necessary grip without compromising manoeuvrability.

The carbon finish looks sublime; what advantages and disadvantages does the carbon bring to the product?

Carbon is much stronger than fiberglass, requiring less material for the same strength and stiffness. This advantage makes the board extremely light. The Falcon 137 weighs about 2.3 kg.

How long has the board been in development?

Over than a year!

Big air is constantly changing; we've gone from holding down 9m kites in massive winds to smaller kites for doubles. How does the FALCON handle the different demands of today's big air riders?

The Falcon's exceptional comfort sets it apart from other carbon big air focused boards. For a long time, the Oceana has been known as the best board for extreme conditions, but not suitable for everyday use. Our target audience is older riders with a history of injuries who want to ride big air without feeling pain the next day. The board strikes the right balance between comfort and performance, making it a favourite among big air riders at different skill levels.

Size is always an important factor with any kiteboard. Are there different considerations with the FALCON to get the most out of it?

Size is very important for every rider, and when they are struggling with their progress, I would like to motivate everyone to get in touch with someone and discuss their level and ambitions, including their home spots. We have riders globally of the same length/weight, but the difference in their board sizes is sometimes 2 sizes in between. It's a very personal situation we like to discuss with our customers when they are not 100% sure about their selection. Specifically, for the Falcon, someone could ride a bigger board due to its grip/weight when they want to.



" THE FALCON'S EXCEPTIONAL COMFORT SETS IT APART FROM OTHER CARBON BIG AIR FOCUSED BOARDS. "

QUESTIONS JEN TYLER
WORDS DOM ZIMMERMANN
PHOTOS TBC

TECH FOCUS

OZONE VORTEX V1 ULTRA X

Ozone head designer Dom Zimmermann tells us about Ozone's newest big air beast, the Vortex Ultra-X. Dom tells us tales of its development and the wide range of riders finding huge benefits in its surprisingly accessible handling.



What was the inspiration and design goal for the Vortex Ultra-X?

The design brief was to create a kite that could jump as high as the Edge but had better-looping characteristics. As with all our top-end models, we had a free hand in material choices with no compromises to costs. With our full R&D team and highly skilled team riders, we set to work on this exciting project.

The Edge has been part of your lineup for a long time, with a storied success in the race and big air scene. Why didn't you make an Aluula Edge, and why was there the need for a totally new three-strut design?

Just exchanging materials on the Edge wasn't enough. It was the obvious first try when we started the process in 2022. While just changing the materials alone charged up the Edge's performance a fraction, it wasn't enough of a difference. Getting to grips with the Aluula materials, we realised that we had to design a kite in conjunction with it, properly integrating it, not just adding it. A lot of iterations followed, all based on a 5-strut design, as that was the conclusion we drew at the time in order to achieve very high canopy stability in strong winds. It was only later on in the development process when we happened to try a very different direction based on three struts, that we realised we'd found this advantage and greater possibility with refined sail tension, the preloaded leading edge and struts to reach such high canopy stability.

The marketing for the kite is heavily focused on big air, but is it just a big air kite? What else is it capable of, and who should consider buying one?

It is indeed capable of much more than just big air riding. In fact, it's a great fun, all-round freeride kite



" WITH OUR FULL R&D TEAM AND HIGHLY SKILLED TEAM RIDERS, WE SET TO WORK ON THIS EXCITING PROJECT. "



" BOTH ARE DESIGNED TO SATISFY ANYONE
LOOKING TO IMPROVE THEIR BIG AIR GAME,
AND BOTH THESE KITES CAN GO SUPER HIGH. "

for anyone who likes to hoon around on a twin-tip but also on a hydrofoil. Being naturally light due to the three-strut construction and the Aluula airframe, many riders enjoy it in light winds on their foils. Direct handling, with a very crisp and taut canopy, delivers such intuitive control that it's hard not to enjoy the engaging flying sensations in all sorts of conditions.

What are the main differences between the Edge and the Vortex?

There are big cross-overs between the Vortex and Edge. They are both designed with very clean aerodynamics and taut, efficient canopies, so they both have that crisp Ozone handling. Both are

designed to satisfy anyone looking to improve their big air game, and both these kites can go super high.

The Edge is more tuned for that plug-and-play freeride experience, and one of the most overlooked aspects of its performance is just how incredible its easy upwind performance is. It absolutely rockets you upwind and, at the same time, delivers a beautiful amount of sheeting power on tap. For fast and efficient riding sensations, they don't come much easier or feel as accessible as the Edge. Send the kite back overhead and sheet in, and you can't fail to get good jumps and floaty hangtime. It is also designed with a more robust Dacron airframe, so is more

rugged and can handle more abrasion against the beach, for example. It's also lower in price.

The Vortex Ultra-X is made of more exotic materials that take a bit more general care to look after, but it delivers a faster response. When directing customers, we basically ask first, "Do you already pull kite loops, or is it something you really want to get into?" If that answer is in any way a "yes", then we say they're ready for the Vortex. It loops fast and climbs so reliably up through the window that it's almost automatic that it will catch you. That performance benefit helps anyone throwing their first loops and those who want to keep pulling the bar for double or triple loops.

" WE HAVE VERY CLEAN LOCKING SPLICES AT ALL INTERSECTIONS AND LOOPS, FURTHER STREAMLINING THE BRIDLE SYSTEM. "



Beyond that, it's just an intuitive kite to ride, aided by the 16-point bridle that really puts the rider in superb contact with the kite. The feedback we've had from all kinds of rider levels is that it is helping them in so many ways, but primarily with easy improvements to their jumping heights and kite loop confidence. From there, the sky's the limit for session after session progression.

What are the main benefits of having a 3-strut Big Air kite? There seems to be a solid split between 5- and 3-strut kites, although many new designs are switching to three...

The reduced weight of only having 3 struts is obvious regarding mega loops or doubles. The kite has less inertia, so it doesn't stop through the loop but keeps accelerating, which is one highly liked attribute of the Vortex; no matter how low you pull a loop - the kite will always catch you.

What feature makes the Vortex kite easy to catch after a kite loop?

It's the combination of everything, but the lighter the kite's weight, the better it will shoot up through the window (with good design, of course). The small diameter LE with 16-point bridle attachment along the leading edge reduces drag, contributing to high speeds and better climb/catch after a loop.

What is the main benefit of the Aluula airframe in the Vortex kite? As you have your own factory, was it hard to train the staff on the new material, and what have you done differently to ensure longevity and durability in the seams?

Using Aluula materials for the airframe gave the design many benefits. It's stiffer than conventional Dacron,

so the kite is more reactive and more stable in naking wind. Reducing weight obviously helps, as mentioned in one of my previous answers.

As with every new process in the factory, there's a learning period. However, as designers, we have 100% access to the factory and work with our colleagues in the dedicated prototyping department. So, the prototyping process is when we work on the production processes within the factory so that by the time products are signed off for production, the team has everything nailed perfectly every time. The teams in the factory are highly skilled, some with over 25 years of experience in their field. Alongside the material use, we're focusing on adding the necessary strength to ensure all areas are strong. Along the LE, every seam is double reinforced to reduce the risk of seam creeping, for example. Once we knew how to work with Aluula materials, it was a pretty straightforward process, but it added additional complexity and labour to the way we built a kite.

What customisation options are available when setting up the kite so the rider can tune the characteristics?

There are two back line settings on the kite. When you receive it, it comes set up on the lighter bar setting, and the bar pressure can be increased using the tab in front. The rider should also play around with different line lengths, as this can change many of the kite's characteristics.

To finish the point about customisation - don't forget we offer pretty much all our kites in a range of custom colour options! There's a custom colour chooser on the web page for each product - you can go wild and get just the perfect colour combo!

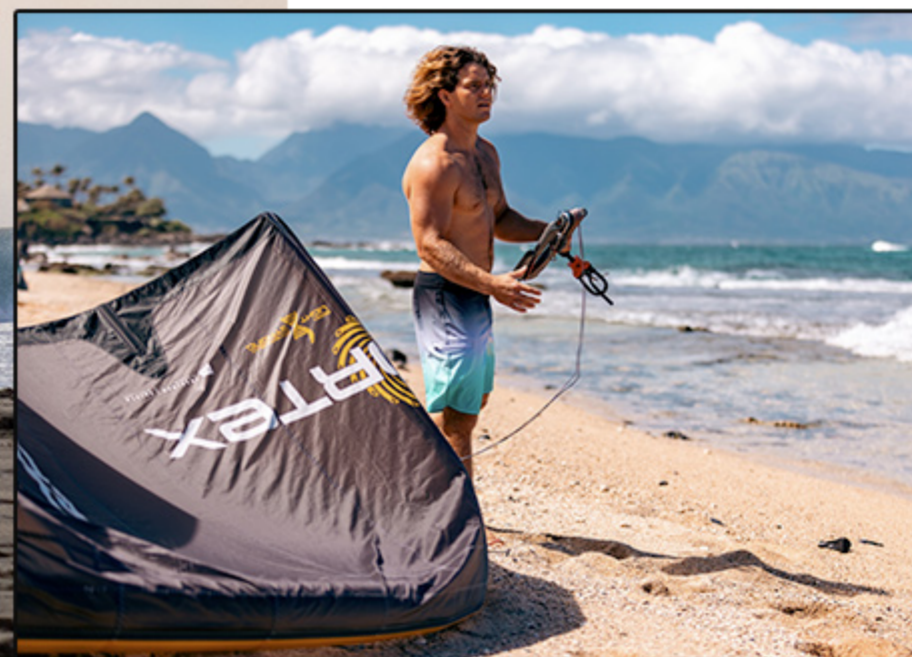


" BY THE TIME PRODUCTS ARE SIGNED OFF FOR PRODUCTION, THE TEAM HAS EVERYTHING NAILED PERFECTLY EVERY TIME. "

" FROM INTERMEDIATES UPWARDS, MANY PEOPLE FIND IT A VERY ENGAGING, EASY AND INSPIRING KITE TO RIDE. "

How have the sales been so far? Are you guys pleased with the kite reception in the marketplace.

We've been incredibly pleased by how well the kite has been received. In designing a kite to deliver very high-performance handling for new school big air in strong winds, the responsive connection at the bar, the range and the incredible control it delivers has translated into the kite being very accessible for anyone of a good intermediate level upwards. From intermediates upwards, many people find it a very engaging, easy and inspiring kite to ride. You just get on it and immediately feel ready to send it!



QUESTIONS JEN TYLER
WORDS EWAN JASPAN

PHOTO ANDY TROY

TECH FOCUS

NAISH KITEBOARDING PSYCHO NVISION

In this Tech Focus feature, Ewan Jaspán discusses Naish Kiteboarding's Psycho Nvision, a new kite built from the ground up. This kite is ideal for riders of all levels seeking control, confidence, and fast-forward drive. It's great for those aiming to go big with ease and confidence, and it's loved by the Pro team riders! If you enjoy a little tech talk, you'll love this!



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The Phoenix was launched in 2022 as an easy-to-use big-air freeride kite. Is the Psycho Nvision a totally new kite or a development of the Phoenix?

The Psycho is a totally new kite! The only thing in common with the Phoenix is the number of struts. Otherwise, it does not replace the Phoenix; it is a new kite with a new purpose and is completely designed from scratch. We took many things we had learned from previous kites and new ideas and innovations. It was the first kite we built around the Aluula GC-82 material instead of adapting existing models, which has given its performance characteristics unfound in other products around the market.

The big news is the Alluula frame. There is no standard version of this kite. Is that on the cards, or is the focus on pure performance?

At Naish, we don't do standard kites; all of our kites are quality kites with the best materials available. The Psycho Nvision is equipped with an Aluula airframe with our seam technology (crucial with Aluula) and in combination with Naish Quadtex. Having a solid airframe puts the most stress on the panels next to it. Quadtex is the stiffest canopy material available, and that is what makes our Nvision kites unique. They have a canopy that can withstand the stiffness of the Aluula.

For now, the kite is only available in Aluula, as we wanted to create a pinnacle kite and lean into designing it around the benefits GC-82 Aluula provides. In the future, we will work on a Dacron version, which will be the first time we have returned from Aluula to Dacron. It is interesting to see the differences this way, and so far, we are very happy with the results. Working between the materials,



"IT IS INTERESTING TO SEE THE DIFFERENCES THIS WAY, AND SO FAR, WE ARE VERY HAPPY WITH THE RESULTS."



“ WE HAVE VERY CLEAN LOCKING SPLICES AT ALL INTERSECTIONS AND LOOPS, FURTHER STREAMLINING THE BRIDLE SYSTEM. ”

PHOTO SAMUEL CARDENAS

105 TECH FOCUS

we are figuring out how to perfectly adapt designs to certain materials and gain the benefits without any trade-offs. The Aluula kite will remain superior in most regards, but you would hope so with the extra price tag!

The leading edge and struts are super thin; how does this change the kite's characteristics?

This creates a kite that can fly forward exceedingly well on take-off, riding around, and catching through kite loops. We have also been able to create a solid structure kite but paired it with bridling and an arc, allowing the kite to turn fast and be trusted to do what you want when you want. This also allows for a closely matched centre of weight and centre of effort on the kite. The lighter and smaller LE, paired with the delicately placed draft position, means that the kite feels perfectly balanced and does not want to over-fly or back stall, staying ready for rider input at all times.

The kite has a fixed bridle and uses a thinner TLS400 line. What's the advantage of using a fixed bridle, and how much faster do the thinner lines make the kite?

The fixed bridle gives the rider a hands on and direct feel to the kite. A 10-point bridle system paired with five struts and GC-82 gives a crisp feel that is unmatched in terms of control and awareness of what your kite is doing and where it is at all times. The TLS 400 bridle lines are aerodynamically efficient, creating near-to-no drag. We have very clean locking splices at all intersections and loops, further streamlining the bridle system. An added benefit of thinner bridle lines, which many people do not realise, is that the water relaunch is easier. Just like cutting through the air, the thinner lines break the surface tension of the water more easily and get your kite back in the air sooner.

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"THE PROFILE LOCK SEAM, MIXED WITH QUADTEX, MEANS THE NVISION KITES LAST LONGER THAN ANY OTHER COMPOSITE MATERIAL KITE ON THE MARKET."



Can you tell us more about the Profile Lock Seam and how that works?

The Profile Lock Seam is a seam running along the deep point in the kite's profile. It is the part of the canopy with the highest stress, so adding a seam keeps the profile perfect over time, not letting the kite 'bag out' over time. The Profile Lock Seam, mixed with QuadTex, means the NVision kites last longer than any other composite material kite on the market. The Aluula airframe is extremely stiff and puts high demands on the canopy to match up, which is where QuadTex once again excels. It will keep your kite feeling fresh and brand new session after session.

When designing the kite, what performance characteristics are you looking to focus on?

What makes a big air kite a big air kite?

For me, the main characteristic I wanted to hit was a feeling of control and confidence. The main thing that gives me the feeling and ability to go big is trust in my gear and trust that the kite will be there to catch me after any kite loop or jump. As we are now a few weeks after launch, the feedback so far has been overwhelming regarding the confidence this kite is giving people, especially riders of a level who want to take their first steps into kite looping and heli looping. This level of confidence also aids high-level riders in their battle to commit to learning new technical tricks, knowing that all the power rests in their hands, as the Psycho will always be there for you, allowing you to access your Psycho side easily.

Fast-forward drive was another characteristic we had to hit. This allows the rider to hold more power before going into a manoeuvre and then get a good vertical takeoff and early catch from loops.

The last main characteristic we focused on was a bar feel that is intuitive and direct without being heavy.

While the kite is aimed at the big air performance market, how easy is it to use, and who will this kite suit?

The Psycho is aimed at any rider of any level, wanting to go bigger with confidence. Whether mega loops, massive airs, or learning your first kite loops, this kite will give you access to your Psycho side, which you may not even know you had. It is incredibly easy to use, which is the main feedback I have received so far.

Riders who thought this kite would be above their pay grade getting on the kite and instantly felt at home and going bigger than they ever expected.

**What are the pro team saying about the kite?
Are they enjoying the new platform and design?**

For sure, they are stoked with the confidence they are accessing and the time in the air to nail their next big trick. It is always exciting when a rider comments on it being the best kite they've ridden, as Team Riders are inherently critical! Haha.

Why should a customer choose the Psycho Nvision in this crowded big air marketplace?

In a crowded big air marketplace, there are not many well-rounded big air kites which cater to the needs of the everyday kiteboarder, and the pro rider alike. You have some kites built around the top team rider, but then in the hands of an average rider, the kite is 'on edge' 'twitchy' and a handful to deal with, not inspiring confidence. On the other hand, you have kites built to jump big, high aspect, flat arc, which are great for going big but are slower than ideal and do not inspire confidence when learning kite loops as they are slow and can backstall. The Psycho is the perfect blend between the two and is really something that needs to be felt to believe. The feedback so far has been far above even our confident expectations, and we are just stoked to bring confidence and progression to riders of all levels. Try one at your local Naish dealer.

PHOTO SAMUEL CARDENAS



" THE PSYCHO IS THE PERFECT BLEND BETWEEN THE TWO AND IS REALLY SOMETHING THAT NEEDS TO BE FELT TO BELIEVE. "

WORDS STIJN MUL PHOTOS SAMUEL CARDENAS & ANDY TROY

PROLIMIT ELITE BOARDBAG

The Space X Kitesurfing Team grab Prolimit's Elite Surf/Kite Board Bag and travel from Holland to Tarifa for Full Power Tarifa. The Prolimit Elite Surf/Kite Board Bag for safely transporting their gear, impressed by its capacity and design features. Read all about their trip in this mini-feature!



ON THE ROAD

ROAD

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“ THIS JOURNEY ALLOWS THEM TO CARRY A RANGE OF EQUIPMENT ESSENTIAL FOR FACING THE VARIED WIND CONDITIONS ”

The Space X Kitesurfing Team are known for pushing the boundaries of the sport, these riders always blend action with cutting-edge technology. Their partnership with Prolimit, a leader in producing premium wetsuits, bags,

and board bags, shows their commitment to excellence and innovation.

At the heart of their adventures lies their passion for kitesurfing, which drives them to explore some of the most iconic locations around the world. Tarifa stands out as a jewel in Europe, known as the continent's wind capital. Based in Amsterdam, the Space X Kitesurfing Team has made this spot a pivotal point in their travel itinerary,

especially in anticipation of the Full Power Tarifa event scheduled for May 2024.

The decision to drive from Amsterdam to Tarifa is not taken lightly. It is a testament to the team's dedication and the logistical advantages this mode of travel offers! This journey allows them to carry a range of equipment essential for facing the varied wind conditions that Tarifa is famous for. The area's consistent winds can shift quickly, necessitating a diverse kite quiver to fully engage with what the locale offers!

Understanding the importance of transporting their gear safely and efficiently, the Space X Kitesurfing Team collaborated closely with Prolimit to identify the perfect board bag that would meet their needs. After careful consideration, the choice became clear: the Prolimit Elite Surf/Kite Board Bag with Slider wheels would be their top contender. This product stood out for its unmatched capacity and innovative design features, making it an ideal companion for the team's adventures.

“IT CARRIED THEIR KITES AND BOARDS AND OFFERED EASE OF MOBILITY, WHICH IS CRUCIAL ON THE GO.”

The team's reaction to the Prolimit Elite Board Bag was nothing short of stoked! It carried their kites and boards and offered ease of mobility, which is crucial on the go. The board bag's strong construction and thoughtful design, featuring multiple compartments and protective padding, made sure that the team's equipment would arrive in Tarifa in perfect condition.

Inspired by their positive experience with the board bag, the Space X Kitesurfing Team filmed a creative video showing how much they actually got in the kite bag - [Watch the video here.](#)



ON THE ROAD

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

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

Put the popcorn on, it's Movie Night!

MOVIE NIGHT

#1

KITEBOARDING FLAT WATER PARADISE WITH JETT BRADSHAW - COURT IN THE ACT

Despite fierce winds and a near-miss with a rock, Tom's spirit remains unbroken. Join Tom Court and Jett Bradshaw's epic journey that claimed top spot on our Movie Night list this issue!



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#2

INDIE - THE NEW ONE STRUT KITE

When a new product video earns a spot on Movie Night, you know it's no ordinary video! Introducing the FLYSURFER INDIE – your ultimate one-strut kite companion - Whether you're just starting or seeking new thrills, the INDIE has you covered!



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#3

DEATH LOOPS: HOW TO FIX THEM AND HOW TO AVOID THEM

Join Alex Buss from Kitesurf College for crucial tips on avoiding death loops! Featuring real-life footage from seasoned kitesurfers, this video is packed with practical safety advice to keep your kitesurfing adventures accident-free.



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#4

KITESURFING TULIPS

After patiently waiting for three years, Stig Hoefnagel captures the perfect shots of Holland's tulip bloom. With the perfect Southwesterly winds and peak colours, this breathtaking footage is a must-see on our Movie Night list!



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

A scenic view of a blue lake with a forested background and a colorful kite surfer in the distance. The kite is multi-colored (red, yellow, blue, green, orange) and is flying in the air. The rider is a small figure on the water. The background is a dense green forest. The foreground shows the edge of a tree with green leaves on the left side.

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RIDER KNUT SCHEVIK PHOTO BY HEIDI STAVRAN