

KSURF!

ISSUE 107

OCT/NOV 24

WELCOME TO IKSURFMAG

Welcome to the World's Number One Kitesurfing Magazine! For issue 107, we're offering five subscribers a chance to win a €100 Duotone Apparel voucher. Rou Chater's editorial explores AI's growing role in kiteboarding, while Jen Tyler interviews James Carew and the female powerhouse team at Kubus Sports. We dive into The Wind Seekers Kitefest, SpaceX kitesurfing in Ireland,

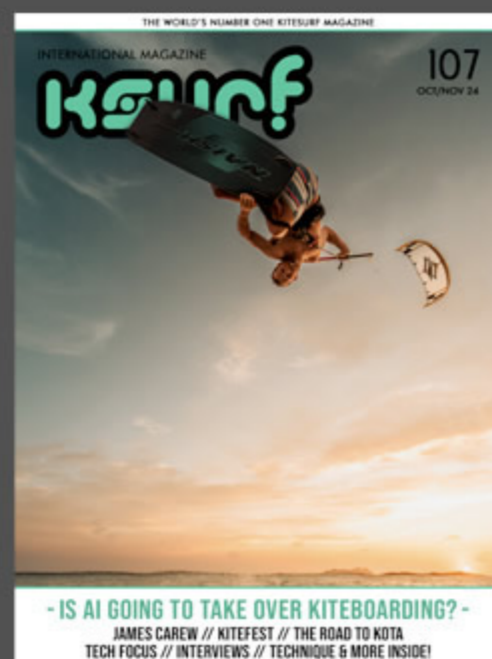
and Ellie Dimitrova's stunning Sakalava Bay adventure. Arthur Guillebert shares his journey at Dunkerque, and we cover WOO Worlds 2024 and Lorenzo Casati's road to KOTA. Plus, tech insights on the Enduro V5, ION wetsuits, CORE's Pace Pro, and our Technique section keep your skills sharp this season. That's not all; we've got tests, stories and much more!

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INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE

KSURF!

107
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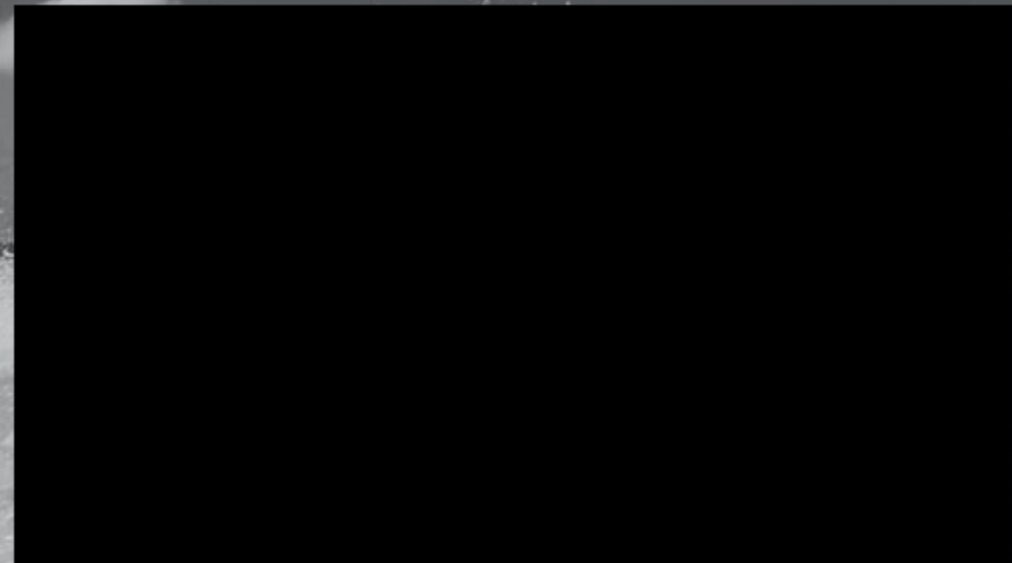
- IS AI GOING TO TAKE OVER KITEBOARDING? -

JAMES CAREW // KITEFEST // THE ROAD TO KOTA
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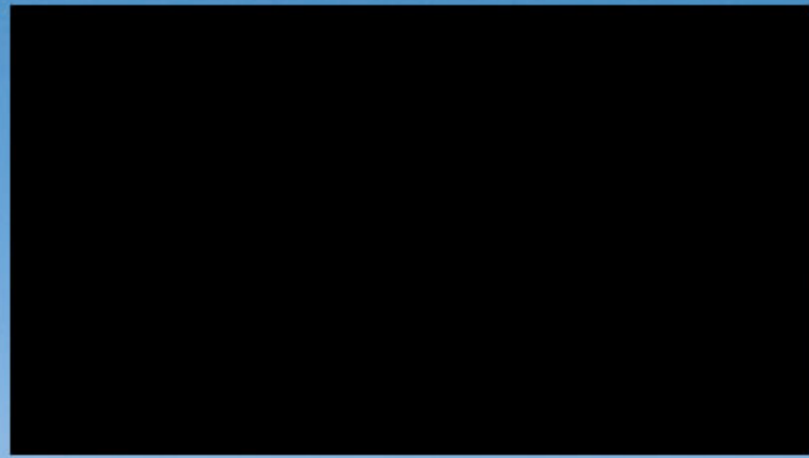
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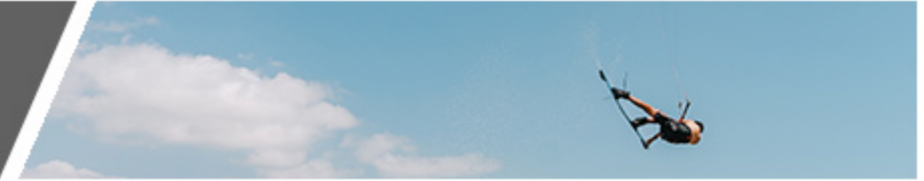
THE ROAD TO KOTA - LORENZO CASATI



IS AI GOING TO TAKE OVER KITEBOARDING?



ENDURO V5 UNLEASHED



JAMES CAREW: BACK IN FULL FORCE



TECH FOCUS



INSIGHT - THE FEMALE POWERHOUSE AT KUBUS SPORTS



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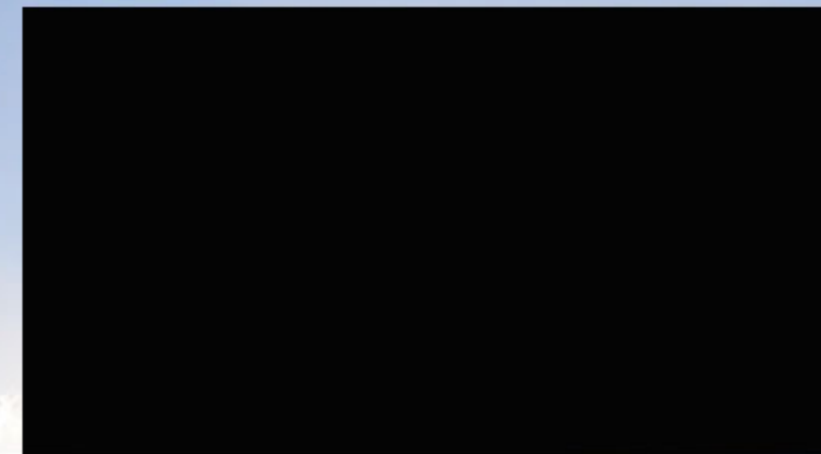
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RIDER JESSE RICHMAN
PHOTO LANCE KOUDELE



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RIDER SCOTT BARENSEN
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THE AI TAKE-OVER

You'll notice a rather different feel to our first article in this issue. We let artificial intelligence out of the bag to create its own feature. It's an interesting read, considering a robot did it. Let's just say it looks like I'm still in with a job for the moment. However, this is just the start, and it certainly looks like an interesting future.

AI can streamline our workload and support us in our roles. It can also take your job, and it might already have done in some cases. Let's think back to the first computer games, a handful of pixels moving slowly on a screen and taking an age to load, and you compare that to the latest greatest games console with photo-realistic graphics and blistering speeds. You can imagine where AI might end up.

Looking to the internet, where IKSURFMAG was born, can give you clues. When we launched, 500kb broadband was just becoming mainstream as dial-up speeds of 56kb were phased out. This meant that due to the amount of data in our magazine, you could only read it if you had that kind of speed. Some countries didn't for years, and our title remained off-limits to them. Now, we consider high-speed internet access a basic human right. If you don't have the infrastructure, you can beam it down directly from space. Technology develops quickly, and plenty of evidence supports AI following that path.

If we look at how technology has changed kiteboarding, it's plain to see. From the design process to testing to manufacture, the landscape has changed immeasurably. As we sit on the cusp of this AI precipice or ramp, depending on how you look at it, it's interesting to imagine what the future holds. For our lead feature, we did exactly that, except in the interest of proving a point, we asked AI to do it.

It's got some pretty big ideas, which may be coming to a beach near you soon or not. Will photographers and pro riders become a thing of the past as AI can create images cheaply and easily that previously took time and money to create? Will the humble journalist fall by the wayside, and my job becomes redundant? Who knows what the future holds, but one thing is for sure: it won't stop you from enjoying the sport you love unless it steals your job and you can't afford to buy kites anymore.

Here come the robots...

God forbid.

Rou Chater

Publishing Editor

A KITESURFER RIDING IN FRONT OF AN EXPLODING VOLCANO IN THE CANARY ISLANDS, BEING CHASED BY SHARKS, LIONS, AND TIGERS, WITH A TYRANNOSAURUS REX ROARING.



--- WORDS & PHOTOS AI ---

With the increasing presence of AI in different aspects of kiteboarding, such as writing articles, taking photographs, and even riding. Rou Chater and AI discuss the potential impact of AI on the sport and whether it could eventually replace human professionals. Intrigued? Read on!

IS AI GOING TO TAKE OVER KITEBOARDING?

**“ BEING A PHOTOGRAPHER IS EXPENSIVE,
AND IT’S ALWAYS TRICKY TO GET THE “SHOT”,
WHY NOT LET AI DO IT FOR YOU? ”**



Forget the Olympics; that was last week's news... Unless you've been living under a rock lately, you'll have been hearing a lot about AI. We've discussed it in the magazine, and given how the landscape is always changing within our sport, we thought it merited some further investigation.

Writing articles takes time, so why not let AI do it? Being a pro rider is hard work, so why not let AI do it for you? Being a photographer is expensive, and it's always tricky to get the "shot", why not let AI do it for you? This is just the beginning, who knows where this will end up. Look at social media; it used to be the case that pros were merited on their performance on the water; now it's more about how many followers you have; could it be about how good the AI is in the future?

AI writers, photographers, and riders will be a lot cheaper than the real thing, so we asked AI to write this article and create all the images for us. While the pictures are funny, the text is a little scary, although we think AI-powered kites that fly us so we don't have to bother might be a little far-fetched. Enjoy. Everything after this sentence was created by a machine that was asked the simple question: Is AI going to take over kiteboarding?

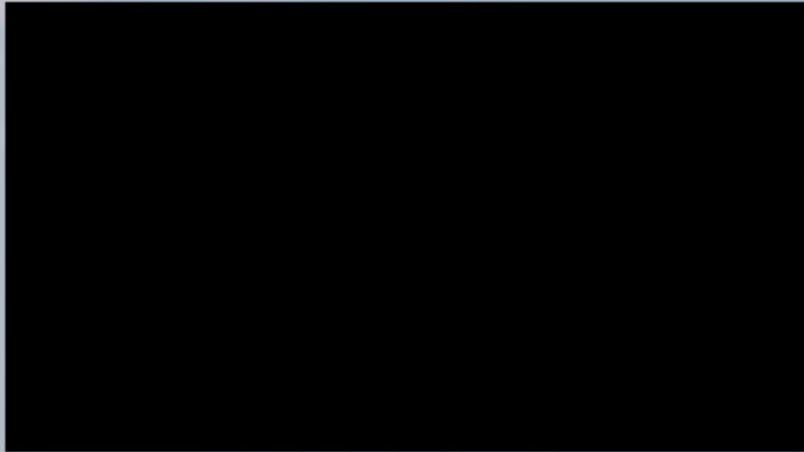
RIDING THE WINDS OF CHANGE: KITEBOARDING IN THE AGE OF AI

Kiteboarding, an exhilarating blend of surfing, paragliding, and wakeboarding, has long been a sport defined by the raw forces of nature and the skilled hands of its riders. As kitesurfers harness the power of the wind, skimming across the water's surface or launching into the air for breathtaking aerial manoeuvres, they embody the spirit of freedom and adventure. Yet, in this world of wind and waves,



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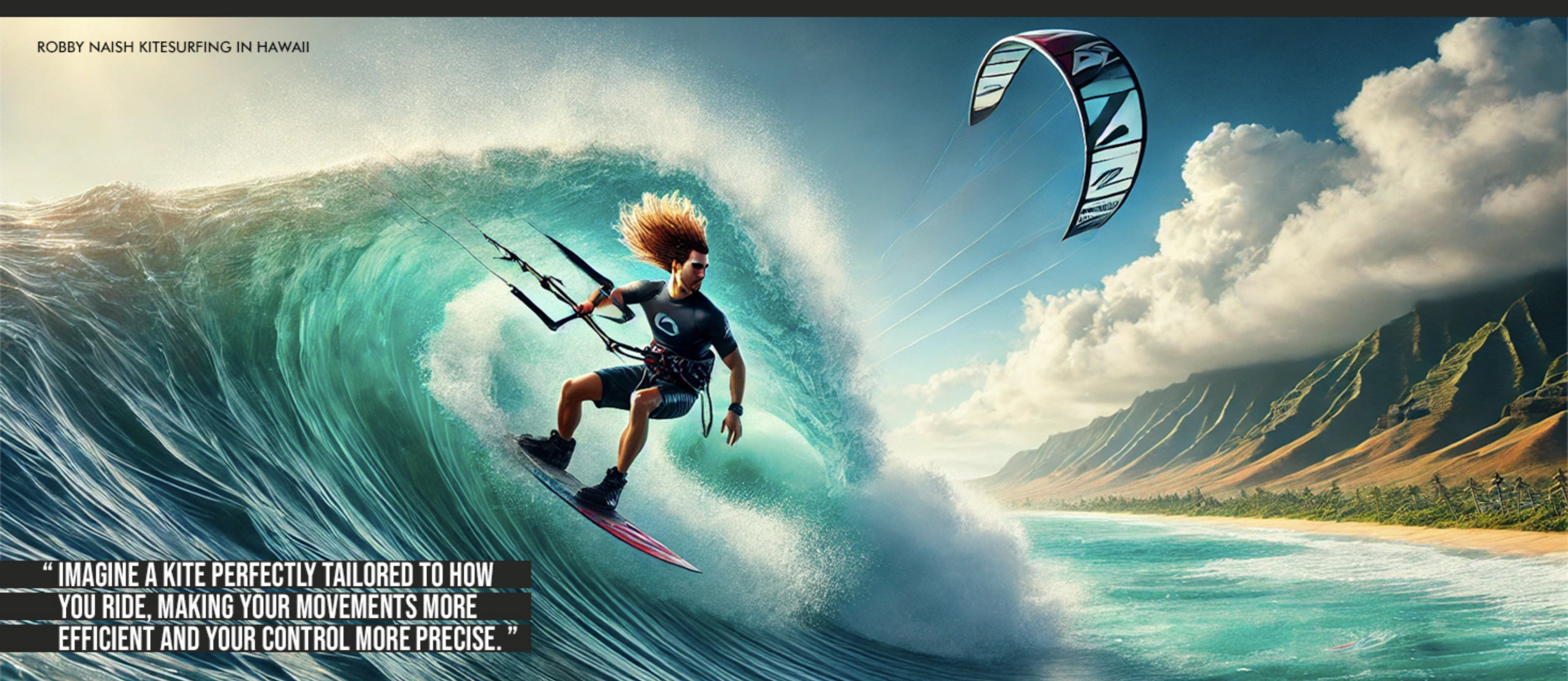


“When you bring this kite to the beach you’re not just carrying a Swiss army knife, you’re packing an entire arsenal. It excels in every situation.”

JESSE RICHMAN

INSPIRED BY NATURE DRIVEN BY THE ELEMENTS





“IMAGINE A KITE PERFECTLY TAILORED TO HOW YOU RIDE, MAKING YOUR MOVEMENTS MORE EFFICIENT AND YOUR CONTROL MORE PRECISE.”

a new force is making waves of its own: artificial intelligence (AI). The intersection of kiteboarding and AI is redefining the sport in ways that are as thrilling as they are transformative.

THE RISE OF AI IN KITEBOARDING

AI's encroachment into kiteboarding is not about replacing the rider but enhancing the experience. From safety training, AI is being integrated into various aspects of the sport,

allowing kitesurfers to push their limits while minimising risks. For instance, AI-driven analytics platforms can now assess a rider's performance in real-time, providing instant feedback on everything from body posture to the trajectory of their jumps. This is particularly beneficial for beginners, who can learn from the AI's data-driven insights, as well as for seasoned professionals looking to refine their techniques.

Moreover, AI is revolutionising kite design. Traditional kites are crafted through a combination of experience, intuition, and trial and error. Now, AI algorithms can simulate countless design variations, optimizing kite shapes and materials for specific conditions. This leads to better performance and allows customisation to match individual riding styles and preferences. Imagine a kite perfectly tailored to how you ride, making your movements more efficient and your control more precise. That's the power AI brings to the table.

SAFETY FIRST: AI AS A GUARDIAN ON THE WATER

Kiteboarding is an inherently risky sport. With the forces of nature at play, conditions can change rapidly, sometimes with dangerous consequences. AI is stepping in as a guardian, helping to mitigate these risks. Advanced weather prediction models powered by AI can now offer real-time updates on wind patterns, tidal shifts, and potential hazards, allowing riders to make informed decisions about when and where to ride.

In addition, AI-driven safety systems are being developed to monitor a rider's condition and the equipment's status. For example, sensors embedded in the kite or harness can detect anomalies like a sudden drop in wind or an unexpected equipment failure. The system can then alert the rider or even take automated actions, such as adjusting the kite's position to avoid a crash. These innovations are making kiteboarding safer, allowing riders to focus more on the thrill of the ride and less on the potential dangers.

THE FUTURE: AI AS A CO-PILOT

The role of AI in kiteboarding could expand even further, potentially transforming the sport into a collaborative effort between humans and machines. Imagine an AI-powered kite that learns from your movements, gradually adapting its responses to your style and preferences. Such a kite could act as a co-pilot, helping you execute complex manoeuvres with greater precision or compensating for environmental changes on the fly.



“AI-DRIVEN SAFETY SYSTEMS ARE BEING DEVELOPED TO MONITOR A RIDER’S CONDITION AND THE EQUIPMENT’S STATUS.”



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A KITESURFER DOING A MEGA LOOP IN CAPE TOWN IN FRONT OF TABLE MOUNTAIN



“WITH AI IN THE MIX, THAT DANCE WILL BECOME MORE INTRICATE, PRECISE, AND PERHAPS EVEN MORE EXHILARATING.”

This symbiosis opens up new avenues for the sport. Competitive kiteboarding, for instance, could see the introduction of AI-assisted categories, where the rider's skill is complemented by their ability to work with AI technology. This could lead to entirely new forms of competition, where creativity and innovation are as important as physical prowess.

A NEW ERA OF KITEBOARDING

As AI continues to evolve, its integration into kiteboarding will likely deepen, bringing about changes that are both exciting and challenging. The sport will always retain its essence—a dance between rider, wind, and water—but with AI in the mix, that dance will become more intricate, precise, and perhaps even more exhilarating.

In this new era, kiteboarding will remain a sport for those who seek the thrill of the open water and the rush of the wind. But it will also become a playground for innovation, where technology and nature converge in ways that push the boundaries of what's possible. Whether you're a seasoned pro or a newcomer to the sport, the fusion of kiteboarding and AI promises a future where the sky is not the limit—it's just the beginning.

IS AI GOING TO TAKE OVER KITEBOARDING?

Kiteboarding, also known as kitesurfing, is a thrilling water sport that combines elements of surfing, windsurfing, and paragliding into one adrenaline-pumping activity. For decades, kiteboarding has attracted adventure enthusiasts who are drawn to the sport's unique blend of skill, strategy, and freedom on the open water. However, like many aspects of modern life, kiteboarding is not immune to the influence of technology—specifically, artificial intelligence (AI).



A KITESURFER IN FRONT OF AN EXPLODING VOLCANO WITH A KRAKEN, SHARKS AND JELLYFISH

As AI continues to permeate various industries, from finance to healthcare to entertainment, it's only natural to wonder: could AI take over kiteboarding?

AI IN EXTREME SPORTS: A GROWING INFLUENCE

AI's role in extreme sports has been steadily increasing, primarily through the development of smart equipment, training aids, and predictive analytics. In kiteboarding,

this influence is just beginning to take shape. Companies are already experimenting with AI-driven innovations that aim to enhance the kiteboarding experience, making it safer, more accessible, and potentially more competitive.

One of the most significant areas where AI is making inroads is in the design and optimisation of kiteboarding equipment. By using AI algorithms to analyse vast amounts of data, manufacturers can develop kites,

boards, and harnesses that are more efficient and better suited to different conditions and rider preferences. For example, AI can simulate thousands of potential kite shapes and materials in a fraction of the time it would take human engineers, leading to equipment that offers better performance and durability.

Additionally, AI is being used to create more innovative training tools. Wearable devices equipped with AI can monitor a rider's movements, providing real-time feedback on their technique.

This kind of instant analysis helps beginners learn faster and allows experienced riders to fine-tune their skills in previously impossible ways. Moreover, AI can predict weather patterns more accurately, helping kiteboarders choose the best times and locations for their sessions, thus maximising their time on the water.

AI AND SAFETY IN KITEBOARDING

Safety is a paramount concern in kiteboarding, as the sport involves navigating powerful forces of nature, including strong winds and waves. AI has the potential to significantly enhance safety for kiteboarders by predicting dangerous conditions and assisting riders in avoiding accidents.

For instance, AI-powered drones could be deployed to monitor weather conditions in real-time, providing kiteboarders with up-to-the-minute information on wind speed, direction, and potential hazards. These drones could also track a rider's location, ensuring that help is immediately available in an emergency. Furthermore, AI-driven apps could alert kiteboarders to sudden changes in weather, helping them avoid getting caught in a storm or swept out to sea.

AI can also help prevent accidents by analysing a rider's behaviour and equipment performance. Wearable sensors can detect when a kiteboarder is fatigued or losing control, triggering an automatic safety response such as deploying an emergency parachute or shutting down power to the kite. These innovations could drastically reduce the number of accidents and injuries in kiteboarding, making the sport safer for everyone.

ROU CHATER FINALLY GETTING BARRELLED
AT ONE EYE, HE IS BALD



**“ AI HAS THE POTENTIAL TO SIGNIFICANTLY
ENHANCE SAFETY FOR KITEBOARDERS BY
PREDICTING DANGEROUS CONDITIONS ”**

_sp1723

_Photo Thomas Burdiles

_Rider Willow River Tonkin

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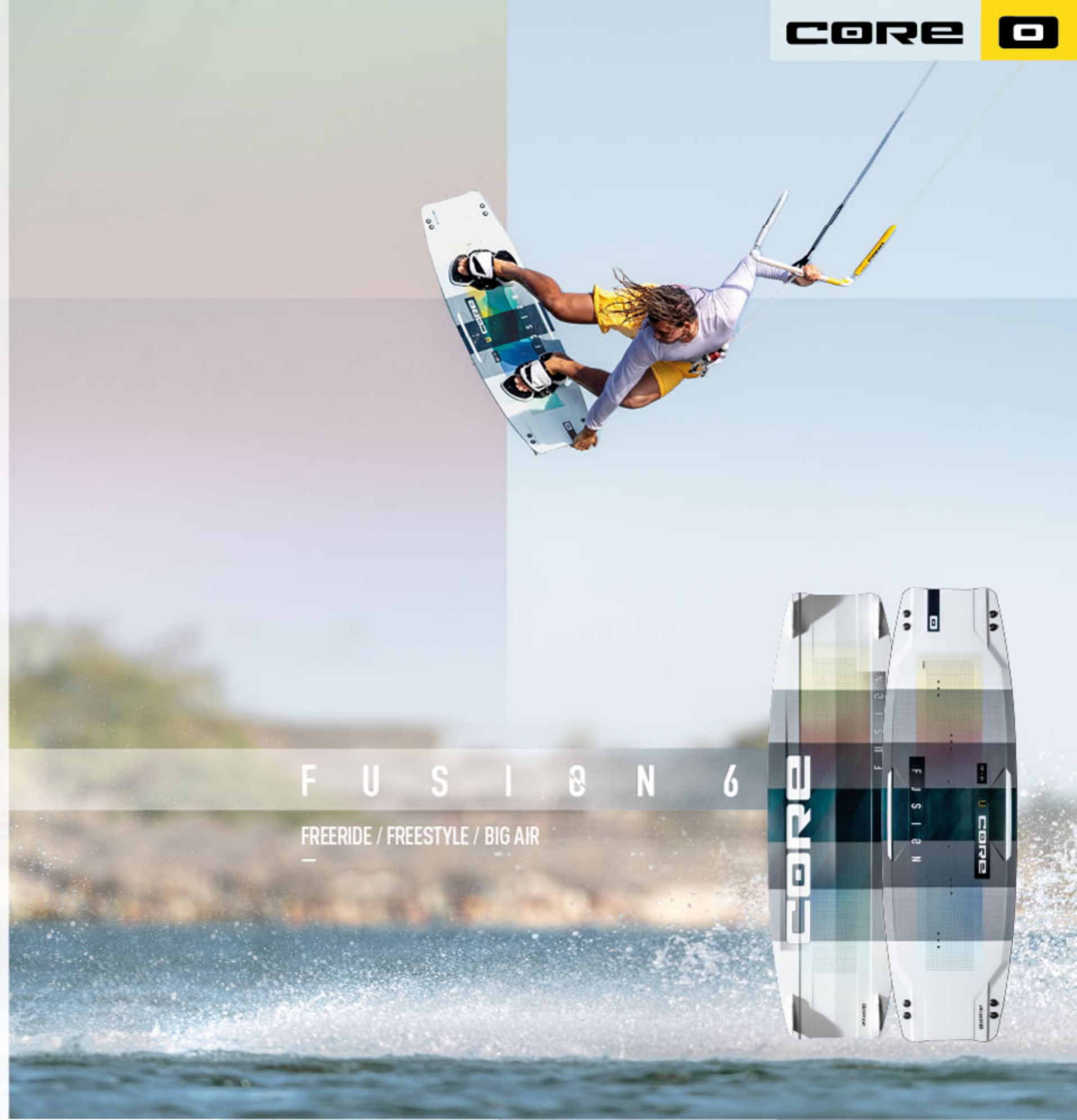
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“ AI COULD TAKE THIS A STEP FURTHER BY PROVIDING REAL-TIME ANALYSIS OF EACH TRICK'S COMPLEXITY, EXECUTION, AND ORIGINALITY ”

THE RISE OF AI-ASSISTED KITEBOARDING COMPETITIONS

As AI continues to evolve, it is likely that we will see its influence extend to kiteboarding competitions. AI can be used to enhance both the judging and participation aspects of the sport. In competitive kiteboarding, judges currently rely on their expertise and experience to evaluate performances, often with the aid of video footage. However, AI could take this a step further by providing real-time analysis of each trick's complexity, execution, and originality, ensuring a more objective and consistent scoring system.

AI could also assist competitors by providing personalised training programs that adapt to their strengths and weaknesses. By analyzing a rider's past performances, AI can identify areas for improvement and suggest specific exercises to enhance their skills. This tailored approach could give competitors a significant edge, potentially leading to higher levels of performance and more exciting contests.

Moreover, AI could be used to create entirely new forms of kiteboarding competitions. Imagine a scenario where riders are paired with AI partners, such as drones or autonomous boats, to navigate complex courses or perform synchronised routines. These hybrid human-AI competitions could push the boundaries of the sport, introducing new challenges and opportunities for creativity.

THE ETHICAL DILEMMA: IS AI ENHANCEMENT STILL KITEBOARDING?

As AI becomes more integrated into kiteboarding, it raises important ethical questions about the sport's nature. One of the sport's fundamental appeals is its reliance on human skill, intuition, and connection

with the natural environment. If AI starts to take over aspects of the sport, from equipment optimisation to performance analysis, is it still the same sport?

Some purists may argue that relying too heavily on AI diminishes the essence of kiteboarding, turning it into a tech-driven exercise rather than an authentic interaction with nature. They might worry that AI could lead to a homogenisation of the sport, where everyone uses the same optimised equipment and follows the same AI-generated strategies, leaving little room for individual creativity and expression.

On the other hand, proponents of AI in kiteboarding might argue that these technologies simply enhance what is already a highly technical sport. After all, kiteboarding has always relied on advancements in equipment and technique to push the boundaries of what's possible. AI, in this view, is just the next step in the sport's evolution, offering new ways to explore and enjoy the water.

This ethical debate is not unique to kiteboarding. Similar discussions are happening in other sports, from AI-driven soccer coaching to advanced analytics in baseball. Ultimately, whether AI-enhanced kiteboarding is still kiteboarding may come down to personal perspective and individual riders' values on tradition versus innovation.

AI AND THE FUTURE OF KITEBOARDING CULTURE

Beyond the practical implications, AI could also profoundly impact kiteboarding culture. The sport has always been closely tied to a sense of freedom,

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KEVIN LANGEREE KITESURFING IN HOLLAND
WEARING CLOGS - MAKE IT MORE DUTCH

**“WHETHER AI-ENHANCED KITEBOARDING IS STILL
KITEBOARDING MAY COME DOWN TO PERSONAL
PERSPECTIVE AND INDIVIDUAL RIDERS' VALUES”**



He's back! After months of physical and mental battles, James Carew has returned to the sport he loves with renewed strength and a sense of purpose, reclaiming his spot at the top. Catch the full interview with Jen Tyler in the latest issue of IKSURFMAG!

WORDS JAMES CAREW & JEN TYLER PHOTOS JASON BRODERICK

JAMES CAREW BACK IN FULL FORCE

“KNOWING I’D BE OFF THE WATER FOR SIX MONTHS, MAYBE A YEAR, BEFORE I’D BE 100%, WAS TOUGH.”

In June 2023, the GKA Big Air Strapless World Title was within reach, and James Carew was determined to land on the podium after a tough loss the previous year. “I felt unstoppable,” he recalls. And he was. James stormed through the competition, snagging his first Big Air World Title. But just as quickly as the celebration began, things took an unexpected turn.

“I wanted to change kites for a double loop right after the win. Me being me, I went for it full speed,” James says. During the second loop, three kite lines snapped, sending him plunging 10 meters into the water. “I hit the water like a meteor,” he says. As soon as he hit, James knew something was seriously wrong. “It felt familiar—I’d had a similar injury as a kid.”

Initial tests showed a broken tibia, a bruised knee, and hip injuries. “Three months off didn’t seem too bad,” he thought. But further scans uncovered a torn meniscus, ACL, and other complications that required surgery and a much longer recovery. The new diagnosis hit hard. “Knowing I’d be off the water for six months, maybe a year, before I’d be 100%, was tough.”





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**“THE PHYSICAL REHAB WAS JUST AS INTENSE.
“I HAD A VERY CLEAR VISION OF MY GOAL ”**

I had a lot of doubts about whether I could come back,” James admits. “Whether I was still the athlete I thought I was. But you have to block those thoughts and tell yourself you’ll make it—even if you don’t believe it.”

While the mental side of recovery was challenging, James found peace in the ocean—even though he couldn’t surf or kite. “Not being able to surf was harder than not kiting,” he says. He started swimming in small waves early on, “The first day I swam in a one-foot wave, I felt like a kid again.” The physical rehab was just as intense. “I had a very clear vision of my goal,” James says.

With that in mind, he dedicated himself to his routine: six days a week of physiotherapy followed by gym sessions focused on slow, deliberate training to prevent over-exertion. “I listened to my body, giving it time to heal and slowing down when needed.” Recovery wasn’t just about rebuilding strength. His afternoons were spent unwinding—time in the sauna, relaxing at the beach, and using ice or heat therapy. Despite setbacks like a failed surgery,



James pressed on, hitting his milestones ahead of schedule, thanks to a solid rehab plan and his discipline.

But James didn't do it alone. His girlfriend Bruna, who had overcome her own knee injuries, was a huge source of inspiration, and his sponsors were beside him every step of the way. "Bruna was definitely one of my motivators," he says.

" HITTING HIS MILESTONES AHEAD OF SCHEDULE, THANKS TO A SOLID REHAB PLAN "

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“THE INJURY FORCED HIM TO PAY CLOSER ATTENTION TO THE FINER POINTS OF HIS TRAINING, AND IT MADE A DIFFERENCE.”

Her resilience during her recovery gave him strength during his hardest moments. Everything I do is for the people who believe in me.”

“All of my sponsors at the time were very supportive. They all helped me through this process and some of them helped me cover some big costs of the recovery process. I was very fortunate to have such awesome people around me at the time.”

When James finally returned to the water, he was nervous. “I thought I’d feel like a kook,” he laughs. But to his surprise, everything clicked. That first smooth session was a result of all the careful preparation, and soon, he was back, ready for competition.

Back on the competitive scene, James felt better than ever. “Honestly, I feel stronger now,” he says. The injury forced him to pay closer attention to the finer points of his training, and it made a difference. “Sending it like a madman is still my way, but now I focus on the details first.”



Standing on the podium after his comeback wasn't just about the trophy. "It symbolised that all those small, deliberate steps during rehab were what mattered most in the end," he says. His journey back to the top proved that consistent, intelligent work is the key to achieving your goals.

" HIS JOURNEY BACK TO THE TOP PROVED THAT CONSISTENT, INTELLIGENT WORK IS THE KEY "



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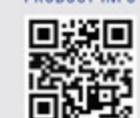


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DAY AS THE BEST VERSION OF
THAT PERSON.”**

Now, James is focused on maintaining his body and avoiding further injuries. “Training is how I stay healthy,” he says. His advice to anyone going through recovery? “Figure out who you are, and then show up every day as the best version of that person.”

Welcome back, James!



WORDS KIM DOUMA, JILL SANRODJI, ANNIQUE THUIJS
AND LINDA VAN LAKWIJK

INSIGHT

THE FEMALE POWERHOUSE AT KUBUS SPORTS

Jen Tyler chats to the powerhouse team at Kubus Sports! She dives into what it's like to be part of an (almost) all women's team in the world of kiteboarding and wingfoiling. From navigating challenges to creating a supportive, dynamic work environment, these incredible women share their unique perspectives on how they're not just riding the waves but also pushing the boundaries of the industry. Tune into this Insight feature!



PHOTO SAMUEL TOME



Hello everyone! It's lovely to have you all here. We'll begin with some general questions for the group and then have a few individual questions for each of you. What is it like to be a part of an (almost) all-women's team in an industry that has traditionally been male-dominated, and what is your biggest advantage in working with an all-women team?

It's always fun when we have video meetings with multiple girls of the team with someone 'new'. They are usually surprised but always in a positive way, and the people we speak to like to see more girls in the industry. It's empowering and always very positive and motivating. We create a supportive space where we can express ourselves openly, which fuels our creativity and teamwork. But we can be harsh to each other at the same time.

One of the biggest advantages is that we tend to approach things differently—girls often “feel” more, which can lead to fresh ideas and deeper connections with our audience. We challenge each other constructively and draw on our diverse strengths, making our work more relatable and impactful. It feels great to break barriers while building a solid community that inspires and uplifts each other. It's great to see so many girls on the water nowadays.

We also have Lauren Holman (E-Com) and Savannah Boersma (Design) working from the Hood River office, who occasionally join us here in Nijkerk (The Netherlands). We work with freelancers such as Peri Roberts and Catharina Edin.

Even though our team may seem female-dominated, we have male colleagues who bring valuable input. Maintaining a healthy gender balance is essential and leads to the best results!

“ WE CREATE A SUPPORTIVE SPACE WHERE WE CAN EXPRESS OURSELVES OPENLY, WHICH FUELS OUR CREATIVITY AND TEAMWORK. ”



JILL SANRODJI AND KIM DOUMA AND THE PROLIMIT CREW BEHIND THE SCENES DURING A SHOOT IN CAPE TOWN

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FREERIDE
PERFORMANCE**



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Rider: Mika Hassenberg / Picture: Helen Fischer

ELEVEIGHT.WORLD



Are there any specific challenges you face as a woman in this industry?

Of course, we've had moments where perceptions and stereotypes overshadow our expertise. We would lie if we said we hadn't experienced this. It can be frustrating when assumptions are based on gender rather than skills or knowledge. But once people realise we know what we're talking about, they often become strong supporters, and it feels like it can even work to our advantage as people find it a pleasure to connect with us.

These experiences only fuel our determination to break down those barriers and show that women have a powerful voice and valuable insights in this industry.

What's your favourite part of working in the kiteboarding and wingfoiling world?

Linda: My favourite part of working in the kiteboarding and wingfoiling world is that it's more than just a job—it's a lifestyle! The excitement continues even after leaving the office. I genuinely enjoy being part of a passionate community and sharing that enthusiasm

for the sport. Whether at the spot or on a kitesurfing holiday, I love getting people excited about our gear and helping them out on the water when needed. It's all about doing what you love most!

Have you noticed recent shifts in the industry's attitude toward female professionals?

We are seeing more and more girls entering the scene, which is fantastic! This not only brings fresh perspectives but also helps to challenge stereotypes and create a more inclusive environment.



PHOTO KIM DOUMA, SAVANNAH BOERSMA, JILL SANRODJI DURING A NAISH & PROLIMIT SHOOT IN CAPE TOWN

It's exciting to see women taking on important roles and making significant contributions, and it feels like the industry is becoming more supportive of female athletes and professionals.

Do you all get on the water together as a team to recharge, or is it hard to find the time?

Linda: Getting caught up in all the work can be easy, but we encourage each other to get out for a session together. I often ride with Kim, and it's so much fun! It's a great way to recharge and bond as a team while enjoying the sport we love.

" IT FEELS LIKE THE INDUSTRY IS BECOMING MORE SUPPORTIVE OF FEMALE ATHLETES "

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▲ 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
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" I DISCOVERED MY LOVE FOR THE OCEAN,
AND IN 2014, I TOOK MY FIRST KITESURFING
COURSE. I'VE BEEN HOOKED EVER SINCE. "



LINDA VAN LAKWIJK – ACTIVATION MARKETING

Linda, please tell us about yourself and your position at Kubus Sports.

I grew up in a town in the Netherlands. We didn't go to the beach often because my parents hated getting sand on their toes. Later in life, I discovered my love for the ocean, and in 2014, I took my first kitesurfing course. I've been hooked ever since.

After working in marketing at various companies, including a film distributor, a holiday review platform, and a weather website (yes, I can read wind models well now), a position at Kubus Sports came up. My boyfriend, who runs a kite school and has already worked with Prolimit, told me about the vacancy. They invited me for an interview and called me with an offer the same day, and it felt like a dream come true. The marketing team back then (2020) was still very small, but I got the chance to build and lead it. After the recent acquisition of Naish, the team expanded globally, with teams in the Netherlands, the USA, and Hawaii.

Last year, I transitioned into the role of Activation Marketing Manager, where I truly thrive. I love being hands-on with marketing—diving into consumer funnels, brainstorming new campaign ideas, setting up promotions, or writing content. My focus as an Activation Marketing Manager is on media, PR, advertising, campaigns, and events aimed at connecting with and engaging the end consumer.

How do you keep things fresh in the fast-paced world of media and PR for a sport as dynamic as kiteboarding?

I stay actively engaged with the latest trends on social media and have been on these platforms from the start.

I'm always watching for new ideas, shifts in consumer behaviour, and what's happening in the water sports world—where a new trend can go viral in hours. To understand where our sports are heading, staying involved is crucial. Having run my own kitesurfing and holiday blog in the past, I know the importance of connecting with the community and delivering content that resonates with their passion. I love experimenting with new formats, campaigns, and collaborations to keep our messaging fresh and exciting.

What's the key to running successful events in such an unpredictable, weather-dependent sport?

The key to our sport is flexibility. We participate in multiple events with Naish and Prolimit, some of which have wind windows like competitions. In contrast, others require being ready to adapt plans with backup dates or alternative activities. In our world, flexibility is essential, and keeping your schedule open is a must. Fortunately, since we're all passionate about water sports, this mindset comes naturally!

Does your role give you more creative freedom than other marketing areas?

My role as Activation Marketing Manager gives me a lot of creative freedom compared to other areas of marketing. I get to be hands-on with developing campaigns, brainstorming new ideas, and exploring ways to engage our audience through media, PR, advertising, and events. This role encourages me to experiment and stay flexible when connecting with consumers, and I love that! I enjoy testing out new strategies, ads, and writing styles, figuring out what works best for different audiences while coming up with fresh ideas to make our brands stand out.

" I LOVE EXPERIMENTING WITH NEW FORMATS, CAMPAIGNS, AND COLLABORATIONS TO KEEP OUR MESSAGING FRESH AND EXCITING. "



LINDA VAN LAKWIJK BEHIND THE SCENES DURING THE NAISH TEAM EUROPE SHOOT IN DAKHLA (NTE COMPETITION)



KIM DOUMA – CONTENT MARKETING

Kim, please tell us a little about yourself and your position at Kubus Sports.

My name is Kim, and my current role at Kubus Sports is Creative Content Manager. I've worked at Kubus for 3.5 years, and a lot has changed in the past years. Our team has grown a lot, which I'm really happy about. We now have many new, young colleagues. When we were a smaller team, I took on various roles, but as the team has grown, my main focus has shifted to overseeing and managing all the content we create. What I enjoy about this job is that it is very creative; I meet many amazing people, riders, and freelancers who help me create the best content, and we are working on all the content with a team worldwide.

What's the most challenging shoot you've had to organise and why?

Coordinating a shoot with multiple riders, photos, and videographers is always an exciting challenge. One of our most challenging shoots was the Naish Team Europe shoot in Dakhla. Coordinating riders from different countries was already a logistical challenge, but the location made it even trickier. Dakhla requires a layover in Casablanca, and that's where things got complicated—two riders missed their flights, one couldn't make it because all flights were fully booked, and another rider was delayed by two days. To top it off, some board bags with the new gear went missing! Despite these hurdles, we still captured fantastic footage, which was all worth it.

As I write this, we're shooting in Mauritius. The location is incredible, but the conditions at One Eye are harsh for shooting. However, the crew and riders have been amazing, and I'm thrilled to say we scored some fantastic shots this week! We can't wait to share them with you!

What's the craziest location you've had to organise a shoot in?

I think the craziest location was for the Prolimit winter shoot in Switzerland at Lake Silvaplana with Ben Beholz. The goal was to shoot with Ben when he was riding through the crack/channel in the ice. It was essential to arrive when it started to melt, but he also needed enough ice to cross the lake between the ice. We chose the right moment because we drove there with our van,

"IT PERFECTLY BLENDS MY PASSION AND EXPERIENCE FOR (SHOOT) PRODUCTION WITH MY LOVE FOR SPORTS."

and luckily, we arrived on time to make the perfect video about this. I can't wait for more amazing locations to shoot in! I know one thing: I prefer warmer places over cold locations!

JILL SANRODJI – ATHLETE MANAGER

Jill, please tell us a little about yourself and your position at Kubus Sports.

At Kubus Sports, my role involves everything related to our international athletes across our Kubus Sports brands: Naish, Prolimit, Brabo (field hockey), and Princess (field hockey). Before this, I was a production manager at Eyeforce, a video and photography company in Amsterdam and Cape Town. I studied Sports, Management and Business and wanted to return to the sports industry. I'm thrilled to be part of the Naish brand as it evolves, and I often tell friends that if I could define my dream job, it would be this. It perfectly blends my passion and experience for (shoot) production with my love for sports.

Do you get to travel with the riders? How do you keep things organised while on the road?

Yes, I travel with the riders for product shoots, which are my favourite trips. I enjoy building close friendships with them. I'd also love to support them more at competitions, not just during shoots. Keeping things organised on the road is crucial, but it can be challenging since I still have ongoing tasks to manage.

Do you ever get to hit the water with the riders, or is it all work and no play?

Regarding shoots, the riders ride when the wind is right, so I usually stay on the beach to manage anything around it. However, whenever I get the chance,



I join them; it energises me and keeps me connected with the team, which is fantastic. In Cape Town, we even managed to squeeze in some surf sessions together, which was a blast. I'm excited for many more moments like that in the future.

ANNIQUE THUIJS – TRADE MARKETING

Annique, please tell us a little about yourself and your position at Kubus Sports.

I'm excited to be the newest Marketing team member, having joined Kubus Sports just two months ago. My career has taken some interesting turns - from working in the event industry to fashion sales - but it's

all led me to this exciting role, where we all share a love for (water)sports. As Trade Marketing Manager, I get to bring all those experiences together while working closely with our retailers and B2B partners.

How do you build strong, lasting relationships with retailers and other B2B partners?

For me, it's all about building personal connections. Trust and mutual respect form the foundation of every relationship. Open communication is key, along with understanding our partners' unique goals so we can create win-win collaborations. Staying true to myself helps nurture honest, long-term partnerships. Plus, it helps that we all share the same passions.

When you're not closing deals, do you manage to sneak in some time on the water?

Being on the water always puts a big smile on my face. Whether I'm working out on or off the water, it's where I recharge and clear my mind. I don't get out there as often as I'd like (as Linda mentioned, it can be easy to get caught up in work), but when I do, it resets my focus and gives me fresh energy. Finding that balance between work and play is really important to me.

Thank you, ladies, for taking the time to chat with me today.

Thanks, Jen, always a pleasure!

WORDS MOSTAFA ABBAS, NICHOLE LAMBRECHT, BETO GOMEZ, RUBEN LENTEN, JASON VAN DER SPUY AND LUCA CERUTI
PHOTOS ANDY TROY & ESLAM PIKO

Organised by The Wind Seekers' Egyptian kitesurfing entrepreneur Mostafa Abbas, Kitefest isn't just an event—it's a one-of-a-kind adventure. Bringing together riders from across the world, Kitefest blends the excitement of kitesurfing with the ultimate in luxury, creating a truly unforgettable experience! Find out what it's all about right here.

THE WIND SEEKERS KITEFEST





“ KITEFEST HAS QUICKLY ESTABLISHED ITSELF AS A PREMIER KITESURFING EVENT, OFFERING AN EXTRAORDINARY BLEND OF SPORT, LUXURY, AND COMMUNITY. ”

The Red Sea sparkled under the sun as Kitefest 2024 kicked off its second edition, bringing together kitesurfing riders from all over the world. Organised by The Wind Seekers, a company founded by Egyptian

kitesurfing entrepreneur Mostafa Abbas, Kitefest has quickly established itself as a premier kitesurfing event, offering an extraordinary blend of sport, luxury, and community.

The Kitefest isn't just any kitesurfing event. It's an experience designed to explore the stunning beauty of the Red Sea while providing riders with the opportunity to kite,

connect, and celebrate life. Mostafa Abbas, the visionary behind Kitefest, set out to create an adventure that extends beyond kiting: "The Kitefest isn't just about kiting; it's about creating memories, building connections, and enjoying the beauty of the Red Sea while throwing some epic parties," Mostafa shared.

Unlike typical kitesurfing events, the Kitefest takes place aboard three luxurious yachts that cruise the Red Sea,



allowing riders to explore its most unique and untouched islands. Guests experience the remote, serene kitesurfing spots that make Egypt a hidden gem in the kitesurfing world. The underwater beauty of the Red Sea, coupled with top amenities, sets Kitefest apart from any other kitesurfing adventure.

"The Kitefest brings together people from all over the world and invites the best riders in the industry. Not only can they practice and coach,

"THE KITEFEST BRINGS TOGETHER PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD"

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SURFING ELEMENTS



“ HE JUST HAS THIS WAY OF BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER TO EXPERIENCE IT IN THE BEST POSSIBLE WAY. FOR MANY PEOPLE, THAT'S THROUGH KITING AND DANCING. ”

but they also help build a stronger kitesurfing community," said Mostafa.

Living on these luxurious yachts is more than just accommodation; it's a defining element of Kitefest. The yachts offer a week of luxury with delicious meals, great service, and an unbeatable vibe!

"We're so grateful to Mostafa for shining light on Egypt as a beautiful kite destination, both because of the hidden spots and the amazing people," said Nicole Lambrecht, founder of Rising Stars Egypt and Nicole's Greenhouse. "He just has this way of bringing people together to experience it in the best possible way. For many people, that's through kiting and dancing."

Beyond the daily kiting sessions, Kitefest offers activities like beach barbecues, volleyball tournaments, scuba diving, and wakeboarding. With the best demo gear available for guests to try out and nightly parties on the yachts, the fun doesn't stop when the sun goes down.

"Eat, sleep, kite, repeat together on a super yacht? That's Windseekers! Exploring the best kiting islands around Egypt with like-minded people all sharing one passion is the best way to describe this unforgettable experience," said Luca Ceruti, one of Kitefest riders.





One of the highlights of Kitefest is the presence of world-class professional riders who enjoy the experience, coach, and share their knowledge with guests. This year's event saw incredible talents like Ruben Lenten, Luca Ceruti, Jason van der Spuy, Beto Gomez and more took part in the action.

"I first met Mostafa a few years back, and since then, we've been hanging out and working together," said Ruben Lenten. "Fast forward to this year, and the vibe just keeps getting better. Three yachts packed with like-minded kites, sick sessions, and yacht parties... it's hard to beat that!"

"FAST FORWARD TO THIS YEAR, AND THE VIBE JUST KEEPS GETTING BETTER"

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“KITEFEST CONTINUES SOLIDIFYING ITS PLACE AS ONE OF THE GLOBAL PREMIER KITESURFING EVENTS.”

For many riders, the Kitefest is more than just a kitesurfing event; it's a chance to build lifelong friendships and enjoy Egypt's hidden treasures.

"One of the most memorable weeks of my life. Cruising on three yachts to all the best kite spots in the Red Sea with all your friends and amazing people is as good as it sounds," said Jason van der Spuy. "Endless things to do even when there's no wind and an epic party every night. A truly unforgettable experience."

For Beto Gomez, the Kitefest exceeded all expectations: "Papi, for me, Wind Seekers Kitefest was magical. I still can't believe we were in the middle of the Red Sea with three mega yachts and great people. The vibes during this event were on another level."

As Kitefest 2024 comes to a close, guests are already looking forward to next year's edition. With its unique mix of luxury, adventure, and community, Kitefest has become a must-attend event for kitesurfers worldwide.

"People should not miss Kitefest next year," urged Nicole Lambrecht. "Thanks to events like these, we can support young kids in Egypt who compete in international events, and we're already planning for next year's edition."

With each passing year, Kitefest continues solidifying its place as one of the global premier kitesurfing events. It offers an experience that's not just about the sport but about embracing life to the fullest—on the water, under the stars, and with a community as vibrant as the Red Sea itself.

This year, the SpaceX Kitesurfing crew ventured on their first dedicated content shoot, chasing the ultimate storm. After tracking weather forecasts, they set their sights on Achill Island, Ireland—known for its wild winds and dramatic landscapes. The crew delivered a great adventure, from capturing epic footage of Lieuwe's latest board and Prolimit's gear to braving stormy conditions at Cross Beach. Get a behind-the-scenes look at their journey right here.

SPACE X KITESURFING TAKE ON ACHILL ISLAND



“ THE VARIETY OF BEACHES, RUGGED CLIFFS,
AND UNSPOILED BAYS MAKE IT A STUNNING
PLACE TO KITE. ”



SpaceX Kitesurfing is a company of passionate kitesurfers who aim to innovate the kitesurfing world by producing new content ideas and organising kitesurfing competitions for both professional and amateur riders, using the latest innovative technology. This year, the SpaceX Kitesurfing crew ventured on its first-ever dedicated content shoot to capture footage for their brand. The mission: to find a storm! After checking forecasts here and there, they noticed a severe front approaching Ireland. Achill Island was chosen as the location for the shoot because it was where the storm hit the hardest.

Achill Island is truly a stunningly green place with rugged nature, beautiful beaches, and an incredibly charming Irish village with friendly locals if you've never been. Achill is so unique because it offers conditions suitable for all disciplines. There's a beach (bay) with rough waves and a gorgeous rock on the side, creating a breathtaking backdrop while kitesurfing, winging, or windsurfing—specifically at Keel Beach. Just across the road, there's a beautiful little lake where we saw a handful of beginners practising kitesurfing. At the end of the trip, we even taught Wouter, the cameraman.

Around Achill Island, has several great spots for kitesurfing within an hour's drive. You can enjoy kitesurfing on both flat water and at sea. The location is on the west coast of Ireland, where the Atlantic Ocean has free rein. This provides constant and strong winds, which are ideal for kitesurfing, especially during storms. The variety of beaches, rugged cliffs, and unspoiled bays make it a stunning place to kite. Additionally, it's a relatively unknown destination (for kitesurfers), often giving you the feeling of having a piece of untouched wilderness away from the crowds.



“ WE WERE EXCITED ABOUT THE VIDEO WE WANTED TO MAKE BUT HAD YET TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO FIGURE IT OUT, SO WE DECIDED TO MOVE AROUND AND EXPLORE THE AREA. ”

On this trip, Stijn Mul and Marijn Ploeg, the two owners of SpaceX Kitesurfing, were travelling with Wouter Kloosterman, the owner of the production company Oneoseven Media House. A day before departure, the guys contacted Colly Murphy, a professional firefighter from Dublin who

helped them find all the good beaches and forecasts. Colly has loads of experience with weather forecasting, rain fronts, and risk management and knows Achill Island like the back of his hand. They made a plan with Colly, arranged a hostel, booked flights, and rented a car. The next day, they would leave, with the flight scheduled for around 6:00 AM, so there was some stress.

We were surprised by the beautiful view outside when we woke up on Achill Island the following day. We (Marijn, Stijn, Wouter) arrived first, with Colly joining us a few hours

later. We were excited about the video we wanted to make but had yet to figure out how to figure it out, so we decided to move around and explore the area. It was clear from our accommodation that we wanted to hike up the green mountain to get a view of the entire village. And that's precisely what we did.

The shoot was a lot of fun because it was for SpaceX. We were in charge of everything - the planning, the locations, and the filming angles.

The goal was to capture Lieuwe's latest board, created in collaboration with Space X, and Prolimit's latest lineup.



We've always wanted a product collaboration that had our DNA. Not only are Lieuwe boards from our home turf, but they also align perfectly with our vision of the sport. Kitesurfing is about being on the water and pushing yourself out there and the stories we share. It's the sessions where we share amazing conditions, push each other, and have the most fun, which stays in our memory. Those are the stories we want to share. The collaboration with Lieuwe has been a long time in the making. Our team rider, Marijn, has been deeply involved in the testing and development the Falcon, and we feel confident that this board is a perfect combination of riding comfort and high performance.

" KITESURFING IS ABOUT BEING ON THE WATER AND PUSHING YOURSELF OUT THERE "

YOUR LIFETIME IS IRREPLACEABLE
YOUR LIFETIME IS IRREPLACEABLE
YOUR LIFETIME IS IRREPLACEABLE
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Next to the Falcon sits the Shotgun, already well-known for its all-around performance and durability. We are stoked to present this collaboration and hope we inspire you to tell your story. We will consider you part of our crew when we spot you with our board.

The brand-new Prolimit wetsuits are made of Natural materials, including oyster skin. We tested this new wetsuit, Prolimit Vapor, in Ireland, and it was wild how soft and still stretchy the 6:4 wetsuit feels.

We worked every day from early morning until late night to get all the needed shots. Sometimes, we would quickly eat at home and head to the following location. We only had four days to capture all the footage, and we only had one day with strong winds, so we wanted to be as productive as possible. At SpaceX Kitesurfing, kiting is primarily about the friendships we've formed through kitesurfing. Even though we are professional kitesurfers, it's always mainly about the fun we have together on the water and land. We wanted to capture that. The video will feature plenty of shots focused on having fun together rather than just landing the highest or best tricks.

THE STORM DAY

On a stormy day with the strongest winds, we woke up to the sound of the wind. We planned to go to Cross Beach, known for its huge waves, an hour's drive from Achill Island. Colly drove ahead of us. It was raining heavily, and Colly was driving even faster, haha. We had mentioned we were hurrying, so he stepped on it a bit. We stopped for a coffee along the way and then continued.

" THE VIDEO WILL FEATURE PLENTY OF SHOTS FOCUSED ON HAVING FUN TOGETHER RATHER THAN JUST LANDING THE HIGHEST OR BEST TRICKS. "



“ THE SESSION WAS EXCELLENT; WE WERE OUT TOGETHER, AND DESPITE THE RAIN, THE WIND LIFTED US BEAUTIFULLY INTO THE AIR. ”



It was raining when we arrived at the spot, so that we couldn't see much. After a while, the rain eased up, and the windsurfers said it would be a beautiful day. That's when you know it's going to be epic. It was a bitterly cold day with a strong wind. Marijn and Stijn both grabbed their 8m kites and were able to pull off some massive loops. Colly and Wouter had it more challenging. The cameras had to be out in the rain to capture everything. From the water, it looked pretty funny; Colly was acting like a rain shield around Wouter's RED camera so that Wouter could get the best shots. Thankfully, everything stayed intact because it really can rain in Ireland. The session was excellent; we were out together, and despite the rain, the wind lifted us beautifully into the air. We could spot good takeoff spots with rain in our eyes and then execute some big jumps. We were both surprised by how blue the water was compared to the Netherlands; it was incredible.

One challenge during kiting on the second-to-last day was quite unfortunate. This was the day of the strong wind, and we had driven back from Cross Beach to Keel Beach because the wind was expected to be good there in the afternoon. We captured some great shots with short lines, nicely filmed and droned. Then, we were about to switch to photography. Marijn and Stijn both thought Wouter was ready to capture their synchronised short line loop, but at that moment, he was changing an SD card... What a shame because this happened: Marijn wanted to kite loop upwind of Stijn simultaneously, both with their kites horizontal in front of them. Due to a slight miscalculation, Marijn's kite hit Stijn's, causing them both to fall out of the air into the water.

Marijn thought the hard impact had knocked out Stijn, but Stijn was really annoyed. The bad part was that the guys were kiting near a harbour, so it wasn't a real kitespot. There were 4-meter-high breaking waves crashing against a rocky wall.

Marijn's bridle broke and was hanging by a thread, and Stijn was released and had to do a self-rescue back to shore. Fortunately, they managed to sail around the rocky wall and back to land on the other side of the harbour. The only damage was Stijn's cut hand and a damaged kite.

Stay tuned for the video -
COMING SOON!



" THE BAD PART WAS THAT THE GUYS WERE KITING NEAR A HARBOUR, SO IT WASN'T A REAL KITESPOT. "

WORDS ELENA DIMITROVA PHOTOS TAIHUKA SMITH

THE EMERALD DREAM

Imagine kitesurfing in one of the most remote and untouched corners of the world, where emerald seas meet pristine beaches, and the wind never stops blowing! This past June, Ellie Dimitrova's Emerald dream finally came true. She teams up with Val Garat and spent eight unforgettable days riding the winds of Sakalava Bay and Babaomby, two of the most breathtaking kite spots you could ever imagine. Read all about it exclusively in IKSURFMAG!





" WE ARRIVED AT THE BREATHTAKING EMERALD SEA. THE CRYSTAL-CLEAR WATER AND UNTOUCHED BEACHES WERE BEAUTIFUL. "

This June, I had the incredible opportunity to lead a kitesurfing trip to Madagascar, a destination that had been on my list for years but one I had never had the chance to visit until now. The event featured the professional French kitesurfer Val Garat and was organised through my travel agency, Kite The World. We were a group of 14, spending eight unforgettable days exploring two stunning kite spots—Sakalava Bay and Babaomby, another incredible location on the Emerald Sea.

Our first stop was Sakalava Bay, where the lagoon offered smooth waves and strong, steady winds. It's an ideal spot for beginners to practice wave riding since the waves here aren't too fast or rough. What made Sakalava truly unique were the varying conditions in one place. A sandbank would appear at low tide, giving you the perfect mix of flat water and gentle waves. There's even a secret spot just five minutes downwind, which works only at high tide. It felt like having our own private kite paradise, with hardly anyone else around.

Next, we made our way to Babaomby, situated on the Emerald Sea. Just getting there was an adventure! We took a local boat from a village called Ramena, and after about 45 minutes, we arrived at the breathtaking Emerald Sea. The crystal-clear water and untouched beaches were beautiful. You can only kite here at low tide; otherwise, there's no beach to launch from. The wind was everything you'd expect from Madagascar—consistent and strong. The colours of the water were mesmerising, shifting from deep blue to bright emerald. It's easily one of the most beautiful places I've ever kited.



" I COULD SEE THE ENTIRE COASTLINE, DOTTED WITH TINY ISLANDS BELOW, AND WE EVEN SPOTTED WHALES AND HUNDREDS OF TURTLES ALONG THE WAY. "

After an exciting kitesurfing session, we visited Nosy Suarez, an island near the main kite spot at the Emerald Sea. The locals treated us to a meal of freshly caught fish, which was the perfect way to unwind after a

day on the water. One of the highlights of the trip was the warmth and kindness of the Malagasy people. They greeted us everywhere we went with open hearts and smiles, ensuring we felt welcome. At Nosy Suarez, for example, they organised a bonfire for us during one of our last nights in Sakalava Bay. We had an amazing time, and they even painted our faces with traditional designs, making us feel part of their celebration. It wasn't just the kitesurfing—the people of Madagascar made the trip unforgettable.

While the group part of the trip lasted eight days, I wasn't quite ready to leave Madagascar just yet. After everyone else had flown home, I stayed a bit longer to explore Nosy Anko, a private island that you can only reach by helicopter. The flight over was mind-blowing. I could see the entire coastline, dotted with tiny islands below, and we even spotted whales and hundreds of turtles along the way. Nosy Anko felt like a secret hideaway. With only one hotel on the island, it was totally secluded. I spent my days kiting around the island's lagoon, which I practically had to myself. The water was so calm and clear,



“ THIS TRIP TO MADAGASCAR WAS ONE OF THE BEST ADVENTURES I’VE EVER HAD. ”

and the wind kept blowing, making it perfect for long, peaceful kite sessions. We even did a downwind run to the nearby smaller islands.

Looking back, this trip to Madagascar was one of the best adventures I’ve ever had. The combination of perfect wind, stunning beaches, and crystal-clear waters made it a dream destination for any kitesurfer.



Sakalava Bay was ideal for learning new skills, while the Babaomby Emerald Sea was everything you could want in a kite spot—beautiful, windy, and wild. And of course, the private island experience on Nosy Anko was the cherry on top!

For me, kitesurfing is all about exploring new places and sharing those experiences with others, and this trip allowed me to do both. We discovered some of the best kite spots in the world, and I got to share them with an amazing group of people. Madagascar is definitely a place I'll return to. There's something magical about the wind and waves there, and I'm already thinking about my next adventure.



“ KITESURFING IS ALL ABOUT EXPLORING NEW PLACES AND SHARING THOSE EXPERIENCES WITH OTHERS, AND THIS TRIP ALLOWED ME TO DO BOTH. ”



ARTHUR GUILLEBERT CONQUERING DUNKERQUE

WORDS JEN TYLER & ARTHUR GUILLEBERT PHOTOS LUKAS K STILLER

Jen Tyler chats with the French freestyle champ about battling tricky winds, overcoming injury, and the electric energy from the home crowd. Find out how he stayed focused in those nail-biting final moments and his plans to chase a second world title this season!

“ A LOT OF PEOPLE THINK FREESTYLE IS ALL ABOUT FLAT WATER AND CONSTANT WINDS, BUT A GOOD RIDER HAS TO BE ADAPTABLE. ”

Hi Arthur, it's great to catch up! Congratulations on your recent win at Dunkerque. Was it like winning on your home soil?

Thank you very much; it's great to catch up with you, too! Yes, even though Dunkerque is in the north of France, and I'm originally from the south, I definitely still felt like I was competing at home.

Talk us through the spot; what's it like for freestyle?

Dunkerque is an interesting spot. It's got onshore winds and some waves, so it's not what you'd call ideal freestyle conditions, like those perfect, flat Brazilian lagoons. A lot of people think freestyle is all about flat water and constant winds, but a good rider has to be adaptable. The wind was good enough during the competition, and though it wasn't perfect for freestyle, it kept things exciting!

Can you tell us how you prepared for this event, including your training schedule and mindset leading up to Dunkerque?

Well, this time, my preparation was far from ideal. I went to Greece about a month before the event to really dial in my tricks and fine-tune everything. But on the third day, I injured my knee—a bone bruise. I had to focus on physiotherapy and treatments to get my knee in good enough shape to compete.






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4TH MATTEO DOROTINI

**“THE PHYSICAL REHAB WAS JUST AS INTENSE.
“I HAD A VERY CLEAR VISION OF MY GOAL”**

Did the tricky wind and water conditions affect your strategy, or were you confident with your initial plan?

Being injured and not really trained, I didn't have a special strategy. However, the rather difficult conditions were still an advantage

because it was more difficult for everyone to land big figures, so I managed to make a difference with my consistency on each heat.

The conditions definitely played a role in my strategy. Because of my injury and the lack of training leading up to the event, I didn't have any special game plan. I had to rely on what I knew and play it safe with consistency. I knew I wasn't at 100% physically, so my main goal was to stay consistent and land

everything cleanly. The conditions were tough for everyone to be honest.

Did the support from the French crowd give you an extra boost?!

Oh, absolutely. The crowd was incredible! I took a bad hit on my knee during the semi-final—I felt it immediately. I wasn't sure if I'd be able to keep going, and when I came off the water, I could barely walk. But hearing the crowd, and seeing everyone cheering for me, gave me this adrenaline boost.

“ THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE WAS TIMING EVERYTHING RIGHT WITH THE WAVES BECAUSE ONE MISTAKE WITH THE POP OR LANDING COULD THROW EVERYTHING OFF. ”

I was so happy to be in the final here in France in front of all the French people who supported me that I didn't really have any pain. I managed to dominate at the end to win.

The competition was tight, with only a 0.4-point difference between you and Chabloz at one point. How do you stay mentally focused when the scores are so close?

Yeah, it was really tight! I knew I had one last trick to land to secure the win. It was a high-pressure moment for sure, but I felt confident. The biggest challenge was timing everything right with the waves because one mistake with the pop or landing could throw everything off. But I trusted myself, stayed focused, and went for it. Thankfully, it worked out in the end.

When you're facing the final trick or heat in a big event like this, do you have any rituals to help you stay calm and focused?

There's no real difference in how you prepare for a heat, whether it's in the 1st or 3rd round or even the final. Actually, I'd even argue that the final feels less stressful. By then, you know it's the end of the line – there's no next round, no chance of elimination. It's just about where you rank. So, you just keep your cool, focus, and go for it.



“ THIS VICTORY HAS PUT ME IN THE LEAD OF THE CHAMPIONSHIP THIS YEAR. I WILL TRAIN HARD AND I AM EXTREMELY MOTIVATED ”

What are your goals for the rest of the season after this big win? How do you keep up this momentum going into the next competition?

It was the best possible start to the season, even though it was unexpected due to my knee. This victory has put me in the lead of the championship this year. I will train hard and I am extremely motivated for the next stages. My goal is to go for a second-world title this year.

Sounds good, best of luck, Arthur!

Thank you and see you in Brazil!



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WOO WORLDS 2024

WORDS JEN TYLER, HUGO WIGGLESWORTH, JASON MONTREAL
PHOTO JEREMY PECK

The WOO Worlds 2024 results are in! You'll have undoubtedly heard of WOO Worlds, and if you haven't, you're in luck; we're about to tell you all about it and share the 2024 results!



“ THEY'RE DEDICATING LOTS OF EFFORT TO MAKE SURE THEY DO THE BEST JOB POSSIBLE, MAKING SURE THE GAME IS FAIR FOR EVERYONE INVOLVED. ”



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	1 ST PLACE	2 ND PLACE	3 RD PLACE
Kite Highest Jump M.	\$1,500 + WOO 4.0	\$500 + WOO 4.0	\$250 + WOO 4.0
Kite Highest Jump W.	\$1,500 + WOO 4.0	\$500 + WOO 4.0	\$250 + WOO 4.0
Kite Highest Jump Sr.	Kite + Bar + WOO 4.0	Board + WOO 4.0	Board + WOO 4.0
Kite Highest Jump Jr.	Kite + Bar + WOO 4.0	Board + WOO 4.0	Board + WOO 4.0
Wing Highest Jump M.	\$1,000 + WOO 4.0	\$500 + WOO 4.0	\$250 + WOO 4.0
Wing Highest Jump W.	\$1,000 + WOO 4.0	\$500 + WOO 4.0	\$250 + WOO 4.0
Kite Distance 1 Hr.	\$500 + WOO 4.0	\$250 + WOO 4.0	\$100 + WOO 4.0
Wing Distance 1 Hr.	\$500 + WOO 4.0	\$250 + WOO 4.0	\$100 + WOO 4.0
Team Max Height	\$1,500 + 5x WOO 4.0	\$500 + 5x WOO 4.0	\$250 + 5x WOO 4.0
Team Total Distance	\$1,000 + 5x WOO 4.0	\$500 + 5x WOO 4.0	\$250 + 5x WOO 4.0
Team Total Height	\$1,000 + 5x WOO 4.0	\$500 + 5x WOO 4.0	\$250 + 5x WOO 4.0
Draw Anything	Wing + Wingboard + Foil	Wingboard + Foil	Wing
Nation's Cup	Engraved Glass Trophy + 5x WOO 4.0	Engraved Glass Trophy + 5x WOO 4.0	Engraved Glass Trophy + 5x WOO 4.0

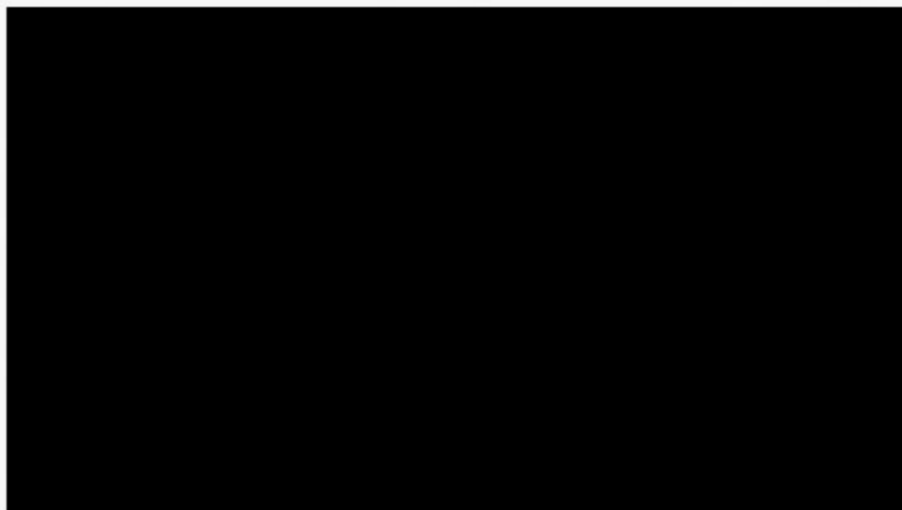
\$1,000 BONUS
FOR HIGHEST JUMP OVERALL AT WOO WORLDS

Woo Worlds is an event open to anyone, no matter where you're from. It's all about bringing kiteboarders from every corner of the globe together for a bit of friendly competition and a lot of fun. Now, to make sure everyone has a great time, there's a big focus on keeping things fair and square. Like any competition, there will be rules and a referee to keep things in check. The guys at WOO Worlds 2024 do take this role as referees seriously. They're dedicating lots of effort to make sure they do the best job possible, making sure the game is fair for everyone involved. So, if you're all about kiteboarding, this is definitely something you won't want to miss!

THE MAIN RULES:

- 1. Fair Play & Cheating:** Zero tolerance for cheating, including misuse of the WOO sensor or submitting incorrect data. Violations result in disqualification or bans.
- 2. Water-Based Activities Only:** Kitesurfing or wingfoiling sessions over water are valid. The use of external propulsion, such as boats or cars, is prohibited!
- 3. Profile Accuracy:** Riders must ensure the correct age, gender, and nationality information is provided before the competition starts.
- 4. Session Upload:** Sessions must be uploaded immediately after completion with the proper WOO settings, including board type and location.
- 5. Safety & Conduct:** Safety is a priority. Riders are expected to maintain good sportsmanship and respect the competition rules.

But with all these rules, the prizes rise!



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DISCIPLINES, CATEGORIES AND WINNERS!

- Highest Kite Jump (Men, Women, Junior, Senior)
- Men: Hugo Wigglesworth (36.7m)
- Women: Cassandra Coverley (20.0m)
- Junior: Toby Wigglesworth (27.3m)
- Senior: Toddo #WOOlfs (25.4m)
- Kite Distance (1 Hour)
- Lukas Walton-Keim
- Creative GPS-based Drawing Challenge
- TBC

TEAM CHALLENGES:

- Total Distance - Team Progresywna (5467.3 km)
- Total Height - Team Guardians of the Galaxy (77.2km)
- Max Height - Team The Flying Kiwis (137.9m)

Hugo Wigglesworth - Highest Kite Jump (36.7m)

The Flying Kiwis and I had one clear goal for our one-day Woo Worlds strike mission to Plimmerton: go big or go home! The forecast called for increasing winds throughout the day, with gusts reaching up to 45 knots in the afternoon. We knew we had to pace ourselves for the heavy winds to come. When we first arrived, it was blowing around 20 knots—manageable. But just two hours later, some 35-knot gusts started ripping through. I headed out for a short 30-minute session on my 8m SONIC, and right away,

“ SOME 35-KNOT GUSTS STARTED RIPPING THROUGH. I HEADED OUT FOR A SHORT 30-MINUTE SESSION ON MY 8M SONIC ”





“ THE WATER WAS EMPTY—NO OTHER KITERS IN SIGHT—BUT I WASN’T ABOUT TO MISS THE CHANCE TO CATCH A GOOD GUST. ”

after a few jumps, I could feel the wind was incredibly lifty. It was a great sign that bigger jumps were on the horizon as the wind picked up. I switched over to my 8m ERA to prepare for the real action.

At first, the wind wasn’t as strong as I hoped, but it ramped up fast in the last 30 minutes. Gusts were now hitting near the 45-knot mark, and I managed a few jumps over 25 meters. I was completely overpowered on the 8m, so I made the call to switch down to my 7m. Meanwhile, the rest of the Flying Kiwis boys stayed out. By the time I had rigged my 7m and refuelled, the boys had come in for a late lunch break. The water was empty—no other kites in sight—but I wasn’t about

to miss the chance to catch a good gust. So I headed back out on my 7m and instantly felt just as powered on it as I had been on my 8m just 30 minutes earlier. Now, the gusts were cranking over 50 knots.

In my first five jumps on the 7m, I struggled to time a gust with a kicker. Then, on my next attempt, I spotted a perfect left-foot forward kicker, launched off it, and sheeted in like I’ve done thousands of times before. But this time was different—my kite shot above me and accelerated upward at an insane speed.



“ THEY RUSHED TO THE WATER’S EDGE TO GRAB MY KITE WHILE I YELLED, “WORLD RECORD!!” ”

It kept lifting me until I hit the peak of the jump. When I looked down, I realised just how high I was. I wanted to descend fast! The kite kept pulling with a strong vertical lift, so I threw in two back-hand heliloops, then switched to two front-hand heliloops to get down quicker. I landed cleanly between the waves, looked at my watch, and saw 36.7 meters. I’ve never been more stoked in my life!

I rode back upwind to the beach, shouting with pure adrenaline. The boys on the shore had seen the jump and knew it was massive! They rushed to the water’s edge to grab my kite while I yelled, “WORLD RECORD!!” Everyone was buzzing with excitement. This is a day I’ll never forget.

Max Height - Team The Flying Kiwis (137.9m)

Once a year, a dedicated group of Kiwi senders embarks on a pilgrimage to one of the most unique spots in the country, chasing the fierce, distinctive winds that hold the promise of Woo Worlds glory. Wellington, known as the windiest major city in the world, sits just south of the Porirua Harbour—a small, narrow opening where, on certain special days, cold, dense wind funnels through the cliffs on either side of the harbour. The result? A uniquely powerful and loft-inducing wind, perfect for launching massive jumps.

Last year, this very spot helped the Flying Kiwis secure multiple podium finishes in the Woo Worlds, so this year, the team had high hopes of repeating that success. However, one elite member of the crew had his sights set even higher: a new World Record. Thankfully, the winds delivered. They built steadily throughout the day, and during his fourth session,




Hugo Wigglesworth struck gold, pulling off the boost of a lifetime, soaring to an astonishing 36.7 meters and claiming a new Woo World Record. That same day, Clark Robertson secured 3rd overall in the senior division for the highest jump, while the rest of the team posted solid scores that pushed the Kiwis into first place overall and helped New Zealand climb into the top three of the Nations Cup.

As we left Wellington, we knew we'd had a strong start, but it wouldn't be enough to lock in a podium finish. We had to bide our time in Auckland as we faced a lull in the wind, slowly watching our team and country slip out of first place.

But the wind gods smiled on us again this year, and Auckland got its moment to shine. Muriwai Beach—famous for having the most Woo sessions and jumps over 20 meters in the country—delivered classic conditions. Gusts reached up to 50 knots, and Hugo's younger brother, Toby, smashed his Woo record with an insane 27-meter jump, taking the junior section of the competition. New Zealand was back on top in both the Nations Cup and the Team Max Height divisions, thanks to massive efforts from riders like Mark Harrison, Mark Roosenbrand, John Adams, Grant Payne, and Jason Montreal.

The wind may have favoured the Kiwis this year, but we definitely made the most of it.

Jason Montreal



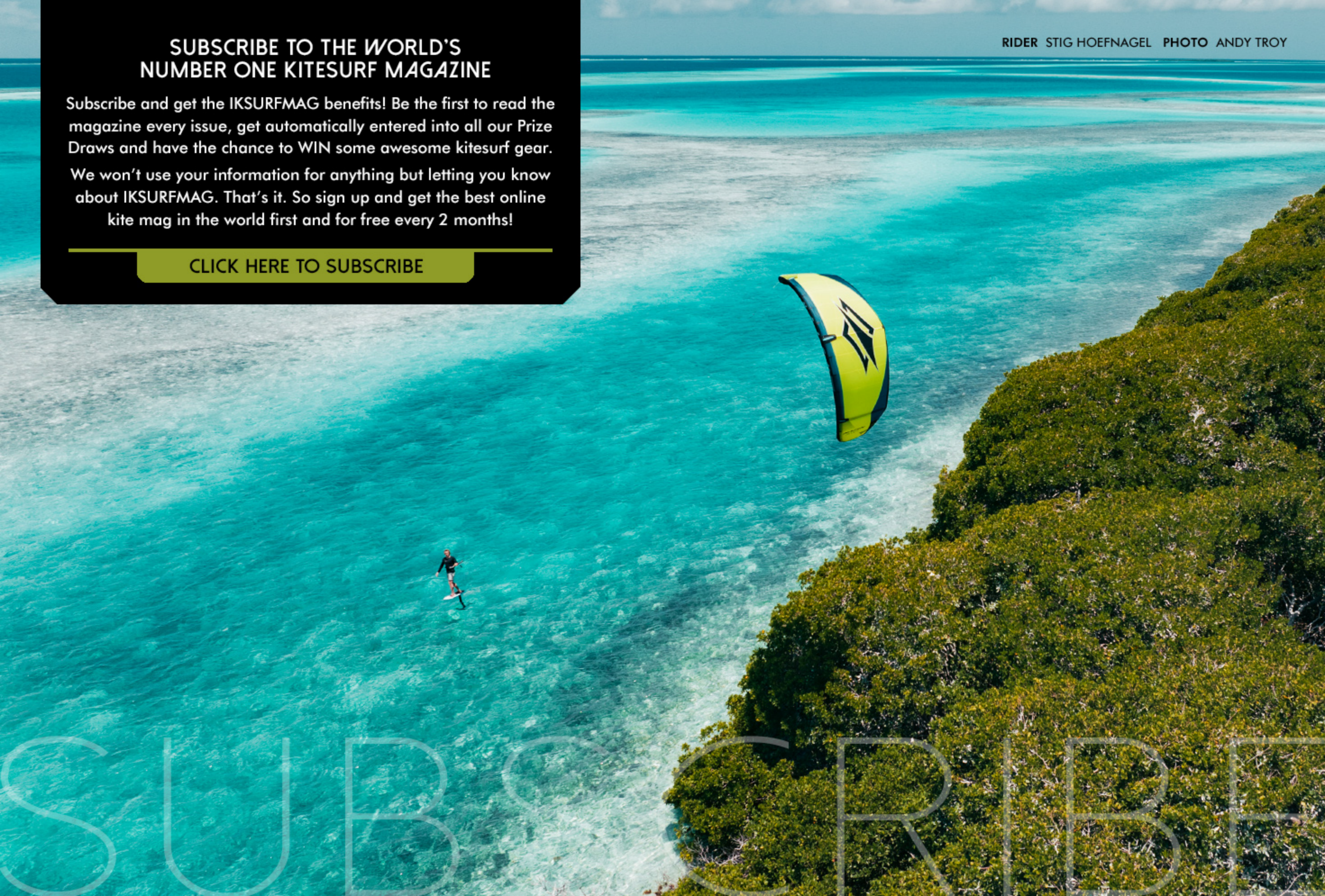
“ MURIWAI BEACH—FAMOUS FOR HAVING THE MOST WOO SESSIONS AND JUMPS OVER 20 METERS IN THE COUNTRY—DELIVERED CLASSIC CONDITIONS. ”

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THE ROAD TO KOTA - LORENZO CASATI

Lorenzo Casati is taking the world of Big Air kiteboarding by storm. After a jaw-dropping performance at Red Bull's "Ride the Sky" in Tarifa— landing three world-first tricks—he's cemented his spot at the 2024 Red Bull King of the Air. But that's not all... he just snagged the top spot at the Cold Hawaii Red Bull King of the Air Qualifier! Will we be seeing him at Dunkirk - find out here!





“ I’M PROUD TO HAVE PUSHED THE BOUNDARIES OF THE SPORT, SHOWCASING WHAT BIG AIR TRULY REPRESENTS TODAY ”

My experience at the Red Bull qualifier Ride the Sky in Tarifa was nothing short of fantastic. The wind and conditions were perfect for true big air, allowing me to be incredibly consistent throughout the competition. I managed to land 35 out of 38 tricks, with each jump featuring double loops or high-risk, high-technical manoeuvres. I landed three world-firsts in competition—variations of triple loops that made history in big air. I’m proud to have pushed the boundaries of the sport, showcasing what Big Air truly represents today and where it’s heading in the future.

Tarifa has always felt like a second home to me. I’ve trained here for years, and competing alongside such talented riders in this incredible event made securing first place an indescribable feeling. The hard work put in by Harlem, Lieuwe, and me over the past year is really starting to pay off. But more than anyone, I owe thanks to my dad, who is my coach and the mastermind behind the innovative training methods that have helped my brother, Leonardo, and me rise to the top in big air, strapless waves, and hydrofoil.





“ I SECURED ANOTHER FIRST-PLACE FINISH JUST TWO WEEKS AFTER MY VICTORY IN TARIFA. ”

Looking ahead, my focus is on the upcoming Red Bull qualifiers, which serve as preparation for the legendary King of the Air in Cape Town. My brother and I are

determined to continue pushing the limits of big air and train to become the sport's most versatile, multidiscipline riders.

My journey continued in Denmark at the second Red Bull King of the Air Qualifier—Cold Hawaii. Riding the 9m Harlem Thrive, I secured another first-place finish just two weeks after my victory in Tarifa. It's been an

incredible run, solidifying my standing in the world of Big Air and strengthening my claim for the King of the Air crown in Cape Town. Competing against top riders like Jamie Overbeek and Cohan van Dijk in crazy conditions, I was able to claim the win.

I am looking forward to Dunkirk!

THE ENDURO

V5

UNLEASHED

Santiago Cisneros talks us through Ozone's latest release, the Enduro V5. Whether launching big air, carving waves, or cruising, this kite's got you covered with the perfect balance of power, stability, and smooth control. Find out more here.





“ I’VE BEEN RIDING THE ENDURO SERIES SINCE THE FIRST VERSION DROPPED, AND HANDS DOWN, THE ENDURO V5 IS MY FAVOURITE. ”

If you’re into kitesurfing like I am, you know how much the right gear can change everything. I’ve been riding the Enduro series since the first version dropped, and hands down, the Enduro V5 is my favourite.

You can feel and see all the effort Ozone’s put into this kite over the years—it’s the result of constant refining and dedication, and it shows in its performance.

I’ve watched the Enduro adapt to different riding styles over time, and while every version brought something fresh, the V5 just takes things to a whole new level. Ozone made some brilliant upgrades, like the 16-point bridle system and that super clean

canopy—it’s sleek, but more importantly, it feels amazing out on the water.

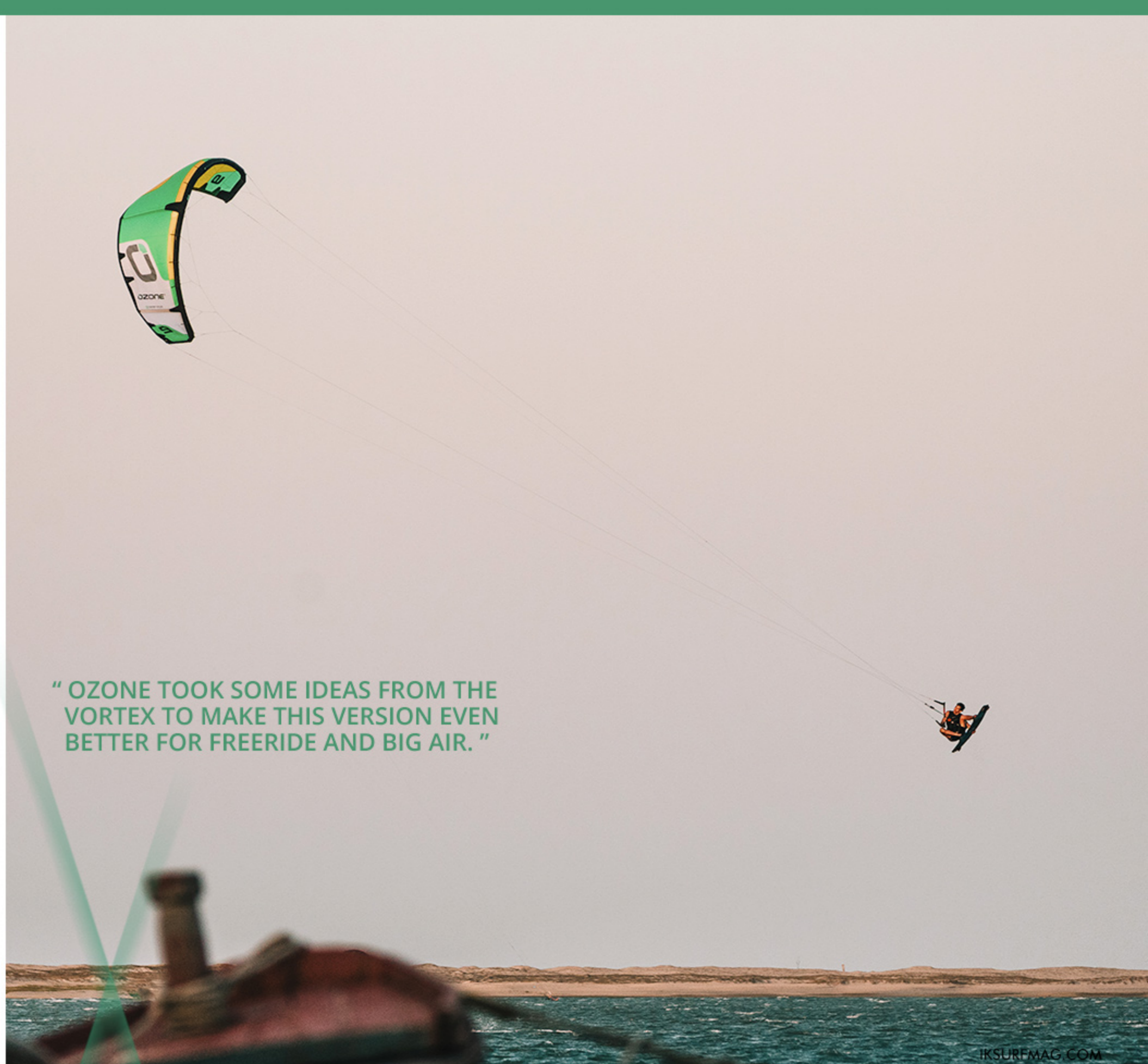
What stands out for me is how stable it is. It’s got that solid feel in the air without putting too much pressure on the bar, which means I can stay out longer without wearing myself out. And the way it glides upwind? It’s so smooth and effortless you hardly have to think about it. Whether flying upwind or playing in the waves, the V5 is responsive and reliable.

Even though the Enduro has always been an all-around kite, Ozone took some ideas from the Vortex to make this version even better for freeride and big air. So, if you love throwing huge jumps but still want a kite that can handle any condition, this is the one. It keeps that signature Enduro versatility—you can switch from big air to freestyle to wave riding without missing a beat.

Whether you're into big air or freestyle, the V5 does it all. I keep reaching for it no matter the conditions. It's my go-to kite now, no question.

Being part of the launch video process was an adventure in itself. I was in touch with people all over the world—Paulino from Portugal, Jesse from Hawaii, and me with the Borgi family, Tomy and Simon, in Brazil—brainstorming and planning the video for the kite's release. Seeing how passionate everyone was about this kite and the story we wanted to tell was inspiring.

Ozone's created something special here. It's not just another kite; it results from years of hard work and innovation. It captures everything I love about kitesurfing—freedom, fun, and that sense of adventure. Whether chasing waves, going for big air, or cruising, the Enduro V5 will take your sessions to the next level.



“ OZONE TOOK SOME IDEAS FROM THE VORTEX TO MAKE THIS VERSION EVEN BETTER FOR FREERIDE AND BIG AIR. ”

“ GET OUT THERE AND LET THE
ENDURO V5 SHOW YOU WHAT IT’S
ALL ABOUT! ”

If you're after a kite that can do it all, this is the one. Trust me, once you ride it, you'll get it. Get out there and let the Enduro V5 show you what it's all about!

Stay tuned for some exciting videos coming out over the next few weeks!



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CABARETE



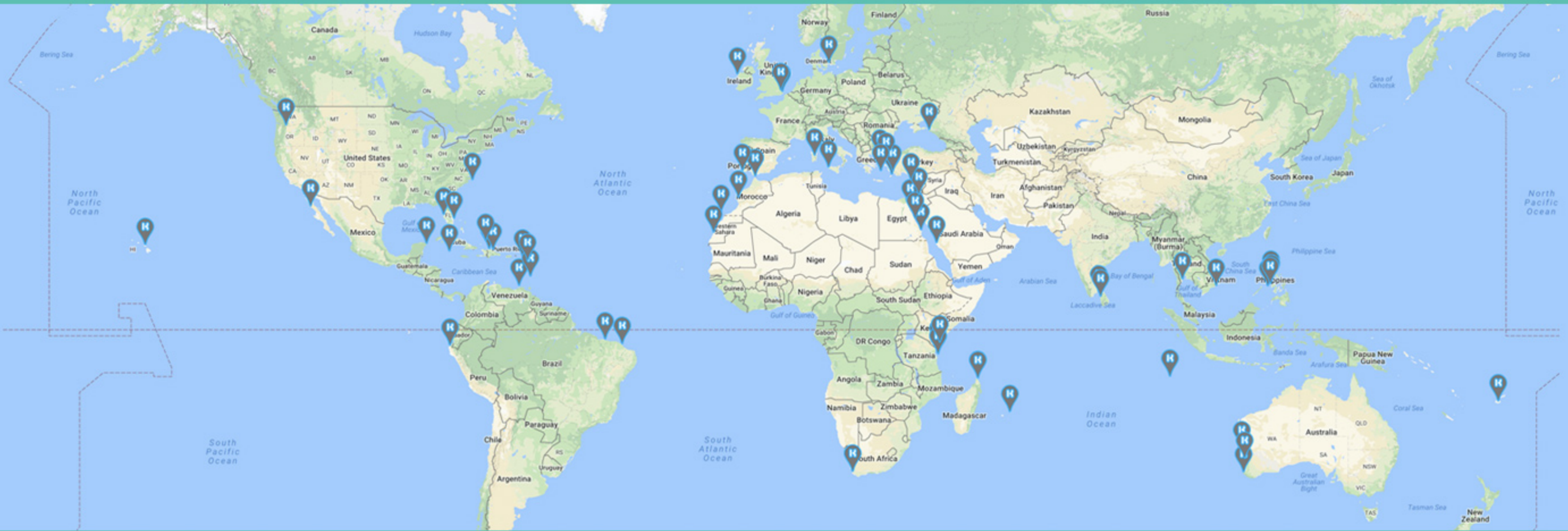
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QUESTIONS JEN TYLER
WORDS MICHAEL SCHUSTER (HEAD OF R&D)
PHOTOS CRAIG KOLESKY

RIDER CAMILLE LOSSERAND

TECH FOCUS

ION SEEK & AMP

In this Tech Focus, we dive into the latest in wetsuit innovation with ION's new Seek & Amaze Amp range! Jen Tyler chats with Michael Schuster, Head of R&D at ION, to explore how Max_Flex Technology is pushing the boundaries of flexibility, warmth, and performance. From a 30% increase in the stretch to eco-conscious materials, find out more about ION's wetsuit design.





"THE LOOPS ARE CONSISTENTLY SMOOTH, WITH NO ADDED AGGRESSION, AND THE TURNING RADIUS OFFERS EXCELLENT VERSATILITY."

Hi! We're super excited to hear about the latest advancements in ION's new Seek & Amaze Amp Wetsuit Range. For starters, please talk to us through Max_Flex Technology. The Seek and AmazeAmp already have a reputation for being the stretchiest wetsuits on the market, but how did you achieve a 30% increase in stretch, and what materials and structural changes did you make?

Max_Flex is the name of the outer lining. Wetsuits typically have three layers: the inner lining, the rubber core, and the outer lining. All three layers contribute to a wetsuit's flexibility. However, the outer lining significantly impacts stretch, assuming all other factors remain constant.

With performance in mind, we focused heavily on developing Max_Flex. It offers up to 30% more stretch with the same amount of force.

The key to Max_Flex's superior flexibility lies in its unique knitting technique. The fabric is woven in a rhombus-shaped pattern, with the long axes aligned horizontally and vertically. This structure allows for greater elasticity compared to square or rectangular weaves. Small channels between the rhombus shape also increase flexibility and assist with water drainage.

Does the 30% increase in stretching impact the wetsuit's longevity and durability?

We rigorously tested the materials and wetsuits while developing the new AMP line. Striking the right balance between durability and flexibility is always a challenge, but we achieved the ideal combination through extensive lab and field testing. The AMP wetsuits are as long-lasting as our regular models, but durability largely depends on the seams. For this reason, the AMP line features fully taped seams on the inside and reinforced cuffs for added strength.



“ SUDDENLY, THOSE EXTRA CENTIMETERS YOU COULDN'T REACH BEFORE ARE NOW WITHIN GRASP. ”

However, proper care is the most crucial factor for extending a wetsuit's lifespan. To maintain your wetsuit, rinse it after every use, handle it carefully when putting it on and taking it off, avoid drying it in direct sunlight, and refrain from using hangers that can damage the shoulder area. Following these simple tips can significantly enhance its longevity.

How important is it to rinse your suit, and what should we all do to care for our wetsuits?

Rinsing your wetsuit enhances its durability, especially during periods of non-use. Rinse it with fresh water to remove sand, sweat, and salt. If needed, use a mild biodegradable detergent, but keep detergent to a minimum to preserve the neoprene's plasticisers, which maintain its stretch. Be sure to thoroughly

rinse out all detergent afterwards.

How does the wetsuit's flexibility impact power transfer and energy efficiency during kite sessions, for example, board grabs or rotations?

This is where Max_Flex truly shines. Freedom of movement is essential, especially in the arms and shoulders, which is why Max_Flex is strategically placed in the upper torso areas.

For instance, think about grabs—or even passes or any movement that involves twisting your upper body. With Max_Flex, you require less effort to achieve the same stretch. This means that reaching the nose of your board, for example, will take less energy. Suddenly, those extra centimeters you couldn't reach before are now within grasp.

Less effort also means more endurance. You'll have more attempts, more practice, and likely master your tricks sooner.

With Max_Flex in our Seek and Amaze AMP wetsuits, it almost feels like you're wearing a thinner suit than you actually are.

The Seek and Amp are now fully taped; how does that enhance heat retention compared to regular seam construction, and what advantages does it give in reducing water entry? Are there any downsides in terms of flexibility?

Unlike stitched seams, taped seams prevent water from entering the wetsuit. Over time, water will inevitably seep through traditional seams, leading to a noticeable drop in heat retention. Taped seams might reduce freedom of movement, but the impact is minimal.

The real advantage is warmth: taped seams allow you to choose a thinner wetsuit without sacrificing insulation. A thinner suit means more freedom of movement, as having even one less millimeter of neoprene on your body can make a big difference in flexibility.

What are the environmental benefits of using oyster shell powder and limestone in the neoprene?

These alternative resources replace petroleum in wetsuit production. Traditionally, neoprene was made from petroleum, which is extracted from deep underground and requires a significant amount of energy, leading to considerable air pollution. Today, more sustainable options like oyster shell powder and limestone are used, which have a much smaller environmental footprint.

While the production of neoprene still consumes energy, it's far less than when petroleum is involved. However, it's important to acknowledge that even with these advancements, wetsuits remain net negative for the environment. That's why our R&D is focused on reducing the product's impact in meaningful ways.

That said, it's essential to recognize that every wetsuit, and indeed every product we buy, affects the environment—regardless of the materials or production methods used.

What are the challenges in creating a wetsuit that balances high performance with sustainable materials?

Incorporating environmentally friendly materials into wetsuits must make sense for the user in all aspects. Sustainability alone isn't enough if it compromises performance. That's why we were excited to find a way to source Max_Flex from recycled nylon waste—it was a balance between eco-friendliness and performance.



“ A THINNER SUIT MEANS MORE FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT, AS HAVING EVEN ONE LESS MILLIMETER OF NEOPRENE ON YOUR BODY CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE IN FLEXIBILITY. ”

“ THESE CHANNELS HELP DRAIN WATER MORE QUICKLY FROM THE WETSUIT, ENHANCING BOTH COMFORT AND PERFORMANCE. ”



Achieving this balance, however, is challenging. First, it's no secret that sustainable fabrics often increase costs. If the final product is priced too high, its eco-friendly materials won't have much impact. Second, many sustainable alternatives still fall short in terms of flexibility and durability, leaving significant room for innovation.

Looking ahead, we're confident that future wetsuits will strike an even better balance between performance and sustainability. In the meantime, we believe the most sustainable approach is to maximize a product's lifespan and improve recyclability.

The one-hand zipper is a great addition. Under repeated use, what is the zipper's expected durability and push-button locking system?

ION: The zipper's durability is comparable to standard options. We use a state-of-the-art YKK zipper, and to ensure longevity, we've reinforced the end to prevent damage from excessive force when opening the suit.

How does the 3D mesh channel system reduce drying time compared to traditional wetsuits?

We incorporated small channels between the rhombus-shaped structure of our Max_Flex lining. These channels help drain water more quickly from the wetsuit, enhancing both comfort and performance.

How does the Seek & Amaze Amp line compare to other wetsuits on the market in terms of sustainability, flexibility, warmth, and overall value?

We're thrilled to have enhanced the Amp line in various aspects while also lowering consumer prices slightly. The Amp suits are performing exceptionally well, often outpacing many larger brands, as evidenced by numerous magazine tests and awards.



“ WE WANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT PURCHASING A WETSUIT AND PARTICIPATING IN THE SPORT IS A PRIVILEGE NOT EVERYONE CAN ENJOY. ”

When compared, Amp suits are priced alongside other brands' top-line wetsuits. As a European brand, it makes us proud to compete with major Australian and US brands, motivating us to push even further. Given that the Amp is ION's second most premium suit, we are confident in showcasing our technological leadership with the Select level wetsuits.

These days, a wetsuit is quite a big investment for people; what has pushed production costs up over the years?

The main reason for rising production costs since COVID-19 is that everything has become more expensive. Shipping costs doubled in just one year,

raw material prices surged due to increased demand, and inflation has also significantly impacted costs. During the wetsuit development process, we scrutinized every detail—from the wetsuit design to production and material sourcing. This allowed us to identify key cost drivers, enabling us to enhance the new AMP level while keeping prices low.

What's the most essential factor for someone choosing a suit?

First, we want to acknowledge that purchasing a wetsuit and participating in the sport is a privilege not everyone can enjoy. We are aware of this, which is why price is always the primary decision factor.

As a brand, we strive to cater to everyone by offering options from budget-friendly entry-level suits to premium feature-rich models.

If you're considering buying a wetsuit, the first question to ask is what level of warmth you need. A wetsuit's primary purpose is to keep you warm in conditions where you would otherwise be too cold to participate. Environmental and performance factors come second. Warmth is determined by neoprene thickness, interior linings, and seam construction. Once you know the temperatures you'll encounter and how long you'll be in the water, you can find a suit that perfectly meets your needs.

Perfect, thanks so much for your time, Michael!

QUESTIONS JEN TYLER
WORDS PHIL JANKE
PHOTOS THOMAS BURBLIES

TECH FOCUS

CORE PACE PRO

Phil Janke (CORE Head of Marketing) talks us through the Pace Pro in this Tech Focus. Designed by Frank Ilfrich, the genius behind CORE's kites, with the help of Giel Vlugt and Zara Hoogenraad, this new model takes Big Air to a whole new level.

Let's jump in!



RIDER GIEL VLUGT



Hi Phil! We can't wait to hear all about the new Pace Pro! Who was the lead designer, and for whom was it designed?

The Pace Pro was designed and developed by Frank Ilfrich, CORE's chief designer behind all our kites and wings. As the demand for big air kites and competition performance continues to evolve, we saw a good chance to introduce a second big air model alongside the XR. This eventually resulted in the Pace Pro.

The goal behind the Pace Pro was to combine two contradictory characteristics: on the one hand, the absolute top performance in jump height, hangtime, and flight stability, and on the other, fast looping without additional acceleration and safe catching required for today's big air competitions.

How long have you spent working on the kite? We know CORE only releases a product when it is ready. Has this kite been in the making for a while?

As you mentioned, the great thing about CORE is that we take our time with each product development. Our minimum 2-year product cycle allows us to work on different approaches and test them extensively. As always, we invite our team riders to contribute to this process. Zara and Giel invested a lot of time and effort in the Pace Pro, greatly contributing to the result. While both have ridden the XR Pro extensively, the Pace Pro is an even better fit for their riding style.

What are the main differences between the Pace Pro and other kites in CORE's lineup?

The Pace Pro expands our Pro line-up, known for utilising the highest-quality materials available to deliver performance beyond our regular models.

**" OUR MINIMUM 2-YEAR PRODUCT CYCLE
ALLOWS US TO WORK ON DIFFERENT
APPROACHES AND TEST THEM EXTENSIVELY. "**





“ THE LOOPS ARE CONSISTENTLY SMOOTH, WITH NO ADDED AGGRESSION, AND THE TURNING RADIUS OFFERS EXCELLENT VERSATILITY. ”

With the XR Pro already in the lineup—a supercharged XR model that excels in strong winds due to its ultra-rigid 5-strut frame made from Aluula—we identified a gap for a faster and more agile 3-strut model that can still match the XR’s jumping ability. CORE’s innovative design approach solved this challenging requirement: a fixed bridle system supporting the extremely stretched bow.

What advantages does the fixed-bridle system offer over traditional bridles in the Pace Pro’s design?

The numerous bridle points supporting the kite’s arc allow us to design a high-aspect ratio shape and achieve an even thinner leading-edge diameter. This unlocks new possibilities, such as fine-tuning the kite’s position in the wind window. For loops to remain as fast and consistent as possible, the kite must be positioned precisely in the wind window, a task the fixed bridle handles effectively. The Pace sits more on the front lines, making it especially suited for the popular pre-pop jumping technique. The loops are consistently smooth, with no added aggression, and the turning radius offers excellent versatility.

How does combining the Pace Pro with the Sensor 4 bar enhance safety and performance?

The Sensor bar system has always been unique, offering an ultra-direct bar feel and combining simplicity with high-end components. However, its Supported Single Frontline Safety (SSFS) was incompatible with fixed-bridle kites. The introduction of Sensor 4’s new Single- Frontline-Safety (SFS) has made it possible to experiment with a fixed bridle for the first time. Tested and approved by IKO and combined with our 4:1 Adjuster, the Sensor 4’s new Single-Frontline-Safety (SFS+) is now one of the safest systems on the market.



" ITS UNIQUE SETUP—FEATURING A FAST-TURNING, BIG-AIR DESIGN WITH AN ULTRA-STIFF ALUULA AIRFRAME—MAKES THE PACE PRO TRULY ONE OF A KIND. "

Additionally, we've introduced the option to choose between a High-V and Low-V setup, which is particularly useful when using lines shorter than 20 meters. Enhanced bar grip coating, more voluminous floaters with improved grip, and universal pigtailed contribute to a meaningful upgrade. As a result, the Sensor 4 retains all the strengths of the 3S while gaining added versatility, allowing riders of other brands to use a Sensor bar with their kites.

What sort of feedback have you received from

CORE big air riders?

It's interesting: Every rider, regardless of background or skill level, is blown away by the Pace Pro after their first session. We're not surprised, and there are several reasons why. As a fixed-bridle kite, it feels and responds differently from our previous bridle kites. Its unique setup—featuring a fast-turning, big-air design with an ultra-stiff Aluula airframe—makes the Pace Pro truly one of a kind. Of course, there are many reasons to choose the Nexus for wave riding and

freestyle or the XR and XR Pro for stronger winds and achieving your highest boosts.

The kite is much easier to loop and perform doubles with than the XR Pro. Who should buy this kite, and what sort of riders should stick with the XR?

So, the Pace Pro is a perfect choice if you focus on big air with kiteman loops and double loops. If you're aiming purely for big air and maximum hangtime, then the XR Pro is the ideal option. Heavier riders will also benefit from the 5-strut frame of the XR Pro.

Aluula has obvious benefits, but what does it bring to the Pace Pro? Why is it important in this kite?

We are constantly testing various materials, each with its advantages and disadvantages. While I wouldn't claim that Aluula is the best material in every aspect, it delivers the best results when maximising stiffness. This enabled us to create a thinner leading-edge diameter while maintaining a stiff airframe, which is crucial for big air and high winds. Every CORE rider can attest that our exclusive materials, ExoTex 2 and CoreTex 2, also deliver outstanding performance in low stretch and rigidity. In some cases, they are the better choice for certain models.

Is the kite purely a big air double-loop machine, or can it be used for other disciplines like foiling?

The Pace was developed with kiteloops and double loops in mind. However, thanks to its intelligent design and material mix, it's also a highly versatile all-rounder. It's more than capable for foiling and wave riding, offering ease of use and confidence-inspiring handling in various conditions.

Great, thank you so much, Phil.

Thanks, Jen!



" THANKS TO ITS INTELLIGENT DESIGN AND MATERIAL MIX, IT'S ALSO A HIGHLY VERSATILE ALL-ROUNDER. "

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QUESTIONS ROU CHATER
WORDS GARY SISKAR

TECH FOCUS

RIDE ENGINE HYPERLOCK

In this Tech Focus, Rou Chater chats with Gary Siskar to dive into Ride Engine's latest innovation: the Hyperlock system, which offers unparalleled support, easy adjustments, and top-tier durability. Gary shares the story behind its development, the engineering challenges faced, and how this new tech is set to redefine comfort and performance for kiteboarders. We've got it all straight from the source!





" FOCUSED ON FIT AND SUPPORT, THE HARD SHELL HARNESS WAS BORN, SPARKING A REVOLUTION IN HARNESS DESIGN AND INNOVATION. "

Ride Engine has always been a leader in innovation, first with the rigid shell, then the Unity Direct Connection system, which eliminated the need for straps, and now the Hyperlock system. When creating the Hyperlock, what were you looking to improve over the UDC system?

From day one, Ride Engine's founder, Coleman Buckley, had a clear goal: to create better equipment that would enhance the experience and performance of riders on the water. He began with the harness, recognising it as the most overlooked yet arguably the most crucial piece of equipment in the kiteboarding kit. Focused on fit and support, the hard shell harness was born, sparking a revolution in harness design and innovation.

Next, Ride Engine addressed the problem of webbing. Traditional webbing tends to loosen during use, whether slipping or stretching, which can negatively impact rider performance and reduce time on the water. Ride Engine introduced the Unity Direct Connection system—the first truly "set it and forget it" harness spreader bar and closure system to solve this. Building on that innovation, the Hyperlock system represents the next evolution of Unity. Its 4-point ratchet design allows for easy on-the-fly adjustments while providing unmatched support and hold, offering a level of security and comfort not previously seen in any harness on the market.

How long have you worked on the prototypes to get the design right?

Contrary to what many might assume, adding snowboard-style ratchets to a harness took a lot of work. The unique load and pull angles exerted by the kite presented significant engineering challenges.



“ HYPERLOCK OFFERS THE PINNACLE OF HIGH-PERFORMANCE HARNESS SPREADER BAR SYSTEMS ”

The components also needed to be durable enough to withstand environmental factors like fine to coarse sand, debris, salt water, and extreme temperature fluctuations.

To tackle these issues, we licensed Hydrocinch technology, which had already spent over seven years prototyping and testing various ratchet designs before our collaboration. Over the past two years, we have refined the concept through multiple prototype iterations and extensive lab testing, ensuring the final design delivers the best durability, performance, and safety.

How easy is the new system compared to traditional webbing straps and the UDC set-up?

Hyperlock is in a universe of its own when it comes to user interface and experience, far surpassing both traditional webbing and the Unity spreader bar system. It's highly intuitive, making it incredibly easy to put on, adjust—whether on or off the water—and remove after a session. In short, Hyperlock offers the pinnacle of high-performance harness spreader bar systems, eliminating all the hassles associated with traditional webbing and Unity-based harnesses.

What are the benefits that the Hyperlock brings?

Convenience in adjustment both on and off the water. Easy to put on and take off. 4-point redundant connection for safety and superior spreader bar hold down.

Are there any metal parts in the buckle design?

Yes, the ratchet mechanism operates with a spring. Still, we've engineered this component to withstand the unique demands of kiteboarding and the challenging environments in which Hyperlock will be used.

Available on the Elite Type 1, Elite Type 2, and Lyte Hyperlock harnesses for 2025. Are there any other updates on those models we should be aware of?

Absolutely! The Elite Series harnesses have been completely redesigned from the ground up. Featuring a new hard shell profile, Step-2, this ergonomic shape is based on biometric analysis. It offers greater support and comfort and reduces pressure on the lower rib cage for both men and women. Combined with Ride Engine's data-driven Lumbar Lock technology, it delivers the most comfortable and supportive harness shape available. Additionally, all our harnesses now come equipped with an 8mm stainless steel hook, exceeding industry standards for durability and safety.

When can everyone get their hands on one?

Ride Engine will release a limited number of all-model harnesses featuring Hyperlock in late October 2024. They can be found at your favourite kiteboarding retailer or [Rideengine.com](https://rideengine.com).

"IT OFFERS GREATER SUPPORT AND COMFORT AND REDUCES PRESSURE ON THE LOWER RIB CAGE FOR BOTH MEN AND WOMEN."



WORDS HANNAH WHITELEY PHOTOS ARIS GIANNOUKOS

Mykonos may be famous for its parties, but Hannah Whiteley's one-month trip there was so much more. The island's consistent Meltemi winds, stunning beaches, and lively atmosphere captured her heart and made her rediscover her love for kiteboarding. Read all about it in this exclusive feature!



MYKONOS MAGIC



“THIS YEAR, I’VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR NEW EXPERIENCES AND FRESH STORIES, AND MYKONOS PROMISED JUST THAT.”

Greece has always been my training ground throughout my kitesurfing career. However, this was my first time visiting Mykonos, one of the country's most famous islands. Although known primarily as a party destination, I had never considered what kitesurfing conditions it might offer. Nevertheless, it was about time

to check it out for myself. This year, I’ve been searching for new experiences and fresh stories, and Mykonos promised just that.

Upon my arrival, I discovered that the wind in Mykonos is very consistent, particularly during the summer months. The "Meltemi," a north-northwest wind, blows from late May to September, creating perfect conditions for kitesurfing. Typically, the wind picks up in the afternoons, ranging from 15 to 30 knots, which is great for beginners and advanced riders. I was immediately captivated by the

island's special vibe: its picturesque landscapes, stunning beaches, and vibrant nightlife. To my surprise, beyond its party reputation, Mykonos was a hidden gem for kitesurfing, offering so much more than I had anticipated.

At first, I had planned a short trip for content creation and training, but I ended up enchanted by the island's magic. Before I realised it, I had extended my stay to a month. I loved the kite spot, friendly community, and lively Greek atmosphere. Even though Mykonos is more expensive than other Greek islands and the mainland, every moment I spent there felt completely worth it.



“IT FELT LIKE I HAD RETURNED TO MY ROOTS—NO EXPECTATIONS, JUST PURE LOVE FOR THE SPORT. I KITESURFED FOR HOURS EACH DAY AND FOUND IT IMPOSSIBLE TO GET ENOUGH.”

I felt more like myself than I had in a long time. Surrounded by the warmth of the local kite community and nearly perfect wind conditions every day, I was driven to push my limits on the water. Each session became an opportunity for progression, allowing me to rediscover my passion for kitesurfing. It felt like I had returned to my roots—no expectations, just pure love for the sport.

I kitesurfed for hours each day and found it impossible to get enough. The sea has an incredible way of healing and serves as the best medicine for grief. This trip to Greece will always hold a special place in my heart. After an epic day on the water, visiting Mykonos Town is a must. The charming vibe of the town captivates you instantly, and the nightlife is wild. There's always a great party, regardless of the day, and many restaurants offer everything from traditional Greek cuisine to delightful Mexican dishes. If you're in the mood for something sweet, grab an ice cream as you stroll through the characteristic streets lined with iconic whitewashed buildings.

No trip to Mykonos would be complete without visiting the iconic windmills. Perched on a hill overlooking the town, these historical structures symbolise the island's rich heritage. The view from the windmills is breathtaking, especially at sunset, providing a stunning backdrop for photographs. Wander up for a picturesque view of the town and the Aegean Sea. Just a short walk from the windmills is Little Venice, a charming area with waterfront houses on the edge of the sea. This area is packed with vibrant bars and restaurants, making it the perfect place to unwind after a day of kitesurfing. The colourful buildings create a romantic atmosphere that is popular with locals and tourists.

My trip to Mykonos was not just about kitesurfing but a healing journey and a reconnection with my passion for the sport. The island's beauty, the welcoming community, and the consistent wind made for a truly wonderful experience. Whether you're a kitesurfing enthusiast or simply looking to explore a beautiful destination, Mykonos has something for everyone.

As I reflect on my time there, I know this adventure will remain a special one in my memory. The combination of wind, sea, and the vibrant energy of Mykonos has left me wanting more awesome sessions, magic moments and stories to tell.

“THE ISLAND'S BEAUTY, THE WELCOMING COMMUNITY, AND THE CONSISTENT WIND MADE FOR A TRULY WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE.”





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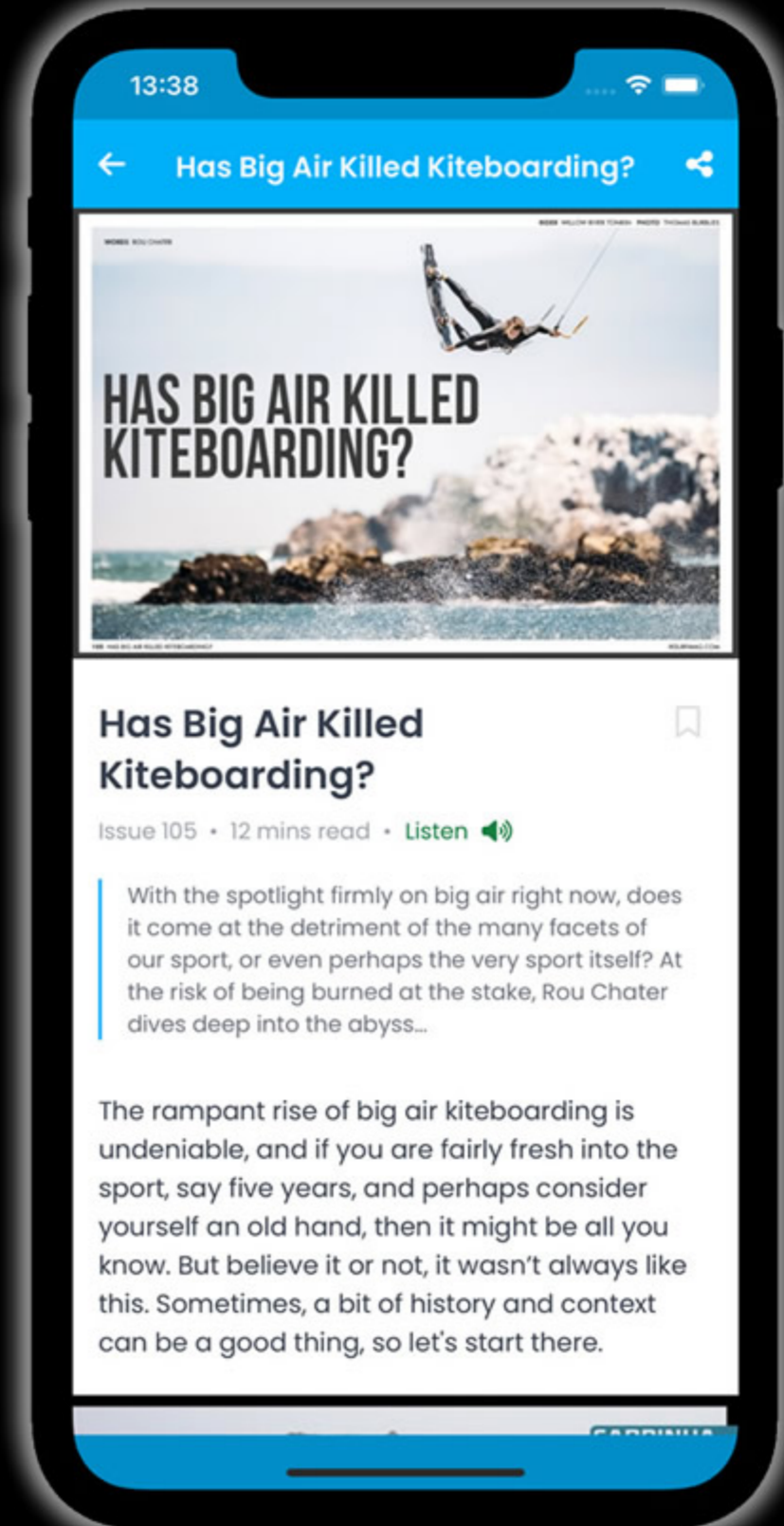
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TECHNIQUE

WORDS & PHOTOS CHRISTIAN & KARINE



The equinox is past, and autumn is very much upon us here on the northern side. The change of seasons always excites the senses with new smells, foods, and colours. Socks are officially required, and thank heavens, it's nearly time to retire the lawn mower. For us kites, the leaves drifting into every nook and cranny is a sure sign that the winds are here, and while the water is warm, we won't so much be making hay, but we'll certainly be making the most of it. So, you'll need some homework to keep your minds occupied and play time productive... We start this issue's tech off with the front roll. It is the most fabulous move, both disorientating and thrilling, and is the base for so much that is possible in kiting. It simply screams for your attention and deserves a place in every kiter's box of tricks. Then, drum roll, please, we're back on our learning to loop series. Today is the day; it's all about your first kite loop. You've done all the hard work building up to this, and with all the prerequisites in the bag, we reckon you're ready. Let's do this!

As always, enjoy...

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

1 / FRONT ROLL



CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE

2 / LEARNING TO LOOP #7



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FRONT ROLL ▶

Cabrinha Moto X 8m

Cabrinha XO 133

The front roll is a move that is revered and feared. The yang to the back roll's yin. Can you afford to have one but not the other? If you answer no, you've come to the right place. Using your kite to jump, the sent front roll has the potential to be on your all-time favourites list; it feels so good, and hundreds of progressions and variations must make it both a fundamental and an absolute must! It's so rewarding as, for a moment, you haven't got a Scooby where you are; it's all a blur, and then suddenly, like waking up from a crazy dream, you recognise the world around you again.

Much like the oft-dreaded back roll we covered last issue, the front roll is easily misunderstood. There's no somersault or inversion; it's just like swinging on a rope again, turning 360 under your kite. Funnily enough, we often teach the front roll before the back roll because once you can get your head around it, there's not much to it. And therein lies the secret: a lot less is definitely more, and actually psyching yourself up for it is one of the main challenges. Hopefully, we can make it understandable and achievable over the next page or two, so here goes...

We're all clear that the rotation is a 360 spin around a vertical axis. This time, you rotate the other way, looking back to where you've just come from over your rear shoulder so that your back faces the direction of travel! This is what can be intimidating, as you'll effectively be rotating blind.



There is good news, though. If you get the rotation and the kite stays above you, you'll return to reality quickly.

This is a sent front roll, using your kite for lift. Your approach and kite movement are the same as you would for a jump—more good news, nothing new here.

As per all moves, when you can't have a cheeky peak at your kite because you're too busy doing something else, like rotating, there are two golden rules:

1. Get the jump sorted before take-off. By this, we mean sending the kite and levelling the bar before you leave the water. This stops the kite from moving any further back and asks it to hang around at midday whilst you still know where the level to the horizon is.

2. Don't put any pressure on your bar. Once the bubble is in the middle, it should stay there. This means no supporting yourself on the bar and definitely no using the bar to pull yourself around the rotation. This may sound like we're stating the obvious, and of course, it is easier said than done. However, it all comes down to the crux of the move: initiating sufficient rotation.

ALL IN THE KICK

If you get enough spin, you'll rotate fully around. So, how do you get the impetus for this spin? It's very much all in the kick. You were kicking off against your board, extending your flexed back leg whilst turning your head and shoulders. The common problem herein lies in where you kick yourself.



A

The seemingly obvious and all too tempting option is to launch yourself forward (as the name suggests) across and over your board's nose. This is best avoided. Think about your kite and where it and your lines are. You've got to go around your lines. You're not diving down; you're turning around. As such, you must kick yourself upwind and away from the board while turning your head and shoulders. It's like sitting on a swivel chair and kicking against your back leg. You turn around the swivel; you don't launch yourself over the desk. Without wanting to oversimplify the front roll, in essence, if you get the kick right, the rest just happens. All the work is at the beginning. We can't emphasise this enough. It's a millisecond action that pretty much dictates whether you get around or not.



B

SEQUENCE 1. If you look at this sequence, you can see the kicking action to initiate your front roll. Karine sorted the kite, edged, sent, and levelled. Now, she needs to get her kick in, and the impetus for her front roll is part of her take-off. You can see that her bar is level and out on the sweet spot (more on that in a mo.), and she's kicking against her edge, extending her back leg whilst turning her head and shoulders back. As an extra, she brings her front knee up and keeps her chin in. All of this adds up to rotation. The bit not shown in the photos is the effort and force involved in the leg extension kick-off. We're talking full mule mode here, not a gentle game of footsie! Once you're on your way around, it's a matter of leading with your eyes, keeping your head turned, and trusting your rotation.

This is all good and well, but it'll only work if the kite is in the right place—around 12 o'clock and, if anything, just a tad past 12. This way, the kite almost pulls back against your harness hook and helps the rotation. If your kite doesn't get up to 12, it'll pull you forward, and as we've just discussed, this doesn't help one iota, as it'll kill your rotation.

And before we move on to the method, we should also ponder the bar and sweet spot. As you send your kite up and around the edge of the window to jump, you feather the bar out to follow the sweet spot so that you can hold your edge. You mustn't pull the bar in until after you've kicked. If you pull first, the kite will pull you up and over the board, off your edge. This way, you won't get the energy you're after for the rotation and won't have an edge to kick against.

OK, now that you know how crucial the kick-off is, let's have a look at the rest...

PIC A. YOUR APPROACH

You have to tackle your front roll as a jump. It doesn't need to be much, just enough to get you off the water, but if you tone it down too much, you won't feel as comfortable as you can on take-off. All the usual applies. Good upwind edge, a bit of speed so that the board is lively, kite at either 11 or 1 o'clock, hands centred on the bar, sweet spot trimmed to the centre of throw so that you're comfortable, bum low, legs resisting, weight centred, back leg flexed but solid, deep water and lots of space. Here, Karine ticks all of the above.

PIC B. SEND

Same again, as you would for a small jump, you need to get some air and support, so send the kite back.



C

A short, sharp send is better than a slow drift as you can hold your edge and have something to kick against for your take-off and rotation impetus. Karine steered the kite up, feathering the bar out to follow the sweet spot so that she could edge. Her board carries on in the same direction, her bum remains low, and she keeps resisting.

PIC C. SORTED, OK, TAKE-OFF

As previously discussed, get your kite sorted and initiate your front roll-take-off. First job: level the bar to stop the kite. Do this whilst your bar is still in the sweet spot. You can see that Karine's shoulders are level, and her bar is level; she's ready. Now, you can kick yourself into your rotation, extending your back



D

leg and turning your head and shoulders whilst lifting your front knee. Once you've kicked, you can pull the bar gently with a touch. But as usual, the power from the kite and your weight are joined at the harness hook, and nothing is going through your arms.

PIC D. KNEES UP

Once you're on your way up and around, lift your knees. The smaller you are, the quicker you rotate and the more balanced you remain. Karine starts to lift both her knees; her head is committed to the rotation. Her shoulders are turning, and her bar is pretty much level with her shoulders. As you get more comfortable and start to send the kite with more meaning, you can give it a little tweak on your front



E

hand to instruct it to come with you. You can see that Karine's kite is slightly past 12, but it's not a problem as she has support and is on her way around.

PIC E. HALFWAY

If you're spinning quickly, this stage will pass in the blur above. However, if you're rotating more slowly, this halfway house should be a moment of calm. If your eyes focus upwind, it's easy to panic, as it'll give you the sensation of flying backwards, sitting in a train carriage, facing the wrong way. Ignore your inner voice, which will suggest that you can pull yourself around. You won't know which hand is which for a start, so pulling won't help. Instead, ensure you're looking over your shoulder and waiting for your first glimpse of water downwind.



F

Turn your head further, and a little Timotei hair flick will amaze you with its effectiveness. Where your head looks, the body will follow. The good news is, if you feel too disorientated, you can do nothing and float down under your kite with no drama. This is considerably preferable to yanking on a hand, hoping it'll bring you around. The main takeaway is that Karine's kite is up around 12, and she's still leading with her head, looking over her shoulder to keep the rotation going. It's also worth noting that she's not looking up to see where the kite is. If you do, it'll throw you off balance, off-axis and disorientation, which ramp up to another level!

PIC F. RELIEF EXCITEMENT & JUBILATION

You've officially cracked it as you come around and



G

start to see the playground you recognise. Whether you land perfectly or drop into the water doesn't matter. What does is that you've committed to the rotation, and you got it, claimed it mentally, and now know that it's possible! Even if you only made it 50cm off the water but rotated fully, you'll be primed and ready for more. In this pic, as Karine comes around, she sees the water as she's used to seeing it; her bar is level, and her kite is still hovering around 12. Now she can guess where she'll land and focus on that spot, looking forward towards it so that she's no longer looking over her shoulder.

PIC G. DIVE

If you're still up there and have time, you must



H

dive your kite for landing. This is again just as it would be for a jump. Keep your eyes on the landing pad and steer your kite forward and down. Karine has given her bar a good pull to get the kite diving and is focused on where she'll touch down. As you drop, lower your legs to get the landing gear down.

PIC H. TOUCH DOWN

Aim to land the tail first, over the board, and point off the wind so you can ride out smoothly. A heftier dive will assist your landing as you get more confident, comfortable, and eventually higher. However, you'll find you're round and down during your early stages before you know it.



TOP TIPS

Conditions and kite sizes. Without a shadow of a doubt, learning rotations on a bigger, slower kite in lower winds will take the fear and jeopardy out of it. Even if you get it wrong, the result is wet hair and relaunching the kite. Learning powered

on a small kite is not for the faint-hearted!

Before going for any front rolls, try a few gentle small jumps. This will warm you up to the kite movement you want so that you can think ahead to take off without concentrating too much on your jump.

Light fingers. We don't mean to go and steal something, but rather to hold the bar gently from beginning to end. This way, you're less likely to pull on it.

REMEMBER – sort the kite, level the bar, and kick-off!

Look at SEQUENCE 2 and check out the video to put it all together...

COMMON PROBLEMS

If you find your kite overflies behind you when you go for the front roll, it's a sure sign that you're throwing yourself over the front of the board.

Ditto. If you keep losing your board, coming out of the straps, and the board sticking to the water, you're going across it or pulling the bar before kicking; same result.

If you keep landing on your back and not making it around, the chances are that you're being too ginger with your kite and not getting it up and past 12 o'clock for your take-off.

If you over-rotate. Two possibilities. Firstly, you could still be looking back over your shoulder even though you've completed the rotation. Secondly, if you let the bar out as you come down, you'll continue to spin.

KEYSTONES

1. Jump Approach
2. Send them level
3. Kick up and around, turning your head and shoulders
4. Only then pull the bar
5. If it's not a blur, spot landing and dive



LEARNING TO LOOP #7 ▶ YOUR FIRST KITE LOOP

Cabrinha Moto X 8m

Cabrinha XO 133

Ladies and Gentlemen, it's time! You've worked through all the prep, nailed all the prerequisites and honed your looping skills. Today, it's all about the kite loop, or instead, your first kite loop. As long as you get your head around a few points, spoiler alert, it involves building blocks, we think you're onto a winner. If you're keen, you've probably already watched hundreds of kite loops, whether live, in videos, in your head and most likely in your dreams. You know what's involved, but let's just make sure that we're on the same page:

A kite loop means that you'll pull the loop with your rear hand, resulting in the kite pulling against the direction of travel, which is why the pull can be pretty intense if there's a lot of power!

POINTERS

1. It's going to be small! You want it to be low-level. Forget those images of mega loop madness; it's building blocks, starting small and working up from there.

2. Not too powered, just enough to comfortably jump. The problems and surprises come with power, so avoid it like the plague for the moment. Yet again, building blocks. You don't want to be hanging onto your 9m in 30 knots, thinking now's the time! It is much better to ponder what to do as there isn't enough to get particularly airborne and settle on kite looping.

3. Timing. You'll start late on the way down, preferably just before you touch down. Yup, that's right. You can then build up top, going less late and then earlier and earlier.

4. Position the kite when you pull the trigger. Your kite wants to be at and starts its loop from 12 o'clock. This means you'll have tension on your lines, so your kite will respond. This means you can loop the kite higher, tighter, and quicker to get less pull. It means the kite won't drop you, even if it doesn't get all the way around to catch you. And it means the pull will come from more downwind than massively behind you.

5. Where you look. Assuming you follow point 4, your kite will pull from just behind downwind. This is the direction you'll end up going in. You'll be balanced and positioned for the landing if you look towards the pull and the kite. This essentially means that you'll land downwind but just a smidgen in the opposite direction of travel.

6. Which foot lands first? This actually isn't a be-all and end-all, but getting your head fully into kite looping whilst learning helps if you land leading with the same foot that led into the jump. This means you can carve back onto your heels and carry on in the same direction post-landing. It gives you the option of carving back from whence you came onto your toes, but we'll leave this option out to fully nail the jump aspect into our psyche.

SAME DEAL

However you look at the kite loop, if you've been following this series, you've practically already done one. Pulling a decent down loop transition one way is



similar to pulling a kite loop the other. There are many ways to visualise what's about to happen, but nothing beats a gentle, controlled one to get your personalised POV, which will give you all the reference you need to continue. Starting low and soft, getting confidence and control, and following all the same rules, just like we did with the down loop, before eventually pulling the trigger earlier. The good news is that you won't get much pull if you're not very powered and you loop late.

To see what we're after, have a look at SEQUENCE 1.



You can see that Karine's kite loops a complete 360, but it doesn't have time to go back up to the zenith before she lands. This is because it's relatively late, and Karine is not very powered – perfect.

OK, enough of the chat; let's look at some of the crucial moments of the kite loop so you can see what's involved and when...

APPROACH AND SEND PIC A

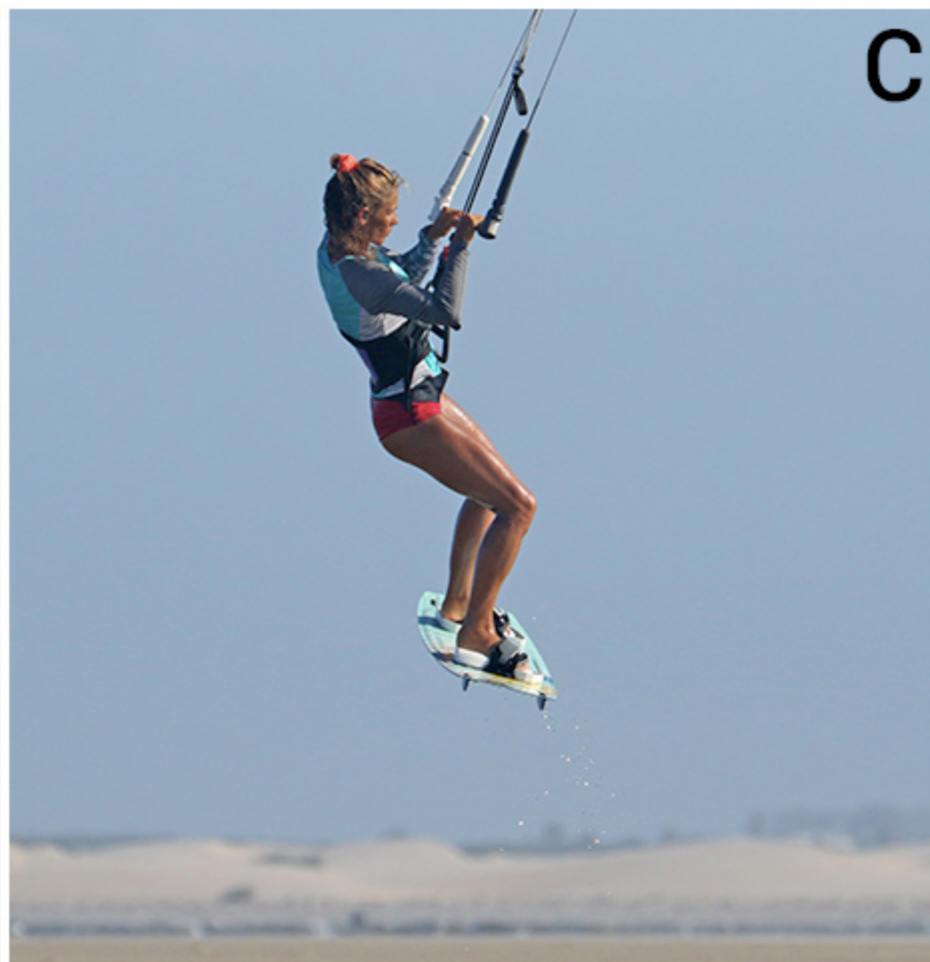
You need to approach this as a jump, with a good edge and enough speed not to slow down when you send the kite. You want an up jump; you don't want to be swinging under your kite. It's all about having and keeping tension in your lines. This way, your kite will respond when you ask it to. You're not looking to



go big, but it's better to get a bit of a jump and wait longer than try and do a mini hop and have to rush. Her Karine is edging upwind, good, controlled speed, bum low, legs resisting. Her hands are thumb-width out from the bar's centre, giving her some leverage for the loop. She's sent the kite from 11 o'clock and lets the bar follow the sweet spot so that she can hold her edge.

TAKE OFF PIC B

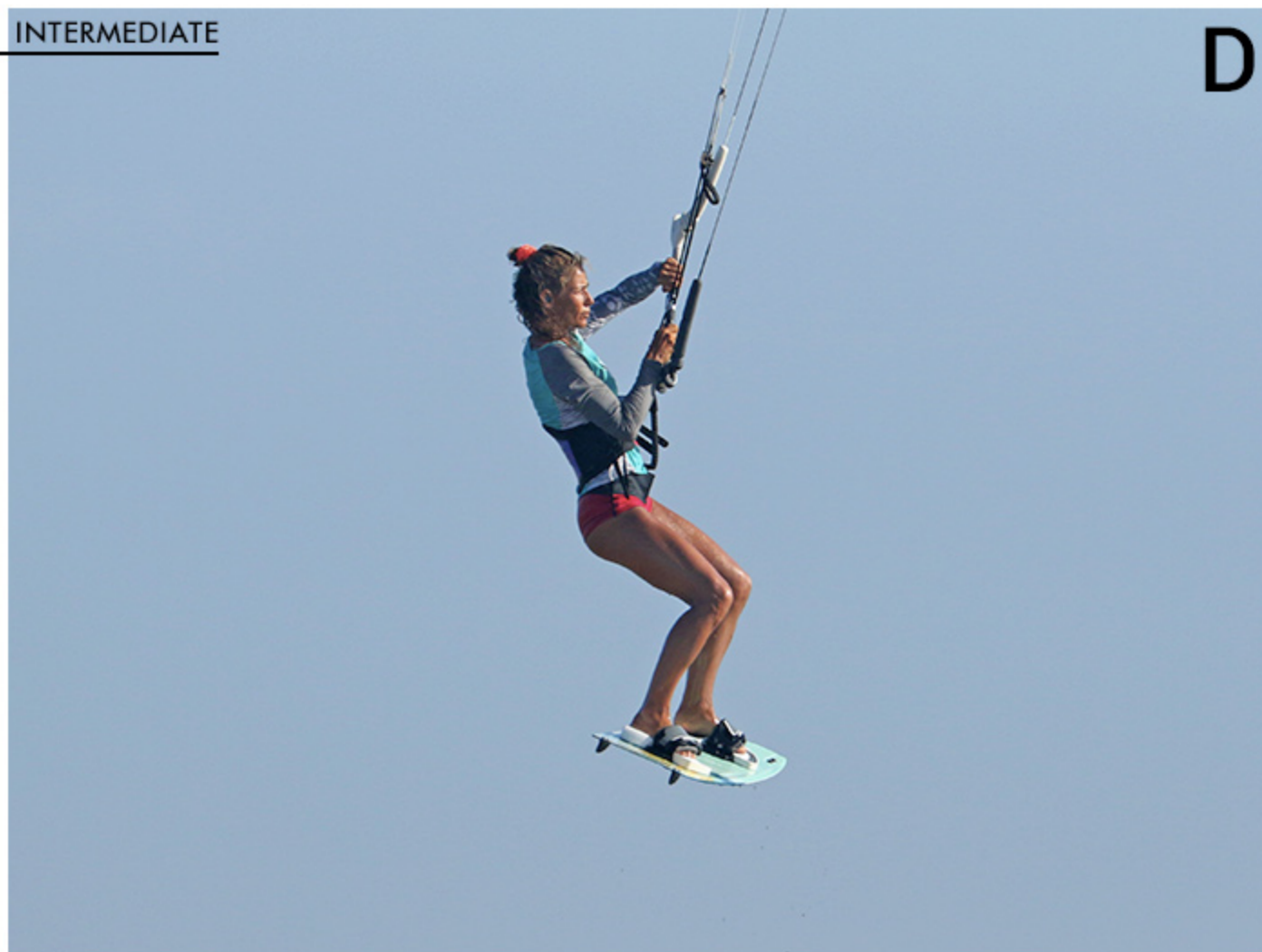
This bit may take a bit of practice. You'll need to tame it down if you're used to sending your kite hard for bigger airs and letting it go quite far back in the window. It's all to do with starting your loop at 12 o'clock. If the kite goes too far back, you'll have a lot of work to get



it forward to 12. The key here is to level your bar before kicking off so your kite stops moving back just after it hits 12. This means you can't drift it up slowly on the send because you won't get the lift for your jump if you do. As Karine kicks off her bar, she is already levelled, so her kite stops. Also, it is worth noting that the kick against her edge comes before she pulls in on the bar to ensure that she gets that up, takes off and doesn't swing downwind. This way, the kite will remain above her, so she'll have tension in the lines when needed.

PATIENCE PIC C

If you've been psyching yourself up on death metal and hefty shots of espresso on the way to the beach,



it's worth remembering that you're not going all out, guns blazing, gung ho. Instead, you'll be patient and late. As you rise into your jump, keep the bar level, make sure you're balanced and look where you usually look, slightly forward in the direction you're travelling. Bring your knees up for balance, and if your kite is behind 12, you can give it a little tweak forward so it's sitting bang at midday. Karine is lifting; her kite is right above her, she's got her bar in on the sweet spot, tension on the lines, she's looking forwards, bringing her knees up and most importantly, waiting. You want to pass the apex of your jump and know that you're descending.

THE FULL MONTY PIC D

Two words: look and commit. Regardless of how late you go, you want to etch this into your mind. Timing-wise, you can go super late for your first attempts just as you're about to touch the water. You'll give it the full Monty on the bar and lock in, as you've already done multiple times. As you do this, you will look back, just behind downwind, so that you're ready for the pull and can follow it. You can see that Karine has given it everything on the bar, the full push-pull. She's looking slightly back, anticipating the pull and bracing her body for it. As a reminder, if she keeps the bar where it is until the kite goes round,



the pull will be sudden but short. And by going late and with little power, it shouldn't be aggressive either:)

FOLLOW THE LEADER PIC E

Now, things should start to feel familiar, with the kite pulling and yourself following the pull. The great thing is that with the kite acting as your guide, you can watch it, follow it, and be confident that you're travelling in the right direction. You need to prepare for landing, twist your hips and point the board towards the kite, aiming to land, pointing just back from downwind. Keep the bar locked into push-pull mode so that the kite continues to loop,



and don't allow the power to pull the bar up and away from the sweet spot as the kite loops. Karine's eyes are on her kite; the bar is locked into the full Monty, and she's turning her hips and board to follow the kite in preparation for landing.

TOUCH DOWN PIC F

Aim to land tail first and over the board; you want to keep your nose up. Being over the board will allow you to "take" the landing. Due to the fact you're going late, keep the kite turning as you want it to go fully around; it's good practice for the future. With your board heading off downwind, you have time to regain balance, push your heart back down your throat, and wonder about your own personal



amazement – you just kite-looped! You can see that Karine is still steering her bar; she's compressed to absorb her landing and is still watching her kite to see where it is in the loop.

TENSION PIC G

You're not finished yet! Whilst you head downwind towards the kite and the kite travels up towards the zenith, you run the risk of outrunning your kite and losing line tension. You need to carve back onto your heel side edge to prevent this. As tension is restored, you now run the risk of stalling your kite, so ease the bar out, steer your kite forward, and sail away with a well-deserved cheer and a mighty grin.

TOP TIPS

It's worth remembering your goal: to ride away from your first kite loop. It doesn't have to be pretty; it shouldn't pull like a train, and you're not expecting to complete the full loop while in the air.

Just like with the down loop transition, start as late as you can. As you get more confident, you can gradually go a bit earlier and earlier still, eventually working up towards the apex of your jump.

Don't worry if you haven't got a modern kite capable of double loops. If you're on a 9m or less, all kites will turn and loop if you ask them to. It's a matter of tension, timing and input, and you've already done the hard work.



Take a look at SEQUENCE 2 and the video on the IKSURMAG channel to see how this all fits together. Let's have it!

COMMON PROBLEMS

The most common issue is coming down hard, dropping, and feeling that the kite is slow to loop. This is a result of having no tension, which is most likely the result of your kite starting from behind 12 o'clock. Make sure to level the bar at take-off and have the kite right up before giving it the beans.

If you get twisted off balance when the kite pulls, you're still looking forward when you pull. Make sure you turn your head and look back, following the kite.

Suppose you land very fast and find it hard to take the landing, resulting in you losing your balance and falling. This is often the result of having the bar in too much. You're strangling and stalling your kite, so rather than climbing up towards 12, it stays low and in front of you. Ease the bar out so that the kite can breathe as it rises.

KEYSTONES

1. Come in as for a jump and send the kite from 11 or 1
2. Level bar early on take-off
3. Wait
4. Look back slightly and give it the beans
5. Land following kite, edge back up, and let it breath



FLY FISCH, TAKING IT EASY FOR A SUNSET SESSION ON LAKE CONSTANCE IN AUSTRIA.
PHOTO DIETMAR STIPLOVSEK



Lightroom

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

LORENZO CASATI DOMINATED THE RED BULL KING OF THE AIR QUALIFIER IN TARIFAI
PHOTO SAMUEL CARDENAS



Lightroom

WHEN GIANMARIA COCCOLUTO AND LACI KOBULSKY TEAM UP
FOR A SHOOT, YOU KNOW THE RESULTS WILL BE GOOD!
PHOTO LACI KOBULSKY

Lightroom

TITOUAN GALEA IS LUCKY TO CALL THE PARADISE OF NEW CALEDONIA HIS HOME SPOT!
PHOTO GILL CHABAUD



Lightroom

TRIED & TESTED

In this issue, the IKSURFMAG test team puts CORE's Pace Pro and the Harlem Thrive through their paces, alongside Mystic's newest innovation—the Solace Impact Vest. Get ready for an in-depth look at how these products perform, from boosting your ride to keeping you protected on the water!

WORDS & PHOTOS
THE IKSURFMAG TEST TEAM

BRAND CORE

MODEL PACE PRO

SIZE 9M

YEAR 2024



"THE JUMPS ARE EXPLOSIVE, AND THE KITE GENERATES PLENTY OF POWER THROUGH THE TURNS."



AT A GLANCE

The Pace Pro is being hailed as a groundbreaking addition to CORE's impressive lineup of kites. It is explicitly designed for enthusiasts seeking ultimate big air performance and fast kite loops. This kite represents a significant evolution in the realm of big air and freestyle for CORE, making it the fastest big air kite they have ever developed.

A standout feature of the Pace Pro is the three-strut airframe constructed from Aluula, an advanced material that combines stiffness and lightness. This construction allows for an exceptionally thin leading edge and strut diameters, reducing air resistance and enhancing the kite's speed. The build quality as ever on the CORE kites is second to none. The canopy is made from their exclusive CORTEX 2® triple ripstop canopy, which is highly durable and has been tested extensively in their lab.

The bridle is fixed, and there are no pulleys, which helps improve the kite's responsiveness and offers a more direct feel through the bar. This new feature for CORE,



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

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

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

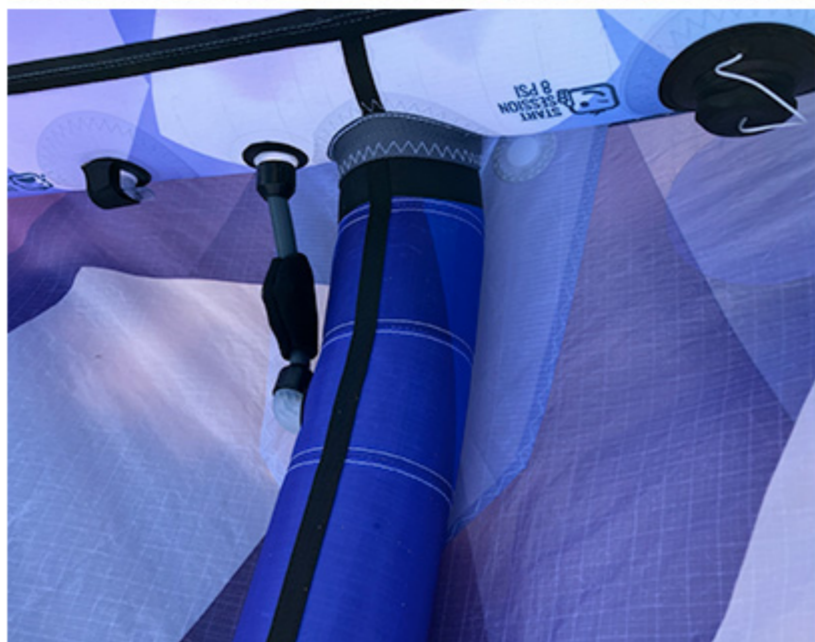
BRAND HARLEM

MODEL THRIVE

SIZE 9M

YEAR 2024/2025

"A KITE LIKE THE THRIVE IS PROBABLY THE KITE THAT 90% OF RIDERS SHOULD HAVE"



AT A GLANCE

The Thrive is the latest kite addition to be released within Harlem's new 'game changer lineup', another product manufactured in the heart of Europe at the Brainchild factory. As you're a reader of this magazine, I'll assume that the Brainchild production facility in North Macedonia is now firmly on your radar. If not, have a look through the back issues and listen to our editor's podcast 'Intriguing Beings' with its founder Ralf Groesel. Not only is Ralf in charge of his own production facility, but he also acts as product designer for a selection of products for a select few brands, Harlem being the first.

The Harlem Thrive is offered as "the kite made for 90% of the riders out there" as a lightweight high-performance all-rounder. Given that I transitioned from having multiple quivers of kites for each discipline to a single quiver of 3-strut all-rounders almost a decade ago (and still likes to dabble in multiple disciplines), you know they've delivered on their promises if it can pull me away from my current favourite.



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

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

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BRAND MYSTIC

MODEL SOLACE

YEAR 2024/2025

" A WELL-CRAFTED
PIECE OF
EQUIPMENT FOR
KITESURFERS
AND ANY WATER
SPORTS
ENTHUSIAST "



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

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



AT A GLANCE

The Solace Impact Vest Szip has emerged as the perfect impact vest for kitesurfing enthusiasts who use their mobile phones to track their sessions or take them on the water as a safety backup! This premium vest is designed with a built-in waterproof pocket and incorporates several advanced features to provide convenience, safety, and outstanding performance.

In addition to keeping devices safe, the vest is equipped with a built-in safety knife, ensuring that users are well-prepared for any emergency situations they may encounter. The vest's CE approval signifies that it meets rigorous safety standards, providing further assurance to users about its reliability.

The vest's construction utilises Mystic's Clash Foam technology, which delivers excellent impact protection, which is essential for riders engaging in big air. Furthermore, the non-padded harness waist part is specifically designed to ensure a comfortable fit with whatever harness you choose to ride, allowing for ease of movement and enhancing the overall riding experience.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

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

KITESURFED WITH A 24-YEAR-OLD TWO-LINE KITE

Landing at #1, ready for a blast from the past? Watch as Ben Beholz takes heads to the lake with a vintage 8.5m Wipika Freeair - This nostalgic kitesurfing session is one you can't miss!

1100 votes


[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#2

SURFING DUNE - 50 HOURS OF TRAVEL TO SURF, KITESURF, WING FOIL SKELETON BAY, NAMIBIA

With just 12 hours notice, Kai Lenny, Nathan Florence, and crew embark on an epic 50-hour journey to Skeleton Bay, Namibia. Surfboards, kites, and wings in tow—this adventure is full of action!

789 votes


[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#3

SKETCHIEST KITE LAUNCH EVER!

Claiming #3 on our Movie Night list this issue, prepare for heart-pounding action as Tom Court faces the 'sketchiest kite launch ever' in his latest Free Ride Vlogs episode. You won't believe what happens next!

625 votes


[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#4

HOW TO KITE LOOP AND CATCH?! – VOL. 2 MEGA GUIDE TO KITE LOOPS

Landing at #4 on our Movie Night list, Alex Buss from Kitesurf College explains the low loop and catch technique essential for mastering powered kite loops—check it out!

572 votes


[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

RIDER ELEVEIGHT CREW PHOTO KERLI HALLISTE



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