

WIND **uk** SURFING

Issue 8 September 2018



WYATT MILLER'S

Aerial antics

VASS FAMILY

windsurf holidays

30 YEARS OF

Flag Beach

MARK DOWSON

in profile

INSTRUCTOR LIFE

with Mic Brignall

HIGH FLYERS

RYA windfoiling

GREG DUNNETT

in profile

BRITISH SPEED!

+

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WIND^{uk} SURFING

TEZ PLA VENIEKS

SEPTEMBER 2018

NO STRESS!

I think back to when I REALLY got bug bitten by windsurfing which was during my first (of many) Neilson seasons. I'd been windsurfing for a while, on and off, but hadn't really got it. In fact, I actually didn't care too much for the sport at all if I'm honest. Why was I working in a windsurf centre? To get some sun, party and chase girls (I was only young).

It was my beach manager that gave myself and one other that much needed kick up the arse. He practically forced us to go sailing every time the wind kicked in – which was daily. During the first two weeks of set up, with no guests around, I learnt more about windsurfing than I'd ever done. I also improved quickly, in part helped by the fact our venue was the waist deep waters of SE Spain's Mar Menor, but also the consistency of the breeze, having access to top notch kit and great coaching (thanks Owen Beacock!). Before long I was trying carve gybes, ducks, learning to jump and generally having a blast.

But why am I telling you this?

Regular readers will have seen our extensive coverage of foiling - in particular across our test reports and on WSUK's website. With flying being a key talking point within the industry as well as more and more riders taking it up it's something we're keen to cover and continue doing so.

I started foiling about 18 months ago (give or take) and while I enjoyed it to a certain extent I wouldn't say I loved it until recently.

I'm now at a level which is similar to my skill set in Mar Menor. The difference being jumps, gybes and ducks have come quicker with foiling due to already having these windsurf skills on lock.



Photo: James Jagger

Twitter:

@tezwos

Instagram:

@tez_plavenieks_sup_wind

For me it's a breath of fresh air to be in that position again. I went through a period with standard windsurfing of trying to improve and beating myself up when progression didn't come quick enough. It's therefore refreshing to know that I can do a few things whilst out sailing and have found transferring these skills to foiling

has been much more efficient - relatively. Things still don't happen overnight and there's a long way to. But I'm enjoying the process immensely. The current great UK 2018 summer weather, consistent sea breezes, warm water and superior kit (to that of 18 months ago) also help.

The main thing though is that I'm not heaping pressure on myself as I did with regular sailing. I know at any time I can go back to that and do my thing. Foiling is therefore not a stress which could be another reason for rapid success. Being more mature is also another contributing factor I'm sure.

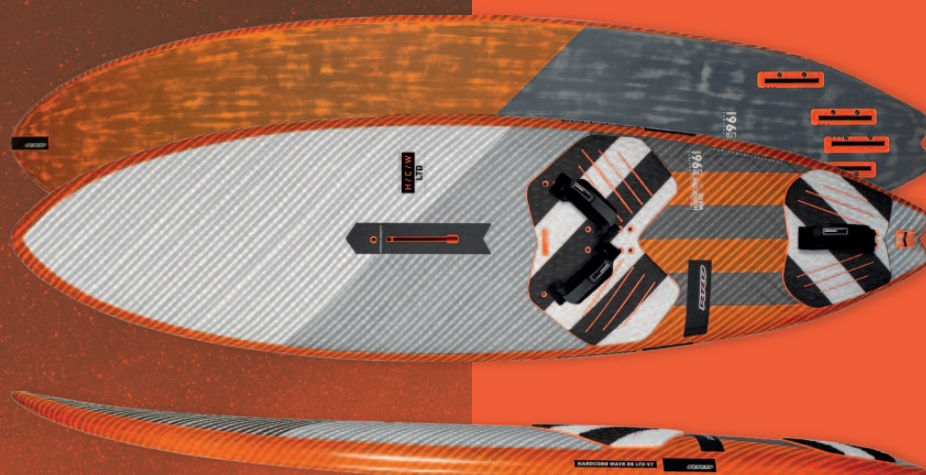
My point is: if you've been toying with the idea of windfoiling then now's the time. Equipment is way more user friendly, there's much more info and knowledge out there as far as dos and don'ts go, but most importantly you already have the base skill set because you already ride. For anyone competent using harness and footstraps foiling is a logical progression. So bite the bullet, get involved and add another arm to your windsurfing - you'll be glad you did.



RIDER: ALEX MUSSOLINI - PHOTO: SAMUEL TOME'

RRD

robertoriccidesigns



HARD CØRE WAVE V7



WIND
SURF
ING

[hahrd, -køhr]

/ 'ha:rd, kø:r /

[count noun]

Having an intense (often excessive) interest in or enthusiasm for some particular activity, pastime or hobby.

PROGRAM: PURE WAVE

VOLUMES: 70 • 78 • 86 • 96

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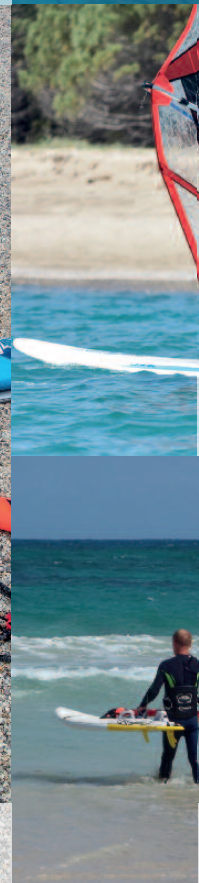
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CLARE'S
COLUMN

NEED FOR SPEED?

COME TO
CLUB VASS
SPEED WEEK

CLUBVASS.COM

What is it? Speed week is a very special week hosted at Club Vass. It's been taking place at Club Vass for over 20 years. It's all about speed, racing, recording times, gybing and of course celebrating achievements for both men and women.



Pic: Charlie Jones

When is it? Usually the second week of July when it's nice and hot, the katabatic winds are in full swing and it's the real start of the summer action!

So, Club Vass is alive and kicking, the wind has booted in for the summer, which means action! Myself, Max Rowe, Pip Pardoe and Lucy Taylor have all just hosted a very successful speed week. Even more so this year as we had Dave White back on our team! 'Whitey' as he's known throughout the windsurfing world held the world production speed title many times. He's a huge name in the windsurfing world and is an inspiration to the team and our guests here. He's an extremely talented speed and wave sailor and he's also helped many of us and our guests better their windsurfing and speed times throughout the infamous speed week.

Unfortunately just over a year ago Dave suffered a stroke, leaving him with very little movement down the right side of his body. Despite his stroke, being such a strong willed and powerful man, Dave has come a long way in such a short amount of recovery time. We are all very happy to have him back in action, on and off the water. His coaching, photography, his endless tips, tricks and jokes throughout the week have been a great help for us this speed week. Thank you Dave and family!

Another extremely positive result from speed week is we had a handful of ladies in the group of 25. It helped having myself and Lucy running the week alongside the guys as it

encouraged the ladies to come and join. In the windsurfing world the word 'speed' can often put people off, especially women. Speed is commonly mistaken for big sails and strong men but what we really try to get across to everyone in the group is that speed is the key to comfort and if you're comfortable, you'll be fast. The ladies were a lot happy calling it 'comfortably fast week'! We had times of 28 -32 mph from our group of ladies, who wouldn't have dreamed reaching those speeds at the start of the week.

Speed week is a time for celebrating huge goals and achievements, it also co insides with Club Vass' anniversary party 'All white on the night' where the team and all the guests dress in white, and we celebrate, we then share all the results over beers and a bbq.

The result – Vassiliki is a flat water location, here at Club Vass, we have top end equipment, world class coaching, and the biggest bbq party Vass has to offer. If you want to better your windsurfing, be more comfortable and faster on the water, I'd definitely recommend joining our 2019 speed week guys and girls!

Clare Elliott is a pro coach for Club Vass Holidays. She made her PWA competition debut in 2016.

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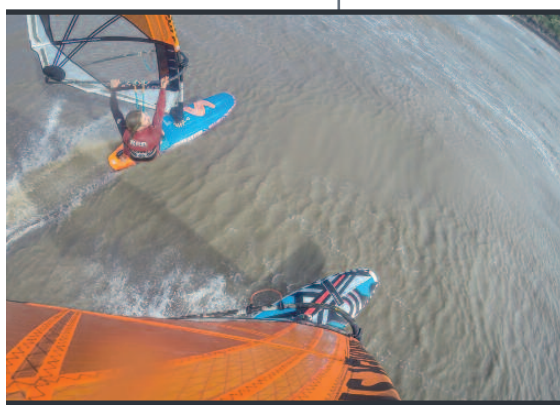
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DAVIS
LOWDOWNTHE WORLD ACCORDING TO
WINDSURFING DUO
PETE AND ZARA DAVIS**Pete:**

A little bit of competition is good for you. Often, especially after a long wind drought like we have just had, we are so grateful to get out on the water that taking part in a competition is the last thing on our minds. But believe me it is a fantastic way of improving your windsurfing.



Zara Davis is the current Women's Speed world record holder and sponsored by O'Shea, Simmer, Sonntag, AL360, Synergy Worldwide and Walnut Grove Clinic. Hubby Pete works tirelessly behind the scenes for the UKWA and organises the yearly Weymouth Speed Week as well as being an accomplished windsurfer himself.

It doesn't matter if you're into big jumps and wave riding, freestyle, flat water slalom blasting or just going up and down with your mates there is some competition out there for you. I have heard all the excuses: "I haven't got the right equipment", "I am not good enough!", "don't have the time", and so on. These are what it says on the tin, excuses!

The benefits of competition are many fold. First and foremost it improves your sailing. In slalom for example, instead of gybing where you like you have to gybe at a mark with a load of other super keenos – you soon sharpen up your skills. It also gets you to up your game when faced with better opposition than your usual crew at your local beach no matter what discipline you're into.

Secondly you get to see a bit more of the UK and maybe the world with comps held all over the place at all sorts of levels. Seeing and sailing new spots is good for the soul and if nothing else it makes you appreciate what you have on your own doorstep or have access to.

Thirdly and in some ways the most important, you will make new friends that will stay with you the rest of your life. There is no better bonding experience than going head to head with a rival even if it's at the back of the fleet or during an early round. Sharing that with a beer afterwards is a way to make a lasting friendship.

You don't have to be on the latest gear or even the right gear to have a go either, so what is stopping you? Whatever you're into there are loads of events around the country organised by the UKWA, BWA, RYA, NWF and Weymouth Speed Week. Have a go it's worth it.

Zara:

When you read this I would have been to the ISWC Speed World Championships at Sotavento beach on Fuerteventura and hopefully achieved my third World Championship. My windsurfing career has been very fortunate but as Pete has said in his bit, we all started as beginners at our local spot. Mine was at Brogborough Lake near Bedfordshire – a small lake about as far from the sea as you can get in the UK.

But these hotspots where super keen people who just love to windsurf start and encouraged like myself and John Skye are vital to making the champions of tomorrow. When I started, the RYA T15 program was not in existence. It was down to parents to not only take their kids to the sea but buy the kit, wetsuits and everything else needed. That's not too bad if parents are already windsurfers. The older and smaller kit gets passed to the youngsters. But as we have established the pool of windsurfers is getting older and smaller – how do the kids who don't have windsurfing parents even hear about windsurfing and how brilliant it is?

T15 by the RYA is an amazing way for youngsters to try before you need buy anything and don't think it's just windsurfing experience they get out of it. They make lifelong friends, learn how to compete, to lose and to win with dignity and humility and these are lessons for life.

I remember a young girl in my T15 group that started as a shy thing that can now stand in front of a crowd, adults and kids, and hold a lecture, deliver a sailing plan for the day and has gone on to be an accomplished sailor and coach. I know that all sport will deliver these extras if they are delivered right but the T15 program helps – all volunteers give the kids the best chance. Hopefully the making of the champions of the future.

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FEEL THE NEED, FOR SPEED

WORDS AND PICS: PETE DAVIS

SPEED WINDSURFING IS ON THE UP AND IF YOU HAVE NEVER GIVEN IT A GO NOW IS THE TIME. GENERALLY IT FALLS INTO THREE AREAS: online GPS speed competition where you can go anywhere and record your fastest speed and upload them and see how you did against people in your, area, country or the world (this includes online local and national online competitions like the British GPS Speed Challenge). Then there is official speed competition. Like the national UKWA Speed Championships at Weymouth and ISWC Speed World Championships where you go head to head with your competitors on the same piece of water at the same time and see who comes out on top. Finally there are the official record attempts where you inscribe for a fixed period at hopefully a windy flat water spot like Luderitz in Namibia, where there is a good chance that you could break a national or world record and certainly get a personal best speed.

The blue ribbon distance has always been the 500m course but there is also the nautical mile record which is much harder and due to the longer distance the speeds are understandably slower than 500m and subsequently gets less press, more on this distance later. Us Brits have produced some great speed sailors over the years at official WSSRC events, like Erik Beale the first man over 40 knots, Dave White previous UK record holder and Production World record holder three times, Farrell O'shea who started speed sailing in the 80s and the only Brit to go over 50 knots and is our current record holder at 51.20knots. Zara Davis has been at the top of her game for some years and the first woman over 45 knots, holding 500m world record at 46.49 knots and the outright mile record at 37.29 knots. The spirit of speed sailing is still very strong. To whet your appetite, here is a quick round up of what has been happening so far this year.



14COMP SPEED WINDSURFING



Jim Crossley

ISWC world championships hosted by the Dunkerbeck speed Challenge.

The ISWC Speed World Championships were held again this June on the island of Fuerteventura. The World Championships have been held here for the last two years and the European Championships the two years before that. This year the plan was to move the event site from Mattas Blancas to Sotavento Beach a few kilometres down the coast, which was the site from back in the day that set the world records in the 80s and 90s. Unfortunately the day before the event started the organisers were told they couldn't hold the event there due to an administrative error. This however turned out to be a huge stroke of luck! Usually for this time of year the wind strength and direction is strong and from the north – northeast which causes the wind to curl slightly and be in a perfect direction for the beach at Sotavento. It was not playing ball, the wind was blowing from a mainly NE direction but too much east, not strong enough and gusty which meant that Sotavento and Mattas Blancas would've been unsuitable with light and side shore winds forecast all week.

Bjorn Dunkerbeck, the event organiser, and his team sprang into action and came up with an alternative location on the very southern tip of the island. Where the wind was stronger and offshore giving the perfect flat water location in a very remote and beautiful part of the island: Punta de Jandia. The competitors all bought into the idea and were happy to go

mobile and experience this new secret spot about as far south as you can get and only accessible via 19km of dirt roads

The Dunkerbeck Speed Challenge is a Pro Am event that hosts the ISWC Speed World Championships and is a great competition that allows competitors of all ages to take part; this year the youngest was 11 and the oldest 61. As well as giving a stage to some of the world's fastest windsurfers like last year's winner Twan Verseput from Holland, Andy Laufer PWA star from Germany, our own Zara Davis and of course the legendary Bjorn Dunkerbeck.

As usual a good British contingent was taking part, Zara Davis, world record holder and current world champion, Jim Crossley – a regular at this event, who came fifth last year – Nigel Spriggs who got off to a slow start last year but was pushing Jim by the end and first-timer Gavin Furmenger.

The wind gods threw everything at the competitors from light winds on the limit for competition and riders using their 7m+ sails and medium slalom boards to extreme 40 knot rounds using full on speed needles and 5m sails. The men's fleet was dominated by Twan Verseput who was out to prove that winning last year wasn't a fluke and was peaking at over 43 knots and 250m runs of over 40 knots. Andy Laufer the very experienced slalom racer showed that he could turn his hand to speed coming second and pushing Bjorn into third place.

Zara Davis showed why she is queen of speed with wins in every round. She was kept honest by Annie Schindler who



Nigel Spriggs



Twan Verseput



Men's podium



Women's podium



has really improved from last year but wasn't fast enough to beat Zara, especially when the winds got nuclear. Third place went to German Anja Kruse who unfortunately due to an injury off the water didn't really get a chance to show her full potential but loved the event and promised to come back next year.

Jim Crossley and Nigel Spriggs took up from where they left off last year with Nigel beating Jim in the first round. Then Jim pulled it back and found his form in the following rounds

and they ended up in a very respectable ninth and 14th respectively. Gavin finished a very respectable 17th to round up a great British performance.

If this has whet your appetite for a bit of speed competition then entry usually opens in January venue TBA keep and eye on the FB page @DunkerbeckGPSspeedchallenge and inscription is on the website <http://www.surfbd.com/dunkerbeck-speed-challenge/>

The Prince of Speed, Nautical Mile world record attempt in the South of France.

The Nautical mile is a tough record to achieve, as sailing flat out for a mile is hard on the body and requires a lot of skill to keep the speeds high over the inevitable gusts and lulls of this long distance, it doesn't get as much attention as the 500 records speed's, the shorter the distance the higher the speed. (Its why people some people always quote their peak speeds). Its also difficult to stage because there are not many places in the world that have the ideal conditions for this distance. Which is why until this event the majority of the mile records were set in Walvis bay, Namibia way back in 2006. So it was ripe for staging a mile attempt.... but where?

Farrel O'shea and Zara Davis fist muted the idea of staging a nautical mile challenge in the South of France over a year ago at the very popular Le Rouet beach known by the guys from GPS –Speedsurfing as, La Franqui. Local sailor and very experienced speed sailor Andrea Baldini (known as Principe to his friends) also had the dream of staging an attempt there and took on the daunting challenge of staging a combined 500m and mile event called the POS (Prince of Speed). It was a lot of work bringing together sponsors and local support for this event but Principe worked tirelessly for over a year to make it happen. It was well worth it, read on.

The men's and women's Windsurfing mile record attempt started after the 500m POS competition, The mile was a standby event that was called with three days notice given to the 15 riders inscripted. The existing mile record was held by none other than Bjorn Dunkerbeck, set at Walvis Bay in 2006 at 41.15 knots. Zara Davis held the women's outright sailing record form the same time at 34.74kn.

The first two riders to try and beat it on the opening day the 5th July, in less than ideal conditions were his old slalom rival Antoine Albeau who squeezed it in before he flew out to Fuerteventura for a PWA event and Oisin Van Gelderen who stayed on after the 500m event. The phrase, 'Close, but no cigar' for Antoine both he and Oisin Van Geren set new national mile records for France and Ireland at 41.02 and 35.88 knots, respectively but no men's world record.

The wind then disappeared till the 16th and official 500m national record holders from all over Europe, Including Christian Bourneman from Germany and our very own Farrell O'shea, plus GPS specialists all turned up to try and add the mile to their trophy cabinet and who knows the World record. It was worth it with national mile windsurf records for Germany, Italy, Switzerland and France but again no men's world mile record. Was Bjorn's record safe?

There were some fast speeds posted by the men on the 16th including legendary speed windsurfer Thierry Bielak fastest at 39.79 knots and Andrea Baldini the event organiser taking the National mile record for Italy at 39.03. But no one went faster than Antoine on the opening day and no men's world record so another wait till the next call which was the coming Saturday the last chance before the event closed.

Saturday arrived, so did the wind and the dark horse from Belgium, Vincent Valkenaers. A young, little known speedsailor, who has been making a name for himself online on the GPS rankings but never entered an official record attempt before. Even though he lives in Belgium he calls this site La Franqui his home spot. With his knowledge of the site and the stronger winds he proved he is a force to be reckoned by taking the world record from Bjorn on his second run with an amazing speed of 42.23 knots.

Zara Davis had everything to lose at this event. As the current women's world 500m and mile record holder at 46.49 knots and 34.74 knots respectively. Zara's mile record was also set in 2006 and equipment and competition had got better and she knew it was a going to be a close competition with speed specialists Heidi Ulrich from Switzerland and Marie Paul Geldof from Belgium. On the 16th of July her first time at this venue, Zara was out to do her best. After a long day of runs she managed to up her personal record to 35.34 knots over the mile course but this was not enough as Heidi was 0.6 knot faster at 35.91, this meant Heidi took Zara's world record.

Zara was very disappointed and then had to fly home to the UK to see patients at her clinic Walnut Grove clinic where she works. The only chance she had of getting it back before the fixed period for the attempt was the following weekend when more strong wind was forecast. With everything crossed she flew back out for the next strong wind session three days later. The mission to fly back was worth it, they all went faster but Zara by the smallest of margins managed to get the outright world Nautical Mile speed record back.

She managed 37.29 knots over the long mile run. It was Zara's day, the closest Heidi could get was 37.16 knots, 0.13 of a knot slower than Zara. This record is faster than any women on any sailing craft (boat, windsurf, kitesurfer) of all-time and is the outright record.

Kitsurfers were also taking part with Roger Oernvang getting the men's Swedish record, Marin Teattla getting the women's world and French records and the inspirational Chris Ballaais, who achieved the men's world and French record despite having only one arm!

All speeds quoted when published in this article are subject to ratification by the WSSRC (World Sailing Speed Record Council).



Farrel O'shea



Vincent Valkenaers

18 **PROFILE** WYATT MILLER



PROGRESSIVE THINKING WITH SLINGSHOT'S

WYATT MILLER

WORDS: WSUK

PHOTOS: WYATT MILLER, CHRISTOPHER CURRAN AND ZAIRA VALERIO

WYATT MILLER IS CURRENTLY GRABBING ATTENTION ACROSS VARIOUS SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS WITH HIS FUTURISTIC WINDFOILING EXPLOITS. An accomplished windsurfer, in standard mode, as well as foiler WM has just taken on a new role heading up the windsurfing department for the brand. We caught up with Wyatt to get the goss.

Firstly give us a brief background on your windsurfing life to date.

I grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area and started windsurfing with my dad around the age of 11. I started teaching windsurfing summer camps when I was 16 and got my first sponsors when I was in college at age 20. Nowadays, I split my time between my windsurf resort (Pro-Windsurf La Ventana <http://prowindsurflaventana.com/>) in La Ventana (Baja California Sur, Mexico) and Hood River, Oregon (The Gorge).

I have been on most of the freestyle podiums in the USA for the last decade. I started windfoiling four seasons ago and just last month I became the brand manager for Slingshot windsurfing (<http://www.slingshotsports.com/slingshot-windsurf>).

Where do you base yourself now and why?

I have a windsurf resort in La Ventana, Baja California Sur Mexico. The wind is super consistent from November to April. There are not really any other places in North America with mid-winter windy seasons and it's only a three-hour flight from most of the west coast, so it's a great destination.

I spend the summers in Hood River, the conditions are absolutely amazing and a lot of the North American windsurf industry is based up there.



Talk to us about the windsurfing conditions you find in your 'hood – what's great and what's not so great.

Hood River is WINDY! I pretty much only use my 4.0 and 4.4 and often wish I had something smaller. The water is warm, 18C and getting warmer by the day. There are about 15 spots to sail along 70 miles of river. We have some flat water spots, but usually we are looking to the overhead to logo high swells produced by the opposing current and wind direction. The fact that the river is always moving upwind means you never have to try and beat upwind, in fact if the wind dies you can get stuck upwind. You have good jumping on both tacks and no large predators. There is not really anything not to like about it, it can be gusty but gusty 4.0 is not so bad.

Do you travel to windsurf much? If so, where do you normally head?

I've spent time in Maui, Dominican Republic, Colombia, Margarita, Bonaire and other windsurf hot spots. I went to Dominican Republic, Cuba and Colombia the last couple years as part of my non-profit, 'Beyond Boardshorts' (<http://beyondboardshorts.com/>) that focuses on getting windsurf gear to low income windsurf kids in the Caribbean. I usually do at least one trip in the spring (this year it was to compete in the Defi Wind, France). I drive from Hood River down to my windsurf resort in La Ventana and back every year and the surfing and sailing locations up and down the Baja Peninsula are some of my favourites in the world. And of course, I always make time to sail in San Francisco when I'm back home.

Where's your fave windsurf spot, home or away?

My favourite windsurf spot in Hood River is called The Wall. It's a narrow section of the river just below a massive dam. The water is moving really fast which builds huge swells and for some reason it is really smooth in between the rollers. It's such a good place for big jumping and epic swell riding with overhead waves in the river.

In Baja there is the legendary wave sailing spot called Punta San Carlos. I do clinics there every October on my way down to open my resort. With a good south swell you can have a mile long wave with multiple sections to hit and perfect side-offshore winds. It's like a skatepark for windsurfers.

When did you first come across foiling and what made you want to get involved?

I have been foiling for about three or four seasons. At first, my buddy Tyson Poor got a kite foil and we just put bolts all the way through an old beat up board. It worked but it was not easy, the foil just wasn't in the correct location. Then I saw the designer for Slingshot, Tony Logosz, ripping our home spot in The Gorge, Oregon. He looked like he had it totally dialed and was jibing easy. He hooked me up with one of his boards and foils and that's when it really started to take off for me.

I drive from Hood River down to my windsurf resort in La Ventana and back every year and the surfing and sailing locations up and down the Baja Peninsula are some of my favourites in the world





At which point did the foiling switch flick and you become addicted?

When I landed my first backloop at my place in La Ventana I was pretty hooked. We don't always get ramps big enough for backloops there. With the foil, all of a sudden I was able to do them in small one-metre swell in winds that I would need my 5.6 to use my freestyle board. The foil really just made windsurfing in less than exciting conditions super fun again.

What do you prefer: foiling or standard windsurfing? Which do you find more fulfilling?

When the conditions are good I still prefer normal windsurfing. I can do a lot of tricks and boosting backloops and pushloops along with all the freestyle moves is just too much fun. The second the wind lightens up or just gets flukey instead of being bummed I keep the same sail I was on and just switch to the foil board and I am having a blast in minutes. I have been learning a lot of new tricks on the foil and each session I get noticeably better so at the moment it's the foiling that is more fulfilling.

22 PROFILE WYATT MILLER

It's great to see the recent progression, considering that windsurfing foils have been around for 30 plus years



We've seen some pretty sick vids of late with you stomping big moves on the foil. How long has it taken you to get here skill wise?

Well, I have been landing backloops, forwards and shuv-its for the past two years. And I had another season or two of part time foiling before that. But my buddy Bryan Metcalf-Perez who is a ripping freestyler only had five days on the foil and he was landing big backloops just the other day. So, if you have the freestyle skills already it's a pretty natural progression. One of the things that really surprised me is that a shuv-it is just the same as on the regular board. I landed the first one I ever tried. I was going into it wondering what would happen if I tried a shuv-it and it was just completely surprising how natural it felt.

There aren't many riders pushing this side of windfoiling. Is it something you'll be continuing to showcase?

I am surprised there aren't many more guys pursuing the big moves on the windfoil. I get a lot of inspiration watching all the crazy stuff Balz Muller and his brother Jacob are doing. I think now that I have posted some videos we will see a bunch of other guys throwing down, it's a pretty natural extension of the sport, and at the moment I feel like I can jump higher in the given conditions than I can on

my normal kit. I will definitely keep working on it. I want to get a pushloop here soon, but to be honest it's a bit scary getting on top of your gear like that. It's great to see the recent progression, considering that windsurfing foils have been around for 30 plus years.

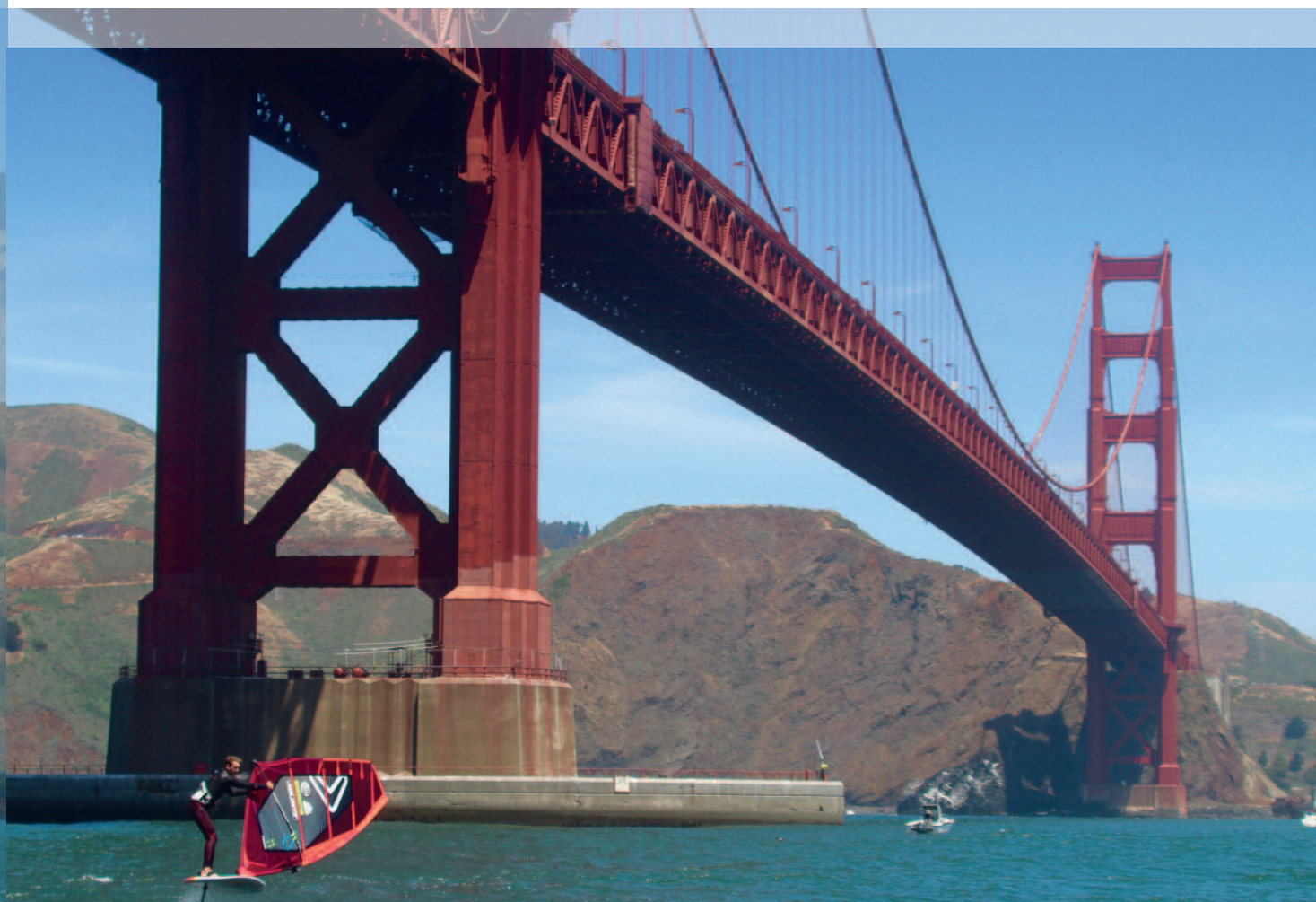
(www.slingshotsports.com/slingshot-windsurf)

Your kit is probably under a lot of stress during big moves. Have you broken anything?

If you are going to be jumping you really want the carbon version. I bent a couple masts and fuselages on the aluminium gear. So far the carbon stuff from Slingshot has really held up. I haven't broken anything.

And what about near misses? After all a foil is quite large and hard should it all go pear shaped.

I definitely think about it a lot. A few of the big backloops in the photos I did on a real small sharp wing. Now we have produced curved wing tips on the foils that make it a lot less dangerous as far as puncturing yourself. The mast is still super sharp and sometimes when I over-rotate a forward, all my momentum is headed towards the trailing edge of the mast which is not so good. The pushloop is going to be the sketchy one to learn.

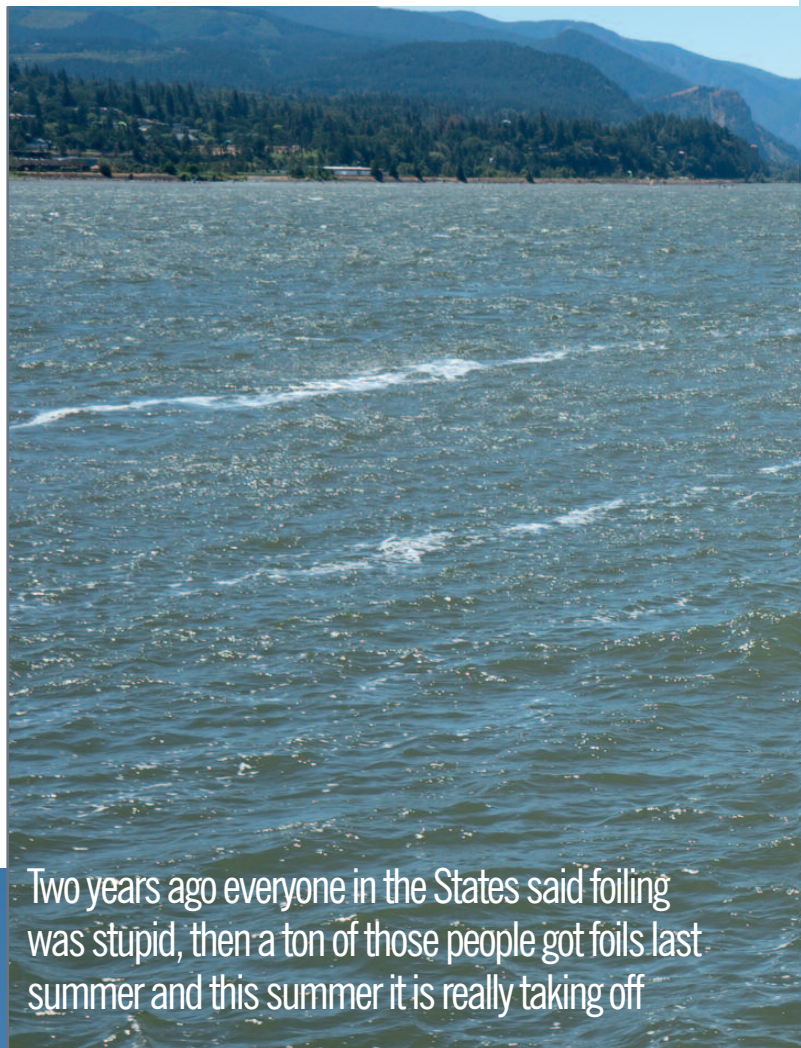


Is foiling the future of windsurfing? We hear in the States that it's all that's being talked about, whereas in the UK it's catching on slightly slower.

I definitely think it is the biggest thing to boost windsurfing since the short board. I think a lot of people have given up windsurfing because it's so hard to find good conditions and boring conditions are well... disappointing. But with the foil you hardly need any wind to have a super exiting session. Being bad at jibing again is fun, when you finally get one foiling all the way through you scream your head off just like you did on your first normal jibes. Two years ago everyone in the States said foiling was stupid, then a ton of those people got foils last summer and this summer it is really taking off. Everybody who comes down to my windsurf resort learns how, and quickly. Most people are getting 100m rides their first hour. I think it's the easiest foil platform to learn.

What's your opinion on windsurfing in general (globally)?

Here in the States it has dropped off significantly, the parking lots used to be full on the good days. Now there plenty of parking spaces on all but the best days. I think it's more popular in Europe and holding steady there. The Europeans just have a lot more of a sailing culture and I think all the sailing clubs and schools drive a lot of interest.



Two years ago everyone in the States said foiling was stupid, then a ton of those people got foils last summer and this summer it is really taking off



And what about those sailors who have no interest in flying? Do you think things like the renaissance of one design longboard riding is set to grow again after Cobra's recent announcement regarding the Windsurfer LT?

Somehow I don't see old school longboarding bringing windsurfing back. I think foiling is the future. I can only imagine that pretty soon we will all have electric foil boards and be ripping around every body of water without a sail. If you could motor up and then kill the motor, pump and ride swell and then give it a little juice when you needed it from the electric motor it would be so fun. I think the all watersports enthusiasts will know how to foil in one way or another.

Tell us about your new role with Slingshot – how did that come about?

The Slingshot designer Tony Logosz absolutely rips on a windfoil. When I was a kid I wanted one of his Logosz Design windsurf boards soooo bad. The guy has a huge history of being at the forefront of windsurf design. He was developing foiling gear in its infancy and testing it here in Hood River and making it look so



With Slingshot it's all about fun and usability
and I think that's what the consumers are
really into

fun. He started hooking me up with gear and I was helping with the testing and just trying to get as good as him (he still has some moves on me). They really needed a windsurfer who was in touch with the market and the consumers and since I had a great working relationship with Tony it was a perfect match. I'm really excited to be part of the team, Tony is seriously a genius, he is living like five years in the future and the amount of products he comes up with keeps it really fun.

What are your main areas of responsibility?

I help test the product and decide what products should go to market. I am assembling a national and international team and working on the branding. I guess I am just trying to steer the whole brand in a fun and profitable direction. One of the big reasons I signed up is that Slingshot is to focus on the freeride and freestyle side of windfoiling, which is where all the fun is. I saw the rest of the industry just re-making Formula racing with massive wide boards and tons of beating up wind. With Slingshot it's all about fun and usability and I think that's what the consumers are really into.

How do you plan on growing the windfoiling side of the brand?

I think with Slingshot all the pieces are there to have good growth. Since they have been doing big things in kite and wake the distribution is already set up. The products are next level thanks to Tony's forward thinking. The goal now is to get the boards in schools and with some star instructors. Buying a whole kit set up is a big leap and a lot of people aren't sure they are ready to go all in with foiling. If we can just get them up and going once, they are going to find it so fun and easy that the barrier to entry will drop away. Once the products are under your feet they really sell themselves.

Slingshot products are very progressive in terms of performance. Is this hard to convey to newbie foilers? How do you go about doing this?

I think when you look at the super short wide boards they just make sense, despite the strange shape. People ask me all the time about putting a foil in their old slalom boards. It works, but when you think about having the wind pushing the big long nose around, the super short boards are obviously a better idea. Also, when you think about the up and down motion of foiling you don't want a long nose pearling into the water or into swells. A dedicated foil board is the way to go, it just feels so good to have no swing weight up front and all the boards are wide enough to uphaul and slog home if the wind dies completely.

What're your plans for the rest of 2018?

I will be in the Gorge all summer testing, working on some video projects and signing our international team of foiling freestylers. We are working on some great new freestyle shapes for jumping and higher winds. Tony is always coming up with new moves and we are just starting to figure out what tricks are possible on the foil. Then, I will head down to Baja for my wavesailing clinics with Solo Sports in San Carlos October 6th-20th (<http://www.solosports.net/>). And, then to La Ventana to open up my windsurfing resort and teach all our guests to foil. I get a lot of insight into the products and the consumer needs while teaching down there.

Find out more about Wyatt and Slingshot foils at: <http://www.slingshotsports.com/slingshot-windsurf>



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MARK DOWSON

Q&A

INTERVIEW: WSUK
PICS: RUSSELL GROVES
REGULAR WINDSURFING UK CONTRIBUTOR, LANZAROTE LOVING, COMMITTED WAVE SAILOR AND (NOW) BWA PRESS OFFICER MARK DOWSON'S ENTHUSIASM FOR WINDSURFING IS SECOND TO NONE.

Frequenting many different UK beaches, as well as putting in hours across the drink in Lanza, he's a committed wave hound and a nice guy to boot. We caught up with Mark for a long overdue natter.

Tell us about your windsurfing background: where it started, who got you into windsurfing and what made the bug bite? '

I first got the chance to try windsurfing back in France on a BIC when I was 18. My friend, Nick, was working out there on a campsite and they had one as part of their setup for the campers. My brother and I had been itching to give it a try it as we'd seen it on TV and thought it looked amazing fun. It did not disappoint. From that first try we were both hooked and I've sailed every year and I just love it!



Where's your local these days, if you have one?

2018 (so far) has been a strange one – not that windy really. I have sailed 37 times so far this year and as usual it has been split between the UK and Lanzarote. In the UK I've sailed at Filey (1), Avon (1), Rhosneigr (5) and Fraisthorpe (14). In Lanzarote I have scored Jameos (9) and Costa Tegui (7).

Who's your crew that you hang out/sail with?

The Fraisthorpe, East Yorkshire, crew would have to be Chris Sykes, Brad White and John Wright (who I've been sailing with a lot recently.) We have also had some memorable east coast adventures with Steve Thorp.

In Rhosneigr I've sailed with George B and Phil Johnson for many years, Alex Tritten, John and Paul McLawrence and recently Steve Laddiman has been joining us on both coasts. The usual suspects in Costa Tegui are Rob Cattee and Claudio and in Jameos, Nejc Zupan and Tim Orchard.

Why wave sailing in particular? Is it only wave that floats your boat or are you happy to blast about on the flat?

I'd have to say yes to that, it's definitely the wave sailing. I will go out in the flat just to get a bit of water time though. But for me it's wave sailing, whether it be float and ride or full powered jumping and wave riding, there's just nothing else that comes close to it.



Talk to us about the gear your using.

I'm riding for Juice Boardsports and I use the amazing Ezzy Takas and Elites. I love the comfort and control of these sails and they just ride the wave so well. I have two sets of gear one for the UK and a set I leave in Lanzarote. So for boards in Lanzarote I currently use 'well worn' RRD freestyle 101 and an even more worn RRD Wavecult 92. In the UK I have a Severne 101 Nuevo which is great for down the line cross off waves and a Simmer 85 for the strong stuff. Just recently I have added a Moo custom 99, made just for me and I bagged an ex-Steve Thorpe 80ish Moo for the stronger winds.

You're a big fan of Lanzarote, with lots of miles clocked up toing and froing to the island. What is it about the place you like and why?

Yes, we have had a long love affair with the island. We have a small place out there and many, many happy holiday

memories! Why? Well the weather, food, the windsurfing and it's just a beautiful island that we love to spend time on.

Any particularly memorable sessions from Lanza?

There have been lots! However, a session this Easter at Jameos with Nejc and Tim stands out. We launched a mile downwind as the usual rock launch was a little dangerous with sizable waves and offshore winds. I still have the images in my mind of Tim and Nejc carving on the beautiful mast and a half set waves, I have never bottom turned so fast in my life!

And what about spots yet still to ride? Do you fancy some of the big wave locations for instance?

There're a few new places on my list I'd like to score in some decent winter swells, but I'm content to sail decent waves in the usual spots. There's always something to improve!



Why do you think Lanzarote isn't quite as popular with Brits as some of the other Canary Isles?

Good question! There is a group of UK windsurfers who like myself love the island and return year after year or have made it home. The wind shadow on the inside at Costa Tegui is frustrating for many folk and maybe that puts some off. 'For me this is a blessing as it keeps numbers on the reef down. Jameos, the best cross off, down the line location is also tricky as it is a rocky launch and a bit of a kit breaker so it is pretty quiet there too.

What about other global locations? Anything elsewhere on your bucket list?

I'd like to try out South Africa for a couple of months. I've heard/seen how consistently good it is!

Talk to us about your new role as British Wave Sailing's Press Officer. What does this entail?

Well I'm helping Geoff and Nigel out, as they asked me! It is surprising how much of their time they devote to running the BWA tour. It's very early days so I'm still finding my feet, but so far it has been a lot of fun. We have started concentrating on Facebook coverage whilst Ben and Alfie of WindsurfingTV, are doing an amazing job of the event round up videos. For the rest of the tour we are hoping to continue to offer the same forms of Facebook coverage that we did at the Rhosneigr Wave Classic as well as coverage in the windsurfing press. We are also aiming to promote the 'Future Pro Wave Camps' that have secured three year funding from the Mailing Room. These camps offer subsidised coaching (£10 a day for youngsters aged 10 to 17 at all the BWA camps. So if you know of any aspiring pros of the future it would be great to see them there!

Does this mean you're pulled away from competing?

I'm hoping it won't mean that! I aim to compete in the masters this year and I expect it will have some impact but as long as I'm having fun that all is that matters. Time will tell, we have not had an event where I have done both yet.





Learnt anything specific since taking on this role about the windsurfing media or other?

Yes I have learnt a great deal. I am starting from knowing virtually nothing so I can only get better. Getting quality photographs for all the riders is really tricky and I'm trying to line up volunteer photographers for each fleet so that people can see themselves in action!

You managed to nail a great result at the Gwithian comp in 2017 so will you be defending that? What about chasing the overall?

I'll be at Gwithian and I'll give it my best shot, but I'm not at all confident that I'll succeed in defending it as there are so many good riders in our fleet. Any of the guys could knock me out in a heat! The conditions will have an effect as different people rip in different conditions. Sometimes you get the waves and sometimes you don't and that is what makes it interesting. I have also scored some amazing sailing in the week leading up to the competition so it's worth going for that alone.

For the overall masters title I am sure it will be the same story, especially as the Avon event has been moved to September and that may encourage some of the new south coast faces to enter the fray! It also depends on who can do the whole BWA tour. If you miss one of the completed events then you cannot hope to get the overall title. This year will be the first time I manage to do all the events. I have already booked Tiree so won't get the automatic 23 points added on (I normally cannot get out of work.) For me the competition gives you something to aim for and the final standings are not the most important thing! Though I can't deny it was an amazing feeling winning in Cornwall.

Who's your main rival (or rivals) when doing events?

It's a very friendly fleet and as I said previously any of the guys can easily take a heat. In Cornwall last year my main rival was Steve Laddiman, we sailed on the same side of the ladder and we ended up in the super final together. Grahame Pettit, Kyle McGinn, Justin Dennington, Jamie Bambridge were also all up there challenging at the top of our fleet. I'm sure there will be other faces appearing this year, Carl Tomlinson and John Mclawrence for example. For the overall we could see Rob Castle, Stuart Tilbury, Craig Hamilton, Galen Dickenson or Phil Anson push into some of the top five positions, it will depend upon who can do all the tour dates.

In one sentence sum up why other windsurfers should do a few comps?

It's great fun, you get to improve your sailing and sail with some of the best wave sailors in the UK.

Any other plans windsurfing wise for 2018?

Summer training on Lanzarote and as much UK sailing as possible before the next events!

Final thoughts, thanks and praise?

Thanks and praise must go to Nigel Treacy and Geoff Hautman for all the hard work they put into the BWA. Also to all the judges and event hosts who make the tour happen. Finally all the folk on tour who make it a hoot and all the guys who help me to improve when I free sail - Russell Groves and Nejc Zupan, Brad White, Steve Laddiman and Steve Thorp to name a few! Fantastic sails and boards from Gump at Juice Boardsports & John at Moo. Finally thanks and praise to all the family for putting up with the windsurfing obsession.



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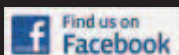
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RYA WINDFOILING: HIGH FLYERS

WORDS AND PICS: RYA

AS THE RYA'S PILOT FOILING COURSES LITERALLY TAKE OFF, TRAINER SAM ROSS MEETS THE WINDSURFERS WHO HAVE FOUND THEIR HAPPY THROUGH LEARNING TO WINDFOIL. The RYA has been working with teams of instructors to develop a fun and effective introduction to WindFoiling.

The RYA First Flights, Sustained Flights and Performance Flights courses help get you set up and flying in as little time as possible. To start, the RYA First Flights course gets you up and out on the water for the first time for that all-important 'money shot' photo.

Next, you'll look at stance and height control on the RYA Sustained Flights course. The aim is to get you foiling more comfortably, sustaining height and flight in the harness as well as foiling on different points of sail.

With RYA Performance Flights you'll be focusing on getting round the corners more effectively and gybing without touching down, as well as pushing the angles you can sail.

There has been a fantastic uptake in centres offering the courses this year, with many people 'returning' to the sport because WindFoiling gives windsurfers access to something they may have felt was missing.

For many, this is lighter winds. We aim to teach the initial courses in over 10 knots. Once you have the skills you can push the wind minimums down to as little as 6-8 knots. While ultra-light winds may require some more specialist kit, it's the 10-15 knot range where many are finding maximum gain. What was previously 8-9m freeride weather is now 5.5-6.5 foiling weather.

As long as you can comfortably blast in footstraps at an intermediate planing level then you can access an RYA First Flights course. However, rather than the RYA telling you what it's like to learn and fly, let's hear from a couple of people who have already been on that journey...

Rob Cunningham, 54, from Maidstone, Kent Windsurfing background

I learnt to windsurf in the early 80s on local lakes, progressing to the south coast to sail in waves in all weathers.

As I've got older I've found freeriding in warmer waters more appealing in places like Dahab and Vass. I've become a fair weather sailor. I would describe myself as a competent short board sailor.

Why did you want to learn to foil?

I was a little bit out of love with windsurfing. I wanted a new challenge with the promise of excitement in lighter winds. I must admit I was getting envious of kites having fun in 10 knots!

Describe the process of learning.

After a quick briefing (including reciting the number one rule a few times) we were ready to fly! With the right setup, getting up on the foil was not too difficult but staying up proved trickier.

With each subsequent session our instructor equipped us with more tips for sustained flight so that by the end we were flying around with the biggest grins. Our instructor also introduced us to different types of boards and foils to help us decide the best set-up for our particular needs.

Why was it good way to experience foiling?

Foiling is significantly different to regular windsurfing both in technique and equipment, so getting quality tuition right from the start put me in a great position to make significant gains.

How does it feel to foil?

My first sustained flight reminded me of the first time I planed in footstraps (and that was a long time ago!). The feeling of gliding over the water in near silence should be experienced by everyone.

What would you say to anyone else thinking of doing it?

Foiling is not just for pros and the young / super fit. I signed up for the course with an open mind. I hoped foiling was for me and would have accepted a different outcome but the course and foiling exceeded my expectations. I would heartily recommend it.

So the question is, what are you waiting for?

All RYA centres running WindFoil courses provide everything you need to get flying. The RYA First Flights course can be done in as little as two hours.

Find your nearest WindFoil School at www.rya.org.uk/wheresmynearest



Adrian Jones, Veteran (62) Windsurfing background

Freeride since 1990 including RYA scheme, California and Hawaii, raceboard since 2012.

Why did you want to foil? I was inspired by the San Francisco America's Cup foiling footage. Plus WindFoiling looks fun and easy in promotional videos by experts.

Describe the process of learning.

I jumped in, bought dedicated foil kit, flew easily but fell off and felt overpowered in every direction. It was scary and fast and I felt like I needed help. The RYA course in Poole was intensive, well-structured and friendly, learning as part of a team. It was a continuum of activity with theory and shore simulators put straight into practice both on the lumpy sea and in the flat harbour, which was an excellent platform to catch your breath and learn by watching others.

Why was it a great way to learn foiling?

The group (of all ages) gelled. We all learned mainly by direct expert tuition and listening to post-foiling/falling video/photo group analysis of each other's good and bad points each day.

How does it feel?

WindFoiling lifts you up to a continuously fast sensation pushing you to anticipate balance ahead of time more than windsurfing. The power comes effortlessly from the foil and from smaller rigs, provided you relearn how to pump up quickly onto the plane. Your balance goes to a new level like learning to ride a bike all over again.

What would you say to anyone thinking of learning?

WindFoiling is even better than it looks! It is the best motivation to learn how to windsurf in the straps – such an adrenaline rush and serenely satisfying when it comes together. If you can already windsurf in the footstraps foiling works, there's lots of kit, you simply have to try it.





FAMILY

WINDSURF HOLIDAYS

(or: getting your kids hooked on windsurfing)

WORDS: TEZ PLAVENIEKS

PICS: TEZ & FI PLAVENIEKS, CLUB VASS



IT'S A DILEMMA FOR ANYONE INTO WINDSURFING WITH OFFSPRING. IMPARTING ENOUGH INSPIRATION/INFORMATION AND ENCOURAGING YOUR KIDS WITHOUT BEING OVERLY PUSHY CAN BE TRICKY. IF THE MAGIC HAPPENS THEN THEY TOO WILL HAVE THEIR IMAGINATIONS PIQUED AND SOON BE BLASTING BACK AND FORTH WITH MUM AND DAD (IF BOTH PARENTS SAIL). The difficulty, however, is not being the overzealous parent forcing the issue resulting in a complete lack of interest. Also, there needs to be preparation in the event of none of your children ever becoming bug bitten. But you know what? That's OK as hopefully they'll find another active pursuit to while away the hours. We know of many a young un involved in other similar sports even if they're not bothered by windsurfing per se.

Beginnings

Our eldest, Molly, has always been around boards of some description (how can she not with me as her dad!). From day one it was SUPs, surfboards, skateboards and windy boards/sails. Familiarisation has therefore been ongoing – something which is now happening with our youngest, Oscar.





Touching, feeling, talking about and gently being invited to step aboard has been one strategy of ours. As said at the start of this article it's hard not to be too pushy but I genuinely believe we haven't been. All along we've given Molly the opportunity to opt out.

Regular floats on top of SUPs and sweeps round in kayaks have seen Molly's water confidence increase steadily. She was also taken to swimming lessons early on. Prior to our trip to Club Vass, Greece, she was happy enough in shallower waters but didn't care for deeper stuff, understandably as she can't swim properly (yet).

So all the foundations had been laid and at the start of spring 2018 Molly had been asking increasingly often to get out on the water. We were therefore interested to see how warmer seas and air temps would affect the situation.

Greece

Windsurfing parents may consider they've found their own suitable family sailing destination but for us Club Vass is definitely the one that works the best in summer. A combo of decent shaded outdoor space, right next to the launch, which actually doesn't get too blustery is the first piece of the puzzle. Then having consistent (generally) wind that all family members can make use of is the next tick in the box. Kit is also important: for both mum and dad AND kids. The fact is, there are very few centres where 0.8m kiddy rigs are available. This point alone makes Club Vass worth its weight in gold (diddy harnesses and boards are also great additions). And then there's the general vibe. Windsurfing's buzz positively crackles in this part of the world – the Club Vass staff and other guests helping to push the stoke'o'meter through the roof (especially when the cross shore kicks in!).



Alongside all this is the 'easy access' nature of the village with everything just a short walk away yet boasting plenty of amenities and options for eats/drinks. The locals love wee ones and many restaurants cater for most diets, even dairy free and allergies as is the case with our youngest. And should you get a window to go bonkers in the infamous Zeus Bar, or Club Vass BBQ, then fill ya boots.

In the past Vass has been labelled a hardcore freestyle/party venue. But actually, these days, it's more family friendly than you'd imagine. Of course, wave heads will be left disappointed by flat water conditions but my take is: 'all water time is good time'.



Confidence

Something during this trip flicked a switch in Molly that's for sure. Within a few days she was practically begging to be let loose on the water with boom in hand. There were a couple of days where she was also out paddle boarding. And on a couple of occasions she had the opportunity to ride a few ripples on a SUP surf style (another tick in the box). And all this without being able to swim properly remember. And on that note...

With proper flotation our little girl was all over the wet stuff. Under supervision Molly became quite happy chucking herself head first in the deep end of the hotel pool. With inflatable noodle under one arm she could get back to the surface for another go. If she needed fishing out then we could oblige. Pretty soon she was beginning to show signs of doggy paddle, which from a safety POV is comforting.

Back on the water

Molly's crowning glory was during a morning with the (amazing) nannies and kid's instructors. Setting off atop a board specifically designed with nipper rippers in mind she was able to position the sail intuitively and slot her feet in the footstraps. OK, this wasn't planing conditions but again it's the familiarity and muscle memory (we all know about that one!) that aids progression. With a huge cheer from onlookers Molly was very much loving the spotlight which only fuelled the fire.

She also managed a short stint with UK pro coach and top freestyler Max Rowe. Don't think many three year olds get that kind of opportunity! So big up the instructors and head nanny Billie.



And the wee one?

It wasn't all about big sis though. Young son Oscar (10 months) had his first go with a windsurf sail, albeit on dry land. As a child just learning to walk it was grin inducing to see him just about managing to balance a kiddy rig. Either way he thought it was hilarious. And crawling around sail/board racks is amazing as well!

Final thoughts

It's very hard when it's your own kids to not sound gushing when they achieve. That said we, and others, were genuinely impressed by our three year old girl's enthusiasm and progression. She may end being a windsurfer for life. Likewise she could find something else as a passion. That fact that she's had the opportunity, however, bodes well for her future windsurfing exploits. Obviously we parents are chuffed so it'll be interesting to see how things go.

Huge thanks to Club Vass for hosting us and allowing our kids to roam free and immerse themselves in windsurfing's culture and the Vass vibe. All the staff were great and we can't fault them. Kit is amazing and with some blow to play it meant mum and dad also got their windy fix. All in this trip was a big success and an experience our kids will hopefully remember for a lifetime. Check out more at clubvass.com





SEASONS IN THE SUN

the reasons for seasons

WORDS: MIC BRIGNALL

PICS: LAUREN BUCKLAND (CAPTURE PHOTOGRAPHY)

KRIS BENTHAM

(CLAIRE EDMED PHOTOGRAPHY)

LUKE SPARKS (CLAIRE EDMED PHOTOGRAPHY)

LUKE BROWN (CLAIRE EDMED PHOTOGRAPHY)

WHY GO ABROAD AND WORK IN THE SUNSHINE TEACHING GUESTS TO WINDSURF?

The answer may be obvious but just in case you're scratching your head Mic Brignall will explain all.

7:30: Wake up (very occasionally slightly the worse for wear – not a good idea)

7:40: Rake through washing to find clean board shorts (decide to do washing later)

7:50: Head to resort (using flip flops, longboard, or boat)

8:00: Fight for space on toastie machine

8:30: Morning beach meeting

8:45: Beach set-up (safety boat launched, boats rigged, everything washed – not clothes, unfortunately)

9:30: Beach opens

9:45: Teaching starts – beginner lessons first

12:30: Lunchtime (time to load up on carbs)

14:15: Intermediate and advanced lessons/regatta

17:45: Tidy up beach, ready for the next day

18:30: Grab some dinner

19:00: Head to the bar for a drink or two with the team and/or guests

21:00: Have a gyros on the way home

22:00: Sleep!

'You are living the dream!'

Hard work pays off

I get told this pretty often by nearly everybody. Having worked in six different countries in the last three years I know a thing or two about seasons. Firstly, hard work pays off. Secondly, all work and no play makes Jack (and Mikey) a dull boy. A balance is critical as it's a touch pointless travelling if you don't enjoy where you are.

Wherever I am, on the last night I watch the sunset. It's the thing that wraps up that season for me, and lets me reminisce about the time I've had - a big part is the sport, whether it be windsurfing or snowboarding, and if I've achieved my goals for the season. I'll let you in on something... as of the end of 2017, I still haven't cracked the forward loop! 2018 though...

Being thrust together with a random bunch of seasonaires would be a nightmare for a lot of people. But it can be a fantastic bonding experience - you can usually rely on your team to support you through anything. Paths cross that would never have come close, if it wasn't for the season. It's this that really turns the work into an experience - with the right people you are in for a great time!

The season 'dream' is to play all day, and not do a single ounce of work. I've known a few who did this... but they lost their job pretty quickly. Some people save all winter to have a work free summer (or vice versa). More common, though, is to work on season. There are different jobs - instructing, restaurant work and nannying, to name a few; bar work is awesome if you want to have the maximum water time. I much prefer teaching, which is essentially living on the beach. Simply being around windsurf kit, helping and teaching guests gives me a buzz, especially when they complete their first carve gybe.

One of the things I am asked most often about is my accommodation. It's not five-star! But for me that's not a problem. I'm happy if I have a clean mattress to sleep on and a roof to sleep under. (One of my worst decisions was to sleep on the beach one night, so I wouldn't be late for work, but that's another story!)

It's very rare that a day is spent indoors - I'm either working or out having a good time. Generally accommodation is only a short walk away from the resort, or in one case a ferry ride away. Sitting on the bow every morning was a great reminder of how lucky I was to be working in Turkey.

Days off are naturally the highlight of any season. Time to do what you want: windsurfing, exploring or simply recovering. Windsurfing is of course the first choice, but if there's no wind, renting a car is always a favourite, taking some time to explore the country. There are so many hidden gems; Sardinia in particular is littered with them (not just beaches historical stuff as well, although the beaches are great!).

It's hard work on the beach, especially in 40-degree heat, so sometimes a chilled out day is required: head to the local bar (usually open all day, and they serve food) and spending most of the day there on the WiFi. For some reason my parents get upset if I don't call home at least once a month.

Simply being around windsurf kit, helping and teaching guests gives me a buzz, especially when they complete their first carve gybe





The bar is usually the place to convene, so most people who are on day off will meet there. If you have no plans, you know where to look.

As we all know there's a slight drinking culture on seasons. There's always a party going on somewhere, and nights out in foreign countries can be some of the most entertaining – albeit confusing – experiences. Typically the locals, Greeks and Turks especially, are great at looking after you and the only thing they want in return is publicity (recommend their restaurant/bar to your guests). Loyalty is also a big thing to them, so the more you go, the better you will be treated – I can't think of anywhere in the UK that would let me have a tab running for several weeks in a row!

Recognising guests

You'd think it would be easy to get bored by the same routine week in, week out, but the ever-changing guests keep you fresh. It's particularly rewarding when you start recognising guests season to season, and get to teach them again. As I have said already, it's hard work, but there's loads to be learnt and it's a great feeling when you have your beginner windsurfers all up, sailing and smiling!

Perhaps I have got you hooked on the idea of doing a season, so let me tell you how to go about it. Seasons can be done all year round, since winter-sun is becoming ever more popular. Travel companies are always looking for people at peak times, such as mid-summer or Christmas, so if you are a university student, it's not a problem.

There are so many companies around, it's hard to know where to start. Neilson (who I work for), Mark Warner, Ocean Elements and Club Vass are a few in the Mediterranean. If you have your sights set further afield then ION Clubs have some of the best names in windsurfing locations from Egypt to the Caribbean. These are just the big companies, there are hundreds of small companies to pick from too!

Without sounding too cheesy, deciding to do my first season was one of the hardest, but best choices I've ever made. I have been lucky enough to visit a different country every season, and I've met some lovely people. A particular favourite was Turkey, where I was good friends with one of the local beachies who introduced me to some of his culture. And here's a piece of advice I shall never forget; *"Never get a real job, it's not worth it. Keep travelling, and enjoy what you do!"*





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SURPRISE SURPRISE

NEILSON'S AIRONE BEACHCLUB (ITALY)

Airone

Neilson's Airone hotel sits away from surrounding villages. You can access these using brand new road or mountain bikes Neilson have for guests to use. Alternatively hire a car and go exploring. During our two week stay Neilson laid on transport to one of the medieval mountain settlements around 15 minutes away. Rossano town is famous for liquorice and even has a museum dedicated to the *Glycyrrhiza glabra* root. It also has a good selection of bars and restaurants for those not enamoured by the aniseed tasting snack.

Back in resort there are a whole host of facilities that any returning Neilson guests will be familiar with. Tennis courts, a fab kids club, yoga, fitness and wellbeing/spa centre, huge swimming pool and of course the beach with its associated watersports toys.

Travellers of all types will find plenty of suitable accommodation, from double rooms to garden villas which we stayed in. There's plenty of (authentic) choice at the restaurant buffet which also saw our nine-month old son well looked after in the face of having a number of allergies. The hotel staff couldn't do enough to help – big up!

The beach

Flanked by dense pine forest the walk to Neilson's Airone beach front is extremely pleasant. During hot spells it offers sanctuary from the heat as it remains cool and shaded. Emerging into the light you're treated to a huge expanse of sandy beach that stretches for miles in either direction. Azure coloured Ionian waters lap the shoreline with watersports toys– dinghies, windsurf kit, kayaks and SUPs – to the left. For those simply wanting to chill then plenty of sunbeds and umbrellas are available to use.

The beach is dominated by a huge lifeguard tower in the middle. Manned by both English and Italian staff this instils confidence. There's also a well-stocked beach bar for post-session refreshments. As far as Neilson beaches go (and I've stood on a few) Airone is sublime.

WORDS: TEZ PLAVENIEKS

PICS: CE PHOTO, DAVID GREEN, FI PLAVENIEKS

IT'S HARD NOT TO LOOK AT WIND FORECASTS WHEN HEADING AWAY ON A TRIP – ESPECIALLY IF YOU'RE A

WINDSURFER WHOSE DAILY ROUTINE INVOLVES POURING OVER WEATHER CHARTS. And yet, when readying for our recent jaunt to Neilson Holiday's new Airone Beachclub, Calabria, Italy, I held fast and didn't even once sneak a peek.

Reports on the grapevine were that Airone – located just outside Sibaris on the Gulf of Taranto – is a light wind resort. With that in mind I'd made the decision to treat it as a holiday, rather than specific windsurfing trip. If we got anything in terms of blow then Brucie bonus...but I certainly wasn't banking on it.





With the sun setting behind the hills it was pure bliss blatting back and forth across flat water, banging in turns at either end





Windsurfing #Week 1

Joining us for the first week of our Italian jaunt was former PWA competitor (and now Red Paddle Co head) John Hibbard and family. Being in such esteemed windsurfing company made the prospect of full power conditions a tantalising prospect. But would Airone deliver?

Being a brand new resort, with staff having little experience of conditions, there was much debate and chin scratching during the first day. Wind speeds were close but no cigar. As such it was a flick flack light wind freestyle day. As Italian sun beat down, and gin clear water reflected rays from beneath, this was no bad thing. I'd already made peace with having a non-planing holiday so wasn't really that bothered.

The following day things changed. By early afternoon gusts were full power (for big kit truckin' at least). Being on dad duty meant I didn't get afloat until late – the missus having priority. She enjoyed a stacked session with me following later.

With the sun setting behind the hills it was pure bliss blatting back and forth across flat water, banging in turns at either end. The only one out I was acutely aware of not going too far downwind, even though Neilson do operate full safety cover. Before long it was time to head back in and make use of the hotel's brand new Piazza bar.

The first week saw only two more windsurfing sessions occur, this time featuring onshore winds. Blowing up around lunchtime it was almost reflective of proper sea breeze conditions. Considering initial expectations I'd decided we'd done better than expected – especially if that was it for puff.

#Week 2

The following week and Airone had an influx of new guests with many more windsurfers touching down. Standing beachside, with baby asleep, I was asked how conditions had been. Whilst chatting the wind started to build...

Before long we were on! The wind was offshore with plenty of riders making use of Severne/Starboard rig/board combos. I'm not sure what the beach staff thought as 10-14 sailors hooned across pan flat water – this was, after all, supposed to be a light wind resort.

The day after was also a strong wind one, with (apparently) the Mistral in full effect. Again, offshore, but proper wind (25 knots)! It was, however, the following that featured the best conditions, for me. Switching back to onshore gusts

picked up around lunchtime – so did the swell. My wife and I enjoyed two sessions with fun ramps to boost from, with chop increasing in punch and size the further left you sailed – a shallow sand bar area can be found here which I can see being extremely good fun should the wind really crank. Experienced windsurfers would love the air time.

So yep, scoring a 50% hit rate, in terms of wind, wasn't too bad. Whether this is reflective of how the season will pan out remains to be seen. We're certainly not complaining though!

Other stuff

For those not bothered by windsurfing fear not. There's plenty more to get your teeth into, activity wise. Or simply kick back with a good book in the sun. Novices will be well served: Neilson staff can show newbies the ropes and give guidance/tips where needed.

For families Neilson's Airone kid's club and staff can't be faulted. Working tirelessly nannies ensure wee ones are kept entertained and have as fun a holiday as mum and dad. This also includes taking older kids afloat, along with beach staff help when needed.

A huge thank you to everyone working at Neilson's Airone Beachclub. Nothing was too much trouble and everyone went out of their way to help make our trip as good as it could be. Both the Italian and English staff are a credit to the company.

If you fancy hitting up Neilson's Airone Beachclub, or any of Neilson's other resorts, then check out the website for more info:

www.neilson.co.uk/beach/italy/airone-beachclub

Also big up CE Photo who supplied many of the images accompanying this article. For any aspiring photographers looking for overseas work using their behind the lens skill check out: www.cephoto.uk/work-with-us/



FROM BOARDS TO BOURNEMOUTH

GREGG DUNNETT

**AUTHOR
PROFILE**



INTERVIEW: WSUK

PICS: GREGG DUNNETT

HAVING MADE THE SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION FROM GONZO WINDSURFING MAG JOURNALIST (HIS DESCRIPTION NOT OURS) TO APPLAUDED NOVELIST GREGG DUNNETT IS JUST ABOUT SET TO DROP HIS FOURTH WORK OF FICTION. If you've had opportunity to read any of his previous books then you'll note the 'surfy' theme running through all. That and dark undertones. We caught up with the self-styled surf noir author to find out more.

Firstly congrats on 'The Things you find in Rockpools', in our opinion your best novel to date. How do you come up with your plot lines and topics?

Thank you! I enjoyed writing that one too. Strange how easy it was to write from the perspective of an incredibly geeky 11-year-old, almost like I had experienced it personally...

I don't know if it's the right way, but I've plotted all my novels in the same way. I start with an idea that interests me. So with my first book, *The Wave at Hanging Rock*, it was: What if a group of surfers over-developed the whole localism thing. How far might they go? What would the impact be? And then you work out other things around this idea, to make it plausible. In this case it really had to have been teenagers, because they needed an element of immaturity. And they had to be isolated in some way. And they had to do something (they beat a visiting surfer to death with rocks). So already you've got half the story. Then it's just a case of

filling in the missing pieces as you go and trying to bring the story to a logical, satisfying conclusion.

There're quite menacing dark undertones running through your novels. Is this set to continue, or maybe even become darker still?

To be honest it wasn't always quite so dark. My first serious attempt to write was a story about an ageing surf photographer at the time of the changeover from film to digital cameras. I wrote 120,000 words of it, that's like a book and a half. But I later realised there was no plot. There were no murders, no mysteries. Nothing really happened. I learnt from the experience that thriller novels are about murder, or deceit, or menace, otherwise it's like reading about someone getting up and going surfing, and having a few beers and going to bed again (which is pretty much what that first book was like). So yes, the darkness is definitely set to continue.



I think the best novels are where you feel you're learning something, or getting a window into a new world as you read



Surfing, and associated watersports (note: Greg features SUP in his second book *The Desert Run*) are perceived to be 'sunny' pastimes. What's the recipe for melding noir and something more about sand, sea and tropical backdrops?

I think that idea of these sports being sunny is part of the mainstream media's overly narrow way of portraying any sport that isn't mainstream. Surfers are represented as kinda stupid (the blond, dumb stereotype), or adrenalin junky big wave dudes, or pseudo-spiritual. They're almost never shown as normal people. But the reality of these sports is quite different, as we all know from doing them. You get a much wider range of characters and personalities taking part. So I just try to reflect that. In a way I have ordinary people, some of whom happen to be surfers, and some of whom happen to be killers, in the way that some people in mystery/suspense books are. It was never a particularly deliberate move either. Because I've done these sports my whole life when I sit down to write, that's what comes out...

An accomplished windsurfer in your own right are we likely to see sail powered craft crop up in any of your works?

I'd like to try it one day. But I do think windsurfing is a hard subject to write a mainstream novel about for the reasons above. The public perception of our sport is even more removed from the reality than with surfing. It gives you a real problem. If you write it to fit the media image, it would feel completely wrong to windsurfers, if you wrote to fit the reality, it's going to seem odd to non-windsurfing readers (and they're by far the majority!). But if the right idea comes along I'd definitely like to give it a go. I think the best novels are where you feel you're learning something, or getting a window into a new world as you read, and a window into windsurfing could be really interesting. It's just hard to do well.

Describing surfing, windsurfing and SUP in a non-cheesy way is hard indeed – especially when aiming your writing at non-water going types, yet you seemed to have nailed it. Any secrets to this success?

Thank you! Like I said my first attempt at a novel was mostly surf scenes, so I guess I had a bit of practice there! I think what I learnt was it's important in any 'action' scene to have some element of the story playing out, alongside the literal description of whatever is going on. So for example, in the main surf scene in 'The Wave', the protagonist goes into the water at this new, secret break he and his

friends have discovered, and he's scared because they're the biggest waves he's ever faced. But he's also distracted because he's full of hatred for his best friend, who has been sleeping with the girl he liked. This distraction nearly gets him drowned, but he overcomes that, and starts catching the best waves he's ever ridden – and his friend does too – and they both realise that their friendship is more important than any girl. Actually that does sound pretty cheesy the way I've just put it, but hopefully it shows how the surf scene isn't just there for filling – it's part of the story, it moves things along.

By your own admission it took a while to knock your first book out yet you seem to be storming ahead now. How hard is to keep coming up with something fresh? Ever struggle for inspiration?

I've wanted to write books for as long as I can remember, so I guess that first one took 42 years! But yes, once the first is out of the way it definitely gets easier. You learn the tricks to speed things up.

There's no struggle for inspiration as yet, but I do have to choose the ideas carefully. It takes me at least six months to write a book, so I need an idea that's going to sustain my interest for that time, and get me through the inevitable and painful rewriting stage.

Do you have plans for further novels already in the bag? If so, how many plot lines do you have firmed up?

Well I have a new one coming out this summer called 'The Girl on the Burning Boat'. I don't have a plan yet for what to write after that. I prefer to focus on the current project until it's finished. If I allow myself to think too much about what's next, there's a danger of that taking over and the current work never gets finished! It'll definitely have many of the same themes though – the coast or the oceans, adventure. That's what I like to read, and therefore what I like to write.

Think you can become the next Kem Nunn (note: Kem Nunn is a Californian author of dark surf fiction as well as countless TV/movie screenplays including *Miami Vice* and Kathryn Bigelow's original *Point Break*)?

Don't tell anyone, but that's the dream!

Any plans to get your stories visualised and turned into motion pictures?

That would be awesome too. Do you get many Hollywood producers reading this? If so my email is hello@greggdunnett.co.uk. I'm open to pretty much any offer except Harvey Weinstein.

For many years you worked as staff writer for *Boards Magazine*. Ever miss those days of test trips and creating entertaining articles with your own unique twist?

When I worked for Boards I spent two to three months abroad every year on the test trips, and outside of that I could sail whenever it was windy because it was work. Now I'm older with a young family, it's hard to put in words just how much I miss that! I guess you just have to try to enjoy each stage of your life as you live it. Or try to.

Would you like to get back into this kind of thing again or is being an author where it's now at?

I'd love to. I just need a babysitter for two months! No, the reality is I've worked hard for a few years now to build momentum as an author and I'm going to keep at that for a while to see where it takes me. But the great thing about writing is you can do it anywhere. So the loose plan is to spend a few years somewhere hotter and with better waves quite soon. Kind of a family adventure. It's not exactly the same as my Boards days, but it's a way of getting back to what I love to do, to travel and explore and to get in the water every day.

That said, if a magazine ran test trips open to guests like Boards did back in the day, I'd be the first to sign up (hint).

What's the biggest tip you could give to anyone thinking of either getting into niche journalism or writing books?

I thought when I quit Boards that it was a really tough time to be a writer, with the internet making a lot of what magazines offered redundant. But actually it's brought a lot of new opportunities (which new writer/entrepreneurs like you guys are exploiting). So I guess the 'secret' is to pour everything you've got into what you're creating, and build an audience of people who enjoy what you do. Once you've got that there are all sorts of ways to monetize it enough that you can keep doing it.

And what about time to get afloat? We know you're hands are full with a young family but are you still finding time for windy/wavey shenanigans?

Those young families they do mess things up don't they? I still windsurf almost whenever it's windy, unless I'm on

childcare duties. I don't surf so much because Bournemouth (where we live) is pretty bad for surfing. But when I do get in the water I probably appreciate it more than when I was younger and could do it all the time. I now know how special those moments are, and I'm really looking forward to getting the kids involved as they get a little older.

Any goals left to achieve as far as windsurfing goes?

My brother and I (he of Windsurf-Round-Britain and Round-Europe fame) made two attempts to sail around the Isle of Wight on longboards, but both times we failed. To be honest he was holding me back. So there's that. Oh and Baja. I've got this thing. If I ever manage to write a proper bestseller and get rich, I'm taking the whole family to Baja, I'll make them camp on the point there for a month while I ride perfect waves every day, and play guitar and drink Coronas every night. It's going to happen. It's going to be awesome.

What's your opinion of the windsurfing industry in 2018?

To be honest I don't know. My focus is on the kids and the writing. That said, Avon Beach in Dorset (where I sail) still has a pretty healthy scene.

Is it better or worse compared to when you working in it? What would you change, if anything?

Again I don't really know. But I'd say it's knocked along OK for a number of years now. I guess it's easy for me to be relaxed about the industry side of things these days, because my living is no longer tied up with it. It's pretty clear windsurfing isn't going to boom again any time soon, but it isn't going to go away either. If it's destined to be a small niche sport, then that's OK with me.

I guess the 'secret' is to pour everything you've got into what you're creating, and build an audience of people who enjoy what you do





Are you still part of the organisational team for The Avon Beach Windsurfing Fest? If so, what's your role?

I think I got fired after my attempt at writing a funny article about it! Genuinely there's not a lot I can add, the guys involved are all way more competent than me at organising, and running an event etc... And they're so keen! I'm also kind of busy with the writing (it really does swallow up the hours). But mostly I just got fired.

Any opinion on windsurfing comps – we know you've entered a few in the past?

I've never been very competitive. I once rode a lucky windshift and got to the windward mark first in a race. I

panicked, dropped the rig and then apologised to the rightful leaders as they sailed past a few minutes later.

I'm now getting old as well. My ankle is knackered from ten years crashing trying to learn to back loop. So I think it's time for me to formally give up on my dream of becoming world champion. But I do want to get more involved with the kind of experiential windsurfing events – like the Defi wind in France, and there's others like that. I think there's still a lot to do.

Final thoughts on windsurfing and writing in general?

I'm absolutely certain that the experiences I've had windsurfing, and the places it's taken me, have had a huge influence on my life and who I am, and I'm incredibly grateful for that. I also think windsurfing has helped give me my little bit of success as an author. Windsurfing teaches you to fail and try again, which definitely helps with writing (I think it helps in life generally). It also makes you different, and somehow authentic. And people are happy to buy into those qualities. I don't think I'd be me if I couldn't windsurf, and couldn't write. So I'm pretty happy with both!

Thanks and praise?

Thank you so much for the opportunity to be interviewed – and can I also say how pleased I am to see a new windsurfing magazine on the scene. I think it's fantastic what you guys are doing and I hope it goes from strength to strength. (Thanks Gregg! – Ed)

And if you've room for a quick plug. Could you say that if people are interested in finding out more about the books, they can get a free copy of my second book from the website www.greggdunnett.co.uk

Thanks!





A WALK DOWN MEMORY LANE

30

YEARS OF FLAG BEACH FUERTEVENTURA

WALKMANS WITH CASSETTE TAPES, POP CULTURE, THE A-TEAM, LEG WARMERS, VIVID NEON COLOURS AND WINDSURFING. No easy-clamp on booms just knots, sails with few battens but in bright pinks and yellows and greens and long and narrow boards. That's how windsurfing was and a lot has changed. Amongst all this, however, Flag Beach is still going strong 30 years on.

It's 1988 and a small container has been placed at Flag Beach filled with Alpha boards and Neil Pryde sails. We just need to find some customers. The beach is deserted, there are no sun loungers, no bar; just miles of white sand, clear blue water and a steady breeze. Silence. The odd roaming goat munching thorny bushes and lost nudist Germans lapping up the sunshine. The odd Suzuki Jeep with billowing tarp and loaded with kit cruises right up to the water's edge for a wind check and chat.



Downtown Corralejo is a quiet, sleepy place filled with locals and fishing boats pulled up on the beach, just a smattering of German tourists (again!) and some windsurfers searching for wind. Most streets are dust tracks, there're only two food shops: a pizza place and a couple of local restaurants, a couple of night time watering holes and a dodgy disco called Freddie's. There is just the old Hotel Corralejo on the sea front and some newly built apartments for rent by the name of Hoplaco. Out of town and past Flag Beach there are two large modern hotels.

No Work Team have opened a surf shop on the main square and filled it with windsurfing paraphernalia, including clothes and a big sofa for hanging out. The Sol y Mar hostel houses most of the hardcore riders seeing winter out while chilling and training; Farrel O'Shea, Gary Gibson, Alex Williams and Julian Kendal who founded the Sotavento competition in 1986. It's all very different to 2018.

International cuisine

Fast forward to now. Corralejo has more than 50 complexes and hotel resorts, surf camps now dotted all over town, parks, shopping centres selling all the trinkets you can purchase, Burger King and plenty of tarmac roads with gleaming white painted crossings and row upon row of street lights! A massive selection of international cuisine to choose from with bars, cafes and night clubs. A harbour full of boats and two gleaming top of the range ferries. Tourists and residents from all walks of life and places around the globe stroll the streets day and night.



Down at Flag Beach the sea is now dotted with windsurfers, a spectacle of colour and action with a sport called kitesurfing also in view. On windless days a now popular import from Hawaii named SUP has become popular. The sails are more muted with their livery and easier to rig; boards shorter and fatter and so much easier to sail!

Summer months

Customers now talk to us from afar, via the web, before even arriving on Fuerte. The summer months see the beach rammed with sun worshippers and sports people young and old. We have sun beds and parasols and a beach bar with WIFI. There's a mobile phone specifically for wind checks.



We can no longer drive down to the water's edge, we can no longer light a fire and roast sausages in the middle of the beach washed down with a jug of homemade sangria. We can't walk barefoot through the sandy streets of town.

We look back with nostalgia to a bygone era of adventure, of long days on the water often in hardcore conditions with no rescue services, and telling the tales of a near miss on the north shore that day and finally swimming back to shore or being rescued by a fisherman (or a passenger ferry in Ben's case!). We chat about fun nights in a small mixed crowd around a bonfire amidst the sand dunes and sharing the same passion for the sea.



The most beautiful beach in the world

Windsurfing may not be what it was in the 1980s and life may not be as simple and relaxed. But we would not change the last 30 years for anything. The view from our office on the most beautiful beach in the world, the fresh smell of the salty Atlantic air every day on the way to work, the sun on our face and the wind in our hair; of being able to windsurf every single day we go to work.

For that we thank all those who have supported us and it made it possible over these last three decades; who have learned to windsurf with us, improved their skills with us and shared their passion for the sea and windsurfing with us. See you soon!

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THE PERFECT WINDSURF spot MAURITIUS

WORDS & PICS: PLANET WINDSURF HOLIDAYS



LOCATED ON A PENINSULA IN SOUTH-WEST MAURITIUS IS A DESTINATION SO BEGUILING YOU MAY WONDER WHY IT HASN'T ALWAYS BEEN AT THE TOP OF YOUR BUCKET LIST. FLANKED BY A LARGE FLAT-WATER LAGOON, LIES A LUXURY HOTEL QUITE UNLIKE ANY OTHER, AND OUTSIDE THE FLAT WATER LAGOON ARE SOME OF THE MOST EPIC WINDSURFING WAVES IN THE WORLD. With consistent winds, warm weather, amazing hospitality at affordable prices, exquisite cuisine and outstanding tropical beauty, this Indian Ocean destination is about as close as you can come to perfection. Planet Windsurf Holidays has the scoop.

Why you should go on a windsurf holiday

As if you need convincing! Learning to windsurf from a luxury beach resort, or just taking a week out to hone your skills, can be one of the best experiences of your life. You get to escape from home, enjoy an exotic destination and windsurf in one of the best spots in the world – such as Le Morne in Mauritius.

Marcus Bull from Planet Windsurf tells us more... "I have been passionate about travelling for as long as I can remember, but learning to windsurf added a whole new and exciting dimension to my trips. Regular travel now seemed so boring in comparison to travelling with such a purpose. Learning to progress in a destination whose conditions were just perfect for the sport also made what is a somewhat tiring exercise into an exciting endeavor. When I got tired I could relax poolside or go for a snorkel while at the end of the day I knew that dinner would be laid on and a plush bed would be waiting for me."





And once he was hooked, there was no stopping Mr Bull. Combining his passion for this exciting sport, with many years working in the adventure tour operation industry, led him to running his very own windsurf holiday company in 2000. Specializing in tailor made luxury tours to the world's best windsurfing spots, Planet Windsurf Holidays is now the world's number one windsurf holiday operator. Along the way, Marcus learnt that not all windsurfing holidays are created equal.

Finding the perfect spot

"After years of travelling to the very best windsurf spots in the world as a free spirit, with my only concern being the conditions, a wife and two little girls have since appeared somehow! Since I cannot be as selfish now as in the past, my list of travel needs is geared much more towards my family's needs."



"My best efforts to transpose my enthusiasm for all things wind, water and waves to my other half have sadly not been successful. So my quest began for the perfect family holiday where I could also indulge in my passion for windsurfing. The list I was handed from those 'above' included a safe location, direct flights, kids clubs and a location where I would not have to disappear for most of the day to windsurf. We tried many locations around The Mediterranean, Morocco, Canary Islands and the Cape Verde Islands, and had some really amazing trips, all with varying degrees of 'success'," says Marcus.

And then he discovered Mauritius...

"Then in 2014 we were invited by ION Club (the then Club Mistral), the largest windsurf / kitesurf centre management company in the world, to a 'site inspection' of their school in Le Morne, Mauritius. We were to stay at The St. Regis Mauritius Resort, where ION Club has one of their 4 centres on the island. OMG! You cannot believe how perfect this resort is for a family windsurf holiday."



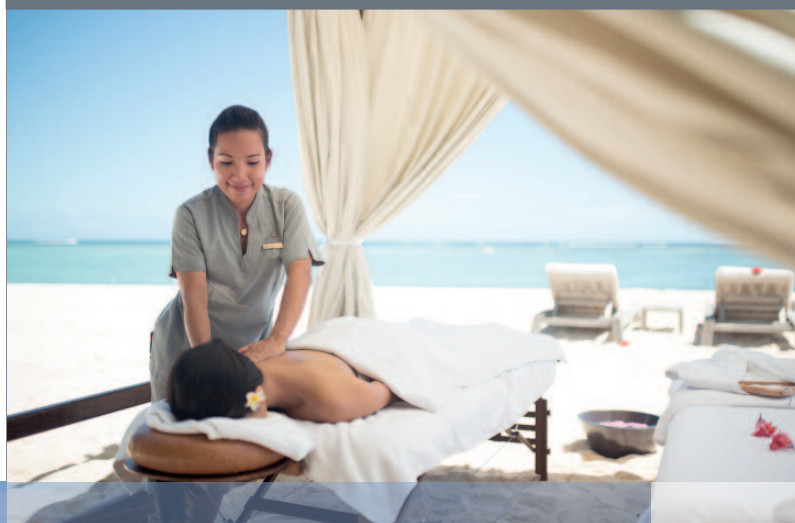
"The hotel is simply stunning in every way, not too big as to be all-consuming, with spacious rooms that are perfect for families, incredible food, a great kids club (free) and best of all (for me), world class windsurfing from the beach right next to the hotel! I've never been so popular with my family, meaning I was free to come and go to the beach whenever the conditions were at their best."

"We have never looked back, and now plan at least one trip a year to Mauritius," says Marcus.

Get to Mauritius today

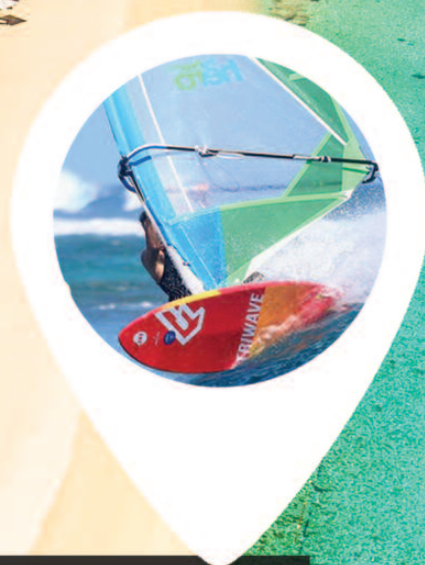
Whether you're planning a glittering celebration filled with champagne sabering as the sun slips below the horizon or are looking for a healthy active getaway filled with yoga, fitness and fresh living, Mauritius is perfect for you. For bookings before the end of September (the best time for windsurfing!) Planet has an exclusive limited time offer which includes 55% off your room, a free room upgrade, a free upgrade from half-board to full-board, a free sports massage and free dinghy sailing, kayaking, wakeboarding and select watersports. In addition two children sharing the parents' room 'eat, stay and play for free'.

So what you waiting for? For a handcrafted, relaxing and amazing stay at the best address in Mauritius contact Planet Windsurf Holidays today!



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WINDWISE AUTUMN SESSIONS

WORDS:

SIMON BORNHOFT

PICS:

WINDWISE/PHOTOCEAN

WINDWISE WARRIOR FLAT WATER WAVE RIDING

An incredibly demanding, rewarding and skill enhancing Windwise Autumn Skill Training Challenge – are you up for it?

Level: beginner to advanced

No matter your vessel or level, we teach beginner-improvers this exact exercise,

it is all about developing your counter balance, learning to oppose the power, position and movement of the rig. It physically won't work unless you get your vision and touch points in place, so it implants and drives home transferable skills. Do it until your body aches!





What Is Windwise flat water wave riding?

This Windwise Skills Training exercise is done 'out' of the harness on any board, anywhere in any wind – so no excuses? Essentially it's using our look, lean (in Warrior) lever mantra, to turn your board pretty much completely into wind, then massively downwind (and beyond) forming a hugely exaggerated 300+ degree twisting, 'snaking' run. It's packed full of vision, opposition, core touch points and includes our 'Warrior ethos' that proliferates throughout the sport whenever we're turning a board.

This cannot be for 'me'... why should 'I' do it?

Whether you're a total beginner, fast or slow improver, plateaued intermediate or "I don't need coaching" advanced sailor, this Windwise Skills Training exercise is pure gold and part of your turning DNA! When you truly focus on the core principles and feel the touch points, it's an entertaining and rewarding exercise. It might have you, and onlookers, asking what on earth are you doing, but, we guarantee it will do wonders for your counter balance, steering, fast tacks, helitacks, all gybes, all 360s, wave riding and it will teach you how to fall in less! In fact, we'd go as far as to say that this Windwise exercise stands out as one of the most important exercises you can and should do on a board – BUT do focus on the highlighted skills, touch points, and make sure you accentuate your Warrior!

Windwise Warrior flat water wave riding = one exercise, many applications. Pure progression!

"The actions, principles and exaggerated forces when doing one of our favourite and incredibly productive skills training exercises links into just about every single windsurfing move there is, including fast tacking, all gybing styles, helicopter tacks, up and downwind 360s, first time WaveWindSUPing, basic short board wave riding, through a plethora of freestyle moves. I strongly urge you to train using our flat water wave riding exercise. It does wonders for your skills, confidence and your ability to analyse, understand and break down the component parts of any move."

HOW TO FLAT WATER WAVE RIDE — FOR ALL LEVELS!

Start off with a basic version on a high volume board or WindSUP in non-planing conditions. Look how, throughout these sequences, the boards are turned in very similar ways using our core principles, looking and leaning in Warrior stance (flexed knee), moving the 'touch points' up and down the boom, to apply the correct forces and pressure.

Core Principles

Vision: look and lean (in 'Warrior') where you want to go!

Opposition: lever the rig in pretty much totally the opposite direction.

Warrior: look and lean over a heavily flexed knee.

Touch points: hands well forward upwind, wide spread, clew hand close to head downwind.

Warrior upwind – vision – opposition and touch points

Vision: looking upwind, chin near or even on front shoulder.

Warrior: look and lean over a heavily flexed knee.

Opposition: rig is leant back to counter balance

Upwind touch points:

the hands are well forward (sometimes the front hand literally touching the boom clamp), the rig is raked right back, often 'touching' the rear, knee, shin or ankle.



Warrior downwind – vision – opposition and touch points

Vision: looking downwind, chin near or even on rear shoulder.

Warrior: look and lean over a heavily flexed knee into the turn.

Opposition: rig is leant out of the turn to counter balance.

Downwind touch points:

you'll see that in many situations, we pull the clew hand in and down very close to the head to gain control of the rig.

"Imagine you're talking into a microphone, whilst pulling down trying to rip the boom off the mast!" Which is leant the 'opposite' way to counter balance.



BEACH START FLAT WATER WAVE RIDING

You can actually develop your vision, opposition, Warrior and touch points ethos just steering in the water. as ever accentuate vision, chin near/on leading shoulder

and keep walking towards where you want to go to help control power in the rig.



Turning downwind:

look downwind, chin on downwind shoulder, wide hands (clew hand pulled into head), rig upwind, body in Warrior downwind.

FLAT WATER WAVE RIDING LARGE BOARD

On larger boards, you'll need to move your feet well back and adopt a wide foot set up.

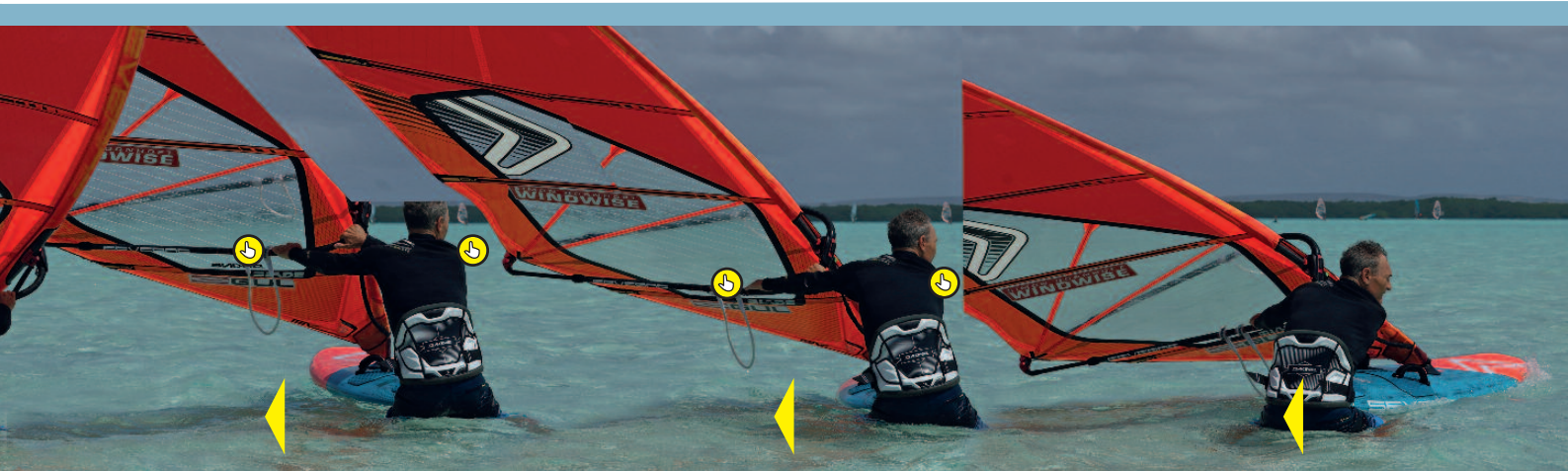
Before you start... remember your touch points.

1. Back hand down the boom.
2. Back foot well back.
3. Chin on rear shoulder.



Turning downwind:

look downwind, chin on rear shoulder, wide hands (clew hand into head), rig out of the turn body in Warrior into the turn massively. Lean forward if the tail sinks.



Turning upwind:

look upwind, chin on upwind shoulder, hands up the boom, rig downwind, body in Warrior upwind.

This is *not*, lazily turning upwind and downwind, with your head wondering about. It needs to be a determined, focused, exaggerated action. Moving your hands hugely up and down the boom to enable you to throw your body into Warrior one way and then the other way, 'chucking' the rig the opposite way to counter balance. Turn the board up and downwind as much as is humanly possible!



Turning upwind:

look upwind, switch chin to front shoulder, both hands up the boom, rig downwind, body in Warrior upwind.

SHORT BOARD NON-PLANING

This is hard work but so, so, so good for your windsurfing, especially IF you exaggerate your Warrior, vision and move your hands! Get out there, do the hard yards and work down in volume until you can do it on anything.

Before you start... remember your touch points.

1. Back hand down the boom.
2. Back foot well back.
3. Chin on rear shoulder.



Turning downwind:

Look downwind, chin near or on rear shoulder, wide hands (clew hand pulled in and down towards your head. Lever the rig out of the turn as the body leans, in Warrior over that flexed knee ridiculously far forward and into the turn. If the tail sinks lean body (and even the rig) forward **more**.

This does wonders for your windsurfing flexibility, counter balance and ability to stay on that board in tricky situations. The amount of times I've been caught out on a wave, lost wind, speed, power and been incredibly grateful to still be on that board with crashing white water around me. Become amazing at it if you have any aspirations to wave sail.

SHORT BOARD NON-PLANING IN THE STRAPS

Warning – this is hard!

To get into the straps off the plane (this was shot in six knots), lean forward, 'sail ugly' by pulling down heavily on the boom, keep the rig forward more than you thought possible and slip both feet into the strap. If the tail sinks, get the body and rig **forward more**! Then run through your FWWR ethos... and watch your wave sailing ability soar!





Turning upwind:

look upwind by switching chin to front shoulder, shift the hands right up the boom, rig back, body in Warrior leaning forward massively into the wind. Push out on clew hand and repeat the downwind stage.



WARRIOR FLAT WATER WAVE RIDING PLANING

This is fun! Get your speed up, tuck the feet right into lose fitting straps, check the coast is clear, unhook, accentuate everything, then get carving massively

upwind and then downwind, trying to keep on the plane! Don't 'foot steer' (I hate that expression) or wiggle your hips from one side to the other. This is a whole body



Carving upwind:

to carve upwind, dig the heels, look upwind, chin near or on front/leading shoulder, hands right up the boom, rig back, body leaning forward massively in Warrior to keep the board flat. This is a great skill for cross on-shore windsurfing. Just before the board comes off the plane, come up, push out on the clew hand to help turn the board downwind – just like your Warrior tack ending, then drop into Warrior for the downwind (bottom turn).

WARRIOR WAVE RIDING

Okay, so we are now actually on a wave and all that practice will pay off. In fact, in my coaching experience, those who genuinely practice our FWR in all conditions/boards, find that their wave riding comes incredibly quickly, be that on a windSUP (you don't need

to be able to waterstart to wave ride) or a fast 'down the line' ride. In most cases, turn upwind first to climb to the top of a wave for a fast bottom turn, which should start at the top of the wave!



Turning upwind on a wave = back side wave riding

Turning upwind on a wave is called 'back-side' wave riding (your 'back' to the wave) and it's the easiest way to steer on a wave. It's just like our Warrior tack ending. So if you can rake the sail back and lean the body forward on flat water, you can turn on a wave.

Turning upwind:

look upwind in Warrior over that flexed knee, chin on front shoulder, hands up the boom, rig downwind to 'oppose'.

Upwind back side riding

The speed of the wave enables you to really carve upwind. Note how the same skills are in place! Looking upwind towards the wave, lean towards the wave and rake the rig back – body in accentuated Warrior! Then body then momentarily comes up, shifting the hand touch points massively forward (you can even let go with the rear hand) to transition across the board towards and move the rig the opposite way to the body – classic opposition!

and rig movement, throwing yourself into Warrior upwind and downwind. This teaches you to carve from 'rail to rail' using the rig and body and helps you

understand the basics of bottom turning (like going through a gybe) and top turning (like heading upwind for a tack).

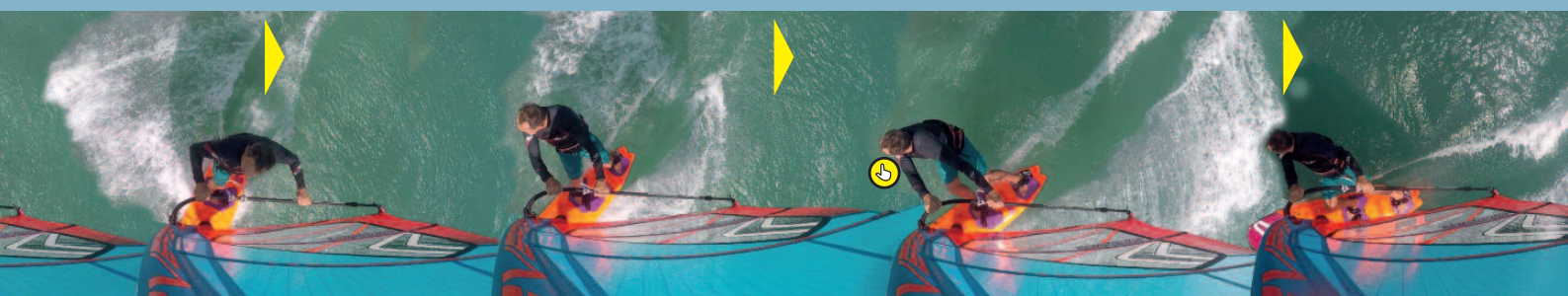


Carving downwind:

look downwind, wide hands (clew hand pulled in and down towards your head. TP = chin near or on shoulder,

Lever the rig out of the turn as the body leans, in Warrior over that flexed knee ridiculously far forward and into the turn. If the tail sinks, lean body (and rig) forward even **more**.

Initially the downwind 'bottom turn' is similar to a gybe (Or setting up for a 360, duck gybe, etc) but you're in the straps, then, as you pass the dead downwind stage, you're incredibly 'twisted' and relying on counter balance to stay on the board rather than the rigs power. Look how the body looks and leans over a flexed knee. The body and rig then switch sides to transition from downwind Warrior to upwind Warrior. Vision is vital to help turn the body first and push the rig the opposite way to make the board turn. Keep practicing until you can keep your speed up and make multiple turns.



Front side wave riding

Turning downwind on a wave is called 'front-side' wave riding and it's very similar to the beginning of a gybe. If you can keep the rig forward, look and lean into the turn (towards the wave), like going into a non-planing carve gybe on flat water, you too can turn on a wave! At higher speeds, carving downwind and making a tight 'bottom turn', is just like the beginning of a carve gybe. The mantra is the same as gybing too. Look (towards the wave), lean towards the wave in Warrior and keep the mast forward and away from you, often out of the turn to oppose the body's position.

Turning downwind:

look downwind, chin on shoulder, wide hands (clew hand into head), rig out of the turn body in warrior into the turn massively. Lean forward if the tail sinks.

ADDITIONAL RELEVANCE

At Windwise our core principles, skills training exercises, touch points and Warrior re-occur in as many different places as possible. So you'll see how the same ethos, with varying degree of exaggeration (depending on your level and commitment) link into other aspects of the sport. So by doing one exercise you'll be practicing different elements and segments of a whole host of 'moves'.

Upwind additional relevance



Uphaul and hovering for a wave in Warrior



Warrior fast tack exit



Warrior upwind helitacks, upwind 360s

Downwind additional relevance

You'll discover how very similar vision, opposition, Warrior and touch points appear in the following downwind moves.



Laydown gybe (big waves)



Warrior downwind including gybing



Warrior downwind 360

As ever, we'd love to help you on the water on one of our Windwise experiences and if you have any questions or suggestions for these features please let us know info@windwise.net.

Check out our Freeride and Freewave courses, safaris and adventure trips for all levels. We have a wide selection both in the UK and abroad with our proven Skills Training System to ensure your progression.



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COACH OF THE YEAR 2017
WINDSURFING HALL OF FAME



WINDSURFING EQUIPMENT & ESSENTIALS: TAKING THE RIGHT STUFF!

WORDS: SIMON WINKLEY

PHOTOS: ALEX IRWIN - SPORTOGRAPHY.TV

WINDSURFING IN A NEW OR REGULAR LOCATION IS AWESOME AND CAN CLEANSE THE SOUL IN SO MANY WAYS BUT, AS WITH ANY ACTION SPORTS, THERE'S PLENTY OF KIT-RELATED THINGS THAT CAN GO WRONG IF YOU'RE NOT CAREFUL. CREATING YOUR OWN EPIC FAIL MOMENTS WITH KIT COULD CAUSE YOU – EVEN AS A GROWN ADULT – TO SHED TEARS OF RAGE, PAIN OR IMMEASURABLE SADNESS – AND CRYING ON THE BEACH (APPARENTLY) IS NOT A MECHANISM TO IMPRESS FELLOW WINDSURFERS. So throughout this article I humbly offer tips and hints to get you to the water with all the kit and essentials you need for a safe, productive and stress-free session at any time of year.

Focusing on the kit

Whilst some people live quite close to their local spot – and windsurf there on a regular basis – not many of us could actually claim to be able to rig on our lawn, open the garden gate and step smugly onto the beach suited and booted with kit in hand. So it's pretty likely that a journey will need to be made. The good news is that nowhere in the UK is more than 70 miles from the coast and there are splendid inland locations aplenty. Currently based on the Surrey/Kent border, my local spot for an inland blast is the excellent, windsurf-friendly Queen Mary Sailing Club with elevated water and one-mile reaches. Whenever I can, however, I like to escape to the coast with a 45-minute drive to the nearest spot – the same time as it takes to get to QM.

I think just about everyone I know who windsurfs has, at some point or other, forgotten a piece of kit. And guess what? The thought of driving all the way home to pick up the (delete as applicable) sail, mast, extension, boom, UJ, fin, finbolt, screwdriver, wetsuit, harness etc. that you recklessly abandoned on your garage floor – and back again – is a situation (for most) that is fraught with panic and despair as you stand on the beach

watching other (more organised) windsurfers zipping back and forth in solid conditions. A desperate plea to others might sort you out yet there's no guarantee of blagging it. A friend of mine once sailed a session in 25 knots at Hayling Island having left his harness at home and couldn't feel his arms for about a week afterwards. He never did that again.

You might be lucky and have all your kit stored permanently in a well-racked-out van which you can park in a secure location. If your only option however is to store kit somewhere safer and load your vehicle every time it's windy then perhaps some sort of military regime of kit storage and packing is needed to ensure that you have what you need and that you don't end up with a garden trowel in your kit box instead of that essential freewave fin. Having a laminated checklist taped to your kit box or pinned to your garage/shed wall could help. As a minimum – pack your car/van and then, before committing to leaving for your chosen spot, work from the bottom upwards to do a visualization/recall of each piece of your windsurfing hardware and personal kit to check if you have forgotten anything.

OVER THE YEARS I HAVE OWNED LOADS OF KIT OF ALL BRANDS, AGES AND CONDITIONS FROM HALF-BUSTED SCRAP-HEAP STUFF TO BRAND NEW GEAR. CHOOSE YOUR KIT WISELY AND GET THE BEST ADVICE YOU CAN FROM FRIENDS, WEBSITES, FORUMS AND TRUSTED SHOPS. MY FIRST EVER SAILS WERE END-OF-SEASON TUSHINGHAM SELL-OFFS FROM A HOLIDAY COMPANY AND THEY WERE PERFECT. Then I foolishly bought a slippery 106-litre Bic Adagio slalom board for £100 from a rogue trader. I should have been enjoying loads of healthy progression at that stage on a 150-litre board. Instead I spent a month falling in and nearly went mad before getting rid of it. Avoid impulse buys, try before you buy wherever possible and make sure that the kit will serve you well.

Right now I am very lucky to have access to an incredible range of equipment yet – not being the sort of person who takes things for granted, it gets looked after meticulously (in use and in storage) and, consequently, is sold on later in first-rate condition. Whatever kit you have it needs to be relied upon when you need it – so it needs plenty of TLC. Ensure that it is always rinsed off after a dunking in the sea

and dried as soon as possible before checking for damage then storing it with care. A seized boom, for example, is no fun at all on the day when you know that you meant to rinse out the salt water last time yet never got around to it. Or that sail with a small tear in it? Get it fixed before it goes out of control and the whole panel needs replacing.





Suggested personal gear from essentials to recommended extras

1. **Wetsuit:** a modern, warm, stretchy one like the O'Neill Psycotech offers a far greater warmth and flexibility than older suits.
2. **Wetsuit boots (or shoes):** depending on location and season.
3. **Rash vest:** Not really needed beneath a top-spec modern wetsuit as the inner materials are already soft and smooth. For hot, overseas windsurfing or can be used over a shorty wetsuit to give warmth and protection with the boardies and rash vest look!
4. **Boardshorts:** for hot, overseas windsurfing or can be used over a shorty wetsuit to give extra warmth and protection with the boardies and rash vest look!
5. **Harness:** Try loads on at your local shop before buying. This Severne Air is light, supportive, super-comfortable, looks good, has a great spreader bar and stays down!
6. **Rigging jacket:** my choice is the Ion Neo Shelter Jacket and every windsurfer I meet either has or wants one of these. All body and arm panels are cut and bonded in a pre-bent shape to allow natural movement. Whilst I would not use this for a personal full-power session I sometimes coach basic planing skills from a board in the winter whilst wearing it and I still maintain full body movement. On the beach it's a cocoon. The hook-hole allows a harness to be worn underneath and the hood is very welcome on winter beaches and even better with a beanie underneath. This item completely transformed my winter windsurfing from the moment I got it.
7. **Changing robe/towel:** to get changed in the car park without offending the locals choose the Ion Poncho or, for the feeling of a full survival shelter, a dryrobe.
8. **Small towel:** it's always nice to dry yourself off and get the sand off your feet before driving home. Older spare towels can also be used to remove sand and water from kit before taking it home.
9. **Changing mat/wetbag:** to stand on outside (or inside your van) and to let your damp wetsuit fall into before zipping it around to stop the water leaking everywhere.
10. **Personal floatation device (PFD):** not for everyone but can be especially reassuring when pushing harder, trying new skills like waterstarts, sailing in bigger conditions or in an unfamiliar location. I use the Spinlock Aero Pro when teaching foiling which is awesome to say the least. It gives significant front and back protection (even more so with the optional D30 Impact Protection back protector) with 50N of buoyancy. It is soft, supple and comfortable, has a reinforced hole for a harness hook and allows full maneuverability.
11. **Helmet:** can help in the same ways as with the PFD (not shown).
12. **Mitts:** I try not to use them to avoid forearm cramp but palm-less ones can work well by taking the cold sting off your fingertips whilst reducing the chance of cramp. I like to put gloves on in the winter when I am back on the beach to regenerate my hands before removing them and heading out again.
13. **Headwear:** a neoprene hood (not shown) can be the one thing that keeps you out longer in the winter. Just remember to take it off before you walk into the petrol station or bank on the way home...
14. **Headwear:** a warm beanie is another lifesaver during beach breaks/rigging time etc.
15. **Suncream:** easy to omit for a UK trip but, what's good for Baz Luhmann...
16. **Sunglasses:** having sensitive eyes I need great sunnies to use afloat in fast summer freeride conditions but I don't like to use a retainer. The King range from Bollé do the best job and never fall off my face.
17. **First aid kit:** something basic to deal with the unexpected (especially in a remote location) and to stop bleeding – for example from the dreaded finjury.
18. **Basic storage like robust plastic boxes:** used Eurocrates purchased online are best - or flexi-buckets to keep gear in and to easily switch it all from garage/shed to car/van without the risk of leaving something behind. These items are durable, inexpensive and stop salt water soaking the inside of your vehicle after a session.



A typical freewave setup:

With this typical freewave setup I run through all the parts in my mind from bottom to top to check nothing has been missed: 103 litre board, single fin, set of tri fins, UJ, toe protector, 30cm mast extension, 400 mast, 5.3 sail, 140-190 boom.



Suggested basic tools of the trade

- 1. Screwdriver:** get this wrong and ruin the heads of your fixings to make later adjustments traumatic. Typically size 3 Philips for foot strap screws, and either large flathead or size 3 Philips for fin bolts and vent screws. Buy quality brands to last.
- 2. Long-nosed pliers or multi-tool:** a Leatherman Wave will serve you forever if looked after well. A Gerber Suspension is half the price yet still very good.
- 3. Rig puller:** various types – or use a marlinspike hitch on one of your big screwdrivers – or use a rig winch for easy downhauling with zero back strain, never use your harness hook as I have witnessed 2 snap on the weld when downhauling and that certainly can lead to tears!
- 4. Batten key:** should be present in the sail bag pocket. Sizes vary between brands.



Suggested spares

1. **Spare fin bolts:** I have lost many so I always have a good selection of bolts to fit my current kit as well as having the chance to get someone else out of trouble if I can.
2. **Spare rope:** lengths: downhaul 2m; outhaul 1m, inhaul (or boom clamp rope) 0.5m. Thickness: 4mm. I only use Marlow Formuline 3.8mm Dyneema rope. It's a bit more expensive but specifically designed for windsurfing with no outer sheath to split, staggeringly strong, nice to handle and lasts better than anything else under strain in metal cleats.
3. **Spare uphaul.**
4. **Spare mast extensions.**
5. **Spare RDM boom adaptor:** for using a standard diameter boom clamp with a skinny mast.
6. **Mylar sail repair tape** (not shown).
7. **Epoxy repair stick and disposable gloves:** for hand-mixing epoxy putty to give a temporary fix to board dings (not shown).
8. **Spare UJ or replacement tendon.**

9. **Spare vent screw and rubber washer:** Check regularly as the washer can perish over a relatively short time and getting water permanently trapped inside your board is the stuff of nightmares.

10. **Spare harness lines.**

Other suggested essentials and extras (photo overleaf)

1. **GoPro (in Super Suit) with Flymount mast/boom mount:** and Rainex for smearing over the front of the housing to stop water droplets sticking to the front which ruins the photos/video. Take spare memory cards and battery.
2. **Mobile phone in a soft waterproof case:** to (maybe) take out with you as an emergency option around your neck and inside your wetsuit. This is not something I would tend to do myself yet, whilst windsurfing solo is never a good idea, some do it. As some paddle boarders now set off with a VHF radio to call the coastguard direct if they get into trouble I thought it worthy of a mention here as a possibility for solo windsurfers. Carrying it is

Suggested roof bar kit for cars or vans

1. **Roofbars:** ideally adjustable with thick pads.
2. **Buckle straps:** good quality surf branded ones like DaKine in sound condition.
3. **Board bags:** to protect roof-racked boards (shown in large kit shot).
4. **Yoga bricks:** good for placing between stacked boards on roof bars to prevent crushing of boards. Watch them for blowing away on a windy day when you unload the boards.
5. **Cables and locks:** as a theft deterrent.





3. **Healthy packed lunch:** containing carbohydrates (to fuel muscles and brain and to keep you going for longer), low in fat and with an easy-to-digest snack like a banana...unless you're lucky enough to have a lovely café by the beach. Not forgetting to take a little bag of Scooby Snacks to keep you going and to share with grateful friends...
4. **Hot/cold drinks:** to keep warm/hydrated
5. **Backpack:** to chuck it all in the car/van

Confession time. As I write this I am on the road on a 20-day coaching trip including South Wales, Weymouth and a number of inland locations. It was the middle of the no-wind heatwave of the decade when I left home and it still is. The long and short term forecast was for such little wind that, whilst I took kit as small as 4.7 and 103 I purposely ignored the advice I have just given above and left home without my 4.0 sail, 370 mast and 86l board on the basis that there was no way it would remotely be needed (probably at least until the late autumn). Then what happened? Over the last three days the forecast for the Weymouth area this coming Sunday has gone from 13 knots to 45 knots, the coaching is cancelled (giving me a day to play) and I'm despairing at my decision to leave the small kit at home just to save a little space. It's not the first time this has happened. Will it be the last?

Contact: info@simonwinkley.com for
bookings and info. Facebook @swwinds
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Try it, you might like it (again)

BIC Techno One Design 293

Info: <https://world.bicsport.com/windsurf/boards/product/techno-293-od-dtt.html> **Price:** £1250

WORDS: WINDSURFING UK

PICS: JAMES JAGGER

AT ONE POINT, NOT TOO FAR BACK, YOU COULDN'T MOVE FOR BLUE BIC TECHNO BOARDS LITTERING BEACHES ON SUNNY BLOW DAYS. THE ICONIC BLUE SHAPE STILL HOLDS FAVOUR WITH MANY – SCOUR THE CLASSIFIED SECTIONS AND YOU'LL NO DOUBT FIND A FEW BEING SOLD SECOND HAND. THESE DAYS THEY'RE NOT QUITE AS PREVALENT, YET THERE'S NO REASON WHY THEY SHOULDN'T BE.

Check BIC's website and you'll discover a whole host of BIC Techno shapes and designs, all manufactured with easy windsurfing in mind. A huge tick in the box is the brand manufacture within Europe (BIC's French homeland to be exact). You mightn't be getting a board made from the latest exotic material. It may not be the best solution for aerial contortionism. But then that's not the point. For many sailors looking to get out and simply blast, across 'normal' conditions, BIC's Techno range will still fit the bill for many.

Light wind

Possibly the most versatile and longstanding shape in the BIC range is the One Design 293. No doubt you'll have seen this sled being put to good use by all manner of Olympic pathway fleets. In particular, youth windsurf racing is alive and well with the 293 and associated rigs. So what from a recreational windsurfer's point of view?

First of all BIC's One Design Techno is super versatile. Not only is it capable of performance windsurfing in planing mode, but due to the hybrid shape, integrated daggerboard and beating straps it's an efficient light wind machine that gives raceboard/longboard shapes a run for



their money. And for those who fancy some whirling and twirling simply attach a smaller fin, plug in a sub-6m and with the majority of its 205L volume underfoot it's a great low breeze skills training platform.

Planing conditions

One of the magical elements of the Techno 293 is its early planing potential. In the lightest of airs the OD winds up to full speed in progressive fashion, that wide tail forgiving clumsy footwork (great for those practising strap technique). The additional/substantial nose rocker keeps everything up front clear of chop whilst being able to push against the Ride 46cm fin increases full power efficiency no end. For intermediate sailors it's a great platform for learning the planing ropes – especially with multiple options for footstraps. If you plump for One Design rig also then combined with a 7.8m low end force fours are no match!

We'll be honest, blistering speed is not the Techno's forte. But, again, that's kind of missing the point. Early planing,

with efficient upwind and downwind ability, is where the BIC's skills lie. Round bends and riders need to be forceful when pushing a rail into the water. With practice good gybing technique can be developed that'll see planing exits in no time.

If you're at an advanced level of skill then you can throw the 293 about more than you'd think. The daggerboard does add some weight so jumping needs to be done with this in mind. One of BIC's alternative Techno's however, sans daggerboard, will be fine for some floaty air time. How do we know this? Because we've tried...

Conclusion

If you've dismissed BIC's Techno range as not for you then perhaps it's time to revisit and check out what the French brand are offering. Affordable windsurfing equipment with no less performance than you'd expect from any other premium product. As an everyman windsurfer the One Design 293 delivers everything you'd want from a light to medium wind early planing freerider (with the additional benefits of light wind performance). Robust, versatile, efficient and a whole lot of fun. And just to address the elephant in the room: that previously thin nose danger area now has a mast bumper in place to prevent damage in the event of catapulting. If you fancy something that'll put a smile on your face then check out BIC's 293 and raft of alternative Techno designs, you never know...





Multi-faceted speed machine

NoveNove Revo 135 Pro



Info: www.i-99.it/y2018/windsurf/revo-pro/

Price: Revo PRO: € 2.299; Revo GLS: € 1.999

WORDS: WINDSURFING UK **PICS:** JAMES JAGGER
WITH CHAMPION WINDSURFER FINIAN MAYNARD AT THE HELM IN TERMS OF DESIGN YOU ALWAYS KNOW A BOARD SHAPED BY HIM IS GOING TO DO ONE THING VERY WELL: GO FAST! BUT HOW FAST IS THE QUESTION? NOVENOVE'S REVO RANGE OF BOARDS ARE BILLED AS DETUNED SLALOM MACHINES WITH THE ADDED BENEFIT OF BEING EASY AND SMOOTH THROUGH TRANSITIONS. THE 135, TESTED HERE, IS ALSO FOIL READY SO EASILY CAPABLE OF TAKING ON DUAL ROLES.

In Pro construction the Revo looks aesthetically top drawer. Its black and lime green graphical livery lends a polished look to proceedings. Supplied with an MFC G10 Race 46 tuttle fin i-99's Revo 135 packs in the width that's for sure. So much so that it can take up to a 10m sail – pretty hefty when you consider the board's volume is only 135. Still, great it's got so much range and we couldn't wait to get it wet.

As we've said on many occasion having time to really spend looking at a product is key to properly understanding a piece of equipment. We've partnered the Revo with a bunch of different sails – from freeride to slalom – and found that in all instances the ride is both forgiving yet blisteringly quick (in standard windsurf mode that is). During even the choppiest

of sessions, bearing in mind the board's width, it takes down flotsam without any trouble and delivers riders through gybe transitions without hiccup. Even sailors still looking to nail down gybe fundamentals will find favour with the Revo, such is its easy going cornering nature. And then it's back up to full zoom on the straight giving an exciting and engaging experience.

And in foil mode? Considering this is a freerace board you could almost believe the Revo 135 is foil specific rather than foil ready. Partnered with a variety of different foil machines it's an early planing and super stable platform having lifted off. Not all foils are optimised for every board but the ones we've partnered the Revo with have delivered fun and efficient experiences.

Conclusion

As you can see there aren't many downsides when discussing the Revo. It does like a bit of power to get fully up to speed in standard windsurf mode and the Pro black paint job does have a tendency to scuff up when presented with shingle beaches. But these are only minor points as for the best part i-99's Revo 135 is a versatile sled that will put smiles miles wide on speed freak faces whilst allowing foil flyers the ability to get some hover time across multiple scenarios. One of the most fun and fulfilling NoveNove boards we've tested to date.





Family fun



JP Australia Magic Ride 154 Family ES 2018

Info: <http://jp-australia.com/2018/products/boards/magic-ride/>

Price: £1299

WORDS: WINDSURFING UK **PICS:** WINDSURFING UK
WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM A WINDSURFING BOARD THESE DAYS? EASE OF USE, PERFORMANCE AND VERSATILITY ARE SOME TERMS WHICH SPRING TO MIND – ESPECIALLY THE LAST WORD. WITH RECREATIONAL TIME BEING AT A PREMIUM MOST PUNTERS WANT AS MUCH BANG FOR THEIR BUCK AS POSSIBLE. EVEN MORE SO IF YOU HAVE A FAMILY OF BUDDING WINDSURFERS IN THE MIX.

JP's Magic Ride 154 Family fits the bill for many different requirements. An early planing freeride board, light wind cruiser and perfect platform for teaching your offspring it's definitely a multi-faceted platform.

For this test our three year old reviewer was the main pilot on most occasions. Being so young and new to the sport is a good gauge of whether something works or not. First off she liked the fact that two thirds of the MR Family is soft and padded. This makes clambering on and off easy on the knees. It was also noted just how stable the board is.

Floating about in marginal conditions was easily achievable for both Molly and us as parents. If mum and dad fancy a spot of light wind freestyle

then no probs as it's a platform that'll readily accommodate – even for heavy weights.

Multiple footstrap fixing points allow efficient progression for riders wanting to get into the realms of planing. It was also a nice trait for Molly who could practice getting her feet sorted and therefore increasing her muscle memory for later down the line. If you're aiming for your wee ones to achieve the same then it's worth positioning the rig right back in its track to make everything more doable for tiny arms.

When the wind picks up it's time to get stuck in to some early planing shenanigans. Rising up to full speed mode effortlessly the Magic Ride 154 Family reaches a decent top speed.

Pinching close hauled is simple when pushing against the 52cm fin whilst burning back down breeze is fun and fulfilling. The MR 154 is also a great tutor for riders looking to learn those (sometimes) elusive carve gybes. Very forgiving of less polished technique it helps build confidence through transitions and achieve that desired end goal.

Conclusion

All in JP Australia's Magic Ride 154 Family is a super versatile sled that all family members will find favour with. From messing about in light winds to fully lit up planing performance cruising or blasting about are both enjoyable. If you have anyone learning to windsurf – young or old – then it's a great beginner board for lighter weight riders or progression platform for those having already dialled in windsurfing's fundamentals. Our daughter loved it and asked if we could have one – now there's an endorsement!



Progressive performer

Loftsails Oxygen 7.3m HD 2018 sail



Buy from: <https://4boards.co.uk/product/windsurf/windsurf-sails/loftsails-oxygen-hd-blue-2018/>

Specs: www.loftsails.com/windsurf-gear/sails/oxygen **Price:** £689 for 2018 and 2019 for HD version. Standard orange version £629

WORDS: WINDSURFING UK **PICS:** JAMES JAGGER
HAVING USED A NUMBER OF MONTY SPINDLER'S WINDSURF SAIL DESIGNS THERE'S A GLARINGLY OBVIOUS TRAIT RUNNING THROUGH ALL EVERY DESIGN HAS TWO FACES – THE OXYGEN 7.3M BEING NO DIFFERENT. ONCE SHEATHED TO ITS IDEAL MAST THE MINIMUM SETTING DISPLAYS AN IMPRESSIVELY BELLIED OUT MAIN SECTION THAT'S SHAPED FOR PURE POWER AND LOW END PLANING. WHACK THE DOWNHAUL AND OUTHAIL ON AND SUDDENLY YOU END UP WITH A MUCH MORE TRIMMED LOOKING HIGH WIND PERFORMER. BUT LOOKS ARE ONLY SKIN DEEP. HOW WOULD IT PERFORM ON THE WATER?

In marginal conditions Loft's Oxygen 7.3m does indeed provide an immense amount of down low grunt that'll have riders up and planing in the bare minimum of breeze. Feeling quite freeride orientated in this setting it's a very drivey sail that pulls riders along all manner of windsurfing lines and through transitions – although not in unmanageable fashion. As much as there's plenty of boost it's also comfortable.

With wind strengths increasing riders will need to tune accordingly. The upper limits of the Oxygen 7.3m are impressive. We had it out when other riders were blasting back and forth on

much smaller rigs. Yet the Oxygen maintained its manners and simply converted gusts into efficient forward momentum. As such we could easily see the 7.3m being utilised in a race environment, even without cams.

Through transitions and the sail's pull is whippy. It begs sailors to commit fully and aim for those planing exits, which are achievable with power on tap allowing boards to knife through even the choppiest of conditions.

As is such here at WSUK Towers we used the Oxygen 7.3m in foiling mode. (Whilst on test it was also up against the brand's Skyscape 7m – stay tuned for



that report in next issue). With barely any breeze puffing the Oxygen 7.3m is an efficient boost of turbo power to pop foils on the fly and keep them blasting through lulls. A great sail to partner with a high aspect foil for some fun back and forth hovering.

Conclusion

Very much a sail of two faces Loft's Oxygen 7.3m is an efficient early planing machine, that'll surprise just how quickly up to speed it can be. In contrast the sail's top end is very akin to that of slalom engines with it coping well when erratic gusts and blowier conditions appear. Partner with a freeride, freerace, slalom or foil sled for versatile and fun windsurfing shenanigans.



Signature series



KA Sails Konzept 7m slalom sail

Info: <http://www.kasailwindsurfing.com> **Price:** € 609 - 719

WORDS: WINDSURFING UK **PICS:** JAMES JAGGER
KA SAILS WERE PRETTY COMMONPLACE AROUND UK SHORES A FEW YEARS AGO. STILL GOING STRONG, HOWEVER, WE DECIDED TO RE-VISIT THE NETHERLANDS BASED SAIL BRAND TO SEE WHAT THE SCORE IS WITH THEIR SIGNATURE SLALOM/RACE/SPEED SAIL THE 7M KONCEPT.

The first thing that strikes you is the sail's livery. It's a good looking sail and we had a few comments reflecting this during testing. Rigged on a 430 mast the cams are a tight fit but certainly force shape into the sail. Once sheathed it's then pretty easy to yank on the downhaul and tune accordingly. With boom affixed KA's Konzept is a light feeling rig with beautiful lines.

We used the 7m in both foiling and slalom mode. Conventionally it's pretty standard fayre in terms of how powerful the Konzept is. Whilst certainly not lacking in the early planing dept. it loves a bit of breeze to get things fully lit. Modern windsurfing sails have impressive range, the KA Konzept being no different. We used the 7m in everything from marginal conditions right up to 30 knots. In all instances it retained impeccable manners and stayed rock solid. (For

foiling we recommend minimum downhaul with a neutral outhaul setting. For standard windsurfing tune as per rigging instructions).

Round bends the 7m powers even the stickiest of boards through transitions with smooth acceleration. There's nothing untoward happening and even though the final rotation is a hard one KA's Konzept 7m doesn't yank riders out of their straps in unwieldy fashion. Instead it drives and shoves boards on to the new tack ready for that next reach.

In foil mode there's just enough bottom end to pop flyers up. It's real magic in this guise is just how light feeling and forgettable (in a good way) the Konzept actually is. Slipping efficiently through the air it's forgiving of unsteady winds making it a good choice for those with take off tendencies.



Conclusion

KA Sails' Konzept 7m is a great example of what a slalom sail should actually be. With immaculate mannerisms in blowy weather it powers speed sleds efficiently. There aren't any unwanted surprises with the Konzept and it flatters riders when conditions get hairy. Round marks it's effortless with a dependable pop as the bottoms rotate and those cams kick shape back in. All in a good choice for anyone after summer blasting speed or success on the race course. Plus it looks great to boot.



Kiddy friendly

O'Shea Grom Rig 1.5m



Info: <http://www.osheasurf.com/grommain.html> **Price:** £1849

WORDS: WINDSURFING UK **PICS:** FI PLAVENIEKS
WITH MANY WATER GOING TOYS OFFERING INCREASED VERSATILITY THERE'S MORE THAN ONE WAY TO UTILISE WHAT YOU OWN. O'SHEA HAVE A LONG STANDING MANUFACTURING STAND UP PADDLE BOARDS AS WELL AS WINDSURFING GEAR. HERE WE LOOK AT THE BRAND'S GROM 1.5M KIDDY RIG AND HOW THAT STACKS UP WHEN GETTING OFFSPRING INTO WINDSURFING – ALL FROM THE POV OF SAID GROM.

As well as being an adept paddler the Wind+SUP makes a great platform for learning to windsurf. Days when the wind blows needn't be a sit on the beach affair. Simply grab a sail and still get out. The Grom 1.5m rig is a nifty addition to your kit box with offspring firmly in mind. With dimensions to suit smaller frames it's a hard wearing, durable, bright and thoughtful design. Lightweight component parts, including dinky reduced diameter boom fit for smaller hands, the Grom 1.5m is eye catching and looks the biz – comments from onlookers confirmed this during testing.

Our three (now four) year old tester found the rig fairly easy to wield around in light winds. Having taken first steps with something even smaller she was familiar with how things feel. We did

have to lower the boom right to the very bottom of the cut out as Molly is right on the cusp height wise. With a bit of help from mum and dad, however, she was soon up and sailing. This muscle memory development is key to successful progression so it's great she could do most of the sail work herself.

For the second outing the wind had picked up considerably. In this instance there was a little more assistance required as tiny muscles couldn't quite cope with force four winds. Still getting involved, however, this ended up being Molly's introduction to (almost) planing sailing – albeit with dad holding on to make sure no off putting situations arose. Needless to say it was all smiles and giggles.



Conclusion

O'Shea's Wind+SUP inflatable is a quality multi-purpose iSUP that's fun in paddle mode but also efficient in windSUP guise. Mum and dad can get a bit of cruising in the bag or dabble with some light wind freestyle. Switch things round and plug the Grom 1.5m rig in and suddenly the whole set up is a kiddy friendly beginner windy combo. The Grom 1.5m is a stable, user friendly and on the whole cracking little rig that wee ones will enjoy using. Molly's comment? 'This is fun! Can we do it again?' which I'm sure you'll appreciate is endorsement enough.



French finesse

Alpinefoil A1 carbon/alloy mast windfoil

Info: <https://www.alpinefoil.com/kitefoil-windfoil-shop/windfoil/> **Price:** Carbon mast A1: €1879; Alloy mast A1: €1299

WORDS: WINDSURFING UK **PICS:** JAMES JAGGER
ALPINEFOIL ARE YET ANOTHER FRENCH WINDFOILING BRAND WHO PRICKED OUR INTEREST WHEN THEY STARTED PUTTING OUT CONTENT EARLIER IN 2018 RELATING TO THEIR BRAND NEW A1 OFFERING. COMING WITH BOTH A CARBON AND ALLOY MAST THE BRAND OFFER AN INTERCHANGEABLE DESIGN THAT MELTS THE BEST OF ALLOY AND CARBON WORLDS. WE MANAGED TO GET HOLD OF BOTH TO PUT THEM HEAD TO HEAD.

Things that don't change are the impressively manufactured burnt orange coloured 92cm fuselage, ULW900 RTeam front wing and RTeam carbon stabilizer. Also, unique to Alpinefoil is the integrated sacrificial anode that helps with corrosion and stops saltwater attacking the foil. We then had the option of swapping from AF's A1 carbon 92cm mast to the brand's 90cm alloy version.

Carbon

Attaching to the board via deep tuttle it's a snug fit that locks securely in place – this is the same with all components and gives confidence when entering the water.

As soon as a gust hits you can feel the power generated from the wings. It

doesn't take a huge amount of puff to rise up but what surprised us the most with such a big front wing is the Alpinefoil's manners. It's a very stable ride with an efficient glide and smooth feeling through the water. Whilst not the fastest we've tried it still holds an impressive top speed, but more importantly is super easy to use. The 92cm mast gives extra leeway which is especially welcome in rougher water. It also showed no sign of torsional flex (or twitch), instead staying rock steady rigid on the straight and round corners.

Alloy

Switching to the alloy mast was interesting. In almost every scenario we tested the foil we couldn't detect too much difference other than a slight (and only very small) lack of upwind

performance when compared to its carbon sibling. Everything else feels much the same with the A1 losing none of its manner displayed with the carbon mast fixed in place. And even though the alloy is a few centimetres shorter there was also hardly any difference in terms of the rapid onset of over foil.

Conclusion

All in Alpinefoil have properly nailed the A1 foil's design. With its anti-corrosive fuselage and carbon wings the version we used is perfectly suited to light air flying in the most efficient manner possible. Whilst not a manoeuvre orientated foil per se, other than gybes, it's a great freeride model that many will find favour with. For those racing we'd suggest probably going with the carbon mast whereas everyday sailors would find enough performance with the brand's alloy mast. And if you really want to get progressive then don't forget you can swap out the foil's wings and gain additional range. For us Alpinefoil's A1 windfoil represents exactly what a decent foil is all about.



Light air fun

RRD WH Flight 85 aluminium windfoil



Buy from: <http://www.robtoriccidesigns.com/equipment/wh-flight-alu-hydrofoil-85/>

Price: £899 (buy from: <https://4boards.co.uk/product/foiling/rrd-wh-flight-alu-hydrofoil-85/>)

WORDS: WINDSURFING UK **PICS:** JAMES JAGGER

WE'D BEEN WANTING TO GET OUR GRUBBIES ON RRD'S WH FLIGHT 85 ALU FOIL FOR A WHILE. THANKS TO THE GUYS AT 4BOARDS WE MANAGED TO DO SO! FIRST UP THE WH 85 IS A TOP SHELF BIT OF KIT THAT SLOTS TOGETHER NEATLY. SUPER HIGH ASPECT WINGS LOCK INTO PLACE EFFICIENTLY AS DOES THE 85CM MAST AND WHOPPING 120CM LONG FUSELAGE. YEP, THAT ELONGATED STRUT IS A BIG 'UN FOR SURE – THE BIGGEST FOIL FUSE WE'VE USED TO DATE.

The other surprising things are the wings, which are 80cm (front) and 38cm (rear). You'd expect them to be larger with such a long fuselage, maybe. RRD state that you still get enough power to lift in light winds though.

Our first session was with a 4.5m coupled up. That in foiling terms is pretty windy. The first thing we noticed with RRD's WH Flight 85 is how similar it is to standard windsurfing in terms of getting going. Normally you don't bear off quite as much with foiling but with the WH 85 you do. Having gotten used to this it's then up, up and away.

In powered up conditions the RRD foil needs concentration. You can feel turbulent water grabbing at that long fuse. For nervous/newbie foilers we'd

suggest avoiding winds above 15 or so knots as you'll need to have developed more technique before hitting this wind band.

Bringing it back in line with RRD's spiel and our next few sessions occurred in much lighter winds. We also paired RRD's WH 85 foil with a foil specific sail and found the ride was much more controlled and plug 'n' play. Also shifting the rig right back in the board's track helped bring the boom in line with the foil's fuse ensuring a more locked in ride.

It's a foil that flies upwind and tracks well on broad reaches with decent amounts of vroom relative to the actual wind speed. Also with less flotsam on the water the better it performs. We



managed to fly the WH 85 alu foil in around 10 knots making statement of 7-8 perfectly plausible.

Conclusion

RRD's WH Flight 85 alu foil is a specific hydrofoil that's best suited to the lighter wind end of the spectrum. That noticeable long fuse, those high aspect wings and multiple head fittings (tuttle, deep tuttle or powerbox) show the Italian brand aren't afraid to think outside the box and do things their own way. If you're looking to get out in super light airs on medium size rigs then RRD's WH Flight 85 aluminium foil could be the one for you. A good price as well!



Smoothly does it

Zeeko alloy Windfoil

ZEEKO
ALL STYLES NO COMPROMISE

Info: <http://zeeko-kites.com/gb/all-the-products/403-alloy-windfoil-2018-3760253112314.html> Price: €999

WORDS: WINDSURFING UK **PICS:** JAMES JAGGER
THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT IT: WINDFOILING IS AN EXCITING ASPECT OF WINDSURFING AND ONE WE'VE BEEN KEEN TO COVER AT LENGTH. AS WITH ALL AREAS OF THE SPORT PRODUCT DESIGN AND EQUIPMENT TRENDS CHANGE AND EVOLVE SUPER FAST. ALSO, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT FOILING IS BRINGING COMPANIES IN FROM OTHER SPORTS, SUCH AS ZEEKO KITES.

Zeeko entered the windfoiling market in 2017 but it's the tweaked 2018 model we put under the spotlight here. Made from anodised alloy – an alloy Zeeko state is different from other aluminium foils – it's an easy on the eye product straight out of the box. But aesthetics aren't only skin deep. The paint Zeeko use is also extremely hydrodynamic and shows attention to all details.

There are other interesting features as well. Both the XLW freeride front wing and rear stab are produced in G10 form, rather than carbon. The brand have also come up with the nifty AVS (anti ventilation skin) system – think grooves carved into each wing to disrupt air flow and prevent cavitation or over foiling. A small underside fin is also strategically placed to prevent tail yaw and increase stability whilst

protecting the fuselage should it connect with seabeds.

From the off Zeeko's high aspect foil is an easy to use bit of kit. Taking off progressively newbie foilers will appreciate its calm mannerisms. Experienced riders can kick it high quicker if they prefer. Perched atop the 90cm mast it flies along effortlessly. The newly position mast>fuselage works a treat with being applicable to older style boards as well as new foil ready/foil specific sleds.

One particularly nice trait is being able to change the ride's feel simply by altering foot placement – not all foils are this tunable (physically) when flying. With outboard feet riders can rail upwind with the best of them. Should foilers become unmanageably overpowered, however, simply place back foot across the centre



line and everything settles right down – great for anxiously progressing sailors. Through moves Zeeko's Windfoil is manageable and doesn't push back in gybes as some much as some.

Conclusion

The overriding sensation of Zeeko's Windfoil is a smooth one. Smooth to lift; smooth when flying and smooth through transitions. It's certainly a product that found favour with us here at Windsurfing UK. Big props for Nicolas Caillou's team also utilising alternative materials for manufacturing (G10) and trying to incorporate new technologies (AVS system). The Zeeko's affordability and multi-compatibility points also give two further box ticks.



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WORD AND PICS: ROBERT CARROLL

THE BREATHABLE VIVIDA TEE HAS BEEN ON AND OFF CONTINUOUSLY THROUGHOUT THIS UNUSUALLY HOT BRITISH SUMMER AND HAS JUST ARRIVED BACK FROM A WATER SPORT TRIP IN ZADAR, CROATIA.

On more than one occasion this shirt has been a true savoir, due to its rapid drying ability and it's cool, breezy design allowing comfort in direct sun.

Whilst I personally favour the shirt over its standard cotton, or rash vest counterparts its unusual sizing did warrant some frustration at times. As a consistent wearer of medium shirts since my early teens I was surprised to discover the overly long approach adopted by Vivida, and I'm still unsure if this was a conscious manufacturing decision. If it was purposely made larger than average I can understand the comfort and cooling benefits but it seemed slightly bigger & longer than most shop bought 'Large' sizes I've tried on in the past.

The design is sleek and fitting for a water sports enthusiast but as a photographer used to observing small detail, I would have to critique the slight lack of clarity in the print which, when compared

against other established branded shirts, looks mildly blurry. .

Conclusion

I would recommend a size check before purchasing and a comparison with other similar

products but cannot fault the comfort and practical benefits of this fun looking and protective tee.

Pros:

Cool and comfortable
Attractive design
Rapidly wicks away moisture

Cons:

Unusual sizing
Slightly blurry printed design





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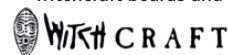
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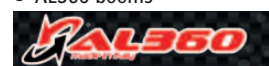
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