

WINDUK SURFING

Issue 7 June 2018

MAURITIUS DOUBLE TAP

with Danny Geereedhary
and Mike Wand-Tetley

VASS:

the early days with Tony Booth

BEHIND THE LENS

with Alex Irwin (Sportography)

GINA CHIPPINGTON'S

surf widow life

KEITH ATKINSON

hot seat Q&A

MR B'S GRILLING

with Simon Bassett

RYA

Team15

+

REGULARS:

CLARE ELLIOTT AND
DAVIS (PETE/ZARA) COLUMNS

TECHNIQUE:

SIMON BORNHOFT WINDWISE &
SIMON WINKLEY FUNDAMENTALS

REVIEWS:

ESSENTIAL GEAR TESTS AND MORE!



BOOM!

IN WITH THE NEW...



NEW WEBSITE & APP
NEW FLIGHTS [BA & THOMAS COOK]
NEW FOILING

#clubvass



Club Vass Active Holidays, Club Vass Holidays, Club Vassiki Holidays are all trading names of Club Vass Active Holidays Limited. Air Travel Organiser's Licence No. 10271.



clubvass.com | 0844 463 0191

WINDuk SURFING

BACK TO THE OLD SCHOOL

I've just read a news story stating the Thailand based Cobra Factory, where many windsurfing and SUP boards (among other things) are manufactured, is set to release an updated version of the original Windsurfer. For many the Windsurfer was the epitome of what the sport stood for in the early days.

Things, however, moved on in terms of technology, development and performance, much to the dismay of some. There have been countless exercises at reintroducing that yesteryear windsurfing experience, through various initiatives, and make windsurfing (in particular the lighter wind end) mass appeal once again. In most cases these exercises have fallen flat – although some have been semi-successful. And yet, during the past few seasons, I've noticed more and more riders getting back out on old school longboards and/or just floating about on their big gear (and I'm not including SUPs with rig attachments in this).

Now I appreciate things are cyclical. Maybe this has been the case previously and I've simply not been paying attention. I do feel, however, there's a bit of a light wind renaissance going on (finally) with sailors simply happy to be out on the brine whatever the wind. Obviously we all love full power blows but for many lining up suitable forecasts with windows of opportunity is tricky – life often conspires to get in the way meaning a large % of windsurfers get what they get. Perhaps banging the active lifestyle drum is now being absorbed by windsurfers who are back at it on lighter air days? Or maybe peeps are fed up with hitting the beach only to be confronted by marginal conditions. Rather than jack it all in it could be the bullet's being bitten and riders are heading for a float regardless, simply wanting to scratch an itch anyway they can?

So could this new/old bit of kit, designed by ex-80s race champ Bruce Wylie, from Cobra rejuvenate light wind areas of windsurfing even further? Maybe. Only time will tell – as with most things. It's certainly not cheap gear (\$1,999) but

TEZ PLA VENIEKS
MAY 2018



Twitter:
[@tezwoz](#)

Instagram:
[@tez_plavenieks_sup_wind](#)

the press release states it comes part of a package. What's also interesting is Cobra themselves stepping up as the supplier brand, rather than badging said kit up with some other company logo. Cobra has always been a tad under the radar about what goes on within its walls. Maybe this is them coming out into the light?

Plentiful amounts

If you're perusing for the first time then hopefully you'll find something to stoke your breeze addicted fires. And don't forget to check out Windsurfing UK's website where we have all manner of other windy related stuff on display for your reading/watching pleasure. In particular pro windsurfer and long time racer Keith Atkinson's series of fitness vids aimed specifically at windies (you'll also notice Keith's mug somewhere on the following pages as we dish out a grilling via our Q&A sit down).

As always if anyone's got any suggestions for articles or ways they want to get involved then feel free to tap us up. The door's always open and we're happy to hear ideas from all corners of the fabulous world of windsurfing.

Until next time – stay steezy.

RRD

WH FLIGHT ALU 85 COMPONENTS



120 cm (STANDARD)



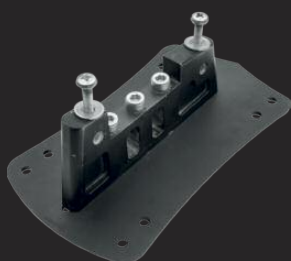
110 cm (OPTIONAL)



100 cm (OPTIONAL)



85 cm



TUTTLE BOX HEAD (STANDARD)

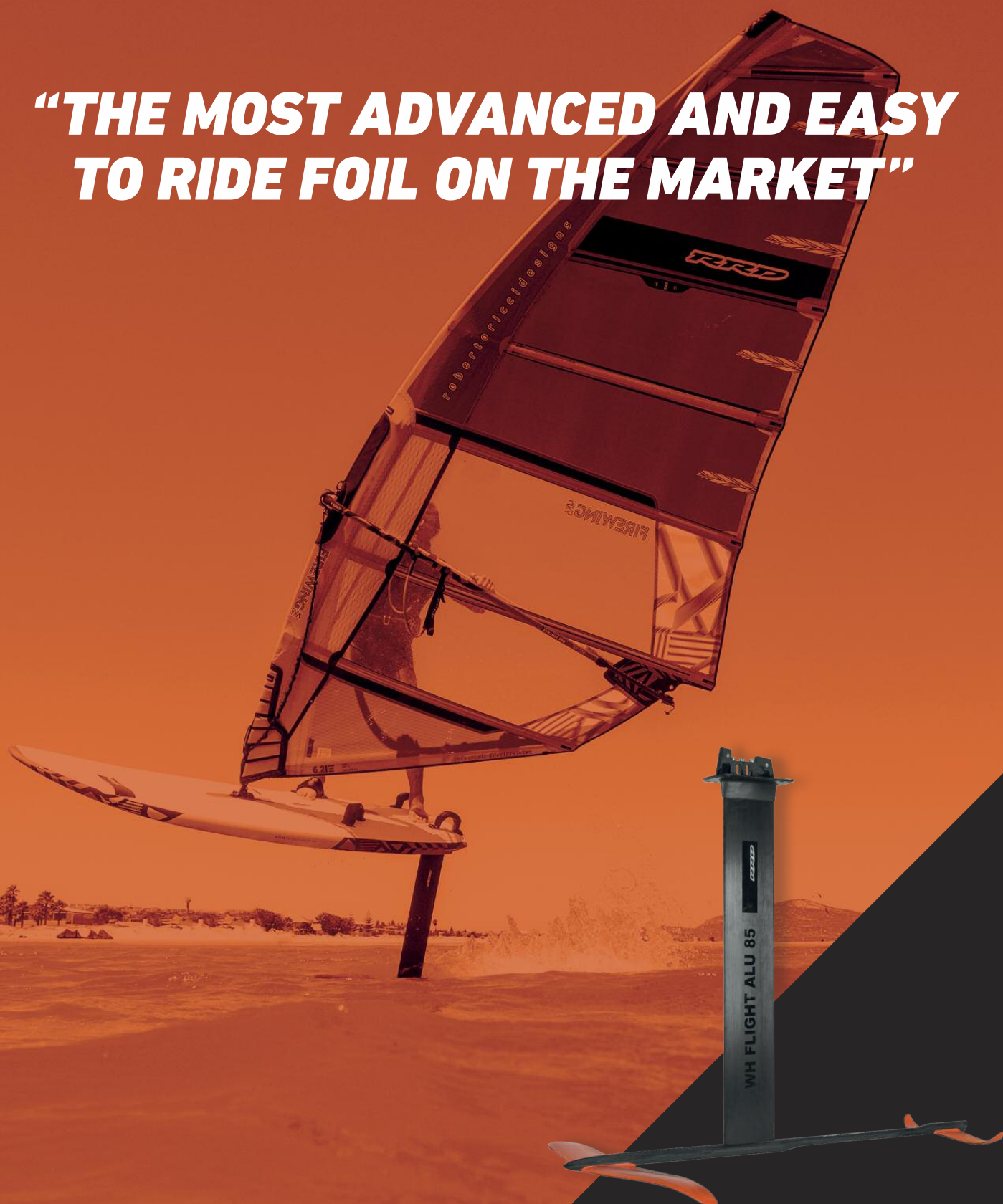


POWERBOX HEAD KIT (OPTIONAL)

www.robertoriccidesigns.com

WH FLIGHT ALU 85

***“THE MOST ADVANCED AND EASY
TO RIDE FOIL ON THE MARKET”***



The **RRD WH FLIGHT ALU 85** is our most advanced freeride aluminium hydrofoil. All in one it incorporates the most innovative features available on the market and more. It is usable on every type of board thanks to its dedicated plate, usable with both tuttle- or powerbox inserts and is extremely fast and performing. Be ready for your full flight-mode!

CONTENTS



12. TRAVEL
Mauritius



20. PROFILE
Alex Irwin



86. COACHING
Simon Winkley

26. PROFILE
Simon Bassett



32. FEATURE
Vass beginnings



76. COACHING
Simon Bornhoft



ED: TEZ PLAVENIEKS
tezwoz1@hotmail.co.uk

ADS: ANNE EGAN
anneegan@mac.com

WINDuk
SURFING

Subscribe in print go to:
www.windsurfingukmag.co.uk/windsurfing-uk-subscriptions/

06/18

FEATURES

8 COLUMN CLARE ELLIOTT

10 COLUMN PETE & ZARA DAVIS

12 TRAVEL MAURITIUS

20 PROFILE ALEX IRWIN

26 PROFILE SIMON BASSETT

32 FEATURE VASS BEGINNINGS

40 FEATURE DANNY GEEREEDHARY

50 PROFILE GINA CHIPPINGTON

54 PROFILE KEITH ATKINSON

62 FEATURE RYA TEAM15

68 TRAVEL TOP 3 DESTINATIONS

76 COACHING SUMMER SKILLS

86 COACHING FUNDAMENTALS

92 SPOTLIGHT NEW KIT REVIEWS

40. PROFILE
Danny Geereedhary

50. PROFILE
Gina Chippington

54. PROFILE
Keith Atkinson

68. TRAVEL
Top destinations

92. REVIEWS
New kit

62. FEATURE
RYA Team15

DESIGN: 2b Graphic Design
peter@2bgraphicdesign.co.uk

Subscribe in digital go to:
<https://joom.ag/EZNL>

THANKS AND PRAISE TO:
CHIEF CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER:
JAMES JAGGER
THANKS TO: PETE & ZARA DAVIS, CLARE ELLIOTT, TONY BOOTH (CLUB VASS), KEITH ATKINSON, ALEX IRWIN (SPORTGRAPHY), GINA & SIMON CHIPPINGTON, DANNY GEEREEDHARY, MIKE WAND-TETTEL, MIC BRIGGALL, SIMON BASSETT (2XS), FINN MELTON, SIMON BORNHOFF, S IMON WINKLEY, PHILIPPE CANIERI (HORUE), JON POPKISS (AHD/AFS), BOB & STU ALLINSON (4BOARDS/LOFTSAIL), BECKY & LARRY CHAN (MK WINDSURFING), PAUL SIMMONS (SEVENE LN), FRANK BLAKE & NIK BAKER (FANATIC), EMMA SLATER (RYA), PLANET WINDSURFING, HOLIDAYS, SAMUEL TOME, BOUKE BECKER & JOHN BLACKWELL (WITCHCRAFT WINDSURFING), FI PLAVENIEKS.
Cover:
Finn Melton attacking the lip in Cape Town by Samuel Tome
Setting the record straight:
We would like to apologise for an credit error on last months cover shot. We incorrectly named Mike Archer as the rider in the shot, but the rider in question was in fact Mike Wand-Tetley, as credited on our website in the article 'The story behind the cover'.

WindsurfingUK magazine is all about sailor to sailor dialogue: a sailor's magazine written by sailors. Next issue is AUG 2018 with a deadline of submissions on June 30th 2018. Technical Information: Contributions as a Microsoft Word file emailed to Tez@windsurfingukmag.co.uk, images should be hi-resolution. WindsurfingUK magazine encourages contributions of any nature but reserves the right to edit to the space available. Opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the publishing parent company, 2b Graphic Design Limited. The publishing of an advertisement in WindsurfingUK magazine does not necessarily mean that the parent company, 2b Graphic Design Limited, endorse the company, item or service advertised. All material in WindsurfingUK magazine is strictly copyright and all rights are reserved. Reproduction without prior permission from the editor is forbidden.

CLARE'S
COLUMNCLUB VASS
DIVA WEEK

Hi all! Following on from my last column on windsurfing communities I'm dedicating this one to a very special windsurfing community that are 'The Divas of Club Vass'. Club Vass is the largest windsurfing centre in Greece; it is based in a small, thriving town called Vassiliki in Lefkada. Lefkada is an island, south of Corfu and north of Kefalonia, joined to the mainland by a causeway.

Vassiliki is at the end of a north-south valley backed by a very high south facing mountain. The Club Vass hotel resort is situated right on the beach, allowing all our guests to be immersed in the action. In the morning, the wind is light and usually onshore, perfect for beginner windsurfers and paddle boarders. As the sun gets higher and moves south towards the mountain it warms the land and generates katabatic thermal winds. These winds increase throughout the day and can reach up to a F7! Ideal for our intermediate and advanced windsurfers.

Mountain biking, Yoga and Pilates are also popular within our resort.

So, what is Diva week? Diva week is a week of windsurfing tuition, fitness and après surf dedicated for female windsurfers of all ages and abilities. It's a female-only group run by world class female instructors. Club Vass designed this week for female windsurfers to come together, learn and improve their windsurfing, but also to have fun, with no pressure or seriousness which I find sometimes can be a problem when learning to windsurf. (Especially being a girl!) Around this week, the resort still runs tuition as normal, usually for the husbands and boyfriends!

Every year we see an increase of Diva numbers. Last year we saw 35 ladies hit the water! It was amazing so many keen female windsurfers came together on and off the water. The ladies are split into ability groups, so they can benefit from specific tuition. There is a beginner group, lower intermediate, higher intermediate and advanced group. Skills



Words: Clare Elliott
Pic: Club Vass

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

that are taught throughout these groups include: beach starts, water starts, getting the board to go fast, using the footstraps and harness, gybes and even freestyle moves.

Amongst the windsurfing action other activities that happen in Diva week are Yoga and Pilates, paddle boarding, running and biking, snorkelling, volleyball and more. Après surf is hugely popular amongst the ladies too. This is a great chance for all of the women to come off the water and share their day's experiences over a 'few' cocktails. There's always an organised supper in town, live band and the infamous Club Vass BBQ, held on the last night of tuition.

Why? I feel Diva week is such a great event that happens at Club Vass for all female windsurfers out there. Windsurfing as a sport is very male-dominated, therefore women are automatically considered inferior on the water. Women may be easily disheartened when it comes to learning to windsurf in much the same way that men are, purely due to the fact that the basics of it as a sport are inherently difficult, however, Diva week is an opportunity for any female windsurfer, whether they are brand new to the sport or not, to participate in learning and support one another. This I believe is something females are naturally good at. But also to not take things too seriously and just come together as strong women willing to contribute our time to windsurfing, keep fit, share stories and have a laugh.

So when is it? Club Vass put on two separate weeks during summer where the 'Divas' take the floor! This season there is one on 3rd June and another from 2nd September 2018. See ya there ladies!

boardwise

MON-FRI 9:30-6:00

SAT 9:00-5:00

call: 01543 505084 SUN: CLOSED

20 CROSS STREET - BRIDGTOWN - CANNOCK - WS11 0BZ

part exchange welcome
interest free credit available
The UK's no.1 board store since 1976

0% Finance

on all purchases above £499

THIS MONTHS MEGADEALS

2018 RRD Freestyle Wave
V4 Ltd 84/90/96/104
rrp: £1899
NOW: £1599

2018 RRD Freestyle Wave
V4 Wood 84/90/96/104
rrp: £1699
NOW: £1299

2017 Fanatic Blast
Ltd 100/115/130
rrp: £1549
NOW: £1199

FOILING PACKAGES

JP Hydrofoil 135 ES
+ Neil Pryde RS Flight
Alloy
rrp: £1998
NOW: £1799

Naish Hover 122/144
+ Thrust WS Foil
rrp: £2748
NOW: £2499

ALL THE LATEST WINDFOIL KIT NOW IN STOCK

NEILPRYDE
RS Flight
Alloy
£699

NEILPRYDE
RS Flight
R4
£2049

STARBOARD
Alloy
GT
£1099

STARBOARD
Carbon
GT
£1899

FANATIC
Flow
H9
£749

RRD
Flight 95
Carbon
£1799

Huge range of WindSUP's in stock

perfect for the whole family!
easily attach any windsurfing rig

WETSUITS UPTO 50% OFF

WETSUIT
WAREHOUSE



www.wetsuitwarehouse.co.uk



largest stock of used gear in the UK
take a look at our website for the latest deals

www.boardwisecannock.co.uk

01543 505084

info@boardwisecannock.co.uk

mail order specialists we deliver worldwide!

sup - windsurfing - snowboarding - surfing - wakeboards - skateboards - wakeskates

DAVIS LOWDOWN

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO WINDSURFING DUO TO PETE AND ZARA DAVIS

Pete:

Ever wondered why there are so many windsurfers that have been sailing for 30 plus years? The sport was only brought to the masses in the 1970s and there are guys and girls still windsurfing from those heady times. Even the big name pros that made small fortunes from windsurfing and were hugely successful back in the day, like Robbie Naish, Bjorn Dunkerbeck and our own Nik Baker and Farrel O'Shea who started as kids, are still ripping now.

So what is it that drives us to keep windsurfing? For sure the kit has become easier, lighter and faster, but that didn't stop us back in the day. Nor does freezing cold winds and water, happily donning our thick rubber suits, hats and gloves to make the most of a winter blow when every normal sane person is in the pub in front of a fire.

Well I have a theory... the drive to carry on windsurfing or come back to it after an absence for kids or a dabble with the dark side (kiting) is for sure partly down to the freedom you get from blasting over the water, jumping and riding waves and overtaking your mates. But I think the reason we keep sailing these (lets be honest) weird craft is because we can't do it whenever we want.

It's a basic human trait that if we are denied something, we want to all the more. If we could windsurf whenever we wanted in perfect conditions we would get bored with it. So often you hear of people giving up their homeland to go and live in windy warm places like Maui and the Canaries and before you know it they're bored and give up and often come home. What is the moral of this story... next time your having a moan about the lack of wind for what feels like a millennia or its freezing cold winds from the east with snow thrown in. Remember that's what keeps us on the hook and makes the good days we get so special.



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

Zara:

This winter has been particularly bad for our sport. What with unseasonably cold weather, snow and a lot of rain. Thrown into the mix to make it even harder for us was hardly any wind! To top it all when it did blow it was usually from the wrong direction. On the plus side it's been a fantastic snow season in Europe for those into snow sports. The combination of which has kept most of us off the water.

So with my Osteopathic head on I thought it would be a good idea to float a few ideas by you all on getting ready for what looks like a good windsurfing season coming up. Firstly if you haven't been doing so, get fit for windsurfing. This is always hard as the best training for windsurfing is windsurfing itself. However in the absence of that good cardio sessions like running and biking is good for all-round fitness but I find a combination of this with functional fitness like suspension training and if you can find one, a good functional fitness gym that helps strengthen your core and really helps with your flexibility and stability.

Finally we all do it; rush down to the beach for our first outing on the water, struggle to remember all the bits and then remember how it all goes together in a desperate bid to get out there. Remember: it's always worth a few minutes just before you go out to do a few active stretches and warm up before hitting the wet stuff. Loosen the ankles, knees, hips, lower back and shoulders, all the areas that will be under strain as you hop over that first wave. It will pay dividend's for your session and most importantly avoid those injuries that can happen when you have been off the water for a while and it will avoid you having to come and see someone like me to mend those broken bits.

See you on the water soon.

THE ONLY
SURFCENTER
RIGHT ON THE
BEACH!

SURF • WINDSURF • KITESURF
SUP • BODYBOARD • CATAMARAN

flag[®]
beach
.com

fuerteventura

★ 30 ★
YEARS

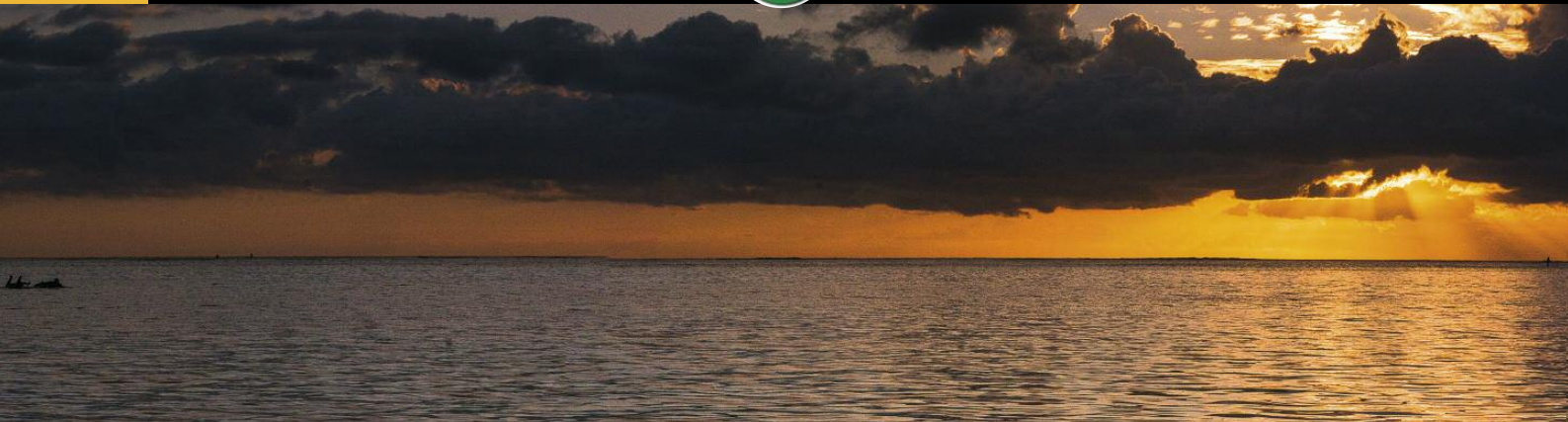
SINCE 1988

RENTAL • SCHOOL • ACCOMMODATION

+34 928 866 389

f FLAGBEACH

t @FLAG_BEACH



SLEEPING WITH DRAGONS

WORDS: MIKE WAND-TETLEY

PICS: MIKE WAND-TETLEY, DAVID VAREKAMP

RUGGED, BEAUTIFUL AND UNTAMED: MAURITIUS IS THE INDIAN OCEAN'S BLACK DIAMOND IN THE ROUGH. Sitting in the tropical Trade Wind belt some 2000Km off the coast of Africa and surrounded by the world's third largest reef, Mauritius has huge potential for some truly epic wave sailing. Once I had realised this and seen a few amazing pictures there was no doubt in my mind, I was going.



Fast forward 12 months and after 14 hours squeezed into a big winged tin can I was more than ready to experience the beautiful turquoise barrels I had been dreaming of for so long. As we drive across the island from the airport to Le Morne it quickly becomes apparent that Mauritius is a melting pot of different cultures. Strong Indian, African, French and even Caribbean influences can be seen on nearly every street. Between the houses, sugar cane fields and Hindu temples occasionally you get a glimpse of the volcanic black pre-historic landscape that makes up the interior of the island. It would be the perfect set for a film like Jurassic Park. It's not hard to see why the Dodo is the national bird.

For the last 20-30 mins of the drive you follow the coastline which feels like a mash-up of the Caribbean and Hawaii to me. On one side of the road Maui beach style car parks with even more impressive white sand and turquoise barrels backdrop, not bad! Whilst the other side is lined with Coconut drive-thru's, food wagons and Coca-Cola branded shacks, just like the streets of Bridgetown in Barbados.

Eventually we arrive at what can only be described as luxury hotel street: a long road running the length of Le Morne with luxury hotel after luxury hotel from end to end. We had chosen to stay at the more reasonably priced RIU hotel for the first half of our stay. For ease, comfort and convenience, this is by far the best hotel for windsurfers. It boasts the best launch spot, conditions, and is home to the island's ION centre. Meaning everything you need is within a stone's throw.

On the water

Le Morne is like a windsurf playground, offering everything from heavy, fast down the line waves to flat water freestyle and slalom. It's the setup of the reefs here that give Le Morne so many different conditions within a relatively small sailing area. The same reef can also make Le Morne dangerous so you need to be aware of your surroundings and get some local knowledge/advice before hitting One Eye on day one.

Essentially the entire island is encircled by one reef, and at Le Morne there is a large gap or channel in the reef. The shape of the reef at Le Morne has created 4 distinct wave breaks, each one more gnarly than the last, and some of the most perfect flat water you will find on the planet, within the protection of the reef. Truly making Le Morne one of the few spots on earth where you can enjoy all disciplines of windsurfing in one day!

Kite/beginner Lagoon

As you look out to sea from the ION centre to your left as you follow the beach around the corner is the flattest area. Generally used by kites and, in the morning beginners, it is a very flat, shallow bay completely enclosed by the reefs and with very little current. Unsurprisingly freestylers like this area.

Main Lagoon

This is simply the area inside the reefs and channel, immediately in front of the beach. It is not as sheltered as

“The wave here is so fast it is like being shot out of a gun! Heavy, fast and unforgiving, One Eye is not for the faint hearted.”



the kite lagoon and so has slightly more wind chop but due to the protection of the reefs very little swell makes it through to this area. On the odd occasion during bigger days some small waves will make it through to the lagoon past little reef, and you can get a very small, soft and friendly wave right by the beach. This is the perfect introduction to waves and many kids, families and beginners head out to play when this little wave works. Other than that though the main lagoon is basically a big protected freeride blasting area for you to enjoy.

Little Reef

As the innocent name suggests little reef is the baby reef of Le Morne and offers good jump ramps and small soft waves. Perfect for those that are new to the waves or want to perfect that new jump. Just inside the channel and outer reefs, little reef is protected from the main swell and so is much smaller than the other outer breaks. Just make sure you check the depth before you start sending big backloops though on a low tide it can get pretty shallow in places.



Manawa (AKA The Sleeping Dragon)

Manawa is right on the edge of the channel on the outer reef, and so is fully exposed to the Indian Ocean's raw power. The beauty of being on the edge of the reef is you can go as deep as you feel comfortable with. You sail out of the channel and upwind to get into position and catch a wave. Once on a wave you then ride down-the-line back towards the channel. So the further upwind you sail the deeper you get and the longer and more gnarly the rides get. So you can stay on the edge of the reef and just sail the lighter more crumbly end of the wave in relative safety and progressively get deeper as you get braver. But be warned if you go deep, the sleeping dragon can still bite. Manawa is a relatively gentle wave, but relative to what is the important question? The answer, One Eye! I have not seen any UK break serve up three-piece masts at the rate Manawa does. It's shallow if you go deep and a logo to mast high bowl isn't unusual, but the very same wave will usually only be about half that size and power on the edge of the reef. I absolutely love Manawa, and it's progressive nature and spent a lot of our holiday sailing here.



Chameaux

The one hit wonder, is basically the other side of the channel to Manawa (right as you look from the beach), just past little reef. As the wave hits the pointy end of the reef here it peels down both sides, into the channel towards little reef and also along the outer reef (One Eye). So Chameaux is essentially the same set up as Manawa but with the opposite wind direction. In terms of down the line riding you'll get one maybe two bottoms turns and a big hit on the right section, but unless it's a big day and you manage to link your big hit into One Eye (extremely hard to do) that will be wave over. Not many people seem to sail here much, I only really sailed Chameaux on my way past to One Eye.

Monster One Eye

The wave here is so fast it is like being shot out of a gun! Heavy, fast and unforgiving, One Eye is not for the faint hearted. The wave at One Eye peels along the reef almost perfectly, and the speed of the peel is crazy! You are basically running away from the section continually. Your first aerial here won't be because you timed it right, it will be because you didn't realise how fast it peeled and ended up with no choice! The power you discover a moment later as the monster throws you out in front of the wave is unreal. It threw me well clear of the white water into the flats on many occasions, I even started to fear I was going to hurt my ankles from all the slap landings. Simply put: one of the best and most exciting waves I have ever ridden, but not something I would recommend to beginners. Note - You will not be able to sail One Eye unless you bring your own equipment as ION don't allow you to take their kit to One Eye, and based on the number of totalled sails and masts coming in from just Manawa I don't blame them.

Precautionary note

Whilst the reef and channel at Le Morne are what created this glorious windsurfing playground, they also can make it a dangerous spot if you are not aware of the risks, so here is a bit of info to help keep you safe.

The waves crash on the reefs pushing water into the bay, which then makes its way back out to sea again through the channel. This creates strong currents in and around the channel. Generally speaking if you stay inside the reefs and clear of the channel you will experience very little current and it shouldn't affect you much, if at all. That being said I would still recommend talking to the ION centre staff before you hit the water, a bit of local knowledge never hurts.

If you want to make your way out into the waves, especially Manawa and One Eye, then you need to know the situation and have a back-up plan should things go wrong. Both are outside of the reefs and the current and wind are pushing you out to sea away from the island, so there is very real risk here. As mentioned earlier renting from the ION centre is a good idea if you want to sail Manawa, the centre is as close as you can get to Manawa on land, and has a beach tower they will watch from if any ION customers go out to Manawa.

They will also provide you with a bright orange ION vest and waterproof mobile phone, which really could end up being your life line if things go wrong.

One Eye is yet another level, ION don't officially cover One Eye for safety as you aren't supposed to take their rental kit there at all. They will rescue people from One Eye but they don't watch it like they do Manawa. Essentially if you want to sail One Eye you are on your own, and to add to this One Eye is the last stop on your way downwind and out to sea. Ideally, or if your name is Jason Polakow, you'd rent a boat with jet ski's, a safety crew and photographer, and do it properly. For those of us with a more modest budgets my recommendation is:

1. Sail in a group using a similar 'buddy' system to divers.
2. Buy a local mobile phone (waterproof ideally) and a waterproof case (a rinsing at One Eye will put any waterproof housing to the test so make sure it's a good one), put the local rescue boat numbers in your new phone and put the phone in your wetsuit. I have never been so glad to have a bulky, uncomfortable brick down my wetsuit before!
3. Make sure someone on the beach knows you are going out there and when you plan to be back. If all of the above fails someone noticing that you're not back on the beach at the time you agreed could be your last chance to raise the alarm.

One last word of caution that applies to all sailing areas really. Check your depth before launching into any big nose first landing jumps. Most of the time you'll be fine but sometimes it can be no more than knee or waste deep if the tide is really low, so it's worth checking quickly just in case.

The island

Away from the beach at Le Morne the island is like nothing I have ever experienced. The towns and cities are very much in development stage and are a world away from the beach side paradise of Le Morne's 'hotel street'. Chaotic and crowded some of the larger cities feel like a slice of Delhi has been separated and put on a paradise island thousands of miles away from India. I'm glad I experienced the towns and cities, in particular the markets, but would not go out of my way to do this again, if I'm honest.





"...the main lagoon is basically a big protected freeride blasting area for you to enjoy."





Black River Gorges National Park

The Black River Gorges National Park is well worth a visit, and given more time on the island I would have loved to do some trekking here. Numerous viewpoints and waterfalls line the roads through the park and they are all worth a look – the prehistoric landscape is stunning. Waterfalls straight out of posh shampoo adverts, cascade over deep black volcanic rocks, covered in lush green tropical vegetation, all set against a distant turquoise reef backdrop; I was half expecting Dr. Grant to run out of the bushes followed by T-rex, shouting “Don’t move. His visions based on movement” at each stop. This does mean that even a short drive through the park can take a long time though, especially if you are a trigger happy photographer, but it’s well worth it.

We didn’t find many of the manmade attractions, such as Ganga Talao Lake as interesting as the park and landscape itself, and would probably bypass these if we went back. One site worth noting is the Bois Cheri Tea Factory. This place is genuinely one white linen clad larger gentleman away from being a Twinning’s advert. The Tea house, which is now a restaurant and gift shop, is set in front of a lake and surrounded by the tea plantations. Sitting on the Veranda drinking in the view (and tea) whilst working my way through one of the best steaks on the island was a great way to recover from all the beatings One Eye gave me the day before, I highly recommend it.

Where to stay

We stayed half our trip at the cheaper RIU hotel on Le Morne, and half in La Gaulette. A small town a few miles down the road from Le Morne, which is closest you will be able to stay if you are not in one of the luxury hotels.

In terms of comfort and ease, staying in one of the luxury hotels on Le Morne is by far the best option. You are literally based on the beach with everything you need on tap and never more than 50 metres away. The RIU I stayed at is also home to the ION centre so if you want everything to be very close stay here.

La Gaulette is small fishing town just down the coast from Le Morne, that has it’s own watersports tourist community from June to October. There are plenty of apartments and villas to rent at a variety of prices. Also there is a number of different watersports shops and rental places in La Gaulette many of which offer a shuttle to the beach as part of their service, though I preferred having my own car. Especially as that means you have the freedom to go and explore the island on your own.

In terms of food in La Gaulette we would recommend American Cafe for breakfast, it’s cheap and good food. Ocean Vagabond, right next door, is a great place for dinner, good food, nice people and usually a good vibe, topped off with windsurfing videos playing at the bar all night long. For car rentals I would recommend Ropsen, they are based in La Gaulette and will be about half the cost of booking through a hotel.

Mauritius really is a little lost world of watersports paradise and Le Morne is probably the best windsurfing playground I have ever visited. In short I’d go back in a heartbeat given the opportunity. It’s not cheap, it’s not close, but I will never forget this trip, least of all the waves. The memories will still be putting a smile on my face for many years to come.



PERFORMANCE CONSTRUCTION

The crisp, responsive feel of the monofilm construction instantly converts power to acceleration.

MAXIMUM STABILITY

7 battens in all but the smallest sizes lock the profiles in position and work together with the high skin tension to maximise stability and wind range.

RACE EVOLVED

Built from the knowledge base of the REFLEX program, the NCX delivers race sail performance without cams.

D18 NCX NO CAM RACE

Engineered for performance, the D18 NCX defines the no-cam freerace category. Widely recognized as the best no-cam freeride sail available, the NCX delivers accessible race sail performance without cams.



SEVERNE

FOR THE LOVE...

ALEX IRWIN

SPORTOGRAPHY PROFILE

ALEX IRWIN IS FAST BECOMING ONE OF THE MOST RESPECTED PHOTOGRAPHERS WITHIN THE SAILING WORLD. HE'S ALSO GETTING MORE INVOLVED WITH WINDSURFING, AS CAN BE SEEN BY LAST ISSUE'S SIMON WINKLEY COASTAL SAILING ARTICLE AND THIS VERY ONE YOU'RE HOLDING IN YOUR HANDS. WE CAUGHT UP WITH ALEX TO FIND OUT MORE.

Tell us a bit about your watersports background.

Keen swimmer, kayaker, sailor and love being out on the water or in it.

When did you first discover the joys of photography? What was your initial subject matter?

We had tickets to Wimbledon and we were lucky enough to see the final between Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal when Nadal beat Federer. It was possibly the best match I have ever watched. This was before the roof cover was fitted on centre court. The match was delayed several times for rain; by the last game it was almost dark and I kept on shooting every bit. He won, he dropped to the floor in joy and stayed there for some time – everyone was so happy for him and I kept snapping and snapping capturing the moments. I was then sitting there taking it all in, looking through the images I'd captured and someone came over and said they would like to buy the images without seeing them. I grabbed the moment and the chap bought every single one. I knew then that this was the career for me – getting paid to capture amazing moments and doing something you love as well.



At what point did the lightbulb go off and you decide to combine photography and water?

We became members of the local sailing club in Burghfield and my father enjoyed taking photos and had a rather nice camera – a Canon 30D then a 5D MK II with a 70-300 lens. One day thought I would bring the camera down to the sailing club and photograph sailors going round the buoys. This then led on to some sailors asking for the images.

You've been involved with some significant shoots. What's been your fave to date and why?

I have been involved in many significant shoots ranging from the Queen's Diamond Jubilee parade down the Thames, capturing the pageant from the top of a 120ft mast, to the London Olympics. That said my favourite so far has probably been the Royal Yacht Squadron Bicentenary where classic J-Class yachts raced around the Isle of Wight. We were probably the only media RIB that ventured south of the Island and it was pretty extreme.

Where's your ideal location for capturing awesome images?

There probably isn't one location as such, it is more dependent on the conditions. Bring sun, wind and waves to almost any location and it is transformed into my ideal work place.

What about subject? Describe your ideal.

For me the ideal subject is the interaction between sailors and their craft. Yes there are always spectacular shots of boats crashing through waves or windsurfers in the air but if you can capture the human side it can elevate the shot to something truly magical.

You're fairly new to windsurfing photography but have been working with WSUK's Simon Winkley. How did this partnership come about?

Simon Winkley, oh where do I start? He taught me everything I know! I am joking, sorry Simon. I met Simon six or seven years ago now whilst photographing at Queen Mary Sailing Club where he windsurfs and owns a boat repair service. He is always extremely helpful whenever we have a problem with our RIB and we have also helped Simon with the odd photography question. He asked if we would work with him on some windsurfing projects and we jumped at the chance. Don't get me wrong I cannot windsurf to save my life – a blind monkey drunk would be a better windsurfer than I am. I love windsurfing, SUP and surfing shots though and was wondering how to capture those amazing moments. Now I feel I am one of those people on the cusp of capturing awesome windsurfing images.

Any funny moments for the two of you whilst on a shoot?

Snow, rain and -8 wind chill. Right, so this is when I thought I'd get some great windsurfing shots wrapped up nice and warm. Well that was wrong wasn't it? I saw dogs walking past warmer than I was! I drove down in snow, got to West Wittering where the weather worsened and then whilst photographing we had the whole lot: wind, snow and rain. We got some cracking shots out of it but it was BLOODY freezing! But with the help of my Zhik Kiama Coat, a few coffees and a good old bacon sandwich we were all back to a normal functioning human beings soon enough. What a cracking day (honest!).

Plan on doing more windsurfing photography? If so, anything specific you can tell us?

I would love to do some more windsurfing photography. I actually own a water housing so some wave shots or beneath the sea shots with the windsurfer above would be awesome. I also really enjoy the lifestyle shots so capturing the windsurfer looking out to sea or warming up in their van and so on would be cool. I feel doing a photoshoot isn't just about capturing the product, it's also about capturing the story of the day, so if you have a puncture on the way back from the photoshoot, photograph it, as it's part of the story. Wait did I just say that? That never happened on a photoshoot with Simon did it?

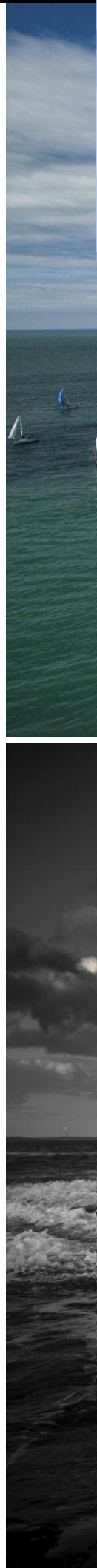
Talk us through your tools of the trade. You've shelled out for some costly equipment.

Do I have to (crying sad face)? It's a hefty investment! With technology constantly changing and quality of video and photographic equipment getting better and better it's a profession that you have to keep up with the times on. For example the drone market is booming and clients are wanting that aerial perspective whether it's photo or video. We are fully qualified and CAA approved. So without going into too much detail equipment is costly but we are completely self-sufficient. We have a 6.5m rib configured for videography and photography with a fully commercial advanced powerboat driver at the helm: David aka my dad.

How's working with your dad?

Really beneficial, he is a sailor, knows how to work a camera and as mentioned is the RIB driver. With his sailing experience he can put us safely in the best position for shots. For close up drone work he flies the drone and I operate the camera. This means that 100% of my attention goes into the imagery.

Yes there are always spectacular shots of boats crashing through waves or windsurfers in the air but if you can capture the human side it can elevate the shot to something truly magical.





Ever chuck your toys out of the pram with him? (Or he the same!).

Of course we do but success is to then move on. So two minutes later it never happened and all is good.

Who's your fave photographer and why?

I have quite a few but there is one that stands out for me for his creativity and pure impact of his images and that is Carlo Borlenghi. He's now in his 60s. His images are artistic and each one I feel tells a story and that has come from many years of practice.

What's the image you wish you'd been credited for, watersports or other?

A good question. There are many shots I see and wish I had taken, envy is a powerful motivator to improve. If pushed I guess I would have to say that the image of Nadal winning the Wimbledon final already discussed. Instagram for me is the best social media platform and at the end of the day with a beer it's always good to have a browse and find some incredible images that you can learn from, maybe the technique in which it was taken.

How hard is it to make a living from photography?

Very! Anyone with an iPhone can be a photographer. Anyone can capture that moment now as everyone has a camera, of sorts, so it's just trying to find that market/niche and make the most of it. Also, it's not the subject matter that necessarily counts it's how you capture it.

Any big plans for 2018, if so what?

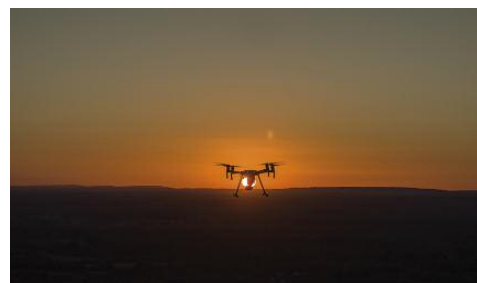
This year we have some big events coming up and live video feed/photos is something which is very exciting. We are hoping to provide live on the water coverage without leaving our RIB, from both our video cameras, drone included, and also photographic camera edits and post within minutes to the social media world and to media centres.

What about time afloat yourself. Do you get much?

Not enough. We are heavily involved in the running of Burghfield Sailing Club and our RS400 dinghy is there. I have not sailed it for quite some time (you don't need to know exactly how long). We do enjoy making sure the bar is still functioning though. I also have a 12-foot bamboo stand up paddle board I would love to use more. So we spend many hours afloat but normally with a camera in hand.

When are we going to see you on the other side of the lens aboard some windsurfing kit?

Ummmm, help is needed. I would definitely need to have a few lessons first but would love to give it a go – when it warms up. I did start kitesurfing which was great but again a lack of time means that's been put on hold.





Any final thoughts on windsurfing or photography in general?

I truly believe that the medium of static image is still more powerful than video. Photos capture the second memory and is with you for life whereas video normally gets watched then is forgotten about. You can't hang videos on the wall either. My most memorable image is my father capturing me at the 2012 Olympics with a Canon 1DX and a 600 prime lens which is an absolute beast. I had more people photographing me and my set up and than the actually runners going past!

Thanks and praise?

I have been very fortunate with the support received during the early part of my career. In particular Tony Bishop of Queen Mary SC stands out. My first experience was back in 2012 when we covered the Bloody Mary regatta, not as a commission but purely for fun. QMSC then printed my images which are proudly hung on the club house walls. Since then we have covered every Bloody Mary and plan to continue. This relationship then led to introductions to Royal Thames yacht club and then on to Cowes Etchells fleets. We also work with the Andrew Simpson Sailing Foundation as a direct result of Tony initiating the first Bart's Bash. So thank you Tony.





SIMON SAYS. . .

SIMON BASSETT IS THE EVER FAMILIAR FACE OF 2XS CLUB, SCHOOL AND SHOP AT ONE OF THE SOUTH COAST'S BEST LOVED WINDSURFING SPOTS: WEST WITTERING, WEST SUSSEX. INVOLVED WITH WINDSURFING SINCE THE VERY START WE SAT DOWN FOR A NATTER WITH SB TO FIND OUT MORE.

Tell us when you first discovered windsurfing and stepped on a board. What made you decide to get involved and what kit were you using?

I was dinghy sailing as a kid on lakes in the Cotswolds. My dad bought an original Windsurfer in the south of France (1974) on holiday and that was my first introduction to the sport. It was a heavy board; big sail with no window and a solid teak wooden boom and mast foot that pushed into the deck of the board.

Where was the location of your first windy steps?

When we got back from France we would windsurf on the local lakes in south Cerney and Somerford Keynes. My dad set up a windsurf school and club in 1976 which was in a perfect location at Cotswold Water Park - I could cycle from home and windsurf as much as I wanted. It was the start of my addiction to windsurfing!

What was the hook that drew you in and kept you wanting more?

The lakes where we originally windsurfed on would not allow windsurfing above force 4 – for me this was when windsurfing came alive. We learnt to jump 12ft boards without straps, cut the boards down in size and chopped fins to get more speed or air. In the winter months we attached an angle iron so we could ice windsurf! Kit choice was very limited.

Did you compete back in the day? If so, what are your best result results and memories from that period?

Yes I competed in lots of events and classes – course racing, speed, wave and slalom – at the time it was very exciting. You needed so much gear! I was at the Weymouth Speed Trials when Fred Haywood broke the world speed record at 30 knots. I remember being hit by lightening with 300 others competitors at Grafham Water and have an unofficial 30 knot World Production Record with Klepper at a speed event in Halifax.



Simon Bassett



How often were you sailing then? Is it the same now?

Lots back then, every spare moment. For me now after 41 years windsurfing I pick my moments. I always go windsurfing or SUP surfing on holiday and my kit is right on the beach at West Wittering so I can go when it looks good.

What kit couldn't you be without?

My Goya custom made quad and my Ezzy Taka 4.

How has that changed over the years?

Gear has got lighter and stronger and has a much bigger wind range. It's just so much easier to windsurf now. You need a lot less equipment, which is great.

What piece of windsurfing equipment really gets your juices flowing?

I have a big windsurf toy box so lots of choice depending on the day. A perfect session would be on a 5.3m Ezzy Taka, Streamlined carbon boom with 14 knots of wind and

my Slingshot windfoil board. Then when the wind and waves pick up at high tide a 4.7m Ezzy and Quatro Super Mini 85l.

When did windsurfing turn into a performance sport for you?

Windsurfing has always been about performance since I was about 11 but it also has been about simply being on the water and in the ocean. It's all about that magic feeling you get after a decent session.

Was your sailing about moves or speed?

Originally it was a voyage of discovery, not many moves to start with. I remember watching Jurgen Honscheid doing a planning carve gybe on Grandstand. It was inspiring so we tried it at speed along with many other moves.

And now?

Now it's more about waves, fun, not getting injured and riding with friends.





Talk us through your discovery of West Wittering and what makes it such a special place for windsurfing.

I first discovered West Wittering on a trip with Martin West when I worked in Staines as a windsurf instructor. It's a beautiful, rural beach that the locals purchased to stop a Butlin's development in the 50s. The windsurfing conditions change each season due to the sand bars that move. You have waves at high tide and flat water at low tide. It couldn't be better!

How was it back in the day? Has much changed about the spot?

Since I've been here we have more sand. The beach was pebbles back in the day. Now that it's sandy we have much better surf and longer to walk at low tide with your kit.

When did you decide to set up a windsurfing centre and how difficult was it to get things going?

We set up 2XS® in 1989. We were a shop in West Wittering selling windsurfing gear, mountain bikes, power kiting equipment and then snowboards.

To start with it was super hard. Interest rates were 15%, we had no money but we won a competition and got some loot and support from the Princes Youth Business Trust. We were a finalist in a UK PYBT competition and received an award from Prince Charles.

We took over the beach site in 1991 when the land owners wanted to ban windsurfing. We drew up a safety plan and beach management system to keep windsurfing there, and keep it safe for other beach users.

What are your fondest memories of running 2XS?

There are lots of highs and a few lows but a big one was when Walmart tried to take our name 2XS® and trade mark. James Mellor, a windsurfing buddy, saved our bacon and we won our two year dispute with them.

Tell us how things are for 2XS these days? What's different to then vs now?

Well, we had a shop and in 2005 we sold the land for development and took it all online. It was a big risk. The internet back then was just starting, suppliers weren't too keen. Now we have a demo centre, school, club, hire and an online shop, so you can try before you buy – we have some great suppliers which makes it much better.



If you could start again what would you do differently, if anything?

Probably not much. Maybe keep a few more original custom boards I had and, as always, only sell what you believe in.

As a concept 2XS is quite unique, resembling more an overseas centre than UK based windsurfing club. How much do you think this has played in the success of 2XS?

Well why not? The UK is a great destination and West Wittering beach is amazing. We just wanted to provide the best option for windsurfing – the 2XS club, school, hire and demo centre – and have the best choice of kit.

Where's windsurfing sit for you in 2018?

For us it's a 110% priority. We're teaching 5 year olds to sail, we're selling the latest kit, we're learning new stuff on the water and we are generally on it!

What would you change about the sport, if anything?

The weather! If we had more consistent wind we wouldn't need to go abroad windsurfing. It would be kicking here in the UK.

How do you see windsurfing moving forwards? Is foiling the future?

I really like light wind foiling. I think it is epic gliding across the water in low wind with small sails. I would like to see freestyle grow in the UK. I think it should be part of basic windsurf lessons. It is the basis of rig and board control. You can do freestyle in lakes, flat water and at the coast in waves.

What are your plans windsurfing wise for the rest of the year? Got any overseas trips planned, if so where?

Tenerife in a few weeks then Club Vass in the summer.

Tell us about your fave global windsurfing destination and why you love it.

It has to be Maui – that is THE place – Pa'ia, North Shore. Windsurfing with our friends the Mckirgans, riding and flying over the reef at Camp One, Spartans Reef with Whitey, Fred Haywood, Dave Ewer and Nicky Boy back in the day are amazing experiences. As was going to the Quatro/Goya custom house and getting a new board. Maui is the full windsurfing experience, and then some!

You have three women in your life (two daughters and a wife) who seem to be into watersports. Is this more luck or pure judgement?

Jane (wife) likes the beach and sometimes windsurfs or SUPs. Holly and Daisy (daughters) both love the ocean and windsurf, SUP and surf. We had a brief moment with horses but warm beach holidays sealed the deal!

Do you think it's harder for women in windsurfing than men?

No I don't. I think if you want to succeed it's the inner beast that drives your determination and you need lots! You do need access to decent kit, coaching and a support network for windsurfing, that's what makes it hard for people to learn. The lack of those things that is.

Any final thoughts?

Yes! Go windsurfing! Buy some new windsurf toys and take a windsurfing holiday – you won't regret it.



We don't just sail Severne
We live Severne!

search severneshop.com



NEVER MISS A FLASH DEAL

GET YOUR EXCLUSIVE EMAIL
NOTICE OF MONTHLY 24/48HR
FLASH DEALS

LIMITED-TIME FLASH DEALS EVERY MONTH
SAVE ON SAILS, MASTS, BOOMS, HARNESSSES,
EXTENSIONS, AND EVERYTHING ELSE SEVERNE.

OPT-IN NOW AT severneshop.com

* We won't spam you!

Need advice? Call us today 07515 553535

- + Largest Severne retailer in the world
- + Best prices in the UK
- + Part exchange your old Severne sails
- + 5 dedicated experts for 24/7 advice
- + Join our FREE Revolutionaires club for money off
- + FREE delivery available in mainland UK
- + Great savings on boards, booms, masts and hardware
- + We deliver worldwide

Pictures are for illustration purposes and show sails with coloured backlight giving the transparent areas the appearance of colour. * Club membership discount – join for free online and save the same day. Excludes already heavily discounted products and certain sale items. ** Online prices quoted are for a limited time only and subject to change. severneshop.com is part of Quayside Severne Shop. Prices correct at time of going to print.

VASS

BEGINNINGS

How it all started:
the short version!

WORDS: TONY BOOTH

PICS: TONY BOOTH, CLUB VASS

CLUB VASS HAS BEEN IN EXISTENCE FOR QUITE A WHILE. IN FACT, THE ICONIC VASSILIKI BAY WINDSURF CENTRE CELEBRATED ITS 30TH BIRTHDAY LAST SEASON. Windsurfing UK caught up with one of the founders, Tony Booth, to find out how it all started, what's changed and how things are likely to be.



When did you start windsurfing and where were those first steps taken?

I actually had a go in St Tropez in the days when you had to wedge a piece of bamboo into the mast foot to stop the rig popping out. The rest was mainly in Vassiliki...

Tell us what made you head to Lefkas and the story behind discovering Vassiliki Bay. Was it all cloak and dagger stuff or was 'Eric' common knowledge?

It may not be the romantic story you're hoping for! I was teaching waterskiing, in Tolon in the Greek Peloponnese and didn't really take to it. One night I was putting the world to rights in a bar with a couple of mates, Gary a pro Aussie rugby player and Paul who happened to own a share in a windsurf operation in Vassiliki. I knew Paul from ski seasons in Andorra and during this rather wobbly evening he mentioned that Roger, another mate from Andorra, was working at the centre in Vassiliki. So we hit the road and arrived in Vass on the opening night of the Zeus Bar! That set the tone, and after a couple of quite hazy months, I decided to buy the operation and see what we could do with it. At that stage the centre was a handful of boards and sails that had to be moved most afternoons to allow the shepherd to pass with his sheep; we never looked upon it as a 30+ year business.

Luckily for us a guest had a friend involved in Thomson Holidays who liked windsurfing so he started promoting Club Vassiliki.



Got any particular stand out memories of those first Vass sessions you can share?

It was an amazing time, albeit a bit blurred. We all had Tiga 260s and Neil Pryde RAF Wave 4.7m s (or similar) and we had to walk along the beach from our old 'Centre 1' to the middle of the bay. No matter what the wind was doing we would sail until it got dark and then walk back through the shallows, generally ecstatic and gasping for a beer or two!

What was Vass like back in the day – pre the popular spot it is now?

Even then it was popular and not exactly a 'secret spot'. Windsurfing was at its peak; the days of the Golf GTI with the obligatory windsurfer on the roof. There were fewer tavernas but it was just as much fun. We knew all of our guests personally and we did everything together and had some great times.

Any particular characters you recall from that era that helped shape Vass into the location it is today?

There are so many; we've always had the most incredible people working with us, as is still the case today. There were a few stand out characters such as Rocket Ron who lived on our look-out tower for a season and made curry for us in exchange. It was a long time ago so most of the people around then have moved on. One of the special people in the early days was a good friend who worked with us and the RYA, Roddy Coull. Unfortunately Roddy is no longer with us, but he will always be remembered in Vassiliki and he's the first guy I had ever saw do a forward!

Has the wind changed much or is it still more or less the same set of conditions you get nowadays?

Haha! Well there are some theories that it's changed, due to tarmac on the roads and a villa on the hillside. But it's still the same wind, still working its magic.

What was the windsurfing move that everyone wanted to do in Vass at that time?

The beach start! No, seriously! I think it was probably a duck tack or even a 360, but all pretty tame by today's standards.

Has it always been a location synonymous with progressive windsurfing?

Yes for sure. I've been to a lot of windsurf destinations but none compare to Vassiliki, unless you want waves. It's always been a spot where you know you'll get good wind that will work for all levels and at Club Vass you know you'll find top notch instructors and kit.

What prompted Roger (Green) and yourself to open a windsurfing centre in Vass? Were windsurf holidays popular then?

The centre was already there (in a fashion) and windsurfing holidays were just starting. Luckily for us a guest had a friend involved in Thomson Holidays who liked windsurfing so he started promoting Club Vassiliki. I guess we were in the right place at the right time and it's just grown from there. We just wanted to create a destination that we would like to go to and that's still our approach. Club Vass seems to attract like-minded people; we all love windsurfing and having a good time, it's infectious.

How did your first week go? Did you have pre-bookings or was it all heart in the mouth stuff?

It's a long time ago now. We had a few pre-bookings and we would grab people off the beach and convince them they would actually enjoy the experience - most actually did.





And number of guests in those early days; how many did you cater for?

Anything from 0 – 20, it's a lot more now.

What were yours and Roger's roles back in the day?

Layabouts really! There were only three of us at the start so we did pretty much everything; we were instructors, board repairers, reps, party organisers, etc.

When did Vass start getting busier? Do you think that was down to you guys promoting the spot?

I'd like to take all the credit but I think luck played a big part. Windsurfing was the 'in sport' at the time and there are few places better for all levels than Vassiliki. Initially two or three tour operators featured us in their brochures and we saved up for the occasional ad in the magazines. Word of mouth also played a role as windsurfing's always been quite a tight community. It was probably by year three that we started to see a future in it.

How hard did you have to work to attract custom when other centres started springing up?

There weren't many centres in Vassiliki; the only two with any presence were Club Vass and Falcon Sailing and both offered a good product. Including lessons in the holiday was the magic formula, as people had a great time on the water and enjoyed the sociability of the small groups, and nobody else really did this. We started offering all new kit each year which made us the real 'stand-out' operation.



Any funny stories from back then with reference to guests that you can tell us (windsurfing or partying wise)?

So many but better not to name and shame in the press!

As much as Vass has a windy rep it's always been good for a right old knees up. Has this changed over the years or is it still good for blowing off some steam?

It's still the same, it's always been a great spot for a party and still is. When Paddy Payne brought Vass Class to us, it put Vassiliki on the party map, so many characters and great friends came from that initial event. Pete Hart and Dave White are still regulars and even Mark Woods is back this year, I don't think Jono has ever missed a year since!



As they started to bring their young families we started kids clubs and now we have the super popular ProKids for the next generation



Who do you think has gone the hardest on the party front in Vass over the years? Any (publishable) details?

It's never been a contest, it's just one of those things that people fall into – I could easily fill your magazine with names but I'm saving it for my book deal!

These days there are as many families as there are hard sailing individuals heading your way. Why do think this is?

The holiday market changed a few years ago, people want a bit more than a beach and a sunbed. As I mentioned earlier, we created Club Vass as a place we wanted to go to and people of our generation seemed to think the same. As they started to bring their young families we started kids clubs and now we have the super popular ProKids for the next generation. The kit is better now and more usable for all the family. People want some activity to be available on their holiday and at Club Vass it's all there for everyone to do as much (or little) as they want.

Some windsurfers also make camp in Vass for weeks on end. Do you see the same old faces year in year out? Who stands out the most from this crowd?

There have always been a few that spend the season there, Clive and Jean spring to mind.

Club Vass is now one of the most well stocked windsurfing centres in the world, as far as gear goes. How much do you spend on kit each season?

A lot but we all like new toys, it's the back bone of the business along with the tuition. I suppose it's several £100,000s.

Does all of this equipment end up getting used in a season?

Yes, for sure, you can never have enough.

How has windsurfing changed over the years, in general? Do you see as much enthusiasm for the sport as always?

We do but then we run a windsurf centre. Windsurfers are a great crowd of like-minded people, we like to sail, go on a MTB ride and have a beer. Nothing has really changed on that front, which is another reason so many old clients return and just get straight back into their stride. The biggest change is the tuition and the kit, it's so much easier to use and so much lighter, people learn in a fraction of the time. It took me two seasons to learn to waterstart and as for gybing, I was called One Tack Tony!

And what about the wider industry? What's your opinion on that?

To be honest I just keep my head down and concentrate on Club Vass.

Foiling is the buzz word of the moment and Club Vass now offers this option. Do you think this could be as popular as some say?

Good question and hard to answer. I think it needs a couple of years for the manufacturers to work out what is the best option, there are a lot of different set ups available right now and they are all pretty expensive. It's an exciting time – watch this space.

Have you tried it? If so, what's your opinion?

No, I had a leg op so I haven't windsurfed for a year, but the guys tell me it's incredibly tiring at first but an amazing buzz, I'm sure it's good for the sport.

What are you looking forward to most for the 2018 Club Vass season?

The start... I love it there!

And final mentions, thanks or praise?

As I mentioned before we have had such an amazing team over the years, they all deserve a mention but as for the present I have to say Ollie has done a top job running the place over the past few years. My biggest thanks will always be to the people of Vassiliki, I've made incredible friends and without that wind I could still be working on Grimsby fish docks!



You can find out more about Club Vass Holidays by visiting - www.clubvass.com

SUPER RIDE



GOLD EDITION
116 | 132



PRO EDITION
102 | 116 | 132 | 146



FULLWOOD SANDWICH
102 | 116 | 132 | 146



EPOXY SANDWICH
116 | 132

- SUPER COMFORTABLE TO RIDE
- SUPER EASY TO CONTROL
- SUPER FOR ALL KINDS OF GYBES (INTERMEDIATE, ADVANCED, RACE)
- SUPER FAST

They provide a totally new windsurfing experience - they jump on a plane early, get seriously fast and yet are incredibly comfortable and easy to ride and gybe. They never ever get out of control even when fully powered up. **YOU WILL BE AMAZED HOW EASY IT IS TO GET SUPER FAST WITH THEM.**

THE RIGHT STUFF...

www.JP-AUSTRALIA.com

CHANGING LANES

WORDS: DANNY GEEREEDHARY

PICS: DAVE WHITE, ANDY STALLMAN, XAVIER KÖNIG: BLASTOFF CREATIVE, STEEVE BONCOURT: SAR PRODUCTIONS, DANNY GEEREEDHARY
FROM THE BROWN WATERS OF THE UK'S EAST COAST TO SUNNY, WARM AND THE TROPICAL CLIMES OF MAURITIUS, SLALOM/SPEED SAILOR DANNY

GEEREEDHARY HAS GONE THROUGH AN INTERESTING TRANSITION IN TERMS OF WINDSURF LOCATIONS AND WHERE HE NOW CALLS HOME. WSUK caught up with him to find out more about this seemingly idyllic lifestyle. (We're not jealous, honest!).





From Essex to Mauritius with Danny Geereedhary

I skateboarded the streets of London where I grew up for ages. Early teens I saw an advert on a British Airways flight of a windsurfer blasting across a tropical lagoon for the drinks brand Martini (or it could have been Bacardi). That left a wow impression with me. At the time I didn't realise that a few years later I would actually take up the sport.

When I moved out of London to (near) the Essex coast windsurfing was a natural 'surfy lifestyle' follow on from my earlier skateboarding addicted years. I was mainly a freeride weekend warrior. But then I started hitting events.

In the past 10 years I've competed on two UKWA competition circuits. First wave sailing in the BWA (masters fleet). Then more recently I switched to UKWA /BSA slalom racing (amateur fleet). I did the ams for two years after first trying out their 'master blaster' fleet. Brian Tilsbury who runs that taster entry fleet is brilliant fun and really dedicated.



Development

My windsurfing development has been about applying what I've read in windsurf magazines. Many hours studying the articles of Peter Hart and Simon Bornhoft. I've only twice ever had instructional clinic days. Once on a Simon Bornhoft Windwise looping day at Hayling Island and another was a slalom gybe clinic weekend at OTC Weymouth with Mark Hosegood. Both were excellent. Perhaps I should have attended more clinics then I might have been further on in terms of windsurfing skills?

My most recent development was having a go at speed-sailing with the local Essex/East Anglian crew and TWB (Team WhiteBoarders), tagging along with the legend Dave White. I'm forever grateful to have spent some time training amongst this talented group (of friends) which pushed me from a freerider, formerly using wave kit, to potential racer using full on slalom kit and now speed-sailing.

Training with 'Whitey's gang' was definitely the catalyst that helped improve my windsurfing speed regardless of water state and wind strength. Sometimes in gales those boys literally took no prisoners. It was genuinely a case of either try to keep up or go home. That association introduced me to speed sailing. Something that I've brought with me to Mauritius – I've been helping develop the speed-sailing scene here.

But thanks for labelling me as a slalom/ speed sailor although I'm not sure that I am properly either? I do both but have yet to make a significant mark in either areas. I'm really chuffed to be involved in both as much as I can. I simply love our sport.



I sailed all over East Anglia's coastal waters but West Mersea was my closest, most frequented, local spot. Of course I will always miss friends and familiar venues.

Coming from a wave sailing/bump and jump freeriding background I used to think sailing quick in straight lines was a tad 'boring' and that basically anyone could do it with the latest, fastest, kit, hence where was the challenge in that? So I ignored it for many years ... but I was so wrong. The adrenaline produced in racing today's fast modern, short length, wide performance boards has been responsible for my latest addiction. The efforts the UKWA have made, in large part, membership plus transitioning into the world of slalom racing very easy and highly enjoyable. The craic is excellent. Speed



“Training with ‘Whitey’s gang’ was definitely the catalyst that helped improve my windsurfing speed regardless of water state and wind strength.”

sailing was a natural extension from slalom racing. Although it's different from slalom racing all it took was one trip down to the speed strip at the Ray, Southend, Essex and I was hooked.

In 2017 Mauritius hosted the IFCA African and Asian leg of its slalom race series. Given the high calibre of racing attendees I predictably placed where I thought I would. But that wasn't a good competition result for me as I was riddled with kit issues/breakages during the entire race week. I would love a crack at the PWA, even if was only to come last. I don't see myself at that kind of level, although training where I am in Mauritius is really good for me.

Mauritius

I was born, raised and worked in the UK my entire life. Then quickly leaving to live on the other side of the world in Mauritius, far away from everything I know, has not been easy but all things considered the fact that it's Mauritius has to some extent made it easier. Primarily my relocation was to help both my parents with rapidly declining health issues. They are Mauritian and returned to live there when I was 19. Now many years on they have aged further and both have medical issues that limits their mobility when out and about. Things simply deteriorated with them to the point that they needed help and that's the real reason for my sudden move over here.

Most people will associate Mauritius with tropical white sandy beaches, lush coconut trees, high class hotels all fronting a very nice holiday destination. Oh, not forgetting great watersports activities. Aside from these obvious attractions none of them were the reason for my sudden, unplanned





“There are other great spots such as ‘Anse la Raie’ in the north east. On the east coast there are couple of flatwater reef locations that at the right tide give delightful flat water. They provide the most blissful freeride blasting experience.”



relocation. Had it not been for my parents conditions I would still be in Blighty. The island has been rapidly developing and since my arrival I've discovered it's now far more attractive to live here compared to when I last visited 13 years ago. With that surge in development there are more resources and services making life here for Europeans, or those accustomed to 'western habits', quite amenable, yet still in full island style. I imagine I'm not the first UK windsurfer to relocate to Mauritius although I've not read about anyone else having done it?

Island benefits

I have noticed there's a steady trickle of new expats choosing to live in Mauritius. But my circumstances for moving here are not the same as a typical migrating expat. Nevertheless it's made available to me the same island benefits plus great watersports in year round warmth. For now my parents are still independent enough around the house so at least that leaves with me lots of free time to go windsurfing.

I live on the east coast but I'd prefer to live anywhere along the western coast as, in my opinion, more development has and is still being concentrated on that side of the island. My parents built their home on the east coast a while after they returned to live in Mauritius, so that's where I immediately fitted in upon my arrival to island.

I'm three miles inland from the sea although it's about a 10-minute drive to the nearest windsurfing lagoon. If I wanted I could literally be on the water every day that there's wind because of the year round warmth. Over here it's so easy to get picky about which days to go windsurfing as there are plenty of nice sunny days with wind that one can simply sneer/turn noses up at. Now when I drive to a beach I sometimes still have to pinch myself looking around at the place with its vibrancy and colour.

I'm still getting used to the place and it still really hasn't fully sunk in that I'm actually living here. When I hear of my friends back home struggling with the cold or lack of winter winds it's really then that it sinks in.

Notably the one big difference I've found is that time on the water really is limited for slalom kit training using larger slalom fins. At the most generous it's about max three hours in a day you get due to tide heights in the lagoons. In the UK I could have easily spent a six-hour stint at some beaches without such issue.

West coast intrigue

I haven't found the best spot (yet). I'm on a mission to discover it. I've become aware that many locals are simply content attending their usual venues on a weekend, such is the pace of life here. The west coast intrigues me most because it's rarely windsurfed due to predominately easterly winds the island gets. It hardly ever comes from a westerly direction. Le Morne is the most widely known windsurfing spot because of the range of skill levels it accommodates. There are other great spots such as 'Anse la Raie' in the north east. On the east coast there are couple of flatwater reef locations that at the right tide give delightful flat water. They provide the most blissful freeride blasting experience.

I hit up Le Morne quite a bit. It's a nice hour and a half drive from home. Le Morne is mainly known for its wave sailing – a local national windsurfing competition was recently held there (at One Eye). Within the lagoon areas there's slalom blasting, freeriding and freestyle. Lately we've been toting up GPS speed sailing runs. Le Morne is definitely a versatile windsurfing location in a stunning setting.





Wave sailing

I've been in the waves at Manawa a couple of times. Sadly I sold all my wave sailing gear back in the UK hoping to buy wave kit out here. I simply had too much slalom gear to bring over. My slalom racing and speed sailing take up most of my current available water time. However, I was asked to co-judge the recent open national wave sailing competition held at One Eye and that was excellent both watching and helping judge. Michael Archer (a sometimes UK BWA wave sailing judge) was kind enough to brush me up on comp scoring etiquette, which I found easy enough. Getting back into wave sailing is definitely on the to do list.

I have friends here that surf but at breaks that are not that local to me. It's nice that I have that option on tap. Naturally there are surf locations here that are kept quiet for locals use only. I would not want to disclose nor diminish that local trust, I do have to live here after all.

Photography has been a growing interest. As is playing the guitar. What's most notable from my relocation is the freedom of no longer having to work for a living – there's a lot that can be done. In Mauritius there's no shortage of activities. I should mention that I run the 'Mauritius Speed League' for speed sailing.

My arrival, mid-2016, was during a fully formed slalom series and that coincidental timing presented the perfect opportunity to facilitate development of the windsurf speed scene from within the local slalom racing fraternity. I've been instrumental in setting up and now run the Mauritius Speed League (MSL) along with the two other admins, Christopher Tyack and Steve Boncourt. Interest and participation in the speed scene here has been steadily growing.

Responsibility

People mention 'idyllic lifestyle' and luckily I do not have to work in Mauritius. So on the surface my relocation might actually seem 'idyllic'. However I do have the responsibility of attending both my parents' aging and medical needs, something that will impinge more on my available free time as they get older (fortunately they are independent enough around the house currently).

I could work here if I wanted to but I would then feel obligated and tied to work for a lot less pay than I would receive in the UK for my skills. With my parents needs on one side and my being in a position where I don't have to work, why would I want to?

Employment

Finding employment is tricky for residents. The island has developed a system of prioritizing jobs through knowing the right people to get you into any available posts. This makes it none too easy for getting a job here.

Since the Island has economically developed quite well over the last 25 years there is more scope for skilled work. If you have the right skill then it is possible to obtain work. But for anyone thinking to come here simply believing that they could find a job that scenario is virtually nonexistent.

Getting windsurf kit is generally obtained in four ways here:

1. Bring it over yourself or buy kit from holiday windsurf visitors to the island.
2. Several brand distributors exist on the island who can be approached for kit.
3. Buy second hand kit locally through joining the local windsurf/surfing communities.
4. Make it yourself.

You have to be constantly prepared for replacements and breakages. Then it's okay. Otherwise the wait to either find a replacement locally or ordering online from abroad could find you without your much needed equipment for months.



For now my home base has shifted to Mauritius. It has to be this way as my parents practical needs require this. I miss all the familiarity of home (UK). Don't get me wrong. It is nice in Mauritius and really can be 'idyllic' but I personally miss a lot about home. Sojourns back to UK? Definitely. It could be this year but if not then surely next year.

I may move back to the UK but I don't see that happening until my parents eventually 'move on' and that could be a while yet. Truth be known I think the ideal set up for me is to have two home locations (Mauritius & UK) and travel between the two. Now that really is the ideal set up!

My plans for the rest of 2018 are:

Get fit again. My mum's Mauritian cooking, as tasty as some of her dishes are, is not conducive to maintaining a healthier body.

- More speed sailing and continue to develop the speed scene here.
- Continue slalom racing in the national league series here.
- Get a multi finned wave board for Manawa and One Eye missions.
- Get a surfboard (mini-mal or longboard).
- Really make an effort to get back into Salsa and Latin style dancing.
- Make a trip abroad somewhere, which I haven't done since I arrived in Mauritius.
- Tinker on a couple of projects I've in mind regarding making kit.
- Push my interest in photography.
- Keep learning to play the guitar.
- Windsurf more to get back to my former level.
- Continue to enjoy the non-working lifestyle.



Thanks and praise must go to:

Dave White and the Essex crew for some crazy fast sessions in East Anglian waters; F-Hot Fins; Fluidlines shop (Essex) who sponsored me as a team rider; Wet 'n' Dry Boardsports (Essex); Simon Chippington GBR 984, for continually keeping me updated on stuff back home and sending me over small kit items that I can't get here; UKWA & BWA.; Andy Finlay (when he was at Zero Gravity/Robinhood Watersports, now at Purivada); Allan Cross (for putting me to task with camera and trusting me to edit some BSC reporting); Darren Herbert (Quiverwindsurfing, Goya/Quattro); John Jessop & Steve Mundy for wave days at Camber Sands and West Mersea local legend 'Paul Reynolds' and to all my friends back home UK for great times; Mark Seaney for first getting me into comps (wave sailing); Leigh Kingaby (for past kit help); Christopher Tyack (in Mauritius), all the resident Mauritian windsurfers (local and expats) for warmly welcoming me into the Mauritian windsurf community and Xavier KÖNIG (@Blastoff Creative) & Steeve Boncourt: (SAR Productions) for supplying Mauritius photos.



WINDUK SURFING

Issue 7 June 2018

MAURITIUS DOUBLE TAP

with Danny Geereedhary
and Mike Wand-Tetley

VASS:

the early days with Tony Booth

BEHIND THE LENS

with Alex Irwin (Sportography)

GINA CHIPPINGTON'S

surf widow life

KEITH ATKINSON

hot seat Q&A

MR B'S GRILLING

with Simon Bassett

RYA

Team15

+

REGULARS:

CLARE ELLIOTT AND
DAVIS (PETE/ZARA) COLUMNS

TECHNIQUE:

SIMON BORNHOFT WINDWISE &
SIMON WINKLEY FUNDAMENTALS

REVIEWS:

ESSENTIAL GEAR TESTS AND MORE!



CHIPPING AWAY²

**BEING THE OTHER
HALF, WITH GINA
CHIPPINGTON.**

Having delved into the life of RRD slalom/speed sailor Simon Chippington last issue this time round we're speaking with Simon's

better half Gina. Gina isn't a windsurfer. By her own admission she's not interested in saltwater. But she's super loyal to hubby and travels to many events, cheering him on and offering support. We're pretty sure there are countless other windsurfing widows around, who probably know more about the sport than you, regardless whether they indulge or not. We wanted to find out what being a windsurf widow is like these days and get some insights from a non-sailor's point of view. Over to Gina...



I met Simon in the hairdressers where I worked. He seemed an unassuming chap, so much so it took him a decade to ask me out! In the whole time I'd known Simon he had never let on that he fancied me or that he was into windsurfing – talk about poker face. It was fairly soon into our relationship that Simon's passion began to rear its head and my house became littered with all of its paraphernalia – not always ideal for a neat freak like me.

I wasn't always enthusiastic about tagging along to events because when it's really windy it's not all that comfortable to be spectating but after some negotiations we have managed to find a happy medium (a nice bolthole for me is a must). I love Marazion (Cornwall) and Tenby (Wales) because they offer lovely coastal walks along with some history and they both provide no shortage of places to grab a cream tea or glass of fizz.

Being comfortable is a big thing for me. I hate being anywhere worse than my own home and calling it a holiday, so I don't travel light. I pack some nice cushions and a throw for the van, download some music or a film and a book and feather my nest for every eventuality. Not forgetting ample snacks for me and Simon. Once settled I can then go off and amble if the weather permits. I've normally scoured the web for places of interest.

All of the sailors are friendly without being in your face. I think most of them are pretty absorbed in the chat and banter for me to really figure, which is how it should be! One of the first people

to welcome me in to the fold was Leigh Kingaby. He has the enthusiasm and energy of five men which is hard not to like.

My fellow windsurf widows are all lovely. Some will keep themselves to themselves while some are happy to chat. If I can organise a mutiny to a nearby pub I feel my weekend away has been all the more worthwhile. Sarah Sibley really welcomed me on a particularly windy weekend in Tenby. Her passion for the sport was clear and she frankly puts me to shame with her support – top marks Sibbers for your dedication.

Windsurfers clearly love what they do. This is the case with a lot of niche sports. Windsurfers help each other along with shared knowledge of hot spots and rigging tips – it's heartening that competitive people aren't all about throwing you under a bus.

There's been a lot of talk about windsurfing dwindling but I don't think that's true. The numbers seem to have increased at BSA events which is great but there could always be more. The most obvious thing to me is the blow your own trumpet thing on social media. Just about everyone has some kind of account so no excuses. A great picture and a hashtag are all that's needed and something everyone can do whatever the skill level. This may help getting numbers to swell #tryit #itreallyworks. The BSA could do with an Instagram account. Andy Stallman is always at large snapping great pictures, hint hint...I think less



52 PROFILE GINA CHIPPINGTON

women are involved in windsurfing (or have been) for a number of reasons. Initial perceptions may suggest it's a bit of a lad's pastime, not true I know, and as I've said already social media could dispel that myth. Some of the advertising going back less than a decade was distinctly sexist and that in turn was/is alienating. I'm glad to see less of it.

Getting me afloat isn't really very likely. I hate it when my hair gets wet. It does funny things like with Monica from Friends when they went to the Caribbean. I'm not especially competitive either and I definitely would need to see the bottom or I'd freak!

Zara Davies has had an amazing year. I can't believe she hasn't been snapped up for an ad campaign by a non-windsurfing brand. That would be a brilliant for raising the female profile. It's also great to see the likes of Jenna Gibson and Sarah Jackson being great ambassadors – all's boding well for the women if they're anything to go by. Watching the youngsters it's quite amazing. Do they realise how good they are? They're only getting started so who knows what the likes of Sam Anstey and Scotty Stallman can achieve.



Although I think windsurfing is a fairly costly past time there's nothing to stop someone giving it a go on knackered kit. It would be a good place to start. There must be ton of stuff sat in garages nationwide no longer in use. The likes of T15 might be able to put it to good use. There are often outward bound days touted at schools which could also. Perhaps the likes of T15 or any other water park business could stick their neck out and offer a skills day?

Ultimate destination

Holidays are what Simon and I are good at. We normally take it turns to choose a destination. Our criteria is opposing so we find this the fairest way to do things. Simon is totally off the chart with excitement (think badly trained Labrador) as we are off to Mauritius for him to compete soon. As you can imagine it's a stretch for me to lounge in the sun at a lovely hotel, gin and tonic in hand but compromise I must! My ultimate destination is Croatia: culture all around, great food, beautiful coastline and a bit of wind to keep the surfy one happy.

Whilst on the Dalmatian Coast about five years ago I had a go a stand up paddling and to my surprise I enjoyed it, the bonus being you get an all over tan. I have tried it at home but I'm strictly flat water and fair weather.

I think windsurfing events could possibly do with more input from local businesses and a little more clarity/commentary



from the organizers. Often I'm not aware what race is on and that's the case with some of the racers too.

When I'm playing the dutiful wife I love reading, cooking, watching classic films and visiting art galleries. If I could do that in Tuscany (Italy) it would be heavenly. I don't really try too hard to involve Simon. If he wants to great but you can't or shouldn't make someone do something they'd rather not. When Simon competes it's often a good time for me to meet with my more aesthetically minded friends – birds of a feather and all of that.



The secret of a happy marriage to a windsurfer is give and take. Be prepared to be flexible. If the wind gets up suddenly your plans might change. However, speak your mind and develop some good negotiation skills. Combine this with a long memory and you might have him (or her) over a barrel next time you want your own way!



2XS^R
SHOP SCHOOL CLUB



JOIN OUR CLUB

EZZY • GOYA • QUATRO • RRD
FANATIC • DAKINE • SLINGSHOT
ION • CHINOOK • STREAMLINED

TEST CENTRE WEST WITTERING BEACH
WWW.2XS.CO.UK • 01243 512 552



BACK IN THE GAME!

KEITH ATKINSON

WORDS: KEITH ATKINSON

PHOTOS: WINDSURFING SHOTS: ANDY STALLMAN.

FITSIX LIFESTYLE SHOTS: ROCKY AND ROAD PHOTOGRAPHY

KEITH ATKINSON HAS HAD HIS FAIR SHARE OF SUCCESS BOTH INTERNATIONALLY AND DOMESTICALLY. A recognisable face on the formula race scene for years he's now back on a slalom tip for 2018 with a new board sponsor and clothing brand in tow. We caught up with Keith to see how things are.

Tell us where it all began for with regards to windsurfing.

I was actually on the beach pretty much from birth. My dad started windsurfing one month after I was born, and so my mum and I used to just watch him. As soon as I was big enough to lift a kiddy rig he got me out there, I was only six years old at that point.

Do you still frequent the same spot you did as a newbie or have you moved on?

The first time on the water for me was at a place called Laybourne Lake in Kent. It's pretty small but super easy to get to for us from where we lived as a family. As I started to improve we started going to Bewl Valley, which is where I continued to sail regularly until I was about 16. It's a really beautiful place but I needed a bigger area of water to train on as I was starting to sail internationally at events on the sea. I keep meaning to go back to Bewl and get a group of old friends together for a weekend, I really love the place, it's very picturesque.



What's your current (favourite) location and why?

When I train on the water, I sail most of the time at Portland Sailing Academy. I live near London still and so it takes me a couple of hours (on a good journey) to get down there, so it's not close, but worth the journey without a doubt. All-round I think it's the best place to train in the UK for windsurfing. It has everything: easy parking, great facilities on site including a café and hot showers. It's also a stunning location with good views of the Jurassic coastline, plus there's a lot of great people down there. I always love the vibe and the atmosphere on the beach.

What does it offer the recreational windsurfer?

Constant and pretty clean wind in most directions. Super flat water – especially in south westerly and north westerly wind directions. Although it offers choppy conditions in some areas if you look for them for a livelier ride. There's always someone out, always nice people to sail with and at low tide you can touch the bottom quite far out so it's pretty safe.

And for the pro?

It's easy to come in and change kit when you're testing gear. The conditions are pretty consistent and most of the best guys in the UK are down there all the time so there's always someone good to test and develop with.

You're known mainly as a slalom and formula sailor, having won numerous titles. Still doing the comps or mainly sticking with sailing for personal fulfilment?

I do enjoy free-sailing and just blasting with friends. But windsurfing competition runs through my veins. I really love racing so I am looking forward to a competing again on the BSA tour for 2018.

Tell us about your most memorable achievement within windsurfing and why?

The one that stands out the most within windsurfing, when I was racing internationally, was winning The Euro Cup at Silvaplana. I had a pretty strong start to the event, but on the last two days I felt like I really got into my stride and I was literally buzzing with adrenaline on the start line. Being in a beautiful place was a factor for me. I was enjoying just being there. On the last day of the competition there was no wind. Andrea Cucchi was in the lead and with only minutes before they called it off for the event, the wind started to come in and we got called out to do two races. I had a good second to last race, but it was down to the last one and all I wanted to do was try stay in the top five (which I was very happy with of course) and not mess up with a bad start. Last race I had a good start and ended up second. Coming back to the beach I didn't know where I stood in the rankings but knew I'd done enough to at least stay in the top five or maybe better. But after another discard came in it shook everything up and I didn't know I'd won until Matthias Regber (Euro Cup Organiser) came to me and told me that it was me. There are literally no words to describe the feeling of winning an event like that. I was shaking. For me it was the perfect event.

I have had fantastic support from K66 with North/Fanatic/ION, and from 2018 I'm sponsored by Goya boards. Windsurfing is certainly not a cheap sport, but it's definitely less expensive than some others out there.





How hard is it to be a competing windsurfer these days? Is it expensive or do you get (have you had) enough support from sponsors in the past?

I've had some good support in the past when I was full-time, but it wasn't enough to sustain me on the world tour. Back then I had incredible support from my parents, at some point I needed the campaign to be sustainable financially, despite reaching a high level there just wasn't enough support, which is why I stepped back from international competitions in 2006 and focused only on UK events which I then funded myself. These days it's very different at the top level to what it was like in the 80s and 90s, but that's not to say it couldn't be like that again. I also had ambitions to start a business which is pretty hard to do when you're on tour and not entirely focused.

I really do miss the international competitions though and mixing it up with the best guys all over the world. I would like to go back and do more at some point in the next few years. I'll need to train like I did before for that though so I can be competitive again. More recently I have had fantastic support from K66 with North/Fanatic/ION, and from 2018 I'm sponsored by Goya boards. Windsurfing is certainly not a cheap sport, but it's definitely less expensive than some others out there.

What's your funniest story from comps (that we can tell readers!)?

The best was while I was training in Maui with a couple of friends. We ended up sailing over a whale which happened to be just under the surface. I saw a slight colour change which was odd to me, as we were quite far out so it couldn't have been reef. A split second later I looked back and that tail of a humpback whale came out of the water and started slapping away. Maybe it got spooked by us, I don't know. Its tail nearly hit one of the guys in the process. It was an amazing experience and luckily it didn't hurt anyone and we didn't hurt it with our fins, so it was all smiles.



“From the perspective of developing events: I’m still adamant that a light wind alternative needs to come in below the wind minimum for slalom to fill the gap between 6-12 knots for example.”



Plans this year? Any events on the calendar? If so, which ones?

The main competitions I'm focusing on will be the BSA events. I may try and get down to Italy and Switzerland for a holiday and swing by Silvaplana to enter the Swiss Championships. The Swiss put on some awesome events, plus I really like it there.

What do you think of the windsurfing race scene in the UK currently? How would you like to see it improved?

I really enjoy the racing in the UK. The people are awesome and they all put so much effort into the events and I speak for everyone. We are all very grateful for their input and the sacrifices they make to ensure each and every event happens.

In terms of improvements, personally I feel like marketing is absolutely key for the sport. I'd really like more engagement with wider audiences outside of windsurfing, which is where real non-industry sponsorship can be generated from. A great start would be creating and publishing high quality videos and pictures regularly on all relevant social media platforms. It's never been easier to get free exposure right from a mobile phone, so it would be great to see that happen.

From the perspective of developing events: I'm still adamant that a light wind alternative needs to come in below the wind minimum for slalom to fill the gap between 6-12 knots for example. So there's more chance of doing something on the water at events. This is crucial for

attracting spectators and sponsorship in the future. After all, what organisation or company are going to sponsor events when everyone's sitting on the beach doing nothing!? Foiling is a really interesting option for a light wind gap filler for slalom events, but we are realistically a couple of years at least away from racers being skilled enough to safely race around a course. Right now there's only a handful of guys that can competently sail foils. The concept is still new but has great potential for a credible discipline. Who knows, it may even make it as an Olympic class?

We also need to give a better understanding of what's happening on the water to spectators on the beach. To get people interacting with what's going on, commentary is essential for this, together with music to give a great vibe at each event. This will help appeal to the right demographic to make the sport look cooler and bring in new blood from outside.

And what about windsurfing in general? Opinions on that?

Windsurfing is amazing. At competition level there needs to be change to really grow and there's still room for improvement, especially with the RYA. The RYA are brilliant at getting people into the sport at grass roots level, but it's frustrating when a lot of talented windsurfers that don't get chosen for the British Team, fall by the wayside and in a lot of instances come away from it. I feel many are disillusioned by the Olympic dream, when actually, only one girl and one boy get to attend.



What happens to all the hundreds of windsurfers they introduce to the sport? Personally I think it's a savage waste to see young people disappear when they once had a passion just because the RYA don't feel they're quite good enough. I'd personally like to see more awareness for the other disciplines such as slalom, course racing and wave/freestyle. There are so many other ways they can enjoy the sport, and if competition really is their thing, then why not aim for the ultimate: the PWA, which is the pinnacle of the sport?

A message to all young windsurfers coming into the sport: do what YOU want to do, go in the direction you feel is right in your heart. Be the master of your own destiny and don't let other people choose for you or give their opinion on how successful you can be. The sky is the limit! Only you can control your outcome. Before I made the choice to move from raceboard to formula, once another sailor told me I'd never be any good at formula, that I was too small compared to the other guys and I wouldn't be fast enough to be competitive. Find a way. Moving forward when I felt the time was right was the best thing I ever did. I always follow my heart and not what someone else dictates to me.

“Be the master of your own destiny and don't let other people choose for you or give their opinion on how successful you can be.”



How would you go about encouraging more riders into the fold?

I'd say come along to some events, especially ones like the National Watersports Festival. The NWF is a great way to get a feel for the sport, as it's the primary event to showcase windsurfing. No matter what level you are there's something for everyone and it's a great way to make headway into competition and meet some of the top people in the sport.

Tell us a little about your life outside of windsurfing. What do you do to make ends meet and such?

I'm a personal trainer. I'm passionate about fitness and living healthy. I'm really focused on influencing healthy living, and I've just started a clothing brand to channel my passions to help influence more people on a worldwide scale (Fitsix).

Where does windsurfing fit in your daily/weekly routine?

I've had a couple of years away from competition, however, this year as I will be racing on the BSA tour, and being self-employed I have a little more flexibility to sail during the week potentially. Mostly though I keep the weekends free and if the wind is blowing I'll try to be down at Weymouth.



Talk us through your windsurfing training programme. Is it specifically tailored or do you wing it?

Everything I do is structured with a specific goal in mind. Each session has a goal too. On the water I am always testing and trying new things for continuous development that varies every session. The specifics of that I keep to myself. If you don't think this way you stand still and the ones that do end up going faster. Off the water my training is very specific. Being a personal fitness trainer I can focus on core strength and power, depending on what training phase I'm on. Without speaking too technically, basically I periodise my gym training so I'm working on something different, at different rates, at various phases through the year. My training during the season is different to out of season training for example, and it's this kind of training and the results you can gain from it that makes fitness so interesting for me.

Anything particular you're working on?

Windsurfing wise right now, it's all about getting as much water time as possible with training partners and continuing my off water regime.

Who are your sponsors these days and how did their support come about?

Currently I'm supported by K66 with North Sails and more recently Zero Gravity with Goya boards. I've been with North/Fanatic since 2011. Personally I'm very interested in testing and development, which I had some involvement with when I was sponsored by starboard back when I was full time. I have the chance to be more involved on that side with Goya so I'm super happy to be working with them moving forward.

What kit are you rocking this season?

I'll be on North Warps and Goya Proton boards. I love how solid the North sails are, they're super fast, light in the hands, easy to use, so durable and the attention to detail is second to none. I feel like nothing has been overlooked. The Goya Proton are awesome. After having tested the boards, the quality is excellent and I have a great feeling they're going to be very competitive! They're super nice on the gybes and comfortable in overpowered conditions too.

Any final thoughts on windsurfing in general?

It's a fantastic sport, I've met some of the most amazing people through windsurfing including my best friends! The great thing about windsurfing is it can take you all over the world and allows you to see the world in a different light. There's no other release from life like blasting across the water!

Thanks and praise?

I'd like to thank my parents for all their incredible support in my earlier years. My sponsors, past and present, that believed in me and chose to support me. Without them it really wouldn't have been possible to achieve what I have so far. Also the undying effort and enthusiasm from the organisers and support crew of the BSA. Without them events wouldn't happen so we all have a lot to thank them for. Sometimes at events tensions can be high, not everyone can be happy all of the time it seems, and it may appear a thankless task to organise comps when things don't go right for some. But we all appreciate their efforts, very, very much. Thank you so much.

You can find out more and follow KA via the following links:

www.youtube.com/channel/UCmfHvobCykp0HkNyyYjYlUg?view_as=subscriber
www.instagram.com/keithatkinson/
www.facebook.com/atkinsonkeith/



TEAM15

WHAT NEXT?

WORDS AND PICS: RYA

TEAM15 HAS BEEN RUNNING FOR OVER A DECADE AND HAS GONE THROUGH CHANGES IN RECENT YEARS TO REFINE THE PROGRAMME. Chris Blackburn, RYA High Performance Manager and Team15 lead, talks through the windsurfing initiative:

For those unaware of Team15, the RYA run programme is an initiative to introduce young people to windsurfing and develop core skills of junior windsurfers throughout the country.

In its most basic form, Team 15 is a junior 'get in to windsurfing' programme and is offered to support clubs running fun introductions to windsurfing, to continue sailing and then on to competing.

Team15 has been running for over a decade and in its infancy saw a rapid growth. However in recent years the numbers had started to decline, so a decision had to be made about the programme and its effectiveness. The decision that was made was to alter the programme and focus resources in a different way.

Thankfully the decline in numbers was halted with the changes made and the programme is now seeing growth once more in terms of both amounts of clubs offering windsurfing and of participants within those clubs.

On the whole the programme is looking healthy. More clubs have signed up to Team15 in the last year and more are anticipated in the year ahead, which goes to show the initiative is working.

But to move forward you have to learn, adapt and improve. This is what Team15 is looking to do throughout 2018.

The interclub programme is very important to Team15's success. Club attendance at the events give figure based data, and that feedback helps to shape the programme. If club attendance is good and on the rise, things are working. If numbers aren't rising, it's time to tweak and refine.

Interclub participation has shown an increase from 2016 to 2017 and we are looking to continue that trend in 2018. The interclub programme planned for 2018 has four events in each region, and the south west region has even been split into two sub-sections to accommodate the demand.





Champions Cup

One area of continual improvement is the Champions Cup – it's essentially the final competition of the season for Team15 competitors. Although the Champions Cup has proved popular there has been the introduction of 'Super-X' which tests sailors on skill set rather than the usual first past the post style of finishing races. Super-X does have a slight racing element to it but it is predominantly about completing skills. Courses are laid that test a sailor's skill, if you complete the skill you will move on to the next and will in turn be fast. This puts the emphasis well and truly on skill completion and building technique.

With the introduction of Super-X a success at the Champions Cup, measured by the positive feedback of sailors and clubs, the mind-set now switches to implementing the same into the club environment. Team15 sees the Super-X as a way to introduce new competitors to the inter-club competitions by familiarising the sailors to the new waters - because of this there is some work to be done on timetabling within the competition schedules, something that the Team15 staff will work with the clubs to refine.

National Watersports Festival

In 2017 the RYA and Team15 were involved in the National Watersports Festival held in Rutland. The festival is a celebration of all water sports and is an annual event which seems to be growing and growing in popularity. By holding clinics throughout the weekend the festival opened up Team15 and windsurfing to another group of not only young people, but parents who could see and appreciate the benefits of the sport for their children. The feedback was so positive and the RYA representatives in attendance thought it was so beneficial that Team15 will once again be returning to Rutland for the 2018 edition of the festival.

Within the Team 15 programme there is a core set of coaches that are on hand to offer help and advice. These trainers are available to be deployed across the country to





mentor and help with coaching. To encourage clubs and coaches to participate fully in the Team15 initiative, the coaching sessions are 'earned'. For every club that attends one of the club development and event support training sessions, a day of coaching is given back in return. This system has been tried and tested and ensures that everyone involved is fully invested toward the common goals of Team15.

From the moment Team15 was launched there has been tireless work behind the scenes to produce resources for the clubs involved, from video resources for coaches to leaflets and posters for the clubs.

Increasing sailing skills

There have been tools developed to help clubs pick the skills challenges they have within their clubs. The main point being the subjective nature of judging the skills. The Team15 programme discourages clubs to choose skills challenges based on a pass or fail basis. The reasoning behind this is that Team15 is about increasing sailing skills. With a pass or fail system it is not who performed a skill the best through a

judges eyes, but whether you can complete the skill and carry on sailing to the next. It's about developing and building upon confidence as well as sailing skill.

Ultimately, the plan and road ahead for Team15 is to build on the successful programme changes that have been implemented in recent years. The updated strategic investment in the programme has been seen to be developing the sailing numbers within the programme, which is the long term objective.

The Team15 initiative gives the building blocks for any club in the country that would like to offer windsurfing. Its aim for the immediate future is to further support clubs, coaches and encourage more clubs to participate in interclub competitions and with more sailors.

For more information or to find your nearest Team15 club visit

www.rya.org.uk/programmes/rya-team15



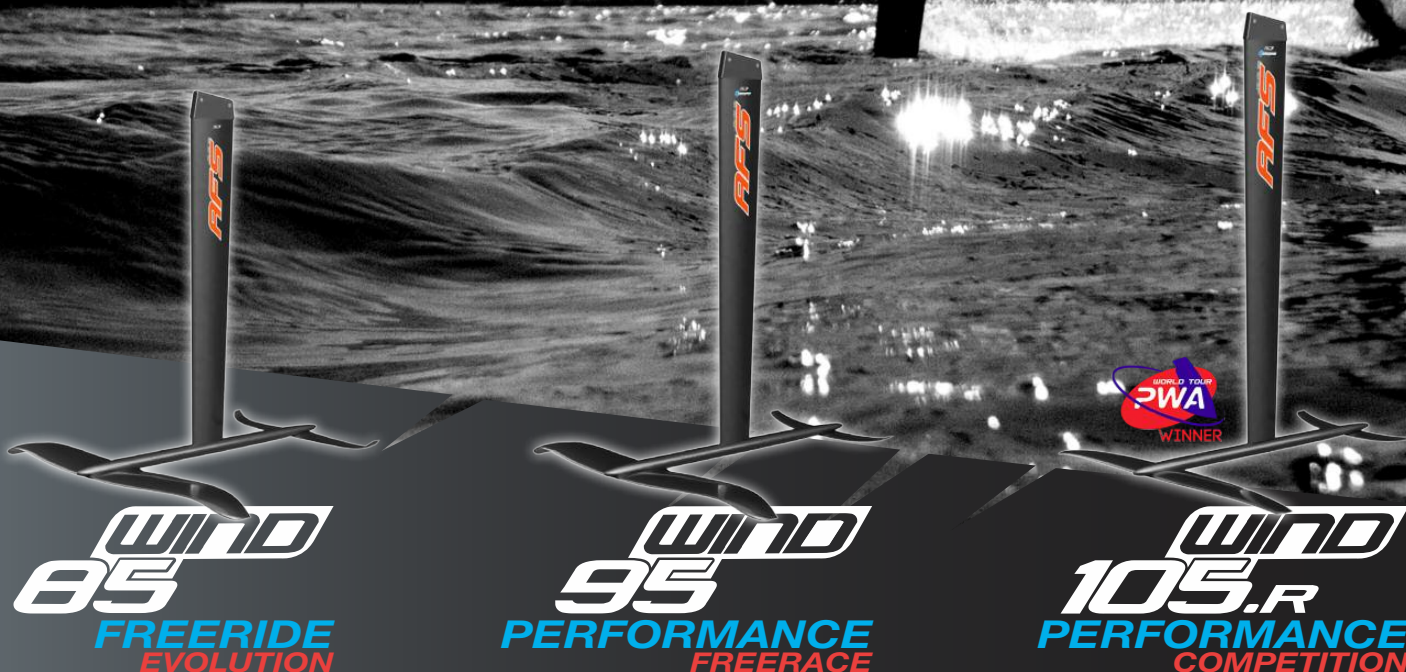
The Ultimate Foiling Combos *From Kai Sports*



Smooth Progressive Planing

Fast Forgiving Riding

Beautiful in the Gybes



FURY | THUNDERBOLT | SL-2 | SEALION WINGS



Experts in Watersports Equipment Since 1979


For more information on all aspects of foiling & stockists contact:

KAI SPORTS LTD - UK DISTRIBUTOR

+44 02380 840777 | info@kaisports.co.uk | www.kaisports.co.uk

Kai Sports Ltd, Unit 1, Hardley Industrial Estate, Hardley, Southampton, SO45 3NQ, United Kingdom



A full-page background image showing a windsurfer in a yellow suit riding a large, curling blue wave. The windsurfer's sail is blue and white with some graphics. The sky is clear blue.

IF YOU HAVEN'T PLANNED YOUR 2018 WINDSURFING HOLIDAY YET, THEN NOW IS THE TIME TO DO IT AS WE'RE ALREADY HALF WAY THROUGH THE YEAR! However, there are a few things you need to think about before you start booking to really ensure that windsurf holiday of a lifetime.

The wind, of course, is the most important thing to consider when looking for the perfect spot and the tricky part is picking a spot with the perfect kind of wind for you. Perhaps you are just starting out and need a destination where the wind is constant but not too strong, with a nice calm lagoon. Or perhaps you are a more advanced windsurfer looking for your next thrill; then what you need is constant strong winds and plenty of fun waves to get some aerial manoeuvres in. It's also important to know your budget, what time of year you will be travelling and what your family or travelling partners want to get out of the holiday. You want everyone to return happy and relaxed so that when you book your next windsurfing getaway they are sure to join!

With so much to consider, that is why the team at Planet Windsurf Holidays have tried and tested all the destinations they offer to make sure that you get the right spot for you. Continue reading to find out Planet Windsurf Holidays' top pick of the very best windsurf locations for 2018.

THE TOP

WINDSURFING DESTINATIONS

on the

PLANET



Le Morne, Mauritius



Paradise awaits in Le Morne, Mauritius, where incredible natural beauty combines with a crystal-clear lagoon, fantastic waves and out-of-this world windsurfing conditions. Mauritius is most certainly a dream destination for any avid traveller. The beaches are simply breathtaking while, inland, the landscape is dominated by large plantations of sugar-cane and stunning mountains and gorges. Le Morne's vast lagoon offers plenty room for beginners wanting to learn to windsurf or intermediates looking to practice gybes and water starts. There is even a 'little reef' small wave training spot inside the lagoon. For the experienced, venturing outside the safety of the lagoon's outer reef, will bring you to some of the world's very best wave spots like Manawa and the famous One Eye (only for the brave!).

Our partner windsurf centre in Le Morne is stocked with all the newest North sails and Fanatic Boards. All abilities are catered for from total beginner courses through to private wave sailing lessons. Kids are very well catered for with highly trained specialist instructors utilising the latest in child-specific beginner equipment.

The UK's summer months mean windy winter in the southern hemisphere where you can look forward to temperate days (24-27°C) with the incredible island offering some of its best windsurfing conditions. Incredibly, the perfect Mauritius windsurf season from June to October, is tourist 'low season' meaning plenty of wind and uncrowded beaches, but best of all, amazing special deals, even in the July/August summer school holidays!

Planet have special offers of up to 65% off their range of hand picked hotels, making this luxurious destination surprisingly affordable.

If you are looking for that perfect mix of luxury and Creole charm, with an ideal location next to the windsurf lagoon, then look no further than the luxury St Regis Resort. Some of the best features of this property include its spacious suites and villa, superb spa, free water sports (including dingy sailing, wakeboarding and SUPing) and a choice of five top restaurants offering mouth watering world class cuisine. The hotel also boasts one of the best kids clubs on the island so you can rest assured the children are content while you windsurf to your heart's content.



Viana do Castelo, West Portugal

Portugal, with its classic Mediterranean climate, has great wind conditions for your next holiday and the area around Viano do Castelo is one of Planet's new found favourites. This great destination has perfect windsurfing conditions for a range of abilities, beautiful landscapes, rich historical sites and a range of other activities for the whole family to enjoy. In addition, it is located just a few hours from the UK with many flights daily from regional UK and European airports.

Just outside the authentic Portugese town of Viana do Castelo a pristine beach lies within a horseshoe-shaped bay, with excellent windsurf conditions for every level. Just a couple hundred yards down the beach is where you will find the wave playground for the more advanced windsurfer. There is a reliable side shore wind in the summer months between May and September. The wind is normally lighter in the mornings, a good time for beginners, picking up nicely through the day to its peak mid afternoon.

At the new FeelViana boutique sport hotel, built by windsurfers with active holiday makers in mind, you can wake up just a few steps away from the water. The hotel is set in a natural pine forest and has worked hard to keep the styling of the hotel in line with the natural beauty of the surrounding area. The hotel has an incredible sports centre stocked with all the latest equipment and an amazing team of passionate windsurfers to assist you, with lessons for both adults and children. A nice touch from the centre is free rescue and recovery by way of the incredible local lifesaving team, on hand to assist anyone in the water. Aside from windsurfing the centre here offers a range of other activities including mountain biking, kitesurfing, trail running and SUPing. New for 2018 is foiling and motocross!

Dakhla, Morocco



Home to some of the world's most reliable and exciting windsurfing spots, magnificent Morocco should top the list of places to visit on your next holiday.

Morocco is a great year-round windsurfing holiday destination that offers an attractive combination of sunshine, waves, lagoons and super reliable wind.

The small trading town of Dakhla in Southern Morocco, located on a thin peninsula of the Atlantic coast, is your gateway to the world's most stunning and perfect windsurf lagoon. Although this is a true year around windsurf destination, the very best time is from March to November. For waves on the Atlantic side, Spring and Autumn are best.

Dakhla has become a kitesurf mecca in recent years, with a number of kite camps springing up around the lagoon. However, there is still one camp with a big focus on windsurfing, and luckily it is one of our favourites – Ocean Vagabond.

This small boutique style camp is just steps away from the lagoon with the windsurf centre right on site. This spot is the perfect place to learn to windsurf or hone your freestyle and blasting skills, thanks to the side shore winds and butter flat water. Depending on the tides, there is also a long shallow water area right in front of the centre. The lagoon is enormous so you can launch either directly in front of your

accommodation, or hitch a ride on the rescue boat to one of the many other spots around the lagoon. For more advanced windsurfers a visit to one of the wave spots offers 2-4 metre peeling waves with side to side-offshore wind.

UK visitors to Morocco will be extremely happy with the unbelievable value for money when travelling through this country. The exchange rate makes it possible for tourists to get way more for their money than in other destinations. Dakhla is simply an amazing place to get away from it all, escape from the hustle and bustle of daily life and spend some real down time relaxing and windsurfing!

So what are you waiting for? Contact Planet Windsurf Holidays now to start arranging your next windsurf holiday to one of these amazing destinations:

www.planetwindsurfholidays.com

or pop them an email on

info@planetwindsurfholidays.com

or call on +44 (0) 1273 921 0001





Holiday to the world's best windsurfing spots



Up to 55% off Mauritius

Book your the luxurious St Regis Mauritius Resort in Le Morne for 2018 and receive up to 55% off your booking!

Authentic Portugal at its best

Experience a unique mix of exciting windsurfing and natural beauty in the Cabedelo pinewoods of West Portugal.



An exotic Moroccan getaway

Dakhla in Morocco offers a unique desert destination where flat water and waves provide the perfect playground.



Call +44 (0) 1273 921 001, email
info@planetwindsurfholidays.com or
visit www.planetwindsurf.com to book!

EST. 2000
PLANET
WINDSURF

NATIONAL WATERSPORTS FESTIVAL 2018

the ultimate intermediate watersports pilgrimage

WINDSURFING
SUP
KAYAK
SCUBA
DINGHY

Weekend of the rutland festival
live music & local food stands

VENUE: RUTLAND 8th - 10th June 2018
Rutland Watersports, Bull Brigg Lane, Whitwell, Rutland, LE15 8BL

TASTER SESSIONS IN ALL DISCIPLINES // LOW-LEVEL COMPETITION ADULTS AND JUNIORS // NIGHT EVENT // PRIZES GALORE // NATIONAL AWARDS IN SUP AND WINDSURFING // TRADE EXHIBITION // RETAIL // FOOD STANDS
TECHNIQUE CLINICS // CAMPING // VIP PARTIES // BANDS // FAMILY FRIENDLY

www.nationalwatersportsfestival.com

National Watersports Festival

SPONSORED BY:

SUPM

Stand Up Paddle Mag UK

SUP Mag UK's April issue is now alive, kicking and ready to order in print...

The new 2018 SUP season is here and there's a plethora of spanking new SUP gear, SUP destinations and interviews to sink your gums into with the Spring issue. Whatever style of riding floats your boat (or board), your perfect stand up paddle magazine is available - posted straight to your door. Printed on top quality paper and perfect bound and with so much awesome content from the UK and further afield, SUP Mag UK is your perfect SUP companion.

To subscribe to the digital copy with approx 60% savings over the print issue: <https://joom.ag/UC4Y>

To buy a printed issue on top quality paper with varnished gloss perfect bound covers please visit: <http://standuppaddlemag.co.uk/subscribe/>

The printed paper copy costs £7.49 inc P&P for a single issue or £27.99 inc P&P for a subscription of four magazines.

Please contact us: 01480 465081 Email: anne@supmaguk.co.uk

DIRECTORY75



Sailrepair - supplier of high performance windsurfing equipment

- witchcraft boards and sails



WITCH CRAFT

- Maverx masts - "the best"



- Foil equipment from AHD & AFS



- AL360 booms



Sail Repair
.co.uk



Seawinds • Kirk Brae
Shandon • G84 8NP
T: 07881 581618

PURAVIDA BOARDRIDERS

South Wales best stocked windsurf store and demo center

Delivery available across the UK

2018 demo boards in stock

www.puravidaboardriders.co.uk Tel: 02920 711946

WETNDRY BOARDSPORTS

• SPECIALIST WINDSURFING STORE •

Friendly, expert advice. Est 99.
Interest free credit available.
Part exchange welcome

WWW.WETNDRYBOARDSPORTS.COM

SADLERS HALL FARM, LONDON ROAD, BOWERS GIFFORD ESSEX SS13 2HD 01268 569988

WINDWISE SUMMER SESSIONS

LIKE A CHALLENGE? NOT PROGRESSING? NEED INSPIRATION? TIME TO WORK ON THE REAL SKILLS THAT FAST TRACK YOUR HIGH WIND WINDSURFING - EVEN BY PRACTICING IN A SUMMER BREEZE? Simon Bornhoft offers two simple summer exercises that stand alone as super skills training exercises that link into different moves. Plus, when they're combined, they create a great duck gybe.

You'd think that being forced to turn round every seventy metres with the wind spinning like a double helix and the risk of a stomach pump every time you fell in wasn't a great environment to learn to windsurf. In fact, I was lucky to start my windsurfing journey on the River Thames near Ravens Ait Island in Surbiton.

I had a Saturday job in one of the UK's most prominent windsurfing shops under the 'never say it's not possible' tutelage of Dee Caldwell, who in the eighties was pretty much the UK's top all-round windsurfer winning numerous racing titles and totally dominant in freestyle. Dee always said, "If you want to improve, don't just sail in a straight line and gybe." Basically he lived and sailed by reversing, spinning or changing his board and rig position as much as possible.

WORDS:
SIMON BORNHOFT
PICS:
WINDWISE





Sailing on a river, a fins throw wide, surrounded by trees, meant that it was gusty, tricky and you had to turn all the time! Dee encouraged everyone to experiment and expressed how, *"This move leads on to this"* or, *"A hip movement in one move was the same as in another."* Without realizing, it was Skills Training in the making. Most importantly, you learnt quickly and how not to fall in too much – which was a good thing considering the water quality of the Thames!

I believe our progress comes from developing the interconnecting and often counter-intuitive actions that train us and help link simple and advanced skills or moves together – especially if you're tight with 'time on the water'. Windwise Skills Training is designed to coerce the body to make 'windsurf-positive' actions, improve our counterbalance and master all manner of turning and board control – but most importantly have a great time doing it!



Windwise Core Skills & Actions

To help remind you of features gone, here's some core Windwise skills that are in this feature. We will say if and when to break these guidelines!

Vision: Try to look through turns to where you want to go. To assist Vision, we'll indicate which shoulder your chin should be near, on, or touching to ensure you're good at looking!

Opposition

Opposition Blasting: Keep a distance between your upperbody/head and the rig with an extended mast arm.

Opposition In Transitions: If you move the rig one way, the body must move the 'opposite' way to counterbalance.

Sailing 7 Stance

Majority of the time we look forward over an extended front leg and arm, flexing the rear leg to absorb chop and raise and lower the hips.

In light winds: Straighten the 7 by tightening the torso and extending the body.

In strong winds or dynamic situations: Sink that '7' down, by heavily flexing the rear leg and dropping the hips low.

Warrior Stance

In the apex of many transitions, the body needs to be dynamic to oppose and counter balance the rig, this requires a very specific action which we call 'Warrior' which is all about 'Looking (often chin on shoulder) and leaning' over a heavily flexed knee. Our Windwise Warrior is everywhere!

Touch Points

Clew to hand, talk into that microphone! You'll see that in many situations, we pull the clew hand in very close to the head to gain control of the rig.

SUMMER SKILLS TRAINING EXERCISES

Here are two very achievable exercises 'Switched Stance' & 'Sail 360'. Individually they will develop your skills base and link into other areas of the sport — do them. Bolt them together and you'll learn how to master duck gybes and more! We teach these to beginners, so any level can do them!

Switched Stance Skills Training

This one 'is' how it sounds. The hands remain in a regular sailing position on the boom as both feet 'switch round', creating virtually a 180° twist at the hips. If you can stand on a board, you're ready to switch!

Why you might ask? Well, it improves general board/rig handling and links into non-planing / planing early gybe foot changes and short board survival gybes. You'll also see it in duck gybe exits, push tacks, duck tacks and, albeit momentarily, helicopter tacks and all Pro freestyle.

Switched Stance

Vision/Sailing Line: Look forward, adopt a wide foot spread and for your initial attempts sail slightly upwind of a beam reach.

Opposition: The mast needs to be upright, with the boom slightly sheeted out.

Hold the mast still and forward as you switch the feet round as quickly as possible. Stepping forward with the back foot first is usually easier. With the feet switched, really twist at the hips, and force the front hip forward, all the time keeping the rig upright and sheeted out. Flex at the knees and 'try' turning the hips so that the harness hook points into wind.

Most people get 'switched' within only five attempts, so let's see where it links into skills training and moves. Once you have become comfortable sailing Switch Stance you can use it to enhance your gybes, learn to duck gybe and if you're into really punchy freestyle, do it in the straps!



SWITCHED STANCE GYBE

Why? It's a fabulous way to develop your Vision, Opposition and understand keeping that Rig@90 degrees to the board mid gybe and when rotating the sail. It also ONLY works if you look through the turn and get that Windwise Touch Point of the clew hand pulled in tight to the head – so talk into that microphone, like a Warrior gybe!

For non-planing or planing gybes, the feet are change fractionally after the dead downwind stage of the turn. If you practice changing the feet super early in lighter winds it really helps to build confidence and the skills base to counterbalance in stronger winds. It also has the added benefit of making you understand the importance of holding the rig still whenever you switch your feet. So here goes...



Vision / Sailing Line:

Switch the feet to a very wide stance whilst sailing on a beam reach and then look through and out of the turn - chin on shoulder Touch Point.

Opposition:

The rig is angled 'out' of the turn as the body moves into the turn = accentuated opposition!

Widen the grip and pull in and down hard on the boom to bring the clew hand close to the head.

ADDITIONAL RELEVANCE

Switched not only develops your windsurfing skills base, it also links into Helicopter Tacks, Duck Gybes and all sorts of other moves.



Push Tack

From a switched position, turn downwind and then drop the mast towards the tail, head near clew hand (just like a gybe). To 'oppose', the body leans forward in a massively accentuated 'Warrior', chin on shoulder and talking into that microphone with the clew hand as the rig swings to the tail.

To enhance your windsurfing, be it a UK tune up or stunning overseas destination join one of our Freeride & Freewave courses, experiences and adventures for all levels. You'll be introduced to a unique Skills Training System and the most welcoming socials all dedicated to your progression and enjoyment.

As ever, if you have any questions or suggestions for these features please let us know info@windwise.net

2018 UK Tune Ups

Throughout the year Freeride / Freewave / Feasible Freestyle & Cornwall Adventures.

2019 Dates coming soon!

Tenerife, Bonaire, Alacati, Sardinia, Prasonisi, Mauritius & more!
info@windwise.net for all the info!



Stance

Sink incredibly low into a super-7 'drop-and-push' stance. In powered-up situations accentuate looking, dropping and sheeting in hard with the clew hand to talk into that microphone! Rotate the rig on a broad

reach like a normal gybe. It's basically a normal gybe, but the feet are changed super early – it's fabulous training.



Duck Tack

We'll deal with this move another time, but going along 'switched' enables the sail to be ducked into wind (it's actually a similar action to a duck gybe except into wind, which makes it SO hard. See how that Warrior tack ending comes into play here too! talk into that microphone! Rotate the rig on a broad reach like a normal gybe. It's basically a normal gybe, but the feet are done super early – it's fabulous training.

Now let's look at our second summer signing, the Sail ... the Windwise way!

SAIL 360 SKILLS TRAINING

This is not about just sailing along and spinning a sail round 360 degrees, that doesn't really do anything. We train specific sailing lines, Touch Points and break it down into two parts. The first being the beginning of a duck gybe, the second part replicating Rig@90 sailing and then the Rig Rotator out of a gybe.

Recreational Uses: A sail 360 links in to clew-first (Rig@90) beachstarts, non-planing and planing gybe exits, helicopter tacks, push tacks and duck gybes.

Pro Freestyle: You'll see it in a whole host of unpronounceable ankle-wrenching tricks.

Sail 360 Sequence

The Set Up

- **Vision/Sailing Line:** Sail on a broad reach (daggerboard up if you have one).
- Adopt a wide, 'heel weighted' foot spread.
- Keep the shoulders right back to oppose and counter balance the 'pull'!
- Widen the grip and pull hard down on the boom, both before and after ducking the rig.
- **Stance:** Drop the body into a low sunken-7 position.



The Duck

Counter intuitively, break the opposition rule, so pull the boom in towards you and then slide it forward to release the mast hand. This takes the 'whack' out of it.

When releasing the front hand it should immediately grab the boom behind the existing clew-hand, and towards the clew end. Immediately release the old clew hand and put it behind you for counter balance. Let the rig drop into the turn – don't rush grabbing it! This allows the mast to swing round to you. The hand still holding the boom on the original side ideally chucks the rig behind you to help make first contact in front of the forward harness line, but in reality a super quick shuffle with the hands along the boom is how most people learn. But adopt a wide arm grip on the boom and pull down hard with the new clew hand as soon as possible!

RIG@90 & RIG ROTATOR EXIT

We covered this fully in last months **Rig@90 & Rotation** issue, but here are the key points.

Once clew-first, you could just rotate the rig round and complete a 360. But I urge you to Skills Train 'clew-first' or more accurately RIG@90 degrees sailing a pretty much dead DOWNWIND on a broad reach! This clocks up valuable time replicating a monumentally crucial moment during your gybe exits. Don't interpret 'clew-first' as sailing with the clew pointing forwards with an extended clew hand, this is what rips so many sails out of so many hands at the end of a gybe.

BROAD — RIG@90!

Touch Point: Chin on shoulder looking forward.

Touch Point: Clew hand well down the boom, hanging down and talking into that microphone.

Rig Rotation Touch Points

Always rotate the sail on very, very broad reach!

1. **Touch Point:** The mast hand moves right up to the boom clamp prior to releasing the clew hand.
2. The new front hand goes under and well down the boom. It can be over or under grip, whichever works for you.
3. Drop low in a Sunken 7 stance, chin on shoulder to look forward and out of that turn!

You can do this whole '360' over and over again simulating the beginning of a duck gybe and drilling the end of a gybe. Learn to love them this summer!



SAIL 360 + WARRIOR STANCE INTO SWITCH STANCE = DUCK GYBE



Non-Planing Duck Gybe



Planing Duck Gybe

1. Set up by sailing 'straight' on a broad reach as fast as possible.



3. Pull the clew behind you to get the new front hand in front of the harness line, well down the boom. Once both hands are on the boom, sheet out and pull down on the boom and 'lever' the whole rig forward and OUT of the turn as you accentuate a Warrior
4. Twist your feet under you to become SWITCHED STANCE. You'll then change the feet automatically to sail out of the turn.

Okay, if you use the first part of your Sail 360 and your Switch Stance training and throw in your Vision and Warrior stance you can then perform a duck gybe! Most people are quite rightly fearful of duck gybing, but that is because they haven't broken it down into small parts. I have coached many people with the skills training exercises and they have made duck gybes (lose 'not teeth') in planing conditions on their first 5-10 attempts. If you only try duck gybing at speed, you'll struggle to ever try one, let alone learn it.



In light winds, duck the sail, just like the sail 360 and then, rather than spinning the sail round and carrying on in a straight line, try to finish the gybe! This is achieved by Vision, Opposition, Warrior Stance and briefly but crucially being Switched Stance.



2 After unhooking, slide the back foot across to leeward rail (don't carve). Pull in, back and down on the boom. Now, using your well practiced 'Sail 360s', duck the sail and keep the released arm behind you to counter balance as the mast drops 'almost' into the water.



Simon Says...

I've coached all these skills to beginners and many others who express, "You'll never get me doing that." Most people are surprised to find huge value and greater success in many aspects of their sailing. Remember, start in light winds and be honest about your key skills (like vision). Self-coach and diagnose along the 'opposing' theme and focus heavily on the Touch Points to guide you through the move.

Incidentally, Robby Naish came to sail at Dee's shop on the River Thames when he was barely a teenager and Hoyle Schweitzer lawyers tried to disprove Peter Chilvers patent there too. So it is part of windsurfing history, but I don't see the PWA running an event there just yet!



THE BASICS OF COASTAL WINDSURFING Part 2

WORDS: SIMON WINKLEY

PHOTOS: ALEX IRWIN - SPORTOGRAPHY.TV

ILLUSTRATIONS: PETE GALVIN

IN THIS ISSUE WE CONTINUE TO EXPLORE THE FUNDAMENTALS OF WINDSURFING ON THE UK COASTLINE – A PLACE WHICH PLAYS HOST TO A WHOLE ASSORTMENT OF WINDSURFING TYPES FROM HARDCORE SOMERSAULTING PROFESSIONALS TO FREERIDE INTERMEDIATES NUDGING THEIR WAY TOWARDS COASTAL CONFIDENCE. Last time we covered safety, choosing a tidal window and the relationship between wind and tide. If you missed that then head to www.windsurfingukmag.co.uk/windsurfing-uk-subscriptions/ to grab a copy. This time we will be looking at characteristics of high and low water, shorebreak, wind direction and changing conditions.

The effects of high and low water

Last time, whilst looking at the rule of twelfths, we discovered the benefits of windsurfing around high water (HW) or low water (LW) in terms of experiencing the smallest tidal flow. Additionally we need to factor in water depth and the possibility of shorebreak to determine if the sea is actually suitable to windsurf on at these times. The best way of checking out a new location, if possible, is to recce it at both HW and LW (to understand the physical differences in the access to the water) before committing to a session there.

Your recce at HW will tell you what the typical shorebreak pattern is. It may be small/flat and very welcoming or surging and thunderous with a high kit-snapping factor. I say 'typical' as the expected shorebreak characteristics can be magnified as a result of strong onshore winds or the arrival of swell created further out at sea.

Your LW recce should reveal how much water remains to windsurf in as well as any secrets. The muddy or sandy (potentially rock-strewn) 'lunar landscape' left behind as the sea has retreated will show you exactly where notable hazards are – if any. LW might be friendly with no shore break or it could push waves up over a sandbar in the sailing area.

Low water

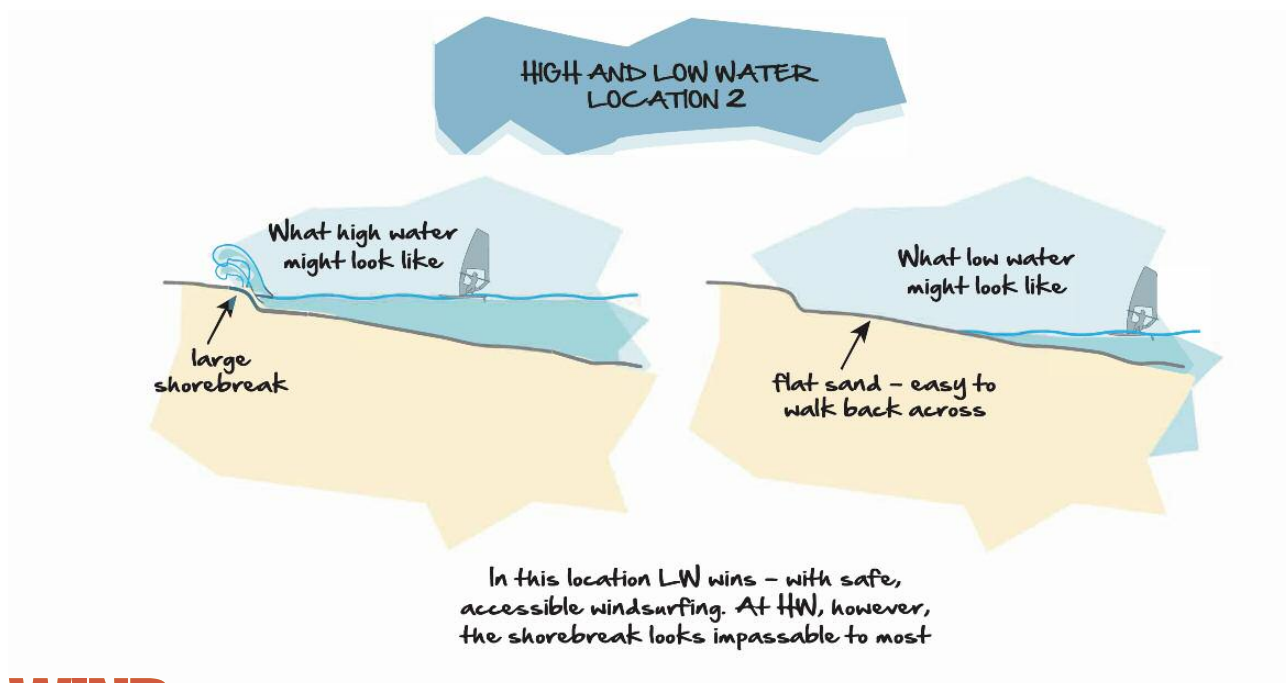
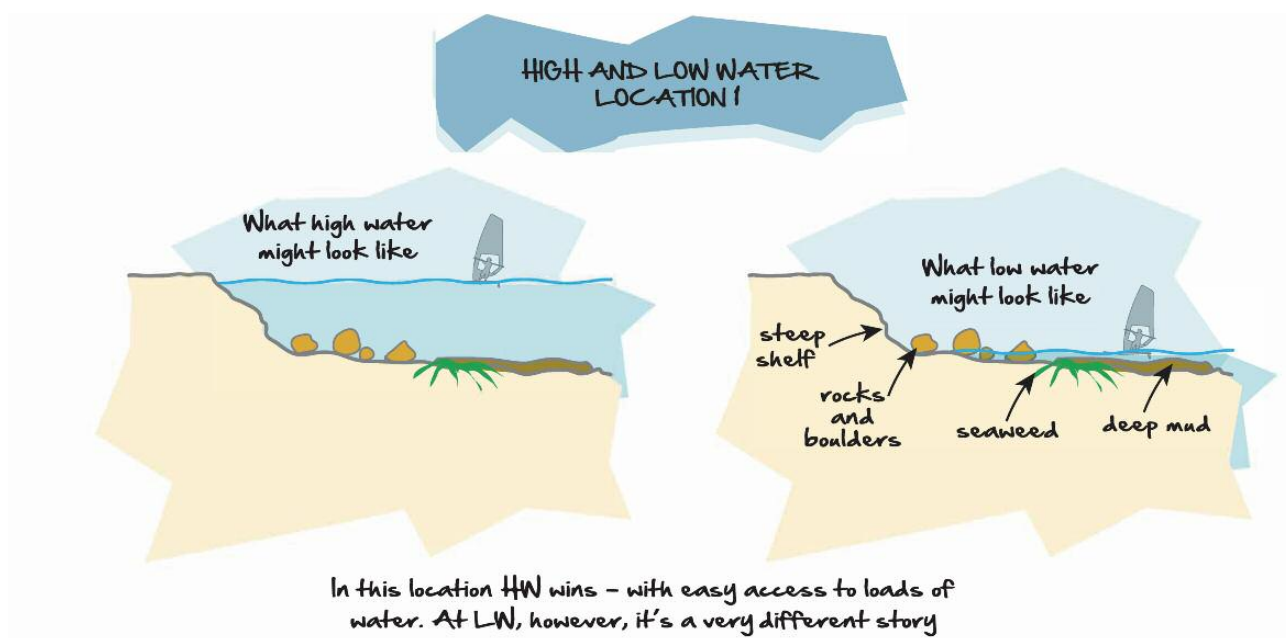
One specific hazard as the tide is reaching LW is simply running out of depth to windsurf. As time goes on, the inside gybe that you have been practicing 20 metres off the beach might now carry the risk of running aground as your fin fouls against sand, mud or rocks...and getting thrown off the board into 25cm of water is 100% guaranteed to end in tears.

In some locations the time around LW is the safest and best time to be out there yet could result in certain challenges being faced when walking back up the beach with your kit. So, depending on the location you might get an easy walk back over solid, flat sand or any of the following:

- A really long walk back carrying kit when you are already quite tired
- An comedy-style slip-and-slide over slimy rocks
- An energy-sapping struggle through knee-deep mud
- Perilous navigation of steep rock formations

High water

In some locations HW is a joy where the sea has brought itself right to the top of the beach for your convenience and the whole area is filled to the brim with enough water to satisfy a small army. The water may be flat and easy to windsurf on and, when you're done, you just land back at the top of the beach, stow your kit and lie back in the sun mollified by your achievements. Or you may find shorebreak, which could be light or heavy.



Shorebreak

Every time we go windsurfing we should be aiming, as an absolute minimum, to get onto the board in some fashion and to sail away. Getting swept back up the beach before you've got started is hardly ideal. If the water is flat when launching then obviously we can get going with ease. If there's a little bit of shorebreak then it should be ok if care is taken. Too much water dumping on the beach however and you may have to give it a miss and turn into a spectator to learn the ways.

Timing can be critical. If unsure, take a seat on the beach for five+ minutes and watch the pattern of the waves, looking for a regular let-up in the shorebreak.

Like arriving at a busy road whilst carrying a stack of shopping you need to stop and take in what's going on – not just rush straight out and hope for the best. Waiting a while to observe the water's behaviour as well as the actions of others should give you a good chance of choosing the safest window to launch between the sets.

Think about how you carry your kit. Carrying it in the normal way with yourself between the board and the mast is ok to get you to the water's edge. Carrying on like this into the sea, however, carries the risk of being trapped between the board and mast as a wave washes over your kit. A worse scenario perhaps is having a wave break onto your kit with you standing on the shore side of the kit as this could knock you over and push you underwater beneath your kit. Consider switching



your grip just before you wade into the sea. Holding the board and the rig in front of you with your back to the waves means that you cannot get trapped if you slip and you always have the option of letting go of the kit, allowing it to be pushed safely away from you towards the beach. Also consider that dumped water returning to the sea can wash over your rig as well as incoming water. Sometimes when coming in its best to just lift your kit onto your head... this is best performed on smaller kit and can be learned and practiced on the beach!

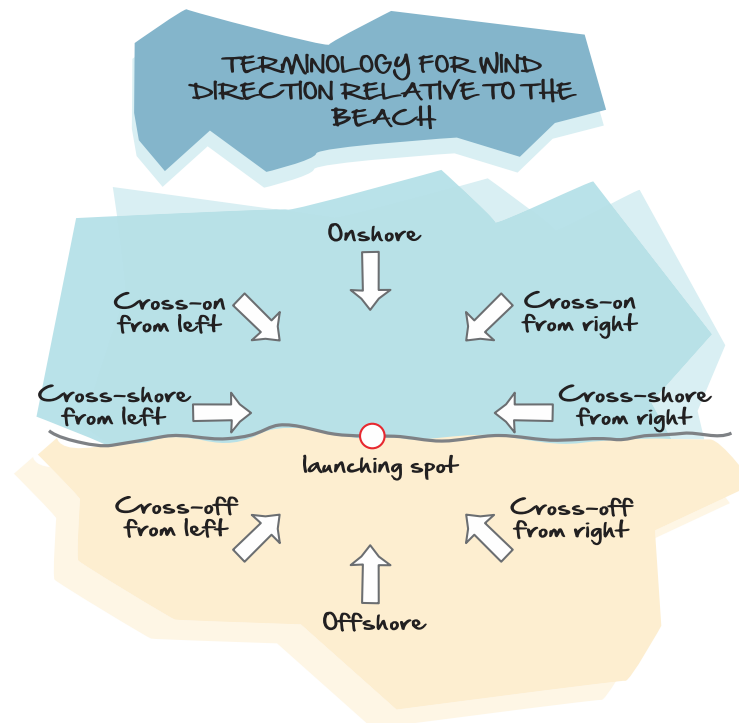
Again, some locations might not be affected too much in this way but it's always a good starting point. HW might be fine in one location yet in another (like the south east coastline around Brighton, for example) it usually brings astonishingly harsh shorebreak, which is best avoided.

Wind Direction

The way the wind is blowing relative to the shoreline you are launching from can make a considerable difference to your session. Let's have a look at the possibilities.

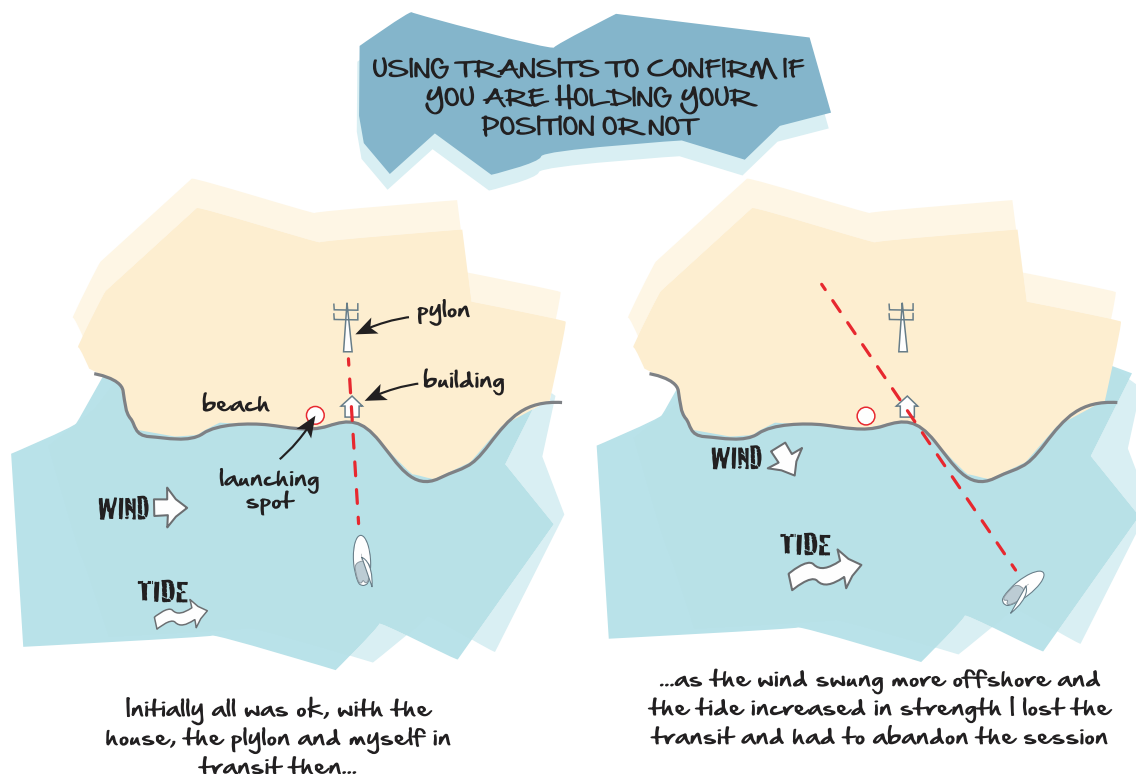
- **Cross-shore:** an ideal direction for your orientation where the wind blows along the beach either directly from the right or the left. Here you can windsurf straight out at 90 degrees to the beach, which is perfect for keeping track of where you are. It should be flatter water than when it's onshore

In an unfamiliar location a top tip with cross-shore, cross-on or cross-off winds is to remember to look back to shore after you have been sailing away from the beach every 20 seconds or so to see what the beach looks like. If you go blasting out for a minute or two before turning, then the view you get of the shore may look confusing as all the dunes, huts or groynes can merge into one distant image. Knowing where you came from and staying on that line however means that every time you turn and head back towards the shore you are reassured that you could land back where you started if you wanted to.



- **Onshore:** the safest direction for getting back to the shore if something goes wrong. Getting out can be tricky as you are sailing upwind and the water state could be quite rough or 'mushy.' You may need to sail a bit further along the beach than you think to clear any shorebreak so don't be in a rush to change direction on the first reach... no one wants to get taken down close to groynes or the shore whilst trying to tack in breaking water
- **Cross-on:** (a.k.a. 'the French direction!') – a great combination of cross-shore (for ease of getting out) and onshore (for safety)
- **Offshore:** AVOID! This can lure unsuspecting windsurfers into the sea thanks to the flat water state and seemingly manageable winds. Once out a few hundred metres the previously fragmented wind can pull together and strengthen and the sea state can become unmanageable. Additionally, if something goes wrong you will get pushed away from the safe haven of the beach
- **Cross-off:** Despite being the dream direction of wavesailors (as it holds up the waves and makes them smoother) it's not great for improvers as the off-shore element adds that risk factor

Recently, towards the end of a crossshore wind-with-tide session, I experienced an increase in the tidal flow at the same time as the wind weakened and swung more offshore. This meant that I could get planing very far out yet I always dropped off the plane as I reached a line about 300m off the beach. I kept heading further out to get enough wind to get planing (so I could plane upwind) yet that was putting me deeper into the tide which was much stronger there and was pushing me away from safety. Transits confirmed that I was being taken steadily downwind and down tide away from my launching spot – not good. So, on a low volume board, I had to commit to a tedious 25 minutes making loads of short non-planing zig zags upwind very close into the shore (out of the strengthening tide) to get back to my starting point – and all in the knowledge that there were still great planing conditions out there yet they had become too far off shore for comfort. I could have landed further down the coastline, which would have brought me to safety yet that would have left me with the logistical challenge of getting myself and my kit back to the original beach. Taking such decisions to stop the fun and to head in, keeping closer to shore, is hard yet necessary.



When the game changes

As per the example above, whilst you are enjoying the great pleasures of windsurfing on the sea it is essential to stay vigilant towards any significant environmental or other factors that may change the game. Head to shore as quickly as possible if any of the following occur as it's far safer to reassess your options on the beach than it is whilst bobbing around on the big blue.

- The horizon is turning dark and/or the sea is turning white, signifying a localized storm or brief squall
- The wind is significantly increasing or decreasing
- The wind is starting to swing offshore
- The tide is starting to get stronger
- The water state is getting rougher, signifying a change in wind direction or tidal height
- The shorebreak is starting to look a lot bigger than when you set off
- The sun is close to setting
- You can sense early signs of cramp
- You are getting tired
- You start to see bull sharks or the Kraken

It's all good!

Whilst there are lots of ideas here that might sound a bit scary, it's important to be aware of all aspects of coastal windsurfing in order to enjoy the sport safely. Interpreting the forecast, sailing with others on the right kit, understanding any dangers and using local knowledge are the four cornerstones of a safe session. So plan your session well and remember that any tidal effects will be more pronounced on springs than neaps. If things do start to change you need to be ready to adapt.

Windsurfing blends physical and mental fitness with skills progression and, in a super-dynamic environment like the coast, great sessions are enormously rewarding. Maybe it's time to grab a mate and get out there with some kit to feel the energy of the sea. Have a plan, be safe and have fun. Just keep one eye out for those giant squids...

Simon Winkley is a RYA Advanced Windsurfing Instructor and a RYA Windsurfing Trainer running instructor courses across the UK and overseas.

Sponsors: Starboard, Severne, Bray Lake Watersports, Spinlock and Flymount.

2018 dates: Vass Coaching Weeks at Ocean Elements 17 June (places) & 24 June (SOLD OUT); Weymouth Coaching Weekends at the OTC 28/29th July plus more TBC, 28/29 July; Queen Mary Foiling Sessions email for details.

Contact: info@simonwinkley.com for bookings and info. Facebook @swwinds Instagram @simonwinkley



Flight control

Foil & Co AFS-2 windfoil



Info: www.ahd-boards.com and www.kaisports.co.uk **info@kaisports.co.uk** Tel: 02380 840777 **Price:** AFS W85 - £1069, AFS - W95 (AFS-2 ++) £1699, AFS105.R - £1899 (many complete board and foil packages available from Kai Sports Ltd)

WORDS: WINDSURFING UK **PICS:** JAMES JAGGER
AS WITH ALL THINGS WINDSURFING THE WORLD OF FOILS MOVES FAST. AT THE TIME OF WRITING FOIL & CO (A SUBSIDIARY BRAND OF AHD) HAVE ALREADY LAUNCHED THEIR UPDATED RANGE OF MONOLITHIC CARBON FOILS AND NEW WEBSITE - WWW.AFS-FOILS.COM. YOU'D THEREFORE BE FORGIVEN FOR THINKING THE BRAND'S AFS-2 IS OLD HAT, WHICH COULDN'T BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH.

Having spent considerable time with the first gen AFS-1 we've since had opportunity to play with the AFS-2 and AHD SL2 132 foil ready board (see review elsewhere) extensively. When testing equipment it's important to go in depth, across as wide a range of conditions as we can. And with the AFS-2 we've certainly achieved that!

From the moment we coupled up the AFS-2 our experienced flights in comparison to the AFS-1 were night and day. Having previously been told lift wouldn't be quite as early as with the AFS-1 that much does ring true. Although the actual amount of time it takes to hover is minimal.

Featuring a 70cm universal wing, complete with 92.5cm (new W95 is now 95cm) tapered mast and 85cm fuselage the AFS-2 is a significant

piece of carbon. A high aspect foil, with thinner and longer wing spans, it bolts to board via standard deep tuttle. Foil & Co use star head fixings for extra leverage when tightening.

With around 12 knots we used a 6m to see how things panned out first run. Happily we were taking flight in gusts without issue. And straight away it became apparent the amount of control the AFS-2 delivers is unparalleled.

Following on from that initial session we chucked the AFS-2 at everything from 10-25+ knots. In all instances, even when a tad over gassed, the AFS-2's composure and good manners were ever on show. Of course, you can over foil on almost any of these toys, but it takes a lot for the AFS-2 to cavitate and cause those unnerving drops from the sky.

Another tick in the AFS-2's box is its speed. Due to the foil's construction, and fixed mast/fuselage lay up, you get minimal, if any, torsional twist. You can feel this on some, especially if swapping from one foil to another. The AFS-2, however, remains rock steady and delivers superior efficiency. How did we measure this? When flying next to riders on standard slalom kit it was obvious the AFS-2 easily kept up and in some cases outran.

Going round corners requires a degree of concentration as there is some push back from the foil. That said after a few attempts progress can still be made..

Conclusion

Foil & Co's AFS-2 is the most controlled windfoil we've used to date. Easy take offs, speed at flight and able to cope with fluctuating conditions it's no wonder some of the PWA pro lot are using this brand's foils. Superb manufacturing techniques, with top drawer attention to detail, cap off a great product from the French foiling crew.



Up in the air

H Ω R U E

Horue H10 EVO windfoil

Info: www.horue.fr/produits/gp/h10-evo **Price:** From € 799

WORDS: WINDSURFING UK **PICS:** JAMES JAGGER
AS WINDFOILING ADVANCES MORE AND MORE AFFORDABLE PRODUCTS – IN PARTICULAR FOILS – ARE APPEARING. ANOTHER FRENCH BRAND INVOLVED FROM THE START HORUE HAVE SPENT A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF TIME DEVELOPING THEIR H10 EVO ENTRY LEVEL (100% FRENCH MADE) WINDFOIL. COMING IN HYBRID LAY UP WITH FRONT AND BACK CARBON WINGS, STAINLESS STEEL DISMOUNTABLE FUSELAGE, CARBON WRAPPED STAINLESS STEEL MAST AND SOFT/FLEXIBLE NOSE AND TAIL IT'S AN UNUSUAL LOOKING FLY TOY WITH ITS REVERSE ANGLE OF ATTACK FRONT WING – AN INTRIGUING TRAIT THAT'S FOR SURE

Fitting to standard deep tuttle box boards, like most foils manufactured for windsurf hydro foiling, the 78.8cm mast is slightly cantered forwards for increased lift in low winds. It should also be noted that the H10 EVO's rear wing has a thrust adjuster allowing for angle alterations dependant on wind strength. A word of warning; both wings and trailing edge of the Horue's mast are super sharp! So much so that you really need to avoid kicking when swimming in the water.

Once afloat the H10 EVO begins lifting with decent power in the rig. You may need to tune you sail for more low end grunt, depending on how consistent

(gusty) winds are – it likes a bit of oomph to get flying initially. Once up, however, the control of the H10 EVO is tangible. With a steady breeze there's little undulation and it's a relatively easy exercise for riders to find the sweet spot and sustain flights. If the wind should pick up then you may have to change down sail size as it does overpower quickly.

Gybes require concentration and focus as there's a degree of push back from the foil. With time an efficient turn can be nailed down though. One particularly fun aspect of the H10 EVO is the foil's 'spring'. If you've got aspirations of sending your windfoil

gear skyward then you'll be happy to hear the Horue is an easy foil to boost with. This fits with the brand's image of performance products. (If you haven't seen any of the Horue Movie vids, with high wind aerial antics being performed, then check them out online).

Conclusion

All in Horue's H10 EVO windfoil is a user friendly product that'll get riders involved in flying without breaking the bank. Fixtures and fittings are solid with the foil having a welcome addition of tuning via the rear wing's thrust adjustment shim. Riders may need to spend an initial amount of time getting to grips with what sails work best in different wind strengths and understanding the foil's sweet spot. Aerialists will be rewarded with a flying machine that'll aid further skyward boosts. As an affordable foil from a brand who know a thing or two about foils Horue's H10 EVO will fit the bill for many.



(More than) a bag of tricks

Loftsails 2018 Airscape 4.8m freestyle sail



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

Specs: <https://loftsails.com/windsurf-gear/sails/airscape> **Price:** £519

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

ATTACH THE 'FREESTYLE' MONIKER TO A PRODUCT AND IT CAN BE AN INSTANT TURN OFF FOR MANY. WITH A LARGE PROPORTION OF SAILORS FITTING THE FREERIDE MOULD THOUGHTS OF AERIAL CONTORTIONISM AND BENDY MAN/WOMAN SHENANIGANS COULDN'T BE FARTHER FROM RECREATIONAL WINDSURFING REALMS. YET THE BENEFITS FREESTYLE TOOLS OFFER ACTUALLY SUIT EVERYMAN WINDSURFERS MORE THAN YOU'D THINK: EARLY PLANING, EFFICIENT UPWIND ABILITY, EASY MANOEUVRING AND SO ON.

Loftsails' Airscape 4.8m is the second 2018 sail we've tested from Monty Spindler's long time brand. There are a few things that jump out, both on the water and off, the first of which is how high the foot of the sail is cut. With boom attached this becomes even more noticeable with an elevated clew primarily designed with ducking in mind.

Following an easy rigging process hitting the water is also an interesting premise. With many sails billed as early planing, whereby riders can get away with using one size smaller, the Airscape 4.8m REALLY allows for this possibility. The sail's bottom end grunt is significant with a positive pull from the front,

driving windsurfers onto the plane even in marginal and/or gusty winds. When others are on 5.3m's (ish) there's no reason why an 85kg rider (with some skill and the right board) won't be up and skimming on the 4.8m.

Blatting along and that high clew is indeed noticeable. It lends itself to a very upright and centred stance that may take some getting used to. In a short space of time, however, most riders will become comfortable and not find it an issue.

Through moves the Airscape 4.8m rocks – even flat water carving style manoeuvres are great fun. There's

loads of drive that'll power you through gybes whilst that high cut foot is extremely efficient for ducking all kinds of monkeys and reverses. If you're an advanced sailor then whippy is a term to associate with the Airscape. There's also loads of lift generated which becomes noticeable through aerial moves like forwards. With only small ramps on offer the 4.8m boosts riders higher and allows for maximum water clearance. It's all doable and fulfilling.

Conclusion

For riders considering higher wind manoeuvre orientated sails Loftails' Airscape 4.8m is one to scope (even if you're not a freestyle trixster per se). Offering all the elements windsurfers desire the Airscape 4.8m is an early planing and upwind machine that'll suit old school carvers who love gybe variations as much as new school power move aficionados looking to bust out air inversions and such. Well made and distinct looking it's one to consider for when the wind picks up. Also works well in windfoiling mode.



Good to go!

Fanatic Stubby FSW 95 TE



Info: <http://www.fanatic.com/product/freewave-stb/> **Price:** £1949

WORDS: WINDSURFING UK **PICS:** JAMES JAGGER
HAVING CHECKED OUT 2017'S 105 VERSION OF THE STUBBY FSW IT WAS INTRIGUING TO LAY HANDS ON 2018'S 95 LITRE VERSION AND SEE HOW IT COMPARED. AS ALWAYS FANATIC'S ATTENTION TO DETAIL, FIXTURES AND FITTINGS AND OVERALL MANUFACTURING FINISH IS RIGHT UP THERE. SO MUCH SO IT SEEMS A SHAME TO GET BOARDS LIKE THIS WET...BUT STILL.

Coming as a 2+1 thruster fin configuration, with x2 12cm side bites and x1 19cm central skeg the Stubby FSW 95 appears quite gunny and long, relative to its overall shape. Parallel rail boards can often take on this aesthetic even when that's not actually the case – a sort of optical illusion if you like. The board's pronounced double diamond tail and stubby nose (hence the name) rounds off a very new school looking board.

On the water and the Stubby FSW 95's flat rocker gets things up and revving in no time – it's certainly quick that's for sure. As such skyward boosts are satisfying and a part of what makes freestyle wave boards appealing. For anyone looking at learning aerial rotations it's a good tool that make inverted transitions easier to stomp.

Freestyle wave boards have come a long way in the last few years. Whilst the above traits won't be any surprise to those with FSW experience the most notable performance increase – with bigger versions of freestyle wave boards (generally) – is in the wave riding department. In the past FSW's haven't really been that fulfilling for diehard wave heads to ride, tending to accelerate out away from the pocket too often. Happily the Stubby FSW 95 is a sled that you can fully belt lips with and delivers a bona fide experience in the surf. Plus, with its stubby compact shape, fitting into real world swells – such as onshore slop and grovel waves – is no issue.

Fanatic have taken the best of previous freestyle wave models, onshore surf sleds and mashed these traits together

adding a little bit of freeride flavour to the mix as well for some additional seasoning. Of course there's no such as the perfect board for every condition – hence why we all have quivers. That said Fanatic's Stubby FSW 95 fits the bill perfectly for powered up coastal lump bashing on medium sized sails.

Conclusion

Fanatic have honed their stubby shapes over the last few seasons arriving at what we now have here: an efficient, suitably fast and fulfilling board that allows wave orientated sailors to attack conditions without having to employ any overly complicated techniques. For most riders in real world wave environments it's a sled that'll deliver you skyward with ease, for all manner of aerial antics, while retaining speed, drive and efficient carving traits for proper banging lip hits, deep gouges and knife edge slices. And for those that just want to blast? No worries. Hop aboard and go!



Redline freeride

Severne Fox 105 2018



Info: www.severnesails.com/freeride-sails/severne-fox **Price:** £1849

WORDS: WINDSURFING UK **PICS:** JAMES JAGGER
FOLLOWING ON FROM LAST ISSUE'S REVIEW OF THE DYNO 105 THIS TIME ROUND WE'RE SPOTLIGHTING SEVERNE'S SPORTY FREERIDE MODEL THE FOX 105. COMING IN BLARING ORANGE/RED LIVRY, ENSURING IT STANDS OUT ON THE BEACH/WATER, THE FOX DISPLAYS SIMILAR DESIGN TRAITS YOU OFTEN SEE ON SLALOM BOARDS – A SCOOPED OUT DECK, OUTBOARD FOOTSTRAPS, HULL CUTOUTS IN THE TAIL AND AN OVERALL IMPRESSION THAT THIS

First run out and we coupled Severne's Fox 105 with a 6m in around 22+ knots. With the brand suggesting the board laps up chop and flotsam, as if it's not there, these were ideal conditions for checking that element out. And we can confirm it is indeed the case...

Pedal to the mettle from the off the 105 revs up straight away with a feeling you've been shot out of a starting gun. Riding very much off the hind quarter of the board it's a silky smooth experience as it blatts across the water. The hull contours do an admirable job of smoothing out the ride, leaving riders free to focus on the ahead and where that next full power gybe should be placed.

The Fox encourages an aggressive speed orientated stance. On a few occasions,

however, we over egged the pudding when pushing against the fin resulting in loss of grip. We found switching up the fin size was therefore best if planning a fully powered up (to overpowered) session. For general back and forths, however, the powerbox 36cm fin is fine.

Round corners and the Fox grips like stink, rails biting effectively. Riders can either bang in a tight turn or arc things out with more progressive edging. In both instances it's fairly simple (with technique) to complete fast exits that'll have your mates playing catch up all day long.

The Fox is a freeride/freerace machine through and through, of that there's no question. That said it still likes a bit of air time with full chat boosts being particularly rewarding – even from only



small ramps. Its light construction helps when sailors fancy skying it although those longer style jumps is where the Fox really shines.

Conclusion

Super fast, to the point of offering de-tuned slalom esque performance, Severne's Fox 105 literally flies across the water riding very much off the fin. Whack a bigger sail on for ultimate white knuckle rides, being more sensitive with back foot pressure in this mode, or simply use as a powered up sporty freeride toy – the choice is yours. If you're looking for a zoomy straight line stick to make use of flatter water days then Severne's Fox 105 could tick the box. But don't discount bumpy waters either as the silky smooth ride really takes that jarring feeling out of choppy blasting.



Get a grip!

MK Windsurfing CPX 150-210 carbon boom



Info: <http://mkwindsurfing.co.uk/booms/> Price: £375

WORDS: WINDSURFING UK **PICS:** JAMES JAGGER
MK HAVE BEEN A LONGSTANDING UK WINDSURFING COMPANY THAT'S SUPPLYING HIGH QUALITY WINDSURFING ACCESSORIES SINCE 1979. IN 2016 THE COMPANY WAS SOLD TO NEW OWNER LARRY CHAN – AN EXPERT WINDSURFER IN HIS OWN RIGHT – WHO SET ABOUT REVAMPING THE BRAND. FOR 2017 THERE ARE A COUPLE OF NEW PRODUCTS THAT HAVE BEEN ADDED TO THE RANGE, OF WHICH WE'RE LOOKING AT THE CPX CARBON BOOM HERE.

There's no question about the high end manufacturing techniques used with the CPX – the MK is a super tough and durable product that should stand the test of time. The boom clamp is solid, with all connections being rock steady, as is the back end which is also solid. Inside the boom head is a removable RDM shim adapter so it'll fit all mast types. It's a stiff boom as well – even at half extension. Towards full length you do get a slight amount of flex but it's nothing significant and hardly surprising as this can be the case with many booms.

On the water and MK's boom is comfortable to grip, with a reduced diameter (27mm) boom arm which allows finger tips to wrap around and

remain in contact without fatigue or strain. Riding over harsh chop, and/or larger chunks of water such as waves, and it remains solid without upsetting your chosen sail's performance. Through 'less strain' moves, such as gybes, there's absolutely no movement we could detect. With height in the mix and flatter landings the boom remains dependable and tough even if your sail contorts out of all proportion. Even with such forces exerted we had complete confidence in MK's CPX carbon boom.

Conclusion

A versatile, built to last and affordable boom MK's CPX carbon boom is worth a look whether you be wave sailor or freeride windsurfer. As extra kudos the MK



brand is British which is great to see in a market where the vast majority of windsurfing products are from companies based elsewhere in the world. If you're a windsurfer who likes to keep it home grown then MK will suit you down to the ground, as well as providing windsurfing accessories with top shelf performance. We enjoyed using the MK CPX boom and would happily recommended to anyone. Long may the brand continue...



Double whammy

AHD SL2 132L x 79.6cm OSS slalom windsurf board



Info: www.ahd-boards.com and www.kaisports.co.uk **info@kaisports.co.uk** Tel: 02380 840777 **Price:** £1649 (less fin & foil). Full Select fin range and AFS Foil package options available from Kai Sports Ltd. Example: SL2 board, Select S1 fin and AFS W85 Full Carbon Foil = £2699

WORDS: WINDSURFING UK **PICS:** JAMES JAGGER
COMING IN DOUBLE CARBON CONSTRUCTION AHD'S SL2 132L SLALOM BOARD INITIALLY LANDED WITH US TO BE PARTNERED WITH THE AFS-2 HYDRO FOIL (REVIEWED ELSEWHERE). WITH IT BEING A SLALOM BOARD THOUGH WE HAD TO HAVE A STAB AT THAT FIRST.

Slalom mode

As a collaboration between the designer responsible for so many AHD boards, Pascal Gerber, and World Cup sailor Diony Guadagnino, the SL2 was always going to be quick. Aesthetics, however, aren't an afterthought either, with graphics and the shape easy on the eye. It's also a robust board that we can attest to having spent considerable time on a harsh shingle beach with it.

Paired with a 45cm carbon race fin it was off to a flying start. To really milk low wind speeds a 52cm could be used though. The SL2's forward rails are soft and forgiving. Combined with the scooped out deck the overall ride is smooth. Comfy MFC footstraps are placed outboard so sailors can firmly engage the fin and top speed is right up there. Gybing is a focused affair with concentration/commitment needed. It's in no way

super technical but for desirable planing exits attention is needed.

Windfoil mode

Slotting the AFS-2 foil in the box and the SL2 transforms before your very eyes. We opened up the straps considerably for foiling mode. Having had an initial flight with straps set to normal it became apparent we were too outboard. With a small tweak it was good to go.

As with slalom mode AHD's SL2 winds up the revs efficiently. The soft forgiving nose helps keep momentum in the face of chop while it's moderately wide rounded tail helps induce lift. A little nudge (pump) sees it take off effectively. With a quoted width of 79.6cm it's not the girthiest of platforms for windfoiling. Yet there's enough leverage to control pitch and roll while the lower width really benefits counter gain.

During unwanted touch downs the scooped forward section and soft rails come into play, shedding water and helping with follow on take offs. It's very forgiving if you should drop, which by design is a very welcome trait when foiling.

Round corners and foot placement again needs to be accurate. Wider boards can be more forgiving. With AHD's SL2 you'll need to focus on technique, which after a small amount of time should start to click.

Conclusion

AHD's SL2 slalom, foil ready 132L board is good looking and one that straddles both disciplines with suitable aplomb. For slalom heads it delivers an engaging yet manageable ride rewarding input with satisfying results. For windfoilers the SL2 delivers a stable flight, relative to its quoted width, that encourages progression. Its light weight helps with foiling take offs and increasing efficient momentum in fairly choppy waters. As a multi-discipline performance toy you really can't knock it.



Simon Winkley, Advanced Instructor and Starboard/Severne Team Rider, returns to deliver two weeks of intermediate to early-advanced coaching in Vassiliki, the magical windsurfing location.

"Simon is a brilliant coach. Two seasons of frustration, crashes and general confusion were overcome within days." (Chris, 2017)

"I had the best windsurfing holiday ever... Simon's enthusiasm and constant energy for coaching is so inspiring... looking forward to 2018!" (Maria, 2017)



17-24 JUNE: £ 725
24 JULY - 31 JULY: £ 795
Fully Booked



HOLIDAYS INCLUDE:

- ✓ Beachfront hotel
- ✓ FREE use of windsurf kit
- ✓ Flights and transfers

- ✓ Inclusive tuition
- ✓ FREE MTBs & bike guiding
- ✓ FREE use of dinghies & SUPs

WINDWISE 2018

WINDWISE SKILLS TRAINING SYSTEM

STUNNING LOCATIONS *DRY GYBES* BONAIRE *FAST TACKS*
WAVE RIDE TENERIFE *JUMP* INTERMEDIATE
STRAPS IMPROVER *HARNESS* PRASONISI *BLAST* SARDINIA
DUCK GYBE ALACATI *FEASIBLE* FREESTYLE
WARRIOR MAURITIUS *RIG@90* HAYLING ISLAND
NWFLATWATER *WAVERIDE* ADVANCED
RIG ROTATORS UK TOUR & FAMILY WEEKS

WWW.WINDWISE.NET

COACH OF THE YEAR 2017
WINDSURFING HALL OF FAME