

AUTUMN 2024

Issue 21 of Tonic Mag is bursting with action, innovation, and stories! Jack Galloway calls for change in his editorial, where gender disparity at the Molokai 2 Oahu foil race takes centre stage. Rou Chater advises avoiding industry gear hype and trends that may stunt your progressions. Get inspired by James Boulding's journey from Manchester to global watersports

fame, and meet rising wingfoiling star Mathis Ghio as he breaks records. We also spotlight waterwoman Viola Lippitsch, Casper Steinfath's adventures in Cold Hawaii, and Meet CORE's Jasper Raus. Explore the latest gear with Armstrong Foils, Prolimit, and Harlem, and don't miss our tests, techniques, and more. Dive into the latest issue now!

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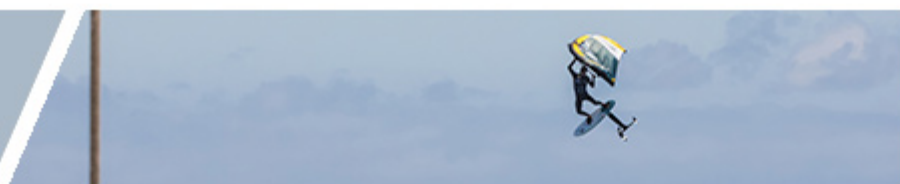
COMPETITION



EDITORIAL



YOU ARE RIDING THE
WRONG GEAR



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WATERWOMEN -
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DOWNWIND FOILING
IN COLD HAWAII



UP & COMING -
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FINDING THE BALANCE



FRONT COVER RIDER KOA FABBIO PHOTO FRANKIE BEES

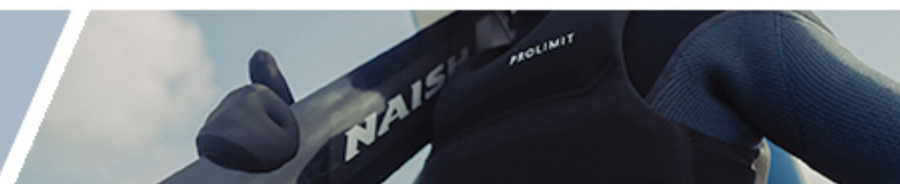
SALT WATER VS
FRESH WATER



TECH FOCUS:
ARMSTRONG FOILS



TECH FOCUS:
PROLIMIT



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HARLEM PACE



TECHNIQUE



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MOVIE NIGHT



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RIDER ANCOR SOSA KATHER
PHOTO JULIEN LELEU




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ISSUE 21

RIDER: FIONA WYLDE
PHOTO: MICHAEL ITO

The Molokai 2 Oahu (M2O) foil race, a 32-mile test of endurance and skill, showcased the best in foil design and athleticism once again this year. But amidst the excitement, a glaring disparity stood out: only five women competed compared to 89 men. While foiling continues to evolve and impress on the global stage, including at the Olympics, the gender gap in downwind events like M2O remains stark. This underrepresentation isn't just a statistic for Jack Galloway—it's a call to action. With a 5-year-old daughter looking up, he wonders why his sport lags and what can be done to level the playing field.

The waters of the Molokai Channel witnessed another thrilling edition of the Molokai 2 Oahu (M2O) foil race this year. Last month's event, renowned for its gruelling 32-mile course and testing conditions,

showcased the next level in foil design and athleticism. However, downwind foiling and events like the M2O have a glaring lack of female representation... for now. This year's event had just 5 female competitors; comparing that to the 89 male competitors doesn't look good. As I write this, the Olympics shows stacked fields of kite and windsurf foilers competing for medals, with equal competition on the male and female sides. It was hugely inspirational to see, especially for my 5-year-old daughter. But I'd like her to feel the same about her Dad's silly sport of downwind foiling, so why is this, and what can be done?

The stark underrepresentation of women in the recent M2O race is possibly symptomatic of deeper systemic issues. Women's entry barriers in foiling sports are multifaceted, encompassing cultural and structural

dimensions. From a young age, girls are often less encouraged to pursue water sports, let alone niche disciplines like foiling. This lack of encouragement can translate into fewer opportunities for skill development and competition at higher levels.

Sponsorship can also be an issue; it tends to favour male competitors, perpetuating a cycle of underrepresentation. Correct me if I'm wrong, but I haven't seen much (or any) female representation in downwind marketing... Other competitive sports, such as trail running, have started to recognise this: 'Here For The Women's Race' is an amazing non-profit initiative that has created a fund that "aims to amplify the presence and recognition of female athletes in trail and ultrarunning, promoting equity and inspiring future generations.". How cool is that?



Structural barriers within the sport's institutions can also play a critical role. I would say that governing bodies should play a part in gender equality in the sport, but downwind foiling is so new that governing bodies don't exist yet. Event organisers, however, should do what they can to create more welcoming events for women. The sport risks stagnation if we don't make it more diverse.

Diversity, including gender diversity, brings fresh perspectives, new talents, and innovative approaches. Including more women in downwind foiling could increase the sport's growth and evolution, attracting broader audiences and creating richer competitive experiences.

Inspiring examples of female downwind foilers do exist. You only have to look at the top two in the M2O race to find them. Annie Reichert and Fiona Wylde are both exceptional athletes. They battled it out in the race and ultimately finished with just nine minutes separating them. Annie in 2:27:12 and Fiona in 2:36:49 —amazing stuff.

We need to share more stories like this, and yes I include our own publication in that, we need to improve sponsorship opportunities for women, and ensure equal media coverage at events. Furthermore, male allies within the sport can play a pivotal role by advocating for these changes and supporting their female counterparts.

The recent Molokai 2 Oahu race has highlighted a significant issue within the foiling community: the urgent need for greater female representation. I believe everyone can start to play their part in making a difference. The waters of the Molokai Channel, and indeed all waters where foiling thrives, should be a space where everyone can soar.

Jack Galloway, Editor

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With over four decades of watersports experience, Rou Chater shows how industry hype and relentless trends might steer you away from what truly works for your needs. Don't let the flashy gear fool you—your setup might be holding you back. Discover why bigger might be better, and learn how to find the gear for you - we've got it all right here in Tonic Mag!

WORDS ROU CHATER



YOU ARE RIDING THE WRONG GEAR

"THE HOTTEST PRODUCT LAST MONTH IS NOW YESTERDAY'S NEWS AS THE SPORT MOVES THROUGH FADS AND PHASES OFTEN DRIVEN BY THE BRANDS AND THE PROS AT THE TOP."



The chances are, if you believed the hype, you were riding the wrong gear, and the industry doesn't care...

Foiling is a hotbed of development right now; in my 42 years of watersports experience, I have never seen anything quite like it. In the early days of windsurfing, the development came quickly, but it was often wild and slightly misguided in the direction it took.

Kitesurfing the development felt more refined; we'd moved away from men in sheds to CAD and CNC machines, but it was still relatively slow, mainly where kites were concerned in those early days.

Like any sport, windsurfing and kitesurfing soon settled on equipment that worked, and gear development slowed to a more moderate pace; after all, if it ain't broke, don't fix it.

However, foiling is a different beast, and we are all victims of it. The hottest product last month is now yesterday's news as the sport moves through fads and phases often driven by the brands and the pros at the top. Sometimes, this isn't the best solution for you, the average weekend warrior at the beach...

As a journalist, I'm in the privileged position of being able to test and ride the latest products, but some of them just don't make sense, and even worse, they might even be holding back your progression. There are a lot of factors at work here: first, where you ride, how you ride, and when you ride. Then, you need to consider your own physique and fitness level, and finally, your skill level will come into play.



"THERE AREN'T MANY BRANDS BASED IN LOCALES WITH AVERAGE CONDITIONS, AND IT'S EASY TO UNDERSTAND WHY."

I'd wager that after reading this and looking at your gear, you might find that some of it doesn't quite fit and is perhaps holding you back. Don't panic; I've been in the same boat; it's easy to get sucked into the trends, fads and marketing that we are bombarded with. The issue is it can be very expensive to try and buy and work out what gear will be best for you.

One universal area is the never-ending dick-swinging contest of wanting to ride smaller and smaller gear. I'm not sure why this happens, but it's probably because you are learning on a 2000+ foil and a 120l board, which is great for learning on but will very quickly hold you back moving forward. Winging has been a huge victim of this, and it's easy to see why.

If you look at many pro riders, they are 60kg wet through and riding daily in perfect winds on some far-flung sunny beach. Often, those locations have the same conditions day in and day out. They aren't

troubled by the endless weather systems we get in Europe, where the wind can do a 360 in a single day and range from nothing to 50 knots without even thinking about it.

It's often the case that this is where the gear is tested and built by the brands, too. There aren't many brands based in locales with average conditions, and it's easy to understand why. However, this means that perhaps what the brands think is the best gear for the moment isn't perhaps the best for you. Then, add the multitude of equipment, making the choices even harder. Some brands seem inclined to make everything and let you work it out; others are a little more nuanced.

"THE DEVELOPMENT OF WINGFOILING IS HAPPENING RIGHT BEFORE OUR EYES, AND IT'S EASY TO GET CAUGHT UP AND END UP ON THE WRONG PATH."



One thing I hear a lot of in this sport is, what the f**k do I buy? I went to the website and got confused. It's certainly not easy, and with foils and boards changing rapidly, it becomes even harder.

There is a real danger of turning people off the sport altogether, but I believe with a set of blinkers to the marketing trends and gearing up for your ability, size, and location, you can get through the mire and settle on a setup that works for you...

I'd wager that whatever you have at the moment might not be the holy grail of what you need and what will help you perform at your best.

If you want a good example of this, ponder the humble downwind board. Born out of Maui as a new sport within foiling, the brands were soon pumping these out and telling you they were the best thing since sliced bread for wing foiling, and you all needed one to have fun. Newsflash: this year, that incredibly expensive DW board isn't getting a mention or much interest on eBay, because this year it's all about the mid-length! It is the same shape but way shorter and smaller to make it more applicable to winging.

The development of wingfoiling is happening right before our eyes, and it's easy to get caught up and end up on the wrong path. My main beef, though, is the dick swinging... The quest to ride smaller and smaller boards and foils as a badge of honour, what board are you on? Oh, mine's 20l, and I'm on a 400 foil, which means I have a massive penis, and I'm better than you.

“LADIES SEEM TO BE FAR LESS CONCERNED ABOUT WHAT PEOPLE THINK OR HAVE TO PROVE A POINT IN THE CAR PARK OR ON THE WHATSAPP CHAT GROUP.”

Before you play the sexist card, this does seem to be something that predominantly affects men on the water; ladies seem to be far less concerned about what people think or have to prove a point in the car park or on the WhatsApp chat group.

It stems from wanting to prove you are not a beginner, which we are all keen to do. Everyone wants to get out of their beginner gear when they feel ready, and suddenly, the numbers count. But that can be problematic for your progression if you go too small too fast, and it can be expensive too.

Being able to say you are riding smaller gear than the guy in the car park also makes you “seem” like a better rider which probably gives you a bit of a dopamine hit like that reel of a kiter-eating shit you were sent this morning.

Smaller gear is better, of course; it’s lighter, faster and easier to turn, in theory, but you might not be ready for it, and therefore, instead of discovering the benefits, you just find yourself struggling, and this is the point when the benefits of smaller gear don’t count for you.

This article relates mainly to winging and any kind of foil sport. To prove that, I will use my quest for foil surfing prowess as an example. I’m a fairly shit surfer. I only started properly surfing when I moved to Pembrokeshire 5 years ago. I can now ride a shortboard to an intermediate standard and feel pretty confident in a variety of conditions.





"EVERY SESSION I HAD WAS A SCRATCH WITH ZERO SUCCESS; IT WAS DEMORALISING, AND I WASTED A GOOD FEW MONTHS TRYING AND FAILING."

When people started prone foiling in the surf, I wasn't interested; I didn't want it to affect my ability to surf, and I didn't want to learn bad habits or detract from my surfing time and journey. My good buddy Oli was out one day at a spot we were sharing. I was on my small, short groveller in the substandard waves, not having a lot of fun,

and he was learning to prone foil and getting some decent enough rides.

After an hour, I decided he was having way more fun than me, and I grabbed my 105l wingboard (you read that right) and my 1780 foil set-up. I paddled out, expecting zero success, but to my surprise, I managed to pop and get on foil on about three waves; it wasn't much, but it was a lot more than I thought I would achieve in session one.

I was hooked, so for the next week, I carried on and found myself getting better quickly. Once I posted my set-up on social media, I was ridiculed. I wasn't actively looking for

prone foil gear; I was just using my then rather large wing set-up (this was at the beginning of my wing journey). The long and short of it is that I caved to the peer pressure from a bunch of very good surfers who were making decent dents into prone foiling.

On several recommendations, I got a 1400 foil and a 40-litre 4'8" board. I then got very shit at prone foiling. Every session I had was a scratch with zero success; it was demoralising, and I wasted a good few months trying and failing. Eventually, I returned to using my wing board, now a 70l 5'2 with a bit more of a surf shape. I had more success catching waves and popping, but I could not get the foil to get my 85kg ass out of the water.



“UNLIKE WINGING, MOST PEOPLE WHO ACTUALLY FOIL IN THE SURF ARE EITHER SHIT-HOT SURFERS WITH TENS OF YEARS OF EXPERIENCE OR PRO WINGFOILERS LOOKING FOR SOMETHING TO DO WHEN THE WIND DOESN'T BLOW.”

Eventually, after wasting a lot of sessions and time, I dug out the 1780 front wing and instantly was back to popping and fooling around on the wave. It was a revelation. After a few sessions, I felt I could confidently call myself a surf foiler. Stokesville ensued, and I started to look at what had happened.

I'd listened to the market. I'd listened to my peers, and ultimately, I'd listened to the wrong people. Unlike winging, most people who actually foil in the surf are either shit-hot surfers with tens of years of experience or pro wingfoilers looking for something to do when the wind doesn't blow. They are also usually young and sporting a six-pack. There are two things I don't have, well, maybe the six-pack if you look at my fridge.

Essentially, I'd made a gear choice based on other people's opinions and what the market thought I should have. It cost me dearly.

I hadn't considered their ability, physique and where and how they ride; the thinking had just swayed me; that is still very much the case, that to prone foil, you need a tiny board and a foil that's around 1000 in area.

I firmly believe this is why so many people try prone foiling and fail and why it has the reputation of being one of the most challenging foiling disciplines... Remember, I'm a shit surfer, 85kg and not a pro foiler by any stretch. But I can prone foil to a reasonable standard now, after a couple of years of being on bigger gear.

“WHATEVER YOU DO, CONSIDER YOUR SIZE, ABILITY AND WHERE AND HOW YOU WANT TO RIDE WHEN LOOKING AT GEAR.”

My current setup is possibly what some would consider a bit more pro. I'm on a 43l board and a 1475 Armstong MA front wing. Pembrokeshire is blessed with good waves, so I'm out surfing when it's pumping. Foil surfing is a smaller wave affair for me, and I've not found a foil that can lift my 90kg when wet in a 6'4" hood much smaller than the 1400 size.

I guess my point here is that I stalled my learning curve by going too small too quickly, which is something I believe many wing foilers do, too, all under the auspices of showing they are better than perhaps they are or conforming to better riders, telling them what they ride is the best.

In winging, the small board phenomenon finally seems dead in the water. Even the freestylers are switching back to bigger boards as they allow them to bounce back up on the foil after a trick. The general rule of thumb is anything over 15l under your body weight is too small and will make things harder.

Of course, that's for a one-board quiver killer. If you want two boards, you may go smaller for the windy days, depending on how you want to ride. But whatever you do, consider your size, ability and where and how you want to ride when looking at gear.

I often get complimented on how long I can ride and link swells for by some of the local crew, but that's not down to superior skill; it's just down to riding a bigger foil with loads more lift, making it easier to pump and connect the bumps on.

“That's big” is something I hear a lot while setting up,



“ IF YOU STRUGGLE TO PROGRESS, DON'T BE AFRAID TO STEP BACK AND SEE IF GOING BACK TO THE BIGGER GEAR MAKES A DIFFERENCE. ”



but a bigger foil, 1200-1400, allows you to get through tacks and gybes with little errors; it will give bigger riders more lift, and it will allow you to pump for far longer too.

Essentially, there is the perfect setup for every occasion, whether winging, dock starting, downwinding, or surf foiling, but that perfect setup is specific to you. It's not what the industry might be telling you to buy or what the hot shot down the beach is riding. It's not what a 60kg rider uses when you are 85kg.

It's also relative to where and how you want to ride. Here in Wales, with the swell we get, riding a 40l wingboard just isn't an option, you need to get your kit out deep enough to be able to waterstart, and if it sinks too much, you'll hit the bottom before the next wave smashes you to bits. That isn't the case for a deep water lake with no waves; the location and conditions dictate so much of what you need, as well as your own physique and skill level.

The fastest way to progress is to make things easy on yourself, don't rush to smaller gear to prove a point, and change one thing at a time, to make the transition easier still. I wish I'd thought about this more years ago when I was learning to surf foil, but sometimes, you must learn the hard way. If you struggle to progress, don't be afraid to step back and see if going back to the bigger gear makes a difference. I will wage it does, then with more skill, you can revisit the gear choice in the future, but always be open-minded to riding larger gear; it might just change your fortunes and make you better than your dick-swinging mates...

THE INTERVIEW

QUESTIONS JEN TYLER PHOTOS JAMES BOULDING

James Boulding has been on the kiteboarding scene for a long time, and today, he shares his journey from Manchester's suburbs to the heart of the global watersports scene, his insights on the evolution of wingfoiling, and what it takes to make waves both on the water and behind the camera. Find out more in this issue's The Interview.



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James, it's great to have you here! Let's start from the beginning: where did you grow up, and how did you first get into watersports?

I grew up in the North-West of England, in the suburbs of Manchester. I didn't get into watersports until around the age of 17. Before that, my life was all about studying and, in my spare time, playing various winter and summer team sports. My side passion throughout all this was climbing, which gave me my first doses of adrenaline. Towards the end of school, I dabbled with some land power kites, and in my final year, I started getting into the water with them. The industry was still relatively young, and at the coast, you'd find more land-based kiting than water activities, but I knew that was where I wanted to go. After finishing school, I went to university on the North East coast, where I caught the kitesurfing bug. The conditions were often rough, and the temperatures weren't too helpful, but I loved the community and spirit there, and I'm still very much in touch with the friends I met in the early days. Upon graduation, I was very much burnt out with studying. I couldn't bear the thought of going straight into a career in finance or accounting, so I took a watersports instructor's job in Egypt, and the rest is history!

“ I DABBLED WITH SOME LAND POWER KITES, AND IN MY FINAL YEAR, I STARTED GETTING INTO THE WATER WITH THEM. ”

You became a pro kitesurfer quite quickly and made many films with riders like Aaron Hadlow, Sam Light, and Tom Court; how did that come about, and what did you learn from those early experiences?

Sometimes, things fall into place. I had decided to spend the winter in Australia with my friends Sam and Tom,



“ THE FACT THAT YOU COULD GET CLOSE TO YOUR SUBJECT
AND TAKE HIGH-QUALITY STILLS OF SOMETHING
BEAUTIFUL AND SPECIAL BLEW MY MIND. ”





Being in the water opens up endless possibilities and makes me feel part of the action. I particularly enjoy shooting in waves as it's challenging and gives me the same adrenaline rush as surfing. Capturing a good shot in these conditions is incredibly rewarding, as everything happens quickly, and you must be on your toes.

Please tell us about your role as a Marketing Manager at Cabrinha.

My role at Cabrinha involves both organisational and creative tasks. I work with the sales team to execute the marketing plan, which includes advertising, website maintenance, social media management, photoshoots, product launches, promotions, events, and consumer communication. I also handle product graphics and print materials.

**"BEING IN THE WATER
OPENS UP ENDLESS
POSSIBILITIES
AND MAKES ME
FEEL PART OF
THE ACTION."**



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I enjoy the variety of skills I use as part of our small team. The best part of my job is the people I work with. I've been with Cabrinha for over ten years and have built excellent working relationships and friendships with many staff members. I've enjoyed watching their kids grow up and have made fantastic memories working alongside talented individuals during our trips.

What is the most challenging part of your job?

Meeting deadlines can be challenging and add extra stress. Product marketing is often the final piece of the puzzle before a launch, so that time pressures can occur. However, it's also gratifying. Some of the proudest moments are when a product collection goes live and the public interacts with something we've been working on behind the scenes for a few years.

— **"THE FOILS WERE STILL RATHER CUMBERSOME AND RELATIVELY SMALL AND INEFFICIENT COMPARED TO WHERE THEY ARE TODAY."** —

How have you seen wingfoiling evolve over the years, and what trends do you foresee shaping its future?

I remember very early on in the sport's inception, being on Maui and working on a new kite collection, when Pete (Cabrinha) came into the office and was excited about the potential. He'd been dabbling with some early prototypes, and it clicked on the water with the foil. The foils were still rather cumbersome and relatively small and inefficient compared to where they are today. I must be honest; I was still quite uncertain at that point. I could see its application in the waves, but recreationally, I wasn't sure. Pete had his finger on the pulse, and it quickly dawned on us what potential there was for this as a stand-alone sport.

Since then, the industry has moved at lightning speed, with foil development supercharging what is possible. It's cool to see the different disciplines developing and riders pushing their signature styles in all conditions. The youth always play a key role in sports development, so I love seeing the youngsters charging on the freestyle side. Combining big air, freestyle and waves in one progressive package showcases the best wing foiling, and events like the one in Cape Verde showed signs of what the future may hold. As a brand, working with talented riders as they forge their way in a fast-changing industry is awesome. Each new iteration of equipment seems to unlock new tricks and combos or aid in riding larger, faster, hollower waves.

Who is the most talented wingfoiler, in your opinion?

Over the last few years, I've enjoyed working with some amazing athletes at the forefront of wingfoiling. I love the style and power of Titouan Galea charging in big waves, complimented by the raw talent of Benji Castenskiold, who just loves every second of being in the water trying new freestyle tricks. They both have the power to help grow the sport and entice a wider range of people to give it a go.

"I'VE LOVED EVERY PART OF MY UNCONVENTIONAL JOURNEY, FROM GRADUATING FROM UNIVERSITY TO BECOMING A KITESURF INSTRUCTOR"

Looking back on your career, what are your proudest moments on the water and behind the camera?

I'm not sure if it's my age or just a bad memory, but nothing stands out. I've loved every part of my unconventional journey, from graduating from university to becoming a kitesurf instructor and everything in between. I think the whole journey is what I'm most proud of.





“HAVING PASSION AND TALENT AT EVERY STAGE CAN LEAD TO A LONGER-LASTING CAREER, WITH THE ADDED BENEFITS OF BEING ASSOCIATED WITH A BRAND.”

I remember looking at a poster at the university that showed what Maths graduates went on to do after they left university. Oddly enough, nothing was anything like what I ended up doing! I've taken many pictures that I love, but what I cherish most are the memories of each session that a picture was taken during, the moments in the water with the riders trying to create something unique or special.

What advice would you give people thinking about becoming a pro rider, and how does someone grab your attention these days?

There are many ways to establish a career in the watersports industry. I encourage young watersports enthusiasts to consider various roles beyond becoming a professional rider or an influencer, as only a small percentage can make a good living from those paths. These roles can also be quite unstable during industry fluctuations. Many career paths are available, from instructors and sales agents to product development.

Having passion and talent at every stage can lead to a longer-lasting career, with the added benefits of being associated with a brand. There are many strategies to gain attention, but reaching out via Instagram direct messages or texting on a Sunday night for free gear is at the bottom of the list!

Establishing a solid relationship with a brand can open up many opportunities. Being adaptable to a brand's needs is also essential. For every brand, selling products is crucial, so demonstrating how you can contribute to their sales and making it easy for them to track your impact is key. It's a win-win situation that leads to a healthy and beneficial partnership for everyone!



What makes a good pro rider, in your opinion?

People often ask me this, and I always say, "Be more like Alby!". Alberto Rondina has had a long career in the sport, and he's carved out a great life, starting as a pro rider and diversifying himself through the sales agent route to running a successful kite station in Sicily. He is still probably one of the most talented, all-rounded athletes I know. He understands the ins and outs of how to get great shots at a photo shoot and can ride any discipline on a kite/wing/surfboard at a very high level. He's also exceptionally hard-working and willing to do anything that needs doing with zero ego. I would urge any up-and-coming pro rider to study this blueprint in detail as it will certainly help their chances of a long and successful career in the industry.

"I HAVE A UNIQUE ROLE AT SHOOTS, AS I BOTH FILL THE PHOTOGRAPHER'S ROLE AND OVERSEE THE GENERAL RUNNING OF THE SHOOT."

You've organised lots of photo shoots over the years. What do you expect from a rider on these occasions?

Being on a shoot is not just about being a skilled rider, but also about working as part of a team and taking on any necessary role at any given moment. Days can be long as we strive to capture the perfect light and conditions, so it may involve tasks like preparing dinner, doing the dishes, or holding the flash during a night shoot. I have a unique role at shoots, as I both fill the photographer's role and oversee the general running of the shoot.

This often means needing more help from the team with setting up gear and swapping riders in and out.



I seem to have coined the slogan 'This isn't a holiday!' as I've said it numerous times to more than one team rider during their first photo shoot in recent years. Hard work and a good attitude go a long way! The best team riders understand what's expected and what it takes to be successful in these environments.

“ BEING WILLING TO LEARN THIS NEW SKILL CAN HELP THEM GET THE BEST SHOTS AT A SHOOT. ”

It's rare for the best riders to understand what makes the perfect photo or video clip, so being willing to learn this new skill can help them get the best shots at a shoot. Doing a trick in the wrong spot, no matter how good it is, will ultimately lead to it not being used.

In an exciting update, there's a possibility that Cabrinha Chair Jon Modica might make an appearance in our next shoot; we'll see how he deals with some whip-cracking!

What is the best piece of advice you've ever received?

Stay humble and work hard!



WATERWOMEN

VIOLA LIPPITSCH

QUESTIONS JEN TYLER PHOTOS VIOLA LIPPITSCH

In this issue's "Waterwomen" feature, we are spotlighting the incredibly talented Viola Lippitsch! From her first glide across the water to balancing a busy school schedule, training, and competition, Viola has quickly made a name for herself in the world of wingfoiling. Join us as we have a chat with Viola about her journey, inspirations, and future in wingfoiling.





“ I INSTANTLY FELL IN LOVE WITH THIS SPORT, AND MY DAD DECIDED TO BUY SOME WINGFOIL EQUIPMENT.”

Viola, it's great to have you here! Please tell us what or who first sparked your interest in wingfoiling.

My first interest in wingfoiling was sparked by my parents. My family loves watersports, and when we first saw people wingfoiling, they decided to book training for all of us at Lake Neusiedl so we could learn it too.

Did you experience any challenges when you first started, or did it come naturally to you?

When I started wingfoiling in early April 2022, I was initially given a big SUP board without a foil to start with. After about an hour, they allowed me to try an actual wingfoil board (160 litres!) with a huge front foil. To my surprise, I managed to "fly on the foil" on the same day and could go in both directions. I instantly fell in love with this sport, and my dad decided to buy some wingfoil equipment.

How can you balance studying, spending time with friends and family, and managing training and competition schedules?

It is challenging to fit everything in because I get off from school only four weeks a year. However, my parents' support—driving me to training spots near Vienna or Lake Garda if time allows and to competition as often as possible—works fine. My best friend and I currently mainly communicate via mobile, as she is a professional handball player and quite busy.



“WHILE TRAINING AT MY HOME SPOT CAN BE TOUGH, ESPECIALLY IN WINTER, I NEVER GIVE UP!”

When did you realise you wanted to become a professional athlete? Or do you plan to study something else alongside your wingfoiling career?

I started my wingfoiling journey in 2023 by participating in my first Leucate competition, which was a lot of fun. I aimed to take part in as many competitions as I could.

In 2024, I set my sights on participating in the whole tour, including Freestyle, Freely-Slalom, and Big Air events. I still have two more years of school ahead of me, and I'm considering studying while continuing to compete in wingfoiling. However, I haven't decided which path to pursue.

Which achievement in your wingfoiling career are you most proud of so far?

It's not easy to answer, but in 2023, during my rookie season in Fuerteventura, I achieved fourth place in the Freestyle competition.

It was a very emotional experience for me. Additionally, in that same season, I secured fourth place in the Big Air World Championship, which is another achievement I am extremely proud of.

How do you stay motivated on days when training gets tough?

My main motto is 'have fun' – even on training days. It's not so bad if the training days are tough or you can't reach your goal. There's always tomorrow or the day after. While training at my home spot can be tough, especially in winter, I never give up!



Who are your biggest inspirations in the world of water sports?

There is no specific person, but I admire all the talented riders who are living their dreams and enjoying every single session on the water.

How have FLYSURFER, SABFOIL and Flikka Boards supported you in your career so far?

I am incredibly pleased to have these three brands as my sponsors. Their top-quality equipment offers a wide range of products. FLYSURFER is a strong brand with extensive knowledge of watersports and paragliding, and its expertise in understanding airflow is impressive.

“I ADMIRE ALL THE TALENTED RIDERS WHO ARE LIVING THEIR DREAMS”



WINGFOIL SESSION BOARDBAG

Heavy duty padded travel bag to travel around with your wingsurf gear. Features a handy padded foil organizer to accommodate your foil parts. Easy travel due to the removable wheeled base available as a sparepart.

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PROLIMIT

“ I AM DELIGHTED WITH THE WIDE RANGE OF FOILS THEY OFFER ”

SABFOIL is highly experienced in underwater activities, and I am delighted with the wide range of foils they offer for every foiling discipline. Based on my vision, Flikka Boards is crafting the perfect custom board for me. Whenever I have a question or encounter a problem, it is promptly addressed or resolved by all three sponsors.

We recently concluded the Big Air competition in Salinas de Pozo Izquierdo, one of the most challenging spots. I want to express my gratitude to the entire FLYSURFER team, especially for their support during these days. I truly appreciate the unity and team spirit displayed by all the FLYSURFER riders and supporters—there is no better team than ours.

What is your go-to set-up?

Depending on the wind conditions, I choose the FLYSURFER TAO in the rigid or soft-handle version, paired with my SABFOIL Medusa Pro in size 669/769 /869. I also use my custom-made full-carbon FLIKKA board in various sizes, making it my favourite setup.

If you had to choose one discipline, which would it be?

Freestyle is my favourite discipline, but I want to enhance my wave-riding skills and compete in the future.

What's your favourite trick to perform, and why? Are there any other tricks you are currently working on?

Of course, my favourite trick is the backflip, as it looks impressive to me, and I keep improving.





“MOST OF MY TRAINING SESSIONS TAKE PLACE AT MY HOME SPOT ON A SIDARM OF THE DANUBE RIVER, WHICH IS ONLY 100M WIDE”

I'm also working on the frontflip and some others, but we are not really friends yet.

How do you manage the training challenges in Austria compared to more ideal locations like Tarifa or Lake Garda?

As you mentioned, this poses a real challenge for me. Most of my training sessions take place at my home spot on a

sidearm of the Danube River, which is only 100m wide. If there is wind—mainly during the cold season—it is pretty gusty, and the water is flat. But I won't complain; it could be worse.

Whenever time allows, such as during long weekends and holidays, my parents drive with me to Lake Garda or Tarifa to give me a better chance for training.

Can you share a memorable experience or funny story from your travel?

It was the GWA Youth World Cup in Santa

Cruz de la Palma two weeks ago. My wingfoil equipment and personal belongings didn't arrive when I did, which caused a lot of trouble. My mom spent several hours on the phone trying to track down my missing items and arrange for them to be delivered to La Palma as soon as possible. In the meantime, my friends lent me some of their equipment so I could practice before the competition started. I had to use the borrowed equipment for the first race heats, so I was grateful to my friends for helping me. Finally, my own equipment arrived the next day, just 20 minutes before the freestyle competition began.



“AFTER OUR SESSION, I LOVED CHATTING WITH THEM ABOUT THE TRICKS WE ATTEMPTED”

What do you love most about competing in the GWA Wingfoil World Tour?


I absolutely love spending time on the water with my new friends. After our session, I loved chatting with them about the tricks we attempted, what went wrong, and what already worked.

What are your plans for the summer?

July is already booked for the competitions in the Canaries, which are currently taking place. In August, we are planning to travel to a windy destination with some friends for training, but we haven't decided on the location yet.

Awesome, thank you, Viola! We wish you the best of luck!

Thanks, Jen!



WORDS CASPER STEINFATH PHOTOS CATHRINE YDE AND MITCH WIESINGER

Downwind foiling has transformed from a niche sport to a way to explore uncharted waters. Casper Steinfath has embraced this new frontier, turning his passion for the ocean into a relentless pursuit of adventure on the waves of Cold Hawaii. Read all about it right here!

DOWNWIND FOILING IN COLD HAWAII

RE-EXPLORING MY BACKYARD BY FOIL

EARLY DAYS

Do you remember the day Kai Lenny famously rode that first open ocean bump a mile offshore the coast of Maui in 2016? I do. It was the beginning of a new paradigm. And it is just crazy to witness and note how far SUP Downwind foiling has come since then.

I remember opening my laptop and seeing that video in which Kai talked about how the whole ocean was now a surf spot. I was awestruck. How was this sorcery possible? I figured, "Yeah, right—This is just a wave of hype. It will pass..." But nearly a decade later, as Kai put it, it is truly amazing to see how many foiling enthusiasts worldwide have taken to the foil and are surfing bumps in the middle of the oceans.

At the time, I was head-deep in the SUP Racing scene, chasing world titles on my regular 14-foot SUP board. I remember both Kai Lenny, James Casey, and the Spencer brothers in Maui hassling at me to get on foil. It is not that it did not catch my imagination, but I was so head-deep into SUP racing that foiling only registered as a small dot on my radar that I "eventually" would get to—and thankfully, I did.

PROGRESSION FROM SUP RACING TO DOWNWIND SUP FOILING

Since unofficially stepping away from SUP Racing during the pandemic, I relatively quickly jumped on the foil bandwagon. At first, like many others, I was amazed at how it turned sloppy 1-foot Danish mush burger waves into the new best thing. Soon thereafter, the gates of downwind foiling opened before me, and the foil fever became my chronic obsession.

"IT IS TRULY AMAZING TO SEE HOW MANY FOILING ENTHUSIASTS WORLDWIDE HAVE TAKEN TO THE FOIL AND ARE SURFING BUMPS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE OCEANS."



"IT WAS A BIG NEW PLAYGROUND THAT HAD OPENED UP, AND I WAS THRILLED TO USE IT TO EXPLORE NEW SIDES OF THE WATERS AT HOME IN DENMARK."



As a SUP racer and surfer, I could use many balance and sprinting skills to accelerate my learning curve. Thanks to my longtime sponsor and mentor, Robby Naish, I was hooked up with some of the best foils at the time. I started punching away at this new challenge, and after some weeks of hard work, I managed to crack the downwind code.

It was a big new playground that had opened up, and I was thrilled to use it to explore new sides of the waters at home in Denmark.

FOILING IN DENMARK (AKA COLD HAWAII)

One of the bodies of water I have really enjoyed exploring is the local "Limfjord," which runs across the Jutland peninsula in Denmark. It is a brackish body of water between the North Sea and the Baltic Sea that is mainly famous for its oysters, but in recent years, a tight community of foilers has made it known for much more.

The Limfjord has become my foiling playground. It is where I honed and continued to develop my downwind foiling skills on my

Naish DW Hoverboard and foils. Although we have a great open ocean downwind in Denmark, I really love these Fjord trips. They are around 10-12 km long on average, and the bumps are super regular and almost work as a linear conveyor belt when they turn on. In some ways, they are similar to the waves of the Gorge in the US.

The conveyor belt comes alive when a frequent westerly storm rolls in and the winds start blowing above 12 m/s or 25 knots. The waves progressively build up throughout the run.

" I LOVE HOW THE LIMFJORD CAN
PRODUCE HIGH-SPEED BUMPS
THAT PUT YOU ON THE VERY
EDGE OF YOUR SEAT "



I often feel underpowered initially, but as I get further into the run, I eventually have to hit the break because the bumps get super steep, and my heart races. You know, the feeling we foilers live for!

I love how the Limfjord can produce high-speed bumps that put you on the very edge of your seat, while on other days, it dishes up neverending mellow rollers where highly effective speeds foil such as the Naish HA Glider 1400 and 1800 can keep you flying in perpetuity.

THE NEW HARLEM PAGE



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NEW ADVENTURES

For me, foiling has represented a new challenge. I love stepping out of my comfort zone and learning the ropes of something new and difficult. In 2021, I took on the 110 km long Kattegat Strait between Denmark and Sweden on a tiny square 5ft board and foil. The equipment was top-notch then, but with more efficient foils coming to market and boards such as the 105 L Naish DW Hover under my feet, I dream of taking on new long expeditions like this again.

I really have enjoyed the new opportunities that foiling in all its forms has brought to the table. Nothing quite beats the feeling of flying down along a coastline far from the shore while screaming your guts out. It has turned my perspective of surfing on its head!

" NOTHING QUITE BEATS THE FEELING OF FLYING DOWN
ALONG A COASTLINE FAR FROM THE SHORE WHILE
SCREAMING YOUR GUTS OUT. "





UP & COMING

MATHIS GHIO

In the fast lane of wingfoiling, Mathis Ghio is making waves with his recent speed record and his exciting partnership with Ozone. Join Jen Tyler as she chats with the rising star about his journey from Olympic windsurfing to wingfoiling, the challenges he's faced, and what's next for this record-breaking athlete. Read the full interview exclusively in Tonic Mag!

QUESTIONS JEN TYLER
PHOTOS WINGFOIL RACING IWSA



"SINCE THE FOIL WAS COMPLETELY NEW TO ME, I HAD TO PUT IN A LOT OF EFFORT TO ADAPT AND IMPROVE IN IQFOIL."

Mathis, it's great to have you here. We have many questions for you, but let's start at the beginning! How did you first get into wingfoiling, and what drew you to the sport?

I am stoked to be here and grateful for this opportunity! In September 2020, after being a high-level windsurfer for ten years, I began my Olympic career just as the Olympic windsurfing gear transitioned from RS:X (fin board) to IQFoil (foil board). Since the foil was completely new to me, I had to put in a lot of effort to adapt and improve in IQFoil. This led me to diversify my activities and take up wing foiling.

I closely followed the Wingfoil scene and admired Balz Muller's creativity and role in advancing the sport. Despite achieving excellent results at the World Games in IQFoil, I was not selected for the French Team due to my engineering studies, which, according to the French Committee, were deemed to be taking up too much of my time.

At this point, I decided to fully commit myself to a career in wingfoiling.

You've been active in the wingfoiling scene since 2021. Could you share some of your highlights with us?

My first vivid memory is of my debut competition in wingfoiling at Leucate for the Mondial du Vent. I will never forget the warm reception from the other competitors when I arrived in this new environment.



"THIS PICTURESQUE LOCATION IS PERFECT FOR WATER SPORTS, AND WINNING IN THIS TROPICAL SETTING FELT TRULY AMAZING."

Despite being an 18-year-old unknown, I immediately felt at home and had great discussions with many people.

The Wingfoiling Racing format is truly unique, especially with its Medal Series on the final day. Everyone in the Top 10 has a chance to win the World Cup, and entering

the final day in the first position is quite stressful, as unlike the other riders, I have everything to lose. So far, all the Medal Series I have participated in have been extremely successful, and I have managed to win all of them.

The feeling of crossing the finish line and realising that I have won the World Cup in a single race is simply epic.

Last but not least, winning the final World Cup in Jericoacoara, Brazil, for two

consecutive years stands out in my mind. This picturesque location is perfect for water sports, and winning in this tropical setting felt truly amazing.

What are some of the biggest challenges you faced in your wingfoiling career, and how did you overcome them?

In 2021, when I was still competing in GWA (Global Wingsports Association) events and taking part in the Free-Fly Slalom and Surf-Freestyle disciplines, I encountered unfair judging during a freestyle heat and a race.

"I DECIDED TO CONCENTRATE ON THE RACING TOUR, WHICH I BELIEVE IS MORE PROFESSIONAL AND FAIR FOR ALL THE RIDERS."

I felt a strong lack of fairness among the riders at the Mondial du Vent in Leucate. The event's focus seemed to be on putting on a great show for the audience without considering the safety of the participants. I was conflicted because I wanted to continue participating in these events to represent my sponsors on the podium. Still, I also felt uncomfortable and unsafe due to the lack of rules and the crowded competition format set by GWA. Additionally, I witnessed and experienced numerous unfair decisions the judges and officials made during the many GWA events I attended.

After discussing with my sponsors, I decided to concentrate on the racing tour, which I believe is more professional and fair for all the riders.

Since then, I've been very satisfied with my decision and have no regrets.

Tell us about setting a speed record with your Ozone Fusion! How did that idea come to mind?

Before joining the Ozone family, I had been steadily approaching 40 knots of speed with my old gear. The remarkable Fusion V1 ram air design is synonymous with speed, so when I joined the Ozone team, I set a goal to surpass 40 knots within the next year.

After being crowned the Wingfoil Racing European champion and completing my final semester exams at my materials engineering school, I returned to my hometown of Marseille.





"I ARRIVED AT THE BEACH AND SAW AN OFFSHORE WIND BETWEEN 35 AND 45 KNOTS, I KNEW THE CONDITIONS WERE PERFECT FOR MAKING HISTORY."

On Sunday evening, while checking the forecast, I noticed 35-40 knots of Mistral wind would come to Marseille the next day.

On a whim, I packed my gear around midnight and headed to Le Rouet at 6 a.m. to attempt to break the 40-knot barrier. When I arrived at the beach and saw an offshore wind between 35 and 45 knots, I knew the conditions were perfect for making history. I embarked on a three-hour session with numerous speed runs.

On the 3rd speed run, I surpassed my previous top speed record of 38.01 knots by almost 1 knot. The location was ideal for achieving top performance.

I was too exhausted and not sufficiently cautious for these high-adrenaline runs, so I decided to end the session. My top speed at that point was 39.9 knots, with a speed over 10 seconds of 38.4 knots.

Leaving the water when I was so close was extremely difficult, but the risks increased, with several crashes occurring above 35 knots.

I had to accept my frustration and took a lunch break and a quick power nap in the car in order to return stronger for the afternoon session.

Once I returned to the water, the wind averaged 40 knots, with gusts reaching 45. I completed several runs and surpassed 40 knots in 5, achieving a top speed of 41.4 knots and an average speed over 10 seconds of 40.00 knots.



"I FELT A MASSIVE ADRENALINE RUSH AS I COMPLETED THE RUN. THAT WAS IT—I HAD ACHIEVED MY GOAL WITH THAT RUN."

It was incredible to sail at that speed and witness everything around me slowing down. Since I had been stressed and my muscles were tense, I felt a massive adrenaline rush as I completed the run. That was it—I had achieved my goal with that run. Afterwards, I returned to shore, packed up my gear,

and returned to Marseille.

What are some unique features of the Ozone Fusion wing that you believe set it apart and contributed to your record-breaking speed?

When reaching around 40 knots, it's crucial to consider the aerodynamic field to fly faster. I believe that the Fusion's unique ram-air design with its double surface played a significant role in helping me achieve this speed record. Its shape enables it to smooth

out gusts and turbulence, which is crucial for stabilising the wing, especially when flying at high speeds with offshore wind.

This wing's reduced drag enables it to surpass speed limits, as its profile is more aerodynamic and efficient than that of single-skin wings.

What sort of training do you do to prepare for a record attempt?

I make sure to prioritise core strength to efficiently transmit power from my wings to the foil. To achieve this, I follow a daily mobility routine. Before hitting the water,

"I BELIEVE AND HOPE THAT ADVANCEMENTS IN EQUIPMENT WILL SOON ALLOW US TO REACH TOP SPEEDS OF OVER 50 KNOTS."

I visualise my runs, which helps me stay focused and stick to my plan. I also practice breathing exercises to stay calm and channel my energy and adrenaline before taking on my runs.

What are the limits for speed? Windsurfers and kites have all broken the 50-knot is this even possible for wing surfers over a 500m course?

It might seem impossible, but who knows what the future holds. Two years ago, my top speed was 30 knots, and now I can maintain that speed on average during 20-kilometer races. I believe and hope that advancements in equipment will soon allow us to reach top speeds of over 50 knots. I have doubts about riding over 500 meters, as windsurfers and kitesurfers can navigate in very shallow areas near the beach, which helps them avoid strong, choppy water and turbulence, providing more stability during their runs. For wingers and kitefoilers, this is challenging because even with strong offshore wind, we often have to ride 100 meters from the beach where the chop is already pretty strong, creating white waters and disturbances.

Stability looks to be an issue, with the power of the wing going through your fluid body to the board, mast and foil, is it hard to stay in control at higher speeds?

Stability is crucial when wingfoiling at high speeds to avoid crashes. I've never crashed at speeds higher than 36 knots, which I'm grateful for because the rapid rebounds at that speed can be intense.





Incorrect landing positions at high speeds can put a lot of strain on the neck and upper body, and I've even almost passed out at 35 knots due to a heavy impact and thorax contraction.

When the wind is unstable, it's essential to use the entire body to balance the wing's movements caused by gusts or shifts to prevent the foil from breaching, which always leads to a crash. This is why having a strong core is extremely important. A strong core prevents injuries and allows quick and strong weight balancing to counter unexpected foil behaviour.

What is your go-to set wingfoiling set-up?

At the moment, my go-to set-up is:

- Ozone 6.5m Fusion V1 wing with my custom colours
- Levitaz R6 Women foil (490sqcm front wing, 190 rear wing, and 112cm mast)
- Levitaz BOOM 58 RS board

How has joining the Ozone team contributed to your growth within the sport?

Since joining Ozone, I have learned a lot personally and technically. On the theoretical side, I am working with Simon Burner, Ozone's co-wing designer, to develop the wing ranges, and I have been able to apply the knowledge and discipline I acquired during my scholarship in Materials Engineering. It is extremely interesting for me to use what I learned at school in a real-life project.

" I HAVE PROGRESSED AND DEVELOPED NEW RACING TECHNIQUES TO BECOME EVEN FASTER WITH THIS DOUBLE-SKIN WING "

On the other hand, I have progressed and developed new racing techniques to become even faster with this double-skin wing, which led me to claim the European Title and win the first World Cup of the year.

These results have allowed me to become the leader of the world ranking after two competitions out of 6, and I definitely think that the Fusion is one of the main reasons for my current position.

Who have been your biggest inspirations and supporters throughout your career?

I owe a lot to my parents, older brother, and girlfriend for always supporting and encouraging me in my career.

Transitioning from IQFoil to wingfoiling has been one of the best decisions of my life, but mentally, it was also one of the most challenging periods. I struggled with depression for several months and lacked the motivation to do any kind of activity. Discovering the joy of winging helped me return to my favourite element: the water.

What's next for you?

My next event is the Wingfoil Racing World Cup in China, which is an 8-star event and crucial for the world title. This event is the most important of 2024.

Awesome, thanks so much, Mathis and best of luck!

Thanks, Jen!

WORDS JASPER RAUN

PHOTO MALIK HUMEDIA

From windsurfing as a child to competing in wakeskating and later discovering wingfoiling, Jasper has always found ways to integrate his love for the ocean into the fabric of his life. "Finding the Balance" is the story of how he weaves his passions with the responsibilities of family, work, and the ever-present call of the sea - Read it now exclusively in Tonic Mag.



FINDING THE BALANCE

PHOTO LASSE HARBACEK

"THE SEA BECAME MY SECOND HOME, AND MY LOVE FOR IT GREW STRONGER AS I SPENT COUNTLESS HOURS WINDSURFING, SURFING, AND RIDING THE WAVES."



Growing up between the waves of Fehmarn and the countryside of the North Sea, I've always been drawn to the beauty of opposites that comes from bringing them together. My childhood was spent by the water, with Fehmarn, affectionately known as the 'German Hawaii,' as my playground. It was here that I was first introduced to water sports, getting my windsurfing license at just nine years old. The sea became my second home, and my love for it grew stronger as I spent countless hours windsurfing, surfing, and riding the waves. This early connection with water shaped my life in ways I couldn't have imagined.

As I grew older, my passion for water sports only deepened. My vacations were always centred around my love for the ocean, and I spent as much time as possible in the water. However, when I moved to Hamburg for my studies, I found myself far from the sea, which led me to discover wakeskating. This new sport opened up a whole new world for me, bringing me into contact with the professional sports scene. I started competing and eventually became an ION and Fox Racing team rider. It was also during this time that I met my wife, and together, we started the parenthood adventure at a young age.

With the arrival of our first child, my priorities naturally began to shift. The demands of family life, completing my studies, and launching my career took centre stage. After earning my degree in mechanical engineering, I transitioned into a sales role in the engineering field before joining a startup as a managing partner.

Juggling family, work, and my passion for water sports became a delicate balancing act—sometimes successful,

" WITH MY CAREER AND FAMILY
REQUIRING SO MUCH
ATTENTION, MY TIME ON THE
WATER BECAME LIMITED "

PHOTO BO JASPER RAUN



sometimes less so. With my career and family requiring so much attention, my time on the water became limited to the occasional holiday in France, where I could enjoy the surf on the Atlantic coast.

In 2020, our family's life took a dramatic turn when we moved from downtown Hamburg to the serene countryside along the North Sea coast. By chance, we stumbled upon an old thatched-roof cottage from 1850. With a lot of love and hard work, we restored the home, creating a base that marked the beginning of a new chapter in our lives.



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The next chapter unfolded a year later when my wife surprised me with a wing foil course for my birthday. Little did she know this gift would change my relationship with water sports.

The wingfoil course on Fehmarn, taken with a close friend, reignited my passion and redefined my connection with the water. The sport combined all the elements I cherished: speed, tricks, wave surfing, and, most importantly, the ability to spend more time on the water without waiting for the perfect swell. My first attempt at wingfoiling occurred at "Speicherkoog," a small inland lake on the other side of the North Sea dike. It wasn't long before I found a tight-knit community of like-minded riders, drawing inspiration from top riders like Lasse Harbacek, a Slingshot pro-rider.

One of the most convenient aspects of this newfound passion is that Speicherkoog is on my daily commute to work, allowing me to fit in sessions before, during, or after work. This accessibility has made it easier to balance my responsibilities as a father, a husband, and a professional with my love for the water. Of course, it's not always smooth sailing—there are days when work is overwhelming or my family needs me—but we've developed a routine that works for us. Now, I can clear my mind on the water, de-stress from work demands, and progress in my sport, all while spending quality time with my children.

One of my dreams has always been to share my love of water sports with my two boys. So far, I've introduced them to the ocean by taking them on my back while surfing or standing on the board together at various wakeboard cables.

PHOTO ZOE SOSA



"I CAN CLEAR MY MIND ON THE WATER, DE-STRESS FROM WORK DEMANDS, AND PROGRESS IN MY SPORT, ALL WHILE SPENDING QUALITY TIME WITH MY CHILDREN."



" I REALISE HOW FORTUNATE I AM TO HAVE FOUND A WAY TO WEAVE MY PASSION FOR WATER SPORTS INTO THE FABRIC OF MY EVERYDAY LIFE. "

Whether they'll take to wingfoiling remains to be seen, but I'm excited to see how their relationship with the water develops.

Since the early days of wingfoiling, I've been fortunate to be a part of the CORE team, which has provided me with the best gear. Since my home spot is primarily flatwater, my focus has naturally shifted to freestyle.

To accelerate my progress, I often travel to destinations like Fuerteventura, where I get inspiration from other riders. Of course, pushing my limits sometimes results in a few bruises, especially at my age, but the thrill and happiness that come from mastering new tricks make it all worthwhile!

Looking back, I realise how fortunate I am to

have found a way to weave my passion for water sports into the fabric of my everyday life. The journey from the waves of Fehmarn to the flat waters of my new homespot has been one of balance, growth, and fulfilment. I look forward to continuing this journey on and off the water as I strive to maintain the delicate balance between family, work, and the sea.

SALT WATER **VS** FRESH WATER WITH GWEN

Rou Chater chats to foil master Gwen le Tutour about the differences in paddle-ups in saltwater compared to freshwater. Gwen offers practical advice on adjusting board volume and foil for these conditions and gives tips for mastering paddle-ups! Read the full interview [here](#).





“I’VE ALTERNATED BETWEEN RIDING ON LAKES IN THE SUMMER AND SEAWATER IN THE WINTER FOR YEARS.”

Thanks for taking the time, Gwen. How are things in the States?

All good. We’re experiencing a heat wave, but otherwise, it’s great!

Great to hear! So, I know your time is limited, so let’s dive right in! This piece focuses on your paddle-ups in saltwater. Is that a new discovery for you?

Considering your extensive experience in water sports, how does it compare to fresh water?

I had an idea there was a difference, but it wasn’t until I started using very small foils that I realised how significant it was. I’ve alternated between riding on lakes in the summer and seawater in the winter for years. It was always a slight difference, but with smaller foils, the difference felt like night and day. On a larger foil, the difference is subtle - maybe a few extra strokes. But with small foils, it’s a game-changer; it can make or break your ability to paddle up.

That’s really interesting! When you say small foils, how small are we talking?

In the specific example I mentioned, I used an 800, the AFS Pure. Not all foils are created equal—some 800s are easier to get up on than others. The AFS 800 Pure, for instance, is like a race foil: thin with no camber, requiring a lot of speed to generate lift. When I posted the video, people pointed out that the most significant factor might be water temperature and viscosity rather than just the difference between fresh and saltwater. It’s like honey; hot honey flows easier than cold honey. So, the colder the water, the denser it is, making it harder to lift.

“ A BOARD THAT’S NOT A SINKER
IN SEAWATER MIGHT BE ONE IN
FRESHWATER. ”



That’s a great analogy. So, not just the density but also the temperature affect the viscosity of the water. How does this translate to practical advice for those struggling with smaller boards?

To manage the density difference, you’ll need more volume in your board. This applies to winging, too; a board that’s not a sinker in seawater might be one in freshwater. But regarding viscosity, you might need a foil that generates lift at slower speeds since cold water prevents you from picking up speed as quickly. So, it’s about balancing the two: more volume for density and a foil with more lift for viscosity.

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"MANY PEOPLE FOCUS TOO MUCH ON PADDLING HARD, BUT PADDLE-UPS ARE 60% PUMPING AND 40% PADDLING."



Have you noticed this difference when dock starting as well?

Not really. I think it's because you're already at speed when pumping from a dock and using a foil that provides enough lift. I've done many dock starting in salt and freshwater without a significant difference. It's really the small foils where the viscosity difference becomes evident.

So, for dock starting, it's less about the water type and more about the initial speed and lift of the foil. Interesting. Now, what are your top three tips for someone learning to paddle up on a stand-up foil?

First, use a big foil and a board you can balance on comfortably. If you struggle with balance, generating power will be tough—second, practice pump foiling. Many people focus too much on paddling hard, but paddle-ups are 60% pumping and 40% paddling. So, master your pumping skills first. Lastly, ensure you can pump for at least 20-30 seconds before attempting paddle-ups. If you can't pump for that long, focus on improving your pumping before tackling paddle-ups.

Those are excellent tips! Finally, what skill level should someone be at before trying paddle-ups? Is there a minimum level of proficiency needed?

Definitely. You should be able to pump foil consistently for 20-30 seconds. If you can do that, you're ready to try paddle-ups. If not, work on your pumping first.

Thanks for those insights, Gwen!

Thanks for having me. Bye!

QUESTIONS ROU CHATER WORDS KJELL VAN SICE
PHOTOS GEORGIA SCHOFIELD

TECH FOCUS

ARMSTRONG FOILS

MIDLENGTH FG BOARD

The surf world has been buzzing with the "Midlength" craze, but Armstrong Foils is taking it to new heights. In this Tech Focus, Rou Chater and Kjell van Sice dive into the inspiration behind Armstrong's Midlength range—combining the glide of a downwind foilboard with the versatility of a traditional surfboard. Whether you're wing foiling or prone surfing, this board might redefine your ride. Let's get into it!





"THE GOAL WITH OUR MIDLENGTH IS TO GET ONTO FOIL FASTER AND EASIER THAN A TRADITIONAL WING"

The "Midlength" craze has been ripping through surfing for a few years. Was inspiration drawn from there, or was it the goal to scale down a DW board for winging or has the idea come from somewhere else?

Both. The Armstrong Midlength embodies a traditional midlength surfboard's fun and versatile soul but benefits from the teachings

of a downwind foilboard shape. The goal with our Midlength is to get onto foil faster and easier than a traditional wing or prone surf foilboard but vastly improve the manoeuvrability over a downwind foilboard. It's a true best of both worlds result.

As we see more and more of these boards hit the market, who should consider buying one?

Three types of riders benefit from the Midlength. First, wing foilers keen on improving their low-end range will see massive gains from jumping on a Midlength,

which has more glide than a traditional wing board yet is still highly responsive and relatively stable to stand on. Prone surf foilers in either small or large surf will also see opportunity with that high paddling speed and the narrow width, which allows you to take off way earlier and still absolutely rip once on foil. Lastly, the one-board quiver rider (possibly without heaps of space in the car for a longer downwind board) will benefit from this versatile performance in all conditions, from light to strong wind and big to small waves.

If you want to see a great example of the Midlength's versatility, watch **The Home of Armstrong Tour**. You won't regret it.

"YOU END UP DERIVING A LOT MORE STABILITY FROM THE LENGTH THAN THE WIDTH, SO DON'T BE AFRAID THAT IT'S SKINNIER THAN SOME OTHER WING BOARDS."

What advantages do they offer to wing foilers over a DW board?

Mainly, it's more compact and responsive while still getting excellent glide for easy takeoffs. Unless you're pushing ultra-light winds where length and max glide is key, a Midlength of appropriate volume will get you pretty far in light winds. And they have footstrap inserts if that's your thing.

And for prone foilers, what are the main benefits?

That glide to manoeuvrability ratio. Think of it as a step-up or gun foilboard. It works great in micro or XL waves where you need to get in early or carry heaps of speed. Then, the narrow width keeps things really manoeuvrable once you start cranking turns.

What are the drawbacks of a design like this?

The range seems pretty narrow. How stable are they for weekend warriors?

Riders are surprised by just how stable the Midlength is for its given volume. You end up deriving a lot more stability from the length than the width, so don't be afraid that it's skinnier than some other wing boards. If you're keen on only freestyle or advanced surf winging, then go for a Wing FG foilboard that's a winging specialist. The same goes for prone surfing; if you can ride a 20-something-litre prone board and it works for you, then go for it. If you want a little bit of everything and an easier time getting (and staying) on foil, the Midlength might be the thing for you.





"THEY ARE CAPABLE AS ALL-ROUNDERS; IT DEPENDS ON HOW YOU BALANCE YOUR TIME ON THE WATER"

Do these boards make the DW boards obsolete for the wing foil community? Many wingers jumped onto that craze early...

At this point in wing and foil technology, downwind boards still have a place in ultra-light winging – the sub-5kts type. The larger Midlengths can get you reasonably close to this level of performance, though. Realistically, "light wind" for most of us is 10-15kts; in this case, a Midlengths, larger foil, and larger wing will do the job beautifully and be fun once you're on foil. Oh, it's way easier to transport than a full-blown downwind board.

Your range starts at 45l and stops at 85l, with five sizes in total. Will bigger sizes be coming? 85l isn't a lot for a heavy-weight winger in light winds.

38L and 100L sizes are coming here very soon (likely by the time you read this!), which pushes the envelope in both directions. That'll take the Midlength to seven sizes: 38L, 45L, 55L, 65L, 75L, 85L, and 100L.

Are these light wind boards for winging, or do they have more use as an all-rounder? Similarly, for prone, do these negate the need for a dedicated prone board?

They are capable as all-rounders; it depends on how you balance your time on the water. You could go for a 100L for light wind days, but it wouldn't be your first choice for prone surf foiling. Conversely, you could get a 38L for prone surf foiling, which wouldn't do much good on a light wind day. It's just a question of how you expect to balance your time. Again, the shape and dims work really nicely for both.



"THE EASY PADDLING AND GLIDE MAKE THE MIDLENGTH A GREAT BOARD TO LEARN ON AND, OF COURSE, A PRETTY RAD SMALL OR XL SOLUTION FOR EXPERIENCED RIDERS."

Picking myself an example, I balance my time between winging, prone surf, and downwind. At 160lbs (72kg), the 55L Midlength paired with different front foils and hand wing sizes covers virtually everything for me, from 12kts to 30kts and small to head-high surf. I've even prone

downwinded it. Admittedly, I rarely reach for my other boards except for my DWP 98L when paddling. That 55L just feels fantastic and lets me ride the smaller foils I want to be on. Love it.

How hard are they to ride? What level do you need to be at as a winger and a prone foiler to get the most out of them?

It all depends on volume, but frankly, a beginner-intermediate-ish winger on a larger mid-length would be well catered to. As for prone, the easy paddling and glide

make the Midlength a great board to learn on and, of course, a pretty rad small or XL solution for experienced riders.

What construction techniques did you use?

Like all Armstrong boards, the Midlength is built around an ultra-stiff double-skin carbon PVC sandwich. This combines with the i-beam top-to-bottom dual stringers for maximum structural rigidity and durability. Our proprietary carbon fibre foil tracks are keyed directly into the stringer fibres for a fully integrated build. The mid-length also sports footstrap inserts if you're inclined to ride strapped.



“FG IS ABOUT GETTING MORE RESPONSIVENESS OUT OF THE ENTIRE SETUP THAN STICKING THE FOIL IN THE REAR OF THE BOARD.”

Are your forward geometry tracks compatible with other foils, or do you recommend running the Armstrong A+ system with these boards?

The Forward Geometry system is compatible with everything. More than anything, FG is about getting more responsiveness out of the entire setup than sticking the foil in the rear of the board. The boxes in the mid-length are in an absolute Goldilocks position, making the board feel incredibly balanced and responsive when flying.

We love the look and got to feel one at a recent demo. It has a really interesting shape and is lightweight, too. We can't wait to get one in the water soon! Thanks for your time!

I love it. Jack's got his mid-length review in the works; I'm looking forward to that. Thanks, team!

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QUESTIONS JEN TYLER WORDS ALEX CRETIER
PHOTOS MARIUS BROSSET AND PROLIMIT

TECH FOCUS

PROLIMIT

WING/FOIL SHIELD HARNESS VEST

Crafted from high-bouncy closed-cell memory foam and flexible neoprene, the Prolimit Wing/Foil Shield Harness Vest enhances flotation, comfort, and impact protection with innovative Armadillo Armour. In this Tech Focus, we'll chat to Alex Cretier to explore its unique features that set the Shield vest apart!



"THE NEOPRENE CONSTRUCTION MAXIMISES FLEXIBILITY, ALLOWING FOR A FULL RANGE OF MOTION."

Can you tell us about the materials used for impact protection in the Wing/Foil Shield FR harness vest?

The Wing/Foil Shield FR harness vest is crafted from high buoyancy closed-cell memory foam, ensuring excellent flotation. The entire vest is made of neoprene, which enhances flexibility and comfort. The backing plate features our innovative, bright shell construction, connected to the harness hook strap for additional support. The Drift hook, a unique Prolimit design, can quickly shift horizontally, providing better manoeuvrability.

What does the "Armadillo Armour" do regarding protection and flexibility?

The Armadillo Armour in the Shield vest provides significant impact protection and buoyancy. The neoprene construction maximises flexibility, allowing for a full range of motion. The front section of the vest is equipped with double-thickness foam, ensuring you stay afloat face-up, adding an extra layer of safety.

What are the key differences between this vest and other impact vests in the Prolimit series?

Unlike other impact vests, the Shield vest integrates a harness hook, offering additional buoyancy and combining flotation, impact protection, and harness functionality in one versatile product. Other vests in the series are more focused on impact protection alone and offer a different level of integrated support and flotation.





“IT CAN BE COMBINED WITH ANY DRIFT HARNESSES, OFFERING VERSATILITY AND COMPATIBILITY WITH VARIOUS SETUPS.”

What is the advantage of an all-in-one harness and impact vest over the two separate items?

An all-in-one harness like the Shield vest provides several benefits over using separate items. It offers enhanced flotation,

superior support due to the PE board reinforcement, and increased flexibility from the neoprene construction. Additionally, it simplifies your gear setup by combining impact protection, flotation, and harness functionality into a single, streamlined piece of equipment.

Is there any maintenance recommended for preserving the high-density foam and other materials?

To maintain the high-density foam and other materials, treat it as you would any other water sports equipment. Rinse the vest with fresh water after use, hang it to dry on a sturdy hanger, avoid direct sunlight, store it in a dry place, and refrain from using the vest as a pillow or cushion, which can compromise its flotation capabilities.

What is the vest's weight, and how does it compare to similar products?

The Shield vest weighs only 0.8kg, making it lightweight compared to similar products. This low weight and its multifunctional design make it an excellent choice for water sports enthusiasts.

How come you decided to use a removable hook, and what are the benefits?

The Shield vest comes with the Prolimit Drift removable hook, which can quickly move from side to side. Users can replace it with any hook that fits 38mm webbing, such as a windsurf-style double slot spreader bar, allowing for customisation based on personal preference.

Are any additional accessories or compatible gear recommended for use with the vest?

The Drift hook on the Shield vest is easy to replace or remove. It can be combined with any Drift harnesses, offering versatility and compatibility with various setups. This makes it simple to tailor the vest to your specific needs and preferences.

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RIDER GWEN LE TUTOUR
PHOTO SABFOIL



QUESTIONS JEN TYLER WORDS ALEX MORGENSTERN
PHOTOS HARLEM

TECH FOCUS

HARLEM KITESURFING PACE

Imagine a lighter, stronger, and more durable wing while maintaining an eco-friendly edge and vibrant design... well, the Harlem Pace is finally here! This isn't just another wing—it's a game-changer. From the revolutionary PROWELD technology to the meticulously engineered Single-Seam construction and Dual-Panel Canopy, every detail of the Harlem Pace is designed to deliver unmatched performance. Find out more in this Tech Focus feature!





"THIS ENHANCES THE OVERALL STRENGTH OF THE AIRFRAME AND ACHIEVES HIGH-PERFORMANCE RESULTS USING TRADITIONAL MATERIALS"

First of all, massive congratulations on the Pace's release! How long has it been in the pipeline?

When we joined Brainchild Productions in 2022, the Harlem Pace was in the works. We introduced the Game Changer lineup with the Harlem Force kite, and the wing followed.

Can you tell us a little about it and how PROWELD's cutting-edge technology compares to traditional materials in terms of strength and durability?

Ralf Groesel developed the PROWELD technology after years of research and testing. It allows for welding panels together instead of stitching them, resulting in a significant reduction in weight at the leading edge. Simultaneously, it increases the bonding strength of the two dacron panels when put together. This enhances the overall strength of the airframe and achieves high-performance results using traditional materials, all at a lower price point than using more expensive materials.

What research and testing were involved in the process that led to the development of the PROWELD?

Brainchild Productions initiated the PROWELD research and was heavily involved in testing to bring the technology to the finished products we ride today. This process involved numerous prototypes and testing in all extreme conditions.



"THE PACE IS AN ULTRA-LIGHT, VERSATILE WING THAT PERFORMS WELL IN ALL CONDITIONS."

The Single Seam construction and Dual Panel Canopy is an interesting idea; what advantages does this bring, and is the material shaped in any way?

The dual-panel canopy helps to avoid mistakes in production. Our biggest challenge was achieving the perfect tension in the canopy, but we succeeded. Additionally, by using multiple stitched panels in the canopy, we can avoid the risk of stretching in

different parts. When combined with the sturdy STW 70 canopy material, the Pace will keep its shape much longer than all other wings on the market, enhancing the overall durability of the wing.

Does it cause an issue for repair, as you can't just swap a small panel out?

The canopy doesn't need to be replaced entirely, as it can be repaired using traditional methods. The wing can be stitched with traditional ripstop material, or we can send each part of our Flylite Twincross canopy to a repair shop to ensure the original design is maintained.

This also applies to repairing the leading edge.

With the eco-printing and colourful design, can repairs be made that are close to invisible, such as complete panel replacement on the current wings?

We can provide any part of the canopy or leading edge necessary to maintain the original artwork.

How does the Harlem Pace perform in light conditions compared to other wings?

The Pace is an ultra-light, versatile wing that performs well in all conditions. Its sharp profile provides exceptional upwind performance, while the light construction enhances its downwind capabilities, making riding effortless in any wind conditions.

"IT IS EASY TO RIDE AND IS SUITABLE FOR EVERYONE KEEN TO TAKE THEIR SKILLS TO THE NEXT LEVEL."

The 6m Pace is designed with a lighter canopy to accommodate lighter wind conditions, allowing for the use of different materials. The two additional struts in the 6m Pace maintain the canopy's shape, enabling better pumping and performance in light wind conditions.

What are some of the challenges Harlem had to overcome while developing the Pace's features?

One of the most significant innovations on the Pace is the PROWELD technology. Achieving the desired stiffness and high-performance profile was crucial. Using only two pieces of canopy material to create a durable canopy that doesn't stretch over time was undoubtedly one of our most significant achievements on the Pace.

What features make the Harlem Pace suitable for all riding styles and levels?

The Pace is a versatile, all-around machine that provides a comfortable ride in the strongest winds to the lightest breeze. It is easy to ride and is suitable for everyone keen to take their skills to the next level.

What improvements can we expect in the next generation of the Harlem Pace?

We are just getting started and will continue pushing the limits of what's possible with the developments underway. Stay tuned for more!





TECHNIQUE

For this issue, we dive into the art of pumping—a game-changing technique to get you up on the foil faster with less wind and a smaller wing! Whether you're facing light gusts or just need that extra boost after a gybe, pumping will have you flying in no time. Christian and Karine break down the essentials of wing control, body positioning, and timing so you can harness the power of each pump and take off smoothly. Ready? Click here.

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KARINE AND CHRISTIAN





HOW TO WING FOIL #13 – PUMPING

We're going to delve into the world of pumping as a means to get up on the foil for this issue. If you're happily flying around, you will perhaps notice that you need considerably less power in your wing once you're up than you do to get up. Effectively, this can mean that you're on a bigger wing than required! You may have also noticed that many wingers with more water hours than you have developed their pumping skills so that they can get up sooner or with smaller wings.

Leaving aside the rabbit hole that is equipment and focusing purely on technique, pumping, and here we're primarily focusing on the wing, is a way of increasing your board speed and, therefore, lift so that you can get up on the foil earlier or quicker. This may be so you can wing in less wind or use a smaller wing in the same conditions. If you wing somewhere where the gusts can be short, you need to get up quickly and maximise the pull before they vanish. Pumping is also a great way to keep yourself up after a gybe or tack when the wind isn't helping, or when you unintentionally touch down.

The great news is that if you're a dab hand at bearing away to get up on the foil, you're already halfway there. The aim of pumping is no different from bearing away in a gust, accelerating. Keep the board down until you have enough speed and lift to climb. We're going to concentrate on what you need to

do with your wing, how you're going to do it and also a little bit of why so that it hopefully all makes sense.

Before we get into the details of what you'll do with the wing, let us take a moment to ponder a few ideas that will impact your quest for speed and lift.

1. You still need pull. Regardless of the physics-defying brilliance you may have seen online, we mere mortals still need something to fill our wings. If there's no wind in it, you have nothing to use.
2. Efficiency rules. Whether it be board trim for minimum drag and ultimate glide, the ideal point of sail for greatest acceleration, stiff core and front leg for maximum power transfer, or the perfect alignment of board, body, and wing, everything works in unison. The sum of all parts here adds up to extra forward momentum. Concentrating on each individual cog will reward you more than sheer brute force and determination (although they can help, too)!

This is also why we're concentrating on pumping the wing and not challenging your coordination by adding the board and foil. That said, once you get the hang of and hone your wing action, you will find that it automatically affects your board and foil, which isn't a million miles away from pumping. This bonus and unintentional action will have a similar effect of increasing lift.

OK, without further ado, let's examine the crucial parts of pumping. In all the photos and sequences, the wind blows right to left, so follow any sequences that way, right to left.

PIC A. WOFFING UPWIND

This should be familiar ground. Anytime you're not flying on your foil, you should pinch upwind while

B



waiting for a gust. Your front foot has a pretty standard position, whereas your rear foot is more mobile. This may mean that you've moved your rear foot forward to trim the board (more essential on smaller boards), and you might be weighting your heels to dig a bit of rail in the water for some added resistance. If there's enough breeze, you'll be flying the wing high and looking upwind for a gust. Once you see a gust coming, make sure you flatten the board. You can move your rear foot across

C



the centreline and angle it slightly forward to get into an open offset stance. If you previously moved it forward, you may want to step your rear foot back slightly. Now you're ready for the gust, waiting to feel if it materialises in your wing.

PIC B. BEAR AWAY

This initial bearing away is also your means of testing the gust. You aim to bear away towards a broad reach, the fastest point of sail. To bear away sheet in with your rear hand whilst relaxing your front arm and allowing the gust to pull your front hand away from

you and towards the nose of the board so that your wing points forward. If it doesn't pull, there's not enough, so head back up and try again. If, however, it pulls your hand, brace your core and drive down through your front leg, pushing your front foot and the nose of the board away from the wind so that you bear away. As you do this, you must also trim the board from nose to tail and rail to get maximum glide.

Open Offset Stance As you bear away and keep the board trimmed, you need to set your stance. The idea is to get everything lined up to maximise efficiency from your actions. If you look at Karine, you can see that her feet are offset, and her rear foot is pointing slightly forward. Karine keeps her wing sheeted to the wind as the board bears away. As such, the board bears away and turns under the wing. Karine faces her wing with her head, shoulders, and hips in an open offset stance. As the board turns further, Karine's body stays the same relative to the wing, but her stance looks more open in relation to the board. This is because the board turns whilst the wing and Karine remain fixed relative to the wind. This means you can keep maximum power in the wing while in the perfect position to pull the wing and push the board.

PIC C. FIRST PULL & FEEL

You should be accustomed to bearing away. The new part here is getting used to bearing away with less power and discovering how much less is still enough to pump. Let your arms extend with the pull, and then, using both arms, pull the wing in towards you, keeping yourself stiff whilst pushing your front foot forward. If the board moves, you know it's worth sticking with. In the photo, you can see that Karine is quite upright, pulling the wing to her shoulders.

This keeps the wing high and prevents it from catching in the water. Standing tall also means she can transfer the power through her body and into the board. You can see how the nose pushes down, so there is enough oomph in the wing to generate more. Game on.

PIC D. SLICE THE AIR

Now we're into the nitty gritty of your wing's movement during pumping. So, you've just pulled it in, and now you're practically wearing it. You aim to get it back to its starting point. That point is where it was just after you bore away, high and forward. Unfortunately, you can't just push it away from you, as in essence, you'll push against the air coming at you (in tech terms, your induced wind, like the wind hitting your face when you're on a bike on a still day) and end up back winding yourself. So, you need to lift and push forward, slicing the air instead of just pushing it away from you. It also means that you'll start your next pulling phase from higher, so once again it'll give you more room for the wingtip not to hit the water.

PIC E. MAXIMUM POTENTIAL

As the wing travels up and forward, you aim to get it as far away from you as possible so you have a longer distance to pull it in. To do this, break at the waist, leaning forward and stretching for maximum reach. What's super important here is to keep your front leg stiff. It doesn't need to be locked out straight, but if your knee gets in front of your foot,





you'll be less efficient in getting the power into the board when you pull. The bonus of breaking at the waist is that it moves your weight onto the ball of your rear foot, helping to keep the board trimmed from rail to rail. Looking at Karine, you can see she's at full stretch; her front leg is stiff, and her board is trimmed, whilst her shoulders, hips and knees are lined up, facing her wing and

the nose of the board, ready for one mighty pump!
PIC F. MONSTER PULL

Time to give it everything, pulling in aggressively with your arms, moving your shoulders back and standing up, pushing the power through your front leg and converting it into forward drive. Looking at Karine, you can see it's almost a rowing action as she pulls the wing towards her, bringing her shoulders back, pushing her hips forward and standing tall.

This is what we mean when we talk about the cogs lining up. Karine's facing down the board, with her wing, extended over the nose of her board and sheeted to the wind. She then pulls the wing-back towards her, along the board, while pushing the board forward away.

When pulling the wing in, be careful not to lean back onto your heels. Doing so will turn the board back upwind and kill your momentum.



PIC G. REPEAT

You may well have heard about the circular motion of pumping, and hopefully, you can see it now. Your wing goes up and away from you to its starting point before you break at the waist and reach forward, so it comes down whilst moving further away. You pull it aggressively in and back towards you before returning it to the starting point. Although you're not thinking circularly,

you can see that the result most definitely is – forward and up, down and back.

As long as there is something in your wing, each pump will give you a tiny bit more momentum, and as such, you'll get closer to the take-off speed required for your foil. It can take multiple cycles to gain this speed, each potentially quicker than the last.

Pic H Lift-Off

You'll feel it. That beautiful sensation that you haven't

forgotten since that very first time. This time, you may be under a bit more physical duress, slightly out of breath, and with an elevated heartbeat, but as the foil starts to plane and lift underneath you, your cue comes up. Either push down on your back leg or if your rear foot isn't far enough back, take a little step back and then push down to fly. As the board comes off the water, you can sheet out and turn the board upwind by gently weighting your heels.



BRUCEY BONUS

It's also worth looking at the board. In the sequence and previous photos, you can see that the nose is pushed down at the end of the pull phase as the power drives forward. Then, in the lifting, breaking and reaching phase, the board comes up as you unwittingly unweight it with your movement. This is the bonus pumping that is a winning result of a good wing movement—the more fluid your pumping, the better the effect on your board and, ultimately, your foil.

TOP TIPS

For your first attempts, try this in conditions that you know you can get up in so that you're using it to get up quicker.

Flat water will also help no end. It's easier to read the gusts, you'll be more balanced and there will be less resistance and drag on the board.

If you have chop or swell, try to bear away and combine the water's push with your pumping.

The one caveat to bearing here concerns very light winds. If you go too broad, you'll lose the wind as you accelerate and end up with nothing to pump against. In this case, only bear away a touch.

Once you're on wings 6m and bigger, they can be harder to pump as they're more prone to catching on the water and will backwind more easily if your technique isn't perfect. If you are on a big wing, stay more upright during your pumping cycle and keep your front hand higher so that the wing is angled up more. This won't be as efficient, but it will keep it dry!

And finally, it goes without saying, don't expect to be masterful from the off. Pumping requires as much practice, patience, time and effort to crack as any other manoeuvre. Excellent! Enjoy the challenge, and check out the video on the YouTube channel soon!



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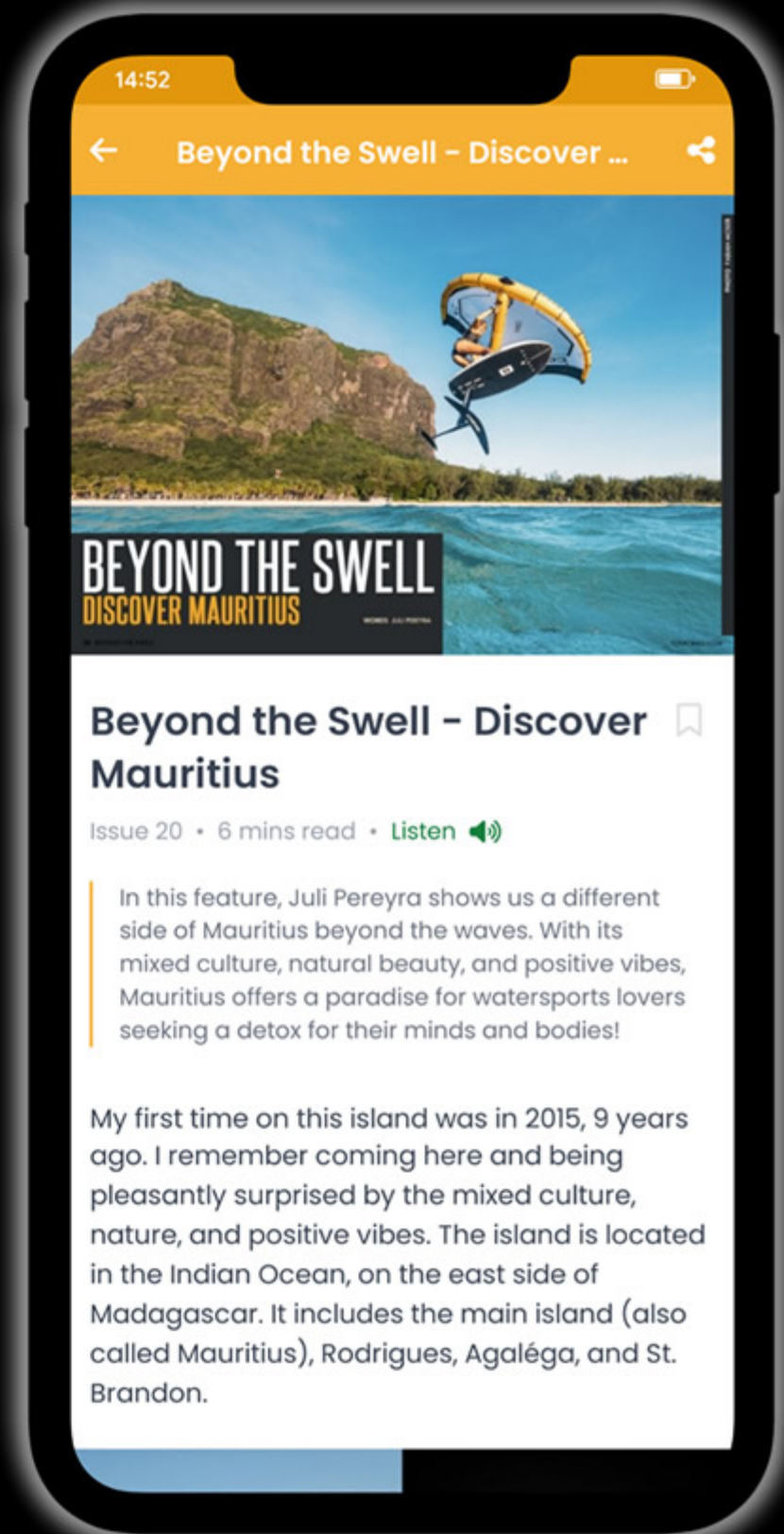
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TRIED & TESTED

The Tonic Mag UK-based test team has been testing the latest gear on the market this summer. Their goal is to provide you with firsthand reviews to help you stay ahead of the game with insight into the best available gear! Check out the full list below.

- Armstrong Performance Downwind Board
- Harlem Pace
- Sabfoil Veloce

WORDS AND PHOTOS THE TONIC MAG TEST TEAM -
JACK GALLOWAY, LIAM PROCTOR & ROU CHATER

BRAND ARMSTRONG FOILS

MODEL DOWNWIND PERFORMANCE

SIZE 8'2

YEAR 2024



"IT'S A JOY TO
RIDE, AND YOU
FEEL CLOSER TO
A PRONE BOARD
THAN A SUP."

TO VISIT THEIR
WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



Downwind SUP foiling has become my absolute go-to discipline. Anytime it's windy, I'm searching for bumps. So you can only imagine my excitement when the brand new Armstrong Downwind Performance arrived at my door.

Before I discuss my experience, I'll highlight some of the upgrades and changes from the original.

They are longer and narrower than the original, designed for expert riders. The board I got on the test is 8ft2 long and 16&3/4 inches wide.

It has a refined bow shape, a split foredeck, a new diamond V tail, and an increased tail rocker. Inspired by the advanced deck grip design from Armstrong's Wing FG foilboards, the DWP boards feature an entirely redesigned grip. It also has a flatter deck shape, with raised central bars and elevated corner blocks, designed to provide intuitive foot placement when up and foiling.

The DWP comes with a high-quality board bag, as is always the case with Armstrong gear.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)



BRAND HARLEM

MODEL PACE

SIZE 5M

YEAR 2024



"IT HAS THE PERFORMANCE CAPACITY TO SATISFY A DEMANDING ADVANCED RIDER TRYING THEIR HAND AT ALL DISCIPLINES"

TO VISIT THEIR WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



Rider weight at time of riding:
approx 82kg

RRP: £1005 / €1144 / \$1300

INTRO

The Harlem Pace is the first wing to be released within Harlem's 'game changer' lineup. It joins the kites, the Force and Thrive, which caused a stir in the kitesurfing world from day one. The game-changer lineup predominantly comprises the kites and wings produced sustainably in Europe at the Brainchild factory facility. This 100% solar energy-powered high-tech facility in North Macedonia aims to revolutionise OEM production within our industry. With well-known product designer and engineer Ralf Grosel at the helm, they seek to invest in technology and innovate production methods to increase product performance and usability, increase the use of recycled materials and reduce the overall impact of our sports on the planet. We'll get into the innovations they're championing in a minute.

Whilst Brainchild is intended to be a production facility in the long run,

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

BRAND SABFOIL

MODEL VELOCE

SIZE 90L

YEAR 2024

"THE BOARD'S
VERSATILITY
MAKES IT A
VALUABLE
ADDITION TO
ANY RIDER'S
ARSENAL."

TO VISIT THEIR
WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



The Sabfoil Veloce 90L Freeride Pro is a standout option for wing foilers looking for a fast board with an easy take-off. Designed with high performance in mind, this board boasts a narrow shape with a more surf-style planform compared to the more traditional square wing foil shape. Sabfoil has put a lot into the design of this board, taking DNA from the modern downwind shapes. You can see the sleek waterline shape and the highly bevelled rails and tail when you look underneath. This not only enhances carving angles but also offers improved manoeuvrability and control. It is also designed and tailored to increase take-off speed and offer stability and balance when in flight, allowing riders to experience a confident and controlled ride.

Built with a full carbon construction, the Veloce is available in three sizes: a 70l, 80l, and this 90l board. Your weight and how and where you ride will dictate which one you choose. As a guide, I usually ride a 70l board, so it was interesting to jump on this, which at 90l is about 5l more than my weight of 85kg.

The finish on the Sabfoil Veloce is stunning, the black carbon weave is visible,

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

READERS GALLERY

Here's your chance to be featured in Tonic Mag, have the right to brag about being famous, and win a Tonic Mag T-shirt!

Congratulations to Jasper Raun for securing our Readers Gallery spot in this issue!

"My current favorite destination for windfoiling is Fuerteventura. Here, especially in the summer, the wind reliability is almost 100%. The water is warm, and the colors are very special. These perfect training conditions can be optimally combined with a family vacation. My favorite spot for freestyling is Matas Bay. Come by for a visit!"

CLICK HERE FOR A CHANCE TO WIN NEXT ISSUE!



Put the popcorn on; it's Movie Night!

The Tonic Mag website is packed with the latest news and videos from the wingfoiling, foiling, SUPing and surfing world, and these are the four most popular videos that have been viewed on the site as voted for by you with your thumbs-up likes over the last two months!

Like what you see? Give it a thumbs up; it could be the next hot pick!

MOVIE NIGHT

#1

WING FOILING . . . HARNESS OR NO HARNESS?

Landing at #1 is the legend himself, Robby Naish! In this video, he reveals the pros and cons of using a harness versus going without, offering insights to help you master your winging technique. Don't miss out!

325 votes


[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#2

MEGA SURF FOIL RIDES IN IRELAND

Landing at #2, Guy Bridge takes us on a stunning ride through Ireland's epic surf foil waves. If you're into surf foiling and have never been to Ireland, this 6-minute video will tempt you to plan your next trip!

323 votes


[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#3

SILLY WAVES FOR THE SAFETY OF THE PUBLIC

Jeremy Wilmotte takes creativity to the next level in this wild ride! With beach restrictions in play, Jeremy tackles unconventional waves, navigates tricky conditions, dodges giant swells, and still manages to snag some epic rides.

184 votes


[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#4

KAI LENNY'S FAMOUS JAWS DOUBLE BARREL

Get ready for an adrenaline rush with Kai Lenny, Nathan Florence, and Ridge Lenny as they recount their legendary XXL double-barrel rides at Maui's Jaws, landing at #4 on our Movie Night list! Watch the full episode on Red Bull TV.

143 votes


[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

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RIDER AUSTIN KALAMA
PHOTO FRANKIE BEES

