

WINTER 2025

Issue 26 of Tonic Mag arrives just in time for the festive season! Jack Galloway explores the future potential of parawings as the next generation of designs arrives in shops. We catch up with Connor Bainbridge, the Olympic kite racer now designing wings for Ozone. John Modica outlines Cabrinha's

new Union system and the latest Prestige foil. Olivia Sanchez covers Armstrong's Women's Week in Tarifa, while Rou Chater and Ben Beholz share how mastering pumping unlocks foiling progression. And that's not even the half of it with tests, technique and much more inside!

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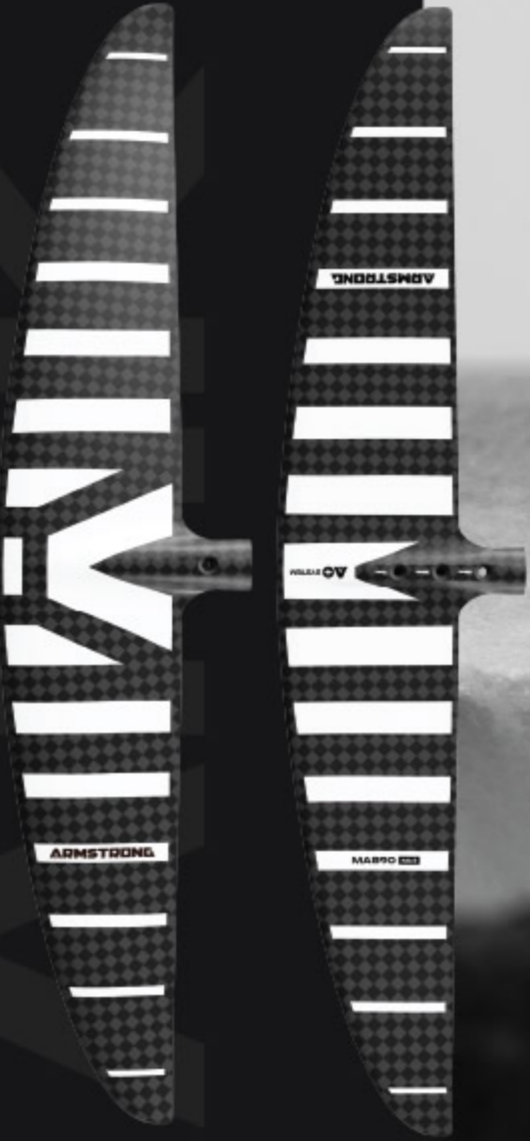
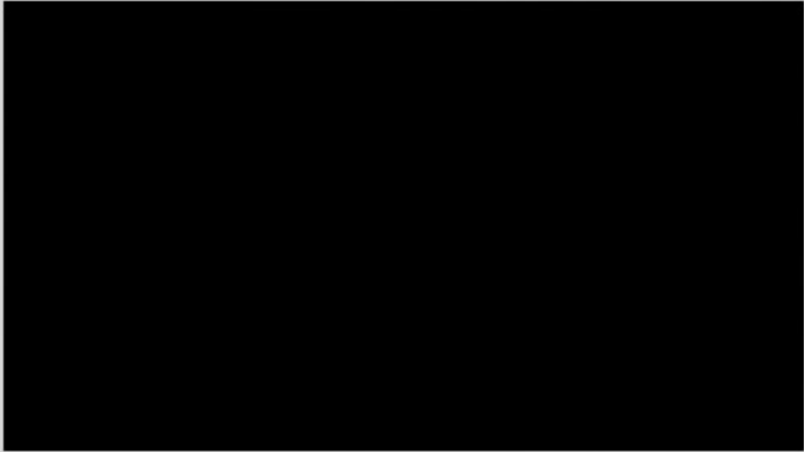


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THE FOIL POD



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RIDER ALINI KORNELLI
PHOTO LE SMS



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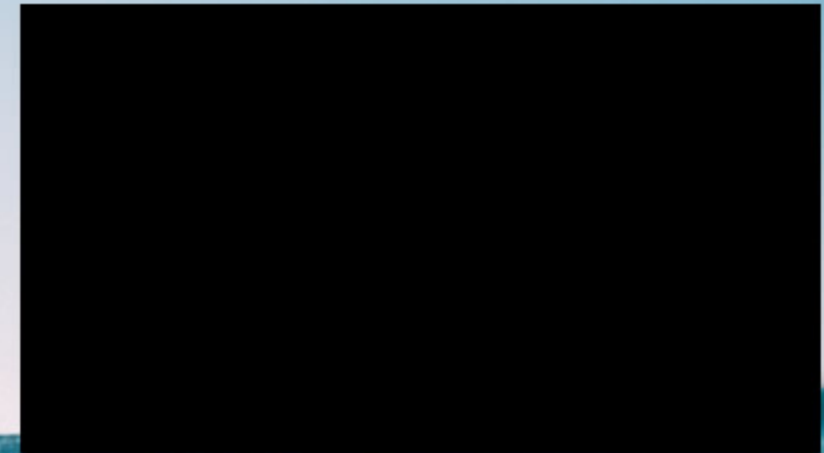
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The Rise of the Parawing: A New Era for Downwind Foiling

I've been wanting to write an editorial on parawings for a good year now, but the time never felt quite right; things are changing so fast that it would have been outdated in just a few weeks. We now know for

sure that parawings are here to stay—but just how popular will they become? And how far can the discipline continue to grow?

As you'll no doubt have seen in this mag over the last five years, the evolution of boards, foils and wings has moved incredibly fast, allowing foilers to progress in

their riding at once-unimaginable levels. But just last year, a game-changer came along that nobody expected—something that bridges the gap between winging and kiting: the parawing.

This hybrid tool, resembling a mini kite but with a vertical bar and 2–3 metre lines, has been quietly revolutionising the foiling game, offering new levels of accessibility and efficiency. I couldn't wait to get my hands on one and have spent this whole season honing my skills. So, let's dive into what makes the parawing such a standout, and why it's one of the most exciting trends in foiling right now.

Padding Out Through Shorebreak, Without the Risk of Ripping Your Wing

Anyone who's spent time in heavy surf knows the struggle of paddling out through shorebreak with your wing. The constant battle with breaking waves, foaming white water and the potential for your wing to get dragged, twisted or even ripped is no doubt a shared frustration for many of you.

For me, this was a standout reason from the start to get into parawing. My local beach, Branksome Dene Chine, is epic on its day, with overhead swell rolling in. However, standing between you and that super-fun session is some enormous shorebreak. I've shredded at least two wings throwing caution to the wind (literally) and attempting to paddle out the back. It's an awful experience—not only because you miss a session, but because you also have an expensive repair to deal with.

With a parawing, you pack it into your bumbag (Ozone Stashbelt) or backpack and duck-dive your way out to sea. It might not be the easiest thing to do, but there's no risk of destroying kit!

Once you're out there and capable enough, you can get flying, pack the wing away once you're riding the swell, and genuinely feel like you're prone foiling. I can't get enough.

A Safety Tool for SUP Downwinding: The Ultimate Backup

Any seasoned SUP downwinder knows that there's always the risk of something going wrong mid-run. Whether it's a broken paddle or simply running out of energy to paddle up, the sudden shift from cruising to struggling can quickly turn an awesome session into a tough battle. That's where the parawing comes in, offering an invaluable safety net.

If you snap a paddle during a downwind session, the parawing provides a quick and easy way to continue your journey. Instead of risking an hour-long prone paddle (something I used to do), you can deploy the parawing and keep moving with relative ease. Even if you can't get back on foil because the wind is light, you can fly it while kneeling or in prone position just to make quicker, easier progress back to the beach.

Erwan Jauffrey was something of a pioneer with this. In the summer he downwind SUP-foiled 150 km (without falling!) in the Mediterranean and achieved the feat without using a safety boat.





RIDER SENSI GRAVES PHOTO CHIARA SOCIN

EDITORIAL



He discusses his safety measures at length in his YouTube video, including carrying a parawing in a dry bag. I've now followed suit and have been taking a small 3 m parawing with me regularly on my longer SUP downwind adventures—either in a bumbag or in a backpack inside a dry bag to prevent it getting too heavy. On one of my runs I ended up 6 km offshore, so it's a real peace of mind having it with me.

Reaching Untapped Downwind Bumps

At our local beach, the good downwind bumps are

3–5 km offshore. Before that, the curved nature of the bay means that swell glides in at 90-degree angles to the wind bumps. It's not impossible, but it makes for very technical downwind that is physically much harder work.

I now regularly start my downwind run with a long reach out to sea, pack the parawing away, and send it downwind. Out there, the swell lines up perfectly with the wind bumps and it's honestly insane! Before this revelation, I'd either be missing out completely,

taking a huge inflatable wing that I'd pack into a massive, uncomfortable backpack, or adding a good 40 minutes to the shuttle run.

I'm willing to bet there are countless opportunities like this around the world to open up access to new and untapped downwind bumps.

Lapping Your Favourite Downwind Run with Ease

One of the most appealing aspects of the parawing is the fact that it can be packed neatly out of the way.

It always used to frustrate me riding bumps or waves with a regular wing and having it stall in front of me or just generally get in the way. The freedom of having your arms free and your vision clear is addictive, to say the least.

Even better, parawing technology is already making huge steps forward, allowing riders to point at high angles into the wind to get back upwind quickly and do it all again. Some of my best parawing sessions to date were in Viana do Castelo, Portugal this summer, lapping 5 km downwind runs in overhead rolling swell on a 65 L mid-length! If you'd told me two years ago that I'd be doing that without an hour's walk in between, I wouldn't have believed you.

With this in mind, parawing has massively improved both my downwind SUP foiling and my prone downwinding skills. I'm able to test smaller foils and ride higher on the mast without risking being unable to paddle back up or facing big swims back to shore.

The Future of the Parawing

If you're like me, you're already imagining the possibilities of where the parawing could go next. I believe we're just scratching the surface. The potential for further improvements is massive and, as the technology evolves, we'll likely see a host of new features that make this already-impressive tool even more versatile.

You may have seen this spring that Théo de Ramecourt used an adapted parawing to win a Défi Wing race. Really it was closer to a kite than a wing, but I do think there are going to be big gains in the amount of depower available in parawings—maybe even an adapted kind of chicken loop to depower using a harness. For me, any way of getting back upwind quicker for the next run is a win.





As we've already seen hinted at in the announcement of V3 versions, brands are likely to start diversifying into multi-discipline wings. One parawing for downwind, one for waves, one even for freestyle? It's going to be super interesting to see what gets released.

Another dimension is packing them away. Will new wings be quicker to pack, or easier to redeploy? We're seeing lots of breakthroughs when it comes to stowing them—bumbags, tummy sacks... who knows what else will appear. There are even people online 3D-printing bar-storage devices to attach to your harness. The more innovation the better.

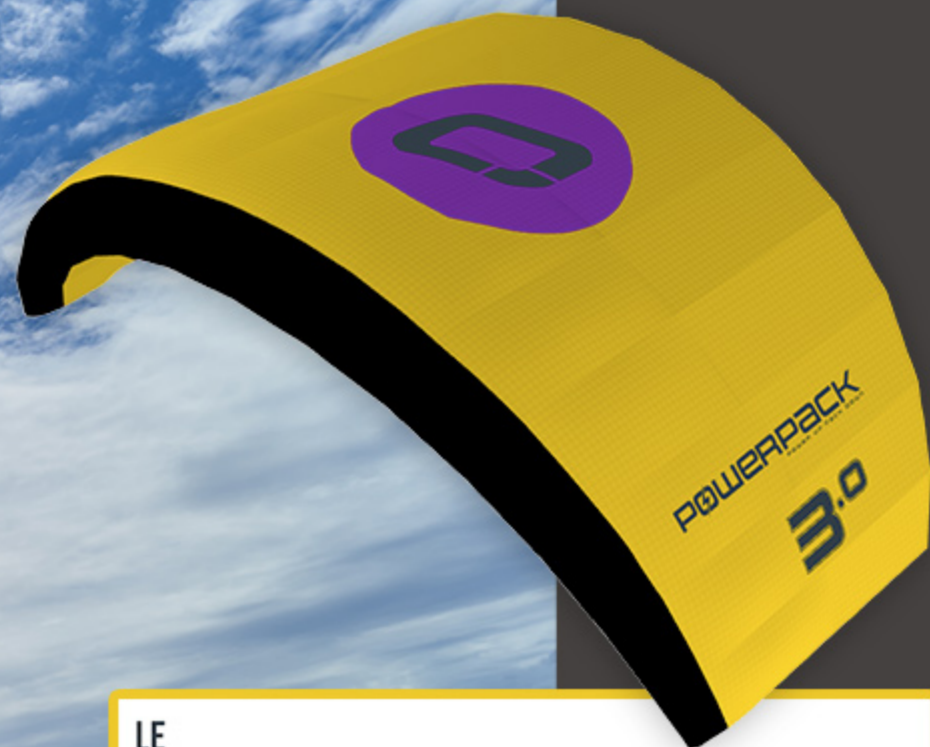
The Parawing's Here to Stay

In the short time since its introduction, the parawing has already created massive opportunities for foilers worldwide to expand their riding. You only had to watch a few AWSI clips from Hood River to see how infectious the new discipline has become. And with continuous improvements on the horizon, it's clear that this is just the beginning.

The parawing isn't just a tool—it's revolutionary, and it's helping us redefine what's possible in the world of foiling. Whether you're heading to the waves, sending it downwind or just looking for a challenge, this new wave of innovation has something to offer everyone, and I can't wait to see where it goes next.

Jack Galloway,
Editor

RIDER AXEL MAZELLA
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THE UNION EFFECT

HOW CABRINHA RE-ENGINEERED THEIR HYDROFOIL RANGE FROM THE CONNECTION UP



WORDS ROU CHATER PHOTOS JAMES BOULDING

Rou Chater sits down with Jon Modica to get technical on The Foil Pod. Check out the full episode on Spotify or wherever you get your podcasts. The Union Connection System was one of the most talked-about designs at the recent AWSI event in the US, and it is now available to the public, too.

Read on to learn the story behind this new direction for the brand and their foils.



“IF YOUR CONNECTION SYSTEM ISN'T THE BEST IN THE MARKET, YOUR FOIL WILL NEVER BE THE BEST IN THE MARKET.”

When Cabrinha set out to build its next-generation foil system, the team didn't want to settle for an upgrade. They wanted a reboot — the kind of rethink that scraps the assumptions of the previous platform and rebuilds the entire architecture around hydrodynamic efficiency, stiffness, and pure, uncompromised feel. The result is the Union System: a connection standard and wing platform that rides smoother, glides further, and turns more naturally than anything Cabrinha has produced before. And for the riders who've tested it, there's a common refrain — this foil doesn't feel like a new model; it feels like a new category.

At the centre of the project is Jon Modica, Cabrinha's chairman and the unofficial fuel injector of its foil programme. Modica's relationship with foiling runs deep; long before he owned the brand, he was racing ram-air kites on early Mike's Lab foils and absorbing everything he could from the pioneers shaping the sport. That history isn't a footnote; it's the reason Cabrinha didn't simply evolve the existing Fusion system. Jon's passion led the charge for this bold new direction.

“We were limited by the connection,” Modica says plainly. “If your connection system isn't the best in the market, your foil will never be the best in the market.” Season after season, Cabrinha's designers could feel the ceiling getting lower. The wings improved. The masts improved. But the interface — the literal joint holding the system together — could only go so far.



THE UNION EFFECT



THE UNION EFFECT

“EVERYONE THOUGHT I WAS CRAZY TO CALL MIKE, BUT HE WAS COMPLETELY RECEPTIVE.”

To break past that limit, Cabrinha would need to borrow from the best.

So Modica made the phone call no one expected him to make.

THE MIKE'S LAB MOMENT

The Mike's Lab saddle system has long been the quiet north star of hydrofoil engineering. It's the interface used on world-title-winning

race foils, the geometry others imitate, the benchmark for stiffness and drag reduction. But the idea of a large consumer brand licensing it directly? That had never happened. Even Modica admits he was nervous.

“Everyone thought I was crazy,” he recalls. But the conversation that followed overturned every assumption. Mike wasn't dismissive; he was interested. He saw an opportunity to influence a broader market without sacrificing the integrity of his design. From that first conversation, collaboration became not only possible but essential.

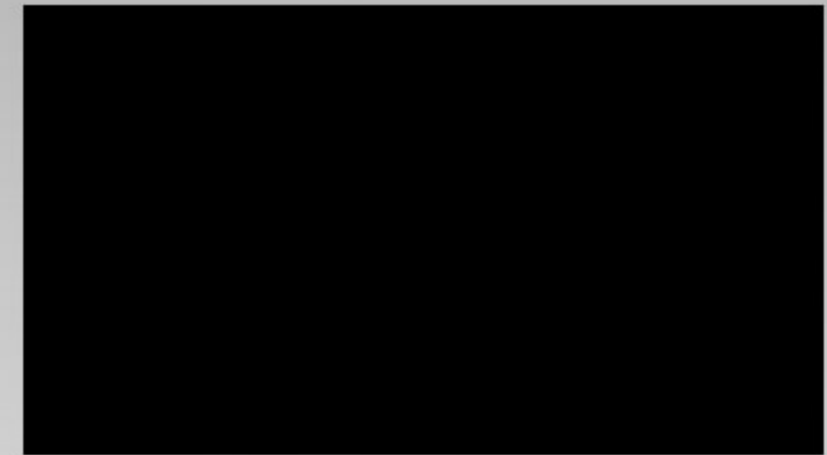
Mike and his long-time design partner Stefano joined Cabrinha's engineering team to refine, adapt, and scale the geometry for a wider audience — a system for riders who aren't just pushing 40 knots on a race course, but winging, prone-foiling, carving, and downwinding across an enormous performance spectrum, with much wider spans than those found on traditional kite race foils.

A CONNECTION BUILT AROUND FEEL

The Union connection isn't an identical copy of the Mike's Lab saddle. It's a carefully adjusted evolution: slightly larger in diameter, subtly reinforced, and built for durability across disciplines.



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“ YOU FEEL THE SMOOTHNESS IMMEDIATELY. THE FOIL STOPS HISSING AND STARTS GLIDING. ”

That tiny increase in diameter — just over a millimetre — transformed the structure. Stiffness rises exponentially. Flex drops. Energy transfer becomes immediate. And with more internal volume, Cabrinha finally had room for M8 bolts, matching the hardware used at the board mount and reducing the system to just two main bolts and one small stabiliser screw.

The effect is dramatic on the beach and even more dramatic in the water. No more guessing which bolt goes where. No more handfuls of different-sized hardware. No more assembling your foil while your friends are already riding. More importantly, the smoothness of the connection changes the way the entire foil behaves.

Riders describe it as “buttery”, but the engineering behind that sensation is a direct consequence of removing turbulence at the mast-to-fuselage interface. Water no longer fights the junction. Flow stays attached longer. The foil stops hissing and starts gliding. According to Modica, this isn’t subtle; you feel it immediately.

THE CASE FOR A MONOBLOCK TAIL

At the rear, Cabrinha made a decision that surprised some riders: the Prestige foil lineup launches exclusively with a monoblock tail. In a community where many love tuning shims or trimming stabilisers by half-degrees, committing to a fixed-angle tail is almost rebellious. But Cabrinha believed simplicity was a performance benefit, not a limitation.



“ WE DIDN'T WANT THE STIFFEST MAST. WE WANTED THE STIFFEST THIN MAST. ”

THE UNION EFFECT

“ A MONOBLOCK TAIL IS CLEANER, STIFFER, AND SIMPLY FASTER. ”

A monoblock tail is lighter, stiffer, and cleaner in the water. There are no shims, no secondary tolerances, and no bolt interference interrupting flow. The stabiliser angle is dialled in at the factory and matched to each front wing size, producing a foil that feels balanced out of the box. For most riders, this is exactly what they want. For those who love to tinker, Cabrinha already has an adjustable version underway, which will be launched soon.

Right now, though, the brand wanted purity: the cleanest, simplest, stiffest tail they could build. And the effect is unmistakable. The Prestige wings pump cleaner, recover faster, and carve more predictably because nothing at the tail is generating unwanted drag.

THE PRESTIGE WINGS: GLIDE WITHOUT COMPROMISE

Once the connection was locked in, hydrodynamic designer Brody Sutherland shaped the new wing lineup. What emerged is a trio of wings with a shared personality: crisp, smooth, ridiculously efficient, yet surprisingly forgiving.

The aspect ratios are high — 10.9 on the 1150, 11 on the 905 and 12.38 on the 760 — but the wings don't behave like the more intimidating high-aspect foils on the market. They lift early, glide effortlessly, carry speed with almost no rider input, and turn far looser than their spans suggest.

Modica says that's because the Union system removed the handbrake. Most wing profiles have to compensate for drag at the connection; Cabrinha didn't need to.



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“THE 905 IS THE QUIVER KILLER. IT’S THE WING YOU TAKE WHEN YOU DON’T KNOW WHAT THE DAY WILL DO.”

With a clean interface, the wings could be designed for balance, not correction.

That’s why the 905 has already become the standout. Testers call it the “quiver killer”, the one wing you take when you don’t know what the day is doing. For prone, winging, and even downwind runs, it carries a huge range. At the top end is the 760, built for speed and control. At the other end is the 1150, which gets heavier riders flying early and keeps them gliding in marginal conditions. Together, the range covers most riders in just about any conditions — without being confusing.

DISTINCT SIZES, CLEAR PURPOSES

Unlike most brands, Cabrinha didn’t release eight front wings with small gaps between them, leaving you agonising over the 900 or 950, for example. They released three because three was enough. The 1150, 905 and 760 are all meaningfully different, each designed to own its category rather than overlap awkwardly with neighbouring sizes. It’s a rare moment of clarity in a market that often leaves even seasoned foilers struggling to decide on the right setup.

THE MASTS: ENGINEERING HONESTY

Supporting the wings are Cabrinha’s two mast options: a 16 mm high-modulus carbon mast and a 14 mm Apex version made with ultra-high-modulus fibres. Both masts are built to offer exceptional stiffness and glide. The goal was to keep thickness to a minimum while still offering enough stiffness to give riders total control in the most challenging conditions.





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“ THIS WAS THE MOST COLLABORATIVE FOIL WE’VE EVER BUILT — AND IT RIDES LIKE IT. ”

Cabrinha also resisted the temptation to offer five or six mast lengths. After talking with retailers and riders, they learned most foilers dislike owning multiple masts. So they built around the two lengths they felt would suit most of the market — 78 cm and 84 cm — again keeping things simple and making the purchasing choice easier.

The 78 cm mast is the all-rounder, perfect for prone, surf, downwind, and flatter-water winging. The 84 cm mast is for high wind and

chop, giving riders extra leverage and margin when the water gets messy. It’s the mast to go for if you mostly wing. Cabrinha felt anything shorter or longer serves only a niche, so they kept the range focused and functional.

A COLLABORATIVE FOIL WITH A COHESIVE FEEL

Unlike Cabrinha’s wings and kites - which are the singular vision of Pat Goodman - the Union system is the product of many minds: Brody shaping profiles, Mike and Stefano refining the connection, Lars Moltrup and his team managing construction and tolerances, team riders feeding daily insight, and Modica steering the ship.

The result of that shared engineering effort is a foil that feels incredibly polished. The Union doesn’t feel modular; it doesn’t feel like a collection of parts bolted together. It feels engineered as one continuous shape, translating energy cleanly from foil to mast to rider. It glides through the water with a silky feel that offers huge performance in an easy-to-ride package that will excite just about anyone who steps on it.

Modica distils the project down to one goal:

“Give people a foil that works unbelievably well without needing to tinker.”

And with the Union System, Cabrinha may have built exactly that.

WORDS OLIVIA SANCHEZ PHOTOS CHIARA SOCIN

When Armstrong Foils hosted its first Women's Week in Tarifa, Olivia Sánchez joined a group of inspiring riders for a week of wind, waves, and connection. Between powerful Levante sessions and late-night laughter, she found more than just progression on the water; she found confidence, friendship, and a renewed sense of purpose. Read the full story exclusively in Tonic Mag.



INSIDE ARMSTRONG'S WOMEN'S WEEK



“MANY OF THE WOMEN THERE WERE WELL-KNOWN RIDERS, PEOPLE I HAD LOOKED UP TO FOR THEIR INCREDIBLE SKILL AND ACHIEVEMENTS.”

When Armstrong invited me to the Women's Week in Tarifa, I could hardly believe it. I knew from the very first moment it would be something special. For me, it felt like a personal milestone. I had been part of the Armstrong Foils team for almost two years, and this invitation felt like a reward for all the dedication, passion, and work that had led up to that point. What I didn't realise was how deeply the experience would affect me. Before arriving, my expectations were already high. I imagined a week spent surrounded by strong, inspiring women, united by a shared love of the ocean and wind. What I experienced, though, went far beyond anything I could have dreamed of.

From the moment I arrived, the energy felt different. It was positive, open, and full of excitement. I have always been quite shy, and I didn't know any of the girls personally, so I was a little nervous at first. Meeting everyone for the first time was a mix of curiosity and admiration. Many of the women there were well-known riders, people I had looked up to for their incredible skill and achievements. Suddenly, I was standing next to them, sharing a lineup and a journey. That alone felt surreal.

Tarifa greeted us with its full spectrum of moods. We had light wind and small waves some days, strong Levante winds on others, and even moments of perfect calm. Those changing conditions became part of the adventure. Every day brought something new. One day, we were riding through glassy water at sunset, the next we were holding onto our wings in powerful gusts.



“ WE SHARED LAUGHS, ADVICE, AND ENDLESS ENCOURAGEMENT. IF SOMEONE STRUGGLED, THE REST CHEERED THEM ON UNTIL THEY GOT IT. ”

The variety made every session feel fresh and exciting. It reminded me how important it is to adapt and enjoy whatever the ocean gives you.

Despite coming from different parts of the world and a wide range of ages and backgrounds, we all connected instantly.

That surprised me in the best way. I had expected to feel like the youngest or the least experienced, but instead, I felt surrounded by sisters. Everyone supported one another. We shared laughs, advice, and endless encouragement. If someone struggled, the rest cheered them on until they got it. That sense of unity was the heart of the whole trip for me. It showed me that this sport, often seen as an individual sport, can be beautifully collective.

The first time I ever tried foiling was actually through windsurfing. The feeling was unlike

anything else I had experienced on the water. When the board lifted and started gliding above the surface, it was as if time paused. That smooth, flying sensation was addictive. A few months later, I tried wing foiling for the first time. It might feel similar, but it was something completely new. The mix of freedom, speed, and control made me fall in love with it instantly.

Before Women’s Week, I had always seen foiling as a passion, something that brought me joy and peace. But after spending that week with so many inspiring women, I began to imagine it as part of my future in a much bigger way. I started to see how it could become a lifelong journey and maybe even a profession.



Watching others teach, create, and share the sport planted a new seed in me. It made me believe that there is space for women to grow, lead, and make a mark in this world.

Two sessions from that week stand out vividly in my memory. One was at Hierbabuena Beach, where we went prone foiling. It was my very first time trying it. I was nervous at first, but the girls surrounded me with encouragement and helped me every step of the way. The joy I felt catching my first little wave is something I'll never forget.

“ THERE IS SPACE FOR WOMEN TO GROW, LEAD, AND MAKE A MARK IN THIS WORLD. ”



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“ I REMEMBER FEELING SO FREE, JUMPING HIGHER THAN I EVER HAD BEFORE, AND LANDING WITH A MIX OF SURPRISE AND HAPPINESS. ”

Everyone was clapping and laughing, celebrating those small wins together. That session wasn't just about riding waves; it was about community, kindness, and shared growth.

The other session that stands out happened at Playa Chica. The Levante was blowing strong that day, and we decided to go for some freestyle riding. It was pure fun. The wind was wild, the energy was high, and we all started pushing ourselves a little harder. I remember feeling so free, jumping higher than I ever had before, and landing with a mix of surprise and happiness. It was one of those moments where everything clicks. You stop overthinking and just feel it. That's what sessions are all about for me; finding that sweet balance between focus and joy.

Looking back, some of my favourite memories didn't even happen on the water. It was during the evenings, when we'd gather for dinner, share stories, and laugh until late. Those conversations made the experience complete. We talked about dreams, challenges, and life beyond the ocean. It was during those moments that I realised how strong and connected this group of women was. We weren't just riders; we were people with stories that intertwined through a shared love for wind and water.

Throughout the week, I also learned a lot about the technical side of foiling. Before, I hadn't paid much attention to details like foil placement or balance points.





“ WE SHARED LAUGHS, ADVICE, AND ENDLESS ENCOURAGEMENT. IF SOMEONE STRUGGLED, THE REST CHEERED THEM ON UNTIL THEY GOT IT. ”

But spending time with the Armstrong team opened my eyes. I discovered how even minor adjustments can completely change the feeling of the ride. Understanding that gave me a new respect for the craft and engineering that go into every setup. It also

reminded me that progress often comes from curiosity and patience rather than rushing through steps.

One of the highlights of the entire trip was meeting Martine Grael. It still feels unreal to say that I got to spend time on the water with a double Olympic gold medalist. I had admired her for years. What struck me most was her humility. She treated everyone equally, always ready to help or share what she knew. We connected easily because of

our racing backgrounds. I come from windsurfing (Techno, and more recently IQFoil) and she comes from Olympic sailing (in the 49erFX class). Though the equipment is different, both disciplines fall under the Olympic sailing racing format. Talking with her gave me perspective on what it means to build a life around the sea. Her advice and energy were truly inspiring.

When the week finally came to an end, I didn't feel ready to leave. It was one of those experiences that stays with you long after it's over. My mind replayed every laugh, every session, every connection.



On the flight home, I found myself reflecting on everything that had happened. I realised that Women's Week wasn't just a trip or an event; it was a turning point. It reminded me why I love this sport so deeply. It also made me feel part of something greater than myself.

What Armstrong created went beyond equipment or performance. It built a community, a space where women from around the world could meet, ride, and inspire each other. I came back with new friends,

“ A SPACE WHERE WOMEN FROM AROUND THE WORLD COULD MEET, RIDE, AND INSPIRE EACH OTHER. ”

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“ PROGRESS ISN'T JUST ABOUT TRAINING HARDER OR GOING BIGGER. IT'S ABOUT CONNECTION, SHARED PASSION, AND TRUSTING YOURSELF. ”

new confidence, and a stronger sense of belonging. It felt like the beginning of something important, not just for me but for the future of women in water sports.

Every time I head out on the water here in Tarifa, I'm reminded of that special week. The sessions, the smiles, the sense of family all come rushing back. It showed me that progress isn't just about training harder or going bigger. It's about connection, shared passion, and trusting yourself. The ocean always gives back what you put in, and that week, it gave me more than I could have imagined.

DOCK STARTING:

WHY PUMPING IS THE MASTER SKILL FOR EVERY FOILER



WORDS ROU CHATER PHOTOS JAN SCHRÖDER RIDER BEN BEHOLZ

Dock starting may be one of the hardest things to do on a foil, but it's also arguably the best skill you can learn to improve all your foiling disciplines. The art of a good pump is the most essential and transferable skill in our sport. Rou Chater sat down with Ben Beholz on The Foil Pod recently to talk about the highs and lows of earning and the importance of cracking it.

“ IT’S THE HARDEST THING YOU CAN DO ON A FOIL,
BUT AT THE SAME TIME, IT’S ALSO THE EASIEST
TO ACCESS. ”

If you’ve been around foiling for any length of time, you’ll have noticed a pattern. The riders who really seem to “get it” across every discipline – wing, prone, downwind, kite – are almost always the ones who can pump properly. Not just a couple of desperate shuffles to save a botched gybe, but real, sustained, controlled pumping. The kind of pumping that lets you link bumps, flag out for longer and keep the foil alive when physics says you’re done.

At some point in your foiling journey, you realise that pumping isn’t an add-on skill. It’s the foundation. As Core team rider and YouTuber Ben Beholz put it when we spoke for The Foil Pod, “If you can pump foil and dock start, you really understand the foil. Then you really know when it stalls, how to keep it going, how long you can glide.” Once you’ve felt all of that through your legs with no wing, no wave and no engine to help, every other foiling discipline starts to become easier.

Dock starting has become the purest expression of that learning curve. In many ways, it’s the hardest thing you can do on a foil, but at the same time, it’s also the easiest to access. You don’t need wind or swell or a boat, and there is no waiting on a forecast. You just need a dock, a ladder or even a rock, a foil set-up and a slightly worrying level of determination.





THE HARDEST EASY THING IN FOILING

Let's be honest: dock starting feels ridiculous at first. The idea that you're going to sprint down a dock, jump onto a board that's floating in space on a wing the width of a well-proportioned coffee table, miss every cleat and obstacle on the way in, and somehow not die, sounds optimistic at best.

I remember my own first attempts vividly. I'd watched other people doing it and mentally filed it under "probably not for me". Then at a UK event, I watched our very own Jack Galloway stepping effortlessly off a ladder and cruising around like it was no big deal.

" I'D WATCHED OTHER PEOPLE DOING IT AND MENTALLY FILED IT UNDER "PROBABLY NOT FOR ME" "

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“ A MATE AND I MADE A PACT: WE WERE GOING TO LEARN TO DOCK START, WHATEVER IT TOOK. ”

Jack's an incredible downwind and pump foiler, the sort of guy who makes everything look easy, but when I asked him what he thought about me learning, the answer was brutally honest. I was probably a bit old, probably not quite fit enough, and it was going to be really tough. For a while, that was all the excuse I needed.

Eventually, the fear of being left behind outweighed the fear of smashing into a pontoon. A mate and I made a pact: we were going to learn to dock start, whatever it took. We found a suitable dock, bolted our biggest foils to some old kite foil boards and started throwing ourselves at it. On my first jump I thought, "This is horrific and not for me," but Oli, my mate, encouraged me to keep at it and, honestly, if it wasn't for him, I'd have given up after my third go. We persevered and eventually started getting the odd landing and a little glide.

It's insanely addictive – or maybe I just have an addictive personality. My partner could not understand what was happening to me. Four hours a day, every day for a week, coming home exhausted, battered and bruised, just to do it again the next morning. When you're deep in that phase, it's hard to explain to anyone who isn't there with you what all the fuss is about, but you'll want to keep doing it over and over again so you can crack it.



“WHAT MAKES DOCK STARTING BOTH HORRIBLE AND BRILLIANT IS THAT IT REMOVES EVERY SAFETY NET.”

Ben's experience was similar, and he's quick to stress that there's no shortcut through this phase. "When I teach this to people, I always say it takes a thousand tries," he told me. "Nobody gets around it. You just need to invest in it." Some days you feel like you've cracked it; the next day you're back to square one, falling on your face and wondering what changed. The trick, he says, is not to treat it like a magical breakthrough moment, but like training. "See it as a workout. Go to the water every day for 20 or 30 minutes before or after work and make it a routine. Don't expect it to happen this session. After a week or ten days, though, you will foil."

What makes dock starting both horrible and brilliant is that it removes every safety net. There's no energy coming from anywhere except you. No wing to drag you through errors, no wave face doing half the work, no parawing to lean against. It's just the speed from your start, your legs, your timing and your foil, which is exactly why it's such a powerful teacher.

HOW DOCK STARTING TRANSFORMS YOUR FOILING

Once you claw your way through that first successful lap – and you will, if you stick at it – something shifts. You start to feel the foil in a way that's hard to access in other disciplines. The subtle moment just before a stall, the precise pressure change that keeps it flying,

the quiet, efficient glide phases where you're doing very little and the foil is doing everything. You get an almost subconscious sense of how deep on the mast you are, constantly trying to stay high, and how hard you can load it without killing the lift.

Ben summed it up nicely when he contrasted it with kite foiling. "With kite foiling, it's just not the same knowledge I need for my foil because the kite pulls and there's so much power. In pump foiling, you need to generate everything out of your body. There's nothing. Just a bit of current or wind can already be deadly for the pumping motion." If you can keep a foil flying in that environment, doing a couple of recovery pumps out of a wing-foil gybe suddenly feels trivial.

“THERE ARE NO BORING DAYS ANYMORE,” HE SAID. “PUMP FOILING, DOCK START, YOU CAN REALLY DO IT EVERYWHERE ”

From my side, the difference it made across all my foiling was huge. Wing foiling became easier; gybes and tacks were simple, as I understood the glide and pump so much better, and on downwind runs I barely needed the wing at all. Linking bumps was easier. Prone sessions, especially on marginal days, stopped being about catching one wave and a long paddle back; I was starting to pump back out and link waves too. Downwind runs felt more connected because I could use pumping to bridge the gaps between bumps rather than giving up when the energy dropped. Everything tightened up and, perhaps most importantly, my confidence grew. Once you know that you can keep the foil going under your own steam, you ride differently.

Ben sees that too, and he's convinced that more riders should give dock starting a chance, even if it frightens them a little. “There are no boring days anymore,” he said. “Pump foiling, dock start, you can really do it everywhere. A stone is enough or a beach, if you can do a beach start. The freedom that comes with it is the cool thing.”

I'd echo that sentiment too. EVERY DAY is a foil day. Since I learned to dock start a few years ago, I have barely ridden my mountain bike; I can be in the ocean no matter the forecast. More time on foil just means you improve across all aspects of foiling. It is perhaps the most transferable skill within our sport. Good pumping technique is needed in every discipline.





“ WITH THE NEW PUMP FOILS, YOU CAN JUST USE A STANDING START, JUMP ON IT, AND IT GETS GOING.”

WHY EQUIPMENT CHOICE MATTERS MORE THAN YOU THINK

The other big lesson I learned early on is that not all foils are created equal when it comes to dock starting. I began on an F-One Phantom that was brilliant with a wing and in the surf but absolutely unforgiving off the dock. Every time I jumped on it, the foil wanted to dart left or right, and any slight mistake was punished instantly. Oli, my dock-starting mate, meanwhile, was on an Axis 1150 – at the time, pretty much the gold standard for learning to dock start, and still a good foil with which to learn even to this day – and while he definitely had better technique, he also had more help from his gear.

The penny dropped when another friend turned up, jumped on my set-up and struggled every time, then hopped on the 1150 and started making it look possible. I eventually managed a few short glides on the Axis, phoned Tom at the UK distributor on the drive home and basically begged for an 1150. The difference really was that stark.

Ben went through the same evolution. Early on, he was using relatively small wings that demanded a huge run-up and brutal effort just to get flying. “I needed much more speed,” he remembers. “With the new pump foils, you can just use a standing start, jump on it, and it gets going. The foils were too small back then.”



“THE FIRST TIME MOST PEOPLE PICK IT UP THEY ASSUME IT MUST BE FRAGILE SIMPLY BECAUSE IT’S SO LIGHT.”

Modern pump and dock-start foils have changed the game. Higher aspect ratios, refined profiles and dedicated stabilisers have made it much more realistic for “normal” humans to learn. Core’s arrival in this space with their Pulse front wing and Drip board is a good illustration of how seriously the bigger brands are starting to take it.

THE CORE PULSE AND DRIP: MAKING DOCK STARTS MORE ACCESSIBLE

Core has never been known for racing to market with half-baked ideas. They were relatively late to kite foiling and wing foiling, preferring to watch the early chaos, learn from everyone else’s mistakes and then release polished, durable products. Pump foiling is

the first time they’ve moved early, and you can feel that both the Pulse foil and Drip board have come from real-world use rather than a marketing brainstorm.

Part of that is down to Ben’s enthusiasm. Based on his description, he badgered them for long enough that people inside the brand started pump foiling themselves, especially around the lakes of Germany and Switzerland where the sport has quietly grown into a scene of its own. Once that happened, development became an obvious next step.

The Pulse front wing is deliberately pitched as a beginner-to-mid-level solution. “It’s not a high-performance foil to pump four or five hours, but also it’s not a total beginner foil which is slow,”

Ben explained. “It’s really something in the middle.” In practice, that means enough low-end lift and stability to help you off the dock, but enough speed and glide that you won’t grow out of it after a month. Core already had a modular foil system in place for their CFS foils, so the Pulse slots into that ecosystem. If you already own a Core mast and fuselage, you can bolt the Pulse and matching stabiliser straight on.

Ben likes to pair the Pulse with a longer fuselage and a larger tail when he’s teaching or setting people up to learn. A longer fuse calms the pitch and makes the whole system feel more forgiving, buying you just enough time to correct mistakes before the foil stalls. “Some people say as short as possible,” he said, “but especially in the beginning, when you need to develop the feeling of where to jump on, how to balance, how much weight on the back foot or the front foot, I think it really makes sense to have a long fuselage. It’s much more forgiving.” On the stabiliser side, he often runs the 300, which adds extra low-speed lift and makes getting up and staying up less demanding.

The Drip board completes the picture. At 95 cm, it looks tiny on land, and the first time most people pick it up they assume it must be fragile simply because it’s so light. “Everyone I gave it to was like, this board will never last,” Ben laughed. “But the crazy thing is, it lasts. It’s very stiff, it’s very strong, and I didn’t break a single one.” That low weight and stiffness are exactly what you want for pump foiling. Any flex in the board robs you of energy, and any extra length in front of your front foot becomes swing weight that needs to be moved with every pump.

A person is shown underwater, riding a Core Drip pump foil board. The person is wearing a blue t-shirt and shorts, and is holding the board with both hands. The board is black with 'CORE' written on it. The background is a clear blue water surface with light reflecting off the water.

“ YOU STOP LOOKING AT FLAT, WINDLESS WATER AS WASTED TIME. YOU START SEEING OPPORTUNITY EVERYWHERE.”

Ben noticed the difference clearly when he was helping a friend in Greece who only had a much longer kite foil board. “It’s hard to imagine, but it takes a lot of energy,” he said. “If you just have like 20 centimetres of board in front of your foot, it swings. Everything that swings or any weight that goes into any direction where you don’t want it, it’s distracting and takes energy.” The Drip, being compact and stiff, minimises that wasted movement.

Interestingly, the board is not a one-trick pony. Ben has also used it for kite foiling with smaller wings, and it works well enough in that role, just as Core’s SLC kite foil board in 115 cm doubles nicely as a pump board if you don’t want a dedicated set-up. But if your focus is dock starting and pumping, the Drip is very clearly optimised for that use case.

TURNING UP EVERY DAY

The story that runs through all of this – from inland lakes in Germany and Switzerland to docks in Wales and beaches in Greece – isn’t really about equipment, though. The gear helps. Modern pump foils like the Pulse and compact boards like the Drip make dock starting less punishing and more achievable. But the deciding factor is still whether you’re willing to turn up, day after day, for that 20–30 minute window and throw yourself at it.

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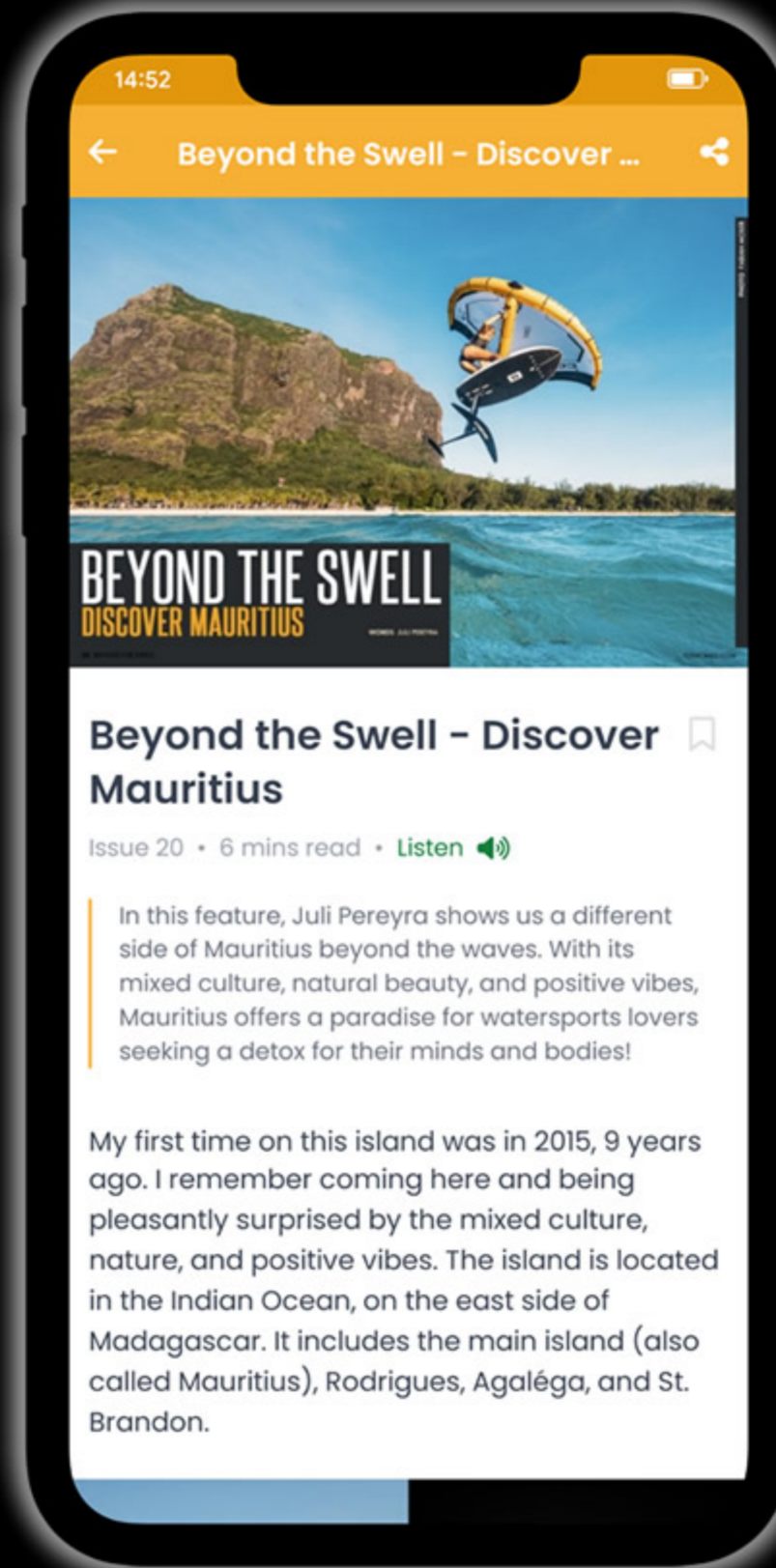
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Beyond the Swell - Discover Mauritius

Issue 20 • 6 mins read • Listen

In this feature, Juli Pereyra shows us a different side of Mauritius beyond the waves. With its mixed culture, natural beauty, and positive vibes, Mauritius offers a paradise for watersports lovers seeking a detox for their minds and bodies!

My first time on this island was in 2015, 9 years ago. I remember coming here and being pleasantly surprised by the mixed culture, nature, and positive vibes. The island is located in the Indian Ocean, on the east side of Madagascar. It includes the main island (also called Mauritius), Rodrigues, Agaléga, and St. Brandon.

PODCAST

FROM OLYMPIC KITE RACER TO WING DESIGNER

INTERVIEW ROU CHATER / TONIC MAGAZINE

Connor Bainbridge on Paris 2024 and Building the Next Generation of Ozone Wings

Rou Chater sits down with Connor Bainbridge, racer, Olympian, designer and now hopelessly addicted to wing foiling. The full interview is available on Spotify and all the usual podcast platforms, and there is a full video on our YouTube channel. Rou and Connor talk about his tricky Olympic campaign, his transition since retiring from kite racing, and his new role designing wings for Ozone.





“ THAT CONSTANT LOOP OF DESIGN, BUILD, TEST AND TWEAK IS PRETTY ADDICTIVE. IT’S A DREAM SETUP, TO BE HONEST.”

ROU: Connor, since your Olympic campaign, you’ve been based in the UK and also in Mauritius, working with Ozone. How’s life now, and what does a typical day look like?

CONNOR BAINBRIDGE: Life’s really good. I’ve officially retired from kitefoil racing, and I’m now working full-time with Ozone as an assistant designer, mainly on the wing program. Most days start with OzCAD (Ozones’ proprietary design software) on my laptop, adjusting files, refining prototypes, then heading straight onto the water to test them. We’ve got a tight R&D group here, everyone rides everything, and that constant loop of design, build, test and tweak is pretty addictive. It’s a dream setup, to be honest.

ROU: Let’s rewind to Paris 2024. From the outside, the path looked solid: years of top-three finishes, event wins, then the Olympics. But your campaign was far from smooth, wasn’t it?

CONNOR: Definitely not smooth. I started the cycle with F-ONE, and was very involved in developing their race kite and committed to that project. Then Flysurfer suddenly became the dominant kite. Because I’d invested so much in the F-ONE platform, I transitioned late, and overnight, I went from being consistently on the podium to struggling to get into the top ten. It was a horrible feeling. We genuinely questioned whether I’d lost my edge or whether it was time to walk away. Turns out we just weren’t on the right gear, but at the time it was brutal.



“ I CAME BACK REFRESHED MENTALLY, AND THE RESULTS FOLLOWED. I PODIUMED AT EVERY EVENT EARLY IN 2023, ”

Then, near the end of 2022 I had a huge crash at The Hague. Someone rode into the back of me and ripped my MCL clean off the bone. I ended up on crutches and in a brace for three months—right at the moment I was supposed to be building into Olympic qualifying.

RACING THROUGH INJURY

ROU: And you had to go through the

selection trials, still recovering?

CONNOR: Pretty much the entire 2023 season was done in a brace. At the start of the year, I was in a selection fight with Guy Bridge. He'd had a great winter and was pushing really hard, and I didn't know if I'd even be competitive again after the injury. Weirdly, the enforced break helped. I came back refreshed mentally, and the results followed. I podiumed at every event early in 2023, earned selection for the Olympic Test Event, and Guy stepped away from the pathway just before that. For a moment, it looked like everything was back on track.

ROU: That's when the qualification drama really began, right?

CONNOR: Yes. The big one was the 2023 Worlds, the crucial event for qualifying the nation. Three days before it started, I caught COVID. I could barely get out of bed for the equipment measurement. We had GoPros on board for debriefs, and my coach watched the footage and said, "How are you even breathing? You're coughing the whole way round." Unsurprisingly, we didn't qualify there. It was devastating.

Three weeks later, we had the Europeans in Portsmouth. Home waters, home crowd. It should have been the moment. And then on medal race day,

“ WE WERE JUST HOLDING ME TOGETHER UNTIL THE OLYMPICS—I COULD FALL APART AFTERWARDS. ”

I took the wrong kite. I went out on an 11 when it was very obviously 15-metre conditions. That one call cost us the qualification. It turned what looked like an easy pathway into a crisis.

HOLDING IT TOGETHER

ROU: Everything then came down to the last-chance regatta. How did you deal with that mentally?

CONNOR: Honestly, not brilliantly at times. The two years leading up to the Games were mentally rough. However, I had a great support team, physio, coach, sports psych, family, and without them, I don't think I'd have made it to Marseille.

My physio used to joke, “We're just holding you together until the Olympics; afterwards, you can fall apart.” And that's pretty much what happened. As the Games got closer, it all became about process. Get through the next week, the next month, the next stage. Once you've put a finish line in your mind, you can bury a lot of the difficulty.

Luckily, everything clicked at the last-chance regatta. Apart from one race, I won everything. We qualified the nation and locked in my place. It was a huge relief.

Then, just to keep the drama going, I had another big crash two months before the Games and put a foil into my shin bone. The trailing edge snapped off inside the bone. I had emergency surgery in France the night before the World Championships and missed the event completely. Again it was: “am I even going to make it to the Games?” But we got there just in time.





“ WALKING INTO THE OLYMPIC VILLAGE COMPLETELY RESET MY PERSPECTIVE. YOU REALISE HOW MANY ATHLETES ARE DISAPPOINTED ”

THE EMOTIONAL WEIGHT OF THE OLYMPICS

ROU: You finished eighth in Paris, an incredible result, but you wanted a medal. What was that like emotionally?

CONNOR: It was really tough. From 2018 onwards, I'd lived on the podium. So my expectation going into the Games was that I should be in the medals. Finishing eighth felt like a massive failure at the time. I actually booked a flight home for the day after the regatta because I wanted to get out of there and forget the whole thing.

However, a few people convinced me to stay for the closing ceremony, to actually experience what the Olympics is outside of the racecourse. Walking into the Olympic Village completely reset my perspective. You realise how many athletes are disappointed, there are far more competitors than medals.

Micky Beckett said something that stuck with me. He'd also had a tough result. He stopped me and said, "Don't let one event every four years define what you are as an athlete." At the time, I was close to tears and hiding behind sunglasses, but he was right. The Games are huge, but they're still just one regatta.

A NEW CHAPTER

ROU: Did the Olympics change your opportunities afterwards?

CONNOR: Not dramatically. I'm not a big self-promotion or social media person, so I didn't suddenly become 'Olympic Influencer Connor.'



“DRAW IT, FACTOR IN SHRINKAGE, AND YOU GET ROUGHLY WHAT YOU EXPECT.”

What it has done is give me a vast bank of experience in managing pressure, coping with setbacks, and structuring high-performance programs, which I can use in design, coaching, or mentoring. It's less about opening new doors and more about strengthening what I wanted to do next anyway.

ROU: Let's talk design. You've gone from racing lycra to OzCAD. How did the transition into working with Ozone happen?

CONNOR: The roots go back years. With F-ONE I was deeply involved in developing the Diablo race kite, but I was never doing the technical design. I couldn't access their software, and living outside Montpellier made it tricky. Around the same time, during COVID, I started Blue Fox Boards and taught myself CAD in Rhino. That was my first taste of making products from scratch.

When my time with F-ONE ended, I approached Ozone's Iain Hannay and said I'd love to work with them on developing the next-generation race kite for 2028. We created a role where I came in during R&D blocks with Axel and Dom. I got deeper into it,

built a strong relationship with Dom, and after the Olympics, Iain offered me a full-time assistant designer role. Within a month, I was in Mauritius, sitting in Dom's living room, having "morning school" in OzCAD.

LEARNING THE TOOLS

ROU: OzCAD isn't something you can learn on YouTube. What was it like getting to grips with it?

CONNOR: Brutal but brilliant. Board design is straightforward: draw it, factor in shrinkage, and you get roughly what you expect. Soft goods are a different universe. You're dealing with stretch, seam behaviour, tension lines. Change one number and five things shift.

In the first few months, Axel and I went to Dom's house every morning like students. We'd scale kites,

“ MY FIRST KITES TECHNICALLY FLEW... BUT I WOULDN'T RUSH THEM INTO PRODUCTION. ”

re-panel wings, fix seam layouts, often getting it wrong. We once scaled a leading edge to twice its proper diameter, and another time produced struts that didn't physically fit, but that's how you learn.

Even now, if I'm stuck, I call Dom. The software keeps evolving, too, because we have an in-house developer refining it for wings and kites. My first kites technically flew, but you wouldn't want to release them to the market.

THE PARAPEX ADVANTAGE

ROU: Ozone's own their own factory, Parapex, how helpful is that when designing and prototyping products?

CONNOR: It's a huge advantage. Because Ozone owns Parapex, the feedback loop is incredibly fast. I get photos and questions every day from the sewing floor. I'll ask them to shift a seam by a millimetre or tighten a tolerance, and they come straight back with implications and adjustments. That efficiency means we need far fewer prototypes than many brands. The build quality is insanely consistent.

I'm heading out to the factory for their 25th anniversary soon. I've only known most of the team by email so far, I owe several of them beers for the things they had to build in my early learning stages.

FALLING IN LOVE WITH WINGING

ROU: When did winging become a passion?

CONNOR: Honestly, only at the start of this year. Before that, I could wing, but I didn't love it.





“ BEING RESPONSIBLE FOR OZONE'S WING PROGRAM IS EQUAL PARTS EXCITING AND TERRIFYING. ” ”

At 100+ kilos, the gear felt oversized and clumsy. Kite racing felt precise and efficient; winging felt like hard work.

Two things changed everything. First, I designed a custom mid-length board that suited my size and style. Suddenly, everything felt more dynamic. Second, I switched to Mike's Lab wing foils. I've worked with Mike and Stefano for years, and once I got proper, stiff, race-bred foils under my feet, the sport transformed for me.

On top of that, if I wanted to design wings properly, I had to get a lot better at riding them. I treated it like a training block, and once I passed that threshold, the sport became addictive. Now, if it's windy, I'm winging.

ROU: You're now responsible for Ozone's wing program. How does that feel?

CONNOR: Exciting and terrifying in equal measure. I helped finalise the Fusion and Flux this year, and after that, Dom handed over the reins. My first major product, designed entirely by me (but of course, joint tested throughout the process by our entire R&D team as usual), comes out soon. It's thrilling, and this is exactly the responsibility I wanted.

The best part is riding my own prototypes every day, trying to break them, figuring out what works. The crossover between kite design and wing design inside the team keeps things creative. It's a huge job, but I love it.

“ WITH EVERYTHING I’VE LEARNED OVER THE LAST OLYMPIC CYCLE AND NOW IN DESIGN, I FEEL LIKE I HAVE A LOT TO GIVE BACK. ”

LOOKING AHEAD

ROU: What does 2026 look like for you?

CONNOR: More balance. We’ll spend around four months in Mauritius each year in testing blocks. Outside that, I want more time in the UK, I’ve hardly been home the last few years. We’ll also do focused test trips, likely including Hood River for the wing and parawing development.

I’m also excited to get back into coaching. I coached a lot after my windsurfing days and loved it. With everything I’ve learned over the last Olympic cycle and now in design, I feel like I have a lot to give back. It’s still being planned, but it’s something I’m passionate about.

ROU: Connor, thanks so much for sharing the journey—both the Olympic roller coaster and the design evolution. We can’t wait to see your first fully designed wing from Ozone!

CONNOR: Thanks for having me. It’s been a crazy few years, but I’m excited for what’s coming next.



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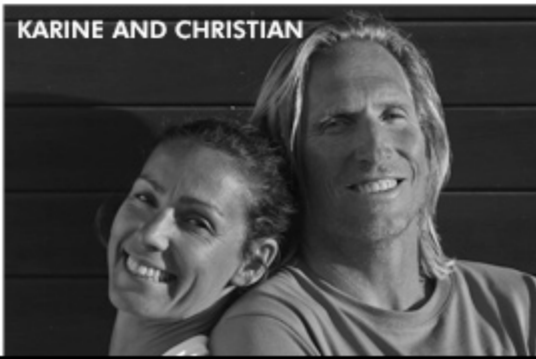
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TECHNIQUE

KARINE AND CHRISTIAN



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This issue it's all about function. Without wanting to encourage you to head out on your weekly shop to the supermarket in a pair of aggressively soled Salomons, sporting a quick dry and easy wash bamboo t-shirt, and dare we reach so far as a pair of convertible Goretex trousers, there is room, time and cause in life for such brilliantly practical items, (convertible trousers exempt of course). Toeside pumping is your winging equivalent! It won't win you many style points, but when push comes to shove, you'll be the one laughing all the way onto your foil.

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HOW TO WINGFOIL #18 – TOESIDE PUMPING

This issue we're going to take you through something that is much more of a skill than a fancy pants move. Pumping on or from toeside might not be high on your priority list. It may not garner you a coach full of admirers, but it is well worth a considerable investment of your practice time. It's just so brilliantly useful. Toeside pumping will save you time and save your bacon in so many situations. Whether you drop off the foil and touch down post gybe, foot change or exiting a heel to toe tack, in fact any time you're woffing toeside you'll find it more practical than a Swiss army knife.

Without wanting to teach your grandmother to suck eggs, we should make it clear that to give this a go you should already have a solid toeside and be able to pump heelside. The action of pumping is challenging enough without being twisted into toeside, so being balanced and in control of your board and foil whilst toeside is essential.

The good news is that the principles remain the same. You're aiming for maximum efficiency to increase your board speed enough to generate lift on your foil so that you can get up earlier, quicker or with less power. There's no magic wand though, you still need some pull in your wing so that you have resistance to use.

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Before you head out onto the water and raise your heart rate towards the red zone there are two important factors to consider:

BEARING AWAY

In order to get maximum bang for your buck when pumping you will need to bear away, turning off, away from the wind towards a broad reach. Not only will you be travelling on the potentially fastest point of sail with minimum resistance, you'll also be ready with your wing and board in the best position to pull effectively and transfer this energy forward through your front leg.

TOESIDE STANCE

If you're riding toeside and feel both comfortable and confident with the board trimmed and foil happy this is a good sign, you're extremely likely to be centred over the board, supporting yourself by standing on your own two feet, with your torso facing forward and wing held comfortably away from you. This is generally only possible if your feet are somewhat offset, rear foot slightly across the centre line of the board towards the upwind side, with your front foot just on the downwind side. Depending on the size of your board and foil, you need to be aware that if your feet are too offset it'll be hard to keep your board trimmed whilst pumping. This will be more evident on smaller kit.

NEW GROUND – TOESIDE

When you learnt to pump heelside you were already accustomed to and well-practiced in the art of bearing away to get up onto the foil. Here in the toeside variation this will be a path less travelled, if at all. As such your first drill is to practice bearing away, gaining speed and getting up on the foil from toeside. Do this when you have enough power to do so without the need to pump.

BEARING AWAY

Have a look at **Pic A**, a sequence of Karine bearing away. In this example she has touched down post gybe,



so she still has a bit of momentum. Even so, she steers up a little, pulling her wing back and driving through her rear leg so that she's riding at the very least across the wind. This way she is in a good position to feel the wind, she's able to look upwind for a gust and she won't be losing ground whilst waiting for one. At this stage it's important to keep the board trimmed from nose to tail, so that you're ready to move, but it's OK to cant it over slightly to windward to help you keep ground. You can see that Karine has weight on both feet. She achieves this by adopting the classic open toeside stance. Hips and shoulders are

facing forward, which brings the back knee forward, so that both knees and feet are working in unison. When she feels the gust Karine pushes the wing forward by straightening her front arm towards the nose of the board and sheets in with her rear arm.

As the power comes on Karine points her wing forward, drives through her front leg which flattens the board and pushes the nose away from the wind, bearing away towards a broad reach. Karine keeps her shoulders open and upright, so that she can stay forward enough to keep weight on both feet, maintaining board trim both from nose to tail and rail to rail. Minimum drag plus maximum efficiency equals acceleration.

TAKE OFF

Now on to **Pic B**. Once you feel that beautiful transition from chugging board to planning foil you know that there's enough to get yourself up. Looking at Karine you can see that she's still centred, trimming the board, which enabled her to get the foil flying underwater. Her wing is still relatively low, sheeted to the wind and pointing forward, but she's no longer holding it forward, it's also centred in front of her. There's no need or desire to bear away further.

To come up, Karine extends her back leg, giving her foil a little nudge to climb. This way she can rise gently. She keeps her weight centred and doesn't lean back! As the board releases, she sheets out.



Now that she is foiling, she doesn't need the same amount of power.

Finally, Karine gently pulls her wing back and flexes her ankles to turn her board up so that she can ride upwind in her toeside stance.

As you can see, even for flying, the principles are very much the same as what you do heelside. Once you're happy with this, feel comfortable maintaining board trim, balanced whilst bearing off the wind and confident with the board and wing's position in relation to the wind and each other, it's time to give pumping a crack.



PUMPING

Bear Away and Test Pic C

You've now hopefully practiced this part, so we'll keep it brief. The same applies, woffing across the wind, looking for and waiting for a gust, with your weight centred. Once you feel some pull in your wing, stretch out your front arm and sheet in to bear away. As the board turns ease your rear arm out to keep the wing sheeted to the wind. Just as with your heelside pump, you'll only know if it's good enough after a test stroke. Keeping your shoulders open and upright, and your weight centred, pull the wing in towards your shoulders. If there is some resistance, push this through your front leg to transfer the pull into forward

drive. If you speed up, you know that there is something worth pursuing.

Stroke Out - Slice Pic D

The direction of your stroke is important. You have to direct the wing along the board towards the nose, so that you can get maximum pull on your next stroke in. To be successful you must work hard to keep your shoulders open, twisting your waist so that you push the wing in the right direction. To move it forward, sheet in to prevent backwinding yourself, and lift it so that it doesn't catch the water, and you don't run over it. Finally break at the waist, hinging your hips and extending your arms, reaching to get the wing as far forward as possible.



You can see that Karine has her wing very close, she sheets in, lifts it and reaches forwards so that she, board and wing all line up for the next phase...

Stroke In – Monster Pull Pic E

From your outstretched position it's time to give it the beans. Pull your arms down towards you with gusto! As you do, keep your trunk stiff and aim to push through your body, front leg, foot and into the board, forcing it forwards and increasing your speed. Once again concentrate on

where you pull your wing to. You're aiming to pull down the board towards your shoulders and chest so that the wing comes back in exactly the opposite direction that you'll push the board. You have to maintain your open stance, with your chest facing down the board, so that your hands arrive on each side of you. This gives you the most efficient pull-push combo and means that you'll continue straight. Look down the board. Here Karine is pulling for all she's worth, bringing her arms in and then straightening up her body, but she never leans back. As soon as the wing arrives close to her, she is already lifting it in preparation for the next out stroke.

Repeat Pic F

Hopefully it's all looking very familiar now? The mythical circular pumping motion continues! Each stroke in building momentum until you have enough speed and lift to fly. Whilst doing this, it's crucial that you have weight on both feet, even when driving through your front leg. This way the board moves in a straight path. However, as you build speed and force you can be more aggressive with your pumping, reaching further and pulling harder. Once again, the bonus is that as you lift the wing at the end of your in stroke your weight will shift back slightly,



as you hinge and reach forward your weight will move forward. The result, an unintentional but perfectly brilliant bit of board and foil pumping:) Looking at the sequence you can see that each time Karine lifts to stroke out it tips the nose up a little and each time she starts to pull and drive the board flattens. This means that each stroke turns into a tiny step up the ladder, building speed and lift.

As alluded to at the beginning, once you breath life into your foil and feel it smile, you can give a little push with your rear leg and bingo, up she comes. You can see that throughout this sequence Karine is looking forward down the board. Once she feels lift, Karine points her wing up a tad and nudges

her foil by extending her back leg. Only then does she look where she now wants to go, sheets out, brings her wing back and leans her board over into toeside.

TOP TIPS

When you first give this a go there are a few things that will really help.

Firstly, if possible, try this in flat water and with a bit of pull in your wing. Bear away a few times without pumping just to get your bearings as to where the wind is coming from and towards which direction you should be aiming.

We touched on keeping weight on both feet so that your board doesn't wobble or turn too much one way or the other. It's very easy to push through your front leg and literally carve your board off downwind. Likewise, with too much on your rear foot the board

will want to turn back towards the wind. This will massively hinder your chances of getting up the ladder, you're far more likely to slide down a snake! A slightly less offset stance can help, but your best buddy here is to keep your shoulders facing forward.

Starting with a smaller wing will get you comfy sooner. Big wings need lifting higher, and from toeside this is even more tricky due to your open stance. It's not uncommon to run over your wing toeside, and pumping is no exception. Give yourself a chance and start small.

Excellent there you have it. Time to give it a go! We'll have a video up on the TONICMAG YouTube channel soon, so stay tuned....

RIDER JULIEN FILLION
PHOTO WILLIAM POLLOCK



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HEADS UP:

WHY HELMETS BELONG IN MODERN WATERSPORTS

Helmets are quickly being adopted in wing foiling, downwind foiling, and heavy-water surf. To understand the "why" and the "how," we sat down with Mystic's design duo, Edwin (Design Director) and Joost (Technical Design Engineer), who have spent years developing protection that riders will actually want to wear.





“ A HELMET DOES NOT MAKE YOU INVINCIBLE, BUT IT PROVIDES CRITICAL PROTECTION AGAINST THE IMPACTS THAT MATTER. ”

THE CULTURE SHIFT

In kiting, style long outweighed safety. Big, baggy “toadstool” lids looked clunky and felt draggy in the water, so many riders skipped them once lessons were over. Foiling changed that equation. You are closer to a wing with sharp edges, crashes happen near hardware,

and speeds are deceptive. Surfing is seeing a shift, too. Crowds are up, leading to more crashes between surfers at busy breaks. At the other end of the spectrum, pro surfers are normalising helmets at heavy venues.

“It is strange that we still see so many bare heads,” Edwin says. “We all like sleek gear, but modern helmets can be as minimal as a winter hood, and they work.”

WHAT REALLY HURTS YOU

1 Knockouts and drowning: The worst-case

scenario is simple: unconscious in the water. A helmet does not make you invincible, but it provides critical protection against the impacts that matter.

2 Sharp object impacts: Foil masts, front wings, surfboard fins, rails, and even other riders are real hazards. Side impacts to the temple or jaw are common when you tumble close to your board.

3 Eardrum trauma and cold: Water impacts and wind chill can damage ears. Covered ear sections can reduce that risk while still allowing situational awareness.

“HELMETS CAN GET A CERTIFICATE BUT MAY HAVE ONLY BEEN TESTED FOR VERTICAL IMPACTS. IN A CROWDED MARKET, IT IS IMPORTANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU ARE BUYING.”

STANDARDS THAT MATTER

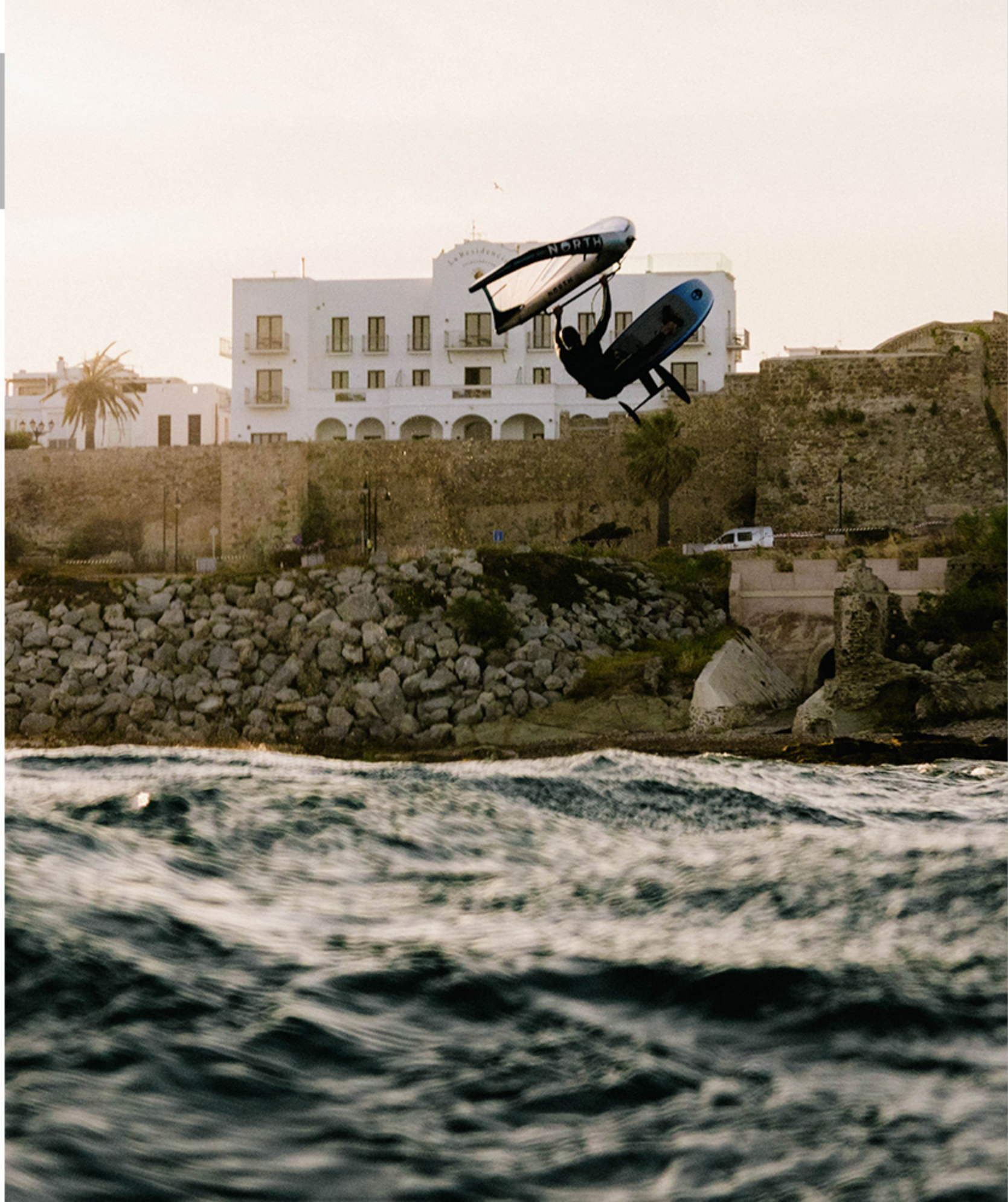
There is no single “kite” or “foil” certification today. The water helmets that take safety seriously are tested to EN 1385 (a whitewater sports standard used for kayak helmets). That standard requires impact tests from multiple directions and a secure chin-strap test. Some soft “bump cap” style helmets can get a certificate but may have only been tested for vertical impacts. In a crowded market, it is important to know what you are buying.

QUICK CHECKLIST WHEN YOU SHOP

- Look for EN 1385 on hard-shell water helmets.
- Confirm multi-directional impact testing.
- Check that the chin strap passes a pull test and that the helmet stays put when you jump in feet-first and head-first.

WHY FIT BEATS BULK

Most people rejected helmets because they felt like buckets. Mystic’s team attacked fit first: if it hugs like a hood, you forget you are wearing it. Their path ran from the slim Impact Cap (a viscoelastic “soft shell” that hardens on impact) to the Legacy, which borrows the sleek and snug design but also adds a hard shell and passes the full whitewater certification.





“AIRFLOW CHECKS FOR WHISTLING WHEN RIDING AT SPEEDS, AND EAR-PORT TUNING SO YOU CAN STILL HEAR YOUR SURROUNDINGS WHILE REMAINING PROTECTED.”

TWO KEY IDEAS FROM THEIR R&D:

- Shape adapts, not just size. Heads are rounder or more oval. A clever rear “slot” design lets the shell flex to both shapes, keeping the helmet low profile rather than ballooning.

- Thin is not weak. Protection comes from the right combination of shell, foam, and curvature, not just thickness. The Legacy’s EVA blend and shell geometry hit the required G thresholds without the bulk.

They also tested the basic stuff many brands skip: repeated water entries in a pool, utilising high-speed video to see where bubbles and turbulence collect, airflow checks for whistling when riding at speeds, and ear-port tuning so you can still hear your surroundings while remaining protected.

WATER SPECIFIC DESIGN DETAILS TO LOOK FOR:

Look for water specific details: smart drip management with small brims and internal channels that shed water away from your eyes after a duck dive or wipeout; ear coverage without “going deaf,” using mesh-backed openings or two-layer structures that protect your eardrum and cut wind roar while preserving awareness; vent paths that work in water, with front-to-top airflow that cools your head in summer without creating parachute effects or spray traps; and secure, simple retention, meaning a strap you can tighten with cold hands and a shell that won’t lift when you hit the water.



“PROS ACROSS WING, FOIL, SURF, AND BIG-AIR KITE WEAR THEM. CONFIDENCE LOOKS BETTER THAN CONCUSSIONS.”

SOFT VS HARD: WHICH ONE FOR YOU?

Hard shell (EN 1385)

- Best for foiling (wing, downwind, prone) and reef or heavy surf.
- Better against sharp-edge impacts (foil wings, fins, rails).
- Modern, low-profile models minimise drag and “mushroom” feel.

Soft cap/Bump cap

- Great for glancing blows and surface slaps, flatter water, and lighter surf.
- Ultra comfortable and very low profile, but not the same sharp-object protection as a hard shell.

COMMON MYTHS, ANSWERED.

“A helmet will snap my neck.” Modern water helmets are light, low-volume, and designed for water entry. Mystic’s tests showed negligible lift and turbulence with tight-fitting profiles. The risk of head trauma far outweighs the theoretical neck risk for these sports.

“It whistles, and I cannot hear.” Poorly designed vents can whistle. Good ones use tuned mesh and port placement to reduce wind noise while keeping you aware. Your brain adapts to the slightly different soundscape within minutes.

“It looks kooky.” Pros across wing, foil, surf, and big-air kite wear them. Confidence looks better than concussions.





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“FOR LIGHTER DAYS AND MAXIMUM COMFORT, A MODERN, LIGHTWEIGHT LID LIKE THE IMPACT CAP IS A MASSIVE UPGRADE OVER NOT WEARING ANYTHING AT ALL.”

HOW TO CHOOSE AND SET UP

- 1 Measure your head and try multiple sizes. A good helmet should feel snug without hot spots.
- 2 Dial the retention so it will not move when you jump in. Do a feet-first and head-first plunge test.
- 3 Pick coverage for your discipline. Temple and jaw coverage are smart for foiling and surfing in a reef environment.

4 Pair with an impact vest if you are pushing in it big conditions. More confidence often means safer landings.

5 Check and rinse. Salt kills gear. Rinse after every session and inspect the strap and foam regularly.

THE PERFORMANCE UPSIDE

Protection is not just risk management. As Joost puts it, “When I wear an impact vest and a helmet, I feel more confident, so I push a little harder on the water.” That confidence can unlock progression, whether that is learning jibes on a wing, linking bumps on a downwind run, or committing to a late drop on a reef.

Competitions are already moving. At some

big-air events, you cannot ride without a helmet. Insurance considerations also trend toward “wear one.”

BOTTOM LINE

You use your brain for everything. Protect it. Today’s water helmets are low profile, purpose-built, and tested for the right kind of hits. They are now purpose-built for the sports we do, not just a repurposed surf or kayak lid. For wing foiling, downwind foiling, prone foiling, and surfing around people or reefs, a hard-shell that meets EN 1385 is a good bet. For lighter days and maximum comfort, a modern, lightweight lid like the Impact Cap is a massive upgrade over not wearing anything at all.

Make the choice once, set it up right, and then stop thinking about it. You will ride longer, progress faster, and come home safer; your family will thank you for it, too!

WORDS ROU CHATER
PHOTOS RIDE ENGINE

RIDE ENGINE

AIR BOX MINI

The Pump That Brings Wing and Kite Inflation Up to Date

For years, pumping up a wing, kite or SUP has been one of those unavoidable rituals that quietly steals time and energy. Manual pumps have improved incrementally, but the basic experience has remained the same: bending over, pushing hard against resistance, checking pressure by eye with a far-from-accurate analogue gauge, and the only real positive is the warm-up.



“IT DELIVERS THE KIND OF UPGRADE THAT FEELS OVERDUE IN A SPORT WHERE ALMOST EVERY OTHER COMPONENT HAS GONE THROUGH A TECHNOLOGICAL REVOLUTION.”

Modern wings need pretty specific pressures in order to work correctly. The entire structure of the wing is dictated by the PSI inside the leading edge and the strut, and getting it wrong vastly affects performance. Not enough air and the wing won't have power, will fold and crease, and the low end will be severely affected, as you won't be able to pump it. Too much air causes the wing to distort from its intended shape. There is a reason why manufacturers specify certain PSI values on their wings, and it is prudent to stick to them as closely as possible to ensure you are riding the wing as the designers meant it to be ridden.

Ride Engine's new Air Box Mini aims to change that dynamic entirely. Compact, fast and fully automated, it delivers the kind of upgrade that feels overdue in a sport where almost every other component has gone through a technological revolution.

The Air Box Mini enters the market off the back of Ride Engine's original electric pump, but it isn't a small revision. It is significantly more compact, far easier to pack, and thanks to new brushless motors, it inflates faster and more efficiently. The footprint is roughly a third smaller than the previous model, making it a realistic everyday carry for anyone heading to the beach. Overseas travellers, van-based riders and anyone who likes to keep their setup streamlined will immediately appreciate the reduction in bulk.





“IF YOU ARE SHORT ON TIME — AND LET’S FACE IT, WE ALL ARE — IT CAN SAVE YOU PRECIOUS MINUTES”

Performance is where the improvements really stand out. The brushless dual-stage motor system delivers high-volume airflow at the start, then automatically transitions into a high-pressure stage to top your wing or kite off precisely. You simply set your desired PSI, press go, and walk away. Once the target pressure is reached, the pump shuts itself off. The result is consistent inflation every session, without the

guesswork that creeps in when relying on an analogue gauge or a subjective feel for firmness.

Battery life has also seen a notable step forward. The Air Box Mini’s 4500 mAh lithium-ion battery can inflate multiple wings or kites on a single charge, or up to several SUPs, depending on volume. For riders who switch sizes mid-session, or for those who spend long days on the beach, this offers practical freedom that traditional pumps simply cannot. There is also a reverse-charging feature, allowing the pump to double as a power bank in a pinch. While it is not something you will use every day,

it does reinforce how this device fits into the modern, multi-gadget setup we all live in.

But the biggest real-world advantage is not actually the pump itself; it is the time it hands back to the rider. With a manual pump, inflating your wing doesn’t take long, but if you are short on time — and let’s face it, we all are — it can save you precious minutes. With the Air Box Mini, you press start, then step away. You can assemble your foil mast and fuselage, attach your stabiliser, fit your front wing, and double-check everything while the pump does the hard work for you. You can sort your wetsuit, get your boots on, or run through a couple of mobility exercises before you hit the water. All while the Air Box Mini is busy pumping your wing for you.



This is particularly valuable in wing-foiling, where rigging the foil setup is often more time-consuming than preparing the wing. By the time you've tightened the final bolts, your wing is typically ready to go. More than that, you get the perfect amount of pressure in your wing every time, meaning you will get the maximum amount of performance out of it.

This is perhaps the most underrated performance element here: precise and repeatable pressure. Manufacturers design wings to fly optimally at specific PSI ranges, and small variations can have a big impact on stiffness, responsiveness and depower. A wing that is 1 PSI low can feel spongy and less efficient. One that is slightly over-inflated can lose its shape as it tries to straighten itself out, plus you are putting additional pressure on all the seams. The Air Box Mini's auto shut-off ensures that each inflation is exactly on spec, every time.

Of course, electric pumps are not entirely without limitations. They need to be charged, and while they are robust, they are not designed to be exposed to water directly. Many riders still carry a manual pump as a backup, especially for remote locations or long trips. But as a primary inflation tool, the Air Box Mini is compelling not simply because it does the job, but because it changes the texture of the setup experience.

Wing-foiling continues to evolve quickly, with innovations in boards, foils and materials arriving almost seasonally. Yet the pump, the device that literally brings our gear to life, has remained an afterthought. The Air Box Mini signals a shift. It is not just a convenience gadget; it is a meaningful upgrade in efficiency and consistency of pressures. If getting on the water faster, with less effort and greater accuracy, is a priority, this little pump deserves a place in your kit.

TRIED & TESTED

Wings and Foils for you from Cabrinha and AFS as we start to see some of the 2026 gear make it into our hands!

- Cabrinha Mantis 3.5m
- AFS Stream 5m
- Cabrinha Prestige 905



WORDS AND PHOTOS THE TONIC MAG TEST TEAM
THIS PAGE COURTESY OF AFS

"IMPROVED CONTROL, REDUCED WEIGHT, AND AN IMMEDIATE FEELING OF PRECISION"

TO VISIT THEIR WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



AT A GLANCE

The 2026 Cabrinha Mantis arrives as a refined and thoughtfully engineered all-round wing aimed at riders who want versatility without sacrificing control. Structurally, the wing is built around a stiff Dacron inflatable leading edge paired with a drop-strut design that gives the Mantis a very stable airframe. The canopy uses high-quality Teijin D2 ripstop with a load-path panel layout designed to maintain shape under pressure while helping the wing feel predictable throughout the entire power range. Small stabilising battens support the trailing edge to reduce flutter and lock in the profile.

One of the biggest updates for 2026 is the move to the new Cabrinha Handlebar boom system, replacing the traditional dual-handle setup. The boom mounts cleanly to the strut and offers a rigid, direct connection to the wing. This not only improves precision and stability but also reduces weight. It's a significant design shift for the Mantis and clearly points toward where Cabrinha see the future of wing control heading.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

"AND TOGETHER WITH THE CARBON BOOM THEY CREATE A WING THAT FEELS PRECISE, EFFICIENT, AND GENUINELY HIGH-END."

TO VISIT THEIR WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



AT A GLANCE

This new wing from AFS takes a blend of high-tech materials and packages them into a cutting-edge wing for the modern era. The Stream is built around their UPE FlowFrame™ structure, a high-stiffness, low-stretch material that gives the middle of the leading edge and central strut an incredibly rigid feel. The rest of the leading edge uses reinforced Dacron, and the whole frame is designed to twist when overpowered in gusts, reducing fatigue on your arms.

The canopy is built from two different weights of PE ripstop, with a heavier, more stable fabric forward where tension is critical, and a lighter, more responsive cloth toward the trailing edge. It's a smart balance: the front section locks in shape and resists deformation, while the rear reduces weight and allows the wing to twist. Small battens help fine-tune the tension in the trailing edge and reduce any flutter.

AFS also adds anti-abrasion reinforcement in high-wear areas, and the finished wing is extremely well-made with really high-quality stitching. The Stream feels like a carefully engineered piece of equipment;

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)



"IT FEELS CLEAN,
COMPOSED, AND
PREDICTABLE, YET
NEVER DULL."



AT A GLANCE

Cabrinha's latest hydrofoil has been a long time coming. After the success of their H-series foils several years ago, things went quiet in terms of new wings. Rather than releasing endless incremental updates, Cabrinha took the bold approach of stepping back, rethinking their entire platform, and rebuilding from the ground up. The result is the Union system, and the Prestige is the first wing to launch on it.

At the heart of this system is a brand-new connection. Cabrinha have licensed the renowned Mike's Lab interface, widely regarded as the gold standard in Olympic kite racing, and then re-engineered it for today's larger-span foils. This is not a repurposed race foil, and it is not a Mike's Lab product with Cabrinha branding. The Prestige wings are Cabrinha-designed foils from tip to tip; they simply utilise a strengthened, enlarged interpretation of the Mike's Lab connection for simplicity, precision, and long-term compatibility.

The result is one of the cleanest, most user-friendly assembly systems on the market. The front wing and tail are both monoblock pieces, bolting together via a short bolt to make a two-piece plane,

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

TO VISIT THEIR
WEBSITE, CLCK HERE



WORDS SIL ROMEJI PHOTOS KIRILL GAPESHKO

SHIPWRECKED INTO THE SWELL

How a joke on a Mauritian beach became a foiling short film about play, place, and the ocean's pull.

On an island where the wind sets the rules, and the reef draws the lines, filmmaker Kirill Gapesenko and rider Sil Romejin accidentally created a short film: part parody, part love letter to Mauritius, and all about rediscovering the joy at the heart of water sports culture.





“ A LONE WINGFOILER SHIPWRECKED... BUT WITH BETTER TOYS. I LAUGHED. THEN I IMMEDIATELY QUESTIONED MY LIFE CHOICES. ”

LOST, FOUND, AND SHIPWRECKED (ON PURPOSE)

Mauritius has a way of rearranging your priorities. The island pulls you into its rhythm of wind, reef, and restless creativity—and before long, you’re agreeing to ideas that would never survive the sensible light of

home. That’s exactly how filmmaker Kirill and I ended up making a foiling short film that begins not with a hero shot, but with a shipwreck.

What started as a throwaway joke between sessions—sunburned, salt-crusted, and buzzing on too much Mauritian coffee—turned into *Shipwrecked Into the Swell*, a playful vignette stitched together from ocean energy, silliness, and the quiet magic of life lived by the wind.

We met on Mauritius with two constants: the Indian Ocean would be our playground,

and the wind would decide everything else. Somewhere between the long tacks, the reef breaks, and the laughter, Kirill said it:

“What if the story starts with you washing up on the beach like Tom Hanks in *Castaway*?”*

A lone wingfoiler, shipwrecked... but with better toys.

I laughed. Then, I immediately questioned my life choices. Fake sand-in-mouth acting? Rolling around like a stranded coconut? Not exactly my comfort zone. But Kirill already had that filmmaker’s glint—the look of someone who knows the joke is about to become canon.



“ MAURITIUS STRIPS YOU BACK TO THE BASICS: WIND, WATER, PLAY. ”

So one early morning on Le Morne’s shoreline, we went for it.

Dragging myself up the sand felt ridiculous. I muttered to an imaginary volleyball (thankfully cut from the script), wondering if any of this would look remotely cool. But as soon as the camera rolled and the ocean began its morning pulse, something clicked. The story took over.

From that playful opening, the film slides into the rhythm that shapes my life: wingfoiling the clean lines off Manawa, carving into the wind-driven energy, switching into kitesurfing when the breeze pulsed, and threading the whole thing through with the island’s ambient magic.

Kirill shot it with documentary instinct sharpened by cinematic ambition—tight, immersive action balanced with wide-open lagoon panoramas that breathe Mauritius into the frame.

Everyone has drones and GoPros. Anyone can post a big carve. We wanted something different—a simple story you could smile at and still feel pulled into, a moment of being lost and found at once. Because that’s what Mauritius does: it strips you back to the essentials.

Wind

Water

Play

The ocean is both chaos and compass.

“ WE WEREN'T TRYING TO
MAKE SOMETHING BIG —
JUST SOMETHING TRUE. ”

Reviewing the footage later, I braced myself for the embarrassment. But the goofy acting? Somehow... it worked. It grounded the high- performance riding in a moment of human silliness, adding a narrative thread that made everything feel warmer, truer.

It reminded me why we do this sport at all: not for the perfect clips, but for the feeling. The expression. The inner kid who still loves drifting, imagining, and pretending.

In the end, that Castaway-style opening tied everything together. A small idea. A small project. But infused with heart, swell, and a whole lot of wind.

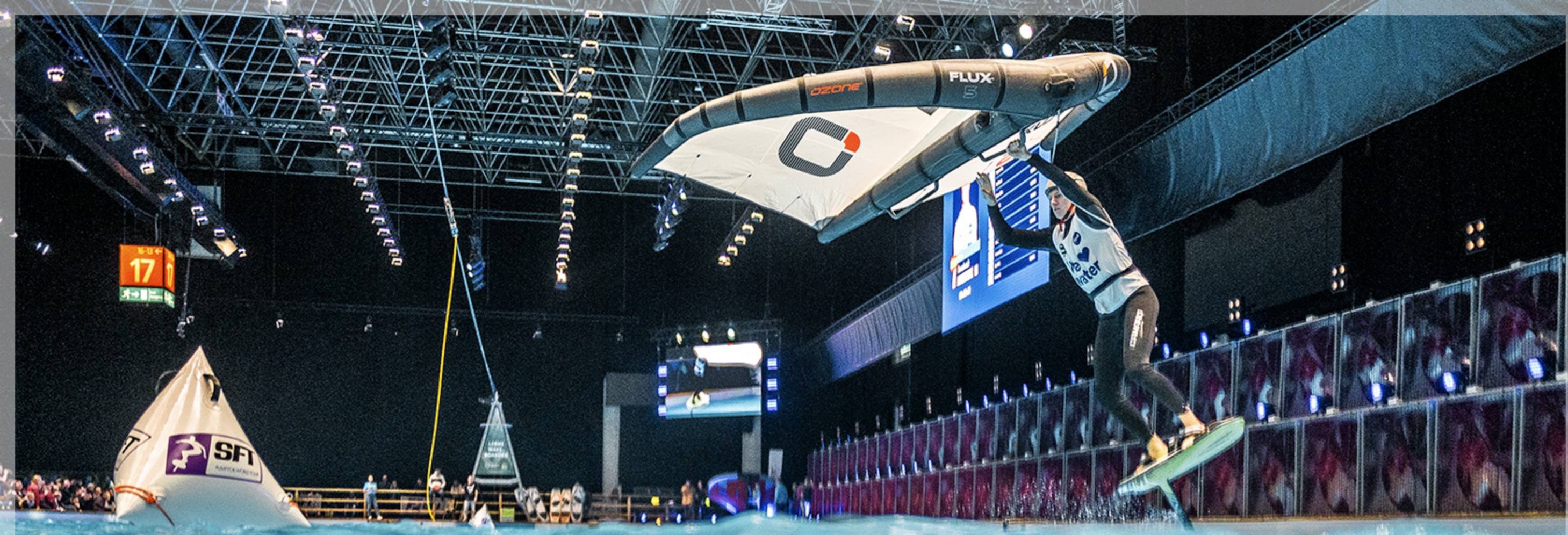
We didn't set out to make something big.

We just wanted to make something true.

And in its own way, it came out better than we imagined.

The film will be released soon.
Keep an eye out on Tonic Mag to check it out!





Why you should go to boot Düsseldorf 2026

THE ULTIMATE FOILING GEAR SHOW

When winter drags on and the summer season still feels distant, there's one event that brings gear, water sports culture and adrenaline all under one roof: boot Düsseldorf. Running 17–25 January 2026 at Messe Düsseldorf, boot transforms a convention centre into a full-on surf and watersports playground, and this edition looks set to be one of the biggest yet.

“ FROM THE WARMTH OF THE EXHIBITION HALL YOU CAN ENJOY DISPLAYS OF PUMP FOILING, WINGING, PARAWING AND FLAT WATER PADDLE UP AND PUMP RACES. ”

A 62-METRE INDOOR POOL: WHERE GEAR MEETS ACTION

At the heart of boot 2026 is the massive indoor pool in Hall 17. 62 metres long and filled with 1.3 million litres of water, turning the show floor into a live playground. Top-level competitors will ride wingfoils, SUPs, pump-foils and more, often in world-cup-class contests like the GWA Indoor Wingfoil World Cup, the SFT Surf Foil World Tour and the EuroTour SUP Indoor World Cup.

For anyone who geeks out on kit, likes to try before you buy, and loves actually seeing the gear and talking to the brands in person, this is where it's all happening. Watching the worlds best athletes battle it out in the pool adds a dimension to the event that you don't often get to experience indoors. From the warmth of the exhibition hall you can enjoy displays of pump foiling, winging, parawing and flat water paddle up and pump races. This is not your average boat show!

TRY IT YOURSELF, DON'T JUST WATCH

boot isn't just about being a spectator. One of the most powerful draws is the participation zone. Whether you're a complete beginner or seasoned foiler, there are opportunities to wakeboard, SUP, pumpfoil, windsurf (with 82 wind machines), or even try a kitesurf simulator, all under professional supervision.





“ WHERE YOU CAN SEE, FEEL AND HAVE A GO ON SOME OF THE LATEST GEAR WITHOUT HAVING TO BE OUTSIDE IN THE WILD WEATHER OF WINTER ”

It's a rare 9-day window where you can see, feel and have a go on some of the latest gear without having to be outside in the wild weather of winter! It's ideal if you're in the market for a new foil setup or curious if pumpfoiling is "your thing."

GEAR, TECH & CULTURE, ALL IN ONE PLACE

boot Düsseldorf isn't just a demo day. It brings together roughly 1,500 exhibitors from around the world, showcasing the latest in surf, SUP, foil, paddling, windsurf and watersports tech. Whether you're scouting a new SUP board, checking out cutting-edge foil gear, inspecting carbon masts, or comparing the latest wing boards, you get to see many of the upcoming season's releases before they hit stores.

Beyond gear, there's culture: live shows, pro contests, community vibes, and even social events. Hall 17 morphs into a laid-back shared space after sessions with DJs, surf chats and drinks, turning a trade fair into a mini surf festival.

A WINTER ESCAPE WITH A SURF-SOUL

For many, boot is more than a trade show: it's a winter escape. boot gives you a concentrated taste of surf life, it's indoors, warm, social, and loaded with energy. For those of us living far from coastlines or waiting for spring winds, this is the place to be to connect with the sport and the people who are so passionate about it.

“ YOU GET TO MEET OTHER FOILERS, BRAND REPS, SHAPERS, AND GEAR GEEKS ”

It's also a place to connect. You get to meet other foilers, brand reps, shapers, and gear geeks, often the people who can give you first-hand insight on what works, what's coming, and the clever hacks the internet doesn't tell you.

WE'VE GOT 10 TICKETS TO GIVE AWAY — WANT ONE?

To get you even more excited, we're offering 10 free-ticket passes to boot Düsseldorf 2026 — exclusively for our subscribers.

HOW TO ENTER:

- 1 Simply make sure you're a current subscriber.
- 2 Just add your email to the link below
- 3 We'll pick winners at random by the 1st of Jan, and email ticket codes directly to the winners.

What the ticket includes: full access to the show (all halls), entry to Hall 17 and the indoor pool events, and full participation in demos/activities.

If you've ever thought about trying foiling, seeing the latest gear up close, or just immersing yourself in surf culture for a few days, this is your chance. Don't miss it.

- SUBSCRIBE TO WIN -



MOVIE NIGHT

The Tonic Mag website is packed with the latest news and videos. 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!

#1

LAKE TAHOE RIDING A STORM

Hitting the number one spot, this issue is this wild edit from Lake Tahoe, 6500m above sea level, in a 35 knot storm Ozzie Kroop and Taj Makai head out on the ski for a downwind shred at altitude!

678 votes



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#2

THE EVERYDAYERS - MARILYN KNECHT

76 years young, Marilyn Knecht proves that passion knows no age. From surfing in the 60s to windsurfing for more than 45 years, and now mastering wingfoiling, she has dedicated her life to the water.

406 votes



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#3

ARMSTRONG MA MKII

Is this really the one foil for all wind sports? Brandon Scheid and Matt Nuzzo go deep on all the Armstrong gear they are riding to kite foil, wing, and parawing. Turns out the new MA MKII is their weapon of choice!

388 votes



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#4

FOILING INJURY

Jeremy Wilmote isn't built like the rest of us. He broke his leg in this crash in NZ, then he carried on foiling for a few more days, including riding prone and towing in, and learning to parawing, and that's just the start of it!

385 votes



[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

RIDER ALINI KORNELLI
PHOTO LE SMS



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