

sbc

kiteboard

PRSRT STD
US POSTAGE PAID
NIAGARA FALLS NY
PERMIT #10

S2 P1

MIXED ADC 150

Brian Wheeler

25672 Spinnaker Dr

San Juan Capistrano CA 92675-4020

TEST: FREESTYLE, FREERIDE AND SURF KITES TESTED!

BRIAN WHEELER BRIAN WHEELER STEVENS

OAHU'S FAVORITE SON

SLIDING, BONKING AND GRINDING

SLIDING WITH STYLE

KSP TOUR: KITESURFING'S CROWN JEWEL / BEHIND THE LENS: MUSTACHE RIDES





KITESURFING'S CROWN JEWEL

The new tour on the block propels
competitive waveriding to epic
new heights

*WORDS BY BRIAN WHEELER / PHOTOS BY JOHN BILDERBACK,
MAX HOUYVET, ROBERTO FORESTI, JOAO BARBOSA*

Hawaii's Jesse Richman cracks
the top six on the first-ever
KSP wave world tour.



Mitu Monteiro training for the KSP
Tour stop at Ponta Preta, his home
break on Sal Island, Cape Verde.



SPIRIT OF THE KSP

Accruing more than 650,000 frequent flyer miles between September and December of 2011, 64 top waveriders lugged nearly four tons of kiting gear to three of the planet's most epic breaks—all in pursuit of kite surfing's most celebrated honour, the 2011 World Championship title. In its inaugural season, however, this new tour delivered a spectacularly fresh waveriding vision of a calibre never before seen.

Founded by high-profile riders Guilly Brandao, Mitu Monteiro, Kristin Boese and Sky Solbach, the four-some formed the KSP (Kite Surf Pro)—a non-profit kite surfing-only tour—in early 2011, and gained power over the PKRA to crown the esteemed kite surfing world champions. Wielding the sport's top authority, the KSP ramped up holding periods to 10 days, selected three of the dreamiest kitesurfing venues on the planet (see next page for details),

scheduled contests during prime seasons for waves, featured live streaming and live scoring, raised the bar on judging standards by requiring all judges to be International Surfing Association-certified (which is a compulsory credential for surfing judges), and redirected competitive waveriding in scores of remarkable ways. Essentially, the KSP created a groundbreaking dream tour—a true crown jewel of the sport.

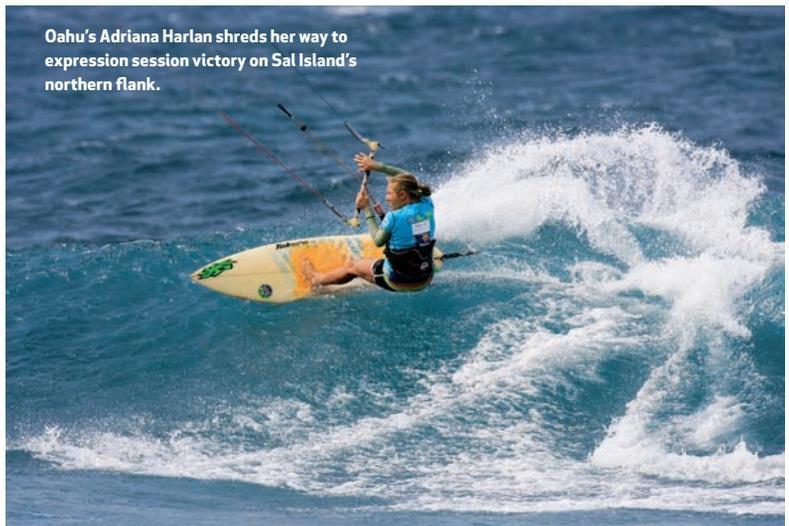
Even with its next-level vision, though, the KSP faced a number of startup challenges, including a budget too small to offer prize money. Some riders and companies balked, denying their support and pledging zero sponsorship dollars to the fledgling tour. But fortunately, a bulk of riders and industry insiders got on board, eager to help reinvent the face of the sport, cultivating growth in a fresh, pure, limitless direction. And through showcasing the pinnacle of

the sport in the best conditions possible, hopefully, help generate a hefty prize purse for the KSP's 2012 season. A fleet of staff volunteers and local organizers also flocked to the KSP, altruistically donating thousands of passionate hours to help the re-born World Championship Tour take flight.

Just before this article went to print, the tour's first media report came in with staggering results, which mirror the KSP's mind-blowing first season success. Excluding the yet-to-air 30-minute-long show on the One Eye Pro, this first tour stop alone earned the sport of kitesurfing TV coverage in 111 different countries, fetching a ginormous audience of 47.7 million viewers.



2011 Kitesurfing World Champion Ines Correia heading out for an expression session at the KSP's final leg of the year.



Oahu's Adriana Harlan shreds her way to expression session victory on Sal Island's northern flank.

Competing in her first pro contest ever, local wildcard winner Ninja Bichler (who was unsponsored at the One Eye Pro) rides Mauritius' legendary wave to near perfection.





Kristin Boese, KSP President, Tour Manager and competitor, sets up for One Eye's pitching lip at the 2011's inaugural tour stop —the One Eye Pro in Mauritius.



The media and judges set up at One Eye.



Pacasmayo's epic long waves.



California's Bear Kerry in Ponta Preta, Cape Verde.



THE LOCATIONS

STOP 1: ONE EYE PRO

Country: Mauritius

City: Le Morne

Break: One Eye

Type: Left-hand reef break

Size: Works from three feet up, and can exceed 20-foot faces

Length: 300 m

Barreling: Yes

Wind direction: Mostly side-off

Ability level: Intermediate and up

Why go? For long rides on one of the world's most perfect waves, plus a diversity of other nearby breaks.

Challenges: Sharp, shallow reef and sea urchins; use caution with aggressive locals who sit on the end bowl at One Eye; extremely strong current ripping out the channels on big swells; no rescue boat available when swell is big and the channels close out.

Other info: Aside from One Eye, you can find other, more user-friendly breaks outside the lagoon, such as Manawa, Small Reef and Chameaux.

Season: June through November

Lodging: Indian Resort & Spa

How to get there: Air Mauritius from London, Paris, South Africa, etc.

STOP 2: PACASMAYO KITE SURF PRO

Country: Peru

City: Pacasmayo

Break: El Faro

Type: Left-hand point break

Size: Waist to triple-overhead-plus

Length: Can exceed 1.5 miles long, continuous

Barreling: No, except when large at dead low tide at the top of the point

Wind direction: Side-on to side-off

Ability level: Intermediate and up

Why go? For the longest ride of your life, whether kiting or surfing

Challenges: Strong current at point

Other info: Must bring surfboard! Hire a tuk tuk (super cheap) or the Jet Ski to shuttle you back to the point after your mile-long-plus rides.

Season: May through November

Lodging: El Faro Adventure Resort

How to get there: From Lima, Peru, fly to Trujillo (avoid TACA Airlines—they don't accept surfboards) and take a cab to Pacasmayo. Or, for less than \$45, book an overnight, 12-hour-long bus ride directly to Pacasmayo. cruzdelsur.com

STOP 3: PONTA PRETA KITE SURF PRO

Country: Cape Verde

City: Santa Maria, Sal Island

Break: Ponta Preta

Why go? For big hollow barrels

Type: Right-hand point break

Size: Three to 20 feet

Length: 100 m

Barreling: Yes

Wind direction: Side-off to offshore

Ability level: Intermediate to advanced and up

Challenges: Breaks super close to shore, right in front of rocks; mega shorebreak when entering water on large swells.

Other info: Loads of other world-class breaks to explore on the island, plus Kite Beach, which is good for twin tips.

Season: December through March

Lodging: Melia Tortuga Beach or Villaggi Bravo

How to get there: From a number of departure points in Europe (including Lisbon, Portugal), fly to Sol, Cape Verde on TAP Portugal Airlines. Or fly direct from Boston on TACV Cape Verde Airlines.



Mitu Monteiro finishes the tour second overall.



THE CONSENSUS

Jose Luengo, KSP Judge: "The KSP shows the true potential of the sport—real surfing. With riders ripping big waves with radical moves and no straps—the best show ever seen on waves—we are on the way to the future of competitive waveriding."

John Amundson: [Why did I choose to support and compete on the KSP's inaugural tour, despite no prize purse?] "Faith."

Adriana Harlan: "The future of competitive waveriding is heading in the right direction. After Mauritius we saw almost every single rider take off the footstraps, bringing the sport even closer to traditional surfing, which is a positive thing for the sport and the competitions. It was a great first year, and it showed people around the world and in the sport that waveriding with a kite is becoming as popular as freestyle. Hopefully next year will bring more viewership and larger sponsorship so the sport can become more mainstream."

Airton Cozzolino, 2011 Kite Surfing World Champion: "I was very happy about the organization of the tour. For the first time, I felt like I was participating in a real world tour, even if there were only three events. The location choices were excellent, the jury competent, and the level of riders and wild cards was very high."

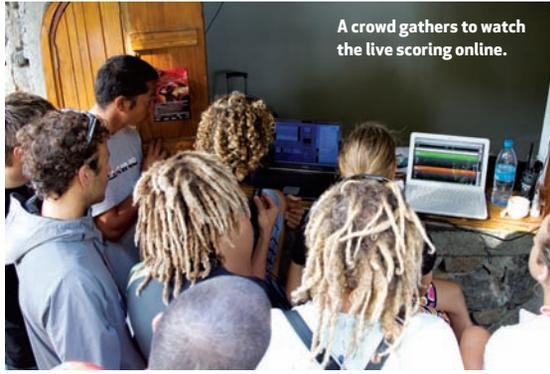
Ninja Bichler, Mauritius' Female Wild Card winner and One Eye Pro Champion: "This is the first-ever wave event that has had so much press coverage and spread such a positive impression inside and outside the kitesurfing industry. The One Eye Pro, which kicked off everything, rendered everyone speechless with its epic conditions, positive spirit and good organization. It made kitesurfing history!"

Guilly Brandao, 2010 Kitesurfing World Champion and KSP founding member: "The KSP has had a huge impact on the future of the waveriding discipline. It has shown the kitesurfing world that there

are a group of very talented riders willing to push the progression and competitive performance, and that the organization is willing to do what it takes to bring the riders to the best locations to make it happen."

Ines Correia, 2011 Women's Kitesurfing World Champion: "The KSP has great impact on the sport because it's 100 per cent focused on waveriding, and the competitions are held in the best spots with the best riders and best judges, which will increase the competition and freeriding levels."

Kristin Boese KSP President, Tour Manager and competitor: "We've gotten quite a bit of feedback from outside the sport, and it has been very positive so far. Everyone can see the direction we want to go and the things we have achieved despite the lack of budget. We are very grateful to a lot of people who have advised us in many different ways, a few of them from within the surf industry."



A crowd gathers to watch the live scoring online.



The Crew.



Sky Solback commentates the live-streamed webcast.



Mitu Monteiro.



Mitu Monteiro sets up to crack Pascamayo's long, peeling lip.



2010 KPRA World Champion GUILLY BRANDO logs quality time in One Eye's green room.



WHAT IT TAKES TO WIN (OR, HOW TO RIDE LIKE A PRO)

"Ideally, the judges are looking for a steep takeoff into the wave, with a flowing U-shaped bottom turn or transition, projecting straight up the face of the wave, then cracking the lip as hard as possible, setting up for re-entry. The judges want a variety of maneuvers, all performed within the critical section of the wave. The more versatile a rider is, the better their chances are of winning. The rider should not be jerked by the kite or using the kite to pull him or herself back into the wave. The kite should be an extension of the rider's surfing. If everything is flowing, and the rider is one with the kite and the board—it just looks good. The bottom line is the judges are looking for radical, controlled manoeuvres in the critical section of the wave, [performed] with power, speed and flow." —**Brad Price, KSP Head Judge**



2011 KITESURFING WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP RANKINGS

TOP 10 MEN

2011 World Champion: Airton Cozzolino (Italy/North)

Coming into the KSP's 2011 season fairly unheard of, Airton Cozzolino quickly became noticed on tour. Showcasing his powerful, fluid surf-influenced style in the massive waves at the One Eye Pro, Cozzolino excited the panel of judges and tour riders like no other. No easy task, he rode some monster waves top to bottom with so much speed, power and flow—all while staying in the critical section and integrating some progressive moves—you'd think he had straps on. One heat he scored a perfect 10—the only one the entire season. Winning the One Eye Pro title, Cozzolino placed second in Peru (and tied with the 23 other men in Cape Verde, as the event unfortunately didn't receive contestable conditions). Italian by citizenship, the 19-year-old rising star spends a lot of time training in Cape Verde.

RANKING: 2ND—Mitu Monteiro (Cape Verde/F-One)

With a 2008 World Championship title under his belt, 19 years of surfing experience and a home break of Ponta Preta, the 2011 title was well in Mitu Monteiro's reach. Coming a close second in Mauritius and tying for fifth in Peru, the knee injury that Monteiro suffered in the One Eye semi-finals could very well have held him back this season. Nevertheless, the 28-year-old put on a remarkable show with a unique blend of hardcore surf-influenced riding and progressive aerials, along with his signature of switching stance right after a critical move and then ripping just as hard switch. Mitu rides so well both ways it's hard to decipher his natural stance. One of the smoothest riders on tour, he also helped found the KSP.

RANKING: 3RD—Guilly Brandao (Brazil/Mormait)

Defending his 2010 title, Guilly Brandao was a force to reckon with this season, though you might not have thought it after he tied for 13th place in Mauritius (little known, however, Brandao was competing with an injured rib). But after taming One Eye with the biggest standup shacking of the comp and "towing in" (with kite) on a 20-plus-foot monster when the winds got too offshore to ride during the Super Session, Brandao's talent shone incredibly bright. A resident of Florianópolis, Brazil, Brandao more than redeemed himself by winning the next tour stop—the Pacasmayo Kite Surf Pro—held at one of his go-to training grounds. Given his graceful, fluid and powerhouse riding, he will most definitely be a top contender for 2012's World Championship title.

RANKING: 4TH—Mauricio Pedreira (Brazil/Nobile)

Like most Brazilians on tour, Mauricio Pedreira knows the world's longest kiteable wave quite well. Part of the Brazilian dominance in Peru, the 36-year-old Pedreira, who calls Florianópolis, Brazil home, tied for fifth with his solid top-to-bottom riding. But his talent went even further at the One Eye Pro, where he reached the podium, coming in third.

RANKING: 5TH—Sky Solbach (U.S./North)

As a founding member and Vice President of the KSP, Sky Solbach helped bring the KSP to life this year. In addition to commentating the live webcasts, he found time to compete. With his solid backside riding at One Eye and El Faro, the 28-year-old Solbach battled his way through some contentious matchups to earn a coveted spot in the KSP Top 5.

6TH: Jesse Richman (Hawaii/Naish)

7TH (TIE): Juan Pablo Diban (Chile/Liquid Force),

Patri McLaughlin (Hawaii/North)

9TH: Etienne Lhote (France/F-One)

10TH (TIE): Jeremie Eloy (France/North), Lee Harvey (U.K./North)

TOP 10 WOMEN

2011 World Champion: Ines Correia (Portugal/Airush)

One of the youngest competitors on tour, the shy and reserved 18-year-old Ines Correia had an incredible season. Second in Peru, tied for fifth in Mauritius and part of the 12-way women's tie in Cape Verde (due to lack of contestable conditions during the 10-day holding period). Born and raised in Lisbon, Portugal, Correia has been kiting for a mere four years. Nevertheless, she rips. Unique in her approach to the waves, you can tell when Correia hits the water, as her speed, power, and the volume of spray she throws are nearly unrivaled.

RANKING: 2ND—Marie Gautron (France/Naish)

Growing up in the mountains of France, Marie Gautron now lives in Jura with her four-year-old daughter and husband. When not kiting and traveling, Gautron works as a freelance dental assistant. But when this 27-year-old hits the water, you'll likely see her ripping strapless. Taking second in Mauritius and tying for seventh in Peru, Gautron will surely be in the running for next year's title. And on a rather odd note, she once participated in *Koh-Lanta* (the French version of the TV show *Survivor*), lasting an impressive 34 out of 40 days.

RANKING: 3RD—Kristin Boese (Germany/Best)

KSP President, Tour Manager and Founding Member, Kristin Boese holds more titles on tour than anyone else—and she somehow finds the time to compete while running it all. Sure, loads of people helped envision, plan and execute the inaugural KSP tour, but Boese's relentless passion and determined, hard-working attitude fused it all together. Holding dual Kite Surfing World Championship titles (2005 and 2007), she more than knows her way around the surf, loves riding strapless and rips with or without them. While she is from Potsdam, Germany, the 34-year-old Boese resides in Western Australia when she's not trotting the globe with the KSP or empowering female kites with her KB4Girls worldwide tour.

RANKING: 4TH—Melissa Gil (U.S./Cabrinha)

Placing a consistent seventh at the first two tour stops, Melissa Gil's fluid riding and passion for surf earned her a spot in the KSP's esteemed Top 5. Originally from San Jose, Costa Rica, the 28-year-old Gil now lives in Jupiter, Florida, where she regularly trains. The website espnW.com recently ran a lengthy profile on this passionate waterwoman.

RANKING: 5TH—Maayke Tadema (Netherlands/Best)

Reading waves well and exhibiting a high order of grace, Maayke Tadema laid down some solid riding this season, ranking ninth both in Mauritius and Peru. While Maayke is from the Netherlands, she spends a good portion of the year running her kiteboarding school, Wind Riders, on beautiful Lake Garda in Italy.

RANKING: 5TH (tie)—Ninja Bichler (Mauritius/North)

A complete underdog, Ninja (pronounced *neen-ya*) earned a Wild Card spot on tour by winning the local qualifier event in Mauritius. And in a mind-blowing, purely switchstance performance, she bagged the One Eye Pro title, winning every heat by no less than a whopping seven points (out of 20). Originally from Germany, Bichler would likely have ranked much higher had she competed in Peru.

7TH: Kirsty Jones (U.K./North)

8TH: Kelly Strachan (U.S./Caution)

9TH (TIE): Adriana Harlan (Hawaii/Switch), Suzanne Kuiper (Netherlands/F-One)