

kiteSista *presents*

# COMPETITIONS

## RIDING UNDER PRESSURE

### IS IT TIME TO GET A BIT MORE COMPETITIVE?

That is the question we are asking this month at KiteSista. So what does it mean to take part in 'competitive kiteboarding'. Your first thoughts might involve judges, championships, pressure and talent – but that is not where we are going with this. What we want to talk about is you, your friends, and the advantages (and the fun you can have) when things get a little bit competitive.

### WHAT IS COMPETITION?

You might label yourself as highly competitive or, on the flip side, consider yourself someone who's not in the slightest bit competitive. But either way the fact is that we all have a competitive edge: it's inbuilt and part of our evolutionary make up.

We all know this to be true in kiteboarding. You only have to be riding towards someone in light wind to feel that need to assert yourself as the more upwind rider and therefore the one with priority. (What? don't tell us you use that moment to refer to the regulations and give way to the rider on the starboard tack! Of course you

don't, you turn your hips and dig in your heels!)

Anyone who kites with windsurfers will also be able to admit to themselves the odd, "I bet I can go faster than you!" moment as you go hell for leather trying to prove to the windsurfer that there are very few remaining reasons for them not to pick up a kite...

Riders: Estefania Rosa & Bruna Kayija  
Photo: KiteSista

"COMPETITION IN BIOLOGY AND SOCIOLOGY, IS A CONTEST BETWEEN TWO OR MORE ORGANISMS, ANIMALS, INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS FOR TERRITORY, A NICHE, FOR A LOCATION OF RESOURCES, FOR RESOURCES AND GOODS, FOR MATES, FOR PRESTIGE, FOR RECOGNITION, FOR AWARDS, FOR GROUP OR SOCIAL STATUS, OR FOR LEADERSHIP. COMPETITION IS THE OPPOSITE OF COOPERATION. IT ARISES WHENEVER AT LEAST TWO PARTIES STRIVE FOR A GOAL WHICH CANNOT BE SHARED OR WHICH IS DESIRED INDIVIDUALLY BUT NOT IN SHARING AND COOPERATION. COMPETITION OCCURS NATURALLY BETWEEN LIVING ORGANISMS WHICH CO-EXIST IN THE SAME ENVIRONMENT."





Rider: Estefania Rosa  
Photo: KiteSista

## THE NATURAL HIGH

It feels great to win. Even the least competitive amongst us will admit that it feels good to win something on your own merit. More than just the win however, the very act of competition raises our adrenaline levels and can induce an ear-to-ear smile which (provided you are also a good loser) stays on your face for the rest of the day.

So it is in your natural instinct to compete: your mind and body are drawn to it, it makes you feel good and it is fun. Fun is something that no one can contest to having too much of in their life, and any opportunity to have more should be embraced.

## I AM NEVER GOING TO BE A CHAMPION

So you're not champion material. That's okay, nor are we... But whether you're trying to go that first few meters further than your friend on your first board-start, using a WOO to prove once and for all that you jump the highest at your local spot, or

even something as simple as getting upwind faster than the person you're riding with – competition is a great way to improve your all-round kite skills.

And then you can of course compete against yourself. Landing a new trick, holding that grab a moment longer, grabbing a new part of the board, adding an extra half rotation. In reality you are competing against yourself all the time to become a better kiter.

## COMPETE TO PROGRESS

Ride with people better than you or those trying the same things and you will progress many times quicker than always being the best in your group, or confining

yourself to riding up and down all day on your own. Anyone who has been to a kite camp can attest to this – it is not just coaching but being in a group filled with people trying the same moves as you forces you to try harder and ultimately to progress more.

## WINNING A MEDAL

At this point we need to not overlook 'real' competition which (with the current absence of a credible wave tour) comes in 2 basic flavors.



Rider: Paula Novotna  
Photo: KiteSista



Riders: Lilo Gringa & Laura Jaubert  
Photo: KiteSista



### FREESTYLE

The laying down of your very best tricks in a limited time period (usually 7 or 10 minutes). Try it. No matter what your level, stick a digital watch on your arm, set the countdown to 7 minutes and see just what you can do. If you are lucky enough to possess an actual trick repertoire then feel free to have a friend list the tricks and try and score you. The first thing people realize is just how short 7 minutes is, and how differently you ride and perform your tricks when landing them is the most important thing.

Rider: Dioneia Vieira  
Photo: KiteSista



### RACING

The most primitive and accessible part of kiteboarding. It only takes two people (or you can race the watch if you truly kite in isolation) and can be done anywhere. It should be noted that racing doesn't necessarily require special boards, expensive foils, or highly tuned kites. It is also worth noting that whilst the technical aspect of professional racing gets more and more complex, the discipline being considered for the Olympics is current twin tip racing!

Racing can be practiced over a course, from point A to point B, upwind, downwind (or a combination of the two) and requires no special equipment or judges to validate it (photo finishes excluded: if in doubt, race again). And the only trophy you need at the end is the large beer that the loser bought you...

### READY, STEADY, GO

So that is what we want you to take away from this. Not just a sentiment or some advice, NO, this is an order! Get out there, get competing, motivate your friends to do the same and – as well as becoming a better kiter – you might just find that you feel ready to step up to the next level and get involved in some more serious competition.