

# kiteista

THERE ARE NO CABLES  
in Kiting

If we write an article about wakestyle, kickers, sliders and the cable park, it would be a fair assumption that a significant number of you would immediately turn the page and move onto something else, muttering something along the lines of...

"I kitesurf, I am not a wakeboarder, and all that stuff with objects in the water is practiced by a minority of too-cool-for-school young riders."

With that in mind our aim here is to explain how wakeboarding, and more specifically the cable park, can be the perfect complement to your kitesurfing passion and can provide a useful path to progression.

## A BIT OF HISTORY

Let's start from the beginning. Before kitesurfing and wakeboarding even existed there was waterskiing, and of all the countries who loved waterskiing there was one which loved it more than the rest. Germany.

Why? Quite simply they loved their winter sports. Combine that passion for waterskiing with a passion for engineering and we get to Bruno Rixen.

As a watersports addict he wanted to make waterskiing more accessible, so between 1960 to 1969 he spent a decade patenting and building prototypes until he had a system capable of the demand of constantly pulling a skier through the water for hour-after-hour, day-after-day around a five pulley track (or a 5.0 as you will hear it called). Fast forward to today and you have over 265 parks operating Rixen Full Size Cableways in 45 countries and six continents. And that doesn't take into account the smaller 2.0 (two pulley) systems which are cheaper, easier to construct, and pull one rider from point A to B and back again.

It is even possible to build temporary set ups for events in public places, as they do in Germany every year for the huge Wake The Line event where they link up full size Olympic swimming pools for the event.

## WHO IS DOING IT

Now you know what it is and how it came to be, we would like to prepare what you will find when you get there. The answer is: everybody. Young and old; girls and boys; mums and dads... Everybody can have a go. This is often

a surprise as we imagine a wake park like a skate park, full of fearless adolescents bouncing around as if their bones were made of rubber. And whilst they are there, they are not always the majority.

Rider: Therese Taabel.





**CABLE RIDING IS AN EXCELLENT CROSS-OVER SPORT FOR KITEBOARDING BECAUSE IT IS SO CONSISTENT. THE PULL IS THE SAME EVERY TIME AND YOU CAN WORK ON TRICKS WITHOUT HAVING TO WORRY ABOUT THE KITE. IF YOU'RE LOOKING TO START HITTING PARK FEATURES ON THE KITE FOR THE FIRST TIME, CABLE RIDING IS A MUST. PLUS THERE ARE A LOT MORE CABLE PARKS OUT THERE THAN THERE ARE KITE PARKS!**

**-SENSI GRAVES**

Riders: Colleen Carroll, Sensi Graves.

**I'M A KITER, NOT A WAKEBOARDER**

We have a lot of the skills required and whilst the first few sessions will seem a little strange, once you get over your initial urges to edge hard against the cable and learn instead to follow it, you will begin to develop board skills that will greatly help your kiting. Riding a cable is a bit like unhooking and riding off downwind after your kite, and whilst this might not be something you do every day, being able to ride

downwind towards the force that pulls you whilst still maintaining an even tension and pull, is a very helpful skill when you start doing downwinders and of course after performing unhooked maneuvers.

If you come with snowboarding experience then you will already know about using both edges of your board, but the lesser experienced kiter only uses their heel side edge which is only 50% of your board – and if you want to get your money's worth out of that shiny new kite stick, you should be using 100% of it!

**LEARN NEW SKILLS**

So you can improve skills which you can bring back over into kiteboarding, but what about the world of new opportunities the cable offers? This is where the magic lies. First off, you do not need to check the forecast for the cable: providing there is not a thunderstorm you are pretty much good to go. Which makes a change for us Windguru-addicted kites.

Then you may spend your first few times absolutely terrified of the sliders and kickers as you ride past them, but the moment you pluck up the courage to ride over one of them will be a life changing moment. You will realize that it actually isn't nearly as difficult as it looks, and suddenly countless hours and days of progression will open up in front of you.



Rider: Julia Castro.

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first time will motivate you to push your kiting too.

**WHAT ABOUT THE BOOTS**

Fear not, at the cable park, once you start to ride around with confidence and hit the modules you will be wearing boots like everyone else, and this will help you become accustomed to them in a safer environment without the addition of a kite and wind. Then if you want to start wearing them when you are kiting then you'll be in more familiar territory. Of course you can still catch an edge and suffer the consequences, but unlike the kite: you can let go of the cable.

We started at the cable about a year ago, and still find that about 90% of our sessions have something in them that we do for the first time. It may only be a small step, but the confidence and satisfaction that comes from doing completely new things for the



**EXPRESS YOURSELF**

We go on about it all the time, but one thing that has been lacking in the current state of kiteboarding is individual creativity. We have to say it is coming back, and why? Wakestyle. Riders who rip at the cable park are much more used to developing their own style of riding and attacking tricks and modules. There are no constraints and style is much more an expression of you and your creativity.

You do not have to ride the same as everyone else, you develop style, tricks and ways of approaching things that are a reflection of you.

**SOCIAL EXHAUSTION**

Being completely exhausted and getting social are two aspects of the cable that go hand in hand.

You will find that the cable park is a very social environment as everyone gets to watch everyone else ride, you can even go round with a friend on the same cable if you wish. As for the exhaustion, well, after an hour of riding at the cable you will know exactly what we mean, and this makes the sitting on the side and hanging out with the other riders, exchanging tips and building friendships, a side of cable riding which is very different from kiting.

In kiting a lot of interaction is based on dependency. You need someone to launch and land your kite. At the cable park you don't need anyone, but you sure as hell want to share the stoke with everyone!

As for that exhaustion, give it a couple of sessions and you will start to develop a new set of upper body muscles that you did not think even existed. It is really a physical sport, especially in the beginning, and if you had become complacent in kiting you will really appreciate the extra work out for your body.

**READY?**

So what are you waiting for? Overcome that initial fear, grab a friend, leave your pride at home for the first few sessions, and go and try something new: you won't regret it.

(In fact, we loved it so much that we decided to launch [www.wakesista.com](http://www.wakesista.com) as a place for girls to find all the latest info, tips, tutorial and news on all things wake!)

**RIDING CABLE IS PERFECT FOR PRACTICING YOUR PARK MOVES! PERSONALLY I HAVE GOTTEN VERY EXCITED ABOUT RAILS AND KICKERS THIS YEAR. I LOVE HITTING UP THE CABLE ON A NON-WINDY DAY. THERE ARE NOT TOO MANY KITE PARKS AVAILABLE AROUND THE WORLD YET, SO IT'S GREAT THAT YOU CAN WORK YOUR MOVES IN THE CABLE. IT'S SO MUCH FUN!**

**- MALIN AMLE**



**UNNY**  
Rider: Malin Amle  
Photo: Håkon Mæland