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THE SEARCH





TYLER WARREN

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A full-page background image of a surfer in a red wetsuit riding a large, curling blue wave. The surfer is on an orange surfboard. The wave is massive and has a thick white foam crest. The sky is a clear, pale blue. On the left edge of the image, there are decorative elements: green palm fronds at the top and a yellow flower at the bottom.

THE ERATM BOARDSHORT

DURABILITY MEETS ALL DAY COMFORT.

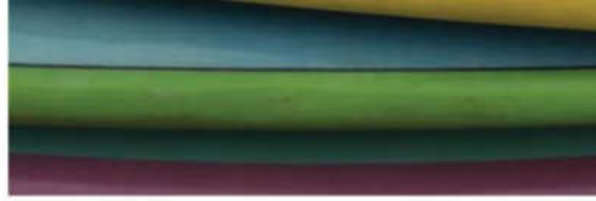


DANE GUDAUSKAS
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"OFF THE WALL"






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Sebastian Williams, pouncing like a tiger in the Bay of Bengal. ©EWING

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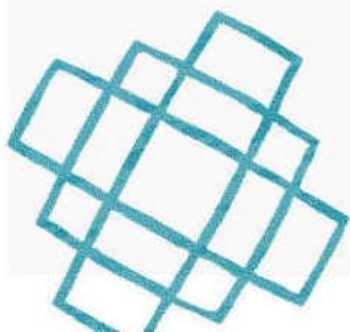
Meet the team of Saffas working with the WSL to bring the world's best competitive surfing to a big (or small) screen near you.

ROB MACHADO JUST PASSING THROUGH



JUST
PASS
ING
THRO
UGH

REEF SANDAL: **MACHADO DAY**





EDITOR'S NOTE

– Calvin Bradley



Like you (perhaps), I was surprised to hear in January that *SURFING* magazine was closing its doors effective immediately – the latest in a series of titles going belly-up since the start of the digital revolution.

I've always been taught to look on the bright side, so even though it's a huge bummer that *SURFING* is no more and there aren't really any positives to take from their closure, it's kind of an honour that Zag now moves up a position to the fourth longest-running surf mag still in existence.

Most of all, though, it was a heavy

reminder for any business but particularly ours, that things can suddenly end – even after 53 years of relative stability.

This lead me to think about the role *ZIGZAG* plays in the broader picture of South African surfing, and what scenario would play out if we were to shut our doors as well?

Of course there's no question that waveriding would continue in this country, we have a strong surfing culture and foundation. But with no regular mouthpiece to share ideas, original stories and the

most epic images from photographers everywhere along our coast, there would be some form of disconnect between the various surfing regions – unless everyone followed hundreds of different Instagram accounts or far too many Facebook pages to stay in the loop. And even then it's usually a sick photo with a short caption and a never-ending list of hashtags, leaving more questions than answers or insight. Plus, just like that, the classic image is buried deep in timeline history, two thumb scrolls after sharing. At least



Ted Sazcek dropping into a bomb at Kalk Bay – a classic image that'll still be right here decades later. ©TOMÉ

that's how it rolled out in my mind.

Digital is rad, don't get me wrong, but there's something special about a printed magazine that can be grabbed from the shelf or pile, and referenced whenever you need reminding of a particular photo or story.

As former *SURFING* editor Travis Ferre wrote upon hearing the news of their closure:

"I could probably fill a book with inside jokes and stories and talk forever about the life-altering experiences I had with that team and title... but for the same reason *SURFING* is no longer with us, I won't.

We just don't have time, kids. On with the show. And fuckin' hurry, there is no time to waste."

Our collective demand for wanting to see things right here, right now, has played its part in making business tough for print-based media. There's no question about that. But we must also be careful what we wish for.

In his ode to the 53-year-old title, Travis also said something profound. "There are less outlets starting today, we lost a great one that was once the magazine for the punks, the outcasts, the aerialists, the characters and photographers with an edge,"

wrote Travis. "Thankfully I still have them all – the mags, the stories, the memories, the friendships, the history for myself, but there's now less for this generation."

This generation seemingly has everything at their fingertips, but do they really and at what cost?

Following a salute from one mag to another, the main point I wanted to share is that we're hugely thankful for the continued support of our loyal readers, and hope to keep you stoked and dialled-in for decades to come.





DROP THE ZAG A LINE ON
LETTERS@ZIGZAG.CO.ZA
AND BE HEARD

A KOOK TOURIST

I wanted to share an experience I had as a 'tourist' surfer in Durban.

Two years ago, I'd mistakenly parked the cheapest-hire-car-money-can-buy unattended on the beachfront. I left a bag with wallet, apartment keys, phone, and towel in the boot and, perhaps unsurprisingly, it wasn't there upon my return. Silly me.

The following year, having utilised the services of an enthusiastic car guard at a popular spot, I stood by another cheapest-hire-car-money-can-buy, feeling the chill of the setting sun and savouring the stoke of the session. This time, having learned from my mistake, I'd left everything at the apartment besides the clothes I wore and of course my board. But instead of looking at a forced lock, this time my gaze flitted between a locked car and the empty key pocket of my leash.

The carpark was emptying and I was faced with the reality of either a long walk home through a dodgy part of town, or the humiliation of explaining my situation to a group of locals who'd surely laugh at me before leaving 'the kook tourist' to fend for himself?

Over an hour later, having been given a lift to the apartment, lent a towel for warmth, the use of their phone to call the rental company, plus helping to break into my own hire car with a coat hanger (which it should be noted is remarkably easy), I was now safe and sound.

I hope this story finds the crew who helped me out that day and serves as a lesson not to assume the worst in people. I've since experienced the same warmth from many locals at other spots around your beautiful coast.

James Grimstead, UK

– South Africa: home to lekker locals & crafty criminals.

Straining to make the section. ©IRLAM*



*Modified by Zag

RENTAL BOARD REVOLT

With flights booked and accommodation sorted for my trip to Australia, I didn't want the hassle of flying my boards over, so I thought I'd just hire when I'm there, right?

Wrong! If you're planning a trip where surfing is going to be part of the itinerary, take your own boards. Let me explain the four types of boards you will get on vacation:

First is the friend who has "loads of boards you can borrow." Remember these friends last surfed twenty years ago, when we all had a crush on Kelly Slater. Kelly was riding boards so thin that you could put two together as a decent set of water skis. Your skinny teen frame may have been able to stand up on those old school boards, your middle-aged body cannot.

No problem; you go off to the surf shop, they all rent out the same generic mini-mal type board so they must be okay, right? Wrong again! You know how rubbish Bic pens are? Bic surfboards are even worse; I think they just melt down pens into surfboard moulds. They weigh more than the over-packed suitcase you brought on holiday.

Remarkably the melted Bic pens do actually float but that's where your wonder will end. They're too heavy to paddle and if you do catch a wave don't even think about trying to manoeuvre them through the crowded surf.

There can't be anything worse than a Bic rental board right? Wrong! There is the Bic board you get to use free from the backpackers where you're staying. You will never find a backpacker board with both fins and a leash, it does not exist. You will, however, find a Bic board with so many holes it could only be used as a colander.

So out of desperation you will finally track down a shop that rents performance boards. You're prepared to forgo dinner for the next three days in order to pay the increased rental fees, it'll be worth it. But just as you're walking out with your beautiful light board, the 17-year-old shop assistant tells you how much they will charge your credit card if you damage this amazing piece of fibreglass. There is no way you can ride this board in the horrifically crowded Australian surf – one ding and you would need to sell a kidney on the black market.

Nicole Morse, Cape Town

– Choose the wrong airline and taking your own boards will cost you an arm and a leg as well. Just saying...

WINNING LETTER SCORES A HAMPER FROM RIP CURL



LETTERS MAY BE EDITED FOR BREVITY/CLARITY

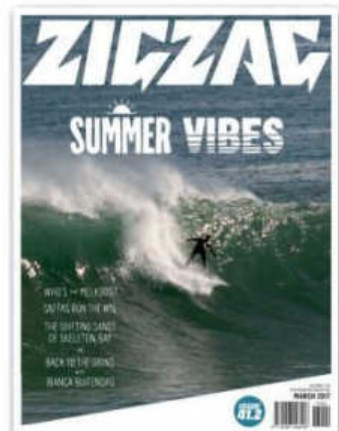
COVER SHOT

I hope this photo will make you stoked.
Spot: Somewhere in Cape Town over the December holidays.
Surfer: Big Daddy himself – so stoked.
Put me on the cover.

Juan Swanepoel, Cape Town

– Epic shot, Juan, but after the votes were cast for this issue's cover, you missed out by a whisker.

There's always next issue, though, so keep trying.



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“We were really lucky to score this spot, because it never breaks,” says photographer Ian Thurtell. “Well, it does but never this clean, it always has a bump on it.”

As the story goes, Ian and frothing grom, Max Elkington, had just got out from a long surf at another spot nearby. On the drive home, eager Max spotted this peak and jumped out the still-moving car whilst simultaneously struggling into his wetsuit. With the sun beginning to set there was no time to waste – the opportunity gone for who knows how long again.

“He caught about twenty waves in twenty minutes,” reckons Ian of Max’s spur-of-the-moment score.

Flip the page for a different perspective.



ZAG 41.3 / SPAT OUT



With fins glassed firmly to his bottom deck, Jordy Smith exerts full-force through a grinding roundhouse at good old, reliable Supertubes. ©THURTELL



BREATHING SPACE

with Bianca Buitendag / by Gina Smith



Bianca is gearing up for another season on the Qualifying Series. ©GREBE

After dominating the South African surf scene and one quick year on the WQS in 2012, Bianca Buitendag landed her spot on the Dream Tour the next season. And she certainly showed her worth after finishing eighth in 2013, seventh in 2014, and a career best of fourth in 2015. Bianca's WCT rankings were on the rise. Until she fell off tour at the end of last season.

The news came as a bit of a shock to the Saffa surf scene. Her surfing is still very much up to the standard of the elite Top 12 with her vertical, smooth backhand and innovative forehand. So what went wrong?

It's an age-old tale of how those "uncontrollables" can get the better of the best surfers around. Sometimes it is one unlucky heat, or a series of Round 2 losses.

"When I heard that I wasn't going to requalify, I did not have any regrets because I knew that I'd put in all I had," says Bianca. "Those Round 2 knockouts were the hardest part of my year. Life has taught me that we can only be in control to a certain point,

and just when you think you have everything in your control you get a big wake-up call. I am happy for the time off, I need it."

Having been immersed in the world of competitive surfing since the tender age of fourteen, many were left wondering if Bianca would return to the WQS grind to make it back to the elite rankings. But South Africa can rest easy; whilst Bianca is grateful for the extra breathing space her new schedule allows her, competing is still her primary focus. And so far 2017 holds a myriad of prospects for the 23-year-old Vic Bay local.

Between the major WQS events, Bianca is looking to shadow behind-the-scenes at Roxy in Europe, speed up her studies in finance and accounting, go on some African surf trips, and plan a women's surf festival in Vic Bay at the end of the year.

She demonstrated her personal strength and faith when she lost her father in 2015 yet honoured his memory with multiple solid WCT finishes. Bianca is one of those multifaceted icons who encompasses grace

and fierceness. Falling off tour is already proving to help Bianca regain the passion and want to return to the grind and take her place back on the WCT.

"I am eternally grateful for the opportunities it has created and what it means to me. I've gone way further than I initially thought." Bianca mused. "When you're into something so deep it is easy to enter into the mindset that the world revolves around this opportunity in front of you. It has actually been a blessing. I came to realise that I need to be really honest with myself to know what I want, and when and where I want it. I also needed to regain the motivation because I was running a bit low."

It's easy to be a spectator at home watching the Dream Tour unfold with envy and possible resentment. You're sitting behind a desk with deadlines watching athletes surf cooking waves with a schedule that takes them to the likes of Fiji, Hawaii and Europe. But as the saying goes, all that glitters isn't gold.

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SPECIFICATIONS AND PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

*When you're chasing heat wins, rankings,
pleasing sponsors and requalification,
it is easy to lose sight of the person
in the reflection of the trophy*





"I think many people perceive life on tour to be glamorous, which I can't deny. The women are so beautiful and strong in their surfing and personhood." Bianca explains. "But it has its downside and the grass is not necessarily greener on our side. Many readers who have experience with competition will be nodding in agreement when I say it is very tough."

When your career is based on your performance, it is easy for cracks to appear in the façade of confidence. Insecurity and a warped sense of identity plague many who are trying to make it big.


"Surfing is the reason for a lot of my joy and a lot of my pain too." Bianca reiterates. "I remember my first year on the Dream Tour. My identity was fully in my performance. I was in an emotional tornado. When I lost or if someone made

an opinion about my surfing, I would lock myself in the bathroom for hours and cry. Because I thought that was what defined me. Eventually my faith in God taught me the opposite. Surfing is great but it's not necessarily who I am."

When it comes to advice for those pursuing surfing as a profession, Bianca swears by getting out of your comfort zone and being humble with your performance. One scroll through the World Surf League website and you'll see that the international standard for men and women is high and growing everyday.

"If you're winning all the contests here it doesn't necessarily mean that you have what it takes to make it internationally. You need to travel and have a sober evaluation of your surfing ability in comparison with international athletes."

Bianca claims that her secret recipe is to be surrounded by people who are more interested in her wellbeing than her career. When you're chasing heat wins, rankings, pleasing sponsors and requalification, it's easy to lose sight of the person in the reflection of the trophy – even in a sport as soulful as surfing. Competitions aside, the ocean will always provide that solace we crave. And Bianca's goal has always been to use the sport in a selfless way. She has done exactly that by supporting various charities and releasing a series of films that explore and celebrate freedom and living joyously.

"One thing I could never satisfy is my hunger and longing for salt water," says Bianca. "Whether it's a surf or dipping my toes in the shoreline, that sensation will never let go of me. I will return to the ocean until the day I die." 

SOMETHING FISHY

with Asha Armstrong / photos by Samuel Tomé



Asha pokes at the notch he cut in his fins to further customise his craft.

“We cut away some of the base of the fins to make it easier to turn,” says Asha Armstrong of the fish he is seen weaving through this lovely cyan tube at his local. “Most of the volume has been left in the back half of the board.” Continues the 15-year-old grom, still probing the gap cut out of one of its two big wooden fins.

“It has two parts,” adds Ian, Asha’s father who shaped the sled. “A thin part and a thick part. If you imagine yourself paddling on the board, the thick part is under your stomach and the thin part is under your chest. It lifts you up and tips you forward when stroking into a wave.” Reckons Ian when asked why it was designed this way.

“It’s 4’11” x 19 1/2” x 2 1/4” and it’s so fast, so you can just take off and race.” Asha chimes in. “It’s for small waves, one to maybe four-foot is good, and it has a huge tail.” He says before glancing back down at his chunky fish shyly.

“If you want to push the performance then it’s best at eye level,” says Ian when questioned what size to order if we were interested in one for ourselves. “Head height makes it easier and a few inches taller makes it super easy. Performance potential depends on what length you ride it at. Max likes it for airs, Asha for barrels and I like it for big carving turns. It’s a very versatile, all-round board.” Ian informs us before we conclude the interview.





Asha's stumpy and versatile fish works a charm in tricky, fast-peeling barrels.



HERE'S TO THE RESURGENCE

by Jazz Kuschke



Matt McGillivray and a host of other South African competitors will benefit from a much-improved local circuit in 2017. @VAN GYSEN

As South Africans we suffer from optimism. It's all good; see the bright side; the glass is half full and all that.

Actually, no. Wait. We're a fickle bunch and we love to hate. This especially when it comes to our national teams in the mainstream arenas. If SA's soccer team, rugby, netball or national cricketers perform badly, then the Boo Brigade begins. I might not be talking about you, but these voices are the loudest.

The same has been happening in the SA competitive surfing scene, with a bunch of negativity creeping in. At least for the past few years.

In 2015 Zag published an article that was part state-of-the-nation, part crystal-ball rub titled *Sink or Swim*. At the time, South Africa did have a certain Jordan Michael Smith and Bianca Buitendag flying the Rainbow Nation flag on the Championship Tours, but those two tall humans aside, Saffas had very little to clink our *Klippien-en-Cola*

about around the braai. No, for nearly half-a-decade a lot of talk was not so much as to who would qualify next. But rather, can anyone qualify again?

It looks like we might be set for a resurgence of sorts, however, and are buoyed with positivity at the prospect. Stoked about what might be.

WHAT WILL BE

"2017 looks set to be the best year for surf contests in more than a decade," says Robin de Kock, General Manager of Surfing South Africa. "Last year we had a CT event, three WQS events for Open men and women, three QS1000 Pro Juniors, and about four events for the youth. This year that number has doubled across the board."

It's the same model implemented by the Brazilians, and Saffa QS hopefuls can now bag some real WSL points on home shores. The likes of Jordy Maree, Adin Masencamp, Matt McGillivray and co. can now spend

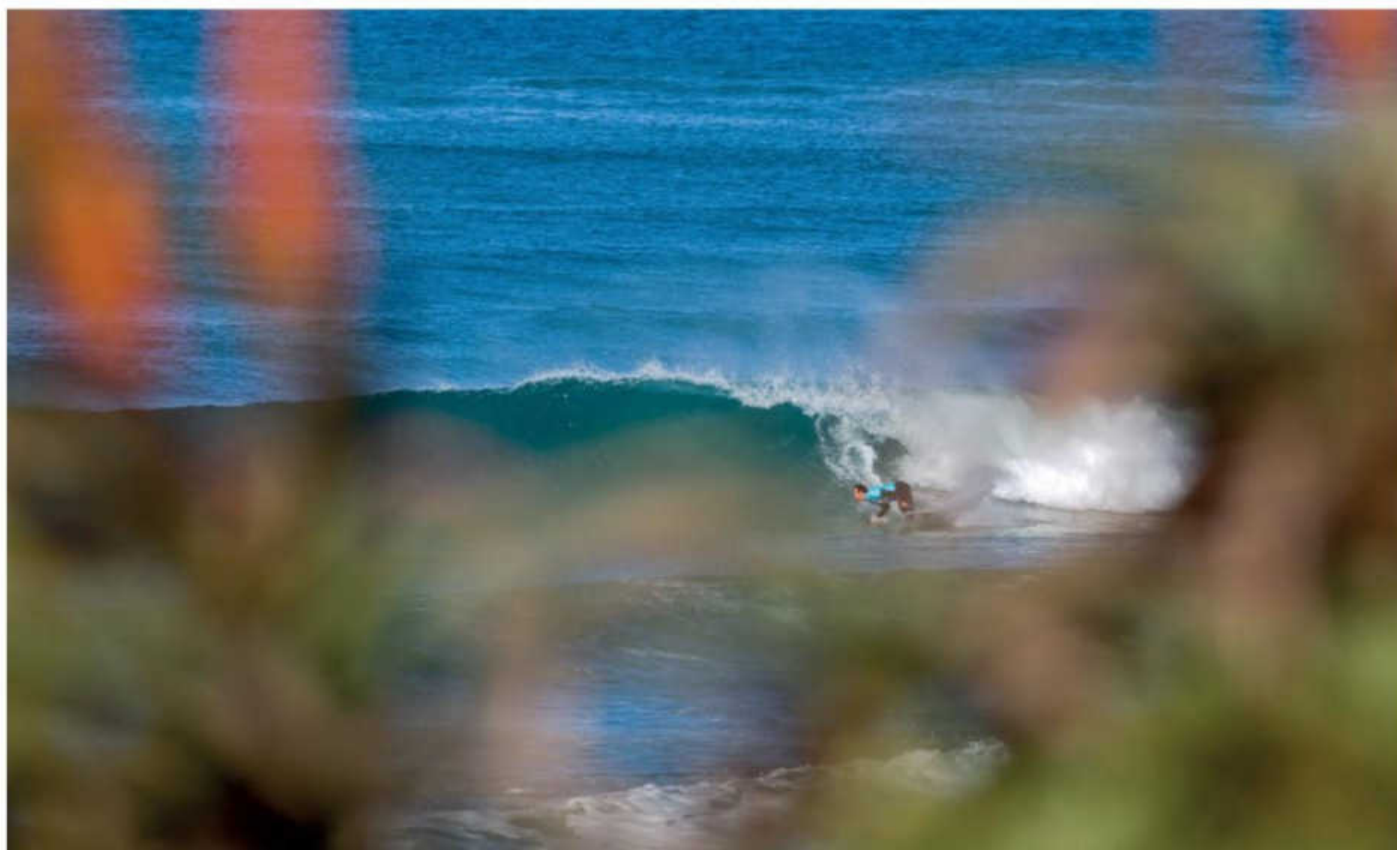
a good part of the year at home and (if they put together the results) accumulate significant enough points to gain entry to the bigger global events later in the year.

"A few years back, they (the Brazilians) created a very strong domestic tour that gave their surfers the opportunity to slowly build up their careers from there, with good points and prize money on offer at local events." Explains WSL Africa Operations Manager, Colin Fitch.

"Effectively, the young guys and girls who are starting out the tour here could do very, very well. Let's say one wins all five events, then they could have 5000 points in the bag. That would catapult them into the top 100 in the world," says Colin.

The 'five events' he is referring to are the Nelson Mandela Bay Surf Pro presented by Billabong & Volkswagen; Buffalo City Surf Pro presented by RVCA & Volkswagen; VANS Pro Surf Classic; Jordy Smith Cape Town Surf Pro presented by O'Neill,

With a half-dozen QS events on the South African calendar in the first half of the year, local pros have new opportunities



The world's best will be back again for the J-Bay Open, and Jordy Smith will be aiming for his third title in home waters. ©EWING

Volkswagen & Corona; and the Volkswagen SA Open of Surfing presented by Hurley.

A mouthful we know. And indeed, that is Mr Smith's name you see there. The big man is plowing back into the scene that groomed him, investing in the next generation.

"It is the first time in South Africa that a surfer – let alone someone of the calibre of Jordy – has invested and taken naming rights to his own event," Colin says.

Held as QS1000's, the events will feature 32 Men, 18 Women and 16 Under 18 Junior surfers competing for 1000 points and an evenly split prize pool. In addition to those events, the SA Open will be a QS3000 with 3000 points at stake.

WHO WILL BENEFIT MOST

"It's a great opportunity for guys like myself to better their seeding on the QS and hopefully gain enough points to compete in the bigger events, which offer even more," says 17-year-old Adin

Masencamp, whose goal for 2017 is to earn enough points to be in the QS6000 and 10000-rated events in 2018. At the time of print, Adin was lying 256th on the Qualifying Series rankings.

Adin believes that not only is it an opportunity to score some valuable points, but also that it will push the competitive surfing level in the country and offer the groms, the Under 18's and Under 16's of today, something to strive for. A piece of the puzzle that has perhaps been lacking over the past few years – just getting somewhere close to qualifying (let alone actually making it onto the Championship Tour) has seemed like something near insurmountable.

"This is what the South African surfers needed, the more big QS events the better in SA because it just gives you the experience that you need when you compete against an even bigger field overseas," says Adin.

Matt McGillivray, who, along with a handful

of others represent *Generation Next* for SA, agrees. "It's a big opportunity and will help a huge amount for the Saffas starting off their QS campaign," says the J-Bay supergrom who blazed his way onto the QS in 2016. "Instead of having to spend large amounts of money travelling to other countries just for the smaller contests, trying to build-up enough points to qualify for the 6000's and 10000's, it will now be possible to get the points and seeding required before actually having to leave the country."

Matt is currently lying 29th on the QS, which affords him seedings into the bigger events. "For me it will be awesome to be competing at home, and I feel like it's good training and a good opportunity to get some more points in-between the 6000's. I feel like the waves that the events are at here in South Africa will be a lot better quality to what we compete in for most overseas comps, so I'm really looking forward to surfing some heats in good waves."

“It is going to help shape everyone’s minds in terms of international competition.” – Mikey February



The Cell C Goodwave, which is guaranteed to run in pumping waves with a R100 000 first prize on offer, has been re-introduced to Durban's New Pier for 2017. ©EWING

INTERNATIONAL FLAVOUR

Of course, these events will also attract foreign surfers, even more than we saw at the 2016 Cape Town Surf Pro and VANS event.

“It is going to help shape everyone’s minds in terms of international competition,” says Mikey February, a seasoned QS campaigner who finished 2016 rated in the 50’s on the QS. “It’s something we haven’t really had for a long time, besides Ballito and obviously J-Bay. Just in terms of guys getting to see people who have travelled halfway around the world to compete in 1000’s and really grind it out, and how much they want it. That is really going to show guys at home what is going on, on the tour.”

M-Feb is also of the opinion that it will afford some of the younger groms some international exposure. “The rest of the world will get to see the talent we have,

which might give a lot of the younger guys some good opportunities,” says Mikey.

“Aside from that, I think it’s going to be the most affordable QS leg for a lot of people, and it’s going to be great to see people who I see all around the world every year in my home country.”

CASH AND POINTS

Indeed, for most of the QS1000-rated events there are already confirmed international entrants. This despite the fact that while the points remain the same, the prize money is not the same as equally-rated events elsewhere.

“Travis Logie, the QS Commissioner and the WSL Commissioner’s office have allowed us to set the rate at a local rate, rather than to find R13 to match every dollar in-line with the international events,” explains Colin.

“It’s great to have Travis’ support and

he even joked in one of his emails to me that the local circuit looks so good that he almost wants to move back to South Africa and start competing again,” he says.

ADDED SPICE AND SPECIALITY

Along with the existing and new WQS events, there is the Cell C Goodwave at New Pier, the JBU Supertrial and the Ballito Pro Trials.

“It’s really good for us to have the speciality events such as the JBU Supertrial and the Cell C Goodwave,” Colin says. “They add a lot of incentive to be able to make a lot of money and to make it into a Championship Tour event.”

Credibility and some cash up for grabs. Plus, the bragging rights of winning the Goodwave is one every top SA surfer wants.

Now, go light the braai, pour a cold one and drink a toast to the bright future of SA competitive surfing. 🍷

**Anyone who
has never
made a
mistake...**



©Morbo

Has never tried anything new.

www.grahamsmithboards.com



www.surffcs.com



The view north towards Koeberg nuclear power station, with some sick surfing in-between. ©JOHNSON



STORY BY
ETIENNE BUYS

PHOTOS BY
BRENDAN PIETERSE

WELCOME TO MELKBOS;
A PRISTINE LITTLE SEASIDE VILLAGE
SITUATED ABOUT 35 KILOMETRES
NORTH OF THE MOTHER CITY.
LET'S TAKE A SHORT TOUR OF
MY TOWN AND ITS HISTORY, HERE
ON THE BEAUTIFUL WEST COAST.



Golden hour at backline, the perfect place to experience the last few rays of the day.



The Melkbos lifestyle summed-up in a photo; good vibes chilling on the beach, and when the surf is up everyone is in the water.

Losperd's Bay or Melkbosstrand as it is now known, got its name from the *Euphorbia mauritanica* bushes originally found here in abundance and the milky substance they secrete when cut or broken.

The town has also played an integral part of Cape Town history; for one it is the site of the Battle of Blaauwberg, where the British first landed and fought with the French/Batavian troops that were stationed in the area to control the Cape Colony at the time. A cannon to commemorate this battle, which led to the establishment of British rule in South Africa, is situated on our foreshore at the famous Damhuis.

For all the diving enthusiasts, numerous shipwrecks dating back to the Portuguese Discoverers of the Early Renaissance are strewn along our beaches.



Goofy local Jeandre Blignault is one of the most underrated surfers on his backhand. Here he winds one up at Corner.

There are heaps of perlemoen and crayfish too, but make sure you've got your license because our anti-poaching unit is pretty good!

Melkbosstrand is also the landing point for the SAT 3/WASS fibre cable between Portugal and SA, so respect the locals or no more internet. On top of that, we have our own nuclear power station at Koeberg, so you see, we Bos locals do hold all the power in Cape Town.

'The Bos', as it's affectionately known by the locals, is a *dorp* that is surrounded by the *Swartland*, which is renowned for its world class wines and also wheat producing farms.

A strong art culture also exists – yes, us West Coasters do have some class – with a number of renowned artists and authors calling The Bos their home, adding an air of

sophistication to the town.

Melkbosstrand forms the gateway to the West Coast and its scenic route along the R27, as well as the N7 from Cape Town to Namibia, which seems to be quite busy during the winter months with all of the chargers driving up to Skeleton Bay.

For those surfers not heading to Namibia, there is also Atlantic Beach, one of the best coastal golf courses in the Western Cape.

Although the town has grown over the years, it still has that village feel to it, which appeals to a lot of tourists and visitors – this means that the water can get crowded with beginners during the summer months.

MELKBOSSTRAND IS ALSO THE LANDING POINT FOR THE SAT 3/WASS FIBRE CABLE BETWEEN PORTUGAL AND SA, SO RESPECT THE LOCALS OR DON'T GET ANYMORE INTERNET. ¶



The 'dark horse' Tristan Lev knows his way around the Corner lineup.



Regular Indo visitor, Jaco Steyn was probably frustrated he was not shredding in his boardies and made sure this Tubewave lip knew all about it.



Maybe I'm a bit biased, but this is my favourite wave in the world. Tubewave living up to its name. ©COETZER

THE WAVES

Surfing is part of the lifestyle here in Melkbos and we have some good surfers and waves, but we suck at naming our spots. These are some of the waves you'll find in and around town:

OYSTERS

A slamming right reef break mainly for bodyboarders, but on the right swell you can surf it – with your big balls. And if you're too afraid to ride Oysters, you can just eat them at *Lapa*, which is way safer.

SLIPWAYS

Little left, great for the groms.

A-HOUSE

Nice A-frame peak in the right conditions. Perfect for small wave training.

TUBEWAVE

My absolute favourite. Back in the late 1980s and throughout the 90s, Tubewave was the best spot along this stretch of coast. It all started because of the SAT cable that runs into it. Now and then it still shows moments of its former glory, but these days the crowds are a pest and the bloody rip will make your arms feel like jelly afterwards.

KELPLAND

I think this one is obvious.

TOILETS

Named after the original blue toilets, which are now purple. Toilets runs left and right from Kelpland, but is a crapfight with SUPs, bodyboarders, longboarders and who knows what else in the lineup.

WE HAVE SOME GOOD SURFERS AND WAVES, BUT WE SUCK AT NAMING OUR SPOTS.

VANS

Mainly for kite and windsurfing, but can handle swell. Lots of peaks, sharks, longboarders and the occasional maelstrom.

CORNER

Yep, you guessed it, right in the corner at Shark Bay. It used to be one of the most consistent waves on the coast in any condition, now we just pray for banks once a year.

There you have it with our waves; not bad, not good, but lekker!



Diran Zakarian is a damn good surfer and you'll regularly see him sticking sick tricks like this.

Don't underestimate this silent assassin, because Anoush Zakarian can smash the lip with the best of them.



THE LOCALS

Melkbos has its roots deeply entrenched in South African surfing, with pedigree surfers representing Boland, Western Province, South Africa, the UK and even New Zealand all hailing from The Bos.

Growing up as a grommet here I had plenty of top guys to look up to, with the likes of Gavin Rudolph, Stefan Lindeque, Chris Harris, the Liebenberg brothers, the Van Der Merwe brothers, Micheal Moore, Philip Pawley, The Slechter Bros (RIP Dirkie), Dale Pearce and Nic Maski always pushing each other deeper and harder, which set the trend for the new crew that was coming up.

The next generation included surfers like Ewald Van Heerden, Reuben and Tyrone Pearce,



Bos locals; (top L-R) Jeandre Blignault, Gerrit Frylinck, Julian Zens, (middle L-R) Anastasia and Christian Venter, Justin Gomes, (bottom L-R) Joske De Beer, Ettiene Buys and Anoush Zakarian.

Rodney, Roy and Robin Somogyvary, Jeandre Blignault, Diran and Anoush Zakarian, Chantelle Rautenbauch and Stacy Guy.

We also have heaps of underground rippers like Joske De Beer, Nicky Rheeder, Leon and Jean Du Preez, Luke Venter, Justin Torode, Gerrit and Neil Frylinck, Kyle and Brandon Hanekom, plus influential guys like Dutchie pulling in for a beer and a wave when he gets the chance.

With so many good surfers in the lineup it's always quite competitive, and that in turn influences a whole bunch of new groms coming through the ranks. Julian Zens and Christian Venter are leading the pack in that regard. Watch out for these frothing

groms, they will paddle rings around you.

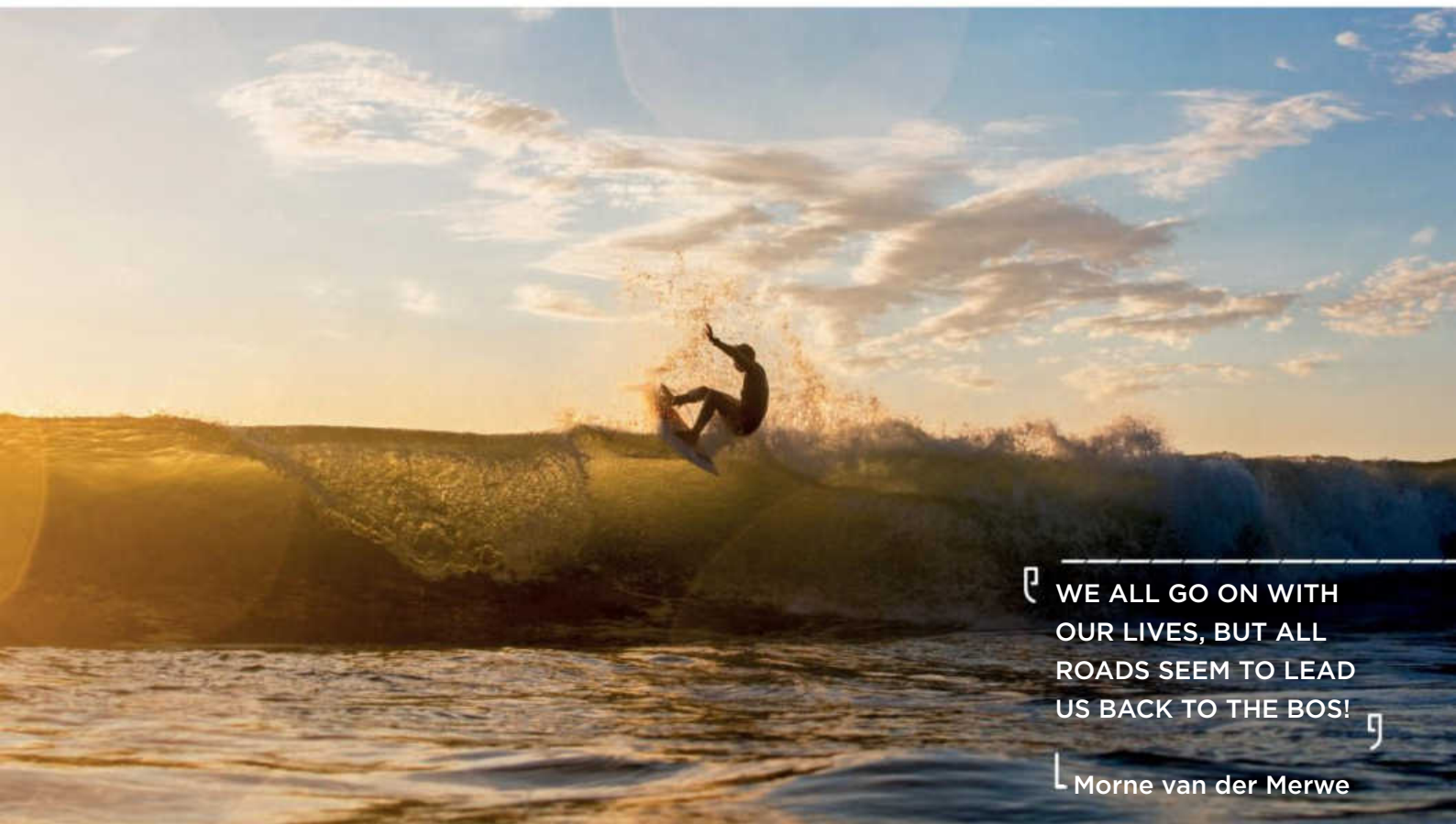
You also can't leave out the big wave boys, with Reinhardt Fourie (who can twist you into a pretzel), James Taylor (already an international name), Ethan and Baz Koopmans, plus Ivan Van Vuuren and his son.

So yup, we have all types of rippers here.

DISCLAIMER

If I've forgotten someone, my apologies, there are too many good surfers to remember and I'll owe you a beer.

WITH SO MANY GOOD SURFERS IN THE LINEUP IT'S ALWAYS QUITE COMPETITIVE, AND THAT IN TURN INFLUENCES A WHOLE BUNCH OF NEW GROMS COMING THROUGH THE RANKS.



WE ALL GO ON WITH
OUR LIVES, BUT ALL
ROADS SEEM TO LEAD
US BACK TO THE BOS!

Morne van der Merwe

One thing you are guaranteed in Melkbos in summer is an epic sunset. Here Julian Zens goes fins-free on a picturesque evening at Tubewave.

WORD ON THE BEACH

STEFAN LINDEQUE

Melkbos is a great place with different wave options from beach to reef breaks. The protected bay is ideal to start and progress. When I grew up in The Bos, we always had good surfing battles between myself, Morne van der Merwe and Micheal Moore, which helped us all during our competitive stages. Melkbos is a true breeding ground for SA juniors.

MICHEAL MOORE

Surfing in Melkbos for me is like being a kid in a candy store, you have so many different options when deciding where to surf.

RYAN PAYNE

The Bos has pretty average waves all year round, but when the elements align it can produce an incredible wave. A true diamond in the rough.

TRAVIS LOGIE

It was a while ago when I used to visit Cape Town every year, but I think the best waves I surfed were at Tubewave. I loved it. Kinda reminded me of Velzy Land or Dairy Bowl, but bigger, more fun, uncrowded and super rippable. I would love to surf a left like that.

MORNE VAN DER MERWE

From *klapping* S's, to popping wheelies on gravel roads on our BMX's, to hanging out at the Blue Toilets either before or after a surf; the landmarks that gave the spots their names might be demolished or have changed colour, but they will always be in my memories. Tubewave at the moment 'tubes' few and far between, but back in the day she did give us *kiff* barrels. Melkbosstrand made me who I am today. We all go on with our lives, but all roads seem to lead us back to The Bos!

There you have it my brus!
Hope you enjoyed the tour
of The Bos I love.
Just remember to respect
the surroundings and the
locals and you will always
be welcomed back.

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Summer Vibes

THE HOTTEST SHOTS OF THE SEASON



Like insects buzzing around Lion's Head, Michael February and a seabird take a summer flight. ©THURTELL





M-Feb, summer-lovin'. ©THURTELL



And that's a wrap - summer is over and we're gunning swiftly towards winter.

Surfers in the Western Cape enjoyed another epic season (as per usual), but frothers from other regions will be letting out a collective sigh of relief, because now it's their turn to score some cooking surf more regularly - if this coming winter should be so kind.

But before the days start getting short, let's take a look at some of the finest images from the Summer of '16/'17.





Single and loving it. ©SPECKER



Barrels of fun down in the Boland. ©GREBE

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After more than a year's-worth of upgrades and repairs, the Durban Municipality have re-opened the Bay of Plenty pier and it's looking as good as new.

The only question now is, do we continue calling New Pier by that name, or does Bay now earn the title?

Whatever the case may be, the cranes are gone, the beach above the high water mark has been planted with natural vegetation that has the birds and bees buzzing, and if the banks play ball, Bay of Plenty may become our new favourite stretch along the Golden Mile.

Davey Van Zyl salutes the men in charge of the upgrades, while busting out his fins at the New New Pier.

©PATTERSON



"Howling winds, freezing water, boiling hot days and lots of traffic; these are not a few of my favourite things but are the reality of Cape Town in summer," says photographer Ian Thurtell

"To get the best moments for a session at the beach breaks here you have to be stealthy; dodging all the tourists and random boards flying in different directions.

But there is always a gap in the elements to snag a memory that sums up an epic season.

For me it's this shot of Rob Tweddle threading an icy barrel no-handed on a rogue day at his local, but there were many other moments worth remembering this season." ©THURTELL

"This summer offered a mixed bag," says East London photographer Pierre De Villiers.

"The banker spots like Yellows and Easterns weren't great, with the preferred east swells getting flattened by howling westerlies as swiftly as they appeared.

On the other hand Nahoan had a great summer, with a decent swell and sand combo making for a consistent playground.

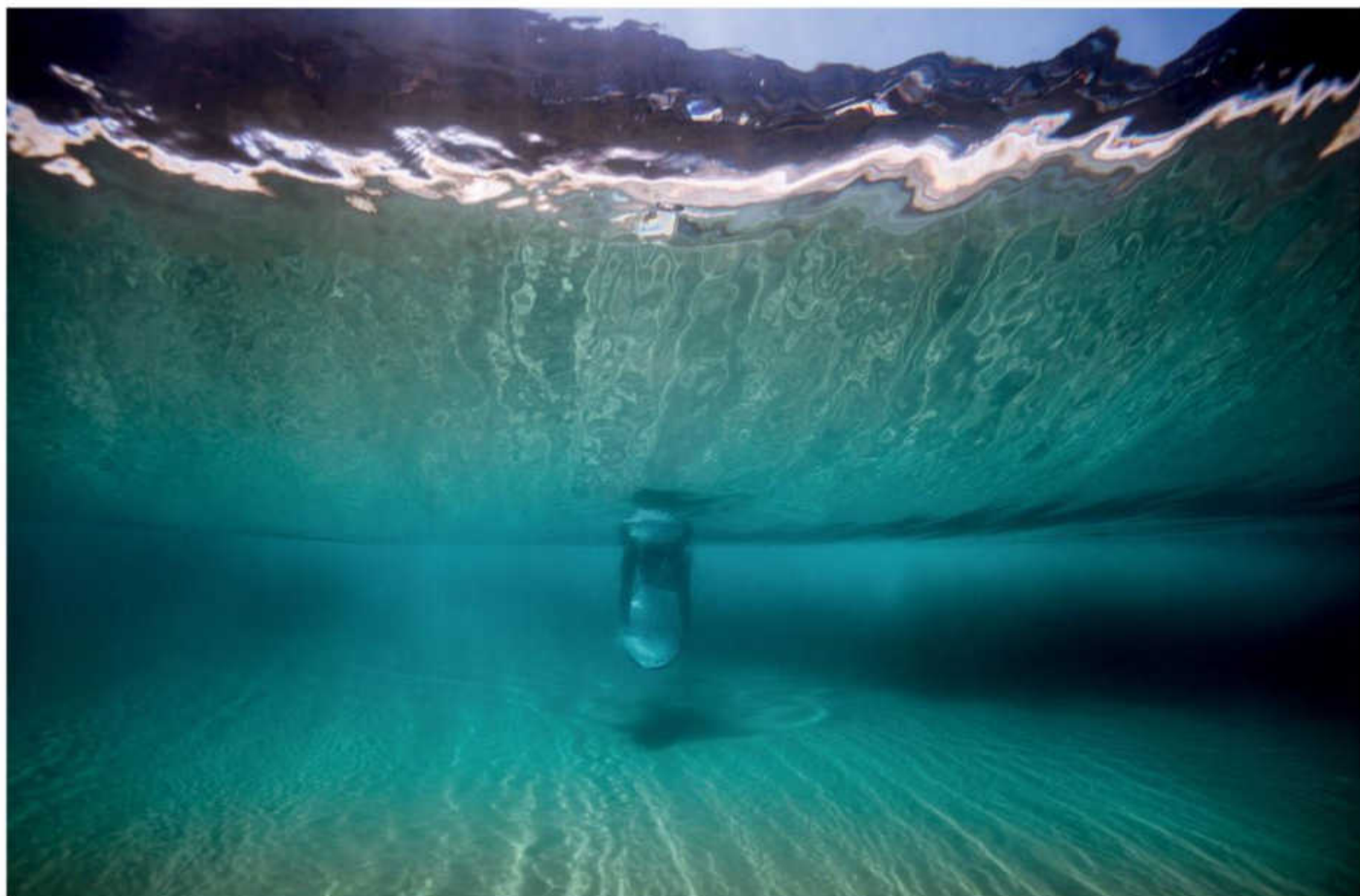
Spots like Glen Eden and Igoda have also had their days with some memorable barrels being ridden, and even though this session at Formyards wasn't all time, there were some fun lips for Michael Monk and crew to smack." @DeVilliers



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East London grom Daniel Emslie added slob-grab airs to his repertoire this season. ©DeVILLIERS



Ducking out for a surf. ©HEALE

Surfers along our east coast have to wait patiently, like they would for a good potjie, for the Indian Ocean to heat up over summer.

And when it reaches the required temperature, then cyclone season commences.

With these tropical storms sending consistent bands of swell from a totally different angle than the usual, it creates something of a conundrum for those looking to score.

Do you surf your favourite east swell-favouring local spot, or hit the road towards those rare gems that only come to life when the angle is just right?

Many, like Beyrick De Vries, choose to hop the border and sample some of the spicy delights served up by our northern neighbour. ©FWING








It's close on a year ago that Sacha Specker had a frightening run-in with a big fish along this stretch of beach, but that hasn't deterred him from getting back out there and into the thick of things. And thick-lipped it was for a number of days this summer.



Here Sacha appears to be raising the roof in his quest to make it into and out of this freight train, which he did before kicking out in a swallow style dive as the wave closed down on him. As they say, you can't keep a good man down. ©THOMPSON 



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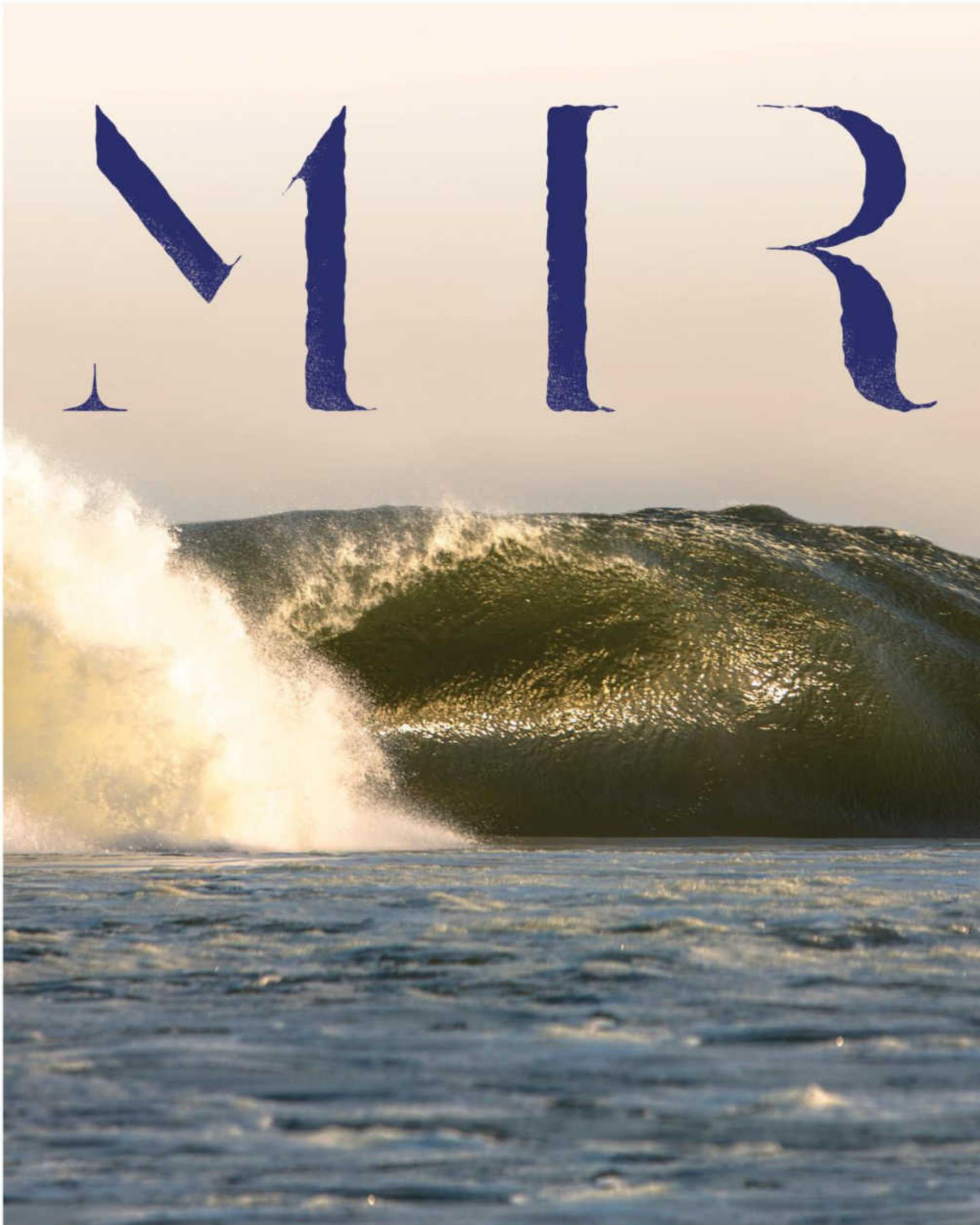
WEEKEND AWAY CHECKLIST*

SURFBOARD

WETSUIT



Volkswagen



AGE

THE EVER-CHANGING STORY
OF SKELETON BAY

by Will Bendix
& Alan van Gysen



But with their fate dictated by wind and tide, if you blink for too long they might just be gone (or become even better).

"SLOW DOWN FOR COFFEE".

The words appear out of the desert, a mirage scrawled in pink and blue on a makeshift chalkboard. But the sign doesn't disappear as we trudge closer towards it while making our way back up the point. Instead an arrow points left to a weather-beaten 4x4 where a cheerful woman from Swakopmund is pouring steaming cups of java for a bunch of shivering surfers. They stand huddled around the small gas stove in their wetsuits. A mocha pot still sits on the boil, puffing wisps of smoke into the air.

"I thought it would be fun to sell some coffee while watching the surfing," says the barista as she froths milk. "Skeleton Bay has become very famous for its waves, you know."

We watch as a goofy footer dips into an impossible left on cue. Half a minute later he is belched out in a plume of spit 500 metres down the point.

"Oh my godddddd! Did you see that?" someone asks in disbelief. The rest of the crew just stare glassy-eyed, too tired to answer as they cradle their cups close to their lips, brains numbed by the cold Benguela current and relentless wind.



20.0000°S

13.3333°E

It's a long walk back up the sandspit after the wave of your life, so why not?



A longer, icy version of Teahupo'o according to some who have ridden both. Good practice then for Jordy to work on his Chopes technique.



A solid swell and a crew of surfers sprint in opposite directions on a cooking day at Skeleton Bay.



UNLIKE THE BARREN
WILDERNESS THAT
SURROUNDS IT,
SKELETON BAY
IS AN INFANT IN
GEOLOGICAL TERMS.
30 YEARS AGO IT
DIDN'T EVEN EXIST.

**IT'S IMPOSSIBLE NOT TO BE
HYPNOTIZED BY SKELETON BAY.**

From the first time you lay eyes on the churning tubes that spill down the edge of the Namib Desert, your mind struggles to answer one question: how can a wave like this be possible? It all appears surreal – the proximity to shore, the sheer length of ride, the intensity with which the waves grind into the desert. The landscape disorients you further. An endless patchwork of caramel coloured sand waiting to swallow the chassis of Land Rovers and bury the bones of ships long run aground. But unlike the barren wilderness that surrounds it, Skeleton Bay is an infant in geological terms. 30 years ago it didn't even exist.

"There just wasn't really a wave back then," says Heiko Metzger, a former Namibian windsurfing champ and lifelong surfer.

Surfing came late to Namibia, far later than neighbouring South Africa where the luxury of warm water and a post World War II beach culture helped nurture a budding surf industry in Durban during the early 1960s. Namibia had kelp and the cold, framed by an inhospitable terrain and, later, a bloody guerrilla war fought between the

South West Africa People's Organisation and South Africa's apartheid government. Hardly the stuff the *Endless Summer* was made of.

The first Namibian surfers were mostly diamond divers like Metzger who sought their fortune in the alluvial deposits that had washed down ancient rivers onto Namibia's shores. They also found waves amongst the sand and wind.

"We would head out and ride the winds, and between sessions watch this perfect little wave peeling about 100 metres before closing out," recalls Metzger of the first time he windsurfed Skeleton Bay in the early 1980s. "Even then the sand blowing across the spit would just disappear into the ocean. We often thought about surfing this much shorter wave, but the two-knot current was just too draining to deal with. Besides, it was great with a sail."

A geological study published in 2003 backs up Metzger's recollections. The study investigated how the sandspit had evolved since 1958, concluding that the peninsula had changed drastically in shape and size. Fuelling this metamorphosis was large deposits of sand moving northwards, carried by the current, winds and waves.

But Namibia has one of the most active coastlines in the world and this pattern of erosion had been playing out for centuries. The big question was why the spit had started to grow and change shape after decades of relative stability. The answer was literally blowing in the wind.

By analysing more than 40 years of meteorological data, researchers discovered that the predominant southerly wind direction had shifted by 20 degrees on average since 1976. This counter-clockwise shift in the prevailing wind direction resulted in sand being deposited from a new angle at a “protuberance” or bump along the spit that marked the top of Skeleton Bay. In effect, a new spit was forming on the back of an old one.

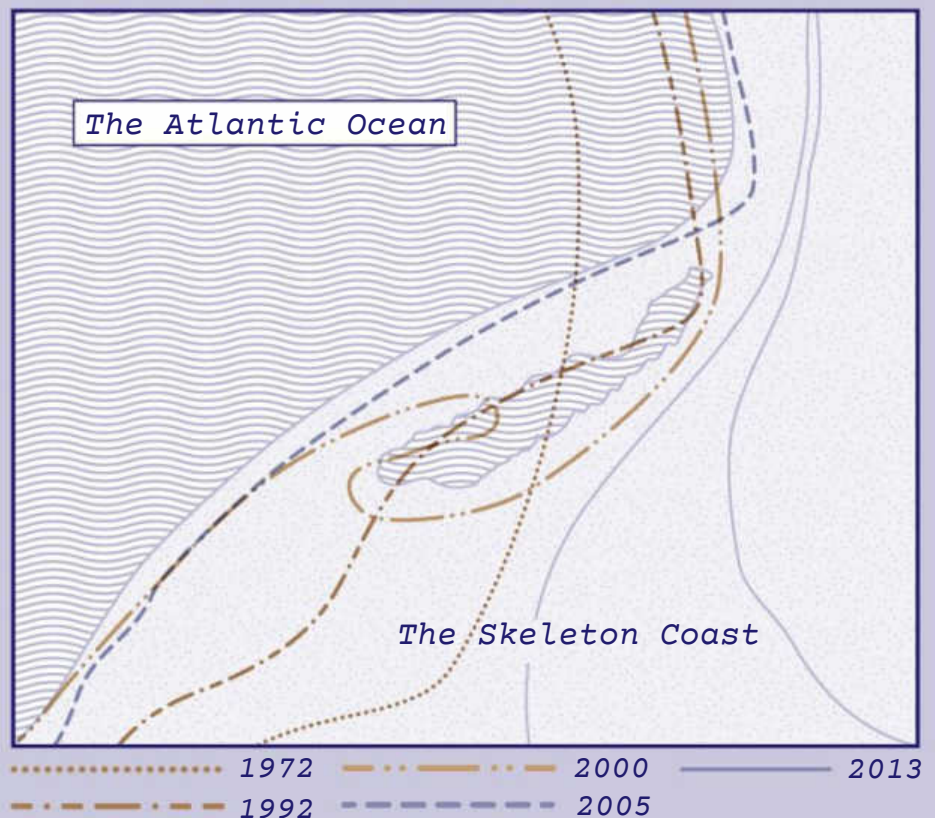
As the bump grew out into the Atlantic Ocean and became more pronounced, the predominant southwesterly swells that sweep up the coast started to carve a deeper bay on the leeward side of the bump, coaxing swells to wrap further and further down the point.

Take your right hand and hold it up flat in front of you with your palm facing away, digits all pressed together. The top of your thumb is the tip of Skeleton Bay where the shallow bay would have started in 1958. To the left of your hand is the ocean, where swells wrap in from the southwest. Now move your thumb as far as it will go so it sits at a right angle to your palm. That’s the shape of the bay today.

At the same time that the bay was expanding, the powerful wave action was moving huge deposits of sand further north in the littoral drift, causing the northern end of the spit (your fingertips) to grow. The study estimated that as much as one million cubic metres of sand flows along Skeleton Bay per year – enough sediment to fill 400 Olympic sized swimming pools. As the wind continued to blow and move sand up the coast, Metzger’s 100-metre closeout evolved into a two-kilometre drainer.

By this stage Metzger had long set sail on a round the world journey with his family. He returned in 2008 to all the hype of the ‘newly discovered’ Skeleton Bay.

“I had to see it for myself, and when I did, I couldn’t believe it was the same place,” says Metzger. “It had drastically changed in shape from 1984. What used to be a sharp, pointed little bay had turned into an extensive bay way better suited to the general swell direction. And the wave it created, well, that was another story entirely.”



The shape of the coastline has changed dramatically at Skeleton Bay through the years.



Hawaiian Koa Smith would travel halfway around the world just for one more wave like this.

AS THE WIND
CONTINUED TO
BLOW AND MOVE
SAND UP THE
COAST, METZGER'S
100-METRE CLOSEOUT
EVOLVED INTO A
TWO-KILOMETRE
DRAINER.



Alex Smith compiling footage for our online viewing pleasure.



Having lead expeditions in the area for decades, Francois Loubser has witnessed the rapid metamorphosis of Skeleton Bay.

DETAILS ARE VAGUE AS TO WHO WAS FIRST TO RIDE THE REVAMPED WAVE IN EARNEST, but one thing is certain: it wasn't Corey Lopez or any of the surfers who accompanied *Surfing Magazine* on their Google Earth Challenge in 2008.

"Ten years ago I told my nephew about this place," says Francois Loubser. "He used to go surf Cape Cross and I said 'you should look here'. We used to come here for fishing expeditions. We would paddle around with our kayaks and see these waves coming down the sand. So he was maybe one of the first to surf here."

Loubser is a devout fisherman and an encyclopedia of knowledge about the birds, wildlife and ever-shifting moods of the desert. The pub of the B&B he runs with wife Lala in Walvis Bay is adorned with fishing photos where a massive set of jaws from a bronze whaler hangs as the centerpiece.

"I landed that right there at Skeleton Bay where the guys surf," he says with a wry chuckle.



Watching it online is one thing, but seeing the phenomenon first-hand is another story entirely and can stop you in your tracks.



"I PUT IT ALONGSIDE
THE HEAVIEST, MOST
CHALLENGING WAVES
IN THE WORLD"

– Craig Anderson



If you're hoping to get the barrel of your life, first you've got to make the drop.

Loubser doesn't surf himself but has become the fixer for many a travelling pro looking for tube enlightenment. He understands the nuances of Skeleton Bay as intricately as any geologist, an education earned through decades of fishing and leading expeditions along these lonely stretches of sand.

His nephew, Shaun Loubser, is part of the tight knit crew of second-generation Namibian surfers and a member of the national surfing team. His polished pigdog technique comes as no surprise, but he is reluctant to claim any dubs on surfing the wave first.

"My uncle did mention it, but the first guys known to ride the wave were a couple of bodyboarders from Walvis Bay, Carlos Figueiredo and Naude Dreyer," says Loubser.

"They would go there just to check out the solid beach break dumpers pulling through the bay. It would break extremely close to the beach and it was mostly a close out, Waimea shorebreak style. We have other spots around the area that break really well on solid swells, so we normally went to these spots instead. But then around 2004 or 2005 the bay started to change and the wave started to show its true colours. I started joining Carlos and Naude after they started talking about how fast and perfect it was."

Around the same time a few other gritty stand-ups were getting dialled into the wave; local surfers like Jock Currie, Torsten

Gossow, Lesley Koen and the legendary Speedy. But it was still uncertain what the wave was really capable of.

"The first few years of riding the wave we never fully realised its potential," says Loubser. "We knew we had a killer beachbreak but didn't think it was a world class wave. Tropical warm water reefs seemed to be more 'world-class' than surfing cold sandspits at that time," he laughs. "We actually used to argue about who got the longest closeout... It took us a while to come to grips with the wave and we only started to realise its full potential around the end of 2006.

"What you have to understand," continues Loubser, "is that the Namibian surf community is very small and we didn't have any pro surfers around who we could learn from and push ourselves. And this wave pushes even the best in the world. When Cory Lopez and his team came over in 2008 and we saw what the pros could do, we knew we had one of the best waves in the world in our backyard."

Surfing Magazine never claimed to have pioneered the wave in their landmark 2008 article but it was easy to assume it was a new discovery. After all, how could a wave so stupendous have been ridden before without the surfing world knowing about it? Although the specific location was never mentioned, a few surfers were incensed, but looking back, Loubser puts it in context.

"Sure, we probably would have had it

alone for a few more years. But they also showed us what could be done on the wave and for this, I'm happy to share the wave with guys that can surf it. Besides, it's not really for everyone."

Craig Anderson agrees. After filming the final section of his signature film *Slow Dance* along the spit, Ando had to recalibrate his expectations of what a wave was capable of.

"Nothing comes close to it," he says.

"There is a section at Desert Point that's about 10 metres long that is maybe of similar speed and shape of the barrel but with all the elements combined – the wind, the current, the power of the open Atlantic Ocean and the sheer length of the ride, nothing compares."

The problem with mirages is that they always look perfect from a distance, but the closer you get, the more you realise you're staring at an illusion.

"It looks prefect, and it can be," says Ando. "But Skeleton is not for the faint hearted. Everything is a challenge there regardless of your surfing ability. At four to six-foot even the best of the best struggle with the take-off and riding the tube. The current is ridiculous, there's no way you can paddle against it. The wave moves so fast and jacks so suddenly that the real challenge is getting in the right spot for an entry, where it's possible just to make the drop and then generate enough speed to make the wave. I put it alongside the heaviest, most challenging waves in the world."



Some extra paddle power came in handy for Thomas King on this bomb.

THE KEY TO ALL THIS UNBRIDLED POWER LIES IN THE BATHYMETRY OF THE COAST.

Not far offshore from the desert, the continental shelf drops rapidly to the Walvis Ridge which reaches over 5 000 metres at its deepest point.

"If you look at the bottom topography around Skeleton Bay, it suggests the wave doesn't lose much energy to friction on the sea floor," says Dr Bjorn Backeberg, Manager for the South African Data Centre for Oceanography. "You've got quite a deep ocean and all of a sudden the sand just lifts up as deep ocean swells that have lost hardly any of their energy explode onto the bank. Then it boils down to the angle of the coastline in relation to the swell, and that's what makes it so sick. With a WSW swell it literally just runs straight down the point

like at J-Bay, but it's obviously a sand point which has got less jagged edges, which makes it even more perfect."

The downside is the relentless current that develops along the spit, where there is no headland to buffer the sweep or deep channel to transport all that trapped energy back out to sea.

"The waves moving towards the coast basically push a whole bunch of water onto the shore and it has to go somewhere, it has to balance out," explains Backeberg. "So you get this current, this longshore transport that essentially moves water along the coast."

Ask any punter who has surfed Skeleton Bay and they will tell you about the ruthless wash that drags you down the point as soon as you start paddling. But this exhausting conveyor belt is also a key ingredient to what

makes Skeleton Bay so unique.

"As the wave bends in, instead of just breaking it starts draining the excess water from the longshore transport," says Backeberg. "That's probably why you see it growing taller or getting thicker and mutating as it moves down the point, because there's more water being sucked up into the wave from further upstream."

Unlike most other sand-laden points around the world, there seems to be no limit to what the spit can handle. In May 2014, an intense frontal system broke off its usual south-to-north trajectory and spent a couple of days swirling in the South Atlantic Ocean, growing more intense as it flung a deep purple blob towards the west coast of Africa.

Sean Holmes, former winner of the Red Bull Big Wave Africa and thorn-in-the side to



UNLIKE MOST OTHER SAND-LADEN POINTS
AROUND THE WORLD, THERE SEEMS TO BE
NO LIMIT TO WHAT THE SPIT CAN HANDLE.



The Namibian version of Desert Point, swallowing then spitting Granville West out.

Kelly and Andy at J-Bay, was on the beach the morning the swell made landfall. He was joined by a contingent of professional tube hounds who had jetted in from Hawaii, Europe and Australia, but nobody was quite prepared for what greeted them as the fog lifted.

"I have never stood on a beach with a bunch of other pros looking at empty, perfect waves without knowing whether any of us actually wanted anything to do with it," recalls Holmes. "Some waves were quite simply impossible to paddle into. Sitting on the beach watching in awe seemed the most manageable thing to do."

After a few hours of watching, a handful of surfers braved the jump off, then another handful and then another as they cautiously began trading the waves of their lives.



Desert waves slowly marching their way seaward.

ZAG 41.3 / PLACES

Around midday Holmes found himself down the bottom of the point, exhausted after a long ride, when the horizon went black. Photographer Alan van Gysen was swimming further up when he saw something he never thought possible – the same wall of water breaking far out to sea, then reforming and concentrating all its energy on the point as it started to unload down the bay.

“I was in the danger zone and had to paddle for my life to escape annihilation,” says Holmes. “There was so much water moving that if I’d been caught inside, I would have been lost to the ocean. What you need to understand is that a 12-foot swell hitting the shore here breaks in the same way and shape as a four foot wave on any other day. The only difference is that it stands taller, throws thicker and wider, but is still as perfect. The four waves that I proceeded to just scratch over were like nothing I have ever seen in my lifetime of surfing. The only other place in the world where I have experienced or seen waves of a similar shape, thickness and intensity would be Teahupo’o. But the ride at Teahupo’o is the blink of an eye compared to Skeleton.”





INSERT A CAPTION ABOUT THIS IMAGE

Takes notes if you want to know how to build the perfect wave, because here is the blueprint.

IRONICALLY THE SAME LIFE FORCE THAT MAKES SKELETON BAY SUCH A PHENOMENON MAY KILL IT IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

Experts believe accelerated erosion could break up the sandspit before the next generation gets to ride it. Every swell that goes by carries this warning. The dark brown tubes are full of grit, made heavy by the sediment they are constantly scouring out of the shoreline. In amongst the piles of broken boards that blossom along the sand flats are deep rivers of water, stretching

their fingers towards the lagoon that lies on the other side of the spit. The same study that investigated the evolution of the sandspit warns that the bank separating the lagoon from the sea may soon be breached as wave action cuts deeper and deeper into the bay.

"Already the lagoon is cutting through the bottom part of the point," says Dirk Redman, another local who has been riding the wave since it came to life. "The sand is always changing. In five years' time, who knows, the wave may be gone."



Not there for the waves.



"IN FIVE YEARS' TIME, WHO KNOWS, THE WAVE MAY BE GONE".

- Francois Loubser

WE'RE STILL DRINKING OUR COFFEE

when Francois Loubser squints his eyes and motions to a series of poles further up the point.

"You see those poles?" he says. "Two years ago surfers used to walk back up the point to the end of the poles and jump in there. Now surfers are walking past the poles, at least 150 metres further south, maybe more, and jumping in. The point is still growing."

Loubser attributes this fresh growth to the break up of an even bigger sandspit called Sandwich Harbour to the south.

"Right now Sandwich Harbour is being completely eroded away," he says. "All that sand is flowing and being deposited here at the top of Skeleton Bay, and then again further north."

It's a strange contradiction, this wave that is simultaneously growing and eating itself. A wave that, a decade ago, nobody thought was possible.

Someone asks Loubser if he thinks Skeleton Bay will keep growing, making the wave even longer, or if the sandspit will eventually break apart and swallow itself.

He shields his hand from the sun as he squints into the afternoon glare. "Who knows what the desert will do," he replies.

Bring a few, because Skeleton Bay chows boards for breakfast, lunch and dinner.



HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY SURF SKELETON BAY

— WITH BENJI BRAND

Nothing will quite prepare you for your first wave at Skeleton Bay, but a couple of pointers can never hurt. And who better than GoPro guru Benji Brand to show you the way.

EVERY TIME I GO THERE the wave breaks completely differently. Sometimes the sandbar is quite far out, and other times it's breaking right on the shore. Sometimes the wave stands taller, and sometimes the wave is short and really fat and heavy. It all depends on the swell size, direction and tide.

TO RIDE THE WAVE SUCCESSFULLY you need to focus on certain sweet spots in the lineup, places where the wave will actually let you in. Managing your energy output is important too. It's an exhausting place to surf with the rip and how intense the wave is, and then the long walk back up the point. It's hard not to get too excited but you need to pace yourself.

THE CLOSEOUT SHOREBREAK AT THE BOTTOM OF THE POINT IS HEAVY.

A couple years ago when that ginormous swell hit I was by myself towards the end of the point when a set came through that actually broke on some outside reef. I thought I was going to get washed through into the shorebreak by, like, a 15 footer. It's probably the heaviest shorebreak on earth. It's really easy to drown in there. Best to avoid it.

THERE ARE QUITE A FEW CHALLENGES TO THE WAVE - the cold and the fear of what's lurking below is part of the mental challenge. The drop is really heavy, it's pretty hard not to get axed! You've just gotta paddle into it as hard as you can and commit. Once I'm on the wave, I just try to go as fast as I can cause it's hard to make the wave if you don't.

THE SKELETON BAY SURVIVAL GUIDE:

Skeleton Bay hugs the edge of one of the oldest deserts on earth, so it's the kinda place you want to come prepared. Here's what you're going to need:

RUBBER, LOTS OF IT

Water temperatures hover between 12-15 degrees Celsius and if that doesn't worry you, consider the wind chill that will cut a hole through the most blubber-insulated walrus. A good 4/3 is mandatory. A hoodie and booties won't go amiss either.

A THICKER BOARD

Not only are you going to be floating all that rubber, but you want a sled that's going to paddle harder and get you into a wave as early as possible. Don't worry about how a thicker board will handle through turns – you're not going to be doing any. Did we mention Skeleton Bay likes to chew six-o's and spit them out like toothpicks? Make sure that quiver is glassed strong.

MORE FINS

It's no coincidence that some of the most barrelled individuals in the world ride quads when it comes to Skeleton Bay. Just ask Koa Smith or Benji Brand, who claim four fins gives you the extra speed and drive a wave like this demands. "I just try to go as fast as I can cause it's hard to make the wave if you don't," says Benji. Hard to argue with that logic.

OFF-ROAD SKILLS

Did we mention you're out in the middle of the desert? You're going to need a four-wheel drive (readily available for hire in any of the major coastal towns like Walvis Bay, Swakopmund and Luderitz) and the ability to drive it. The flat marshy plains that border Skeleton Bay love nothing more than swallowing the tyres of 4x4 kooks.

HUMILITY

You're going to get your arse kicked. But you might also get the wave of your life. Be prepared either way.



The Benji Brand POV.





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27TH - 29TH JUNE

29TH SEPT - 1ST OCT

STOP 4 - CAPE ST FRANCIS

29TH SEPT - 1ST OCT



ZICZAC



VONZIPPER



PHILIP NEL / MORNÉ LAUBSCHER



Surrounded by majestic cliffs and white sand beaches, Phil knows exactly where to find the best point of view of his local.

If you've got a problem, Phil will fix it – especially if it's an injury.

The biokineticist from Boland is a frother of note, who is always keen to shred whether it's two-foot or twenty, barrelling or *pap*.

But Phil isn't the kind so eager that he'll paddle straight back to your inside. No sir, he is more likely to give you a smile and a wave, then crack a beer with you on the beach after a sick session.

Name: Philip Nel **Age:** 34

Nickname: Kaptein

Local spot: Caves

Occupation: Biokineticist

Favourite board: 6'0" x 19 1/4" x 2 1/2" (30 litres) 'Kingston' from Liquid Freedom, shaped by Duncan Gray.

Number of boards snapped: Enough to slowly pile the garage full. I can't part

with the memories, so I just keep most for who knows what.

Worst grom abuse suffered: Growing up in the nineties meant rough Boland Junior initiation.

Been there, done that: Been doing the Indo pilgrimage for seven years now, and found our happy place somewhere in North Sumatra.

Cardinal sins committed (answer 1-7):

1) **Left your wax face-up on a sunny day:** In my wife's car.

2) **Ridden an SUP:** And enjoyed it (laughs).

3) **Missed good waves to visit a girl:** Nope. She loves the beach.

4) **Lied why you weren't out during a swell:** Lied to surf a swell.

5) **Missed epic surf because of a hangover:** Drink more water!

6) **Peed in a borrowed wetsuit:** Sorry Frikkie! Drank too much water.

7) **Claimed a lame barrel:** Blame it on the hangover.

Pets: Pair of Jack Russels, roosters, squirrels and cats mixed-in with some of Lara's other wild animal sanctuary 'patients.'

Current Star: Jordy, Twig and Bianca.

Future Star: Adin Masencamp.

Most underrated: @dietakhaarman

Favourite surf movie: *Sipping Jetstreams*.

Favourite gadget: Nixon Blaster.

Last book you read: *Blitzed: Drugs In Nazi Germany* by Norman Ohler.

Groovy music: *Band of Skulls*, *Thrice*, *Manchester Orchestra*, *Pantera* and *Youngsta CPT*.

Last time you laughed at a mate: Rory whipping me convincingly in golf, again, after scoring an Albatross. I should take him on in tennis next, me thinks (laughs).



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GRAHAM SMITH SURFBOARDS

FRIAR TUCK

SHAPER:
Graham Smith
DIMENSIONS:
5'10" x 20 3/4" x 2 5/8" - 33.41L
FIN SETUP:
5 fin

This is our advanced surfboard for heavier surfers, that can be used for beginners or more mature surfers too. Well-balanced volume is the key factor behind this model, as this design will accommodate small, medium or even head high waves when used by good surfers. The deep modern concave, low entry rocker, will generate speed, making this board quick off the mark, and turning easier. The moderate tail lift and double concave vee in the tail allows for easier rail-to-rail transition.

EMAIL:
info@grahamsmithboards.com
TEL: (+27) 31 368 4022
WEB: www.grahamsmithboards.com



GRAHAM SMITH SURFBOARDS

THE TWIN

SHAPER:
Graham Smith
DIMENSIONS:
5'10" x 20" x 2 1/2" - 32L
FIN SETUP:
Twin fin

Classic old school Twin Fin refined to take on any surf conditions.

EMAIL:
info@grahamsmithboards.com
TEL: (+27) 31 368 4022
WEB: www.grahamsmithboards.com



CLAYTON SURFBOARDS

THE DV3

SHAPER:
Clayton Nienaber
DIMENSIONS:
5'7" x 19 3/4" x 2 5/8" - 28.1L
FIN SETUP:
Thruster

The DV3 is an epic small wave board with ultra performance. Perfect when the waves are small, giving you an incredible amount of speed from the flatter water entry. The extra volume helps the rail pop back and not catch, allowing for flow and maneuverability in your surfing. Matched for all skill levels in 1-4 foot waves.

E-MAIL: cindy@claytonsurf.co.za
dean@claytonsurf.co.za
TEL: (+27) 31 368 4825
WEB: www.claytonsurfboards.co.za
ADDR: 44 Milne street, Durban Central, 4001



CLAYTON SURFBOARDS

THE EGG

SHAPER:
Clayton Nienaber
DIMENSIONS:
5'6" x 20 1/2" x 2 5/8" - 34.8L
FIN SETUP:
5 fin

Egg V2 is our modern interpretation of the classic Egg. Ridden at your minimum length and maximum volume. A super fun alternate to your standard shortboard with the fun retro vibes... think volume combined with fun equals good times.

E-MAIL: cindy@claytonsurf.co.za
dean@claytonsurf.co.za
TEL: (+27) 31 368 4825
WEB: www.claytonsurfboards.co.za
ADDR: 44 Milne street, Durban Central, 4001



COLBY SURFBOARDS

MUSH MONSTA

SHAPER:
Kevin Colby
DIMENSIONS:
6'0" x 20 1/2" x 2 1/2"
FIN SET UP:
Thruster

Expect a good time when you jump onto our newest model the Mush Monsta. This board goes fast, has incredible drive, is easy to surf and can be surfed aggressively allowing for airs and big tail wafts. Similar to the "Wicked Genie", the wide point has been moved further back. The Mush Monsta features a rounder fuller outline with a big rounded pin for added smoothness through the turns. This board should be ridden 3-4" shorter than a performance shortboard.

EMAIL: kevin@colbysurfboards.co.za
TEL: (+27) 31 337 0914
CELL: (+27) 82 337 5378
WEB: colbysurfboards.co.za
ADDR: 42 Brickhill Rd, Durban



SPIDER

HYDRO X

SHAPER:
Spider Murphy
DIMENSIONS:
5' to 7'
FIN SETUP:
Thruster

Designed to extract every last ounce of energy from a wave and capable of handling the extremes of powerful waves to mushy beach breaks. The Hydro X excels from J-Bay, Indo to the Mentawais because of its incredible speed and performance in the barrel. A fullish outline and light single concave take the capability of Spider's bottom deck Hydro-Channels to new levels. The result is an all-round high performance board suiting everyone from the average Joe to the hardcore competitor.

EMAIL: boards@safarisurf.com
TEL: (+27) 31 337 4230
WEB: www.safarisurf.com
ADDR: 6 Milne Street, Durban, South Africa, 4001

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SPIDER

CLASSIC NOSE RIDER

SHAPER:
Spider Murphy
DIMENSIONS:
9' to 10'
FIN SETUP:
Thruster

Designed for riding the nose and gliding in small, flat conditions, this board can turn on a dime and is the ultimate small to medium surf nose rider. It features a flat rocker, wide nose, even plane-shape and a square tail with good tail lift to glide through the turns.

EMAIL: boards@safarisurf.com
TEL: (+27) 31 337 4230
WEB: www.safarisurf.com
ADDR: 6 Milne Street, Durban, South Africa, 4001

DUTCHIE SURF DESIGNS

COSMIC

SHAPER:
Dutchie
DIMENSIONS:
5'4" x 21 1/4" x 2 5/8"
FIN SETUP:
Keel or Quad

The 1970's fish has become the retro icon. This design is famous for its great flow and amazing speed. Full and forward outline, beaked nose and wide tail featured with double curve swallow tail and box channel. Super flat, fast and fun, almost like a skateboard on water. Add this model to your quiver for the ultimate fun factor.

EMAIL: info@dutchie.co.za
TEL: (+27) 21 554 3592
WEB: www.dutchie.co.za
ADDR: no.43 Stella Park, 57 Stella Road, Montague Gardens

FISHSTIX

FREAK FISH

SHAPER:
Simon Fish
DIMENSIONS:
5'2" to 6'4"
FIN SETUP:
Twin keel or quad

For fast, carving clean lines, this is your board. While the double wing in the tail gives it extra sting and response off the back foot, the full parallel outline and low rocker help produce the incredible speed of the board. The channels create hold and drive water out through the tail into the deep swallow tail, where the water is released giving you more control and projection off the tail.

EMAIL:
simon@fishstixsurfboards.co.za
CELL: (+27) 83 557 7794
WEB: www.fishstixsurfboards.co.za
ADDR: 49 Milne St, Durban
@Fishstixsurfboards
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PETER LAWSON SURFBOARDS

F22 HIGH PERFORMANCE

SHAPER:
Peter Lawson
DIMENSIONS:
6'0" x 18 3/4" x 2 5/8" ~ 27.2 L
FIN SET UP:
Thruster

I have done some slight changes to the concave and rocker that increases acceleration through the turns at high speeds. The rail to rail turns are flawless making you feel like you are surfing like John John. The feedback on these F22 High Performance boards has been well received. It is important to chat to me about your next F22 as this makes shaping the perfect balanced stick much easier.

EMAIL:
peterlawsonsurfboards@vodamail.co.za
CELL: (+27) 82 441 5374
ADDR: 49 Milne St, Durban
Above Cool Runnings

NATURAL CURVE SURFBOARDS

THE FISH

SHAPER:
Hugh Thompson
DIMENSIONS:
5'8" x 21 1/8" x 2 5/8"
FIN SETUP:
Keel fins

The classic Fish is one of the best all-round boards on the market. These boards are designed to be short, wide and have volume distributed from nose to tail, making them great paddlers and along with their performance characteristics they're fast on any type of wave and in any size. Driven by glassed-on keel fins, The Fish is definitely a must in everyone's quiver.

EMAIL: hugh@naturalcurve.co.za
CELL: (+27) 83 360 0003
WEB: naturalcurve.co.za
ADDR: 31 St. Croix Street, Jeffrey's Bay

GOTCHA SURFBOARDS

UFO

SHAPER:
Peter Lawson
DIMENSIONS:
5'10" x 20" x 2 1/2"
FIN SETUP:
Thruster

Free 3-fin set and FREE delivery to anywhere in RSA. The increased foam volume through the chest area makes this board paddle like a dream and super stable on the take-off. Ideal for all levels of surfing and very forgiving for front foot placement mistakes, which do happen when you get a bit lazy. Excellent performer in 2 foot to 6 foot wave conditions, but also loves locking the rail for chasing the barrel or swooping the open face when the swell pumps. Custom orders from R3950 depending on size.

EMAIL: info@surfhq.co.za
TEL: (+27) 31 368 7568
WEB: www.surfhq.co.za
ADDR: 65 Sylvester Ntuli Rd, Durban



GROW SURFBOARDS

G3

SHAPER:
Glen Row

DIMENSIONS:
5'1" x 17½" x 2" - 17.8L

FIN SETUP:
Thruster

Shaped for Luke van Wyk. This model was originally developed for Eli Beukes and Luke Slijpen and has since been refined and perfected for the up and coming younger groms. It's fast, loose and perfect for you if you are looking for a next level board to take your surfing further. Try one of them, I guarantee you will like it or your money back!

EMAIL: growsurfboards@gmail.com
CELL: (+27) 82 895 5460
ADDR: 4 Dorsetshire St, Paardon Eiland

LAMPEEZ SHAPES

THE DIET PLONKA

SHAPER:
Lamps SA, Kevin Olsen France

DIMENSIONS:
5'9" x 18¾" x 2½" - 27L

FIN SETUP:
5 fin

This is designed and tested by KO in France. This is the most popular model in our range since 2009. Diamond, squash, swallow or round tail. Available in polyester resin or bio epoxy, with a recycled composite stringer. Rapid response with a lively flex. Lighter, stronger and more sustainable. We export worldwide and freight is at a reasonable rate eg: to Australia, New Zealand, Europe and Japan is ZAR1800 for air freight per board. Mauritius is only ZAR800 per board by air freight.

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REBEL SURFBOARDS

FISH

SHAPER:
Thys Strydom

DIMENSIONS:
5'8" x 22" x 2½"

FIN SETUP:
Twin keel fins

This board is all about fun.

EMAIL: info@baysurfboards.co.za
CELL: (+27) 82 324 0849
WEB: www.rebelsurfboards.co.za
ADDR: 8 Croix St, Jeffrey's Bay

THE BOARDROOM

THE PHATANT

SHAPER:
Dennis Ellis

DIMENSIONS:
5'6" x 19¾" x 2½" - 28.31L

FIN SETUP:
Quad

This model was used by Anthony Smyth to earn a gold medal at the 2016 World Adaptive Surfing Champs in California. Well done Ant! Features are a bevelled 50/50 rail, flat deck and deep double concave with spine into a light vee tail and extra tail kick. Incredibly quick off the top with none of the usual quad hang ups. This baby will take your small wave surfing to a new level.

EMAIL: ellisdennis.de@gmail.com
CELL: (+27) 83 735 4865
TEL: (+27) 41 586 2276
WEB: www.theboardrooms.co.za
FB: The Boardrooms
ADDR: 48 Brickmakerskloof, Southend, P.E.

HAYDEN SHAPES

HYPTO KRYPTO

SHAPER:
Hayden Cox

DIMENSIONS:
5'6" x 19¾" x 2½" - 28.31L

FIN SETUP:
Thruster (Futures)

Currently one of the most in demand and best selling surfboards globally, The Hypto Krypto is a balance of tradition and modern performance. Suited to the elite level surfer and to the everyday surfer, it is often referred to as the 'one board quiver' for its versatility across all types of surf conditions - from small 1-3 ft beach breaks, to barrels of up to 8ft.

EMAIL: jarrod@liquidforce.co.za
CELL: (+27) 21 556 8172
WEB: http://liquidforce.co.za/hs/
ADDR: 3 Tritonia Road, Blouberg, Cape Town

HAYDEN SHAPES

THE PLUNDER

SHAPER:
Hayden Cox

DIMENSIONS:
5'10" x 20½" x 2½" - 34.6L

FIN SETUP:
5 fin

The Plunder is a fuller plane-shape board designed to bring versatility and fun to small waves without forgetting about that superior performance spark too. The unique surface area in the outline allows the board to trim with surprising speed in the weakest of conditions, while the soft diamond tail paired with the kick in the rail-line rocker toward the back third, gives The Plunder an ability to respond and turn when a good section lines up.

EMAIL: jarrod@liquidforce.co.za
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M*A*T SURFBOARDS

PASSION POP

SHAPER:
Mat Marais

DIMENSIONS:
5'9" x 19" x 2 3/8"

FIN SETUP:
Thruster

This is the ultimate small wave performance board, if you want to take your surfing to the next level without sacrificing volume. Single to double concave with pulled in tail for critical turns in the pocket. Ride 1 to 3 inches shorter than your height and a 1/4 inch wider than your standard shooter. Scarfing/FCS/Futures and made with Xtra Foam.

EMAIL: info@matsurfboards.co.za
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WEB: www.matsurfboards.co.za
FACEBOOK: Matsurfboards
ADDR: AECI Industria Golf entrance, Beach rd, Strand

PYZEL

THE BASTARD

SHAPER:
Jon Pyzel

DIMENSIONS:
6'2" x 19 1/4" x 2 1/2" - 30.5L

FIN SETUP:
Thruster

JJF rides this board in most conditions and comps. A bit more rocker than our Flash for a snappier feel, but still keeps its drive and speed through flatter sections. The single concave throughout adds to the speed and the subtle hip in the tail makes it easy to redirect. The tail is a touch more pulled in, giving bite and drive through turns, and we flattened out the deck to re-position the volume for a lively feel. Great for big carves in powerful waves, and still feels great in weaker surf.

EMAIL: info@pyzelsurfboards.co.za
CELL: (+27) 76 545 6245
WEB: www.pyzelsurfboards.com

SPACECRAFT

COSMIC HIPPIE

SHAPER:
Dan Riding

DIMENSIONS:
4'11" x 20 1/2" x 2 1/2"

FIN SETUP:
Twin fin

The outline is designed to aid existential being. The rails are shaped for spiritual enlightenment. Concaves allow for intergalactic lift. Fin setup for interstellar connection.

EMAIL: thunkinfo@gmail.com
CELL: (+27) 73 966 3593
WEB: @spacecraftsurfboards.blogspot.co.za
ADDR: 9 Laurentia Way, Hout Bay, Cape Town, 7806

SLATER DESIGNS

OMNI

SHAPER:
Tomo

DIMENSIONS:
6'0" x 20 3/4" x 2 3/8" - 39.3L

FIN SETUP:
FCSII, Futures, quad or thruster

The Omni takes modern functional aesthetics to new places with a clean and minimalist meeting of Kelly's performance round tails and TOMO's modern planing hull designs. The Omni will revel in smaller waves up to 5ft with smooth and extremely radical performance capability. Suited for intermediate and advanced surfers. Please beware of design rip-offs.

EMAIL: surfshop@countryfeeling.co.za
CELL: (+27) 42 293 1679 Michael
WEB: www.firewiresurfboards.com
Country Feeling Surfshop
Jeffreys Bay

FIREWIRE SURFBOARDS

PYZALIEN SWALLOW

SHAPER:
Pyzel

DIMENSIONS:
6'0" x 19 1/4" x 2 1/8" - 30.1L

FIN SETUP:
FCSII, Futures, quad or thruster

The Pyzalien Swallow Tail is a great all round performance board designed to maintain speed and flow with a very lively feeling in all types of waves. The fuller outline with a slightly wider flatter nose rocker is great for paddling that gives instant speed and acceleration from the bottom contours of single/double concave running into a nice vee off the tail. This board will increase your wave count and improve your performance surfing.

EMAIL: surfshop@countryfeeling.co.za
CELL: (+27) 42 293 1679 Michael
WEB: www.firewiresurfboards.com
Country Feeling Surfshop
Jeffreys Bay

FIREWIRE SURFBOARDS

AMIGO

SHAPER:
Pyzel

DIMENSIONS:
6'0" x 19 3/8" x 2 1/2" - 30.4L

FIN SET UP:
FCSII, Futures, quad or thruster

The Amigo has a very fast user friendly rocker that gains speed easily and has a loose snappy feel in all conditions. The outline is full with a nice hip leading into a wide tailblock which adds speed and breaks free on demand. The bottom is single concave running all the way through with just a touch of double concave between the fins. This combo gives the board planing on top of the water with speed especially through flatter sections.

EMAIL: surfshop@countryfeeling.co.za
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- 3 3/4" nose
- 15 1/2" wheelbase
- 65mm Roundhouse Radial Smoke wheels.



31.25" FORT KNOX

- 9 7/8" wide
- 6 1/2" tail
- 3 3/4" nose
- 17 1/2" wheelbase
- 69mm Roundhouse Concave Smoke wheels.

ENQUIRIES:

E-MAIL: info@carverskateboards.co.za
WEB: www.carverskateboards.co.za

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SurfYogis products are made with natural, clean ingredients. The ingredients include, beeswax, zinc oxide, cocoa powder, coffee extract, vanilla bean, coconut oil and castor oil. Our surfscreen zinc will shield you from the sun 100% of the time in the water and on the land. Guaranteed to last for hours. Made for surfers by surfers.

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ENQUIRIES:

E-MAIL: rian@darkstardirect.co.za
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The Premiere V-Truck Black is a great carving deck due its length and width. The large deck allows a rider's feet to fit completely within the rails; providing stability and carving control.

Could be recommended for downhill, carving, or if you are a taller rider.

Specs:

- SurfSkate V-Truck System
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- Weight: 9lbs
- Wheel base: 21.5"
- Traction Pad
- Abec 5 bearings
- 65mm wheels

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ENQUIRIES:

E-MAIL: warren@darkstardirect.co.za
CELL: (+27) 797 834191
WEB: www.darkstardirect.co.za

GOTCHA

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ENQUIRIES:

E-MAIL: info@surfhq.co.za
WEB: www.surfhq.co.za
TEL: (+27) 31 368 7568
ADDR: 65 Sylvester Ntuli Rd, Durban

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WEB: www.darkstardirect.co.za



ATALIA BUNCE 079 - 508 - 5432
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TAMARYS DE MAROUSSEM 082 - 932 - 8477
TAMARYS@LOCALANDABROAD.CO.ZA

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@nickliotta

SURF MAROC

TAGHAZOUT, MOROCCO



@sidney_boulanger

The Taghazout region is blessed with a multi aspect coastline, which means on any given day a wide range of waves can be found to suit the whole spectrum of surfing abilities. Likewise there are surf spots to suit an array of swell, tide, and wind variations. Typical Surf Season: September - April.

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ENQUIRIES:

EMAIL: enquiries@localandabroad.co.za
TEL: (+27) 87 508 0004
CELL: Atalia (+27) 79 508 5432 ; Tamarys (+27) 82 932 8477
ADDR: The Workstation, 1 Old Main Road, Umhali, 4390

ELANDS BAY GUESTHOUSE

ELANDS BAY



The Elands Bay Guesthouse is conveniently situated at the top of the famous point. There are numerous accommodation options to suit the budget of every surfer, group or surfing family - starting from R250 for a dorm to R2950 for the Main House that sleeps 14.

Elands Bay Guesthouse is fully furnished and self-catering with braai facilities, DSTV, free Wi-Fi, games room and an enclosed swimming pool to chill at between sessions. The guesthouse is not pet friendly, but Point Cottage welcomes any canine travellers.

ENQUIRIES:

TEL & FAX: (+27) 22 972 1229
E-MAIL: info@elandsbayguesthouse.co.za
WEB: www.elandsbayguesthouse.co.za
ADDR: Elands Bay Guesthouse
184 Kreef Road
Elands Bay
Western Cape
South Africa

TOFINHO BEACH COTTAGES

TOFINHO, MOZAMBIQUE



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Tofinho is a kilometre South of Tofo, 500km north of Maputo and is easily accessible with a normal sedan vehicle - no 4x4 needed. With self-catering cottages, the friendliest staff and even fully catered tours offered on request, this would definitely be a trip worth taking.

ENQUIRIES:

TEL: Gideon (+27) 81 438 5511
TEL: Ricardo (+258) 842 9922 83
E-MAIL: info@tofo.co.mz
WEB: www.tofo.co.mz

ONCE IN CAPE TOWN

KLOOF STREET, CAPE TOWN



Once in Cape Town is an all-star hotel, centrally located on Kloof Street, Cape Town, where you can tailor-make your own experience. Every room is en-suite. You can stay in a standard twin/double room, while the budget conscious traveller can also choose a shared 4-bed en-suite room and make some new friends. Rates include a lekker breakfast on the go with a deluxe coffee from "Yours Truly", and fast free Wi-Fi. There are daily free activities - head down to the beach for a surf, hiking Lion's Head - we even have a fire pit in the back garden! Bus stop to the beaches and free off street parking. New terrace deck area with live music and rocking surf industry events. Stuck in Jozi for work? Check out their new Johannesburg version, "Once in Joburg" for a laid-back, yet comfortable urban stay with all the amenities of a city hotel.

ENQUIRIES:

TEL: (+27) 21 424 6169
E-MAIL: book@onceincapetown.co.za
WEB: www.onceincapetown.co.za
@OnceYouthHotels
ADDR: 73 Kloof St, Cape Town Central

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ENQUIRIES:

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TEL: (+27) 82 432 5513
WEB: www.shapesofafrica.co.za
ADDR: 4 Bond Street, Mount Moreland



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Power to you



SHOT BRU

DAMN, WE LOVE YOUR PICS

PRESENTED BY

Hurley



An icy swim at Llands resulted in this classic snap by Chase Dell.



A powerful gouge in Gonubie by Paul Love. Photo by Gordon Wilson

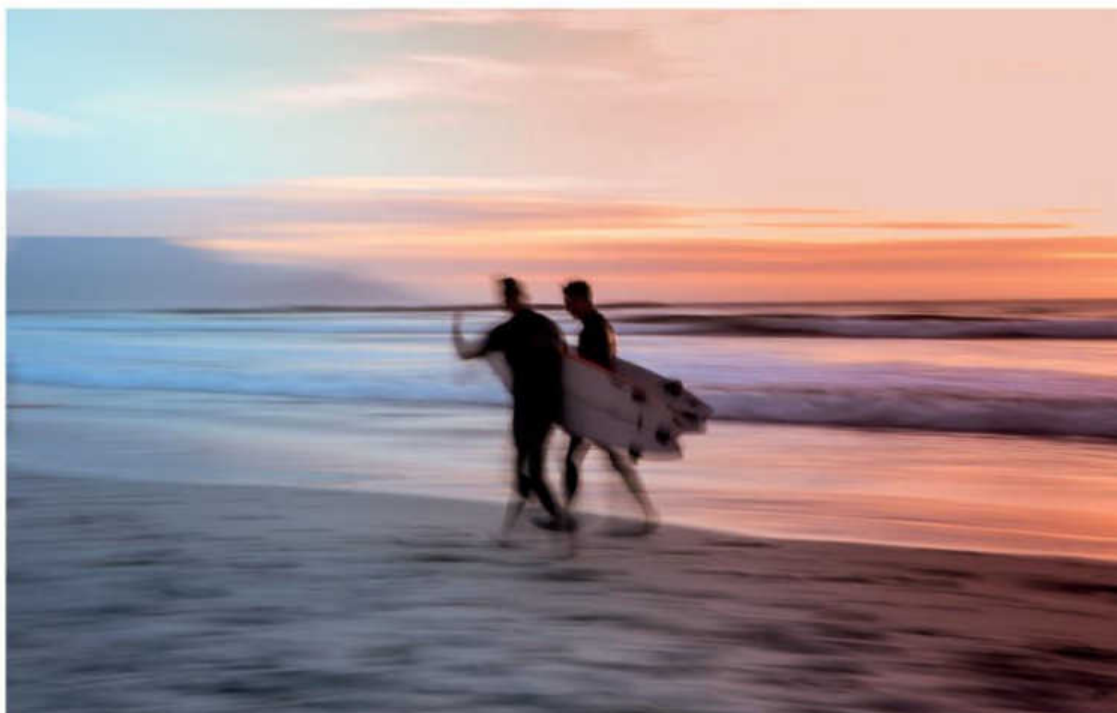


↑ **WINNER** 🖐️

A well-composed shot by Clinton Richardson showing some good surfing by Karl Steen and a very big boat.

X **R1000**
OF PRODUCT

Glowing after an epic evening session. Photo by Manie Van der Hoven





SHOT BRU

DAMN, WE LOVE YOUR PICS

PRESENTED BY

Hurley



Eli Beukes *klaps* it hard
in Kommetjie. Photo by
Gunnar Steinart



York van Jaarsveldt
ensconsed at Crons.
Photo by Olivia Anderson

SHOT BRU / ZAG 41.3

Shot by Snap On

↑ **WINNER** 🖐️

Pure gold from this issue's winner, Mark Jago, shot somewhere in the Overberg.

R2000
OF PRODUCT

SurfSure Insurance Brokers

is the first company in South Africa to have taken the initiative to structure tailor made insurance cover for all surfer's and water enthusiasts' specific needs.

As surfers, we the SurfSure team, are also qualified brokers who love the ocean and have been in the insurance industry since 1969. We strive to provide peace of mind for our clients and for them to enjoy **a hassle free insurance experience.**

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Brendon performs a Kerrupt flip in KZN that's as easy as 1-2-3: (1) Hit the section just right. (2) Turn your head to face your tail, grab your rails and somersault. (3) Pray that you land.





FLIPPING KERRUPT

with Brendon Gibbens / photos by Greg Ewing

Kerrupt flips feel great because you can really push hard when you hit the section.

As with anything in surfing, timing is crucial. If you're able to hit the lip at the perfect time, just a little bit ahead of a barrelling section, you're pretty much set.

All you have to do from there is turn your head towards the tail of your board and do a somersault. Another crucial part of the trick is to make sure you get the grab, although that's kind of a natural progression when you're doing the somersault.

Once you're flying through the air doing a somersault, you can't really do anything else but hope that you'll land on your feet.

I remember seeing a black and white sequence of Dane doing a Kerrupt in an old issue of Surfer – it was shot in Tahiti if I remember correctly. Ever since seeing that, and the Volcom-sponsored ripper in Campaign 2, I've been keen on the trick.





I was in Kommetjie the other day at the end of Dienaar Road – otherwise known among the Kom skom as Goofballs – wondering if I should suit up and paddle out or go home and hammer nails into my eyeballs. At least I'd be able to do the mutilating in peace with nobody shouting at me for the hammer or stealing all the nails. It seemed preferable to getting into the water with 57 other people stealing all the waves and shouting at me for dropping in.

I watched disconsolately as a line of nine paddled shoulder-to-shoulder for the same wave. In front of them, a couple of dozen surfers on the inside scrambled to avoid the charge of the *laaitie* brigade. A few bailed, a couple of girls screamed, the others ploughed grimly on, praying to the god of surfing that they wouldn't get speared, bludgeoned or, worse, a ding in their board.

I'm kidding. There is no god of surfing. If there was, he wouldn't have allowed surfing to explode into the mainstream the way it has. He would've known there were only a limited number of ridable waves on any given day at any one spot and would have kept the numbers down.

I don't know how he'd do this. If I knew, I'd be the god of surfing. Maybe I am. Maybe I'm just one of those really useless gods that drink too much and would rather

sleep than do an honest day's work. Or even a dishonest day's work.

Surfing was once the preserve of kombi-driving rebels and outlaws. Now even people with proper jobs and BMWs are getting involved. It's just not right.

Surfing has to be the only sport in the world that's rapidly being destroyed by its own popularity. Imagine if you went down to the tennis club on a Saturday morning and there were 140 people on every court by 7:00am all hell-bent on playing their own matches. Or you go for a pick-up game of footie with your mates and a few minutes later dozens of aggro idiots appear from nowhere, run onto the field and take over. They don't even bring their own ball.

I've been thinking of ways of deterring people from surfing and the only thing I can come up with involves sharks. Problem is, the last time a surfer got fatally attacked in South Africa was years ago. That isn't going to put anyone off surfing. With odds like that, it might even encourage them to start.

I don't know how to get sharks to cooperate in this poorly thought out plan. They're notoriously arrogant and rarely take advice, no matter how well meaning it might be.

Seals are regularly spotted among surfers on both sides of the peninsula. I don't know what they want. Waves, probably. Sharks

are meant to love 'em to bits. They're the *Nandos* of the sea. But not even a fat, juicy Cape fur can entice a great white into the line-up these days. It's hopeless.

The other option is to get shapers to start making exploding surfboards. Not all of them, obviously. Nobody wants *Apocalypse Now* at backline, even though today Charlie most definitely surfs. And his brothers and sisters and cousins. The exploding boards would work on a similar principle to landmines. Obviously I don't mean those big fragmentation mines that can cripple a tank. I'm not a monster, you know. I'm talking about a small charge buried discreetly in the top deck of, say, every five boards that are made. The idea is that it will detonate under a certain amount of pressure. Perhaps once the surfer has learnt to do a bottom turn. Explosives could also be resined into the nose of longboards so that the first time the surfer manages to walk to the nose, he gets a nasty shock, sells his board and takes up golf instead.

There is a third, more extreme, option. Surfing is a drug, right? Anyone who has been at it for long enough will agree with me. And if you don't, you're not a surfer. Or you've never tried drugs. Either way, you're no friend of mine.

Where was I? Oh, right. So if surfing is a drug – which it is because like all addicts



we get crazy and unpredictable if we go without it for too long – then we need to lobby the government to get it banned. That should thin out the crowds. If you get caught surfing – perhaps by jet ski-mounted cops in yellow Speedos – you’re sent to a rehabilitation centre in Pretoria for a month. There, you will be subjected to aversion therapy. Strapped into a cheap office chair, you will be forced to watch a loop of Addington Beach in an easterly gale. The video will be intercut with images of screaming babies stung by bluebottles.

I might need to rethink this one.

Point is, I can’t fight for waves any more. Well, I can. But I’d need to be armed, perhaps with a very small crossbow. Nobody wants guns in the water. Tiny eco-friendly crossbows, though.

I do know that if I keep on paddling away from the encroaching crowds, I’ll be in Madagascar by June. The crowds there will push me further east – past Australia and Hawaii where I definitely won’t get a wave – through the Panama Canal and across the Atlantic. By 2020 I will have circumnavigated the globe and be back in Kommetjie without having got a single wave to myself.

I’ve heard people – mostly owners of surf shops – saying treacherous things like, “It’s never too late to start.” Please don’t do that. Don’t encourage them. We need to be telling

surfers that it’s never too early to stop.

A Facebook friend who runs a surf school posted this recently.


“A lady came to visit me on Saturday from a company based in SA and said she wants to organise private group surf lessons for their employees starting this weekend. There’s 200 employees in the company. I hope most of them want to surf.”

I tell you what, Bianca. I’ll pay you not to give them lessons.

Okay, sure. I could take a chance and go to, I don’t know, Spitsbergen in the Svalbard archipelago and hope to find an uncrowded spot. But I don’t really want to compete with polar bears. The pack at New Pier is bad enough. Anyway, I bet I’d get there and find an iceberg with, “Twiggy was here” carved into it.

A guy I know pulled up at Goofballs. He encouraged me to paddle out. I never told him about the option of hammering nails into my eyeballs. I didn’t know him well enough for that. Instead, I just moaned about the crowds.

“Pull rank,” he said. Rank? I thought about it. “Listen, ous. I was surfing before Simon Anderson invented the thruster. Before car guards. Before you were born. So when I paddle for a wave, you back off. Got it?”

Yeah, that’ll work. 



AVAILABLE AT FINER
LOCAL SURF SHOPS AND
RIP CURL STORES COUNTRYWIDE



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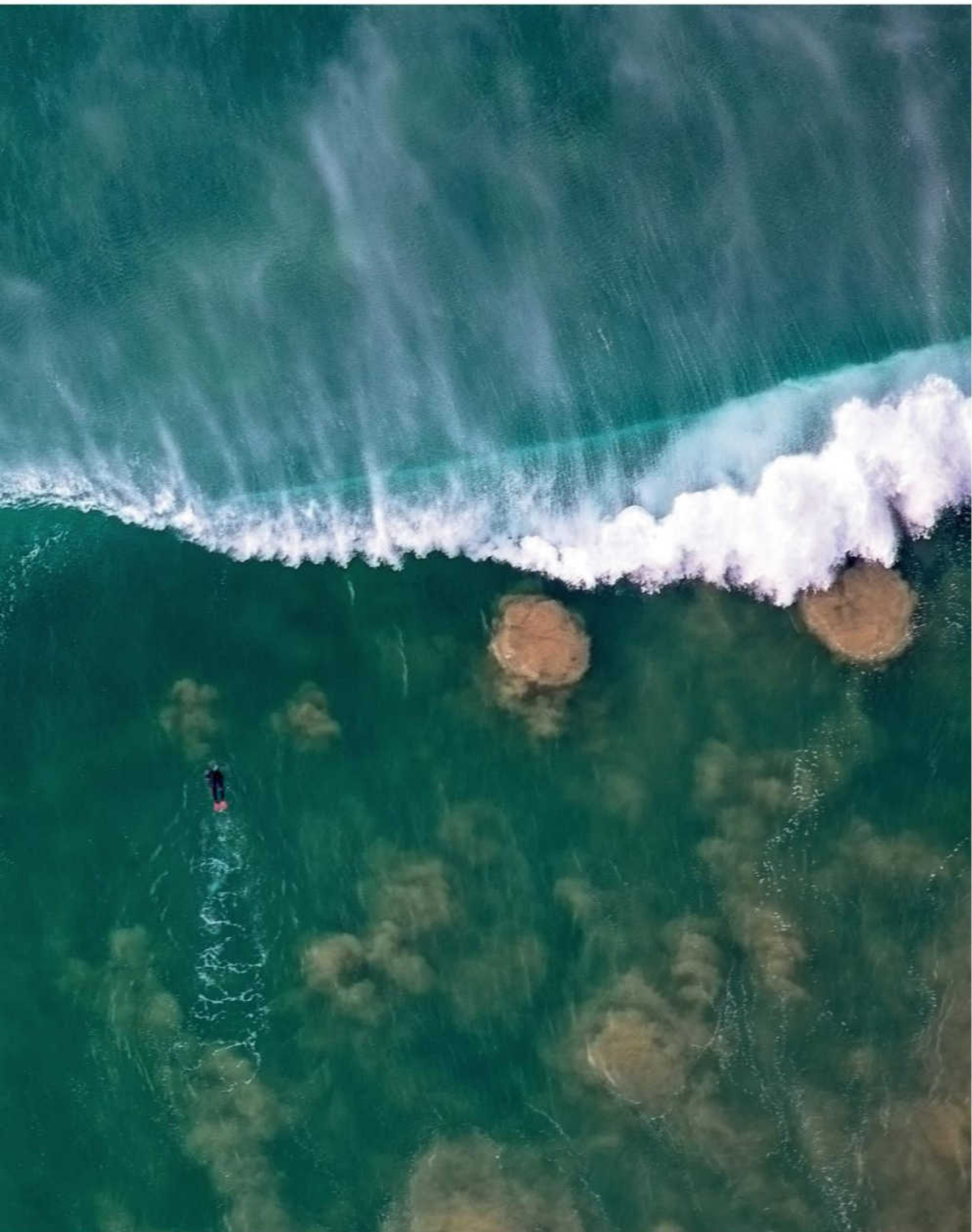


DREAM TEAM

WORDS AND PHOTOS

ALAN VAN GYSEN

UNLESS OTHERWISE CREDITED



A seemingly lonely figure, WSL photographer Kelly Cestari, dives below a Supertubes freight train while bringing us the day's best action.

When our lone world tour campaigners Jordy Smith (**CHAMPIONSHIP TOUR**) and Grant 'Twiggy' Baker (**BIG WAVE TOUR**) paddle out to do battle with the world's best, we could be forgiven for thinking they're alone out there on the global stage.

And although they're the only surfers actually competing on the Championship Tours at present, there's a whole team of Saffas hard at work just in the wings, off centre stage, representing us proudly.

From the dawn of professional surfing, South Africans have been at the forefront; both leading the charge in the water and spearheading the body that is responsible for hosting events and crowning the world champions of our sport. You can go right the way back to 1969 when Max Wetteland, Ian McDonald and Ernie Tomson ran the first ever Durban 500 at the Bay of Plenty to trace the roots, before Peter Burness, then Secretary of the Natal Surfing Association, would take over as contest director the following year.

Under Peter's guidance the event, renamed the Gunston 500, would go on to attract the world's best to compete against SA's top surfers, and still exists today in the form of the Ballito Pro – the world's longest-running professional event. Peter's leadership abilities did not go unnoticed and would lead to his eventual appointment as President of the IPS – which would eventually become the ASP and then the WSL as we know it today.

Since then Saffas have played a pivotal role within the professional surfing body, both working for and creating the tour we know today. Touring judges through the decades have included: Dave Fish, Tim Williams, Solly Berchowitz and Graham Stapelberg; event organisers and regional managers Paul Botha, Graham Stapelberg and Colin Fitch; media heads Pierre Tostee and Kirstin Scholtz; and of course the surfers themselves. But more about these legends in an article to follow.

For now let's start in the present and see where history and the hard work of our fellow Saffas has got us, with six South Africans currently making a mark on the WSL backstage.

HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED IN WORKING FOR THE WSL?

I was sponsored by Roxy from the age of eight and competed on the Women's World Championship Tour for four years until 2010, when I got into commentating through Roxy. Since 2014 I have worked full time with the WSL.

WHAT'S YOUR JOB DESCRIPTION?

WSL Sportscaster.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR HIGHLIGHT TO DATE WORKING ON TOUR?

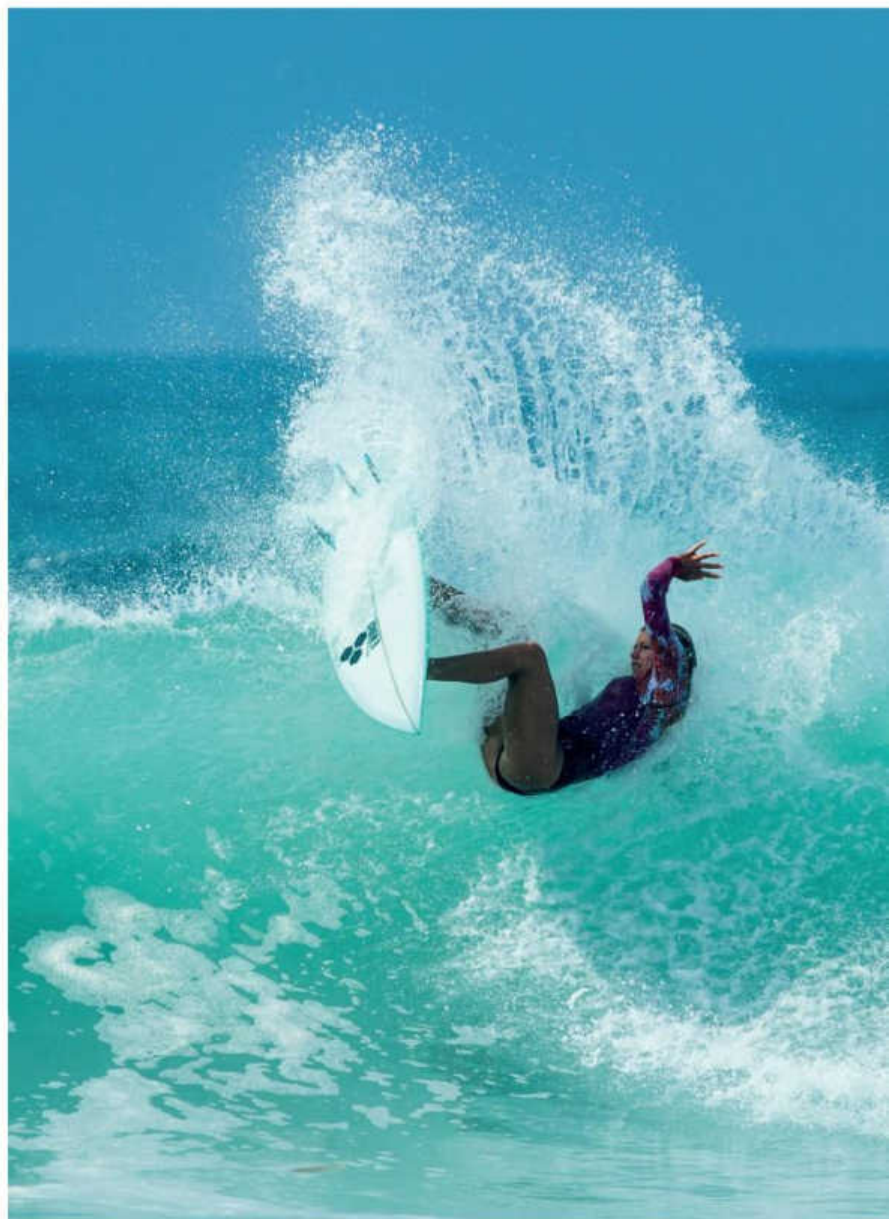
Watching the Tahiti contest from the channel, and coming home for the J-Bay Open every year.

WHAT ARE THE PERKS OF THE JOB?

Being paid to be at some of the most incredible places, free-surfing and exploring on the lay days, while watching the contests from the best places when the events are on. It's not always six-foot and perfect but it's kind of the most fun ever!

WHAT ARE THE LOWS OF THE JOB?

You're always moving around and it can get lonely. It's also tough dealing with people straight after they compete – being a former competitor you know the heart and soul that goes into what they are doing, and all the hard work in the lead-up. It can be pretty taxing.



The early wake-ups are tough, and even just making sure that you're on-point all day. We have 14-hour days in Europe, and it's back-to-back. There's definitely a challenge in everything that we do, and with that, there are the ups and downs.

DESCRIBE A TYPICAL DAY IN YOUR LIFE AT AN EVENT?

The average working day entails waking up at around 5:30am to get ready for the day, then I make my way to the Dawn Patrol show and if it's on, I'll watch all the heats and do sideline reports for the live broadcast.

**" IT'S NOT
ALWAYS SIX-
FOOT AND
PERFECT BUT
IT'S KIND OF
THE MOST
FUN EVER "**



Rosy makes the most of a lay day with a fierce layback in California. ©MILLER



ROSY HODGE
— SPORTSCASTER —



©MILLER

NAME ROSY HODGE

HOMETOWN EAST LONDON

CURRENTLY RESIDING IN CALIFORNIA



FAVOURITE WAVE ON TOUR
J-BAY

**"ROSY IS SO PROFESSIONAL
AND I COULDN'T BE MORE
PROUD TO HAVE HER ON TOUR."**

- JORDY SMITH



GIGS CELLIERS — COMMENTATOR —



NAME GIGS CELLIERS

HOMETOWN NEW PIER, DURBAN

CURRENTLY RESIDING IN HERMANUS,
WESTERN CAPE



FAVOURITE WAVE ON TOUR
J-BAY



**BEST SURFER TO NEVER
HAVE WON A WORLD-TITLE**

CHEYNE HORAN AND JOE ENGEL AT THE END OF THE 70'S AND EARLY 80'S. BRAD GERLACH AND MATT ARCHBOLD, MATT HOY AND RICHARD CRAM IN THE 80'S AND 90'S. ROB MACHADO, SHANE DORIAN, KALANI ROBB AND ROSS WILLIAMS IN THE 00'S, AND BOB MARTINEZ AND DANE REYNOLDS RECENTLY.

HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED IN WORKING FOR THE WSL?

I have been involved with commentating events since the early nineties. The Gunston 500 was outside my surf shop and I used to listen to guys like Solly Berchowitz and Barry Wollins back in the day, and thought as a then world title holder I may have a little something to add. Guys like Pierre Tostee (Mr Price Pro), Seth Hulley (Oakley Pro Juniors) and Jevon le Roux (Hurley SA Champs) kept calling me up after that, and I did a few Billabong Pros at J-Bay thanks to Cheron Kraak. Having competed and being passionate about several aspects of the sport and its industry has kept things relevant for me.

WHAT'S YOUR JOB DESCRIPTION?

Well, commentating is what I do but that role has evolved along with the quality of the broadcasts that WSL are now producing. So now I'm doing various anchor roles and play-by-play commentary, whereas guys like Pottz and Ross Williams are more in an analytical roll. It's trickier than it seems as you're running live and the whole world is watching.

WHAT ARE THE PERKS OF THE JOB?

Ask any of the staff on tour and they will say travel and seeing the world's best in action, but judging by my new wetsuit size I would say the food (laughs).

WHAT ARE THE LOWS OF THE JOB?

Long hours and the travel schedules can be tough. In saying that everyone loves their particular roles, and watching events unfold knowing that your input is part of the final product is very rewarding.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR HIGHLIGHT TO DATE WORKING ON TOUR?

It's been an evolving thing so highlights are replaced as you grow. Certainly doing CT events are the highest on the list and being on duty with world title wins like John John and Tyler this last year was memorable. Being on beach duty for Mick Fanning's encounter at J-Bay can't be described as a highlight, but it's certainly a cemented memory.

**" WATCHING
EVENTS UNFOLD
KNOWING THAT
YOUR INPUT IS
PART OF THE
FINAL PRODUCT
IS VERY
REWARDING "**

DESCRIBE A TYPICAL DAY IN YOUR LIFE AT AN EVENT?

Wake up at 4:00am, then get some coffee and make sure you have your ride to the contest site ready for the pre-broadcast meeting. There are a few hours before the Dawn Patrol show starts around first light, and often events will go on hold but we remain on standby – after all it's live television and expecting the unexpected is part of that.

WHAT DO YOU DO ON A LAY DAY?

People like Strider (Wasilewski), Peter Mel, and Rosy Hodge are surf groms, so jumping in with them will ensure we grab a surf somewhere. It's a privilege experiencing the world, so taking in sights, cultures and cuisine is always rewarding.

WHY DO YOU THINK THERE ARE SO MANY SOUTH AFRICANS ON TOUR?

Generally everyone on tour has a dedicated work ethic and I assume Saffas have that reputation. No matter what country you hail from it's a great experience working with the WSL, and I'm excited to see what the future holds as more and more people follow the broadcasts of events, and further down the line the mainstream impact as surfing gets included in the 2020 Olympics.



KELLY CESTARI

— PHOTOGRAPHER —



NAME KELLY CESTARI

HOMETOWN DURBAN

CURRENTLY RESIDING IN ADELAIDE

SOUTH AUSTRALIA



FAVOURITE WAVE ON TOUR
BACKDOOR



**BEST SURFER TO NEVER
HAVE WON A WORLD-TITLE**
TAJ BURROW



Whether he is treading water or taking a break on the ski, Kelly (far left) has the angle covered.

HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED IN WORKING FOR THE WSL?

Years back I snapped my femur giving pro snowboarding a go. Licking my wounds at home and giving my future some serious thought, I decided to give my other love, photography, a real chance. When I thought my portfolio was good enough I approached Pierre Tostee, and with enough persuasion he let me assist him on some events and it progressed from there.

WHAT'S YOUR JOB DESCRIPTION?

I don't really have a job description, but you could say Senior Photographer for WSL. Capturing photographs is not the only aspect though, there is a lot of behind-the-scenes processing, editing, image management, etc.

WHAT ARE THE PERKS OF THE JOB?

Travelling to places I otherwise wouldn't see, and meeting people I otherwise would not meet.

WHAT ARE THE LOWS OF THE JOB?

Travelling! In 2016 I spent nine months on the road – nine months away from family. Without sufficient planning and thought, it takes its toll on family life.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR HIGHLIGHT TO DATE WORKING ON TOUR?

When I was a teenager at high school I hated my name, then Kelly Slater started his reign as king of surfing and I accepted my name as being cool. Over the years to have documented Slater's world titles has been a very big highlight, and then this year to have witnessed the rise of John John.

DESCRIBE A TYPICAL DAY IN YOUR LIFE AT AN EVENT?

Waking up early for the call – actually arriving well before that to secure some parking (laughs). Then it's the sunrise, the morning lineups, etc, to shoot. If the event is on it's a full day of shooting, editing and image management. Documenting the action is a major part but people also want to see those behind-the-scenes lifestyle moments, so capturing those are very important too. My day doesn't stop when the heats end, there are still a few hours of desk work afterwards. A good workflow makes for efficient work.

WHAT DO YOU DO ON A LAY DAY?

Lay days still have their requirements. Sometimes the conditions might not be good enough for competition but still good enough for some free surfing or practice, which is always good to shoot. If there are no waves then I get out and make some images to show off the location. If it's terrible I'll watch a movie or read a book.

WHY DO YOU THINK THERE ARE SO MANY SOUTH AFRICANS ON TOUR?

I think the general perception is that South Africans are hard workers, not just in surfing but in general we have an excellent work ethic. We are also friendly and easy to get on with, which is important when you have a very large working team. Specific to surfing, South Africa has some world-class breaks, top-level athletes, photographers, judges and commentators. It's only natural that there will be a group rising to the top.



TRAVIS LOGIE

— COMMISSIONER —



NAME TRAVIS RICHARD LOGIE

HOMETOWN DURBAN

CURRENTLY RESIDING IN BEVERLY HILLS

(WORKING FROM SANTA MONICA, CALIFORNIA)



FAVOURITE WAVE ON TOUR

I CAN'T DECIDE BETWEEN
TEAHUPO'O OR RESTAURANTS



BEST SURFER TO NEVER HAVE WON A WORLD-TITLE

TAJ BURROW FOR SURE,
I'VE ALWAYS BEEN A HUGE
ADMIRER OF HIS TECHNIQUE

HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED IN WORKING FOR THE WSL?

Former CEO Paul Speaker told me while I was still on Tour that whenever I retired they'd like to have me on board.

It was a no-brainer for me. I've lived and breathed pro surfing, so I was very keen to stay involved in my passion.

WHAT'S YOUR JOB DESCRIPTION?

QS and Junior Commissioner.

At Junior and QS levels, overlooking career paths, scheduling, formats, rules and regulations and making sure the integrity of the sport is maintained throughout.

WHAT ARE THE PERKS OF THE JOB?

Being able to travel and surf some of the best waves on the planet.

WHAT ARE THE LOWS OF THE JOB?

You're always going to make a call that doesn't work out, it's just how the ocean works. So when careers are on the line and athletes lose because of the conditions it's difficult not to feel responsible – even though no one can or will ever fully predict what the ocean will do from hour-to-hour.

DESCRIBE A TYPICAL DAY IN YOUR LIFE AT AN EVENT?

It depends on the waves really; if it's firing you can relax and get through some meetings with the regional staff or surfers, but if I'm not confident in the conditions I'll just be glued to the heats and monitoring every set.

WHAT DO YOU DO ON A LAY DAY?

There are always a few meetings to be done here and there, but I'll always have a surf or two even if the waves are bad, then play some golf.

WHY DO YOU THINK THERE ARE SO MANY SOUTH AFRICANS ON TOUR?

Ja, the South Africans on tour aren't scared to grind, although I can't speak for myself here (laughs), but I think the reason there are quite a few of us working on tour is because South Africans are generally easy to get along with and are team players.



**" YOU'RE ALWAYS GOING TO MAKE A CALL THAT
DOESN'T WORK OUT, IT'S JUST HOW THE OCEAN WORKS "**





GRAHAM STAPELBERG

EXECUTIVE
VICE PRESIDENT



NAME GRAHAM STAPELBERG

HOMETOWN WESTVILLE

CURRENTLY RESIDING NEWPORT BEACH

CALIFORNIA. WSL HQ IS IN SANTA MONICA



FAVOURITE WAVE ON TOUR

J-BAY



**BEST SURFER TO NEVER
HAVE WON A WORLD-TITLE**

DANE KEALOHA



Bringing you the world's best surfers in the world's best waves; that's the WSL's aim. Jordy Smith doing his part at Supers.

WHAT'S YOUR JOB DESCRIPTION?

I oversee all the tours of WSL, which includes the CT, QS, Junior, Longboard and Big Wave Tour.

HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED IN WORKING FOR THE WSL?

I originally got my start as a travelling international judge with ASP back in 1986. Prior to that my first ever event for the ASP was the Cape Town Surfabout in 1985. I got my CA in South Africa after graduating from the University of Kwazulu-Natal.

The ASP was going through some growth pains at the time, so using my professional expertise I helped with the restructure of the organisation and was later hired as their Financial Controller in 1988, before being appointed Executive Director in 1995.

I held that position for four years before I moved on to Billabong as their Global VP Marketing. I was at Billabong for 15 years and throughout this time period remained on the ASP Board of Directors. When WSL

acquired the ASP, I was asked to be the endemic brand representative on the WSL Board and then was hired in February 2014 as Chief Strategy Officer which evolved to my current position of EVP/GM of Tours and Events.

DESCRIBE A TYPICAL DAY IN YOUR LIFE AT AN EVENT?

Be up by 6:30am, work with the Events team to ensure all the key touch points at the event are running smoothly. Meet with Government officials and event partners. Then I'm always on standby throughout the day to put out any fires. At the end of day I have a debrief with the team to get ready for the next day.

WHAT DO YOU DO ON A LAY DAY?

Go for an early surf and then back to my computer to make sure planning for the next events stay on track and the work back at WSL headquarters doesn't fall behind.

**WHAT ARE THE PERKS OF THE JOB?**

Going to some of the best surf locations on the planet, and continuing to be involved in the culture and the cutting edge of the sport.

WHAT ARE THE LOWS OF THE JOB?

When you're on the road, which is a significant number of days in the year, there is no difference between a Monday or a Sunday.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR HIGHLIGHT TO DATE WORKING ON TOUR?

I now have great friendships at every stop on tour.

WHY DO YOU THINK THERE ARE SO MANY SOUTH AFRICANS ON TOUR?

Saffas have always been keen to travel and explore. They have always been very professional and respectful wherever they go, and are willing to put in the hard yards to show their worth.

**ETTIENE BUYS****JUDGE****NAME** ETTIENE DIEDERIK BUYS**HOME TOWN** MELKBOSSTRAND**CURRENTLY RESIDING IN** MELKBOSSTRAND**FAVOURITE WAVE ON TOUR**

LOWERS / J-BAY

**BEST SURFER TO NEVER HAVE WON A WORLD-TITLE**

DANE REYNOLDS

HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED IN WORKING FOR THE WSL?

I started judging in 1996 for SSA and worked my way through the ranks until 2001, when I got to do my first WCT at the Boost Mobile Pro in Trestles. Between 2001 and 2004 I got to do a few QS and CT events, and in 2005 I got offered a permanent position on the World Tour.

WHAT ARE THE PERKS OF THE JOB?

You get paid to travel the world and see all these interesting places, people, cultures, make good friends, surf some really good waves and see amazing surfing. Oh, and I love the pressure of the job! The guys I work with are a bunch of top blokes and great surfers.

WHAT ARE THE LOWS OF THE JOB?

Crappy waves on the QS, crowds, hotels and bad contest food, expensive beer (with our currency, almost everywhere). Long, long work days and waiting periods with no waves.

WHAT IS YOUR FONDEST MEMORY FROM YOUR YEARS ON TOUR?

Surfing big Wilkes Pass for the first time – I almost got lost on the outer reefs of Fiji. Having the privilege of judging the Andy Irons / Kelly Slater rivalry. And judging Jordy's first win on tour and seeing some amazing battles go down.

DESCRIBE A TYPICAL DAY IN YOUR LIFE AT AN EVENT?

Waking up before sparrow's fart, drinking coffee, waiting on the call, work, surf, then beer and some sleep and then we start it all over again.

WHAT DO YOU DO ON A LAY DAY?

I literally pray for a wave somewhere with no crowds. 🙏



After months of sucking hind tit and watching the rest of the country score, Durban finally had a good run of waves in late February. The weeklong run between the piers coincided with the return of Durban's prodigal son, and spectators were treated to a daily show of **Jordy** blowing up between New Pier and North Beach. In fact Splab has noticed that every time Jordy comes home, the waves fire. True story. We are currently working on a plan to hold the world number two captive in his hometown so **Durban surfers** can be treated to a year-long run of waves. World title be damned!

Still in Durbs, the waves were so fun that even **Warwick Wright** took a break from male modelling and was spotted out in the lineup. Splab would love to say that Wok was looking pasty, out of shape and could hardly swing a bottom turn, but all he was doing was drowning Splab's lowly correspondent in spray.

Ricky Basnett is doing well as a stay-at-home dad, timing his sessions between diaper changes, but still needs a little help when it comes to electrical appliances. Wife **Candice** had to point out to him that the toaster he had thrown away because it wasn't working just happened to be during the middle of a power failure.

In Industry news, **Pat Duff** has left **Vans South Africa** to take over the role of Vans Marketing Manager for Europe. The massive promotion comes with a move to Switzerland, which Duff-man is making with his (much) younger girlfriend **Michaela Robertson**. The only hitch came when applying for visas in person and immigration officials wanted to know why his daughter had a different surname.

Speaking of moving, **Zag** is moving offices to the **Hacienda** office block above **Tops** on Florida Road. Yes, right above the bottle store. The staff have already negotiated with the owners and devised a bucket and rope pulley system for deadline orders.

Brendon Gibbens is currently shooting a new film with his sponsor **Globe**, and a big chunk is slated for South Africa and Mozambique. Stand by for the release later in the year.

Congratulations to **Dutchie** and wife **Lindi** on the arrival of their baby girl, **Katinka**. Fellow shaper **Thys Strydom** also has a new baby, a CNC machine that he has set up in his **Rebel Surfboards** factory in J-Bay.

Speaking of surfboards, **Zag** has teamed up with **Lampeez** from **Lampeez Shapes** for the ultimate DIY surfboard competition. We want your craziest, cleverest, most ingenious surfboard ideas... and then we're going to shape them into reality. That's right, for the next year we're looking to build and showcase your ultimate surfboard designs by picking one winning idea every issue and then shaping it, test driving it and, of course, handing it over to the winner. All you have to do is submit your best design idea. The only proviso is

it can't be a conventional thruster. Stay tuned for details and the demo video on www.zigzag.co.za.

Our good friends at **Waves For Change** recently received a huge honour when they scooped the **Laureus 'Sport For Good'** award during a prestigious ceremony in Monaco. The **Laureus World Sports Awards** is an annual ceremony that honours remarkable individuals and achievements from the world of sports, with previous winners like **Lewis Hamilton**, **Rafael Nadal** and **Man United**. It's a testament to the amazing work **Waves For Change** are doing to be featured in this lineup and if you want to support them further, have a look-see on waves-for-change.org.

With **Samsung** pulling out as title sponsor for the **World Surf League** and nobody stepping into the breach at the time of going to print, things are looking precarious for the future of pro surfing. The tour is largely being bankrolled by American billionaire **Dirk Ziff** through his company, **ZoSea Media**, and it's estimated to cost around US\$3 million to run just one event (around R40 million). While that might seem like small change for a billionaire, it starts to add up across a year of events, especially if you're not seeing a solid return on your investment. Even before **Samsung** pulled out, the rumour mill was swirling with talk of a streamlined tour with less events, competitors and running days.

The same tropical storm that sent waves to Durban smashed into Tofo in Mozambique, where **Jason Hearn** and **Peter Hamblin** were filming a commercial for **Panasonic** with **Dion Agius**. Apparently the storm hit so quickly the crew didn't have time to leave and had to hunker down while the roof literally got ripped off their digs. **Agius** reckons it was the scariest experience of his life, but even worse was the devastation it left behind, destroying hundreds of locals' homes.

Regular **Zag** videographer **Calvin Thompson** recently cracked the nod to accompany an international crew on a mission to West Africa. Junior's first surf trip abroad went smoothly, aside from his brand new drone malfunctioning and taking a permanent swim, then getting poked in the eye by a groom's broken board, and finally being robbed by a geriatric Rastafarian who plucked the cash out his wallet and told him "This one for Rasta."



And to end: after much speculation, Google-Earthing and soul-searching, **Splab** has uncovered the location of **Mick Fanning's internet-melting righthander**. Confirmation came via **Kerry Wright**, who matched up all of Mick's clues (the wind was pumping, you wouldn't expect there to be waves there, a local taking a dump on the beach...) and corroborated it with photographic evidence from **PE**. Long live the search!



EDITOR

Calvin Bradley - calvin@zigzag.co.za

PHOTO EDITOR

Greg Ewing - greg@zigzag.co.za

ONLINE EDITOR

Gina Smith - gina@zigzag.co.za

DESIGN

Studio Kronk - info@studiokronk.com

AD SALES

Mark Bester - mark@zigzag.co.za

ADMIN BOSS

Chantal Padayachee - chantal@zigzag.co.za

PUBLISHER

Andy Davis - andy@zigzag.co.za

SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHERS

Louis Wulff, Alan Van Gysen

PHOTOGRAPHIC CONTRIBUTORS:

Samuel Tomé, Robbie Irlam, Ian Thurtell, Daniel Grebe, Richard Johnson, Brendan Pieterse, Fabian Coetzer, Neil Hellerle, Luke Patterson, Pierre De Villiers, Simon Heale, Sacha Specker, Sean Thompson, Ryan Miller, Pete Frieden, Morné Laubscher, Henrique Pinguim, Kin Bentley

EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTORS:

Jazz Kuschke, Ettiene Buys, Will Bendix, Alan van Gysen

GUIDING GURU:

Craig Sims

SUBS / CONTRIBUTIONS:

Subscription queries: subs@zigzag.co.za

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