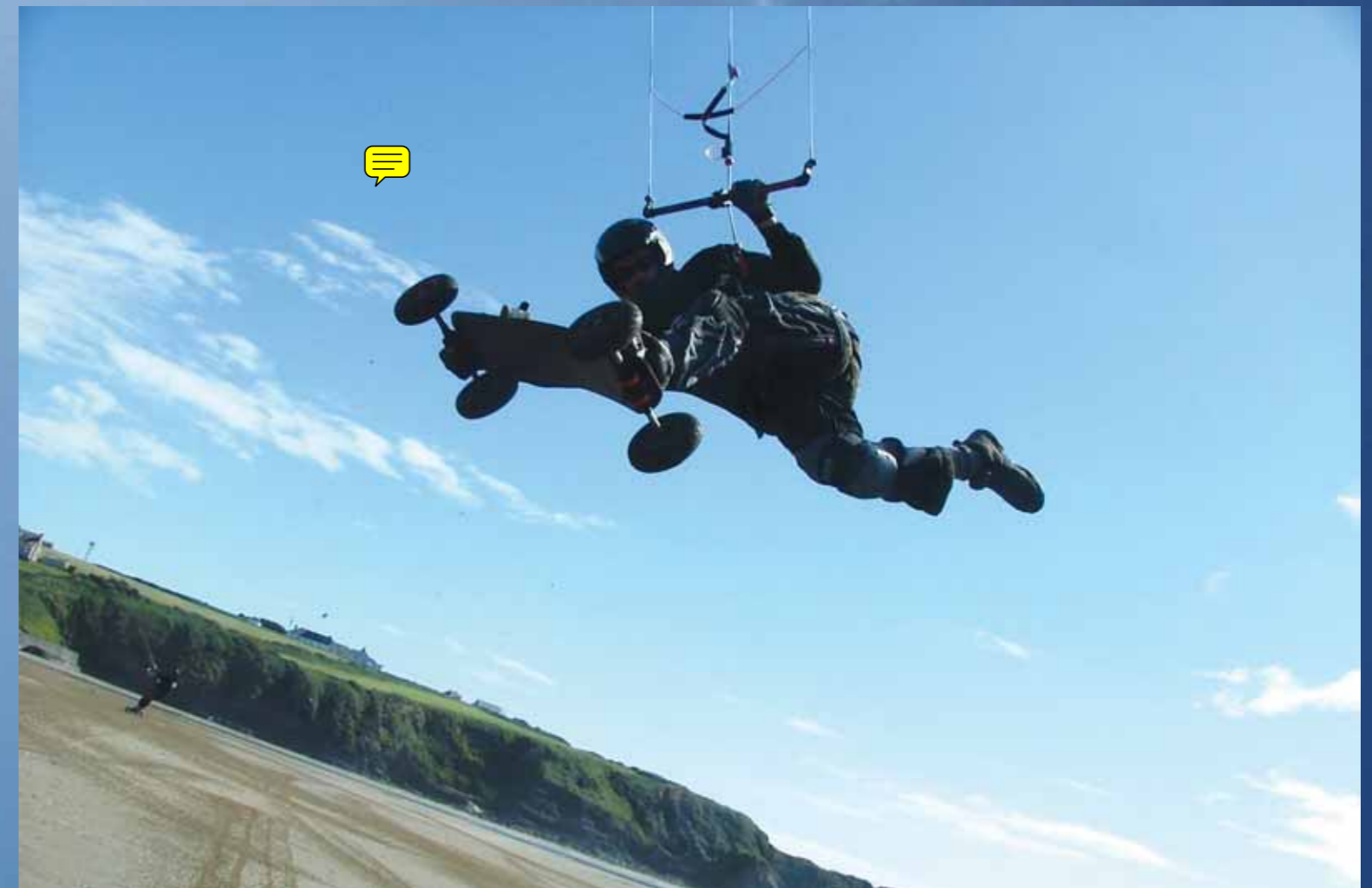


TRUE TALES TEAM WASTED On Tour

In the beginning there was open access for all. Beaches were hassle free and sunny, while the wind blew constantly onshore at 18mph every day. Then the councils found out 'fun' was being enjoyed, so quickly imposed bans and restrictions on kite loving folk around the country. Fed up of hearing that beach after beach was being closed down, the Team Wasted boys made for the wilds of the Welsh coastline as the calendar scrolled down to mid-summer, searching out new and exciting locations that had yet to hear of bans....



The Start: Friday 18th June

Travelling from numerous locations around the UK, Ady, Mike and Mark arrived at Abergele in north Wales, the chosen place for the start of the tour. All stoked to be on the search for pastures new, found a sweet campsite and set up shack in anticipation of the first flying session of the trip. Tents sorted, the amigos headed for the beach, to be joined by good friends Kitegirl and Rob Hills, who had just finished a day's kitesurfing on the west Wales shore. With two hours to go till high tide, the emphasis was on avoiding strange smelling pools of murky water and making the most of light winds on hand. After a chilled out sunset cruise, the pub finished that first day.

Saturday

The promise of better winds. Ady was up grabbing a quick Dawnie in gusty conditions before the high tide stopped play. Mike and Mark soon stirred in time to catch a wounded looking Ady limping up the path. Doh! By midday the injured party was checking out hospitality at the local A&E department. A suspected chipped bone and very bruised coxis was the diagnosis, after Ady made a quick arse scudding trip over the foreshore rocks.

The afternoon offered a quick trip to check out other local beaches, before the tide had receded enough for the evening session. What a session it was! Ady was out of action, so was promoted to head photographer while Monkey Man Mark pulled trick after trick with amazing 10-14 foot rotations, grabs, inverts and others yet to be named with his 12 metre Frenzy. Meanwhile Mike was blasting up and down the beach in his buggy with his 9.5 Frenzy maxed out, roaring through the stinking sewage foam, pulling impressive buggy jumps in the consistent 20 -25 mph onshore winds.

Sunday

Mid morning high tide made the perfect excuse to say good-bye to Abergele and head to the next port of call. South through the beautiful interior of Wales to visit an old favourite, Blackrock Sands. The beach was almost deserted, crying out to be blasted by board or buggy. But unfortunately, as we well knew, BRS was out of bounds to kites at this time of year!

"Monkey Man Mark pulled trick after trick with amazing 10-14 foot rotations, grabs, inverts and others yet to be named with his 12 metre Frenzy."

So back in the wagons and further south to check out Barmouth. After a brief discussion with the campsite boss - "We don't allow groups on site" - the mention of 'kites' and 'tide times' did the trick and we scored a quiet pitch at the far end of the site. A quick set-up of tents and we were on the beach in another glorious sunset. Mark was reliving the highs of the previous evening, Mike decided his buggy needed a wash so made straight for the surf, while Ady eased back into flying with a few tentative speed runs before high tide ended another day.

Monday

Butch and Kelly, the final tour members, arrived fresh from the Chillii Peppers the night before, under instruction to follow the coast road and look for a Little

Devil flying near the beach. The kite was spotted, campsite found. Tents to be pitched and catching up to be done

After talking about our options in the area, we headed north to Talybont to check out a friendly suggestion. A narrow, decked walkway was the best route from the car park through the dunes, and after the ritual 'reccy' we knew that 'Billy Gibbons' Brother' had pointed the way to an awesome flying spot. Talybont is a beautiful golden beach with massive sand dunes at the back and around four miles of hard packed beach stretching north, not forgetting the 'naturist' section a couple of miles up, that raised eyebrows and provided chuckles for the boys on their treks up the beach!

The wind was blowing about 8-12mph cross/onshore, so up with the big kites. Not enough breeze for a freestyle session, but having so much beach to explore the boys set off on a down-winder in search of a bit of nudity - as you do. Later, we were joined by Chris and Joe from Ozone UK, who arrived with the essential kite spares and Samurais for an evening buggy session.

Tuesday

With the morning sun turning our tents into greenhouses and the sound of banners flapping in the wind, it was time for a 7am wake-up session. Ady, Kell and Butch headed over the railway track and down the sea wall stairs to the beach below, ready for another 8-12mph morning bang onshore. Sweet! The tide was on its way in, leaving an hour or so before our entry point was cut off by rising water. The race was on to get kites up and be first to rip up the untouched sand. We used this short session to clear our heads from the previous night, preparing for the day ahead. ▶



There were rumours of incoming bad weather and big wind, but it still seemed nice enough to head off into the hills for a spot of downhill boarding and buggying. On return to the campsite, the once proud Team Gazebo was in tatters across the campsite with bent poles and guy ropes everywhere. Maybe we should have read the instructions - 'Do not erect in windy conditions.'

Wednesday

After packing wet tents and scraping up the gazebo, we were on the road to South Wales and Newgale Sands. We rolled up just as the rain cleared and made way for a sunny but very windy day. A quick trek up the stone wall with the wind meter revealed a lovely flat beach with the tide well on the way out, but also showed 48mph gusting to 50 plus. Humph, maybe not today!

The barren looking campsite did not look like it could provide much shelter from this blast, so off some more to the wickedest little bay we'd ever seen. This was the spot for us. Broadhaven, a small seaside village with a short, maybe half mile long stretch of hard packed sand to session. There was a gnarly looking seawall and road right along the beach, which would make for an awesome arena style atmosphere.

After setting up camp and a few hours of downhill, we headed for the local pub. One gashed knee for Butch, a few scratches for Mark and Ady landing on his coxis yet again, after steamrolling the other two from behind on his Mega board! Made the walk a lot more entertaining for the uninjured parties. Stick to what you know, Eh?

Thursday

We awoke to fluffy clouds, sunshine and more importantly, clean 24mph winds. A quick brunch saw us on the beach for one of the most memorable flying days in a long time. For hours Mark and Butch traded tricks in what seemed like a duel or airborne ballet. Kelly dashed about in his buggy, keeping to the trend of air, air and more air and showing you don't need a board to jump high. Mikee headed straight for the surf, riding for the most part above the level of the foot pegs until he returned to the jumping arena to see what was going on six feet above ground. Meanwhile, Ady was again promoted to capture the action.

The sea wall was getting increasingly filled with spectators, with a few spilling onto the beach to say "Hello!" and check what the fuss was about. We couldn't have hoped for a better response from local people and everyone seemed to appreciate what we were doing. We received an invitation from the publican in the next village - after an awesome day's ragging up and down the beach we accepted their hospitality, with dinner and birthday beers for Mikee.

Friday

We said good-bye to Broadhaven, vowing to return, and set off en route to our final destination. With the lure of Pendine drawing us closer, we checked out yet another beach for potential, Freshwater West. After a walk in the dunes and tweaks and repairs to our kites, we headed via Saundersfoot toward the expansive delights of Pendine and an evening flight in light onshore winds. ▶



Saturday

There was a good gathering of like minded folk from around the country on the historic beach of Pendine – the looming ban bringing them from near and far. The afternoon and evening saw freestyle, speed runs, bails and general socialising with the awesome spectacle of riders disappearing into the sea fog – only to reappear like an apparition flying 10 foot in the air. With dusk closing and fog thickening we were the last left flying in the white out.

The End: Sunday 27th June

The final day of the tour, but not before a wicked day's flying. Having missed so much flying Ady was keen to have a proper session and hit the beach by 6:30am. Soon after the rest of the crew rolled down, maybe for the last time? We certainly hope not. We have had many an awesome time at Pendine over the past couple of years and would be

without one of the best kiting beaches to play on. But what a day to finish on, with 18-25mph cross/onshore and sun blazing. We had one last Monster session before the tide threatened to cut our exit.

It was all good. We'd been flying all week and aches and pains were beginning to take over. We had found new terrain to kite, opened a few people's eyes to our fledgling sport, made new Welsh friends along the way. Scotland anyone? PK

THE CULPRITS

- Mark Archer – Ozone/Kitedeck rider
- Mike Alwood – Crazy, crazy man!
- Adrian Martin – Great White Dread
- Glen Butcher – Ozone/Kitedeck rider
- Kelly Howlett – Billy's Cambridge rider

Report: Glenn Butcher ('Butch')
Pix: Adrian Martin/Team Waste

