

FREERIDE TOUR

This was the first of five UK events, providing riders of all levels and abilities the chance to ride with the Ozone UK team in a non competitive and fun environment, on a mission to expand and push the boundaries of land based kiting. With terrain ranging from hard packed sandy beaches to rolling grassy hills covered with natural bowls, kickers and drop-offs to suit every flying style, this event was to set the standard.

20-25 mph onshore winds howled across Troon beach. The Ozone team were keen to prove they could go just as hard on land as their neoprene gimp suit clad counterparts on water. Prove it they did – with style! At one stage 95% of the kitesurfers were grounded, watching the inspirational abilities of Terra Firma tearaways. Riders on boards and buggies boosted, cruised and powerslid across the firm sands, busting out tweaked rotations, massive board-offs and huge boned grabs. A real atmosphere of comradeship presided with a super chilled out feel to the whole event.

'Appo' Appleton impressed with super smooth buggy jumping, going huge in howling winds, as did Chris Hill busting PHAT grabs on his new D-ex Carbon deck. The Wee Man Jack was wowing the audience with his sick new Rodeo Front Flip 180. Seeing a 10 year old busting like that makes you wonder about the future potential of the sport. And as usual, Phat Dan was going crazy with rotations and huge solid sidewinders, getting to grips with the jumping power of his trusty Frenzy. But trick of the day had to go to Si Daykin with his super stylish 'railey to water walk', coolly skipping across the surface as if he were Jesus himself.

Sunday brought a change of conditions and location. Ardeer Beach Park in nearby Stevenson was the venue. More rolling hills, gullies, drop-offs and bowls surrounded a mass of flat sections and tarmac paths through the park. Wind was light and offshore throughout the day, providing more mellow conditions than the boys hoped for. So out with the new Samurai 2's, impressing with their light wind power and super smooth handling followed by 'Imp Wars' in the light evening zephyr.

The first event had gone better than we expected, but the best was yet to come. The boys were staying on an extra day, courtesy of a 25 mph onshore forecast. Ardeer Park had taken on a whole new look. It was completely deserted and hills seemed higher, gullies wider, drop-offs longer and bowls lush. A freeriders' dream – a natural kite park.

You could hear hollering for miles as the boys found their groove. Each way you turned, another figure would come flying through the air, let out a cheer and land powered, swiftly whizzing by. Appo found a 'track' down to the beach while Mikee preferred to blast across the flats, knowing another op on his already injured foot

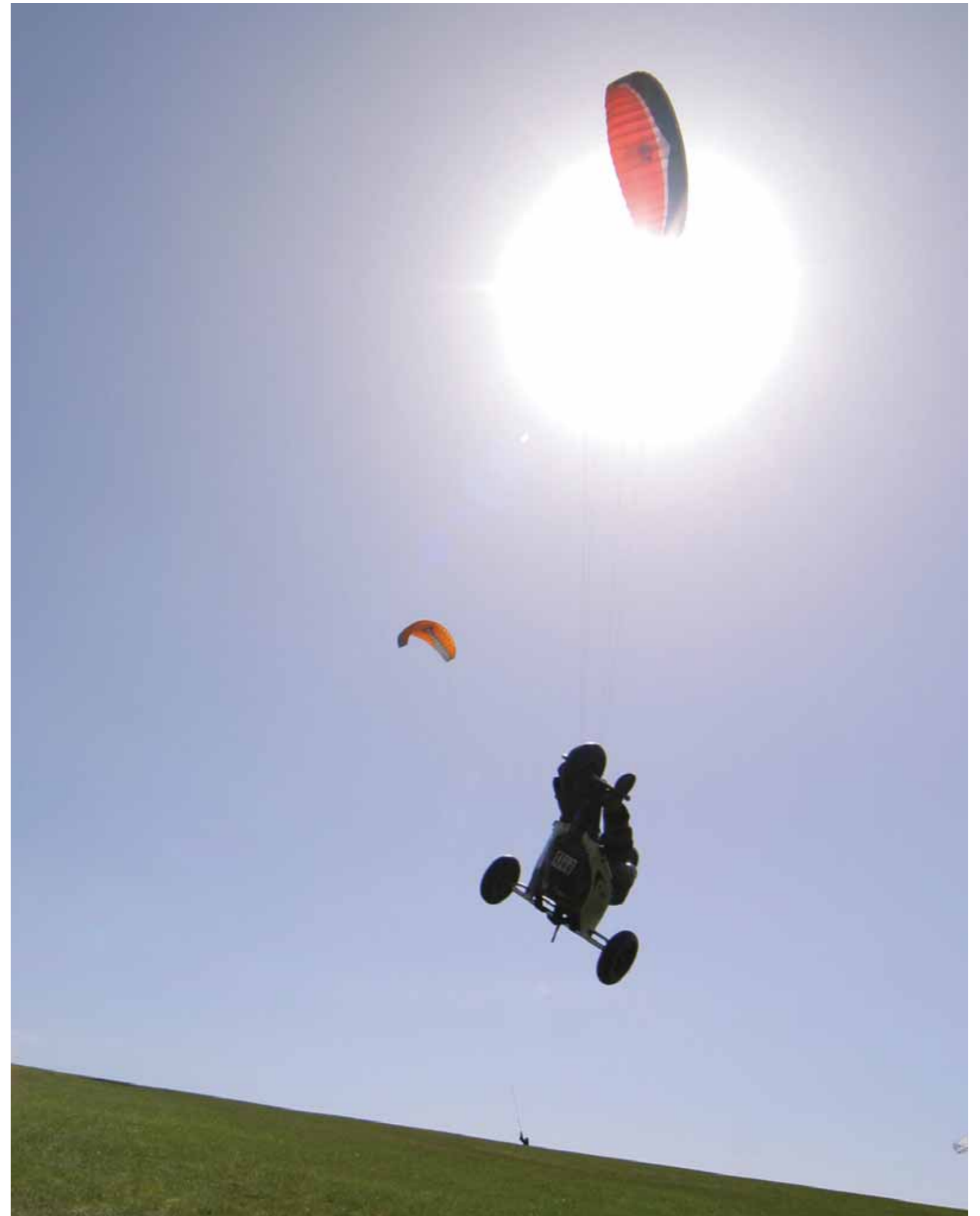
was quickly approaching. Phat Dan and Butch found a wee 15 foot drop-off and were boosting mammoth jumps from ridge to grassy carpet below, then looping their kites to accelerate back up the steep face. Everyone seemed to favour a different feature with mini session spots all around.

Hello, hello...

A lone police car slowly made its way through the park and pulled up next to our wagons where we were having a break. "There's been a complaint about you guys" came a gruff voice, but all we could see was a police officer beaming from ear to ear. He proceeded to tell us that some people forget what it's like to be young. Being a kiter, he was on our side, coolly cruising off to tell the 'complainer' to stop being such a killjoy. Sadly, it's not always like that...

Special thanks: www.flyozone.com, www.extreme-zone.co.uk, www.design-extreme.co.uk

Report: Butch (Ozone UK, Design Extreme, Ground Industries, Billys)





The Phat Car Jump

We'd just about finished for the weekend; the kick-start for the Ozone Freeride Tour had gone off with epic riding locations in and around Troon, Scotland. All there was left to do was pack up the Ozone Tour Bus and start the long trip back to England, but not before one last crazy stunt.

Location: Ardeer Beach Park, Stevenson, Scotland.

Conditions: Cross-onshore – 25 mph clean steady wind.

Equipment: 10 metre Ozone Frenzy + modified Rob Hills buggy + Dianese Gladiator jacket, pads and helmet + Vauxhall Astra Estate.

Action: Up steps the 'Phat One', Dan Vaughan, main buggy maestro in the Ozone UK freestyle team with giant sized kahunas and the courage of a mountain lion. After a couple of initial set-up runs to make sure everything was safe, the lion roared into action. Before long Dan was flying through the air with the power and amplitude of a Daredevil fighter pilot, making the imposing wagon look like a kid's matchbox toy. Time after time, soaring overhead with plenty of clear airspace between his twitching sphincter and the ominous looking roof bars of the chariot beneath. Each time touching down smooth as butter on the grassy landing strip below.

Caution: It goes without saying that Dan is a master at the art of freestyle buggy jumping. Everything possible was done to ensure a safe outcome to the impending craziness. No riders or cameramen were harmed in the making of this stunt!

