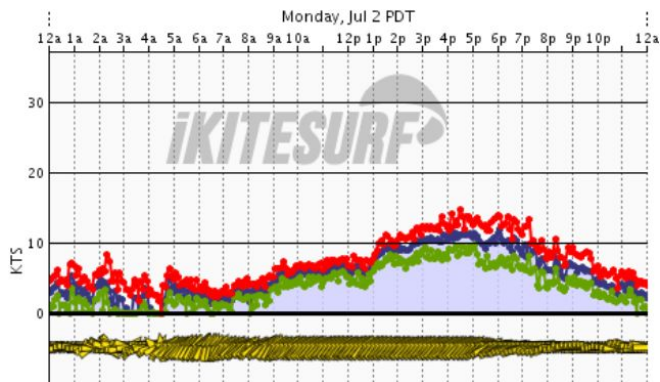


July 2nd 2018

Flysurfer Demo

Santa Barbara, California



Semana Nautica

Semana Nautica is the name of the Santa Barbara summer sports festival. An 81 year tradition, but this was the first year kitesurfing was included. It's the first year because a good windy day in Santa Barbara, is considered light at other kitesurfing beaches. On our windy days, 80-100% of the kites are on foilboard out of necessity. This summer sports festival, the local freeride kitesurfers were introduced to a new lightwind weapon. These challenging conditions made it a perfect arena to showcase the new Flysurfer Soul.

About 12pm the wind picked up to 7 knots. Giampiero Alferoni took the foilboard and 18m Soul out. I snapped a picture of Giampiero foiling in the lightwind and posted it on our local kitesurfing group chat. The local kites quickly came to see this lightwind spectacle.

None of the kite testers had ever flown a foil kite before. Most of them fly 12m single strut LEI kites. We had each kiter fly the Soul on the beach for about 5 minutes so they could get used to the kite and bar. Turning speed and power were the first things everyone noticed were different from LEI kites. The Soul turned slower than their LEI kites but had considerable more power. The kite testers started their session with their foilboards and 15m and 18m Soul. Everyone was able to transition like they do with their LEI kites. The wind picked up and they were impressed by the efficiency of the depower.

Eventually, it was windy enough to twin-tip and everyone couldn't wait to test the jumping capabilities. They said getting big air was easy and the lofty hang time was fun. Some kites crashed while figuring out the timing on landings. After crashing, the kite flew way ahead of them but just drifted back into the wind window without collapsing. They said their LEI kite would have crashed in the water in the same scenario.

I only saw one kiter crash the Soul on the water. It was the 15m with leading edge down. We saw him pull the left steering line and easily relaunch the kite.

Another kiter was timid to try the foil kite because he thought he wasn't skilled enough. I told him this new Soul kite is much more user friendly and to give it a try. He suited up and got attached to the 15m. After a 5 minute lesson on the beach, he went on the water and kitesurfed with no problems. He stayed out so long, he was the last kite tester on the water for the day. When he came in, he self landed the Soul after being told how.

Everyone said they had a lot of fun. The local kites have always been intrigued by foil kites, but were intimidated by the bridle and worried about the kite collapsing like they had seen other foil kites do. After the event, the kites all had an appreciation for the Soul and were asking how much it would cost to get one.

-Mike Jablonski

