

AUSTRALIAN

kiteboarder



Cocos Islands
Kiting with Richard Branson
Bass Strait solo xing
Mackay Slider Jam
Andy Yates World #1
2010 Harness Review



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Beam me up, Richard...

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It is year 2010 and pretty soon it will be possible for just about everyone to travel into space...

The man that will make this possible is Sir Richard Branson, Owner of the Virgin Imperial, Necker Island and Moskito Island in the British Virgin Islands (BVI). Virgin Galactic will soon offer space trips for all those that are financially able to pay the crazy trip. When exactly the space travel for everyone is going to be launched has not been announced yet but for those that want to travel into a completely different world now... Welcome to the BVI Kite Jam 2010!

For an island state the BVI's are really quite surreal with its 60 islands (or planets that is), each and every one special and different in its own way - almost as special as the idea of the BVI Kite Jam, the event that will from now on take place once every year.

Some of the best Pro-Kiters were invited, between them Kristin Boese, Andre Phillip, Susi Mai, Tuva Jansen, Tom Court, Chris Burke, Gretta Kruesi and Madison Van Heurck. Next to those riders the event welcomed about 50 other kiters of all levels and origins. All of them met up for one very special get together in March 2010 to explore a territory that is quite new to the world of kiteboarding. The excursion begins on a 14 space ship (catamaran) big fleet, a slight breeze of luxury and a big portion of adventure and Caribbean feeling.

So, what did the adventurers find? An unbelievable diversity of spots and all of them with steady trade winds between 10 and 20 knots Houston... ahem... Necker, we got a problem...

No Wind on the first day of competition and Murphy's Law proven once again. Lucky that the BVI Kite Jam is not your normal contest and the possibility on Necker Island are pretty much endless for all kinds of conditions, even when there is no wind. Surfing, SUPing, wakeboarding, diving, hiking around the island or up the hill to enjoy amazing views, relaxing at one of the stunning pools or even just enjoying the decadent ambience of the island. No wind days suddenly become fun days.

Sir Richard Branson himself is a passionate Kiteboarder and together with his 2 kite instructors Charlie and Scotty he partly created the BVI Kite Jam. Of course he joined the event activities himself and enjoyed playing host to all the kite guests at his home spots.

The high expectations some people might have had when traveling to the location were not disappointed and even the full moon joined the party and made the islands shine in an astonishing light until even the last partygoers return to their boats.

Richard Ripping

Planet Anegada, a perfect skate park for kiters

There is no better way to put it when describing the view out of the helicopter. Mangroves, little mountains of white shells, flat and shallow water behind an endless reef with unbelievable colors, a few ship wrecks added for obstacles and perfect speed runs all the way downwind. While one side offers protected bays and white sandy beaches for beginners the other side of the island offers rockier beaches with great waves for the experts.

First stop for the Kite Jammers was Cowreck Beach where everyone enjoyed another great meal right on another picture perfect beach. After recharging the batteries the group went back to Pomato Point for a first kite session in shorts and lycra - Pros and Ams alike shredding the turquoise blue water with no one else around except the Kite Jammers themselves. In the evening everyone returns stoked and tired to the boats just to get ready for another great dinner and Party at the Anegada Reef Hotel.

It seemed like the wind-god appreciated the wind dances and other offerings of the evening before and the kiters woke up to wind noises in the sails of the catamarans the next morning and the very motivated ones even went out for a quick session before breakfast. Organizers Scotty and Charlie had a really special surprise for everyone today and after a quick snack everyone was shuttled to Low Beach where one kiter after the other was launched between Mangroves and in knee-deep water. After the first few minutes on the water and in the most perfect conditions ever, everyone had nothing else but smiles on their face and even up from the helicopter the happy faces were easily visible.

A downwinder of several kilometres followed and occasionally the group stopped to explore some obstacles or beautiful backgrounds and of course to shoot some great pictures before everyone finally ended up back at Pomato Point and a long lunch break. Sir Richard Branson who still was not tired after the long downwinder joined the group for some more kiting at the spot in the afternoon. Laurel Eastman and Kristin Boese were doing intensive clinics for the amateur riders who very obviously enjoyed their lessons from the pros and did a great job in implementing the tips given, into their riding.

Planet North Sound, the bitter end

For the next and last day the organization had ordered a decent swell to make sure also the surf fanatic people would go back home happy and fulfilled. The breaks around Moskito Island showed their amazing potential not only for surfing but also for kiting and the Pro riders were ripping it up in the beautiful glassy surf all morning and early afternoon. Only the crazy BVI Poker Run could lure the Kite Jammers away from the water and into Party mood and with more fancy costumes, lots of fun and some delicious Caribbean drinks. The evening at the picturesque Moskito Island beach turned out to be another great, if not even the greatest, party of the trip.

The Final Countdown

Preparations for the BVI Kite Jam 2011 are now already underway check the website to find out full details.

Short Facts:

How to get there: Any flight to the US mainland, from there to San Juan/Puerto Rico and then Tortola/BVIs.

Further info:

www.bvikitejam.com
www.britishvirginislands.com
www.neckerisland.virgin.com

