



### **The British Kitesurfing Championships @ The Kitesurfing Armada Festival**

We want to host a fantastic Tour Stop of the BKC at the Armada. Our festival is founded on a support for grassroots kitesurfing and those who kite at every level, from absolute beginners (where we fully fund the Youth Tour) to those aiming for the Olympics (where we have recently given a grant to the young people competing).

The BKC is another very important part of British kitesurfing and we want the Tour to grow and succeed. That is why we the Armada has sponsored it over the last 3 years and hosted last year and this. We want to do our bit at the Armada, and use the biggest kitesurfing event of the year to showcase the talent we have in the UK.

Ticket prices at the Armada are more expensive than the other tour stops. They have to be. Anyone who comes can see that this isn't a usual set up. The costs in order to run the festival are significant in terms of security, fencing, electricity, PA systems, staffing, volunteers, water safety cover, rash vests for every rider – not to mention tents, bands, features, lighting and everything else that goes with the festival.

You can argue that this is our choice to run a festival and so we have to deal with this – and that's true, but there is also a clear benefit to kitesurfers who come to this event in terms of being able to join in and enjoy everything the Armada has to offer, not to mention the media opportunities, the chance to perform in front of a big audience, meet every brand manager in the country etc. We just need to make sure every event that takes place within the Armada does a little to help cover the overall costs of the festival and help keep it going.

So we have taken the cost of the other tour stops as a base, and then to try to be fair we have discounted the on-site weekend Armada Kitesurfing Ticket by 50% and added it on top. Please note these prices aren't online yet – the BKC section of the site went live before it should have done! Sorry for any confusion. Prices for BKC entry at the Armada will therefore be:

Pro men / women: £80

Masters: £70

Amateur Men / Women: £60

Juniors: £60

The extra at least helps cover some of the costs of the things you receive as part of your Armada Ticket - rash vest for every person, the water safety cover, the PA on the beach, set up costs etc just

to be 100% clear we are certainly not making any money at all on this! And the new Goody Bag is also still thrown in, details on website.

Some people may still say, just let me pay the base BKC tour costs and I won't get involved with or have anything to do with the festival etc. I'm sorry but this just isn't realistic or a viable option – and even if this was an option, we don't want to be policing the festival site or the water checking event rash vests and BKC kilters who choose not to be involved. It's the last thing we want to do. It's a community festival, it's about all being there together – if you are coming as a kitesurfer we want you to be fully involved with everything that's going on and enjoy all aspects of the festival - on and off the water.

That said, we do understand that even if people understand and support the reasons above - for some the higher cost of the Armada ticket is still going to be a stretch. We want to support this tour and the kitesurfers taking part. So, to go further, IF you feel you will not be able to attend the Armada BKC tour stop because of the total ticket cost, we are putting up a bursary fund from the Armada Trust to help people take part. You can fill in a quick form and reclaim £25 per person at the event itself which the Armada Trust will cover to do our bit to further support everyone getting involved. That way you can come at the same rate as every other tour stop, fully engage with the festival and there is only positive feeling around everything to do with the BKC at the Armada. The bursary fund form will be live and online by end of next week, as will the updated ticket prices.

Thank you for your support and we look forward to hosting an awesome tour stop at the Armada this year and showcasing the best of British talent.

#### **The Armada Team**



'We are really excited to be running the third leg of the BKC tour at the amazing Kitesurfing Armada for a second year in a row. 2017 saw some of the best conditions and most spectacular freestyle competition the British circuit has ever seen. We look forward to working with the Armada team again in 2018, and helping bring together kitesurfers of all levels and ages from across the UK and beyond. Fingers crossed for wind again in June.'

**Andy Gratwick, BKSA MD**



'The Armada is such a key to the BKC Tour. It's not just a normal tour stop, as well as the competition, there is so much more that it offers. For me as an ex competitor on the tour, having a stop at the Armada is a big thing, what other stops do we gain that much exposure for our sport and the tour? Yes it's more expensive than the other stops, but with the Armada Trust now supporting the riders entry fees, it just shows how much they care about our sport.'

I personally know what it takes to put an event like this on, and believe that it enhances opportunities for all riders. At what other event do you have the opportunity to network with every brand on the market, whether you are currently sponsored or a young groom looking for their first sponsorship. There are massive advantages to attending the Armada stop, and I urge anyone that hasn't been or is planning on giving it a miss, to look at previous videos, photos or simply ask someone who has been before making a decision.

I have worked closely with Dan Charlish at this event for a few years, and have had the pleasure of getting to know him throughout this time, and there aren't many people that have the passion, not only for the sport, but giving back to it as well. So in summary, yes it's more expensive, but the gain in knowledge and opportunity, as well as competing in front of a great crowd is well worth it! I really hope to see you all there for yet another kick arse event'

**Craig Smith, BKC Race Director**

