



IN THE LAB

KEVIN PRITCHARD

WORDS BY PETE DEKAY | PHOTO BY JOHN CARTER

A few years back, world champion windsurfer Kevin Pritchard made the jump to professional photographer, and now he leads a double life from both sides of the lens. Let see how this all came about.



Kevin Pritchard's photo and windsurfing toys.

What got you into photography?

I got into it when I first started up with MauiSails and we were constantly needing a photographer for photos of every little thing. I was like, "I can do that." I knew nothing about it, so I just went down and saw what PWA photographer John Carter had and decided, "I want one of those." Then I got hooked on it. I started reading as much as I could and looking at tons of photos of sports, fashion and product. I also talked with all the photographers and tried to learn as much as I could.

Was it ever difficult being both a pro windsurfer and a photographer?

Oh, yeah. I remember Jerome Houyvet tearing me a new one about being a photographer. There was even a point when, one time, I was bottom-turning down a nice wave and I saw him turn his camera away from me. I think it was just to let me know to not mess with one of the best photographers in the world. Since his little e-mail chat (that he copied all of the pro photographers), I think we have become better friends now than before. We joke and chat about camera gear, and he is such an amazing photographer, especially in the water, which is where I strive to get better all the time. It is cool to be on both sides of the lens.

What is your scariest moment as a photographer?

I've had quite a few. Mostly just learning what to do and not to do. Scary for me was coming back to my car and having my 500mm stolen.

Another time was shooting eight-foot Honolua Bay [HI] and getting sucked out over the reef and breaking the seal on my waterhousing. That was not fun. But I've had some much more scary times while windsurfing for sure.

Who are your favorite windsurfers to shoot?

Kai Lenny and Graham Ezzy. Kai is just a total professional. We joke and have fun together, and then he is like, "What do you want me to do?" I say, "Tweaked Push Loop right over me." And on next run out he nails it. With Graham, I sometimes get frustrated, as he is always trying new tricks. But then, suddenly, he starts making them. He is sailing so amazing right now, and it's really fun to watch and learn from him.

Do your sponsors like that you are a double threat, as both a pro windsurfer and photographer?

I think so. For Ezzy Sails, I have been making all of the rigging videos and doing a lot of the product shots. I love working with Graham on stuff, too, like our recent online collaboration, *Take 1*. He is a good judge of my work. If he doesn't like something, he'll let me know, and we have a pretty good balance.