



Not Will Tuthill—Charles Chepregi jumps his Snowfer in the Australian Alps. (photo courtesy www.snowfer.com)

Solo Session

By Will Tuthill

Have you ever done something that you really wish could have been photographed? Say, for instance, you were out sailing and you did a really spectacular jump only to land it, look around, and realize that no one, absolutely no one, saw it. It is an odd feeling indeed. You have the main prize firmly in hand, the personal satisfaction of knowing that you did it, but in some ways, it is a hollow victory.

When Tom Brady throws a touchdown pass or Barry Bonds slams a homer, everyone sees it and even they themselves get to see it after the game—not so for us lonely windsurfers.

On the weekend of Feb. 4, I suffered just such a situation and it has been bothering me ever since.

After a morning of snow kiting on Lake Sunapee, NH, in light but increasing winds, I decided to change over to “pole boarding,” as it is derisively referred to by the KWA [Kites With Attitudes]. It was like slipping into a familiar and beloved pair of sandals, for as one snow sailing friend put it, “It’s what you grew up on.” It is one of the few things that our healthy sport has in common with cigarettes and narcotics: Once a junkie, always a junkie.

The breeze picked up to the point where the new Snowfer I was riding felt almost exactly like a shortboard in the water. In fact, the last time that I had used a windsurfing rig was in water. Now this, my first snow-sailing session of the year, bore an uncanny

similarity to my last water-borne session.

Along the leeward shore of the lake, stretching for a half a mile or so is a long serpentine pressure ridge. It looks like a breaking wave with an undulating face and a froth of drifted snow just behind the peak. Being the leeward shore means that it is a comfortable cross-wind reach to run up and down the length of it. I spent a couple of hours carving bottom turns and slashing off the lips until almost all of the snow had my tracks on it. Down near the base of the ridge is an underwater rock formation that causes the ice to buckle up with curled edges like peeling paint. Set at a 90-degree angle to the main wave, the ice resembled a backyard skateboard ramp, just perfect for launching jumps. Needless to say, had a photographer been present the memorable moments would have been captured. Looks like I’ll just have to go back and try again.

