

# WAVEJAM III

OK, so the first few 'Jams could have done with a little extra gelling agent to deliver their full flavour potential, but the players in the UK wave scene are do or die merchants, and knew they were on to a winner. All it needed was persistence and a little luck on the 'right time, right place' front. **Russ 'Crazy Horse' Tetlow** brings us the latest on the ever-evolving WaveJam format, with pix by **Si Crowther**...



**W**e needed this one to be a good one. When you take on the mantle of organising an event you run the gauntlet of condemnation should you fail, and thus far, although we hadn't exactly failed, we hadn't truly succeeded either.

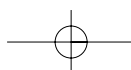
But success was inevitable, eventually. If you take the best sailors to the best beaches in the best conditions, you simply cannot fail. Things can (and will) certainly conspire against you, but eventually Mother Nature is going to smile on down at you, and when she does the result is worth all the risk in the world. Wave Jam 3 was a success – you can't imagine how refreshing and satisfying it is to be able to report on an event where the conditions absolutely delivered the goods!

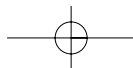
## Location, Location...

As the weather fronts lined themselves up for an epic weekend, we polled the invitees for their opinion on which destination would be best suited



for a wavesailing spectacular. Rhosneigr in Anglesey and Gwithian in Cornwall were shortlisted. Rhosneigr is one of the most reliably windy and wavy spots that the UK mainland has to offer, but is not the best for down-the-line (DTL) riding. Gwithian is not blessed with the same wind reliability, but with or without the wind it is a magnet for proper surf action. When blessed with the right wind direction the wave produced there is first class – proper DTL and with plenty of punch. So Gwithian had it, by a mile. Unfortunately we couldn't coax the Welsh Posse away from their home turf, and apparently they





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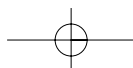
**“ AS SOON AS WE ARRIVED AT GWITHIAN WE JUST KNEW WE HAD CREAMED IT... ”**

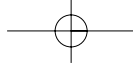
scored some epic jumping. I think that when they see these pix though they'll be kicking themselves for not having made the effort to join us.

It was a wet old journey getting there, but as soon as we arrived we just knew we had creamed it. Although overcast, there was still

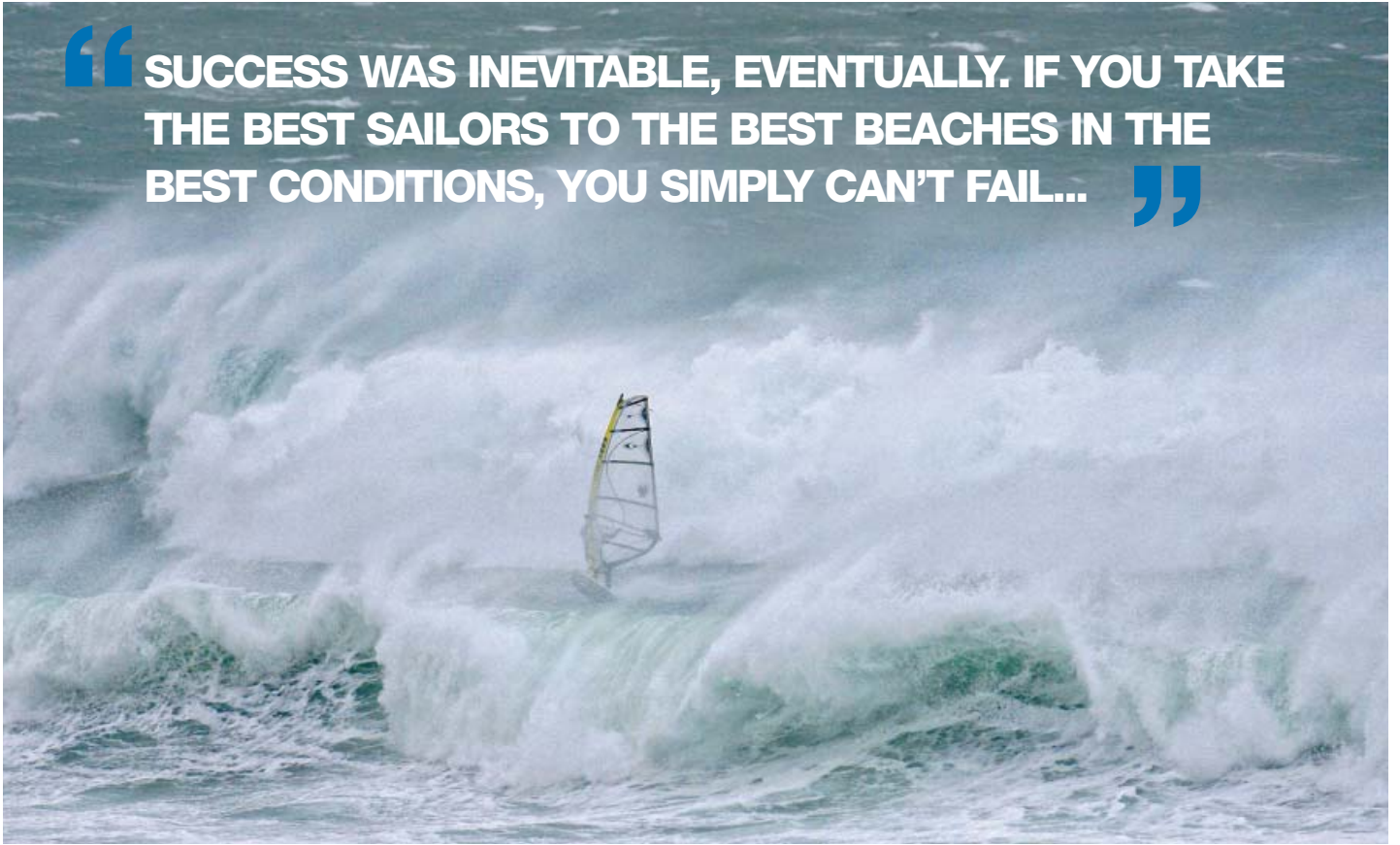
plenty of light to capture the action. The roll call included Jamie Hay, Nick Moffatt, Rich Potter, Jan Sleigh, Mark Bell, Dangerous Dave, Andy and Steve King, SJ, Jamie Hancock, Ian Black, Ian Ross, Duncan Coombes, Gregg Dunnett, Harvey Dawkins and Guy Cribb. Some were

there just because Gwithian was the place to be, some were locals, and the rest came specifically for the WaveJam. Stats for the day read 14ft, 10°C, 12sec period, 30mph+ southerly all day. Just looking at those figures again makes me go all gooey inside... →





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### Spreading It On

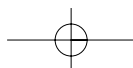
Everyone was having a great time freesailing, but it was time for the WaveJam. The idea of splitting the fleet and switching over halfway was abandoned in place of a single heat of 20 minutes, judged on this occasion from the cliff top by Steve and myself. The cameras were good to go, and once the competitors were

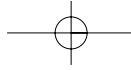
assembled on the beach Steve signalled the start of the 20-minute heat. Up went the signal and the sailors hit the water en masse – and 30 seconds later we were treated to the somewhat undignified sight of the cream of British wavesailing talent having a swim. Yes, it was that sort of wind! It was seriously strong on the inside (most sailors had already changed down

to their 4.0s), so you got a great gust off the beach for about 100 yards to entice you out into the fray, then some sneaky blighter would switch the wind off and turn on the rip, just in time for the white water and vertical walls of punishment. Those with enough float to do so managed to chicken gybe, everyone else just got drilled. You can just imagine the pressure... You've got 20 mins to do your thang, and the first thing you do is go and take your kit out for a swim. Not good. People were chicken gybing three times or more just to make it out the back!

So, while the 20 mins are ticking away, what was happening on the water? Who was making it look good? Nick Moffatt drops in on a logo-high set... It's building to mast-high... He's on the way in for his top turn, times it to perfection and snaps it in right under a nice fat lip that pushes him back into place as he's sprayed by the rest of the wave. It looks very cool. Jamie Hay tries a drop in, but it's a close out and – what's this? Jamie Hancock is doing the 800-metre kit drag from downwind. Uh-oh, looks like the laid-back kid played it a little close to the wire. Next up is Richard Potter, who, considering how tall he is, looks tiny as the wave he's sat on starts to build. He drops in... NICE top turn... He skirts the wall of white water, picks it up again, goes for the third but... Close out!

Meanwhile, Jamie Hancock is finally out the back and in position. He realises he's late to





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start and he's gouging hard. Jamie Hay is riding too, and the two Jamies' styles are looking very similar – both fully tweaked round in the torso, board buried in deep. They both head back upwind with the wave until it builds momentum again, and this time it's Jamie Hancock and he's round and under the lip in a flash. He's left with a vertical wall between two close-outs. Fearless, he goes for the 360 but loses speed at the top... The wave picks him up like a rag doll and he's left under the board with the mast visible top to bottom as it closes out over him... Nasty!

Recovering from that uses up the rest of his 20 minutes, leaving Rich Potter, Nick Moffat and Jamie Hay to take all the glory – the pinnacle of which is a four-turn ripfest from Hay that shows some nice speed, timing and good use of the wave. A clear standout winner. So, it's Jamie Hay in first place, who gets a nice new watch for his troubles, Nick Moffatt takes second to win the T-shirt, and Rich Potter bags the beanie in third. Well done lads!

So what of the other big names? Well, Andy and Steve King's attempts to get into the action were thwarted as they started downwind and tried in vain to sail uphill into the competition arena. To be honest it was not the best show by the pros. They did sail, and what they did was of their normal high standard, but their time-keeping left a little to be desired and as a result they didn't really stamp any authority on the event. We're clearly going to have to work a little harder at getting everyone properly organised for the next Jam.

By about 4 o'clock most people were off the water, with the wind getting ever more fusty. Rich Potter had landed his brand new board up on the rocks, launched and got away with it pretty much unscathed, but his 4.0m had fared a little worse, and he'd had to come in. Eventually though the quality conditions enticed him back out there; he rigged his 4.7m and off he went again to join Steve Thorpe and Ian Black in the best conditions of the day. Rich put in some really nice slides on wave tops, and Thorpy just went on and on ripping and shredding. But by the end, the day's standout



on the waves was Blackie once again. He was on his home turf, and while some of us were struggling with too small a sail, Blackie just kept banging away until the light ran out.

It was an awesome end to the day – you just had to get your kit choice right. If you didn't, there was plenty going on out on the water to more than keep you entertained. It's certainly not unusual to see Blackie out there on his own right at the end of the day if the conditions are rocking, and he really does have it dialled, looking really good in his selection of wave and style of riding.

### Day Two

The second day started with a morning surf at the Bluff before the wind showed up again to give us the most perfect day for an absolute age; the kind of day that feeds the soul and keeps it fed for months and months and months. We didn't have the heart to rerun the Jam for the second day, so apologies to those that wanted us to; instead we opted to do what we used to do, which is to just get out there and play. If you were there and had a great time I salute you. If, for whatever reason, you struggled, then I hold my hand up to you. Keep on at it! We had some very testing conditions, with getting out the back being the biggest test of all. By observing from the top of the cliff, my advice would be not to come in too close to the shore after every ride if you can help it, and perhaps go a little bit bigger in either your sail or board choice to get you there.

I can see it being an interesting balancing act running the WaveJam. Some people are either in for a lot of travelling, or they are going to opt only

to attend when the show is in town. Hopefully, as the momentum builds the extra exposure the events gain will make it more attractive for those who have to travel a long way.

To finish I want to thank Boardseeker.com for sending their pro video man Brendon. A huge big thanks goes to Sunset Surf Cafe and shop, who cater for everything from feeding your tum to resting your bum to getting you out on the water to give it some, and Niamh our volunteer photographer, who took the theatrical 'break a leg' saying to heart and broke her foot in two places putting herself in harm's way on the Sunday. Good on ya girl – keep up the go for it attitude and thanks for your excellent contribution to the pics.

I'll leave you with this final word to the winner, Jamie Hay: *"The sun even shines on a dog's arse now and again..."* ☺



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