

The 100km/h windsurfing mission

Windsurf icon Björn Dunkerbeck is on his way to Namibia. The half Danish-half Dutch giant's objective? Breaking the windsurfing speed world record on a 500m course. In this exclusive Q&A with the Newsroom, he explains why he thinks it's possible – and how he wants to break the 100km/h barrier as well.

His new record attempt

“The world speed record in windsurfing has been the same for a few years. Currently, the fastest guy is Antoine Albeau with a 500m run at 52.05 knots (96.40km/h) in 2012 in Luderitz, Namibia. At the moment I am fourth in the ranking with a speed of 51.09 knots – almost 95km/h.

“100km/h is next. I believe we can break that barrier and that's why I'm going back to Namibia with 15 other competitors this year, Albeau included – to try and break this record and this barrier.”

His top speed on a windsurf

“53.50 knots for two seconds. That's 99km/h. It's an incredible feeling... try it some day!”

His record history

“I've been doing speed sailing since 1987 and broke my first open ocean windsurf record in 1992 with a run at 43.30 knots on 500m. So far I won 41 world titles, six Guinness records and I've broken seven speed records.”

His gear

“The board I will use is 40cm wide, 130cm long and weighs 2.5kg. The fin is 16 to 18cm long. The sail area goes from 5.4 to 5.6m² depending on the weight of the windsurfer. Everything is very small!”

His schedule

“I flew out on Wednesday, October 28, hoping to be in the water by Friday. I will be down in Luderitz for almost three weeks – that means on the water for about two weeks.”

His age

“46 is not too old. If you do freestyle windsurfing, 25 is old; if you do wave windsurfing, it's 35. But for speed sailing, you have the right knowledge of the material and the right experience at 30-40+. And the

right body weight – because you got to weigh 100 kilos. Being 35 or 45 isn't a problem if you are fit – it's all about the experience."

His shot at a new record

"The goal is to reach 100km/h and break the world record. My equipment is good enough, and three or four of the competitors in Namibia can do it – including Albeau and I. I believe we have the ability to do this."

Key factors

"The water has to be very smooth in the channel and the wind has to come from the right angle. You need the right wind strength – 45 to 50 knots of wind would be ideal."

Windsurfing versus sailcraft (the current holder of the world speed sailing record is the boat-plane hybrid Vestas Sailrocket 2)

"Windsurfing isn't using foils yet, so we cannot reach sailcraft' speeds. It will be the situation until windsurfing finds out how to use foils."

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