

# HIGH WIND BOARDS

» 10 HIGH-WIND BOARDS FOR GETTING YOUR FIX NEXT TIME IT'S POSITIVELY NUKING.

PHOTOS BY ERIK AEDER

**T**here's a myth that the most difficult thing to do in windsurfing is a forward loop. Untrue. The most difficult thing to do in windsurfing is deciding which board you're going to spend your hard-earned money on. You don't need to tell us – we know windsurfing boards aren't cheap. And windsurfing sessions don't always come that often – or easily. So having the right equipment to maximize your on-the-water fun factor? Yeah, that's a pretty big decision. We've seen people spend more time picking out a windsurfing board than picking out a car – and we completely understand.

With that in mind, we've entirely revamped the *WindSurfing* board tests. You'll still see the familiar blob graphs, and you'll still be able to find a tester of your size and skill level to compare favorites with (and now, you'll be able to compare them all at the same time – turn to page 68.) But in this test, we've introduced something new: superlatives. Yup. We're coming out and saying it: These boards do this best. Planing, turning, blasting and more – we're picking out the one board (and a few runner-ups from every category) and telling you which one it is – no reading between the lines or comparing blob graphs with a microscope. We hope you enjoy the new board tests – turn the page and jump on in.

BOARD TESTS 2010



We told the test team, "No looping!" They don't always listen. That's OK.

## NAISH GLOBAL WAVE 90

### “WOW! PERFECT WIDTH FOR QUICK PLANING.”

When wind was light, the whole test team was eyeing the 90-liter Naish. With plenty of float and width in the tail, the Naish easily exhibited the most sail range and planed off significantly earlier than every board in the test except the Thommen – yet still remained relatively controllable even when the wind came up. Definitely a favorite board for larger members of the test team.



#### RIGHT ROCKER + WIDTH

Surprisingly, the Naish doesn't have a slalom-type rocker – but the width (especially in the tail) helps it get going quick.

#### BIG FIN

The 25 cm fin had plenty of surface area, letting the Naish comfortably handle sails up to 6.7 for optimum light-air performance.

**HOW WE TEST FOR PLANING:** Testing for planing requires something none of us likes – gusty wind with plenty of lulls. Rather than rigging to plane constantly, we rig to plane in gusts, giving us an accurate assessment of how much wind is needed to get going.

**TRADE-OFFS:** The width and volume definitely became a handful for smaller sailors in high winds, where they preferred to step down to smaller boards.

➤ To see a full review, pics and videos, go to [windsurfingmag.com/boardtest10](http://windsurfingmag.com/boardtest10).

### » PLANING TEST FAVORITES



#### ◀ THOMMEN MWX925

**What Worked:** Peter Thommen wouldn't be caught dead on a board that didn't plane – this one is no exception. **“Quick acceleration, and high marks for planing!”** – Dave Troup



#### ▶ STARBOARD QUAD 86

**What Worked:** Width and volume give the Starboard an advantage despite having less fin depth to drive off of. **“Going WAY before you expect – pump, pump, POW!”** – Josh Sampiero



#### ◀ ANGULO CHANGO 88

**What Worked:** The classic wave shape smoothly glided onto plane with minimal rider input. Nice. **“Planned early and blasted through holes with ease.”** – Aaron Vieira



#### ▶ JP FREESTYLE WAVE 78 PRO EDITION

**What Worked:** Despite the smaller size, it still impressed with its planing prowess. **“Planes very quickly. Light pro construction is very responsive.”** – Ryan Mattson

Ray Scott and Dave Troup blast upwind toward Camp One.



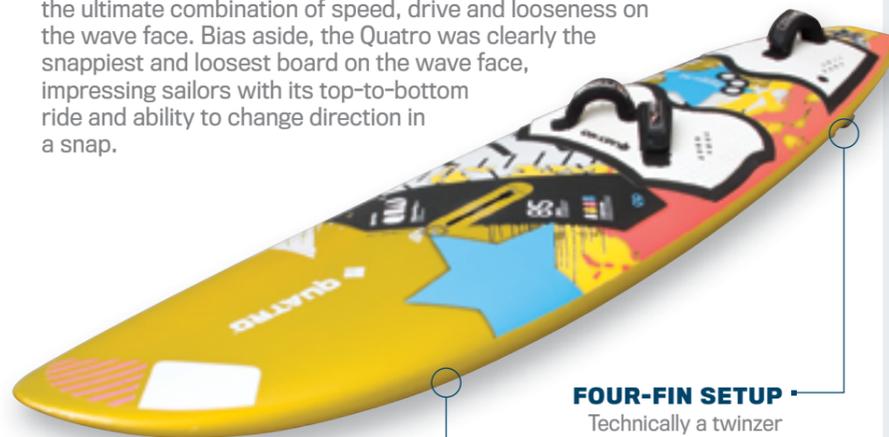
BOARD TESTS 2010

# BEST BOARD FOR WAVES

## QUATRO QUAD 85

### “TURNS ON A DIME? TRY A PINHEAD.”

We had our suspicions that the Quatro would be a standout wave board. After all, its pedigree includes a standout Maui shaper (and ripping sailor) in Keith Teboul, Ho’okipa testing grounds, and a twin-with-thrusters setup meant to offer the ultimate combination of speed, drive and looseness on the wave face. Bias aside, the Quatro was clearly the snappiest and loosest board on the wave face, impressing sailors with its top-to-bottom ride and ability to change direction in a snap.



#### FASTER ROCKER

Keith Teboul took out some of the rocker to make this board faster – it gets its wave performance from the four-fin setup.

#### FOUR-FIN SETUP

Technically a twinzer setup with side thrusters; the four smaller fins definitely work on the wave face.

**HOW WE TEST FOR WAVES:** Launching from upper Kanaha, it’s straight to Lower’s if it’s breaking for down-the-line rides. Then Uppers for “real-world” onshore-type conditions – backside rides and jumping. We’re looking for how a board changes direction, how well it slogs and smoothness in the bottom turn.

**TRADE-OFFS:** The four-fin setup took some getting used to for less experienced testers, and limited top speeds in flat water.

### » WAVES TEST FAVORITES



#### ◀ STARBOARD QUAD 86

**What Worked:** The big boy’s Quad planes earlier, floats more, with higher speed – but sacrifices a bit of maneuverability. **“Stable, secure top turns – fun in high winds.”** – Alex Loria

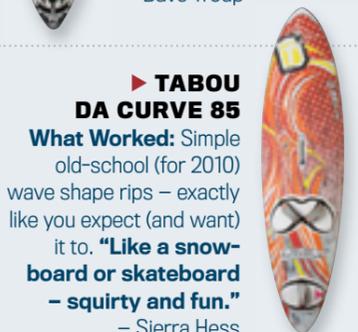
#### ▶ EXOCET 3X 82

**What Worked:** Does with three fins what the Quatro does with four – but easier for wave newbies to tune in. **“Nice jibes and bottom turns.”** – Carl Spiess



#### ◀ RRD WAVETWIN 90

**What Worked:** Twins can still win in the waves – but they’re less suited to flat-water blasting than the quad boards. **“Super snappy – keeps power in violent turns.”** – Dave Troup



#### ▶ TABOU DA CURVE 85

**What Worked:** Simple old-school (for 2010) wave shape rips – exactly like you expect (and want) it to. **“Like a snowboard or skateboard – squirty and fun.”** – Sierra Hess

BOARD TESTS 2010

# BEST BOARD FOR CONTROL

## FANATIC FREEWAVE 85

### “THIS BOARD MADE ME FEEL LIKE A PRO!”

The super-lightweight Freewave Team Edition is a freestyler’s dream in a wave-friendly board, offering a relatively low planing threshold, plenty of speed and a lively, responsive ride that reacts to the most minute rider inputs – something both skilled sailors and wave-board newbies really liked.



#### ULTRALIGHT CONSTRUCTION

Boards across the fleet felt a little heavier this year as brands try to work with more durable materials – but not the Team Edition.

#### VEE

Tucked rails and plenty of vee give this board control despite lightweight construction and its performance ride.

**HOW WE TEST FOR CONTROL:** One of the more qualitative values we test for is the board’s “control” factor. This comes well after everyone has ridden every board in the fleet and decided which boards let them feel most comfortable and in command – while still having fun.

**TRADE-OFFS:** Freestyle-friendly shape won’t suit the wave-riding purist – but it’s a great solution for the real-world wave sailor.

### » CONTROL TEST FAVORITES



#### ◀ JP FREESTYLE WAVE; 78 PRO EDITION

**What Worked:** Small size made for easy input when conditions got overpowered. **“Fast, with great control. I can pick my path.”** – Carl Spiess

#### ▶ GOYA ONE 85

**What Worked:** Predictable but exciting ride did it all – and did it all well. Big ups for awesome graphics. **“Smooth in voodoo chop – but excellent pop for jumping.”** – Dave Troup



#### ◀ TABOU DA CURVE 85

**What Worked:** If boards follow directions, the Da Curve is one hell of a listener. You ask, it does. **“I liked its liveliness and lightness – and it was easy to turn!”** – Alex Loria

#### ▶ EXOCET 3X 82

**What Worked:** Offers the advantages of a multi-fin ride without the “Why the hell did THAT happen?” face. **“Smooth over bumps, with a Cadillac ride!”** – Sam Bittner

BOARD TESTS 2010  
BEST BOARD FOR  
**NEWBIES**

# ANGULO CHANGO 88

**“SMOOTH IN ALL PHASES OF FLIGHT.”**

The Chango is decidedly the most old-school of all the shapes in this fleet – and let us emphasize: THIS IS A GOOD THING. The step-on-it-and-ride performance made it a fave for testers getting accustomed to high-wind sailing, and the length made carve jibes a breeze.



**LONG AND NARROW**  
Relatively, that is – it's the longest board in the test. The benefit? A smooth, reliable ride.

**WIDE TAIL**  
The second widest tail in the test keeps the Chango's planing ability impressive – a plus for newbie high-wind sailors.

## » NEWBIES TEST FAVORITES



**◀ NAISH GLOBAL WAVE 90**  
**What Worked:** Plenty of float, easy to ride. What's not for a newbie to like? **“This financial planner says it is ‘tacks efficient’ – Ha-ha!”**  
– Carl Spiess



**▶ GOYA ONE 85**  
**What Worked:** Simple, and didn't require lots of technique or tuning – but won't disappoint as skills progress. **“Easy to slog, with great volume distribution for uphauling.”**  
– Aaron Vieira



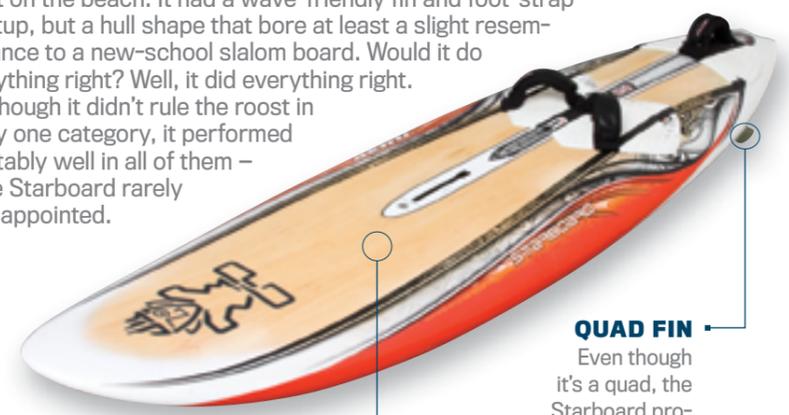
Maui resident and nursing student Sierra Hess never stops smiling.

BOARD TESTS 2010  
BEST BOARDS TO  
**DO IT ALL**

# STARBOARD QUAD 86

**“SICK. NASTY. QUADTASTIC.”**

Curiosity abounded about the Starboard as we checked it out on the beach. It had a wave-friendly fin and foot-strap setup, but a hull shape that bore at least a slight resemblance to a new-school slalom board. Would it do anything right? Well, it did everything right. Although it didn't rule the roost in any one category, it performed notably well in all of them – the Starboard rarely disappointed.



**WIDTH AND ROCKER**  
Despite being a four-fin wave board, the Starboard offered consistently good speed in flat water – and still ripped in the waves.

**QUAD FIN**  
Even though it's a quad, the Starboard provides lots of fin area – making blasting upwind a cinch.

## » DO IT ALL TEST FAVORITES



**◀ FANATIC FREEWAVE 85**  
**What Worked:** The free-style wave shape lives up to its billing, offering performance for anything. **“Super fast, super smooth, and carved my best jibes on this board.”** – Sam Bittner



**▶ JP FREESTYLE WAVE 78**  
**What Worked:** Do-it-all board for smaller sailors. Fast and friendly, with more float than the volume suggests. **“Great high-wind board with a smooth planing release.”**  
– Ray Scott

# THOMMEN MWX92

**“SMOOOOOTH – YET SUPER AT BUMP 'N' JUMP.”**

The Thommen came to us with very little indication of what it was built for (although the MW stands for “Maui Wave”). But an explanation wasn't needed – we quickly found the Thommen to be a standout in all categories, especially for heavyweights. It was fast, friendly and tons of fun. A great all-around board for mainland sailors.



**WIDTH AND VOLUME**  
Plenty of both provides plenty of planing power. No complaining here.

**HULL SHAPE**  
Vee to double-vee bottom shape leaves you in maximum control despite having more board under your foot.

✚ To see a full review, pics and videos, go to [windsurfingmag.com/boardtest10](http://windsurfingmag.com/boardtest10).

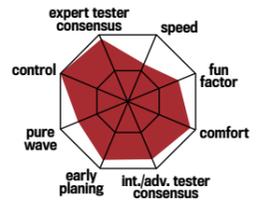
BOARD TESTS 2010

# TEST STATS

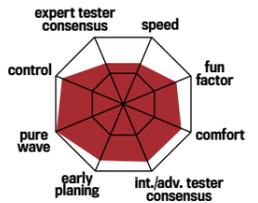
We rounded up 11 boards from 78 to 92 liters, and rode 'em to death. Here are the results.



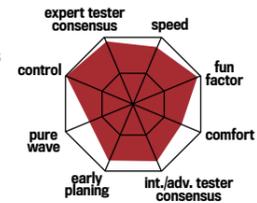
**◀ ANGULO CHANGO 88**  
 • Length: 242 cm • Width: 59 cm • Sail Range: 5.2-6.7 • Optimal Sail: 5.4 • Fin Size: 24 cm • Fin Box: A-box • Price: \$1,449 • What We Liked: Thin, fast shape was easy but exciting. Awesome jibes and a smooth ride. • Buyer Beware: Unless you've got a powerful style like Josh Angulo, it's not going to snap around as easily as other boards. • Best Suits: High-wind newbies, heavyweights, old-school sailors who want a classic ride. • Other Highlights: Comfy Dakine straps are standard.



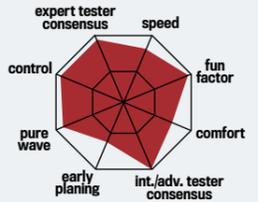
**◀ EXOCET 3X 82**  
 • Length: 240.3 cm • Width: 59 cm • Sail Range: 4.2-5.9 • Optimal Sail: 5.0 • Fin Size: Select 13.5 cm (3) • Fin Box: A-box • Price: \$1,775 • What We Liked: Multi-fin ride worked with traditional techniques. Cadillac road master, cuts through chop. Offered more float than its 82 liters suggest. • Buyer Beware: Won't win any drag races. • Best Suits: Advanced-intermediate to advanced riders looking for a multi-fin that won't require a change in sailing style. • Other Highlights: Use as a single or tri-fin setup.



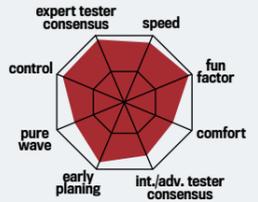
**◀ FANATIC FREEWAVE 85**  
 • Length: 237.4 cm • Width: 58.2 cm • Sail Range: 4.5-6.5 • Optimal Sail: 5.4 • Fin Size: 25 cm • Fin Box: Power • Price: \$2,199 • What We Liked: "Like a steak knife through filet mignon" said one tester. "Liveliness. Speed. Turning. Everything," said another. • Buyer Beware: Sticker shock is a very real possibility with one of the pricier boards in the fleet. • Best Suits: Advanced sailors looking for a ride to help them progress. • Other Highlights: Lightweight Team Edition felt like a feather in our hands.



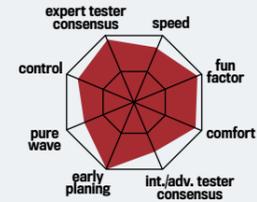
**◀ GOYA ONE 85**  
 • Length: 239.4 cm • Width: 58.3 cm • Sail Range: 4.2-6.2 • Optimal Sail: 5.2 • Fin Size: 24 cm • Fin Box: A-box • Price: \$1,845 • What We Liked: Secure, confident ride. Smooth through voodoo chop. One veteran tester said, "The Goya covers all your bases." • Buyer Beware: One tester complained about slippery pads; two noted early planing problems. • Best Suits: First-time wave sailors, sailors who need to do perfect jibes every time. • Other Highlights: Eco wood model is \$1,645



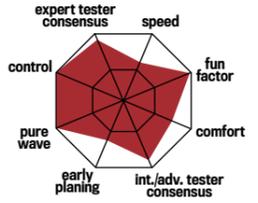
**◀ JP FREESTYLE WAVE; 78 PRO EDITION**  
 • Length: 232.3 cm • Width: 56.1 cm • Sail Range: 3.7-5.5 • Optimal Sail: 4.2 • Fin Size: 23 cm • Fin Box: Power • Price: \$2,215 • What We Liked: Planing – for a 78-liter board, it had incredible planing power. An all-around favorite with "stratospheric performance" one tester said. • Buyer Beware: Fun isn't cheap. Some found it to be a high-strung ride. • Best Suits: Adventure-seeking lightweights. • Other Highlights: Great straps and pads.



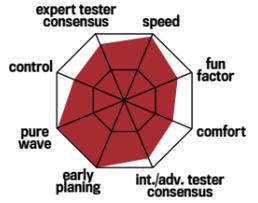
**◀ NAISH GLOBAL WAVE 90**  
 • Length: 248.7 cm • Width: 68.6 cm • Sail Range: 4.7-6.5 • Optimal Sail: 5.7 • Fin Size: 25 cm • Fin Box: Power • Price: \$1,849 • What We Liked: Nearly unanimous good reviews for planing, upwind ability and controllable ride from veterans and newbies alike. • Buyer Beware: One drag-race-prone tester noted a slight lack of top speed. • Best Suits: Everyone but the most radical and dedicated wave purist. • Other Highlights: Power-box fin offers sail range; comes with the Naish Eco board bag.



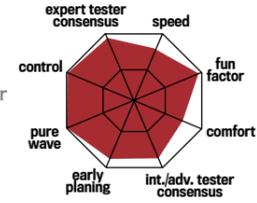
**◀ QUATRO QUAD 85**  
 • Length: 230.4 cm • Width: 57 cm • Sail Range: 4.0-5.6 • Optimal Sail: 4.7 • Fin Size: MFC QS 300 and mini-thrusters • Fin Box: Power • Price: \$1,995 • What We Liked: Pure wave-riding. Loose and slushy, it really shone down the line – and backside. • Buyer Beware: Not a speedster or bump 'n' jump board – this baby is made for waves. • Best Suits: Lightweight and advanced riders who want a change-of-direction board for playing in the surf. • Other Highlights: Good grief, we love these graphics.



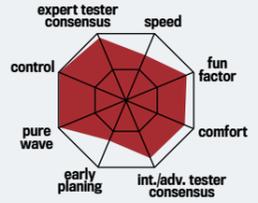
**◀ RRD WAVETWIN 90 LTD**  
 • Length: 234.8 cm • Width: 60.2 cm • Sail Range: 4.5-6.2 • Optimal Sail: 5.3 • Fin Size: MFC GP G10 • Fin Box: A-box; FCS box • Price: \$1,950 • What We Liked: Slashes up the wave face with ease, got heavyweight tester Carl Spiess around on his first loops. • Buyer Beware: Some found straight-line performance to be slightly lacking. It's at home in the waves. • Best Suits: Wave-sailing purists who want a board to float them out in light winds • Other Highlights: Limited Edition construction.



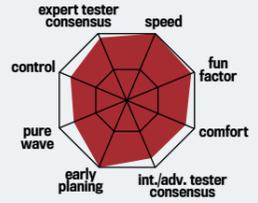
**◀ STARBOARD QUAD 86**  
 • Length: 234.5 cm • Width: 57.6 cm • Sail Range: 4.2-6.5 • Optimal Sail: 5.3 • Fin Size: 16 cm and 10 cm • Fin Box: A-box, surf fin box • Price: \$2,399 • What We Liked: Works like a single-fin in flat water and like a multi-fin on the wave face. Great upwind, super-snappy top turn. • Buyer Beware: You might not want to ride a single-fin board in the waves ever again. • Best Suits: Heavyweights looking for a multi-fin option, real-world wave sailors. • Other Highlights: Use as a single-fin or multi-fin.



**◀ TABOU DA CURVE 85**  
 • Length: 230 cm • Width: 57.6 cm • Sail Range: 4.2-6.2 • Optimal Sail: 5.0 • Fin Size: 24 cm • Fin Box: A-box • Price: \$1,899 • What We Liked: Lively, light and easy to turn. Best rail-to-rail action of any single-fin board in the fleet. • Buyer Beware: Multiple testers found the straps set far apart – even at the closest setting. • Best Suits: Experienced, traditional wave sailors who want a classic wave shape that doesn't lose a step to the newest fads. • Other Highlights: Big fin offers sail range.



**◀ THOMMEN MWX92**  
 • Length: 238.3 cm • Width: 58 cm • Sail Range: 4.7-6.7 • Optimal Sail: 5.7 • Fin Size: 24 cm • Fin Box: Power • Price: \$1,950 • What We Liked: Fast. "Couldn't find its top speed," said one tester. Very early planing and lots of float. All-around test favorite. • Buyer Beware: It was a big ride for smaller sailors. • Best Suits: Heavyweight sailors who need a do-it-all board that can confidently venture into on-shore waves. • Other Highlights: Top-quality components spare no expense.



## » MEET THE TEST TEAM

- SAM BITTNER**  
 Weight: 140 lbs. Level: Intermediate Bio: Last year, Sam learned water starts. Now? Waves!  
 Favorites: Starboard, Naish, Thommen
- RUSS FAUROT**  
 Weight: 150 lbs. Level: Intermediate Bio: Ezzy team rider likes little, turny wave boards.  
 Favorites: Quatro, Tabou, Naish
- SIERRA HESS**  
 Weight: 120 lbs. Level: Intermediate Bio: Second-year board tester with a constant smile and stoke.  
 Favorites: JP, Quatro, Exocet
- ALEX LORIA**  
 Weight: 175 lbs. Level: Intermediate Bio: Maui local is a wave-board specialist.  
 Favorites: Goya, Naish, Quatro
- RYAN MATTSON**  
 Weight: 165 lbs. Level: Intermediate Bio: Test rookie has an eye for newbie-friendly boards.  
 Favorites: Exocet, Angulo, Starboard
- MARC MILLER**  
 Weight: 145 lbs. Level: Intermediate Bio: Lightweight free rider likes boards that are easy to sail.  
 Favorites: Exocet, Goya, RRD
- ADAM RASKY**  
 Weight: 170 lbs. Level: Advanced Bio: Super-fit Gorge sailor likes responsive, exciting boards.  
 Favorites: Angulo, Thommen, Goya
- RAY SCOTT**  
 Weight: 170 lbs. Level: Advanced Bio: Has been testing boards longer than the editor.  
 Favorites: Angulo, Thommen, Naish
- CARL SPIESS**  
 Weight: 210 lbs. Level: Advanced Bio: Showed up with some new skills courtesy of ABK.  
 Favorites: Fanatic, RRD, JP
- JOSH SAMPIERO**  
 Weight: 230 lbs. Level: Advanced Bio: Likes fast, turny boards with float. But especially float.  
 Favorites: Exocet, Starboard, Thommen
- DAVE TROUP**  
 Weight: 190 lbs. Level: Expert Bio: Drag racer and wave slasher is difficult to please – that's a good thing.  
 Favorites: RRD, Goya, Naish
- AARON VIERA**  
 Weight: 170 lbs. Level: Advanced Bio: The Human Catapult catapults much less these days.  
 Favorites: Fanatic, JP, Quatro

## GET MORE ONLINE

▶ Not enough board-test coverage for you? Check out the bonus coverage online, where you'll find complete test reports, action videos and a video introduction to each board – all at the newly redesigned windsurfmag.com. Enjoy!

