

The European Freestyle Pro Tour is your friend

review09 preview10



The EUROPEAN FREESTYLE PRO TOUR 2009 was a bold statement. We travelled to new places, brought a lot of new people on the tour and saw one of the most dominant yet charismatic sportsmen ever

EFPT09

The season 2009 brought 5 events preparing 40.000€ price money for over 450 registered EFPT riders

To get a process or started it always needs a good kick-off project. The EFPT decided to introduce all riders and the windsurfing world to a new format of freestyle windsurfing, the Freestyle Classix was born. The small town Podersdorf in eastern Austria is the spot with the longest EFPT history, and therefore the perfect place to get something new started. Gerhard Polak, organsier of the event on the Neusiedler

the tour09. The „second start“ of the tour is still fresh in my mind like this...

There was this weird feeling in the car with Photographer Raffaello Bastiani, French rider Nicolas Akgazciyan, EFPT judge Marek Antol, race director Tom Hartmann and about 150 kg of luggage. Stopping half way at a traffic light Nico mentions the strange smell coming from outside and all the other occupants agree on blaming the breaks. The feeling is growing, not yet sure where it's going to end up. Finally our travellers made a one and half hour ride in about 35 minutes and everybody entered the ferry to Civitavecchia, Rome safely.

Not more than one hour ago the European Freestyle Pro Tour finished the first competition in the season 09, the Toshiba Freestyle Grand Prix at Porto Liscia, Sardegna. Steven van Broeckhoven won the final against Davy Schefers, followed by Andre Paskowski and Nicolas Akgazciyan. It was the first time Sardegna prepared the playground for the best European freestyle riders, and even though it's a secret right now, it will not be the last time. It was great fun to be on Sardegna, meet new people and see how fast they can become good friends. Stefano Lentati and Andrea Polloni deserve a great honour for their work as organizers before and during the event.

The reason why everybody had to hit the ferry that fast was the next event on Lefkada which was placed back to back on the tour schedule for '09. The Milos Beach Corona Lefkada Open were held for the third time. As the years before the event, organised by Christos Stratos, was windy and could deliver a



Nicolas Akgazciyan

High's & low's. He won the Freestyle Classix in Podersdorf, Austria, got injured during a PWA contest, and could finish 3rd in the EFPT total season ranking

See, restrained the variety of moves to a level somewhere in the late 90's, which had a big effect on the result.

Change the system

Focusing on the style of their moves French rider Nicolas Akgazciyan on 1st, Tonky Frans from Bonaire on 2nd and the „Italian Stallion“ Raimondo Gasperini on 3rd made the podium, but none of them earned some points for the total season ranking. Riders and organisers decided to not count the result, because of the different format to all other events on

result, which showed the same top 4 as seen on Sardegna. The young fleet on the heels of the „Fab 4“ was getting closer but not ready to overtake so far.

Passengers on the Meltemi

Another ferry and one weekend later the EFPT impedimenta stopped the first time on the biggest of the Greek islands. The Palekastro Open at Kouremenos Beach on Crete brought a competition no one could ever have thought about. The first time the EFPT was able to finish 2 full double eliminations, during which the riders had to use all gear their board- and quiverbags prepared them with. From 4.0sqm to 5.7sqm all sail sizes were used with dedication in the most exhausting competition this season. Steven van Broeckhoven made the hat trick perfect, followed by Paskowski and Akgazciyan, who could place themselves on the podium a head of Swede Niklas Strahlen. Michalis Oikonomakis and Hannes Unterweger, the owner of the Freak Surf station organised a great debut for Crete on the EFPT, preparing perfect sailing conditions surrounded by parties with fireworks, ceremonies and side shows. Everybody left Crete with happy faces.

The reason for the smile was not only the past event, it was the upcoming last event of the back to back to back to back tour in June. The Alacati Surf Paradise Club (ASPC) hosted the King of the Bay the fourth time in a row and could again prepare a superb event, on and off the water. Arkin Pekdag and Ralf Busse did a great job so our riders could fully focus on their. Was it able for blonde Viking Niklas Strahlen to enter the top 4 on Crete, on Alacati Davy Scheffers could again reach the small final end up on fourth position and reunite the „Fab 4“. The podium brought Nicolas Akgazciyan on the third, Andre Paskowski on the second and once again Steven van Broeckhoven on the first place. If anybody reading this article does not know Steven van Broeckhoven let me clue you into him. „In school there is this guy sitting in the back and he is getting good grades because he is super talented. In the

first row there sits a guy who gets good grades because he is studying 24/7. Combine those 2 types, add a lot of charisma, muscles and curly hair, and big sense of spontaneity, tadaa... Steven van Broeckhoven.

PWA break during summer

After Sardegna, Lefkas, Crete and Alacati all in one month the EFPT schedule showed two more events for 2009. The Toro Andaluz in the mid of September and the Rip Curl Prince of the Wind on Naxos as the final by the beginning of October. One month without an event the old and at the same time new organisation team around Harry Schaffrian and Dominique Peck focused on press work. Interviews with Yarden Meir from Israel, Dutch Maarten van Ochten, Swede Niklas Strahlen and alè le bleu Nicolas Akgazciyan were done, and will be followed over the winter by many more.

Off-water-life online

Stay tuned for the „Ferry series“ featuring Andraz Zan, Tine Slabe, Alex Tetsis and Stam Promponas coming soon on efpt.net. During summer we received bad news about our event on Tarifa. The already postponed Toro Andaluz finally had to be cancelled for the season 2009. After a few phone calls it was clear for the Toro organiser Panxo Pi Suner and the EFPT crew that the event is going to be on tour again in 2010, scheduled from the 26th to the 28th of March, again supported by the Spanish government.

As there is always good growing

EFPT judges

Head judge Tom Hartmann and EFPT approved judge Marek Antol travelled to all events in the season 09

Andre Paskowski

The champion of 2006 & 2007 is the longest competing EFPT rider. van Broeckhoven had to work hard to beat him





Davy Scheffers

here together with Steven after their final on Sardegna, showed how perfect and clean the new school kids can go

out of bad, the cancelation of Tarifa changed the calculation base for the total season ranking from 4 to 3 out of 5 events. The effect of this change was that it brought Steven van Broeckhoven and his hunters closer together. For the final event 2009 on Naxos the title race was still open. The Rip Curl Prince of the Wind was hosted by the Flisvos Sportclub crew around station founder Jan Andres. Everything was set for the final decision between Andre Paskowski and Steven van Broeckhoven, but before we come to the big final I would like to mention two riders. Both had a great time on Naxos and showed their best freestyle performance on the EFPT so far. Belgium rider Dieter van der Eyken and Israeli Yarden Meir are aged 17 and drove the audience crazy with their fast, clean and fresh style. Yarden finished 7th in the total season ranking and Dieter did an amazing run through the double elimination on Naxos and ended up on the third place. The rider who stopped him was German warhorse Andre Paskowski. He had an amazing season, going to all EFPT and PWA events, and running the best windsurf movie production we have seen so far, „Four Dimensions“. On the tour he often played the role of a big brother for the young freestyle fleet. Even though he would never admit, he seemed to enjoy this position. The EFPT feels proud to have such a variety of riders on tour, from the 14 year old Greek Konstantinidis twins over German „Windsurfing Ken“ Tilo Eber to 30+ rider Alex Tetsis, everybody is out for the sport and loves the tour and everything that comes along with it.

The champion

Steven van Broeckhoven took a big draught after the last heat for the EFPT09 that made him the champion

Very first female judge on Naxos

Now back to the final decision on the European Freestyle Pro Tour 09. Heat nr. 35 on Naxos was, winner of the single elimination, van Broeckhoven against Paskowski. Total season ranking 1 vs. total season ranking 2. The heat had to be cancelled twice, riders, crowd, judges, photographers, everybody was standing at the beach starrng out in the sea and waiting for the wind to come back and deliver the right conditions for the last heat of the season. Shortly after lunch race director Tom Hartmann brought up the green flag for the very last time, and the Belgium dominator Steven van Broeckhoven did what he knows best. He focused on the moment, got rid of all the pressure and won the the fifth EFPT final in a row with a clear 5 to 0 jury decision. Without any doubt he brought European Freestyle Windsurfing to a new level.

Right at the moment when Steven came in from his winning heat a lot of words and images went through my mind. Michael Schumacher, Lance Armstrong, Michael Phelps, Kelly Slater, Tony hawk all those athletes achieved something really great in their disciplines. Steven van Broeckhoven is at the beginning of a great carrier and the European Freestyle Pro Tour is very proud to be his starting point and homebase. We are looking forward to 2010, join us on your favourite online or print magazine, on facebook or on efpt.net to see if Steven will be able to defend his title on the EFPT10 and get closer to all those sport icons.



photo: Jonas Roossens

2009 was the relaunch of the European Freestyle Pro Tour. 2010 we reset our focus on the trinity of event locations, riders and industry sponsors. Those 3 parts will converge on the EFPT10

All of you who followed the European Freestyle Pro Tour in 09 do have a light glimpse of the future of the tour. Dieter van Eyken, Yarden Meir and Davy Schefers are just a few names of the young fleet of riders within the EFPT that are going to design the shape of freestyle windsurfing to come. Not only that they are excellent sailors on the water, they also are motivated participants back on the beach. Either they explain their windsurf gear or some tricks to the crowd, or work in close cooperation with the EFPT back-office to improve the circumstances of the tour. The young fleet knows about the chance they are given with the EFPT, and they are willing to give something back.

New web design for EFPT10

2010 the tour will bring out the event locations in bright light. We are going to invent the brand of „EFPT-approved“ spots, having the simple conclusion „if the spot is good enough for the best freestyle windsurfers in Europe, for sure I will spend my summer holidays there“ as a background. Similar ideas can be seen in winter tourism, where the winter sport regions became famous because of Ski and Snowboarding events and therefore have an advantage on the tourism market.

We do it for the fans

The third pillar, and maybe because of the money the most important one, is the industry. For 2010 we will give all sponsors a more prominent place on our new designed web page efpt.net and direct at the event locations. At the

beach we will achieve that in cooperation with our riders who will do their jobs as ambassadors of their sponsor brands. We will have meet & greets, rig-up tutorials, super sessions that are open for everybody etc. All those actions and happenings will bring the crowd closer to the sport. During the season 09 we experienced a growing interest in the tour not only on the computer screens or in the magazines, where we could get more into overall extreme sport pages, the beachsides of the event locations were crowded like never seen before. It is now our turn to catch those people and even more during the EFPT10. Be part on efpt.net, facebook and your favourite magazines.

EFPT10

See here the provisional tour schedule for 2010

date	event location	price money
26.03. - 28.03.	Tarifa, ESP	15.000€
30.04. - 09.05.	Podersorf, AUT	30.000€
21.05. - 23.05.	Korsika, FRA	5.000€
29.05. - 02.06.	Sardegna, ITA	10.000€
04.06. - 06.06.	Lefkada, GRE	5.000€
11.06. - 13.06.	Crete, GRE	10.000€
23.06. - 26.06.	Alacati, TUR	10.000€
16.09. - 19.09.	Naxos, GRE	10.000€
end of Oct.	Athens, GRE	20.000€



photo: Jonas Roosens

Photo credits | EFPT

photographers

Cover | EFPT

Nicolas Akgazciyan | Flora Bikich

Andre Paskowski | Jonas Roosens (image cropped)

Davy Scheffers | EFPT

Steven van Broeckhoven | Jonas Roosens

Dieter van der Eyken | Jonas Roosens

thanks to all other photographers from the season 09



Thanks to all Event Organisers, industry sponsors, riders, judges, online and print magazines, video makers, fans and lovers of freestyle windsurfing

see you all on the EFPT10

to find out more information go to efpt.net and search for us on facebook

dancin' letters done with scriptographer.com