

SPEED RECORD FOR ZARA

→ Zara Davis has taken a new women's production speed record on her Mistral speed board in Luderitz Namibia. She was invited to take part in the Luderitz Speed Challenge by her sponsor Anders Bringdal, the new owner of Mistral Boards International. She joined her fellow Mistral team members Anders, Farrel O'Shea and Andrea Baldini, on the flight to Cape Town and then drove 1300km up the Skeleton Coast town of Luderitz to start the challenge. The event is run by the legendary kiter, Sebastian Catalan, who was the first sailor ever to break the 50 knot barrier at the site last year. The site has traditionally been a kiter's speed venue and not suitable for windsurfers due to the shallow depth at the bottom of the run. Windsurfers were encouraged to take part this year on the back of promises made by the organisers of an improved course, a channel dug in the shoreline and the course moved 70 metres down to make it a straighter 500m run. The new layout worked exceptionally well for the top kites. On the 12th of October the first day of 40 to 45 knots of wind, Alex Caizergues on his 1st run down the course achieved an average speed of 54.1 knots which once ratified by the WSSRC will give him back his outright world record which was taken from him last year by the 60 foot Trimaran, Hydropter. Unfortunately the course was not ideal for windsurfers, the shallow water at the approach to the course meant that they could only get on the run at high water, 2 hours after Alex set his record. This combined with the sand bank built to windward half way down the course to reduce the chop, created a wind shadow for the sails for the last 250 metres of the run. This created a 500 metres of heaven and hell, the top smooth and fast and the bottom a gusty bucking bronco ride. Despite the shortcomings of the site the team made the most of it with Zara setting a new Women's speed production record of 36.99 knots on her Mistral Speed board and Anders a new Swedish National record of 44.8 knots on his 42cm wide Speed prototype. Zara said "The run was amazing at the start, using my 5.0m Simmer race sail I was fully powered up. My GPS shows I was hitting almost 40 knots for the first 250 metres then it all went wrong when my sail was shadowed by the high bank to windward for rest of the run. This board for sure has the potential to take me over 40 knots over 500m given the right conditions" Zara is sponsored by Mistral, Simmer, Dakine, Spartan and Walnut Grove Clinic

