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SPEED RECORDS FALL AT LUDERITZ

Top ranked female British speed sailor Zara Davis took part in this year's speedwearing world record attempt in the Nam-San basin of Luderitz. The site was made famous last year as the venue where kitesurfer Sebastian Catalán broke the 50-knot barrier. With a wider channel excavated for 2010, even higher speeds were anticipated this year – and the kites badly wanted their tails back from the 50-knot hydrofoiled catamaran, Hydroptère. Little did they realise how quickly that would happen as French kiter Alex Caqueran blew Hydroptère's 51.36 knots away with a blistering 54.1 knots in 45 knots of wind on his very first run down the 300m course. The new channel was claimed to be more accessible to spectators too, hence the international Mistral speed team of Anders Brogaard, Fanel O'Shea, Andrea Baldini and Zara Davis signed up to take part. Unfortunately the course didn't exactly live up to expectations – the entry was only navigable at high tide and a tail windward bank to control the chop midway down the course made the 500m speedstop a real run of two halves. The team made the best of the conditions though, setting two records in 35 to 40-knot winds two hours after Alex's unassailable size run. Anders broke the Swedish National Record with 44.9 knots and Zara set a new Women's Production Record of 36.99 knots on her stock Mistral speedboat.

Zara said: "The run was amazing at the start – I was fully powered up on my 3.0m Simmer race sail and the GPS showed I was hitting almost 40 knots for the first 250m. But then it all went wrong in the wind shadow from the high bank to windward for most of the run. Given the right conditions, this boat certainly has the potential to take me past 40 knots over 500m." Zara Davis is sponsored by Mistral, Simmer, DuKine, Spartan and Vialini Gove Clinic.

More at luderitz-speed.com

