

Wavelength

EUROPE'S PREMIER SURFING MAGAZINE



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ONE OF THE ORIGINALS**



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RUMBLINGS

IN THE

Words/Photos: Simon Jennings

NETHER REGIONS

A GERMAN SHAPER CALLED ROUVEN BUFO BRAUERS HAS BEEN DOING VERY ADVANCED WORK IN THE FIELD OF BOARD EVOLUTION. WORKING IN THE NETHERLANDS HE IS USING NEW GENERATION TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPED FROM AEROSPACE MATERIALS IN THE QUEST TO PRODUCE A TECHNICALLY SUPERIOR SURFBOARD. THE FIGURES SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES

FLEX

The new materials Bufo is using are far more elastic than first generation types. Standard polyester-fibreglass breaks at 2% flex. Tolerance with the Bufo system increases that by 300% and can flex to 6% before cracking the lamination. The new glassing system is not affected by UV light so, delamination does not take place making the boards more water resistant after damage and repair.

WEIGHT

Bufo's glass system is 30% lighter than today's boards, the fibreglass cloth, the skin of the board, comes in varied weights and sizes. Nine, six, four and two ounce cloth are the standards. Combined with solvent-free-based resin this forms the skin. The lighter the cloth, the faster the board, but the lighter the cloth, the weaker the board. A board using Bufo's glassing has vast weight advantages over the usual processes. The new system is 30-50% lighter.

The biggest weight saving is the removal of the stringer. In the Bufo board the stringer was removed for three reasons, to save the environment, to save weight and because the stringer will break before the glass system. It is leaving fibreglass behind.

The new system transfers the stresses in the resin part into the fibre part, the only way airframes and turbines would not come apart under stress. All of this makes the board incredibly strong, resisting pressures of 2.5 metric tons.

The other major advantage is that the Bufo system can be repaired using normal techniques like Solrez, epoxy resins and polyester resins. The system used by Bufo allows a surfer to have their magic shape created, but with the new glassing system it is lighter making the board faster thus increasing performance. It also is stronger; it won't break or ding as easily.

Because of stresses built into the board, minor dings will push back, increasing its life-span, thus working out as greener and cheaper in the long run. With its weight/strength ratio it is the ideal travel board.

CONCURRENT DEVELOPMENT

Bufo has a vision and an understanding. He is a committed shaper who has had to adjust his shaping for the North Sea and is more open to change than others. It is all very well to dismiss his boards as North Sea specials but they have been surfed in big conditions and have proved superior to normal boards.



Samples of Bufo's handiwork.