

**Looking out of the window I can see treetops full of snow. Not the best incitement to get you afloat, especially on inland waters. It's at times like this that I wished I lived closer to a long beach and could just pop out for a quick, dry, hour's blasting. Sounds ideal? Well that's Land Speedsailing. As the '96 racing season looms National Team Coach, Graham Bobin, talks us through the new developments in the sport.**

I know that there are still people out there who have never heard of or seen Land Speedsailing. It has been around for 12 to 15 years now, some people believed it would not last, but it has and it is still alive and kicking. It is not as popular as its closest relation, Windsurfing and it has not been around for as long as Land Yachting to which it is affiliated but has carved its own identity and gathered a hard core of enthusiasts. Many people start speedsailing as the light wind alternative to windsurfing, that's good because you can sail around on one of these machines, in a light force two, learning and practicing all of those allusive moves that need hours of practice on the water.

That last statement alone should spark interest in any budding Robbie Nash, who has also been known to use a Land Speedsail. Speedsailing is for everyone from kids big enough to lift the rig, to those still young at heart. All of the manoeuvres, such as gybes, tacks 360's and many more, are easy on wheels. You don't need to think about keeping up the

dreaded board speed through the turn, it does it for you and you can do it all at slow speed too.

With the weather being a little chilly recently how many of you have braved the snow to go windsurfing, or was the lake frozen anyway, and what about ice cream head?! None of that for the land speedsailor, warm clothes, a nice wind proof suit, boots, woolly socks and of course gloves. No changing, just de-rig and jump in the car and head home. Yes, Land Speedsailing is not only the light wind alternative, but also the best way to sail in the winter. (If that hasn't sold it to you nothing will!)

Learning can be done in safety as well, in one of the British Land Speedsailing Association (BLSA for short) recognized schools. These are generally connected with the dealer in your area. More about that later.

The BLSA in its present form has been going for 7 years now and its function like most associations is to deal with the sports administration, insurance, the teaching of different levels including instructors and trainers and the organising of events. Based in Teddington, Martin Coates carries out many of these functions with a little help from his friends.

This year sees the start of Team Speedsail UK. The newly formed British team are heading into Europe for several races this year. We are choosing to concentrate on forming an enthusiastic team therefore it is not skill level we are looking for when choosing team mem-



bers it is how much they are willing to put into the sport as techniques are best learned on the course or at team training sessions'.

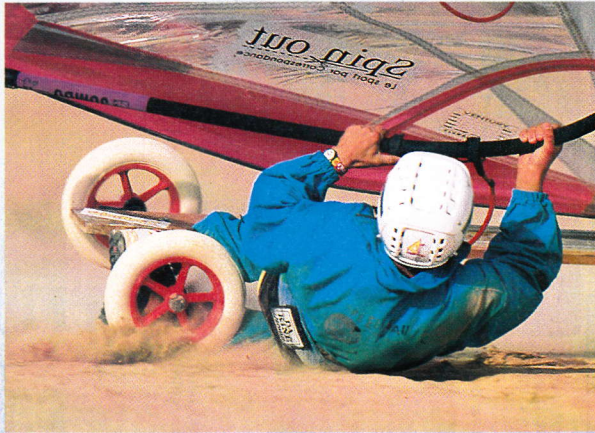
# The Wheel Thing



The first Euro venue will be the Dunkirk to De Panne ( Belgium) Raid where the Brits will be " fighting them on the beaches". This is a 35 Km endurance race with up to 150 competitors. Shortly after we have the Easter event, this year to be held at Weston-Super-Mare. Invitations to the top French and Belgian speedsailors have been sent and we hope that around 25 may join us for a rematch over three days. For those of you out there who would like to be considered for the team come along on Friday 5th for a trial. Other events during the year include another Raid in France and hopefully the Euro Cup at the end of October here in the UK. Possible other events are to be held, once confirmed, in the North-east at Bridlington, an attempt at a new speed record and a show event in South Wales.

If you would like to have a go at this sport contact one of the following dealers and schools. They will be able to give you a demonstration and arrange a course for you. Information about membership or insurance can be obtained from the BLSA .

**All the photos are from last year's World Championships. Held in Land Speedsailing's spiritual home, the Tunisian desert, the racing is held on a giant salt pan and generates speeds that terrify. Sadly there wasn't enough wind even for Speedsailing this year so the event had no official result. All the photos are by Norman Lomax who**



assures us that the guy above is not wiping out but going for a deliberate freestyle manoeuvre where he kicks the board round at speed and sails it away backwards. Rail Rides? Ha!

**Left: Shy, unassuming, the headgear says it all.**

**Far left: All the usual thrills of racing, but with no brakes, a top speed of over 35mph on the reaches and all happening it under ten knots of wind. Eat your heart out BWA.**



## DEALERS AND SCHOOLS

Speedsail UK and the National Speedsail School.  
Atlantic View, Rinsey, Ashton, Helston, Cornwall. TR13 9TS  
Fax or Phone (01736) 762950

Weston Speedsail School.  
103, Mead Vale, Weston-Super-Mare, BS22 8XE.  
Phone (01934) 511780 or 0585 164112

Bray Watersports Centre.  
Bray Lake, Monkey Island Lane, Windsor Road, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 2EB.  
Fax or Phone (01628) 38860

Robin Hood Watersports.  
152 Leeds Road, Heckmondwike, West Yorkshire, WF16 9BJ.  
Fax (01924) 443843 or Phone (01924) 474529

The Edge Surf Shop.  
8 - 10 Main Street, Seahouses, Northumberland.  
Phone (01665) 721257 or 720712

Solent Sailboards.  
Calshot Activity Centre, Nr Southampton Hampshire, SO4 1BR.  
Fax or Phone (01703) 894000

British Land Speedsailing Association.  
155 Waldegrave Road, Teddington, Middlesex, TW11 8LU.  
Phone (0181) 2872998

