

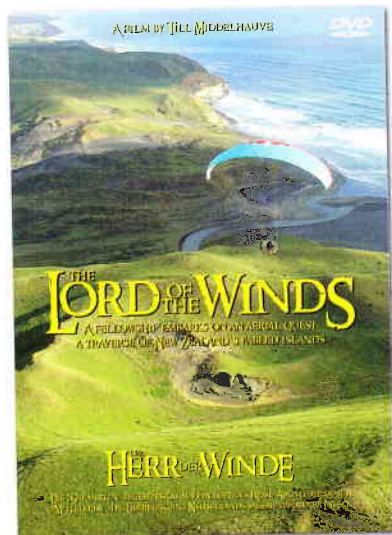


Cruising New Zealand's famous Ninety Mile beach. Photo: Till Middelhaue

MINI REVIEWS

LORD OF THE WINDS DVD

Paramotor across New Zealand with the creator of award winning East Wind. Review by Bob Drury



There are few more beautiful places to fly than New Zealand. For Dave Dennis, one of New Zealand's few PPG instructors and one of the driving forces behind the sport in the country, there was a dream just waiting to be realised. In Feb 2006 Dave managed to lure a group of six like-minded pilots half way across the world to take on the challenge of a lifetime and fulfil his dream – to paramotor the length of New Zealand's two islands.


Starting at the top of the north island the group and their support crew head south along the pristine beaches of the west coast. The flying and the filming are fantastic, with beautiful sequences of the guys skimming along beaches and ducking in and out of clouds, set to nice music. Thankfully the director stays cannily away from the trashy rock or panpipes that so often accompany flying films, instead choosing acoustic guitars and soft vocals to set the mood.

As with almost every film I've ever seen that involves paramotors, the weather has a major and inevitably defining part to play in the success of the expedition. Never more so than when Dave Dennis' wing goes into a parachutal stall whilst coming into land after getting wet in a rainstorm. His plummet to the ground and subsequent impact are shocking. Miraculously Dave somehow escapes uninjured.

From the famous surfing beaches of Raglan on the west coast the team head inland to the Tongariro National Park and Mt Ruapehu, one of

New Zealand's still active volcanos and the setting for the 'Land of Mordor' in the Lord Of The Rings films. Their goal is to fly up and over the volcano, but the wheels of bureaucracy and the weather seem dead set against them. Fortune favours the brave though, and clearly the very determined, and eventually the teams' continual badgering of the National Park wardens leads to a breakthrough that handily coincides with a break in the weather. A short while later we are all staring down at Mordor.

Continual badgering may break down the belligerence of the Tongariro National Park wardens, but it is utterly ineffective against the onset of the New Zealand winter and the atrocious weather that follows. Pinned to the ground like the kiwi bird itself, New Zealand's iconic and ironic national icon, Dave Dennis and friends finally admit defeat. Dave's dream of paramotoring the length of New Zealand remains unfulfilled... for the time being.

Till Middelhaue has built himself a reputation as a talented cinematographer, and his creative films stand as great ambassadors for our sports. East Wind, his award winning film from 2005 about a thousand kilometre journey on flying paramotor-powered bicycles, is still a big seller today. Lord Of The Winds is a worthy second release from Till and looks set to be another great success. 

Lord Of The Winds is available from www.xcshop.com and all good retailers.