

# The Story of Life

Words: Peter Svensson

Pix: Richard Ström

Our subscribers will have opened this issue and felt something free and DVD-sized drop out (and quite possibly twang off a flip-flopped foot – apologies if it hurt!). *Life* is a superbly shot film by none other than **Peter Svensson**, and features BOARDS reader Clive Hopkin. Here's how it came about...





**L**ife was filmed in Jericoacoara and Icaraizinho between October and December 2008. Its goal is to show how beautiful life can be there – not just for the visitor, but also for the local people. But just how did a quiet boy from Sweden end up working in paradise, becoming a windsurfing filmmaker, and producing this DVD about a BOARDS reader? Well, like so many things, it was through a series of chance events, as Peter explains...

I arrived in Jericoacoara for the first time in November 2005 for a three-week windsurfing trip with friends. We'd heard about this hidden jewel in BOARDS and elsewhere, and being from Sweden you get kind of hooked immediately by the facts of 30-knot winds, minimal bikinis, cheap drinks, sun and 30 degrees.

I'd brought a brand new video camera with me, but I was so into the amazing windsurfing conditions it was two weeks before I realised I hadn't even unpacked it! My hands were shredded from sailing by then and needed a rest, and while chilling on the beach one afternoon I suddenly woke up to Jeri's fantastic potential for photography. It had taken me two weeks to recognise that this is the best light a videographer can ask for, and during the last days of the holiday I went completely mad, shooting over 15 hours of footage.

I vowed to return and film a full length windsurfing movie, and in 2006 I went back. I had e-mailed Fabio Nobre, the owner of ClubVentos, and told him to arrange for me (an amateur filmmaker at that time) a helicopter as I was filming my first ever windsurfing movie on his beach. Incredibly, he replied a few hours later saying: *"Okay, if you film a movie here, I will fix you a helicopter"*. I honestly couldn't believe it. This guy, who didn't know me, spent a fortune on a helicopter!

I released my first windsurfing movie in 2007 (*Committed*), and it became pretty well spread on the internet. While shooting in Jeri I had some beers with Fabio and we discussed all things windsurfing. It turned out that our approach to most things was similar, and three months later Fabio e-mailed to ask if I knew anybody who'd be interested in working as his marketing manager. I was in my final year at university, and started to think of suitable candidates. My girlfriend, Anna, did her nut. *"Don't be such a fool! You should take the job!"* I hadn't even thought about the possibility until then. Settle in Northern Brazil? Hell – why not? So I told Fabio that I was the guy he was looking for (while crossing my fingers), that I had a degree in marketing, and I had some ideas about what we could do with a video camera.

In 2007 I was back in Jeri for my first day at

work, still pale after a rainy Swedish summer. Fabio welcomed me and introduced me to all the employees – over 50! Then we went to the magical room, the marketing office, and after 30 minutes everything I imagined had changed. I thought I was up for a lazy marketing job on the beach, to place a banner now and then on the internet. Bullshit. I was introduced to Fabio's new plan immediately, to start a new, second centre. *"But it means nothing if we don't do the proper marketing around it. Any ideas?"* I had still a bit of jetlag, and I must admit to initially feeling a bit intimidated as we smashed through the cogs and slammed straight into fifth gear.

We started cooking right there, the first day on the most crazy campaign I have ever heard of. We decided to invite the best windsurfers in the world to help us find this new spot. Thirteen PWA stars accepted the invitation, and then journalists joined as well. It was not actually the result which impressed me most, but the fact that ClubVentos did it. It is still just a windsurfing centre in a small village. Yet we had Robby Swift and Kevin Prichard flying in from Maui, Baptiste Gossein from France, Kauli Seadi, Marcilio Browne, Andre Paskowski and everybody else joining because we dared to do it. 'ClubVentos Beach Search' took all my waking hours that year. *[Read the full Beach Search story in our May 2008 issue.]*



When we summarised the year, I started to get scared. How the hell can we ever do anything on this scale and with this result again?

The months passed and we got stuck into some crazy ideas. Too crazy. But we didn't want to do something small and boring. Then it struck us like lightning! We should introduce the world to the wonderful local people and their fantastic approach to life, and showcase our clients, who seek the life-changing experience of a visit to this amazing place. And what better way to do that than a windsurfing film?

You may think 'life changing' is a little strong, but Jeri had definitely changed me. The place is magical. It calms your European head down to a slow pace, and you start to appreciate all those small but important things, like watching a full sunset. I never do that back home in Sweden. In Jeri it's almost a law. It's a part of life here, to end the day on the beach, watching the sun disappear. Besides, the locals deserved a movie about

their village and their culture, and the sport which now pays for their children's education. It suddenly became very clear that we should do a film about life. Life in Jericoacoara and Icaraizinho...

I started to contact some pro riders to nail down a list of stars. Gollito, Andre Paskowski, Marcilio Browne, Normen Gunzlein, Antxon and Vicky Sanchez are Jeri regulars. All are good riders, great personalities. But there was something missing. It still felt like we were producing a typical windsurfing movie – and we didn't want to. Those riders appear in loads of movies, and we wanted to do something new, and more emotional. We wanted to show the normal windsurfer. The freerider. The office-working windsurfer, who dreams of the ultimate windsurfing experience, the ultimate holiday. We should do a movie about a client!

We started looking through our client list from previous years to see if there was anybody that suited the role. Everybody did! ➡



## Get Yours!

If you're not a subscriber and want to see the film, there are three bits of good news. The first is that we've had an extra 500 copies made. The second is that the DVD is free – all you have to do is become a subscriber. And the third is that, as a subscriber, not only do you get BOARDS delivered to your door before it hits the shelves, you also get to enjoy all the benefits of our Subscriber Club. You know it makes sense...



We have 40 year-old couples flying in from Belgium, 25 year-old friends coming in from Spain, doctors from USA and teachers from Paris. Then we thought of a guy who'd been here a good few times and fitted the bill perfectly. BOARDS reader Clive Hopkin is around 40, and lives and works in London - the absolute antithesis of Jeri. Hectic, stressed, heavy traffic and grey weather. We called him and asked if he fancied coming to Brazil one more time. No prizes for guessing his answer!

I travelled to London during the winter to film Clive in his normal, everyday life. We did some interviews and shot several takes in the city, the subway and his office. He has a nice life, and a job he loves a lot. But he is, like many windsurfers, a dreamer; he appreciates the importance of travelling and culture, and loves to discover new parts of the world. I knew this is exactly what we wanted for the movie. A guy with a life that everyone can relate to.

Back in Jericoacoara I was so stoked to finally be making a movie about the place I loved so much. I scribbled down a list of locals I needed to interview, and what I wanted to show from the village. I filmed Nito a couple of times, an old fisherman who came to Jeri in the '70s and never left again. He had so many stories, and I spent many hours at his house, listening and sipping so much knowledge from this simple, yet very wise man.

When the windsurfing pros arrived it was time to focus on the riding part of the movie. We wanted to mix all riders, but also to give them a touch of personality as they are a part of the Jericoacoara story. They have, exactly like Clive, myself, and many other windsurfers, discovered Jericoacoara and decided that this is it. This is the place to spend time at. This is the place to live your life.

BOARDS subscribers received their copy of *Life* free with this issue, and I really hope you all take some time off to watch it. Don't expect a radical windsurfing film with punk music; if that's what you want you'll be very disappointed. But if you want to be inspired by a beautiful place, slow-motion windsurf action, and people who deserve their own movie, then I recommend you turn off your mobile and watch *Life*... [boards](#)

**To see more movies from Peter Svensson, check out [www.peterfilm.se](http://www.peterfilm.se) and [www.clubventosbeachsearch.com](http://www.clubventosbeachsearch.com)**

### Fancy a Job?

Fabio Nobre, owner of ClubVentos, writes: "Peter Svensson, the amateur filmmaker that dared to e-mail me in 2006 to ask for a helicopter, is now shooting for higher altitudes as he is leaving his position of marketing manager of ClubVentos to start his own film production company. At the time of writing, his job in Jericoacoara is still free. So if you have a marketing graduation, a passion for windsurfing, and a hyperactive brain full of crazy ideas, send your resume to [jobs@clubventos.com](mailto:jobs@clubventos.com). Just don't expect a 'lazy marketing job'. Day one will be in fifth gear." [boards](#)



BOARDS reader, and co-star of *Life*, Clive Hopkin