



HISTORY

The History of Kona World Championships

History of Windsurfing, Ups and Downs

In the beginning, one-design racing was the major vehicle of exposure for the sport of windsurfing. By the late 70's, it had become the fastest growing sport in World history. As the equipment evolved, windsurfing took the lead as the first extreme sport on water. The focus switched from racing to big wave jumping in Hawaii and the extreme winds of the Columbia River Gorge in Oregon. The windsurfing industry struggled to support one design racing which in due course, inhibited the entry-level and eventually the growth of the sport.

History of Windsurfing in Florida and Keys

While invented in California in 1969, Florida, New England and the Midwest were early growth markets for the sport. Florida benefitted from being a winter getaway for Northerners, so the Midwinters and other regattas became very popular. The Manana Regatta was held in Key West from the late 70's into the mid 80's. Windsurfing centers also popped up in Key Largo and Islamorada. The Islamorada Pro-Am started up in 1984 and ran for two decades. Further up the East coast of Florida, the Calema Midwinters followed in 1985 and became one of the most prominent windsurfing regattas in North America.

Kona to The Rescue

The Kona concept was born from the memories of the early years when fun, fair racing provided comradery amongst windsurfers of all ages and skills. With the Kona One-Design sail-size-to-weight program, windsurfers of any weight and/or age can have an equal chance to win. The playing field is more level than ever before. Tactics, board skills and endurance shall be the defining difference. From its conception in 2006, the class has grown quickly, recognized as an official sailing class by ISAF in 2009 and now, well over 4,000 boards worldwide.



Kona at Home in Florida

From the beginning, nearly all Kona racing in North America was done in Florida, probably because it was the home of the Kona distributor. The Calema Midwinters served as a Kona championship regatta, growing the Kona fleet steadily over the years. The 2010 Kona Worlds held in Miami did more to introduce Kona to the continent than anything before and since. And only two years ago, the Kona Worlds in Islamorada drew the largest attendance for a one-design regatta in over two decades. Florida still hosts more Kona Regattas than the rest of North America.

Previous Kona World Championship Locations

- 2015 Brouwersdam, Netherlands
- 2014 Islamorada, Florida Key, USA
- 2013 Trois Rivieres, Quebec, Canada
- 2012 Maspalomas, Canaries, ESP
- 2011 Nivaa, Denmark
- 2010 Miami, Florida, USA
- 2009 Motala, Sweden
- 2008 Travemunde, Germany
- 2007 La Ciotat, France
- 2006 Pattaya, Thailand





Islander Resort - Islamorada, Florida USA

In the Florida Keys – America’s Caribbean Islands

The 2016 Kona Worlds will be held at a beautiful oceanfront Florida Keys resort, a proven effective venue (site of 2014 Kona Worlds) to hold the Regatta and help promote our sponsors. Recognized as a leading Florida Keys vacation getaway, water recreation and sport fishing destination, the **Islander Resort**, is the newest Guy Harvey Outpost Resort and located on Islamorada Key, Florida Keys. The resort, with its pristine private beach, provides the perfect venue for the Regatta and provides competitors, families, committee members and spectators the best in Florida resort accommodations.

The Islander Resort features two waterfront resorts, oceanfront swimming pools, a marina, a lighted 200-foot pier with amazing views and local marine life, Guy’s Beachfront Bar & Grill and recreational fun and charters in diving, snorkeling, eco tours, kayaking, parasailing, mangrove tours, fishing and boating. This 22-acre Atlantic Oceanfront resort offers Kona Worlds sponsors a well-recognized branded venue and competitors a taste of the good life in a casual, island atmosphere.

Islamorada, Key West

Known as the “Sportfishing Capital of the World,” the city of Islamorada is the perfect blend of oceanfront elegance, unspoiled nature and Floribbean style. Mid-way in the Keys, and stretching from Florida Keys Mile Marker 90 to Mile Marker 72, Islamorada consists of four unique Keys with turquoise blue waters of the Bay and offers numerous tranquil spots to relax under Florida’s golden sunshine.

Islamorada, with an area history spanning over 3,000 years, also features the History of Diving Museum, the Theater of the Sea (marine mammal adventure) and offers up the island’s complete history at the Key Historic State Park and Lignumvitae Key State Park. Ever since the days of famous authors and sportsmen like Ernest Hemingway and Zane Grey, Islamorada has attracted outdoor competitors – the perfect venue for the 2016 Kona World Windsurfing Championships.

