



Featuring Suter Tan –  
One of Singapore's Top  
Wakeboard Instructor Photography: David Ngiam

# RIDING THE WAVES

He is currently 37 years old, but started water-skiing since he was 7 years old. That gives Suter Tan about 30 years (give and take) of experience riding the waves and executing stunts that will make Jacky Chan sit up and watch.

Recruited into the Singapore Water Ski National Team at the age of 16, Suter has won 2 bronze medals and established a record in the 19th Sea Games in Jakarta in 1997 and has not looked back since. The switch to wakeboarding was made in 1995 and he is now a much sought after wakeboard instructor with almost no time for himself.

In June 2007, 1080 Wakeboard Academy merged with Launch 2002 Wakeboard School. The merger reunited 2 of Singapore's wakeboarding pioneers, Suter Tan and Kevin Tan, still considered to the best in this country.

Currently an instructor with Launch 2002 Wakeboard School in Marina Country Club (the former Punggol Marina), Suter's day starts as early as 7 am and may end 12 hours



later. Walk into the school now and chances are, you will not find him there. He will be out on the waters instructing new students – thanks to Suter's reputation preceding himself, or holding sessions with ex-students who revisits Suter from time to time simply due to fond memories of their training days with Suter. Such is the demand for one of Singapore's top wakeboarding instructor that his days are filled with endless wakeboarding sessions tightly packed in a breakneck schedule.

Over the years, Suter has seen a change in trend – there are now more women within the wakeboarding community compared to 10 years ago. Some parents have also started their kids off young (3 to 4 years old) on the Kneebboard.

According to Suter, it seems that ladies actually enjoy a better success rate in wakeboarding compared to guys, and it is probably due to the fact that ladies actually listen to



instructions. Guys on the other hand, with a stronger belief in their 'superior' physique (alpha-male mentality?) tend to have a 'talk less do more' attitude that is counter-productive. Executing certain wakeboarding manoeuvres require listening to the finer but nonetheless crucial instructions.

The current situation of wakeboarding in Singapore seems to have hit a catch-22 point, Marina Country Club alone has a total of 40 boats available for wakeboarding. However, Singapore has insufficient water space for wakeboarding. Some countries have designated areas for wakeboarding but here in Singapore,

safe areas with good water are limited. This has spurred some wakeboarders to head for the Santi River in Johor for their wakeboarding sessions as they are left with little choice.

And finally, a piece of advice from Suter to the aspiring novice wake boarder: 'If you are not ready, never attempt a trick on the wakeboard.'

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