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November 2024 No. 415

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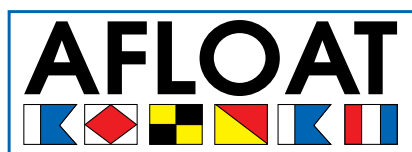
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**A life of
adventure**

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Head Office:

PO Box 709, WILLOUGHBY, 2068

Ph: 02 9417 6499

info@afloat.com.au

www.afloat.com.au

Display Advertising:

Daniel Small

Ph: 0449 707 053

Email: daniel@afloat.com.au

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AFLOAT welcomes contributions from readers. Stories should be no longer than 1600 words and the ideal length is about 1300 plus pix. Our preference is for copy submitted by email. We prefer a package, that is words and pictures. Photographs can be submitted by email as hi-res jpeg files as long as they are at least 300dpi at the size they will be used. Any material sent by mail should be accompanied by a stamped self-addressed envelope, if you want it returned. All care will be taken but no responsibility accepted for unsolicited material.

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AFLOAT Acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and their connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.

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Photo: Sally Machray

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Front cover: IMOCA 60 *Charal* with solo sailor Jérémie Beyou (FRA) training off Lorient for the Vendee Globe.
Photo: Eloi Stichelbaut – polarYSE

Adventures on Water: Jordan Mowbray



Exploring the echoes of the past in Yendegaia Bay, Patagonia, Chile.

A life of sailing adventures, from the icy wastes of Antarctica to choppy waters of the boating industry has kept Jordan's life full, reports **Andie Casey**.

Jordan Mowbray grew up on the shores of Lake Macquarie, near Newcastle, one street over from the Belmont 16-foot Sailing Club. Like many local boys, Jordan grew up in and around the water, including racing dinghies and going fishing with friends, all the while developing a passion for all things boating. This passion was enhanced by some of his father, Tony Mowbray's, major achievements. Tony sailed solo, non-stop and unassisted around the world when Jordan was seven. At the time, Tony was the fastest Australian to complete the Around the World milestone, with a finish time of 181 days. A few years later Tony and a team of four set sail for Mawson's Hut in Antarctica, successfully completing another treacherous and testing adventure. Some children follow their parents' footsteps into the world of finance, or business. The Mowbrays' were no exception. However, their family business became adventure sailing.

Antarctica

Jordan was 12 years old when he and Tony first sailed to Antarctica. Team Mowbray, as they came to be known, would repeat this voyage many times. As well as journeys through Patagonia and around Cape Horn, often setting sail from Puerto Williams at the bottom of Chile or Ushuaia in Argentina. As of September 2024, and at the age of 31, Jordan has rounded 'The Horn' over 20 times, a significant milestone due to the treacherous conditions in this



Photo: Jordan Mowbray

Battling the elements at Cape Horn, where the waves crash over the cockpit of Commitment.



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part of the world. Naturally, Team Mowbray became synonymous with once-in-a-lifetime experiences for paying charter guests seeking a life less ordinary. After leaving high school, Jordan completed a Yachtmaster qualification, formalising the trade he learned while “on the tools” in the Southern Ocean. Avoiding icebergs, shooing Leopard seals from chewing holes in inflatable dinghies and keeping guests three times his age calm in rough seas were not formally included in his qualification, though had they been Jordan could have passed with flying colours. Jordan began splitting his time between Team Mowbray Expeditions in the Southern Ocean, and working as a First Mate aboard various superyachts chartering in the Caribbean, Bahamas, and the US East Coast. By this time, Jordan was qualified and competent to skipper Team Mowbray’s high-latitude 60ft sailing yacht, appropriately named *Commitment*, without Tony.



Photo: Graham Murphy

S/Y Commitment enroute to Antarctica in the Drake Passage.

High-latitude sailing

A challenge faced by all sailors in the Southern Ocean is in combating the notoriously tough conditions. Modern technology allows for weather prediction even while at sea. However, unenviable decisions still need to be made as storms roll through and wind and rain batter sailing vessels. It is not uncommon for winds to reach up to 50 knots in these locations, with gusts of up to 80+ knots. On one particular expedition Jordan and his charter guests were held up in the Antarctic Peninsula waiting for a weather window. Jordan, at the age of 22, was responsible for determining when it would be safe to cross, both at their current position and at their destination, which they would reach in three and a half days’ time. Finally, a suitable window appeared, and Jordan departed Antarctica. After sailing for one and a half days north, the weather deteriorated unexpectedly, and at rapid pace. A new swell rolled in from the southwest, crossing with the



Photo: Keir Enderby

Commitment anchored in the icy serenity of Paradise Harbour, Antarctica.

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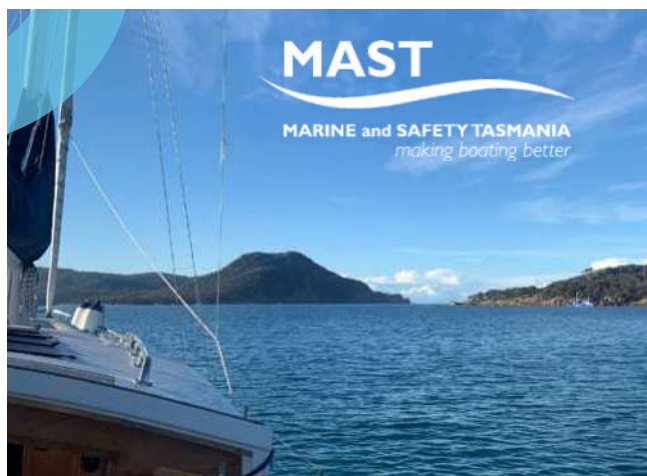
Setting sail from New Zealand into the vast unknown of the Southern Ocean, with Cape Horn on the horizon.

residual swell from the northwest, creating wedges on the peaks of the waves. With few options, it was decided to heave-to for the night or until the worst of the weather was over. During the course of that night, the boat was knocked-down and held underwater for a period of time. The carnage was absolute, as floor became

ceiling, and each attendee felt sure that this was their last night. Miraculously, the boat righted itself, and while many were covered in bilge water, and cupboards had burst open with heavy items catapulting out, only minor injuries were sustained. There was only one thing to do – continue sailing back to the Horn.

Credentials

At this time of his career, Jordan was able to reflect on the rewards gained through his hard work and efforts. He had, by this time, completed regular Antarctic voyages over a 10-year period. He had been one of the youngest Australians to achieve a Yachtmaster qualification. Jordan had completed multiple long voyages, including a Great Southern Ocean crossing, which saw him at sea for 42 days. He had been to so many countries for work he'd had to request a new passport, as his had run out of pages. In addition to all this, Jordan had worked on superyachts, living in spectacular locations adjacent to what would be considered



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First glimpse of an Antarctic giant — sailing past this breathtaking iceberg.



Cutting through the frozen frontier aboard Commitment.

by most a fairly luxurious lifestyle. Throughout, he had gained a lot of friends and respect within the industry, as he had earned his stripes and remained true to his roots as an Aussie boy from Belmont. "What should I do next?" was a natural progression in Jordan's thoughts.

After investigating a variety of potential avenues, Jordan determined that while he enjoyed the exhilarating lifestyle of high latitude sailing, remaining at sea long-term could become quite a lonely experience. He began to seek a position that would allow him to remain close to his family, and hopefully leave room one day for a relationship. The highs and lows of adventure are very exciting. But as many sailors know, when you are always on the cusp of leaving a place and arriving at the next, it is not easy to form or maintain relationships with loved ones. When a person has seen and done so much at a young age a crossroads can appear. Turn one way for possible adventure and excitement – with the accompanying less glamorous side of near-death experiences and a lack of connection – or turn the other way. This would mean less excitement but the simple joys of stability and being loved for who a person is rather than what is written on their CV.



Commitment meets nature's icy majesty at the end of Seno iceberg, where glaciers stand tall north of Puerto Eden, Chile.

Boating industry

In a moment of serendipity, Jordan crossed paths with Jed Elderkin from E Marine Motor Yachts, who needed a hand with some service work on a couple of his customers' yachts. Jordan and Jed quickly took to working together, and within a short time Jordan was appointed Business Development Manager, with a focus on selling yachts and growing the business. Jordan's personable demeanour, strong experience with and deep knowledge of different boating needs, was well received by customers and he became a trusted consultant for potential boat owners. Some initially may have thought 'who is this young bloke?', but after hearing just a little of his experience, they realised they were in safe hands. To others considering this path, Jordan would advise "Just have a crack, try not to let fear stop you from doing things. Go and get qualified, that is quite important, and take projects on that will build a bit of resilience and mental toughness. That will build your confidence when you see you can do it. And in general – having a strong network throughout your career will give rewards even years later. If people pick-up the phone and are pleased to hear from you, that's a big thing".



Photo: Ekkehard Erben

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The icy expanse of the glacier meets the wild landscapes of Patagonia.

An amusing story Jordan remembers comes from the time he was hiking in Patagonia with his friend Marina. As one does in these environments, they were going to attempt to hike an unknown glacier. They rugged-up for the weather, strapped on their crampons, and headed out. As Marina was feeling confident, she took a fateful step off the moraine – which for the uninitiated, is an accumulation of rock and debris that has built up on the edge of a glacier. She fell through a snow bridge and into a crevasse, the

top half of her body was poking out, and her lower half dangling in space. At this early stage in the hike they had not ‘roped-up’ which is a safety practice where climbers are connected to each other by a rope for rescue purposes.

Temporarily scared witless, Jordan began running over to her. However, the cries for help soon became “STOP!”, when both realised that his footsteps may make the edges collapse further. Slowly, and with a lot of care, Marina was able to remove herself from the position with her ice axes and returned to safety, upon which time she and Jordan burst into exuberant, relieved laughter at having lived to fight another day. With a deep gratitude for a life lived fully, for Jordan this story brings back not fear, but giggles.

The move to E Marine Motor Yachts has been smooth. E Marine are the exclusive dealers for Back Cove and Sabre Yachts in Australia and New Zealand, which allows them to provide a high level of specialised customer service for clients interested in premium quality motor yachts. In addition, E Marine are growing the brokerage side of their business, which enables customers at a variety of price points to enjoy their time out on the water in comfort. Jordan and Jed’s philosophy is to match their customers to the best boat for their needs, whether that is motoring around Hamilton Island, cruising around Sydney Harbour, or on a personal mission in more far off and exotic locations. To find out more visit www.emarine.com.au ⚓



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