



Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing **MEDIA GUIDE** 2014-2015

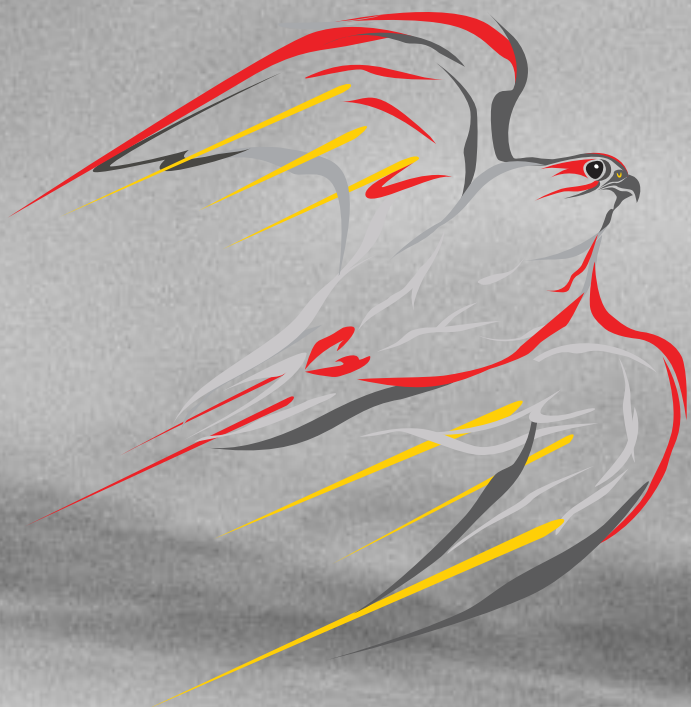
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OUR INVOLVEMENT

As backers of Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing (ADOR) and the Abu Dhabi Volvo Ocean Race stopover and as an official Volvo Ocean Race Partner, Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority (TCA Abu Dhabi) plays an integral role in the 2014-15 race.

TCA Abu Dhabi's mission is to promote the heritage, culture and traditions of Abu Dhabi worldwide. The emirate – with its long maritime history and exciting range of watersports options – is an ideal race stopover. Sailing is a passion for many Emiratis and expatriates, and crowds for the stopover are expected to be strong in numbers and enthusiastic in spirit.

This is the second time TCA Abu Dhabi has backed a team and hosted a stopover in the race and the initiative is a key element of the Authority's strategy to promote Abu Dhabi as a watersports destination of note.

Abu Dhabi looks forward to welcoming all the competing teams, along with their families and fans to the Destination Village on the Corniche from December 12, 2014 – January 3, 2015.



DISCOVER ABU DHABI

THE EMIRATE: THEN & NOW

Abu Dhabi is the vibrant capital of the United Arab Emirates and the largest of the seven emirates that make up the Arabian Gulf nation. Both the city and the wider emirate have a rich, captivating history that in many ways tells the story of the entire region. There are archeological traces of ancient civilisations settling in parts of Abu Dhabi as far back as the third millennium BCE. For centuries, Islamic explorers, Bedouin tribes, camel herders, date harvesters, pearl divers and fisherman traversed the area that is now the UAE, settling in small coastal villages to take advantage of the warm waters off the peninsula's coast.

In 1971, Abu Dhabi, along with the six Northern emirates, unified to form the UAE - with Abu Dhabi as its capital and its ruling family, the Al Nahyans, at the head of the federal government.

Abu Dhabi city has long evolved as a diverse and multicultural capital – something that remains very much a part of its character today. Originally a sparsely populated area inhabited by Arabian pearl diving communities, 19th century subcontinent and Middle Eastern immigrants added to the emirate's population growth and its cultural diversity but at its core, Abu Dhabi has always been an Arab city. Both the Al Nahyan family and Dubai's ruling Al Maktoum family descend from the Bani Yas, a tribe of Bedouin from the heart of the Arabian peninsula.

Today, Abu Dhabi is one of the biggest success stories of modern Arabia – leveraging its resource-rich geographical location to develop a stable, modern, affluent city for locals and expatriates alike, and presiding over an emirate known for its business-savvy culture and unfailing commitment to peace and prosperity.





THE UAE'S MARITIME HERITAGE

Located on the Arabian Peninsula and with all its major cities positioned on its long coast, the UAE has a rich maritime history.

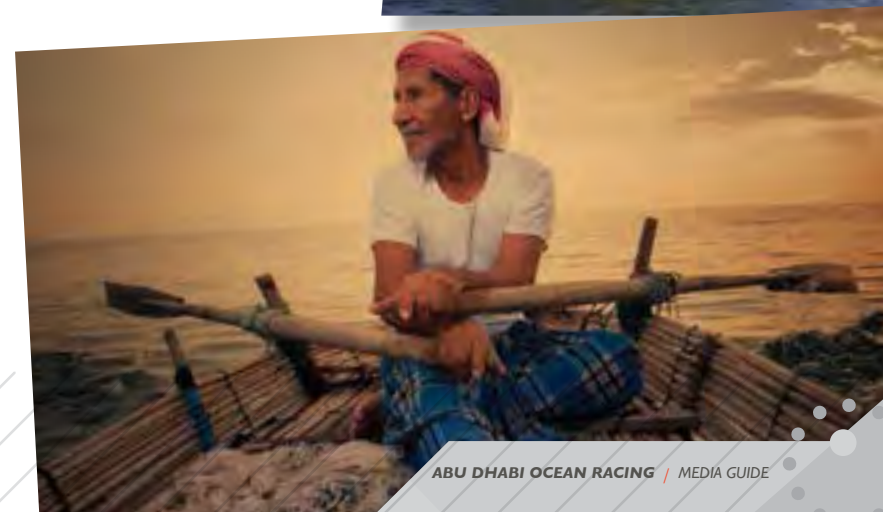
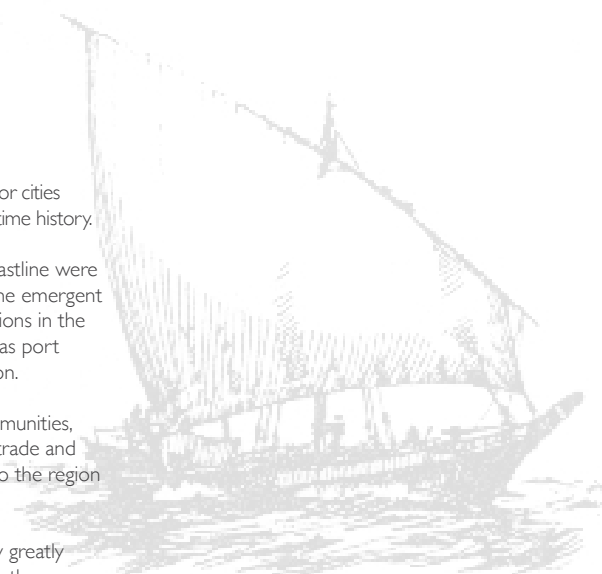
The first societies who settled on the Emirates' coastline were mainly fishing and, later, pearling communities. As the emergent Islamic empire reached the peninsula's eastern regions in the mid-7th Century, Emirati villages were established as port towns to facilitate commerce throughout the region.

Given its geography and the positioning of its communities, the Emirates have long been at the crossroads of trade and commerce, serving as a vital maritime connector to the region and Central Asia.

The 19th century emergence of the pearl industry greatly contributed to the rise in prominence of what was then the Trucial States. The waters off the UAE coast possess an abundance of pearls and during the 19th century through the first half of the 20th century, the pearl industry grew and thrived. Before the discovery of oil in the Emirates, pearling drove the local economy.

Emirati pearl divers and fishermen would spend months at sea to provide for their families and return with commodities to sell and barter. Indeed, throughout most of the Emirates' history, the sea was key to local communities' survival.

Today, this heritage is still very much alive across the UAE. Emirati culture commemorates and celebrates its seafaring heritage, and the dhow – the traditional, wooden sail boats used for fishing and diving throughout the centuries – is an ever-present sight.





WHAT TO DO IN ABU DHABI?

All visitors will want to see the majestic beauty of the city's Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque. Surrounded by serene, reflective pools, the mosque is one of the world's largest, capable of accommodating 40,000 worshippers. The daily 5pm 'Sunset Tour' is particularly lovely, as visitors will get a chance to witness the majesty of the massive edifice at dusk.

For lovers of all things fast and furious, Ferrari World Abu Dhabi is the place to be. The world's first Ferrari theme park, visitors are taken through the history of Ferrari with over 20 exciting rides and attractions, including Formula Rossa – the world's fastest roller-coaster. The park also has shops and several impressive restaurants and cafes.

Yas Waterworld is an exhilarating waterpark experience for people of all ages, with 43 rides, slides and attractions, including a 238-metre long waterslide – the world's longest. Embracing one of the major symbols of Abu Dhabi's history, Yas Waterworld's theme is that of 'The Lost Pearl', where patrons follow the story of a young Emirati girl on a quest to find a legendary pearl.

Also on Yas Island is the iconic Yas Marina Circuit – home to the annual Formula 1 Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix and featuring a state-of-the-art, 800m go-kart track at the Yas KartZone. Visitors need no prior experience and can simply 'arrive and drive,' enjoying speeds up to 60 km/hour with cutting-edge technology on hand to record and improve lap time.

A must-see for visitors is Emirates Palace – one of the world's most opulent hotels. A bastion of Emirati culture as well as luxury hospitality, the spectacular hotel offers 11 gourmet restaurants and a 1.3km private beach. Operated by the Kempinski Group, the Palace is the must-try place for fine dining meals – including fine dining Emirati cuisine, afternoon tea or a cappuccino – complete with gold leaf.



SAADIYAT ISLAND

This is the emirate's cultural and artistic hub with the Manarat al Saadiyat exhibition boasting the Saadiyat Experience – a multi-media show which take visitors through the past, present and future of this residential, tourism and cultural destination. There are a number of five-star resorts and beach clubs, the region's only ocean championship golf course and The Collection shopping destination complete with upmarket boutiques, restaurants and the region's only integrated medicine and wellness facility.



WATERSPORTS

Abu Dhabi is full of activities and destinations for lovers of watersports and maritime adventure.

Abu Dhabi has many sailing and yacht clubs, offering every level of experience for those who need the basics all the way to seasoned experts. The Abu Dhabi Sailing & Yacht Club, Abu Dhabi International Marine Sports Club, Western Marine Sports Club, Watercooled Watersports, and the Desert Islands Watersports Centre on Sir Bani Yas Island are all ideal for those who want to get out onto the water.

Abu Dhabi also has an exciting variety of marinas. Facilities such as the Emirates Palace Marina, Al Bandar Marina, InterContinental Abu Dhabi Marina, Yas Marina and Eastern Mangroves Marina offer a perfect blend of Emirati sailing culture and history with world-class, state-of-the-art berthing facilities and an abundance of high-quality restaurants and cafes.

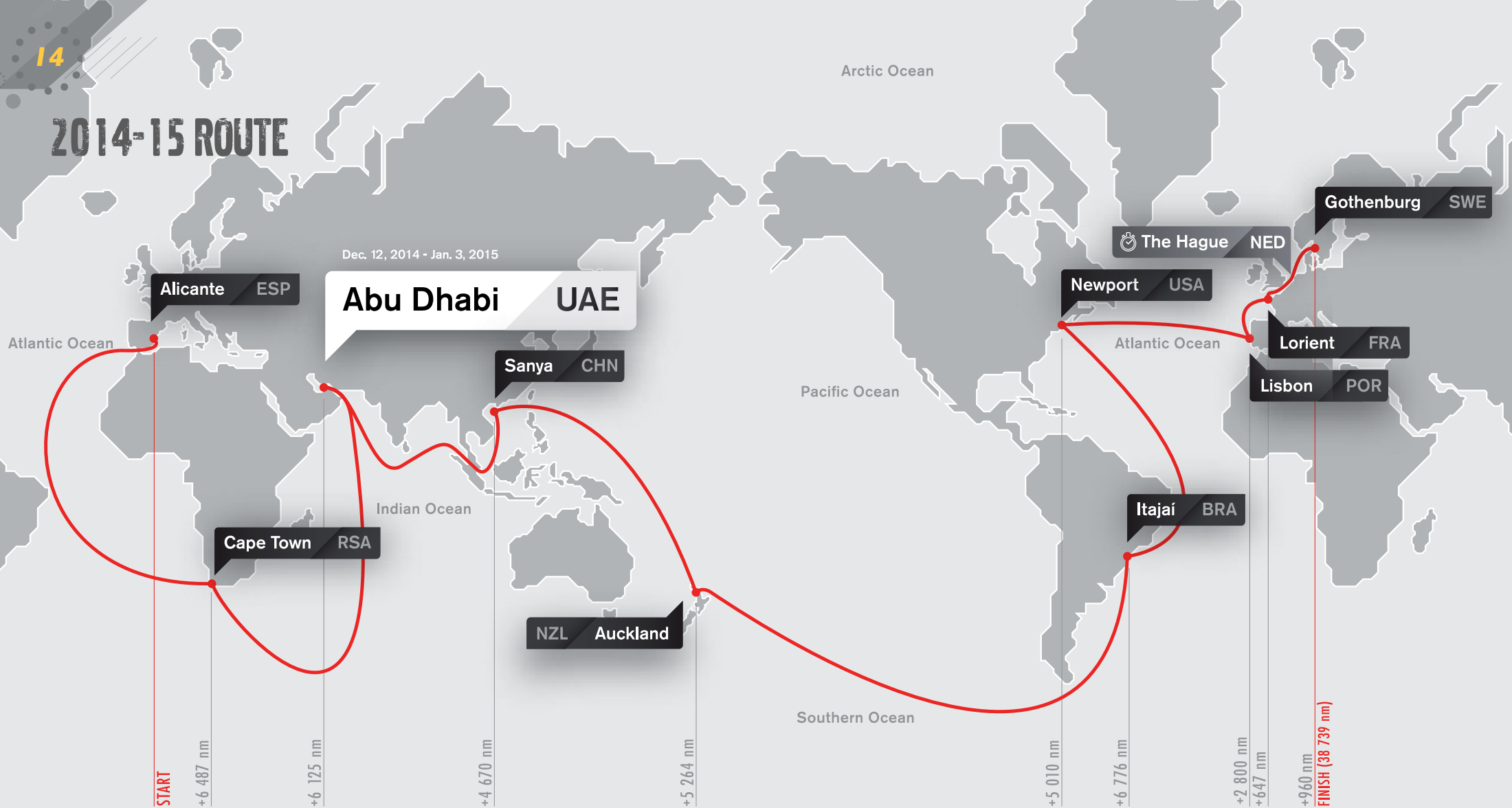


Sea Hawk Water Sports is a go-to organisation for a myriad of aquatic adventures, both above and below the water. Sea Hawk offers the full spectrum of PADI diving courses, from the absolute beginner to the master. The company also offers two-hour, thrice-daily guided kayaking tours of the Eastern Mangroves nature reserve. Noukhada, which pioneered Abu Dhabi's kayaking tours, offers a large variety of activities through the Eastern Mangroves.

In nearby Al Ain, Wadi Adventure is a cutting-edge, man-made facility for white water rafting, kayaking and surfing – the first of its kind in the region. The park contains the world's largest man-made surf wave, as well as the world's longest kayaking channel network.

For a more relaxing and cultural excursion, visitors can explore the UAE's pearl-diving heritage with the Abu Dhabi Pearl Journey, a seaborne excursion aboard a Jalboot – a traditional pearling boat – and learn how divers acquired the sought-after mineral, complete with a traditional Arabic meal, dates and coffee, and exploration of Arab sailors' culture through both history and song.

2014-15 ROUTE



Start	Port	Alicante	Cape Town	Abu Dhabi	Sanya	Auckland
Race Village Opens		Oct. 2, 2014	Nov. 1, 2014	Dec. 1, 2014	Jan. 24, 2015	Feb. 27, 2015
In-Port Race		Oct. 4, 2014	Nov. 15, 2014	Jan. 2, 2015	Feb. 7, 2015	Mar. 14, 2015
Leg Start		Oct. 11, 2014	Nov. 19, 2014	Jan. 3, 2015	Feb. 8, 2015	Mar. 15, 2015
Racing to		Cape Town	Abu Dhabi	Sanya	Auckland	Itajai
Distance		6,487 nm	6,125 nm	4,670 nm	5,264 nm	6,776 nm

Itajai	Newport	Lisbon	Lorient	Gothenburg	Finish
Apr. 4, 2015	May 5, 2015	May 25, 2015	Jun. 10, 2015	Jun. 22, 2015	
Apr. 18, 2015	May 16, 2015	Jun. 6, 2015	Jun. 14, 2015	Jun. 27, 2015	
Apr. 19, 2015	May 17, 2015	Jun. 7, 2015	Jun. 16, 2015		
Newport	Lisbon	Lorient	Gothenburg		
5,010 nm	2,800 nm	647 nm	960 nm		

ABU DHABI: THE STOPOVER

Abu Dhabi really pushed the boat out for the last stopover and this time the UAE capital is looking to go even bigger and better. A massive 23-day festival of sport, heritage and entertainment is planned, with more than 200,000 visitors expected at the event between 12th December 2014 and 3rd January 2015.

The 'Destination Village' on Abu Dhabi's Corniche breakwater will host a garden hospitality area, open-air cinema and many other exciting activations, exhibitions, boutique booths, entertainment, concerts, a kids zone, cafés and restaurants. There will also be the chance for fans see the Volvo Ocean Race yachts and teams up close, and to catch all the spectacular In-Port Race action.



Signature Concert: Blue Planet

BBC Worldwide's highly acclaimed Blue Planet in Concert will open the 2014/2015 Abu Dhabi stopover on December 12 marking the show's Arabian premiere. Five time Oscar nominated composer George Fenton will conduct the concert.

Fenton is best known for his work in film and TV, having written scores for over 100 films and collaborating with some of the world's most influential filmmakers. His film work ranges widely, from Groundhog Day with Bill Murray to Gandhi with Ben Kingsley.

In 1990 he composed the score for the BBC Natural History series, Trials of Life, and went on some years later to write the music for the Earth Trilogy: The Blue Planet, Planet Earth and Frozen Planet. This trilogy has changed the face of natural history filmmaking, masterfully using music to underscore the stories unfolding on screen and bringing the wonders of the planet to mass audiences worldwide.

Having previously played to sell-out audiences in the USA, Europe, the Far East and Australia, Blue Planet in Concert combines spectacular, specially cut high definition footage from the award winning TV series – The Blue Planet – with the emotional and evocative musical score performed by a live orchestra.

Two 90-minute evening performances of Blue Planet in Concert will be shown on December 12 and 13 on a 12-metre wide screen placed on a purpose-built, floating stage in the waters off Abu Dhabi's stunning Corniche and will be accompanied by a 75-piece orchestra.

OVERVIEW OF STOPOVER EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

12 Dec	Destination Village Opening	Join us as we kick-off a 23-day festival of Sailing, Entertainment, Watersports, Heritage and Family Fun at the Destination Village. The Village will be open weekdays from 12:00 - 21:00 and weekends from 11:00 - 00:00 and entry is free. Special welcome gifts will be on offer to the first visitors through the gates on the 12th!
12 Dec & 13 Dec	BBC Blue Planet in Concert	<p>The BBC's award-winning series, 'Blue Planet', will be brought to life in concert in Abu Dhabi at the Volvo Ocean Race's Destination Village on 12th and 13th December.</p> <p>George Fenton, the Oscar-nominated composer and conductor, will lead the National Symphony Orchestra in performing a specially composed score with the best footage from the TV series shown on a 12-metre widescreen video wall.</p> <p>The 75-piece orchestra will delight audiences with its magnificent performance from a specially designed floating stage on the water just off Abu Dhabi's stunning Corniche. With the city's spectacular evening skyline serving as a dramatic backdrop, the concert nights will be a perfect start to the Volvo Ocean Race's series of events over the festive period.</p> <p>Tickets are available from www.itp.net/tickets/blueplanet</p>
12 Dec-18 Dec	"At One with the Sea" Conservation Gallery & Talk Series	TDIC and the Saadiyat Beach Club come together to host an informative series of talks and exhibitions highlighting Abu Dhabi's many marine environment and wildlife conservation projects, including the popular Turtle Talk series.
14 Dec-18 Dec	VOR AD Village Visits Programme	School children from across Abu Dhabi will be given a unique Volvo Ocean Race Abu Dhabi experience through 90-minute interactive village tours which will get them up-close and personal with the Volvo Ocean Race, the sport of sailing, marine conservation and Abu Dhabi's cultural connection to the sea. Public schools, private schools and youth clubs are welcome to take part in the supervised tours which will include educational talks, fun activities and VOR-themed goodies appropriate for children from all cultures. To sign up your school or club for the Village Visits programme, contact us on jennifer@worldsport.ae
14 Dec-18 Dec	"Twilight Touch" Beach Rugby	Join UAE Touch for a special edition of Twilight Touch beach rugby on the Abu Dhabi Sailing & Yacht Club beach each weekday evening from 18:00. Unbelievable Corniche setting, spirited competition and some relaxed refreshments available in the Destination Village afterwards. Limited team slots still available. To sign up, visit www.uaetouch.ae
14 Dec	Sunset Fitness Sessions	Gold's Gym is conducting a series of evening fitness sessions on the ADSYC beach from 17:00 - 19:00, accessible to people from all levels of fitness. Supervised warm-up, aerobic workout and warm-down routines are all part of the 90-minute outdoor experience.
14 Dec-16 Dec	Volvo Ocean Race Fleet Arrivals	Welcome in the Volvo Ocean Race fleet as they complete the 6,125 nautical mile race up from Cape Town with a triumphant entry into the Corniche waters. It will be a full-on race to the finish line just off Lulu Island and then a warm Arabian welcome will await each boat in the Destination Village including traditional ceremonies and cultural performances. Come down to the Destination Village day or night and be part of the excitement - see media for details.

15 Dec	Birmingham City Orchestra in Concert	The City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, one of Britain's most innovative ensembles, will take to the Destination Village's floating Skyline Stage to perform a modern classical programme built around British composers, Britten and Elgar.
16 Dec	"A Sea of Strings" Guitar Showcase	Renowned guitar masters Jason Carter, Dominic Miller and Kamal Mussallam come together for an exciting fusion of classical, traditional and contemporary guitar styles through solo and collaborative performances. Jason will feature harp guitar compositions from his recent collection, Like You've Never Heard, Kamal showcases traditional Oud playing with a modern twist while Dominic, Sting's long-time guitarist and writing partner, will perform hits such as Shape of My Heart and Fragile.
17 Dec	"A Celebration of France"	The French Embassy celebrate France's deep connection to the Volvo Ocean Race-- including its 2011/12 winning entry, Groupama and its hosting of the 2015 L'Orient Stopover - with a showcase of French food, music and culture in the Destination Village.
17 Dec	"Heroes of the Sea" - an exclusive Esquire Evening	Esquire Magazine hosts an exclusive red-carpet evening of glitz and glamour in the Destination Village in the Riviera theme and featuring a top-flight guest list of local and international luminaries. It's invitation only but a few select readers could be rubbing shoulders with the elite - check out: www.facebook.com/EsquireME .
19 Dec	"A Celebration of Spain"	The Spanish Embassy and the Spanish Business Council celebrate Spain's deep connection to the Volvo Ocean Race - including home of the VOR Global HQ, the race starts in Alicante and the 2014/15 VOR entrant Mapfre - with a showcase of Spanish food, sport and culture in the Destination Village.
19 Dec	"Skyline Concert" Signature Artist	The Skyline Concert Series has its pinnacle on Friday 19 December with an unforgettable show by a top international singer/songwriter on the floating Skyline Concert stage. The artist will be announced in the coming weeks but concert goers can expect a distinctive pop vocal performance showcased in an unbelievable setting with a rousing festive atmosphere. Watch www.timeouttickets.com for ticket on-sale announcements.
19 Dec-20 Dec	Olympic Rowing Festival	Olympic Rowing Clubs from around the UAE will line up to compete in a special 2-day Olympic rowing festival held in the Corniche waters off the beach of the Abu Dhabi Sailing & Yacht Club and hosted by the UAE Sailing & Rowing Federation. Entry slots are still available for interested clubs. Visit www.adsyc.ae for info.
19 Dec	Dragon Boat Festival	The UAE Dragon Boat Association is teaming up with ADSYC to bring the fun and colour of dragon boat racing to the Corniche with a special 2-day Dragon Boat Racing Festival. Entry slots are still available for interested clubs. Visit www.dubaidragonboat.com for information.
19 Dec	Stand-up Paddle Racing	The UAE SUP and Surf Association is teaming up with ADSYC to bring SUP racing to the Corniche with a special 2-day SUP Racing Festival. Entry slots are still available for interested clubs and individuals. Like the UAE SUP and Surf Association on Facebook for details.

20 Dec	"South Africa Day"	Join the UAE's massive South African community by celebrating their connections to the Volvo Ocean Race - including Cape Town's hosting of the 2014 Stopover - with a fun day of South African exhibitions, entertainment, food and beverages. Entry is free and the family fun will flow freely throughout the day. Hosted by Sabco. For details on how to take part as an exhibitor or visitor, visit www.sabco-uae.org .
21 Dec- 23 Dec	Junior Beach Sports	Daily beach rugby for junior sportsmen will be taking place on the ADSYC beach every day from 11:00 -14:00 with supervised competitions in a daily competition format open to all interested youths. Supervised and great prizes on offer for all winners and participants including mall vouchers, waterpark passes and VOR merchandise.
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23 Dec	"Abu Dhabi Soul" - Ladies Night	Popular Emirati soul musician Hamdan Al Abri is slated to lead a cool evening of soulful singers and DJs on the Destination Village stages and Skyline Terrace. Ladies will be encouraged to garb a bit of seasonal cheer with special beverage offers in a spectacle evening setting from 18:00 onwards.
24 Dec	22ft Dhow Race	Abu Dhabi's dhow racing champions of tomorrow will be on show in the Corniche waters on 24 December in the 22-foot Dhow Race. Always colourful and easy to view from all along the Corniche promenade, this regatta features over 40 teams of predominantly junior dhow sailors and will either start or finish in front of the Destination Village depending on wind conditions.
24 Dec	"Seasons Greetings": Family fun for the festive season	Enjoy choir performances throughout the day and a special big band session of seasonal classics from the Destination Village.
25 Dec	"Seasons Greetings": Family fun for the festive season	Bring the children to the Destination Village to meet Santa Claus, whilst parents enjoy the Festive feel of the Stopover.
26 Dec	GCC Club Beach Rugby Fest	UAETouch welcomes over 200 rugby players from across the GCC to take part in a special end of year beach rugby tour at the ADSYC Beach Sports Zone, running throughout the day. Limited invitational slots still available for local UAE clubs. Fantastic prizes on offer. For information contact www.uaetouch.ae .
26 Dec- 28 Dec	VOR Academy Youth Clinic	The Volvo Ocean Race Youth Academy gives local young sailors the chance to start their journey towards being a top international ocean race competitor by giving them a classroom and practical introduction to the ins and outs of competitive sailing. The 3-day clinics series is run by the Volvo Ocean Race global team in conjunction with ADSYC and limited slots are still available for qualified young sailors. Contact reinier@adsyc.ae for more information.

26 Dec	Jalsah Live!	Jalsah, the legendary Emirati musical spectacle, makes a very special outdoor performance in front of a live audience on the floating Destination Village stage with the stunning Abu Dhabi Corniche Skyline as a stunning backdrop. The 90-minute performance will feature the best Jalsah musicians and clappers from across the Gulf and will showcase the solo singing talents by an all-star line-up of headliners. The show is produced by renown Jalsah producer Bassam Al Turk - see www.timeouttickets.com for ticket announcements.
27 Dec	Emirati Day Festival	A special celebration of local Emirati heritage will unfold in the Destination Village on 27 December with special displays of Emirati culture including Ayala and sea chanting performances, Emirati cuisine cooking demos, falconry shows, dhow building & launch exhibition and Arabic calligraphy and language workshops. A highlight of the day will be the spectacular 43-foot Dhow Race just beyond the breakwater. It is a magnificent sight as up to 100 dhows in full sail compete to win the final event in the three-race 2014 Dhow Racing series. After the race prize giving, the day will flow into evening with a special guitar/ Oud/sea chanting performance and a special premier showing of the new film, A Grain of Sand, about Abu Dhabi's sea chanting heritage.
27 Dec	43ft Dhow Racing Classic	
28 Dec- 3 Jan	"At One with the Sea" Photographic Competition Exhibition	The culmination of a 6-week photo competition being run in conjunction with the Emirates Photographic Society and TCA Abu Dhabi, the "At One With The Sea" Photo Exhibition will showcase entries from the competition finalists across all categories impactfully displayed in the Breakwater Gallery in the Destination Village.
28 Dec- 31 Dec	Junior Beach Sports	Daily beach rugby for junior sportsmen will be taking place on the ADSYC beach every day from 11:00 -14:00 with supervised competitions in a daily competition format open to all interested youths. Supervised and great prizes on offer for all winners and participants including mall vouchers, waterpark passes and VOR merchandise.
29 Dec- 30 Dec	VOR Academy Junior Regatta	The VOR Sailing Academy is extended in Abu Dhabi to include a 2-day junior sailing regatta run in conjunction with ADSYC. Junior Sailing Clubs from around the GCC are being invited to take part along with local junior sailors in the regatta. For participation information, contact reinier@adsyc.ae .
29 Dec - 31 Dec	UAE Match Racing Cup	The UAE Match Racing Series makes the VOR AD one of its stops for three days of exciting match racing featuring the UAE's top match-racing specialists. Log on to www.adsyc.ae for details.
30 Dec	VO65/60ft Dhow Racing Challenge	Get out on the water to witness a very unique sailing challenge as Abu Dhabi's ocean racing VO65 flagship, Azzam takes on the Emirates' 60 ft Dhow Racing champion in a downwind match race off the coasts of Lulu Island, with the winner taking line honours glory and global bragging rights in the age-old modern traditional sailing debate. Limited on-the-water viewing slots available for media and enthusiasts - contact competitions@volvooceanraceabudhabi.ae .
31 Dec- 1 Jan	VOR Pro-Am Racing	The Volvo Ocean Race Abu Dhabi Stopover reaches a thrilling climax with 4 days of exciting VOR fleet racing before the world's greatest ocean sailors set off for Leg 3 to Sanya, China. Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing will defend their title as VO Abu Dhabi In-port Race Champions from 2011 on the 2nd of January. Both the IPR and Restart days will feature vibrant send-off parades featuring traditional ceremonies, musical and cultural performances and live race viewing on the Village big screens. Land-based and on-water hospitality packages are available from hospitality@volvooceanraceabudhabi.ae
02 Jan	VOR AD In-port Race	
03 Jan	VOR Leg 3 Restart	

SENSATIONAL STOPOVER

Abu Dhabi

HOST CITY

VOLVO
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ROUND THE WORLD

1. MAIN ENTRANCE & DESTINATION EXPO
2. ADSYC BEACH
3. ADVENTURE ZONE
4. MUSTO SHOP
5. VOLVO PRODUCT DECK
6. VOLVO PAVILION
7. TEAM SCA PAVILION
8. DONG FENG PAVILION
9. MEDIA CENTRE
10. SAILORSTERRACE
11. PUBLIC FOODHALL & SKYBAR LOUNGE
12. VOR DOME THEATRE
13. THE BOATYARD
14. MAERSK EXHIBITION
15. VO65 HAUL OUT AREA
16. VIEWING PLATFORM
17. PARTNER EXHIBITIONS
18. ADHSBC GOLF DRIVING RANGE
19. FLOATING CONCERT STAGE
20. VO65 BOAT MOORINGS

TRAVEL INFORMATION

How to get to Abu Dhabi

Etihad Airways, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates, has in just ten years established itself as the world's leading airline. 'Etihad' is Arabic for 'union'.

Based in Abu Dhabi city, Etihad Airways serves an international network of 109 existing or announced passenger and cargo destinations in the Middle East, Africa, Europe, Asia, Australia and North America. It has a modern fleet of 102 aircraft, including 71 Boeing 787s, 25 Boeing 777-X, 62 Airbus A350s and 10 Airbus A380s.

Etihad has 47 codeshare partnerships and holds equity investments in airberlin, Air Seychelles, Virgin Australia Aer Lingus, Air Serbia and Jet Airways. Etihad Airways is also in the process of formalising its equity investment in Swiss-based Etihad Regional, operated by Darwin Airline.

The airline seeks to reflect the best of Arabian hospitality – cultured, considerate, warm and generous – as well as enhance the prestige of Abu Dhabi as a centre of hospitality between East and West.

Where to stay

Visitabudhabi.ae provides a wide range of hotel options from the basic to the unparalleled luxury of the Emirates Palace and Yas Viceroy.

Abu Dhabi boasts an incredible range of hotels to suit every need, and all provide easy access to the Destination Village and in-port racing. Hotels on or near Abu Dhabi's Corniche such as Sofitel and Beach Rotana provide some of the easiest access to the events. However, hotels on Yas or Saadiyat islands provide the benefit of world-class amenities and entertainment options like Yas Waterworld and Ferrari World Abu Dhabi.



Travel package information

Etihad Holidays is a division of Etihad Airways that offers a comprehensive range of holiday packages to Abu Dhabi.

The programme features a choice of hotels and flight packages that are designed to provide comfort and savings.

They can also provide complete packages including fly-drive, car rental, special tours and cruises.

Please visit:

www.etihad.com/en-ae/etihad-holidays to book.

Desert Adventures have also put together tailored packages for an exciting visit to Abu Dhabi, with a stay in 3, 4 or 5 star hotels, including behind-the-scenes guided tours and VIP hospitality at the Destination Village. Four packages are available: Step Aboard, Anchors Away, Top Deck and Commodore's Choice.

For further details, visit:

www.volvooceanraceabudhabi.com/en/swing-by-our-stopover/book-your-holiday



KEY MEDIA INFORMATION

Accreditation for the Abu Dhabi stopover during the Volvo Ocean Race will be handled by the team from VOR.

Please visit:

www.volvooceanrace.com/en/presszone.html

to register for credentials, photography or videography passes and spots on media boats and platforms.

The media centre will be in the Abu Dhabi Stopover Destination Village.

www.volvooceanraceabudhabi.com



The Visa Application Process

The visa Application process for Abu Dhabi has been designed to ensure ease and security for visitors to the emirate.

Citizens of Australia, Andorra, Austria, Brunei, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Monaco, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States of America and the Vatican State can get a free-of-charge entry visa upon arrival at Abu Dhabi International Airport.

GCC citizens do not need a visa to enter the UAE.

Citizens of all other countries will need to apply for a tourist, transit or visit visa prior to their trip. If you are flying with Eithad Airways, a visit visa may be arranged for you upon request. If you have booked your trip through a travel agency, in most cases they will be able to arrange this for you.

Five-, four- and three-star hotels can apply for visas on behalf of guests who have booked a stay with them. Please note that not all five-, four- and three-star hotels have this system in place. Make sure you check with your preferred hotel if they offer this service. This service does not currently apply to guests staying in hotel apartments.

While the airline, travel agency and hotel can apply for your visa, please make sure you give yourself enough time for it to be approved, and note that they do not take responsibility if the visa is declined.

Otherwise, you will need to apply for a visa through your nearest UAE embassy. An eye scan will be required at the airport.

Filming and Photography Permits

Please note that filming permits should be obtained through the National Media Council prior to arrival in the emirate. The Tawasol team at twofour54 can help in facilitating the process and will happily assist you in obtaining it faster in return for a small fee.

Process

All media coming to Abu Dhabi who are bringing camera and professional photography equipment with them and who want to shoot in public areas are required to complete:

- Customs form
- Data form for filming permit
- Credit card authorisation form
- Earth (ground) photography licence
- TCA media visit proposal form

All forms can be downloaded at:

www.volvooceanraceabudhabi.com/en/press-centre/press-releases

It takes 15 - 20 working days for ground permits to be granted. These permits allow for filming and photography at public locations (e.g. on the Corniche, in the desert, on streets and in the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, etc.)

Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority suggests that you apply for filming permissions throughout all of the days of your stay to ensure you're covered, even if you plan to only do a few hours of shooting on one day. The filming permits cover the whole UAE, except Dubai.

For further information on filming and photography permissions, please contact:

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HELPFUL ARABIC PHRASES

Assalaam Alaikum

- Peace be upon you

To which the reply is:

Wa Alaikum assalaam

- And peace be upon you

This phrase will be used in many different contexts when meeting people.

Sabah al khair

- good morning

To which the reply is:

Sabah al noor

Masah al khair

- good afternoon / evening

To which the reply is:

Masah al noor

Shukran (jazeelan) - thank you
(very much)

To which the reply is:

Aafwaan -you're welcome

Afwan - sorry/excuse me

Keef haluk? - How are you?

To which the reply is:

Al hamdu lillah (bi khair)

- praise be to Allah (well)

Miscellaneous Words

Inshallah - If Allah wishes

Mabrook - Congratulations

Naam - yes

La - no

Min fudluk - please

Tamaam - perfect

Useful for Taxis

Sida - straight

Yasar - left

Yameen - right



#GOAZZAM

ABU DHABI IS BACK IN THE VOLVO OCEAN RACE

Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing is back for its second consecutive Volvo Ocean Race challenge, once again skippered by British double Olympic medallist Ian Walker:

LAST RACE

In the 2011-12 race, despite winning three in-port races and pulling off a stunning victory in the transatlantic seventh leg from Miami to Lisbon, Walker and his crew could not recover the points lost when a broken mast on the first night of the race put them out of the opening leg from Alicante, Spain to Cape Town, South Africa.

Despite battling hard to get back in contention, more serious damage – this time to their yacht's carbon hull - sustained in treacherous conditions deep in the southern ocean on the way from New Zealand to Brazil, forced them out of that leg too. This second body blow finally snuffed out any chance of overall victory.

Although the whole team continued to battle to the very last mile of the race, when it ended in Galway, Ireland they had to settle for fifth place overall and the satisfaction of becoming the first United Arab Emirates entry to compete in and complete the Volvo Ocean Race.

BACK TO WIN

Now, Walker's Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority-backed team is back with a new boat and a hand-picked crew line-up.

Standing shoulder-to-shoulder again with Walker is UAE Olympic sailor Adil Khalid who made history in the previous edition by becoming the first Arab and Emirati sailor to complete the race.



ONE - DESIGN VOLVO OCEAN 65

Identical yachts designed and built to be fast and tough

The 2014-15 Volvo Ocean Race takes place in a fleet of identical 'one-design,' 65-foot, high-performance, ocean-going racing yachts designed by Farr-Yacht Design. In previous races the teams commissioned and built their own boats to custom designs within set dimensions laid down by the race organisers – known as a 'box rule'.

One-design was introduced to reduce the cost of entry for competing teams and to avoid the breakages that plagued the yachts in the last race by producing a tougher, more resilient fleet.

The entire fleet was built by an international consortium of four European boatyards which each constructed a section of the yachts. The hulls were made at Persico in Italy, the decks at Multiplast in France and the internal structure at Decision in Switzerland. The UK's Green Marine managed the final assembly, commissioning and handover to the teams. The yachts' masts and sails are also identical and came from Southern Spars and North Sails respectively.

Using a consortium of companies rather than a single yard was necessary to ensure the fleet of seven boats could be built in time. Building a 65-foot Grand Prix race yacht would take a single builder many months to complete, however the consortium was able to produce one boat every seven weeks.

Built primarily from carbon for lightness, the new generation of boats all weigh within a few kilograms of each other and in pre-race training have very much proved themselves to be high-performance ocean thoroughbreds. The new design has significantly more support structure in the hull, which should make the fleet stronger and less prone to breakdowns.

Strict enforcement of the one-design ethos and state-of-the-art high-tech construction techniques means the yachts are precisely the same in every way - right down to the sponge and bucket the crews use to mop up water down below. In fact, the only major difference between all seven boats is the livery the teams sport.



Azzam

As in the last Volvo Ocean Race, ADOR's yacht is named 'Azzam' which is the Arabic word for 'determination' – highly appropriate for a yacht and crew taking on a 39,000-mile race across the world's oceans. ADOR is the only team to have named its yacht.

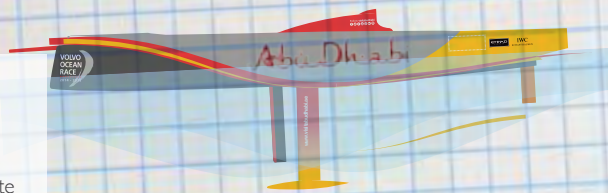
ADOR boat livery and graphics

The spectacular red, yellow and silver livery which spans Azzam's hull and sails features a falcon – the national bird of the United Arab Emirates, which has a deep-rooted place in the nation's culture.

Speed and precision are the hallmarks of a falcon – attributes Azzam will hopefully share. Falconry is the most noble of desert sports with falcons playing a starring role in hunting expeditions. The finest falcons can be traded for millions of dirhams and there are falconry festivals each year in Abu Dhabi.

The colours used in Azzam's livery are red, yellow and silver. The red is taken from the flag of Abu Dhabi while the yellow evokes the magical atmosphere of sunrises and sunsets over the Abu Dhabi desert. The final element of the design recalls traditional Bedouin jewellery that was fashioned in silver – a metal the Bedouins regarded as earthy, natural and elegant – long before gold became popular.

The ADOR graphics were painstakingly spray-painted by hand onto Azzam's hull and sails and took more than 2,500 man-hours to complete.



NAMES AND EXPLANATIONS OF KEY COMPONENTS

A snapshot of Azzam's key specifications can be found here:

www.volvooceanrace.com/en/boat/11_Main-technical-specifications.html

ON DECK COMPONENTS:

Component	Explanation
Bowsprit	A 2.14 m (7ft) carbon spar projecting forwards from Azzam's bow used as the lower anchor point for her massive headsails.
Bow	Also known as 'the stem' the bow is the pointed front end of Azzam.
Headstay	Also sometimes called a forestay, the headstay is a strong carbon cable from the bow to the top of Azzam's mast used to support the mast and to fly Azzam's headsails from.
Foredeck	The triangle of Azzam's deck in front of the mast. This is one of the most exposed parts of the boat and not for the faint-hearted in rough weather. The foredeck is primarily the domain of the bowman but the rest of the crew will make trips up here to help out with sail changes.
Headsail	Headsails are any sails flown from in front of Azzam's mast. (As opposed to the mainsail, which is hoisted up the back edge of the mast). Headsails are divided into jibs - which are flown from the forestay; gennakers - which are flown from the bowsprit; and the staysail - which is flown from a lower anchor point in the middle of the foredeck to an upper point around three-quarters up the mast.
Mast	Azzam's mast is a 30.30 metre (99.4 feet) deck-stepped carbon tube containing the rope halyards from which all her sails are flown.
Daggerboards	To stop Azzam sliding sideways (a.k.a. leeway) when the wind blows from the side, the crew drops one of a pair of long carbon daggerboards down into the water. The boards project down through the deck and out of the bottom of the hull and are raised and lowered using ropes and pulleys. As well as preventing leeway the boards also contribute to Azzam's speed by providing hydrodynamic lift as the water flows over them.

Component	Explanation
Boom	The large horizontal carbon spar on the bottom edge of Azzam's mainsail to which the mainsail control lines are attached.
Sidestays	A.k.a. 'shrouds', sidestays are a lattice of strong carbon cables that provide sideways support for Azzam's mast.
Spreaders	Spreaders are horizontal carbon struts projecting from Azzam's mast to help spread the support load of the sidestays evenly up the mast.
Vang	The vang is a control line from the base of the mast up to the boom that the crew use to change the power generated from the mainsail by changing its shape.
Outhaul	A control line from the back end of the boom that the crew uses to control the shape of the bottom part of Azzam's mainsail.
Halyards	The rope lines running up inside Azzam's mast that are used to hoist her sails.
Sheets	The rope lines attached to the back corner of Azzam's sails used by the crew to trim them to the fastest shape.
Canting keel	Like the majority of racing yachts, Azzam has a keel fin with a weighted bulb on the end that helps counteract the heeling force of the wind on her sails. However, rather than being fixed in the middle Azzam's keel can be 'canted' (swung out to the side) by powerful hydraulic rams below decks. Canting her keel like this dramatically increases Azzam's performance. The keel fin is angled by five degrees to provide additional lift to Azzam's hull.
Twin rudders	Azzam is fitted with a pair of rudders - large underwater blades connected to her steering wheels at the back of the boat. Turning the steering wheel changes the angle of the rudders and makes Azzam change course.
Stern	The flat back end of Azzam's hull that is fitted with an escape hatch to prevent the crew being trapped inside if she capsizes.
Backstays and Checkstays	A lattice of strong carbon cables from the back corners of Azzam's hull to attachment points at the top and midpoint of her mast to help support it and enable the crew to control the shape of the mainsail.

BELOW DECKS:

Component	Explanation
Winches	Large metal drums mounted on Azzam's deck around which halyards, sheets and other control lines are wound. The winches can be turned by hand using a winch handle fitted in the top, but for heavier loads or when the line needs to be pulled quickly they can be connected to one or all of the three winch pedestals.
Cockpit	The crew working area at the back of the boat enclosed by the coachroof and side decks and containing the control lines, winches and steering wheels.
Coachroof	Another word for the curved cabin top/roof behind the mast, which is designed to give Azzam's crew protection from the wind and waves.
On board cameras	Azzam is fitted with five remote controlled cameras to record the action on board. There are also two 'uplink' points to connect a handheld waterproof video camera and there is a waterproof microphone for sailor interviews located at the front of the cockpit. The cameras and microphones are operated by the on board reporter, either from the media station below decks or from on deck using an iPad app.
Communications tower	This is a large structure on the centre of Azzam's stern fitted with a group of satellite communications aerials used to beam in weather data and beam out media output from the OBR.
Life rafts and man overboard equipment	In case the crew have to abandon ship mid-ocean Azzam is fitted a pair of automatic life rafts for the crew. These are located at the back of the boat in the lower section of the communications tower. Also located here are items safety equipment that would be used in the case of a man overboard situation. These include a floating strobe light with locator beacon, a smoke canister and a floatation device.
Water ballast tanks	To enable the crew to maximise speed across a range of conditions Azzam is fitted with three water ballast tanks – one 800 litre tank in either corner of the stern and one 1,100 litre tank on the centre line forward of the mast. By filling or emptying these tanks using seawater, the trim of Azzam's hull can be adjusted to suit the wind strength and direction – e.g. water in one of the aft tanks lifts the bow up for fast downwind sailing. When filled the forward tank is intended to reduce the amount of slamming when Azzam is sailing upwind in windy conditions and big waves.

Component	Explanation
Bunk	The sailors sleep on netting bunks that are hinged to the side of the hull and can be adjusted to compensate for the yacht's steep angle of heel. There are bunks on both sides but for best boatspeed the sailors only ever use the ones on 'high side'.
Galley	Azzam's 'kitchen' is a Spartan affair comprising a small sink, some storage for cutlery and condiments and a gas burner and kettle for the sailors to heat water to pour on their freeze-dried meals.
Watermaker	Possibly the most important piece of equipment on board, Azzam's watermaker is used to make around 50 litres of fresh water by filtering seawater.
Main engine	As well as powering her propeller to move her around when her sails are down, when she is racing Azzam's marine diesel engine can only be used for charging her batteries and to move her canting keel from one side to the other during tacks and gybes.
Keel system	Azzam's canting keel is moved from side to side by two massive hydraulic rams powered by her marine diesel engine.
Toilet	Azzam's toilet is on the forward face of the galley bulkhead and comprises a carbon toilet bowl mounted on gimbals with handholds to help the sailors stay in place in rough weather. There is a foot-operated hose for filling and washing the bowl and a hand-operated pump for flushing.
Navigation station	Located underneath the floor of the cockpit at the back of the yacht, the navigation (a.k.a. nav') station contains the weather instruments, communications kit and laptop computers used by navigator Simon Fisher and skipper Ian Walker to plot Azzam's fastest course around the world. When the yacht tack or gybes the kit can be swung around to the new 'high side'.
OBR workstation	A few feet further back from the nav', station the OBR's work station contains a mini-mixing desk for the cameras mounted on deck and on Azzam's mast and spreaders and the laptop he uses to edit images and video and produce his written reports.

DHOW VS. AZZAM: HEAD-TO-HEAD



Feature	Dhow
Masts	Two
Construction	Wood, carbon & Kevlar composite
Length	11.5 metres (38 feet) 10.6 metres (35 feet)
Number of sails	2
Maximum sail area	278 square metres (3,000 square feet)
Number of sailors in crew	Not less than 10
Steering system	Single tiller and rudder
Keel	None. Crew balance boat with their body weight
Estimated top speed	12 knots (15 mph)
Weight	1 – 3 tonnes (1,000 – 3,000 kg)
Hull construction	Wood
Length	18.28 metres (60 feet)
Width (beam)	4.26 metres (14 feet)
Draft (depth)	1.4 metres (4.6 feet)
Ballast	Water and/or sand bags



Feature	Azzam
Masts	One
Construction	Carbon
Length	30.30 metres (99.4 feet)
Number of sails	11
Maximum sail area	578 square metres (6,222 square feet)
Number of sailors in crew	Eight (plus one OBR)
Steering system	Twin wheels and rudders
Keel	Canting keel generates up to two tonnes (2,000 kg) of righting moment
Estimated top speed	38 knots (43.7 mph)
Weight	12.5 tonnes (12,500 kg)
Hull construction	Carbon
Length	20.37 metres (66 feet)
Width (beam)	5.60 metres (18.4 feet)
Draft (depth)	4.78 metres (15.8 feet)
Ballast	Water tanks

WALKER'S HANDPICKED LINE-UP

Ian Walker has handpicked the men who will stand shoulder-to-shoulder with him for Abu Dhabi's second assault on the Volvo Ocean Race. The result of his careful selection is a highly potent line-up comprising three sailors from the last ADOR campaign and four new faces. Significantly, all but one of the sailors has raced alongside Walker previously.

Donning Abu Dhabi crew uniforms for the second time are under-30 helmsman and trimmer Adil Khalid (United Arab Emirates), navigator and helmsman Simon Fisher (Great Britain) and bowman Justin Slattery (Ireland).

Making their first appearances in ADOR colours are helmsman and trimmer Phil Harmer (Australia), pitman Daryl Wislang (New Zealand), under-30 bowman and helmsman Luke Parkinson (Australia) and trimmer and helmsman Chuny Bermúdez from Spain.

Slattery and Harmer raced alongside Walker in the 2008-09 Volvo Ocean Race aboard Green Dragon.

Harmer won the 2011-12 race as a member of the French Groupama sailing team, while Wislang and Bermúdez were second on CAMPER with Emirates Team New Zealand. Slattery is the second ADOR sailor to have won the race previously – he was victorious as part of the ABN AMRO ONE crew in 2005-06.

IAN WALKER

VITAL STATS

Boat Position: Skipper
Date of Birth: 25/2/1970
Hometown: Warsash, Southampton, UK
Height: 1.82m
Weight: 83kg
Nationality: British



TOP SAILING ACHIEVEMENTS

2012 - Volvo Ocean Race, Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing - 5th
2004 - Olympic coach to Shirley Robertson - Gold
2001 - America's Cup - GBR Challenge - Skipper
2000 - Olympic star class (Helm) - Silver
1996 - Olympics 470 class (Crew) - Silver

BACKGROUND

Cambridge University graduate Ian Walker is one of Britain's most successful sailors, with two Olympic silver medals, two America's Cup campaigns and two Volvo Ocean Race campaigns to his name.

A father-of-two from Southampton, Walker took the silver medal in the 470 class at the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta and followed that up four years later in Sydney with another Olympic silver, this time in the Star class.

He went on to lead the 2002 British America's Cup team and coach the British Olympic Yngling crew team to gold at the 2004 Olympics in Athens. Other career highlights include racing as tactician for the Italian +39 America's Cup campaign, winning the 2006 TP52 World Championship, and heading up the Green Dragon challenge for the 2008/09 Volvo Ocean Race.

As skipper of Abu Dhabi's debut Volvo Ocean Race campaign in 2011/12, Walker led the team to a number of notable successes including victory in the Rolex Fastnet Race, three Volvo Ocean Race in-port race wins (including one in front of 23,000 race fans in the UAE capital), and a memorable victory in the transatlantic Leg 7 from Miami to Lisbon.

FUN FACTS

If he hadn't become a professional sailor Walker says he would have played on the wing for his beloved West Ham United Football Club.

Ian is a keen golfer and loves squeezing a game in during the stopovers.

ADIL KHALID

VITAL STATS

Boat Position: Helmsman & Trimmer
Date of Birth: 08/10/1988
Height: 1.70m
Weight: 83kg
Nationality: Emirati



TOP SAILING ACHIEVEMENTS

2011 - Volvo Ocean Race, Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing - 5th
2010 - Laser Standard Class, UAE National Sailing - 1st
2010 - Laser World Championships - Top 20
2010 - Asian Games - Qualified
2008 - Olympic Games - Qualified

BACKGROUND

UAE national Adil Khalid made history in 2011 as the first Arab sailor to compete in the Volvo Ocean Race with Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing, helping to inspire a new generation of Emiratis take to the water.

A rising star of the UAE National Sailing Team, the 26-year-old also became the first Emirati sailor to take part in the Olympic Games in 2008. In the same year, he competed in the Laser World Championships in Australia as well as at international Olympic Class regattas in Italy and Holland.

Adil continued to flex his Laser sailing credentials throughout the Arabian Peninsula in 2009, notching up wins at the UAE National Sailing Championship and Saudi Sailing Championship, and taking second places in the Qatar International Regatta and Bahrain Al Barez International Regatta.

In 2010 Adil continued to pursue success in regional events in the lead up to competing at the Asian Games in Guangzhou, China that November.

FUN FACTS

Unknown to many, Adil has a secret talent for drag racing, a sport that he used to take part in as a teenager in the UAE.

SIMON FISHER

VITAL STATS

Nickname: SiFi
Boat Position: Navigator
Date of Birth: 20/1/1978
Hometown: Hamble, UK
Height: 1.88m
Weight: 88kg
Nationality: British



TOP SAILING ACHIEVEMENTS

2012 - Volvo Ocean Race, Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing – 5th
2009 - Rolex Middle Sea Race - 1st
2009 - Volvo Ocean Race, Telefónica Blue, 3rd
2006 - Volvo Ocean Race, ABN AMRO TWO - 4th
2001 - Round the world record
1998 - America's Cup - GBR Challenge

BACKGROUND

A highly respected ocean racer and three-time Volvo Ocean Race competitor, Fisher – a.k.a. 'SiFi' – started racing in 1986 in Cadet dinghies in the UK. His excellent all-round skills, fastidious work ethic and easy-going character make him a favourite amongst his teammates.

SiFi returns to Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing as navigator so is responsible for formulating the team's routing strategy while racing – a role that requires expert skills in meteorology and navigation as well as a keen competitive instinct.

While racing, the teams all have the same weather data beamed to them each day from Race HQ in Spain and are banned from using any additional sources of information. Aside from his duties at the nav-station, Fisher is also one of the fastest helmsmen in the ADOR crew.

In the 2008/09 edition of the Volvo SiFi was navigator on Telefónica (Blue). Two years later as navigator on ABN AMRO TWO he helped set the monohull 24-hour distance record.

FUN FACT

SiFi is into cycling. Big time. He is good at it and hits the road every time he can during the stopovers.

PHIL HARMER

VITAL STATS

Nickname: Wendy
Boat Position: Helmsman / Trimmer
Date of Birth: 26/6/1979
Hometown: Hamble, UK
Height: 1.87m
Weight: 92kg
Nationality: Australian



TOP SAILING ACHIEVEMENTS

2012 - Volvo Ocean Race, Groupama – 1st
2009 - Volvo Ocean Race, Green Dragon – 5th
2005 - Volvo Ocean Race, Brunel

BACKGROUND

Harmer brings a wealth of talent and experience to the Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing (ADOR) crew. This will be his fourth Volvo Ocean Race and the Australian, who now lives in the UK, is hoping to lift the trophy twice in a row after winning the last race with Groupama sailing team.

Nicknamed 'Wendy' after an Australian children's TV presenter with whom he shares a surname, along with his helming and trimming responsibilities Harmer is also in charge of managing the yacht's sail inventory. This is a key role as new race rules strictly limit the replacement of damaged sails, meaning the ADOR crew will have to make sure their race sails stay in good condition for the whole of the 39,000 mile course.

Wendy began sailing aged six in the Manly Junior Race in his home town. His first professional race was the 1998 Sydney to Southport race at the age of 19. His first Volvo Ocean Race was in 2005 with the Dutch syndicate Brunel, and his second was with Ian Walker's Green Dragon team.

If he hadn't become a professional sailor Wendy says he would definitely have been a fireman. A lover of sport, the Australian is a big fan of his compatriot the professional golfer Stuart Appelbey.

FUN FACT

Harmer was a rollerblader in his youth and lays claim to being a secret karaoke king with 'Benny and the Jets' by Elton John his 'go-to' tune.

JUSTIN SLATTERY

VITAL STATS

Nickname: Irish
Boat Position: Bowman, trimmer and helmsman
Date of Birth: 08/07/1974
Hometown: Cork, Ireland
Height: 1.85m
Weight: 84kg
Nationality: Irish



TOP SAILING ACHIEVEMENTS

2011 - Louis Vuitton Trophy La Maddalena - 2nd
2009 - Maxi One Design World Championships - 1st
2007 - Extreme 40 Championship - 1st
2005 - Volvo Ocean Race, ABN AMRO - 1st
2004 - Round the world record
1998 - Maxi One Design World Championships - 1st

BACKGROUND

Ireland's Justin Slattery is universally acknowledged as one of the world's most experienced ocean racers. He has competed in four Volvo Ocean Races and was a part of the winning ABN AMRO crew in the 2005-06 edition. This will be his second campaign with Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing but his third with skipper Ian Walker as they sailed together in 2008-09 on Green Dragon.

Married with a daughter, Slattery counts experience, confidence, courage and decisiveness amongst his top attributes. He began sailing in Ireland aged 16 and competed in his first professional race nine years later.

Aside from his Volvo Ocean Races exploits, Cork-born Slattery set a trans-Atlantic record on the maxi Nicorette at the age of 23 and was bowman on American businessman Steve Fossett's record-breaking 2004 world circumnavigation. In 2005 he set a new Fastnet Race on the 100 foot ICAP Leopard – a feat he repeated in 2012 when he and the Abu Dhabi crew led the monohull fleet home in a new record time which still stands today.

FUN FACT

Slattery says if he hadn't chosen a life on the open ocean as a professional sailor, he would have pursued his other ambition – to be an architect.

CHUNY BERMÚDEZ

VITAL STATS

Nickname: Chuny
Boat Position: Helmsman and Trimmer
Date of Birth: 01/03/1970
Hometown: La Coruña, Spain
Height: 1.77m
Weight: 81kg
Nationality: Spanish



TOP SAILING ACHIEVEMENTS

2011 - Volvo Ocean Race, CAMPER ETNZ - 2nd
2008 - Volvo Ocean Race, Team Delta Lloyd - 7th
2004 - Volvo Ocean Race, Brazil 1 - 3rd
2001 - Volvo Ocean Race, Assa Abloy - 2nd
1993 - Whitbread Race, Galicia 93 Pescanova - 3rd

BACKGROUND

Roberto de Bermúdez Castro, universally known as 'Chuny', is Spain's most experienced and successful round-the-world sailor having competed in five Volvo Ocean Races finishing in the top three in all but one.

An industrial engineer by trade, Chuny has also competed in both the Olympics (Star Class in Athens 2004) and the America's Cup (in 1995 and 2000).

Chuny advocates hard work, a strong team ethic and personal fortitude as the key attributes of a successful Volvo Ocean Race sailor. With fewer crew for the 2014/2015 edition, Chuny says everyone on Azzam will need to multi-task and be able to helm, trim sails, work on the bow, and also navigate.

Married with three kids, Chuny knows it's not easy to strike a balance between 100 per cent focus on board and thoughts of the family back home. For him, it's a dilemma that every sailor taking part in this gruelling race has to face, but through years of extensive offshore experience, he has come to terms with the idea of being away from home most of the year.

FUN FACTS

He likes taking Spanish cheese and olive oil on board.

Chuny's personal hero is his father who first introduced him to sailing and is still competing. In 2013 Chuny took time off from the professional sailing circuit to crew for his dad at Spain's Snipe Masters Championship.

LUKE PARKINSON

VITAL STATS

Nickname: Parko
Boat Position: Under 30 Bowman / Helmsman
Date of Birth: 22/02/1990
Hometown: Fremantle, Australia
Height: 1.85m
Weight: 89kg
Nationality: Australian



TOP SAILING ACHIEVEMENTS

2013 - Red Bull Youth America's Cup
2013 - Audi Hong Kong to Vietnam Race – 1st
2013 - Kiel Week – 10th
2013 - Sail for Gold, 49er class – 8th
2012 - Western Australian under-25 offshore sailor of the year

BACKGROUND

Twenty-four-year-old Parkinson is one of ADOR's two under-30 sailors and is making his Volvo Ocean Race debut.

Parko, as he's commonly known, raced alongside Ian Walker in the 2013 Hong Kong to Vietnam and Sydney to Hobart races. The ADOR skipper was so impressed with the young Australian's talent and work rate that he offered him a place in his crew. Aside from being a top class bowman and helmsman, Parko's other greatest assets are his superb physical strength and fitness – attributes which will serve him well as bowman.

Arguably the toughest and least enviable job on a Volvo Ocean 65, bowmen are regularly called on to leave the protection of the cockpit to work on the boat's foredeck fully exposed to whatever the weather chooses to throw at them. Tougher still, when someone is needed to go up the towering carbon mast, invariably all heads turn to the bowman to make the climb.

Parko began his sailing career at the age of five and competed in his first professional race at the 2010 Flinders Island race in Australia. After a spell campaigning on the Olympic 49er international regatta circuit, in 2013 Parko was part of the Objective Australia team that qualified to race at the Red Bull Youth America's Cup in San Francisco.

FUN FACTS

Away from the water Parko may be the most musical member of ADOR – he played cello as a youngster and now reports to enjoy the odd karaoke burst of Mr Brightside by The Killers.

DARYL WISLANG

VITAL STATS

Boat Position: Pitman & Boat Captain
Date of Birth: 20/05/1981
Hometown: Nelson, New Zealand
Height: 6'
Weight: 88kg
Nationality: New Zealander



TOP SAILING ACHIEVEMENTS

Volvo Ocean Race 2008-09 Telefónica Blue 3rd
Volvo Ocean Race 2011-12 CAMPER with Emirates Team New Zealand

BACKGROUND

Two-time Volvo Ocean Race competitor, Wislang lives by his grandfather's advice: "if a job is worth doing, it's worth doing properly". His 'can do' attitude makes him a hard worker; a valuable team member and a confident leader, listening to others and offering support as needed.

Wislang joined ADOR as pitman & boat captain – two roles that place him in the thick of the action. His main responsibility is to ensure the boat and crew are ready for racing, keeping communications open at all times.

In previous editions of the Volvo Ocean Race, Wislang was sail-maker on Movistar (2005 - 2006) and bowman, trimmer & driver on Telefónica Blue (2008 - 2009) and on Camper (2011 - 2012).

Beyond the Volvo Ocean Race, Wislang has competed extensively on the international regatta scene.

FUN FACT

Daryl says if he wasn't a professional sailor he would like to think that he could make it as a pro golfer; but would have a better chance at being a caddy!

MATT KNIGHTON

VITAL STATS

Nickname: Xerox
 Boat Position: On board reporter
 Date of Birth: 09/04/1984
 Hometown: Chicago
 Height: 6' 2"
 Weight: 95 kg
 Nationality: American



SAILING MEDIA COVERAGE

2013 – Argo Group Bermuda Gold Cup
 2013 – Chicago Match Cup
 2013 – Korea Match Cup
 2013 – Match Race Germany
 2013 – Congressional Cup
 2012 – Monsoon Cup
 2012 – Argo Group Gold Cup
 2012 – Chicago Match Cup
 2011 – Chicago Match Cup

BACKGROUND

Knighton is an accomplished commercial videographer and keen racing sailor with proven photography and storytelling skills. His professional tenacity in demanding environments make him the perfect match for ADOR.

While on board Azzam, Knighton will be responsible for documenting every nautical mile of the Volvo Ocean Race, producing great media content as he did during back-to-back transatlantic crossings in June and July 2014.

Based in Chicago, Knighton's impressive resume includes directing the 2013 documentary Black Hawk Down: Return to Mogadishu, shot in a Somalian war zone.

FUN FACT

Matt is a die-hard Chicago Cubs fan and says he will fly back from anywhere in the world when they go to the World Series.

QUOTE SHEET

IAN WALKER – SKIPPER

“It’s definitely going to be the tightest race in history. Success will be about not having any bad legs. You have got to have a strong team, you have got to sail fast, keep the boat in one piece, be smart and sail the right way.”

“I want my kids to be able to say their dad won the 2014-15 Volvo Ocean Race.”

ADIL KHALID – HELMSMAN AND TRIMMER

“Taking part in my first Volvo Ocean Race campaign was a dream. Now with a second chance at it, I want to make winning the reality. We are already so much further ahead in this campaign than before and I feel that I have learnt so much, yet have much more to prove.”

“I’m proud to be flying the flag for Abu Dhabi around the world for a second time. This time we are here to win.”

PHIL HARMER – HELMSMAN AND TRIMMER

“The Volvo Ocean Race is a huge part of my life. To finish it is an amazing feeling but I really want to win it.”

“I love the idea of sailing for a ‘destination’ rather than a company; the idea of having that amount of support really pushes the team to work harder to get the results.”

SIMON FISHER – NAVIGATOR

“I believe we have a great team both on and off the water, together with a good sponsor. We have the benefit of building on all the lessons we learned last race and now we should have all the tools to compete at the highest level.”

“This will be my fourth Volvo Ocean Race, but my first as a father so I am looking forward to making my boy proud.”



LUKE PARKINSON – BOWMAN AND HELMSMAN

“The Volvo Ocean Race is something I have followed and wanted to take part in for a long time. Now the race is no longer a dream – it’s my life.”

“To me, doing the race is the biggest all-round challenge that provides the best sense of achievement and enjoyment. I’m grateful to Abu Dhabi for giving me this chance – I will not let them down.”

JUSTIN SLATTERY – BOWMAN, TRIMMER AND HELMSMAN

“This team is the real deal. It’s a great bunch of talented guys with incredible experience behind them.”

“The Volvo Ocean Race – the best worst experience of your life.”

DARYL WISLANG – PITMAN AND HELMSMAN

“The Volvo Ocean Race isn’t just about a yacht race – it’s about a team coming together and striving for excellence.”

“I love the Volvo Ocean Race for the challenge, the camaraderie and the long-lasting friendships that you make with your crew mates. But the real reason I’m back is the fact that I haven’t won one yet.”

CHUNY BERMÚDEZ

“To join this team is a great opportunity to sail at the highest level.”

“I’m Abu Dhabi’s oldest crewmember: it’s bad news for me, but the good news is we are a very young team!”

MATT KNIGHTON – ON BOARD REPORTER

“This is not a challenge to be taken lightly or for granted. To be on a team where almost everyone has done at least three Volvo Ocean races is humbling, but I couldn’t ask for a better group of guys to share the next nine months with.”

10 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT ABU DHABI OCEAN RACING

#1

Our sailors have raced 20 Volvo Ocean Races between them. Collectively that's more than 13 years of round-the-world sailing experience.

#2

Two of our sailors have won the Volvo Ocean Race previously - Justin Slattery in 2005-06 and Phil Harmer in the 2011-12 race.

#3

Ian Walker is the only skipper in this edition who has won an Olympic medal - in fact he has won two: silver in the 470 class at Atlanta 1996 and silver again at Sydney 2000.

#4

Of our sailing team, seven are married (Ian Walker, Simon Fisher, Justin Slattery, Adil Khalid, Chuny Bermúdez, Phil Harmer, Daryl Wislang) and one is single (Luke Parkinson).

#5

The ADOR sailing team has 12 children between them - seven girls and five boys. Ian Walker has two daughters, Justin Slattery has a daughter, Phil Harmer has two sons, Adil Khalid has a son and a daughter, Chuny Bermúdez has a son and two daughters, Simon Fisher has a son, and Daryl Wislang has a baby girl.

#6

In previous races, sailors have lost as much as 10 kilograms in weight on a single leg of the race. To prevent that happening this time our Sports Science Manager Pete Cunningham has the sailing team on a special high calorie diet while they are racing.

#7

To save weight, the team does not take any drinking water with them on the race; instead, they make their own water to drink each day using a watermaker machine called a desalinator that extracts the salt from seawater leaving it fresh enough to drink.

#8

Unlike conventional sailing boats with fixed keels, Volvo Ocean 65s have canting keels that swing out to 40 degrees either side of the boat to help keep them upright. When the keel is fully canted it has the equivalent righting moment of two large camels sitting on the side of the boat (circa two tonnes).

#9

'Family and friends, and fresh food' are the two things the sailors say they miss most when they are away at sea racing for weeks at a time.

#10

Sailing around the world might sound glamorous but taking part in the Volvo Ocean Race is among the toughest of sporting challenges. Along the way on the 39,000-mile course the sailors will face storm-force winds and mountainous waves, frustrating flat calms around the equator and have to deal with the extremes of high and low temperatures, and work to a nonstop four hours on/four hours off rotating shift pattern.

THE SEASON SO FAR – BACKGROUND TO THE TEAM'S BUILD UP TO THE RACE

Since coming together as a team back in February, ADOR's sailing team and shore crew have achieved a remarkable amount and passed some significant milestones:



The team assembled for the first time in the UK in early February for the handover of their new VO65 Azzam from manufacturer Green Marine.

Azzam passed her safety tests and sea trials with flying colours and within a few weeks the crew took her on a 1,000 mile delivery trip to Cascais, Portugal where, as they had for the 2011-12 race, the team had set up a pre-race training camp.



The advent of a one-design fleet of identical boats for the 2014-15 race means that identifying and mastering the Volvo Ocean 65's sailing characteristics is paramount.

While in Cascais, ADOR invested significant time and resources gathering and analysing performance data to better understand how to get Azzam sailing at peak performance come race time.

Typical data gathering and training sessions ranged from day sailing sessions at first up to four- or five-day offshore runs of around 2,000 miles.

The sailing team also went through a professionally managed and rigorous physical training regime to ensure they start the race in peak form, undertaking 2-4 day ocean training sessions balanced with fitness training ashore.



As the training period came to a close, ADOR stepped up the intensity of preparation with two back-to-back transatlantic crossings. The first took the crew from Cascais to Newport on the US east coast and the second was from Newport to Portsmouth in the UK.



With training now over, in August ADOR took part in its first competitive outings.

First up was the Artemis Challenge pro-celebrity charity race around the Isle of Wight during Cowes Week where, after leading from the start, ADOR brought Azzam home first in the VO65 class ahead of China's Team Dongfeng and the all-female crew of Team SCA from Sweden.

A few days later, ADOR embarked on a considerably more significant challenge when it lined up against four other Volvo Ocean Race teams in the 1,800-mile Sevenstar Round Britain and Ireland Race organised by the Royal Ocean Racing Club (RORC).

After battling against the toughest weather conditions they had faced so far as the remnants of Hurricane Bertha tore across the UK, ADOR emerged victorious against the other four VOR teams and in

the process set a new monohull world record for the course.

Averaging almost 18 knots for the race they tore anticlockwise around the British Isles to knock more than 36 hours off the previous record held by the French Volvo Open 70 Groupama 4, completing the course in a remarkable four days, 13 hours, 10 minutes, 28 seconds.

ADOR now holds the monohull record for the Round Britain and Ireland Race with its Azzam VO65 yacht, as well as the Fastnet Race monohull record from 2011 with its previous Azzam VO70.

Immediately after completing the RB&IR, the sailing team completed a mandatory two day sea safety and survival course run by the race organisers where they received refresher training on first aid, techniques for dealing with fire onboard and how to cope in an abandon ship scenario.



ADOR's VO65 Azzam was delivered to Alicante at the end of August and the team spent September there working on its final preparations, including a full maintenance overhaul of the yacht, the commissioning and testing of their race sails, more safety training, and the completion of a 500 mile 'Leg 0' qualification race.



EXPLANATION OF CREW ROLES

SKIPPER

Leading a Volvo Ocean Race team is a high-pressure role both on and off the water as the skipper is integral to virtually every decision made about the yacht, the crew or the campaign in general.

At sea, ADOR skipper Ian Walker is in ultimate charge of the yacht and crew and is legally responsible for the safety of both. On top of that responsibility Walker has the final say on all decisions relating to the race tactics and strategy while Azzam is racing.

Ashore, the skipper's role is akin to the CEO of a multi-million dollar business with its own accounts, administration, commercial, engineering and communications departments. To manage such an organisation Walker has to have excellent business acumen as well as strong people-management and leadership skills.

If all of that was not enough to deal with, as skipper, Walker is the most recognisable face in the team and is always in high demand from the media for interviews, quotes and comment.

ONBOARD REPORTER

ADOR onboard reporter (OBR) Matt Knighton's primary role is to document what goes on aboard Azzam during the race and communicate it instantly to the Volvo Ocean Race audience. Under race rules the OBRs are not allowed to help with the actual sailing of the boat but they can get involved with cooking, cleaning and bailing.

Unlike any other job in sports journalism OBRs not only report on the action but literally live and breathe it alongside the sailors. The goal of an OBR is to accurately convey to the legions of race fans exactly what life on board is really like; to report everything and relate everything exactly like it is - the highs and the lows, the moments of drama and of monotony, the crew's elation and frustration - using video, photography and the written word.

The tools of Matt's trade on board are hand-held stills and video cameras, a laptop computer and a special mixing desk from which he can control five fixed remote control cameras positioned around the boat.

Beyond his journalistic skills Knighton needs to be physically and mentally tough enough to deal with the rigours of onboard life and balance the challenge of reporting on the people he is living in close quarters with.

Beyond his technical skills and his sailing background Matt was chosen as OBR primarily for his abilities as a storyteller.

In his own words: "This race is all about dreams and stories. I get to share theirs while living my own."

GRINDER

Grinding is the sailing term used to describe the operation of Azzam's three cockpit pedestal winches used to power the yacht's hydraulic systems and turn the winch drums to hoist or trim sails. Pedestal winches have a pair of handles and are operated in tandem by two crewmembers at a time standing opposite each other.

Grinder is not a separate job role on its own – rather, each of the crew (except the OBR) is regularly called on to 'grind' when required.

Key grinding activities are during manoeuvres like tacking or gybing - when the sails need to be ground from one side of the boat to the other; and sail changes – when the old sail must first be furled before the new sail is hoisted up the mast and then unfurled. During these activities everyone is on deck and other than the bowman and the helmsman the other six sailors will be working hard on the pedestal winches.

The rest of the time, when Azzam is straight line sailing, one crewmember is responsible for grinding for the sail trimmer.

HELMSMAN

Taking the wheel of a Volvo Ocean 65 requires 100 per cent concentration at all times.

Even in light to moderate conditions you need to be fully focused on what is going on around you and when you are steering in windy conditions with big waves even the slightest lapse in concentration can result in things going badly wrong, very quickly.

No surprise then that the ADOR crew have a strictly enforced 'no talking to the driver' rule at all times.

"On these boats you can't let up or look away for a second without losing performance," says skipper Ian Walker.

"It's relentless and extremely mentally taxing. That's why when it's windy and we are tearing along we have to rotate the helmsmen much more often than in lighter conditions."

In this edition of the Volvo Ocean Race the crew numbers have been reduced from 11 sailors down to eight for the all-male teams, meaning that everyone on the crew – navigator, bowman, trimmer, pitman – could be called on to drive.



Walker explains the helming pecking order:

"During our training sessions we made sure that everyone gets plenty of opportunity to steer Azzam. We constantly record the performance data, so with a little analysis we can see who the best helmsmen are across a range of conditions. The best drivers will be the ones we call on most during the race."

According to Walker the secret to steering Azzam fast is a subtle combination of feel, good communication and unwavering concentration – with a couple of big scoops of experience and talent thrown in for good measure.

"The helmsman and the trimmers need to be in perfect harmony," Walker says. "So there's generally plenty of communication between everyone on deck. Good helmsmen instinctively feel in their gut when the boat is 'in the groove'."



Sail trimming tips from the experts:

Justin Slattery:

"I was always taught: 'a flappy sail is an unhappy sail' and 'when in doubt, let it out'. When we trim offshore set the headsail for the conditions and then we tend to steer around that setting, only adjusting the main sail in and out to manage the boat heel."

Ian Walker:

"They say that big sails win big races but I've often found that's not the case. Too much sail area in heavy winds causes drag and can drastically affect the boat's performance. Choosing the right sail combination and deciding when to reef the mainsail is crucial."

Phil Harmer:

"The key to being a good sail trimmer is finding the right balance between the mainsail and the headsail and communicating well with the helmsman. Communication needs to be very clear between the trimmer and the helm so you are both trying to achieve the same goal."

SAIL TRIMMER

Trimming is the yacht racing term for optimising the shape of a yacht's sails to the prevailing wind and wave conditions to achieve the best boat-speed possible. Being a good sail trimmer requires experience, reliable gut-feel and relentless concentration.

Azzam's sails work in a similar way to the aerofoil shape of airplane wings in that they produce 'lift' when air flows over either side of them. In Azzam's case the lifting force pushes the yacht forward and the more efficient the trimmers can make the shape of the sails, the faster Azzam goes.

Trimmers change the shape of Azzam's sails by applying the right amount of tension to the lines connected to the sail's three corners: the head (top corner), the tack (front corner) and the clew (back corner). In the case of the mainsail the trimmer will also bend or straighten the mast to change sail's shape.

An experienced sail trimmer can see whether a sail is set right just by looking at it but because the wind is constantly changing the trim of the sails must be constantly adjusted too. Good trimmers rely on their instincts and their eye for a good sail shape but it's a role that requires an obsessive commitment to perfection.

There's no room for 'set and forget'; rather sail trimming about constant tweaking to get as close to the perfect sail set up as you can. Ultimately though every change is checked against the only criterion that matters in yacht racing: did it make the yacht go faster?

NAVIGATOR

Volvo Ocean Race navigators need to know a lot more than how to work out where they are on the ocean and how to get to their destination. When you are racing across oceans you need to build a mental 3D model for yourself, factoring in what the wind, the currents and your competitors will do as the leg plays out. Like chess grandmasters, good navigators need to think several moves ahead and be able to filter the often-conflicting weather information they receive and turn it into a leg-winning strategy.

As if this wasn't enough, with fewer crew than previously in this latest iteration of the Volvo Ocean Race the navigators also need to be able to stand their watch on deck and join in the helming, trimming and grinding.

Fortunately for us then, that as well as being among the best helmsmen and trimmers on Azzam, Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing navigator Simon 'SiFi' Fisher is also an expert in meteorology and ocean currents and runs a business advising professional yacht racing teams on which navigation systems they should deploy.

SiFi will need all of this impressive pedigree to perform well in what is one of the most high-pressure roles in the race.

"I think consistently making good decisions is a challenging part of being a navigator and with one-design there isn't going to be a boat speed advantage to hide behind," Fisher says. "I'm lucky to have some of the best people in the business to support me so hopefully this will put us in a really strong position on that front."



BOWMAN

Arguably the toughest and least enviable job on a Volvo Ocean 65, bowmen are regularly called on to leave the protection of the cockpit to work on the boat's foredeck fully exposed to whatever the weather chooses to throw at them. Tougher still, when someone is needed to go up the towering carbon mast, invariably all heads turn to the bowman to make the climb.

In strong winds and big waves the bow is no place for the faint-hearted. Bowmen must be strong, fast, quick-witted and sure-footed to stay alive.

Involved in every boat manoeuvre - whether it's changing sails for more speed or changing direction with a tack or a gybe - the bowman is the one relied on to get the job done.

ADOR bowmen Justin Slattery and Luke Parkinson make a potent foredeck combo. With three Volvo Ocean Races and a string of record-setting passages to his name, Justin is universally recognised as one of the best bowmen in the business. Luke meanwhile is on his first Volvo Ocean Race, but has been learning fast at the feet of the master and brings youthful enthusiasm and incredible strength and fitness levels to the crew.



HOW THE CREW...

EAT

Preparing food on board Azzam during the race has very little to do with cookery. The closest the sailors get to cooking is pouring boiling water on a packet of powdered freeze-dried food to reconstitute it into a hot meal.

Accordingly, Azzam's galley is a Spartan affair comprising a gas ring and kettle, a sink with fresh and salt-water taps and some storage space for cups, bowls and cutlery.

In previous races, because they are working so hard on deck and eating sparingly, Volvo Ocean Race sailors have lost up to 10 kilograms in weight in just one three-week leg. To try to avoid a repeat of this situation and the resulting drop in performance the ADOR crew eat a special secret high calorie diet concocted by sports performance manager Pete Cunningham.

Food for each leg of the race is packed into daily bags with each sailor taking responsibility for preparing his own meals when he wants to eat. Along with the freeze-dried meals the sailors can also make themselves a tortilla cheese wrap and snack on chocolate or dried fruit.

The food bags include some breakfast meals like porridge but because the sailors are operating on a four hours on/four hours off watch rotation they will often eat non-breakfast meal like a chilli or curry meal in the morning.

SLEEP

Given the high work rates of the sailors and the non-stop nature of the race, sleep is one of the most precious commodities on board. The sailors sleep on lightweight bunks comprising netting strung around carbon tubes. The bunks are arranged down either side of the boat below decks and are hinged to the wall so that they can be adjusted to compensate for the yacht's angle of heel.

The off watch crew always sleep on the 'high side' of the heeled yacht to provide more righting motion and therefore make it go faster.



In colder conditions the sailors sleep in their thermal clothing and use sleeping bags and a small cushion as a pillow. In hot weather, such as in the tropics, the sailors can try to keep cool using electric fans at the end of each bunk.

In windy conditions with big waves the motion of the boat can be very violent, making sleeping difficult.

As Ian Walker explains:

“At the beginning of a leg it can be difficult to sleep for the first few days. Then, soon after, you get so tired that you can sleep through anything.”

GO TO THE BATHROOM

The toilet or in sailing parlance ‘heads’ on Azzam are just forward of the mast and comprise a gimbaled carbon toilet bowl which is flushed out of the boat using a hand operated sea-water pump. There is also a foot pumped hand-held hose for and cleaning the bowl after it has been used and a set of floor mounted valves called seacocks to control the water coming in and out.

To keep it dry, the yacht’s toilet paper is kept in a sealed plastic bag next to the toilet, along with special no-water hand soap.

WASH

Personal hygiene for the crew can be a hit and miss affair particularly in bad weather. There are no showers on board so in cold conditions the sailors go without an all-over wash. In hot conditions they can sometimes take advantage of a rainwater shower on deck if the winds are light. Generally the crew keep themselves clean with antiseptic wipes.

To save weight and space, they pack a minimal change of underwear and socks meaning the smell below decks can sometimes be overpowering. As humorous as it sounds, the offshore sailor’s version of a baby’s nappy rash can end up being severely debilitating and must be treated with soothing antiseptic cream as soon as it arises.

The sailors don’t take razors with them – hence the often-spectacular beards they come ashore with after several weeks at sea. They are however allowed to pack toothbrushes and the team toothpaste tube is generally found taped to the back rail of the yacht.



COMMUNICATE WITH THE WORLD

Race rules prohibit the crew from any assistance from off the yacht while racing other than weather data and position reports sent from race control. This information is beamed to the yacht using state-of-the-art satellite communications that utilise the high tech aerals at the stern.

The crew can also send and receive emails to and from a 'white list' of addresses registered with and approved by the race organisers. As well as being able to confer with their shore crew on running repairs to the yacht, the sailors can choose to white list their wives or girlfriends email addresses. These emails pass through the VOR servers though and any attempt to use them to illicitly pass information could result in a time or points penalty.

DAILY ROUTINE

A sailor's life aboard Azzam

On a VO 65 in the Volvo Ocean Race the concept of night and day soon disappears as the sailors' minds and bodies quickly adapt to the four hours on/four hours off watch system.

Knowing what time of day it is onboard can also be a challenge when you are racing across oceans, switching between hemispheres and traversing time zones. To compensate, official boat time is set as Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) (also known as Greenwich Mean Time [GMT] or Zulu Time), a worldwide accepted standard reference time.

The eight crew are split into two watches of three with the skipper and navigator operating separately outside the watch system.

An individual sailor's 'day' or more accurately their 24-hour cycle could begin in daylight or darkness but either way will generally begin with them being shaken awake in their bunk by a member of the opposite watch.

If they're lucky there will be a hot drink awaiting them in the galley once they have retrieved their wet weather gear from the hanging rack and struggled into it along with their sea boots. (VO65s are high performance yachts that quickly build up speed even in light winds, enough to throw seawater spray across the decks – meaning waterproofs are worn most of the time).

After 15 minutes or so to get dressed, drink their hot drink and perhaps make and eat a freeze-dried meal, it's time to clamber up on deck to start the watch.

Depending on the weather, they could emerge out into pleasant conditions on deck or perhaps into a bucking bronco of a cockpit as the yacht pounds upwind over big waves, or then again it could be into a whirlpool bath of swirling white water coming down the deck as the boat tears downwind.





According to skipper Ian Walker, whatever the conditions, the golden rule is that you are never, ever, late on deck to start your watch.

Once on deck along with two watch companions, the outgoing watch brief you on the prevailing weather, what is known about the situation with the rest of the fleet and what the target bearing and speeds are.

Then you step in to either steer, trim or grind and your watch is under way. Over the next four hours you and your watch buddies will rotate through those three roles and your only focus is sailing the boat as fast as you can.

The two keys to achieving maximum boat speed are going the right way and having the right combination of sails flying for the conditions. The sailors do not ever compromise over either of these things – even if it means getting everyone out of their bunks in the middle of the night in wind and rain to make a major course alteration or change sails. And if those calls come several times in the middle of your off watch – that's just the way things go sometimes.

As the end of your watch approaches one of the team will go below to put on the kettle for a warm drink for the oncoming watch and to wake them from their slumber. Once the new watch takes over, depending on how tough the watch has been you may head straight to your bunk and fall instantly asleep, or perhaps grab something to eat and drink while checking the email for a message from home.

Either way, it won't be too long before you are in your bunk asleep – for a few hours that will feel like minutes before someone calls your name, gives your foot a shake and says "Sorry mate, it's that time again".

COMMERCIAL PARTNERS OVERVIEW

GOLD PARTNERS

Etihad Airways

Etihad Airways returns for its second Volvo Ocean Race with Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing as a Gold Partner to the team.

Etihad Airways is the national airline of the United Arab Emirates and has in just ten years established itself as the world's leading airline.

“Etihad” is the Arabic word for “Union”.

Set up by Royal (Amiri) Decree in July 2003, Etihad commenced commercial operations in November 2003 and has gone on to become the fastest-growing airline in the history of commercial aviation.

Etihad Airways' partnership with Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing promotes the airline's brand worldwide and is closely aligned with the team's overall goal to spotlight Abu Dhabi as a premier family winter holiday destination for watersports and recreation.

IWC Schaffhausen

Returning for their second Volvo Ocean Race with Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing, IWC Schaffhausen is again the official timekeeper for the Volvo Ocean Race itself and as sponsor of the 24-hour speed record challenge.

With its passion for innovation and engineering, IWC Schaffhausen has established an international reputation. Since 1868, the Swiss watch manufacturer has been creating masterpieces of haute horlogerie that combine precision engineering with fine Swiss craftsmanship.

The partnerships between IWC Schaffhausen, the Volvo Ocean Race and Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing, provide another opportunity to demonstrate their expertise in engineering, technology and technical inventiveness.

Only a company able to set such high standards of precision, perfection and durability would have a chance of prevailing in arguably the toughest offshore race of them all.

IWC Schaffhausen and Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing share the same spirit of inventiveness, technical excellence, outstanding craftsmanship, masculinity and adventure.



SUPPLIER PARTNERS

MUSTO

MUSTO is the official technical and leisure clothing supplier to Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing and their partnership and product development are crucial factors in helping the sailors maintain peak performance while facing some of the harshest environments on Earth.

Oakley

Oakley is one of the world's leading eyewear brands and the official eyewear supplier to Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing.

Oakley's excellence in lens design and styling and their extensive product range will ensure maximum protection and function for the ADOR sailors as they race around the world.

Eden Park

Eden Park, one of the leading suppliers of formal wear clothing to professional sports teams, are Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing's official formal wear supplier.

It is important that the team look their best at all times and Eden Park's stylish designer range fulfills this need perfectly when they are ashore. ADOR is delighted to welcome them aboard as a partner for the 2014-15 edition of the Volvo Ocean Race.

Crewsaver

World-renowned manufacturer of critical marine safety equipment Crewsaver have worked closely with the crew of Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing to develop the ultimate ocean yacht racing lifejacket for them to wear as they take on the 2014-15 Volvo Ocean Race.

This development has also been fed into Crewsaver's range of innovative lifejackets for leisure users.

EXPOSURE Marine

Renewing their partnership with Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing for a second consecutive Volvo Ocean Race cycle, EXPOSURE Marine is working closely with skipper Ian Walker and the

ADOR sailors to develop their marine searchlights and torches. In the 2014/15 Race, the crew are using a new EXPOSURE light with advanced search and rescue features and some specific switching programmes customised for the sail trimmers.

Harken

Harken is the world's leading supplier of winch technology to grand prix and cruising yachts. With Harken equipment specified as standard on the VO 65, Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing is delighted to have Harken as a supplier sponsor to the team.

Sofitel Abu Dhabi Corniche

Sofitel Abu Dhabi Corniche is the official partnering hotel for Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing during the Volvo Ocean Race Abu Dhabi stopover.

The five-star hotel is planning a heroes' welcome for the Abu Dhabi crew when they finish the 6,125 nm second leg from Cape Town, South Africa.

The sailors and their families will be able to relax and enjoy the hotel's luxury facilities for the entire three-week stopover in the city over the New Year festive period before the crew set off on the 4,670 nm third leg to Sanya in China.

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You can also sign up for updates and catch all of the latest news about the team and the stopover on:

www.volvooceanraceabudhabi.com

KEY MEDIA CONTACTS

Photos and video b-roll of all the action from the 2014-15 Volvo Ocean Race can be found on the Volvo Ocean Race website (<http://www.volvooceanrace.com>).

VOR's website provides a large, searchable Media Zone, which can be accessed via:

www.volvooceanrace.com/en/presszone.html

This link will take you to a sign up/login page where you can register and access all of the files from previous races and the 2014-15 edition.

Once you are in the Media Zone, you can search by key word for whatever resources you may need.



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