

All in a Day's Work

Damian Foxall – Professional Racing Sailor

To the moon and back! Well, if it was possible that is how far I have sailed in my lifetime. My name is Daman Foxall, I'm from Derrynane, in SW Kerry.

I grew up on a small farm that went right down to the sea. Even on calm days I could hear the sound of the ocean swell crashing against the rocks and cliffs along our coastline, and whenever I got a chance I was on or in the water.



Image courtesy of Damian Foxall

Damian Foxall

in keeping our planet cool by absorbing the heat from the sun and redistributing this heat through ocean currents and weather systems.

How does this work help in the sailing world?

My work in sustainability is to help our sport and other industries to operate in a way that doesn't impact negatively on our planet. Sustainability is about living in a way that keeps the planet healthy for us now and for future generations (see pages 8 and 9).

Do you enjoy your job?

Every day I think how lucky I am to be able to use my sport as a platform to deliver a bigger message. Every day I get to see something new outside, and if I'm lucky I have my camera with me (Did I mention I like photography?) Every day the horizon tempts me with a new adventure, we will even run some sailing adventures to Antarctica this winter! Contact us at Sea Synergy Adventures to learn more: www.seasynergy.org

What first drew you to the sea?

Exploring the shoreline to find new species of marine life, or windsurfing or snorkeling in and out of the inlets and bays, our summers were filled with discovery and adventure. Portuguese men o'war, Jack sail-by-the-wind, Cowrie shells, violet sea shells, sea cucumbers, Cornish sucker fish, and an endless trail of hidden treasures kept us hunting for new finds along the shore.

Do you still love the sea as much as you did when you were a boy?

Today, is my 50th Birthday, and I'm surprised how the time has gone. Every morning I still feel like that little boy that jumped out of bed, gulped down breakfast and ran out the door – not to be seen until the evening. I still look out over our Atlantic horizon and wonder what is out there.

How did you become a sailor?

I left secondary school early and headed for the sea. The experience I gained delivering boats around the Atlantic and as a dive master in the Caribbean, led me eventually to becoming a professional racing sailor.

Where does your work take you?

Now, 34 years later I have raced around the world ten times, across the Atlantic more than 25 times, and have won and lost races, broken world records and boats – and even once a bone! I have sailed in every ocean, seen icebergs and Albatross, seen giant squid and flying fish, and even the odd swimming bird. I have sailed so many sea miles, that if I stretched them all out together I could easily have sailed to the moon and back!

Which race is one of the most memorable?

The longest sporting event in the World is the Volvo Ocean Race (VOR). This sailing race circles around the world taking nine months to complete the 39,000 miles lap from start to finish stopping in 9-10 ports along the way. The VOR has even been to Ireland twice, and in 2012, when we finished by winning the race outright into Galway, we had almost a million people watch the grand finale.

You have another job. What is it?

I'm a Sustainability Consultant and Ocean Health Ambassador. Using my sport and my knowledge of the environment, I work to promote Ocean Health and Sustainability.

Why is this work important?

The ocean is a fundamental part of our life on Earth; it gives us more than 50% of the oxygen we breathe. A lot of the world's protein comes from fish sources. The ocean provides a very important role



Damian at the helm, with fellow crew members.



Damian's job as a professional racing sailor has taken him all around the world—many times!

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