



Newsletter

June 2016



Issue 01: Preparing for a Challenge!



Welcome to Wicked Weather Watch!

As the excitement builds during the final preparations for our attempt to circumnavigate the Arctic Ocean, we are delighted to be working with so many schools across the country, helping the next generation understand more about climate change and inspiring them to get involved.

The Arctic is changing and has significant challenges ahead. The next decade is crucial. If we all give some of our attention to the challenges facing the Arctic, and educate the next generation, then surely we've got the best chance of getting it right.

Thank you for joining Wicked Weather Watch and the Polar Ocean Challenge on our journey! I look forward to bringing you the latest information straight from the Arctic in the coming weeks.

David Hempleman-Adams



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What is the Polar Ocean Challenge?

Departing on June 19th 2016 the Polar Ocean Challenge is a historic voyage with purpose and meaning. The level of global warming is increasing the number of ice-free months in the Northeast Passage, opening up the Arctic Ocean and making it possible for **the first British yacht to sail around the North Pole in one summer season**, navigating through the receding Arctic sea ice.

In order to complete the voyage the crew must reach the Northeast Passage before the end of July, when the ice flows will have melted sufficiently to allow access, but the clock will be ticking to get around the North Pole and exit via the Northwest Passage before it freezes over again.

Why is this possible now?

The Earth is hotting up on land and in the oceans. 2015 was the hottest year on record. Between the years 1880 and 2012 the average world temperature rose by 0.85%. This might not sound like a lot but even a small increase in temperature can have a huge impact on the planet and upset the delicate balance of our climate system. The temperature in the Arctic is increasing at twice the rate of the rest of the world.

One of the effects of this rise in temperature – known as global warming – is that Arctic sea ice has continued to shrink year on year. That is why it could now be possible to complete this expedition around the North Pole.

The Polar Ocean Challenge sets sail from Bristol on June 19th 2016

Track the expedition and get all the latest news:

www.wickedweatherwatch.org.uk

www.polarocean.co.uk



Did you know...

...that the Polar Ocean Challenge is a multi-record breaking attempt!

If successful, the POC team will not only be the **first British yacht** to circumnavigate the Arctic Ocean in one summer season, but Wicked Weather Watch Youth Ambassador, **Ben Edwards** (above), will be the **youngest person ever to complete the journey at just 14 years old.**





Colin Walker is in charge of Northabout's refit



'Northabout' gets ready for her great adventure

What special modifications have been made for the Arctic trip so to get through ice?

The boat is made of aluminium and has been reinforced to make it stronger. The bottom of the boat is especially strong and the propeller is protected in case it hits ice (see picture below right). The front of the boat - called the "bow" - has been shaped so it can ride up the ice and then break it.

What equipment do you need on the boat?

Lots of warm clothes, an inflatable boat for exploring, lots of navigation equipment such as radar, cameras, charts and depth sounders, and lots of safety equipment.

How will you generate power to run electronic equipment on the boat and for experiments?

The boat will have an engine and also a generator plus solar panels. It will also have a probe in the water to read temperature and measure the depth.

What will you do if you crash?

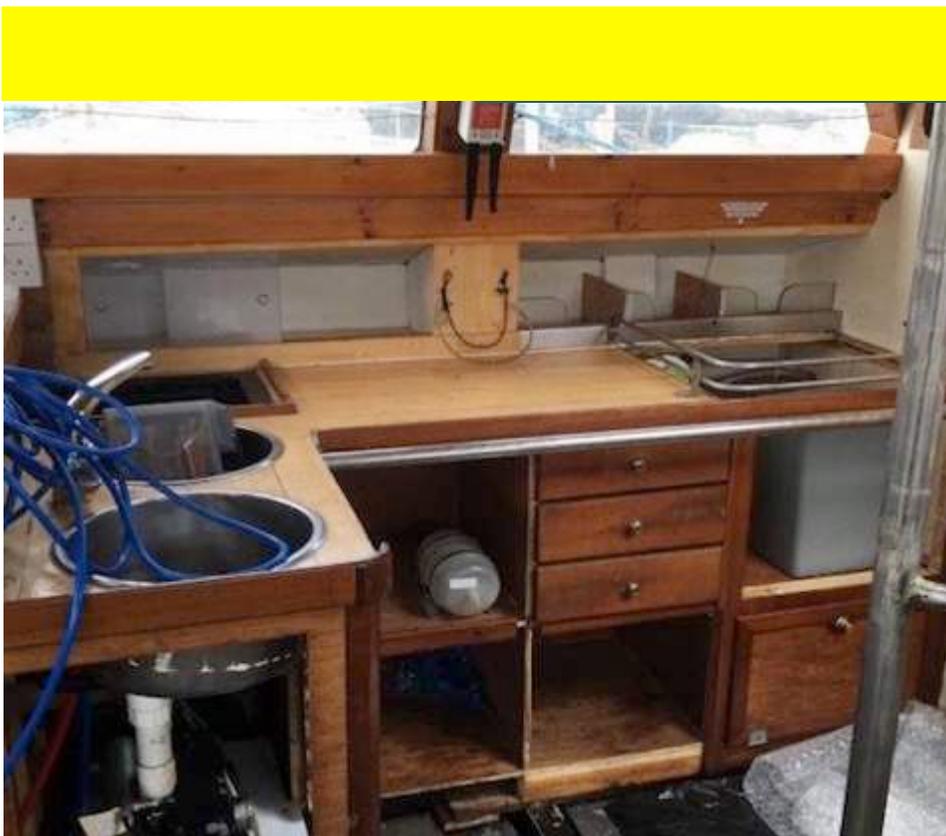
Our navigation equipment will hopefully help us to avoid crashing! But if we do will we have a satellite phone so we can contact the coastguard and shipping if we get into trouble.

What problems do you think you might have?

Lots of problems, that is the challenge of doing a trip like this. One of the biggest challenges will be finding a way through the ice. We have to wait for the temperature to rise enough for some of the ice to melt and then try to find a passage through the ice.



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NORTHABOUT'S STATISTICS

Length: 15 meters (49ft)

Sleeps: 7 people
(see picture below)

Distance to travel around
the Arctic Ocean:
13,500 nautical miles

Speed: 7 Knots (7.7MPH)
if the wind is behind;
4 knots (4.4MPH) if
going against the wind

Above: the kitchen where the crew hope to make bread.

Will you have a food / water supply?

Northabout will take a lot of drinking water and also have a water-making machine that converts salt water to drinking water. We are planning to stock the boat up with enough food to last one month without stopping. She will then have to call into a port to get fresh food. Most of the food we take will be tinned, rice or pasta as it is easy to store. We are hoping to take a bread maker but this can only be used in good weather!

Where will you sleep?

There are 7 berths in the boat so everybody will have their own bunk but the boat will be sailing day and night so there will be a watch system where everybody takes it in turns to be on deck or rest or sleep. The berths at the stern of the yacht are less turbulent (slightly) than those near the bow. However, as they are near to the engine they are noisier and if there's an engine problem can be smelly!



**Thank you to the students at Grove Primary School
for their questions to Colin!**

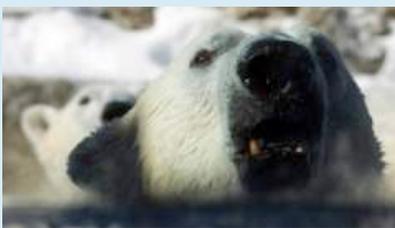


In the news

The dramatic melting of ice in the Arctic and the impact of climate change has hit the headlines recently – these articles in the [Independent](#) and [Canada Journal](#) are just two recent examples.

And has climate change had an impact on wildlife and helped to create a new species? A possible grizzly-polar bear hybrid has been shot by a hunter in northern Canada. Read more about it following the link below.

'Polar bear hybrid' shot in Canada



Working with schools

Wicked Weather Watch is working with schools across the country to tell them about the Polar Ocean Challenge and climate change. Throughout June and July we will be running assemblies at as many schools as possible.

Why not run an assembly at your school? Download the assembly pack from our website or contact us to see if we could come and run the assembly for you!

Summer competition!

Over the summer we will be running a competition for young people.

Let your imagination run wild! Tell us where YOU would explore, the top 10 things you would take on your expedition and why.

The winning entry will receive a visit from David Hempleman-Adams to their school when he returns from the Polar Ocean Challenge, to hear all about his big adventure.

Terms and conditions are on the **WWW website**. Deadline for entries: Sunday September 18th. Email your entry to: chiefweatherwatcher@wickedweatherwatch.org.uk.



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