



OCEAN CRUISING CLUB®

For Immediate Release

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The OCC Announces its 2023 Awards for Sailing and Voyaging Excellence

Devon, UK, 13 February 2024—The Ocean Cruising Club has announced the winners of its 2023 awards for sailing and voyaging accomplishments including the OCC Lifetime Award, the Barton Cup and the Seamanship Award.

THE OCC LIFETIME AWARD

The Reverend Bob Shepton has combined decades of high latitude sailing with extreme mountain climbing to earn the **OCC's Lifetime Award** for noteworthy ocean voyaging. His accolades and accomplishments aboard his modest Westerly Discus 33, *Dodo's Delight*, are too numerous to list but include:

- Circumnavigating the world, via Cape Horn and the Cape of Good Hope, with a group of disadvantaged ex-students from the school where he was Chaplain in the early 1990s.
- Multiple passages across the North Atlantic to Greenland, combining serious climbing and trekking and once anchoring at the foot of a sheer cliff to serve as "base camp" for his climbing team's ascent.
- Traversing the ice-clogged Northwest Passage twice in consecutive years and logging more than 150,000 ocean miles.
- Jury-rigging a broken mast in Antarctica to cross the Drake Passage and sail on to the Falkland Islands.
- Authoring numerous articles and books including *Addicted to Adventure* and *Addicted to More Adventure*, as well as *High Latitude Sailing* with Jon Amtrup.

Bob has received multiple British and international awards from the Cruising Club of America, the Royal Cruising Club, the Piolets d'Or climbing award and other OCC honours including the Barton Cup and the Vasey Vase.

Now in his 80s, Bob continues to share his experiences and expertise as an arctic advisor, consultant and lecturer. More information is available at: <https://bobshepton.co.uk/>

THE BARTON CUP

Rob Barton rowed the 4,470 nautical miles from Australia to Tanzania solo in 86 days to earn this year's **Barton Cup**. This award, named for his grandfather and OCC Founder, Hum Barton, recognises an OCC member who has made an exceptional voyage. Rob is the first person to successfully row this passage, solo and non-stop, earning him a Guinness World Record.

The southern Indian Ocean includes some of the most challenging waters in the world. Rob encountered multiple storms, strong ocean currents and 10m waves which capsized his 21ft (6.4m) boat *Australia2Africa*. He endured months of isolation, severe sea sickness and extreme weight loss but persevered, arriving in Tanzania 21 July 2023.

Instead of seeking a world record, Rob's main aim was to draw attention to youth mental health issues and raise funds for the Australian charity, Zero2Hero, which helps to prevent youth suicide. For Rob, the row was personal. He and his daughter, Jess, have been very public about her difficulties with depression and anxiety and hope that the almost \$150,000 (AUD) Rob raised will enable young people to get help.

Rob adds that he was also motivated by, "focusing on the finish line and a dry bed." His Facebook page contains additional information about his journey:

<https://www.facebook.com/p/Robs-Row-100085457294871/>

THE OCC SEAMANSHIP AWARD

The **OCC Seamanship Award** recognizes exceptional skill or bravery at sea. German OCC members Astrid Clausen-Grube and Martin Grube exemplified skill and composure when faced with a potential dismasting of their Jutlandic 37 DS sloop *Pincoya* during their first Atlantic crossing. En route from the Cape Verde Islands to Martinique, they noticed their intermediate port shroud had started to part. With brisk winds and 3m seas, the couple used *Pincoya's* running backstays to stabilize their compromised mast.

While Astrid managed the boat from the deck, Martin climbed to the upper spreaders multiple times to successfully repurpose their running backstays as temporary shrouds, clinging to the mast "like a little monkey" as it swung through a 10m arc – see *Atlantic Crossing ~ It Could Have Been Easier*:

https://liveicomcontent.azureedge.net/occf/ffarticles/20231129_212-221_GRUBE.pdf

After 20 days and more than 2100 nautical miles (1400 of them with a broken shroud), *Pincoya* arrived in Martinique with her mast still standing.

The additional award winners for 2023 include:

- **Vasey Vase:** Stephanie Connor and Martin Fuller
- **Jester Trophy and David Wallis Trophy:** Trevor Robertson
- **Water Music Award:** Sherry and Dave McCampbell
- **OCC Award (members only):** John Maddox
- **OCC Award (open):** Peter Mott
- **Qualifier's Mug:** Reija Treacy Wolnik
- **Port Officer Service Award:** Bill and Joanne Harris / Allan and Cathy Rae
- **Events & Rallies Award:** Dick Morris
- **Environmental Award:** Howard Dryden/Diane Duncan of the GOES Foundation
- **The Vertue Award:** Ted Laurentius
- **The Australian Trophy:** Kayo Oazki

Nominations are made by OCC members; selection is by an experienced panel of bluewater cruisers and approved by the OCC General Committee.

About the Ocean Cruising Club



The Worldwide Community for Adventure Sailing Since 1954

The Ocean Cruising Club is the “home port” for those who have made long voyages across big oceans. With 61 nationalities represented by its 3500+ members and some 270 Port Officers in 100 countries, we have a more diverse membership and a more international reach than any other bluewater sailing organisation.

The OCC exists to encourage long-distance passagemaking in vessels under 70ft (23.26m) LOA. To qualify for OCC Full Membership, voyagers must have completed a non-stop ocean passage between two points at least 1000 nautical miles apart. Associate Members are committed to achieving that goal. This requirement distinguishes the OCC from all other sailing clubs.

Our membership as a whole has more experience offshore than any other sailing organisation – in the number of circumnavigators, in the range of extraordinary voyages members have completed, and in the number of solo sailors and female sailors among our ranks. This requirement sets us apart from other organisations, even as it draws us together as a group.

Web: www.oceancruisingclub.org

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/OceanCruisingClubMembers/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/oceancruisingclub/>

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