



EGGING YOU ON



Marcus Blackmore's Nordhavn 78 adventure machine anchored in Tonga.

Don rates adventures like he does eggs — soft, medium or hard

How do you prefer your eggs, soft, hard or medium? Well, you can choose your adventures the same way. Personally, I like them all, soft in an eggcup dipping toast fingers, medium-poached on some crispy sour dough bread, or real hard, cold, out of the fridge for lunch! Up for anything really and I call that the rich colour of life, especially if they are free range. So there I was last week in Tonga, off on another grand adventure, chasing treasure and looking out at the world from the magnificent Nordhavn 78 *Ammonite*. There were seven of us high up in the pilothouse, snuggled into Italian leather

and surrounded by a *Star Wars* array of electronics and soft music. This was adventure in an egg cup for sure.

AGE LIMIT

I was with my mate Marcus Blackmore and we had been laughing about my new claim to fame. I was recently reported in a magazine (writing about the www.taliskerbountyboat.com expedition) as "going on 60". What the...? But then again, next year I will be 56, going on 60? So maybe that will be hard to dispute?

Now Marcus has 10 years on me, so going on 70? Wow! And yes Jessica is going on 20, when will it end? It all will one day

and each of us will look back just before that moment and think?

Meanwhile, this new "soft" adventure in Tonga had all the elements — mystery, intrigue and an ongoing unknown outcome. It was fuelled by some interesting characters, with dubious stories and yet more to unfold in the future. Watch this space!

Marcus takes his boat all over the world and had it in Tonga to help me in my quest there. We did some great dives, spent time with the whales, met interesting locals, and hooked big fish. Marcus is quite the adventurer, continually challenging himself every day and pushing the boundaries in his private and business life.

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example of finding adventure in your everyday life.

CHEAP THRILLS

Jessie Martin is getting out there again, this time in a Contessa 26, the same type of boat made famous by the likes of Tanya Abbey and others who have solo'd them around the world. He bought it in America and is headed back to Australia soon. They are great boats.

I found a perfect example in the US for \$20,000. With another \$10,000 in your pocket for extra gear and some food, you could set off around the world no problem. Yes, a \$30,000 solo adventure. Where would it rate? For Jessie maybe "medium", for most others probably "hard", but I have to tell you eggs are good for you. Drop me a line if you take it on.

MEANING OF LIFE?

The great Greek Athenian philosopher Socrates probably had an answer, yet it looks like one of his descendants is still chasing it as we all should. Sixty-seven-year-old grandmother Jeanne Socrates is about to set off from Canada in her 38ft yacht *Nereida* on her third solo circumnavigation attempt, this time "solo and non-stop" (see www.svneraida.com).

Life is for living if you have your health, so I was shocked to hear that 15-year-old Dutch sailor Laura Decker, currently sailing solo around the world, attempted to slash her wrists in the midst of all the pressure with court orders trying to stop her.

I was asked to comment on this for a national American newspaper, re "Youngest Records" causing these problems — nothing to do with records. Surely this is clearly an issue for her parents and parenting, watching how children are brought up and their brains programmed. I don't have children. If you do, give them some small adventures first! Then they may understand more about themselves and life.

YOUNG ENDEAVOUR

In the past few weeks, I have chatted with or received emails from budding adventurers planning to row the Pacific,



Adventurer Marcus Blackmore on another “soft” adventure in Tonga while awaiting the arrival of his new TP52 to take on the IRC Championship. Championship

head off to Antarctica, climb mountains, walk jungles, and one from Steve Huljev who hopes to be the youngest www.worldsoloflight.com

It is a big challenge and he has a long way to go, but could do it. Interestingly, in his proposal he mentioned his adventure some years before of sailing on the *Young Endeavour*, Australia’s sail-training ship. I was on the scheme’s advisory board at that time, as was Marcus who still is. We both know the value of this amazing opportunity for Australia’s youth. As part of the 24 crew onboard, Steve Huljev was obviously highly regarded, having been awarded the Young Endeavour Order of Australia medal for his voyage. Quite an honour.

He is now moving through life with a real spark and I have no

doubt that his time onboard for 10 days changed him. It is a ballot to get onboard these voyages as they are always over subscribed, but if you are between 16 and 23 years of age, please check out www.youngendeavour.gov.au It could be the greatest thing you ever do in your life. How would I rate it? “Medium” adventure for most. Next year, the ship is off into the Pacific, including Tonga, so maybe I will see you out there.

TWO-WHEEL DREAMING

During my days off (LOL), I dream of “other” adventures, so I have decided to ride a motorbike around the world. No set date yet and just for pleasure. I have started the planning now, which includes plenty of books.

One is a real laugh about three Australians setting off to do the same. It quickly turns into a set of interesting disasters, all as a direct result of some very poor planning/preparation that impacts during the execution.

Very funny read nonetheless.

These guys are what I call with a smile “disasturers”, more so than “adventurers”, but good on them. You find them in all types of adventures. They create grand adventures from their own shortcomings? All fine, as long as it only impacts on themselves.

The late great Dr David Lewis was at times qualified. I’ll never forget in *Ice Bird*, his 35ft steel yacht, sailing solo through the Southern Ocean to Antarctica, that he got “upset” when his “glass” jug of kerosene, suspended by ropes in the cabin for protection, eventually smashed. Really! He was an inspiration to me, but I prefer to make my adventures as boring as possible.

So, a motorbike around the world, how would that rate? I reckon “scrambled”, a bit of everything. The fastest was 19 days, but I reckon 90 days sounds about right for someone going on 60. Wow, I don’t believe I said that. 🚫