

30 MINUTES WITH ... GREG ALICE



When it comes to a high-class boat sale, very few could rank close to the pinnacle of dealing with a team like Boating World. With a 'no task too big or small' attitude, everything they do seems to exude quality – and it's not just in the way they do business, it's ingrained into each of their crew. This month, we chat with Greg Alice, salesman extraordinaire of the Boating World team.

Interview by Dean Castle

Greg, whenever I call you, you're either busy with a sale, fishing in a competition, giving someone some training, or transporting a boat somewhere off the coast of Africa. What else could you possibly get through in a day?

I believe the saying goes 'Jack of all trades, master of few', or something like that... My business card might say salesman but I believe there's so much more someone can do when they're doing something they love – and I strongly believe that being a client of Boating World means that we get to go the extra mile. In a normal day on the job, I could be doing anything from entertaining a client at one of Cape Town's hottest restaurants or perhaps going for a water test and showing off our beautiful coastline – but when needed, I am always prepared to get into the bilges and give the back-up support and service we're known for.

I think it would be a pretty wide perception that people think you've got a spectacular job being on boats all day. Is that the case?

[Laughs] The story of my life! It's the classic scenario, "what the others think I do; what my friends think I do; what my clients think I do; and what I actually do". Truth be told, most of my day is spent behind my computer ensuring our clients are looked after, building new relationships and nurturing current ones. We offer a large range of marine products - from just about every type of boat imaginable, to Airberths, Pierplas floating jetties and even Gyro stabilisers, so you can imagine the excitement never stops!

You've basically grown up around the boating industry. Any infinite words of wisdom you've learnt down the years and live by?

I have worked in boating for a total of seven years. I was a part-time 'appy' in a workshop for two years, assisting with everything up to engine installations, and for the past half a decade I have been selling and offering back-up service.

I've been told I should charge for strong words of advice, but this one's on the house [laughs]. The biggest tip I can't emphasise enough is to keep on top of your general maintenance; keep your boat in prime condition as it saves it from deteriorating. Boats on the water require a good, environmentally-friendly clean each and every week.

Being involved with hardcore sport fishing boats like Riviera, you must get to do quite a bit of fishing?

Aaaah my happy place... From childhood, I remember my parents taking me fishing at Durban harbour. The first fish I ever caught was a 5 kg Kingy - the excitement and happiness was more than humanly possible



for such a small boy and I was hooked for life. Fishing off a Riviera is an absolute luxury and whenever there is a trip to the deep and a seat offered, I'm there like a bear! Besides being a hardcore fishing vessel, it's the smoothest luxury cruiser that's perfect for the whole family; while those long fishing trips leave you feeling relaxed and energised.

Working at Boating World, you've had a lot of experience across the board. What products is the company currently involved with?

Boating World's main focus has been on the leisure industry and we consider ourselves specialists

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in the field. Our main products are Fairline and Riviera boats, and we also represent factories like Lazzarra and Benetti whose range starts at around 93 ft, catering for a very niche market. We are brokers for ▶



all types of pre-loved vessels and offer a very broad spectrum of boats. Besides selling boats we strongly believe in boat maintenance and offer Airberth to help make owning a boat easier. Made out of high density polyethylene plastic, it raises your boat (Cat or Mono up to 15 tons) out the water while docked in your mooring. We also import PierPlas floating jetties which are a perfect, easy jetty solution. We've also acquired the agency for SeaKeeper which is a Gyro stabiliser to minimise and almost obliterate the roll of the boat completely while offshore.

You've had the privilege of visiting the Riviera and Fairline factories overseas. Are they as spectacular as I imagine?
A privilege it is! It's not every day that you get to take a stroll through two of the top boat factories in the world! Both Riviera and Fairline take huge pride in their operation and it's truly evident when they are guiding you through each process of the build. You see every step first-hand and you realise why it is such a quality product. Everything is done on-site, and they have their own timber workshops where they treat and lacquer each piece of wood that



finishes off their boats so beautifully. I was recently at the Fairline factory to test a Squadron 65 and it was the time of my life. Like a kid going to Ratanga Junction, I could visit the factories over and over and get just as excited each time.

Getting to see the 'behind the scenes' of a boat builder, do you think it has helped with your growth?

Without doubt. Being able to assist my clients with the answers I've learned builds credibility. My clients require a lifestyle and an investment and I need to be equipped to assist them with any queries. Being at the factories and on the water, I have been fortunate enough to see the time, detail, finesse and technologies that go into a boat build so I can appreciate the asset thoroughly. I am now able to not only be a salesman but a driving force on a product I can vouch for. The experiences I've had has given me the tools to become stronger in helping ▶



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my clients while giving me the passion for a product I am confident to put my own name behind.

Fairline's Squadron 65 was recently here in SA. You got to spend some quality time on her – what were some of the stand-out features for you as a seasoned boater?

I have seen some beautiful boats in my time with Boating World, however, nothing comes close to the quality of a 2014 Fairline. The company is able to add that finishing touch that words simply cannot give justice to. From the time I saw her at the Ipswich testing facility, to her arriving in Cape Town, I was overwhelmed by the build quality, design, technical specs and overall performance. I was fortunate enough

to form part of the crew given the task to skipper her to Angola. This was a full test for the Squadron and she handled it above our expectations. She cuts through the water seamlessly and the overall living area is designed in a way so that you feel you are in your home away from home. The finishes of this boat are of a 10-star standard and the way this boat is able to manoeuvre astounds me. You can really feel that extra mile Fairline has put into their design and technology development.

The saying goes that if you love what you do, you'll never work another day in your life. Does that ring true for you?

I am lucky enough to love my job but people often only see the glamour side. There is so much behind the scenes work that goes into a transaction that would astound you! I am fortunate enough to call many of my clients friends and this gives me the luxury of living the dream.

How do readers get in touch with you, or anyone else on the team?

I'm very often on the go, so the best bet is to go direct on my mobile – 078 544 7668. But, we are in the 21st

Quick facts about Greg Alice

One word people would say describes you?

I'd like to think it would be passionate.

Your claim to fame?

Being interviewed by *Leisure Boating* magazine.

Three things you'd want if stranded on an island?

Knife, fishing rod and a blonde.

If you were a sea animal – what would you be?

Definitely a Great White shark – it's the King of the ocean!

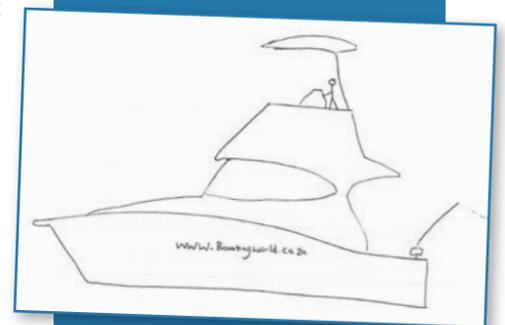
When you're not on a boat, what are you doing?

Working my a** off in the office or enjoying a cold beer with friends.

Best cure for sea-sickness? If you don't have a Sea Keeper gyro stabiliser [wink]?

A good swim in the ocean does the trick.

Draw a picture of a boat in under two minutes:



century, so emails are almost just as effective; drop me a mail on greg@boatingworld.co.za. Alternatively, to support our clients across the country, we have offices in Durban as well as in Cape Town which can be reached on (021) 418 0840. **LB**