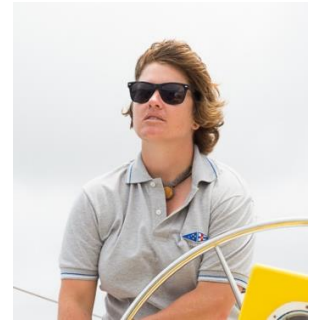


# Biography Lisa Blair

THE FIRST WOMAN TO SAIL SOLO AROUND ANTARCTICA



Whilst completing her Bachelor of Education and a Bachelor of Visual Arts at Southern Cross University, Lisa Blair secured a job as a hostess on a sailing boat in the Whitsundays on 2005. Once discovering sailing Lisa wanted to learn more and was inspired from books about solo sailors like Kay Cottee, Robin Knox-Johnston and Jessie Martin. Lisa decided to change her course in life and gather the skills to become a solo sailor herself. Lisa since clocked up more than 50 000 nautical miles of ocean sailing before embarking on her record making voyage.

After Circumnavigating the world in the Clipper 2011-12 Round the World Yacht Race Lisa went on to work for Alex Thomson Racing on their 60 foot racing yacht sponsored by Hugo Boss. She then acquired her RYA/ MCA Yacht Master Offshore, a Master Class 5 (Australian Skipper ticket) and her MED 3 (Marine Engineering). Lisa worked as skipper of the 68 foot long, Ex America's Cup, Racing Yacht *Southern Cross* sailing around the Whitsunday Islands, in 2014 Lisa sailed twice across the Tasman Sea from Australia to New Zealand **SOLO** clocking up almost 3 000 nm of solo sailing experience in preparation for her Antarctica record.

Following that Lisa is a sailing instructor in Sydney, skipper of Ex-American Cup Yachts Sprit and Kookaburra and worked for Manly Fast Ferries. Lisa acquired her yacht in November 2015 – previously named *Funnel-Web* - and skippered it in the 2015 Rolex Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race. After 3.5 years of planning and gathering funds Lisa set off on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2017 from Albany in WA with the goal of becoming the first woman to sail solo, non-stop and unassisted around Antarctica with the secondary goal of breaking the current record of 102 days held by Russia.

72 days into her solo voyage and  $\frac{3}{4}$  the way around Antarctica Lisa suffered a dramatic and life threatening dismasting in storm conditions more than 1000nm from land. Lisa managed to save her yacht, was rendered fuel from a passing container ship, built a jury rig and motor sailed into Cape Town, SA. 2 months later Lisa re-started her voyage, crossed her track at the position of demasting and continued back to Australia. On July 25<sup>th</sup> Lisa made history and became the first woman to sail solo and unassisted around Antarctica with one stop.

Lisa was awarded the *Spirit of Adventure* award by Australian Geographic and the *Seamanship Award* by the Ocean Cruising Club and finished off the year by partnering with The Magenta Project.org and leading the first all-female team in 16 years to race in the Rolex 2017 Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race on board her yacht Climate Action Now. Lisa has now sailed over 70 000nm and turns her attention to finishing her first book titled *Demasted* which is to be published by Australian Geographic.

Following an incredible year in 2017 Lisa set off in the New Year with the goal of becoming the first woman to sail solo, non-stop and unassisted around Australia. Lisa succeeded on the 17<sup>th</sup> of December when she sailed into Sydney Harbour after facing down storms, drifting as she was becalmed, a near sinking and safely navigated around the many reefs and rocks. Lisa established a new record time of 58 Days, 2 hours, 25 minutes and 29 seconds.