

SAILING UNIVERSITY

[Captain Krzysztof Chris Baranowski](#)

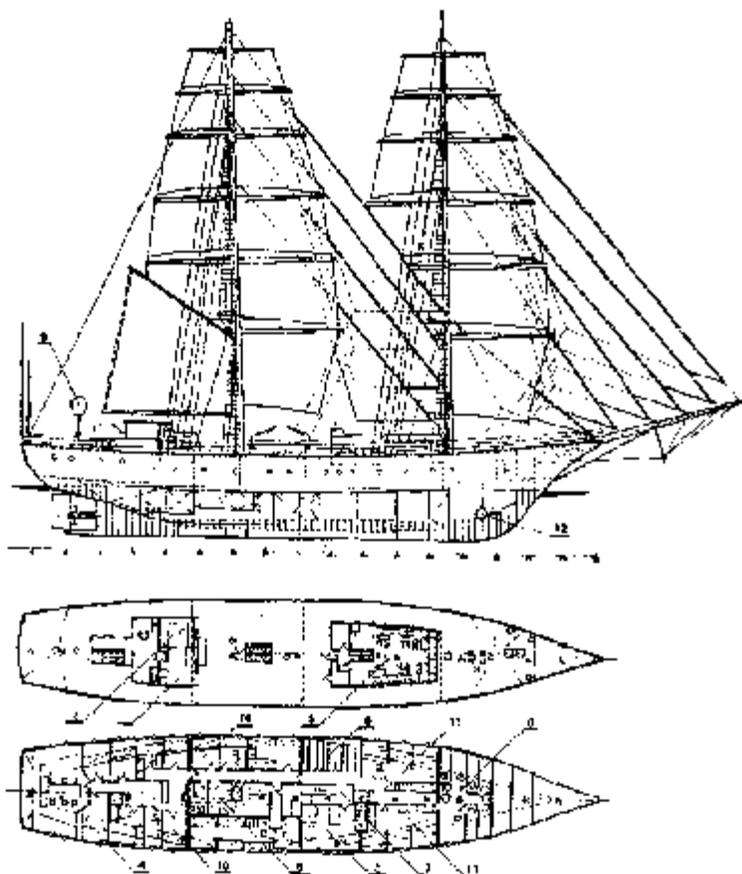
International Class Afloat Foundation
Poland

The high seas and oceans provide a unique educational opportunity for the benefit of young people. Confronted with the danger and physical effort young people develop more quickly, understand teamwork and take responsibility for other people. This effect was known for ages but usually young men who learned to sail eventually became sailors.

Nowadays, we have Marine Academies and Naval Schools training professional officers for shipping or Navies, and we complain that young people are brought up forgetting that the sea can also exert an attraction on civilians who treat sailing as a pleasure or a hobby.

The Class Afloat was launched by me on board of the Tall Ship Pogoria in 1982. It was a barquentine for 50 people specially built for non-professional training and included a class on board. As captain of this ship I invited young people of Poland, aged 16, to be my crew. After six months of selection I took 30 youngsters on an educational trip to Italy, Greece and around South Africa. It was nine months at sea that changed young people's attitude toward life. They began to understand other people from different cultural circles, they learned tolerance and coexistence, and they grew more mature. The children's parents could not recognise their own boys as they became men.

The idea of Class Afloat was picked up by the Canadian West Island College. In 1985/86 I had the pleasure to teach Canadian professors proper square-rigger language and then take a Canadian class of 40 boys and girls on board. We again sailed the same route around Africa while completing the educational curriculum for that age. After two years of Canadian Class Afloat experience I proposed the mixing of crews by inviting 10 American, 10 Russian and 10 Polish boys on board the Pogoria. They were 15 years old and they had no common language. Yet we spoke both English and Russian and tried to go on with mathematics, physics, literature, and chemistry. While having school on board we circumnavigated South America rounding the dreaded Cape Horn.



Boat Layout	Specification	
1. Chartroom	Length (total)	55.50 m
2. Radio	Beam	8.50 m
3. Lounge/Classroom	Draft	3.60 m
4. Conference room	Sail area	1200 sqm
5. Galley	Engine	400 HP
6. Dining Area	Max. speed under power	9 kn
7. Pentry	Max. speed under sail	16 kn
8. Toilets/Showers		
9. Satellite Telecom		
10 Double Cabin		

Figure 1: International Class Afloat Foundation Boat

International Class Afloat in 1988/89 was very much welcomed in both Americas, Europe and the Soviet Union and was given a privilege of flying the United Nations flag. Currently, the Canadian Class Afloat is sailing the Atlantic but we are also building the Tall Ship Fryderyk Chopin. The hull is already on water and outfitting should be completed this summer. We are using all our previous experience from building the previous Tall Ship Pogoria for the benefit of future crews. The next Class Afloat is scheduled for this Autumn.

A new Tall Ship in commission is a good chance to start something new, such as the International University for Bio-Environment (I.U.B.E.). On the financial side this idea is much less expensive than any other lodging complete with food. Certain subjects to be taught can be discussed but courses such as marine biology -habitats and ecosystems-anthropology or international politics-global issues-are ideal for ocean voyaging and meeting different cultures.

In the end the wind is still free and, based on that expense, the sailing vessel can travel for nothingösimple fact many of us tend to forget. I am not a philosopher but a Tall Ship captain, so permit me to invite you on board, both professors and students alike, and let's have a lecture. In the meantime we cast off for other shores.

History of Classes Afloat			
Year	Vessel	Crew	Destination
1976/77	<i>Pakonez</i>	Baranowski Family	Great Lakes/Atlantic
1983/84	<i>Pogoria</i>	Polish boys	round Africa
1985	<i>Pogoria</i>	Polish girls	across Atlantic
1985/86	<i>Pogoria</i>	Canadian students	round Africa
1987/88	<i>Pogoria</i>	Canadian students	round the world
1988/89	<i>Pogoria</i>	US/US\$H/Polish boys	round South America
1989/90	<i>Astrid</i>	British students	round Atlantic
1989/90	<i>Pogoria</i>	Canadian students	round Atlantic
1990	<i>Iskra</i>	UN seminar	across Atlantic
1990/91	<i>Pogoria</i>	Canadian students	round Atlantic
1991/92	<i>F. Chapin</i>	UN	171

Captain **Krzysztof Baranowski** is the president of the International Class Afloat Foundation. He has travelled the world's oceans with teams of young students on educational voyages, most recently on behalf of the United Nations.