Atlantic Rally for Cruisers

Personal Preparations - What to Wear

The clothing options for an Atlantic crossing
Nick Gill from World Cruising Club's technical clothing provider Gill takes a look at modern sailing clothing and offers some ideas for your sailing kit-bag.

Layering – a personal climate control system
In sailing one thing is certain; you need to be prepared for all weather conditions. For an ARC crossing this will include the delivery to the Canary Islands, the variations in Atlantic weather during the trip, local Caribbean conditions and then the reverse for the return crossing. Space is at a premium on board, so even if budget is not a restricting factor there is a limit to how much clothing you can take. I believe it is best to look at your options in terms of layers. Hot or cold, the layering system makes enormous sense and it is your own personal climate control system.

Base Layer Options
The Base Layer is vital. One of its main purposes is to keep you dry next to the skin and it does this by wicking moisture away from the body. If you are wearing cotton it will absorb perspiration like blotting paper, and then transfer heat from your body 20 times faster than dry fabric leaving you feeling cold and clammy.

For the cooler part of the journey I recommend Gill i2 Lite or i2 Tec. There are many choices of long or short sleeve, crew neck or zip polos as well as leggings and boxer shorts. Don’t forget the boxers, as damp cotton underwear is no fun! The main difference between i2 Lite and i2 Tec is that the Tec is slightly heavier and therefore warmer and also features an anti microbial finish. This, put simply, reduces the odour caused by being unable to wash it - very handy on an extended passage.

For warmer conditions, Gill has introduced technical long and short sleeve shirts. They are very fast drying, highly wicking and have a UV SPF 50 sun protection factor, essential for the latter part of the ARC rally. This new Technical Apparel range has a natural feel, is not tight fitting and is very comfortable to wear.

In many ways there is an overlap between the warm and cool weather base layers. They both do a similar job but the warm weather technical apparel is designed for use on and off the boat despite being 100% technical.

Mid Layer Options
There has probably been more development in what we loosely term mid-layer, than any other area of our business in the last few years. New materials and production techniques have considerably increased the options, whilst at the same time widened their usage opportunity.

The role of the mid-layer is to provide thermal insulation. This can come in many forms from a relatively thin micro fleece to a fully waterproof, highly breathable, insulated jacket and salopettes. One of the materials that has had such an impact at Gill has been soft-shell. A sandwich material that gives warmth, water and wind resistance. They are available in different weights and degrees of stretch and warmth. My choice is the soft shell race jacket and pants. As well as warmth, it has a high degree of water resistance and gives protection for most conditions. It is so versatile, being just as happy on shore or even on the slopes.

For a more conventional mid-layer I recommend the convert range. A lightweight, highly breathable rip-stop fabric with a Thermore® synthetic fill insulation that compresses easily and insulates when wet. I recently spoke to someone who had just returned from an Atlantic crossing who said she did not take it off for 20 days. “It was like wearing a sleeping bag”.

Outer Layer Options
The Outer Layer is for real protection against the elements and must be completely water and windproof. In order to work most efficiently, the fabric should be breathable to let the moist air escape from inside the garment.

There are three suitable options in the Gill range to suit all budgets. The main difference between the garment options is the height of the collar and the durability of the materials. There are two types of material available: 2-layer and 3-layer.

The 2-layer option is generally lighter and because the coating is unprotected, requires a lining in the garment. It is also less expensive and slightly less durable.

The 3-layer fabrics are a sandwich with the waterproof membrane in the middle. The outer layer gives the texture and the abrasion and snag resistance, whereas the inner is a scrim and this protects the coating from wear and tear. Gill 3-layer garments are the most durable and do not need a lining, but are also more expensive. This is due not only to the fabric cost (more than 50% higher) but also to the taping costs, both in materials and labour.

Outer Layer Garment Options
OS 2 Offshore Range
Our most suitable 2-layer option is the OS 2 Offshore / Coastal Jacket and Trousers. It is mid-weight, packed with features, has a collar that ends just at the top of the ears and is the most suitable suit for a wide range of conditions. If most of your sailing is coastal cruising with the occasional offshore passage and a very occasional ARC crossing, then Key West will do the job. It is reasonably priced, comes in unisex
and women’s specific sizing and the women’s trousers have a very useful drop seat.

**Atlantic**
As its name implies, the Atlantic is ideal if you do a fair amount of offshore sailing and the occasional race. It is made using a 3-layer, 5-dot, ocean grade fabric and it is heavier and more durable with a much higher collar.

**Ocean Racer**
If budget is less of an issue there is the Ocean Racer jacket, developed with the crew of Volvo Ocean Race winner illbruck, combining the features of the Atlantic suit with many innovative design systems that reduce weight and improve the garment breathability, but without sacrificing performance. It performs like an Ocean Jacket but feels more like a Coastal Jacket.

**Hands and Feet**
Wearing shoes and gloves when moving about on deck is essential to avoid injury. You could potentially be 2 weeks from outside assistance. As the weather is likely to be predominantly warm, shoes rather than boots are the best option. Gill’s new boat shoe, called the “Decktech”, has been tested independently in wet and dry conditions on varnished wood and glass fibre decking, and proved to have outstanding grip. Ideal on a rolling wet deck.

Gloves are also important, not just to protect from rope burn but also from getting fingers caught or trapped. There are many options but I would strongly recommend long finger gloves. The Gill Pro-Glove is probably the toughest on the market using a material known as Proton Ultra as opposed to the thinner Amara.

**What to Pack**
Weight and space are often a limitation on board so careful planning of your wardrobe is essential. The following table lists what I consider to be the best options from the Gill range. I have split it into different temperature conditions and different layers. I have also included the dry weight of the product as a guide. Whichever brand of clothing you end up packing, it is definitely worth checking out the layering and temperature guide as it makes good sense. For further information visit www.gillmarine.com

### GILL - WHAT TO WEAR FOR SAILING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Layer</th>
<th>Very Warm</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Cool</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Temperature Range</strong></td>
<td>&gt; 22 Degrees C Plus</td>
<td>15 - 22 Degrees C</td>
<td>&lt; 15 Degrees C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base Layer</td>
<td>Range Description</td>
<td>Range Description</td>
<td>Range Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tech App</td>
<td>Quick Drying UV Technical shirts in long and short sleeve for men and women</td>
<td>i2 Tec</td>
<td>As very warm plus Base layer</td>
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<tr>
<td>i2</td>
<td>Base layer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Shorts and Trousers</td>
<td>Range Description</td>
<td>Range Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>C005</td>
<td>Men’s Escape quick dry shorts</td>
<td>i2 Tec</td>
<td>As very warm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C006</td>
<td>Men’s Quick dry long / short trousers</td>
<td>Base layer</td>
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<tr>
<td>1642</td>
<td>Technical sailing shorts</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid Layer</td>
<td>Range Description</td>
<td>Range Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>i2</td>
<td>Microfleece tops and bottoms</td>
<td>i2 Tec</td>
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<td>i4</td>
<td>Mid-weight fleece tops &amp; salopettes</td>
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<td>i5</td>
<td>Crosswind Softshell jacket</td>
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<td>i8</td>
<td>Crosswind Mid Layer Jacket</td>
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<td>i10</td>
<td>Crosswind Performance Mid-layer Softshell jacket</td>
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<td>Range Description</td>
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<td>C019</td>
<td>Technical Apparel Range: Mid-layer jacket and waist pants</td>
<td>i24</td>
<td>Atlantic jacket &amp; trousers</td>
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<td>C018</td>
<td>Technical Apparel Range: Mid-layer jacket and waist pants</td>
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<td>Atlantic jacket &amp; trousers</td>
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<td>Feet</td>
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<tr>
<td>960</td>
<td>Gripper shoe</td>
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<td>Gripper shoe</td>
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<tr>
<td>900</td>
<td>Tall Yachting boot</td>
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<tr>
<td>Head</td>
<td>Range Description</td>
<td>Range Description</td>
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<td>138</td>
<td>Gill Polarised floating sunglasses</td>
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<td>Gill Polarised floating sunglasses</td>
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<tr>
<td>HT1</td>
<td>Peaked sailing cap</td>
<td>HT1</td>
<td>Peaked sailing cap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HT2</td>
<td>Gill Polarised floating Sunglasses</td>
<td>HT3</td>
<td>Gill Polarised floating sunglasses</td>
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* Temperatures are approximate only.
* The temperature range is a guide and will depend on the wind and/or wave state. Wind strength in particular will affect the type of clothing needed.

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**Suggested Atlantic Kit Bag**
Technical products that completely avoid cotton. Shirts can double up as a thermal base layer under waterproof clothing - perform the same function.

**Technical Apparel Range**
Ideal base layer for warm weather sailing offering UV protection. Available in women’s styles and colours.

**Quick dry UV shirts:**
- Sonar Long Sleeve Polo_C003: £35.00
- Reverb long sleeve Tee_C002: £30.00
- Equinox Short Sleeve Tee_C001: £25.00

**Technical Apparel quick dry shorts:**
- Escape Shorts_C005: £40.00
- Technical Sailing Shorts with pad_1642: £42.50
- i2 Lite Base Layer boxers: £15.00
- i2 Tec Tee Base layer: £35.00

**Mid Layer**
- Convert Jacket: £75.00
- Convert Salopettes, or: £80.00
- Crosswind Mid Layer Jacket: £100.00
- Crosswind Mid Layer Salopettes: £100.00

**Outer layer**
- Atlantic Jacket_OS4J: £255.00
- Atlantic Trouser_OS4T: £180.00

**Footwear**
- Decktech Shoe_965: £65.00

**Accessories**
- Long finger Pro glove_7450: £25.00
- Technical quick dry sailing cap_136: £15.00
- Polarisated racing and floatable sunglasses with retaining strap_9472: £35.00
- Large 70 Litre Cargo Bag_L002: £47.50
- Wash Bag_L011: £15.00

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