

Hello BBS Alums!

The Alumni Highlight is a monthly newsletter that aims to highlight the philanthropic, academic, entrepreneurial and professional achievements made by our thriving BBS Alumni community.

Hamid Qabazard graduated from BBS in 2000 and went on to complete an undergraduate degree in Architecture at the University of Louisiana, Lafayette. He has established an entrepreneurial venture, in pilot gig rowing. We had an in depth discussion with Hamid Qabazard and here's how it went:



What is Pilot Gig rowing?

It's an increasingly popular sport that has its origins in Cornwall, UK. Pilot gigs were rowing boats that met incoming merchant ships entering into harbors to "pilot" them safely to their berth past dangerous rocks and sand bars. History has it that gigs used to be paid according to a "first come first served" basis, and the custom of racing these vessels came from this practice. Today pilot gigs are popular throughout UK and are becoming increasingly common throughout Europe and now in Kuwait.

The Kuwait Pilot Gig is an original replica of the Cornish pilot gig rowing boat. Proudly built here in Kuwait by Qabazard Marine LLC in 2010 and introduced in 2016, this beautiful and seaworthy vessel is at the heart of our sport and key to its popularity by being stable for beginners yet responsive and fast when raced.

What's so special about Gig rowing?

There is certain serenity when rowing with a group that is very rare to find in any other activity. Once the rows align their rowing together, it brings a feeling of peace with the group as thou they are one entity perusing a purpose of unity, in the ocean. Our participants tell us, they feel disconnected from all their everyday responsibilities and worries.



Why did you choose to invest in such a sport?

I wanted to bring back a part of Kuwait's history that is slowly slipping through our fingers, with every coming generation. People don't know how amazing this country was. Our history began at sea, when Kuwaitis use to sail and dive in search for pearls. It is our duty to carry our history with us when we are designing a better future for our children.

It's also a great course for team development for organizations and companies because the pilot directs the rowers away from the waves and the rowers move the boat for a smoother sail. In other words **managers** can't run a company without employees and employees require guidance in order to move the company forward.

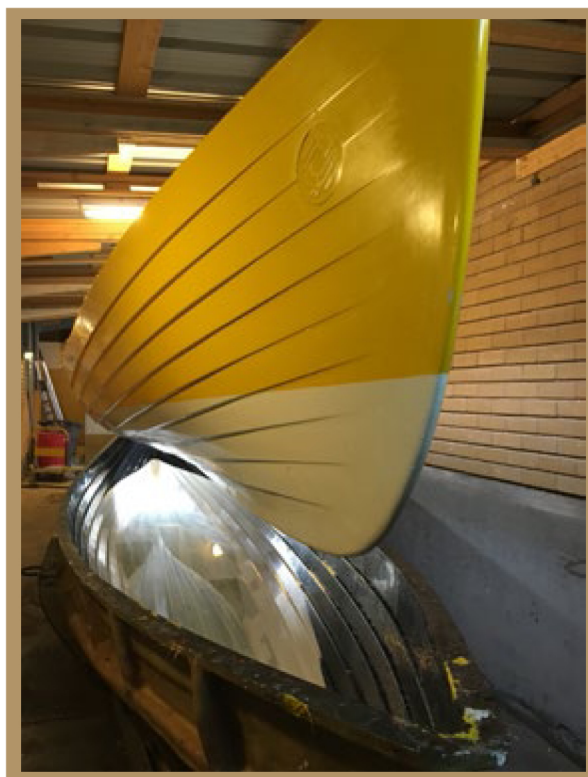
What is the process of the program?

Before taking the participants out to sea, we give them a lecture about skill development and then brief about the sport. The lectures are given by internationally certified coaches, who then take the participants for their first run into the sea. It is a six session course where we focus on each member and give them pointers on how they can improve their skills during and after a sail.

The boat consists of six rowers, one coxswain (Pilot) and two extra passengers. We offer three main packages: social rowing, professional and coxswain.






Who can join you the program?

Anyone who is physically capable can join the program. There are people between the ages of 15 and 80 that practice this sport.



To get in touch with Hamid and find out more about Qabazard Marine LLC, check out the following Instagram account: @q8_pilot_gig, or contact him on giggrowingkuwait@gmail.com or +965 99031123

We're on social media, tag along!

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