

DEEP SEA FISHING LIFE

SKIPPER AMBITIONS

writer **SARA CARBERY**

photographer **KATE MacPHERSON**

What BAILEY PUATA loves most about being a Sealord fisherman is working hard as part of a team in all weathers at sea.

At 18, Bailey is one of the younger fishermen catching a range of species off the South Island coast.

He lives in Nelson and is on a six-weeks on, six-weeks off roster, which he likes as it gives him plenty of downtime to kick-back and chill out.

"This last break I went down to Christchurch for a couple of weeks and went snowboarding. I also like to go fishing or diving with my dad when I'm home," says Bailey.

Life on the boats is hard work but there are plenty of rewards.

"We went out off the West Coast the last time we went out. My job is to shoot the gear (nets) over the back and that will be down for about six hours or so.

"We then go out again and haul it all up on board. It gets tipped down into the factory and we then go down there and help out with the packing, filleting [and] driving the machine."

Fishing offshore in all weathers is a test for any fisherman but Bailey particularly enjoys the rare times when it is rough due to high swells.

"Yeah I like it when it is rough because it adds a bit of excitement to it. It makes you be a lot more aware and just adds another dimension to it."

Bailey has ambitions to become a qualified Skipper and have his own boat, so gaining qualifications is an important aspect of this journey.

"Last trip off, I got my Deck Hand ticket and I just finished my Working at Height course. I have also got my forklift license and am going to get my crane license soon.

"Hopefully I will get to Bosun or 2nd Mate in the next few years but in the end I want to be a Skipper."

Bailey went to Nelson College and left midway through Year 12 to join the fishing fleets.

His focus had been on his three core subjects of PE, Rugby Academy and Building.

The idea of going to sea for a career set in when he was 16, and he knew he "wanted to give it a crack".

His advice to school leavers who want to get into deep sea fishing is to try and get into the highly regarded Westport Deep Sea Fishing School and then, after the course, get onto a boat.

“ THE KEY THING IS TO HAVE THE RIGHT ATTITUDE. YOU’VE GOT TO HAVE A WORK ETHIC THAT IS DEFINITELY IMPORTANT, AND BE FRIENDLY AND WORK TOGETHER WITHIN A TEAM. ”

BAILEY PUATA



"But the key thing is to have the right attitude. You've got to have a good work ethic that is definitely important, and be friendly and work together within a team."

Bailey says future job prospects look good for

school leavers as reliable, friendly crew members are always needed.



KEY FACTS



- **BAILEY PUATA** WORKS AS A **FISHERMAN** WITH **SEALORD GROUP LTD** AT THEIR NELSON BASE.
- HE WORKS A **SIX-WEEKS ON, SIX-WEEKS OFF ROSTER** CATCHING A RANGE OF SPECIES OFF THE **SOUTH ISLAND COAST**, WHICH HE PARTICULARLY ENJOYS.
- **BAILEY** HAS BEEN **GAINING QUALIFICATIONS** IN HIS ROLE AND HAS AN **AMBITION TO QUALIFY AS A SKIPPER** AND HAVE HIS OWN BOAT.



For more information on a career in the fishing industry with Sealord, visit www.sealord.com/nz/careers