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Name

Tracy Edwards MBE

Topics and Title

Yachtswoman, Team-Building & Motivational Speaker

Background History

Tracy Edwards won international fame in 1989 as the first skipper of an all female crew to sail around the world. The boat won two legs and came second

overall in her class.

In 1990 Tracy was awarded Sportswoman of the Year and an MBE. She was the first woman to achieve acceptance by the British yachting community and paved the way for other women to follow.

Tracy wrote the story of her record-breaking Whitbread voyage, and the book *Maiden* was published in 1994 and remained at number one in the book chart for 19 weeks.

Tracy Edwards came into sailing by an unconventional route. Her father died when she was young and her mother travelled the world as a ballet dancer. She was expelled from school at 15 and began sailing as an on-board cook. Tracy overcame chronic sea-sickness to become a professional Sailor in 1980 and embarked on her first Whitbread Round The World Race 1985-86 as a crewmember on "Atlantic Privateer" which came 1st on the Cape Town - Auckland leg.

Areas of Expertise

Following her success with *Maiden*, Tracy set to consolidate her position as one of the world's top sailors by entering Trophy Jules Verne in 1998 again with an all female crew.

This yachting trophy is for the fastest circumnavigation around the world with no stopping and no outside assistance. She was well on course for the record for more than half of their route, but was thwarted by treacherous seas off coast of Chile and her mast snapped in two. During the attempt Tracy and her team broke 7 world records.

Tracy retired from round-the-world sailing two years later when pregnant with daughter MacKenna, and published her second book "Living Every Second". She then decided to turn her attention to organising round the world sailing events, and

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In 2003 she set up Quest and signed a £6million sponsorship deal with the Crown Prince of Qatar to create two round-the-world races and a marina complex. HSBC sponsored the first event to the tune of £3million. The Oryx Quest 2005 was a huge success and created \$46m worth of press coverage for the gulf state. However, Qatar refused to pay Tracy the £8million she had borrowed to facilitate the event and pay the teams to enter. Qatar also refused to pay the \$1million prize money. Quest consequently went into receivership and Tracy was forced into bankruptcy in September 2005.

Having been discharged in September 2006, Tracy is now rebuilding her life, consulting for companies doing business in the Middle East, doing motivational and teambuilding presentations and pursuing legal action against Qatar. She won her first case in Qatar in 2006.

She regularly gives her time for charity work and is Patron of The Ahoy Centre, Ambassador to the NSPCC working with CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) and Ambassador of One Parent Families. Tracy also supports The Lady Taverners and The Prince's Trust.

Tracy is a unique speaker having experienced not only the upsides of winning but also the devastation of taking a calculated risk that resulted in financial ruin. She speaks eloquently and is disarmingly open about success and failure. The biggest lessons in life are learnt when things go wrong and Tracy's story of battling against the odds to survive is poignant and truly revealing.

Possibly the most extraordinary and horrifying part of 2005 for Tracy and her family were the 28 days that Tracy was held against her will in Qatar whilst the authorities tried to force her to sign a waiver exonerating them from the sponsorship. Tracy refused to sign, exhibiting the strength of character, fearlessness and tenacity that have characterised her sailing projects. Her refusal to sign and her fighting spirit ensured that legal action against Qatar could commence in the hope that she, her team and event suppliers can one day be compensated.

There are many lessons to be learned from Tracy's experiences of massive successes and devastating failure. In addition, Tracy has lost none of the sparkle and humour that audiences warm to and make her one of the most inspirational speakers of today.

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Client Comments:

Tracy went down a storm - she was excellent and I have received nothing but positive feedback. The balance between humour and the serious messages was spot on and was very relevant and pertinent to our conference purpose/objectives.

Would highly recommend Tracy to other corporate entities looking for an inspirational & motivational speaker

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