



Tracy Edwards Log Book

23rd March 1990

We are still beating our brains out and not managing the course most of the time. We are moving so slowly as well – I feel like SCREAMING!!! I bet L'Esprit is racing gaily along at 8 knots. When will this wind swing?

An uneventful day. We should have come up into the wind as much as possible today, as tonight we couldn't get round the oilfield. We got to the oilfields at dusk and spent the night tacking through the restricted area. I wanted to tack when the wind was right but listened to someone who thought we should wait until we got closer. It was the wrong thing to do and I should have had the confidence to stick to what I thought.

The buck stops with me though so what happened next is my fault. When the wind came round to 070 we tacked out and, instead of tacking back and forth as we should have done, I decided to keep going as the wind was swinging in the right direction. AS I'd only slept for four hours in the past 24, I decided to go to bed at midnight after we had dodged the last ship and oil rig. We were doing 090 – the course was 070.

When I got up at 0400 I thought the world was coming to an end.

The boat was shaking itself to pieces and the main was flogging badly. WE had a squall with 50 knots of wind. Not a great way to start the day. All three watches were on deck along with Angela who had swapped with Jo for the day. They were trying to get the reef in. We managed to get the No. 1 down and changed it for the No. 3 bareheaded.

The wind and the rain were incredible; it really hurt your face and the sea looked like it was boiling under the furious black sky which seemed low enough to reach up and touch. I plotted the course and checked we had been steering 090: the plot showed we had been doing 110. We had been going east whilst I was asleep. Needless to say at that precise moment the wind swung round and we started doing a very nice 080 so we didn't tack.