



Tracy Edwards Log Book

31st March 1990

It is difficult to describe the utter feeling of despair and desolation I feel when I work out the positions after the chat show. When the figure comes up on the calculator to indicate how many miles ahead L'Esprit and Rucanor are, my heart drops into my stomach. It is really a physical thing like a blow in the guts – or that sinking feeling you get when someone you are crazy about leaves you. The pain, the breathless emptiness.

To say that I have let everyone would be the understatement of the century. There is this to be said about single-handed sailing, I suppose; you don't have anyone to answer to, you don't have to watch the looks of hope on 11 faces as you come up on deck to read the positions, only to see them turn to misery. Even worse are the forced smiles and sympathy for the Navigator. 'How can she get us so far behind' they think, but they say "Never mind there is a long way to go!"

They are great my crew, they help me so much to feel positive. It's difficult. I feel about as positive as a cat in a dogs home at feeding time. Dawn and Michele are terrific; they never stop pushing the boat. The girls won't give up. I know why I am not a single-handed sailor!

The last few days have been a bit of a blur of hot with little or no breeze and loads of current close into the Brazilian Coast. That helped us to get around the point. We have been in sight of Schlüssel for three days now. Close battle. They asked us on the VHF if we knew how they and us could beat L'Esprit and Rucanor. Nancy suggested Exocet Missiles!

Everyone is now brown and lean; freeze dried food – always a good way to lose weight. No-one is peeling yet – except me as usual. I have swapped the Watches over so that the girls each get a turn at sleeping six hours at night. It's better than rolling around in your won seat in the daytime.

The talk on this leg is not of men (well not much) but of food; Big Macs, Kentucky Fried Chicken, American Salad Bars, Chuck's Steakhouse (the sailor's favourite haunt in Ft Lauderdale), BBQ's. Junk food rules! Everyone is so looking forward to Ft Lauderdale; the last stop then let's go for it.

There is a lot of talk as well about 'what am I going to do at the end of the Race?' It's like leaving home all over again. Everyone, to tell the truth, is a bit lost. I am sure something will turn up for all of us.



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The girls are taking turns at washing up in the evenings now, as Jo looks like she has just spent six hours in a Sauna by the time she has done dinner. She in turn does that watch for whomever it is. I have to put the fan on the instruments instead of me to stop them melting -I am melting instead!

Evenings though are lovely and cool, with clear starry skies. We saw loads of dolphins today - the normal grey ones at last. They are so lovely, playing with the boat, full of joy and exuberance with life and we are sure of course that they are laughing as they play.

