



MDL MARINAS

**News Release**  
**For Immediate Release**  
**10 September 2023**

**Fourteen strong fleet sets sail from MDL's Ocean Village Marina to start the retro Ocean Globe Race**

Fourteen yachts and their intrepid international crews set sail from MDL's Ocean Village Marina today to tackle the Ocean Globe Race, a 27,000-mile circumnavigation to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Whitbread Round the World Race.

Following months of preparations and mounting excitement, the yachts cast off their lines to the cheers of the crowd lining the edge of the marina in the heart of the city of Southampton, before making their way up Southampton Water to the start of the retro edition of the iconic race.

At 1pm, veteran sailor and fellow circumnavigator Sir Chay Blyth started the competing boats from the Royal Yacht Squadron line in the Solent, just in front of the historic yacht club on the Isle of Wight.

Onboard vessels of all sizes, including Britain's largest working steamship, Shieldhall, throngs of well-wishers accompanied the fleet along the western reaches of the Solent towards the Needles before sounding a final 'bon voyage' as the crews headed towards the horizon on their epic ocean-going adventure.

"What an amazing sight to witness 14 teams recreating history, stepping back in time and setting off around the world on a grand adventure in the spirit of the original 1973 Whitbread," says Don McIntyre, Ocean Globe Race Founder and Sponsor.

"This McIntyre Ocean Globe is a dream come true for all the sailors involved. The past two weeks at MDL's Ocean Village has been a fitting tribute and fun time to celebrate MDL's own 50th anniversary, so thanks for the memories and support bringing the OGR back to the UK and see you in about eight months."

The competitors have no GPS, no high-tech equipment, and no computers onboard. The crews will navigate using only a sextant, charts and the stars, as the competitors did in the early Whitbread races.



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Six of the boats competing have taken part in one or more of the past Whitbread races, the most notable being Tracy Edwards' Farr 58 *Maiden*. In 1990, Tracy triumphantly brought home the first ever all-female Whitbread crew onboard *Maiden* to Ocean Village Marina.

In this edition, *Maiden* again set sail with an all-female crew, but with new purpose – to highlight the work of The Maiden Factor Foundation, a charity started by Tracy to support communities to enable girls into education, helping them to reach their full potential and create better futures for all.

Tim Mayer, MDL's Sales and Marketing Director, comments: "We have been delighted to host the Ocean Globe Race crews and the Race Village here at our Ocean Village Marina in Southampton. We wish them all the best of luck with this challenge of a lifetime and look forward to welcoming each and every one of them back to Ocean Village in April, where the winner will be crowned during our South Coast and Green Tech Boat Show."

The finish of the Ocean Globe Race will be at Ocean Village Marina, with the prize giving held during MDL's South Coast and Green Tech Boat Show, 19 -21 April 2024.

The crews are expected to finish between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

For more information on the Ocean Globe Race visit <https://www.mdlinarinas.co.uk/ogr23/>

For more information on MDL and its marinas visit [www.mdlinarinas.co.uk](http://www.mdlinarinas.co.uk)

**Ends**

### **Notes for editors:**

#### **MDL Marinas Group Ltd**

- MDL Marinas Group is the UK's leading marina and water-based leisure provider and one of Europe's largest marina groups, offering members over 160 destinations to cruise to in the UK, France and Spain. Currently MDL Marinas manages 18 UK marinas and one in Spain.
- Bringing ocean racing back to Southampton, MDL is hosting the Ocean Globe Race at its Ocean Village Marina in the heart of the city – as it did previously for so many editions of the Whitbread Round the World Race.
- MDL Marinas is celebrating its 50th Anniversary this year, with Ocean Village Marina added to its portfolio in 1989 - one year before Tracy Edwards triumphantly brought home the all-female Whitebread Race crew of *Maiden* to Ocean Village Marina.
- MDL Marinas Group is proud to be landlords to over 500 marine businesses, with over 260 staff delivering the unique MDL experience to all berth holders, visitors and commercial partners.



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- For more information visit [www.mdlmarinas.co.uk](http://www.mdlmarinas.co.uk)

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