

News Release
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Highlights from the 2024 South Coast & Green Tech Boat Show: Standout debuts, sustainable innovation, and an iconic homecoming

The South Coast & Green Tech Boat Show, one of the largest regional boat shows in the UK, concluded its highly successful three-day event last weekend (Sunday, April 21) at MDL's Ocean Village Marina in Southampton. The Lord Mayor and Sheriff of Southampton, Cllr Valerie Laurent, officially opened the show while underscoring its importance to the businesses it attracts.

With the increasing footfall and popularity of the show, Tim Mayer, Sales and Marketing Director of MDL, comments: "The best bit of the show for me is speaking to businesses that have been coming from the start and have seen their businesses grow over the years."

The show attracted around 4,000 visitors across the three days. It featured an impressive line-up of global power, sail, and electric boating brands alongside an extensive range of marine products, including electronics, covers, upholstery and bedding.

With more than 100 boats and over 70 exhibitors, attendees also had the opportunity to view vessels that had never been seen in the UK before, including the world debut of the Hardy 50DS and the Virtue V10 Top.

All registered visitors to the show were automatically entered into a free prize draw for Raymarine equipment worth nearly £3,000, thanks to their role as headline sponsors. Richard Marsden, Raymarine UK Sales Manager, comments: "We were thrilled to return as headline sponsor of the South Coast & Green Tech Boat Show 2024 - it has been getting better and better each year. The success of the show is a testament to the enduring passion for boating in our vibrant community, and it was nice to catch up with so many of our customers."

The Green Tech Boat Show was incorporated into the main event last year and returned this year after initially moving from Plymouth. It showcases the growing mainstream conversation surrounding sustainable boating practices. According to Mayer: "Around 30% of the show is now green marine technologies."

A dedicated area, The Innovation Hub, was sponsored by ePropulsion and featured innovative marine technology businesses and organisations displaying products aimed at driving the industry forward on a greener, more sustainable path.

The hub's schedule included discussions and presentations from various companies on a broad range of topics, such as recycling boat equipment, electric boating, carbon emissions, sustainable anchoring, and eco-conscious cleaning practices. To highlight those making a special effort towards environmentally sustainable practices, products, and services, MDL's Green Innovator Award also returned for 2024, with PSA PrimeMarine winning the award.

Steve Bruce, Managing Director of the innovation hub sponsor ePropulsion, says: “At the South Coast & Green Tech Boat Show this year, it was clear that the demand for innovative, sustainable marine technology continues to grow. It was a pleasure to meet so many existing customers and receive so many new enquires. Thanks to MDL’s excellent organisation, and our sponsorship of the media centre and innovation hub, the event offered us a perfect platform to showcase our advancements in the electric outboard sector.”

Referring to specific products, he comments: “Our new 500w eLite motor has been exceptionally well received, and we’ve seen significant interest in our more powerful X-Series and 1-Series systems.”

Aside from a significant focus on sustainability, an especially noteworthy highlight of the show was the special welcome home parade and celebration for the iconic sailing yacht *Maiden* on Saturday, April 20, following her around-the-world voyage. Ocean Village offered the perfect vantage point to view the yacht’s arrival.

The official welcome for the all-female crew was to celebrate the completion of the final 27,000-mile world race, which departed Southampton last September. The race also concluded *Maiden’s* six-year campaign promoting equality for the next generation, raising awareness and funds for girls’ education worldwide.

“It was an honour hosting this historic moment of *Maiden’s* welcome home parade to celebrate their incredible achievements; there was such a spirit of camaraderie and passion throughout the days that also reflects our entire boating community,” says Mayer.

On Monday, April 22, it was officially confirmed that *Maiden* secured first place in the Ocean Globe Race, becoming the first all-female crew to win a round-the-world yacht race. The *Maiden* crew also achieved several ground-breaking milestones, including the first female British skipper to win a round-the-world race, the first fully crewed British boat to win the round-the-world race, the first black women to race around the world and the first Afghan woman to race in a round-the-world-race.

Adding to an already incredible feat, the 27,000 nautical miles of racing relied solely on the intrepid female crew using traditional navigation methods – a sextant, charts and celestial navigation.

“MDL gave the entire fleet such a great send-off,” says Tracy Edwards MBE, skipper of the first all-female crew in 1989. “Tim Mayer, Lauren McCann and the whole team went the extra mile for *Maiden* at the end of our World Tour and were so supportive to us during our Parade of Sail and celebrations! A huge thank you from us all,” Edwards continues.

The ‘Parade of Sail’ flotilla with *Maiden* crossed the Solent from Cowes on the Isle of Wight and into Ocean Village on Saturday, where the guest of honour and its 1989/90 Whitbread Round the World Race “Godmother” - Sarah Ferguson, Duchess of York - awaited. An enthusiastic and long-standing supporter who named the yacht at its 1988 launch.

The Duchess was also joined by more royal visitors within the welcoming parade, including the daughter of the late King Hussein of Jordan, Princess Haya bint Hussein. Media outlets, BBC South and the Daily Echo attended to cover the exhilarating homecoming.

The South Coast & Green Tech Boat Show will return to MDL's Ocean Village Marina in 2025. For more information about next year's show, keep an eye on www.mdlboatshow.co.uk

To exhibit at the 2025 show, contact: t.mayer@mdlmarinas.co.uk

ENDS

Notes for editors:

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