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Headline News

EDS Says....

Let's Do It Again!

Four-year race programme envisioned.



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30 Aug 2001 13:22 GMT The inaugural *EDS Atlantic Challenge* so exceeded expectations that the company confirmed here that it has already begun plans for the next race.

"The experience has been great, the results have been outstanding," enthused Gordon Moultrie, vice president of EMEA, the foreign arm of EDS. So outstanding that EDS has made a four-year commitment to sponsor the next *EDS Atlantic Challenge* in 2005.

The race was such a success for the company that Moultrie said waiting four years for the next one simply made no sense.

"That is too far away for us," Moultrie said.

The skippers agree and consider 2005 too far away as well. But there are many constraints around the timing, including a very tight Open 60 calendar.

According to Sir Chay Blyth, founder of the Challenge Business, a time slot in roughly the same time frame as this first race is an excellent target. It allows the skippers ample time to prepare for the race. The race and timeframe have been sanctioned by IMOCA, the Open 60 governing body.

"We are working on ways to keep the voyage in the skipper's minds," Blyth said.

Moultrie concurred, "What we are doing is working with Sir Chay on a plan which will have what we think are quite interesting facets, starting as early as we can next year, and running through the intervening period up to the next *EDS Atlantic Challenge*. It is our intention to have at least one or two major platforms before we get to the next race."

Moultrie stressed that the main idea is to be involved with the people who sail the boats. "They are absolutely our kind of people and we are going forward with a quite significant commitment to the next four years."

Although he said EDS does not intend to fund individual campaigns, the company is looking at working with individuals for specific events. "The core is the association with the Open 60s and the people who sail the Open 60s," he affirmed.

The Challenge Business will remain the Race Organizers while EDS will maintain the business and public relations side. "We found a platform that works and an organization we can work with," Moultrie affirmed, and said, "The huge amount of energy and commitment," is what will make the integrated teams work.

Sir Chay said the race route might change, but both he and Moultrie agreed that St Malo is the home of the *EDS Atlantic Challenge*.

But next time there might be a waypoint on the westbound Atlantic leg, Sir Chay conceded. "In hindsight, Mike

Golding was correct, and it would have been fairer to put a waypoint off the Azores.”

He added, “We have a blank sheet of paper. We have a lot to learn, but it’s a first and we will grow it.”

(If you want to be kept up to date on future races and developments click the JOIN button on the left

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