



DAME ELLEN PATRICIA MACARTHUR



Born: 8th July 1976, Whatsandwell near Matlock, Derbyshire.

Dame Ellen Patricia MacArthur DBE is a retired English sailor. On 7 February 2005, she broke the world record for being the fastest person to sail around the world. Ellen now heads up a charity called the Ellen MacArthur Foundation.

HER LIFE STORY SO FAR

As a small girl, Ellen loved the adventures told in *Swallows and Amazons*. When she was eight, her aunt invited her to sail with her on the East Coast. This was an exciting experience that turned into an obsession. She read sailing books at the local library and saved all her pocket money to buy her first boat – an 8ft dinghy. When she left school, Ellen worked at a sailing school in Hull.

Aged 17, Ellen bought a sailing yacht and named it *Iduna*. At 18, Ellen made a historic solo trip around the British Isles in *Iduna*.

Ellen lived in France for a while in her early twenties and fitted out another yacht herself. In 1998, aged 22, she was named 'Yachtsman of the Year' in the UK and 'Sailing's Young Hope' in France.

In 2001, Ellen came second in a very tough sailing challenge called the solo Vendée Globe race. This was a race around the world. She was the youngest person ever to finish it and set a new female world record in solo yachting. Before the trip, Ellen taught herself to sew on a piece of pigskin. This was because she knew of a sailor who had bitten off his tongue when his boat was struck during a solo race; she wanted to be able to sew her own tongue back on if the same happened to her.

The Queen honoured Ellen's success by appointing her a Member of the British Empire (MBE) for services to sport. On 7th February 2005 she broke the solo record for sailing non-stop round the world. It took her just 71 days. This was a tremendous achievement. She was greeted back in England by a crowd of thousands cheering her when she and her boat, the *B&Q*, arrived safely.



The next day, on 8th February 2005, it was announced that the Queen had made Ellen a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire (DBE). Aged 28, she is the youngest person ever to receive this honour.

WHAT IS SHE DOING NOW?

In October 2009, aged 33, Ellen MacArthur announced that she was retiring from sailing to concentrate on examining ways in which energy can be used and saved.

In 2010 she launched the Ellen MacArthur Foundation. This is a charity that aims to inspire young people to think carefully about energy usage. By doing so, Ellen MacArthur hopes that we will have a more positive and happy future.

FIND OUT MORE

Watch Dame Ellen MacArthur speak





EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Where was Ellen Macarthur born?
 2. Tell me something about Ellen Macarthur's childhood.
 3. What was the name of the race that Ellen took part in in 2001, coming second?
 4. How many days did it take Ellen to sail solo, non-stop, around the world?
 5. Tell me what Ellen Macarthur is doing now that she has retired from competitive sailing.
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