

Nikki Welsby's success in motorsport

Nikki has always had a love of cars, but only thought about getting on track after being invited to a corporate driving day at Bedford Autodrome.

Following that, she looked for any opportunity to get out on track again and that's when she was handed a leaflet at the *Autosport Show* early in 2004 about an all-female motor racing competition – **Formula Woman**.



After being short-listed from thousands of entrants, **Formula Woman** became Nikki's ultimate focus throughout 2005 and 2006.

Nikki said:

"The Formula Woman competition was an excellent experience and I met so many amazing and inspiring people.

There are clearly thousands of women who have a passion for cars and really want to get into motorsport, or simply become better drivers on the road. Until Formula Woman there was nothing available.

This is an excellent concept and prepares women for all areas of motorsport, not just the driving."

There was much preparation required to be in with a chance of competing in Formula Woman:

- **Numerous track days**, with coaching from professional racing instructors
- **Competing in endurance kart races** to build stamina and improve race craft
- Understanding and developing the skills required to **drive a racing car on the limit**
- **Generation of media coverage (over £100,000)** including TV and radio interviews, coverage in regional glossy magazines, local newspapers and nationals like *The Independent*.
- Securing and working with **sponsors, investors and partners**
- **Building a high level of fitness**, stamina and concentration through dedicated work with a personal trainer
- And a large dose of grit, **determination and enthusiasm!**



Nikki's preparation stood her in good stead for the **Eliminations Camp** where the final 100 women were taken to a secret location for three days to fight it out.



This consisted of car skills - such as braking and race starts - kart races, fitness competitions and a speech in front of race commentator, Brian Jones, about what it would mean to be one of the final 16 women chosen to race in the series.

On the last day, the remaining 25 women competed in timed laps around Bruntingthorpe circuit to determine the final cut.

As a result of the qualifying laps, Nikki was selected to become one of the 16 chosen to race in the Formula Woman race series.



Nikki's skills and determination shone through and after eight hard fought races throughout the UK, she clinched the outright championship at the very final race to become the **2006 Formula Woman Champion**.

She commented:

"It was a real challenge, excellent fun and totally exhilarating. And winning was the icing on the cake!"

As the reigning Formula Woman champion, Nikki went on to promote **women in motorsport** by appearing at the *MPH '06 Show* as well as being interviewed on stage at the *Autosport International Show* in 2007.



She was booked to provide passenger laps at an NSPCC charity day at Castle Combe circuit and was guest speaker at an Executive Woman's event in London later that year. Nikki was also nominated for **BBC Midlands Sports Personality**.

Nikki has since raced in the Renault Clio Cup championship and Mighty Minis, as well as being selected to drive the Ferrari 599 safety car at Ferrari's official 50th anniversary celebrations at Silverstone.



Thanks go to Nikki's sponsors:

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Testimonial

Main sponsor of Nikki Welsby, **Lloyds TSB CarSelect**, issued this statement following her championship win:

I am delighted to announce that Nikki Welsby was yesterday crowned winner of the 2006 Formula Woman Championship.

In the last race of the championship, held over the weekend at Snetterton, Nikki put in a sterling performance finishing in second place. This meant that her overall championship score of 126 put her into first position, ahead of Vicky Lloyd on 112 points.

Nikki commented: "It was a tough weekend and I knew I had to remain incredibly focused and determined in order to secure two podium positions and finish well in the Championship. When I realised I'd won the Championship, I was absolutely over the moon. I've worked incredibly hard for the past 2 ½ years to achieve this and it really is superb news to be crowned the overall winner. I'm thrilled that my main sponsor, *Lloyds TSB CarSelect*, was able to support me throughout the Championship and attend the final race weekend to share in the glory."

Needless to say, this is a tremendous result for Nikki as well as for ourselves. Please join me in congratulating Nikki on her well-deserved win.

Mark Ellis
Manager

