

Introducing **NZeC** Consultancy
part of **NZeCommerce** Group

2003 Trevor Sharman – World's Fastest Accountant!



Saturday 18 Oct British Airways flight BA 001, Concorde Supersonic 1st Class to New York, JFK

Shortly after sunset we taxied out from the gate and left the superbly stocked Concorde Room, an exclusive annex at the far end of BA's 1st Class Lounge at LHR Terminal 4, and took off to the west. This was the last ever Saturday service out to New York and it was like being a passenger in a fighter jet as we were pushed back in our seats, shot down the runway and we were up, up and away, high out over the West Country soon accelerating past Mach 1 with a gentle nudge as we broke the sound barrier, onward up to Mach 2, twice the speed of sound, faster than a rifle bullet.

Gradually as dinner was served I watched the setting sun start coming back up again in the western sky as we travelled faster than the earth's rotation, in our incredible craft - G-BOAE,

known as Alpha Echo. Our route out across the dark, cold, North Atlantic, followed that of other fine ships; Cabot's Mathew, the Mayflower, the SS Titanic and the RMS Queen Elizabeth 2 (with its luxurious 6-day crossing) and all those others who, over so many generations, had gone before us, far down below on the surface ...

For a while, sampling a decent red from what BA called *the finest cellar in the sky*, looking out at the curvature of the earth, I thought about what an amazing feat of engineering this was and how men built this incredible machine within a human lifetime of the Wright Brothers first flight.

This was one of the ultimate technology projects, over 10 years in the making, conceived on paper in the 1950s when Spitfires still flew in the RAF, in the far east.

A Concorde pilot once said that he could balance a pound coin on its edge on the centre console and it wouldn't drop because of the complete lack of turbulence at that altitude or mechanical vibration even at that speed.

By the time we got to the USA the sun was back up again and after landing as we taxied slowly around JFK to the terminal I watched it set again for the second time that day.

New York for the weekend! Later in the evening, still buzzing as I thought about the events of the day, and having a couple of Steinlagers, *drinking our beer there*, it dawned on me that during the 3 hour* flight, as I was having a walk about the quiet aisle, touching the low cabin ceiling with my hand, walking back to my seat at the very front of the plane, at that point in time I was actually the fastest person** and highest person*** on earth...

... with the exception perhaps of any astronauts in space or the crew of a US blackbird spy plane.

And even if there was someone else actually up there in the sky that winter Saturday evening, I doubt they were drinking a quality NZ pinot, eating caviar, cheese and crackers and listening to the Eagles!

Regardless, I do believe for that special moment, out of all the 7 billion people on earth, I was, if not the fastest person then at the very least, *the world's fastest accountant!*

*747 or 777 - 8 hours

** Mach 2, 2,175 km p/h - plus my walking speed!

*** 59,000 feet or 18 km - plus my outstretched arm!

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Trevor Sharman, Director & Principal Consultant
at NZeC Consultancy
...we were there ...taking it to the limit!

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