



## An interview with Nicholas Frankl - Three time winter Olympian and Founder of My Yacht Group

🕒 March 17, 2014

An interview with Nicholas Frankl, three time winter Olympian and Founder of My Yacht Group.

- **Can you please tell us a little bit about your early life, where you grew up and how you came to have dual British/Hungarian nationality?**

I was born in London to a British mother and Hungarian father, and grew up in the U.K. We spent family holidays in Hungary, on Lake Balaton and in Budapest, while I was growing up, and when I wasn't busy running away from boarding school!

- **You went on to represent Hungary in the Bobsled event at three Olympic games. Can you tell us at what age you got into this sport, how you eventually went on to compete for your country and how successful you were at it?**



My father commentated on bobsled, luge, skeleton, and some other sports for Hungarian TV at the 1992 Albertville Olympics. And he thought, well bobsled is basically like driving on ice, and Nicholas is really good at driving. So we got the idea to see if I could drive a bob. And, it turned out I wasn't bad! I went to "bob school" in Austria, and I got down, didn't crash – which for someone new to the sport is an achievement in itself! – did some respectable times, and we set up establishing the Hungarian team. It wasn't easy, but we persevered, competed in a number of world cup competitions, and I went from zero to qualifying for the Olympics in 1 year.

My first games were Lillehammer in 1994, and I came 28<sup>th</sup> out of 43 teams driving HUN1 in the 2-man. If you consider that the top 20 places are basically already 'taken' by the well-funded "A" teams like USA, Switzerland, Germany, France, Canada, GB etc., and they each field 2 teams, we were extremely happy with the result. We qualified again for Nagano in 1998, placing 24<sup>th</sup> out of 32 teams in 4-man bob this time, and in Salt Lake City in 2002 we again competed in the 4-man, finishing 23 / 33 teams.

My Olympic 'career' is one of my proudest achievements. The Olympic global family is actually pretty small, and the friendships I have made through competing are very dear to me, not least with HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco. We enjoyed a friendly rivalry, and he helped me immensely when I first got into the sport. Really the definition of a true sportsman.



HSH Prince Albert II, Petra Nemcova, Nicholas Frankl, Princess Charlene.

- **What did you do after your bobsled career ended?**

Well, as a very amateur bobsledder, I never stopped working! \$7,000 per set of 'runners' and you need to keep earning as much as possible. At that time I was, in true entrepreneurial spirit, working on a variety of projects. In addition to writing, hosting, and producing automotive programs for radio, TV and print, I was involved with an energy drink, traveling frequently to Asia, and also to many of the F1 races; the brand was a sponsor of one of the teams. So it was a pretty busy time!

- **How did you get into the corporate entertainment business and what or who was your inspiration for starting it?**

Running the Ferrari Asprey sponsorship from 1996-99 gave me a unique insight into hosting the crème de la crème of clients all over the world from Japan to Argentina, and more.

I moved to Los Angeles in 2000 and saw a gap in the market for a relationship-based sponsorship and marketing company. I believe in long-term, strategic partnerships, and saw a way to create meaningful collaborations between global brands and high-profile property owners – Academies, studios, private clubs, and so on.

- **Tell us about your company My Yacht Group, supplier of "Uber luxury and ultra high net worth experiences for discerning guests".**

We provide High Net Worth clients with hospitality packages and entertainment at some of the world's most high-profile events – Cannes Film Festival, Monaco Grand Prix, Art Basel Miami, the Monterey, CA Concours d'Elegance, and more. These are people who want a unique experience, but they want to enjoy it in like-minded company. If you are super rich, you want to be around other super rich people. And that's the solution that we provide. It's creating exclusive gatherings, and an intimate and convivial atmosphere, catering to a very specific clientele.



At the same time, we work with luxury brand partners, who are always seeking fresh and exclusive ways not only to entertain and engage with their current clients, but also to meet new ones. And there is simply no more exclusive way to do this than aboard a superyacht. It takes an already luxurious event and elevates it. So for those brands wishing to extend an invitation with true cache, this checks all the right boxes. Small, exclusive, intimate. These are people who receive a lot of invitations. Send them a.n.other cocktail reception at a.n.other house for 500 that the PR agency threw together vs. a private yacht party for 120 guests? No contest. I guarantee they will accept the yacht invitation.



- **From a marketing point of view, which luxury brand do you most admire and why?**

To be honest I don't think any of them are doing a very good job on event marketing. They complain of lack of new clients but persist with the same unimaginative strategies and 'in store' events, and rely on massive advertising budgets so magazines will write nice things about them.

- **Looking to the future, do you see yourself branching out into other avenues of corporate entertainment?**

We're always looking at ways to expand. We've been approached to bring My Yacht to many different events and countries. We add new events when they make sense: last year we debuted My Yacht Concours d'Elegance during the motoring weekend in Monterey, CA. Amazing that such an iconic, waterfront event has never had any yacht hospitality there before! That was a huge success and we'll be back there in August. In 2012, we started our one non-yacht event, My Yacht Club at the Austin F1 Grand Prix. Alas, no room for a yacht in Austin, so we went down there in Year 1 of the Grand Prix and created a Monaco-style nightlife experience over the F1 weekend. Bottle service, VIP tables, gorgeous hostesses, really catering to the sophisticated F1 fans that fly in and expect a lot from the nightlife. Year 2 in 2013 was even bigger and we're looking forward to creating even more excitement this November. Opening night is Halloween, so that will be fun!



- **You are obviously very passionate about Formula 1, can you tell us what most appeals to you about the sport?**

It's modern day gladiators but with all the politics and drama of a daytime soap opera!

- **If you had your time again, would this have been the sport you would have pursued as a career?**

FORMULA 1, hands down. I was a World Champion in another life, I'm sure of it!

- **Olympic Bobsled champion, racing car driver and pilot, you obviously have a penchant for thrill seeking and danger, have you got anything else lined up in the future to keep the adrenalin flowing?**

At some point going into orbit would be amazing. My heroes are the astronauts from the Mercury, Gemini and Apollo missions. I've been fortunate enough to get to know Buzz Aldrin – he's a real hero – and last year we hosted The Red Bull Stratos astronaut Felix Baumgartner aboard in Monaco.

For more information about My Yacht Group, visit: [www.myyachtgroup.com](http://www.myyachtgroup.com)

Interview by **Robert Lawrence**