

Those 'Instant' Successes

Many times an unknown person does something spectacular and suddenly becomes a hero, a public figure, an overnight success and the object of much envy.

But let's explore this "overnight success" syndrome, which almost always occurs over time.

Several years ago, Gerald (Gerry) Spiess – a school teacher from White Lake, Minnesota – accomplished an incredible mission.

Spiess designed and built a 10-foot sailboat from plywood in his garage. After a test launch in the local lake, Spiess transported the boat to the East Coast for launch.



He sailed the boat, called *Yankee Girl*, from Norfolk, Virginia, on June 1, 1979, and arrived in Falmouth, England, after a 54-day Atlantic crossing.

Most of us can only imagine what he endured to complete his ordeal, but suddenly, the whole world knew who he was.

What's his story? Did Spiess have a good idea, implement it and "luck" into celebrity status?

No. Spiess worked, planned, sacrificed and studied for three years to build his boat. He committed not only his money, but also 100 percent of his spare time for three solid years. He had to chart his course and plan every detail, including maximum use of his space and the proper food, clothing and water to carry.

Once the trip began, so did the danger. The most treacherous and difficult part was fighting the violent waves and currents of the Atlantic Ocean. The sea often combined with a driving, bitterly cold rain, which chilled him to the bone.

By the time he reached England, he was so brutally battered by the cruel ocean that his entire body was black and blue. Yes, Spiess had "his day in the sun," but it's safe to say that he sacrificed and worked hard in order to receive his rewards.

Most of us are not interested in doing a project of that nature, but if we are going to accomplish anything of significance, long hours of planning, preparation and hard work are required.

The conclusion: All the effort is worth it, because realization of the dream brings long-lasting satisfaction and personal rewards.

– Beecher Hunter