

# NAOMI RICHES MBE DL

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## British Paralympic Gold Medallist Rower (London 2012),

Naomi is available exclusively through DBA Speakers.

Rowing, possibly more than any other sport, looks almost effortless when executed perfectly. Spectators watch a boat gliding through the water, all members of the crew in harmony of rhythm, stroke, commitment, and united by the desire to win. But, behind the scenes, each team member spends thousands of hours in training, both individually and with their team mates, on the water, in the gym and other physical and mental exercises. For each race, the coach selects the crew for that boat, in that race, on that day. If everything goes as planned, a gold medal is the ultimate prize on the world's biggest sporting stage

**Naomi never expected to be a rower. Nor a gold medallist or world champion. Labelled as “disabled” at 8 weeks old, with a severe visual impairment, this “little blind girl” received no support, had low expectations, and was not expected to achieve much. Being bullied at school led to low self-esteem and indifferent exam results. But this young woman had a strong desire to prove people wrong because she didn’t want to be defined by what *other people* saw as her impairment.**

She swam for the local disabled swimming team, but had little other interest in sport. In 2004, she was offered the opportunity to join the GB Adaptive Rowing Team. Her “disability” had become an opportunity to become a world-class athlete. In rowing, her determination, commitment, physical and mental ability were valued, combined with her ability to work in a team.

Just 4 months after being selected, she became World Champion in the Mixed Coxed Four. She won 5 more World Championships, and the Paralympic Bronze medal in 2008. Her coach wasn't impressed with 3<sup>rd</sup> place, even at the Paralympics. At London 2012, Naomi won Gold in the Mixed Coxed Four and was later awarded the MBE. The post box was (and still is) painted gold in her home town as a public and permanent reminder of her success.

Warm, engaging, friendly, and communicative, Naomi still rows competitively for her local rowing club and turns up at training sessions in the very early hours of the morning to support and encourage other rowers and crew mates.

Her topics include teamwork, resilience, setting and achieving goals, diversity and inclusion, motivation and inspiration (of self and others) and the Paralympics in London 2012. Each speech is adapted and tailored for each audience, and she takes time to work with each client, to ensure that relevant and messages are communicated effectively, in an engaging way. She demonstrates how her story, and the experiences she gained, can be applied to their businesses, their teams, their careers, and their lives.

Her presentation *All that Glitters* invites her audience behind the scenes to see what is really needed to achieve. It includes pages from her training diary showing not just the highs, but how to keep going, when the going gets tough.

As a professional speaker, Naomi's decade of experience and her outstanding communication skills combine with her open and honest style, her natural authenticity, and her genuine passion to support and inspire others.

**You *could* sum up Naomi's success in four words which are the title of one of her presentations, “From Playground to Podium.” But this dedicated and inspirational woman delivers a great deal more...**

## What people say about Naomi as a speaker

“Naomi was *fabulous*. Just what our Away Day event needed. Thanks, Diana, for suggesting Naomi. You get it right for us ... every time.” **Alison Thorne-Henderson, Dual Chief Officer, Royal Cornwall NHS Trust. June 2023**

“First class. Naomi spent time with everyone who wanted to speak with her, and she is an inspiration. Her *All that Glitters* speech invited our audience behind the scenes to see what really goes on in the quest for a gold medal. Our thanks to Diana Boulter for recommending this young lady to Seabourn. Our guests loved her.” **Seabourn Ovation, November 2023**

"A lovely, friendly and inspirational guest speaker whose story encourages all our children to be their best" **Conifers School, July 2023**

"Naomi's session was the highlight of our Away Day. She told her inspirational story, seamlessly linking it to our own work and understanding our own motivations. Naomi's style is very personable and engaging. She uses humour and her authenticity to draw the audience in and left us all with plenty to think about in our own work contexts. We all felt deeply privileged to have spent this time with Naomi and to have learned from her experiences on and off the water."

**Name supplied, UK Central Government Department**

"I met Naomi in 2014 when I started working with the guys at Thomas International. Naomi has not only developed into someone who understands the Thomas tools and how to integrate them into peoples' everyday lives, she has also become an accomplished keynote speaker sharing her moving story to help others reach for their goals. I have no problem in recommending Naomi as a World class speaker for your conference." **Derek Redmond: Olympian, award winning Inspirational & Motivational Speaker, Business coach and mentor**

"I felt incredibly lucky to have Naomi speak at the 2M Future Leaders' Development Day. She is that rare combination of someone who has achieved great things and yet remains down to Earth. This makes her the best of motivational speakers. Not only is she motivating and engaging, but she is also a warm and personable individual whom everyone connected with." **Lian Kessler-Maller, Group Director of Human Resources & Public Relations, 2M Holdings Ltd**

"Naomi, I wanted to say a huge thank you for your presentation. It was incredible how you gripped every single one of us, despite doing it all via Zoom! I know our volunteers were particularly moved and inspired by your personal journey, so I want to pass on a particularly huge thank you from them for the profound impact you have had on them" **Samuel Donnelly, Head of Communications, Nightline Association**

#### **Additional biographical achievements**

As former Chair of the world-famous Henley Women's Regatta, Naomi Riches is internationally respected.

In 2016, she set the Guinness World Record, for rowing the length of the Navigable Thames... (!)

In 2023, Naomi had the honour of being appointed a Deputy Lieutenant (DL) in the County of Buckinghamshire.

Selected to contribute to a new book, "*Successful Women in 2024*" released on International Women's Day 2024

**Naomi is available exclusively through Diana Boulter at DBA Speakers.**

**To check Naomi's diary, contact Diana on  
07554 440537 or email [diana@dbaspeakers.com](mailto:diana@dbaspeakers.com)**