

December.99



**Donna
McMahon**
Why you can
expect to see
more of her!



Donna McMahon

Interview by Jay Graygor

Hard work and dedication is paying off - expect more to come

Date of Birth: 1/11/70

Birthplace: Jackson Heights, NY

Hometown: Farmingdale, NY

Height: 5' 6"

Weight: 129

Family: Husband, Training Partner and more, Brian McMahon

Career Highlights: Sunapee New England Triathlon Festival 97 (qualified for Hawaii), Hawaii 97 (first Ironman), Great Floridian 98 - 2nd female overall, Hudson Valley Ironman 97, 98 & 99 first female overall, Southampton 98 - first female, Seacrest Tobay Triathlon 97 & 98 - first female overall

This year's highlights: Canon Long Island Marathon 2nd female overall, Blackwater Eagleman Ironman 99 - 2nd female overall (first amateur), Mighty Montauk & Montauk Sprint Triathlons first female overall, Ironman Florida 7th female overall (4th pro - Qualified for Hawaii 2000)

How/when did you become involved in triathlons?

I started participating in running races in December 1991. In 1992, I saw an application for a sprint triathlon and thought it would be a challenge. I signed up for my first sprint triathlon and had 5 weeks to learn to swim (more than just keeping my head above water). It wasn't the "I won my first triathlon" story, but I enjoyed the experience and was looking forward to more races at different distances and saw lots of room for improvement.

In 1993 I did my first Ironman and found that to be my favorite distance. I gradually moved up in my age group placing as the years passed by. I did about 2-3 triathlons a year till 1997. 1997 was a breakthrough year for me, I carefully studied my training, started a log and started experimenting on what worked best for me. I did 54 Races - 13 Wins Running - 2 Wins Triathlon (first 2 wins) and finished the year with a USAT Ranking 43rd (20-29) age group. In 1998 I did 45 Races - 22 Wins Running - 3 Wins Triathlon - 2 Wins Biathlon, with a USAT Ranking 15th (20-29) age group - ALL AMERICAN!

I decided to go Pro in 1999. My reasoning was 1) that you had to

be pro to get ITU points to be eligible for the Olympic Trials. 2) to be eligible for prize money and 3) hopefully to get some sponsors - so I could work less and train more!

My first race as a pro was Wilkes-Barre; Unfortunately a few days before the race I dropped an ice pack on my toe. I thought it would be okay by race day, but it wasn't and I had a disappointing race. When I returned to New York, I had the toe x-rayed and it was fractured. Six long weeks of recovery no running at all! The season ended with Ironman Florida, which went well, and I qualified for Hawaii 2000!

As for sponsors in 1999 Clif Bar has kept me well fed on my long bike rides. Others have given me pro prices (helps but still expensive). I work as a school bus driver (although I'm only six

credits from my masters degree) about six hours a day. The split schedule allows me to get in extra workouts midday and I'm only about 5 minutes from work. An unexpected surprise was my Union USWA-TCU approached me this year and offered sponsorship in the form of some new equipment (we all need that) & some expenses. The Union felt I represented a healthy lifestyle, set a good example and wanted to help me reach my potential.

My husband has created a web site for me, which is updated with upcoming races, results and pictures from races for the last three years, that can be found at www.donnamcmahon.com.

What kind of sports did you do growing up?

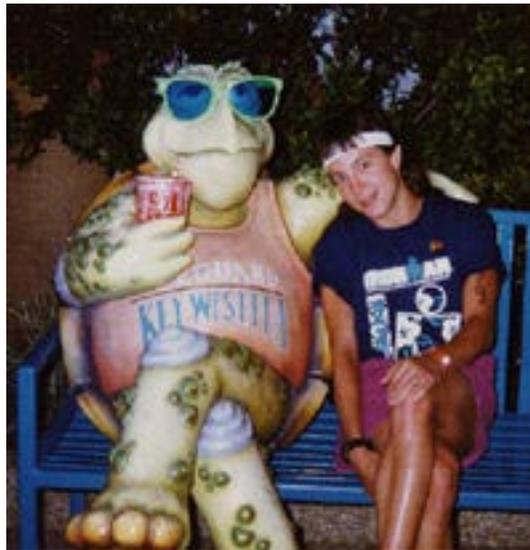
I always enjoyed baseball (hardball) and played on teams, I liked basketball and enjoyed bike riding after school. I was on the Equestrian Team in college.

What has been the biggest change in your life since turning pro?

Focus on certain races, putting in more time and adding higher intensity training.

There is more pressure to perform at the pro level.

What do you like to do when you're not training/what are



Donna McMahon Continued...

your hobbies?

Reading, listening to music - Midge Ure, Ultravox, Erasure', collecting die cast model cars.

Do you have any superstitions? I feel that if I don't train on Fridays I will not have a good weekend! Ha Ha

Who are your heroes? My Husband, My family, my pets. As for Triathlon Heroes they would have to be Karen Smyers, Paula Newby Fraser, Dave Scott & Mark Allen.

Do you have a pre-competition routine/What is it like to be around you the day of a competition?

I like to mentally prepare for the race using visualization. I like to have everything ready the day before the race and be set up early, so I can relax before the race. No complaints from my Husband (pre race). Post race that's another story depending on outcome of the race!

Do you get nervous before races? Not as much as I used to. Still get a bit tense at the high profile races.

What do you find most challenging about being a triathlete? Finding a balance between family, training, work and sleep.

What are your immediate goals? To place among the top pros.

What are your long term goals? Olympics 2004 to be a top pro.

What is your favorite food? (I'm Vegetarian) Cereal, Trail Mix, Stuffed Mushrooms (Mom's), peanut butter and eggplant parmigiana.

Other than triathlon, what is your favorite sport? baseball

What is your favorite TV show? Pretender

What is your favorite movie? Rudy

What's your favorite type of music? New Wave

I can't live without...? Brian

What would be an ideal day for you? Winning the Hawaii Ironman on my wedding anniversary October 14, 2000! (we got married in Hawaii 1997)

How many hours a day/week do you train?

2-4 hours per day - non ironman training.

3-7 hours per day - ironman training.

Donna, Thank you for the interview and best of luck in 2000!
You too Brian. *JG for TT*

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