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Other African countries
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MEET 2007 SA WOMEN'S BODYBOARDING CHAMP

Name? Pamela Bowren

Birthday? 5 November 1986

Years bodyboarding? Since Grade 6, but I stopped for a year in Grade 9 as we moved overseas (which happened to be inland), so this is my ninth year in the water.

Why did you start bodyboarding? I have always loved the sea and we, as a family, always went to St Francis during the December holidays. When we moved to Port Elizabeth, I saw other guys doing it and gave it a try. I have enjoyed it ever since. A bonus is that I also live just a five-minute walk away from the beach.

Who has been your biggest influence? The Eastern Province locals who got me started on the competitive scene and all my friends in the water of course.

Where do you live? I live in Port Elizabeth with my parents (right near the beach), but I am currently studying in Stellenbosch.

Your local break? It used to be Fence and Clubhouse in PE, but now it is anywhere in Cape Town when I have a chance to go bodyboarding.

Your fave wave in SA? Wedge in Plettenberg Bay. Caves at Koel Bay is also a good one.

Your biggest fear when it comes to bodyboarding? Not too sure, but drowning would be one and I also dislike surfing alone, it scares me a bit.

Board you ride? A custom made Rossi.

Any sponsors? Rossi Bodyboards.

Best thing about bodyboarding? Freedom, fun and being outdoors. I absolutely love the sea too! Bodyboarding is a fun and social activity. I also find it to be a good stress reliever.

What do you do during the day? I study at Stellenbosch and play hockey, and when I have a chance, I obviously go bodyboarding.

What are you studying? A BA Sport Science degree. I am currently in my final year.

Pet hate? Boys who just think they can use your towel cos it happens to be hanging there! Why don't they bring their own?

Thoughts on surfers? I am friends with a lot of surfers and we are all out there to have fun and do the same thing. I generally don't have a problem with them, but I do have a problem when the groom surfers think they are 'too cool' for the bodyboarders.

Best time of the day? Sleeping and eating time (jokes). The morning, I think.

Role models? Jeff Hubbard, he goes big all the time. Also Sacha Specker, cos he has an awesome style, and God of course.

Goals and dreams for the future? My goal of being SA Women's Champion has been reached and now my dream is to make the SA team that is going to the world games in Portugal next year. I'd also like to travel the world one day.

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TRICK TIME!

So you wanna learn how to bodyboard? Here are some common tricks and moves, explained by Pamela.

ROLL:

2/5 difficulty rating

This is one of the most common bodyboarding tricks and can be performed on any size wave. It involves a good bottom turn followed by hitting the lip and using the power of the wave to move your body into a roll motion. When you begin to drop down, you need to focus on your landing, therefore, re-centring your body above your board and using your arms and elbows to absorb the impact on landing.

AIR ROLL SPIN:

3/5 difficulty rating

This involves a roll and a spin in one rotation. Hit the lip with speed and start rolling. Halfway through your roll, you start spinning. Your momentum should help you complete the spin. Keep your body centred all the time and your legs crossed.

INVERT:

4/5 difficulty rating

This is an air, but with more of a twist in it. A sharp bottom turn is required, and when you hit the lip, your board is twisted overhead (therefore parallel and inverted to the wave). You then manoeuvre your board back down the same way as you went up. It is important to use your hips and elbows to absorb the impact of landing.

BARREL:

3/5 difficulty rating

A fun move that is harder than it looks. A correct bottom turn, control and body positioning is required. Coming off your bottom turn, lean onto your inside rail and pull up your outside rail. Then sit inside and enjoy it. If you're going too fast, stall a bit and if you are going too slow, lean further forward.

SPOT CHECK!

Okay, name the top three places in the world you'd die to surf, and why?

• Hawaii. It's famous for its surf spots - reef and beachbreaks. I hear about it all the time and see these waves in just about every video.

• Indonesia. Island hopping with good waves... what more could a girl ask for?

• Australia. I'd travel the country while surfing beach and reef breaks. It's an awesome place with an abundance of waves. I could also get a job there while surfing.

SCENARIO

You're on a massive 65ft yacht with a bunch of your mates on a surf trip...

There are six other people on the yacht, who are they?

Good surfing mates, guys and girls, maybe also my best friend but she doesn't surf!

You are stuck on it for four weeks, but only have a limited food supply. What would you sneak on board in your bag to eat on your own, without sharing? Sweets - lots of them.

What three foods would you make sure were on board, i.e. what makes up your staple diet? Pasta, meat and yogurt.

Where would the yacht be anchored? Indonesia, definitely.

Because you could only take a small amount of luggage (limited space), what five things would you make sure you had? My bible, my board and bodyboarding gear, a costume, a T-shirt and shorts.

You guys are hit by a massive storm. Who's the first person to get seasick and puke over the edge of the boat? Mmm, not too sure, probably the person who ate the most.

The captain falls overboard in the stormy panic. Who, if any of you, would jump in to save him? One of the guys, for sure.

The yacht starts sinking, what choons would you play? Christian music, The Fray and Mika.

You find a bottle and a piece of paper, and thus can write one message to throw into the sea before the boat completely disappears, leaving you stranded and hanging onto your bodyboard. What would the note say? Sunken ship... please help! Off into, plus the date.

A random yacht sails past with a famous actor and saves you and you fall in love and get married and live happily ever after. Who would you want that celeb to be? Chad Michael Murray. ✓