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**SURFING CHAMPION, LAYNE BEACHLEY'S RIDE TO THE TOP**

Irvine, CA -- Billabong USA team rider and current ASP World Surfing Champion, Layne Beachley is a product of her own determination. This once skinny, long-haired kid with surfing in her soul is now among some of her role models from the sport's record books. She joins the ranks of some the most accomplished female wave riders like: Margo Oberg, Frieda Zamba, Wendy Botha, Pam Burrridge, Pauline Menczer and Lisa Andersen.

At 27, Beachley is one of the anchors for the 1999 Billabong Girls' Team Riders, along with surfer/model, Malia Jones. She holds the title of five event victories in a season of 11 tournaments, won by the greatest points-margin in the history of the sport (2,420 points), and set the record for taking home the most contest earnings ever, for a single season for women (\$75,300). To top it off, no other woman has conquered the sport of big wave surfing like she has. Beachley broke new ground last season in Hawaii by being the first woman to join some of the elite men who take on the huge outer reef waves by way of tow-in surfing, a method where a motorized, watercraft vehicle tows a surfer into waves of 30 feet or more.

As a teen, Beachley's competitive spirit was expressed through a myriad of interests. Along with surfing, there was tennis, basketball, cricket, skateboarding, bike riding, and tree climbing. But it was her love for surfing that headed her to a ride of a lifetime and a lot of hard work.

Her "first ride" was marked by merely catching a modest wake off of a ferryboat at Manly Cove in Sydney, Australia. Early training consisted of many self-taught lessons in the pool at the family's Balgowlah Heights home, sparked with a healthy dose of competition from an older brother. It became quite apparent that her passion for surfing could only be matched by her passion for being the best.

"I always wanted to be the best," said Beachley. "I was naturally competitive...with anyone and in anything..."

In 1987, 15-year-old Beachley entered her first surfing competition in the scholastic titles. Three years later, her career began to materialize and she was traveling throughout Australia,

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California and Hawaii. Her first World Tour victory came in 1993. Beachley was taking pro surfing by storm and collecting victories all the while in major events in Australia, California and Hawaii.

Her goal soon became winning the world title and once she decided on her destination, naturally, she was on her way to clearing her path. But Beachley would soon learn that just as nature's strong, agile bodies of water experience ebbs and flows, so would her career.

In 1995, after vigorous training she was runner-up to 26-year-old Lisa Andersen for the world title.

"I was pretty proud of second. But I had no expectations of finishing runner up...I had expectations of winning," said a disheartened Beachley.

Like a true over-achiever, good was never good enough. Competitions in 1996 and 1997 only ended with the same disappointing results for Beachley and she was beginning to suffer from burn out. After many seasons of striving toward the world title, the optimistic and determined Beachley spirit was beginning to tarnish.

In 1998, Beachley began her eighth season in competing for the world title. After years of conditioning and enough bouts of disappointment by Beachley standards, this strong-willed body was poised for victory. Her stellar performance landed her on the path of victory that she paved the way for seasons ago, the coveted title of 1998 World Champion.

As a truly inspired individual, Beachley can best be described by 1993 ASP World Champion, Pauline Menczer:

"She's a very good competitor. She's so hungry. Really, really hungry to win." A hunger and a passion so deeply rooted in her being that keeps her striving for the next big ride.

For interview and photo opportunities, guest appearances, existing photography or more information call us at: Cynthia Michel Public Relations (310) 789-6919, Fax (310) 798-6909, or E-mail: **[CMPR1@aol.com](mailto:CMPR1@aol.com)**.

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