

WHERE, WHAT, WHEN **WHO IS...**

# Karina Petroni

By Jessica Ridenour

At age 17, Karina Petroni is not quite a grommette anymore, but not yet a woman. With several impressive junior titles under her belt, including the Eastern Surfing Championship Girls' division 2003, the Hello Kitty Boardfest 2004, and Mr. Price Pro Junior 2005, her time in the under-18 category is waning. Now it's only a matter of time before she dominates the women's circuit. Winning second place at this July's U.S. Open of Surfing Junior Pro Competition in Huntington Beach, California, we know we're going to see this girl kick ass in many competitions to come.

Karina took a few minutes off from the sun-drenched excitement at the Huntington Beach pier for a spirited conversation about where she's been and where she's headed next.



image: Eric Petroni

**Where are you from?**

I was born and raised in Panama, Central America, and now I live in Atlantic Beach, Florida. I love it there! It's the south, you know—southern hospitality, the people are wonderful. I wouldn't live anywhere else in the United States.

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**How did you get to where you are today? Who has helped you out along the way?**

I started surfing when I was nine, out in front of my house in Florida. I was having fun with it so I kept doing it. My family definitely helped me along—they're great. They're all behind me and it's just wonderful to have. The whole family surfs, except for my mom. Regarding surf idols, I think you can learn something from everybody. Everybody offers a unique difference.

**Where do you see yourself taking your career?**

I have no idea. The most typical answer is that I

want to be world champ, but for me, that's not what I'm thinking at all. Yeah, I want to be world champ—that would be great. But for right now I just want to live life to the fullest. I'm still young—I'm seventeen. I want to have fun and do different things. I just want to have a blast.



image: Eric Petroni

**Where is your favorite place to surf?**

I love to surf at home. The people there are just so nice. It's southern hospitality. You never walk by someone on the street or on the beach without saying, “Hello! Good morning! How are ya?” I also love Puerto Rico, Australia, and South Africa.

**Who are your sponsors?**

My sponsors are Vans for apparel and shoes, Body Glove for wet suits and swimsuits, Electric Visual, Aqua East Surf Shop, Channel Islands Surfboards, Sticky Bumps, Nixon Watches, and Chevrolet. My very first sponsor was Point Conception Swimsuits. That was about nine years ago and I was with them all the way up 'til a year or two ago. If it weren't for them, I wouldn't be where I am now.

**What are your favorite brands of clothes?**

It's always different. I like Target a lot. I like Lucky and Levis for jeans, and Abercrombie & Fitch for everything. I like Forever 21 because it's cheap, and you can find cute stuff there. A friend of mine gave me a pair of Hudson jeans and I love them. Vans is starting to come out with some cute stuff too.

**What do you do when you're not surfing?**

I eat a lot! I've been playing the piano for years. We also got a brand new skate park in our town, so I've been skating a lot...just whatever is going on that day.