

Fitness pro finishes season with top awards

By Maria Duncalf-Barber

Personal trainer Erin Bailey has caught the "competition bug" after winning a number of top awards at fitness modeling events in 2008.

Since entering her first competition in London last June, she has achieved increasing levels of success in each competition she has entered. In October, she placed in the top 10 out of 32 women in the open category at the Halloween Mayhem Ultimate Fitness Event. Weeks later she placed third in the fitness model category in the Ottawa Serious About Fitness Model Search. In late November, she went on to win first place in the bikini model category and third in the fitness model category in the Ultimate Fitness Event's MVP Quest Event in Hamilton.

This latter event is an invitation-only event for those who have placed in the top 10 in previous qualifying events. It brings together the top contenders of the fitness world.

"I was thrilled because the calibre was quite high. With each competition, my goal was to place better and do better in each competition, which is what I was successfully doing, but I didn't expect to do that well. I thought for sure that I would probably place, but I didn't expect to get first. So I was pleasantly surprised and it made me realize that I can keep pushing myself and keep striv-

ing and keep being better."

As ultimate bikini model champion, Bailey was awarded a cash prize of \$1,000, \$2,400 worth of nutritional supplements and a photoshoot with one of the industry's top photographers. Placing at the competition also earned Bailey a spot in *Inside Fitness Magazine*, Canada's newest top-selling fitness magazine.

While Bailey might make winning look easy, fitness competitions require intense discipline in terms of training and nutrition. For 12 weeks leading up to a competition, Bailey gets up at 4:30 a.m. to drive to her training studio for a one-hour intense workout before seeing her clients. Her diet consists of five small meals per day, with very little carbohydrates or fat.

A typical meal would be a skinless chicken breast, boiled with no spices on it accompanied by a cup of raw broccoli.

"The diet is the hardest part, by far,"

"I've kind of got the competition bug now and I feel like I'm in better shape now... than I've ever been."

Bailey explains. "But it is also the most important part. You won't start getting dramatic results until you drastically alter your diet."

All this hard work makes people wonder what motivates her.

"It gives me a goal to work towards and it allows me to become the best I can be. I also like to be a role model for my training clients and for my dance students," Bailey explains. "This gives me the opportunity to push myself to become a better role model."

In addition to looking forward to Bailey's upcoming wedding to fiancé Kevin Boyes, she also has her sights set on upcoming fitness events in 2009.

"I've kind of got the competition bug

now and I feel like I'm in better shape now – and I'm turning 35 in February – then I've ever been. I think that's a better accomplishment than most things I've done in my life."



Photographer: Chris Linton of sportshooting.com