

The Bourn Identity



In focus

With Carmel Meyer

Sue Bourn's athletics ethos sees her take part in a wide variety of fitness pursuits which develop whole body strength and conditioning. More on that later... but the name 'Commando' should give you a hint...

Sue emigrated with her family from the UK at age seven to reside in Wanneroo. Leaving home at 18 she worked at the Central Law Courts for more than five years. Sue's next career move to Halliburton Energy Services was a fortuitous one as it was there that she met her husband Antony. Sue is now in admin at a Welshpool marine wholesaler. Their daughters are Hayley (studying Forensics at UWA) and Alisha (studying nursing at Curtin). Sue is not only a great athlete but also a great mum. At the 2014 State Championships, I was amused and touched to see Sue using her warm-up time to scan the track for 'recently deceased' bees. She was collecting them for Hayley's Forensics class! At the same championships, Leon Sander dubbed her 'Curly Sue' for her glorious head of curls! Sue, who was programme cover girl that year, took it all with her usual good humour and a big smile.

Sue enjoyed athletics and netball at school but the occasional game of netball was all she could manage to fit in when her children were young. The approach of her

40th birthday saw Sue decide a lifestyle change was in order. She started running with the Marathon club, saw those distinctive Masters singlets on some fellow runners and soon was sporting one herself! Sue is now not only a regular track and field participant and Sunday runner but is Race Director of the 'Barden Bash' in Maylands. Sue says she loves the atmosphere of Masters on a Sunday morning and at the track- *'there is always someone to have a joke and a laugh with'*.

Sue prefers distance over sprints -- 5km and 10km runs and the occasional 21km. In the 2015 Road Running Championships Sue was the first female with a 4:52min/km average speed over the three events. She is also up for the occasional sprint but is wary of the higher injury risk. Sue has put her all-rounder abilities to good use in the Patron's Trophy, finishing in the top three for the past three years.

Soon after she started running, a major quad. muscle injury which sidelined her for six months taught Sue the pitfalls of too much too soon. Sue says she slowly built herself back up, learnt the difference between *'good pain and bad pain'* and also how far to push before having to rest or ease off. She is a firm believer in stretching after every session as a way to prevent injury.

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Commando Curly Sue

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But, says Sue, *'I only ever stretch on warm muscles after a session'*. When she is feeling discouraged Sue says she only needs to look to the older athletes for a dose of renewed enthusiasm. *'I feel if they can do what they do, then so should I be able to keep going.'*

Sue once coached her daughter's netball team to victory but admits she is not keen on the yelling that is sometimes necessary to get kids to focus and listen.

I suspect though that Sue is quite used to being yelled at herself!

By the 'Commando' and Michelle Bridges no less. Sue has been on a Warrior Weekend camp where the Commando led a three-hour training session. You can bet there was yelling involved! At the conclusion of the weekend, Sue's team was declared a champion team. Sue signed up for more punishment by participating in Fitness Expo sessions and in 2014, she came first on points in the online GetCommandoFit program. In 2015, Sue completed Michelle Bridges'

12WBT (12-week body transformation program).

A fully equipped home gym enables Sue to do two or three sessions of heavyweights each week. Motivational posters of the Biggest Loser trainers stare down from the gym walls. Sue also does group sessions named, terrifyingly, Bootcamp, Bodyworks and Build & Rip! She finds the encouragement and motivation provided by group training to be of huge benefit. Sue says *'I find doing all these different types of sessions during the week keeps my training interesting and works different muscles at every session.'*

Not a keen flyer, Sue is looking forward to competing on home soil in the 2016 WMA Championships. In December 2015 she started another 12WBT program; the '10km Advanced Program', to help improve her 10km time.

Just writing about Sue's training regime has exhausted me! She leaves no stone unturned in her fitness program and it shows in her great physique and results. While she is serious in her approach to developing her athletics skills 'Curly Sue' is great fun to be around at the track or Sunday runs.