

# LAUREN MCFALL

By Meaghan Shea

Look all you want, but you probably won't find a girl who can hold her breath underwater for three minutes. Unless, of course, you search the Upper West Side of Manhattan, where the former captain of the 2004 Olympic Synchronized Swimming team, Lauren McFall, now resides. The Los Altos, Calif., native led the U.S. team to a bronze medal in Athens that year, and is now making her mark in a bigger city with a new career in fitness.

Lauren inherited her love of athletics from her mother, who did water ballet — the predecessor to synchronized swimming — at the University of California-Berkeley during the '60s. "My mom took me to a synchronized swimming show at age eight and I was hooked," she says. Lauren made her first Junior National team at age 15 and began competing with National teams soon after, traveling all over the world for shows.

She even made the 2000 Olympic squad but was cut just six months before the Games. Luckily, she isn't the type to give up on her dreams. "My first coach told me I'd never be good at synchronized swimming because I was skinny, uncoordinated and couldn't float," says Lauren. "I thought of her while I was on the podium at the 2004 Olympic Games."

But don't think she didn't work hard to get to that platform. "The team and I trained 8-10 hours a day, six days a week for the four years leading up to the Olympics — with only about two weeks off a year," she says. "We did sports-specific exercises, plyometrics, ballet, gymnastics, stretching and Pilates, and we swam about 6000-10,000 yards every other day."

She may have hung up her wetsuit after the 2004 Olympics, but Lauren's dedication to fitness is still strong. The 26-year-old is currently in the beginning stages of a successful personal training career with Focus Integrated Fitness in New York City. "I want to share my exercise knowledge with other people," she says, "I was lucky to find such a good company to get my start. There is a great energy among the trainers that reminds me of being on the Olympic team."

Lauren's coaches and teammates always told her she'd make a great trainer. So far, it looks like they were right. ★

*Editor's Note:* To contact Lauren McFall, send e-mails to [Lauren@focusnyc.com](mailto:Lauren@focusnyc.com).

## LAUREN ON HER WORKOUTS

Lauren has toned things down since her days as an Olympian, but she still trains 3-4 times a week. She does 30 minutes of cardio and 30 minutes of abs and arm exercises, along with two weekly Pilates classes. "When I was competing, I was training for perfection," she says. "Now I work out to feel good."

## LAUREN ON HER DIET

She eats healthy most of the time, but Lauren admits she has her weaknesses. "I eat a lot of protein and try to consume most of my calories early in the day," she says. "But I just can't resist the smell of Gray's Papaya hot dogs."

## LAUREN ON HER FUTURE

When she isn't training her clients, Lauren is pursuing her political science degree at Columbia University. She is considering continuing on to law school after graduation, and perhaps making a living in corporate motivation one day.