

## Siargao's Queen of Tide's

Written by MindaNews  
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GENERAL LUNA, Surigao del Norte — After topping the Roxy International Women Surfing Competition where she bested surfers from Australia, Germany, England, Switzerland, Thailand, Indonesia, USA and local surfers, Nilbie Blancada concluded that she lives to surf.

Nilbie, “Beh-Beh” to friends and family, the lady surfer would not have won the crown had she not listened to elder sister Nildie, a former international surfing champion herself. It was her sister who encouraged her to surf.

Beh-Beh, 19, who hails from the town of General Luna in Siargao Islands, Surigao del Norte said she spent most of her time learning the craft, by catching good swells in this surfing Mecca in the country.

She said she did not expect to win this competition because she had wounds in her right rib and another deep cut in her right eyebrow.

She incurred the injuries days before the start of the competition while doing her intense practice.

“My body was hit on the reef and I got these wounds,” she said adding it is “normal” to suffer bruises because of the extreme nature of the water sport.

During the competition, she said she was even experiencing difficulties in doing her maneuvers.

“It was hard to move and make the maneuver because of the injury. But I just did my best,” she said with a smile adding she flaunted all her favorite tricks like cut back, floater, run house and tubing.

And all her hard work paid off as she garnered a whopping P110,000 in cash.

This oriental beauty had never hesitated in buying a new motorbike and few belongings for their house as a testament to her labor.

### Fear

Nilbie said she can't forget the time when she was only 13-years old. A neophyte then, she went on a surfing game with friends and they would giggle every time they fell on every wave.

When it was her turn, she caught up on a very huge wave and to everyone's surprise, she was able to hold on to herself and survived her first big wave with a flourish.

But unknown to everyone, she was actually filled with fear during that ride, that by the time she went home, she burst into tears overwhelmed by the feeling.

“Nag-promise jud ko nga di nako mo-surf pagbalik!” ( I had made a promise to myself not to

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play surfing again), Nilbie said.

“I did not return to the ocean for several days because of that horrible experience. I suffered a sort of phobia because of that,” she narrated with a smile.

But eventually, her friends would continue to encourage her to go back and surf. Until eventually, she gave in to the prodding of friends and joined them in another surfing game. From then on, Nilbie learned the ropes of surfing.

Inspired by Nildie, her elder sister, who was once among the 100 best women surfers around the world, Nilbie is now beginning to carve a her name in the sports of surfing.

First “Cloud Nine” wave

Bhe-bhe said her first “Cloud Nine” wave was her most unforgettable.

“Yes, I really can’t forget that because you can’t measure the happiness once you’re able to ride the surf board,” the petite young lady said.

After that experience, Nilbie has not stopped riding on the waves, sometimes forgetting to attend her classes during her high school days.

While not surfing, she helps in the household chores. She also helps her sister run a resort business in the area.

Nilbie said at times she also offers surfing lessons to foreign and local tourists.

She also shared her secret in enduring the extreme water sport which is exercise. She does sit-ups and jogging to maintain her stamina.

She said it is also important to build one’s upper body strength in order to not easily get exhausted especially when the surfer paddles through the sea to find the waves.

Because surfing needs balance and composure, she does walking on the slack line installed by his brother-in-law, Rico, at their resort.

“Yes, it’s very important because you have to control your body balance every time you ride the surf board,” she said.

She said self-discipline is needed like having proper diet and enough sleep.

Awards

Nilbie has won six championships in different competitions in different parts of the country, the recent one in Baler, Aurora.

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Last year she snatched the grand prize in Lanuza, Surigao del Sur and Samar.

She, however, said she is still mastering some of the difficult tricks in surfing.

Nilbie idolizes Siargao-born surfing ace Edito Alcala and several foreign surfers whose faces have landed in media outlets and surfing magazines.

But life as a surfer has never stopped her from dreaming further. She dreams of having a decent house one day, which she said may come if she wins competitions outside the country.

“I’m still young and still in the process of learning,” she smiled.

With her achievements, Nilbie has not stopped practicing. She is now preparing herself for another competition in Bali, Indonesia in June.

Another crown, hopefully, for the local Surfing Queen. (Roel N. Catoto/MindaNews)

*source: <http://www.mindanews.com/feature/2012/05/30/siargao%E2%80%99s-queen-of-tide%E2%80%99s/>*