

BEX AND EASKEY, ISLAND PARADISE.



Sister Act

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PUT THE EXAMS ON HOLD, LEAVE BEHIND THE WILD, ICY NORTH ATLANTIC STORMS AND ESCAPE TO HAWAII.

I'VE SPENT A FEW WINTERS ON THE NORTH SHORE GOING SOLO, BUT THIS TIME MY LITTLE SISTER BECKY-FINN CAME WITH ME. BY 'LITTLE' I MEAN 16, BUT IN FACT SHE ALREADY TOWERS OVER ME. WE MAKE A UNIQUE SISTER-SISTER TEAM: I'M A SHORTBOARDER WHO'S ALWAYS ON THE GO, FULL OF ENERGY AND WANTING TO SURF EVERYWHERE ALL AT ONCE. BEX (AS I CALL HER) IS IRELAND'S NUMBER ONE FEMALE LONGBOARDER, SUPER LAID-BACK AND GROOVES TO HER OWN BEAT. SOMETIMES I HAVE TO DRAG HER OUT OF BED, BUT ONCE SHE GETS GOING THERE'S NO STOPPING HER!

First Taste

On our first night in Hawaii it seemed as though we'd brought the bad weather with us. The wind blasted through the palm trees and blew away the mosquitoes, but also brought down a huge branch from the tree growing up through the house. Luckily, it didn't come through the roof.

With the wind comes the swell. I got a call from a friend the next morning to say Rocky Point was looking good. Let's go! Rockies was a solid four- to six-feet with strong offshore. It felt so good to lose the wetsuits and

be in warm water again. The waiting period for the Pipeline Masters had begun so the lineup was pretty crowded, but the rip helps keep the crowd spread out and we sneaked onto a few of the set waves. Eventually the rip

washed us down to Gas Chambers. This wave lives up to its name – on some waves all you can do is take off and gun it down the line in fear of your life.

The Ocean Strikes Back

The ocean in Hawaii will always find ways to force you outside your comfort zone.

I paddled out at fun-sized Pipe and joined the crowd of super-groms and 'Jon-Jons' getting stand-up barrels... At the end of a ride I tried to kick out but the lip sucked me back over and I landed on my fins. Ouch! I had blood

coming from my head but didn't know how bad it was so I walked up to the lifeguard tower – apparently it was okay and I could go back out.

Several hours and 10 stitches later at Wahiwa General Hospital I was nearly in tears. I'd cut my ear pretty badly but it was still intact so I wasn't too worried, but then they told me I couldn't surf for at least a week! I had to wear a compression bandage for the first few days so the first thing I did was buy a bright turquoise head scarf and all the waterproof dressings and bandages I could find. I was determined to get back in the water.

The Pipe Masters

The surf world is really pretty small. Just over a month ago I was surfing with Kelly Slater in Ireland. He reckoned he wouldn't have any problems with the locals because he was surfing with Easkey at Easky! And now here he was firing through Backdoor claiming