

# A FATHER/DAUGHTER BOND



By Stacy Booth

**T**he Reed family has always been active—Jennie Reed, the youngest of two daughters, says they were always involved in some activity, often skiing. Jennie's father, Duane, remembers when she was a very little girl. "I remember when she was 3 years old, we went to Mount Bachelor around Thanksgiving, and she would hang on to the end of my ski pole and we'd ski down in tandem. She was about up to my hips in size, but man, she would go. And she just had tenacity to keep going."

Jennie and her sister, Laura, also found cycling after Duane says they watched three legs of an international women's cycling event in Idaho. Laura expressed interest first and Duane says she was introduced to the women's team at Gregg's Cycle. "They

took Laura under their wing as a protégé and Jennie came along right behind her." "My dad always introduced us to a lot of sports," says Jennie. "I never felt pressured to do something. I think that's pretty critical, especially if you want to build your career in a sport past the age of 18—you have to do it for yourself. When you're so young you don't know if you like doing something, want to train every day, train twice a day." Jennie has always competed in cycling for herself—Duane says she is very self-driven.

Jennie says she tried cycling with the Gregg's team when she was 16 and in a few months really started enjoying it. She also competed in junior nationals that year since they were in Seattle—"I entered everything there, gave everything a try." Jennie also won two junior national titles at that competition, disappointing other girls (Duane says a couple were in tears) because she was an unknown who, Jennie says, had to ask how

many laps some of the races were.

Surprising finishes aren't uncommon in the Reed family. Duane qualified for the Ironman World Championships in Hawaii after competing in Ironman Canada in 2001—a race his friends secretly signed him up for. Duane placed fifth and qualified for the Hawaii race with a roll-down qualification. "I was really surprised," he says. Duane has continued to do a few Ironman races each year, moving from the full-length races to Ironman 70.3—half the distance of the traditional Ironman events. He holds two third-place medals from the Ironman 70.3 World Championships held in Clearwater, Fla.

Previous to competing in Ironman competitions, Duane would compete in his age division at cycling races that Jennie was participating in during her high-school years. "We'd race together and have some fun like that, talking about our various experiences of racing, which we still do," says Duane.

Jennie Reed and her father, Duane, cycle together when they can. They enjoyed a sunny day on their bicycles this past spring.

Jennie and Laura experienced success as a family during their time at the University of Washington, where they both raced in the collegiate national cycling championships. Duane says the University of Washington won the national championships that year because the Reed girls won so many races at the event. It was after that competition that Jennie received a call from the national team coach to try out for the national team in San Diego. Ten years later, Jennie is still racing as a world-class cyclist. In fact, Jennie now holds the World Championship Title in the keirin, an event she just won in Manchester, England, in April. She also earned the

bronze medal in the match sprint event from the same championships. In fact, Jennie is headed to the 2008 Olympics in Beijing to go for gold in the match sprint.

Jennie previously attended and competed at the 2004 Olympics in Athens, and says that experience will help her in Beijing. "Other athletes can tell you what to expect but I think you have to actually experience it yourself. It's completely different than world championships," she explains. At the Olympics, athletes are eating and living with all different athletes in

a big Olympic village versus being surrounded by athletes in your own exclusive sport, staying at a smaller hotel at world championships. Jennie says at the Olympics it is about managing all the stimuli. "Everyone reacts to it so differently. It's exciting but at the same time quite exhausting."

Duane isn't surprised Jennie has so much talent athletically, or that her sister, Laura, also has been successful—"I always could see they had it in them."

For more information about the 2008 Olympics visit <http://en.beijing2008.cn/>.

