



FIT FOR LIFE

Pipped by an Olympian

Carol Westmorland recalls the day her Queen of the Mountain title was claimed by a gold medallist

Uh oh! The message pinged up - Joanna Rowsell just stole your QOM!

This is Joanna Rowsell Shand, our Olympic gold medallist who had on that day in May 2015 taken my Strava Queen of the Mountain title. So how did that happen? Not the fact that she had taken my QOM - she was, after all, training for the Rio Olympics. But how had little old me managed to compete in such illustrious company?

Well, it happened because I entered a local cycle time trial around Bassenthwaite Lake near Keswick, promoted by Cycling Time Trials North District and organised by Border City Wheelers Cycling Club - my club. Joanna Rowsell Shand and I competed against each other on that day.

My message from Strava read:

Uh oh! Joanna Rowsell just stole your QOM!

Hey Carol,

You just lost your QOM on Castle Inn Hill Sprint to Joanna Rowsell by 13s.

Now get out there, have fun and be safe.

Since this epic day she has gone on to win another gold medal in the team pursuit cycling track with the formidable Laura Trott, Katie Archibald and Elinor Barker. Incidentally, she took 2013 off with a broken shoulder, like me.

Joanna began her racing career in junior National Championship competitions in 2005/06. The same year I claimed my National Championship 24-hour and the same year I shared a September



'A SPORTING ACTIVITY SHOULD EXCITE AND SURPRISE, IGNITING SOMETHING FROM WITHIN'

day with Bradley Wiggins when he claimed the competition record in a 10-mile time trial. What a year that was!

Joanna, being enormously talented, caught the eye of British Cycling when she was 15. She was awarded an MBE in 2013 and showed great aplomb as a cycling track pundit in the Rio Olympics following her team gold; all this from just getting on a bike and pedalling fast.

Joanna has alopecia, but that is not what you see when you picture her. You see great success with great presence.

Joanna can have my Queen of the Mountain any day. In my eyes this girl rocks and she's not too shabby on a hill sprint.

Carol Westmorland lives in the Eden Valley. She is a Cycling Time Trials national champion, clocking up 445 miles in 24 hours. She also teaches pilates. www.pilates-cumbria.uk