

Two Women Who Somehow Seem To Do It All

by Erin Mantz

For many women living and working in Washington, D.C.'s career-driven environment, devoting time to work, family, fitness and fun can be a challenge. But when Joanna Lohman and Lori Lindsey talk about juggling, they mean it literally. While balancing budding careers, rigorous workouts and active social lives, Joanna and Lori keep lots of balls in the air. As active team members of the Washington Freedom Soccer Club, they balance successful day jobs and up to five practice sessions a week, managing hang time with friends and frequent Freedom games, not to mention coaching for D.C. youth soccer teams!

The Washington Freedom may be best known as Mia Hamm's team that won the professional women's league championship in 2003 when they played at RFK stadium. Since their professional league ceased operations after the 2003 season, the Freedom dug in its cleats and evolved into a powerful organization known today as the Washington Freedom Soccer Club. Designed to not only showcase some of the best talent in women's soccer in the country, the club also coaches hundreds of children in the D.C. area through various soccer clubs. And instead of RFK, the Freedom players call Germantown's, Maryland SoccerPlex "home" for seven home games a year. Here, the Freedom's talented players go up against the top amateur soccer teams from across the country and around the world.

Lori Lindsey exemplifies the many Freedom players weaving in soccer games with equally successful day jobs. Lindsey works at West End Travel-fittingly enough, Washington's only certified small businesswoman-owned travel agency. Many agency accounts include sports affiliates and nonprofits, so Lindsey handles much of the accounting, hotel reconciliations and other office work. Agency owner Vivianne Pommier got to know Lindsey from 2001-2003, when the agency booked the Freedom team's travel, and immediately knew she was hiring a winner and a true team player. Today, she marvels at Lindsey's high performance on and off the field. "Lori is not only a huge asset around the office-she is the first one to volunteer for community service events, fulfill every job responsibility and also manages to further her personal goals as a soccer player," says Pommier.

Talk about a tight schedule. For a Washington Freedom player, staying in shape means sticking to a strict training regimen. A typical day for midfielder Lindsey includes a two-hour Freedom practice in the morning, several hours at West End Travel and then four to six hours in the afternoon and evening coaching youth soccer teams in the Freedom's coaching program. When she does have time to relax, Lindsey loves visiting the Dupont Circle area to have a picnic or just to lay out in the sun. A favorite brunch spot is Logan Tavern at 14th and P Streets, where you might see her indulging in a stack of blueberry pancakes. After all, a girl's got to eat, and all those activities can make a person hungry!

Freedom Head Coach Jim Gabarra recognizes his players' juggling acts and admires their dedication. He tries to plan practices accordingly. "I don't have the power to add extra time to a 24-hour day, but I can certainly support my players by tailoring the practice schedule to make their weeks go a little bit smoother." With each player expected at four to five practices a week, staying in shape takes time, energy and extraordinary commitment. Strength and conditioning coaches from the Freedom's official sports medicine provider, National Rehabilitation Hospital (NRH), help the players stay focused and build stamina safely.

Freedom player Joanna Lohman knows all about building stamina and optimizing performance. While

graduating from Penn State with a 3.98 GPA, Lohman led the team to the NCAA Final Four and was captain of the US National U-21 team, a prestigious role. By the time she graduated, the women's professional league had ceased operating. Yet, her love of the game inspired her to stick with the sport and wait for the league to return, hopefully by 2008.

Today, Lohman plays as a midfielder for the Freedom and works as a successful commercial real estate broker for Tysons Corner-based Studley, Inc. She represents tenants who wish to align their real estate goals with their business goals, and her work includes renegotiating leases, finding new space and getting creative in making deals work. Luckily, she found a mentor in broker Craig Lussi. They work as a seamless team and support each other's schedules as they represent some of Virginia's and D.C.'s top associations, law firms and corporations.

In addition to the 30-plus hours per week at Studley, Lohman practices with the Freedom at least four times a week and independently works out with weights another two. She credits daily core and strengthening exercises for building strength and overcoming an earlier back injury.

One day a week, she gives herself a break from exercise and makes time for friends and fun. She frequents the popular Georgetown restaurant, Old Glory, Bethesda's South Beach, Union Jack's and Tommy Joe's and hot spots at Baltimore's Federal Hill.

Lohman has come a long way in her personal and professional life, but this Silver Spring-native who played youth soccer for the Bethesda Soccer Club has come full circle. At many Freedom games, family members and old friends are familiar faces in the cheering crowd. "Playing in front of the Freedom home crowd is what inspires me the most!" says Lohman. Several other Freedom players also have D.C.-area roots, including University of Virginia graduate Kelly Hammond (who also grew up playing youth soccer for Bethesda) and University of Maryland graduates Emily Janss, Mallory Mahar and Kimmy Francis.

Both Joanna and Lori, currently in the U.S. National Team training pool, have been called up to represent the U.S. in international play, making their already hectic pace all the more precarious.

Is there a secret to Lohman's and Lindsey's successful balancing acts? Both women point to one overriding factor in making their busy schedules work: time management. Making lists, being prepared for the next day's activities the night before and keeping daily goal reminders help achieve success. Lohman even keeps a daily journal. "I write everything down-from a 'Things To-Do' column to a list of goals and thoughts on progress. It allows me to let go at the end of the day and get a great night's sleep," says Lohman.

When asked what advice they'd give other Washington women who are trying to achieve their goals, both players recommend breaking down goals into smaller steps. You can then track progress more easily and keep frustrations to a minimum.

As for finding that extra energy in the midst of a long day, Lindsey offers one simple tip: "Drink more water!" Staying hydrated and cutting out soda's sugar highs and lows will make a difference and give you more energy to get through the day."

With all these strategies, you may still wonder why and how Lindsey and Lohman try to do it all? How do they conduct themselves as professional athletes, but without the benefits of a professional athlete's salary? How do

they build successful, enjoyable careers and still make time for social plans? How do they play soccer before most people eat breakfast and shoot goals instead of sinking into the couch to watch television at night? "Call it the love of the game," says Lindsey, who hopes the professional league will one day return. Lindsey, who played on the 2003 Washington Freedom Championship team alongside Mia Hamm, enjoyed life as a professional athlete and dreams of another chance to play in the big leagues. "Young girls don't have enough positive role models these days and, as a Freedom player, I love showing them how important it is to play sports and live a healthy, active lifestyle."

You can see these two in action. The 2006 Freedom season kicked off with a May 20 home game and several thousand fans cheering them on. In addition to world-class soccer, Freedom games at the SoccerPlex feature a pre-game Fan Fest with face painters, interactive soccer activities, sponsor booths and giveaways. Pre-game and halftime shows and halftime contests round out the great entertainment value and fun that Freedom games offer. Tickets are \$10 each and can be purchased online at www.washingtonfreedom.com, or through the Freedom office at 443-259-0020.

Erin Mantz is a freelance writer based in Potomac, MD.

Washington Freedom July Games July 2, New York Magic, 6 p.m.

July 9, New Jersey Wildcats, 6 p.m.

July 19, Hampton Roads Pirhanas, 7 p.m.

July 30, FFV Nuebrandenburg, 6 p.m.

All home games are played at the Maryland Soccerplex in Germantown, MD.

Staying In Shape When You're Short On Time

Washington Woman asked both Freedom players how to get in shape if you only have limited time during your week. Here are their tips:

- Lohman recommends cross training, e.g., run one day, bike or elliptical the next, and switch often so you don't get bored with the same old routine.
- Interval training is also important, so you are not always going at one speed for the entire workout. Mix the 15 minutes with segments of speed and recovery.
- Resistance training keeps muscles in good condition.
- For people just starting to get in shape, begin by walking at a comfortable pace and increase the pace and time each day until you reach a running speed.
- The best scenario would be doing cardio for at least 30 minutes a day and adding on a few days of resistance training (but we are all busy women!).
- Lindsey recommends running outside 4-5 times a week for about 20 minutes, and doing push-ups and sit-ups at least three times per week.