

= Karen McDougal =

Karen McDougal (born March 23 , 1971) is an American model and actress . She is known for her appearances in Playboy magazine as Playmate of the Month for December 1997 and Playmate of the Year of 1998 . In 2001 , the readers of Playboy voted McDougal " The second sexiest Playmate of the 1990s " .

McDougal taught pre @-@ kindergarten before winning a swimwear competition that launched her career as a glamour , promotional , and swimsuit model . Since her appearances in Playboy , she has extended her career into a wide variety of appearances in mainstream media , including other magazine modeling , television commercials , and minor acting , with mixed success . She has been a successful fitness model , with multiple magazine appearances including being the first woman to appear on the cover of Men 's Fitness magazine . She starred in The Arena , a direct @-@ to @-@ video film , and inspired the creation of a fantasy art statuette and a doll .

McDougal is a fitness enthusiast , since childhood ballet study and high school sports . She is an avid motorcycle and car collector . Since her Playmate days , she has maintained a largely private social life .

= = Early life = =

Although her Playmate datasheet stated she was born in Gary , Indiana , McDougal was actually born in Merrillville , Indiana , near Gary . She is of Cherokee Indian , Scottish and Irish descent . McDougal is the first daughter in the family with 3 older brothers , Bob , Dave and Jeff , and a younger sister , Tina . Her mother , Carol , remarried when McDougal was 9 years old and the family moved to Sawyer , Michigan where she remained until college .

McDougal studied tap dance and ballet as a child . Her childhood dream , prior to teaching and modeling , was to become a ballerina . She attended River Valley High School and became a cheerleader , band member , color guard , volleyball and softball player , as well as Michigan state champion clarinet player for 4 years in a row in high school . Her high school nickname was " Barbie " due to her wholesome sweetness . After graduating high school in 1989 , she attended Ferris State University at Big Rapids , Michigan , majoring in Elementary Education .

After 2 years of college , McDougal moved to a Detroit suburb where she taught pre @-@ kindergarten , before being persuaded to try out for a swimsuit competition . One of her professional goals has always been to open a learning center for children , but she has put those plans on hold to focus on pursuing roles in acting and modelling .

= = Modeling = =

= = = Playboy = = =

In 1997 , McDougal tried out and won her local Venus Swimwear swimsuit competition in Michigan , earning her place at the international final in Florida . Her victory caught the eye of Playboy photographer David Mecey . Soon after that she was approached by Playboy for a test shoot at Playboy Studio West which she accepted . Upon completing her test shoot , she was promptly selected to return for a complete photo and video shoot and chosen as Miss December 1997 . Her pictorial , which was shot by photographers Richard Fegley and Stephen Wayda , has a winter theme and its outdoor portion was shot in the snowy fields near Park City , Utah . Her video , the " Playmate Profile " , was featured on Playboy TV soon after her magazine debut .

In May 1998 , she was announced to have been chosen by Hugh Hefner and fans as Playmate of the Year (PMOY) of 1998 at a luncheon at the Playboy Mansion . As her reward , she was awarded \$ 100 @, @ 000 and a special edition silver Shelby Series 1 convertible with a customized Michigan license plate " PMOY 98 " . McDougal 's PMOY pictorial was featured in the July 1998 issue of Playboy where she also appeared on its cover . In contrast to her Playmate pictorial , her

PMOY pictorial has a tropical theme and its outdoor portion was shot at Saint Lucia . According to her interview in her Playmate of the Year " Video Centerfold " which was released soon after her PMOY issue debuted , she believes her physical imperfections are her " funny " smile , her crooked pinkies which she inherited from her grandfather and her " ugly feet " which she wishes others would not look at . Because of the popularity of the VH1 television series " Pop @-@ up Video " at the time , one of the segments in her PMOY video was done as a Pop @-@ up Video parody filled with factoids about her and Playboy . During her appearance on The Magic Hour to promote her PMOY issue , McDougal demonstrated her signature pose , straddle split on TV in front of a live studio audience .

Many regard her as a favorite Playmate because of her combination of beauty , " Girl next door " appeal and curvaceous figure , according to a November 2001 Playboy poll in the special edition Sexiest Playmates . In that issue , she was voted " Readers ' Choice No.2 Sexiest Playmate of the 1990s " , with Pamela Anderson taking the No.1 spot . In an online chat in 2002 , McDougal expressed interest in posing nude for Playboy again if offered .

= = = Fitness modeling = = =

In March 1999 , McDougal became the first woman to appear on the cover of Men 's Fitness magazine . Since then she expanded her career into fitness modeling by appearing in fitness and body building magazines such as Muscle & Fitness (January 2000) , Physical (June 2004) and Iron Man (October 2005 , January 2006 , June 2007 and November 2009) . She appeared in a 10 @-@ page pictorial in the January 2006 issue of Iron Man as " Hardbody " of the month , and on the cover of its October 2005 and June 2007 issues . McDougal returned as " Hardbody " of the month in the November 2009 issue in a pictorial together with fellow Playmate Katie Lohmann . In interviews , she stated that her transition to fitness modeling was unintentional .

= = = Other appearances = = =

Playboy released a limited edition doll in 2002 based on the likeness of McDougal and emphasized that it was an accurate model of her statuesque physique . Her collectors ' figure was originally slated to be the first in the series to be released , however it was delayed due to redesigns . McDougal collaborated with fantasy sculptor Bill Toma in creating a limited edition bronze statuette titled Warrior Princess in 2003 . McDougal posed for Toma in the creative process and the pedestal of each statuette bears her signature .

In early 2004 , McDougal appeared in a photo spread in the Italian edition of Vogue with fellow Playmates , Pamela Anderson , Audra Lynn and Tishara Cousino . It was a tennis themed men 's fashion spread shot in Las Vegas by photographer David LaChapelle . The spread contained her first published nudes since her contract with Playboy expired years earlier . She traveled to Japan to be one of the eye candies for Scott Hall and Kevin Nash (The Outsiders) when they wrestled at Yokohama , Japan in May 2004 . McDougal also participated in the 50th Anniversary celebrations of Playboy throughout the year at Las Vegas , New York and Moscow with other Playmates past and present .

McDougal appeared in the 2005 Playmates at Play at the Playboy Mansion swimsuit calendar as the calendar girl of July . The calendar was the inaugural Playmates at Play calendar and it was shot on the grounds of Playboy Mansion in 2004 . It was Playboy 's first attempt at creating a non @-@ nude swimsuit calendar featuring Playmates similar in style with those from Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Issue . While all Playmates appeared in bikinis in the calendar , McDougal and Hiromi Oshima were the only two Playmates actually wearing only painted on bikinis .

In November 2006 , she was part of a trio of Playmates (along with Tina Marie Jordan and Katie Lohmann) that appeared in the " Celebrity Playmate Gift Guide " pictorial of Splat magazine , a paintball enthusiasts magazine . The pictorial showcased new paintball products for the 2006 holiday season . McDougal has also appeared in various pin @-@ up posters , calendars , magazine covers , advertising campaigns , promotional events , clothing , swimwear and lingerie

catalogs following her success as Playmate of the Year .

= = Television and film = =

McDougal appeared in a series of sexy television commercials for XFL football league on NBC and UPN with the theme of " Cheerleaders " . These edgy XFL commercials with implied nudity backfired and caused a controversy as they were deemed too risqué by the media , they were quietly withdrawn before the launch of 2001 XFL inaugural (and final) season .

In 2001 , she co -@-@ starred with Lisa Dergan in The Arena , a Roger Corman @-@ produced , direct @-@ to @-@ video movie directed by Timur Bekmambetov . The entire production was shot in Russia . In her feature film debut , McDougal 's character , Jessemina , is a slave girl who is forced into fighting as a female gladiator in an Ancient Roman colony by its corrupt governor . The role offered McDougal her first opportunity to act in a dramatic role and to demonstrate her physical abilities with the movie 's sword fighting sequences . The movie , initially titled Gladiatrix was deemed to be a knockoff of Gladiator . Although the movie was not well received , it has turned into a lesser known cult film .

McDougal was one of twelve contestants in the search for the new host succeeding Brooke Burke for Wild On ! in 2002 (known as Wild Off !) . The contest took place at The Palms in Las Vegas . Each contestant was given a " wild " challenge to complete and McDougal 's challenge was to dress up as Cleopatra and roam the casino at Caesars Palace in the arms of an actor dressed up as Julius Caesar for a day . She completed her challenge and was considered an early favorite by fellow contestants , but did not advance to the final round of 5 contestants . Cindy Taylor was the eventual winner of Wild Off ! .

After winning the local try out in Los Angeles , McDougal advanced to the 2004 WWE Diva Search special held at the Beacon Theatre in New York as one of 28 finalists . The special was televised live on Spike TV with a live audience on July 15 , 2004 . McDougal , clad in a black bikini , survived 2 rounds of elimination during the 2 hour special , only to be eliminated by the judges in the last round at the end , just prior to the selection of the final 10 contestants eligible for online voting .

McDougal appeared as one of the interviewees in E ! True Hollywood Story of Hugh Hefner first broadcast on April 9 , 2006 . She briefly described her experience at the Playboy Mansion when she was Miss December 1997 . In summer of 2006 , McDougal appeared as a fitness model demonstrating all the exercises in a fitness training DVD with Hollywood celebrity fitness trainer Valerie Waters .

McDougal is interested in pursuing hosting duties of TV or sports shows . She has guest hosted TV programs (Wild On ! on E ! , VIP Access on Showtime) , appeared in other TV programs (such as : Lovespring International , Anger Management , The O 'Reilly Factor , Playmate edition of Russian Roulette , etc .) , movies (cameos in Joe Dirt , Charlie 's Angels , Grind , The Girl Next Door and Raising Helen) and music videos with singer David Lee Roth .

= = Business venture = =

In 2010 , McDougal became one of the owners of Pharmore Alternatives , a company selling various health and wellness supplements . She attended the 2011 AVN Adult Entertainment Expo in January 2011 to promote its products .

= = Personal life = =

McDougal as she is an avid motorcycle rider and car collector . Her first modelling assignment was being a promotional model at a Harley @-@ Davidson bike show in Detroit . In 2004 , she bought a pink custom @-@ built motorcycle , and entered an Easyriders sponsored motorcycle competition in Pomona , where her motorcycle won the Best Radical Custom award . She also professes to be a chocoholic and junk food junkie even when she considers herself a " health nut " . In her spare time , she works out 5 days a week to stay in shape . When she was Playmate of the Year of 1998 , she

had a healthy BMI of 19 . Although she is a swimsuit model , she is not a proficient swimmer because of her aquaphobia . She is an animal lover and owned two cats : Brittany and Brandy . McDougal has two tattoos , one is a tattoo of a cat on the second toe of her right foot to honor her cats , the other is that of a cross behind her right ear as a reminder of her spirituality .

McDougal 's family members initially did not support her decision to pose for Playboy . Eventually , they embraced the fact and her mother appeared in interview segments of her Playmate of the Year " Video Centerfold " as a sign of support . Her family has a history of breast cancer , and McDougal , who acknowledges having breast implants , is an advocate of breast cancer awareness . As of 2007 , McDougal is residing in Los Angeles and Phoenix , Arizona . In March 2008 , McDougal appeared in a topless pictorial and interview in Spanish magazine Interviú in which she discussed her relationship with Bruce Willis at the time .

= = Quotes = =