

Have you ever come across a lady who has won 11 Regional titles, nine national titles and three international titles in martial arts? Well I have and here's her story.

One evening I was losing the will to live while I was sprinting on the treadmill. My lovely trainer Danielle Piermatei Silva, or Dani, decides to be extra nice to me and pump up the speed (woo hoo) I think she likes the fact that I'm in agony! I totally regret telling her how much weight I gained over spring break.

Often when I feel like giving up she jumps on the other treadmill and runs with me, she always jokes around and motivates me, to make me feel confident – but I'm still in pain!

Finally it's water break time, it's my favourite part of the lesson because we talk about the most random things because she is my trainer and best friend. However today she shared her inspirational story about what happened to her and her seriously amazing achievements.

Dani was born in Brazil; she's the youngest of four girls although sadly her mum passed away when Dani was still very young. Her dad and hero, Hilton Leão Da Silva, is an international master of ju-jitsu (8 degree black and red belt) and still in the game even after 65 years. That led to her passion for ju-jitsu from a young age. She started when she was just four years old – that's when she started beating up the boys!

At that time it was unusual to have a young girl skilled in ju-jitsu, so that's why she had to compete against boys, but she still won. Her sisters envied her as she always made her daddy proud. They teased her by saying, "just give yourself five more minutes and you'll turn into a boy." She laughed it off believing that if you're doing what you love, nothing will stop you.

Danni always pays attention to details and says, "Come on Shamma! Only a little bit more, when you see the results in the mirror you will say, 'Dani! I love you. BIJO!!!' [that's kisses in Portuguese]."

***Shamma Bin Hamooda, age 16***