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▶ RUTHI
COLLINS

BACHELORETTE
OF THE YEAR

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JANUARY 2013



PROVING THAT
50 IS THE
NEW **30**

“O.k., but I am doing this on one condition... it benefits you.” Truer words have never been spoken, or perhaps in this case multered under her breath with an undercurrent of what-have-I-just-agreed-to-attitude. Ruthi Collins had to say something to stop her friend’s giggles as Collins learned that she had been nominated for C2’s first-ever bachelorette of the year contest.

Collins should have seen it coming. Her friends had been suggesting for some time that if the magazine ever opted to swap out the bachelors in favor of a bachelorette that Collins “would be perfect” for the role. Collins received the “congratulations you’ve been nominated” e-mail as she was sitting at her nominator’s house. Once convinced to participate, she endured the daily “fill out the form” harassment that also followed from her friends. She obliged.

Collins’ friends describe her as hilarious and loyal. The loyalty appears to go both ways, as Collins’ run for the title was solely to spread the wealth. Literally. She took on this journey to help her recently widowed friend get back on her own road to recovery.

It is a close-knit group of girlfriends that keeps Collins in check. Their “club” of nine is unbreakable. “We don’t read. We don’t play cards. Our motto is ‘Drink more. Eat less.’ Sound right up your alley? Too bad. This is a closed club, with no room for expansion, I’m told. “We’re like August National,” Collins quipped. “We have rules. Although, I am the president and what I say goes.” (Stay tuned for a spin-off story on the “club” if we can’t join ‘em, at least we can read about them.)

A sales director for the Coastal South Carolina territory of a national wholesale company, Collins gets to spend her time in and around the waterways and Lowcountry byways that she loves. “Beach, pool, golf, repeat,” she tells me. When her toes are in the sand, she is usually reading. And yes, if you must know, she did read the *Fifty Shades of Grey* trilogy. Twice. In fact: “I read it so fast the first time I missed most of the story,” she said. Enthralled, she read well into the night and picked it back up again while blow-drying her hair in the morning. “Yes, I’m partial to romance novels and smut books. You’re in, you’re out. It’s an easy read, and I don’t have to keep track of any suspects,” she said.

Now, fine bachelor gentlemen of the Lowcountry, if the appreciation for “romance” novels, a solid golf

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▶ **RUTHI COLLINS**
CROWNED
CH2'S FIRST
BACHELORETTE
OF THE YEAR

ARTICLE BY
COURTNEY HAMPSON
PHOTOGRAPHY BY
MARK STAFF

swing and insight into the inner workings of August National has you parting, there are a few more things you must know. It’s going to take a southern man (or one hell of an actor) to win Collins over. Part Tennessee and part South Carolina, Collins appreciates Southern values. “I have no prejudice against northerners; I just tend to be attracted to what I know. I grew up the South. My mom cooked dinner every night. I have six strands of pearls... you know...” she trailed off. Southern or not, Collins’ strong will is ever-present as she commands a room, whether telling a story or simply laughing her unmistakable laugh. Part cackle, part guffaw, her laugh may be her signature color.

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▶ RUTHI COLLINS



Divorced for 14 years, Collins has heard a million pick-up lines. "I'm fun in a bar," she said, "but not great on the pick-up part. A man is going to have to approach me. I'm not looking." If you're going to move in for the kill, be forewarned: men, you'll also have to win over Collins' 24-year-old daughter, Cathryn, who got engaged this past fall. (Almost clearing the way for Collins to start a new chapter in her life, but who am I to suggest that? Hint, Hint.)

Let I tell you everything, I thought it important to ask Collins to share some insight in her own words:

COURTNEY HAMPSON: What is the quality you most admire in a man?
RUTHI COLLINS: Family values.

CH: What do you most value in your friends?
RC: That at any given time, one or all will come to my rescue. I guess you would call that loyalty.

CH: Who are your heroes?
RC: My sister Rozzie. She is "older and wiser." My ex-father-in-law, Dr. Warren J. Collins; he is such a fabulous man. And, John Calamar, my surrogate "Daddy."

CH: What are your pet peeves?
RC: Stupidity.

CH: What is the most important thing in your life?
RC: My daughter's happiness. She gives it to me, so I want to reciprocate.

CH: If your house were on fire, what is the one thing you would save?
RC: My sister Scoot. (Strange, I know, but I



HER PASSION FOR HER FAMILY AND FRIENDS IS UNBREAKABLE. HER BLUNT DELIVERY AND HUMOR TELLS ME THAT YOU'LL NEVER HAVE TO GUESS WHERE YOU STAND WITH HER. BUT TRULY, IT IS HER ACTIONS THAT SPEAK LOUDER THAN HER WORDS.

have her ashes. Her real name is Roberta, but my dad nicknamed her Scoot when she was a baby. She lived here on Hilton Head Island when she passed away from a rare cancer. She was cremated, and I have her. Yes, crazy I know, but her three children couldn't decide what to do, so she's with me.)

CH: What has been your most embarrassing moment?
RC: Please...they are daily.

CH: Would you take the last sip of milk for your morning coffee?
RC: No, I drink mine black.

CH: What was the last movie that made you cry?
RC: Do you watch the Hallmark channel? Some no name actors, boy gets girl, saves the day, Christmas movie. I'm watching one today as a matter of fact.

CH: What is the biggest misperception others have about you?
RC: That, I never get depressed.

CH: Secret shame?
RC: I don't know that this is a secret, but I love to read historical romance novels.

CH: What is the greatest gift you have received?
RC: All the people that have passed through my life and who continue to

CH: What television show best depicts your life?
RC: Gilmore Girls. I wanted to say Sex and the City, but there is no sex and no city!

It is important to note, that the above questions were sent to Collins via e-mail. She replied back via e-mail, and every answer had an exclamation point at the end of the sentence. I'm no psychiatrist, but to me this suggests Collins' live-for-the-moment zeal for life. Her passion for her family and friends is unbreakable. Her blunt delivery and humor tells me that you'll never have to guess where you stand with her. But truly, it is her actions that speak louder than her words. Her humble gift to her dearest friend is really all I needed to know. ☺

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