

MODEL

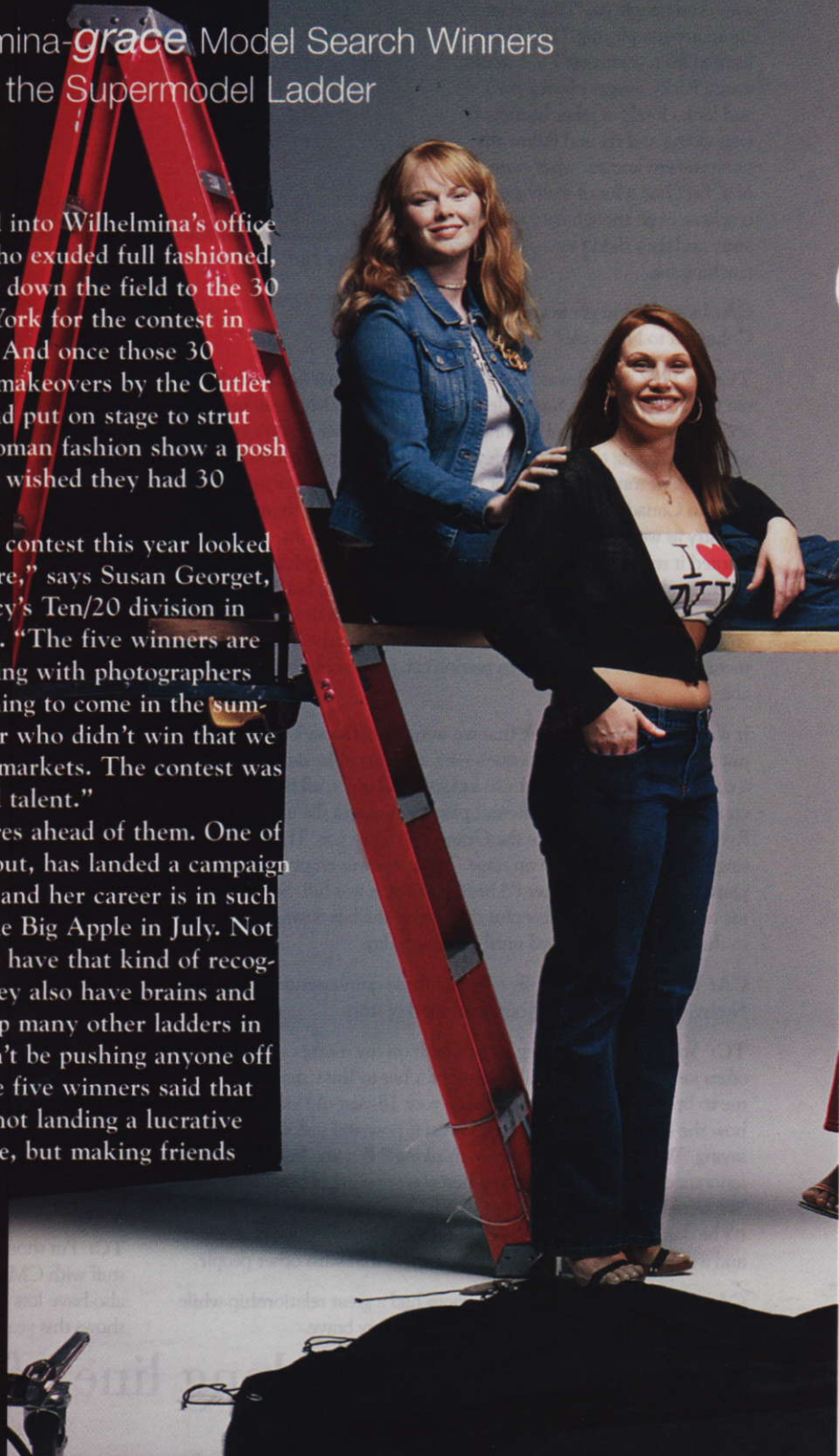
The 2002 Wilhelmina-*grace* Model Search Winners
Get Set to Climb the Supermodel Ladder

BY JILL JOHNSON

More than 5,000 photos flooded into Wilhelmina's office last year from radiant women who exuded full fashioned, all-American beauty. Narrowing down the field to the 30 lucky finalists flown into New York for the contest in February was a Herculean task. And once those 30 finalists were transformed with makeovers by the Cutler Salon and Make Up For Ever and put on stage to strut their stuff in a Liz Claiborne Woman fashion show a posh Manhattan nightspot, the judges wished they had 30 modeling contracts to give away.

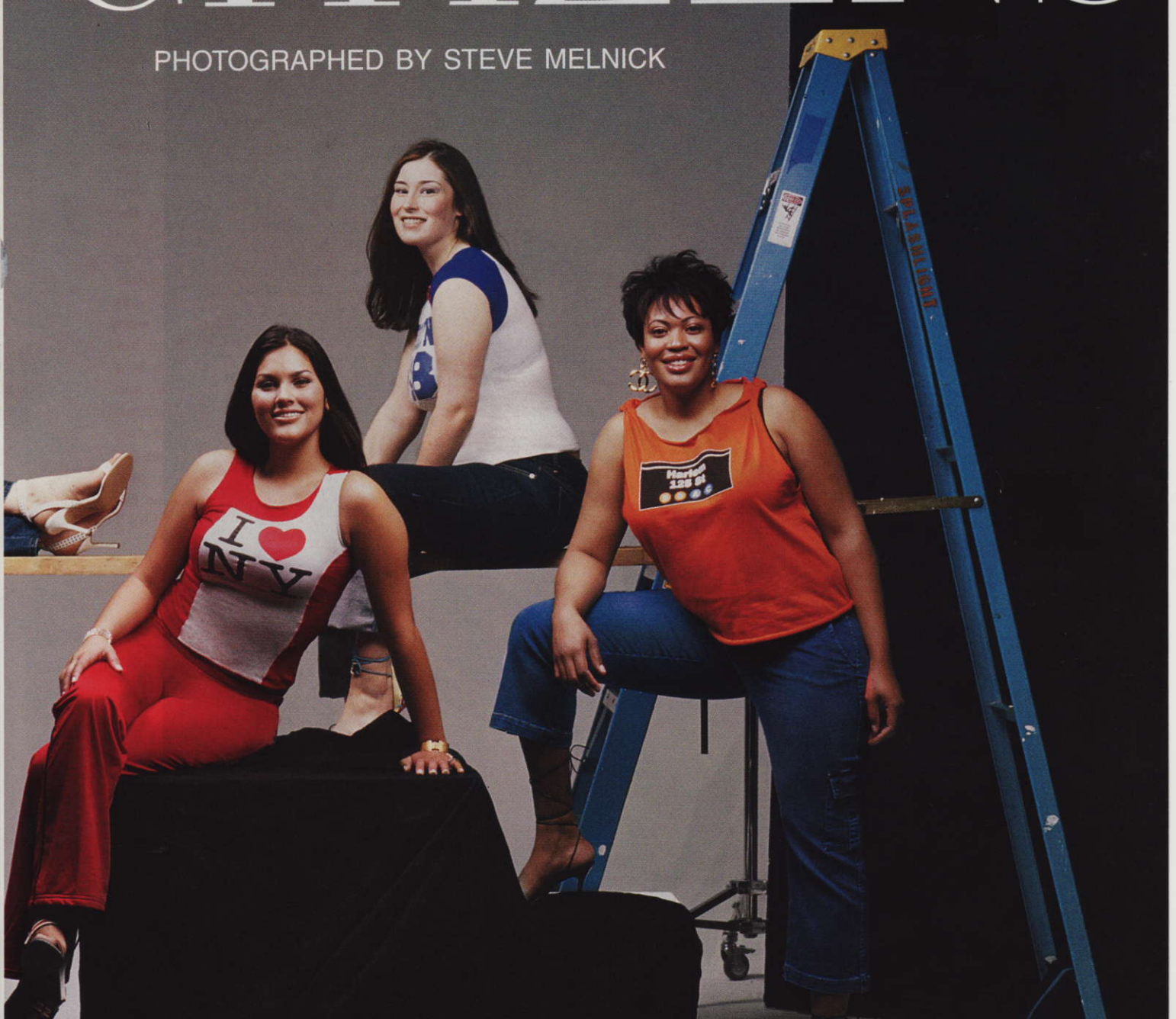
"The women who entered the contest this year looked more like models than ever before," says Susan Georget, director of the Wilhelmina agency's Ten/20 division in New York and one of the judges. "The five winners are all fantastic. One is up here testing with photographers already, and the others are planning to come in the summer. Plus, there are three or four who didn't win that we are placing with agents in other markets. The contest was great for us and for *grace* to find talent."

The winners have bright futures ahead of them. One of last year's winners, Kimberly Stout, has landed a campaign with the clothing company INC and her career is in such high gear that she's moving to the Big Apple in July. Not only do these photogenic women have that kind of recognition to look forward to, but they also have brains and aspirations that will take them up many other ladders in life. These grounded leaders won't be pushing anyone off to make it to the top: each of the five winners said that the best part of the contest was not landing a lucrative contract or getting a taste of fame, but making friends with the other finalists.



CITIZENS

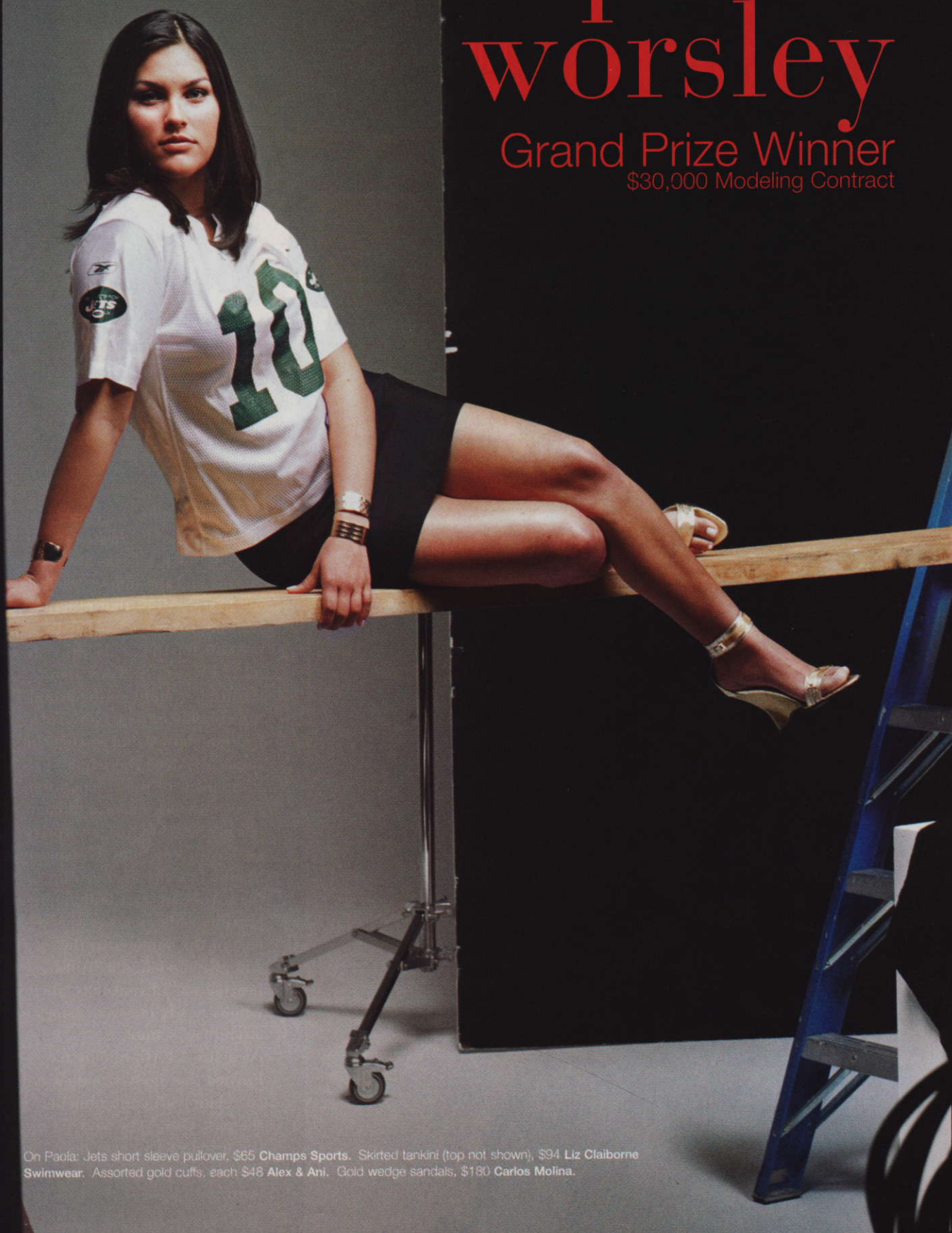
PHOTOGRAPHED BY STEVE MELNICK



From left: Denim jacket, \$58 **Gap**. Tank top, \$45 **Seventy Washington**. Jeans, \$30 **Old Navy**. Ankle strap sandals, **Colin Stuart for Victoria's Secret**. Tulip pin \$23, jeweled pin \$29 and blue rhinestone choker \$13 **Girl Props**. Mesh zip up hoody, \$89 **DKNY Jeans**. Cotton tube top, \$38 **What Goes Around Comes Around**. Boot cut jeans, \$32 **Old Navy**. Diamond name plate, \$425, gold alphabet charm necklace, \$95 **Fortunoff**. Strappy sandal, \$375 **Giuseppe Zanotti Design**. I love NY tank \$58, **What Goes Around Comes Around**. Track pants, \$50 **Reebok**. Rhinestone earrings, \$10, rhinestone bracelets, \$5 each, and gold bracelet, \$5 **Girl Props**. White gold and diamond ring, \$750 **Fortunoff**. Striped sandals, \$285 **Giuseppe Zanotti Design**. Brooklyn baseball tee, **Stylist's own**. Jeans, \$32 **Old Navy**. Flower pin, \$15, **Girl Props**. Lace up pumps, \$400 **Giuseppe Zanotti Design**. Subway station T-shirt, \$19 **NYC Subway Line**. Jeans, \$134 **Womyn**. Gold dangle earrings, \$4 **Girl Props**. Gold ring, \$1,095 **Fortunoff**. Ankle-tie sandals, \$130 **David Aaron**.

paola worsley

Grand Prize Winner
\$30,000 Modeling Contract



On Paola: Jets short sleeve pullover, \$65 Champs Sports. Skirted tankini (top not shown), \$94 Liz Claiborne
Swimwear. Assorted gold cuffs, each \$48 Alex & Ani. Gold wedge sandals, \$180 Carlos Molina.

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KODAK E100VS

42

STANFORD

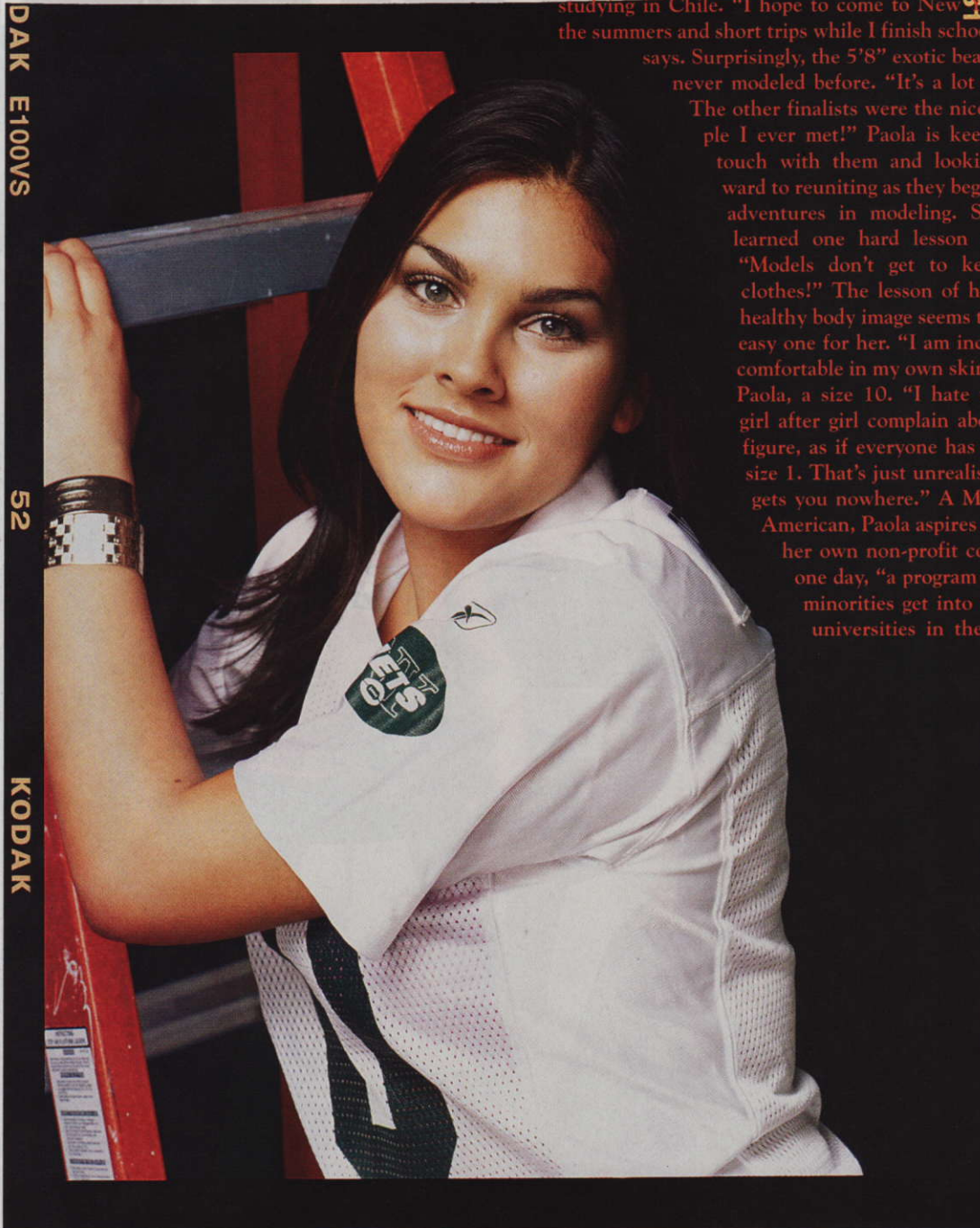
"This is every girl's dream," says Paola Worsley, the 19-year-old Stanford University student who took the top spot in the contest. A communications/Spanish language and literature major, Paola is wrapping up her sophomore year and will spend part of next year studying in Chile. "I hope to come to New York for the summers and short trips while I finish school," she says. Surprisingly, the 5'8" exotic beauty has never modeled before. "It's a lot of fun.

The other finalists were the nicest people I ever met!" Paola is keeping in touch with them and looking forward to reuniting as they begin their adventures in modeling. She has learned one hard lesson so far: "Models don't get to keep the clothes!" The lesson of having a healthy body image seems to be an easy one for her. "I am incredibly comfortable in my own skin," says Paola, a size 10. "I hate to hear girl after girl complain about her figure, as if everyone has to be a size 1. That's just unrealistic and gets you nowhere." A Mexican-American, Paola aspires to start her own non-profit company one day, "a program to help minorities get into the top universities in the U.S."

DAK E100VS

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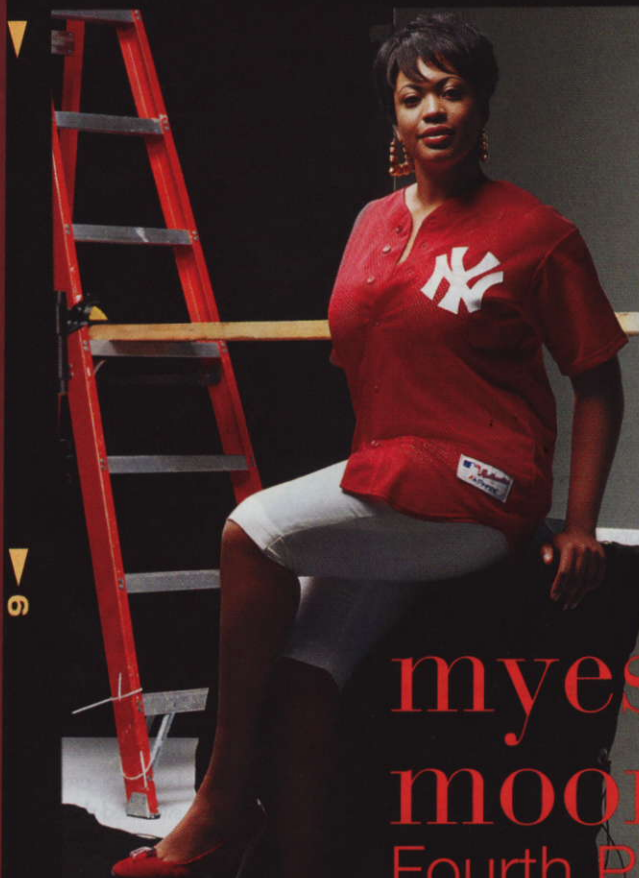
KODAK



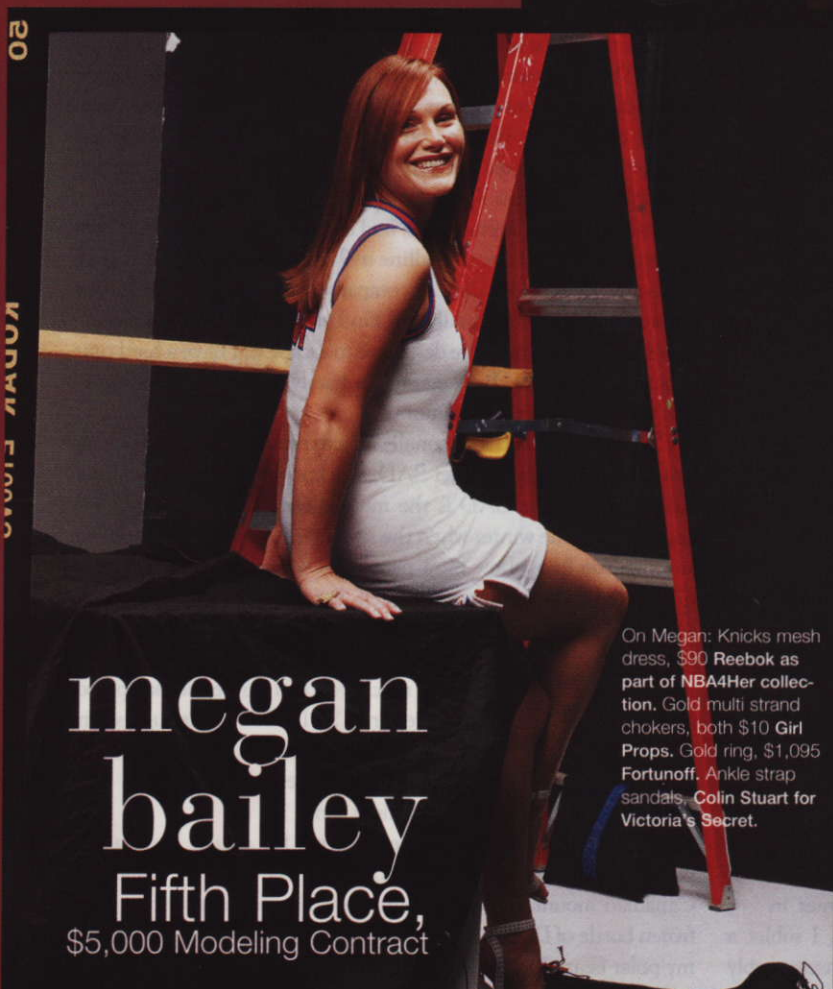
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"I thought someone was playing a joke on me," says Myesha, about the news that she had made it to the finals. The 25-year-old Texas native loved watching everyone get their makeovers in New York. At 5'9" tall and a size 14, Myesha explains that she's been working on her own transformation for the past year. "I've been trying to be a girl," says the self-proclaimed tomboy, "and look what happened!" Now Myesha, who is working on a doctorate in immunology at Emory University in Georgia, is juggling classes and modeling bookings. She has already landed jobs with Rich's (department store) and Goody's through Click, the agency that recently signed her in Atlanta. "As soon as school is over—within the year—I plan to move to New York," says Myesha. "I had planned to pursue a career in science, but now it depends how modeling goes." Science may just have to wait.

On Myesha: Yankees jersey \$60, Champs Sports. Cotton pedal pushers, \$55 Liz Claiborne Woman. Hoop earrings, \$7 Girl Props. Scrunchy pumps, \$315 Giuseppe Zanotti Design.



myesha
mooney
Fourth Place,
\$5,000 Modeling Contract



megan
bailey
Fifth Place,
\$5,000 Modeling Contract

On Megan: Knicks mesh dress, \$90 Reebok as part of NBA4Her collection. Gold multi strand chokers, both \$10 Girl Props. Gold ring, \$1,095 Fortunoff. Ankle strap sandals, Colin Stuart for Victoria's Secret.

"I've had lots of photographer and artist friends tell me that I have a really expressive face," says Megan Bailey, another beauty from Tennessee. "That's why I decided to enter the contest." Her friends were right—the photos she sent in won 31-year-old Megan her first trip to the Big Apple. "It was absolutely wonderful," says Megan, "and I got a very positive impression of New York City." A good thing, since it may be her new home soon. "Wilhelmina wants us to move up there eventually. I'll commute back and forth until I can make it a permanent move," she explains. Megan just finished her second undergrad degree, a B.S. in sociology (her first is a B.S. in food and nutrition) and she currently works at the post office. "I really would like to get my Ph.D. in sociology—I love learning," says Megan. In the meantime, the 5'8", size 14-16 model has another mission: "I want to be a spokesperson for the plus-size market!"

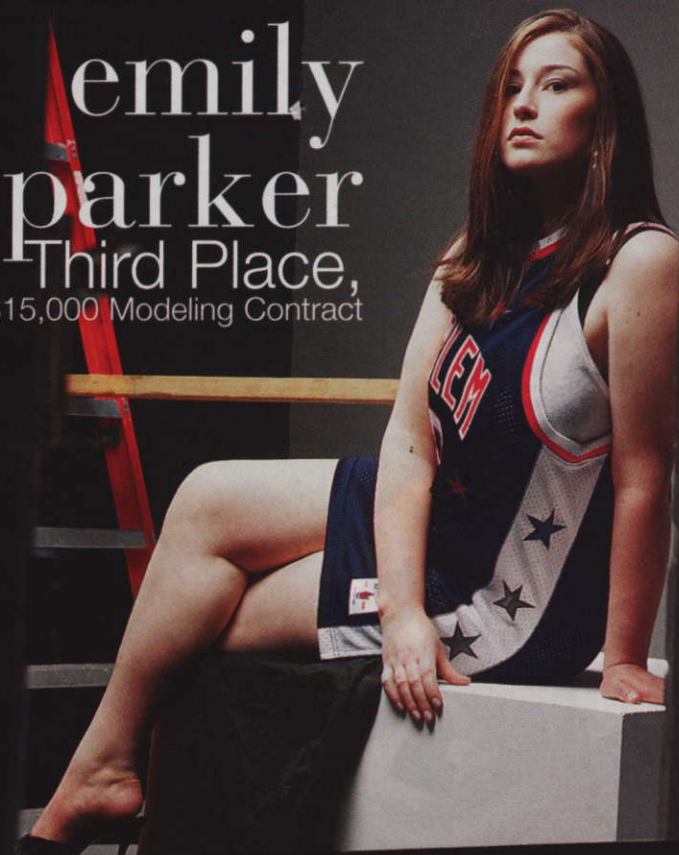
Editor: Amy Berlin.
Hair: Ramie Roth for Cutler Salons.
Makeup: Delcar Braun and Lucy Camarena for Make Up For Ever.

Emily Parker, a 19-year-old from Indiana, was thrilled to be invited to New York and pleasantly surprised to find camaraderie rather than cat fighting among the finalists. "Everyone was so cool," says Emily, a statuesque 5'10" and size 16-18. "The experience—especially walking on the runway—helped me become less inhibited and shy." Emily currently works in daycare at a wellness center, and she's passionate about playing basketball and volleyball in her free time. Her other passion is writing, and she and brother are collaborating on a screenplay. "I hope to move up to New York within the next year. I'd like to get some bookings and save up some money first," says Emily. Eventually she aims to segue into the movie industry, but not via the typical model-turned-actress route; she and her brother plan to start a production company some day.

On Emily: Harlem Globetrotters jersey, \$75 Champs Sports. Cotton tank, \$10 Jockey. Hoop earrings, \$7 Girl Props. Mules, \$150 Carlos Molina.

emily parker

Third Place,
\$15,000 Modeling Contract



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KODAK

shelby stack

Second Place,
\$15,000 Modeling Contract



On Shelby: Mets jersey, \$30 Modell's Sporting Goods. Denim mini skirt, \$38 Torrid. Gold hoop earrings, \$210; 20" gold chain, \$415; 24" gold chain, \$850 and 30" gold chain, \$395 Fortunoff. Gold choker, \$68 Alex & Ani. Leather pumps \$90 Pelle Moda.

"I was in beauty pageants growing up," says Tennessee native Shelby Stack. "I was always the biggest and the tallest, but I did my best." All of that practice walking runways has finally paid off for the 5'11" 20-year-old. "I wasn't nervous about strutting it and looking proud," says Shelby, of her New York fashion show debut during the finals. "I loved the whole excitement of the competition." A social work major and member of the Chi Omega sorority at Austin Pey State University, Shelby has already been up to New York to start building her portfolio. She plans to spend part of the summer in the city and give modeling a "full-hearted try." Eventually Shelby, who is newly engaged, hopes to attend law school. As a size 14-16, Shelby has learned that body size does not correlate with contentment. "In the past year," she says, "I'm the heaviest I've ever been, but I'm also the happiest I've ever been."

KODAK EIUUVS

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