

# Oh Honey, Won't Ya Let Me?

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More and more women are going to school to run with their husbands after the kids are grown or after retirement. This is specially true of the wives of owner operators. This is a way for the couple to finally get to spend time together and to make more money.

Recently a lady I know that had done this very thing, ran into a problem with her husband. He received a call that his elderly father was in the hospital. The prognosis at the time was that the father would probably survive, but was very ill. Because the truck was under load, and the hubby didn't trust the wife's ability to handle the truck by herself, even though she has been driving for over a year and felt confident she could do it, he didn't fly home. His father died two days later.

Many men that have run solo for years, and then have their wives come out to drive with them, do a disservice to those wives by not allowing them to develop their skills fully. They won't allow the wife to back up to a dock or into a parking spot, drive in weather, drive during the day in traffic, drive through big cities or through mountains. This effectively cripples the wife's ability to take over in case of emergency.

In a discussion of this topic, another non driving lady said how sweet it was that the husbands were so protective of their wives, and that it was the husband's job to be so protective. She went on to say that women should allow their husbands to do this.

If one were only talking about husbands protecting a wife's honor, personal safety from a thief or mugger, or making sure she took care of herself, I might agree. But in the harsh reality of trucking and team running in particular, the type of protection we are talking about is smothering, inhibiting and in some cases can not only cost one money, but is down right dangerous.

I am reminded of the lady driver down in Dallas in the last couple of years, whose husband was shot while backing into a spot at a truckstop. He got her and the truck away across the street but died after doing so. Of course the company would of sent someone to take the truck back, but being a lady driver, she did it herself. What would she have done if she had been prohibited from learning all aspects of the job by her husband? Tucked her head down and lost the pride she obviously took in doing her job?

These days to get one's cdl, it takes not only knowledge but rudimentary skills to pass the tests required. Those skills are not easy to learn in the couple of weeks of school. This would indicate that anyone getting a cdl would have the basics fairly well down and would want to drive. This is a given. A wife going to run with her husband looks to him to train her completely.

So, what do you do if your hubby doesn't want to allow you to do all aspects of the job? I do not advocate taking the tire thumper to him, though I am sure some of you have felt like it. I would start out by explaining that you want to be able to do all aspects of the job. (Some women don't want to, and that is ok too.) If he is still resistant, then ask him what would be better, him being right there to teach you or laying dead or in a coma in the hospital (God forbid) and you having to wing it without his help. This does happen where a driver is injured, gets very sick or even dies while on the road leaving his wife to take over running the truck, if owned, by herself, bring in the truck or deliver a load. You might also explain to him that at least you will still have

a career if something happens to him, be able to keep the truck without having to hire a driver and be able to support yourself adequately.

I am sure it is not worth fighting hard enough to ruin the relationship over, but if you really want to be a competent lady driver, you may have to gently stand your ground.

Ya'll stay safe out there!