

RESCUE OF THE MONTH.

SURF LIFE SAVING
NEW SOUTH WALES



JULY/AUGUST 2019

Club: Kiama SLSC

Lifesavers involved: Rhys Dawson, Bradley Dawson and Toby Streamer

On Sunday 4 August 2019, a 58-year-old rock fisher was fishing at Little Blowhole, Kiama when his rod became jammed. He lost his footing attempting to free the rod and fell into the water. He was fully-clothed and was wearing a lifejacket and fishing cleats.

The fisherman's brother was unable to notify emergency services because he could not speak English. The rock fisher was in the water for an hour before passers-by noticed him in considerable distress and called Triple Zero.

The Surf Life Saving NSW State Operations Centre was contacted by Police and tasked the Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter, the South Coast Branch volunteer Duty Officer, the Kiama Jet Rescue Boat Service and the Kiama SLSC callout team.

Rhys Dawson, Bradley Dawson and Toby Streamer from Kiama SLSC responded to the incident, quickly mobilising an IRB. They soon located the rock fisher floating 400 metres off East Beach headland.

The lifesavers reported that he was extremely cold and very appreciative when he was rescued. Despite

wearing an approved lifejacket, he was exhausted after being in the water for so long.

The fisherman was transported to East Beach for treatment because conditions were too rough to return safely to Kiama. Multiple ambulances were dispatched to the incident and paramedics treated the patient for mild hypothermia and water ingestion.

Conditions were hazardous at the time of the incident with large sea swells along the NSW coast. Surf Life Saving NSW and the Bureau of Meteorology had issued hazardous surf warnings for the weekend.

A police officer who also attended the incident sustained injuries, including a broken leg, while attempting to locate the fisherman on the rock platform. Volunteer lifesavers and the NSW Fire Brigade treated the police officer before paramedics arrived.

Surf Life Saving NSW commends the response of the Kiama volunteers. Had it not been for their fast response, readiness of the assets and their skill in navigating the IRB in rough conditions, the likely outcome would have been loss of life.



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Joel Wiseman
Director of Lifesaving
Surf Life Saving NSW

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George Shales
President
Surf Life Saving NSW