



NEW SOUTH
WALES

RESCUE OF THE MONTH

— MARCH 2019 —

Club: Wamberal Surf Life Saving Club

Lifesavers involved: Max Taylor

Max Taylor (11) from Wamberal SLSC on the Central Coast, showed life skills and rescue experience beyond his years on Tuesday 12 March 2019 when he rescued a swimmer from a deadly rip current.

Growing up on the sand and in the waves as a Nipper and member of the Wamberal Express Boardriders club, Max knows his beach well. Little did he know he would be called on to use this local knowledge, fitness and skill to save a life.

At 5.30pm, Max returned to shore from surfing at Wamberal and headed across the beach to the carpark to meet his Dad. He heard someone calling for help.

Max recalls looking around to identify where the cries were coming from and seeing a group of people on their phones calling for help. Beyond the group he noticed a swimmer struggling in a rip current.

With council lifeguard patrols over for the day and no other surfers in the water, Max took it on himself to attempt a rescue, using his experience and knowledge of the surf to assess the situation and paddle out to the swimmer.

The tide was low and the wave size was about a metre and breaking heavily on the sandbank. The testing conditions forced Max to be smart with how he used the rip to his advantage to get to the patient as quickly as possible.

After negotiating the break, Max paddled out to the swimmer and looking back at the shore, noticed he was almost 150 metres from the beach.

The swimmer was panicking and fatiguing fast. Max got off his board and pushed it over to his patient to put space between them so he wasn't dragged underwater. He then instructed the patient to climb onto the board.

After he had the patient balanced and floating on the board, Max pushed and kicked the board from behind back to shore.

On his return to the beach another surfer and member of Wamberal SLSC and an off-duty Central Coast lifeguard Harry Carpenter arrived. Harry was able to assist Max and his patient up the beach and check they were both okay.

Back on the beach, the patient admitted this was his first swim in Australia. He admitted he just dropped everything on the beach and walked into the water. He was overwhelmingly thankful for the fast response from young Max Taylor.

Max's Dad James had made his way down to the beach after wondering where his son was and saw the group on the beach assisting both the patient and Max after the rescue. He was surprised to see the group shaking his son's hand.

While not fully comprehending the enormity of what he'd done, Max was happy with his actions nonetheless. Actions which more than likely saved a man's life.

Director of Lifesaving
Joel Wiseman

President of Surf Life Saving NSW
George Shales