



NEW SOUTH  
WALES

# RESCUE OF THE MONTH

— OCTOBER 2018 —

**Club:** Soldiers Beach SLSC

**Lifesavers involved:** Matt Neale, Ian McGaw

On Sunday 28 October lifesavers from Soldiers Beach SLSC made the decision to close the beach for most of the day due to the hazardous conditions. Patrol 4 then spent their shift proactively advising people to stay out of the water and erected red warning flags at all public access points.

Shortly before 5pm Patrol Vice Captain Matt Neale was watching a group of young surfers who had entered the surf from the rock platform at the northern end of the beach. He realised one of the males had come off their board and was struggling to keep his head above the waves.

Matt alerted the other members of the patrol to the developing situation and paddled out to the stranded surfer on a rescue board. After negotiating several powerful sets he reached the young man where it quickly became apparent that the 16-year-old was not a strong swimmer.

During the trip back to shore both Matt and the young surfer were knocked off the rescue board by the turbulent backwash from the rock shelf. While the remaining surfers were assisted from the water by members of the patrol, fellow lifesaver Ian McGraw

assisted Matt in using the large rip to swim the surfer away from the dangerous rock shelf.

The two lifesavers then spotted a break in conditions and were able to get the surfer safely back to shore.

After talking to the young man they discovered that he'd never been to Soldiers Beach before and he had only been surfing on a few occasions.

The incident highlights not only the importance for lifesavers to understand the unique challenges of their beach but to proactively watch out for members of the public who may get into trouble. The lifesavers involved displayed great teamwork and skill and without their efforts the outcome could have been very different.

Director of Lifesaving  
Stuart Harvey

President of Surf Life Saving NSW  
David Murray

