

RESCUE OF THE MONTH.

SURF LIFE SAVING
NEW SOUTH WALES



FEBRUARY 2022

Club: Australian Lifeguard Service - FNC

Lifesavers and Lifeguards involved: Mariah Jones, Hugh Stewart

If not for the exceptional Board skills of a pair of Far North Coast-based lifeguards, choppy conditions caused by heavy wind on the Tweed River Bar could have seen a serious incident become far worse after a man was thrown from his individual canoe on Valentine's Day.

Around 12.30pm on 14 February, lifeguards were advised of a man with a quickly-sinking ocean man canoe being sucked out through the Tweed River. The man did not have a lifejacket.

Lifeguards Mariah Jones and Hugh Stewart responded and, fighting 3.5m swell, reached the man in distress and kept him afloat as Tweed River Police negotiated the bar in their vessel.

Once the boat was close enough, Mariah and Hugh assisted the man in getting aboard before attaching tow ropes to the sinking canoe, allowing the Police to escort the man and his canoe back to shore for assessment by paramedics.

Considering the conditions at play – 3.5m southerly swell and 25 knot southerly winds – the pair executed the rescue almost out of a textbook, illustrating their advanced Board skills not only in reaching the man in distress, but keeping him afloat.

A tube would not have been helpful in the conditions, so the lifeguards' skill level and decision making to complete the rescue as they did is to be commended.

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads 'Joel Wiseman'.

Joel Wiseman
Director of Lifesaving
Surf Life Saving NSW

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads 'George Shales'.

George Shales OAM
President
Surf Life Saving NSW