RESCUE OF THE MONTH.

SURF LIFE SAVING
NEW SOUTH WALES

AUGUST 2022

Club: ALS Port Macquarie

Lifesavers and Lifeguards involved: Darren O'Rafferty

The actions of an Australian Lifeguard Service lifeguard were behind the major rescue of a man and his out-of-control vessel at Town Beach on the state's Mid North Coast.

Responding to the incident at around 11.15AM on Tuesday 11 August, Darren O'Rafferty jumped to action after he observed a man fall from a boat whilst attempting to navigate the bar.

Assisted by the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) Shark Tagging Boat, which was in the area attending to a drum line alert, and a member of the public on a jet ski, the man, who was in his seventies, was quickly pulled on board the DPI vessel to be assessed. He was wearing a life jacket.

It would later come to light that the man had been attempting an inbound crossing of the bar when his vessel was hit on the side by a large wave, at which time he bumped his head on the console and was thrown overboard.

With the man's vessel still out of control, Darren would call on his skipper and coxswain training as he jumped on a Marine Rescue jet ski which had arrived on scene and use it to transport himself to the boat, climbing aboard and safely navigating it outside of the bar.

Described by onlookers as 'a scene from a James Bond movie', the rescue has been recognised as the Surf Life Saving NSW's Rescue of the Month winner for August 2022.

Joel Wiseman
Director of Lifesaving
Surf Life Saving NSW

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