

# SurfLIFE

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SURF LIFE SAVING  
NEW SOUTH WALES



## Swansea-Belmont New State Champs Host

The state's largest surf sport event is moving to a new home next season after Swansea-Belmont SLSC was awarded host rights to the 2017 and 2018 NSW Surf Life Saving Championships.

It will be the first time the pinnacle event returns to Blacksmiths Beach since 2010, and the Hunter based club is delighted to secure the Championships for at least the next two years.

The 2017 event includes Lifesaving, Age, Masters, and Open competitions and takes place across three weekends next March. It is anticipated that around 7,000 competitors will enter the Championships which caters for athletes from the Under 9 age group right through to those aged in their 70s.

Hosting the event is also a boon for the Lake Macquarie tourism industry with research revealing that the State Championships generate on average almost \$10 million in direct and indirect revenue throughout the duration of the carnival.



Photo: Ken Bellette

## Batemans Bay Unveils new Clubhouse

**Lifesavers at Batemans Bay had plenty of reasons to celebrate after their revamped clubhouse was officially opened on Australia Day.**

Bega MP Andrew Constance, SLSNSW President Tony Haven AM and Far South Coast Branch President Tony Rettke were among the dignitaries on hand to witness the opening of the building which began construction in April 2015.

In an effort to renovate their rundown clubhouse, the club previously received \$305,000 in funding under the NSW Government's Surf Club Facility Grant Program and were able to add to this with a significant fundraising push in their local community.

"This new building will also help the club bring new members on board and we hope to increase membership tenfold

for next season," said Ken Bellette, Vice President of Batemans Bay SLSC and Project Leader.

"Our previous clubhouse was condemned completely and we couldn't use it for anything. So we've revamped it all and now we can hire the hall out which will help us with funding for the club."

The successful revamp of the club became a community project with many businesses in the Batemans Bay area keen to get on board.

"The whole community got involved in the project, and a number of businesses gave us greatly reduced rates on everything for which we are very thankful. We were around \$50,000 short of finishing the building when the Batemans Bay community chipped in again so we could complete the project," Mr Bellette said.



## Community Education Gathers Momentum

**It's been a busy but productive few months for the Surf Life Saving Education team who have continued to find new ways to communicate surf safety messages, including a successful Beach Safety Workshop for Hornsby's Chinese community.**

The April workshop was supported by SLSNSW, Surf Life Saving Central Coast, Community Migrant Resource Centre and the Australian Asian Cultural Association.

Toowoona Bay on the state's Central Coast was a natural fit as host as many within the Sydney Chinese community prefer the

short trip up the M1 to enjoy rock fishing and other coastal activities.

"It's one of the best events that I have ever been involved with throughout my time in Surf Life Saving. The response to the workshop was marvellous and it was just a fantastic day," said Chris Manning – President of Toowoona Bay SLSC.

During the workshop the participants were taught useful tips on where to swim at the beach, the role of the lifesaver, and what to do if you get into difficulty. They were also shown how to identify rips and witnessed the different rescue techniques and skills before getting the chance to hit the water themselves.



## The Economic Value of Surf Life Saving to the NSW Community

For every dollar that is invested in Surf Life Saving in NSW there is a return of 46 dollars. That was just one of many findings a new report into the economic benefits of Surf Life Saving NSW has found.

The report “The Value of Surf Life Saving NSW to the Community” examines the direct economic value of Surf Life Saving in NSW to the community and the benefit-cost ratio. It is estimated that the combined economic benefits to the community as a result of drowning and injury prevention is worth \$1.9 billion.

Preliminary findings from the report were delivered to NSW Parliamentarians at a function hosted by the Hon. Melinda Pavey MP, Chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Surf Life Saving group in late 2015 with the final report published in time for the end of the 2015/16 summer.

What was brought to stark reality in the report was just how many deaths and permanent incapacitations there would have been in the absence of volunteer lifesavers.

It was estimated that there would have been an additional 320 drowning deaths along the NSW coastline in 2014/15 if lifesavers had not been present while a further 234 people would have suffered significant permanent injuries. The estimated value of lifesavers in preventing drowning deaths is \$1.35 billion and permanent incapacitations are \$565 million.

“This report clearly highlights the significant economic benefit of lifesavers to the community,” said Surf Life Saving NSW CEO Phillip Vanny AM.

“As a not-for-profit organisation with limited resources, this report demonstrates the considerable contribution that Surf Life Saving makes to the community both economically and socially.

“What is clear from the data is that there is substantial value in investing in Surf Life Saving,” Mr Vanny concluded.

**Photo:** Lifesavers with Melinda Pavey MP at the Parliamentary Friends of Surf Life Saving NSW function, NSW Parliament House, 2015.

### 2014/15 Key Season Facts:



**\$34 mill**

The value of volunteer labour is calculated at **\$34 million**.



Surf Lifesavers performed **5902** rescues, **138,775** preventative actions, and administered **9199** first aid treatments.



It's estimated that had lifesavers not been patrolling there would have been an additional **320** drowning deaths costing the community **\$1.35 billion**.



It's estimated that had lifesavers not been patrolling there would have been an additional **234** people who would have suffered permanent incapacitations costing the community **\$565 million**.



There would have been a further **1000** incidents of minor injuries without lifesavers.

**1:46**

For every dollar invested in SLS there is a **return of \$46**.



## Successful Season For Lifeguards

From the beaches of the Tweed through to the coastline of the Bega Shire, the men and women of the Australian Lifeguard Service (ALS) have experienced another successful season.

This year more than 300 lifeguards patrolled over 80 locations servicing contracts from July through to April.

“I would like to thank all our team members for their exceptional efforts throughout the year,” ALS NSW Manager Brent Manieri said.

**“There were a number of challenges throughout the year as there is every season but our lifeguards handled everything thrown at them with the highest degree of professionalism and skill that the public has come to expect from the ALS”**

Mr Manieri also said that one of the most pleasing aspects of the season was the continuing strengthening of relationships with coastal councils, which included a number of key contract extensions over the last 12 months.

“These relationships are something we value highly and it is important that we all work toward the common goal of keeping visitors to our beaches safe,” he concluded.

Although almost all contracts have concluded following the April NSW School Holiday Period, ALS Lifeguards will continue to patrol Byron Bay’s Main Beach 7-days-a-week throughout the winter months.



Photo: ALS Supervisor, Phil Rock

## Port Stephens Lifeguards

### Focus on Safety

**A decision made last year by Port Stephens Council to provide additional lifeguards and equipment for the 2015/16 Patrol Season has been warmly embraced by the community.**

For the first time each of the three beaches (Fingal, One Mile, Birubi Point) were manned by two lifeguards and a jet ski providing an additional level of support for those tasked with protecting the beachgoers of the Port Stephens region.

Australian Lifeguard Service Supervisor Phil Rock is the man responsible for supervising the team of lifeguards who operate within the area and he praised the Council for its foresight.

“We’ve been incredibly lucky to work with a Council which has been prepared to implement changes. Port Stephens Council is extremely supportive of the service we provide and we look forward to working with them into the future as we strive to ensure that both locals and visitors can safely enjoy their time in the area. There have been a lot of positive changes over the years.”

And he should know after almost 30 years of providing lifeguard services to the community.

Phil’s journey to becoming a lifeguard supervisor at Port Stephens began approximately 200 kilometres to the south at Manly on Sydney’s Northern Beaches.

“I first became a lifeguard at Manly largely because all my friends were doing it. I was there for around 10 years before I joined the ALS in 2004 and became lifeguard supervisor for Port Stephens in 2008.”

He said his formative years played a key role in his subsequent career advancements.

“As a supervisor, my role varies greatly throughout the season as I have a lot to do with the training, rostering and development of our lifeguards.

“I think what helped me a lot initially was the fact that I had experience on a busy beach. You learn how to spot things among a crowd which is a useful skill for all lifeguards,” he said.

Like other areas of the state where the ALS is contracted, Port Stephens has changed over the last decade.

“There are definitely peak periods throughout the patrol season with a lot of new residents moving into the area in recent years,” Mr Rock said.

“I would say the school holidays are our busiest times with plenty of interstate travellers taking advantage of the close proximity of the airport to enjoy some time at our beautiful beaches.”



# Lifesavers Lower Flags On Patrol Season

**“Our volunteers have done a sensational job not only on patrol, but also spreading the message of surf safety to visitors to the beach.”**

**The 2015/16 Patrol Season ended on Anzac Day with lifesavers taking the opportunity to reflect on the season that was.**

The season began back in September with a ceremonial Raising of the Flags at Sydney’s Coogee Beach.

Since that first day of patrol, frontline volunteers have performed over 6,500 rescues, faced a near doubling of first aid treatments almost 17,000, and initiated over 150,000 preventative actions.

They’ve battled searing heat, large crowds, and call outs to a variety of emergency situations. Through their volunteer efforts they have cemented their reputation in the eyes of the public as a respected icon of the Australian summer.

Almost seven million people have attended a NSW beach this season. There was a significant increase in crowds throughout the December – January holiday period.

Consecutive hot days and the annual influx of tourists to popular holiday destinations alongside an unusually warm autumn has meant a busy time for members.

NSW Director of Lifesaving John Restuccia said many lifesavers have gone beyond the call of duty this season.

“Our volunteers have done a sensational job not only on patrol, but also spreading the message of surf safety to visitors to their beach. Everyone who wears the red and yellow uniform is an ambassador for the movement, and our 21,000 active patrolling members are a credit to their clubs and families,” said John Restuccia.

“Winter is a great time for our volunteers to enjoy some well-deserved time off, but as is always the way our clubs and branches will be putting in place plans for next season with many opportunities for our members to upskill being offered over the coming months.

“On behalf of the Board of Directors of Surf Life Saving NSW, I would like to thank everyone for their efforts throughout the year,” Mr Restuccia said.

Lifesaving Manager Andy Kent agreed.

“The 2015/16 season has been a successful but busy season for our members who have coped with a variety of challenges.

“I hope everyone uses the opportunity to recharge over the winter break and for those involved with our callout teams, we thank you for your ongoing efforts. Our Emergency Response network plays an integral role in keeping the public safe even when there are no patrols on the beach.”

Unfortunately there have been 45 coastal drownings so far this financial year, which is significantly higher than the last few years.

This can be attributed to a variety of factors including a doubling of diving-related incidents, but overall the highest incidence of drowning involves those who get into difficulty while swimming with males still being overwhelmingly represented.

The majority of these fatalities occurred outside regular patrol times at beaches where there were no lifesavers present. Surf Life Saving NSW will continue to push vital safety messages to the public throughout the year with a particular emphasis on the dangers of swimming at an unpatrolled beach.

*\*Final data from the 2015/16 season will be published in the Surf Life Saving NSW Annual Report.*

**6,524**

RESCUES

**16,869**

FIRST AID

**154,626**

PREVENTATIVE ACTIONS

**6,755,243**

BEACH ATTENDANCE



## Project Blueprint Nears Completion

**The end is in sight for a state wide project that has assessed the risks at every accessible beach and rock platform in NSW over the last four years.**

Since 2012, Project Blueprint, funded by the NSW Government’s Water Safety Black Spots Fund has been conducting extensive onsite research and working with stakeholders including Councils, National Parks and Wildlife Service, and the local community through a series of public forums.

The final phase of the project incorporated site visits to Great Lakes, Kempsey, Port Macquarie, Greater Taree, Port Stephens,

Lake Macquarie and Newcastle Local Government Areas.

During the final site visit to Newcastle and Lake Macquarie, the Project Blueprint team assessed 15 kilometres of coastline between Stockton and Burwood, and a further 34 kilometres between Burwood and Catherine Hill Bay bringing an end to a project that has covered over 1700 kilometres of coastline and assessed more than 1100 locations since 2012.

NSW Operations Manager Adam Weir said that the completion of the project wouldn’t have been possible without the

contribution of the many stakeholders.

“From the beginning this project has been about building solid relationships and working towards a common goal of reducing the drowning rate in NSW.

“It has been a logistical challenge for the team but they handled all that was thrown their way,” Mr Weir said.

He also noted the contributions from members of the public who attended forums or made their insights on their area known to members of the team.

“In a research project such as this it is our experience that some of the best information can be gleaned from talking to people who know the area intimately.

“Everyone involved with this project should be proud of their work and we look forward to continuing to play an active role in reducing risks along our coastline,” he concluded.

The reports from Phase 4 of the project have been submitted to the respective Councils and land managers with a final report encompassing the journey of Project Blueprint to be prepared soon.

It is anticipated that this body of work will be used to guide future drowning prevention strategies in NSW.

## Life On The Frontline

**Volunteers from all walks of life were recognised for their efforts during National Volunteer Week held in May.**

As one of the largest volunteer organisations in the country, Surf Life Saving NSW is extremely grateful for the contributions of all members who generously give up their time to be involved at whatever level in the movement.

### Significant Rescues:

In a busy final few months of the Patrol Season, members were involved in some significant rescues. Here are a few examples of the type of situations our frontline volunteers have experienced.

Volunteer lifesavers were among a host of emergency responders involved in a dramatic rescue attempt at Fingal Heads on the state’s Far North Coast on 25 March. A family of three including a 10-year-old

girl were washed into the sea off a rock platform and carried north by a strong rip. Six people were ultimately pulled out of the water by rescuers, but tragically one of the first into the water, a man holidaying from Queensland, lost his life in the incident.

The Ballina Rescue Boat successfully rescued an elderly man who got into difficulty in the Richmond River on 24 April. The patient had got into difficulty and was transported to the waiting paramedics.

A group of lifesavers from Bellambi SLSC ended their patrol season on the best possible note helping to successfully revive a man on 25 April. The patient had got into difficulty while swimming at the Illawarra beach. He was brought unconscious to the shore by four lifesavers, including two teenagers performing their first major rescue. After 15 minutes of oxygen therapy he was stable enough to be transported to hospital.



2015 NSW Volunteer of the Year, Glenn Clarke



Photo: The UAV takes flight over Umina  
Insert: Dr Paul Scully-Power talks about the Little Ripper Project

## Little Ripper Takes Flight

**Lifesavers at the 2016 NSW Championships at Ocean Beach-Umina were among the first to get a look at the new Unmanned Aerial Vehicle being hailed as a “breakthrough” in rescue technology.**

The Little Ripper Lifesaver© long-range UAVs will initially be trialled in three locations in NSW – Byron Bay, Hawks Nest and Newcastle over winter with a group of lifesavers who will be trained as pilots and camera operators.

Among the capabilities of this cutting edge technology is the ability to conduct aerial surveillance, search and rescue operations, shark detection and monitoring or even deploying emergency and first aid equipment including floatation devices, defibrillators and survival kits.

On hand to see the UAV put through its paces was one of the founding directors of the project, renowned scientist and the first Australian born astronaut to enter space in 1984, Dr Paul Scully-Power.

SLSNSW had the chance to catch up with Dr Scully-Power to get his thoughts on the Little Ripper Project, the challenges, and what this technology could eventually be capable of.

**Can you give us an overview of your role within the program?**

I’m one of the founding directors of Little Ripper Lifesaver and what we’re trying to do is something in the national interest. As you are probably well aware the Westpac Rescue Helicopter is an Australian icon and what we’re trying to do is bring that

into the 21st century using these UAVs which are really a mini helicopter that can fly automatically.

**We’re currently at the point where we are only just glimpsing what this technology can do – how long has the idea for this project been in the pipeline?**

We have been working on the concept for a number of years. We actually used smaller versions of what you could call drones during Hurricane Katrina and the technology is now so much more advanced. They can now fly an automatic course, stop, rotate, take photos and so much more.

**What are the challenges for operating in the unique Australian environment?**

The challenges of operating here are the same as UAVs face worldwide. You are flying in airspace which means there are other planes including light aircraft and helicopters. So that means we have to fit in with all the rules and of course be visible to air traffic control. Once we get through those hurdles you will see integration with UAVs and normal airspace.

**From a lifesaving perspective this technology has amazing potential. What do you see as the main benefits?**

Obviously we can help people in distress, and when you say people in distress that’s more than just sharks. It’s people getting caught in rips or drowning. What we’re planning to do and what we’re developing is the technology to drop lifesaving gear to people in distress in the ocean environment.

We can drop a pod that will automatically inflate when it hits the water. It will have a life raft, which can be used to hang on to. Along with that we can deploy electronic shark repellent which is now available, and a distress beacon, and we are also exploring further than just the water to assist bushwalkers and so on.

**What is the next stage of the program?**

Well we have a six month trial which is being funded very graciously by Westpac and it’s about getting through the trial and seeing what all the applications are, and I think it will just grow and grow.

I think 10 years from now you will see UAVs everywhere. We have to be very careful to make sure that they are integrated with the national airspace. Eventually they will be used for all sorts of things like finding boats at sea, national security, bushfires, floods - I think you will see UAVs everywhere. The potential is limitless and the technology allows us to do that now.

**You must be pretty proud to see the culmination of a lot of people’s hard work take flight?**

It’s a hard working team, a very professional team, and we’re working with a whole range of people including Surf Life Saving, Westpac, CASA the regulator. That takes a lot of time and effort, but we will get there. What I want to see is a seamless integration with the rest of the aviation community.



## Junior Lifesavers of the Year Winners Announced

**Two young lifesavers have capped off their Nipper careers in grand style by taking out the Junior Lifesaver of the Year Award (JLOTY).**

Byron Vinkovic (Shellharbour SLSC) and Ella Cook (Narrabeen Beach SLSC) impressed the judging panel during the four-day development program in Sydney in April.

They were among 22 Under 14 finalists from the 11 branches in NSW nominated to take part in the annual leadership and development program which brings together like-minded young lifesavers in their final year of Nippers.

“It feels amazing and I was shocked and excited when I heard my name. It’s great to win this award as sometimes our branch isn’t recognised as much as the others so to win something this big is amazing – nothing compares to it,” a clearly delighted Byron Vinkovic said.

Like many of his peers, the young South Coast lifesaver was introduced to the beach early in life, and once he hit the water for the first time as a Nipper he was hooked.

Throughout the JLOTY program the young lifesavers participated in a variety of workshops as well as recreational activities all designed to develop the leadership potential of the lifesavers and highlight the many opportunities in Surf Life Saving.

“I’ve learned so many new leadership skills and ways of thinking. I learned a lot about self-reflection and thinking about how I could be a better person, especially through the resilience workshops and talks by previous winners of the award,” Byron said.

Ella Cook has been involved in Nippers since she was very young and believes the program has been one of the highlights of her years in Surf Life Saving.

“It was really good how quickly the friendships developed and I think that was because we are all like-minded and share a similar interest. In fact on the second day people were already saying that it felt like they had known each other for years,” said Ella.



“I can honestly say the whole experience was amazing and I got so much out of it. I’ve met some new lifelong friends and have learned so much which I can now take back to my club so all the youth members can benefit from this knowledge,” she said.

The experience of the JLOTY Program reinforced both Byron’s and Ella’s ambitions to stay involved with their clubs with both wanting to earn Bronze Medallion qualifications harbouring ambitions to eventually crew rescue craft and become leaders within the movement.

Both Byron and Ella will be honoured as part of the 2016 Awards of Excellence to be held in Sydney in August.

**Photo:** 2016 JLOTY finalists pose for a photo in their patrol uniforms.

**Photo Insert:** JLOTY 2016 winner, Ella Cook and Byron Vinkovic with their awards.

## 2016 YOM Participants

**Cooper Murphy** – Ballina Lighthouse & Lismore SLSC

**Brianna Clarkson** - Brunswick SLSC

**Kate Blunn** – Evans Head-Casino SLSC

**Lewis Warne** – Cudgen Headland SLSC

**Emily Girard** – Sawtell SLSC

**Isaac Sanderson** – Wauchope – Bonny Hills SLSC

**Stephanie Clark** – Tacking Point SLSC

**Jasmine Davis** – Crowdy Head SLSC

**Pierce Jackson** – Black Head SLSC

**Nicole Blanch** – Birubi Point SLSC

**Ashlee Seale** – Fingal Beach SLSC

**Reed Van Huisstede** – Cooks Hill SLSC

**Noah Davis** – Fingal Beach SLSC

**Jasmine Darwin** – Umina Beach SLSC

**Jennifer Webb** – Killcare Beach SLSC

**Salesi Taula** – Soldiers Beach SLSC

**Andrea Malm** – Freshwater SLSC

**Tara Ellevsen** – Collaroy SLSC

**Liam Bailey** – Mona Vale SLSC

**Sarah Brown** – Wanda SLSC

**Archy Fowler** – South Maroubra SLSC

**Gemma Weidner** – Coledale SLSC

**Jaime Carter** – Woonona SLSC

**Hamilton Reilly** - Helensburgh Stanwell Park SLSC

**Mathew Lawrence** – Nowra-Culburra SLSC

**Michael Walsh** – Mollymook SLSC

**Matt Davison** – Nowra-Culburra SLSC

**Elizabeth Halsey** – Narooma SLSC

**Alec Sinclair** – Moruya SLSC

**Madeline Grayson** – Broulee Surfers SLSC



## Young Leaders With Big Ambitions

**A group of dedicated teenage lifesavers from around NSW came together in April for a unique leadership and development program that aimed to further not only their interest in the lifesaving movement, but give them skills that they can use for life.**

The Youth Opportunity Makers (YOM) is the premiere development and networking program of its type for young lifesavers aged 15-17. Its popularity continues to increase year-on-year with a record number of people applying for the 2016 program, and the standard of applicants exceptionally high.

Run concurrently with the Junior Lifesaver of the Year program, the YOM schedule gave participants the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge about lifesaving with visits from the Westpac Life Saver Rescue Helicopter, and a behind-the-scenes look at the State Operations Centre at SLSNSW headquarters.

In order to create not just skilled lifesavers, but skilled people, the group attended a variety of workshops throughout the program including resilience training, goalsetting and presentation techniques. The current Surf Lifesaver of the Year Rosie Taliano (North Bondi SLSC) visited to talk through her journey in lifesaving, and each of the group were invited to speak about their own goals and hopes for the future.

It wasn't just the current participants who benefited from the program with the teenaged club members working closely with facilitators who played a mentoring role throughout the four days.

Many of the facilitators have themselves gone through the program in the past, and are ideally placed to highlight many of the opportunities within the lifesaving movement. By closely involving past participants the idea is to build a legacy and network of young lifesavers everywhere.

For many of the participants it's the first real chance they have had to network with other lifesavers of a similar age from all around the state, and these friendships formed could prove very useful to them in the future.

**“The YOM Program is a fantastic networking and development opportunity for these teenaged lifesavers, with the week all about highlighting the many opportunities that being involved in Surf Life Saving can bring. Many of the previous participants have gone on to hold leadership positions and the class of 2016 will be no different.”**

**- Calum Blyth, SLSNSW Development Officer**

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Photo: Stephen Chu



Ollie Signorini (centre) wins the U19 Surf Race and the Saxon Bird Memorial Trophy



## State Champs Farewell Ocean Beach – Umina

**After four years hosting the 2016 NSW Surf Life Saving Championships, competitors said farewell to Ocean Beach – Umina.**

Around 7,000 competitors aged from Under 9 through to 70+ competed at the state's largest surf sport event, generating an estimated \$10 million dollars for the local Central Coast economy in the process.

The Championships were once again proudly supported by ClubsNSW, and Surf Life Saving New South Wales wishes to express our thanks for their generous support.

In the waves and on the sand there were some outstanding performances that encompassed the true spirit of surf sports.

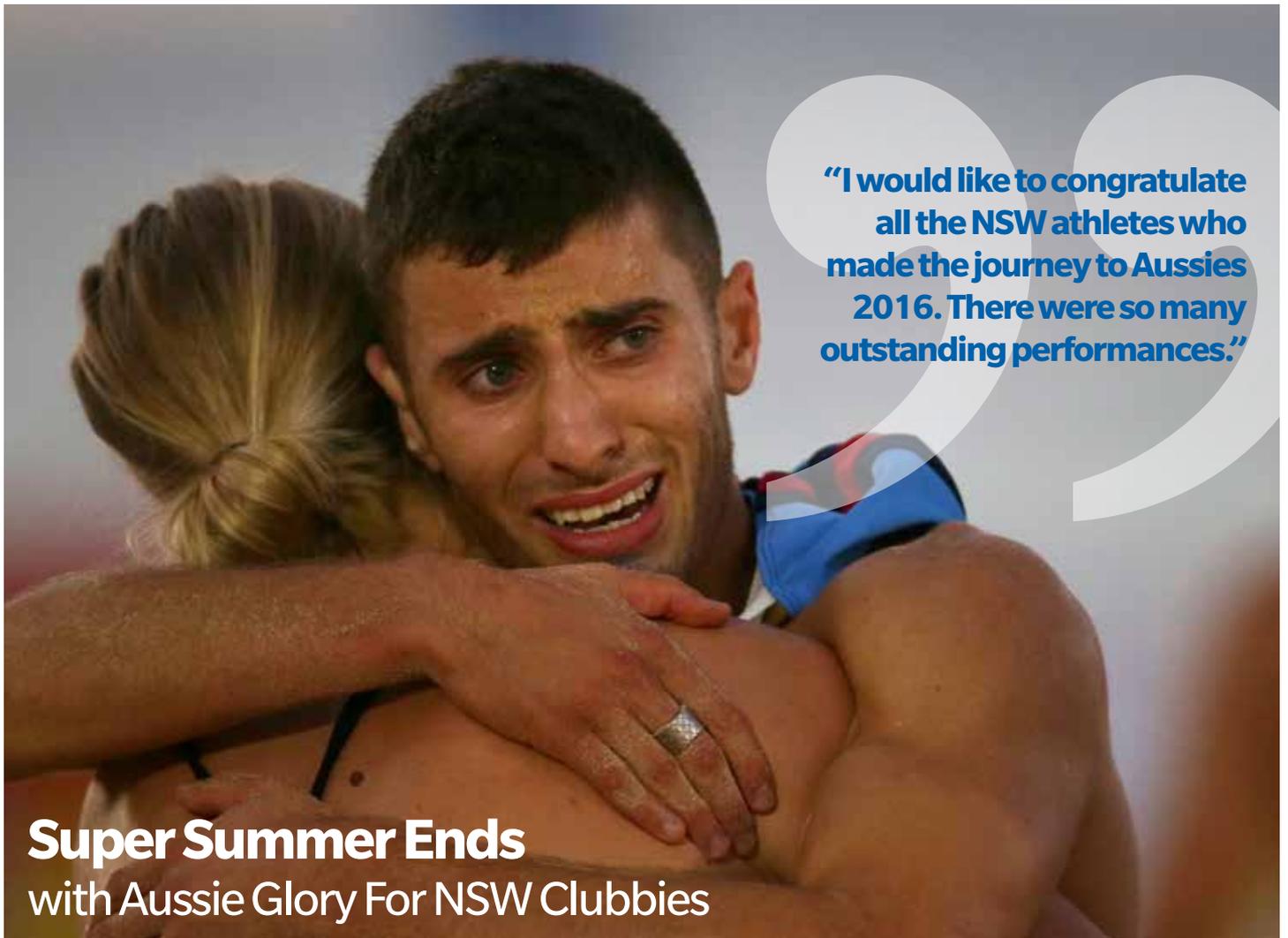
Manly's recent dominance in the juniors point score continued with the Sydney Northern Beaches club finishing ahead of Wanda and the ever improving Cooks Hill.

There was a new winner in the Masters point score with Bondi Surf Bathers downing fierce rivals North Bondi and Queenscliff.

In the Opens the battle between Newport and Manly continued with the former taking the points and Wanda wrapping up the top three.

*The 2017 and 2018 NSW Surf Life Saving Championships will be held at Blacksmiths Beach, Swansea-Belmont.*





**“I would like to congratulate all the NSW athletes who made the journey to Aussies 2016. There were so many outstanding performances.”**

## **Super Summer Ends with Aussie Glory For NSW Clubbies**

**The large contingent of NSW surf sport athletes had plenty of reasons to celebrate at the 2016 Australian Championships popularly known as “The Aussies” on the Sunshine Coast in April.**

Over 2000 lifesavers made the journey north for the nine-day competition with the Youth (U14 & 15) seeing 350 athletes from 47 NSW clubs being represented, the Masters had 867 entrants from 89 clubs, and 1728 competitors from 69 clubs competed in the Open division.

It was raining gold, silver and bronze for NSW athletes who returned with a healthy haul of medals at the season ending competition.

In the Youth division NSW finished with 17 gold, 10 silver, and 13 bronze medals, the Masters turned back the clock entering the history books with an incredible tally of 130 gold medals, 118 silver, and 125 bronze medals, while the Opens recorded 57 gold, 49 silver and 51 bronze to their credit.

Precious metal wasn't the only thing on the line with many athletes using the competition as a last chance to impress the selectors busy finalising the Australian team that will contest the World Lifesaving Championships in the Netherlands in September.

As big as the medal haul ultimately was, it wasn't enough to secure a NSW club first place in the overall point score. Top honours went to Queensland clubs Northcliffe and Currumbin with Newport in third spot. Manly LSC and Umina Beach SLSC were the other big winners with both finishing inside the coveted top ten.

NSW Surf Sports Manager Rob Pidgeon said it was an impressive end to the season for the athletes.

“I would like to congratulate all the NSW based athletes who made the journey to Aussies 2016. There were so many outstanding performances, and by all reports everyone who made the journey had a great time” Mr Pidgeon said.

“It's been a fantastic summer of surf sports and now everyone can relax and enjoy some well-deserved time off as we look ahead to another bumper season,” he concluded.





**This page:** Jemma Smith (Umina) competes in the U17 ski race before claiming gold. Photo by Harvpix.

**Opposite page (top):** Ali Najeem (Wanda) celebrates an emotional win, scoring gold in the Open 2km Beach Run. Photo by John Veage.

**Opposite page (bottom):** North Cronulla crews victorious in the Surf Boat Relay. Photo by Harvpix.

## Youth

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- Manly's Thomas Bedingfield was a dual gold medallist taking out the U14 Board and Ironman races with Zachary Roja (Nth Cronulla) claiming gold in the U14 Surf Race
- Isabellah Walker (Cronulla), Chloe Mannix-Power (Cronulla), and Bradley Hunt (Byron Bay) all claimed gold in the individual Beach Sprint
- Alexandra Rampoldi (Nth Cronulla) won gold in the U15 Female Beach Flags while Samuel Zustovic (Helensburgh – Stanwell Park) took out the U14 Male Flag event
- Chloe Gentle (Wanda) and club mate Annika Durante came first and third in the U15 Female 2km Beach Run

## Masters

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- Ross Langbein (Collaroy) led home a NSW clean-sweep ahead of Queenscliff duo David Callan and Jon Harwood in the Male 30-34 Beach Sprint
- Cudgen Headland's Nadi Canning's red-hot season continued with 5 medals including gold in the Ironwoman in the Female 30-34 Division
- Terrigal's Paul Lemmon won his ninth straight Surf Race as well as medalling in the Board Race (gold) and Ironman (silver) events in the 45-49 group.
- There was plenty of success in the Surf Boats. Batemans Bay took home gold in the Male 120 Years, Corrimal took out the 140 Years race, while Nth Cronulla finished first past the post in the 200 Years Division. Sth Curl Curl and Gerringong took out the 220 and 240 Years races respectively.

## Opens

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- Wanda's Ali Najeem blitzed the field to win his maiden Open 2km Beach Run Australian Title with Oliver Hoare also picking up a gold medal in the Male U19 event
- Cronulla's Ngairé Hadfield won gold in the U17 Beach Sprint and silver in the Flags
- Umina's Jemma Smith was named Female athlete of the championships after she won 9 medals including 6 gold
- Lizzie Welborn (Nth Bondi), Carla Papac (Cronulla) won the U17 and U19 Ironwoman respectively, while Newport's Georgia Miller claimed her third consecutive gold in the Open Female Surf Race.



## Milestone Man History Made as Coogee Clubbie Breaks Record

**One Coogee clubbie recently had plenty to celebrate becoming the longest serving member in the rich history of the proud Sydney club. Norman Hill, 92, affectionately known to all as “Nob” was honoured at a function in March to celebrate his 76th year of membership.**

The Australia that Norm was born into in 1924 was very different to the one we call home today. King George V was the reigning monarch, Stanley Bruce was the Prime Minister, Balmain beat Souths in the 1924 NSW Rugby League Grand Final, and the nation’s population was slowly approaching six million.

In 1940 aged just 16, Norm would join the surf club that would play a significant role in his life.

“One day a group of friends were down at Coogee beach and we saw the lifesavers and thought that looked like a lot of fun so we went down to the clubhouse and talked to the secretary about joining up. He asked us if we could swim 400 yards in eight minutes – we were young and fit, told him of course we could,” he said.

Like many members of his generation, war was calling and when he was 18 he made the first of two attempts to join the Air Force.

A couple of months later at the suggestion of a friend he again threw his hat in the ring but this time with a new job and name. It was a ploy that almost backfired spectacularly.

“On my next attempt to sign up I added an “s” and became Hills and changed my job to dairy farmer and when I went to the depot they had two forms. The officer in charge asked are you Norm Hill or Norm Hills? When I told him I have no idea who Norm Hill is he just looked at me and said I think you do as you live in the same house and have the same parents!”

Norm later spent three years in Europe finishing up as a wireless operator and gunner and served on the famed Lancaster aircraft.

After the war he went on to be a founding member of the Coogee Penguins winter swim club, competed in the first City to Surf, and managed to swim and run on the beach almost every morning during a 27-year-career with Caltex.

He’s seen many changes to the club and Surf Life Saving over the years with two of the most important being the inclusion of women and the formation of Nippers where he became involved in coaching the youngsters including his son.

“We used to have a social ladies club and a dance every Sunday which was great. A lot of the boys actually ended up marrying members of the first women’s March Past Team and it was a great day when they could officially become part of the club.”

A constant theme in the life of Norm Hill is his deep passion for his hometown, his surf club, and for life in general.

“I love the club and I don’t have any regrets. It has been great for me and is truly one of the best run clubs in Australia. I love coming down and while most of my friends are gone it’s still a big part of my life. In the end I can’t complain about anything.”

Norm continues to inspire the younger members of the Coogee club.

The current NSW Young Lifesaver of the Year Julien Vincent had this to say about the World War II veteran.

**“Nob Hill is an enduring legacy in Coogee Surf Life Saving Club. After being a member for more than 75 years, he’s one of our last remaining World War II veterans and has many great stories to tell of his time in service in the RAF. It’s a pleasure to know him and hear some of his many stories.”**

**Photos:** Throughout his life, Norm “Nob” Hill has never been far from the waves of Coogee Beach.

**Top left:** As a proud member of the Coogee Penguins Winter Swimming Club in 1985

**Bottom left:** as a young man (far left) as part of the 1941 R&R Team

**Top right:** Milestone Man – Norm is honoured by his club on reaching 76 years as a member in 2016

**Bottom right:** Pounding the pavement in the first City 2 Surf, 1971, with the Coogee SLSC Running Club



# Helping teams be the best of the best. **That's the Beko spirit!**

As one of the world's largest whitegoods manufacturers we understand that it takes a lot of hard work to be successful, and just like Surf Life Saving NSW we believe that giving back to the community is very important.

Helping others just because you can is a very simple philosophy. It is one that we wholeheartedly believe in and encourage others to share. Beko in the Community supports groups like Surf Life Saving NSW, so they can save lives, create great Australians and build better communities.

**That's the Beko spirit.**

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To save lives, create great Australians and build better communities.

### SUMMARY

Surf Life Saving NSW is the state's major water safety and rescue organisation, and with over 77,000 members, is one of the largest volunteer movements in Australia.

The primary role of Surf Life Saving NSW is to save lives on our beaches, while other activities include developing our members through education, leadership and surf sports programs.

There are 129 surf clubs and 11 branches in the state which are affiliated with Surf Life Saving NSW, stretching from Fingal Rovers SLSC near Tweed Heads, to Pambula SLSC on the Far South Coast.

For contributions or suggestions for SurfLIFE please contact SLNSW Media on 02 9471 8000 or [webmaster@surflifesaving.com.au](mailto:webmaster@surflifesaving.com.au)



NEW SOUTH WALES

SLNSW endeavours to ensure all information contained in SurfLIFE is correct and true, however accepts no responsibility for any inaccuracies or mistakes contained in the publication.

Surf Life Saving New South Wales

T +61 2 9471 8000 F + 61 2 9471 8001 E [experts@surflifesaving.com.au](mailto:experts@surflifesaving.com.au)

3 Narabang Way Belrose NSW 2085 | PO Box 307 Belrose NSW 2085 Australia

Fundraising Authority No. CFN11033 ABN: 93 827 748 379

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