



# “OLD MAN” AND THE SEA



**Ironman legend Dean Mercer turned back time yesterday, leaving even the most cynical on the beach daring to dream that perhaps there is a chance for a fairytale farewell.**

At 39, Mercer, who first won the Aussie Ironman title 20 years ago, left a top-class field in his wake winning his opening heat by more than 100 metres.

In his final shot at the title, Mercer looked awesome, taking the lead in the opening ski leg, before putting the issue beyond doubt with a magical piece of body surfing that drew gasps from the crowd and left him well in front going into the final board leg.

“It’s good to get a wave like that, makes you look a bit better than you are sometimes as well, but it was nice,” Mercer said

As Mercer crossed the finish line with minor placegetters Manly’s Jonathon Stock and Northcliffe’s Nathan Smith still at sea, his mind wandered to another day when the order was ski, swim, board. “You know it’s the same order as it was 20 years ago when I won, it’s funny coming here and the perspective 20 years gives, there’s no pressure, I’m just having a lot of fun.”

A dual winner of the event, Mercer later won his quarter-final, putting him through to

today’s semis at a beach that is likely to produce conditions which suit his strengths.

“There is not much of a run, once you hit the water you are straight into it because the bank isn’t very long so it sets up well for me,” he said.

Add to that the predicted two metre swells across the weekend and suddenly a Dean Mercer victory, while improbable, is far from impossible.

“Zane (Holmes) and Shannon (Eckstein) deserve to be the favourites but if there’s surf then it opens things up. That said, the cream usually rises to the top and the better guys tend to make it through, I’d like to think I’m still one of the better guys.”

Asked who were the best he has seen in 20 years at the top, Dean was definite. “Trevor Hendy was the best ever in the shorter events, in the Kellogg’s Nutri-Grain you can’t go past my brother Darren. Over the years I managed to beat everyone else in those events but never Darren, he was too good.”

The thought of the generational change taking place with Darren’s daughter Jordan winning her first Aussie gold at these championships also bought a smile to her uncle’s face. “She’s got the genes, fast over the sand and you know when she paddles a board she looks just like her dad, its uncanny how the style is the same.”

## AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE WINNERS

**Almost 300 people gathered at Observation City last night to acknowledge the achievements of SLSA members during 2008.**

Winners were:

- Lachlan Holbery-Morgan, Anglesea SLSC and Australian Lifeguard Service, Vic: DHL Surf Lifesaver of the Year, and DHL Lifeguard of the Year
- Lakes Entrance SLSC, Vic: DHL Club of the Year
- Garry Williams, Secret Harbour SLSC, WA: DHL Volunteer of the Year
- Shannon Eckstein, Northcliffe SLSC: Athlete of the Year
- Leigh Buchan, City of Perth SLSC: Coach of the Year
- Peter Connell, North Burleigh SLSC: Official of the Year
- Henry Scruton, Nobbys SLSC, NSW: Assessor of the Year
- Michael Clancy, Chelsea Longbeach SLSC, Vic: Trainer of the Year

Congratulations to all finalists in these prestigious awards.

Northcliffe craft legend Bruce Kolkka was on hand to be inducted into the SLSA Hall of Fame, joining more than 60 other individual and team greats.

The famed double ski team of Dennis Green and Barry Stuart was inducted in absentia.

SLSA’s highest award for bravery, the Meritorious Award-Silver medallion, went to Brock Curtis-Mathew, of Wollongbar, NSW, a non-member of SLSA, for his actions at Lighthouse Beach, Ballina in 2008, when he attempted to rescue his friend Peter Edmonds, who had been fatally attacked by a large shark.

Major James (Jim) Peryman from North Cronulla SLSC, was posthumously recognised for his actions in 1950 at North Cronulla, when he rescued a 16-year-old girl caught in a treacherous rip. Tragically Jim was drowned due to the weight of seaweed on his line during the rescue.

A presentation of the Meritorious Awards will be made in the Championships Amphitheatre at 10am today, while awards to the DHL Lifeguard, Lifesaver, Club of the Year and Coach, Official and Athlete of the Year will take place at 11am.

Full details of all awards can be found on the SLSA website. [www.slsa.com.au](http://www.slsa.com.au)

**INSIDE: LATEST RESULTS; ATHLETE PROFILES; MORE PHOTOS, RESCUE 2010 DETAILS. ALL CHAMPIONSHIP PHOTOS AVAILABLE ON WWW.HARVPIX.COM**





## 60 SECONDS WITH ISAK COSTELLO

**Age:** 13  
**Club:** Swansea Belmont

**Winning an Australian title would be...** my dream. Hopefully I'll do it sometime.

**Person I would most like to meet:** Pierce Leonard

**Favourite cartoon character?** Peter Griffin (Family Guy)

**How did you get started in surf?** Family has always been involved, I started in U/9 and really enjoy it.

**Who is your sporting hero?** Pierce Leonard.

**Prime minister for a day?** Make surf life saving the number one sport in Australia and put it in the Olympics.

**My mum is great because...** She takes me everywhere for training, she cooks and cleans for me.

**My mum is a dork because...** She thinks I'm a little baby.

**What song do you sing when you train?** "Kids" – MGMT.

**What's your favourite thing about Surf Life Saving?** Meeting new friends, surf camps and keeping fit.

**Which event do you most like to watch?** Ironman.



## 60 SECONDS WITH CARA LANGDENAM

**Age:** 23  
**Club:** Bulli

**Winning an Australian title would be...** the best way to end the season.

**Favourite cartoon character?** Stewie from Family Guy

**How did you get started in surf?** Always lived near the beach and I'm the youngest in my family so I got dragged along.

**Who is your sporting hero?** My track coach Noreen Parrish and training partner Marie Kay.

**My mum is great because...** She is caring and loving and is always there for me.

**My mum is a dork because...** She says random things which make me laugh.

**What song do you sing when you train?** The last song I heard on the radio before I got out of the car.

**What's your favourite thing about Surf Life Saving?** The great people you meet.

**Which event do you most like to watch?** The boats in big seas.

# THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS

**The Scarborough amphitheatre is once again set to come alive for the very popular beach flags finals this afternoon.**

The beach flags have become a real crowd favourite at the Aussies and the beachfront will be at capacity to see if Simon Harris (Northcliffe) and Melissa Howard (Kurrawa) can defend their Aussies titles.

Harris, who will be aiming for his record-equalling seventh beach flags title, is in good form after yesterday's heats and semi-finals.

"The form is pretty good. When I get it right, it's pretty comfortable, so I'm really happy with that. It's about surviving; you've only got to win once."

"If I win that will make seven, which equals the record, I'd be rapt with that, really rapt."

Local hopes will rest with Tom Nolan and Todd Edwards, both from North Cottesloe, and Nolan is looking forward to his first open final after taking out the under-19 crown last year.

"There are a lot of really good flaggers in there so I'm going to go out there and do the best I can and see how I will go, it will be very hard and fast," Nolan said.

"The amphitheatre will be full and they'll be cheering really loud, not only North Cott, but the other WA clubs, we seem to come together and cheer for each other. I'm very excited."

Harris, Nolan and Edwards will be taking on Christopher Stewart (Alexandra Heads), Aaron Stubbs, Paul Cracroft-Wilson and Morgan Foster (all Kurrawa) and Daniel Rye (Emu Park) in the final.

In the open women's flag final Howard will have to overcome Australian team representative Cara Langdenam (Bulli) and a host of other beach sprint stars. Other starters in the final are Davina Strauss (Coledale), Catherine Donaldson (Kurrawa), Hayley Atkins (Anglesea), Elly Graff (Cronulla), Emma Rynne (Northcliffe) and WA local Renee McCabe (Scarboro).

As for Grant Baldock's tip (SLSA General Manager, Surf Sports) he will be backing the favourite.

"I think for the male Simon Harris will be hard to beat and in the female Cara Langdenam will take the gold," Baldock said.

**Flags action will start at 3.30pm and from 3pm there will be entertainment from Telstra Road To Tamworth winner Morgan Evans and his band.**



*Kamikaze... No luck for the rising sun in yesterday's beach flags.*

## OOPS ... DID I REALLY SEE THAT?

**Spectator's could scarcely believe their eyes when reigning heavyweights North Cottesloe were left stranded at the start of their Open boat defence yesterday.**

What followed was just as extraordinary as the once-in-a-summer mistake from the three-time defending champions.

"It was just one of those things, completely my fault, I made a mistake, got the oar in the wrong position and it took us six or seven strokes to straighten things up, by that stage we were well and truly last," said sweep Jack Alliss.

"I thought the boys would want to throttle me, but gee they are good, I told them we were last and they just said, 'oh well we'll peg them back one at a time', and that's what they did."

Indeed the champion crew clawed back to second place at the turn and then, to the cheers of clubmates, pulled themselves over the top of a swell to shoot clear and win by five boat lengths.

"Did you see that, they gave them five start and won by five ... it's unbelievable!" screamed one fellow boatie in awe.

By day's end North Cottesloe were through to today's fourth round but Alliss was keen to avoid the hype of a history making fourth successive open boat title.

"These boys have been around a long time and not one of them is talking about four in a row," he said.

"Sure it would be nice, it would be amazing, but we are just not talking about it.

"I know it sounds like a cliché, taking things as they come and all that, but it's true, we just have to go about our work and get to the final, we honestly have not mentioned it."

### SURFTRADE

[www.surftradeshop.com.au](http://www.surftradeshop.com.au)

RUSSIES SPECIAL OFFER

# FREE RESCUE TUBE\*

\*With every Club Order of \$400 plus GST

ORDER NOW:

PATROL UNIFORMS    MANUALS / MEDALLIONS  
RESCUE EQUIPMENT    PATROL FLAGS

Visit [www.surftradeshop.com.au](http://www.surftradeshop.com.au)  
to view full range.

Call 02 9847 4900 to place your order.

\$110.<sup>00</sup>  
RRP

HURRY OFFER ENDS  
30th March, 2009.



Whatever it takes.

CREATA

# AGE 36. TITLES 36. HOW LONG FOR "THE MAN"?



Here's to you Mr Robinson... Three starts, three wins and through to the semis.

**Superstar Clint Robinson has made winning ski races as predictable as night following day and again it's been three from three on the way to today's semi-final.**

The Barcelona Olympic gold medallist, who has won a staggering 36 National titles (which just happens to match his age) has also hinted the time may soon come for him to bring down the curtain on the most successful career in Surf Life Saving history.

"It's just great to get in the water and get through without getting into any drama," Robinson said.

In all three races he was professionally quick off the beach and never headed. As for his chances on Sunday, with the swell tipped to lift, luck and experience will play their part.

"I saw it Wednesday when the swell was big, I stayed up in the hotel to avoid getting cooked in the sun at my age, but as usual the doctor (Fremantle doctor) gets up and impacts the runs, it can get pretty interesting," Robinson said.

Asked how long he could go on winning at the highest level Robinson was circumspect.

"Internationally I'm concentrating on the longer kayak races these days, as for surf I just love paddling, love coming down and being with my mates but with other things like family and all that's important in life I will have to think about it."

Pressed on when that would be, Robinson gave a smile and suggested it may be "sooner rather than later", whenever the time comes you can rest assured "the man" will go out on his terms, more than likely as a winner.

## EMMA'S FIRST

**Nothing could diminish Emma McKenzie's smile as her Scarborough success continued with her first open Aussie gold in the women's belt.**

The 18-year-old had already taken gold in the under-19 Champion Lifesaver and silver as part of the Alexandra Headland team in the patrol championship, but the belt was a like a bolt from the blue.

"It's just amazing, I can't believe it, I'm so stoked," Emma said.

In tough conditions with a heavy chop, Emma had no idea she had won until she got back to the beach.

"The chop was so big I could only see the person next to me, I just had to put my head down and get to the can as fast as I could. My team-mates reckon I won by about 10 yards but I've got no idea."

Emma's mum was one of the first on the beach.

"It was really great, she was just stoked and said it was great for all the hard work I put in."

In only the second year the event has been contested, North Cronulla's Lucy Mahoney was second with Cronulla's Jessica Lauricella third.

Emma later picked up a silver in the under-19 Tube Rescue and bronze in the Open Tube Rescue, taking her tally so far to two gold, two silver and a bronze.

The Open Tube Rescue gold was won by Northcliffe's Eloise Van Gysen, Flora Manciet, Kelly Jury and Jessica Walker with City of Perth taking silver.

• **In other results**, Northcliffe's Pierce Leonard, Zane Holmes, and Shannon Eckstein combined to win the board relay. The same trio then joined Nathan Smith to take Gold in the surf teams, giving Holmes his third gold medal in as many events.

Eckstein then matched his club mate in the gold medal count by taking out the restricted surf race.

• Cronulla's Zak Abdallaoui won the under-17 surf belt from Ryan O'Grady of Bulli and Freshwater's Jordan Burden.

• The Collaroy team of Bart Louis, Kendrick Louis, and Patrick Nicol won the under19 board relay from Warilla/Barrack Point with Burleigh Heads/Mowbray Park third. The WBP team held a strong lead into the final leg but Nicol produced an amazing paddle to catch his rival and win the sprint up the beach.

## RESCUE 2010 - EGYPT THE NEW VENUE!

**The International Life Saving Federation (ILS) has confirmed that Egypt will be the venue for the World Lifesaving Championships in 2010.**

Rescue 2010 (previously scheduled for Cornwall in the UK) will be held at Alexandria in Egypt in late September/early October – stay tuned to the SLSA website [www.slsa.com.au](http://www.slsa.com.au) for exact dates.



Mactastic breakthrough... Emma McKenzie wins her first open gold.

## FIT, FUN AND FOREVER YOUNG

**The Sydney 2009 World Masters Games are where everyday people can have extraordinary experiences. Held from 10-18 October 2009, the Games are open to everyone, not just elite athletes.**

The surf lifesaving competition will be held at Manly Beach on Saturday 10 and Sunday 11 October and is open to all competitors over the age of 30.

The Sydney 2009 World Masters Games are all about being fit, fun and forever young.

The social program is jam packed with activities, including what promises to be an unforgettable Opening Ceremony at Sydney Olympic Park in which the competitors will take centre stage, a Closing Ceremony in the heart of the city and daily events in the Sydney Olympic Park precinct and at other social hubs around Sydney. To find out more about competing, volunteering or spectating, visit [www.2009worldmasters.com](http://www.2009worldmasters.com).

SLSA is still calling for Officials - Nominations close Friday 27th March 2009

## RESULTS

**2009 Whereis® Australian Surf Life Saving Championships: Scarborough Beach, WA: Day 2**

**Men: Open: Surf Teams:** Northcliffe A, Northcliffe B, Mooloolaba A. **Surf Board Relay:** Northcliffe A, Burleigh Heads Mowbray Park A, Mooloolaba A. **U19 Yrs: Surf Board Relay:** Collaroy Red, Warilla / Barrack Point Black, Burleigh Heads Mowbray Park A.

**Female: Open: Surf Belt:** E McKenzie (Alexandra Headland) L Mahoney (North Cronulla) J Lauricella (Cronulla) **Rescue Tube Rescue:** Northcliffe A, City Of Perth A, Alexandra Headland Gold. **Single Ski Relay:** Kurrawa Team1, Northcliffe B, Burleigh Heads Mowbray Park A. **U19 Yrs: Rescue Tube Rescue:** Northcliffe A, Alexandra Headland Gold, Maroochydore 1.

**Mixed: Open: Restricted Surf:** S Eckstein (Northcliffe) H Smith (North Burleigh) M Allen (Bronte) **Surf Boat:** South Curl Curl A, Manly A, Cooks Hill A. **First Aid:** Noosa Heads, Coochiemudlo SLSC, Point Lookout. **U17 Yrs: Surf Belt:** Z Abdallaoui (Cronulla) R O'Grady (Bulli) J Burden (Freshwater)

## MARVEL MUMMY...



Alison O'Toole, husband James and little Tighe. Alison was the toast of the media yesterday, as news of the new mum's, 2 kilometre beach run Aussies victory spread.

Talkback radio, television and newspapers all wanted to catch up with Alison, who like all mums is clearly a multi tasker - quick interview, feed Tighe, light run, press conference – all in a day's work.

# DAY TWO ACTION



Smiles ... Northcliffe celebrate after the open tube rescue.



Red tide ... The under-19 board relay team from Collaroy.



Splashdown ... A Mooloolaba crew goes through the break.



New event ... Former Ironwoman Kristy Munroe leads the Alex R&R team.



The K Team... Hayley Bateup, Terri Sullivan and Teneale Hatton won the Open Ski Relay.

## WHAT'S ON THIS WEEKEND

### CITY OF STIRLING ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

#### Information Tent

Drop into the Information Tent behind the amphitheatre to find out the latest event information, entertainment options, things to see and do in and around Scarborough, Perth and regional Western Australia, plus book your travel and tours. Open daily from 7am to 3pm.

#### Children's activity area

Visit the Children's Activity area at the children's playground, north of the amphitheatre to create many exciting arts and crafts in surf lifesaving and beach themes. Other great activities include fact painting, games, bouncy castle and much more.

#### Roving entertainers

A variety of roving entertainers are scheduled to appear throughout the Scarborough Beach precinct through to Sunday.

## TURN YOUR PHONE INTO A GPS FOR FREE

While you are on the beach at the Whereis® Aussies you could turn your mobile phone into a portable GPS for free.

As part of the partnership between Whereis® and the Australian Surf Life Saving Championships, Whereis® is offering you the chance to see what life would be like with a Whereis® Navigator with a free seven-day trial.

The premium wireless Whereis® Navigator provides voice prompted, real time, turn-by-turn navigation for selected Telstra Next™ G GPS enabled mobile phones.

Add to that Whereis® is also providing swell and surf conditions reports from beaches across the country.

Whereis® is the leading provider of maps in Australia and is focused on providing the highest quality data. 100% owned by Telstra, Whereis® is a leading brand of Sensis.

## PROGRESSIVE CLUB POINTSCORE

Northcliffe 148 • Alexandra Headland 77 • City of Perth 68 • Maroochydore 52 • Manly 48 •  
Warilla / Barrack Point 48 • Kurrawa 47 • Cronulla 44 • Mooloolaba 43 • Freshwater 38

