



SEVEN UP FOR HARRIS

Northcliffe speedster Simon Harris yesterday equalled the all-time record with his seventh win in the Australian Open Flags.

Harris, was never in trouble and in the end strolled to victory after a stumble from Kurrawa's Paul Cracroff-Wilson in the final sprint. He then made another dash, to the phone as wife Kristy Cameron was waiting to hear the news.

"It's been a tough few months, Kristy has been away with the police force. I've missed her, plus I've been eating plenty of baked beans as I'm not too good in the kitchen," Harris quipped.

As for the future and trying to break the record he now holds with Redhead legend Michael Jones, Harris is not sure.

"I'll wait a few months and think about next year, right now I can't say if I will or won't compete but just to be mentioned in the same sentence as Michael is an honour."

Melissa Howard took her flag tally to five with victory over Bulli's Cara Langendam but not before a heart-stopping moment earlier in the final.

Howard and Kurrawa team-mate Catherine Donaldson were left playing a game of hide and seek after both had dived for the same flag. In their haste it was thrown well clear, leaving them searching through the sand for about 10 seconds, before Howard spotted it about three metres away and pounced.

"I couldn't believe it, the thing just vanished," Howard said.

After the win Howard was almost speechless, eventually composing herself before admitting: "I've found it hard to compose myself all day, I'm just so happy."

In the-under 19s, the sand flew in a tight contest which saw Thomas Reiken (Alexandra Heads) and Hayley Wyper (Burleigh Heads Mowbray Park) crowned Australian champions.

Reiken took first place ahead of Warren Trestail (Kurrawa) and Jake Lynch from Newport. While Wyper earned her gold after beating off Elly Graf (Cronulla) and Chelsea Maples (Kurrawa).

The under-17s also saw a tight contest which pleased the capacity crowd as Mitchell Swain (Currumbin Beach) and Hayley Openshaw (Brighton, SA) gave it everything they had to take their gold medals.

Swain took the hose and the title from the grasp of Mount Martha's Jarrod Sheppard and William Nolan (North Cottesloe), while in the women's Openshaw defeated Katie Williams



Ecstasy... Flags champion Simon Harris and Melissa Howard (below) celebrate.

(Collaroy) and Amy Murphy (City of Perth) to win the gold.

In the under-15s it was a local affair as West Australians Mitchell Cavanagh (Mullaloo) and Gabrielle Murphy (City of Perth) pleased the local crowd to win their first Australian titles.

Cavanagh overcame an unlucky Tyler Harding (Wanda) who was disqualified after breaking in the final showdown. Shaheed Duke (Sorrento) finished with the bronze.

A very excited Murphy had to defeat Rohani Bakkah (Sunshine Beach) and Siobhan Dibley (North Cronulla) to win the gold.



HOLMES PUTS ANOTHER ONE UNDER HIS BELT



The reel thing... Zane Holmes powers to victory in the open belt race.

Moments after winning the Open Belt championships, Zane Holmes announced it would be the last time he'd pull a belt.

"I came here wanting to put my name in the record books and to be honest I can hardly believe it, now that I have I think it might be the last time I swim it," Holmes said.

Holmes is working to a plan, with this victory "under his belt" he now needs to win the

single ski and double ski before his career ends to have a clean sweep of Aussie golds in the water events.

Yesterday's belt was by no means easy, with a messy swell and heavy drag, and once through the break the Northcliffe star looked up to find he was 15 metres off course.

"I thought the ally I had would be a bit difficult and when I looked up and saw I was well off the can I thought I'd made a mistake but the drag must have taken the other guys as well," Holmes said.

"I didn't see anyone at any stage during the race, even when I got to the can I was facing the other way, I had to ask who'd won."

Second home was Cronulla's Chris Allum with North Bondi's Tim Shaw third. The race was a disaster for Northcliffe's Beau Cummins with his belt coming apart as he picked it up, ending his race just as it began.

As for Holmes, a quick kiss from proud mum Vicki and it was back up the beach for the semi-finals of the ski and Ironman, where he progressed to today's finals.

"I like it like that, better to keep busy, I don't like sitting around thinking about the races too much," Holmes said.

Going into today's finals, Holmes has a clean sweep at these championships with four wins from as many events.

Northcliffe look good things in the Taplin relay and his other finals are the ski and Ironman – could it be a magnificent seven?

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WATCH BACKWASH, SAYS ALICIA

Scarborough's notorious backwash may be an important factor in today's open Ironwoman final, according to defending champion Alicia Marriott.

After watching ski paddlers being knocked over like nine pins during the Taplin relay heats yesterday and then getting a bad start in the shore break in her board race semi-final, Marriott pointed to the backwash as being the big variable in the race for the crown.

"While the swell will probably be fairly small, the backwash is creating havoc," she said.

"It is making it really difficult and when it hits the breaking waves it can make it hard to stay up."

Good luck with the backwash can also give competitors leaving the beach a vital edge as it gives them an extra push as they head out to sea.

Luck certainly wasn't on Marriott's side in yesterday's Ironwoman semi-finals

The City of Perth star was stone last after being knocked off her ski trying to work her way through the break.

"I couldn't believe it, I knew I was in a bit of trouble but I looked up and I was last," Marriott said.

Marriott worked her way to 11th after the ski, and eventually qualified in 7th.

The semi-final was won by Rebecca Creedy, while Hayley Bateup took out semi-final number one.

In the Ironman it may not be a two-horse race but the chances of a major upset in today's final are slim unless the swell increases.

The heavy surf, shallow bank and nasty backwash that had played its part this week did so again in yesterday's semi-finals, with Hugh Doherty and Chris Allum both missing out.

But the big guns, defending champion Shannon Eckstein and former champion Zane Holmes, looked comfortable doing no more than they had to do to qualify.

Eckstein led for most of his semi and jogged to the finish behind Nathan Smith.

"With so many events, it's really about conserving energy and just making sure you qualify," Eckstein said.



You put your left leg out... Nathan Smith on his way to the Ironman final.

"Come the final everyone will be going flat out from the gun."

In the second semi, Holmes led from the start with the evergreen Dean Mercer hard on his heels and in the end it was Mooloolaba's Mercer breaking the tape.

That made it wins in the heat, quarter and semi for the 39-year-old who would have been hoping for huge seas today.

Holmes and Eckstein were both quick to dismiss the notion of a two-horse race, knowing that competitors like Pierce Leonard, Matt Poole, Smith and Mercer should not be dismissed.

KIWI POWERS HOME

It was back-to-back for Kurrawa's New Zealand import Teneale Hatton in the under-19 women's single ski final in tough conditions yesterday afternoon.

Hatton, who hails from Auckland and last week competed in the New Zealand national titles, came out strongly and managed to avoid the carnage when five paddlers were knocked off their skis at the start of the race.

Hatton finished ahead of fellow Kiwi Rachel Clark (Kurrawa) and Lauren Smith (Warilla/Barrack Point).

"I'm pretty stoked. I really wanted to defend my title. This is my second year competing for Kurrawa and I'm really happy," she said.

Hatton cruised away from the rest of the field after being lucky to catch a small wave that brought her to shore and to victory.

Hatton has had a busy Championships and has also been part of teams that have taken out the under-19 women's Taplin relay, the open women's single ski relay race and the open mixed double ski title.

Yesterday's win in the under-19 Taplin couldn't have been any closer at the end of a thrilling race.

Two Kurrawa teams battled with Warilla Barrack Point throughout but Hatton's teammate Briana Newson looked to have the gold wrapped up when she raced away in the final leg.

But Warilla's Madison Prior put in a brave sprint and only just missed gold.

Also in the under-19 arena, the Freshwater team took out the board rescue final, with the combination of Alisha Miller and Rachel Crerar beating off Tahnee Flemming and Shannon Hulbert-Green (Byron Bay) and Bonnie Hancock and Jessica Walker (Northcliffe).

CLOSE RACING

It was anyone's race down in the under-17 Water Arena yesterday where the tide had turned and the swell was causing havoc.

According to Freshwater's Brooke Miller, the winner of the under-17 board race, it really was a matter of luck whether or not you would fall victim to the power of the surf. "I found it very tricky getting out there, it was a bit of luck I guess. It's really anyone's race in these conditions," said Miller, who claimed gold in the tightly-raced event.

The belief rang true as all competitors managed to avoid the recurring set on the way out, however, it came down to four girls finding themselves on the same wave on the return to shore.

"I wasn't thinking about anything but focusing on the finish line. I didn't want to look to the side as I would've lost concentration," Miller said.

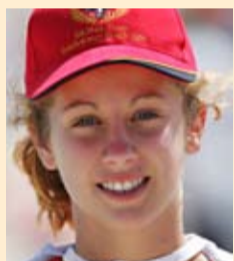
It was almost a case of déjà vu when the boys hit the water for the under-17 board race just minutes later.

As in the women's event, it came down to four on a single wave and it was Matthew Eltham, from Terrigal, who raced up the shore and across the finish line to collect his sixth national title.

The championship glory didn't end there for the talented youngster, as moments later he paired with Edward Gourley to take out the U/17 board rescue.

In the girls' board rescue a longtime partnership between Copacabana's Alicia Bain and Lauren Stone proved to be the winning formula to take out the gold.

"We have been paddling together for years, since we could do this event and we just work together well", an excited Lauren said.



60 SECONDS WITH SAMANTHA MILLS

Age: 16

Club: South Port, South Australia

Winning an Australian title would be... a dream.

Person I would most like to meet: Kristyl Smith

Favourite cartoon character: Spongebob

How did you get started in surf? My parents.

Who is your sporting hero? Melissa Wu.

My mum is great because... She's always there to support me.

My mum is a dork because... She embarrasses me!

What song do you sing to yourself when you train? "Like it Loud" – Cassie Davis.

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

What's the funniest thing that has happened when you've been on patrol? Running into the water when I tripped and grazed my whole nose!

Which event do you most like to watch? Boards.



60 SECONDS WITH ELIZABETH PLUIMERS

Age: 22

Club: Northcliffe SLSC, Queensland

Winning an Australian title would be... an awesome feeling.

Person I would most like to meet: Lance Armstrong

Favourite cartoon character: The Road Runner.

How did you get started in surf? My parents moved to the coast from the country and got involved in Nippers for surf safety.

Who is your sporting hero? Lance Armstrong.

My mum is great because... She is an awesome cook.

My mum is a dork because... She wears her dressing gown to get the mail.

What's your favourite thing about Surf Life Saving? The people and the competition.

What's the funniest thing that has happened when you've been on patrol? I went to do a rescue with a tube and I tripped over the rope and face planted.

Which event do you most like to watch? The skis and the boats when there is surf.

THRILLING WIN FOR KURRAWA'S GOLDEN GIRLS



One to remember... best friends Terri Sullivan and Hayley Bateup.

They may not be a classic board rescue pairing but Kurrawa's Terri Sullivan and Hayley Bateup were wearing golden smiles after a thrilling final yesterday.

Both Sullivan and Bateup are better known as board paddlers so it was Bateup who donned the goggles to take on some of the sport's best swimmers.

And what she may have lacked in swimming speed was more than made up for in a furious paddle back to the beach.

However, it was not all-the-way win.

Favourites Kristyl Smith and Elizabeth Plumers looked set to win after Smith reached the cans first.

They held a handy lead at the pick-up but Sullivan, who received a boost from the backwash, had cut into the advantage.

Once Bateup was on the board, they set off in rapid pursuit of the leaders.

"It's one of the first times we've done a board rescue as a team and fortunately we paddle well together," Sullivan said.

Nearing the break Smith and Plumers still led but then a large wave rose up and the Sullivan/Bateup combination paddled furiously to catch it.

With both teams on the wave it then broke and dumped them into the sandbank, and while the Kurrawa pair hung on grimly, Plumers and Smith came off and their race was lost.

"I'm not a swimmer so we have two board paddlers," Bateup said.

"While I'm not as fast in the swim as some of the others, once we're together on the board we really take off.

"It's great to win gold with my best friend."

Just as happy was the Northcliffe pair of Pierce Leonard and Shannon Eckstein after they comfortably won the men's board rescue.

As wins go it was pretty straightforward: Eckstein was first to the cans, Leonard was first to the pickup and the pair was first back to the beach.

Catching a wave on their return only emphasised the extent of their victory, which gave Eckstein his fourth gold medal of the carnival and Leonard his third.

KEEP AN EYE ON KY

Olympian Ky Hurst is back with his first love and has a chance to win a record sixth Open surf race in today's final.

Speaking just after winning his semi-final, Hurst looked relaxed but not at his peak "I took a long break after Beijing and to be honest it surprised me how long it has taken (to get fit), I'm happy enough with my swimming it's just finding that change of pace," Hurst said

Hurst got a taste of how hard things will be during yesterday's lifesaver relay.

After the boat and ski legs his Kurrawa team-mates handed Hurst a lead going into the swim leg but it was short lived.

"I went in probably ten yards in front and Shannon (Eckstein) just dusted me," Hurst said.

As usual Eckstein was quick across the sand but he also used the rip to work the bottom brilliantly and was ahead by the time they settled down to swim.

But experience paid off for Hurst as he stayed close to Eckstein during the swim and when the pair stood up to run, Eckstein stumbled.

"Fortunately, I was able to stay with him and in the end we both got that little wave and somehow I managed to beat him up the beach which is almost unheard of," Hurst said

Hurst handed a small lead to U/17 board paddler Jarrad Blackburn who on the way back to the beach took a risk to stand up early on the bank, but it paid off and he handed a lead to sprinter Melissa Howard who raced to the finish to give Kurrawa victory.

As the team celebrated on the line the adrenaline was still pumping for coach Phil Clayton.

"Look at that (holding up a shaking hand) I've been shaking all through the race, it's awesome," Clayton said.



Ky's the limit... Hurst helps Kurrawa to victory.

RESULTS

2009 Whereis® Australian Surf Life Saving Championships: Scarborough Beach, WA: Day 3

Men: Open: Surf Belt: Z Holmes (Northcliffe) C Allum (Cronulla) T Shaw (North Bondi) **Surf Board Rescue:** Northcliffe A, Mooloolaba A, Cronulla A. **Surf Board Riding:** J Davies (Cottesloe) R Jenkins (North Cronulla) A Carroll (Bronte) **Beach Flags:** S Harris (Northcliffe) P Cracroft-Wilson (Kurrawa) C Stewart (Alexandra Headland) **U19 Yrs: Surf Board Rescue:** Elouera Red, Cudgen Headland Blue, Warilla / Barrack Point White. **Taplin Relay:** Terrigal A, Mooloolaba A, Freshwater A. **Surf Board Riding:** T Iten (Floreat) J Woods (North Cottesloe) **Beach Flags:** T Reiken (Alexandra Headland) W Trestail (Kurrawa) J Lynch (Newport) **U17 Yrs: Surf Board Rescue:** Terrigal A, Mooloolaba A, Mooloolaba C. **Rescue Tube:** K O'Brien (Cronulla) T Lyndon (Lennox) J Burden (Freshwater) **Surf Board:** M Eltham (Terrigal) E Gourley (Terrigal) K Wikaire (Northcliffe) **Surf Board Riding:** N Sanchez (South West Rocks) M Cocks (Coolum Beach) S Levitt (Palm Beach (Qld)) **Beach Flags:** M Swain (Currumbin Beach) J Shepherd (Mount Martha) W Nolan (North Cottesloe) **U15 Yrs: Surf Board Rescue:** Redhead B, Mooloolaba A, Wanda Red. **Rescue Tube:** S Bell (Mooloolaba) Z Hughes (North Cronulla) C Smith (Cudgen Headland) **Cameron Relay:** Ocean Beach Blue, Wanda Blue, Redhead A. **Surf Board:** I Morgan (Redhead) M O'grady (Avoca Beach) T Norton (Burnie) **Surf Board Riding:** R Jenkins (North Cronulla) K Cetinich (Palm Beach (Qld)) Z Haynes-Love (City Of Perth) **Beach Flags:** M Cavanagh (Mullaloo) T Harding (Wanda) S Duke (Sorrento (Wa))

Women: Open: Surf Board Rescue: Kurrawa Team1, Northcliffe A, Ocean Grove A. **Surf Board Riding:** F Casey (South West Rocks) R Barben (Coolum Beach) L Black (Surfers Paradise) **Beach Flags:** M Howard (Kurrawa) C Langendam (Bulli) H Atkins (Anglesea) **U19 Yrs: Surf Board Rescue:** Freshwater A, Byron Bay A, Northcliffe A. **Taplin Relay:** Kurrawa Team1, Warilla / Barrack Point Black, Kurrawa

Team2. **Single Ski:** T Hatton (Kurrawa) R Clarke (Kurrawa) L Smith (Warilla / Barrack Point) **Surf Board Riding:** R Lougher (North Curl Curl) J Heal (Secret Harbour) J Ford (North Cottesloe) **Beach Flags:** H Wyper (Burleigh Heads Mowbray Park) E Graf (Cronulla) C Maples (Kurrawa) **U17 Yrs: Surf Board Rescue:** Copacabana A, Warilla / Barrack Point Black, Freshwater A. **Rescue Tube:** K Elliot (Elouera) M Bell (Maroochydore) S Hulbert-Green (Byron Bay) **Surf Board:** B Miller (Freshwater) A Nurthen (Terrigal) E Ricketts (Dicky Beach) **Surf Board Riding:** A Charles (North Cronulla) K Hilleard (North Cronulla) G Mckinnery (North Cronulla) **Beach Flags:** H Openshaw (Brighton) K Williams (Collaroy) A Murphy (City Of Perth) **U15 Yrs: Surf Board Rescue:** Sunshine Beach Red, Avoca Beach Blue, Mooloolaba B. **Rescue Tube:** M Davies (Burleigh Heads Mowbray Park) J Lauricella (Cronulla) K Lee (Mooloolaba) **Cameron Relay:** Mooloolaba A, Geraldton A, Alexandra Headland Gold. **Surf Board:** C Callaghan (Avoca Beach) M Blackburn (Mooloolaba) D Rippon (Terrigal) **Surf Board Relay:** Mooloolaba A, Avoca Beach Blue, Mooloolaba B. **Surf Board Riding:** B Doyle (Tweed Heads / Coolangatta) F Casey (South West Rocks) J Walker (Mullaloo) **Beach Flags:** G Murphy (City Of Perth) R Bakhach (Sunshine Beach) S Dibley (North Cronulla)

Mixed: Open: 5 Person R&R: Collaroy Black, Trigg Island Red, Wanda Blue. **Lifesaver Relay:** Kurrawa, Northcliffe, Bulli Gold. **Mixed Double Ski:** Northcliffe C, Manly Blue, Northcliffe A. **First Aid:** Noosa Heads Noosa, Tannum Sands Tannum, Manly Blue. **U19 Yrs: 5 Person R&R:** Ocean Grove A, Point Leo A, Collaroy Black. **Surf Belt:** T Rowles (Burleigh Heads Mowbray Park) A Gaudins (Northcliffe) S White (Bulli) **Double Ski:** Warilla / Barrack Point White, North Bondi A, Burleigh Heads Mowbray Park A. **U17 Yrs: 5 Person R&R:** Arcadian Blue, Coogee, Collaroy Red. **Single Ski Relay:** Mooloolaba A, Bulli A, Collaroy Red. **U15 Yrs: 5 Person R&R:** Picnic Bay Stingers, Bondi B, North Cronulla Gold.

DAY THREE ACTION



Take off ... this Cottesloe crew tries to defy gravity.



Nosedive ... A Warilla/BP paddler about to get wet.



Winner ... Lachlan Holbery-Morgan, DHL Surf Lifesaver of the Year and DHL Lifeguard of the Year.



Double team ... Flora Manciet and Nick Crilly.



Dash and splash ... Palm Beach rowers in action.



All smiles ... Mooloolaba's under-15 Cameron relay team celebrate.

TODAY

Start time 8.10am

Open Women's Double Ski
Open Men's Double Ski
Open Women's Surf Race
Open Men's Surf Race
Open Women's Beach Sprint
Open Men's Beach Sprint
Open Women's Board Race
Open Men's Board Race
Open Women's Single Ski
Open Men's Single Ski
March Past

Handover ceremony (presentation stage)

Open Women's Boat Race
Open Men's Boat Race
Open Ironwoman
Open Ironman
Open Women's Taplin Relay
Open Men's Taplin Relay

Competition to finish approximately 2.30pm

DHL DELIVERS, AGAIN

DHL, the world's leading express and logistics company, has announced it will continue its support of Surf Life Saving in Australia for another three years.

Lindsay Birley, Senior Vice President Commercial, Asia Pacific, DHL Express, made the announcement at the SLSA Awards of Excellence on Friday night.

The partnership, which began in 2003, includes patrol uniforms for surf clubs across the country.

SLSA President, Ron Rankin AM said that DHL's support over the past six years had been remarkable.

"In these tough economic times it is fantastic that DHL has chosen to continue the partnership for another three years and I thank them on behalf of everyone in SLSA."

TV TIMES

Check out all the highlights of the 2009 Whereis® Australian Surf Life Saving Championships on Channel 7 and local affiliates:

Part 1 - Sunday 29 March
Part 2 - Saturday 4 April (Adelaide only)
Sunday 5 April (Other metro city)

Check local guides for times.

COMING UP

Rescue 2010: Alexandria, Egypt
nib Coolangatta Gold: 18 October 2009
2010 Aussies: 16-21 March 2010, Kurrawa, Gold Coast
Australian Pool Rescue Championships: 2-3 May 2009

PROGRESSIVE CLUB POINTSCORE

Northcliffe 206 • Mooloolaba 127 • Kurrawa 108 • Alexandra Headland 103 • City of Perth 87 •
Warilla/Barrack Point 81 • Cronulla 80 • Terrigal 79 • North Cronulla 75 • Manly 71

