



'Deaf Surfs Up Australia '08'

Now in its 4th year, the Deaf Boardriders NSW annual 'Deaf Surfs Up' competition at Crescent Head was by far the biggest ever. 20 surfers contested the Longboard category, 13 in the short board and 8 in the bogey board making for a busy day with 20 minute heats containing approx 4 surfers each and judge by members of the Crescent Head Boardriders Inc.

In June of this year Crescent Head officially joined the likes of Bell's Beach, Angourie and Lennox Head becoming a National Surf Reserve. Crescent Head, on the mid North Coast is world famous for waves that peel endlessly down the point and has long been the destination of board riders since the 1950's travelling north from Sydney. Its' head peeling waves are well suited to classic longboard surfing. The reserve abounds with marine life, with whales, dolphins, sharks, fish and even stingrays were all commonly sighted over the weekend.

With 14 heats, 7 requalifies, 5 semi-finals and 3 finals to get through competition started at 7.30am and finished well after 4 o'clock that afternoon. The day started with small but clean waves brushed by nice offshore wind. However as the day progressed wave quality made it difficult for competitors to score maximum points. The finals were held in small but deteriorating surf that made for very close closing, particularly in the shortboard.

The 'Deaf Surfs Up' Competition is regularly held at the end of every second weekend in August with people coming from all corners of the globe, which is Australia, from areas such as Perth WA, Torquay VIC, the Gold Coast and numerous towns up and down the coast of NSW. Some momentum towards establishing a national deaf boardriders club is in progress.

The World Deaf Surfing Championship to be held in Hawaii during July 2009 has some competitors enthusiastically planning for this event that will attract between 100 – 150 surfers alone from around the world.

A big thanks must go to Steve White, president of Deaf Boardriders NSW for organising the weekend and for the Crescent Head Boardriders Club for providing the judges and a well run event. Let's hope in the years to come bigger waves will make for more spectacular surfing.

At the pub, which is within walking distance from the beach, the winners were announced as follow:

Long board

1. Stephen Ashley VIC
2. Gary Gaschk WA
3. Daniel Hildebrand QLD
4. Rodney Adams NSW

Short board

1. Mitch Robson NSW
2. Stephen Ashley VIC
3. Rodney Adams NSW
4. Carl Hansen QLD

Bogey Boards

1. Mark Howells NSW
2. Blake Cuthbertson NSW
3. Ben Bradbury QLD
4. Jason Callaghan QLD

Special Awards

Over 60 years – Peter Ashley VIC

Over 50 years – Steve White NSW

Over 35 years – Rodney Adams NSW

Encouragement Award – Rickie Carr NSW

Highest wave score – Stephen Ashley VIC

Wave of the day – Mitchell Robson NSW