



# RIP TIDE



## TRIMMY BACK AND LEADS NSW AT INTERSTATE TITLES

Mitchell Trim says to represent your state is always a team you want to make. Well, not only is the Newport ski paddler in the team for only the second time in his career but he will lead the Sky Blues into battle at the Interstate Championships at Glenelg Beach in South Australia next month. "I am stoked to be in the team and super stoked about the captaincy. It is such a huge honour," said one of the sport's affable characters. The NSW selectors have also chosen seven other Sydney Northern Beaches athletes – Newport's Max Brooks, Blake Drysdale, Jake Lynch and Laura Shorter in the opens and Manly's Naomi Scott and Newport's Isaac Smith and Grace Gurr in the youth team. Trim said he felt he had done the work leading into Christmas and was happy with his progress this season. "I have changed a few things leading up to the summer which I think has had a positive impact to my paddling," he said. "But with so many good paddlers around the traps and with the structure of the interstate, you just don't know how they are going to structure such a team.

"Also, by not being an ironman, there are only limited teams you can make. So I am super stoked to have made it this year." With the championships in Adelaide on January 20, Trim said he would have a very quiet Christmas. "I will be working the entire way through Christmas which will keep me on the straight and narrow," he chuckled. "I will definitely have a few days off but will be trying to fit a few sessions in here and there," he said. With the fourth round of Ocean6 at Torquay from January 12-14, it will provide NSW team members with some valuable racing before the state team heads to Adelaide on January 18 for a pre-competition camp. "The wedding season has finished for me so I'll be heading to Torquay. I'll be packing the tracksuit pants and the jacket but will be looking to race well down there, too," Trim said. Beach specialists Lynch and Drysdale helped Australia win the International Surf Rescue Challenge in New Zealand earlier this month, while Scott was one of the stars of the Australian youth team in the three Test series. **Great honour for Newport's Mitchell Trim. Picture: CHRIS BORG**

### STATE TEAM

**OPEN:**  
 Max Brooks, Mitchell Trim, Blake Drysdale, Jake Lynch, Laura Shorter (Newport); Daniel Collins (Redhead); Jemma Smith, Rachel Wood (Umina); Lizzie Welborn (North Bondi); Alexandra Rampoldi (North Cronulla); Hayden White, Kirsty Higgison (Branch of Origin).

**YOUTH:**  
 Hayden Copping (Redhead); Jake Evans (Elouera), Noah Havard (North Bondi), Grace Gurr, Isaac Smith (Newport); Jaymee Smith (Wanda); Sam Zustovich (Mollymook); Ngaire Hadfield (Cronulla); Chloe Mannix-Power (Cronulla); Nicola Owen (Redhead); Naomi Scott (Manly); Anthea Warne (Cudgen Headland).



## IRONMEN FURNISS, BROOKS JOIN THE PROFESSIONALS

When Manly's Jay Furniss lined up for the final round of the Nutri Grain eliminator at North Wollongong Beach on Sunday, he was surrounded by seven Queensland competitors.

With his clubmate Kendrick Louis just missing the final round by one spot and Newport's Max Brooks having been eliminated after the first round, it was left to Furniss to try and upstage the likes of defending champion Matt Poole, Ali Day, Matt Bevilacqua, Trevor Hendy, James Lacy, Luke Cuff and Nathan Gray.

While Furniss didn't gain a podium finish, he will join the "professional ranks" for the remaining three rounds at Torquay, Surfers Paradise and North Cronulla.

Brooks also will become one of the professionals. Furniss said he tried not to worry too much about the opposition he faced in the final showdown at North Wollongong.

"I was just happy to be there," he said.

"I wanted to make that last race and getting there was a goal and then it was a case of putting it all on the line and try to go for it.

"I wasn't nervous. I fell behind in the ski but I just tried to stay composed and work my way back in the transition (swim leg) and wade up to them. That is my strongest point, just wading up to them and use my size.

"I thought I did that well. I got on that swim wave and we all came out together. Bevi (Matt Bevilacqua) was a little bit in front and (James) Lacy.

"I had a good board start and really attacked it through the break and just couldn't get on their wash and they snuck away.

"I sort of paid for it and it hurt me a bit. I got to the can with Ali (Day) and TJ (Hendy) and around third but couldn't get anything on the way in. I went shopping a bit and couldn't get anything.

"I was happy.

"I am pretty excited about joining the professionals. I just need to get rid of that 15<sup>th</sup> place at Coolum and climb the points. If I can get rid of that it will be good."

While Brooks was eliminated in the first eliminator round, he won't have to qualify for the last three finals.

"I felt sorry for Max. He was sick. I think he had a bug. It's hard when you are like that," Furniss said.

"That first race, the intensity is so high. It's so fast. Between first and last is like 20m. There's nothing in it but you have to be 100 per cent. Unfortunately for him, he wasn't. Anyway he put his foot on the line and he made it through.

"I will just have a break over Christmas, enjoy it and then get back and prepare for Torquay."

Matt Bevilacqua (Kurrawa) went onto win Sun-



day's final from James Lacy (Mermaid Beach) and Nathan Gray (Surfers Paradise).

Ali Day heads the leaderboard from Trevor Hendy and Bevilacqua.

Brooks is seventh, Furniss is 10<sup>th</sup> and Louis is 14<sup>th</sup> but he missed the second round because of his brother's wedding.

*Picture: Top: Manly's Jay Furniss is now one of the professionals in the Nutri Grain ironman series; Below: Max Brooks is also an automatic qualifier for the remaining three rounds.*

## TAYLAR WANTED TO HAVE FUN IN FIRST IRON FINAL



Taylor Puskaric said it was all about having some fun in the Nutri Grain ironwoman final in the Ocean6 series at North Wollongong on Sunday.

For the Manly competitor, it was her best performance so far in the series after three rounds.

"It's the first final I have made so I am happy with that," Taylor said.

Taylor finished 11<sup>th</sup> overall.

She survived the first race of the cut throat eliminator but then went out in the second race.

Taylor was with some of the more experienced ironwomen Lizzie Welborn, Jemma Smith, Rebecca Creedy and Georgia Miller who missed the cut for the final eight.

The course may have looked short but not according to Taylor.

"It was longer than what it looked, definitely. The swim especially," she said after Sunday's final.

Taylor said she liked the concept of the eliminator.

"It is something different. It was tough, especially after backing up from yesterday. A lot of those girls really didn't do many races, so they were a bit fresher.

"We had to do two iron races yesterday to make the final. I was lucky enough to qualify straight through as I got top two in my heat. That meant I only had

to do one iron race yesterday to make it to today. Some of the other girls would have to do two iron races."

Taylor saw making the final as a bonus.

"I was happy just to make it yesterday and have a good race in the heat. I went into today's race to have fun and whatever happened, happened," she said.

Newport's Lara Moses also qualified for the final, while Georgia Miller was one of the professionals. It was Lara's first final appearance of the season but she went out after the first race.

Georgia had one of those unforgettable days.

She was leading the race in the first swim leg but a wave bobbed up for a number of competitors who overtook her. Then she repeatedly got smashed on the ski.

But Georgia didn't allow the iron setback get to her. She bounced back and went on to win the board final from Northcliffe's Harriet Brown and Lily Cracknell (Avoca).

Lizzie Welborn (North Bondi) leads the series from Brown and Danielle McKenzie (Northcliffe). McKenzie and Miller are equal on points.

Newport's Olivia Heaton, Maddie Spencer and Grace Gurr also made the board final.



Newport's team of Miller, Moses and Olivia Heaton took out the board relay final.

*Pictures: Top: Taylor Puskaric (blue cap) made her first appearance this season in the Nutri Grain iron final at North Wollongong; Below: Taylor Puskaric (left) and good friend Lara Moses.*



## SOPHIA ELATED TO MAKE FINAL

"They were pretty fast," was how Sophia Tonoli summed up her first ski final in the Ocean6 series at North Wollongong on Sunday.

The smaller framed Tonoli found herself racing against Rio Olympian Alyce Burnett, her Newport clubmate and 2016 Aussie single ski winner Hannah Minogue and Northcliffe's top paddler Danielle McKenzie.

Maroochydore's Burnett won the final.

Sophia finished 14<sup>th</sup> in a field of 21.

"I am pretty happy with that to be honest," she said. That was her first appearance in Ocean6. "I haven't been able to do any of them as I have been pretty busy with university, I think they (Ocean6) have clashed with my exams," she said.

"I thought I'd come down here to Wollongong and try it out for a bit of fun."

To qualify for the final, Sophia had to survive a heat and semi-final.

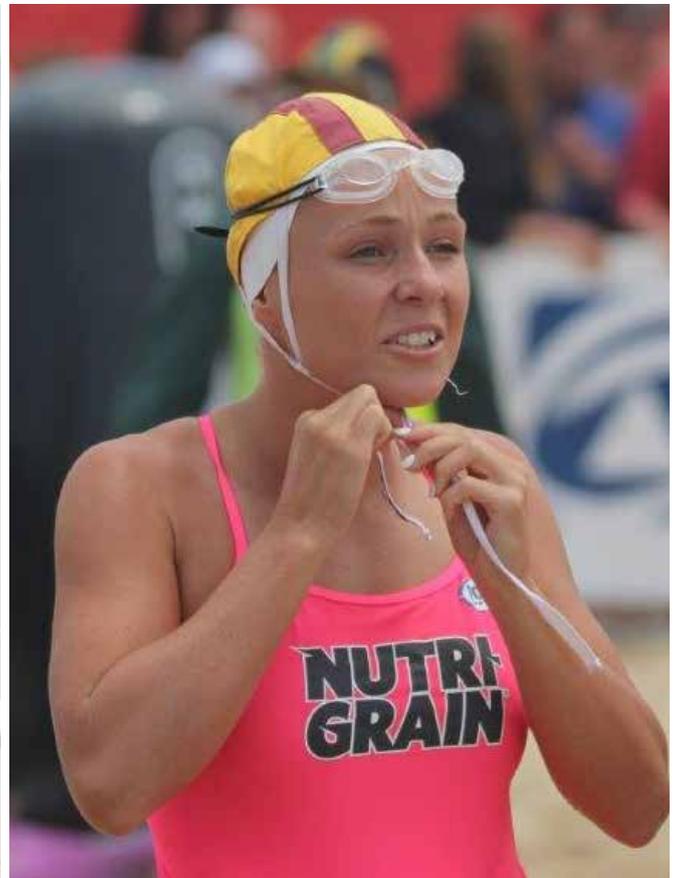
"I got through and was so stoked to make the final," she said.

"I got a good start but the leaders were so incredibly fast. They are so good."

Sophia plans to do round five of the Ocean6 series at Surfers Paradise.



*Pictures: Right: Sophia Tonoli gets ready for the female ski final at North Wollongong;*



*ABOVE: Georgia Miller takes out the board final (Photo courtesy Ocean6) right: Lara Moses prepares for the ironwoman final.*



## MANLY TAKES TAPLIN

Manly's Harrison Stone had a ding-dong battle with Newport's Max Brooks to anchor his team to a thrilling Taplin relay final win at the Ocean6 series at North Wollongong.

"It was our first win of the season. Just awesome," Harrison said.

After the ski and swim legs, Newport were just in front.

"I suppose we went into the last leg maybe a board length behind," Harrison said.

"Then Max got held up by a little wave and I jumped on his wash.

"Then we were just match racing the whole way home.

"We got up together and I was just lucky enough that he stumbled a bit.

"It was our first win. It would be good to see how we go in the six team Taplin."

Nick Dawe paddled the ski and Kendrick Louis did the swim for the Manly A team. "Our other team of Ethan Neville, Jay Furniss and Lachie Bruce also did well which is good," Harrison said.

While the two Sydney Northern Beaches rivals finished one-two, Alexandra Headland came third. Newport's C team of Luke Morrison (ski), young Zach Morris (swim) and Fletcher Davies (board) finished fourth.

"It was the first time we had done it together as a



team. We're calling ourselves the B team now," Fletcher said. Davies was full of praise for Zach Morris. "For a 15-year-old, he was just unbelievable in the swim. He's incredible and has a massive future ahead of him if he keeps it up," Fletcher said. The Manly board relay team of Lachie Bruce, Jay

Furniss and Harrison Stone had a podium finish, third behind winners Mermaid Beach and North Cronulla.

**Pictures: Top: Harrison Stone in action in the board final. He came fifth; Below: Taplin winners Kendrick Louis, Nick Dawe and Harrison Stone. (Photo courtesy Ocean6)**



*Pictures: Left: Jake Lynch (right) congratulates his Newport clubmate Blake Drysdale after the open flags in the third round of Ocean6. Drysdale took the honours (Photo courtesy Ocean6);*

*Bottom left: Ollie Signorini (right) gets ready for the start of the open surf race. After winning the first two rounds, Ollie was unplaced this time but is still in front on the leaderboard.*

*Middle: Manly's Lachie Bruce helped his open board relay team to take third place.*

*Bottom right: Promising 15-year-old Zach Morris (far right) finished 16<sup>th</sup> in the run-swim-run. He is currently second on the leaderboard with 199 points – three behind Kurrawa's Hayden Hemmens. Zach also came 19<sup>th</sup> in a field of 32 in the open surf race.*

