



RIP TIDE

TWO GOLDEN MOMENTS FOR JOEL AT SCARBOROUGH

NOW FOR POOL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Ever since Joel Piper started watching ironmen in action, he's dreamed of the day when he'd win an Aussie gold medal.

Well, it happened at his Aussies debut in Perth last weekend.

And not only did the Newport youngster win one gold, but two gold medals at Scarborough Beach. But the youth championships certainly didn't start out the way Joel had hoped.

By his own admission, he had a shocker in the under 14 surf race, swimming off course and was way back in the field.

"I was really angry with myself," Joel said.

"But I couldn't dwell on what happened as the races were close together.

"I just had to refocus on my next event, which was the board final.

"I was third at the cans and with so much chop it was about catching runners on the way home.

"It came down to a run up the beach and I was just so relieved at the end of the race."

Since Joel was eight and a nipper at Long Reef SLSC, he wanted to be an ironman.

He moved to North Narrabeen SLSC and won his first NSW ironman title while a member of that club.

For the past two seasons he has been at Newport SLSC. Joel said: "They have made me a better person and athlete."

He completed a hat trick of State ironman victories at Blacksmiths Beach last month.

Joel always knew that if he was to win gold in the iron at his first Aussies he probably would have to beat Currumbin's young star Zach King.

And that he did.

"I was sitting second at one stage on the board but then fourth in the transition," Joel said.

But Joel clawed his way back in the swim leg and had enough in reserve in the sprint finish to realise that his Aussie ironman dream had come true.

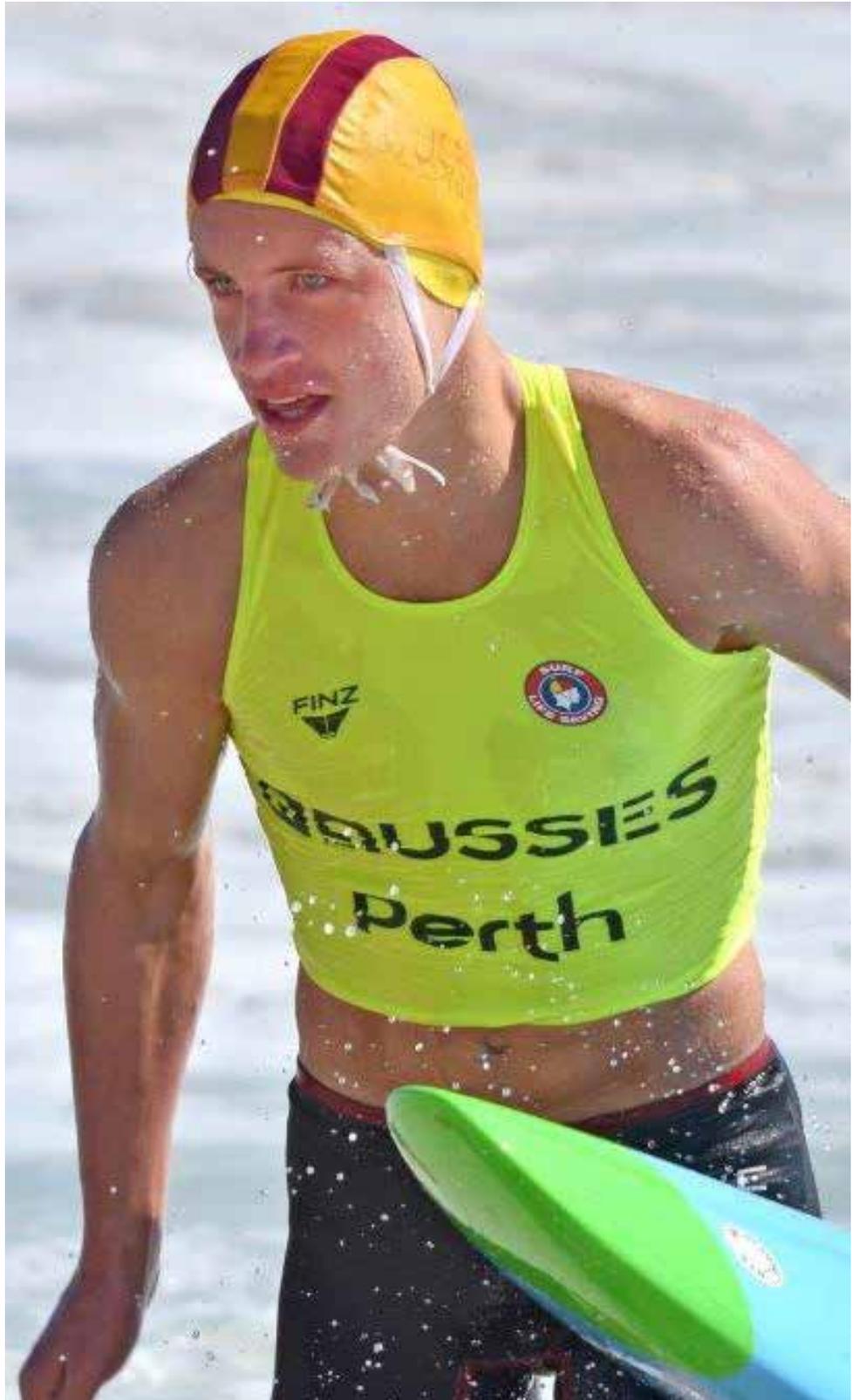
Joel would have liked to have stayed in Perth to cheer on the Newport open competitors but he had to return to Sydney to prepare for the National Age Swimming Championships at Homebush.

"I'll be contesting the 400m and 800 freestyle events and I'd just love to medal," he said.

While Joel has ended his days as a junior, he'll at least be able to compete at the National Youth Championships again next season as an under 15 competitor when the titles return to the Gold Coast.

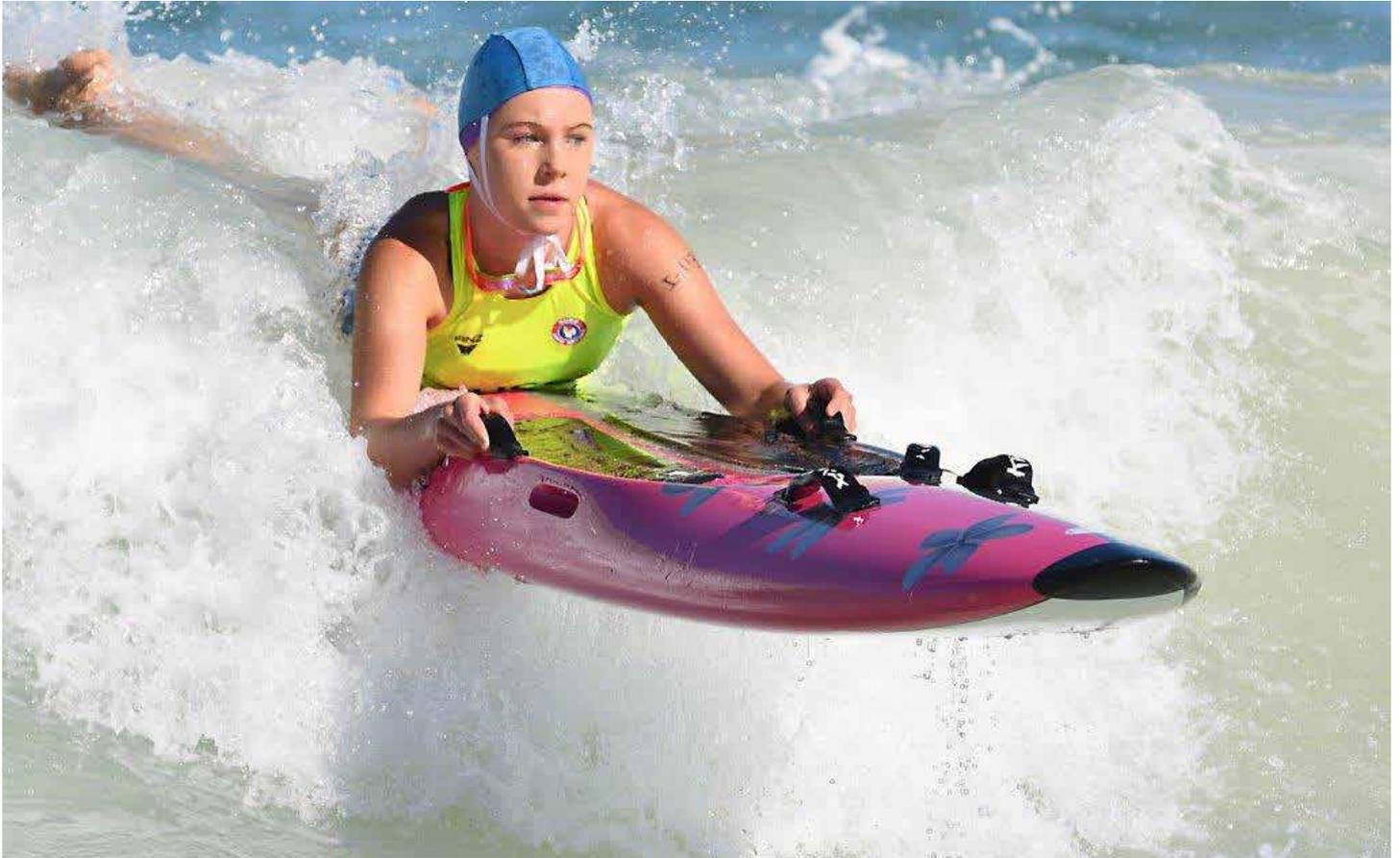
Joel's Newport clubmates Jodie Louw and Alex Lefevre also won medals in Perth, as did Manly's Piper Harrison.

Jodie took silver in the under 14 ironwoman and bronze in the surf race, Alex came third in the under 15 ironwoman, while Piper was third in the under 15 board and third in the surf teams with her Manly teammates Ella Garrett, Sophie Walters and Charlotte Ward.



Joel Piper ... stars at the Aussie Youth Championships at Scarborough Beach in Perth.
Photo: HARVPIX

PIPER IS NOW LOOKING FORWARD TO SKI CHALLENGE



A bronze medal in the board final and an unlucky fourth in the under 15 ironwoman at the Aussie Youth Championships in Perth has convinced Manly's Piper Harrison to stay involved in surf sports for at least another season.

There has been talk Piper might concentrate on distance running instead of the surf but she's put the rumours to bed.

"I was very happy how I performed in Perth," Piper said.

"I am moving up to under 17s next year and that means I will have a go at the ski.

"I am very excited about the ski training so I intend to stay involved (in surf) at least another year."

After consultation with her Manly coaches, Piper decided not to do the individual surf race at Scarborough Beach last weekend.

"They (coaches) thought it best I just focus on the board and iron events," she said.

"It was really choppy and a case of chasing the runners in the board final.

"I was actually leading but others came from behind, but that's surf. Still, I was very happy to finish third."

Piper was well placed to medal in the ironwoman. "I had a good paddle on the board and it was a case of just trying to hang in on the swim leg," she said.

Piper actually led the first leg from eventual winner, Alexandra Headland's Tayla Halliday but the Queenslanders showed her prowess in the swim leg.

"I gave it all I had but those Queenslanders are very



good," Piper said.

On Sunday, Piper returned to Scarborough for the surf teams event and was the first Manly swimmer back to the beach. Piper and her teammates Ella Garrett, Sophie Walters and Charlotte Ward took the bronze medal.

Manly's Piper Harrison in action in Perth. Photo: HARVPIX. Manly's bronze medallists in the under 15 surf teams; Piper Harrison (left), Sophie Walters, Ella Garrett and Charlotte Ward.

JODIE JUST OVER THE MOON WITH HER TWO MEDALS

“Just amazing. It was just so unexpected,”

Newport's Jodie Louw said after picking up two medals at the Aussie Youth Championships at Scarborough Beach in Perth.

Jodie, who was competing at her first Aussies in under 14s, won her first medal in the surf race, a bronze, and then finished second in the ironwoman to Cudgen Headland star Lily O'Sullivan.

Only last month Jodie came second to O'Sullivan in the surf race at the NSW titles at Blacksmiths Beach. O'Sullivan was certainly the star at Scarborough, taking the treble in the surf, board and ironwoman.

“I am just so excited with my results,” Jodie said. “Even though the swim is my favourite, I was not expecting it (a medal) at all. There was a wave at the end and it all came down to a run up the beach. That's where Lily is really good.”

Jodie said she really started to get interested in surf sports competition last season. “I stepped up my training but I really need to do more swimming,” Jodie said.

Jodie also competed in the board final. “I didn't do too well but I certainly surprised myself in the iron,” she said.

“I was probably sitting about eighth after the first leg (board) in the iron.

“But then I had a great swim and started to pass other competitors.”

Jodie threw out the challenge to Lily O'Sullivan but couldn't catch her in the run.

Jodie said she loved the environment of her first Aussies. “It was great and I also liked the conditions,” she said.

She stayed in Perth to watch her older sister Maddie. Maddie has already won a gold medal in the under 17 female 2km ocean swim.

Jodie is looking forward to a break but first she has the National Age Championships at Homebush. She will be competing in the 400m freestyle next week.

Newport's Jodie Louw surprised herself at the championships in Perth.

Photo: HARVPIX



RESULTS

Male Under 15:

Surf race: R Rees (Northcliffe), W Savage (Trigg Island), R Dixon (Wanda);

Board race: N Stoddart (Swansea Belmont), S Coates (Swansea Belmont), B. Meehan (Currumbin); **Ironman:** W Savage (Trigg Island), R Dixon (Wanda), B Meehan (Currumbin).

Under 14:

Surf race: Z. King (Currumbin), D Chisholm (Swansea Belmont), M Magnussen (Metropolitan Caloundra); **Board race:** J Piper (Newport), J Breen (Lennox Head), B Richards (Cooks Hill); **Ironman:** J Piper (Newport), Z King (Currumbin), H Munro (Currumbin).

Female Under 15:

Surf race: T Halliday (Alexandra Headland), I Shipp (Maroochydore), S Tazaki (Northcliffe);

Board race: D Stitt (Maroochydore), N Fredonnet (Trigg Island), P Harrison (Manly);

Ironwoman: T Halliday (Alexandra Headland), S Perkins (Sunshine Beach), A Lefevre (Newport).

Under 14:

Surf race: L. O'Sullivan (Cudgen Headland), L Finati (North Bondi), J Louw (Newport);

Board race: L O'Sullivan (Cudgen Headland), C Cross (Currumbin), O Onley (Cudgen Headland); **Ironwoman:** L O'Sullivan (Cudgen Headland), J Louw (Newport), A Tolano (Sunshine Beach).

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A YEAR HAS MADE FOR ALEX



Alex Lefevre competed at her first Aussies last year on the Gold Coast. She made no finals. This year she went to Scarborough Beach in Perth where she qualified for the surf, board and ironwoman finals.

But she also took the bronze medal in the under 15 ironwoman, finishing behind Queensland pair Tayla Halliday (Alexandra Headland) and Sunshine Beach's Sarah Perkins.

"I am very happy with that. It's a huge improvement," Alex said.

"I was a bit disappointed with how the surf and board finals went but the competition was really good." It came together much better for Alex in the ironwoman.

"I was probably about sixth at the cans on the board and then caught a wave with a couple of others. That put me in a much better position for the swim leg," she said.

"I gradually caught up to the leading group, including Piper (Harrison) and I was lucky enough to cross the line in third place.

"It was a good reward for all the hard training." Alex also combined with Analiese Melbourn and Jodie Louw in the under 15 board relay where Newport finished second behind Trigg Island.

Alex started out as a nipper at Freshwater SLSC but has just completed her third season at Newport SLSC. "I have definitely shown improvement. I think it all started to get better when I got on a longboard," she said.

"I really want to work on my swimming."

Alex moves up to under 17s next season which means she can now paddle a ski.

"I am going to start ski training soon and I am looking forward to that," she said.

Photo: HARVPIX



GEORGIA CHASES NO 4 IN SURF

The big guns now come out to play at the Aussie open championships in Perth and Newport's Georgia Miller will be chasing a fourth open surf title.

Georgia knows just how tough the race will be.

"The competition is so strong," Georgia said.

"You've got Laura Taylor (200m butterfly silver medallist) coming straight from the Commonwealth Games and all the open girls want to win and it's going to be really tough."

Georgia has a long list of individual and team events with Newport and the five-time NSW open ironwoman champion would dearly love to do well in the iron.

And she finished the Nutri Grain iron series in really good form to snatch a podium finish.

Some of the big stars, with Georgia third right.

Photo: HARVPIX

THAT'S THREE IN A ROW FOR THE WARRIEWOOD BOYS



ADAM IN THE WINX CLASS

It's hard enough to win one Aussie title, let alone three. Warriewood's 170 years male beach relay team not only won their third Aussie masters title at Trigg Island in Perth this week but made it three in a row.

What a fantastic achievement for the team of Adam Gee, Ben Hargy, Chris Macdonald and Glen Bauder.

"We're all pretty chuffed," said Adam, who claimed two gold medals after also winning the 45-49 years sprint final in emphatic fashion.

The team has been together for the three years.

For Chris, it was his fifth Aussie relay gold and Adam's fourth.

The boys will now concentrate on the world titles to

be held in South Australia in November.

"We're not thinking too far ahead," said chiropractor Adam.

"We are just savouring this moment."

Adam said it (beach relay) was a really close race throughout with WA teams Sorrento and North Cottesloe throwing out the challenge.

As the video of the race showed, once Adam took the baton for the last change it was going to take something special from the other runners to stop the Warriewood man. Adam was in the 'Winx' class in his sprint final. He destroyed the field.

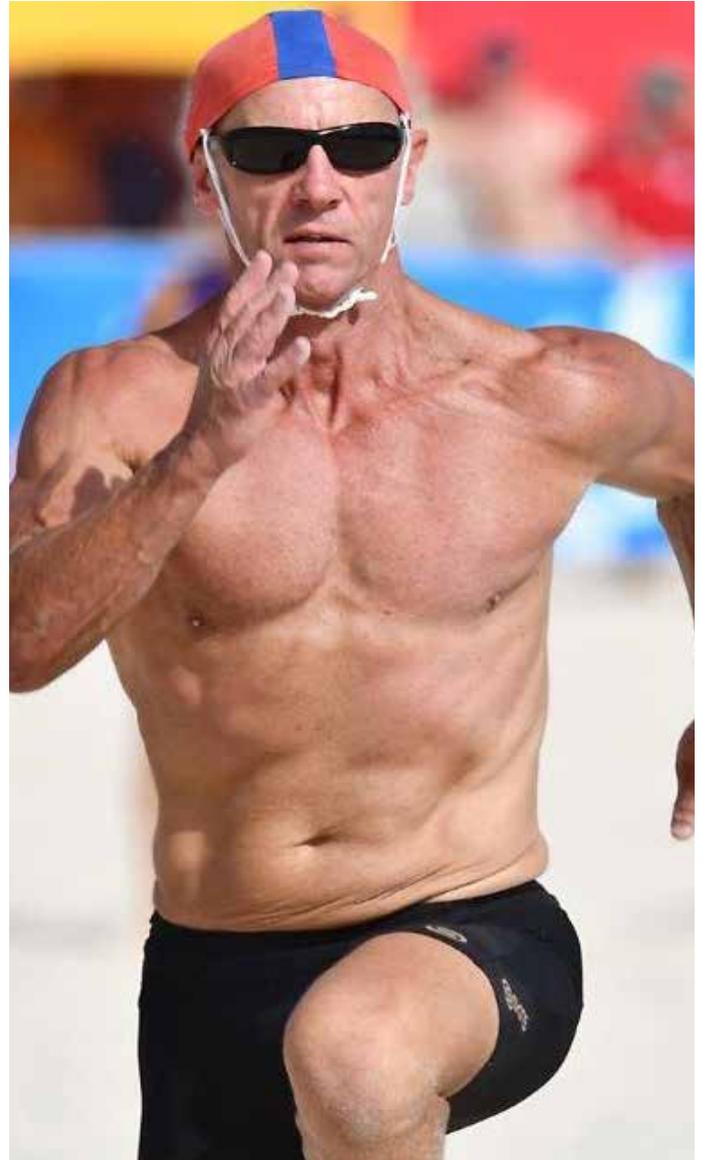
"It was my second (title) in a row," he said.

"It all came together nicely. I got away to a good start and was in the groove after 10m."

Photos: Champions ... Ben Hargy (left), Chris Macdonald, Adam Gee and Glen Bauder.;

Below: Adam Gee with his two gold medals.





SOPHIE'S GOLD RUSH TO TRIGG FOR BEACH SPRINT

Mona Vale's Sophie Stokes reckons Lady Luck smiled on her as a friend got her to the beach arena in the nick of time for her sprint heats at the Aussie Masters in Perth.

After competing in the board final in her age group at Scarborough Beach where she finished sixth, Sophie had to race to Trigg Island for the beach events.

"They weren't going to hold up the sprints," she said. "I got a friend to drive me over there and when I arrived the athletes had already marshalled for the heats.

"Luckily they (officials) allowed me to run."

Sophie survived two heats before the 40-44 years sprint final.

"I got away to a shocking start but came from behind to just win. It was literally a photo finish," she said after nudging out Sonja Belle-Wood, from North Cottesloe.

"My first gold at Aussies in the sprint. In fact, my first ever medal in the sprints.

"I have my speed back after training with Kris (Monnock)."

Sophie said she felt really sorry for Kris.

"Kris really wanted to run and couldn't make it from the water area," Sophie said.

But at least Kris picked up two bronze medals in water events.

She partnered Sophie in the board rescue and was a member of the ski relay team with Sophie and Paula Tocquer. But Kris did get to Trigg for the flags and won another bronze.

Apart from Sophie, Queenscliff pair Robyn Henderson and Merrilee Linegar won their sprint finals.

Robyn and Merrilee also combined with Annabel Nelson and Kelly McFadden to win the 200 years beach relay final. Merrilee won a third gold medal after taking out the flags in her age group.

Queenscliff male runners Michael Gedz and David Shearsby also won their sprint finals as did the

Queenscliff 230 years relay team of Robert Wilson, Brian Dolly, Stephen Hoy and Ross Collins.

For Gedz, it was his fifth title in a row and took his tally to 10 Aussie sprints. He was runner up in the flags to North Cottesloe's Mark Nolan, the man he beat in the sprint final.

Robert Wilson won the flags in his age group. Sydney Northern beaches athletes had success in the male board rescue events with three golds to three different clubs.

Manly's Peter Ingle and Matthew Gibbs, Freshwater's Michael Kirkby and John De Mestre and Newport's Mark Ansiewicz and Nick Carroll were winners.

De Mestre won a second gold in the 55-59 years surf race, while Gibbs took out the rescue tube in the 40-44 years age group.

Gold on the beach ... Mona Vale's Sophie Stokes (left) and Queenscliff's Michael Gedz.

Photos: HARVIX