



RIP TIDE

TRIMMY FACES RIO BOYS IN BID FOR HAT TRICK



To win one State open single ski title is hard enough. When you win two in a row then that's very special. But the \$64 question is can Newport's Mitchell Trim make it three in a row at the NSW Open Championships at Blacksmiths Beach this weekend? There's so many good ski paddlers around but the three biggest dangers will undoubtedly be Rio Olympians Lachie Tame and Riley Fitzsimmons, from Avoca, and Murray Stewart, who has left Northcliffe and returned to Sydney and now paddling for Trim's club Newport.

"Two years ago when I won my first State ski title, it was my first individual State gold," Trim said.

"I was stoked and last year to back it up with Lachie and Riley racing was even sweeter.

"This time it's going to be super tough.

"With Murray back it makes it even more interesting. They are so hard to win and you need a little bit of luck along the way.

"Having the three Olympians there definitely makes it a very hot field. They are professionals and know how to get up for a race, no matter what event. They are freaks on the water."

Trim is not underestimating the capabilities of Manly pair Sam Speer and Nick Dawe.

"They paddle well every year but this year, especially," Trim said.

"Sammy and I train together every week because we both work in the city. He has to be one of the most talented paddlers."

Trim said he can't recall the last time he raced at Blacksmiths. "A very long time ago, I think in nippers," he said.

Asked what sort of conditions he was hoping for, Trim said: "The flat served me well at Umina but it's more enjoyable with a wave. I love it when it's completely onshore – nice and windy so it's bumpy."

Work commitments have restricted Mitchell's training. "Each year it gets harder in terms of balancing social and work commitments," he said.

"Work always comes first so I just try and fit whatever I can around that. I have had to become smarter with my training, making sure it's quality. I feel like I am starting to hit my straps at the right time of the year.

"I really can't speak highly enough of what Luke Morrison has taught me over the last couple of years. He's been enormous.

"It's really an exciting time of the year. My individual ski aside, the ski relay should be fascinating and that goes for the Taplin relay.

"We have so many quality paddlers (ski) at Newport. The B team has beaten the A team all season.

"We're obviously looking forward to the Taplin. The boys are pumped and know it's going to be tough.

"Manly's Taplin team is like Winx (super mare racehorse) – paying \$1.10 in the flat and \$1.20 with a wave on. The team is full of super stars. But we won't go down without a fight."

Pictures: Top; Mitchell Trim chases a third successive State single ski title; Murray Stewart ... now racing for Newport.



DOCTORS GIVE TRENT ALL CLEAR TO RACE AGAIN



'I FEEL STRONGER EVERY DAY'

When Trent Rogers spent 10 days in Royal North Shore Hospital in early January, the last thing on his mind was rowing surfboats again.

He was diagnosed with possibly having autoimmune hepatitis but remarkably Trent will be rowing at the NSW Championships at Blacksmiths this weekend – but not with his regular Mona Vale crew.

Because of the uncertainty whether he'd row again, Matt Collins had to find a new rower and now Trent is with Ryan Halangahu's crew.

Trent represented Australia last season with Collins' crew and they also won silver at Aussies.

He said he was still full of beans after rowing in the second round of Ocean Thunder at Dee Why in December. "I was feeling really good. I did a really strong two weeks of training, all the hill sprints and the lactate work that we'd been doing and all my ergs were on pace," Trent said.

But he woke up one morning in early January and his wife Katie told him he was looking a bit yellow.

"Katie said my eyes were all yellow and that I'd better go to see a doctor," Trent said.

"I went up to the medical centre and, after the doctor took one look at me, he told me to go to the hospital emergency department. He said there was something obviously wrong with my liver and that I shouldn't be that colour.

"So I went to the emergency department at Royal North Shore and straight away they checked me in and immediately said there's something wrong.

"They took blood samples and, within two hours, they said my liver was starting to pack it in and they would need to do a bunch of tests and find out what it is.

"Probably three days later, they diagnosed that there was some sort of hepatitis that attacked my liver and



they didn't know what it was from.

"I had had an oyster cut over the Christmas break after going for a swim at the Basin. I had kicked an oyster and I sealed it up as to not get an infection. I think something has probably got inside and they thought it was Hepatitis E.

"They did all the tests and couldn't find any blockage and they eventually diagnosed it as autoimmune hepatitis. There are sort of two components to that – there's the hepatitis virus and in addition to that is how my body reacted to it.

"That's still going on. They need to make sure that my auto immune system is working properly.

"That is still being investigated. There is a condition called autoimmune hepatitis which means that your body kind of reacts too heavily to viruses that enter the body and they think maybe I have got that. I have to be a little bit careful but the doctors have given me the all

clear to race and to train.

"The doctors told me to "hit it as hard as you like" and race at State and Aussies."

Trent said he lost 10kg while in hospital. "I feel stronger every day now and I have put 3kg back on," he said.

"A mate (Sam Wallrock) has jumped into the bow seat for Matt's crew," Trent said.

"I was equally happy to join Pebbles (Ryan's crew). They are a top quality crew as well."

Mitch Stuart has won gold at Aussies with Austinmer, Chris Reid silver at Aussies with North Steyne and Trent silver with Mona Vale. Matt Chave has represented Australia with the Big Fish crew at Whale Beach.

"On paper it's a pretty good crew," Trent said.

"With this crew, I probably need to put on another 3 or 4kg of muscle, not fat."

Pictures: Trent Rogers is back; and training with Ryan Halangahu's Mona Vale crew at Dee Why.

GEORGIA HEADING IN DIFFERENT ROWING DIRECTION

Georgia Rowe's sporting life is about to change dramatically.

Having rowed surfboats for the Collaroy Gunners since she was 19, Georgia is about to give Stillwater rowing all she's got.

And it's all because she won the Australian National Indoor Rowing Championship, which led to her competing at the world championships in Boston where she picked up a silver medal in the 2000m opens. Now she's thinking Olympics.

"Basically, it's called the Crash B World Indoor Rowing Championships. Concept2 make the ergo (the indoor rowing machine). They fund it and take 100 erg machines to the competition and you use those ergs to do the race," Georgia said.

"It's a massive event and so many people are there. It's just not like professional athletes and people who just do it for fun. There are also people there who have disabilities. It is a really cool event.

"I did this national indoor rowing one. Pebbles (Ryan Halangahu) tagged me on facebook and said I should give it a go.

"You go to a facility where they had it and then they log your score on the computer and compare the times to see where you came. So I ended up coming first. I knew I was fast but I didn't know I was that fast. From that, a lot of things happened and it was pretty crazy. "The head coach of Rowing Australia contacted me and UTS Rowing Club coaches also spoke to me, so there was a lot of Stillwater chat happening. Then I got a call from Australian rowing (a guy in performance development) to say the world indoor championships were on in Boston and they (Concept2) usually invite people to go there and they pay for your accommodation and flights over there. I was asked if I would be interested in going to that and the possibility also of the world games in Poland in July.

"I said; 'yeah put my name down'. On Christmas eve, I found out that I was in. I couldn't turn that down. It was on February 12. I flew over and had three days to acclimatise. It was minus 9. I did a four-week training program which one of the guys from Mona Vale Surf Club gave me.

RIO OLYMPICS

"When I got there I was surrounded by all these people who went to the Rio Olympics. They were all asking me about my training and what I did on the ergo. I was such a novice there and I didn't care.

"I never thought about the race plan."

Georgia came second to Ukrainian Olena Buryak, who was at the Rio Olympics. "She was eight seconds off her personal best and I was only two seconds off mine," Georgia said.

"It was so cold and in the actual arena it was dry air, so it was really, really difficult to breathe and get some oxygen in. The actual 2000m was a horrible experience, so painful but it was really unique.

"My times have been logged for the world games. Now it's a matter of waiting."

Georgia says she is now going to concentrate on Stillwater rowing.

"At the moment I am going to UTS once a week while I am doing the surfboat rowing," she said.



"I am committed to my crew. I am rowing with my three best friends and I want to finish off the season really well.

"We are doing all right. After the Aussies is done, I'll really try and commit to Stillwater. I did a bit while I was at Mosman. I was 19 then and I wanted to hang out with my friends.

"It is the right time for me now. I am 24, I have been working full time as a registered nurse at the War Veterans Nursing Home at Collaroy.

"Now maybe I can step back and focus more on what I want to do with the rowing. The Olympics is definitely a

pipe dream. Tokyo would be awesome. At the moment it's very overwhelming and a lot is going on. There's so much to think about.

"Stillwater is very time consuming. But I want to do it. They have been getting me into a lot of different boats. I have done the lot, but not much single sculling. To get to the next level you have to make the national training squad and they are based at Penrith.

"I want to be in that squad as they pick teams for training camps in Italy. It would be awesome."

Pictures: Georgia Rowe after an early morning training session with the Gunners; and in race mode.

JAY IS FIGHTING FIT FOR ASSAULT ON STATE IRONMAN

Manly's Jay Furniss claims he learnt a lot from his Nutri Grain series debut which he hopes will put him in good stead for the State open ironman title at Blacksmiths at the weekend.

Furniss finished third in last year's event at Umina, behind Newport's Dane Farrell and Max Brooks.

Jay says he's had time to freshen up for the State after the Nutri Grain series at North Cronulla.

"Although I had mixed results in the series, I definitely learnt a lot," he said.

"It was great racing against those top guys and some of them will be at Blacksmiths.

"I am not sure what's going on with Smithy (Nathan Smith) and I really don't know whether Dane is going to defend his title. He hasn't done a lot of racing this season.

"Still, there's Kendrick (Louis), Max (Brooks), Red-head's Daniel Collins and Isak Costello and Wanda's Hayden Allum, so it's still a very good field. I really hope Smithy decides to race.

"Obviously Kendrick will be the one to beat."

Furniss said he had mixed results at North Cronulla.

"But it was fun competing in front of my family and friends," he said.

"There's no doubt that I found the first round (Endurance) very tough, definitely the hardest. It's one you go through some highs and some lows.

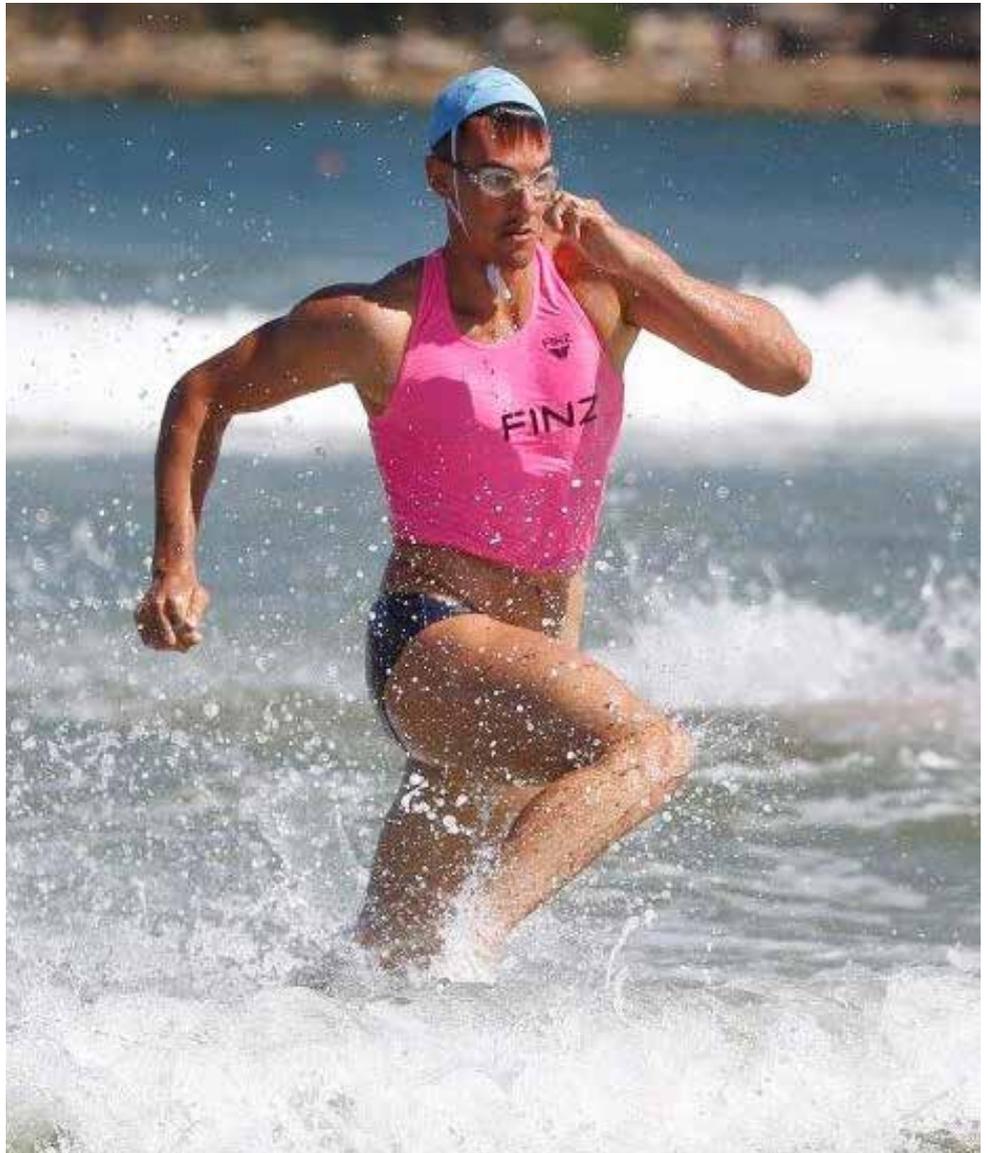
"The Saturday (second round Accumulator) was fun because there were waves on and the pressure was right on from the start in the Eliminator on the Sunday." Furniss said he really wanted to go well in both the iron and board events at Blacksmiths. "It would give me a great confidence boost going into the Aussies," he said.

"I was going well on the board for a while and I need to get back to how I was performing earlier."

Furniss will definitely have a full program of team events. "There's the swim teams, board relays and Taplin relay and also the board rescue," he said.

While he won the board rescue at the Branch Championships with Lachlan Bruce, he'll be back with his original partner John Kelly at the State. "It's an event that I really enjoy," Jay said.

Jay Furniss charges out of the water (Photo: Kemble Cowan)



HUGH TAKES TO THE POOL

Hugh McAlpine knew that if he had a future as an ironman he had to do something about his swimming. "I've always loved the water and paddling a board but I was never a pool swimmer," said the 17-year-old Newport all-rounder.

Yes, he's definitely in that all-rounder category now. He's in the pool five days a week churning out 5 or 6 km in the morning and there is also his afternoon sessions as well.

Only two weeks ago, Hugh, who came through the rippers at Newport, was at North Cronulla and on show in the under 17 ironman before the big boys took centre stage in the Nutri Grain series.

He did three irons, like the Accumulator format, and came away with a first and two second placings to win the event from Elouera's Chris King and Matt Sperring, from Warilla Barrack Point.

"I went there to try and build some momentum before

State and Aussies," Hugh said.

"I suppose it was when I went to Aussies as an under 15 competitor that I started to get some good results in the sport.

"I also started to catch up in size and growth, but I still knew then that I had to improve my swimming."

Hugh has only been on the ski a couple of seasons.

"It (ski) has come a long way in the past 12 months. I trained a lot during the winter for the (Coolangatta) Gold. That was tough," he said.

After the victory at North Cronulla, Hugh said it was just the confidence booster he needed going into the State Open Championships at Blacksmiths this weekend.

He says his main opposition will come from Elouera's Chris King and Jake Evans and Sperring.

Picture: Hugh talking to Dane Farrell at the recent Nutri Grain series.





NEWPORT BEACH TWINS TIPPED TO TAKE GOLD



If there's anything such as "good things" then Newport beach specialists Blake Drysdale and Jake Lynch should take out the flags and sprint respectively at the NSW Open Championships next weekend at Blacksmiths Beach.

For a start, the pair dominated their events in the Summer of Surf Series.

"I really can't see Blake being beaten," said Michael Gedz.

Gedz trains Drysdale's partner Laura Shorter. He also helps Drysdale with his running. He does the same program as Laura.

"Blake is in a really good frame of mind," Gedz said.

"He's mentally and physically strong.

"I suppose the only ones that could upset him are Jake (Lynch) and Dean Scarff (Collaroy)."

Gedz is also tipping Lynch to win the sprint, although he expects strong challenges from his Newport club-mate Dan Grbac, Scarff and the defending champion Michael Kember, also from Collaroy.

"Kember seems to lift at these big carnivals," Gedz said.

Gedz said Shorter was ready to go at State. "She missed Branch because of illness but is fighting fit now with no injuries," he said.



"I would think that her main opposition will be Cronulla's Nari Hadfield. She won the Australian under 19 title last season," Gedz said.

Gedz said Shorter couldn't taper for State.

"We've learned that the sprints and relays will be all over on the Thursday at Aussies. It means running

five or six races in one day. And that's a very big ask," Gedz said.

Newport's new-look open women's relay team will surely be a big chance of taking the gold medal at State.

Pictures: Top; Hot shots Blake Drysdale (left) and Jake Lynch; and Newport's beach relay girls ready to strike.

NEVER IN DOUBT AS MANLY RETAIN THE STATE CUP



Manly LSC left no doubt they were the champion club in the state by winning the point score for the eighth consecutive year at the NSW Age Championships at Blacksmiths Beach last weekend.

The Sky Blues finished on 349 points, 148 clear of second placed Wanda. Elouera came third on 194 points. Newcastle clubs Cooks Hill (192) and host club Swansea Belmont (135) followed, while North Curl Curl finished in the top six on 107 points.

The Morris twins Mitch and Jake and Kimberley Doyle were the stars in the water and dominated the under 12 age group.

Kimberley celebrated an individual treble in the iron, board and swim.

The Morris boys cleaned up, although Jake upset Mitch in the iron. Mitch, however, won both the board and swim, with Jake second in those events.

But it wasn't only in the water Manly had success.

Nina van der Reyden won both the under 11 sprint and flags, with Georgia Morgan second both times and the girls teamed up with Lara Paterson and Olivia Weir to win the beach relay.

Manly also won the under 9 and 10 female beach relays and the under 12 and 14 male beach relays – a good sign for the future.

And the club also won the march past.

Pictures: Manly junior athletes celebrate another NSW victory; and right: Nina van der Reyden about to grab the flag ahead of her clubmate Georgia Morgan (Photos: KEMBLE COWAN).



DUNCAN GIVES GOLD MEDAL TO HIS FRIEND

Now this is a lovely gesture by Manly 10-year-old Duncan Cowan.

Duncan's very good mate Miller Manson was injured at the State Age Championships at Blacksmiths Beach last weekend and taken to hospital after being dumped during a surf race on the Friday. He had his neck in a brace.

It meant he couldn't compete in the under 11 board relay final on Sunday which Manly won with Duncan, Conner Maggs and Will Rylands, who was Miller's replacement.

When Miller was released from hospital and attended a team dinner, Duncan asked Manly coach Graham Bruce to hand over his gold medal to his good friend. "It was the biggest race of the year and Miller has always been in our board team," Duncan said. "I could see he was very upset and sad. "But I could see how happy he was when he got the medal. It also made me very happy."

Duncan's father Kemble said there was no prompting from either he or his wife Katrina for his son to give his gold medal away.

"He (Duncan) took everyone by surprise and there were tears shed by a number of parents in the room," Kemble said.

EVIE BATTLES ON

"He certainly made us feel very proud of him."

Duncan didn't go home empty handed. He won a silver medal in the under 11 mixed Cameron relay when Manly finished second to Wanda.

Evie Coulter had her dramas as well on the last day of the championships.

Coach Graham Bruce said Evie had an accident during the warm ups when she was hit on the head by her board.

"She did an eskimo roll and the board hit her in the head. She sustained a gash to her head and a head knock and was taken to hospital," Bruce said.

"She came back and we assessed her throughout the day and we pulled her out of two events," he said.

But Evie did compete in the final event, the All-Age board relay, and she paddled a great race as the fifth paddler. Manly and Wanda battled it out most of the way before Cooks Hill threatened.

Wanda got the break and ran out winners. Cooks Hill edged out Manly to take second but Evie at least won a bronze medal.

Pictures: Top: Injured Miller Manson (seated) celebrates with his Manly teammates (Sky Blue caps), Duncan Cowan (left), Will Rylands and Conner Maggs; Middle: Evie Coulter is tagged by Mitch Morris in the All-Age board relay; Bottom: Kimberley Doyle in action. Photos: Kemble Cowan





NEWPORT J's STRIKE GOLD IN IRON

Newport's Jodie Louw had previously won just a bronze medal at past State Age Championships before she went to Blacksmiths Beach last weekend. Now she can add gold and silver medals to the family's trophy cabinet.

Her biggest prize of all at this year's State Championships was winning the under 13 female iron.

"I am just so excited," she said.

Before the iron final, Jodie picked up a silver medal in the under 13 surf race.

"It was a swim most of the way and then we all picked up a wave. It came down to a run up the beach. It was so close," Jodie said.

Jodie thought she had some fortune in the iron event. But she did lead from start to finish.

"When I came out of the swim leg and onto the board, I thought I was a bit lucky," she said.

"I had some luck going out (on the board). When I got through a wave, everyone else got smashed."

By then, Jodie had opened up a sizeable lead on the rest of the field and she was sitting in the box seat. Jodie said she had increased her swimming sessions in the pool over the past 12 months. "That has obviously helped me," she said.

Jodie is now looking forward to paddling a longer board. "I am really excited about that," she said. Her clubmate Joel Piper showed his class in taking out the under 13 ironman event.



Joel also led from start to finish.

Joel also picked up two bronze medals. He and Ben Melhuish came third in the board rescue and he teamed with Brandon Bartlem, Max Blackley and Travis Cox to finish third in the surf teams.

While Joel left North Narrabeen to join Newport, his former clubmate Lachlan Marshall went to Mona Vale. Lachlan teamed with Luka Monnock to take the gold in the board rescue, while Luka also picked up a bronze in the under 13 board final.

Pictures: Jodie Louw (top) is all smiles as she has the iron in control; Joel Piper is on his winning way in the ironman; and Luka Monnock shows off his bronze medal after finishing third in the board final.



NORTH CURL CURL MAKE WAVES IN SURF TEAMS



The real highlight for North Curl Curl SLSC at the State Age Championships at Blacksmiths Beach last weekend was the success of the surf teams. The club took out the under 11 and 12 male age groups and also the female under 10 event. On top of that, they finished second in the female under 9 surf teams and third in the female under 11s. "We are very proud of all the kids and what they've achieved," said coach Michael Clues. "Having Sean Davis (former Australian surf captain) joining us has certainly helped our development program."

The club also had one iron winner in Georgina Prowse (under 11s), while Bailey Clues produced a mighty effort to finish third behind Manly's Morris twins Jake (winner) and Mitch (pictured left).

Olivia Clues, Ruby Lovell and Dominique Melbourn, who were members of the winning under 10 female surf teams with Ashton Reimer, also won the under 10 board relay.

The weather was pretty miserable over the three days but the girls (pictured above) rugged up in their coats.

