

NOVEMBER 2012: OMANU BEACH SLSC



EASTERN WINNER



RESCUE OF THE MONTH

RECOGNISING OUTSTANDING RESCUES

Date/time: Sunday 20 May 2012
Location: Omanu Beach
Lifeguards involved: Thomas Brinkley, Adam Brinkley, Nate Moore and Ian Glover

In it for life

What was meant to be an easy afternoon of IRB training for a group of Omanu Surf Lifeguards turned into a double rescue off the Mount Maunganui coast in May.

IRB trainee instructor Thomas Brinkley, 19, was taking a group of 10 prospective drivers and crewman out at around 2.30pm when he noticed a kite boarder was in trouble.

The kite boarder, understood to be a foreign tourist, was 300m off Hart St when spotted but he was quickly drifting out with an offshore breeze blowing.

Although there was no surf the strong off shore wind was causing an issue for the kite surfer. Being winter, the water conditions were bitterly cold.

Brinkley dispatched younger brother Adam and crewman Nate Moore, both 15, and by the time they reached the kite boarder, he was nearly a kilometer offshore. He was in bad shape and was showing signs of hypothermia by the time they got to him.

The rescue was coordinated from the patrol tower which was used as a communications base. From there, an ambulance was called once the patient was on board the IRB.

The Lifeguards assessed the patient and needed to treat him for hypothermia using Thomas' advanced first aid training. They then returned

back to pick up the still-drifting kite.

Their day of drama wasn't over yet. As they were packing up after 4pm, a member of the public reported a dinghy 2kms off shore with the two occupants trying to row back after running out of gas. The IRB students assessed the situation, set the rescue craft up with two ropes and radios and Nate and Adam headed back out to sea.

They quickly found the boaties, who had been putting out a long-line, consulted the occupants and towed the craft back to shore.

Omanu head instructor Ian Glover, who was on hand during both rescues, said it was unlikely the boaties would have made it back to shore before dark, adding that his young troops had handled things brilliantly. He chose the opportunity to allow all the young guards the experience in applying their skills in a real situation. The Lifeguards got the kite boarder out of the water quickly, limiting his hypothermia, and chose to retrieve the kite on a second trip once the patient was stable.

Even though there was no surf, offshore days can often throw up potentially life threatening situations and the young men responded perfectly. They were calm and professional in what ended up being a valuable training day for them all.



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