

DECEMBER 2013: BETHELLS BEACH SLSP



NATIONAL WINNER



RESCUE OF THE MONTH

RECOGNISING OUTSTANDING RESCUES

In it for life

Date/time: Sunday 22 December 2013 at 5.30pm
Location: Bethells Beach & O'Neills Bay
Lifeguards involved: Adi Jenkins, Talia Comp, Jimmy Kendrick, Phil Jenkins, Cam Styles, Lisa McCallum, Dean Maddaford, Shane Dwyer and Megan West

Lifeguards on patrol at Bethells Beach on December 22 could not have imagined what was in store for them at the end of a normal patrol day that had just celebrated the qualification of 17 new lifeguards.

Using the IRB, the team had already rescued a man who had a mild stroke/seizure in the surf. He was assessed, treated and transported to hospital by ambulance.

Having just packed up at 5.30pm, the alarm was raised when a young man had been pulled from the water by friends.

Dean Maddaford and Shane Dwyer immediately despatched the callout IRB, arriving to find an unconscious male patient. After quickly assessing the patient and establishing that he was breathing, they transported him back to base in the IRB for further treatment.

Shortly after further treatment and assessment, the man regained consciousness and his condition was monitored while they waited for the ambulance.

As that incident was winding down, some of the lifeguards decided to head home and as Lisa McCallum was driving out of the valley at 6.10pm, she was hailed by two members of the public who had found a young man, face down in the stream flowing from Waimanu Lake.

The man was heavily intoxicated and stated that his friends had abandoned him. Lisa managed to get him into her car, quickly returning to the surf club where the team

started to treat him. Unfortunately, due to his state of mind, treatment became difficult and following threats of violence, police assistance was requested by the onsite ambulance crew.

At 6.30pm, SurfCom called to alert the team that a member of the public was stuck in a rip at O'Neil's Bay. Jimmy Kendrick was first to receive the message and he quickly responded with Adi Jenkins. They despatched the first IRB followed by Phil Jenkins and Cameron Styles who responded in the second IRB. Both IRBs launched at Bethells Beach and quickly reached the south of O'Neil's Bay where Phil and Cameron located the patient lying face down in water. They pulled him into the IRB.

Jimmy swapped IRB crew with Cameron to assess the patient which he quickly identified as unconscious and not breathing. Jimmy commenced CPR while Phil raced the IRB back to Bethells Beach, where the team were waiting with the defibrillator and first aid equipment.

After Phil and Jimmy beached the IRB, they moved the patient with Adi's help out of the IRB and up the sand to continue CPR. Luckily, due to the previous incidents, the ambulance crew soon arrived.

While the above incident developed, the rescue helicopter was dispatched and soon the helicopter crew, ambulance and lifeguards all assisted in the treatment of the patient.

In addition to the critical man, two other people also required assistance after lifeguards

established they had swallowed water trying to rescue their friend, prior to the IRB team arriving. These patients were also treated for shock.

The now tired team managed to get two IRBs back down to the beach enroute from Bethells to O'Neil's Bay and rescue the unconscious patient from the water and commence CPR within eight to 10 minutes. As a result of this speed, the patient eventually regained some consciousness and left Bethells via the rescue helicopter in a lot better shape than when the lifeguards retrieved him.

In all likelihood, if the other two events had not also occurred and, due to the time of day this event happened, it is highly likely that there could have been one, if not multiple, drownings.

On reflection of the events, the team gained huge satisfaction on a successful resuscitation, not only for the patient but the friends as well.

It was around 8.30pm before the team eventually got away, following a much needed briefing from SLSNR duty officer which proved vital in recalling the events and providing a caring outlook to all involved.

