



# RESCUE OF THE MONTH



## CLUB: Taranaki Seasonally Employed Surf Lifeguards

**SURF LIFEGUARDS: Hayden Paul (USA) Worser Bay LSC, Ryan Paul (USA) Worser Bay LSC, Paul Reeve (UK) SLSNZ International Guard Club, Blake Porteous Brighton SLSC, Millie Malin Worser Bay LSC, Jack Malin Worser Bay LSC, Sophrose London Regional Lifeguard Supervisor**

Taranaki seasonally employed Surf Lifeguards were involved in pulling two people from the water at Oakura Beach, Taranaki on January 13, 2020. Seven off-duty Surf Lifeguards responded to the incident which resulted in one person being rescued and another sadly losing their life.

It happened at around 7.45pm after a day of rain. The sea was glassy with monstrous sets of approximately 6ft - 8ft rolling through. Most of the surfers had retreated back to shore as it was too heavy.

The off-duty Surf Lifeguards were body surfing with fins in the giant waves when they were approached by Surf Lifeguard Blake Porteous who swam out to the rest of the group, despite having a broken collarbone, and alerted them to shouts of help from out at sea.

The group spotted a surfer with what appeared to be two people on his board. Three Surf Lifeguards, Ryan and Hayden Paul and Sophrose London, swam over and found a woman who was unconscious and not breathing. Her husband was on the verge of drowning due to hypothermia and exhaustion.

Surf Lifeguard Paul Reeve paddled a member of the public's surfboard out to help while Ryan and Hayden skilfully towed the unconscious woman through the unforgiving surf and onto the beach. Sophrose helped the surfer keep the man afloat until Surf Lifeguards Millie and Jack Malin came to rescue him in the IRB.

The IRB was expertly manoeuvred through breaking surf and the man was rescued and treated for shock and hypothermia. Ryan and Hayden had begun CPR on the woman with the help of local club members from New Plymouth Old Boys Surf Life Saving Club and the local emergency services that had arrived. Unfortunately their efforts were unsuccessful. There was huge involvement from doctors, anaesthetists, police, fire service and more off-duty Surf Lifeguards.

The highly skilled and experienced Surf Lifeguards, combined with the fast response, ensured that the couple had the best care they possibly could have had on the night. It was the ultimate test of physical endurance, emotional capability, skills and efficiency.

The Surf Lifeguards also have admiration for Blake and the surfer involved in the rescue. Without the surfer's intervention and skill to keep the swimmers afloat there would have been a double fatality that night. Blake, who swam out to alert them to the shouts for help, contributed to a quick lifeguard response.



**SURF LIFE SAVING**  
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