



A busy summer at Venus Bay

FUTURE Venus Bay surf lifesavers on their bronze medallion camp braved temperamental conditions recently, taking to the beach in 40 degree heat one day, and wind and rain the next, to prepare for a busy summer.

But these lifesavers, some of whom come from as far as Melbourne to protect the beaches, were itching to take to the water and earn their medallion.

Venus Bay Surf Life Saving Club chief instructor Kimberley Stewart said the surf lifesaver trainees had been through all sorts of training and weather over the week of camp.

"They do theory work, and put their knowledge into practical scenarios and activities down on the beach," she said.

"And although they all sun-screened up on the 39 degree day, they stayed out in the water a little too long before re-applying and are now parading some very fashionable life-saver cap strap lines across their faces."

At the end of the camp the trainees are rostered onto patrols with at least three life savers on every day this season from December 27 to the end of January.

Kimberley said there are also eight gold medallion life guards who will patrol

every day this summer from 10am to 6pm except Sundays.

"We easily get a couple of thousand people on the beach on a hot day over summer," she said.

"So having paid gold medallion lifeguards on is going to be very handy."

Last year the Venus Bay Surf Life Saving Club performed more than 40 rescues, and Kimberley said the year before that they performed 84 rescues in two days because of treacherous conditions.

"Each summer volunteers would do about 40 rescues on average, and life guards would do more on top of that," she said.

"We also have a lot of troubles with people collecting pipis on the beach.

"But now having three life guards on at a time means we can take the IRB boat out and have much more flexibility on the beach where we've lacked in previous years."

But lifesaving isn't all the club will be doing this summer, with the nippers program and the Summer Surf Sports series lined up for the season.

Kimberley said the Nipper program is great for building six to 12 year-olds' surf awareness, and the older juniors even

learn resuscitation.

"Some of our kids will compete at the Junior and Nipper carnival this summer," she said.

"And the Summer Surf Sports program is something everyone from the club can enjoy, with iron races, board races, beach flag sprints and surf racing.

"The club is also really involved in IRB racing; we have been dominant in it for some time.

"We will be running carnivals through the summer to get ready for the IRB Australian Championships in Tasmania in April."

Ironmen visit

But it will be the visit from two of the country's top athletes, Ky Hurst and Phil Clayton, on January 5 and 6 that will really have the Venus Bay Surf Life Saving Club in a state of anticipation this summer.

Social events at the club during the season are set to draw some eager attention as they have in the past. The trivia night is always a popular soiree for club members and their friends and family.

Spit roast dinners are also on the agenda over the season's Saturday nights, always a pleaser for the hard working lifeguards.

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Future lifesavers on their bronze medallion camp at Venus Bay recently practice their skills in a rescue scenario.



Venus Bay Surf Life Saving Club instructors get ready for the busy summer holidays.