

## **Before 2003 New Archives:**

### **Trans-Tasman 2003 - March 22 - 23, Piha, New Zealand (Australia vs. New Zealand)**

Team Australia had a convincing win in the individual format with Sasha Stocker and Rebecca Woods winning the Open Mens and Womens format respectively. The Kiwi team fought hard and came back late in the day to claim the surf team title in a fantastic Lion Red Trans-Tasman Challenge. Bobby Hansen from Gisborne surfed exceptionally under pressure scoring 24.5 out of a possible 30 as the New Zealand power surfer and pushed the kiwi team over the line by 4 points. Final surf team totals saw New Zealand score 78.5 to Team Australia's 74.3.

Sasha Stocker was stoked with his individual title saying "the waves were fun and allowed performance surfing, hats off to the Kiwi Team for showing fighting spirit to come back and snatch the Team title." Rebecca Woods of Australia impressed all displaying the same big moves and connecting power turns that took her to the 2002 World Grommet Title and dominated the 2003 individual Lion Red Trans-Tasman women's event. Other surfers to impress throughout the day were Mark Bannister, Glyndyn Ringrose and Brett Hardy from Australia and Zenor Wernor and Lisa Hurinui from New Zealand.

The Trans-Tasman spirit is well and truly alive with both teams embracing the event and with the support of Lion Nathan Breweries the aim is to bring the ISA sanctioned event to Australia for 2004.

Excerpt from Surfing Australia's website, [www.surfindustralia.com](http://www.surfindustralia.com)

For more information on this event, please contact Greg Townsend, SNZ at [surfindnz@xtra.co.nz](mailto:surfindnz@xtra.co.nz).

### **Tri-Nations 2002 - February 22 - 24, Piha, New Zealand (Australia vs. South Africa vs. New Zealand)**

South Piha played host to some of the world's best surfers as Australia, New Zealand and South Africa went head to head a new initiative in world surfing. The ISA sanctioned event was a world first and organizers expect the idea to be developed further on a worldwide scale. With a full day of surfing, representatives from each nation were faced with grueling paddle outs and treacherous rips as Piha lived up to its reputation for big

dangerous surf with a fresh Southerly swell arrived battering the coastline and the competitors.

In the end it was the Australians that prevailed with super consistent surfing that the other teams could not match. The Australian team, consisting of captain Joel Jones, ex WCT surfer Sasha Stocker, ex WCT surfer Glynden Ringrose and world #2 women's surfer Melanie Redman, were just too good in the large stormy waves, regularly posting excellent wave scores. The NZ team; Daniel Kereopa (Capt), Damon Gunness, Zennor Wernham and Lisa Hurunui, put up a good fight finishing a close second behind close rivals. On total points the South African team; Shaun Gossman (Capt), Gerard De Plessis, Brad Bricknell and Heather Clark, finished in third.

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## **Reef @ Todos Big Wave World Championship 1999**

February 6 - 17, 1999 - Todos Santos, Baja California, Mexico

### **BIGGEST WAVES EVER SURFED IN COMPETITION**

Mexico (February 17, 1999) -- The world's most elite big-wave surfers gathered February 7 for the prestigious Reef @ Todos (a.k.a. Reef Big Wave World Championships '99) off of Todos Santos Island in Ensenada, Baja, California, Mexico. The ability to perform on waves the size of buildings is considered the pinnacle of surfing achievement - and the '99 Reef @Todos exemplified the danger and challenge of big-wave riding once again. After a challenging day of shifting 12-18 foot waves and weather conditions, Paul Patterson, 27, of Yallingup, Australia took home the individual gold medal. The South Africa team of Ian Armstrong, Cass Collier and coach Mickey Duffus surprised both the field and international surfing experts by capturing the team world title. Presented by the International Surfing Association (I.S.A.), the event normally takes place over two days. However, event officials decided to hold the contest in one day, due to the likelihood of deteriorating weather and surf conditions through the remainder of the February 6-17 holding period. Two competitors from each of 11 countries plus Hawaii competed for national renown and global recognition as the world's best big-wave surfers. Joining Patterson in the final heat were Vetea David of Tahiti, who took the silver medal, Ian Armstrong of South Africa, who went home with the bronze, and Taylor Knox of the U.S. Knox won a special \$50,000 prize after the 1998 event for catching and riding a wave later measured by photograph at 52 feet. Patterson's road to the championship was not easy. He placed third in the second round of competition, but moved into the semifinals with fellow teammate and former world tour runner-up Cheyne Horan; the pair had logged the two best third-place scores to advance. Patterson then turned it on to win both his semifinal heat and the final.

According to Patterson, he surfed a shorter board than the other competitors did, which gave him more maneuverability on the waves. Rather than competing on the world surfing tour, he travels the world in search of big waves. He recently spent three months surfing on the Oahu's North Shore in Hawaii. The event's history is short but epic. At the '98 Reef @ Todos, the greatest big-wave surfers in the world barely survived rides on 30-60 foot waves. Anticipation fueled by memories of the '98 event filled the air as the big-wave warriors boarded boats in Ensenada at 5 a.m. for the 10-mile ride to Todos Santos Island and its infamous "Killers" reef. Upon reaching Todos Santos, competitors breathed easier as waves were a manageable 10 feet for the first round of competition. By round two, the Pacific Ocean began to deliver larger sets. "We could show some style in the waves rather than just surfing to survive," commented Joe McNulty (Ireland), the 1998 individual runner-up. By the time the semifinals rolled around a few hours later, Todos sprung to full form as the surf reached double to triple overhead conditions with deceptively powerful 12 - 18 foot sets. The South Africans were ready with a surprise. Collier, 27, and Armstrong, 26, rejoiced in seeing that the Todos Santos conditions were similar to their home break in Capetown. While not well known internationally, they are famous in their home country. Armstrong was recently voted the number one big-wave surfer by ZigZag magazine. Collier was earlier sidelined from a successful amateur career due to the policies of the apartheid government. Reef, sponsor of the event, gave the pair plane tickets to Hawaii as an acknowledgement of great surfing. Armstrong had never surfed outside of South Africa prior to his experience at Todos Santos and is looking forward to surfing breaks in Hawaii he has only dreamed about. "This event is becoming known for showcasing the talents of newcomers who surf along side legendary talent. The South African win may change the lives of these two surfers," said Cadu Villela, executive director of the I.S.A. In 1998, newcomer Carlos Burle of Brazil won the title, and has since gained international recognition. In 1999, he lost in round one. Team points were based on the total scores from each heat of the two competitors from each country. Following South Africa, Australia took second, Tahiti took third place and the U.S. team came in fourth. Renowned big wave surfers knocked out before the final round included Brock Little of Hawaii, who came in fourth in the semifinal after winning his two prior heats; Horan, who got fourth in the semifinal; and McNulty of Ireland and Mike Parsons of the U.S., both of whom surf Todos Santos regularly. Each placed third in round one. The Reef @ Todos was presented by the I.S.A. (International Surfing Association) and sponsored by Reef, with co-sponsors Flexdex, Rusty, DSO Eyewear and Mexican Surf Fiesta event promotions.

## **Reef Big Wave Team World Championship 1998**

February 12 - 20, 1998 Todos Santos, Baja California, Mexico

Mexico (February 16, 1998) - History was made Monday, February 16th at "Killers" surf spot on the island of Todos Santos in Baja California, Mexico, sight of the "Reef Big Wave Team World Championship '98" an event organized by the International Surfing

Association (ISA). The biggest waves ever surfed in competition hocked the surfing world and media on hand to witness this historic event.

Waves of 20 -25 feet (40 - 50 feet on the face) and occasional waves of 30 feet (60 feet face) slammed into the coast of Northern Baja as the relentless "El Nino" winter continues. The huge waves, combined with many of the best big wave surfers in the world, caused for some of the most memorable surfing, and wipe-outs, ever witnessed. "Welcome to 'Killers', go home alive!" exclaimed the head judge and renowned surfboard shaper Gary Linden after the event drew to a climactic end.

## **Brazil - Big Wave Team Champion of the World**

Brazilian hell-man Carlos Burle led his team to victory and the gold medal in both the team and individual classes by consistently picking off the biggest and best waves in the final heat. In the waning 15 minutes of the one-hour final, Burle fought his way into one of the biggest waves of the event to surpass Australia's Tony Ray on his quest to become the first ever "Big Wave World Champion". His teammate Rodrigo Resende made all the way to the semi-finals placing 5th overall.

The mainland America and Hawaiian surfing teams were heavily favored to win but they were far less dominant than the experts expected. It is difficult to access which of the top two medal winners - gold taken by Brazil and silver by Ireland- was the bigger upset. Australia, another favorite to win got the bronze medal.

The tone of the event was set in the first heat of the day Monday, the second and final day of competition. Within the first 5 minutes of the heat an enormous wave of 50+ foot on the face caught the four competitors by surprise, breaking on top of them. Four of the best big wave surfers in the world, Hawaiians Brock Little and Shawn Briley, and Australians Ross Clarke Jones and Tony Ray were helpless to mother ocean as the wave broke on top of them, smashing one board and breaking the cords of two others. Only Little retained his board, while the others were forced to use back-up boards for the rest of the heat. Briley, in awe of the moment, chose not to paddle back out to the line-up and eliminated himself from the competition.

Taylor Knox charged the heaviest and biggest wave of the day and of the winter biggest during the semi finals, winning \$50,000 cash prize offered by K2 for the biggest wave surfed this winter on the Northern Pacific. Terrence McNulty representing Ireland also made his mark on the event with the "Best/Worst Wipeout" award. "Oh My God!" screamed U.S. Coach Bruce Walker as McNulty was annihilated by the lip of the wave. "I thought I was not going to make it."

The format for this event was a two man national team chosen by each surfing governing body in each nation. 10 teams representing 9 countries (Hawaii was the 10th) made their

way from around the world to compete in this event, the first ever of its kind. World-renowned big wave surfers Brock Little and Shawn Briley of Hawaii, Ross Clark Jones and Tony Ray of Australia, and Taylor Knox and Peter Mel of the U.S.A. joined a field of 19 surfers to brave the conditions of this remote island which lies directly in the path of the huge "El Nino" swells.

Sanctioned and Organized by the International Surfing Association (I.S.A.), the Reef Big Wave Team World Championship '98 is being hailed as equal to, if not better than the previous epic big wave event in history - the 1987 Eddie Aikau Memorial at Waimea Beach on the North Shore of Oahu, Hawaii. "Best event since the first Eddie" exclaimed Brock Little, recognized as the world's premier big wave surfer, as he made the obvious comparison on the minds of all witnessing the historic event. Contributing to the incredible surf which graced "Killers" to make it such a memorable competition were the conditions of the local. Located 12 miles off the coast of Ensenada, Baja California, Mexico, "Killers" at Todos Santos Island is accessible only by boat. The surfers and media on hand to record the event loaded all their gear onto boats to make the one hour trip through 20 - 30 foot swells on their way to the island. The judges and only the bravest photographers were dropped off 40 yards from the island and forced to swim with their equipment through the 6-foot shorebreak in order to reach the island.

As an I.S.A. event, surfers representing their countries competed for pride associated with the challenge of competing in giant waves within the tight-knit big wave community. No prize money was at stake, as gold, silver and bronze medals for both individual and teams were the lure for the competitors. Competing for their countries, the remoteness of location, and life threatening conditions all contributed to the camaraderie felt by all competitors and media on hand.

A rescue crew on "wave runners" was on hand to assist the competitors and rescue surfers when in need. "Thank you to the K38 rescue team for saving my life today, twice!" exclaimed eventual champion Burle during the closing ceremonies.

The event was conceived and executed with the combined efforts of the I.S.A. and Reef Brazil, leading sandal and shoe manufacturer in the Action Sports Industry. "My special thanks to Cadu Villela the executive director of the I.S.A and all the staff and competitors for making this special event possible, " stated Reef Marketing Manager Alistair Craft during the awards ceremony. Other sponsors of the event were Scorpion Bay Clothing company, the Mexican Surfing Fiesta, and 976-Surf.

## QUOTES

"The biggest, best waves I've ever seen." - Taylor Knox, ISA World Surfing Games Champion, Team USA

"Best surf event since the first 'Eddie Aikau Memorial'." - Brock Little, Big Wave Legend, Team Hawaii

"All time Todos." - Mike Parsons, Todos Santos pioneer, Big Wave Rider, Team USA

"The best big waves ever." - Peter Mel, Professional Big Wave Surfer, Team USA

"26 rolls of A+ film, best day ever." - Rob Brown, photographer, Surfing Magazine

"The first, the biggest, the best." - Dr. Mark Bracker, Chairman of the ISA Medical Committee

"If it gets any bigger, I don't want to be in the event." - Terrence McNulty, professional surfer, Team Ireland

"Topped the Smirnoff in '74"- Wayne "Rabbit" Bartholemew, 1977 World Champion, event judge, Surfing Legend

"Giant perfect waves, excellent surfing competition, hard work, and a lot of luck.- "Cadu Villela, ISA Executive Director

"It's good to see somebody finally make it happen." - Evan Slater, Managing Editor, Surfer Magazine