

27th Anniversary 2010 Cooper's Cutloose Yorke's Classic

Young guns dominate the finals as Teale Vanner takes home the cup! South Australia's surfing elite tested at Westcape

Last weekend (2nd – 4th October, 2010) the 27th Anniversary Cooper's Cutloose Yorke's Classic was held in near perfect, solid waves at Westcape in Innes National Park on Southern Yorke Peninsula.

Officials and competitors were impressed at what greeted them for day one of the contest as clean 1.5 – 2 metre waves pounded the beach at Westcape with beautiful spring weather add to the serenity. The day saw 26 heats completed and the level of surfing was second to nothing. Visiting South Australia for the contest were former pro Jarrad Howse who grew up south of Adelaide, Lee and Paul Stacey originally from Encounter Bay and also 10 year pro tour veteran Todd Prestage all from New South Wales. With these surfers in town there was a feeling of expectation and excitement for some of our younger surfers who had the chance to watch and compete with some of Australia's best. Highlight of the day was a long clean backhand tube ride from Paul Stacey which saw him take home the Tube of the Contest Trophy.

The pinnacle of surfing in South Australia is the Yorke's Classic Trophy – the 'Keith Sugars' memorial cup and the surfing in the Rhino's Tavern Open Men's reflected the competitors desire to add this to their collection. In an enthralling weekend of radical beach break surfing it was Teale Vanner (Kangaroo Island) who took home the trophy, \$1000 cash, a new Lee Stacey board and plenty of other sponsored product. Averaging 16 points out of a possible 20 for the whole contest Vanner was in fine tune and rarely looked like letting the title go. He impressed the judges and spectators alike with his powerful variety of manouvres and pre-empted the result with a deep tube ride and massive re-entry on one wave during his pre heat warm up when other surfers were questioning the organisers choice of location.

Vanner, at 21 years of age, was the senior member of the final and was pushed by Khai Adams of Victor Harbor, Alex Rix of Middleton and Max Longhurst of Port Elliott. The surfing was amazing as wave after wave the competitors put their bodies and equipment on the line and displayed what the Yorke's Classic is all about; the best surfers tackling the biggest best waves available.

The Marion Bay Local Traders Women's final was also an outstanding spectacle with all girls stepping up to tackle the extremely challenging waves. As the girls paddled out they were greeted by a 15 wave set all around 2 metres high which

would turn a lot of grown men away. Once the ocean settled it was 16 year old Goolwa surfer Alice Gilbert who made the most of the tough waves. Gilbert was the winner of the inaugural Christine Cox memorial trophy for the Yorke's Classic Women's Champion. Narrowly behind Gilbert in second place was 13 year old future star Ellie Francis of Middleton, Georgie Thomas of Middleton, Grace McDonald of Goolwa and the eldest finalist, at the ripe old age of 17, Brinkley Davies of Port Noarluga South who was the 2009 and 2008 champion.

The CUTLOOSE Juniors put our states best 16 and under surfers to the test and in the end the title went to Port Noarlunga South 'grommet' Mitch Imgraben. In his first ever Yorke's Classic, Imgraben waited patiently for the right waves and the tactics paid off. Again there was a series of large close out waves which really shook the boys up. Second was Tom Bowen of Seaford followed by Mack Baddack of Port Willunga, Brae Adams of Victor Harbor and Joel Van der Stelt of Port Elliott. These youngsters again have proven the future of surfing in South Australia is in good hands.

The COOPER'S Seniors was an opportunity for some past champions to have a crack at the solid waves. With all surfers 35 years or older it was amazing to see how experience and staying in the surf keeps you going. After another 15 wave set it was 2003 Open Champion and wave magnet Matt Shorten of Marino taking home the trophy. Shorten picked off two great waves and his total of 15.7 out of a possible 20 was one of the highest for the whole comp. Shorten narrowly defeated 2002 Open winner, Gary Haworth of Moana followed by Dan Nitschke from New South Wales, Craig Adams of Victor Harbor and local surfer Brian Taylor of Marion Bay who has 4 Yorke's Classic open titles including a 'threepeat' from 1990 – 92.

In maintaining an Australian first for surfing competition the event organisers, Surf Culture Australia again purchased carbon credits to offset the greenhouse gases involved with coordinating and running the event. Event coordinator Mark Orr said 'As South Australia's premier surf event we saw fit to set an example for surf comps in the state and hopefully set a precedent for future events. We were audited by Balance Carbon on all power use, travel, waste production and also event staff vehicles travelling to and from the event. It was calculated that we produced around 5 tonnes of greenhouse gases and carbon credits were purchased accordingly. As surfers we should be at the forefront of environmental awareness and we were stoked that the extra \$5 charge to competitors helped cover this process.' Balance Carbon Managing Director, Matt Shorten, who took the cup home in 2003 was one of the surfers in the hunt for the trophy being eliminated in the Quarter Finals and finishing in equal 7th place.

In what has become a feature of the event this year there were 12 surfers who attacked the Coopers 'Punt for Pale'. After a 20 minute free for all on finals day it was Brett Edward of Stoneyfell who took out the best manouvre with a long clean critical floater over the lip of a 1.5 metre beast and Matt Shorten who took out best overall wave with one of the tube rides of the weekend. Both received some of the sponsor's liquid gold for their efforts.

Nearly 500 spectators braved the challenging walk on the beach, and throughout the weekend witnessed some of the greatest surfing seen in our state in extremely challenging Yorke's Classic conditions. Over the weekend we saw a number of heavy wipeouts, a few hungry reptiles, some great tubes and a superb display of surfing from all competitors

With the surfing completed, presentations of trophies, \$3500 cash and also product in excess of \$7,500 was presented to the finalists. Into the night there were many classic moments to wind down another classic Yorke's Classic.

Massive thanks should go to all locals, competitors, officials, event sponsors and supporters with a special mention to the Innes National Park staff who were great in dealing with the once a year influx of surfers and spectators. We look forward to bigger and better things for the event next year.