

A Leading Voice of Mutual Banking

Media Release

Sunday 2 February 2025

HUNTER JUNIOR SURF LIFESAVERS SHINE AT 2025 NEWCASTLE PERMANENT BRANCH CHAMPIONSHIPS

The best of the best junior surf lifesavers from across the Hunter hit the sand and surf on Sunday, 2 February for the highly anticipated 2025 Newcastle Permanent Branch Championships.

This annual event brought together the region's most talented young lifesavers, with over 300 competitors showcasing their skills across a series of challenging events designed to refine their rescue techniques, surf awareness, and teamwork.

Beyond the competition, the event also honoured two outstanding young members of the local surf lifesaving community, with Grace van Esveld from Cooks Hill SLSC and Ryan Boustead from Nobbys SLSC named the 2025 Newcastle Permanent Hunter Junior Surf Life Savers of the Year.

Recognising leadership, dedication, and an unwavering commitment to surf lifesaving, the prestigious award highlights the vital role young lifesavers play in their clubs and the wider community.

Grace van Esveld from Cooks Hill SLSC and St Philip's Christian College has been a surf lifesaver since she joined as an Under 6, competing at local carnivals and representing her branch at the Interbranch Championships.

Earning her Surf Rescue Certificate in 2024, she now mentors younger nippers and finds joy in helping others through Cooks Hill's Same Waves program. A keen surfer and multi-sport athlete, Grace embodies the spirit of surf lifesaving both in and out of the water.

Ryan Boustead from Nobbys SLSC and St Philip's Christian College has been passionate about surf lifesaving since he joined as an Under 9, excelling in beach events like flags and sprints.

Now a patrolling member after earning his Surf Rescue Certificate, he takes pride in learning from experienced lifesavers and strengthening his skills. With a love for swimming and athletics, Ryan hopes to take his lifesaving passion into a future career as a firefighter.

Hunter Surf Life Saving President Henry Scruton said the championships showcased the impressive skill and dedication of young surf lifesavers.

"This event not only showcases their athletic abilities but also their commitment to keeping our beaches safe," Mr Scruton said.

A Leading Voice of Mutual Banking

Media Release

“Grace and Ryan are fantastic examples of the next generation of surf lifesavers who give back to their clubs and communities.

“Both of them have shown incredible dedication to surf lifesaving, not just in competition but also through their leadership and mentoring of younger members. It’s young people like Grace and Ryan who ensure the future of surf lifesaving remains strong.”

Newcastle Permanent Head of Customer Lending Greg Hooper said the Junior Surf Life Saver of the Year Award is a celebration of the next generation of lifesavers who are making a real impact in their communities.

“We’re incredibly proud to support young lifesavers like Grace and Ryan, who not only excel in competition but also dedicate their time to helping others,” Mr Hooper said.

“Their leadership and passion for surf lifesaving are inspiring, and it’s young people like them who will shape the future of safer beaches for everyone.”

Newcastle Permanent has proudly partnered with Surf Life Saving Hunter for 43 years, supporting vital programs that ensure young lifesavers receive the training and experience they need to help keep beaches safe – now and into the future.

With 13 Surf Life Saving clubs spanning from Catherine Hill Bay to Tea Gardens Hawks Nest those interested in becoming part of the HSLs community can find more information at <https://www.hsls.org.au/>.

Newcastle Permanent continues to invest into local communities each year through its partnerships, employee donations, volunteering, and fundraising programs.

Media enquiries:

Alexandra Fraser 0447 464 196

ABOUT NEWCASTLE PERMANENT

Newcastle Permanent is one of Australia's largest and most trusted customer-owned banks, committed to serving its customers and community. Established in 1903, Newcastle Permanent provides banking products including home loans, deposits, everyday accounts, business solutions, and financial planning plus has a strong branch presence, and a broad ATM network.