

## RUGBY LEAGUE

# Tweed girls play hard

By Annabelle Cottee  
& Natalie Brunoli

SOME of the region's toughest women will be in action when the 38th annual NSW Aboriginal Rugby League Knockout Carnival kicks off at Kingscliff this weekend.

The three-day carnival is expected to attract thousands of players and supporters with organisers tipping more than 40 teams to contest the men's competition.

The women's draw is also expected to figure prominently with 16 teams, including the Tweed Stingrays, already nominated.

Gold Coast Titans fullback Preston Campbell and Broncos back-rower Sam Thaiday are among the NRL stars expected to lend their support to the men's competition but Tweed Stingrays delegate Lulla Phillips said the women's matches also would be fast and furious.

"The women's competition has all the action of the men's competition with lots of big hits and tackles," she said.

Phillips said the Stingrays

## Knockout blow sparks unwanted war of words

THE Australian Rugby League Indigenous Council has expressed disappointment after it was condemned following the cancellation of a proposed "Aboriginal Knockout" carnival in Newcastle.

The Council has thrown its weight behind the NSW Aboriginal Rugby League Knockout Carnival to be staged at Cudgen this weekend.

The privately run NSW Aboriginal Rugby League and Sports Incorporated (NSWARLSI) had sought to stage a carnival in Newcastle this weekend but failed to secure appropriate insurance for

players and referees.

As a result, the organisers of the Newcastle event were advised that referees would not be allocated, but were able to offer their services individually.

When no referees made themselves available the event was cancelled.

"The event will be cancelled because of the actions of the ARL to ban referees from officiating at the carnival," NSWARLSI secretary Michael Anderson said.

"We are sick and tired of those who collaborate with white officialdom to shut down grassroots

initiatives.

"The ARL can be assured that what they have done here is to well and truly stir the hornets' nest."

But Council chairman Smiley Johnstone was quick to respond. "There has been only one body at fault here because they failed to provide the basic safeguards expected of any sporting event," Johnstone said.

"We have seen some of Indigenous Australia's proudest sports people unfairly attacked for what was a fundamental error by the competition organiser."

players came from all walks of life but were united in their love and understanding of the game.

"We've all been supporting rugby league for years," she said.

"It's been a big pastime in our Aboriginal culture.

"The women just wanted to get

involved and do their own thing."

While the Stingrays will represent the Tweed in the women's competition, the Tweed-based Wollumbin Warriors will be chasing back-to-back titles in the men's division.

The Warriors downed Sydney

outfit La Perouse in the final of last year's tournament at Lismore.

The tournament draw will be conducted Thursday with play to commence Saturday.

Games will be played at Cudgen's Ned Byrne Field and the nearby Walter Peate Oval.



A young boy hones his kicking skills under the watchful eye of former Manly half Steve Martin as part of the Aussie Sports Skills Contest.

## RUGBY LEAGUE

## Eadie has vision for future

By Bob Anthony

RUGBY league legend Graham Eadie believes a skills program developed on the Tweed has the potential to bolster the game's future.

Eadie and fellow Tweed businessman Mark Russell have recently unveiled a development program that is aimed specifically at juniors.

The AFL has enjoyed outstanding success in boosting junior participation levels following the nation-wide rollout of its Auskick program and Eadie believes the Aussie Sports Skills Contest (ASSC) has similar potential.

"This program is very much a starting point for kids to get into rugby league," the former Manly and Australian fullback said.

The ASSC program provides a structured series of skills tests which can be easily implemented by junior sports clubs and schools for both girls and boys aged six years and older.

Among the skills targeted are sprinting, kicking (field goals, place kicking, punting and grubber kicks) and passing.

Russell said the ASSC was designed so schools or community groups which do not have big resources can incorporate the tests into physical activity programs.

The program can also be supervised by teachers or parents, regardless of their league knowledge. It can be run as a test for individuals as well as in teams.

Both Russell and Eadie said the program had the potential to develop as a competition between schools or regions, not only within NSW but also in Queensland with the possibility of establishing an ASSC challenge which could be expanded upon.

"It has the potential to be introduced into junior clubs and schools anywhere," Eadie said.

"It provides an ideal stepping stone for young kids just starting to develop the basics and take them into more-advanced training as they get older."



World surfing champion Stephanie Gilmore (front left) presents Maili Masters event winner Mark McNamara (Over 45s) with his prize while (from back left) Craig Paddison, Ian Pearson, Ray Gleave, Brian Nichols and Doug Warbick watch on.

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## SURFING

## Masters proves a welcome test of endurance for surfers

PART of Australia's living surfing heritage gathered at Rainbow Bay at the weekend to contest the Maili Masters longboard event.

The inaugural staging of the event attracted 62 participants aged 45 years and over with Barry McGuiggan, 79, the oldest competitor.

In a carnival-like atmosphere, enjoyed a round-robin format with each entrant surfing three times.

Contest organiser Sean McKe-

own said the format, while fully endorsed by all those concerned, was also a test of stamina for some of the surfers.

"We have had a great response considering this is the first time the event has been run," McKeown said.

"Conditions on Saturday were ideal and even though the wind came up yesterday, we were still able to get all the events done before things deteriorated."

On hand to present the awards yesterday was reigning women's world ASP champion and current ratings leader Stephanie Gilmore.

Gilmore, back in Coolangatta and enjoying a break before heading to the Layne Beachley Classic in Sydney on October 9, confessed she had a couple of old mals in her cupboard which she enjoyed getting out and having fun on.

"I really enjoying coming down here and seeing these old guys

getting out there," Gilmore said.

"I really enjoy surfing mals, it's a fun way of getting back to the roots of surfing and it helps to smooth out your style."

Among the winners yesterday were McGuiggan who took out the over 70s division, Ben Hutchings (over 60s), Rip Curl co-founder Doug Warbrick (over 65s), Mark McNamara (over 45s), Wayne Dean (over 50s) and Peter Becker (over 55s).