

TASMANIAN SURF LEAGUE

ROUND 1 PREVIEW

IRONMAN / IRONWOMAN AND SURF SWIM

– CRAIG SLY



Ironman/Ironwoman

The first round of TSL is sure to provide close racing for both Ironman and women who will experience their first hit out after a long winter of training. Many will hope to benefit from their distance training after completing both kayak marathon races as well as the Coolangatta Gold events over the last few months. The sprint format is sure to draw on this endurance base as athletes search for the required speed over the multi discipline events.

In the men's field it is sure to be a mixture of youth against some of the more experienced competitors and I am sure we will also see a few of the ski competitors having a go at iron racing in an attempt to accumulate series points.

Last year's state champion Michael Boulton should be one to watch in what could be his only outing for the series before heading overseas. He will be looking for his swimming dominance to get him through and his endurance to bring him home in the other legs. Others to watch will be Ned Lennox after a strong off season, Connor Polden on the back of his enormous effort in the Coolangatta Gold long course race and Josh Raspin who will be suited to the shorter style of racing after his work commitments hampered his off season.

Some of the younger competitors to watch as they emerge in open ranks include Jack Walton whose swimming has been very strong over the winter months, Oliver Bailey who successfully completed his first Coolangatta Gold recently as well as Tallow Peart who also completed the Coolie Gold short course event.

The women's event is also looking like a close fought event, with last year's state champion Georgia Matthews positioned as favourite in the lead up. Georgia completed her second Coolangatta Gold over the winter and should have a great base to enter the shorter summer events. She will be closely contested by Maggie O'Leary as they continue their rivalry from last year. Others to watch will be Miriam Boulton after a consistent winter of training.

Hopefully there will also be a good mix of older experienced competitors rising to the challenge as well as the new under 17 competitors stepping up to the three disciplined event with surf skis, these may include Lucy Eade, Hayley Sly and others depending on how they have adapted to the ski leg.

Surf Swim

Both male and female surf swim races are sure to be an open book with the new season presenting an opportunity for new competitors to mix it with the more experienced. We are hoping for some new pool swimmers to enter the fray and provide some close tussles with the open water swimmers.

The men's field should be a close battle with a number of the iron competitors backing up. Conditions at Burnie will most likely suit the pool swimmers as well ensuring a close finish and a sprint to the line. Once again Michael Boulton will look to defend his state title, but is sure to be pushed by the likes of Jack Walton, Ned Lennox, Max O'Leary and Austin Porter. Young guns to watch are Alex Smith and Tallow Peart. It is sure to be a close race with judges being tested at the finish line.

The women's event will be a similar affair with Georgia Matthews again being pushed along by Maggie O'Leary. Evergreen Jade Richardson will provide close competition with her many years of open water experience coming to the fore. Ashya Rodman, Miriam Boulton and Ella Best are sure to lead the challenge from the young guns, as well as a number of new members issuing a challenge.

Depending on conditions swim races are sure to come down to a long Wade and strong run finish, and close racing is expected for competitors to get early points on the board at the first event of the series as they chase the highly valued prize money available for the series winner.