

# Tribute to an angel



Honoured . . . Donnica Clarke during the 2005 Surf Lifesaving Junior Championships at Umina. *Picture: SAM RUTTYN*

By GREG DANVERS

**DONNICA** Clarke's love of the ocean and sport will be honoured by Terrigal Surf Club when a surfboat is launched on Sunday in her name.

The bubbly 16-year-old tragically died in a fall from the North Avoca cliff-face in April that galvanised the Terrigal community, surf lifesaving and athletes far and wide.

More than 1000 people gathered to say farewell to Donnica — the Clarke family's angel — at the Star of the Sea and soon after work began on ways to ensure her personality was never lost.

The "Nica" surfboat, funded by Rod and Gayner Harvey, will take the Terrigal flotilla to three racing craft that is supplemented by two training boats.

"The launch has been timed to coincide with the first day of nippers," Terrigal boat captain Bruce Thoroughgood told *The Daily Telegraph* yesterday.

"Donnica was heavily involved in the coaching of the nippers.

"The 'Nica' adds to our two Terrigal Hotel sponsored boats. Our aim is to have our crews on the podium [at state and nationals]."

With "Nica" splashed across the bow of the new boat and the accompanying frangipanis the crews will have a guiding angel at carnivals this summer.

Donnica Clarke was a dual Australian beach sprint and flag champion at the age of 14 and collected numerous branch and state medals.

Central Coast Academy of Sport, where Donnica was on a surf lifesaving scholarship at the time

of her death, has struck the Donnica Clarke scholarship for next year's programs.

And a group of Central Coast sport and business identities have built the framework for the Donnica Clarke Foundation.

The foundation will provide scholarships for teenage athletes from the region, across all sports, to assist in their endeavours.

Donnica had a simple philosophy to life and competition and it was at the tender age of 13 that she said in an interview with NBN television: "Just keep trying, you'll always get there eventually. It doesn't matter if you are top of the group you're always out there trying."

With that in mind the foundation aim is to raise enough funds to support young athletes and their families in the quest to find their way to elite level.

## Marcus lifts the Molch again

By GREG DANVERS

**MARCUS** Davidson won his second Adam "Molch" Hillier Memorial Classic at Shelly Beach yesterday and dedicated the win to Wayne Sheens.

Sheens, a second cousin to Wests Tigers NRL coach Tim Sheens and a close friend of Davidson, passed away two weeks ago from a rare form of cancer.

"It's great to keep Adam's memory alive," Davidson said as he lifted his second Molch trophy.

"I want to dedicate this win to Wayne."

Hillier died 12 years ago in a hit and run accident while working for the Gosford City Council and the three day event has now crowned it's 11th champion.



Two-time winner . . . Marcus Davidson. *Picture: GARY GRAHAM*

The "Molch" is the Central Coast Kids in Need's major fundraiser where over \$3500 was raised.

"This is our one big fundraiser for the year," a delighted Central Coast Kids in Need secretary Lorraine Churchill said.

"This financial year we have helped 27 families and expended over \$21,000 for families that have to stay in Sydney or Newcastle while their children receive medical treatment."

In Davidson's four-man final was two-time winner Benji Morris (1998 and 2001) and last year's champion Ryan Bignold along with perennial bridesmaid Cameron Sharpe.

Bignold, a goofy-footer, surfed well on his forehead as well as capturing the judges attention with two impressive rights.

But Davidson, who positioned himself on the northern edge of the bank, out-pointed the defending champion with two high scoring rights.

The first was so impressive one of the judges scored him a nine.