

Ross joined the Dicky Beach Surf Life Saving Club on 4 October 1998 and has been actively involved in the club since that date. My first recollections of Ross was within Junior Activities. Ross was the first person to volunteer for water safety each and every weekend. Not content with this, Ross was always involved in the annual training sessions held at Currimundi Lake each and every Christmas holiday period. I would estimate over 100 nippers owe their thanks to his encouragement to keep them going within the Nipper program. Ross, also when work commitments allowed, attended Redcliffe on some weekday afternoons for Board training for the Nippers living in Brisbane. These sessions were again well received with Ross showing the nippers how tough he was being continually bitten by jelly fish or blue bottles in the Redcliffe waters. This did see those Nippers being somewhat immune to stingers after a few years.

Ross was identified on patrols as having the right traits to become a Patrol Captain. Ross was appointed as a Patrol Captain in 02/03. The then Patrol No 3 was very pleased that Ross performed this role as he brought a good temperament and a relaxed manner to the patrol, as well as an IRB driver, which was sorely needed. Over the course of his patrol captaincy members were clamouring to join this patrol. Ross trained a number of current Patrol Captains always encouraging members to give back to the club, including three current Patrol Captains who he assisted in learning how to paddle a board at Currimundi Lake (Karlie; Jess and Jordie). Ross, due to his Chief Training Officer role, handed over his Patrol Captaincy in season 09/10.

Ross's commitment to the club has never waned and even during recent tough times while his wife Sharyn, has been battling an illness, his love of the club and commitment still shines bright. Ross has performed a total of 706.667 hours patrol at Dicky Beach. Ross's extensive award list goes for pages and he currently has 79 awards against his name, and he would be one of the very few people within the club that can claim of attending 12 Xmas patrols.

Perhaps Ross's passion is his work as the Chief Training Officer. Ross has been in this role since 2006, and Ross is recognised as bringing our club into the professional era where strict training regimes abound. Ross has conducted, trained, coordinated and assessed at so many courses over 9 years, it is hard to provide an accurate account of members who have benefited from this role, including most people who are at this AGM.

Ross has attended, trained and assessed at every September Bronze/SRC camp for well over 10 years. Ross, as the club has grown markedly since taking on this role, has developed systems for annual maintenance days to ensure members are not held up to any great extent. This system has now been adopted at many clubs around the State.

Perhaps, what the general members do not see is the work Ross completes behind the scenes regarding training. At the end of every course when we all just walk away, there is a myriad of paper and computer work. Ross has implemented a systematic approach to these workings to ensure all paper work submitted is correctly presented to Branch and State Centre. Ross in his role on the State panels, has identified issues which cause our volunteers undue complications and it is voice of reason that has often changed processes within SLSQ.

Currently, Ross has gathered a group of trainers and assessors to ensure training is best offered to all members of the club in a timely fashion. Every trainer and assessor pays tribute to Ross for his patience in mentoring them through all stages of their development in their particular role. In 2011, Ross was nominated by the club as Trainer of the Year. Not only did he win Branch, but was recognised as Queensland and Australian Trainer of the Year awards, Ross was a most worthy recipient.

Perhaps another passion of Ross is IRB racing, which he actively participated in, especially when a number of the older members of the club participated as Masters. Most people at the time were a little amused by this group of older members joining this testing competitive environment, but as always Ross brought good humour and comradeship to the group, inspiring some of the younger members of our club to become involved in the training side of IRBs. He finished his IRB racing with some mates of his Robbie Howell, John Palmer and Peter Aitken by winning a State Gold Medal in Masters Teams this will go down in the annals of Dicky Beach history.