

Doug “Claw” Warbrick Inducted into Australian Surfing Hall of Fame

Sunday, 21 February 2010

DOUG Warbrick’s huge contribution to Australian surfing has finally been acknowledged with his elevation to the sport’s Hall of Fame at the Australian Surfing Awards on the southern end of the Gold Coast last night.

Surf businessman Warbrick became the 32nd member respectively of the Hall of Fame which began with the initial induction of Snow McAllister (Deceased) and 4 x World Champion Mark Richards in 1985.

Last night’s awards at the Coolangatta Hotel was organised by Surfing Australia and featured a who’s who of the Australian surfing community.

Learning to surf in the 1950’s at Currumbin and Maroochydore, Warbrick founded Rip Curl in 1967 with Brian Singer.

He started making surfboards to indulge his passion at Torquay and by 1969 with the help of a vintage sewing machine began running up wet suits.

He was responsible for starting the Bells Beach Surf Classic aka the Rip Curl Pro in 1973, held during Easter each year at Bells Beach.

Warbrick’s other surfing achievements include being an original member of the ASA (now Surfing Australia) in 1963 and was a committee member and V.P of Surfing Victoria in the 1960’s and ‘70’s. He was also a founding member of the ASP World Tour and the Surfrider Foundation Australia.

After surfing for over 50 years Warbrick still maintains a fierce passion for everything surfing; the industry, sport, culture, history, contests, free surfing, innovation, travel and adventure, as well as mentoring surfing’s great young talents and witnessing their exceptional performances – plus riding a few secret waves with my mates!

Warbrick, who is better known as “Claw”, said it was an emotional moment being inducted into the sport’s Hall of Fame.

“It feels wonderful for someone like me that loves surfing and everything about surfing,” said Warbrick.

“I just feel so honoured and humbled to be included. When you look at the list of inductees it’s extraordinary.”

Warbrick’s induction was one of a number of awards that were presented as part of the Australian Surfing Awards.

Two time and defending ASP Men's World Champion Mick Fanning was recognized as the Male Surfer of the Year, three time ASP Women's World Champion Stephanie Gilmore was named Female surfer of the year, with Lennox Head's Owen Wright getting a gong as the Rising Star of Australian surfing.

Bob McTavish's 2009 novel "Bob McTavish – Stoked" was named the winner of the Surf Culture Award. The book is an insightful autobiography which tells the personal story behind the visionary designer, larrikin and national surfing icon.

Werri Beach Boardriders (South Coast, NSW) were named Simon Anderson Premier Club of the Year after a stellar run of club results in 2009, while the Pioneer Award was presented to Billabong's Stirling Howland for their groundbreaking live webcasts of events. Billabong produced the first webcast of an ASP World Tour event in 1998 at Jeffrey's Bay.

The Stan Couper Administration Award was presented to Surfing NSW CEO Mark Windon. Windon was nominated for his contribution to surfing at a club and regional level since 1968. Windon founded the Southend Boardriders in 1985 which in 2009 celebrated its 25th anniversary.

The Peter Troy Lifestyle Award, which recognises an individual who has shown a commitment to the sport of surfing during their lifetime, went to surfboard icon Shane Stedman.

Stedman started making surfboards in his mum's garage in the early '60s under his label Shane surfboards. Shane's son Luke has followed his father's footsteps and is a professional surfer on the ASP Men's World Tour.

Professional free surfer Dave Rastovich accepted The ASB Surf Industry Award for the Transparentsea Voyage. It was a popular winner for achieving mainstream media exposure and awareness into the plight of whales through ocean kayak, sailing 800 kilometres along the east coast of Australia with support of Billabong, the Surfrider Foundation and Sea Shepherd organisations.

Stuart Gibson's image of Gold Coast big wave surfer Ryan "Hippo" Hipwood surfing the infamous Shipsterns wave break in Tasmania was awarded the Photo of the Year, while Bombora – The Story of Australian Surfing took out the Surf Movie of the Year.

Currumbin's Eden Putland was also presented with the Connecting Southern Gold Coast Most Promising Junior award.

The 2010 Australian Surfing Awards incorporating the Hall of Fame is proudly supported by Connecting Southern Gold Coast, Suncorp, Australian Sports Commission, Australian Surf Business Magazine (ASB), Coastalwatch, Coopers, TravelSIM and Printpoint.

About Hall of Fame:

The Australian Surfing Awards incorporating the Hall of Fame Inductee were first convened in 1985 by the Australian

Surfriders Association (now Surfing Australia) to preserve the history of Australian Surfing and honour its great achievers.

Each year the Australian Surfing Awards incorporating the Hall of Fame Inductee are presented to recognize those who have continued to develop surfing in this country. The awards include a number of support categories that recognize the broad spectrum of individuals and organizations who are involved in the industry through events, competition, business, media, photography, movies, clubs, travel, administration or pioneering new initiatives.

A majority of the awards presented each year are open for public nomination and members of the public are invited to submit nominations. For a list of the individual awards and criteria, please check the document list on the right.

For more info see www.surfgaustralia.com

