



PHOTO BY AL MACKINNON

Undercurrents

This Al Mackinnon photo came through somewhat orphaned from the rest of his submission. The digital file meta-tagging simply reads, "Flawless Atlantic Islet."

FIELD REPORT

Roughly 700 voluntary muscles are attached to the bones of the human skeletal system, like the rigging of some wildly complex sailboat. Consequently, bodysurfers don't ride waves so much as captain flesh and bone. After he won the 2017 Pipeline Bodysurfing Contest in perfect head-to-overhead conditions, Mike Stewart was asked why he devoted so much time to such a practice. He thought for a moment then replied, "Because you are the planing surface. It's up to you to create the shape."

There are few waves finer for those shapes than Pipeline. Like Stewart's Rumi-esque breakdown of bodysurfing, Pipe is equal parts precision and poetry—a perfect complement to the mortal vessel. Event permits at the wave are scarce and notoriously difficult to obtain. This year, the North Shore Lifeguard Association, which took over the bodysurfing contest six years ago, shared its 16-day permit with two, higher priority contests. In previous years, this would have doomed the event to tiny waves or blown-out conditions. Yet 2017 was blessed by an unusually long run of

Skin of the Ocean

Notes from the 2017 Pipeline Bodysurfing Contest.

By Ryan Masters

big, late season swell. "I swam out on the morning before the contest," said event director and North Shore Lifeguard Association President Bryan Phillips. "Second and third reef were breaking with so much energy, it was one of those days where it feels like the beach is shaking."

The ten, six-man heats were loaded with Hawaii's finest human foils—guys like Kalani Brown, Sean Enoka, Mel Keawe, Larry Russo, Kai Santos, Todd Sells, Kanealii Wilcox and, of course, Mark Cunningham and Stewart. A handful of talented Californians also made the trip, two of which, Shayne McIntyre and Jeff Mitchell, missed the finals by a handful of points. Many of the local competitors were

members of Kaha Nalu Hawaii, a hui of hardcore, bodysurf-centric islanders who have been pushing big-wave boundaries at spots like Waimea and Peahi. "We founded Kaha Nalu Hawaii to perpetuate our heritage and traditions," said Sean Enoka. "We've also made it our mission to travel, to bring Hawaiian bodysurfing to other places."

It's important to note that long before a surfboard was built to handle Pipeline, it was bodysurfed. According to the popular narrative, one of three haoles was the first to ride a wave there: Joe Quigg in 1953, the same year he became the first to bodysurf the Wedge; Phillip "Flippy" Hoffman, who allegedly bodysurfed Pipe to win a bet; or Fred Van Dyke, who bodysurfed

Nor Cal spots alone like Steamer Lane and Ghost Tree before moving to Hawaii. This, of course, assumes no native Hawaiian swam out and caught a few off Ehukai Beach at any point during the 1,600 or so years preceding 1953, a very large, very cavalier assumption.

Bodysurfing has been a popular practice among Hawaiians of all walks of life for ages, according to BYU-Hawaii professor and surf historian Isaiah Walker. Not just because it's a low-cost alternative to the increasingly expensive sport of surfing, but because it's woven into the very fabric of native Hawaiian culture. "What has always fascinated me about bodysurfing," said Walker, who has judged the Point Panic bodysurfing contest, "is the diversity. Not just racial, but social and economic—from homeless chronics, to television newscasters, to attorneys, to 300-plus pound Hawaiians, to tiny, skinny Asian women, to little kids, to old men. I've never seen so much diversity before in the water."

Stewart and Cunningham predictably placed one and two in the event, followed closely behind by Kai Santos, Bryan Phillips, Todd Sells, and Mel Keawe. Yet every heat felt like a raw display of human shapes embodying ocean waves. At times, the distinction between man and water disappeared altogether. In his poem, "Ocean Birth," contemporary Māori poet Robert Sullivan writes: "Every wave carries us here—every song to remind us—we are skin of the ocean." The poem was conceived as sort of a unifying clarion call to all Pacific Islanders. It could just as well have been written for bodysurfers. ●

Kai Santos, captaining his bodily vessel through the contours at Pipeline.



PHOTO BY MICHAEL CHITALA

BEST I EVER SAW



FRAME GRAB BY JACK MCCOY

Jack McCoy on Derek Hynd

A light-bulb moment, a pastoral road trip through Oz, and the path to finless insights.

Derek Hynd and I were sitting in my office doing research on what was to be our film, *A Deeper Shade Of Blue*. We were reading about Tom Blake putting a fin on his surfboard. I could almost see the light bulb go on over Derek's head. He turned to me and said, "Imagine if Tom Blake had never put the fin on his board? What would surfing look like today?"

Hmm. I remember thinking it was just another sideways thought from DH. The next day he came in and told me he'd gone home and taken the fins off one of his boards. I didn't know much more about it until a year later. We did a trip up the coast with some friends and we spent the night at our property near a little point break.

The next morning the waves were a perfect three feet. From his car, Derek pulled out what had obviously been a surfboard. The front and back had been sawn off and all that was left was 3'6" of the middle. He proceeded to go out and surf this "thing" like I'd never before seen. For the rest of the day he switched from this little lump of foam I'd nicked named "The

Door Mat" to an old, cut-down Midget Farrelly sailboard, plus another one of his big guns. Both of those boards had DH customized channels and concaves built into the tails.

It became apparent that DH was not only onto something—he was proving his surfing skills to be unlike any modern day surfer. He told me he would never ride a finned board again.

A couple of weeks later we were driving back to Sydney. Stopping at Scotts Head one Sunday morning, there were a dozen or so surfers out there and DH wanted to hit it. There was not too much current so I decided to swim out with my camera and shoot. I got a couple of shots of one

of the surfers out there, who was on an old 60s vee-bottom. DH was admiring it and the guy offered to let him have a go. As DH paddled past me I asked him what he was doing.

"Just going to catch a couple of waves on this old classic," he said.

"I thought you told me a couple of weeks ago that you were never going to ride anything else but finless for the rest of your life!"

"Thanks for reminding me!" he answered and paddled out the back.

Being at water level I didn't see him takeoff, and it wasn't until I came up after going under a wave that I saw him coming past me with the board turned upside down, fin up, no wax on the bottom, like this was easy as pie. He grinned as he surfed by, off on a 100-yard ride. ●

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Art by Nishant Choksi

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LEGAL AFFAIRS DESK

They were lost in Loreto. They were on foot. It was night. Post excellent surf in Bahia Magdalena. This was not the ending they had anticipated. A wrong turn out of the old colonial part of the city had done the trick, landing them in the part of town the tourist board doesn't want people like Dave and John, our two surfers in question, to see. Beyond that, they'd acquired a tail. Hard to say now exactly when that happened. Maybe passing through that intersection, the one by the bar that was maybe something more than a bar, but very suddenly they became aware of a white pickup truck pulling away from where the curb would be if there were curbs in this part of town. A few colored lights washed over the truck as it fell in behind them. In another moment, the lights were gone and it was just Dave and John on the street.

There followed several moments of rushed debate in the shadow of a parked van of indiscernible origin. Sure, the surfers were in shape, and there was Dave's black belt. Yet, by what Dave and John had been able to glimpse, there was also the apparent beefiness of the thugs in the truck. How bad were their odds? Both men were acquainted with analysis. They were experienced and highly regarded attorneys. One was Dave Olan, the founder of the International Association of Surfing Lawyers (ASL). The other was Canadian Prime Minister (of the ASL), John Mickelson.

The Association of Surfing Lawyers was created by Olan in 2002, around his 40th birthday. A Malibu local, Dave was the son of the late Bennet Olan, a pioneering trial lawyer. Both Bennet and his mother, Anna, attended Brooklyn Law School. Anna graduated in 1919, becoming one of the first female lawyers

in New York State, a year before women got the right to vote in the U.S. Along with being an influential lawyer in L.A., Bennet was also an environmentalist, and a longtime member of the Sierra Club, so Dave grew up learning how to be a lawyer for the good of the people, as well as having a deep appreciation for nature.

I met Dave back in the fall of 2004. I'd been in a bad car crash and the insurance companies seemed to be playing me. When I walked into Dave's mixed-use, surf draped (vintage surfboards,

cool photos) loft office off Main Street in Santa Monica, he changed my perception of the tightly wound personal injury lawyer. Later, walking with a handsome settlement, I also noted how far from the cliché, happy-go-lucky surfer this guy was. He was reliable, focused, and tenacious.

And a good talker. Also, being a social guy, he came to realize that, year after year, he was meeting more and more lawyers in court who liked to surf. In the lineup at Malibu alone he met and befriended several, and that was

just one of his local spots.

The group was formed via a massive email blast followed by a few field meetings. One of the genius strokes, initiated and organized by past presidents Grant Hardacre and Luke Carlson, was getting their trips authorized by the State Bar as continuing education so that tax-exempt status could come along for the ride. They have their meetings and attend lectures after surfing in Fiji, Hawaii, Mexico, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, etcetera. Pretty nice. Don't get me wrong: far from a boondoggle, these are legitimate business trips. Top attorneys lecture in their area of expertise. Insights into the law are shared. They learn more than how to perfect a crisp bottom turn. Various surf icons like Nat Young, Shaun Tomson, and Robert August have all supported the group, enhancing the ASL experience.

After 15 years, the new ASL chief is Keenan Keimac, who intends to deepen and expand the ASL global bond. Dave, of course, will remain as resident "ambassador of stoke."

But back to Dave and John on that street in Loreto, and the shadow they'd picked up. Fight or flight was the question, and the fellas had discerned that the former was the least favorable. The guys stalking them were heavy, and given the recent crime in Baja Sur, probably armed. Another vehicle rolled in to this *paisano* nocturne. A nice looking young local couple pulled up by the van. Over the next few seconds, the couple recognized the gravity of the situation, signaled to John and Dave, opened their door, let the attorneys jump in and drove off quickly. The pickup was pointed the other direction and it all happened fast. They were clean away and back to the halls of jurisprudence—and surfing. ●

Dave Olan, founder of the International Association of Surfing Lawyers, in possession of a murdered-out surf conveyance, plus a single-blade to match his rapier legal mind.



PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVE OLAN

The Surfing Attorney(s)
Bound by law and sea.
By Kem Nunn

SURFING AROUND

After spending eons in relative stasis—and now perched on the threshold of modern-day performance wave riding (the advent of finned surfboards)—the surfing world remained still largely frozen in place out of habit, attached to long practiced modes, slowly feeling the way beyond existing mental barriers. As surfers gradually came to grasp the quantum leaps that were suddenly possible, the confirmation of those possibilities was transmitted by those who had not only witnessed an occurrence but had grasped what they had seen. A steady progression was occurring as, little by little, realizations grew and the resulting thaw began to lift the veil that had obscured the possible for so long, revealing a universal, constantly expanding possibility that offers itself on the outer edge. As in: “There is no end...”

Adjacent, himself a waterman for the ages, Mickey Muñoz offers a personal perspective on the arc of his own and Phil Edwards’ surfing lives, via one simple, brief moment delivered by the guy who many consider to be the Baryshnikov of surfing.
—Steve Pezman



PHOTO BY BRUCE BROWN

A Thawing of the Surfing Ice Age

I’ve always thought of my surfing as having climbed near the top, and every now and again, I’d get to peek over. Fortunately never reaching the top has its advantages: I’m still surfing, learning, and loving the climb. Its hard for me to imagine reaching the top with nowhere else to go but down.

When I think of Phil’s achievements, however, I often go back to my very first impression of him riding a wave. Around 1950, when I was a teenager, my mom took me camping down at one of the estuaries south of Oceanside.

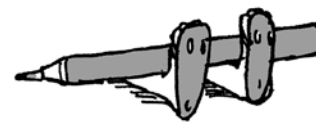
I remember paddling across the lagoon, walking across the beach, and paddling out into the ocean. As I was making my way out, I saw Phil takeoff on a wave. He did one of his classic left-go-right fades, swung the board around and just slowly walked up to the nose. The wave started to break and finally his tail slid out and he kind of went with it sideways, then casually he stepped back and reattached the tail at the other side of the section, then stepped back to the nose and kept going down the line. I’d never seen that done before. You have

to understand that doing anything other than going straight was radical then. And I was just slack-jawed. It dazzled me.

In my mind, that ride was equal to the time, over 30-years later, that I saw Christian Fletcher do an air over the rock at Zippers in the 80s, from there raveling forward to where surfing is today. In Phil’s time, his tail-slide around the section was an incredibly subtle, graceful, functional maneuver that clearly defined one of the reasons he was considered the best of that era.
—Mickey Muñoz

Sudden improvisations, performed at the edges of disaster, have driven progressive surfing since straight-running went out of style. Godfather of the form, Phil Edwards, dynamic even in respite. Location tktk, circa year tktk.

Off Loading



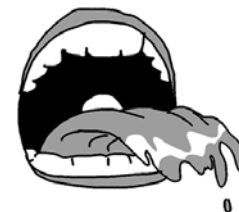
ILLUSTRATIONS BY NISHANT CHOKSI

The juvenile sea squirt wanders through the sea searching for a suitable rock or hunk of coral to cling to and make its home for life. For this task, it has a rudimentary nervous system. When it finds its spot and takes root, it doesn’t need its brain anymore, so it eats it. It’s rather like getting tenure.
—Daniel Dennett

Philosopher, writer, and professor (b. 28 Mar 1942)

Quote provided via Bob Beadle

Off-the-Lip



Exchange at afternoon Trestles:

“My wife is at work and she doesn’t know I’m here!”

“Huh! My wife doesn’t even know I surf!”

“Yeah? You’re lucky. My wife’s in the lineup right...there.”

Quote via Steve Pezman

Errata



We had a couple of identification conflations in the course of producing TSJ 26.3, during which we managed to fuse two modern pro surfers with a pair of legendary surnames from the 70s. Apologies to Craig Anderson (who is clearly *not* Craig Peterson) for the subhead mishap in the “Super Crew” feature. Additional, humble grovelings are due to Laurie Townner for our caption ID in Duncan Macfarlane’s Portfolio, which tagged him with PT’s surname, Townend. A senior moment on our part, so to speak, in both cases.

LINER NOTES

This issue’s profile of Shirley Rogers has been in the petri dish for over five years, hoping for some sign of culturation. A fine photographer, she was cursed with a lithe, runway-model body, long, thick, raven hair, and bewitching Amerasian features. Standing on the Banzai foreshore, one hip cocked, peering through the viewfinder of a period Nikon, she was usually preoccupied, but undoubtedly aware of the attention elicited by her presence. This was the North Shore in the mid 1970s. There were virtually no women on the beach. Yet Shirley, an intense personality, beautifully subverted film critic Laura Mulvey’s idea of the Male Gaze in media. Indeed, she funhouse-mirrored any and all pat gender roles of the day. She was—simultaneously—behind the lens focused on young men in their athletic prime, the subject of many enraptured face-palms and longing heaven-stares, a self-aware model and swimwear designer, and a provider of surfing imagery to the 99.9 percent male surf world of the day.

Traveling and shooting with blade-sharp surfers, early-in at



Shirley Rogers escort, Beau Flemister.

PHOTO BY ERIC WEHNER



Victorian scientist/surf shooter, Ed Sloane.

PHOTO BY ED SLOANE

Grajan, rolling deep with the Black Shorts, sending Tom Selleck into that famous TV eye-roll...Shirley made her mark. Of course, it’s her work we’re here to celebrate. And that requires slide sheets of Kodachrome.

We tried for the better part of a decade to locate her photo files, but they’d been taken by the wind over the years. Remarkably, they surfaced at the Rose Bowl Swap Meet in Pasadena. The purchaser, Doug Walker of the *Lost & Found Collection* now manages her work. We thought she might get a kick out of being squired around by *kamaaina* surfer/writer Beau Flemister, a strapping (and happily married) wordsmith currently in ascendance as a feature writer here at TSJ. They got along swimmingly, and for the first time ever, we get to hear from one of surf history’s most magnetic women.

Let us further embrace the *Human Centipede* nature of surf media reporting on surf media with Nick Carroll’s remembrance of the life and death of *Surfing* magazine. Broadly considered Chicago to *Surfer’s* Manhattan, *ING*

nevertheless could be counted on to periodically rise from its secondary station to wax the floor with its crosstown rival. This happened, to my mind, as recently as four or so years ago, when it seemed looser, more relevant in the contemporary culture, with a better tuned ear to the music, the references, the *lingua franca* of the demographic shared by the two monthly powerhouses. That translated to photo picks and video clips stewarded by one of the hippest visual hands in the game, Pete Taras. *Surfing* is gone, but names like Taras and Carroll and Ferre and Gilovich and Carter (Chris, as in *The X-Files*) and Brisick et. al. soldier on. It was a fine petri dish in its own right.

—Scott Hulet

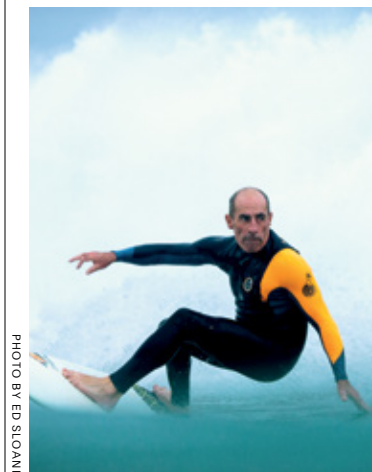
RIP *ING* scribe, Nick Carroll.

PHOTO BY ED SLOANE



Spin The Globe
p.8-9
Answer:
Papua Province, New Guinea.