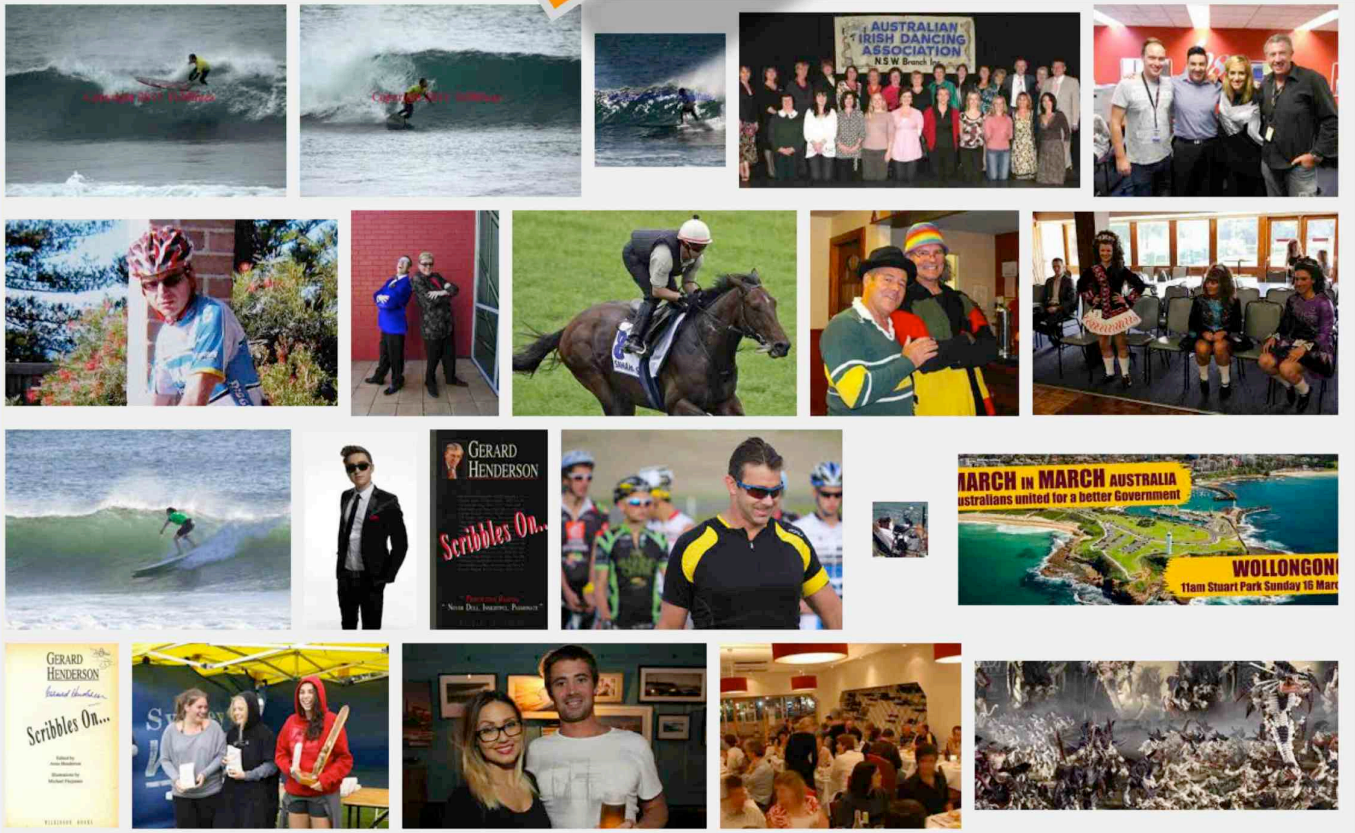


the laybacker

THE YARN EDITION



inside
Hendo's Yarn

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Winter Classic
Saturday 15th July

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A YARN FROM HENDO...

This is a quick edition to get Hendo's Yarn out there before the 'AGM' this Sunday. The image above is the (the start of) the list of Google Images you get if you type in 'Craig Henderson'...Cleverly (for Google) it starts with a couple of him surfing from Dave, all good...

Then we drift a little into the bizarre with the Australian Irish Dancing Association, then some office types looking earnestly cheery, then a bloke in shades and a cycle helmet, then two women in comfortable shoes, then a racehorse in training, then finally some relevance with yours truly and Gary Hoban, then some chicks in some kind of skirty national dress....

Then Mel lining up the wall! A bloke in a suit, an ad, more buff blokes who could be cyclists, a chap relaxing, an ad for a protest march, another ad, then (finally) a more relevant image of the girl groms, then who knows what kind of neat modern duo with the chick all blond and bespectacled, and the bloke well in touch with his feminine side, a blurry party, and what could be the drone army marching across the field in Star Wars...

This gives you a hint of the many facets of Hendo.....and this edition portrays yet another...facet that is, Hendo's Yarn! Hope you like it! Hoo Roo - Andy

The Crescent Head Old Mal Comp 'too many years ago to remember' by Craig Henderson

The event was the Old Mal comp at Crescent Head, the "characters" in this short story are John Young, George Kennedy, Pete Sainsbury, Scott Downing and myself. Remember George's name because it will appear quite a bit in this story.

Pete had borrowed a good quality used Commodore station wagon for the weekend and we all assembled at his house in East Corrimal at 3am on the Thursday morning with an amazing amount of surfboards and other "necessary" paraphernalia for the trip to Crescent.

Not much happened in the first couple of hours except for the usual banter between friends, George is such an easy target, and Youngy doesn't let too many opportunities slip. Pete did the 1st driving shift with George giving directions on how to negotiate Sydney traffic! Really George it is 4am on a Thursday!

I was 'shoehorned into the back seat between Scott and George. Anyway somewhere along the way I took over the driving and I could finally breath, not too much further up the road just north of Newcastle we drove into heavy rain, and this high quality used car sprung a few leaks into the back seat from both windows. It is a very funny sight to look in the rear vision mirror and see 3 x 100kg plus guys fighting to get into the middle of the back seat to get away from the water pouring into the car from both sides of the car!

So there was no way I was stopping to let somebody else take over the driving duties until we cleared the rain squall. George took over the driving. OMG. Just before we got to Kew, and he immediately drove through a speed camera, (smile George, you have just had your photo taken). After the cursing finished, and I think I got the blame for not driving an extra 5 kilometres, George finally settled into a comfortable 20 kph above the speed limit, (quote: these are great roads why are they only 100kph? unquote.)

We finally arrived at Crescent at 9.30ish to find a few nice waves, which we all quickly got changed and hit the water, everybody except Pete who decided to look after the gear in the car.

I vaguely remember Pete yelling to us as we ran up to the jump off point "I will do the 1st shift then 1 of you guys come in and look after the car etc, and I will go for a surf" I do remember sitting next to Scott out the back after about 30 minutes saying "did Pete say something as we were getting in the water" to which the reply was "I didn't hear anything".

After surfing for a couple of hours we grabbed something to eat and got the keys to our cabin in the caravan park which for all those that have had the privilege of going to Crescent we were in the 1st cabin on the left immediately inside the

boom gate. Now describing this accommodation as a cabin for 5 people is a bit of an exaggeration, I have seen dog kennels that are bigger, then you jam 5 grown men, well 4 grown men and George, plus 6 x 9ft + longboards, and things are getting a bit squeezey.

Pete grabbed the bottom bunk bed which was already on the floor level, George in the middle bunk and Youngy on the top bunk so close to the ceiling he couldn't lay on his side. Scott and I shared the double bed. Longboards everywhere, luggage on top of beds,

Pete took enough clothes to last a year, which included his slippers! what the hell!..... the only other person that I know that takes slippers anywhere is George and we had both of these guys on the same trip. I think Scott and I had a shopping bag for clothes between the 2 of us and all of this was jammed into a cabin that is about 8ft by 15ft plus a bathroom and kitchenette.

The "muster" for the comp on the Thursday night was at the pub so we had dinner and a few drinks and met up with other like minded friends that most of us knew from all parts of the coast, that were there for the same reason, to surf Crescent Head with a 4 or 5 other guys I your heat.

I did mention that we were having a few drinks and the more friends that walked through the door the more drinks we had, I have also mentioned that we had George with us..... well everybody we introduced George to, he kept thinking there name was "Gordon", why, I don't know. After too many drinks, is that possible when you at Crescent at an Old Mal Comp with guys you may not have seen since last year? I don't think so.

After a few hours I had George lean on me saying "I can't believe how many guys there are here whose names are Gordon" of which I could only agree.

Pete, Scott and myself called it quits about 10.30pm or so and went back to the cabin for some much needed sleep, Youngy being the friend he is stayed with George who wanted to party until the early hours of the morning. About 1pm cyclone George hit the cabin talking soooooo loudly and under protests from those of us that were asleep claimed that we were all "pussies, who don't know how to have a good time".

Ahh the end of the 1st day. It was still Thursday.

NB. We left Wollongong on Thursday, it was George's long suffering wife Linda's, birthday on the Friday. At the Crescent Head pub on the Thursday night I convinced George that we had been away for 2 days and had he rang Linda to wish her a Happy Birthday. Well he hadn't so he rang her about 10pm

to pass on his best wishes, which she promptly told him how stupid he was and that he had only left that morning! I did hear my name used in a very unchristian way with threats of retribution.

Next morning the comp was on with some nice waves and I think most of us had been eliminated by the end of that 1st day. (things are very vague about now because I had a headache that I couldn't jump over and the sun was sooooo bright!).

That night we were back at the pub for more commiseration or celebratory drinks, depending if you were still in the comp or leading the drinking team.

George hit the wall early that night and Youngy being the friend he is went back to the cabin early with him that night BUT Pete, Scott and myself decided to stay on and celebrate something that I can't remember what it was, I most probably had no idea when I was there but it seemed like such a good idea at the time.

We rolled into the cabin at some ungodly hour and decided to repay George for his neighbourly effort from the night before, and we got abused by a sleepy George for waking him, all I can remember is Youngy saying and laughing at the same time "George what did you expect".

Somewhere during the weekend the Nappers young and a little bit older turned up for the comp, so the celebrations just got a little bit longer and louder, we now had George and Jarret.

Along the way Darren Boyd Skinner needed a place to sleep so "we have plenty of room, stay with us" so another body and longboard was in our dog kennel. I have no idea where he slept but it must have been on the spare 2ft x 2ft square piece of lino, I do remember waking under a longboard that was on my bed, and yes, I have no idea how it got there and seeing Scott's bare arse 1st thing in the morning is not the best start to any day.

Somewhere in the memory banks, this is possibly 15 years ago, I can't remember what happened on the Saturday or any results but I do remember that Pete Sainsbury was our only surviving competitor amongst our travelling herd of fools.

Sunday morning dawned after another night of way too many laughs, I can't remember laughing so much and catching up with friends from everywhere, (the main reason for going to these type of events/gatherings).

Pete was in an early heat/semi and no amount of coaxing could get him out of bed, so we were all relegated to the viewing bench wondering what time we would get home. The presentation was held at the pub (you always have to support the sponsors at these comps and support the sponsor we did! for the whole weekend.)

None of us were receiving trophies that I can remember but we hung around anyway because a guy from Wollongong DV8s club, young Bill Morris was a finalist so we hung around to wave the Wollongong flag.

Preso bits finalised and we said a few hasty "see you next

year" to all of the "Gordons" (ha ha) of Crescent Head and we hit the road for the 6 hour drive home. George and I jumped into the back of Kev Napper's car to get a bit of legroom for the drive home and at a fuel and meal break at Hexham, just north of Newcastle, I asked George what he bought Linda for her birthday and he replied "aw sh.. I forgot to call her".

Now at Hexham back then, as now, on a Sunday night at about 7.30 / 8.00 there is not many gift shops open. As a matter of fact there are not many gift shops on the highway at Hexham at all, so the only "shop" open was an old service station that still had a fuel pump attendant! So George and I go in to find the beautiful Linda a worthy birthday present, what's the chances, the guy looked like he had just stepped out of a 1950's movie that featured rednecks, trucks and guns.

The choices we had was a fan belt for a 64' Holden, a radiator hose and cap for a 71' Falcon or a box of Rose chocolates covered with in about 1 inch of dust. Now as enticing as the car parts were we went for the chocolates. Back on the road again and motoring down the Newcastle freeway all things are going well until I hear a rustling noise to my right, I look over and here is George eating Linda's birthday present chocolates, why, because he got hungry. What a guy!

The rest of the trip home was uneventful or I fell asleep, whichever, I have no idea. Back in Sydney, George and myself got back into the quality Commodore station wagon as at this time the Napper's were still living in Sydney and had not ventured down to the beautiful South Coast.

We dropped George home into the waiting arms of his long suffering wife, Linda at about 11.30pm, very tired and just wanting to get home, so George starts running around his front yard with his dog, Beavis. So we threw all of his gear onto the front lawn and drove away, back to Pete's place to pick up cars etc.

And that was the end of another absolutely fantastic weekend with 4 of the best travelling companions anybody could have.

Now I know some of you readers might think that George has copped some bad press in this dialogue but I can assure you I would do it all again tomorrow with the same crew. Great bunch of friends and friends for life and this is only my side of the story and I am sure each of us would remember different things or things differently.

There were way too many funny things that happened over the weekend to write about them all, so next time there is a comp on somewhere, go along and create your own memories.

This is possibly 15 years ago or more and these mates are still such valued friends and more and I wouldn't swap these memories for anything. These stories, true or expanded / fabricated will stay with us for the rest of our lives.

Keep the sand between your toes.
Hendo