

The Sunshine Coast Daily

Back from the brink

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By RAE WILSON

FORCED almost to the point of extinction by insurance woes, Ithaca-Caloundra Life Saving Club has fought back to be as strong as ever.

An insurance expiration forced the Bulcock Beach club, which celebrated its 50th anniversary last year, to cease weekend lifesaving duties in January last year instead of continuing until May.

The club had to close after losing 90% of its patrolling members, who left the club to pursue other water sports or pastimes, and many of its juniors.

After securing vital insurance again later in the year, the Ithaca club has returned to weekend patrols on the calm but deceptively dangerous section of Caloundra beach.

Club president Helen Morris said the club now had about 15 patrolling members and about 30 juniors actively involved in the club.

She said the club would celebrate its future by showcasing the skills of its juniors on a presentation day tomorrow (Sunday 13).

It wasn't that we couldn't pay insurance, we couldn't find anyone who would insure us, she said.

Apparently anything to do with open water is now too high risk.

We eventually found an insurance broker who would take us on and we've been retraining juniors since last September.

Sunday is really for the juniors. It's a mini-beach carnival and competitions in their age groups for ropethrow, flags, swimming and rescues.

They'll do a little march past and then they'll all get royal life swimming and survival awards for whatever award or standard they've achieved through their pool work."

Ms Morris said the club would also award the junior lifeguard of the year, followed by a barbecue. She said the juniors hailed from Caloundra, Mango Hill, North Lakes and Brisbane after a successful recruitment drive.

These junior lifeguards are the life savers of tomorrow. They need our encouragement, she said.

Ithaca is the only lifesaving club in Queensland affiliated with the Royal Life Saving Society, which celebrates 100 years this year.

The club is looking for a volunteer qualified trainer for Royal Life Saving next season.

To get involved with the club phone the clubhouse on 54919797 or Ms Morris on 0409878089.