

Media Release

Surf Life Saving Australia

Wednesday 20 June 2007



SLSA and NIB Announce Three-Year Partnership for Coolangatta Gold

Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA) today confirmed a major sponsorship deal for the **Coolangatta Gold**, with **NIB Health Funds Limited (NIB)** signing on as the event's new naming rights partner in a three-year agreement to support the iconic race.

The sponsorship will see the event renamed the **NIB Coolangatta Gold** and is a history-making deal for an Australian professional surf sports event as the first-ever non-cereal branded major race in surf sports.

"In 2005 we judged the time was right to bring back the event and since then the event has captured the imagination of our members and of the general public," President of SLSA, Mr Ron Rankin AM, said.

"We are delighted to welcome NIB as our partner for this great race, to help us take it to the next level and firmly establish it as part of Australia's sporting calendar."

"SLSA and NIB share the values of keeping Australia fit, healthy and safe, and what better showcase for this than Australia's ultimate Ironman and Ironwoman endurance race."

Speaking at the announcement NIB's Chief Executive Officer, Mr Mark Fitzgibbon said the health fund was looking forward to being part of the NIB Coolangatta Gold, an event that epitomises Australian surf lifesaving culture.

"This iconic national sporting event is truly one of the world's toughest and most respected surf endurance races," Mr Fitzgibbon said.

"Our support helps ensure the NIB Coolangatta Gold will remain a marquee event on the annual sporting calendar.

"As an organisation, NIB is proud to support an event that showcases the skills and abilities of our surf lifesavers. SLSA, including the branches and clubs play an amazing and selfless role in protecting our coastline.

"Our sponsorship of the NIB Coolangatta Gold is an important part of increasing NIB's brand awareness and membership growth throughout Queensland.

"Our research has yielded positive results amongst our target market with regards to the event, and surf lifesaving in general. As a result we are looking forward to this relationship generating mutually beneficial outcomes for both NIB and SLSA," Mr Fitzgibbon added.

The three-year NIB deal will boost the famed **NIB Coolangatta Gold** Ironman race on the Gold Coast on 14 October that will also for the first time open its entries to all elite athletes from around the globe.

Sportspeople who are not members of surf life saving clubs are being issued the challenge to face off against the nation's fittest Ironman and Ironwomen competitors in surf lifesaving's centenary year.

Defending champion, Zane Holmes is thrilled by the announcement.

“It’s great to have a company like NIB getting behind the NIB Coolangatta Gold and securing the race’s future financially for years to come.

“The fact that the race is locked in for three years now is a big positive for all athletes and its fantastic that Surf Life Saving Australia is attracting more diverse sponsors to the sport in such a highly competitive market place,” Holmes said.

NIB has been a registered health fund since 1953. NIB is Australia’s sixth largest health fund and has approximately 320,000 members across Australia. In March 2007 NIB announced its intention to become the first private health insurer in Australia to demutualise and list on the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX).

Media Enquiries

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