

Easkey Britton Crowned Tour Champion

Other Irish girls, Nicole Morgan finishes 2nd and Shauna Ward 3rd The final event of the BPSA Tour, the Gull Newquay Open took place last weekend, 11th 12th November, at Fistril Beach, Newquay. The event was the decider to crown this years overall BPSA Tour Champions.

The Women's event was of particular interest with all of the events to date having been won by Irish women surfers. Shauna Ward, Bundoran took the first event on the calendar, followed by two wins for Nicole Morgan, Bundoran then a win for Easkey Britton, Rossnowlagh at the Welsh Open.

It was an exciting title race in the women's event. Going into the final event Nicole Morgan was leading but needed to secure a spot in the final at the Gull Newquay Open to retain the BPSA Women's title that she won in 2005. Close behind was Easkey Britton, who having missed one event needed a win at Gull Newquay Open to take the title. Shauna Ward was also hoping to finish the year with a good performance.

However it was Easkey who clinched the women's event at the Gull Newquay Open with Shauna runner up and Nicole having to settle for fifth place, just outside the final. The win pushed Easkey (current Irish Women's Champion) into the top spot in the rankings to crown her BPSA Women's Tour 2006 Champion, an incredible result for her first year on tour.

Speaking with Easkey after the event:

"I'm so stoked with my tour win. It was my first year on tour and I was hoping for a good finish. After my first place at the Welsh Open I was really fired up to win it but I knew it was going to be tough. Especially because I came straight into it after 3 days of travelling back from a surf trip in Samoa and I broke my fav comp board on the plane! The Irish girls have all been dominating the tour this year and my biggest competition was definitely Nicole. She was still leading the tour before the final event in Newquay so I knew it was going to be a close race. We were blessed with some pretty epic conditions at Freshwater in Wales but unfortunately the surf didn't turn on for the last event, it was a cold, windy mess but at least there was some size... The last two events I've just felt like my surfing has moved into a really good place, I've found the 'zone' and hopefully I can stay in it! I tried to go out and surf as if there were no consequences, win or lose. Just surf."

More to surfing than just contests? Easkey travelled to Africa this summer:

I worked at a Children's centre on the Kenyan coast in Mombasa, an orphanage for kids who have been abandoned, rescued from the street or lost their parents to AIDS. The first few days were some of the toughest of my life. I felt lost and overwhelmed by such adversity - what difference could I possibly make in the face of all this? But then my friend told me something Mother Teresa said, "There are no great deeds only small deeds done with great love". I let go of my fears, found my rhythm and I likened my experience and work to navigating the River Nile. I bonded so much with the kids; they gave me so much more than I could ever return... It was heartbreaking leaving them and I couldn't help feeling guilty that I could come for such a short time, build a friendship and trust and leave again... I discovered there is more to life than surfing but without it I feel I would lose my identity and my soul would dry up! I found waves on the coast, went exploring and surfing. I brought boards with me from Ireland and took the kids to the beach and taught them how to swim and surf - they loved it! The ocean is such a powerful healing element. I'm hoping to send more boards over there... The greatest lesson I learned in Africa was "pole pole" Slowly Slowly - not to rush through life so quickly! My heart and mind has been opened in ways I never imagined possible.