

Quick flight to injured Orange rider

An NRMA CareFlight flying trauma team treated a Central West rider who suffered serious injuries in a crash during bike races at Oran Park, in Sydney's south-west, in February.

Our specialist doctor worked with ambulance paramedics to stabilise the man before flying him to hospital when the team landed at the raceway minutes after the alert at 4.25 pm.

The NRMA CareFlight doctor said the 23-year-old man, from Orange, crashed on a bend during the final race of the day.

The rider suffered serious chest injuries and was unconscious when officials reached him.

After stabilisation the rider was flown by NRMA CareFlight under intensive care management to Liverpool Hospital where he was in a serious but stable condition on arrival.

The mission continued NRMA CareFlight's 23-year tradition of providing medical support to people of the Central West and adjacent communities.

NRMA CareFlight's rapid response trauma team flies to seriously injured children and adults in the Greater Sydney, Southern Highlands, Blue Mountains and Central Coast areas.

The charity's doctors also undertake state-wide medical retrieval missions with the NSW Ambulance Service from bases at Bankstown and at Orange. ✕



Long-serving NRMA CareFlight doctor, Bernie Hanrahan, and ambulance paramedics treat the injured rider after he crashed at Oran Park.

Construction crane rescue at The Rocks

The rescue of a badly injured construction worker from a building site at Sydney's historic Rocks area in March will go into the growing list of memorable and innovative life-saving missions undertaken by intrepid NRMA CareFlight doctors.

When the alert came in at 11.23 am on Friday 27 March, there was little indication of what lay ahead for the duty Rapid Response Critical Care team of Greg Ohlsson (pilot), David Gardiner (aircrewman), Marty Nichols (ambulance paramedic) and Colin Xavier (doctor).

Police met the helicopter which landed at Observatory Hill to take our doctor, duty ambulance paramedic and their equipment to the construction site.

A 35-year-old site worker was still unconscious, the victim of a severe blow to the head inflicted by falling timber.

Working with ambulance paramedics,

emergency medicine specialist Dr Xavier gave the man a general anaesthetic. The team then faced the difficult task of working out how to extract the badly injured man from the rubble of the site, given that he was under an induced coma which is how NRMA CareFlight's flying trauma teams start their early treatment for head injury patients right at the accident scene.

At the suggestion of the site foreman, Dr Xavier decided to press a construction crane into service as an unlikely rescue device.

Dangling in a cage at the end of the wire, high in the air, Dr Xavier continued to treat his patient with the help of paramedics as all four men were lifted up and out of the building – onto the road where an ambulance was waiting.

Expert treatment continued as the man was taken to St Vincent's Hospital where, as a direct benefit of the early intensive care treatment, the man made a good recovery.

This mission by Dr Xavier joins other medical mission milestones at NRMA CareFlight including that of Dr Blair Munford who borrowed a flood boat on the Hawkesbury River to continue treating a woman in labour; the improvisation of founding medical director Dr Fran Smith who used the Scenic Railway as rescue transport to bring a badly injured man out of a fog-filled Blue Mountains valley and that of Dr Darren Wolfers who called on indigenous support to use a dugout canoe as transport while treating a bends patient as he was paddled across a lagoon to a runway where our jet landed in a PNG evacuation flight. ✕

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Community



RUNNING CLASSICS WILL RAISE FUNDS

The W2G09 Classic

The annual Woodford to Glenbrook Classic is again planned for the last Sunday in June (28th). If you have a passion for running or mountain biking then you can't miss this 25 km Classic track along the Oaks Fire Trail through the lower Blue Mountains. Entries can be lodged for W2G09 on our website (www.careflight.org). This site allows (even encourages) you to set up fundraising for CareFlight to support your entry.

City2Surf backs us

Yes, NRMA CareFlight is now an endorsed charity for the 2009 Sun-Herald City to Surf. If you or any of your friends are considering an entry into what is Sydney's most popular community event, you can select NRMA CareFlight as your nominated charity. It's easy to support our charity in this way – just go to www.everydayhero.com.au/event/sunheraldcity2surf09 and select CareFlight.

Blackmores Festival

The 2009 Blackmores Festival has events for everybody with distances of 4 km, 9km, half-marathon and marathon. It all starts at North Sydney and ends at the Opera House. See www.sydneyrunningfestival.com.au for details. Entries open soon and you can choose CareFlight as your nominated charity.

Bill's Kokoda trek

With a history of taking on tough challenges as one of the most respected referees in Rugby League history, even Bill Harrigan (pictured) found it one of the toughest tests he has ever faced.



In setting his sights on the Kokoda Track in Papua New Guinea in February, Bill decided to take on some of the toughest terrain on the globe, and at the back end of the wet season as well!

In honouring the significance of the Kokoda Track in Australian military history, Bill also took on the challenge to raise funds for CareFlight. ✕

Check our website for full details of upcoming events at www.careflight.org



19 IGA stores lead Mid-Coast community



With a series of events the 19 IGA stores have led the Mid-Coast community in raising almost \$50,000 already this year to support the medical work of NRMA CareFlight.

The 19 from Buladelah to Coffs Harbour, their customers, sponsors and suppliers, teamed to stage the fundraising which culminated with a dinner and golf day at Wauchope in January. The funds will support the state-wide medical retrieval service which NRMA CareFlight operates in partnership with the NSW Ambulance Service from bases in Sydney and Orange. ✕

Sussex Inlet strong on Charity support



The community of Sussex Inlet came together in March to present the proceeds for their outstanding "Choppers for Charity" weekend which was held in February ... including barefoot bowls, a golf day, dinner dance, a street parade and community festival along its beautiful waterfront. The community dinner, local Lions and Rotary clubs and Sussex Inlet RSL Club presented cheques totaling \$16,000 – the most ever raised by this annual event, showing the high regard in which NRMA CareFlight is held on the South Coast. ✕

A little town with such a big heart

The town of Bribbaree northwest of Young in Central NSW held a very successful Bowls and Bingo night in February with all funds raised going to CareFlight. A regular event that had been put on hold for a short time was rekindled by local personality Kathy Tetley and local NRMA officer Maurice Henry. Over \$4000 was raised through an auction, bingo, bowls and raffle held at the Services & Citizens Bowling Club.

"We've received a lot of donations from the business houses in Young and Bribbaree," Ms Tetley said. "They've all been very generous."

As the auction was taking place a CareFlight doctor was working on a patient with severe burns at nearby Quandialla. CareFlight provides doctors to the NSW Ambulance Service helicopter based in Orange. ✕

Yacht winter ball to aid CareFlight

It's on again, the annual CYCA Winter Ball, a night of fabulous dining and entertainment on Saturday 30 May.

The Winter Ball is one of the highlights of the Sydney sailing social calendar and a great way to catch up with old friends, make new friends and enjoy a great meal, wine and music.

A Silent Auction will also be conducted on the night with money raised going to CareFlight.

Tickets are \$150 each or \$1350 for a table of 10 (one person to book and pay for a table of 10). Tickets must be paid for at the time of booking.

For bookings, please contact CYCA on 8292 7800 or reception@cyca.com.au ✕



Missions



Treatment flies to trapped ute driver

A Baulkham Hills man had a narrow escape from death when his utility and a garbage truck collided in a head-on crash on Wallgrove Road at Eastern Creek in Sydney's west in February.

NRMA CareFlight landed in a paddock adjacent to the crash to allow our doctor to work with Ambulance paramedics to treat the man as Fire Brigade rescue officers used their expertise to free him.

The 4WD utility ended up on its side, pinning the man who suffered head injuries and fractures to his right leg and arm, but remained conscious.

After the initial stabilisation the driver was taken by road ambulance, under continuing treatment by the NRMA CareFlight doctor, to Nepean Hospital where he was in a stable condition on arrival shortly after 10 am.

The doctor said if the man been in a smaller vehicle the impact probably would have killed him. ✕

Boy's beach fall

Emergency services combined to rescue a teenage boy who suffered multiple injuries when he fell from a cliff at Freshwater Beach in Sydney's north in February.

The NRMA CareFlight doctor said the Collaroy boy, believed to be aged 14, fell an estimated 15 metres onto rocks at the southern end of the beach suffering head, facial and back injuries. The helicopter landed beside a car park to allow the doctor to walk around rocks to start treating the boy who regained partial consciousness.

The boy was given an anaesthetic and placed under an induced coma as part of NRMA CareFlight's treatment for head injury patients. Because of a danger posed by the slippery rocks, an ambulance helicopter was called in to winch the boy on board and fly him to the Sydney Children's Hospital at Randwick in a stable condition.



The scene at Freshwater Beach as rescue teams worked to treat the boy.

Tube injury woman

A young Central Coast woman suffered severe concussion from a ski tube mishap on the Hawkesbury River near Wisemans Ferry at Easter.

The NRMA CareFlight doctor said the 18-year-old woman, from Killarney Vale, hit the water head first after flipping high into the air when she lost control during a high-speed ride on the ski tube.

NVGs beat crocodiles

A stranded man was rescued from rising floodwaters at Mt Wells after NT police called CareFlight to make a 120 km pre-dawn dash south from Darwin in February.

The rescue was made possible by the crew of pilot Tony Birmingham and air crewman John Costin using Night Vision Goggles (NVG). It was the first time in the Northern Territory a non-military helicopter has used NVG to make a rescue, and the first rescue mission for CareFlight in the Top End.

NT Police called CareFlight at 4.30 am when emergency services were unable to reach a 41-year-old man who was standing on the roof of his 4WD surrounded by deep floodwaters in an area known to be a crocodile haunt. The CareFlight crew, accompanied by a Darwin-based police officer, flew around low cloud using NVG and found the man had scrambled from the 4WD roof to high ground as his vehicle was swept away.

CareFlight plucked the man from the high ground just after 7 am. ✕

New beacons bring quick Top End rescue

A new-generation alert system led to CareFlight's quick rescue of Top End fishermen whose small boats have broken down at a remote fishing area out from Darwin this year.

Since CareFlight stationed one of its rescue helicopters in Darwin in late December to support the NT Government and Top End community, the crews have successfully completed a number of day and night rescue and medical missions on behalf of NT Health and Police and the national Australian Maritime Safety Authority.

Twice over Easter, within an hour of being alerted, a CareFlight rescue helicopter arrived overhead and guided fishing boats to tow the stranded boats to safety after motor problems.

A satellite picked up the men's beacons operating on the new 406 MHz Emergency Position Indicator Radio Beacon (EPIRB) system.

That the five-metre open "tinnies" broke down off the isolated Dum In Mirrie island, about 50 km south-west of Darwin, made no difference to the efficiency of the rescue. That's why everyone heading out to sea, flying a private plane or bushwalking, should buy one of the new beacons.

CareFlight said the successful helicopter searches were a timely alert for recreational boating people to replace their old 121.5 MHz beacons with the more reliable 406 MHz current version of EPIRBs which can have contact details registered in case of an alert.

Since February this year, world-wide satellites no longer monitor the old 121.5 MHz beacons, so if you want to be rescued, buy a new one which is far superior to the older system. For the investment of a few hundred dollars it can literally save a life. ✕



A February search ended when CareFlight found this boat about to be launched in Darwin, with the fishing party unaware their old system beacon had been accidentally activated, triggering an emergency alert.

Cruel Wind is a compelling perspective

Ten years on, the triumph and tragedy of the fateful 1998 Sydney to Hobart yacht race has been documented for the first time from a Tasmanian perspective in a new book "Cruel Wind".

Rob Matthews was at the helm when Launceston-based Business Post Naiad capsized for a second time, nearly drowning under the upturned yacht. Two of his friends died on board Naiad as the storm's fury hit the race fleet leaving six sailors drowned while 55 survivors were winched to safety as five boats sank.

The role of NRMA CareFlight in rescuing Naiad survivors is part of Rob's compelling narrative.

Pilot of that rescue mission Dan Tyler, and founding director Ian Badham, represented NRMA CareFlight at a highly emotional book launch in March which brought together not only the Naiad survivors but the Tasmanian yachting community.

More than a tribute to all who crewed that small yacht in the face of a one-in-a-hundred year storm, Rob Matthews has penned a most readable account of his life, passion for the sea and survival of Australia's biggest peace-time maritime disaster. ✕



TOP: Wrecked and just afloat, Business Post Naiad drifts shortly after the crew were lifted off in a rescue epic that won our crew high international praise. ABOVE: The crew of NRMA CareFlight who rescued all seven survivors from Naiad a decade ago, from left, Dan Tyler, Murray Traynor and Graeme Fromberg.

Be quick. The only way to obtain a copy of Rob Matthews outstanding book "Cruel Wind" is to order on line at www.cruelwind.com.au

Japan puts Ken's book into print

After inspiring Australian readers for some time, former CareFlight doctor Ken Wishaw has reached new publishing heights with his book recently being re-launched in a Japanese edition.

Ken's account of his pioneering efforts as Australia's first full-time helicopter doctor, and the struggle to keep CareFlight in the skies, remains a popular purchase for visitors to our operations base at Westmead in Sydney.

As the book cover below shows, Ken's book "Helicopter Rescue" has now reached the book shelves in Japan where we hope his motivational, amusing and heart-breaking account will be just as popular. ✕

The only way to get (an English language) copy of Ken Wishaw's book "Helicopter Rescue... the true story of Australia's first fulltime chopper doctor" is at our Westmead base during an arranged group visit or dinner, or by phone to (02) 9891 6144.



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NOW – Online Donations

Without the generous support of community minded people, NRMA CareFlight would not be able to take off – literally. Now you can donate using our website. Go to www.careflight.org and on the home page click on the DONATE NOW button.

On the next page simply click on one of the buttons which will give you the option of making a single donation or donating on a monthly basis.



Other ways to help:

If you would like any information on the following, please contact CareFlight:

- Organising a fundraising event
- Arranging a base dinner and interest visit
- Making a gift to CareFlight through your Will
- Making donations to CareFlight through your payroll
- Making a regular monthly donation

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