

Wanted: old boards for PNG

GEORGE SMITH

ANY surfer knows how annoying it is to get a ding in a fine hand-crafted board.

But a board of any sort, even one minus fins or a nose, is heaven to some kids in Papua New Guinea.

Coolangatta surf coach Jamo Borthwick has returned from an 18-day training trip, organised by the Surfing Association of PNG, to help develop the country's fledgling surfing industry.

As well as coaching individual surfers, Jamo was also training New Guineans to be surf coaches and lifeguards.

Jamo, who runs the Walker on Water surf school, near the Tweed Heads and Coolangatta Surf Lifesaving Club, is calling for Gold Coast and Tweed surfers to donate boards, surfing gear and life-saving equipment to send to the villagers.

"A board floating on the bottom of the rubbish pile here would be cherished by the little kids over there," Jamo said.

"They are surfing with a bit of timber and they're naked because that's all they've got."

New Guinea's nine established surf clubs are fairly tight-lip, each having only three or four boards shared between about 30 people.

Jamo said many New Guineans had great ability as surfers.

"They could mix it with the best guys here," he said.

He wants to help develop surfing in New Guinea to benefit the locals with a viable income stream.

Jamo's trip included Koroing and Vanimo, the best known surf spots in New Guinea, as well as out-of-the-way places such as Tapa and Yalo, "where they set up the club two days before I came".

Events were breaking over co-

They'll be sent to some very grateful young surfers, says Jamo Borthwick



MOTIVATED SURFER Jamo Borthwick is appealing for preserved surfboards to send to Papua New Guinea. Below: In PNG, a keen groom takes to the waves with half a board, left, and some broken boards the local kids like.

ral in one foot of water was no deterrent to the New Guinean groomers.

"I don't know how they didn't get hurt," Jamo said.

"They would jump up and hold or foot, they would do it for hours."

Apart from surfboards and surf clothing, Jamo is keen to provide life saving equipment such as CPR mannequins and training manuals for New Guinea.

Jamo Borthwick can be contacted through jpsurfing.com.au or on 0410 786 211.

