



Song sung blue for Kirra

Crooners to save beach

by Steve Spinks

THE Bring Back Kirra campaign has its committee, its celebrity and local political support, and now it has its own protest song.

The catchy reggae song, *Let Kirra Be Kirra*, penned by local musician and surfer Ron 'Birdy' Burnett, will be the theme for an Australia Day paddle-out when organisers hope more than 1000 surfers will protest against the loss of Kirra Point as a surfing mecca after the introduction of the Tweed sand by-pass pumping operation.

The song was written in 1988 to stop a proposed marina at Coolangatta and Kirra but with the changing of one word – 'marina' to

'beaches' – it remains current.

The song will be performed on Monday by Burnett's band, Quiet Excitement, when Kirra will be overrun with protesters ranging in age and ability from grommets to professional surfers such as Stephanie Gilmore, Mick Fanning, Joel Parkinson and Bede Durbidge.

The surfers will paddle out and attempt to form a map of Australia as a sign of their protest over the inaction by the NSW and Queensland Labor governments in allowing Kirra to be choked to death by sand.

"On the circumference we have, which is 100m by 100m, we probably need 400 surfers," said co-ordinator

John Standing.

"I'm hoping we get more than 1200 surfers but even if we get 800, we definitely have the situation covered. We've asked outriggers to come, all the surf clubs to come and all the boardriding clubs to come, so we are hoping for a fantastic turnout."

The logistics of the paddle-out will be difficult to arrange with about 10 buoys, which will be placed by the Kirra Surf Life Saving Club, indicating 10 points by which the map of Australia will be constructed.

"We'll split the number of people up – east, west, south and north and Taswegians and Kiwis – and then marshal them on the beach and talk everyone through it," said

Mr Standing.

According to the Save Kirra Point committee, the Tweed sand by-pass pumping operation has pumped 10 million cubic metres of sand off Point Danger resulting in the loss not only of the Kirra

break, but the environmentally significant Kirra Reef as well.

According to Kirra Surf Life Saving Club general manager Sheldon Steele, the club has lost a massive amount of trade since the sand settled in.

"We are just one small business among about 15 along Kirra and we have lost \$1.2 million since the start of the 'great southern desert' out the front," he said.



John Standing, Andy McKinnon and Phil Arnett hit the water off Kirra Point

● Picture: Scott Fletcher