



# Thousands protest loss of swells

BY JAMES PERKINS

BOARDRIDERS demanded the resurrection of a lost wonder of the surfing world in the most emphatic way possible yesterday.

Past greats, current world champions, grommets, mal riders and everyday surfers banded together to send a message to governments to bring Kirra back.

About 1500 paddled out into the water yesterday, some catching a few of the ripples that are all that is left of what was once the finest barrels in the world.

Wayne "Rabbit" Bartholomew AM was greeted with cheers when he emphatically told the crowd that he believed the wave could be restored.

Event director Andrew McKinnon said it had been a fantastic response from the community and the message should get through to the government.

"It is the biggest crowd we have seen down at Kirra since it pumped," Mr McKinnon said.

"If they (the governments) don't get the message, they are going to be in trouble."

Two-time world champion Stephanie Gilmore is one of the current generation of surfers who have not had the opportunity to ride Kirra.

"I would love to surf it one day, and that is why I am here," Ms Gilmore said.

LNP State Member for Curumbin Jann Stuckey told the crowd she had brought the issue of Kirra to the state parliament no less than 25 times, and it was a battle that could be won.

Tweed Shire Councillor Katie Milne told the *Tweed Daily News* the council had not seen the sand pumping as an issue in her first four months on council, but she didn't see why it couldn't be on the agenda at the next meeting.



□ FORMER world champion Mick Fanning at yesterday's protest. INSET: Part of the crowd at Kirra.  
Photo: CRYSTAL SPENCER D123864