

SURFING

Press Release

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Dries Millard determined to attend the 2015 ISA World Adaptive Surfing Championships in San Diego, USA

The first ever International Surfing Association (ISA) World Adaptive Surfing Championships are set to take place in San Diego, California, from September 24-27 this year. Dries Millard, Ant Smyth, JP Veaudry and Bongani Xulu have been named by the Surfing South Africa Board of Directors to represent South Africa at the Championships. The four South African representatives will have to raise their own funds to attend the event and with this in mind Dries Millard has already started putting plans together to prepare for the championships. Millard runs Extreme Abilities, an organisation that has partnered with Surfing South Africa in presenting multiple surf events for disabled people in the Western Cape for the past four years.

To prepare for the championships Dries is planning a tour along the South African coastline, starting at Elands Bay on the Cape west coast and heading all the way up to Sodwana Bay in northern KZN. He is looking for a travel buddy to assist with some filming and marketing during the trip. "It's a two month trip, so I am considering either one person for the entire trip or a local from each province to travel and guide me through their respective areas."

The journey, while providing Dries with the necessary training for the event, will also involve 35 stops at towns along the way, where awareness for adaptive surfing events will be raised in local schools by Dries and his team. "Motivational talks and disability awareness has always been a part of our operation, so I will also be going around to local schools to further promote the sport amongst the younger generations."

Dries also aims to put the community's NSRI and Lifesaving clubs in contact with the nearest disability organisations so that these communities will be able to organise their own adaptive surf events in the future.

The competition side of the 2015 ISA World Adaptive Championships is only one of three key components making up the event. The other two components include an *Adaptive Surfing Clinic and Expression Session*, as well as an *Adaptive Surfing Symposium* which includes talks from key note speakers and a discussion of the future of the championships and its future development.

The ISA is teaming up with the Challenged Athletes Foundation (CAF), a recognised leader in the physically challenged sports community, to unify global efforts for the advancement of Adaptive Surfing and create a platform for surfers with physical disabilities to display their talents in a World Championship Competition. - Fernando Aguerre, ISA President

As far as the future of the adaptive surfing is concerned, Millard has set some challenging goals one of which is to surf Dungeons, the famous Cape Town Big Wave surf spot sometime next year. Technology is on his side as the Challenged Athletes Foundation have assisted him in acquiring a fully gripped 8 foot surfboard with a Wavejet propulsion system that will help him with paddling.

Surfing South Africa General Manager, Robin de Kock is enthusiastic about the plan that Millard has put together. "I have worked on a number of Adapted Surfing projects with Dries and he is simply an inspiration. Once he sets his mind to a project he goes for it and just does not give up. It is fitting that the ISA has decided to create the World Adaptive Surfing Championships as it will allow Dries and his teammates to show how far South Africa has advanced when it comes to providing surfing opportunities to individuals with disabilities. Surfing South Africa has actively supported the Adapted Surfing Days that have been so successful over the last four years. Dries has been an enthusiastic and committed innovator of the Adapted surfing program and he deserves all the support he can get in making the trip to the World Championships a reality"



Millard will be looking at all possible avenues for donations to help fund the expensive trip to the World Championships in the USA. Keep in touch with his progress through at www.extremeabilities.co.za or email him directly at dries@extremeabilities.co.za
 For more information on the 2015 ISA World Adaptive Surfing Championships check out the official ISA website at www.isasurf.org

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