

SCUMM



coming soon to a beach near you, you have been warned



Hi, my name is Terry Towelling, and I am a slideaholic of the mat riding variety. I am also SCUMM. On the surface I seem like a regular kind of bloke, yet deep down inside I often ask myself, how did I eventually come to this? I will allow my friends to tell the story, first up to share is fellow SCUMM member, Eric (Da Bolt) Bridges.



SCUMM is the acronym for South Coast Unashamed Mat Men. An eclectic bunch of blokes who share a common purpose, our love, or perhaps even obsession, of surfing mats.

We mostly started off as regular surfers, well regular being a subjective term at best. But surf we did, some of us with over 30 years' experience on all manner of boards, in every type of wave. But for us members of SCUMM we sensed a change brewing within, a deep seated desire to step away from the seriousness of modern surfing and reignite our stoke.



We needed, and actively sort out change. We wanted to put the FUN back into our surfing weekends. Because even the best of things can get boring over time.



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It was Adam (King Waka) Williams, who in late 2010 gave in to an impulse to purchase a Redback Mat. After a brief period of experimentation and considerable laughter, he then convinced Eric (Da Bolt) Bridges to have a go. What followed was a highly addictive and intoxicating sensation. A joyous kind of madness was being triggered by a heady brew of abandoning ego, and long held socially accepted surfing norms, in return for pure unadulterated fun. Little did we know, this condition was to prove itself, not only deeply satisfying, but also highly contagious.



Next gentleman through the looking glass was Paul (Oily) Newman. Oily quickly coined the oddly appropriate name SCUMM. The name has stuck with the same strength and vigour as the condition from which we are afflicted. By January 2011 we were showing signs of sliding deeper into the seemingly strange world of SCUMM, most could no longer resist riding mats. Adam drove us to constantly research our equipment with our ever increasing obsession for performance.

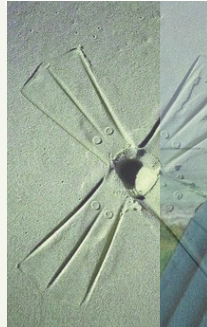
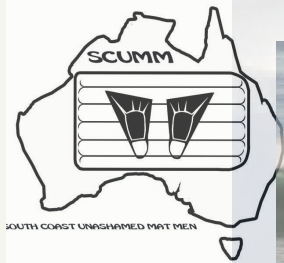
It was during this period of experimentation that we found ourselves visiting Robin (Ramsnake) Thomson in Denmark WA. Here Eric was shown the Paul Gross 4GF Mats from the USA, which George Greenough rides. Paul has made every mat himself in his workshop in California for the last thirty years, and his experience shows.





After many outrageous sessions of trial and error, mat-sliding was introduced to other friends who quickly saw the light: Filthy, Rocks, Matapus, Jules, RH, Tofu, Towel, Slaga and others, a loose collection of ever so slightly deranged yet utterly content men and women. We're known to descend onto a spot where unsuspecting sliders of all types are infected by the madness and laughter we bring with us.

Whether filming, wave-sharing or doing cross-overs, mat-sliding brings great times and is both addictive and contagious. We found ourselves moving ever further away from the excessively image conscious reality that is marketed as the modern surfing world. We had found our stoke, once more, and there was much rejoicing.





We now take on shallow, barrelling reef breaks and epic waves in places like Hawaii, Margaret River, Bali and naturally at home in the pool during our all important BBQ's.

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Here at SCUMM headquarters on the South coast of NSW, every wave is over head high. When someone reaches out to SCUMM we are there for them. Some of our friends who thought they could never surf again due to injuries now regularly get their weekly fix of salt water because of mats. Obviously we have been derided at times by those suffering the ignorance of ego. But we know that those that mind don't matter, and those that matter don't mind. We are SCUMM and we proudly revel in our mat madness. Be warned we're coming to a beach near you soon.

A quick share from SCUMM member, Johnny Tofu. I have surfed since I was fifteen in 1969, riding every sort of craft available. Logs, short boards, kneeboards and body boards. I came back to logs again at 47, and at the age of 60 I ride them for fun and competition. Recently, I have found the highest of highs when I got into mat riding - I fell in love.





Mat riding for me is being as close and as deep to the wave as possible, with the added advantages of every wave being overhead, the latest and steepest take offs when required, the feeling of speed with your face so close to the wave, and the controlled slides. In this age of over marketed surf narcissism its super refreshing to not have to care about what anyone thinks, says or does. When you ride a mat, it's a cross between being a five year old on a billy cart and finding a \$50 note you didn't know was in a pocket. All you need is love and a good mat.



Editor's Note: We feel it's only fitting to warn all Slideaholics readers. Mat sliding is a highly addictive and extremely contagious condition. It can and often does lead to an incurable condition known in medical circles as Dirigible Dementia. Once afflicted there is no known cure, however the condition can be treated with regular mat slides.