

## Sochi Big Wave 2013

The idea of an open traditional surfing competition has been around for a while. Sochi has everything required: unpredictable and rather rough, but wonderful waves, local surfers and visitors, who never miss a swell, and a crowd of fans.

Yet the fickle weather would have its say. The first scheduled date had to be scrapped due to a wrong forecast. The second attempt was forestalled by a hurricane that made landfall three days prior to the scheduled start and over the next two days wreaked havoc, toppling trees, flooding local rivers and turning the spot into a garbage dump. Consideration was given to postponing the event once again, but Surf Gods smiled upon us. Skies began to clear and the chop smoothed out, though rain kept on pouring. No one wanted to delay the event any further, since Go Surf's prizes were getting tired of waiting for their rightful owners. Besides, Andrey Pervuhin has already arrived and agreed to judge the city contest alongside David Dzhalagiya.

Sergey Rasshivaev helped with scoretables, while Aleksey Mitrofanov set up the sound equipment, promptly delivered by Natalia Papenkova from Krasnaya Polyana despite mudflows that blocked local roads. Dmitri Kostenko provided a surfvan and the hospitality this windsurfer is famed for. Event banners owe their stylish appearance to Michael Shevchenko, whom I consider the most talented designer in Sochi. Andrey Yanchenko committed to the effort by turning into a DJ – everyone enjoyed the selection of tracks on his player.

Pasha Kovalenko deserves a round of thanks for the upcoming photos of the event. He got soaked and frozen stiff, fought to keep his equipment from being damaged in the constant rain, but never uttered a word of complaint. Nor did his beloved Leyla Lepsveridze, who covered Sochi surfing in a half-page article, published in the September issue of Tema – the young city newspaper that complements the fashionable and popular Sochi periodical Stil Zhizn I or "Lifestyle".

Everyone did their part, and surfing is lucky to have such followers as the lot of us! The competition itself was held to the high sporting standard. Quarterfinals were opened by the first four: Ilya Inegin, Michael Demeshkevich, Aleksey Klevtsov and David Maharashvili. Ilya shined that day, catching waves quickly and confidently. The second group of four consisted of Natasha Papenkova, Vladas Shatinskas, Andrey Fedichenkov from Rostov and Andrey Rategov. Most of the struggle took place between Vladas and Natasha.

The first place and a Surfskate Stunner skateboard went to Natalya Papenkova.

The first runner-up Vladas Shatinskas received a traction pad.

Ilya Nityagin came in third and was rewarded for his effort with board wax and a T-shirt.

The rest of the athletes were awarded with Go Surf discount cards. Congratulations to everyone and cheers to our athletes for their will to surf in any conditions!

Report submitted by event organizer Alyona Mashhaeva