

Safety lesson turns into rescue when rip traps tourists

The school of hard knocks

Manly Beach

Bryn Kay

MORE than 400 schoolchildren won't be needing to watch *Bondi Rescue* for water safety tips after witnessing a live, firsthand account of what to do during a rip while at Manly Beach on Tuesday.

The children were taking part in a Surf Educate Australia water safety session on the beach when drama struck at 1pm.

Four tourists were swimming outside the lifeguard flags of the South Steyne side of the beach when they were caught in the rip.

Before the children could determine what was going on, two Manly Council lifeguards – Steve Hartley and David Tagg – had joined five Surf Educate Australia instructors in the water to rescue the four swimmers.

Adam Crerar was one of the instructors who was involved in the successful rescue effort and was forced to temporarily abandon his lesson.

"It's very beneficial for the kids to see this firsthand instead of having me just saying it to them," Mr Crerar said. "They can see four guys in a rip getting in trouble and can see what happens."

Mr Crerar, who helped aid the



Surf safety instructors Fernando Rabago, Flo Epper, Jarrod Pearse and Adam Crerar, back at Manly Beach after rescuing four people on Wednesday.

Picture: SIMON COCKSEGE -FP434908

worst affected of the four men who had gone unconscious in the rip but regained consciousness once brought to shore, joked the students were one of the most "attentive" groups he had ever

educated once the lesson resumed.

Manly Council lifeguard supervisor Lee Burnes was also involved in the rescue, announcing over the public address system for the swimmers not to swim against

the rip and instead try to remain calm and attempt to stay afloat.

"It's a good thing for them (the children) to see it and know what they have to do if they find themselves in a rip," he said.

Manly

Oatley not guilty plea

Peter Bodkin

THE young member of a wealthy wine-making dynasty who has been accused of attacking one of Manly's penguin protectors will contest the charge of assaulting the elderly volunteer on New Year's Day.

James Robert Oatley, 28, of Mosman, was charged with common assault after he allegedly pushed Johnyth Burton, 72, to the ground and splashed her with water early this year.

Mr Oatley, the grandson of *Wild Oats XI* and Hamilton Island owner Bob Oatley, did not appear when the matter was heard in Manly Local Court yesterday and his lawyer entered a plea of not guilty on his behalf.

Police claim Mr Oatley was on a boat carrying a number of people that came to shore at Manly Cove at around 9pm on January 1.

Police said a dog leapt from the boat and began chasing one of the area's endangered little penguins before Mrs Burton stepped in to protect the animal.

It is claimed Mr Oatley and the penguin warden then began arguing before he allegedly attacked the 72-year-old woman in front of a shocked crowd of onlookers. The case has been adjourned until April 7.