

RIDING THE WAVE

THIS COMING SUMMER TAURANGA PEUGEOT WILL BE ENJOYING ITS FOURTH SEASON ALIGNED WITH SOME TRUE CHAMPIONS OF THE SURF.

What started off as sponsorship of his local surf lifesaving club has become something of a passion for Tauranga Peugeot dealer principal John Hayes. So much so that he recently became a fully qualified lifeguard too.

"My sons Ryan and Cameron both went through the programme at Mount Maunganui Surf Club and now my wife Jacqui and I have both become qualified guards, so we've been around the club for many years," says John.

"Then around three years ago, Surf Lifesaving New Zealand brought in a new ruling that every competitor must wear a

high-visibility competition vest when they're in the water.

"I'd been looking at various sponsorship opportunities for quite a while by that stage, but the club is such an integral part of life in the city that the idea of branding the vests instantly appealed."

John and Tauranga Peugeot has sponsored the club for three full seasons, with this coming summer set to be the fourth. It's a busy summer ahead too. As head coach John Bryant says, 2017 could be the most pivotal season in this premier club's history.

"We have a motivational saying around the club at present, which is 'Drive for 5'. In March we'll be heading to the national championships in Christchurch as four-time winners," John explains.

"As far as my research shows, no other club has achieved five national titles in a row, so we're gunning for that win.

We set the bar high – we've won seven national championships over the last 10 years – so we're looking forward to getting

"When we go to surf carnivals to compete, we have real presence as a club and that's a good thing for the brand."



I really believe the service Kiwi surf lifesavers provide around our beaches is so incredibly underrated.



to Christchurch to compete."

John Hayes says that, aside from the fact he has strong familial links with the club, partnering with the 'Mounties' fits the Peugeot brand too.

"Because this club is so consistent in their performance, other clubs look forward to competing against them. When we go to surf carnivals to compete, we have real presence as a club and that's a good thing for the brand," he says.

"The other reason our association with the club appeals to me in particular is because I really believe the service Kiwi surf lifesavers provide around our beaches is so incredibly underrated.

These are kids that could be off doing something else on a Saturday. But the give up their weekends for free and sit attentively on the beach waiting for that whistle to go.

"I think that's incredibly selfless; something that is worth supporting wholeheartedly."

"We're by no means the biggest club around, but we really punch above our weight," continues John Bryant.

"Omanu Beach, Papamoa, Piha over on the west coast; they're all bigger clubs than us. But we've always been very determined to deliver a quality programme rather than just grabbing numbers.

"It works for us too, not only in terms

of the trophy cabinet, but we have a very stable club in terms of junior member retention rates."

John says that surf lifesaving leads to many other disciplines and cites the Australian Olympic team's London 2012 campaign as an example of this; at least 60 members of that squad got their start in surf lifesaving before moving into other sports such as kayaking, canoeing and swimming.

"Lisa Carrington is a 'Mountie' and even came back to a recent competition day to help manage our junior clubbies.

There aren't too many clubs in the country that could say they have a reigning Olympic world champion standing on the beach helping out with a clipboard!" laughs John.

For Tauranga Peugeot dealer principal John Hayes – who can register his involvement with Peugeot as far back as 1989 – the relationship with the Mount Maunganui Surf Club is a great one and something he's looking forward to continuing with as the busy summer season approaches.

"In my experience our customers look for the best quality vehicles they can get.

I understand that desire and I want the best out of any partnership I put my name to. I've certainly got it with this premium and professional club," he says.

