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BEHEMOTH ANNOUNCES 2009 NELSCOTT REEF CONTEST DEDICATION

Nelscott Reef Tow In Classic to be Dedicated to Head Judge Gary Smither

LINCOLN CITY, Oregon, September 9, 2009, Behemoth, LLC today announced that the 2009 Nelscott Reef Tow In Classic will be dedicated to dear friend and Head Judge, Gary Smither. Gary, who lost his fight to cancer in June, was a good friend, supporter, and judge for the Nelscott Reef Tow In Classic since the first contest in 2005, and will be greatly missed. The 2009 event will be dedicated in his honor.

Gary was born on December 19, 1951. He grew up on 'The Strand' in Hermosa Beach, CA, and started surfing on mats when he was 10 years old. He got a surfboard and started surfing a few years later. He surfed competitively from age 14 thru 18 and was sponsored by Hap Jacobs Surfboards. Corky Carroll, Mike Purpus, and Rolf Aurness sponsored him into the 'Windansea Surf Club'. He was arrested at Trestles for surfing on the Army Base, which was a right of passage in Southern California in the 60's.

Gary took a hiatus from surfing for nearly 30 years, until his wife Chris got him to return to the water again in 1999 in the Coos Bay area of Oregon. Shortly after, he started competing in Northwest contests, earning several podium positions, including a first place finish at the Cape Kiwanda Longboard contest in 2005. He also earned two first place finishes at the Cleanwater Classic in Westport, WA. In 2008, Gary took over the role of Head Judge for the PNW Judges, after judging all the events in the Northwest for the past 8 years.

Gary had a bout with a brain tumor two years ago and after completing Chemo and Radiation treatment, was able to bounce back to surfing. Gary went on a surf trip of a lifetime to the 'Mentawais' before the tumor came back and took his life at home in the arms of his loving wife Chris on June 23, 2009.

Gary leaves behind two daughters, Melissa 27, and Jessie 32, his wife Chris, and many friends. Gary will be missed, but not forgotten by all his friends in the surfing community. He was a loyal friend and his contributions and dedication to the Nelscott Reef Tow In and Big Wave Paddle Classic will not be forgotten.

“Gary was a special friend, and I can’t think of a better way to honor him other than dedicating this years event to him and all he stood for”, said John Forse, event founder.

His wife Chris will provide Gary's ashes to be spread on Nelscott Reef during the contest this year, as she knows it would be one of his wishes. RIP Gary.

The Nelscott Reef Tow In Classic is now in its fifth year. It operates on a three-month holding period, October 1 through December 31st, and unofficially marks the opening of the North Pacific big wave season. The contest has amazingly been held each year it has operated, boasting a better record than any big wave event in history.

About Behemoth LLC.

Behemoth was started in 2005 for the purpose of promoting surf events at Nelscott Reef and other surf locations around the world. Founding member, John Forse, was the pioneer at Nelscott Reef and made his first attempt to ride the reef in 1995. Forse, along with Jim Kusz, safety coordinator for North Lincoln Fire and Rescue and veteran water rescue team leader, and Adam Wagner of Action Sports Northwest, operate Behemoth LLC out of Lincoln City, Oregon. Behemoth LLC organized and promoted the first annual Nelscott Reef Tow In Classic, bringing the sport of surfing to the professional level in Oregon for the first time.