

FAMILY AFFAIR

# MUM BLAZES A TRAIL FOR DAUGHTERS

## MUCH HAS CHANGED OVER TIME

Emma Herd

PLENTY has changed since Kerry Armstrong-Smith started out in the nipperettes at Umina Beach.

There were no female patrolling members of surf lifesaving clubs when Armstrong-Smith, who joined the surf club when she was four, was coming through.

"That was the case until I was probably in the under-14s," she recalled.

"And I think I was 26 or 27 when women first got to paddle skis."

Armstrong-Smith has had no shortage of success over the years, before and since the birth of her two daughters Jemma, who moves in the under-17s next season, and Bronte, who will be in the under-14s.

She won her first Australian champion lifesaver title when Jemma was a toddler in 2000 and has won the 40+ national title for the past three seasons.

She also earned the national and

world 40-44 years women's ski titles in 2012-13.

But Jemma's successes made her just as proud, with the 15-year-old taking out the board and champion lifesaver at the Australian titles earlier this year.

"It's really nice to see her do well," Armstrong-Smith said.

Jemma has admired her mother's surf exploits since before she was a nipper.

"We used to go and watch her before we started nippers and then she was my age manager right the way through," she said.

"We ski paddle together and she used to be my board coach when I was little."

Bronte is also making an impact and has been named nipper club captain for next season, following in the footsteps of her mother and older sister, while their father, and Armstrong-Smith's husband, Marty is also an active member of the Umina club.



Kerry Armstrong-Smith and daughter Jemma share a passion for lifesaving

Picture: MARK SCOTT