

# WAVE IT UP

By GARY WEEKS

**S**URF'S UP! But it's a long way from the crashing waves and red-hot sands of Bondi or Waikiki.

The beaches around Newquay in Cornwall offer some of the best year-round surf in the world – and Britain's waveriders are making the most of it for a new water sport.

It's called bodyboarding and is fast gaining popularity over its sister sport, surfing.

It's an easier, more accessible version of surfing – boarders lie or kneel on boards which are shorter and squarer than surfboards.

The beaches around Newquay, especially Fistral Beach, are the fave hangouts for bodyboarders, and long after holidaymakers have gone, a hardcore of enthusiasts stay on to brave waves of up to 12 feet.

Rob Barber, 19, is one of the UK's top bodyboarders. He took up the sport seven years ago – on a board which had a chunk bitten out of it by a dog.

Rob spent last winter in Hawaii, competing in the Bodyboarding World Championships where he knocked out four world class pros and went on to become the highest-placed European in the contest.

But being a world-class bodyboarder is not one long holiday, as Rob discovered. It's hard work, highly competitive and can be very dangerous.

In the Hawaiian islands bodyboarders ride the world famous Pipeline, where huge 30 foot waves crash into a reef and break in only three feet of water.

"Competing in Hawaii was nerve-wracking because of the size of the waves," Rob admits. Surfing – and now bodyboarding – have a cul-

## Bodyboarders are riding high in Surf City UK



SURF STARS: Sean and Catherine



HOLDING ON TIGHT: Surfer Rob Barber

ture all of their own. It began in California in the Sixties and has been captured in films like *The Big Wednesday* and more recently *Point Break*, starring Keanu Reeves and Patrick Swayze.

*Blue Juice*, starring Catherine Zeta Jones and Sean Pertwee, is a new film about the British surfing scene and will be showing at cinemas later this month.

Now, for all you beach bums out there, we've got 10 great bodyboarding goody bags up for grabs. The lucky winners will get a copy

of the Australian surfing video *Wave Slaves* and a bodyboarding T-shirt and manual.

Just tell us which island is the world-famous Pipeline is off?

Answers on a postcard to Bodyboarding Competition at Mega's usual address.

● **TO FIND** out more about bodyboarding why not pick up a copy of the bodyboarding magazine *Three Sixty*. You can get it from surfing shops or order it from W.H. Smith.

