

Celebrities show their forms for charity



Thumbs up: Model Megan Gale gets gnarly on her malibu yesterday



Opponents for the day: Pat Rafter with Gale at Manly Beach

Elizabeth Gosch

SURFING ability aside, the real contest at Sydney's Manly Beach yesterday was who looked better in their wetsuit — Megan Gale or Pat Rafter?

The model and the tennis player joined cricketer Michael Slater and other various A- and B-list celebrities for a "surf-off" among the breakers at one of Australia's most famous beaches.

Six teams of celebrities tried out their rusty or non-existent surfing skills in an effort to win \$3000 for their favourite charity.

Held as the final event in the inaugural Havasins Beachley Classic, the Celebrity Surf-Off pitted Gale against Rafter, Slater and other surfers-for-a-day including television host Jamie Durie, Jennifer Hawkins's boyfriend Jake Wall and Commonwealth Games gold medalist Jane Saville. Beachley — heading a team representing her own charity, Aim for the Stars — won the event, narrowly beating the National Breast Cancer Foundation team, which included Dustin Clare from *McLeod's Daughters*. "My first win for the week," Beachley said after missing out to wildcard entrant Stephanie Gilmore in the main event earlier in the week.

Gilmore took out the classic, the richest event in women's surfing history. The \$US20,000

(\$26,600) first prize was double what women normally win.

Surfer Layne Beachley had spent the past four months organising the event and struggled with a bronchial infection throughout the competition.

"It came so close to a fairytale ending for me and I was bitterly disappointed not to win but I am so relieved it's over. I'm really proud of Stephanie but I'm proud of myself for staging such a great event too," she said on Wednesday. Pat Rafter, who surfed for his Cherish the Children charity, was also pragmatic about his performance. "He said 'I choked again'," contest director Brooke Farris said.

Gale's team, the Melanoma Foundation, finished third behind Beachley and the Breast Cancer Foundation. "Megan Gale got an awesome wave in the final," Farris said. "They all did so well, after a bit of a rusty start."

A highlight of the contest was a perfect-10 wave shared by Beachley and former surfing world champion Barton Lynch. "Layne jumped on Barton's board and they both got a 10-point ride," Farris said. Beachley's charity took home the \$5000 and every charity was given a malibu board autographed by the surfers and celebrities involved in the competition.