

Strand: BBC Our Lives
Program Title: Cornwall's Wildest Wave
Program UID: FKJJ239Y
Press Write-ups, Key Facts, Contacts

Program Summary

SHORT VERSIONS:

Big wave surfer Tom Butler rides a monster Cornish wave. (10 words)

Champion surfer Tom Butler sets out to find and ride a secret Cornish giant wave. (15 words)

Surfer Tom Butler has ridden some of the largest waves in the world, but he's been ignoring what's in his own backyard off Cornwall's wild north coast. Will he find and ride his monster wave? (35 words)

Big Wave surfer Tom Butler has ridden some of the largest waves in the world, but he's been ignoring what's in his own backyard off Cornwall's wild north coast. Will the deadly Stones reef deliver Tom his monster wave? (39 words)

LONGER VERSIONS:

33 year-old Tom Butler is a big wave surfer. For the last ten years he's ridden some of the largest waves in the world, but he's been ignoring what's in his backyard off Cornwall's wild north coast. With legends of monster waves, Tom spends the winter searching for them. A deadly reef two miles from St Ives, known as 'the Stone's, could deliver him 'the ultimate Cornish monster wave'. The challenge is, he needs wind and weather conditions to perfectly align. Tom spends the winter waiting. And as storm after storm batters the Cornish coast, his hopes of finding a monster wave look more and more bleak. Then finally, in February his chance comes. Tom heads back out to the Stones with a large safety team of paramedic, safety boat and back up jet skis. When they arrive it looks like the mission will fail. But as the tide turns something magical happens. An extraordinary wave forms and for just half an hour, there is an incredible Cornish 'monster' some 6m high. (172 words)

CORNWALL'S WILDEST WAVE tells the moving story of big wave surfer Tom Butler's search for a monster Cornish wave. The film is a beautiful celebration of Cornwall, a winter of wild weather and extraordinary waves. But above all, it's an intimate character profile of Tom Butler, his love of the ocean, his soulfulness and an insight into what it means to be surfer. (63 words)

I didn't leave school with any qualifications, but I travelled the world because of my sport and rode insane waves up to the age of 31. Tom Butler

The ocean makes me feel really alive and in the moment. When you are in the waves you just forget about everything else that's going on in your life and that's really special for me. The focus it brings. Tom Butler

On having surfed the Stones.

It happened. It was epic! You're out surfing within the ocean. You're not trying to conquer it. You're just playing alongside those big waves. I'll be back. Tom Butler

Facts:

The film was made over the winter of 21/22.

Tom Butler is a world-famous big wave surfer who lives in Cornwall. He has surfed Portugal's giant Nazaré wave, and competed in the Nazaré Challenge a number of times. He is one of the top 20 big wave surfers in the world. After a serious wipe out in Portugal, Tom was forced to take time out and set up Coastal Crusaders in Newquay, Cornwall. <https://www.worldsurfleague.com/athletes/2461/tom-butler>

"I set up Coastal Crusaders for people from a disadvantaged background who may have disabilities and illnesses and to teach them ocean skills. I wanted to do something to help people." Tom Butler.

<https://coastalcrusaders.org.uk/our-team/>

The Stones Reef is a notorious reef, 2 miles off St Ives that has claimed the lives of many mariners. (not to be confused with the Severn Stones Reef)

If all goes wrong we're onto the coast guard. You're onto the boat with the paramedic and then helicopter, winch, done, gone! The issue with the Stones reef is the topography. There are lots of rocks sticking up, and lots of different rumours about underwater caves. Ben Granata, Marine Safety Supervisor

<https://www.trinityhouse.co.uk/lighthouses-and-lightvessels/godrevy-lighthouse>

The Stones Wave – to our knowledge the Stones has not been successfully surfed before. We know of one attempt to try to surf it which failed. It is a 'bomby', or 'bombora' wave. Rare in the UK these are waves that break out to sea and are difficult to surf because of strong ocean currents. The wave is one of the largest ever surfed in Cornwall. It is a new but dangerous location, and can only be safely ridden by experts surfers with a professional safety team.

Big Wave - The film is the first production to come out of Big Wave's Cornwall office and made by director, and surfer, Mike Cunliffe. Big Wave makes award-winning documentaries for broadcasters worldwide.

www.bigwavetv.com

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