

## **Bellyboard riding**

Bellyboard riding is as old as surfriding, and yet most surfriders have only a limited knowledge of how to ride one.

To ride a wave at maximum speed, your board must be as far inside the curl as possible, because there is less friction, due to the steepness of the wall in the curl. Because of the bellyboard's shorter length, compared to a surfboard, it is easier to ride it much closer to this fast area in the curl and so it provides a fast and thrilling ride.

The bellyboard is usually three to four feet in length and fitted with either one or two skegs. One may ride it lying down or kneeling, although a kneeling position is preferred by experienced riders. To prevent nosediving or pearling, the bellyboard is shaped with rocker in the nose.

A bellyboard rider should wear rubber flippers to reach the breakers and to gain sufficient speed to catch waves. Once on a wave, the board will turn when pressure is exerted on the rail facing the desired direction of the turn. Turns can also be made by placing ones hand in the water next to the board, on the side you are turning.

George Greenough from California USA is regarded as the foremost exponent of bellyboard riding today and is credited with inventing the deep flexible skeg and helping to develop the new era surfriding techniques now being practised all over the surfing world.