

09. Alana Spencer.

# The Bright Side.

w/ Macy Callaghan.





## Macy Callaghan is ~~not~~ going crazy in lockdown.

Could this be a time in human civilization when we all sit up and take notice? Striving to articulate the changes we want to see socially and environmentally with a clear and unequivocal voice. Or do we find ourselves slumped on the couch in dressing gowns and scrolling our phones with a furrowed brow? The onshore is already up and it's not even 8 am — ah well.

One young lady who overcame a tough time on the championship tour last year and was more than ready to get her teeth into the new season was Macy Callaghan. After only just requalifying for the tour following a do or die appearance at the QS Port Stephens Pro, Macy marked the whole ordeal down as experience (albeit a grey one) and in the down season worked to position her mindset accordingly. Preparing herself for another full-blown dig at the world's best women surfers is no easy feat. But, as we know, this wasn't to be the case. After the WSL firstly announced the cancellation of the Corona Pro Gold Coast, and not long afterward the complete championship season, Macy, like a lot of us no doubt, kind of just sat and looked into space. Trapped in a despondent daydream.

Is this *really* happening?

Unprecedented times called for even stronger action, and as borders were beginning to close it quickly became clear to many of us; we were strapped in for this ride and going nowhere — quite literally.

But what a place to be trapped. Balmy Autumn days on the East coast of Australia lead into a crisp winter of consistent South swells, and with no real beach closures or surf bans in sight, it was a promising outlook nonetheless.

Fast forward 4 months and as I take a seat on the polished floorboards in my Tugun apartment, I look out onto an empty stretch of beach leading to Kirra point. The afternoon sun sends long shadows across the sand and for a brief moment I recollect how good life is at the moment here. I'm taken from that moment by a bright and cheery voice on the other end of my phone.

*"Hey Alex, how you going?!"*

It's Macy, and she's called right on time.

I'm fairly relieved. Apologies flow for the lack of contact whilst trying to set up our interview; she's been off the radar by her own admission 'surfing heaps' and has only just gotten back from an all-time weekend away with the girls. Sucks to be her it seems. I apologize for my god-awful accent — hoping she can understand me — as we begin to talk about last season, what she's been up to, and how navigating almost certain cabin fever hasn't been an all too bad experience.

**Last year wasn't the best time for you. You scraped yourself back onto the tour with a last-minute requalification following a series of disappointing results. What was your mindset towards the end of last season?**

Earlier in the season I'd had a couple of really good heats against Carissa and Steph, and even though I didn't win them, I learned so much in those matchups which were great experiences. Don't get me wrong though — it was heartbreaking to lose a lot of last year. Through that though, I've learned so much about competitive surfing when I look back at 2019 as a whole. As a rookie, it was inspiring and daunting at the same time to go into heats with the likes of Carissa. I remember we had a heat together at Bells and she just absolutely smoked me! Going into the last QS event at Port Stephens I'd given up on myself — not gonna lie. My manager Mick, along with my mum, and some friends helped pull me out of this little hole I was in, and I ended up having one of the best competitions of my life so far. There was a lot on the line, and it was great to requalify — but man, it was hard last year. I kind of decompressed for the last CT event in Maui, I had such a great time with my friends, ha, I didn't even surf before the event! I was just so relieved, yet tired at the same time from the season I'd just had.

**Come March and then the world fell apart...**

Yeah, right!? But we've been so lucky here in Australia and especially here on the Gold Coast. I'm so grateful because we were able to surf, and there were no bans put in place here like in the states. It's definitely been one of the best places to have been during all of this. Being here and allowed to surf has kept me and a whole bunch of people I know sane for sure. Truth be told though; I've just had the best time personally. Hanging with friends, surfing non-stop pumping waves, making video clips and just being around family and at home. Something I haven't done properly in a few years now.

**Apart from surfing what else have you been up to?**

Well, my sister and I, we've been working on our Tik-Tok careers during this pandemic. So if it all does go belly up, that's the direction we wanna go (laughs). Me and some of the girls have formed ourselves a little girl gang also...

Yeah, you've been hanging with Steph, Tyler, Nicki Van Dijk et al. Quite an ensemble to be part of? Surfing with my childhood idols has been all time. There are like seven of us all up and we literally take over every place we go to. Whether that's a good or bad thing I'm not entirely sure! I've been looking up to these girls for some years and now we've been hanging out a lot, surfing, making music, going out, and just generally running amuck. There were a good few trips south down to Byron Bay before there was a hard closure on the border — which was probably an appropriate thing to happen — I reckon our Byron quota has been well and truly exhausted by this point haha.

**What has your training schedule looked like and how strict have you been on diet?**

Interestingly I haven't been up earlier than 7 am in a long time — I've just been enjoying these days as much as I can. The tour can be quite hectic. I do train here and there just to keep my body moving the way I want it to.

This said I've been surfing more now than I ever have, so that's the training in itself for me. I certainly haven't been going crazy in the gym like people may imagine us surfers do. As far as diet is concerned.... I'm really not a diet conscious person, and I do love a bit of fast food and a lazy day in bed with all of the Uber Eats. However, I am a big believer of everything in moderation: nothing wrong with a bit of balance in life, right?!

**Your time at home does sound great. Do you miss travel though?**

I certainly do. It doesn't help when I have Instagram memories popping up most days reminding me of where I had been over the last few years! I'm so thankful to have traveled so much already, although because of that I am so aware of how much more there is out there. It's a bit of a vicious circle, a Catch 22 situation. I do not miss being on planes mind you, flying gives me anxiety, even just thinking about it!

**Ok, so what has been the funniest thing to have happened to you during lockdown?**

There's been a few! A friend in our group had her 30th birthday recently and we threw a massive themed party and went out and tore up the town — just a bit. We had a Burning Man theme and it was just hilarious, our antics were certainly the highlight of a few peoples' nights. I'm so glad we had the chance to be able to make it happen because we are all home. Another one of the girls, Dimity Stoye, bought herself a boat during all of this. Meaning the whole girl gang has been going out on that and having a hell time messing around and going fishing. Some of the girls like Tyler Wright are pretty good at catching fish, it's impressive. Side note though — I am a terrible angler!

**How are you looking at the future?**

Surrounded by loved ones and with a smile on my face! I'm excited to get into next season, providing it is going ahead... After all this time off I know how much I do love and miss the tour; it's what I want to do with my life.

Itw by Alex Mitcheson.



