

# DIY ready to build on Block's success

**DIY Rescue**  
Tuesday, 7.30, Nine

■ Nine launches another lifestyle make-over show this week, *DIY Rescue*. Given its last attempt, *The Block*, has been the ratings success of the year so far, great things are expected of the new chum.

*DIY* is, perhaps, not on the scale of *The Block*, but should prove popular enough to ensure another huge ratings night for Nine — cementing the 7.30pm family timeslot, leading into solid adult viewing from 8.30pm to 10.30pm (*CSI* and *Stingers*).

This would make Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays a “gimme” block for the network.

So, how does Nine ensure a new show, in an already overcrowded genre, is going to be a success?

With *DIY Rescue*, it has cleverly dissected the genre, looking for gaps that are still to be exploited.

The premise is that a team of experts comes in — with a deadline of four days — and fixes a viewer's home renovation disaster.

And here is the clincher: Our host probes the hearts and souls of the couple, to find out what the

renovation disaster has done to their relationship, and what the make-over is going to achieve on a psychological level. So, they might even patch up a few relationships.

Leah McLeod, last seen cringing and giggling her way through *Stripsearch*, is the host of *DIY Rescue*, with the multi-talented Tara Dennis heading up the renovation team, as the interior designer.

Joining her are newcomers — builder Luke van Dyke and landscape designer Greg Norton.

Dennis, already spread thin with regular appearances on *Our House*, *Burke's Backyard* and *Renovation Rescue*, will be the glue in this potent new mix.

As we predicted when she first appeared in *Changing Rooms* as the craft and fabrics designer back in 1998, Dennis has evolved into a likeable, viewer-friendly adviser and demonstrator, with attractive and realistic design ideas. She also brings personal renovation heartache to this new project.

“We (she, her builder boyfriend Martin Rushby and daughter Avalon) have just moved back into our own house after two years of renovations,” she says.

“We were living in a granny flat, a sort of large studio at the back of the house, all that time.

“It was a really big job. We took the roof off the house and virtually doubled it in size. Martin did most of the renovations.”

But because of the scale of the job, the inconvenience and the time it took, Dennis says it put a strain on their relationship at times.

“There are occasions when you have no money left, and things don't seem to be going the way you want,” she says.

“But now that it's finally finished, for the first time in ages I'm actually excited about going home at the end of the day.

“So I understand how people feel when they are caught up in renovations that can seem like they have gotten out of control.”

The houses chosen for the show's make-overs have come from the plaintive cries of distressed housewives, frustrated at their own or (in most cases) their husband's final submission to, and acceptance of, their renovation disaster.

“So it's great to be able to go in and fix it, plus put smiles back on their faces,” Dennis says.

TONY JOHNSTON



To the rescue: Tara Dennis heads the *DIY* renovation team.