

KIDS SCREEN TIME DEBATE

HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH

NEW LIFTOUT SMARTDAILY STARTS PAGE 23



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Herald Sun

We're for you

Danny Frawley in his playing days with St Kilda; and (below right) with wife Anita and their three daughters.

BRAIN TRAUMA REVEALED

DANNY'S TRAGIC SECRET

EXCLUSIVE Footy legend was suffering chronic neurological disorder linked to head knocks

MICHAEL WARNER

FOOTY champ Danny Frawley was suffering from a crippling disease linked to repeated head knocks at the time of his death.

An analysis of Frawley's brain has been handed to the Victorian Coroner showing the St Kilda legend had Stage II CTE — chronic traumatic encephalopathy — when he died last year. Frawley's wife, Anita, confirmed the finding, hoping it would "prevent other families from going through what we did".

"Our hearts would break seeing others go through the emotions we

went through," Anita said. "This is an issue for the community, it is not about a particular sport or sports, we need more research to diagnose and assist people living with the disease."

There is growing concern over the consequences of concussions in contact sports.

Anita said her husband, who died aged 56, had lived with depression for many years and the diagnosis helped the family better understand the effect of brain injuries.

Frawley is the second Australian rules player to be diagnosed with CTE, after Graham "Polly" Farmer.

REPORTS, PAGES 4-5



Gobbo and the three hits

EXCLUSIVE ANTHONY DOWSLEY

POLICE suspected lawyer-turned-informer Nicola Gobbo was giving Tony Mokbel information about murder targets at the height of Melbourne's underworld war.

A police request to spy on Gobbo — unearthed by the Lawyer X royal commission — exposes the Purana

anti-gangland task force investigators' suspicions in the early 2000s.

"Target is suspected of assisting Mokbel and (name redacted) in their drug trafficking activities and (giving them) information on the activities of other criminals in relation to the murders of Michael Marshall, Jason Moran and Nick Radev," police said.

REPORTS, PAGE 6

THE MAGIC NUMBER TO END LOCKDOWN

PAGE 12

'Traffic lights' in exit plan

SHANNON DEERY

INDUSTRY groups are locked in talks with the state government to thrash out Victoria's reopening plan, as key safety steps for businesses are revealed.

A road map for reopening won't be released until Sunday but the government is devising a traffic light system

for industries, with tighter restrictions as their COVID-19 risks increase.

Premier Daniel Andrews said social distancing, working from home and customer limits in shops would continue, while "workplace bubbles" could be created to limit the number of staff who have prolonged and close contact with each other.

REPORTS, PAGES 8-9

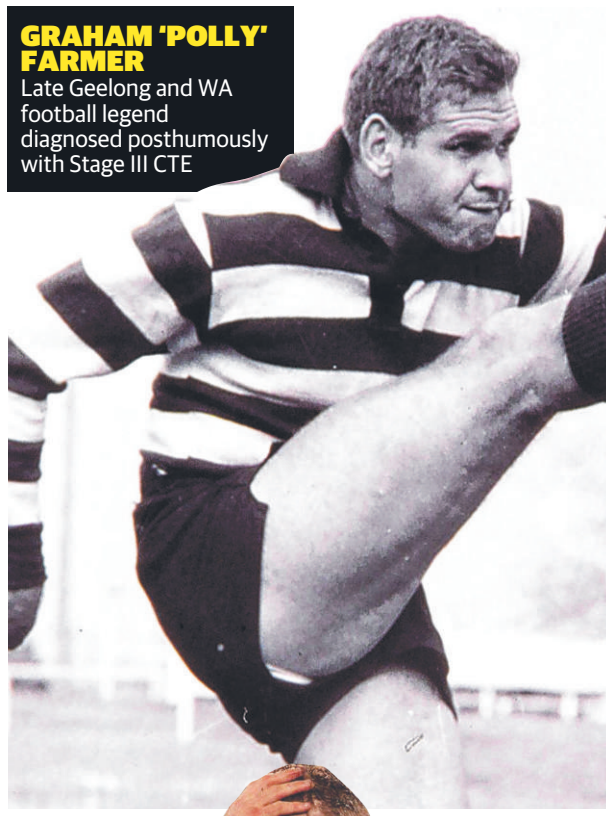
THIS IS A HUGE

CONCUSSION CASUALTY WARD

Prominent VFL-AFL players who have suffered serious health issues linked to head knocks

GRAHAM 'POLLY' FARMER

Late Geelong and WA football legend diagnosed posthumously with Stage III CTE



SHAUN SMITH

Demons Mark-of-the-Century high-flyer declared "permanently incapacitated" as a result of repeated AFL concussions



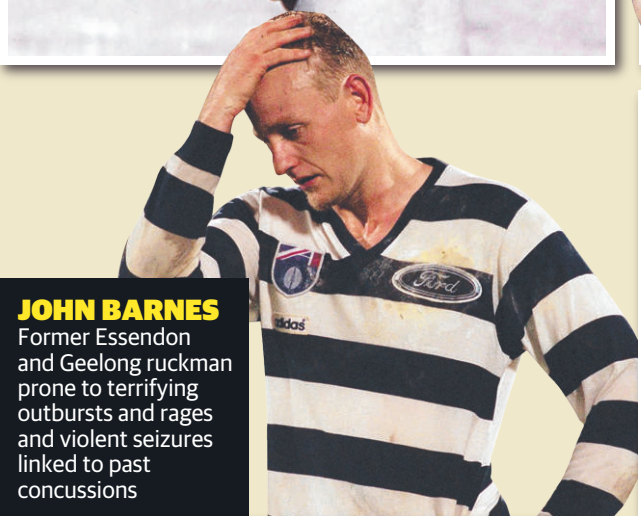
KOBY STEVENS

Ex-St Kilda midfielder who turned to medicinal cannabis to help overcome crippling concussion symptoms that ended his career



JOHN BARNES

Former Essendon and Geelong ruckman prone to terrifying outbursts and rages and violent seizures linked to past concussions



JOHN PLATTEN

Hawthorn premiership rover concussed 36 times and sent to hospital 10 times after head knocks across his career



LIAM PICKEN

Western Bulldogs premiership star forced into early retirement because of severe ongoing concussion symptoms



PADDY MCCARTIN

2014 No.1 draft pick whose St Kilda career was derailed by concussions



The late Danny Frawley with wife Anita and daughters Chelsea, Danielle and Keeley, and (inset) playing for St Kilda. Picture: MARK STEWART



Football must take heed of lessons from school of hard knocks

DANNY Frawley was the knockabout spud farmer from Bungaree — a fun-loving footballer, father, coach and media star.

But as the years rolled by, those closest to him noticed subtle changes that only now can be understood.

"As his wife for over 30 years, I strongly suspected there was more going on with Danny than straightforward depression," Anita Frawley said of her late husband's fight with mental health.

Revelations the St Kilda champ was suffering from Stage II CTE — chronic traumatic encephalopathy — at the time of his death last



MICHAEL WARNER

September are a wake-up call for the game he loved and that made us love him.

The cruel nature of CTE is even if Frawley or his friends and family suspected he was suffering from the devastating disease, no one could know for sure.

CTE can be diagnosed only after death. The crippling neurological disorder is

linked to repeated head knocks and Frawley suffered his fair share during a 240-game career for his beloved Saints from 1984-95.

The AFL has taken giant strides in the fight against concussion since the bad old days when players were knocked out cold and sent back on to the field just minutes after waking up.

Ten years ago, Hawthorn's Jordan Lewis was knocked unconscious in a sickening high-speed collision at Docklands before rejoining the action in the second half.

He would not return to the field in the same circumstances today, but

debate still rages over how many days or weeks of rest a player should be given after suffering a significant head knock.

The AFL has suffered a spate of retirements linked to concussions in recent years.

Liam Picken, Matt Maguire, Sam Bleasdale, Jack Frost, Justin Clarke, Patrick McCartin, Leigh Adams, Sam Shaw and Koby Stevens have told their own often terrifying stories of life-changing symptoms.

McCartin, the game's No 1 draft pick of 2014, opened up on the extent of his issues in a disturbing interview last year.

"I am just a shell of the

person I was, really," McCartin said.

"I am just completely different. It is very concerning. I just can't do basic things.

"Footy aside, I have lost my identity as a person."

A year on, he is contemplating a comeback.

Former Melbourne high-flyer Shaun Smith, 51, was knocked out a dozen times in his 109-game career and recently was declared to be "permanently incapacitated".

He will require lifelong treatment and medication.

The most recent AFL statistics revealed 74 players suffered concussions in 2018,

up from 63 in 2017, affecting an average of four players at every club.

But concussions are not an issue for elite sport, with the junior and local footy leagues also grappling with how to manage head injuries.

The launch of the Australian Sports Brain Bank, led by Associate Professor Michael Buckland, is a game changer in the search for answers on concussion.

It found Frawley was suffering from advanced damage to his brain, a revelation that will help safeguard future generations of footballers.

Danny's parting gift.

ISSUE FOR ALL

Danny's family calls for more research on brain disease

MICHAEL WARNER

FOOTY champ Danny Frawley was suffering from a crippling neurological disorder linked to repeated head knocks at the time of his death.

An analysis of Frawley's brain has been handed to the Victorian coroner showing the St Kilda legend suffered from Stage II CTE — chronic traumatic encephalopathy — when his four-wheel drive struck a tree near Ballan on September 9 last year.

CTE can be diagnosed only after death.

Frawley's wife, Anita, confirmed the finding, saying she hopes it will "prevent other families from going through what we did".

"Our hearts would break seeing others go through the emotions we went through," Anita said.

"This is an issue for the community, it is not about a particular sport or sports. We need more research to diagnose and assist people living with the disease."

There is growing concern about the long-term consequences of head hits in contact sports.

Anita said her late husband, who died at age 56, lived with depression for many years and the diagnosis helped the family better understand the impact of brain injuries in the community.

"His mental health battles and his strong advocacy for mental health issues were well known," she said.

"As his wife for over 30 years, I strongly suspected there was more going on with Danny than straightforward depression."

"I am very grateful for the work of the Australian Sports Brain Bank in shining a light on this disease. We want to prevent other families from

going through what we did.

"We are waiting for the release of the coroner's report before any further comment, however, I want people to know about the problem now, and not wait, as I believe this may help families understand the issues."

Frawley is the second VFL-AFL player to be diagnosed with CTE, the devastating condition linked to concussions and subconcussive hits.

Footy great Graham "Polly" Farmer, who died in August last year, was confirmed in February to have had Stage III CTE.

Frawley's family agreed for his brain to be analysed at Sydney's Royal Prince Alfred Hospital as part of a coroner's investigation into his death.

Samples were also tested in the US at the world-leading Boston Brain Bank. Both found he was had CTE.

CTE ranges from the mildest form, Stage I, to the most severe, Stage IV.

Stage II symptoms can involve depression, mood swings and suicidal thoughts.

Frawley, who suffered multiple heavy hits during his career at St Kilda, talked openly about his struggles with depression before his death.

He played 240 games for the Saints from 1984-95 and was captain from 1987-95 before coaching Richmond.

Frawley became a prominent media figure and was a father of three girls.

A string of high-profile AFL stars have been forced to walk away from the game in recent years because of complications of concussion.

Anita revealed after his death Frawley had taken himself off mental health medication eight months before the crash thinking he had "beaten" his demons.

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DANIEL PATRICK FRAWLEY

BORN

September 8, 1963

PLAYING CAREER

240 games

for St Kilda from 1984-1995 (captain 1987-1995)

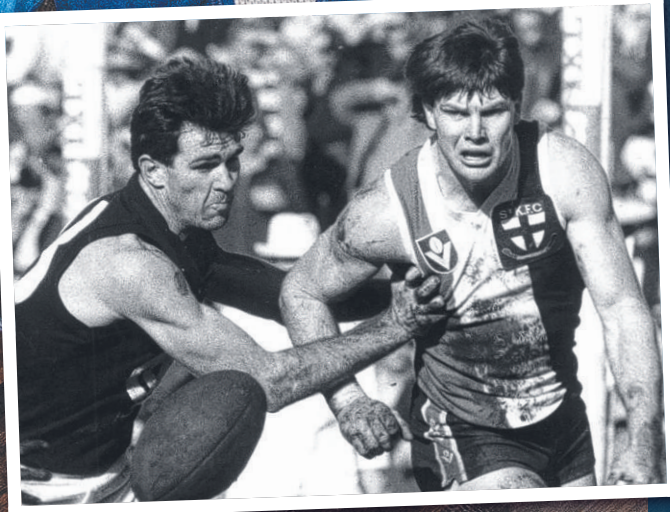
11 games

for Victoria
All Australian 1988
Best & Fairest 1988

COACHING

RICHMOND

2000-2004 (113 games)



BRIEF GUIDE TO CTE RESEARCH

WHAT IS CTE?

Chronic traumatic encephalopathy is a progressive degenerative brain disease found in people with a history of repetitive brain trauma. It's the accumulation of a normal cellular protein called tau and is caused by repeated concussions and smaller hits or subconcussions. CTE symptoms include memory loss, confusion, depression and anxiety, and often begin years after the last brain trauma. CTE can only be diagnosed post mortem.

WHAT IS THE BRAIN BANK?

The Australian Sports Brain Bank was established in 2018 by the neuropathology department at Sydney's Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and is part of a global initiative. Other banks are located in Auckland, Brazil and the US. Its charter is to "research long-term effects of concussion on the brain, with a view to developing new means of diagnosis of brain disease during life, and its treatment".

WHY IS FRAWLEY'S DIAGNOSIS SIGNIFICANT?

Danny Frawley is the second Australian rules player to be diagnosed with CTE, after Graham "Polly" Farmer who died last year after a long battle with Alzheimer's disease.

WHAT NEXT?

The ASSB will use the findings and that of other cases for further research. Another 250 living sportspeople have pledged their brains. For more go to brainbank.org.au

