



**PAT CRONIN  
FOUNDATION**



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

April 2025

# **BFNL players join 72,000 taking a stand against violence**

The focus will shift far beyond football or netball when Strathfieldsaye takes on Golden Square in the Pat Cronin Foundation Round at Triple M Park this Sunday (May 4).

Storm will host eight marquee BFNL matches against Golden Square as part of a powerful stand against violence involving seven Victorian leagues and a staggering 72,000 players in a united front from May 2 to 4.

The scale of the event has more than doubled in the past two years, with 3000 teams from Melbourne to Bendigo to take the field in memory of 19-year-old Pat Cronin, whose life was tragically cut short by a coward punch in 2016.

This is the fourth time the BFNL has participated in the Round, with every player wearing a yellow armband as a reminder of the importance of emotional control both on and off the field.

Bendigo FNL General Manager, Tom King said "Partnering with the Pat Cronin Foundation reflects the Bendigo Football Netball League's commitment to fostering respectful, safe, and supportive environments both on and off the field. Together, we're empowering our clubs and communities with the knowledge and tools to stand up against violence and make a real difference."

Foundation director Matt Cronin – the father of Pat - said it was humbling to see how far the Round had come.

"When my wife Robyn and I launched the Foundation we wanted to turn Pat's story into something meaningful, so that no other family would have to go through what we went endured," said Cronin. "We never imagined it would grow like this."

A promising footballer, Pat was just 19 when he was struck from behind while coming to the aid of a mate involved in a scuffle during a night out in Melbourne.

Although he was walking and talking immediately after the blow, he succumbed to a brain bleed. His family was forced to make the agonising decision to turn off his life support two days later.

“The Round is about showing young people that violence isn’t strength and we’re incredibly grateful to leagues such as the BNFL for helping us to share these messages,” said Cronin.

“The armbands aren’t just a symbol. They’re a conversation starter and a step towards changing attitudes.”

Since the Foundation began, it has delivered educational presentations to more than 250,000 young Australians in schools, sports clubs and community groups, and encourages all clubs involved in the Round to book a session.

“We get kids coming up to us after a presentation, telling us they’ve never really thought about what a single punch could do,” Cronin said.

“That’s what gives me hope. If we can make just one person think twice, that’s one more life potentially saved.”

For more on the Round, visit <https://patcroninfoundation.org.au/pcf-round/>

**ENDS**

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### **About the Pat Cronin Foundation**

The Pat Cronin Foundation is dedicated to ending the Coward Punch. Through awareness, education, research and tools, it works with schools, clubs and community groups to empower young people to never to use violence, to be wise, think carefully and act kindly.

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