

# TRANSCRIPT

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## Transcript: AMA Queensland Director, Professor Paul Griffin, *River949 FM Marnie and Campo Breakfast Show, Friday 25 July 2025*

### Subject: Bare-knuckle boxing

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**CAMPO:** Professor Paul Griffin. Good morning.

**PROF PAUL GRIFFIN:** Good morning, thanks for having me.

**CAMPO:** Our pleasure. You don't sound too happy about bare-knuckle boxing.

**PROF PAUL GRIFFIN:** That's right. I mean, you know, we've discussed this at AMA Queensland and simply cannot support it for many reasons. It's just so dangerous. And when we look at what's happening with One Punch Can Kill and Coward Punch campaigns, they've done a fantastic job of addressing violence in the community, and our contact sports have done a great job of reducing the risks from head injuries in those codes. To then see something like this go ahead where it's essentially encouraged for that to happen just simply can't be supported.

**CAMPO:** Have you spoken to the people like Anthony Mundine about the risks involved and what have you? Are you able to contact these people or they just won't listen?

**PROF PAUL GRIFFIN:** We haven't contacted them directly, but every AMA around the country has put out statements essentially about this. And there's even some studies where it was looked at in just over 145 cases, there were 123 significant injuries from lacerations and cuts to the hands and face, but fractures, both small bones in the hand and around the face, the orbit dental fractures, for example, and three people ended up in hospital with traumatic brain injuries. So that's a rate of injury that's just unacceptable. And some of the things the AMA have pointed out, our hospitals are struggling under the winter surge and then to allow an activity like this where there's inevitably going to be injuries, it's just something that doesn't make sense to us.

**CAMPO:** Well, it's a bit like that "Run It Straight", where they run down the hill and run into each other, these ridiculous sports that are appearing and the danger them. It's just unbelievable what they're thinking, really, isn't it?

**PROF PAUL GRIFFIN:** Absolutely. We're learning so much more about brain injuries and CTE. We're hearing stories of sports stars 20 or 30 years down the track still suffering the consequences of repeated head injuries. And in those sports codes, they're now showing that there's a duty of care of the code itself and even the players, even for accidental head injuries, there's penalties now to try and stamp that sort of thing out. And as I say, this is kind of the opposite where it's encouraged. And we also worry about the message that it sends to the public that these sort of activities, this sort of

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unmitigated violence with no regulation and no mitigation to reduce injuries, it certainly can't be supported.

**MARNIE:** Well, Paul, you've just said basically our hospitals at the moment, which I agree with, through winter. How quick is this coming in, firstly? Is this actually happening?

**PROF PAUL GRIFFIN:** My understanding is there's still lots of discussions. Most other states wouldn't allow this because there's regulations in place, but we don't have that in Queensland, and that's why it's being talked about a lot here. My understanding is they're trying to do it fairly quickly and that it's even potentially booked in for the next few months. And so, you know, we're certainly trying to just make sure that common sense prevails and that perhaps we look at regulating this a little bit better. I understand people need an outlet and want ways to express themselves, but there's so many other combat sports where there are protections in place, there are rules and regulations that reduce the risk of injury and perhaps deviating these people towards that rather than something that just appears way too dangerous.

**CAMPO:** Well, I know you're the number one Lions ticket holder and Marnie's son just had an injury over the weekend where he had his eye cut and he's got five stitches and had a little bit of concussion. You know, that's in a controlled environment.

**MARNIE:** Well, that's with headgear and all that type of thing. But that's what you said, Paul. I mean, you do see it in football, obviously, a lot, right, when you're tackling. I mean, you're an AFL fan. He's Union. So a little different in some, but you come together. I've got friends who play AFL. They just head clash, bang into each other. It happens.

**PROF PAUL GRIFFIN:** Yeah, that's right. I mean, we can never prevent it completely. I think that's what, you know, all the codes have said. But they have put so many, you know, good innovations in place. You know, there's good rules around when you can play afterwards, so the risk of repeated head injury is reduced. There's now a lot of rules that greatly reduce the risk of head high impact in all codes. And as I say, we can't make it zero, but it's certainly a lot better and a lot better managed when it does happen as well. And so that's the big difference with this. Some suggest that the absence of gloves make those head injuries less likely, but it also then increases the risk of things like facial fractures. And, you know, the trouble with some of those, and we've seen that happen infrequently in some of those other sports codes, that some of those facial fractures can cause lifelong disability. So, you know, it's not something that we can take lightly.

**CAMPO:** We can hear your passion in it.

**MARNIE:** Definitely. Thank you, Professor Paul.

**PROF PAUL GRIFFIN:** Thank you so much.

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