



INSIDE COVER

Ben O'Shea



Phone 9482 3111 **Email** inside.cover@wnews.com.au **Follow** twitter.com/insidecover

COUCH TO FITNESS

Maybe we've listened to too much Alanis Morissette but isn't it ironic that some couch potatoes love spending their weekends watching supremely fit footy players run around an AFL field?

Health researchers around the world have pondered this and sought to learn why sports fans often fail to exercise themselves and develop unhealthy eating habits.

A WA project, Aussie-FIT, was launched to better understand this segment of the population and, hopefully, achieve better health outcomes for them.

Funded by Healthway and run in partnership with the Fremantle Dockers, Curtin University, West Coast Eagles, Edith Cowan University, Glasgow University and the University of Newcastle, Aussie-FIT recruited 120 overweight male footy fans to take part in a free 12-week fitness program.

What makes this project special is where the recruits train — not in a suburban gym but at their beloved AFL club.

Using Freo and West Coast coaches and team training facilities, the recruits work on improving their health in the same environments Nat Fyfe and Luke Shuey use.

Not only is it an incredible and rare opportunity for a footy fan, but it is also great motivation to stick to a fitness program.

Plus, the uni researchers gain valuable insights into how

sports fans respond to health and fitness messaging delivered in a fan-friendly context.

Aussie-FIT is an extension of similar research initiatives

internationally, including one that links soccer fans to health programs at Scottish Premiership teams and another involving professional ice hockey teams in Canada.

Visit aussiefit.org if you'd like to learn more or register for future programs.



Aussie-FIT participants.



Aussie-FIT participants.