



Colour Expressions

(shampoo and conditioner for coloured hair)

PAN
sh

[theage.com.au](http://www.theage.com.au)

THE AGE

 [Print this article](#) |  [Close this window](#)

Hit-run victim's wish to win big on the NFL punt

Adrian Prosenko
May 4, 2008

A hit-run survivor struggling to ignite his rugby league career Advertisement
could become the next Australian to make it big in America's National Football League.

Ben Matterson has already confounded the experts by resuming his football career in the National Rugby League with the Gold Coast Titans after being knocked from his bicycle by a speeding car. And now the 21-year-old is taking on another ambitious challenge by having trials for an American football contract.

Matterson is on a meagre deal with the Titans and does labouring work to supplement his income. While he is scraping to make ends meet now, he could hit the jackpot as an American football kicker. While he has no experience in the sport, Matterson's ability to kick a league ball 70 metres with a "hang time" of 4.2 seconds has piqued the interest of NFL scouts.

"I was always able to kick a ball reasonably well, so it just seemed a different avenue to rugby league or anything else in Australia," Matterson said. "I'd love to break through to the full-time squad in the NRL, but in the meantime if the NFL come to me and say, 'We've got a position for you', I'd take that."

The Australian Punting and Kicking Academy (Ozpunt) invited Matterson and Newcastle Knights forward Cory Paterson to a kicking session recently. Ozpunt's Cameron McGillivray was impressed and said the pair's physique and skill levels were attributes keenly sought in the US.

"A lot of the kickers in the NFL are five feet nine inches (175 centimetres) and 180 pounds (82 kilograms)," McGillivray said. "Ben Matterson is six foot four (193 centimetres) and 240 pounds (109 kilograms). NFL coaches are looking at guys like him and saying, 'This is awesome', because they are the usual size requirements of a tight-end or receiver. They're saying what we're doing will change the game."

For Matterson, the fact he is kicking a ball at all is a minor miracle. A junior athletics champion, Matterson didn't play a game of football until he was 15. And it seemed the former Melbourne Storm centre/back-rower wouldn't play again after the hit-run incident.

The crash left him needing shoulder and knee reconstructions, yet he somehow pedalled the four kilometres to his home to call for help after the collision.

"I was basically told I'd never play football ever again due to the severity of the accident and the uniqueness of my injuries," Matterson said. "I always thought I could play again, even though doctors said I couldn't or that it wouldn't be wise to."

This story was found at: <http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2008/05/03/1209235231952.html>