Herald Sun

Tigers roar in fight for former club physiotherapist Ian Macindoe

GRANT McARTHUR, HEALTH EDITOR, Herald Sun
May 21, 2019 4:07pm

For years he kept Richmond's stars in tip-top shape — now the Tigers are throwing their support behind club physio Ian "Doobs" Macindoe in a more crucial health battle.

The father of two and former Richmond chief physio is fighting a rare form of Parkinson's disease, which is slowly robbing him of the things he holds most dear.

But, surrounded by family and the players he dedicated so much time to, Mr Macindoe is determined to remain as fit as possible to slow the disease's progression.

A fitness fanatic who devoted his life to ensuring others could get the best out of their bodies, Mr Macindoe, 53, has been forced into a wheelchair by multiple system atrophy (MSA), which is affecting his speech — though his mind and love for the Tigers is still strong.

Macindoe, his wife, Jacky Macindoe, and nephew and filmmaker Andy Macindoe with the Richmond team.

“I was a very active and physical person, so this was one of the main frustrations when I got the diagnosis, knowing that I would no longer be able to do the things that were important to me: going for a run, going for a swim,” Mr Macindoe said, with the help of wife Jacky.

A visit to training at Punt Rd last week saw Mr Macindoe again embraced by the players and sharing a chat with coach Damien Hardwick, though he laughed off an injured Alex Rance’s pleas for rehabilitation advice.

Mr Macindoe’s battle with the disease has been captured in a documentary, *MSA: The Ian Macindoe Story*, produced by nephew Andrew Macindoe, which aims to raise awareness and funding for Parkinson’s Victoria and those with MSA.

Affecting one in 10,000 people, there are no treatments for MSA, though Melbourne-based Alterity Therapeutics began clinical trials of a potential treatment last year, which company chief medical officer Dr David Stamler said had promising Phase 1 results.

“Importantly, the study was found to be safe. We also found PBT434 penetrates the human brain and achieves concentrations that are potentially clinically relevant at doses that are well tolerated in healthy volunteers,” Dr Stamler said.

“We are very encouraged by these results, which is an important step in developing a treatment for a rare disorder.”