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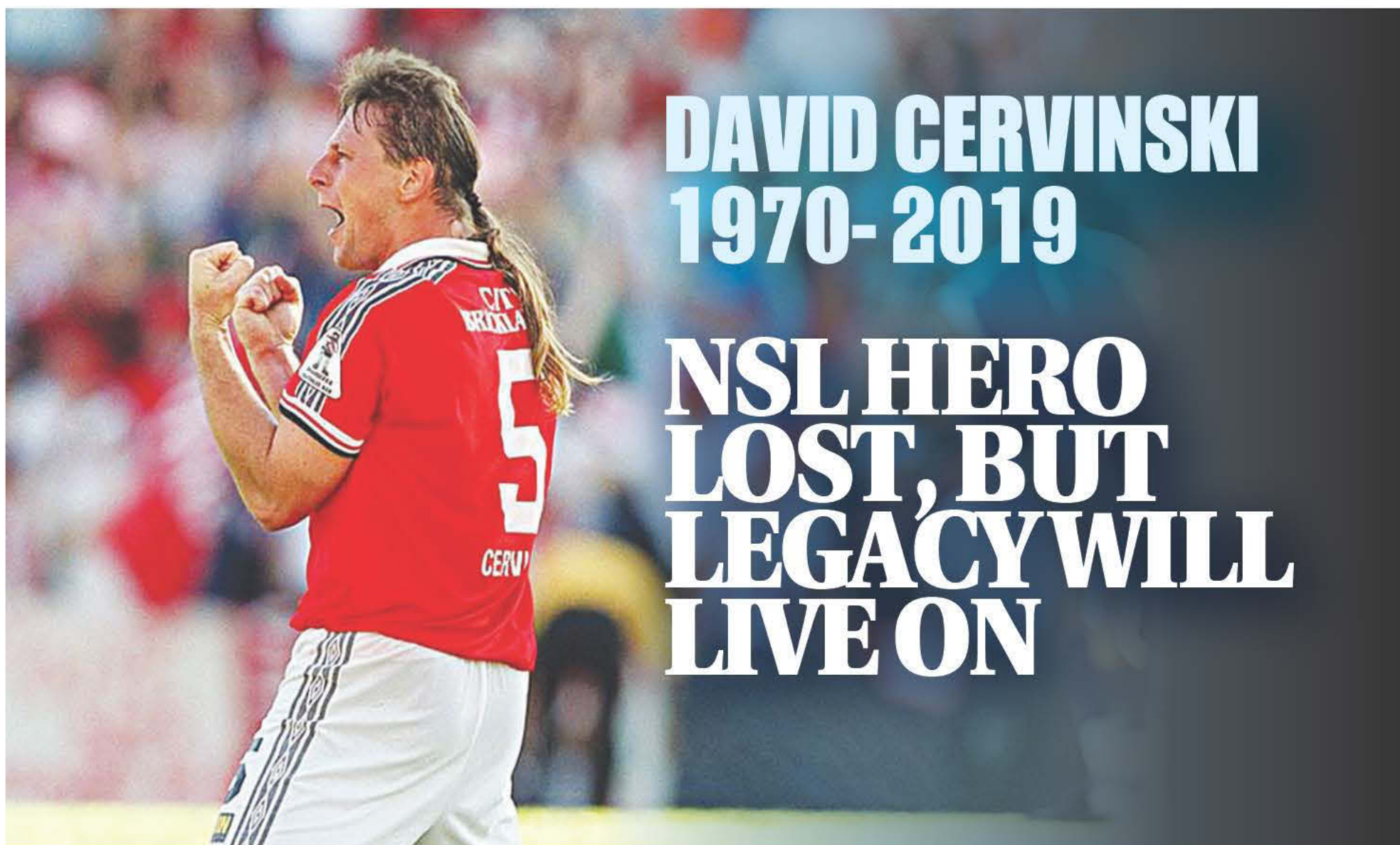



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**One of** the finest NSL defenders of his generation, David Cervinski's death from skin cancer is a dark day for Australian football. But his legacy will prove far greater.

**Four-time NSL** champion Cervinski, 48, lost his enduring battle with cancer overnight, a battle that had lasted nearly three years longer than the six months doctors had originally given him after his diagnosis.

**The Australian** football great's death comes only two days before Perth Glory's Grand Final showdown with Sydney FC, but 19 years after Cervinski played his part in the greatest Grand Final Perth's ever seen - his Wollongong Wolves side coming from three goals down at halftime to beat Perth 7-6 in a penalty shootout in the 2000 NSL decider.

**That day** the storied NSL centreback was withdrawn after just 46 minutes, as the Wolves sought an attacking shift. Unfortunately for the game, he won't be there to see the culmination of this match either.

**But Cervinski's** legacy will live on in more than the hearts and minds of Australian football - David Gallop today recognising his excellent career - and the history books of two of the NSL's greatest clubs, Wollongong and Melbourne Knights.

**Despite suffering** significant facial injuries from tumor-removal surgery, his willingness to share his public battle with cancer and outspoken, emotional candidness about his ordeal helped burgeon the PFA's decision to bring in skin cancer checks for A-League and W-League players every season in a partnership with Molemap.

**"Finding out** that you have stage four melanoma and



that the worst-case scenario is you have six months to live just shatters you," Cervinski said in 2016. "You look back and you think what could I have done to change it?" **"Twenty-five years** ago you used to run around with no top on and that is where it has come from. Now if I could go back and I'd be wearing long-sleeved tops, hats and glasses."

**Gallop said** FFA will pay tribute to Cervinski at Sunday's Grand Final. Glory fans may disagree but a New South Wales side once again breaking Perth hearts might be a fitting tribute.

**"David was** a no-nonsense defender, someone who was respected by everyone who played with and against him and duly recognised as one of the best defenders in the NSL era," the FFA CEO said.

**"Amongst his** many achievements was winning the 2000 Grand Final with Wollongong against Perth Glory



at Subiaco Oval in one of the great Grand Finals in history. In 2017 we were honoured to have David present the Mark Viduka Medal at the FFA Cup Final. **"Over the** past few years he had battled Stage 4 melanoma and wanted to raise awareness to ensure other young footballers are alert to the dangers of this terrible disease.

**"With the** support of Professional Footballers Australia he was the ambassador for the campaign to Kick Out Skin Cancer which now sees all of the PFA's A-League and W-League-based members undergo skin cancer checks every season.

**"We pass** on our condolences to David's family and all of the clubs he represented over his career. FFA will honour David's memory with a tribute to his life and career at this Sunday's Hyundai A-League Grand Final in Perth."