

'IRON MAN' BRACES FOR STARDOM

JOEL KELLY

HIS friends call him Iron Man and his battles have been just as tough as any of those fought by the Marvel superhero.

At just six years old, Albany boy Cody Colmer has already overcome enough adversity to warrant the "hero" tag and wear it with pride.

After an extremely traumatic birth, doctors discovered he was missing half a vertebra – a spinal condition known as hemivertebrae. It requires him to wear a torso brace to secure his back, impressing his school friends and prompting them to call him Iron Man, which Cody says is "pretty cool". He also has a breathing condition caused by an aberrant subclavian artery that squashes his trachea in two places.

Now the young warrior has been called to duty as this year's Little Telethon Star.

Cody's dad Paul Colmer said Cody's many visits to the hospi-



tal had not dampened his enthusiasm for sport.

The left-footer kicked six goals for Yakamia Primary School in a recent soccer match, and he enjoys cricket and swimming.

Despite his enthusiasm and talent for soccer, his sporting heroes are West Coast Eagles ruckman Nic Naitanui and V8 supercar driver Mark "Frosty" Winterbottom.

Mr Colmer said Cody wanted to be a speedway driver or mechanic like his dad.

"He's grown up with the brace and going to hospital, so it hasn't really bothered him at this stage," Mr Colmer said.

"He's been through 17 torso braces and it's only off for showering or swimming generally."

Telethon will take to the air over October 15 and 16.

www.telethon7.com/telethon-2016



Star quality: Cody Colmer, 6, the Little Telethon Star for 2016, enjoys playing soccer despite spinal difficulties. Picture: Ross Swanborough

Pokemon virtually caves in

TREVOR PADDENBURG

THE creators of Pokemon Go have caved into demands to remove the game's characters from WA's war memorials, cemeteries and places of worship.

The smartphone craze urged players to walk around and "catch" virtual animated characters that appeared at locations including the State War Memorial, Flame of Remembrance and the Cenotaph at Kings Park.

The *Sunday Times* photographed gamers sitting and lounging on the state's most sacred memorials trying to catch the virtual creatures.

It prompted Returned and Services League WA president Peter Aspinall to demand the virtual characters be removed, and Veterans Affairs Minister Joe Francis wrote to the game's maker, Niantic, telling it to "show some respect".

This week it emerged the US tech company had taken action, removing a Pokemon "gym" – where players do battle – from the Flame of Remembrance.

While Pokemon characters can still randomly pop up, the removal of the gym means there are far fewer gamers gathered there battling for "ownership" of the gym.

The *Sunday Times* contacted Niantic for comment.

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