

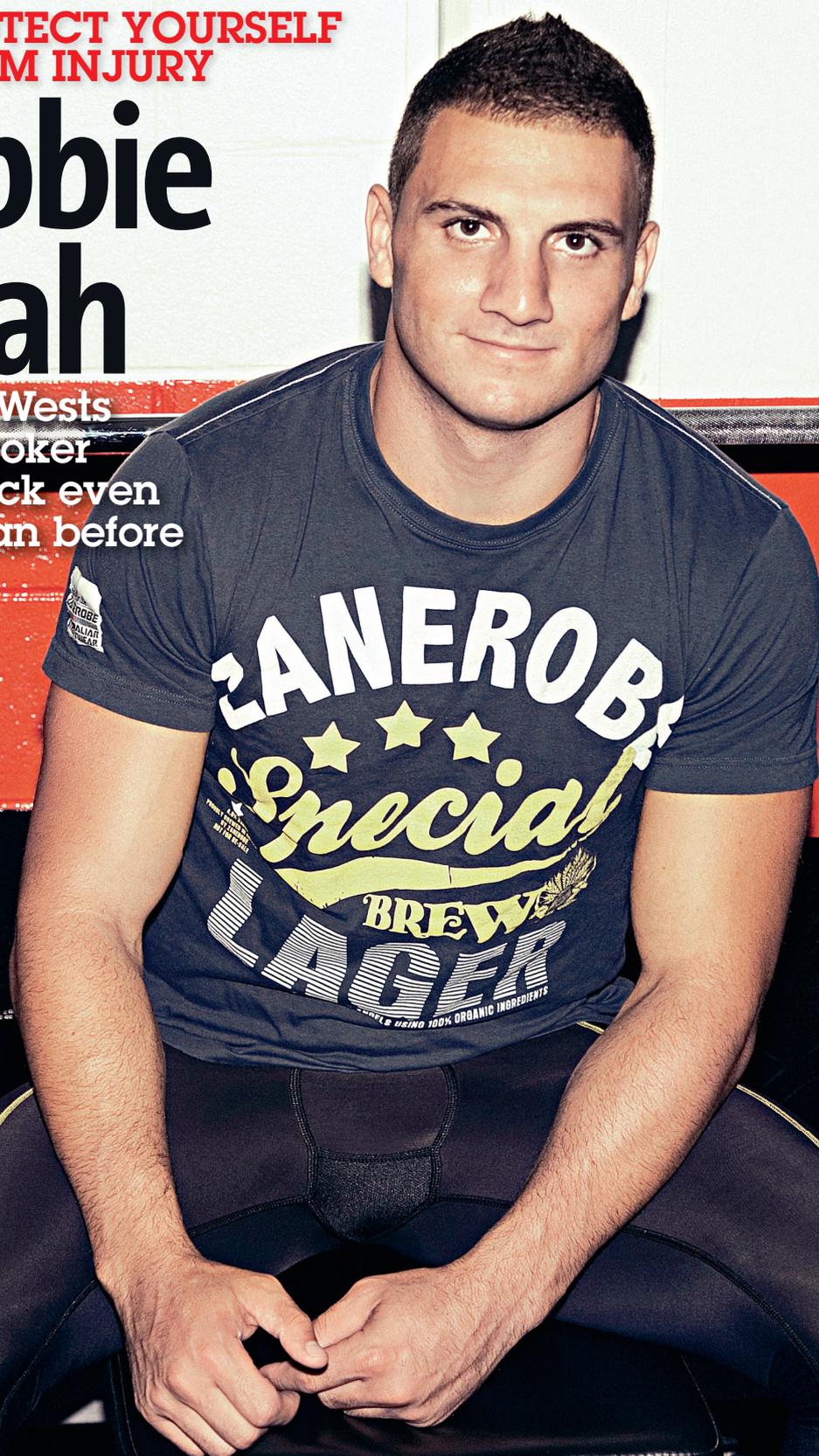
MAN ALIVE!

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 **PROTECT YOURSELF FROM INJURY**

Robbie Farah

How the Wests Tigers hooker came back even better than before

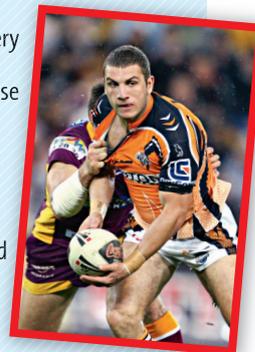


Robbie Farah's 2008 season was one of occasional brilliance and success, but more often struggle and pain, as the Wests Tigers star ploughed on through a debilitating back injury. Surgery in the off-season (shaving back a bulging disc, if you really want to know) was allied to intensive training that included exercises aimed at building up weakened areas and protecting them from further injury – the pre-hab, rehab routine. The routines over the page may look easy, but as Farah will testify, they're anything but.

FARAH ON...

PLAYING INJURED

I feel really good, actually. I struggled mentally last year knowing my back was injured and trying to play every week. That was really hard because I knew I wasn't at my best but I didn't want the opposition to know that. But now that it's fixed I'm happy I've had the surgery. I feel stronger.



COMMON SENSE

With the amount of injuries I've had, I've got to be smarter about looking after my body. I can't party any more; I've got to be more sensible. I used to enjoy a game of golf and that's probably not the best thing for me. I've got a new set of clubs sitting in the garage and can't use it.

BEING PROFESSIONAL

I know it's crucial to prepare myself well and do what's important for me. I'll always do what's going to get me playing my best footy. I might not always enjoy it, but I'll do it because I know it's good for me.

STAYING POSITIVE

I've been through my fair share of injuries and there were times when I got down on myself. But being negative is not going to help you get back. You just do your best. There's times I've been negative and the boys will sense it and try to give me a boost.

PHOTOGRAPHY: JAMES DIMITRI (MAIN); DARREN ENGLAND (INSET)